Film Exhibition at Indian Residential School, 1930-1969

Joel Hughes

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By: Joel Hughes

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Signed by the final examining committee:

Dr. Elena Razlogova — Chair

Dr. Zoë Druick — External Examiner

Dr. Monika Gagnon — External to Program

Dr. Thomas Waugh — Examiner

Dr. Luca Caminati — Examiner

Dr. Haidee Wasson — Thesis Supervisor

Approved by

Chair of Department or Graduate Program Director

Dean of Faculty

ABSTRACT

Film Exhibition at Indian Residential School in Canada, 1930-1969

Joel Hughes, Ph.D.
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This dissertation examines the pedagogical imperatives informing film exhibition within the Indian Residential School System in Canada between the years 1930-1969, and argues the medium was specifically employed to facilitate the system's culturally genocidal ideology and curriculum. Archival in methodology, I utilize a range of administrative documents from the Canadian government and varying religious organizations to write the history of film exhibition at residential schools. I situate this research in concert with postcolonial theory, suggesting the films exhibited intended to reimagine Indigenous identity in ways beneficial to the colonial powers dictating Canadian culture and privilege, and then to transfer this identity to the students through educational positioning of film.

My introductory chapter outlines a brief history of the Indian Residential School System, and situates my study in conversation with scholarship on educational and colonial uses of cinema. Chapter One illustrates how film was incorporated into the residential schools, beginning in 1930 with the earliest reference to the medium's use, and extending to the late 1960s, in which rental receipts from schools in Ontario and Quebec suggest film's later prevalence throughout the system. Chapter Two examines the themes and patterns of the films exhibited, focusing on the frequency with which Hollywood Westerns, and films depicting indigeneity around the world, were screened. Chapter Three employs archival materials to demonstrate the interrelationship between the National Film Board of Canada and residential schools. I show that the Film Board's "rural circuit" method of distribution had contact with the schools, and that its films were positioned to educate the students regarding the distinctly Canadian identity of the system intended they adopt. Chapter Four concludes this dissertation by aligning film with a

public relations campaign undertaken by the residential school system, Churches, and Indian Affairs. This campaign was meant to mislead Canadians, and thereby maintain, public support for the culturally genocidal institutions in their midst. Film and moving images, as I demonstrate throughout the entirety of this work, engaged a complex and multifaceted interaction with the residential school system, its assimilative efforts, and culturally genocidal ideology.

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INTRODUCTION

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"The Cowboys won[1]:" Film Exhibition, the Indian Residential School System in Canada, and the Visual Approach to Cultural Assimilation

In the classrooms of Canada's Indian Residential School System (henceforth IRS), often the sound of a 16mm projector could be heard. Typically a "Cowboy n' Indian" (*Miller* 281) film was being exhibited, delivering all sorts of racist, and problematic lessons to the students. Gordon James Pemmican, a former student of the Pelican Lake Indian Residential School in Sioux Lookout, Ontario, for example, recalls the Hollywood Westerns he and his classmates watched, noting they were often the ones in which "Indians never won." He correlates this exposure to a post-screening behavior, stating that when "we went out to play cowboys and Indians, none of us wanted to be the Indian" (*Survivors Speak* 57). The fact that the children would reenact filmic content, but do so by associating themselves with the white-cowboy onscreen, must have been viewed by teachers as a successful outcome. They must have witnessed the medium's ability to not only push students to affiliate with the dominant authority, but also to solicit their articulating a sense of not wanting to be "Indians."

The "Indians" they were avoiding, of course, were created by the dominant culture and its entertainment industry; those horribly violent characters terrorizing caravans of white people for no good reason, those who "attack with the cunning of the wolf," ensuring the white settlers always fear for their "scalps" (*Kit Carson* 1940). Despite the fact that these images offer gross misrepresentations of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, and likely run counter to the child's own cultural experiences, the filmic "Indian" appears to have confused, to varying degrees, the students' sense of

[1] Published in the 1964 edition of the Gordon Indian Residential School student journal entitled *Peekiskatan*. The larger quotation reads, "The junior girls watched T.V. on Friday nights. We watched Cowboys and Indians. The Indians tried to catch the Cowboys, but the Cowboys ran away from the Indians.

themselves and their cultures. This is precisely what the Indian Residential School System sought to do: to define the many and varied First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and cultures in general and negative terms, and to transfer this information to the students in the hopes they would eventually come to see themselves as the "Indians" they never wanted to be.

Former student, Bev Sellers, for example, recounts her experience with film exhibition at St. Joseph Mission Indian Residential School in British Columbia. She attended the school between the years 1962 and 1967, and remembers "Movie Nights" as typically shaped by

> plenty of derogatory remarks about Indians in western movies…we saw many westerns. Of course, at the time, I could not see it for what it really was: stupidity on behalf of racist fools right down the line from the produces who created the films to the administrators who chose them for our "entertainment." Instead, I cringed and the shame I felt at being Indian went deeper and deeper each time I heard a derogatory comment about Indians. (82)

Aligning with the study of colonial uses of cinema, the exhibition of such content was, I believe, "predicated on" what was thought to be "the utility of cinema for engineering consent and managing the conduct of diverse populations" (*Grieveson* 4). Although the subjectivity of the students as spectators, and the predictability of their response to filmic content, could never be entirely controlled or managed, Sellars and Pemmican show that the medium confronted and overpowered them with culturally derogatory associations. Sellars further expresses the profound effect film had on her, stating that, "even though I knew that did not happen in my community, I believed that somewhere in my 'Indian' world we were that cruel, and I felt such shame" (81). Only eight-years-old at the time, Sellars was forced to confront a difficult paradox regarding her culture and its misrepresentation, and in this, the utility of 16mm exhibition within the IRS classroom is articulated as a culturally disruptive entity.

A correlation between film content and residential school ideology exists, and throughout this dissertation I argue that film exhibition within the Indian Residential School was not just a recreational endeavor, but rather it offered teachers and administrators an aid to the implementation of a culturally genocidal agenda. I will

demonstrate how film was slowly integrated into the system, how its content promoted a colonial agenda of assimilation, and finally how it was utilized in a public relations campaign designed to influence the ways in which Canadians could understand the work of residential schools, to limit their ability to question the operation of such highly unethical institutions.

Undertaking intensive archival research in order to verify the interrelationship between residential school and visual media, I subscribe to an object specific approach to analysis of institutional histories. This means seeking out references to the IRS system's use of film, those disparately located in and amongst literally hundreds of thousands of documents held in archives across the country. The specificity of this archival approach was, despite its challenges, essential to this project, making for an institutionally based study of how the IRS system implemented and employed film exhibition to serve its ideological agenda. I thus employ original archival research to demonstrate a clear historical evolution of film exhibition in the IRS context, from its early use by ambitious teachers, to the government's eventual willingness to converse about its potential benefit to the system as a whole.

Although IRS archives demonstrate a bias towards English, and point to larger tensions concerning French/English relations in Canada, further study is needed to confirm these issues did or did not influence the day-to-day function of residential schools. The TRC *Final Report* implies the aims of English and French schools were essentially similar, suggesting that forcing the students to speak either national language was simply viewed as important to Aboriginal language suppression (*Honouring the Truth* 615). Additionally, documents verify that schools in Quebec rented 16mm films are written in English, suggesting a linguistic bias in the business of film rental. Moreover, I was unable to find evidence to confirm that films were being dubbed into French. I thus forgo an extensive discussion of language politics in Canada because it is unclear whether officials thoroughly considered the inevitable variances in the IRS system's French and English operations. Further study of this issue is necessary, and will need also to account for the numerous Indigenous languages that, despite IRS policies seeking their suppression, remained, in the form of student resistance, and as a part of school life.

I engage numerous studies of the IRS system, those predominantly invested in presenting its history and legacy. From Hudson and McDonald's focus on the system's genocidal intent, Haig-Brown's presentation of victim accounts, Sellars, Fontaine, and Purvis's more personal recounting of their own experiences in the system as both students and teachers, Bombay, Matheson, and Anisman's focus on intergenerational effects of IRS Trauma, as well as the historical studies completed by Jim Miller and John Milloy, those which thoroughly outline IRS operations and agendas. I also consult the TRC's many publications and *Final Report*, as well as studies concerned with the cultural function of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Ronald Niezen begins the work of analyzing the TRC's operations in comparison to other similar establishments around the world. Paulette Regan argues for the need to disrupt the settler embodied by Canadian citizens as essential to reconciliation. The works of indigenous scholars and activists are also important to IRS study. I rely on Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred, who views the IRS system as an application of colonial racism, and who theorizes how to reconstruct indigenous traditions and rituals damaged by IRS operations. My dissertation therefore aligns with these works by illustrating how seemingly disconnected components of Canadian culture, such as film, were utilized by the IRS system in support of its assimilationist ideology.

By taking an archivally based and institutionally specific approach, I investigate how film exhibition at residential school was informed by the system's pedagogical mechanisms and disciplinary structures. How was the medium potentially supplementing IRS operations and dissemination of assimilationist ideology? When I engage the films exhibited at residential schools, I always do so, therefore, through the parameters of the system, and am not necessarily concerned with tracing the academic and interpretive history of the films themselves. This approach aligns with useful and para-cinema studies, and draws on recent work that has similarly taken an archival approach to the medium, studying it through highly specific contexts and applications. Hediger and Vonderau's *Films that Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media* informs this approach as I adopt their, as well as a general emphasis throughout the field today, on discerning film's utility through efforts to reconstruct the "occasion" and "audience" for which it was exhibited.

Recent studies in educational cinema inform my engagement with the general history of pedagogical uses of film. Scholars point to early debates concerning the medium's ability to positively or negatively influence education. Orgeron, Orgeron, and Streible, identify early twentieth century discussions concerning the effectiveness of visual rather textual learning, as well as fears about film as a corruptive form of entertainment inappropriate for the classroom (25). Allison Griffiths discusses film as gaining pedagogical credibility and cultural legitimacy as something more than simple recreation through its relationship to the Natural History Museum (124). Oliver Gaycken points to the investment of the American government in the production of educational film to aid varying contexts and environments, dealing with issues of "public education," agriculture, the military, and Indian affairs (50).

A general theme informing studies of education and film is that of "effective use." This highlights debates in the early twentieth century seeking to discern film as a pedagogical tool from its position in the movie theatre, and argued that it needed to be thoughtfully implemented (*Orgeron, Orgeron, Streible* 35). On numerous occasions, IRS administrators gesture towards this idea of effective use when they cite film exhibition under the premise of "educational purposes only" (*MacKenzie* 1936). Throughout this dissertation I attempt to define the pedagogical motivations informing film's use in the IRS context. However, the IRS system's employment of film contradicts these claims and differs from other educational uses in that it predominantly exhibited recreational cinema to its students. As such, I analyze the exhibited films in an attempt to identify how their images, aesthetics, and narratives were effectively used in their alignment with the system's more general assimilationist pedagogy. The content of these films was, I believe, positioned educationally as another way to forward the agenda of the IRS system to its students.

Although Craig Kridel points out that the use of Hollywood films—more accurately, reedited versions meant to better serve curriculum—by American public school teachers in the 1930's was not uncommon, these applications differ from the IRS system precisely because they were not embedded within institutions seeking to disrupt the student's ability to engage with and perpetuate their own cultures. However, I do see his emphasis on using Hollywood films to teach "character education and moral

purposes" (217), as supporting the idea that the IRS system's use of predominantly recreational cinema should be considered as a pedagogical application.

The ways in which postcolonial theory and film studies intersect is also foundational to this dissertation. The trajectory of postcolonial film studies resembles a larger movement in the field from aesthetic based film analysis, to the study of useful cinema as a history of film and moving images within and operating in relation to institutional contexts and frameworks. Stam and Shohat's early work, *Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media*, for example veers more in the direction of a film study engaging an aesthetically distinct object and phenomenon (*Wasson and Acland* 5), questioning how film semiotics participate in, or augment, postcolonial theories. More recent anthologies edited by Lee Grieveson and Colin McCabe, *Empire and Film* and *Film and the End of Empire*, however, take a more institutionally and archivally based approach to specific applications of colonial film on behalf of imperial governments.

To a certain extent, I adopt both of these approaches. On the one hand, my use of film analysis is not dissimilar to that used by more traditional postcolonial film scholars such as Faye Ginsburg, who emphasize the representation of First Nations/Settler relations in terms of "performing" the settler's desired view of history (81). In this I seek to identify aspects of the exhibited films that would be useful to the promotion of the IRS system's assimilationist imperative—the construction of white male privilege and the marginalized other, or the orientation of the camera's frame to consistently peer through a colonial gaze. On the other hand, I believe the exhibition of content promoting these ideals was seeking a more deliberate audience reaction. In this sense, I view the IRS use of film as similar to the colonial cinema studied by Peter Bloom in *French Colonial Documentary: Mythologies of Humanitarianism*. Bloom reveals French imperialists as having a clear interest in using the medium to manipulate the audience's future engagements with the dominant culture. He points to debates concerning the effective use of film in its presentation to both "'spectators abroad…a group we have every interest in 'curing—for whom we must establish standards of quality and pass on an enlightened vision of our civilization,'" and those in France who needed to be educated in terms of the "economic potential" of the colonies (151), and highlights that the usefulness of

cinema as a colonial tool was associated with the idea it could shape audiences into better colonial citizens. I straddle a line between these approaches, using a more traditional film analysis to point to themes and imagery that might be able to effect a tangible change in the IRS student, to expose them to materials that would reshape their actions and behaviours to reflect those presented onscreen, to make them better Canadians.

Zoë Druick's book *Projecting Canada: Government Policy and Documentary Film at the National Film Board*, informed this dissertation's investment in theories of governmentality and disciplinarity. We can see the films exhibited in the IRS context similarly to her framing of NFB films as a communicative extension of government policy. Film exhibition at residential school, as I will show, participated in forwarding the IRS agenda by consistently employing the image of the heroic white male fighting off, or leading, the marginalized other, in an effort to extend IRS policy to the realm of the visual. Film exhibition becomes yet another way for the system to mold students into the Foucauldian docile body (138), that which is insidiously guided in all its movements by the disciplinary mechanisms of culture, in order to fulfill their role as the "well-tempered citizen" (*Druick* 3). This work is informed by theorist such a Foucault, Said, and Williams and their understanding of the ways in which power and culture intersect in seemingly ordinary and innocent discourses, those that carefully construct the norms and behaviours, the credibility of knowledge and identifiers, and thereby render the inequality, such as that present in the IRS system, a reality.

Of course scholars agree that there is no deterministic relationship between film's communicative capacities and its audience. In fact, the question of how to discern the intended effects of film spectatorship on colonized or marginalized audiences has plagued colonial film studies for decades. James Burns notes this when he states,

> just because [colonized] people were seeing Hollywood movies does not mean that they were becoming Americanized by them. While there is a broadly held view that Hollywood was remaking the world in its own image, historians have been hesitant to speculate regarding the influence of the cinema on audiences. Even for those communities that had extensive experiences of the movies, it is difficult to evaluate the influence of its images (178)

Raymond Williams also argues that visual mediums do not deny the spectator agency, but

rather strive to set limits and exert pressures to ensure "variable social practices are profoundly affected but never necessarily controlled" (123). Documenting the unexplored media wing of the IRS system will gauge these limits and pressures as they are established through film and its associated technologies. It is not, as Anna McCarthy suggests in her study of television, "so much an issue of whether a particular television show actually does or does not perform a public service," but a matter of studying the "strategies and rationales" (*McCarthy* 77) that shape the medium's attempt to govern the opinions and perceptions of its audiences. In what follows, I attempt to thoroughly identify the strategies and rationales informing film exhibition at Indian Residential School in Canada.

The Indian Residential School System was established in the late nineteenth century, and operated until 1997 when school residences in Marieval, Saskatchewan, and Prince Albert, British Columbia, were finally closed (*Canada's Residential Schools Part 2* 105). Funded by the Canadian government and operated by church officials of varying Christian sects, the system was an educational network based upon principals of segregation; the aim was to separate First Nations, Inuit, and Metis children from their families and cultures, and to educate them within institutions intent on replacing their heritage, rituals, and traditions with Western norms and behaviours. IRS graduates were to assimilate into the dominant Canadian culture, a transition that was, over time, meant to erase all forms of indigenous culture in the land we now call Canada.

Current studies of the Indian Residential School System generally focus on issues of reconciliation and history. These perspectives have shaped the discourse by reconstructing an image of the schools, collecting archival information concerning their operations, and engaging the significant and lingering effects of their legacy. In the late 1990s, Jim Miller's *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools*, and John Milloy's *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System*, established a foundation for the study, and continue to be ever-present in contemporary research. Just last year, however, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's (TRC) released its multi-volume, *Final Report*, which has contributed to, and further solidified, this foundational knowledge. Massive in its scope, and impressively rigorous, the report stands as the most comprehensive and informative

study of the IRS system's history and legacy. Importantly, it has acknowledged IRS history as both a public concern, and an academic subject, and has proved capable of speaking to a much wider audience than Miller or Milloy could have hoped for. This public reach has already had wide-ranging effects. Most significantly, it has validated a sense that the Indian Residential School System was "always more than simply an educational program: it was an integral part of a conscious policy of cultural genocide" (*Honouring the Truth* 54-55), and has done so on a national scale, engaging Canadians via a substantial presence in news media.

Public awareness of the IRS system's violence has evolved over the last three decades. In large part, this is due to victims and their courageous recounting of experiences. These have often been accompanied by government acknowledgements, and academic research into the network's operations and ideology. Though Celia Haig-Brown's 1988 publication of victim testimonies was one of the earliest to expose the violence of the system, it was not until 1990, when former IRS student Phil Fontaine (Sagkeeng/Ojibway) spoke candidly of his experiences during a CBC[2] broadcast of *The Journal*, that the Canadian public finally seemed to take notice. Fontaine's interview drew attention to the widespread physical, sexual, and psychological abuses suffered throughout the system. He proclaimed that every child in his third grade class at the St. Alexander Indian Residential School endured some form of sexual abuse. He went on to exemplify what he called the "intensity" of abuse suffered, distinguishing corporal punishment at residential school from that experienced in Canadian public schools, by speaking of his Aunt being "stripped" of her clothing, "and whipped by a priest in front of the other students." Certainly, these were institutions that perverted any reasonable definition of 'education' into sustained practices of trauma, shame, and embarrassment.

The interview ends with Fontaine planting the seeds out of which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission would grow. He states the need

> to record this, and document this collective experience so that we never forget about it, and so that, as well, that others will understand what we're talking about. But as well to undertake a healing process to make our people whole, so that when we talk about the future that we can talk about the future as whole people,

[2] Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

> and not as a people that has individuals—many, many, individuals—with missing parts and pieces and gaps in their being.

In this highly important moment, Fontaine conveyed a sense that the system was not ordinary, finally placing its difficult and violent history both in the public consciousness, and on a national agenda.

This led to the 1996 publication of the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, which condemned IRS operations, and acknowledged the system-wide mistreatment of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and cultures: "with very few exceptions, neither senior departmental officials, nor church-men, nor members of Parliament raised their voices against the assumptions that underlay the [residential schools] system or its abusive character" (*Honouring the* Truth, 372). During these years, academic works started to become more prevalent, consistently presenting IRS history through an uncompromising and highly rigorous perspective. Momentum continued to build in 2008 when the Canadian government finally offered a *Statement of Apology to Former Students of the Indian Residential Schools*, expressing recognition that "the consequences of the Indian Residential Schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language." As part of the apology's call to action, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was established. The culmination of the TRC's work and the publication of a *Final Report* has offered Canadians, educators, the media, and any other interested parties, a thorough, and publically accessible, document that persuasively articulates the system was a horribly abusive and culturally genocidal enterprise.

Scholarship continues to build upon this foundation by looking to the nuances, or the more unassuming details of IRS operations. It no longer seems vital for academic work to help create a narrative regarding the system's intentions and pursuits, but rather to provide more detailed analyses that accounts for, while extending outwards from, this established historical foundation. In other words, how were Canada's seemingly benign cultural practices, or materials, coopted to serve the IRS system? This dissertation pursues this line of questioning, for example, by engaging in extensive archival research to show film and moving images represent a noteworthy component of the IRS system, and that they were purposely employed to contribute to practices seeking a culturally

genocidal outcome. Such a methodology takes the position that although government and church archives have been utilized to great effect in reconstructing the general history of the IRS system; their materials continue to offer numerous more specific threads that can be fruitfully parsed to contribute detailed analysis of the subtleties of IRS history, and the complex operations of its culturally genocidal agenda.

In other words, the system was much more than a church and government operated educational network isolated in the rural depths of the Canadian landscape. Archival records repeatedly reveal its engagement with varying aspects of mainstream and also local Canadian cultures, from the purchasing of supplies at The Hudson's Bay Company, to engagements with the public health system, or participation in local events, such as dance competitions and hockey games. Such documents remind us that IRS the system engaged with a broad range of Canadians and their cultures in multifaceted ways, and that we are only now beginning to draw attention to these important, but less obvious, lines of inquiry.

Central to my concerns, records show consistent contact with Canadian film companies such as Sovereign Film Distributors, Crawley Films Ltd., the National Film Board of Canada, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and General Films Ltd., thereby positioning film exhibition and content in this context as yet another point of access through which we can further account for the complexities of the system's functioning. By examining the IRS system as a self-contained entity, not enough attention is paid to the fact that it was not separate from Canadian culture, but rather woven into the same institutional, economic, and social discourses that effected, and continue to effect, Canadians and First Nation peoples, Inuit, and Métis peoples on a daily basis. We must ask what role did Canadian culture and its institutions play in the day-to-day operations of the system? The IRS system's thorough integration into, and interaction with, the dominant culture offers, I believe, an important step forward in its study.

The appeal of this methodology is evolving, and being utilized in shaping current IRS research. Scholars have focused on such varied issues as trauma, genocide, Aboriginal health, and decolonization. Amy Bombay, Kimberly Matheson, and Hymie Anisman examine IRS history and legacy through the lens of trauma theory, concluding that the system "continues to undermine the well-being of today's Aboriginal

population." They link this claim to "familial history of IRS attendance," suggesting that "attendance across several generations within a family appears to have cumulative effects" (320). The intergenerational effects of the system present a substantial component of IRS legacy, and, as the authors conclude, the contemporary struggles of numerous Aboriginal communities are clearly associated with the reverberations of this trauma. Although the IRS system closed its doors in 1996, its operations continue to effect survivors physically and psychologically—for example, high rates of suicide amongst Indigenous youth in Canada have been linked to intergenerational, IRS trauma (*Bombay* 324)—and we should therefore acknowledge that in this way the system remains part of our contemporary cultures, our interactions and engagements with each other.

Scholars have also focused on the system's culturally eradicative efforts by viewing its operations as an act of cultural genocide, a term defined as an attempt to eliminate a culture's network of meanings, rituals, and symbols (*Hudson and MacDonald* 430). This is distinguished from "genocide," which Raphael Lemkin famously defined as "the coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves" (79). What we know of the IRS system situates it precariously between these two definitions in that it clearly sought to eliminate First Nations, Inuit and Métis cultures, but consistently maintained distance from practices of ethnic cleansing.

Much discussion of genocide in this context is oriented around statistics showing high rates of death due to tuberculosis amongst IRS students, and it is generally accepted that overcrowding in the schools created spaces in which disease could thrive. McDonald and Hudson reaffirm these issues, pointing to the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, which associated "problems of neglect, underfunding, and widespread abuse, as well as the 'very high death rate' from tuberculosis," with "'overcrowding, lack of care, cleanliness, and poor sanitation'" (432). We must not only probe whether the government/churches knew of these problems, which scholarship proves was often the case, but also, whether they consciously chose to ignore these issues, thereby creating the very conditions in which death due to tuberculosis can be understood as intentionally cultivated. While this project focuses on the use of film and film technologies as modes

by which cultural genocide was enacted, such cultural practices and their tools can never be entirely separated from the basic physical conditions for the same.

My own research shows that, for example, in the late 1930s, Ben Anfield of the Alert Bay Residential School in British Columbia utilized a film projector to educate IRS students and Aboriginal communities concerning the disease, which he considered the "greatest enemy of our Indian People today" (*Anfield* 1939). Though these efforts illustrate Anfield's interest in T.B. prevention, the numerous instances in which preventative measures failed to be a priority suggests that the system placed no real demand on individual administrators to take action. The fact that schools were dispersed over vast geographical distances, often situated in isolated locations, entailed that its operations were varied from place to place. This meant that regardless of government policy, or control over the operations of the system, the schools were at the mercy of the individuals running them. It is certainly possible to find evidence of teachers and administrators who sought to limit the spread of disease, but there is also plenty of evidence indicating that this was not much of a concern. An operational spectrum in which some addressed life-threatening events and others did not ensures that linking a physically genocidal intent specifically to the Canadian government/churches proves difficult.

Aboriginal scholars, such as Taiaiake Alfred, confront the IRS system's legacy of assimilation through discussions concerning how decolonization can truly take form. Framing the lingering psychological and physical health effects of the system in a colonial sense, Alfred argues that

> understanding this history of colonialism - the political and economic aspects of the changing relationship between Indigenous peoples and Europeans which resulted in the subjugation of First Nations to European powers - is, in a fundamental sense, less important than appreciating the damage to the cultural integrity and mental and physical health of the people and communities who make up those nations. (43)

He points to histories of colonialism as superficially offering a sense of Canadian society existing in a post-colonial present, and suggests, this simplistic chronological framework often fails to account for the aftereffects suffered by IRS survivors and indigenous

communities. While the end of the IRS era does represent a step in the direction of decolonization, the difficult work of this process lies in confronting the psychological reverberations of such culturally destructive institutions as a type of ongoing colonial occupation, and to see them as an essential component in the dominant culture's further obstructing the return to cultural integrity and sovereignty Alfred calls for.

Approaches to decolonization are catalogued in the anthology *For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonizing Handbook*, and often cite the task of engaging the dominant population in ways capable of disrupting their colonial privilege. Written for Aboriginal readers by Aboriginal authors, the book articulates strategies that challenge

> the current institutions and systems [that] are designed to maintain the privilege of the colonizer and the subjugation of the colonized, and to produce generations of people who will never question their position within this relationship. (1)

The maintenance of this very inequality continues to be evidenced in contemporary news media regarding, not only reporting on IRS history, but on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis issues more generally. This is clearly articulated, for example, in the outrage many people openly expressed when the TRC stated the IRS system was a "conscious policy of cultural genocide" (*Honouring the Truth* 55).

Canada's association with the concept of genocide was clearly upsetting to many of the country's citizens, and immediately after the TRC's assertion, oppositional voices flooded newspapers, talk radio, and television programs. Conrad Black argued against the TRC, reverting to stereotypical notions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, distilling the diversity of their many and varied cultures into one inferior group that "had a stone age culture that had not invented the wheel," and that "despite everything, even the First Nations should be grateful that Europeans came here" (*Black* 2015).

In *National Post* article, professors Rodney Clifton and Hymie Rubenstein were also aggressive in stating their dissatisfaction with the TRC *Final Report*, apparently "debunking" it as a bunch of "half-truths and exaggerations" (*Clifton* 2015). Clearly outraged by the association of Canada with the concept of cultural genocide, they argue that the population growth of Indigenous peoples proves otherwise. But, like Black, they confuse physical genocide with cultural genocide, and ignore the fact that, as the TRC *Final Report* carefully states on the first page of its "Introduction,"

> *physical genocide* is the mass killing of the members of a targeted group, and *biological genocide* is the destruction if the group's reproductive capacity. *Cultural genocide* is the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institutions of the targeted group. Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred and their movement is restricted. Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed. And, most significantly to the issue at hand, families are disrupted to present the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next. (*Honouring the Truth* 1)

Having researched the IRS system so extensively, I believe it should be conceived as a policy of cultural genocide, and I take this position throughout this dissertation. Those outraged by the use of the label are often confusing cultural genocide with physical genocide, and in turn participating in a what I call the redemptive rights afforded to the colonizer; that is, a problematic right to substantial communicative and culturally influential platforms—in this case, nationally distributed newspapers, both in print and digital formats—in order to excuse colonial violence, to redeem a sense of moral superiority associated with the colonial culture by ardently and aggressively attempting to undermine, in this case, harm caused by an incredibly violent institutional network. Homi Bhabha discusses this process as enabling a complicated iteration between a nation's violent past and idealized present. He states that the contemporary identity of the colonizer, or the assimilated colonized citizen, always engages in

> a process of signification that must erase any prior or originary presence of the nation-people to demonstrate the prodigious, living principles of the peoples as contemporaneity: as that sign of the present through which national life is *redeemed*, and iterated as a reproductive process. (*emph. added* 145)

The language of dismissal, as well as the re-articulation of stereotypes situating Indigenous peoples as primitive, seeks to both redeem and dissociate the dominant culture from the IRS system, to simply reproduce an identity of contemporary Canada

that is not only separate from these genocidal efforts, or apart from the actions of this unethical history, but also to "evidence" a current inability to participate in such actions.

This review of secondary materials makes apparent the fact that the history and legacy of the IRS system has not only played out in the academic arena, but also in a larger public conversation constructed by Canada's mass media. It is important that academic work accounts for, but does not get bogged down in the mistakes playing out in the newspapers. The system was participating in cultural genocide, it should be understood as such, and many credible voices are currently backing this position. Canada and its religious, specifically Christian, associations should still bear the mark of colonizer, and still be understood as the culprits of institutionally mandated policy of cultural genocide that continues to operate in the aftereffects still experienced by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and communities. As Black evidences, the ability of powerful and influential citizens and key cultural practices to continue to dismiss Canada's racism, to repeatedly offer up racist assertions of cultural superiority, such as "Europeans...have made vastly more of this continent than it's original inhabitants could have done" (*Black* 2015), without reprimand, is utterly disconcerting.

My period of study begins in 1930. Evidence of film's use at the Anglican operated residential school in Alert Bay, British Columbia, represents the earliest reference to exhibition in this context. I extend my research through this date to 1969, which marks the year that the "Department of Indian Affairs took over the sole management of the schools, ending a historic partnership with the churches" (*Miller* 165). I operate within this time frame for the reason that beyond 1969, the system begins a lengthy process of halting its operations, resulting in its educational motivations straying slightly from the hardline assimilationist mandate it originally pursued. After this date the schools begin to function differently, often finding themselves housing First Nations, Inuit, or Métis students attending public schools in Canada, specifically students from isolated communities that made it geographically impossible to attend while living at home. Given this information, the system can be understood in two distinct operational orientations. I am choosing to focus solely on IRS film exhibition as it operated between 1930-1969, specifically because these are the years in which it remained clearly dedicated to its aims of assimilation and cultural genocide in a distinctly institutional and

educational environment.

Scholars have outlined the historical details of Canada's Indian Residential School System, emphasizing its dedication to social and cultural control, and accurately defining it as a federally funded network of segregated educational institutions dedicated to assimilating First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children into Canadian culture. Its evolution and establishment spanned multiple decades towards the end of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. However, in the context of lands we now refer to as Canada the concept of assimilating the "natives" appears in French Missionary texts early in seventeenth century (*Miller* 39). Prior to government legislation dealing specifically with First Nations education, such as the *Gradual Civilization Act* (1856), and *The Indian Act* (1876), the efforts of missionaries were consistently met with failure, predominantly due to an unwillingness of Indigenous peoples to voluntarily place their children in the care of British or French religious authorities.

Early incarnations of the system were fledgling at best, and not until the Canadian government officially came on board following confederation in 1867, did the system begin to stabilize. Precisely, the *Indian Act* (1876) demonstrated the government's intent to align itself with church-run schools both practically and ideologically. In 1893, for example, Father A.J. Carion of the Kamloops Indian Residential School articulates the shared interests of church and government that would frame the system, stating "we keep constantly before the mind of the pupils the object which the government has in view…which is to civilize the Indians and to make them good, useful and law-abiding members of society" (*qtd. in Haig-Brown* 34). Carion's words imply the assumption that Canada is culturally superior to Indigenous peoples and cultures, who, in turn, are then understood as in need of assimilation through education.

In the following years, the *Indian Act* (1876) underwent multiple revisions, slowly granting school administrators' power to enforce mandatory attendance. Notably, in 1920 it was

> amended to make attendance compulsory between the ages of seven and fifteen, to authorize anyone appointed a truant officer to enter 'any place where he has reason to believe there are Indian children between the ages seven and fifteen

> years, and to prescribe penalties for Indian parents who refused to comply. (*Miller* 169-170)

In 1933, the legislation took on an even more militaristic reality by officially employing the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to enforce attendance policies. This institutional marriage is the precise juncture from which the IRS system's interest to "civilize" First Nations, Inuit, and Métis gained access to a powerful combination of physical and ideological force, which would ensure its sustainability throughout the twentieth century.

In the absence of a published institutional mandate outlining the precise imperatives of the IRS system, scholars have concluded the system's eradicative intentions by studying government and church documents generally associated with its operations. For example, a *Staff Members Manual* published in 1949 by the Anglican Church of Canada, focuses on eliminating First Nations languages, stating that "staff members must insist that the children speak English at all times within school buildings and while under their charge" (*Staff* 1949). Cross-referencing such information with victim accounts, which repeatedly cite the administration of physical punishments if students were caught speaking their own languages, proves that a mandate of cultural destruction was absolutely central to IRS operations. In some cases, as Celia Haig Brown points out, a "routine punishment for language offenders" was to have a "sewing needle pushed through their tongues" (16). Such abusive policies have had devastating effects, essentially situating language revitalization and IRS trauma as some of the most pressing issues facing Indigenous peoples and cultures today. In 1998, the Assembly of First Nations declared "a state of emergency on First Nations Languages" citing a survey that claimed the "number of aboriginal people who identified by mother tongue declined from 23% to 9%" (4). Though some scholars, and survivors, suggest that the system was not bereft of positive attributes or experiences, there is no doubt that it was an oppressive institutional force engaged in malicious culture-destroying tactics. According to John Milloy, the IRS system was always working in terms that saw "one culture was to be replaced by another through the work of a surrogate parent, the teacher" (33). Or, as Jim Miller has stated, "Canada chose to eliminate Indians by assimilating them" (184).

There is no doubt that the Canadian government partnered with church orders to terminate all aspects of First Nations cultures, to ensure their existence would survive

only in museums and slanted historical narratives. Of the estimated more than 150,000 First Nations children (*They Came for the Children* 1) who attended and were victimized by the system, the underlying tenet of the entirety of their education always insinuated that Canadian culture would be the only one present on the land, and that all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis would suffer the sharp vicissitude of Canadian policies, police, and intolerance.

Entering discussions of IRS history through an analysis of the social and cultural effects of film and moving images is unconventional. From the perspective of film and moving image studies, however, it is not unusual to examine governmental and institutional uses of the medium. Scholars such as Allison Griffiths, whose recent work on film exhibition within American penitentiaries (*Griffiths* 1), and Lee Grieveson's investigation of film's importance to the Ford Motor Company in "Visualizing Industrial Citizenship," offer contemporary models for the study of film as part of larger institutional systems. These authors engage the discernable ideologies dictating specific institutions, and question how moving image technologies were positioned to encourage the post-spectatorship behaviors of audience members to unfold in ways beneficial to institutional and cultural motivations.

Grieveson's and Griffiths's analysis consistently engages culture as a multiplicitous entity structured by systemic rhetoric and symbolism, and focuses on modes of communication as deeply intertwined with institutionally specific agendas. In essence they bring their study of moving images to that of state and corporate enterprises, seeking to unravel the complex interrelationship shared in the production of power, and, conversely, marginalization. They do this while attempting to locate and identify how the medium was strategically employed in service of this power. In this dissertation, I strive, therefore, to identify film's deliberate and calculated use within the IRS system, engaging the medium as purposely situated within a complex social and culturally productive interaction with IRS students to understand its efforts to push them in the direction of accepting, believing, or willfully participating in the IRS system's rhetoric, inequality, and colonial governmentality. This enables me to trace how the IRS system's assimilationist message was aided by film as a coercive tool co-opted by discourses of social and cultural power, that in this context it became a "governmental technologization

or instrumentalization in order to render it useful as a means of social management" (*Bennett* 398).

Charles Acland and Haidee Wasson's recent volume, *Useful Cinema*, has thoroughly situated this institutional approach to film and moving image study at forefront of the field. Focusing on film exhibition outside of the movie theatre, the functionality of the medium and its contributions to the ideological premises upon which the ideal citizen is situated, reveals a history of film and moving images that is beginning to be keenly analyzed. In the mid-twentieth century

> schools, business, and public agencies invested in celluloid and its diverse family of technologies in order to instruct, to sell, and to make or remake citizens…cameras, film, and projectors have been taken up and deployed variously—beyond questions of art and entertainment—in order to satisfy organizational demands and objectives, that is, *to do something*, in particular. (3)

The IRS system was remaking First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children through an assimilative education, and engaged the functionality of film and moving images to supplement this process. Though, as Zoë Druick points out in her contribution to *Useful Cinema,* film, at times, "provided hope for Indigenous forms of cultural expression" (82), it also "tended to ignore Indigenous forms of knowledge" entirely (90). Not only was the culture of the students ignored by the films they encountered, they were often misrepresented, typically in the form of Hollywood Westerns depicting violent and "savage" "Indians." The IRS system used film "*to do something*;" to educate its students in terms of cultural stereotype, and to facilitate its assimilationist goals.

The pretense of education associated with the system's underlying and culturally genocidal intentions, however, ensured that the ways in which the medium could "educate" in this context complicated traditional ideas regarding educational cinema. Early concerns about film's foray into educational institutions were often met with efforts to counter "the medium's reputation as a frivolous and harmful" one (*Orgeron* 16). While some would argue that "any element of amusement in classroom films rendered them 'unpedagogical'" (*Orgeron* 16), others would argue a "balance needed to be struck between elements of information and engagement" (*Orgeron* 17). Very rarely did IRS teachers reference the medium as entertainment, most often espousing its pedagogical

value to government bean counters; they would repeatedly turn to idea of film's use for "for educational purposes only" (*MacKenzie* 1936) in clear efforts to solicit funding. In reality, this assertion that film exhibition was purely academic is far from accurate, and is undermined by the fact that documents reveal exhibitions were predominantly conceived of locally as recreational in nature.

The role of recreation, however, within the IRS system is in and of itself an intricate subject. The schools educated students not only in the classroom, but also by forcing them to participate in a twenty-four hour schedule in which they were to act and behave in Western terms and manners. As such, seemingly harmless amusements were quickly conflated with the system's culturally specific pedagogic and behavioural initiatives. Film exhibition forced the students to not only adhere to the etiquettes of spectatorship and socialization ascribed to by the dominant culture, but it also worked to bolster an ideology of assimilation by visualizing the culture into which they found themselves being forcefully assimilated. Films like *Back to God's Country* (1919), which normalizes the marginalization of minorities in Canada, and asserts the dominance of white men over women, animals, and ethnicized others, or *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954), which redeems the image of an unethical white-male leader with the rise of a more ethical one—basically an analogy situating Kirk Douglas as resurrected Christ figure—for example, are rendered educational because they project images of Western culture that valorize it, and glorify it, and sell it to IRS students. The strategy at play is the possibility that recreational cinema could communicate assimilative ideology in a less strenuously didactic and institutional manner, putting a positive spin on assimilation by perniciously encouraging the children to enjoy an aspect of cultural genocide as fun and entertaining. Films were shown in classrooms but also on common areas for weekend movie nights. The titles shown did not differ greatly.

The use of recreational cinema pedagogically or "governmentally," suggests the residential aspect of the schools altered the system's engagement with ideas concerning film's educational capacities, specifically those coming out of the United States in the 1930's, a decade that Eric Smoodin has referred to as "a golden era in film education" (18). In many cases, as Oliver Gaycken argues, film as a pedagogical tool was conceived of as necessarily separate from commercial cinema, and was founded upon the pretense

that people could more easily consume and retain information if it was presented visually (67). Jennifer Peterson points out that throughout the U.S.

> educational cinema was finally becoming a reality in the 1920's…not in commercial movie theatres, as some had hoped, but in the growing non-theatrical circuit of schools, churches, libraries, and museums. Moving pictures, once scorned as a bad influence for children, were becoming a new feature of the classroom in the 1920s. By the 1930s, what had been suspiciously viewed by the previous generation as a tool for pouring information into the passive spectators was now being hailed as a 'magical master teacher.' (145-146)

The situation seems to have been similar in Canada. On the one hand, in a clear effort to solicit funding from the government, references to film exhibition in the IRS system consistently tap into the growing credibility regarding cinema's educational value. On the other hand, the system's aim to educate students in terms of how they are to adopt the norms of the dominant culture meant that recreational cinema could become a pedagogic resource specifically because of its fictive, yet generally mimetic, reflection of this culture. In this institutional history, we see the binary of education and entertainment that was established in the early twentieth century essentially collapse, coming together under a governmental imperative, eliding the two in the complicated process of cultural indoctrination.

The National Film Board of Canada, which I discuss in Chapter Three, similarly ascribes to the ideologies informing educational cinema in the mid-twentieth century. Established in 1939, Zoë Druick argues the institution was "rooted in interwar theories of empire marketing, social science, the administered welfare state, and mass and adult education that encompassed both film form and modes of audience formation" (11). She goes on to state that its films about the "everyday life of the population," were "film acts" meant to "bring about a kind of cognitive—and sometimes affective—activity about the meaning of various social policies in Canadian life" (11). The National Film Board adheres closely with the emerging educational cinema movement in the U.S. by producing educational films in this vein, and, as I will show, this offered the IRS system a useful cinema. Distinct from the use of recreational cinema educationally, the National Film Board ensured the IRS system encountered a more literal engagement with

educational film as a genre.

Often in the absence of more conventional evidence (reports and documentation), victim testimony as evidence and method has played a significant role in writing on IRS history. Because victim testimony has always been a substantial component in the reconstruction of IRS history, I use it to further gauge the tangible effects of film exhibition in the IRS context. Debates within the field of genocide studies, however, have grappled with questions surrounding the use of victim testimony in academic work, and are worth considering here. Robert Melson takes issue with the assumption that "testimony is not essential to an explanation of genocide" (285), arguing that by forgoing the complexities and nuance that victim accounts bring to moments of cultural trauma, scholars have fallen into patterns of "psychocultural reductionism" (284). Actively ignoring victim accounts, he suggests, will silence the narrative proliferation that shapes cultures, identities, and expressions, replacing it instead with simplistic bifurcations imposed by a dominant language that only sees abuser/abused, oppressor/oppressed. Considering that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada collected more than 6200 statements from former residential school students, and that these and other testimonies have become central to IRS analysis, my inclusion of victim accounts is very much in line with academic work currently being undertaken. More importantly, I aim to resist silencing the victims, and to carefully interact with their statements while accounting for and combatting the implication of power and inequality inherent in my own language.

I support victim accounts with a large collection of administrative exchanges between school operators and government officials. On December 8, 1948, for example, Reverend J. W. House, the acting superintendent of the Indian School Administration of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada, wrote to the Department of Indian Affairs concerning film exhibition as part of residential school curriculum. He stated that

> my predecessor was very keen on providing motion picture projectors in all our schools and had managed to collect from various organizations and private funds a sufficient amount to meet about half the estimated requirements…in my view, motion picture projectors should be considered a valuable training aid and, in

> consequence, should be supplied by the department in the same way as other educational requirements. (*House* 1947)

The resources through which the history of IRS film exhibition can be established are available in the form of archival documents and victim testimony. These entities have allowed me to construct a detailed narrative regarding film's entrance into and proliferation within the system, as well as providing the grounds upon which a sense of its intended effects, as well as potential effects, can be productively investigated.

I located the above archival information during extensive research of the *RG-10 School Files*, which are housed at the Library and Archives Canada, and contain records concerning the Department of Indian Affairs' administration of the Indian Residential School System. Amongst thousands upon thousands of documents, I have been able to collect an extensive amount of information about film's use in the schools, arguments concerning the medium's educational value, correspondences with the National Film Board of Canada and Crawley Films Ltd., and exchanges between school and government administrators debating whether or not the medium should carry the distinction of being a "school supply" (*House* 1947).

My archival research was not only undertaken through the Library and Archives Canada, but also through the National Film Board of Canada Archives, the Shingwauk Residential School Center, the Anglican Church of Canada Archives Deschâtelets, The Glenbow Archives, and the General Synod Archives. Through these efforts I have found hundreds of rental receipts, providing me with a list of roughly 170 films that I know with certainty were exhibited within the IRS system. While my research at the Library and Archives Canada predominantly yielded information about funding the purchase of projection equipment, my research at these additional institutions verified that film exhibition was common, and that film's pedagogical role is most legible by thoroughly unveiling the colonial context and content of exhibition. Films such as *The Great Sioux Massacre* (1965), *Kit Carson* (1940), and *No Name on a Bullet* (1959) unabashedly depicted First Nations as terrible "savages." While films like *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), *Hatari!* (1962), *Escape from Zahrain* (1962), and *Sword of Ali Baba* (1965) align with the common theme of representing all non-white Eurocentric cultures as unquestionably inferior.

IRS film schedules resemble what I imagine the line-up of a colonial film festival curated by Napoleon might look like. In response to this, I ground my analysis of the films exhibited in postcolonial theory, framing the use of film in this context in relation to Edward Said's focus on knowledge production. Said demonstrated this in reference to the *Histoire De L'Egypt*, a book written by scholars and commissioned by Napoleon following the French military conquest of Egypt. It harnessed the credibility inherent in the European academic tradition for the purpose of situating knowledge of Egyptian culture as the sole product of France. This meant that what French citizens could know of Egypt was not the result of thoughtful and equitable cross-cultural engagements, but largely the result of an academic work authorized by a leader who understood colonial dominance was not simply a militaristic endeavor.

The idea that one culture can be in possession of another's identity is similarly at play in films exhibited to IRS students, and in ways, the application of this type of possession via film represents the more abstract aspects of the colonial process. Changing the IRS student's appearance—whitewashing them with Western garb and haircuts—was simple, but convincing them to reorient their thinking, their language, their belief systems etc., complicated matters greatly. Whereas Said's assessment of French colonialism involved dominant citizens directing a colonial gaze towards Egyptians, the IRS system needed the students to first adopt the colonial purview, and then to direct it at themselves, and to do so with a high level conviction. The challenge of this was precisely why authorities chose to focus on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, often suggesting that the adults were too interwoven into their culture to be colonized in this manner. While Said discusses the credibility of academia, film brought the credibility of the technological, the modern and the visual, of a culturally specific mimesis and verisimilitude, to the system's sense of its students as highly impressionable. Having the children read a colonial tome like *Histoire De L'Egypt*, for example, was likely impossible, but having them see the "East" in *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), or the "Indians" in *Kit Carson* (1940), was not.

I also draw upon contemporary research dedicated to studying films' utility to colonial occupations. Lee Grieveson and Colin MacCabe's recently established Colonial Film Archive in association with their publication of *Empire and Film*, and *Film and the*

End of Empire, have provided a solid foundation to the study of this visual-colonial history. Common in both books is a focus on film as enacting a call and response interaction with colonized audiences. The Bantu Kinema Experiment in South Africa specifically shaped its filmic content to intervene in Bantu culture, to dissuade their agricultural heritage, and to reorient them into a cheap labour force capable of working Afrikaner or British mining operations. Film was meant to encourage a reorientation of one culture to serve another. This, of course, as Tom Rice points out, saw film's application as a "means of visually recording, navigating, and mapping Empire" (115) for both colonial and colonized citizens and peoples. On the one hand, it would demonstrate to Imperial audiences the failure of indigenous peoples to manufacture resources. On the other had it would re-write the environment of the colonized and present it to them in the hopes they would respond by dedicating their labour to service the British economy. In essence, colonialism's use of film was always seeking a tangible result, a beneficial physical action from the colonized, while simultaneously communicating to the dominant colonial audience in ways that enable them to understand the colonized subject's positioning as exploited labour in just and ethical terms. Through this lens I speculate as to what response IRS teachers were seeking. Was it racial bias? Was it a cultural embrace of the West? Was it highly gendered? Was it labour oriented?

Of course, soliciting such reactions is not simple, or guaranteed. Studying Grieveson and MacCabe's Colonial Film Archive, Filipa César highlights the important fact that despite aggressive colonial narrativizations, colonized subjects retain a disruptive level of agency. He suggests, "the corpus is strongly manipulative…but there is always something in these images that resists the film-makes' colonization, a disobedience which is both rebellion and dignity" (*qtd. in MacCabe* 16). The IRS system, I believe, combatted the agency of the spectator with a repetitive and ideologically motivated film schedule. The students did not simply watch one Hollywood Western, they were repeatedly exposed to them, as they also were with films about the East, and about Africa. The schedule was a relentless colonial endeavor ensuring that if the student were to overcome the shame induced by movie night, they would simply encounter it again a week later, or between exhibitions through contact with other cultural materials such as literature, radio, and television.

Mid-twentieth century documentary films about the IRS system mean that studying the interrelationship between film and the IRS system also involves analyzing how the medium was used to communicate IRS operations and ideology to the Canadian public. This dissertation progresses to its end by suggesting that the IRS system was not only a place of enforced cultural conversion, but that it also operated as a site of knowledge production central to a racially inequitable media education of the larger Canadian population. Kevin Slivka, for example, participates in emerging conversations concerning the IRS system's pedagogical and promotional uses of visual arts, investigating how they engaged both Indigenous students and Canadian audiences. In his article, "Art, Craft, and Assimilation: Curriculum for Native Students during the Boarding School Era," he emphasizes the importance of "photographic images" to the system's "process of education, philanthropy," and notable for my purposes, "controlled propaganda" (229). My interest here centers on his discussions of the system's "before and after" enrolment photos, images that advertised the students' transformation from their own culture to another. Scholars have been debating whether or not the distribution of these images throughout Canada effectively publicized the image of "mastery of the indigenous landscape, the Native's projected identity, and their visual representation," and ultimately constructed the idea of Canada's complete "control over the Native population" (229). It is vitally important to accept that the system's mandate educated not only the students, but also the larger Canadian population on the notion that indigenous identities and cultures could be managed, manipulated, coerced, and thus severely marginalized**.** By producing these photos, the system rendered this transformation simplistically visual, ensuring that the constructed necessity of assimilation could be easily read and accessed by its dominant audience.

I harken back to these early photographic instances as the system's first point of contact with mechanically produced images. As Milloy points out, authorities clearly wanted the system to project a symbolic value, arguing that the visual presentation of the student's movement from the "savage" to "civilized" was central to early postcolonial conceptions of Canadian culture and identity. In other words, Milloy positions the system as an important signifier of Canada's apparent movement out of British imperialism. The "cross-cultural partnerships of the fur trade and military alliances," he suggests,

> that had dominated life in Canada since the 16th century…partnerships, anchored in aboriginal knowledge and skills, had enabled the newcomers to find their way, to survive, and to prosper…were now merely historic; they were not to be any part of the future as Canadians' pictured it at the founding of their new nation in 1867. (4)

The communicative value of the system extended its work beyond the interior of its buildings. It was extremely influential to Canada's attempt to form itself as a newly *imagined community*, one that was seeking to concretize a national consciousness capable of situating First Nations, Inuit, and Métis cultures "within the limits imposed by grammars and syntaxes, created [through] mechanically reproduced print languages capable of dissemination through the market" (*Anderson* 56). The IRS system became symbolic of colonialism in North American moving beyond its early and sparsely settled state. Its images of assimilation depicted a process of bringing Indigenous cultures from the past into the Canadian present, and expressed to the dominant Canadian population that their colony was developing into a modern state.

This is, I believe, an underdeveloped aspect of research into the system's histories, operations, and use of visual media. It was not only a matter of rendering the Indigenous body "docile" (*Foucault*, 138) through a process of fitting it into the grammar, syntax, and governmentality of imperial fashions as the photos demonstrate. It was also about employing photographic and filmic images to facilitate this process through the large-scale coercion of the Canadian population to accept that such a cultural reorientation presented a necessary, moral, and just transformation. Canadians would then operate as a powerful form of surveillance, allowed to openly oppress First Nations people by collectively imagining them as in need of Western norms. The answer to how the IRS system operated for more than century is located in relation to a longstanding public relations campaign, one that consistently informed Canadians that the system was a highly ethical institutional network.

Film's use within the IRS system, therefore, should also be thought of as its use to promote the system. Extending its ideological work beyond the schools, the system partnered with Canadian film and television companies to create propaganda films and newsreels. Government-funded films about the IRS system, which I discuss at length in my final chapter, such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's *The Eyes of Children*

(1962), and *A New Future* (1955), represent the system and its students for the purpose of controlling how it was to be perceived by the general Canadian population. Images of the children embracing a Canadian lifestyle are incessantly presented. The students are shown inhabiting a wintery landscape while playing hockey, skipping rope, ringing church bells, and attending mass; images that suggest to the dominant audience that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples are thriving in their new, precisely "Canadian," future.

Zoë Druick's extensive investigation of the National Film Board of Canada informs this discussion, as she points to this persistent pattern that constructs Indigenous peoples as demonstrating an autonomous "will to assimilate" (104). In particular, her discussion of the 1955 NFB film *No Longer Vanishing*, which was exhibited to residential schools students in Beauval Saskatchewan, has contributed greatly to my understanding of the NFB's intentional use of film to "correspond with government assimilation policy" (105). Following her emphasis on "government realism," I understand these films as participating in a tradition of using "quasi-anonymous individuals" to represent "a range of population subcategories from different regions and cultures," in order to endorse the "federal system or the social policy processes by which group identities must be securely fixed before they can be recognized and supported within a larger national context" (28).

These images offered Canadians further visual, yet superficial, "evidence" of the system's positive effects on First Nations cultures. And, as *The Eyes of Children* (1962) informs its audience that many students do not go home during Christmas holidays because their parents are unwilling to pick them up, we are reminded that this glowing endorsement is always set against a concept of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples as not only primitive, but also uncaring, and irresponsible. Intimations of abandonment work to supplant the fact that these nations in Canada were legally obligated to send their children to residential schools, and thus here the Canadian government employs film and moving image media to actively deflect the dominant population away from its culturally genocidal motivations. These narratives, I argue, enlighten us to the use of popular media as a way of generating sympathy for the First Nations children, not because they were being subjected to culturally destructive efforts, but because their cultures were always implied to be fledgling, primitive, and ultimately inferior. Following a similar line of argumentation to that of Zoë Druick, Robert Stam and Ella Shohat, point out that the

solicitation of an audience's sympathetic reaction to marginalized characters represents a common trend in Eurocentric cinema. A representative of the marginalized culture is singled out as worthy of sympathy because they find themselves oppressed not by the colonial power, but by their own cultural traditions. This promotes what Stam and Shohat claim is a sympathetic response to the dominant culture's paternalistic approach to the colonized people (206). I understand these types of misrepresentations as essential to the cultivation and maintenance of ideological support for dominant discourses.

In Chapter One, my approach is historical and institutionally focused. Cobbling together pertinent information extracted from the archives, I present a thorough outline regarding how and when film exhibition became part of the IRS system and its pedagogic initiatives. My goal, here, is to bring these two entities together, to demonstrate the substantive nature of their relationship, and to establish a solid contextual basis upon which I will begin to argue and speculate as to the intricacy of the more complicated issues surrounding the actual content of exhibition. I begin by illustrating the financial difficulties administrators faced in purchasing projectors in the early 1930's. I show that film's initial entrance into the system was typically born out of a teacher, or principals,' personal interest in the medium. For the reason that, at this time church and government officials were refusing to fund the purchase of exhibition equipment, documents repeatedly reveal early adopters of the technology leaned on unconventional funding schemes. Some teachers raised funds to purchase equipment, or had projectors donated by women's groups, or the National Film Board. Some teachers purchased refurbished projectors at low prices from army surplus stores, and others simply paid for the equipment with their own money. Until the mid to late 1940's, the government was resistant to system-wide funding for film exhibition. It is during these years that both government and church officials begin to converse more seriously about film as a necessary educational tool that should be in all IRS locations. By the late 1960's film commonly appears in IRS institutions, with numerous references to "Movie Nights," and film rental receipts verifying film schedules. In essence, this chapter traces this techno-institutional evolution, outlining the ways in which the medium became integrated into, and modernized, IRS practices.

In Chapter Two, I take a closer look at colonial patterns of representation within the films exhibited. I have accumulated references to film titles located in IRS administrative documents, film rental receipts, yearbooks, and student testimonies. Through this research I have located 170 film titles that I know with relative certainty were screened in the IRS context. From blockbuster films such as Alfred Hitchcock's *Marnie* (1964) and David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), to films with clear educational agendas such as *Beyond Bengal* (1934) and *Personal Qualities for Job Success* (1952), exhibition content initially appears to be diverse in its scope. Unsurprisingly, however, once these titles are organized in terms of content and their thematic patterns, it becomes clear that they all glorify Western culture, by narrating it favorably in relation to hierarchies of race, gender, culture, and economy. I demonstrate the colonial nature of these exhibitions by arguing their images adhere to patterns of representation developed throughout the British Empire. I also discuss the repetitive nature of the schedule and its dedication to exhibiting films that deal with representations of colonialism and cross-cultural interaction. From Westerns depicting white settlers simply trying to survive in North America in the face of hostile "Indian" populations, to representations of John Wayne hunting Rhinos in Africa, to films about white-men surviving the "East," the films persistently take an us (the white and Eurocentric population) and them (the people marginalized by this white and Eurocentric population) mentality, one clearly suitable to the IRS system as a similarly structured institutional network.

Chapter Three examines the relationship between the IRS system and the National Film Board of Canada. Considering the rural setting of a large number of residential schools, the presence of the NFB's "Rural Circuit" and communally based methods of film distribution provided, in some cases, opportunities for an encounter with film that otherwise might not have existed. In 1959, for example, Henry Dickie, then NFB District Officer in Edmonton, submitted "A Report of Visit to N.W.T. Centers, Nov. 23 to Dec. 3, 1959" (*Dickie* 1959), in which he makes multiple references to NFB operations making contact with the IRS system. Dickie visits Yellowknife to meet with Mr. Applewhite, who is cited as the "film coordinator for all Yellowknife public and separate schools" (*Dickie* 1959). He then travels to Inuvik to exhibit films at Stringer Hall

and Grollier Hall, the Anglican and Roman Catholic residences affiliated with the Inuvik Indian Residential School. In terms of distribution, the NFB frequently visited Residential schools, and this chapter asks to what extent this facet of the NFB can be understood as contributing to the IRS system and its assimilationist efforts.

Building upon Raymond Williams's theories of culture, I argue that the NFB situated a distinct kind of Canadian cinema in front of IRS students for the purpose of shaping their spectatorial responses in more nationally-centric terms. While enrolled in the schools, the children were, in essence, stripped of their right to participate in their own cultures, and then presented, in this case, largely NFB films in the hopes that the culturally specific content would evoke, what Williams labels, a "culture producing" response. For Williams culture is born out of the interactions between various subjects and objects, and in this sense, I argue the NFB joined forces with the IRS system to help render the children's reactions as always contributing to the production of a particular Canadian culture, identity, and norms, one that had yet to accommodate Canada's original inhabitants.

My fourth and final chapter examines film productions that depict the work of the IRS system. Early in its history, the system's use of visual media to publically endorse its operations is abundant. Photographic documentation presenting the transformation of students from Indigenous to Canadian Citizens are abundant and easily located. The children were often put on display in the form of school performances, whether in a choir or band, or a dramatic play. Despite the fact that IRS schools were literally falling apart, lagging behind Canadian public schools in terms of academics, authorities always displayed the "work" of the IRS system as inherently positive. Outlining this emphasis on performance as part of the IRS system, I turn to a film analysis of the CBC's *The Eyes of Children* (1962), and *A New Future* (1955). These promotional pieces illustrate a tradition of misrepresenting the IRS system, a history of defining it in charitable and misleading terms, and presenting this ideal to Canadian citizens from Vancouver to St. John's. The films helped silence the dominant population's potential resistance to the unethical, and culturally genocidal institutional network in their midst, and enable me to conclude that moving images effectively contributed to the system's longevity.

I thoroughly believe that Canadians need to hear and respect our victims in order to play an important role in reconciliation. We need to understand not only our traditional ways of idealizing, racializing, stereotyping, and dismissing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and cultures, but also that we continue to forward a colonialism which remains, perhaps less obvious in appearance, yet insidiously contemporary and applicable. To be able to engage the multitude of varying Indigenous cultures on equitable, nation-to-nation grounds, we need to first erode Canadian colonialism, to educate ourselves regarding the violence of unfair treaties, land transferals, institutional abuses, as well as the subtleties of racism and the ways in which Canadian culture works to limit or ignore these troubled histories and modes of communication. My contribution to this seeks to demonstrate that our cultural products and practices, in this case those related to cinema, are so insidiously racist that they contributed to culturally genocidal efforts. Exhibiting films to marginalized cultures in the IRS context was to participate in a systematic series of abusive acts. Film and the moving images have contributed substantially both to an abusive degradation of First Nations, Inuit, Métis cultures, as well as a national pacifism, which can be summed up by the fact that we are allowed to, quite literally and without consequence, not think, or care, about this history, about these issues, about this inequality.

CHAPTER ONE

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The Necessary Equipment: 16mm Film Exhibition at Indian Residential School

I remember it was a Saturday night. Everyone got to see a show in the gymnasium. It was a comical show, everyone was laughing and I realized there was one section that no one was laughing…I walked across the gymnasium floor, to the corner section by the projector room…An oblate brother must have took some boys in that projector room and he was sexually molesting them. I went in that projector room…part of me was scared, but another part was enraged. That oblate brother was saying, 'what goes on in this room stays in here.'…there was a mop close to the door, I grabbed that mop and when he was standing up I broke the mop handle over his forehead…the days after that I was strapped severely and no one was to talk about that incident. That was what I can remember of that experience. *Indian Residential School student speaking of their experience at the Kamloops Residential School in British Columbia* (Agnes 153-54)

This recollection is sad and chilling, and represents a point in which the abuses perpetrated by the IRS system and its employees align with film exhibition in a very difficult and horrifying encounter. The most jarring aspect of this account is the victim's confrontation with physical violence—that which we know was pervasive throughout the IRS system. However, upon closer look, a more insidious practice reveals itself in the student's laughter, in their response to the film's narratives and imagery. Their laughter reveals IRS education having had an effect, as students demonstrate they have already learned how to engage popular entertainments of the dominant culture, to receive intended narrative cues, and to respond to them appropriately. This seemingly benign Saturday night exhibition of a "comical show" masquerades as a pleasurable recreational activity, but in many ways is just another articulation of the IRS system's assimilationist pedagogy. The exhibition spoke to students in English, rather than their own languages, presented them the socio-economic conditions of North America, rather than their own cultural rituals, conditions, and practices, essentially positioning film exhibition to serve the imperatives of the IRS system, as yet another way to further compel student behaviour to align with, or participate in, Canadian norms and manners instead of their own.

That the gymnasium had a "projector room," demonstrates that film technology modernized residential schools, in some way altering the system's educational delivery. Embracing new technology, schools showed interest in the medium's educational potential, appealing, I believe, to the concept of spectatorial pleasure in order to further assimilation. In this case, however, exhibition was not only used for assimilationist purposes, but also to provide a dark corner in which violent predatory behaviours could take place. The necessary darkness of exhibition is, in more than one example, cited as enabling the violent transgression of the authority, and the further victimization of the children[3]. Film exhibition within the IRS classroom/auditoria is thus engrossed in a complicated web of cross-cultural engagements, institutional networks, pedagogical imperatives, and violent injustices, and clearly in need of serious inquiry.

References to film exhibition at residential schools often fail to state why the medium was thought useful to assimilationist objectives. In the following pages, I seek to answer this question: I present archival records that demonstrate administrative attempts to make 16mm exhibition part of IRS curricula, while paying attention to the themes and patterns within these documents in order to make conclusions regarding exhibitive intent. I begin by examining an exhibition of a vaguely titled "Tarzan" film, shown at the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School in Nova Scotia in 1940. This analysis will establish some early concepts concerning how film was utilized, and influenced by, its placement within Indian Residential School. The rest of the chapter ascribes to a more historicist methodology, outlining the logistical details and discussions that situated 16mm technology in the IRS classroom/auditoria. How were the films exhibited? Who covered the costs of purchasing the necessary equipment? How did they change the IRS classroom and its educational environment? I answer these and other questions, mapping the system's first encounters with the medium from the early 1930s, through to the late 1960s when, as administrative documents show, the use of film was commonplace.

I will, at this point, refrain from analyzing the films exhibited in great detail, leaving that work to be undertaken in Chapter Two. Although I do provide a framework through which I approach film analysis, my intent here is historicize my subject, to

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[3] See Haig-Brown, Celia. *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1988. pg-81.

confirm film exhibition was in fact a substantive component of the IRS system. I thereby dig into government and church archives showing that film was positioned to play a definitive role in these educational and cultural imperatives. And, by completing the difficult work involved in locating references to film's use in this context—hidden amongst thousands of largely disorganized documents—my research contributes a new and substantial resource from which to further investigations into the importance of visual media and technology to the IRS system.

As a mode of cultural reflection, the exhibition content selected by IRS authorities reinforced the inequitable, colonial, and racialized grounds upon which the systemic application of assimilation was deemed necessary. IRS film exhibition is similarly dedicated to the medium as capable of assimilating students in this highly dictated manner. In other words, the inherent repeatability of its content, and the consistency with which a film exhibition could convey information to the students had to be intriguing to IRS administrators. Conceptualized in this manner, film exhibition could bring a level of mechanical, and in turn, ideological consistency to IRS curricula across the country. Whereas a teacher in British Columbia may lecture differently than a teacher in Ontario, film exhibition could be counted on, at the very least, to repeat itself.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *Final Report* briefly define IRS film spectatorship in similar terms, referring to it as a "cultural activity," a phrase it then equates, very generally, with the arts. The authors assert that, "like sports, cultural activities were underfunded. They were also often intended to encourage assimilation" (*Honouring the Truth* 113). We are reminded of the fact that residential schools, in all aspects, were obsessed with their assimilative task. This meant that for its victims, there was no escaping the IRS system's physical, rhetorical, and symbolic efforts, even during "Movie Nights" (*The Survivors Speak* 187). In fact, the conception of film spectatorship as a cultural activity, suggests that, in the eyes of IRS authorities, exposure to the medium was just another way to position students to engage with, and learn about, the culture that was literally, and legally, imprisoning them.

Unsurprisingly, the films exhibited never plainly challenged the norms and behaviours of the dominant culture; rather they consistently degrade those perceived as outside of these norms. In 1940, for example, at the Shubenacadie Indian Residential

School in Nova Scotia, reference is made to a screening of "Tarzan." Of the experience, a teacher states that

> a better picture could not be selected for Indian boys and girls, letting them see in the picture their loved forests and waterways, while the characters lived again their simple woodland ways. For many a day, one will witness Tarzan right here in the building, in the person of the actors, the Indian boys. (*Thomson-Millward*, 255)

The students are encouraged to align with Tarzan and the "woodland" characters, thereby asserting that their cultural heritage is part of a primitive and bygone era. The film offers the student's coded images of cultural under-development (in fact, culture gone wrong as Tarzan was white) meant to articulate the uncivilized African culture onscreen as analogous to their own. This clearly wields the classic colonial oppositions used to justify oppression, those that Edward Said describes as the "binary typology of advanced and backward (or subject) races, cultures, and societies" (*Orientalism* 207).

That the teacher believes "a better picture could not be selected for Indian boys and girls," reveals just how ingrained these colonial binaries are among the privileged, in this case, a Canadian citizen. The choice to exhibit a Tarzan film, for example, in conjunction with the assertion that they, the teacher, perceive the children through the racist framework established by the film, is quite telling. In other words, the teacher appears to uncritically accept the backwardness of the children's culture represented onscreen as reality; they misperceive the highly constructed images of a "primitive" race as actually very important in establishing their own colonial privilege and mindset, with the idea that these images instead offer an authentic engagement with children's "woodland" heritage.

This particular application of the medium shows that the teacher possesses a colonially inflected consciousness regarding cultural difference, and that this informs his/her exhibitive choices. In other words, the teacher appears incapable of conceiving the relationship between Canada and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis outside of the "assumption that European civilization and Christian religions were superior to aboriginal culture which was seen as being savage and brutal" (*Honouring the Truth* 4), or understanding that their own privilege depends on the successful application of these very

damaging conceptions of difference. The insidious nature of colonialism is glimpsed in the teacher's failure to understand why "Tarzan" offers the children racist and problematic imagery and narratives. In essence, the psychological aspects of colonialism exhibited in the teacher's naïve behaviour inform film screenings at residential schools, allowing what are presented as good intentions to perform the IRS system's violent and oppressive operations.

Though records do not verify which of the many Tarzan films was shown, of the ten versions produced before this exhibition in 1940, all participate in similar renderings of African culture, mythologizing it as exotic and primitive in comparison to Europe and North America. Despite the fact that Edgar Rice Burroughs, the author of the "Tarzan legend…never set foot in Africa, his books, and the films based on them, have constituted a major source of misinformation on Africa for many for generations" (*Hutchinson* 29). His books demonstrate an orientalist and "textual attitude" (*Said*, 95) towards Africa, engaging it only through the written and visual materials created by the West. Burroughs's white-male privilege means that he does not need to know Africa to represent it, he only needs to know it as it is described by his colonial peers. The film version of this story continued in this orientalist tradition.

Jeff Berglund offers insight into the 1914 publication *Tarzan of the Apes*, and its racially and culturally inequitable motivations, writing of the moment when Tarzan, having been raised by apes in Africa, stumbles upon a cabin full of books:

> Burroughs begs his readers to view Tarzan's act of reading allegorically: the primitive being yearns for knowledge. The author reminds his readers that this scene takes place in the cabin built by the boy's father. In essence, Tarzan is being exposed to the canon—the house of literature—of western learning. Burroughs emphasizes how uncultured Tarzan is, yet suggests that he is saved by his "well shaped head and bright, intelligent eyes" from the primordial groping of his surrogate Ape Family (54).

We encounter a narrative of discovery that leads to the material products of "civilized" culture, not as a point of entry, but rather to satisfy an inherent yearning to escape from the "primordial groping" of the "uncultured." The opposite of a fortuitous encounter, the IRS system presents a similar narrative as it, in the words of Senior Oblate Andre

Renault, "could surround its pupils almost twenty-four hours a day with non-Indian Canadian culture through radio, television, public address system, movies, books, newspapers, group activities etc." (*Honouring the Truth* 6). This was a forced 'discovery' of Western knowledge presented in many different formats, with all its hegemonic and colonial might. If Tarzan was a great film for IRS students, it can thought to be so because of its focus on the protagonist's transition from savage to civilized, here by way of modern technology rather than rustic hut.

The use of film to supplement the educational imperatives of the IRS system informs our knowledge of the system's pedagogical approaches and disciplinary practices. To echo Renault, on the surface film contributed to a strategy meant to overwhelm students with all possible aspects of the dominant culture. To remove the indigenous child from their culture and replace it with another meant IRS education involved more than Western academics. It was important to dictate how they ate, dressed, got ready for bed, went to church, and, among other things, participated in recreational activities, in order to ensure that tasks were accomplished according to Canadian norms.

This represents an institutionalized process of Canadianization that was clearly working in disciplinary terms and took the form of a culturally distinct set of rules and regulations, seeking to enclose and "circumscribe a space in which its power and the mechanisms of its power will function fully and without limit" (*Foucault* 67). Film is an ordinary part of Canadian culture, and the terms upon which it could be engaged in the IRS context, even in a recreational sense, were informed by efforts to encourage the students' submission to institutional, cultural, and colonial power. This was accomplished both through a common thematic focus on and representation of cultural inequality, in conjunction with the physical controls necessary to achieve audience organization and etiquette, which strictly ordered and harshly dictated student behaviour. Shuttled into the auditorium and segregated by gender—"the boys would be on one side of the hall and the girls would be on the other" (*Jaine* 50)—film spectatorship was yet another way in which mechanisms of power were set to work upon the Indigenous body. In many regards, the ways in which the students participated in the etiquette of spectatorship was as important to cultural assimilation as the racist content they were often shown.

This level of organization, however, did not happen overnight, and the IRS system's interest in 16mm film exhibition was slow to evolve. Early on, the cost of exhibition equipment and film rentals presented a substantial obstruction to the system's embrace of the medium. Residential schools were notoriously underfunded, and in most cases money for the purchase of exhibition equipment simply did not exist. In part, this is because the government funded the IRS system using a "Per Capita" grant system that provided financial support on a cost-per-student basis. This financial structure was established by the meeting of the Order-in-Council in 1892, and placed the burden of the system's overall expense directly on the Canadian government (*Milloy* 62). The funds would cover the cost of housing, clothing, and feeding the children. Additionally, the government would also purchase the necessary buildings, lands, and educational supplies, and support the transportation of students to and from the facilities (*Milloy* 62). Consistently, however, they intentionally underestimated these expenses hoping to surreptitiously manipulate religious institutions to contribute to the system's remaining, and necessary, costs. As the TRC *Final Report* tells us,

> when churches concluded, quite legitimately, that the per capita grant they received was too low, they sought other types of increase in school funding. Building on their network of missions in the Northwest, the Catholics quickly came to dominate the field, usually operating twice as many schools as did the protestant denominations. (*Honouring the Truth* 56)

The Christian sects responsible for the daily operations of the residential schools offered varying contributions of capital to the system, and did so according to a number of diverse factors. In this case, the Roman Catholic Church developed a residential school monopoly of sorts simply because they had a pre-existing network of institutions already operating in the far north. Though the per capita amounts were intended to establish a consistency among IRS operations in Canada, their ultimate inadequacy forced the schools to depend upon secondary support, and ensured that differing levels of poverty and management existed throughout the system.

Add to this the fact that although the government regulated expenditures, it was principals and administrators who in reality controlled school finances. Their perpetual mismanagement of funds was then coupled with the government's general lack of

oversight. John Milloy suggests that the government could have "insisted that officials carry out inspections and that the churches follow regulations directed to the care of the children," but that "it did not do so" (*Milloy* 101). This corrupt relationship established an administrative quagmire that without question ensured nobody involved in paying for the IRS system had a true picture of its financial operations. Records are, at times, opaque, and those that seem clear should be questioned. This persistent obfuscation made it easy for many school authorities to knowingly misuse per-capita monies, and I believe, in some cases, purchase film projection equipment despite the fact that it was not included in the government's per capita spending regulations.

While chronic underfunding led to financial mismanagement, providing opportunities for administrators to purchase film equipment, it also ensured that the technology would come in contact with the system in unconventional ways. This is evident in that projectors were paid for out of pocket by teachers, bought by church organizations and other charitable groups, and, as I discuss in Chapter Three, brought into the schools temporarily via the National Film Board of Canada's travelling projectionists or other affiliated volunteers. Also we must consider again that because film equipment was not officially designated a "school supply" and would not be funded by the government, its documentation is sporadic at best. 16mm exhibition within the IRS system did not necessarily need to involve paperwork or even government consultation, making the task of this dissertation all the more difficult. By comparison, for example, it is relatively easy to locate detailed documents listing novels and textbooks purchased by the schools. When we do encounter a reference to film and projectors in government archives, it is consistently articulated through a desperate plea for money, and an exposition of its educational benefits and subsequent importance to school operations.

Though archival materials concerning this history are difficult to locate, I, and other scholars, such as Jim Miller, who references a "widespread use of film" in residential schools (280), are in agreement that throughout the twentieth century film exhibition became a common component of IRS curricula. Many students referenced weekly exhibitions. For example, William Antoine, a former student of the Spanish Indian Residential School recalled "regular [Sunday] movie night" in the 1940s (*Survivors Speak* 187). At the Kamloops Indian Residential School, students remembered

"in those days we were taken to the gym for a movie once a month" (*Agnes* 134), and "once a week we had a movie everybody knew we learned how to play cowboys and Indians from Rowdy Yates (Clint Eastwood), I guess, Gene Autry, and Gabby Hayes" (*Agnes* 194). By the late 1950s and early 1960s the medium's presence within the system was common, and after much convincing, the Canadian Government contributed financially to equipping the IRS system with the necessary 16mm technology.

In most cases, however, early accounts of film exhibition—such as those at residential schools in British Columbia in 1930, and Ontario and Saskatchewan in 1936—operated at the whim of a very small number of school teachers and administrators who, for whatever reason, were eager to engage with film. Film's foray into the curricula of the IRS system, therefore, initially rested upon individual efforts, while the Canadian government and religious leaders remained somewhat skeptical of its value. This means the system's early encounters with the medium are highly idiosyncratic, and unusual, and were often undertaken in relation to irregular funding practices.

In 1930, for example, we see one the earliest references to film exhibition in this context available. In the *Minutes of the Meeting of Indian Residential School Commission of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada,* Ben Anfield of the St. Michael's Indian Residential School located in Alert Bay, British Columbia, takes a unique approach to funding the purchase of 16mm projection equipment. On February 22 of that year, he sent a request to the M.S.C.C. stating that the

> school had bought a moving picture machine, and requesting the sanction of the Commission to operate the same, to charge for admission to exhibitions, and when the machine has been paid for in this way, to turn it over to the Commission. (*Anfield* 1930)

Anfield is not asking for money, but rather for permission to raise the necessary capital to pay for the machine. He clearly purchased the equipment with school funds, however by turning the IRS school into a makeshift movie theatre, he ensured the expenditure was not a financial burden to the school or the commission, but rather, that the equipment was to eventually become a useful asset.

This proved to be an effective pitch. The commission responded positively with the following:

> Action taken: As the pictures exhibited in the local picture show room were frequently unfit to be seen by Indian Children, the purchase of the moving picture machine, on the terms specified, was approved, and the Field Secretary instructed to ask Mr. Anfield to carefully conform any provincial regulations governing the exhibition of moving pictures, before attempting to operate the machine in the school auditorium. (*Church Administration* 1930)

At the time of this exchange, Anfield's school was the largest operated by the Anglican Church, notably situating the medium at this early date within the commission's most populated facility. Aside from these more practical notes, this exchange tells us that 1) film oriented the IRS school in such a way that saw it engage with the settler communities in the area, 2) they sensed the need to censor content, something that was not possible if they took students to see whatever film happened to be playing at the "local picture show room," and 3), that exhibition often took place in school auditoria.

Jim Miller references these very materials iterating their effects in his book *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Canada's Native Residential Schools*. "Movies forced the school into certain forms of organizing the students' recreation." He continues,

> the availability of only one projector, for example, usually ensured that boys and girls watched films in the same room, if in segregated parts of the room. As the Anglican school commission noted, one powerful argument for authorizing the use of moving pictures in the residential schools was that "the pictures exhibited in the local picture show room were frequently unfit to be seen by Indian children." The selection of movies was carefully controlled. At Lebret, students saw *Beyond Bengal* at the end of February 1948 and *Joan of Arc* in late August 1949. At Beauval in the mid1950's, the school paper's list of "Best Films we Saw since New Year's" included *Loyola, The Soldier Saint* and a documentary on steamships entitled *Rulers of the Sea*, as well as the Western *Kit Carson* and two comedies. By the later 1960s the selection of titles seemed to have loosened up somewhat. The Oblates' school at Fort George, Quebec, rented films from

> Columbia Pictures that ranged from *Gunman's walk* and *Cat Ballou* to *Lord Jim* and *Lawrence of Arabia*, and the *Great Sioux Massacre*. (280-81)

Although Miller's assessment of film's use in this case takes up only a few short paragraphs, my research verifies that his interpretation offers a very precise reading of the medium's more general operations in the residential school context. Themes of censorship, audience formation, recreation, and colonial content are always necessarily situated in the forefront of this issue, and essentially frame this dissertation.

Of note, here, is the fact that IRS authorities align their concept of censorship with racial distinction. This assertion is unique specifically because throughout film history censorship is not typically viewed in racially specific terms. Early on, censorship practices generally embrace a distinction between the psychological capacities of children versus adults. Children could, it was thought, find themselves more easily affected by moving images and therefore needed to be sheltered from certain content. Lee Grieveson poignantly articulates this, citing the anxieties associated child audiences in the early twentieth century:

> they were informed by broader discourses about childhood and child development circulating in the period. On the one hand, an anxiety about the effects of cinema on children was linked to a growing sense of the innocence of children…through which children were invested with sentimental, as opposed to economic, value in a process that, in turn, position them as innocent and vulnerable. On the other hand, the discursive positioning of children as citizens-in-formation, or as tabulae rasae for the imprinting of values, behaviours, and ideals of…"good citizenship," led to intense anxieties about the socialization of children and the sustainability of social order…children were here positioned at the confluence of the intense anxieties about socialization and citizenship that were persuasive at the turn-of-the-century. (*Policing Cinema* 14)

We have to ask how did the IRS system interact with these concepts of censorship, and what was it about the films exhibited at the "local picture house" that rendered them "unfit" to be seen by, not simply "children," but specifically, "Indian children?"

In one way, the Anglican authorities might be conflating the more specific subject, "Indian children," with "children." It is somewhat convincing, I think, to read

their comment as tapping into the general concerns regarding the potentially negative effects film content has on impressionable child audiences, and applying them to the IRS students. But there are more complex correlations to be made between this conception of censorship, and the IRS system's assimilationist ideology. The IRS system targeted First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children for precisely the same reasons that inform early concepts and applications of film censorship. The Canadian government essentially blocked the child from their own culture, and dictated and controlled their engagement with the dominant culture because they were thought to be more impressionable than adults, and therefore more easily sculpted into the Canadian "citizen-in-making" desired. In 1894, for example, principal of the Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School stated that "Indian" children needed to be removed from their "pagan environment," and placed "in a school with the goal of making them into *good citizens*" (*emph. added*, *Canada's Residential Schools* 200). Similarly, Reverend Alexander Sutherland stated

> the only way in which the Indian of the country can be permanently elevated and thoroughly civilized is by removing the children from the surroundings of Indian home life, and keeping them separated long enough to form those habits of order, industry, and systemic effort that they will never learn at home. (*Canada's Residential Schools* 200)

The IRS system operated to situate the child as a spectator of Western cultures, and to censor them from the "uncivilized," "paganism," of their own. In this regard, it is possible that such racially specific censorship was concerned with need to censor content capable of reminding the children of their own cultures. Film content would be "unfit" to be seen by "Indian" children if it disrupted the narrative of the culturally advanced and culturally backwards constructed and sold to them by the IRS system.

Despite the fact that the Anglican Church expresses clear interest in using the medium, funding always remained an issue. This is apparent in that roughly eight months after the M.S.C.C.[4] supported Ben Anfield's use of film at its largest residential school, they promptly denied another request to purchase exhibition equipment. In a letter submitted to the Commission on September 20, 1930, the principle of the IRS school in Lac La Ronge, Saskatchewan, Reverend G.W. Fisher, requests "that the school be

[4] *Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada*

supplied with a moving picture projector" (*Fisher* 1930). The Commission promptly denied his request stating, "the Field Secretary was instructed to inform Mr. Fisher of the Commission's deep regret that they had no funds from which this equipment could be provided" (*Commission Response* 1930). Unlike Anfield, Fisher fails to secure funding and support for film exhibition. The difference in response is obviously associated with the fact that one principal had the wherewithal to organize a viable, yet unconventional, funding scheme, while the other did not. In theory, Anfield's projector cost the commission nothing. In this comparison we can see that early in this history the utilization of the medium greatly depended upon the interests and ingenuity of individual principals, teachers, or administrators.

This is further apparent in that two months after Fisher's request for a "moving picture machine" is rejected, he alters his approach and asks that the Commission purchase a "Film-slide projector," insinuating that it is less expensive than a moving picture machine. Again, he is promptly denied for the reasons stated: "owing to a lack of funds, it was decided that this item could not be purchased at present" (*Commission Response II* 1930). On January 15, 1931, he solicits the commission yet again in a request that reads, "the film-slide projector which he requires would cost 60.00" (*Commission Response III* 1931). To this the commission has no response. Fisher clearly encounters repeated rejection for the reason he is only willing to ask the M.S.C.C.[5] to fund the equipment outright, rather than suggest a funding scheme. As a result, the school at Lac La Ronge goes without a projector at this time.

The irony of Fisher's inability to secure funding is located in the fact that unlike 16mm film, which could easily be used in ways that might question its educational value, the "Film-slide" projector has a rich history as an educational teaching aid. Evolving from the Magic Lanterns of the 18th century, into the "small army of delivery men" bringing "lantern slides" to schools throughout New York City and other cities (*Griffiths* 124), film slides were more affordable, and still capable of engaging the early ideas surrounding visual media as a teaching aid. They could achieve the aims of educational cinema movement—collapsing geographical space and bringing images of, for example, South Africa to North American classrooms, depicting visual markers of race, identity,

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[5] *Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada*

and hierarchal citizenship, and finally presenting visual lessons thought to be "more engaging than books" (*Orgeron* 20). Film-slides, though perhaps a less dazzling technical version of the moving image, are synonymous with the educational film movement. Fisher's failure to secure funding then makes clear that in the 1930s IRS access to film or other visual teaching aids was less about arguments regarding their educational value, and more about the creative accounting of school principals.

In 1939, further references are made to film exhibition at Anfield's school, verifying the success of his efforts to ensure that the medium was an active part of its operations. In the "St. Michael's Indian Residential School Newsletter," we learn that as part of the school's Christmas festivities, the children were shuttled into the auditorium for an exhibition: "Monday night we had our Christmas picture to which we had long looked forward – Walt Disney's 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' which some of us saw twice. We sure enjoyed it" (*Alert Bay Newsletter* 1939). Film, in this case, offered a recreational event that was apparently anticipated with much excitement by the children. Not an "educational" film, but one certainly capable of teaching the students many of the terms and conditions of Western culture. As many scholars have pointed out, Disney films have "consistently reflected the cultural and political conservatism of the American mainstream in relation to national, racial and ethnic identities and stereotypes" (*Michel* 11). The simplistic dichotomy between good and evil presented in the film most certainly could offer a vivid metaphor to the students, analogously positioning their culture in subordination to that of Canada, by soliciting their sympathies for a character with, as the film states, "skin as white as snow."

Of course, that the Walt Disney Company, "known worldwide for its sanitized fairy tale adaptations" (*Elsheimer* 450) and misrepresentation of cultural and racial inequality, would find its way into the culturally genocidal network of the IRS System, should come as no surprise. Henry Giroux outlines Disney's complete dedication to an entirely Western, capitalist/colonial, ideal of culture throughout its production history. His analysis of *Pocahontas* (1995) is especially informative here, and draws extensively upon Said's conception of Orientalism as a "form of Western imperialism that shapes the dominant thinking of the East—and its dependency on new images and exotic narratives in order to sanction the centrality of Western culture and its ongoing domination of

others" (111). In this sense, the IRS system's application of film evidences an Orientalist approach fulfilling its perpetual hunger for *new* and convincing materials to serve its assimilationist ends. Giroux goes on to state,

> There is nothing innocent in what kids learn about race as portrayed in the "magical world" of Disney. So even while *Pocahontas* portrays racial differences more positively—viewing the relationship between Pocahontas and John Smith as a respectful partnership of equals—the film's supposedly enlightened perspective on race still upholds Western ethnocentrism when viewed in a larger context…*Pocahontas* is based on a true story, which means that Disney's metaphorical reduction of actual colonial relations to a fictitious interracial love affair and the film's conclusion of peaceful coexistence between the Powhatan Nation and colonialist completely erase the historical reality of European racist attitudes about injustice toward, and oppression of Native Americans. (111)

Considering these criticisms of *Snow White* (1939) and *Pocahontas* (1995) presented here are very similar, we see Disney's maintenance of these attitudes and approaches throughout the twentieth century. Fittingly, Disney's integration into the IRS system evolved, and by 1960s many schools were dealing with Sovereign Film Ltd, which held the rights to distribute Disney content in Canada. Exhibitions consistently bombarded students with these messages. Whether it was the 1955 version of *Davey Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier* (1955), or the presentation of the noblest of "Noble" savages in *Tonka* (1958), the substantial presence of Disney does much to verify the powerful ideological and colonist motivations underlying film exhibition in the IRS context.

Anfield also participated in some amateur filmmaking, further suggesting that the St. Michael's Indian Residential School's early use of cinema came was a result of his fundraising abilities and keen interest in the medium. In 1939 he reported to the M.S.C.C.[6] that he had filmed students constructing a building that would house tuberculosis sufferers, stating that

> this building has been and is a source of much pride to us all, partly because we have been chosen to help in the fight against T.B. among our Indian children and partly because the entire building has been erected by our own boys, 14 of whom

[6] *Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada*

> have thus been given practical training in building by a very competent Forman, the only paid man on the job. The Preventatorium is a real credit to the boys who have worked on it, and I hope this spring to come north to the villages and show the Indian people colored movies taken of the building under construction. (*Alert Bay Newsletter II* 1939)

Anfield owns the proper filmmaking equipment for the purpose of producing such depictions, and demonstrates the importance of the medium to constructing positive articulations of the operations and efforts of the IRS system. At the time, this was especially important considering the fact that, as the TRC *Report* notes, "until the 1950's, the school's were sites of ongoing Tuberculosis crisis," and that the disease "accounted for just less than 50% of the recorded deaths" in the schools (*Honouring the Truth* 93). Making films about the construction of a Tuberculosis Preventatorium for exhibition in First Nations communities had as much to do with establishing the perception that the issue was being confronted, as it did with actually preventing the disease.

Though the government was not actively funding the purchase of film projectors and rentals, when asked to cover the cost of film equipment by school administrators, they were not always unresponsive. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the characterization of film as an important "educational tool" was repeatedly stated as administrators sought to construct its value in relation to the government's assimilative goals. Constructing the medium as an educational supply gave administrators the grounds to suggest it fell under the government's mandate to pay for the system's necessary educational provisions. This funding strategy was employed by most principals seeking to purchase projectors. For example, in 1936, telegraphs exchanged between the Department of Indian Affairs and the Minister of Parliament for North Battlefield Saskatchewan (speaking on behalf of Father Edmond Pratt of the St. Anthony's Indian Residential School in Onion Lake) exemplify the complexity and nuance of funding film exhibition in this capacity:

> Father Pratt, St. Anthony's School, Onion Lake, Sask., purchased portable gasoline engine driven generator, 650 watts, 110 volts, D C Serial number 50198, costing $175. STOP Duty demanded $77.53. STOP Father willing [to] pay cost [of] engine but refuses absolutely [to] pay exorbitant duty STOP Recommend

> Department take matter up [with] Customs Department and have duty cancelled or Department pay fair sum in lieu full duty STOP Father Pratt uses engine [for] educational picture work among Indians, without profit. Humanitarian cause. Father should not be required [to] pay duty. (*McIntosh* 1936)

Pratt was deeply involved in the IRS system, and worked as the principal of the Onion Lake Residential School from 1934 to 1938. He was also the principal of the Ermineskin Residential School in Hobbema Alberta from 1938 to 1939, as well as treasurer of the Blue Quills Residential School in St. Paul Alberta from 1939 to 1941. He returned to the Onion Lake School in this capacity from 1941 to 1942 (*Biographical History 2015*). His purchase of a gas generator for the purpose of "educational picture work," clarified in later documents "to be used in the school for the operation of a motion picture machine for educational purposes only," (*MacKenzie* 1936) represents another early account of film exhibition within the IRS system. Considering Pratt's willingness to purchase the necessary equipment without first consulting the government, we see again that early film exhibition in this context depended both upon who was operating a particular school.

In this case, the purchase of a gas generator verifies that Pratt's "educational picture work among Indians" was not, like Anfield's, necessarily isolated to the school. He possibly took advantage of the portability of 16mm projection technologies, using the generator to show films outside the school or throughout the small and rural community of North Battleford, Saskatchewan. Or, perhaps educational film projection was simply an excuse that enabled Pratt to solicit the government for the purpose of waiving importation fees on a personal expense. Though we only have a partial history of these events and do not know with complete certainty how this generator was used, the ambiguity of the documents reflect a perceived necessity to rhetorically construct and present film's "humanitarian" or "educational" value in order to solicit money, or some form of aid, from the government. Film exhibition for entertainment purposes might seem frivolous, but film exhibition for educational purposes seemed progressive and important.

To put Pratt's expenditure into perspective, the TRC *Executive Summary* points out that

> in 1937, Indian affairs was paying on average, $180 a year per student. This was less than a third of the per capita cost at the time for the Manitoba School for the

> Deaf ($642.40) and the Manitoba School for Boys ($550). In the United States, the annual per capita cost at the Chilocco Indian Residential School in Oklahoma in 1937 was $350. According to the American Child Welfare League, the per capita cost for well-run institutions in that country ranged between $313 ad $514. (63)

The cost of the equipment, including import fees, was more than the per capita amount. Given Pratt's somewhat panicked plea to the government, it seems likely that the purchase strained the institution financially. Furthermore, if we consider that other documentation related to Pratt's school shows the government encouraging the misuse of per capita money[7], it seems likely that Pratt misallocated money, an act that forced him to essentially beg the government for help. Having to validate the necessity of the generator, Pratt, speaking in an impassioned tone, asserts that film, and the equipment that facilitated it, were not just supplemental, but essential pedagogical tools for the work of cultural assimilation. In this hyperbolic plea, Pratt oriented film in such a way that sought to confirm not only its educational value, but also its contributions to his and the government's notions of "humanitarian" efforts.

As the documents state, the connection to humanitarian work meant that the generator could enter the country as part of "Tariff rule 696," which allowed the importation of equipment unavailable in Canada for charitable uses to be imported duty-free. It is A. F. McKenzie who emphasizes this in his response to Pratt, stressing that the generator

> be used in the school for the operation of a moving picture machine for educational purposes only, on which duty has been requested by the Collector at North Battleford, but which you claim should be admitted free of duty in view of the conditions of importation and the use of the equipment. (*MacKenzie II* 1936)

While the ambiguity of this exchange begs many questions, such a lack of clarity goes unacknowledged as both parties accept film's place in residential schools so long as its

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[7] In a 1935 document outlining necessary expenses in relation to building maintenance at St. Anthony's Residential School in Onion Lake, the government states:

> the above authorized expenditures, to the amount of $1,500.00, make up the full amount that is available for this schools, and, should the expenses run over that amount, the school authorities will have to pay some from their per capita allowance or other receipts. (*MacKenzie III*)

described use is understood to be clearly educational. Of course, by "educational," what they really mean is that it could be useful to assimilation. At this time, there is no substantial conversation about film's use, just an uncritical tethering of the medium to ideals of education, and humanitarianism. This reckless presumption situates these concepts as beneficial to any ideological force (nation or otherwise) regardless of varying and culturally distinct learning processes, methods, customs, and traditions.

Pratt's need for the generator also denotes the fact the school did not, at this time, have access to electricity. Given the importance of this utility, it is strange that Pratt would choose to associate film with educational efforts and humanitarian causes as a way to justify his purchase. There must have been multiple and obviously convincing reasons as to why a generator, and thus electricity, could be viewed as a necessity. But the fact that Pratt chose to expound the educational value of film in order to solicit money from the government, suggests that concepts and technology that might enhance the success and efficiency of assimilation were very appealing to IRS authorities. For that matter, throughout the history of the IRS system, the schools consistently ran deficits meaning that cuts to spending on building maintenance were common. Such "chronic underfunding" (*Canada's Residential Schools* 273) often left buildings in a state of disrepair so substantial the government eventually concluded that many school buildings were void of "economic value" (*Canada's Residential Schools* 240). This willingness to fund electricity, not because it would enhance the institution, but because it could power a film projector, means that here the medium played a role in modernizing the facility at North Battleford. Pratt's generator did more than just power a 16mm projector, it fundamentally altered the capabilities of the institution.

Beyond proclamations regarding film's educational value, there is little, if any, evidence of a system-wide rubric concerning how it was to be pedagogically employed. In one case, however, we can discern a clear effort to align film with early trends in the field of educational cinema. In 1947, a "Requisition for Supplies" submitted to the government by an employee of the Mount Elgin Indian Residential School in Alderville, Ontario, requests a copy of Ellsworth C. Dent's text, *The Audio Visual Handbook* (*Bracket* 1947). The book was commissioned by the American-based "Society for Visual

Education," and deals with issues concerning cinema, as well as other audio-visual forms, in an educational arena. Dent begins by claiming the

> major purpose of this booklet is stated in its title—a handbook of information in convenient arrangement for those who may be interested in applying visual or audio-visual aids to instruction. It is intended for two groups: (1) teachers, supervisors and school executives who desire brief general information concerning visual-sensory aids to learning, as well as a guide to sources of materials and further information; and (2) students in visual or audio-visual instruction courses, whose desires should be much the same. (xii)

Whether the book had any influence or not is unclear. Yet, that a teacher or principal felt the need to purchase it, demonstrates, at the very least, a desire to understand how audio-visual materials may facilitate the system's decidedly assimilative model of education.

Published in 1942, Dent's book engages the emerging field of educational cinema in the United States. Many years later, Devon Orgeron, Marsha Orgeron, and Dan Streible confirmed a non-theatrical cinema boom in the 1940s, and state "the postwar era saw film production rise to almost a 1000 each year, with the *Educational Film Guide* listing almost 3800 16mm educational films" (46). While the motivations informing film exhibition within the IRS system differed greatly from non-theatrical exhibition in public schools, the growing presence of the medium in this assimilationist context clearly evolved alongside the educational cinema movement. It makes sense that IRS teachers would align their interest in film with the emergence of educational cinema; this would lend credibility to their repeated claims of film's use for "educational purposes only," and increase the likelihood of their receiving government funding.

Dent was also the General Sales Manager of the U.S. based Coronet Instructional Films in Chicago, a city described in the 1940s as the "Hollywood" of educational cinema (*Orgeron* 48). The Shingwauk Indian Residential School in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, rented Coronet productions through the company's Canadian distributor, Sovereign Films. In 1963, for example, IRS students were shown the Coronet production, *Personal Qualities for Job Success* (1952). The film was described as educating students on the "qualities that are important for getting and holding a position…willingness to take criticism, good personal appearance, satisfactory work habits, the necessity for

initiative, friendliness and the ability to get along with others" (*Schofield* 72). The film seeks to influence its audience into performing the specified behaviours of North American citizenship, and, specifically in the residential school context, it might supplement assimilation by teaching IRS students specifically how to act and dress like American and Canadian working-class people. Dent acknowledges this application, as one of the educational "advantages" of motion pictures, stating they are "effective in publicity, drives, campaigns for social betterment and similar forms of propaganda" (108).

Yet another early account of film exhibition within the IRS system takes place at the Garnier Indian Residential School located in Spanish, Ontario. Beginning in 1935, administrative records outlining the institution's finances list money spent annually on either "Motion Picture Rentals," or the "Rental of Films" (*Berthe* 1935). These financial reports cease in 1945, and seem to disappear entirely from the archives. This is, I believe, indicative of the sporadic record keeping I referenced earlier. Given that the records show throughout these years the school consistently accounts for such expenditures, a discernable pattern of use is evident. Despite a lack of documentation beyond 1945, there is no reason to believe that film exhibition ceased to be a part of the curricula, and student accounts confirm this to be the case. Basil Johnston attended the Garnier Indian Residential School between the years 1947 and 1950, and discusses his memory of film exhibition, specifically referencing the "Sunday Evening Movie" in the recreation hall (237).

Victim/student testimonies verify the commonality of weekly film exhibitions in the 1940s and 50s. In Jack Agnes' book *Behind Closed Doors: Stories from the Kamloops Indian Residential School*, a former student recounted this practice: "I remember Thursday or Friday night they always showed a movie" (89). In the report of the *Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Council Indian Residential School study, 1992-1994*, student testimony described the regularity of film exhibition at the school in Port Alberni in British Columbia: "Some Saturdays we got to watch a movie…like a documentary…I remember thinking it was a good movie because it had a lot of animals in it, like elephants and stuff like you'd never seen in your life" (100). Linda Jaine's 1993 publication *Residential Schools: The Stolen Years* also references weekly film exhibition:

> Movie nights! Friday Nights! I couldn't wait for Laurel and Hardy. I love Laurel and Hardy. The boys would be on one side of the hall and the girls would be on the other and the screen would be up front. The father would run the projector… (50).

In his memoirs *Unbroken Circle: The dark Legacy of Indian Residential Schools* Theodore Fontaine, who attended Fort Alexander Residential School in Pine Falls Manitoba between 1948-1958 referenced "movie night" stating that "once when we were all in the playroom, I was playing on the floor with several friends reliving a picture show we'd seen at movie night and using small objects such as stones and pieces of wood to act as the cowboys" (106).

School newspapers also attest to a common use of the medium from the late 1940s onward. The Beauval Indian Residential School paper, *The Voice of the North*, makes multiple references to the medium. Under the heading "Movies! Movies! Movies!," a 1959 edition reads, "the movie was indeed a very enjoyable and educational one" (*Durocher* 1959). In a 1962 volume, students describe watching "an exciting film on a Stanley Cup Final" (*Gunn* 1962). A 1964 publication articulates, "an interesting film on alcoholism was given" (*Grade VII Pupils* 1964). In 1957, a school paper coming out of Lac La Ronge, describes an officer of the Department of Natural Resources visiting the All Saints Residential School: "he showed us some moving pictures on Friday afternoon. I liked the wild animals. The other reel showed us a forest fire being put out. I liked it too" (*Janvier* 1957). Finally, in 1954, at the Blood Indian Residential School, a paper describes students viewing a teacher's 8mm recordings of his vacation in Mexico, stating that they "even saw an entire scene of a bullfight" (*Anonymous Student* 1954).

School papers reveal trips to local movie theatres were not entirely uncommon. In an edition of *The Great Portage*, affiliated with the Prince Albert Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan, it is stated: "where are all these people, little and big going? Everyone has a radiant face and seems anxious to see a picture show!" (*Anonymous Student II* 1956). Jim Miller also references this practice stating,

> Canon Middleton of the Blood Anglican School took eight of his cadets to town for the evening after they had drill with the town Cadet corps during the day.

> Most likely they took in a movie, as frequently happened to selected students at the school (280).

Bolstering this evidence is a photo depicting students from the Kamloops Indian Residential School lined up outside of the Capitol Theatre in Kamloops, British Columbia (*Haig Brown* 90). Advertised on the theater's sign is the 1938 film *Boys Town*, starring Spencer Tracy and a young Mickey Rooney. Throughout the line-up, a number of students are holding signs that promote the film, which tells the story of a priest who works with underprivileged and delinquent children. The students are here visually constructed as advertisements for the film, parading around Kamloops not only as the *real* version of its characters, but more problematically they were likened to delinquents rather that kidnapped victims. This image also operates to publicize the IRS system as successfully reconstructing Indigenous children in Western terms. In this moment, we see the system's efforts to produce an image of its pedagogical work for the Canadian public.

By the mid-1940s, IRS administrators were beginning to show interest in providing IRS schools with 16mm projectors. In 1947, the Anglican Church was imploring government officials to finally categorize 16mm projectors as a requisite school supply. In a letter dated December 8 of that year, Reverend J. W. House petitioned the Government on behalf of *The Indian School Administration of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada*. House writes Colonel B.F. Neary, then Superintendent of Welfare and Training, Indian Affairs Branch, of the Department of Mines and Resources, stating that,

> my predecessor was very keen on providing motion picture projectors in all our schools and had managed to collect from various organizations and private funds a sufficient amount to meet about half the estimated requirements. He had hoped that the schools might raise the remaining half from some source or other but this has proved to be out of the question because few, if any, of the schools have any fund which they could devote to this, or any other, purpose. In my view, motion picture projectors should be considered a valuable training aid and, in consequence, should be supplied by the Department in the same way as any other educational requirements. I understand that, although this type of equipment is not authorized as a class-room supply generally, you are prepared to cooperate at this

> time to the extent of paying half of the cost of a projector for one of our schools. The cost is approximately $300 per 16mm projector from Crawley Films, Ottawa, for reconditioned War Assets machines plus extra for screen, and, as I would like to take advantage of your offer, I would be glad if you would have an order placed for a 16mm projector with screen to be delivered to St. Alban's Indian residential School, Prince Albert, Sask. (*House* 1947)

Though, in this specific moment, House only solicits the government to fund a single projector, he cites an agreement that would see them cover half the cost of equipping all 42 schools operated by the Anglican Church. Considering the scale of this endeavour, it makes sense he would argue the equipment be categorized as a "class-room" supply. Success in this petition would secure the government's obligation to fund film related expenditures in their entirety.

This exchange marks an important moment in film's entrance into the IRS system in that we, for the first time, encounter a government willing to take on a sizable portion of the cost of the necessary projection equipment. However, the agreement's emphasis on the fact that school administrators find some other source of money harkens back to the ways in which the schools were financed, and the difficulties that this created. The government proves their interest in film as an educational tool, yet only insofar in that the costs continue to be shared with the churches.

Further documents concerning this exchange reveal discrepancies in the information passed back and forth between the church and the government. House claims that "few, if any" of the schools had the financial resources for the purchase of film equipment. Paradoxically, however, on the requisition asking the government to cover half the cost of a projector for St. Alban's Indian Residential School, it is stated that the M.S.C.C.[8] had already "purchased eight projectors" that year "for different schools operated under their auspices" (*Indian Affairs Official* 1948). Despite House's claims, it is clear that there was a source of money dedicated to these expenditures, thereby allowing them to equip roughly twenty percent of their IRS institutions with film projectors. The interaction is further convoluted in that the M.S.C.C. does not accept the government's initial offer to fund half the cost of projectors for *all* their schools. Rather,

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[8] *Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada*

in the end, they simply ask the government to cover half the cost of a single projector. These efforts to categorize film as a "school supply" were necessary in soliciting government funding, while the interaction itself represents bureaucratic processes confusing and delaying what both parties seem eager to address at this time: outfitting all IRS schools with 16mm equipment.

In 1945, a letter sent by Reverend J. Lambert, then principal of the Sandy Bay Indian Residential School in Marius, Manitoba, to A. J. Doucet of the government's training division, presents information concerning the Roman Catholic Church's intent to equip their residential schools with 16mm film exhibition equipment. Lambert specifically cites the Churches' ambition to purchase a substantial quantity of projectors. This is an important fact given that the Roman Catholic Church operated the greatest number of schools within the entire IRS system. At one point they managed 75 different institutions, and their burgeoning interest in film exhibition in the 1940's tells us a substantial portion of the IRS system was actively pursing ways in which film could become a widespread aspect of the curriculum. Lambert states that,

> in our estimates for next year, money has been put aside for the purchase of projectors. We have started with a certain number with the intention of increasing that number as circumstances permit. It has to yet been decided which schools will receive them. This will be done at a later date. (*Lambert* 1945)

In the archival records, there are only two references to this project, and it is never officially followed up. Lambert's first letter simply asks that the government grant the school "a sound projector with generator and engine" (*Lambert* 1945). However, only two weeks later the government was in possession of Lambert's more diplomatic request for funding. In the latter, he does not appear to explicitly ask the government to fund the project. Instead he simply informs them of the Roman Catholic Churches intentions, citing funding difficulties in what seems like a round about way of soliciting the government.

Increased interest in film's use within the IRS system is, I believe, a direct result of its military applications during the Second World War. Scholars consistently cite film's use for training purposes during World War II as crucial to facilitating the cultural acceptance of its educational value. Pertaining specifically to Canada, Peter Lester

similarly argues that "the adoption of 16mm by Canadian armed forces as both a tool of training and entertainment helped establish a greater acceptance of the technology within the mainstream industry" (2), further articulating that war efforts essentially expanded "where 16mm could operate and what purposes it could serve" (16). The military use of the 16mm technology during WWII provided valuable evidence to the educational cinema movement, fortifying the premise that the filmic medium could contribute effectively to the success of training.

In their essay "A History of Learning with the Lights Off," Marsha Orgeron, Devin Orgeron, and Dan Streible, similarly emphasize the effects of WWII on educational cinema in the US, stating that the war

> played the greatest part in the "at long last" recognition of the motion picture's value as a tool of teaching and persuasion. Films not only helped train millions of soldiers but also did important work on the home front. As documentary advocate Mary Losey put it in her 1943 call to arms, 'Films can help win the war, if we use them intelligently.' Losey Urged 'Schools, libraries, Y's, Churches, motion picture councils, forums, civilian defense councils, service clubs, social agencies, trade unions, women's clubs to disseminate films that would shore up support for the war effort. By war's end, a clear consensus existed: Motion pictures were not just influential, they also could be effectively used for specific instructional purposes, which was itself a significant victory in a long-fought battle. (24)

During the war, the medium's function in terms of capably disseminating influential propaganda on a mass scale, and its productive contributions to military training, essentially confirmed to sources of cultural authority and power its potential to persuade the general population to embody certain terms of culture and frameworks of citizenship. These military examples, I believe, did much to make film's utility to IRS curricula appear more convincing and sensible to the church and government authorities.

Following the end of World War II, an influx of information concerning efforts to equip IRS schools with 16mm projectors appears. Most notably, government officials make reference to purchasing the necessary equipment through *Crawley Films* who, at the time, were selling refurbished projectors previously owned by the Canadian military. Referred to as "reconditioned war assets" (*Neary* 1948), there is a clear correlation

between the military's use of film, and the ability of the IRS system to incorporate the medium into its curricula. The end of WWII meant that the schools could be more economical in their purchase of projectors. In other words, the war was essential to film's role in IRS education not only because the military seemed to confirm the medium's educational influence, but also because it literally flooded the market with affordable projectors.

By the 1950s and 60s, film exhibition was much more prevalent in the IRS context. Rental receipts validate this development, confirming, for example, that the Shingwauk Indian Residential School in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, rented 16mm films from Sovereign Film Distributors to facilitate a weekly movie night throughout the 1966 school year. Peter Lester discusses Sovereign Film Distributors in his essay "Sweet Sixteen goes to War: Hollywood, the NAAF and 16mm Film Exhibition in Canada During WWII." He states that by the 1940's there were "two nationally oriented 16mm distributors in the country…both based in western Canada, Sovereign Films and General Films, and both were likewise doing solid business" (5). Considering the steady relationship between the Shingwauk Residential School and Sovereign Films, we can certainly speculate that, as a company operating on a national scale, with offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal, and Saint John, it engaged several IRS schools. It is conceivable, for example, that the Garnier Indian Residential School in Spanish, Ontario—a mere 200 kilometers east of Shingwauk—a school that we know was allocating funds annually for film rentals, could have been dealing with the company. Supporting this claim is the fact that Basil Johnston, former Garnier student, references the exhibition of "silent movies of cowboys and Indians" (*Johnston* 63). Westerns were commonly exhibited at the Shingwauk school; receipts list film rentals such as *Bullet for a Badman* (1964), *The Savage* (1952), and *Ten Who Dared* (1950). Both schools were screening films regularly, and both were participating in the exhibition of similar content.

In comparison to the concepts surrounding educational cinema, this pattern of exhibition stands out. These screenings were the "frivolous entertainments" (*Orgeron* 18) from which the educational genre sought to distance itself. At the same time, however, the orientalist portrayal of "Indians" aligned with educational cinema's efforts to position

the medium as a "supplement to the sermon" (37), "to allow teachers to utilize the media to fit their own lesson" (38). It takes little effort to understand why racially derogatory portrayal of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples generalized within the image of Hollywood "Indian" would aid residential school curricula. In a way, the IRS system did not need educational cinema as a genre comprised of materials produced specifically for classroom use, it needed to make popular film educational by positioning it to support racist and culturally genocidal aims.

Precisely what films were shown in this context can be clarified in regards to available 16mm rental receipts from the Shingwauk Indian Residential School and both the Roman Catholic and Anglican operated IRS schools in Fort George, Quebec. For example, in 1965 a receipt from Sovereign Film Distributors reveals that Shingwauk rented 12 films to be exhibited between January 9 and March 27. This is followed by a receipt for the rental of 7 additional films to be exhibited between May 1 and June 12. In September of 1965, the school rented 17 films to be exhibited between September 8 and December 25. This offers us a glimpse into an entire year of weekly exhibition. The films range in style and genre, but generally can be categorized in recreational terms. From the fairly racist Canadian cinema classic *Back to God's Country* (1919), to Hollywood Westerns like *Once Upon a Horse* (1958), and *Tonka* (1958)—whose main character, White Bull, offers the children the most stereotypical depiction of First Nations cultures, portrayed by the very non-indigenous actor, Sal Mineo—to films dealing specifically with other marginalized cultures such as *Tarzan The Magnificent* (1960), and *Hatari!* (1962), the students encountered the same adventure narratives over and over again. Fittingly, many of the films were oriented around heroic white male characters traversing some dangerous and foreign landscape.

16mm rental receipts associated with the Anglican and Roman Catholic schools in Fort George, Quebec, depict similar patterns of exhibition. In this example, we encounter evidence indicating that more than 20 films were shown in 1969. As we should suspect, the students saw many Westerns. For example, they say *The Great Sioux Massacre* (1965), *The Quick Gun* (1964), and *Wild Westerners* (1962). There was also no shortage of films about other marginalized cultures, such as *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), and *Genghis Khan* (1965).

The intent behind exhibition of this nature, with their generally derogatory representations of non-Western cultures that they put forth, is quite obvious; to educate the students in terms of cultural stereotypes, notions of inequality, and, always, to demonstrate the constructed virtue, modernity, and heroism of the dominant culture. The fact that student testimony consistently references not only memories of Hollywood Westerns, but also the students aligning themselves with, and cheering for the cowboys, must have offered evidence to teachers and administrators that film could facilitate assimilation.

We have learned the evolution of film and film technologies as part of the IRS system began in the 1930s, and that over the following decades, it would gradually become a substantial component of its operations and curricula. The Canadian government's initial reticence to fund the purchase of exhibition equipment, slowly dissipated, and following World War II, military use of the medium for training purposes offered IRS authorities further "evidence" of its pedagogical value, as well as affordable 16mm projectors purchased as "reconditioned war assets" (*Neary* 1947). It was during these years that church and government authorities aligned with the IRS teacher's who first utilized the medium, finally seeking ways in which it could be better integrated into the system. Thus, from the late 1940s and onward, film exhibition was to become an ordinary component of residential school, facilitating its assimilationist agenda in varying and, most often, troubling ways.

Understanding the intended effect of film content on IRS inmates situates the work of film analysis in a complex orientation. Clearly the narratives presented were meant to damage the ways in which they IRS student was capable of viewing themselves and their cultures, but of course achieving this was anything but a simple task. In the following chapter, I will turn to the films, examining their themes, and patterns, in an effort to prove that they were deployed maliciously. Whether it was a seemingly progressive educational film, or the most racist Westerns, exhibition content proves, time and again, that those who brought it to the system knew precisely what they were doing. These authorities sought to destroy the cultures of the IRS inmates, using film to render them, at times, confused and ashamed, always educating in terms of racism, marginalization, and oppression.

CHAPTER TWO

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"Gently pressed through the sieve of civilization[9]:" Assimilative Entertainments and the Colonial Use of Film

The sad truth is that, within the public sphere, within the collective consciousness of the general populace, most of the history of Indians in North America has been forgotten, and what we are left with is a series of historical artifacts and, more importantly a series of entertainments…Native history is an imaginative cobbling together of fears and loathings, romances and reverences, facts and fantasies into a cycle of creative performances, in Technicolor and 3-D, with accompanying soft drinks, candy, and popcorn. In the end, who really needs the whole of Native history when we could watch the movie?—*Thomas King*

The movies loom so large for Indians because they have defined our self-image as well as told the entire planet how we live, look, scream, and kill—*Paul Chaat Smith*

Time and again, IRS students reference encountering a filmic "history of Indians in North America;" their being presented a rendition of settler/indigenous relations through an influential "series of entertainments." Typically this meant IRS schools exhibited plenty of Hollywood Westerns, or films depicting Indigeneity in North America. Whether it was in the *Great Sioux Uprising* (1953), in which students of the Beauval Indian Residential School watched a stubborn Sioux leader, Red Cloud, needlessly force a reluctant Union Cavalry to war, or Charlton Heston in *The Savage* (1952), exhibited at the Shingwauk Indian Residential School, in which a white-man raised by the Sioux people is eventually forced to confront his nurtured "Indianness" as an "uncivilized" existence. These and other films told IRS students to engage the "Indian" onscreen through a stereotypical lens, to cheer for the cavalry, to participate in the dominant culture through a colonially inflected spectatorship. This chapter aims to engage the complexity of IRS spectatorship, to clarify how film exhibition was enlisted to function

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[9] King, Thomas. *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America.* Toronto: Anchor, 2012. pg. 44.

in a culturally destructive manner, and to show that the themes and patterns common in exhibited content reveal the medium's educational purpose as indebted to colonialism.

While it is difficult to speculate on how precisely IRS students may have internalized and responded to filmic content, there can be no doubt that they should be understood first and foremost as what has been termed "a captive audience"(*Griffiths* 2). Quite distinct from the paying masses out for a night's entertainment, IRS students were essentially imprisoned, required to watch under duress. As such, we are dealing with an unusual group of subjects vastly different from general spectators. Further complicating the question of IRS spectatorship is the fact that the empirical evidence grounding this project, evidence that largely comes through the authoritative voices of the IRS system, does not present a reliable foundation upon which the complexity of the IRS student's experiences, and unique perspectives, can be understood on their own terms.

The post-colonial nature of this study additionally questions the validity of efforts to speculate about how students responded to materials; I am careful not to articulate experiences on their behalf, from the perspective of a white-male Canadian academic. Of course, victim accounts inform IRS study, including this dissertation; often they reveal former students describing film exhibition as a confrontation with negative and stereotypical concepts of Indigeneity. I am and have been willing to utilize these specific assertions for the reason they belong to IRS victims, and although such statements are not untouched by the communicative mechanisms, influences, and pressures of the dominant culture, they do, at the very least, offer a glimpse into this highly individual perspective.

This chapter thereby examines how the IRS system incorporated film exhibition into its curricula as a way to bolster its ideological structure and operations. It asks: what were authorities hoping to achieve by positioning IRS students as spectators? Jean Louis Baudry's theories of spectatorship as ideology are of use here. Baudry begins by distinguishing between two identificatory aspects of the "mimed" reality of cinema:

> the first, attached to the image itself, derives from the character portrayed as a center of secondary identifications…the second level permits the appearance of the first and places it in action—this is the transcendental subject whose place is taken by the camera which constitutes and rules the objects of this 'world.' Thus the spectator identifies less with what is represented, the spectacle itself, than with what

> stages the spectacle, makes it seen, obliging him to see what it sees…(45)

The IRS system's exhibitive patterns show that only films made by North American or British companies were screened. As a result, students commonly encountered a "mimed world" typically animated by white-male characters guiding the camera's movement, and the spectator's interpretive responses, in directions favorable to this dominant culture and its socio-economic interests and realities. Baudry continues,

> the ideological mechanism at work in the cinema seems thus to be concentrated in the relationship between the camera and the subject. The question is whether the former will permit the latter to constitute and seize itself in a particular mode of specular reflection. (46)

By exhibiting, for example, *The Savage* (1952), *The Great Sioux Uprising* (1953) and other similar Westerns, IRS teachers were not engaging residential school spectatorship as a "specular" endeavor, or as mere screened entertainment. Instead, it is the institutional environment of the residential school, along with its ideological pursuits, that must inform a conception of "captive spectatorship." Any film analysis must also account for the same. In other words, film exhibition was used as a persuasive tool, using the apparatus of cinema along with select films pushed students to sympathize with, and thereby accept their marginalized position within the dominant perspectives and ideologies of both the IRS system and the culture in which it was situated. IRS authorities made use of the filmic apparatus to further their assimilationist agenda, not obstruct it, "to obtain a precise ideological effect, necessary to the dominant ideology" (*Baudry* 46). I approach film analysis and spectatorship in this vein − as an institutional aspiration of the schools − rather than attempting to speak on behalf of the subaltern, residential school, spectator.

A screening of Walt Disney's *The Light in the Forest* (1958), at the Shingwauk Indian Residential School in 1966, illustrates the system's motivations. The film's narrative presents an American boy, John Butler, raised by the Delaware peoples, who struggles to assimilate back into white culture. Saved from his Delaware family and forced to return to Pennsylvania, he transitions from "wild" and "uncivilized" person obsessed with "scalping" and incapable of passing a rotting animal carcass without stuffing his face with raw, rancid, meat, to a white landowning farmer who marries his

equally white local sweetheart, Shenandoah. Of course, she meets all of the oppressive norms of femininity demanded by American patriarchal culture. The film's parallels with the assimilative agenda of the IRS system are striking. For example, Butler comes to terms with his inevitable reintegration into American culture during a conversation with a Delaware friend. After they finish discussing plans to thwart John's forced return to white society by "taking the scalps" of their chaperones, the friend relays a message from John's "Indian" father:

> remember what happens to the white prisoners that the Indian takes. If he bares his hardship with patience, his Indian master likes him, but if he fights back and complains, there is nothing else to do but to scalp him. Do not fight back. Live with patience and cheerfulness and the white man will like you.

The narrative immediately animates itself around dichotomies of savage and civilized, doing so in a way that suggests Aboriginal assimilation is sensible and fair: "do not fight back," hear the IRS students, "and the white-man will like you." Residential school ideology is envisioned onscreen as the film depicts a character's transition out of one culture and into another. Biology functions as the defacto justification for the morality of the cultural (re-)assimilation. While we do not know precisely how this message affected − and was internalized by − IRS spectators, it is probable that authorities utilized *The Light in the Forest* (1958) as a way to further normalize the system's assimilative pursuits. Though Butler, at times, resists assimilation, the film positions the process as unequivocally good, and suggests it will lead to happiness and a well-respected position within the dominant American culture.

This is not the only instance of the IRS system exhibiting a highly literal process of assimilation. At the Shingwauk Indian Residential School in 1965, teachers chose to screen *The Savage* (1952). The film begins by framing an innocent caravan of white travellers. Among them is a young Jim Aherne Jr. who, along with his siblings, listens joyfully as his father reads stories to pass the time. Suddenly the "Crow Indians" attack, killing everyone, except Jim, who lies on the ground with an armed "Indian" standing over him. Just as he is about be shot, the narrator states, "more Indians came, many more Indians, Sioux Indians, and they chased the murderers away." Jim is left there, forced to engage the Sioux peoples, recalling that

> Running Dog had taken a scalp from the Crow who lay dead next to my father. Did he want mine next? And that's when Yellow Eagle did a strange thing, he made Running Dog give the scalp to me, it was mine because I had killed the Crow, in his eyes I was a warrior.

Jim refuses the scalp and then buries, and stakes a cross in the ground where his now dead father lay.

This sequence imagines "Indians" as child killers, and presents this idea to IRS students, associating them and their cultures with extreme and unjust acts of violence. The "Crow Indians" are depicted as a sociopathic group, and their willingness to murder innocent families, especially children, defines their violence as transcending the ethics of, in this case, American culture. This is made clear as the American military figures prominently throughout the rest of the film, and though they partake in violent exchanges, they never purposely attack "Indian" civilians. Clear differences are established here, with violence against children functioning as a mark of cultural distinction that separates "Indians" as savage, from Americans as "civil."

This sequence also constructs a damming juxtaposition of cultural ceremonies. While Running Dog is wandering around scalping people, Jim refashions a shovel into a cross to mark his father's grave, and then recites a poem as his final farewell. On the one hand, you have the Indian characters, even the good the ones, participating in a violent war ritual, while on the other hand you have Jim, who is only a child, first denying the "scalp" offered to him, and then partaking in what the film implies is a humane and thoughtful goodbye. The film presents a cultural comparison to IRS students simultaneously imagining white culture as thoughtful and civilized, and "Indian" cultures as brutish and uncivilized.

The Light in the Forest also depicts its "Indian" characters as child killers. For example, the Delaware Indians take "15 scalps" from white settlers. Challenging this practice, John Butler, the white boy raised by the Delaware peoples, asks, "Are the children of the whites our enemies also?" The emphasis on killing and scalping innocent children operates, yet again, as a rhetorical strategy meant to construct "Indians" as ruthless peoples. Additionally, Butler's immediate opposition to murdering children can then be situated to affirm American culture opposes such "Indian" brutality, and, in turn,

this binary is potentially passed onto the IRS students, problematically lecturing them regarding the "savagery" of their cultures.

Aesthetically and thematically, these films are typical Hollywood Westerns. IRS teachers clearly saw pedagogical value in this genre, which is not surprising considering its general focus on white-settler/indigenous conflict and relations. According to John Springhall, the

> Western's 'overall thrust sanctified territorial expansion, justified dispossession of Indians, fuelled nostalgia for a largely mythicized past, exalted self-reliance and posited violence as the main solution to personal and societal problems.' The Hollywood Western also codified American identity as mainly white and male, accepted racial supremacy as uncontested, romanticized aggressive six-gun masculinity and, ultimately favored the cowboy's resistance to the trappings of a feminized civil society as the truest form of manhood. (23)

Such films historicized the North American frontier in favor of white-male colonists, typically depicting "Indians" as the enemy resisting the "triumph of civilization over a violent frontier" (*Springhall* 22). These themes and patterns were placed in front of IRS spectators as a damming version of their cultures and histories, providing them fallacious reasons to embrace American and European dominance and development in North America.

In her book *Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty and Representations of Native Americans in Film*, Michelle Raheja further emphasizes this formation of indigenous identity in relation to what she titles, "Hollywood's racial optics regime." She argues that

> The plotlines of most westerns feature Native Americans living outside of their historical, geographical, and cultural context, situated in the past with no viable future. Native Americans are often hyper-visible in North American films, especially in films produced during the first half of the twentieth century…[and] despite intentional and unintentional inaccuracies, the films served as pedagogy and knowledge production for spectators. These films have been highly influential in shaping perceptions of Native Americans as, for example, a dying race that is prone to alcoholism and is inherently unable and unwilling to adapt to change. Even films

> that express admiration for Native Americans, such as…Delmer Daves's *Broken Arrow* (1950), seemingly respective and balanced representations are often rooted in uncritical, problematic racial ideologies that reflect unexamined notions of Native American culture on the part of the director and on the part of North American society as a whole (x)

IRS teachers and administrators potentially envisioned the Hollywood Western in a similar manner, understanding it in terms well suited to presenting residential school students' uncritical and damaging images of "their" cultures. Between January 5, 1966, and June 11, students at the Shingwauk Indian Residential School, in Sault, Ste. Marie were shown a total of twelve films; six can easily be identified as Hollywood Westerns. Rental receipts from the school reveal that at times students saw a western roughly once every two weeks. In films like *Six Black Horses* (1956) they encountered the stereotype of the "Indian" as a violent obstruction to North American colonial expansion. Kelly, a woman trying to get to her husband in California, needs to secure safe passage across dangerous "Apache territory." She hires Ben lane, a cowboy with a quick gun, to take her. Ben warns her of the dangers when he states, "I sure would hate to see your hair hanging from a Coya Terra war lance." The "Indians" scalp settlers and obstruct American expansion, limiting the ability to move freely between the east and the west.

This common generic convention depicting "Indians" as delaying Eurocentric progress in North America appears throughout the system and its use of film exhibition. In another instance, for example, *Kit Carson* (1940) is exhibited at the Beauval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1950. The film similarly follows a cowboy hired to safely guide a caravan of white settlers from coast-to-coast through, in this case, violent and dangerous Comanche territory. The message to IRS students continues to be quite simple, "Indians" are violent and can be historically understood as obstructive to the logical progress of the North American frontier.

Some of these exhibited Westerns deviated from this fear inducing representation of the "Indian;" yet, they still went onto demonstrate their racial insensitivity in other problematic ways. In *Posse From Hell* (1961), exhibited in June of 1966 at the Shingwauk School, the film's "Indian" character, Johnny Caddo, has already assimilated into the American culture and joins a posse of cowboys pursuing outlaws who have

murdered a local man's niece. However, the others mock him for being "Indian," and immediately question his usefulness. For example, just after the murder, the townspeople gather to organize the posse. The victim's uncle, whose mobility has been compromised by an injured knee, expresses interest in joining. On account of his physical condition, the others refuse to let him. He then looks at Caddo and says, "I'm as much use as any Indian." This racist argument quickly silences any doubters, and the uncle's racism cements not only his position in the group, but also the film's marginalizing perspective of Aboriginal peoples and cultures in North America.

The film, however, nuances this racism. Although Caddo, played by Mexican actor Rudolfo Acosta, is derided because of his race, he eventually becomes one of the most effective members of Banner Cole's posse. Whether as an accurate shooter, or an expert navigator, he ultimately earns Cole's respect, while discrediting assertions regarding his inabilities as a cowboy. This is clear when Caddo, having been shot tells Cole, "the way things worked out I really didn't do anything." Cole responds, "you did a lot Johnny." Yet, his success is complicated. For example, his character aligns with that of Seymour Kern, a young banker from New York who resisted joining the posse, and is suggested to be more interested in tea and cocktail parties. As the members of the posse who clearly fit the cowboy archetype, a retired army sergeant for instance, are killed or injured, Caddo and Kern, those framed as the least helpful or likely to survive such a violent pursuit, remain. An anti-racist sentiment is forwarded because the early assumptions about Caddo are proven incorrect. However, his Indigenous culture is never identified or referenced, and the respect he earns is linked only to his effective assimilation into the white culture surrounding him. The flimsy anti-racist sentiment therefore has nothing to do with acknowledging cultural and racial difference on equal terms, but rather is meant to encourage the dominant audience, or in this case the IRS student, to assume "Others" can be molded into "white" people.

The disproportionate amount of Westerns exhibited can be further qualified by the fact that in 1965, the Shingwauk School screened nineteen films between January 9 and June 12, nine of which are easily associated with the genre. Exhibitions of *No Name on the Bullet* (1959), *Ten Who Dared* (1960) and *Man or Gun* (1958) were shown. This pattern also appears at the St Theresa Indian Residential School in Fort George, Quebec.

In 1969 the teachers exhibited six films during the winter semester, three of which were Westerns: *Quick Gun* (1964), *A Bullet is Waiting* (1954), and *Wild Westerners* (1962).

When the schools exhibited non-Westerns, the films often continued to deal with "Indian" or other Indigenous characters. For example, *Nikki, Wild Dog of the North* (1961), depicts the relationship between a Inuit trapper, Makoki, a white man, a dog and a bear, *Savage Sam* (1963), the sequel to *Old Yeller* (1957), depicts a young boy and his dog who find themselves in Apache territory, and *In Search of Castaways* (1962), depicts a group of Americans who attempt to rescue a shipwrecked colleague, and in the process find themselves pursued by "fierce Maori warriors."

That residential school authorities would curate film schedules around such white cowboy/"Indian" binaries makes sense within their mandate. School officials also seemed to go out of their way to exhibit white/Indigenous inequality more generally is also not surprising. In other words, not only were Hollywood Westerns an essential ingredient in shaping IRS film exhibition in assimilationist ways, but films depicting other marginalized cultures and populations were also important to IRS exhibitions. The Shingwauk film schedules show that when teachers weren't exhibiting Westerns, they were frequently showing films like *Tarzan the Magnificent* (1960), and *Escape From Zahrain* (1962).

This focus on exhibiting the "Other" around the world appears in documents related to film exhibition in many IRS Schools. For example, a screening of *Beyond Bengal* (1934) took place at the Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1948. This is a documentary film that follows Harry Schenck's journey into a Malaysian Jungle, a location the narrator ominously suggests offers "a strange new world with strange new laws." Schenck is described as an American "picture hunter" leading a caravan of "natives." He journeys through the

> exotic shrubs and vines cling to one another with tenacious fingers to obstruct his way, [and] ferocious animals and slithering monsters that crawl upon their bellies. The heat, the fever, the poisonous death that lurks in the bite of one mosquito. All the dangers that the jungle arms herself to repel him, are to the white man a challenge. What is his incentive? He wants to unveil the secret which is so viciously safeguarded, to photograph it and bring it back to his fellowmen.

The film positions Schenck as a heroic figure, and is not interested in documenting this landscape and the cultures that inhabit it in neutral terms. The IRS students encounter a narrative that champions white-male authority, selling it as the capable of triumphing in impossible circumstances. The "natives" hand themselves over to his leadership, and, by the film's end, some are so enthralled by him and the culture he represents that they speak of plans to move to Hollywood. In a fitting turn towards IRS ideology, the Malaysians unveil their dream to assimilate into American culture, to willingly adopt its norms and behaviours. We are seeing a definite pattern here in which the films exhibited often frame assimilation as a natural progression desired by, and not enforced upon, the marginalized culture subjected to it.

This theme of white-male heroism represents, I believe, an effort to construct and present the dominant culture and identity in an exceedingly positive manner. Because marginalized cultures were often framed in stereotypically negative terms, films such as *Beyond Bengal* (1934) enabled the schools to define, by juxtaposition, white-male identity over and above what it actually was: a surreal, unfathomably just, superhuman embodiment capable of transcending borders as a leader of all peoples and cultures. Schenck's endeavour to "unveil the secret" of the Malaysian jungle for Western viewers then positions him as "a *hero* rescuing the orient from the obscurity, alienation, and strangeness which he himself had properly distinguished" (*Said* 121).

In relation to the Hollywood Western, Fred Erisman describes the heroic masculinity of the cowboy as embodied by a "person always isolated, often violent, at times vulnerable in his fallibility, but steadily striving 'to forge some coherent ethical code in a world dominated by hypocritical adherence to money, power, and force'" (*Erisman* 129). The power of this idealization was supplement by the charisma of iconic Hollywood celebrities, allowing the system to position highly influential characters in support of its assimilationist goals. Charlton Heston, Peter O'Toole, and John Wayne all appear throughout varying film schedules, offering celebrity voices and credibility to the racism students were experiencing every day. Whether it was Heston in *The Naked Jungle* (1954) leading the "natives" of some generic South American culture to victory in a war against a life-threatening ant infestation, John Wayne successfully hunting African wildlife in *Hatari!* (1962), or O'Toole emerging triumphant from a dessert having

improbably rescued a straggling Arab in *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), the system repeatedly calls on such characterizations and celebrities to exhibit white Eurocentric culture in a godly manner, its white knights able lend credibility to racism, and to exceed expectations in the face of the most insurmountable odds.

The emphasis here is on white-*male* heroism. Consistently, the role of women in the films exhibited is to support the male subject domestically, and in patriarchal terms. Such representations of gender align with IRS school operations. Andrew Woolford points out,

> gender expectations had spatial consequences. Young women and men were held in different spaces in the schools, and their interactions were restricted to certain occasions, when they learned to appropriately interact with one another, such as dances. (170)

In many cases film exhibition brought male and female students together, "if in segregated parts of the room" (*Miller* 280), engaging films that presented them clear gender roles, educating them in terms of how to interact with each other in a patriarchal and colonial sense. For example, in *The Savage* (1952), and *The Light in the Forest* (1958), when the white-male characters who have been raised "Indian" resist assimilation into dominant culture, they are quickly deterred from doing so by their female counterparts. In *The Savage* (1952) Tally Hathersall is influential in showing Jim how to ascribe to the cultural norms of American culture, teaching him to dance, making him dinner, and discussing literature with him. While in *The Light in the Forest* (1953), Shenandoah plays a similar role in John Butler's assimilation, teaching him the norms of American courtship, showing him how to kiss, and hold hands. Female characters are most often represented in relation to a nurturing domestic sphere, presented as "myths constructed by patriarchal ideology and manipulated for the satisfaction of male desires" (*Hollinger* 10). Relating specifically to the Western genre, Karen Hollinger describes female characters in early mainstream film as "meaningful only within male fantasy and not as significant in themselves…women represent home, culture, and civilization… [or] are intruders in male groups who must either become one of the boys or be seen as traumatic presences that must be eliminated" (10). Film exhibition provided female students of the IRS system a dual lesson articulating the intersectionality of their

marginalization based upon race *and* gender.

Of course, male students were educated in terms of, and at times acted out, the violence of Western masculinity. For example, a former IRS teacher recalls his students repeating the line "Take that you dirty Indian dog" following a screening of what is referred to as a "cowboy and Indian epic" (*Purvis* 46). In this example of a complex cross-cultural articulation, the students associate with and mimic the cowboy hero, perhaps aligning their empathy with the white-male character. This response was solicited through the teacher's choice to exhibit such content, and would, we can assume, be a welcome one, considering that the schools consistently pushed students to participate in acts of self-discrimination based on denigrating their own cultural and racial heritage.

The ease with which students might align with the patriarchal figure of the cowboy, has to do with the simplicity of the character's communicative patterns. Scholars have rightly pointed to the archetype of the cowboy hero as often operating in very lucid terms, what Robert Warshow describes as an unwavering "moral clarity," that "initially…the Western movie presents itself as being without mystery, its whole universe comprehended" (*qtd. in Cohen* 83). Hubert Cohen furthers this discussion stating that,

> most Western heroes are men of few words, and those [they use are] direct and clear…because the cowboy here inevitably finds himself in life and death situations his words must not be ambiguous. Others—robbers, rustlers, Indians, women—may deceive, but not the Western hero. (83)

Not only was the Western genre useful because it represented "Indians" to IRS students, but, for the most part, it was easy to consume, easy to succeed in having students, as evidenced above, adopt the persona of the racist cowboy. Yet, over time the genre evolved into a more complex articulation, with John Ford's 1956 film, *The Searchers* (1956), regularly credited as beginning to erode the cowboy archetype, and finally exposing the white-male to complex and necessary critique.

The IRS employment of Westerns does not engage with the genre in this way. Instead, teachers rented what scholars consider the "cheaply made B-features" (*Springhall* 24) of the genre. This meant copious amounts of Audie Murphy films, such as *Bullet for a Badman* (1964), *Seven Ways from Sundown* (1960), and *Six Black Horses* (1959), which consistently positioned him as a baby faced cowboy with all the "moral

clarity" regarding the "Indians" you would expect. Their focus on the "Indian," repeatedly exposed students to fictionalized versions of their cultures, participating in the system's effort to replace their knowledge of their own history as established through their own modes of preservation with the trite and racist renderings of popular American media. For example, students encountered a persistent pattern of animalizing the "Indians." In *Kit Carson* (1940), speaking of captured "Shoshone," a character jokes, "this is the first time I've ever seen a two-legged coyote in a trap." This type of onscreen rhetoric was common in film shown at the schools. They were also repeatedly exposed to images showing groups of "Indians" riding menacingly on horseback, always with one hand on the reins and a bow and arrow in the other, aggressively pursuing the innocent white characters as though they were a herd of buffalo.

These images are further compounded by the fact that they come to the student bearing the immense weight of a lengthy, and racist, narrative tradition. Carol Cornelius studies colonial efforts to construct subordinate cultural identities for those oppressed and marginalized by its systemic discourses of power. In regards to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples she discusses the consistency of these representations through the 1800s in "dime novels, literature, art and Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show,[10]" cultural products which

> combined to create the image of American Indians as savages. This image has continued 'from the era of Columbus up to the present without substantial modification or variation.' Saturday morning cartoons include many war-whooping, tomahawk wielding, painted Indians on the Warpath. (6)

Of note too is the fact that the IRS system's conveyance of this information to students was not limited to film exhibition, but extended to literature as well. Students faced a collection of cultural materials all articulating similar stereotypes. They encountered racist images and narratives in books like *Two Little Indians* by Emma Maguire, in which the main character, Little Bird, repeatedly greets people by saying "Hi! Hi! Hi!" (7), clearly mocking the phonetics of some generic version of an "Indian" language which the

[10] Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show is often cited as the precursor to Westerns. Scott Simon suggests that "what first led audiences and critics to see 'authenticity'…[in] westerns seems to have been their reliance on the formula of the Wild West Show, best known then and now through Buffalo Bill's Wild West. (*Simon* 61)

author must have encountered somewhere—perhaps from a movie like *Kit Carson*—in the dominant colonial ethos. A racist and totalizing version of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis is thus presented to students as though it is joke that should be laughed at and ridiculed.

Another example of exposure to cultural stereotype, through the study of literature, appears when IRS students read *Moccasin Trail* by Eloise McGraw. This book tells the story of Jim Keith, a white boy who is attacked by a grizzly bear and left nearly dead, only to be taken in by an "Indian" community. He adopts their ways and then struggles to assimilate back into white settler culture. This assimilative process, the book suggests, is a difficult yet worthwhile task. Like Emma McGuire's text, and seemingly every Hollywood Western the students watched, the book also uses "Indian" names meant to evoke laughter from the reader. Characters such as "Eye of Bear," "Many Feathers," "Hides His Face" and "Talks Alone" (156) populate the book's landscape.

These racist tropes were common throughout the literature and film the students encountered, as they were forced to engage a web of materials seeking to subordinate their sense of self and cultural identity. Whether it was reading *The Lone Ranger* (*Request For Supplies* 1951), *Daniel Boone Wilderness Scout* (*Request For Supplies* 1951) by Stuart Edward White (*Ogilvie* 1951), the stories of the cowboy hero *Hop Along Cassidy* in 1951 (*Ogilvie* 1951), or watching *Arizona Raiders* (1965), and *The Sons of Katie Elder* (1965), the students experienced Indigenous cultures in North America through stereotypical platitudes that were pedagogically situated in such a way that would undermine a sense of their heritage. The texts they were reading informed the films they were watching and vice versa, suggesting that the use of film and literature, whether presented to the students in class as a screening or an assigned reading, or in a less structured and more recreational environment, the message of white-male heroism, and violent and savage "Indianism" remained. The presence of these materials throughout the schools offered students content that would engage them as spectators, but do so in Western terms, and in the process encourage them, it was hoped, to see and understand themselves through the narrative affiliations that ideologically privileged a white-settler perspective.

This is an orientalist maneuver. In making the student a "Western" spectator, they

are positioned to absorb the misinformation about their nations that was presented in film and text as though it was legitimate. Edward Said identifies this type of knowledge production as vitally important to colonial efforts. The schools first denied the children the right to live their cultures, and then sought to replace those cultures with the rhetorical materials of the dominant North American societies. In other words, orientalism is a way of knowing one's own "othered" culture "textually, that is, as something one read about and knew through the writings of recent as well as classical European authorities" (81). The pedagogical imperative of film exhibition in the IRS context sought this end by curating exhibition schedules to support the orientalist incarnation of Indigenous cultures.

In some cases, however, accounts show teachers attempting to re-categorize the obvious effects of exhibiting inherently racist Western films by suggesting that the stereotypes exhibited were beneficial to the students. For example, I return to the Indian Residential School in Lytton British Columbia to engage in greater detail the children re-articulating the line "take that you dirty Indian dog:" A teacher from this school wrote:

> the Indian boys were greatly impressed by this vehement bit of dialogue. For years after, it became their favorite epithet amounting to almost a term of affection but in no way ever derogatory. For instance, a boy might be jostled by another in passing, or lose in a game of checkers, or receive a snowball in the neck. His response would follow a standard pattern. He'd clench his fists, narrow his eyes, and slowly and clearly hiss the words, "You…Dirty…Indian…Dog!" (*Purvis* 46)

The teacher's analysis of the interaction reveals an ideological framing of this film in positive terms. Rather than understanding the statement as a racial slur that he is responsible for teaching the students, he conveniently interprets it as a complicated expression of schoolyard affection in which the defamatory rhetoric is undermined by the students through their ability to shift its meaning during play. Yet, the discriminatory force of this statement is so substantial that attempts to associate it with a sense of morality or humanity are, I believe, highly dubious. While this potential for a reorientation is possible and could be perceived as radical, certainly the force of the statement as a racist utterance renders its ability to operate subversively unlikely.

The student's repetition of the line "you dirty Indian dog" in some way verifies the system's success in encouraging them to momentarily echo the film and the speech

patterns of the dominant culture. In more straightforward terms, the teacher shows that exhibiting Westerns actually cultivated violence amongst the students, in which they would accept the treatment of their filmic analogs— the "bad guys"—and in schoolyard play imagine inflicting violence upon them. The children were given narratives and imagery to situate themselves in the privileged position of those who stereotype, colonize, and demean.

Numerous theorists and scholars accept and work from the position that representation has a profound effect on the ways in which a culture self-identifies, as well as how it identifies those considered to be outside of, or fundamentally different from, its principles of identity. Stuart Hall, for example, articulates his own marginalization through representation thusly:

> the ways we have been positioned and subjected in the dominant regimes of representation were a critical exercise of cultural power and normalization, precisely because they were not superficial. They had the power to make us see and experience ourselves as 'Other.' Every regime of representation is a regime of power formed, as Foucault reminds us, by the fatal couplet, "power/knowledge' (225-26).

Racism as a visual regime needs to function in such a way that its problematic imagery and narratives are normalized in the dominant imaginary and thereby do not stand out in recognizably unpalatable ways. Even though Westerns, for example, may now seem plainly racist, at one point they offered an acceptable standard of representation. In this case, we see that even if exhibited in absence of racist intent, in which an IRS teacher may genuinely view such films as simply offering students a form of recreational entertainment, the "Indian" or the othered characters onscreen by no means become void of malice, and the child always faces themselves as othered and absorbs, in some way I believe, the harm that it is capable of causing. Having inherited colonialism's substantial visual/knowledge couplet, the norm of exhibiting a culture onscreen in Canada appears to have been tied to an imperialist othering of the First Nations, Inuit, Métis peoples and, of course, anybody who simply is not white. This means IRS teachers who engaged and functioned as part of the dominant culture likely embodied a dulled awareness of the rhetoric of racial inequality they were participating in, and ultimately screening. Given

this colonial thrust to present images of the "other" to IRS students, the exhibitive choices of the teachers are certainly the result of their role in supporting and propagating problematic ethnocentric cultural norms.

In this sense, an exhibition of *Back to God's Country* (1919) stands out in its alignment with, not only the racialized narrative motivations discussed above, but also in it's situating them in relation to a specifically Canadian culture. Archival documents, however, fail to specify precisely which version of *Back to God's Country* was exhibited at the Shingwauk Indian Residential School on March 20, 1965. It is possible that the 1919 silent feature staring Nell Shipman was shown for the reason its images and narratives might contribute to the IRS student's engagement with a symbolic landscape that was decidedly Canadian. There is no evidence to suggest that this version of the film was not exhibited, and that an IRS employee would screen a Canadian-centric film makes sense considering aims to assimilate the children into a specifically Canadian culture. Additionally, evidence shows that silent films, though exhibited infrequently, were not entirely avoided. As I mentioned already, former IRS student Basil Johnston, references the exhibition of silent features at the Garnier Residential School, a mere 192 kilometers away from the school in Sault Ste. Marie, in the late 1940s (*Johnston* 63).

Considering the frequent exhibition of films produced by Universal Pictures and distributed by Sovereign Films Ltd—a company directly linked to Shingwauk Indian Residential School—it is also possible that Universal's 1953 production of *Back to God's Country* was screened. In comparison to the 1919 edition, the film simplifies the narrative, essentially presenting two white-men, one good and one bad, in a battle of wits and physicality. It sheds its Canadian heritage, centering on an American schooner captain, Peter Keith, deep in a fictional northern village. Having collected a shipment of furs, and preparing to return to Seattle with his wife Dolores, Keith is thwarted by Paul Blake, a miscreant local who plans to steal his merchandise. Blake schemes to murder Keith, convincing him to run an errand deep in the wintery and desolate wilderness. He sends an "Eskimo" assassin after him, but the murder is unsuccessful. Returning to town, the two men engage in a lengthy fistfight, leaving Keith with a broken leg. Via dogsled, Delores and Keith arduously journey to a distant outpost in search of medical attention. An "Eskimo" is sent to kill the couple, but fails to do so. Blake pursues the couple

himself, catching up with them only to be killed by Wapi the wild and violent dog loyal only to Delores.

In IRS context, the film's positioning of the Inuit characters is noteworthy. With the exception of the man hired by Blake to kill Keith, the "Eskimos" in the film exists silently in the background serving the white traders and their families. A clear hierarchal order is asserted throughout that sees and promotes the idea that the Inuit characters as entirely subordinate. In the IRS context the film, echoes the system's agenda; its benefit, other than in providing a recreational activity for the students, forces their encounter with the idealized outcome of assimilation, one that pictures them as servants to the dominant white culture. Again, there are pernicious motives in the pleasure of viewing, as entertainment in the IRS context functions to remind students of the burden of inequality they are forced to carry.

The 1919 edition of *Back to God's Country* is notable because of its status as a canonical work of Canadian cinema. With its national interests, it outlines a specific set of parameters around Canadian identity and, for this reason, was potentially considered an important film by school administrators. At the time, 16mm distribution companies such as Sovereign Films Ltd. and General Films offered a wide selection of rentals, ensuring IRS schools predominantly exhibited popular films produced outside of Canada. Such a culturally specific screening as *Back to God's Country* (1919), then, stands out; its exhibition arguably reflects an effort to inject Canadian content into a filmic schedule typically structured around American and sometimes British cinema.

The film opens framing a Chinese man, Shan Tung, and his dog, Tao, trudging through a wintery scene. They enter a lively saloon. Quickly, the bar patrons berate Tung, cutting off his hair, murdering him, and then leaving his vengeful dog to travel north to the edge of the Artic Sea. The plot then turns to Dolores Lebeau, an animal loving young woman who lives with her father in the Canadian wilderness. Shortly hereafter, Rydel, the film's villain appears, lusting after Dolores, and then murdering her father. Dolores quickly moves to the city with her fiancé, Peter Burke, but eventually the two find themselves on a ship headed to the Artic Sea. However, not until the journey has commenced do they realize that Rydel is the ship's captain. Rydel stages an accident that purposely injures Peter, forcing Delores to escape off the boat, which, by this time, is

stuck in Artic ice. She eventually befriends a dog, "Wapi the Killer," who turns out to be descendant of Shan Tung's dog Tao, and who helps her escape Rydel. Aside from the melodramatic narrative, the film clearly seeks to visualize the Canadian landscape for its viewer, to construct its character as an arduous, yet beautiful, environment, one ominously void of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people.

Scholars have often discussed *Back to God's Country* (1919) in these nationalist historical terms, but none more poignantly than Christopher Gittings, who calls it a "disturbing cultural construction of Canadian Nation as a white homosocial entity that does violence to racial and sexual otherness" (21). He goes on to state that the

> white Anglo-Protestant male is the term of identity in this film, he is the measure, the standard for identification between audience and screen, spectator and nation. His is the controlling, objectifying gaze that reads woman's sexual difference as lack, and interprets ethnic and racial difference as inferiority, another type of lack, a lack of 'human', read 'white', qualities...Canada in *Back to God's Country* is...haunted by its others, in this case the white woman, the Inuit woman and the Chinese man. The camera denies these others subject formation; they remain spectacles looked at through a white male camera eye, subalterns subjected to humiliation, abuse and, in the case of the 'Chinaman', death. In this cinematic Canada difference is represented as something to be eradicated. (21-22)

While the film engaged these eradicative concepts, allegorizing them, the system's culturally genocidal efforts can be understood as one form of their institutional application. In other words, the IRS system manifested racist colonial ideologies, it was a weapon employed to eradicate Indigenous difference, an assimilative tool designed to realize racist settler colonial ideals that were culturally promoted through films such as this one.

That school authorities would choose to exhibit *Back to God's Country* (1919) suggests they saw the value in appealing to this mythological Canadian history in order to assert the system's educational purposes. This is "God's Country," the film states, thereby bolstering the Christian and State authority that was imprisoning the students and solidifying an ideological and mutually supportive partnership between media and IRS operations. If students could momentarily peer through the "white homosocial gaze,"

perhaps they would more easily submit to the colonial terms of their ascribed inequality. Or, perhaps it was hoped the recreational nature of film could be utilized to encourage IRS students to be entertained by the film's view of non-white peoples as "something to be eradicated."

The film does, however, offer its residential school audience negative portrayals of settler Canadians, specifically in the character of Rydel. Through him, settler men are tethered to concepts of evil and wrongdoing. For instance, Rydel is physically and psychologically violent to those around him. The film even goes so far as to associate these concepts with Canadian institutional powers. Rydel, for example, after having murdered an officer of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, adorns the officer's iconic Mountie uniform, as if to suggest that just below the surface of this attire and the state power it symbolizes exists incredible violence and injustice. Considering that in 1933 the RCMP was commissioned to force First Nations, Inuit, and Métis families to send their children to residential schools, this particular articulation of systemic violence is especially relevant.

Yet, the extent to which this type of subversive message is parlayed to the children represents the nagging and difficult question of this dissertation. Certainly, as Gittings's reading suggests, the film's obsession with Anglo-Protestant male identity as ultimately benevolent likely makes it difficult for the average viewer to locate its more subtle criticisms of the culture it is representing. It seems most probable that Rydel's ideological function in the film is a redemptive one, working to promote colonial power rather than diminish it. Rydel serves as the film's idealized white Canadian man, constructed as an evil for good white Canadians to thwart. In doing so, the film paradoxically suggests that the very people complicit in a colonial eradication of difference are simultaneously heroic figures who should be rewarded for punishing extreme immorality.

Gittings further identifies *Back to God's Country* (1919) as a colonial film, describing it as representing the "ideological conflict between a white patriarchal Canadian Colonial Nationalism and racialized, ethnicized and gendered others" (21). The title verifies this reading with its proclamation that Canada is God's country, an articulation of the colonializing impulse to simply assume the legitimacy of imperial dominion over the land. That IRS schools would show interest in a film invested in such

colonial perspectives makes sense, and carries forward the system's problematic conception of cultural assimilation as a remedy to colonial occupation.

More generally, scholars have investigated cinema's colonial use in many extensive and informative studies. In their book *Projecting Empire: Imperialism and Popular Cinema*, James Chapman and Nicholas Cull understand the history of film as a predominantly colonial one, considering its persistent application in support of imperial economies via the global reach of its communicative capacities as a mass media. They write:

> from its outset cinema has been a vehicle for disseminating images and ideologies of empire. Some of the earliest 'topicals' – short film records of newsworthy events – were of imperial spectacles such as the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897 and the Delhi Durbar of 1903. Imperial subjects were a natural for the travelogues, or 'scenics,' that provide a staple of early film exhibition. They impressed audiences with their images of imperial splendor and brought pictures of exotic lands and customs to the patrons of the cinematograph. At the same time early cinematographers were involved in the propagation of imperial propaganda. The Spanish-American War (1898) and the South African War (1899-1902) were the first to be covered by film cameramen. (1)

These colonially specific applications of the medium are a part of IRS curricula, and perhaps none so clearly express this heritage as an exhibition of the National Film Board of Canada's 1953 production, *Canada at the Coronation* (1953). Students at the Beauval Indian Residential School watched this newsreel-esque film, and experienced the pageantry of British Imperialism filmed and disseminated on a global scale. A 1957 school publication, distributed not only to the students, but to the people of Beauval Saskatchewan and its outlying areas, quotes students apparently describing their experience as one with "a rich film, in color." They go on to state that it "gave us the illusion of being in London when our queen was crowned" (*Editor* 1957). I suspect, considering that this publication was reaching a local public audience, that the student's reaction to the film is highly censored, or potentially written entirely by school authorities. It nonetheless informs analysis in multiple important ways. Firstly, we must take note of the pronoun "our" in reference to "our queen" which suggests the students'

ostensibly understand their position as subjects of the British Empire. It is not just Canada that is assimilating them, but the British Empire as well. Secondly, the "illusion of being in London" positions the film's exhibition as a way to circumvent geographical space, to transcend the distance of empire and to express its far-reaching power and influence over their existence. And thirdly, the film presents an imperial pageantry verbosely and propagandistically displaying a large and highly orchestrated rendering of imperial power. This last point is particularly important, considering that the British Empire at this time was well into its decline, and would have been interested in associating itself with the idea of stability.

Aesthetically, the film looks like Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1935). The screen is flooded with an extravagant imperial decorum; gold chariots, crowns, ornate churches, and monuments; all of which overwhelm its audience with a strong sense of a modern, economically successful, and powerful culture. The students, I believe, were meant to see this as evidence of their need to assimilate, and ideologically functioned to verify that their cultures were by comparison small, weak, and primitive. The magnitude of the British imperial citizenry is fully on display when the camera pans through a seemingly never-ending sea of white people all beholding and cheering for the spectacle of their superior culture. In an insulting final turn, the film alerts its imprisoned, captive audience of IRS students to the paradox of the empire's allotted freedoms. "Here in the heart of the Commonwealth of nations," the narrator states,

> the great sound of the multitude shouting for the Queen is echoed around the world. In swelling unison the thousands on Canada's Parliament Hill join their cheers to the mighty voice of all her realm. Theirs is the voice of free peoples, freely pledging loyalty to a common ideal, a common heritage, a common tie. God Save the Queen.

Indeed, God Save the Queen, the narrator tells the IRS inmates who were referred to by number rather than name. The film promised freedom to young people denied all access to their traditions and cultures, and subjected to a litany of mental, physical, sexual, and emotional abuses. Plainly, none of this freedom pertains to the children who can at best only echo the film's script to serve the vanity of their captors.

In one way, it is possible that the exhibition of this film was born out of the

teacher's, or the NFB projectionist's, desire to share a naïve pride in Canadian and British culture. Of course images like this would have been utterly mainstream and widely seen, and in conjunction with their celebratory nature, they do not offer the dominant Canadian citizen much reason to question their contents. Certainly, though, the film takes on a different meaning and poignancy when shown in an IRS institution. The film's imagery and propaganda would work to convince students that their imprisonment, though painful, was in fact a road to a freedom offered by Canada or the British Commonwealth.

This was but one of many colonially inflected exhibitions within the IRS system. Colonial uses of film and moving images consistently point to the use of images and narratives to solicit specific, but not guaranteed, responses from oppressed spectators. In his book *Colonial Cinema in Africa: Origins, Images, Audiences*, Glen Reynolds points out that this conception of colonized spectator and their internalization of images and narratives was often referred to by colonists as the "'magic bullet' theory of mass culture and audience reception, arguing for the causal link between projected images and induced behavior" (14). Yet, the interpretive freedom of the spectator is, of course, a challenge to such efforts. James Burns nuances the complex agency of the colonized spectator as in tension with the simplicity of intent behind colonial films and exhibition. "Because film developed such a significant presence in colonial society," he argues,

> contemporary observers debated its influence endlessly. And viewed from the present, it remains difficult to evaluate what effect film had on colonial audiences…one thing that can be said with confidence is that film allowed colonial peoples to conceptualize hybrid forms of identity. This development ran contrary to the expectations of some elites in Great Britain, who had hoped that cinema would strengthen the imperial connection by propagating British values and making colonial audiences into consumers of British products. To some extent these hopes were realized. Elites in many territories expressed a patriotic preference for English rather than American films, and audiences throughout the empire demonstrated an affection for such venerable institutions as the Royal Navy and the British Monarchy. Yet the movies disseminated a bewildering array of symbols and images which audience appear to have rummaged selectively for relevance and meaning. (8)

As Burns also notes about colonial uses of film, regardless of how clearly colonial ideology is expressed, the individuals in the audience always retain a level, no matter how slight, of interpretive freedom. And, though the IRS system tried to limit these interpretative freedoms by repeatedly exposing students to stereotypical images of their peoples and cultures, student accounts demonstrate that this did not entirely foreclose on their spectatorial agency. IRS film exhibition could not guarantee that its racist perspectives would be successfully fully imprinted on the students or that the images and narratives would automatically induce behaviour according to the norms of the dominant Canadian culture.

On the one hand, the fact that IRS students watched a large number of Westerns, in conjunction with the numerous examples in which former students recall wanting to play the role of the cowboy during imaginative play, suggests that in many cases the children were viewing the films as they were intended to be seen and interpreted. Many survivor testimonies state that they aligned with the "good guys" and despised the "bad guys." Jim Miller identifies this trend in his research:

> Alfred Scow, who was the First Indian called to the bar in British Columbia, recalled that at Alert Bay School the children often 're-enacted some of the more dramatic scenes of the movie and of course we played cowboys and Indians, Everyone wanted to be a cowboy; no one wanted to be an Indian. (281)

The children were, as Miller shows, "schooled" by the film in the direction of colonial imperatives. The long-term effects of these films in facilitating assimilation is complex and difficult to trace, but in this case, the solicitation of such reactions suggests that film as an assimilative tool did contribute to a degree of success. Yet, Miller also points out that

> on occasion, however, film night could give rise to unexpected demonstrations of Aboriginal solidarity. When an Oblate school showed *Custer's Last Stand* on Sunday evening, the auditorium erupted with cheers when the cavalry's leader died full of arrows. (281)

The autonomy of spectatorship clearly remains in play here, and this example is definitely reflective of the colonial application of cinema, no matter how didactic, failing to resolutely contain the interpretive agency of the students.

Produced in 1936, *Custer's Last Stand* (1936) is a paragon of the type of stereotypical, racially and culturally insensitive films I have been discussing. Yet another film of the Western genre, *Custer's Last Stand* portrays "Indian" characters partaking in the patterns of cultural misrepresentation common to such movies. Early in the film, the "Indians" engage in a violent conflict with a caravan of white travellers. "We'll take their scalps," says their leader, as they head towards the caravan "whooping" along the way. A chaotic gunfight ensues. The "Indian" characters are the clear aggressors here; they are hostile and violent, while the Americans are simply trying to survive the fray. Because the Americans are outnumbered, one of their men disguises himself by taking a headdress from a fallen "Indian." On horseback, he takes a small boy from the caravan, whom he knows plays the trumpet, to the edge of the battle. He asks the child to play the "cavalry call" in order to trick the Indigenous characters into thinking the cavalry is coming, and hopefully scare them off. The film here positions the white man as much more clever than the brutal and savage "Indians," who are easily duped by such a ploy. These types of narrative insinuations thus operate to support the IRS curricula. Yet, as we see in Miller's account, despite the clear affiliation the film has with white culture, it failed, in this case, to encourage students to empathize with the white characters as their teachers would have wanted.

Bev Sellars, an IRS survivor, points to a further nuance and complexity of spectatorship in this context, recalling that "the media and its messages had devastating effects on me" (81). Discussing an exhibition of *Beautiful British Columbia* (1940), she remembers noticing that

> all the people on camera were White, and they were inviting other people the British Columbia to witness the beauty of it. I couldn't have been more than eight years old, and I could form the right questions then, but, basically, I found myself thinking, "Where do I fit in this society?" I couldn't understand why there was no mention of Indian people, and I put as much thought into it as an eight-year-old could. The words "invisible" and "undesirable" in this context hadn't yet made it into my vocabulary. (90)

This film was produced by the Government of British Columbia Travel Bureau, and satisfied their mandate to create materials that would "'assemble, classify, and distribute

information, and conduct general publicity and advertising'" (*Mattison qtd. in Gasher* 41). In the IRS context, it is difficult to interpret this film as anything other than an articulation meant to show students an idealized version of the dominant colonial society. Yet, Sellars picks up on the absence of her people, noticing that this visualization of British Columbia is populated entirely by white Canadians. Participate in our white, Eurocentric culture, the film advertises to its dominant audience. When exhibited in the IRS context, the whiteness of this Canadian culture is amplified, and rather than idealizing this society for the students, it instead affectively solicits a painful sense of loss. A seemingly innocent tourist film here works to remind students that they do not fit in this society because they are not white, this is not their land and never was, and that they are invisible and undesirable.

Sellars's reference to an exhibition of an Elvis Presley film also demonstrates a commonality amongst stereotypes to which the students were exposed. The emphasis on animality, particularly the metaphor of the Indian as equal to or less than a dog, appears more than once in her accounts. She recalls,

> one Saturday, we were all excited because we were told that we were going to be shown an Elvis Presley Movie. A lot of girls were crazy about Elvis. The show was a western, but I don't remember the name of it…we were all enjoying the movie until I heard Elvis say something like "I'd rather kiss a dog than an Indian." It was like it reached out of the screen and slapped me…I mentioned this to Violet Stump and she said, "I remember that." We were absolutely feeling ashamed about ourselves as "Indians," and this celebrity, who a lot of people were absolutely crazy about confirmed to the world that Indians were not even as a good as dogs. (82)

We see here how the phenomenon of celebrity once again becomes an important part of constructing film's authority, and these stereotypes are legitimated through the added credibility of cultural notoriety. It is not just that the student encounters this damaging metaphor, but when they hear Elvis speak it, its power is magnified.

The idea of the "Indian" as dog comes up again when Sellars's suggests that film's ability to shame the IRS audience appeared to inform the school's exhibition schedule:

> Most movies we watched on Saturday Nights at the Mission reinforced the myth that being Indian was something to be ashamed of. One movie, it could have been

> *The Silent Enemy* (1930), showed an elderly Indian woman who had been thrown out of her teepee because she was too old to help with the family. The rest of the tribe did not want her around anymore. One scene showed her fighting with the dogs for scraps of food that were tossed her way. (81)

Even "Indians" treat each other like dogs, the film suggests to the children. The Indigenous woman as dog metonymically implies that all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples are on the fringes of society, living off of what they can scrounge from the dominating group.

The consistency with which the metaphor of the 'Indian' as dog arises suggests that the IRS system was tapping into longstanding stereotypical patterns of representation in order to inform its exhibition choices. The derogatory implications of these terms were of course generated by the dominant culture in order to marginalize colonized peoples. Robert Stam and Ella Shohat speak to film as perpetuating the colonial terms of oppression by engaging a dominant audience so to encourage public acceptance of a perceived right to hegemonic cultural positions: "within hegemonic discourse every subaltern performer/role is seen as synecdochally summing up a vast but putatively homogenous community" (183). In this case, if First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples can be aligned with, and metaphorically homogenized, as dogs, perhaps film, while using this imagery to justify colonial oppression in the minds of its dominant audience, could also be used to persuade IRS students to understand themselves as animals to be domesticated.

On a practical level, the system's colonial application of cinema is unique in that it was ultimately quite disorganized and, as a result, predominantly relied upon popular, instead of educational, cinema to serve its ideological agenda. It is for this reason that attempting to understand the intent behind its use as an educational tool involves discerning the thematic patterns informing the context of exhibition. By comparison, other historical instances of colonial applications of visual media were far more deliberate and organized. In Africa, film was imposed upon marginalized cultures and peoples in relation to a government-mandated agenda. For example, the Bantu Education Kinema Experiment (1935-1937) involved using cinema in much more blatantly educational and culturally focused ways. The government utilized mobile projectionists

to employ film in 'educating' the Bantu peoples of South Africa in ways that would be desirable to the colonial economy. Here film was being used to disrupt the agricultural labour heritage of the Bantu people in the hopes of reorienting their labour skills in the service of the British wool and mining industries. Films were explicitly didactic and often non-fictional. In doing so, it was hoped that British Imperialism in South Africa would be supplied with a steady flow of cheap, exploitable labour (*Windel* 210). Filmmakers were even commissioned by the British government to make films about African culture that would serve this purpose. Again, the principles of colonial media seek a spectatorial response that incorporates the colonized into the occupying culture in ways beneficial to its socio-economic drives. The IRS system was undertaking a similar methodology, but doing so with commercial entertainment feature-length genre films not necessarily produced for this specific purpose.

It is worth noting here, however, that educationally, the IRS system pursued similar labour-oriented goals, placing a pedagogical emphasis on molding First Nations as a lower tier working class that would serve the Canadian economy. As many scholars have observed, IRS curricula considered academic subjects as secondary to labour training. As Andrew Woolford explains,

> work discipline became more narrowly focused in the early twentieth century in the United States and soon thereafter in Canada as racist evolutionary thinking became dominant among the respective Indian Bureaucracies. Indigenous children were no longer viewed as blank slates on which civilization could be written; instead, they were understood to be bound by their Indigeneity and therefore only able to move so far along the path toward civilization. For this reason, vocational training was prioritized. (156)

Given the financial strain the IRS system was under throughout the entirety of its existence, it is clear that the government did not perceive a need to fund a colonial film unit that would make films specifically for IRS audiences. Although a few movies that roughly fit this description do exist, they always use the setting of the IRS system, or a positive conception of aboriginal assimilation, not to educate IRS students, but rather the dominant Canadian audience on how to understand First Nations within a racist framework. The National Film Board of Canada's 1955 production *No Longer Vanishing*

(1955), for example, which I will discuss in greater detail in the following chapter, frames First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people as common labourers, presenting this idea to the dominant Canadian audience in an effort to foster acceptance of the racially oriented two-tiered labour narrative mentioned above.

The IRS system's colonial use of film is therefore unconventional. Void of funding for productions that could be designed to elicit a specific reaction from the colonized spectator, teachers and administrators were left to draw upon the materials that were available to them. This represents an important distinction, as the products of often American-made popular culture become highly relevant pieces of colonial propaganda within the IRS system.

Colonialism, of course, extends beyond North America, and film within the IRS system needed to teach the children to adopt these perspectives on a global scale. In order to tackle the subject of the "East," for example, *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) was screened on March 22 1969 at St. Phillips Residential School, in the northern community of Fort George, Quebec. Located on the eastern shore of James Bay, the school was at this time undergoing a process that would see the government take over its operations in full by April 1st of that year. Though the Anglican Church was no longer running the school, they maintained their religious presence there, ensuring that those imprisoned would continue to feel the weight of an Eurocentric Christian order.

The film deals at length with the idea of cultural difference from the perspective of a white male British character obsessed with mastering the cultural identity of "Arabia." While Lawrence always retains the privilege born out of his British citizenship, his assumed right to this privilege becomes less clear as he begins operating as a hybrid British/Arab person. Dressing in the attire of the marginalized culture, living amongst marginalized populations and fighting alongside them, he begins to isolate himself from his Western colleagues. This is demonstrated at his funeral early in the film as his British and American counterparts struggle to define his life with any type of clarity. They only seem capable of arguing over who knew Lawrence well enough to make an accurate comment. As a result, he is described as at once a "scholar, poet, and mighty warrior" to the dismay of some, and "the most shameless exhibitionist since Barnum and Bailey" to the dismay others. The film emphasizes the idea that cultural identity is constructed

rhetorically: a version of oneself that can be crafted through written, visual, and oral histories. Later in the film, Sharif Ali cites the importance of knowledge production to colonialism when he tells Lawrence that "truly for some men nothing is written unless they write it."

In the IRS context, it is questionable whether the students would have interpreted the film in this way. Likely, many of the students were happy to settle in and absorb the true excitement of Lawrence's adventure. Yet, the film's emphasis on constructing and disrupting cultural identities certainly means it was an ideal choice to accommodate assimilative curricula that sought to rewrite the children's cultures by reorienting their looks and manners. It appeals to the idea that colonial authorities have the right to reshape the identity of the other, to exist amongst their peoples and dress in their cultural garb while retaining a sense of colonial superiority and an ability to lead them. In other words by adopting the "identity" of the Other, the film participates in the tradition of the "western historicizing consciousness, to appropriate and control the Other" (*Ashcroft* 160). Like the white-boys raised "Indian" in *The Savage* (1952) and *The Light in the Forest* (1958), the IRS students find in Lawrence another white-man out-othering the "Other," dictating the terms and markers of their ascribed and subordinate cultural identities.

Lawrence's position as a heroic figure further evidences the film promoting the themes and patterns I believe were informing the exhibitive choices of IRS authorities. Although many scholars have discussed Lawrence's descent into madness, arguing that it positions the film as a critique of white colonial authority,[11] Lawrence as a hero, I think, far outweighs this descent. In other words, it seems much easier to view Lawrence as a heroic figure whose actions ultimately suggest marginalized cultures as in need of such colonial leadership, rather than understanding his pursuits in anti-colonial terms.

Ella Shohat discusses this identity construction as it presents itself in *Lawrence of Arabia* and other colonial films. She traces the history of Western cinema, arguing that

> in the manner of Western historiography, Eurocentric cinema narrates penetration into the Third World through the figure of the "discoverer." In most Western

[11] See Alexander Lyon Macfie's article "Representations of *Lawrence of Arabia*," in which he outlines this argumentative history of *Lawrence of Arabia* as an anti-colonial film. (84)

> films about the colonies such as *A Bird of paradise, Wee Willie Winkie* (1937), *Black Narcissus* (1947), *The King and I* (1956), and *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), the status of hero falls to the voyager (often a scientist) who masters a new land and its treasures, the value of which the "primitive" residents had been unaware. It is this construction of consciousness of "value" as a pretext for (capitalist) ownership that legitimizes the colonizer's act of appropriation. In *Lawrence of Arabia* and the *Indiana Jones* series of the late 1980s, the camera relays the hero's dynamic movement across a passive, static space, gradually stripping the land of its "enigma" as the spectator wins a visual access to oriental treasures through the eyes of the explorer-protagonist. In *Lawrence of Arabia*, a romantic "genius" inspires and leads the passive Arab masses, an interpretation of history that Arab historians have vigorously challenged. The unveiling of the mysteries of an unknown space becomes a rite of passage allegorizing the Western's achievement of virile heroic stature. (145-146)

While still accounting for variations in spectator experience, we nonetheless can, I believe, claim that by exhibiting *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), the system sought to engage students in the common interpretive approaches Shohat identifies. The ease with which the spectator can engage in sympathetic associations with the heroic adventurer is clearly informing IRS exhibition choices. Importantly, if the student is engaged in these simple and common patterns of colonial spectatorship, then it is possible to also understand the film as a vessel through which more complicated and insidious colonial rhetoric can be presented and psychologically reinforced in the minds of a marginalized audience.

For example, early in the film when Lawrence and his Arab guide have set up a small camp after a day of travel, their discussion of cultural difference clearly reveals the film's ideological intentions. They sit isolated in a vast desert. The guide then asks Lawrence if he truly is a "British Officer," doing so in a tone that emphasizes intrigue and curiosity. Their conversation is as follows,

> Guide: Truly now, you are a British Officer?
>
> Lawrence: Yes.
>
> Guide: From Cairo?
>
> Lawrence: Yes.

Guide: You did not ride from Cairo?

Lawrence: No. Thank heaven. It's 900 miles. I came by boat.

Guide: And before? From…Britain?

Lawrence: Yes

Guide: Truly?

Lawrence: From Oxfordshire

Guide: Is that a desert country?

Lawrence: No, a fat country. Fat people.

Guide: You are not fat?

Lawrence: No. I'm different.

Everything the Arab character utters comes in the form of a question. The film sets up a bifurcation that situates Lawrence as capable of answering his companion's questions as a possessor of knowledge, while the Arab character is only capable of asking about things, which works to define him in relation to a general ignorance. This point is reasserted as the tone in which the subordinate character speaks is one of uncertainty, a tone that is compounded by the fact that his questions reveal he is unaware that Britain is not a "desert country," or that travelling "900 miles" by foot or camel might be unfeasible. He even has trouble piecing together that Lawrence is from Britain despite the fact that he begins the conversation inquiring as to Lawrence's position as a "British Officer."

There is a power dynamic being constructed here, one that unsurprisingly situates the Arab culture as inferior to that of the West. As the entirety of the film is littered with instances that visually and rhetorically operate in a similar fashion, it is clear that its general effort seeks to cement this type of cultural hierarchy. The educational value of the film meets the needs of the IRS system's ideological mandate by visualizing the West as culturally and intellectually superior. Because the students encounter similar moments throughout the entirety of the film, they are prodded over and over again to view the power of the West as a type of supreme entity.

My intentions are not to present readings of *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) that are all that groundbreaking, but rather to demonstrate the ease with which the film's narrative can become applicable in the IRS context. The residential school and its colonial

framework encouraged students to simultaneously associate themselves with the Western "hero" and the subordinated Arab. On the one hand, Lawrence became symbolic of a white culture that the students did not experience. The reality of their situation was violent, and the film, as did the many exhibited within the system more generally, provided students a mythical, idealized image of Western culture and the white men who operated it. It implied that while their experience was abusive and culturally genocidal, the reality of the West is a heroic and technologically advanced leader of a global imperial economy and culture. On the other hand, these films may have encouraged students to view other 'Othered' nations and peoples through the racist frameworks of colonial rhetoric and imagery. *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), like the Hollywood Westerns repeatedly exhibited, functioned colonially by repeatedly nudging the students towards racist perspectives of non-white cultures, while simultaneously hyperbolizing the positive attributes the West perceives in itself. Assimilation into Canadian culture involved, as we see here, a substantial education in the rhetorical application of racism.

Not limiting itself to the East/West cultural bifurcation, the schools utilized films depicting 'Othered' nations all over the world. *The Naked Jungle* (1954), exhibited in 1966 at the Shingwauk Indian Residential School in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, takes place in an unnamed country in South America. Christopher Leningen, played by Charlton Heston, has established a successful cocoa plantation. In his loneliness he marries Joanna, played by Eleanor Parker, but does so "by proxy." In other words, they are married before they meet each other. The film begins depicting Joanna's arduous journey into the "jungle" to meet her new husband.

Christopher is fluent in the language of the "natives," and is temporarily isolated from all aspects of his own culture save its economic and manufacturing machinations abroad. The arrival of Joanna functions to remind him of his American roots, forcing him to confront the fact that he has become, in some ways, dangerously integrated into the wrong culture. Similar to *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962), the film suggests that the process of assimilation is unidirectional—that white people who live the "othered" culture have, in fact, fallen into an ambiguous state existing in-between both cultures. Conversely, the film suggests that the "natives" who successfully veil themselves in the norms of the West, such as Lenigen's educated assistant, are able to ascend into a modern world of

reason and rationality. Christopher has filled his mansion with expensive furnishings and products, but seems to have lost a sense of how to utilize or appreciate them. For example, he owns a grand piano that apparently took incredible efforts transport to such a remote location. Yet, he has no idea how to play it. Joanna shows up to play a slightly out-of-tune version of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, recolonizing this environment with the tastes and culture of the West in an ameliorative attempt to bring Christopher back into what the film perceives as the proper culture.

Similar to the stereotypical platitudes cinematically and literarily framing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, those obsessively presented to IRS students, the film takes great lengths to consistently remind its audience that the "natives" are to be viewed as laughable in their ineptitude, and disturbing in their cultural practices. Joanna's arrival to the planation's marina poignantly marks the film's representational subordination of these characters. As the boat leaves her in the jungle, and she watches it disappear into the distance, a group of "natives" stand just behind her, peering at her menacingly. While she stands with her back to them, the soundtrack is bright and happy. The moment she turns around and visually confronts them the music immediately strikes a harsh and notably minor key. A succession of close-ups follow this, focusing on tattooed faces, necks adorned with bones, one character with warts all over his face, and another ominously eating pineapple with a rusty knife, the juices flowing crudely out of his mouth as he chews.

Once Joanna enters the house, a servant shows her to her room. Joanna asks, "do you speak English Sala?" Sala responds, "Yes ma'am." Joanna then asks, "what is Mr. Leningen doing in the jungle, to which Sala again says "Yes, ma'am." The realization that Sala does not speak English is presented here as a humorous moment, and mocking these characters allows the film to suggest that the very concept or existence non-Westernness is funny. Within the opening ten minutes of the film, the spectator learns that the native characters are to be both feared and laughed at. This message is the same as those the IRS students encountered in the literary representations of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis discussed earlier. IRS education through these materials is certainly establishing a pattern here: students are repeatedly exposed to a simplification of cultural difference that positions the West in contrast to its own representations of otherness in

order to ideologically justify a right to power.

Another film that was instrumentalized in this way is *Escape From Zahrain* (1962), shown at the Shingwauk Indian Residential School in 1966. The film takes place in the fictional state of Zahrain somewhere in the Arabian Peninsula and represents a type of pseudo-realism. Not simply does it imagine the people of the Middle East, but it also constructs a fictional place and culture to do so. Filmed in the Mojave Desert near Barstow California, the movie presented barren landscapes, keffiyehs and tan actors (a Russian and a bunch of Americans to be precise), in order to create its "Eastern" world. Zahrain was an entirely Western representation of Eastern cultures and thus functions to veil and generalize them. From chaotic and riotous street scenes, to military police, to men in thawbs, and keffiyehs, to desert landscapes, the film articulates Zahrain as most Hollywood films do: producing and disseminating Orientalized versions of othered cultures.

The film begins in the office of Zahrain's Head of State. In a discussion with one of his colonels, he ponders how best to deal with the main character Sharif, a social rights activist who has been imprisoned and is awaiting trial. He says

> there will be no trial, it would only provide Sharif a soapbox for his ideas, and have him incite the people. I don't want him asking embarrassing questions. Why aren't there more schools, what has happened to the hospitals I promised? What has become of the millions paid me by the oil companies? Well, these are questions not to be asked before the people.

The film characterizes this culture with a number of negative broad strokes. Social activism is to be suppressed, money is to be embezzled by those in power, schools and hospitals are of little concern, and finally, the only reason the country has any wealth is because of the presence of American oil companies. The film articulates an anti-democratic nation run by an authoritarian dictator situating it in opposition to the West, who, as is often the case in relation to North American settlers, are represented as the only party capable of making the land economically viable.

Sharif is positioned as a counterpoint to this image. He is consistently associated with Western ideals, allowing the film to suggest that Zahrainians engaged in a fight for democratic rights are more "Western" than the general populous they represent. This is

made clear after Sharif has escaped from prison and is attempting to leave the country. Having hijacked a van from a Nurse, the pace of the narrative slows while he and his colleagues make the long journey to the country's border. The nurse repeatedly challenges his commitment to violent uprising as a tool of achieving social justice. She states,

> So you just close your eyes to the things it doesn't suit you to know. You should have been where I was during your riots in September, in this city hospital. Oh it may have seemed very glorious out there in the streets, but when boys of 18 are dying in your arms it isn't so glorious.
>
> Sharif: They died because they could not bear any longer to see their people go hungry, dirty, uneducated, when ours is a rich country. Half our wealth is taken by foreigners, the other half is pocketed by our own corrupt officials, isn't it worth fighting to change that?
>
> Nurse: Not if it means wholesale killing. Besides our people aren't ready for your changes. They're children, they're ignorant, they're lazy.
>
> Sharif: Oh I see, you're one of our European Arabs.
>
> Nurse: I was educated in Europe. So were you.
>
> Sharif: Yes, but I didn't adopt their view of our people.

The characters begin by debating points of civil unrest and human rights in seemingly meaningful ways. However, their intelligence and rhetorical abilities are undermined when we learn that both were educated in Europe. In other words, the film posits that those capable of challenging the corruptness of Zahrain's government are only able to because of their "European" education. Just like the proposed function of the IRS system, the characters gain Western manners through education. Their academic achievements then position Western imperialism as a gift that enables them to "better" navigate their own culture corruptive forms of governance.

This film also brings the concept of hybrid identities to the IRS classroom, recoding the 'European Arab' as the colonized intellectual. Frantz Fanon recognizes such characters as the remnants of occupational colonialism. He states,

> the colonialist bourgeoisie, in its narcissistic dialogue, expounded by the members of its universities, had in fact deeply implanted in the minds of the colonized

> intellectual that the essential qualities remain eternal in spite of all the blunders men may make: the essential qualities of the West, of course. The native intellectual accepted the cogency of these ideas, and deep down in his brain you could always find a vigilant sentinel ready to defend the Greco-Latin pedestal. (11)

In their escape from Zahrain, the characters become part of a narrative in which colonized intellectuals are forced to leave the country, thus suggesting the East rejects citizens capable of aiding its imagined plight, those who are deemed more Western than the rest. Sharif's exodus representationally articulates the notion that his culture inhibits itself by resisting his respect for Western democratic ideals and norms; norms which, the film posits, are the tools of critique necessary if anyone is to question the country's dictatorial governance. The message presented to IRS students is in many ways quite simple: assimilate or suffer at the hands of your own cultures and peoples.

In utilizing film to demonstrate the colonial reach of Eurocentric populations, the system even went so far as to portray the dominant culture as capable of interplanetary colonization. In *Robinson Crusoe on Mars* (1964), for example, students continued to experience settler culture through the heroism and ingenuity of U.S. Commander Christopher Draper. He fits the mold of the superhuman white man, and has a knack for surviving in all sorts of turbulent circumstances. For example, when his oxygen tanks run empty, he accepts his impending death and chooses to fall asleep. However, he has done so fortuitously while lying next to a fire he started with a coal-like rock. The screen fades out, signifying the passage of time. The following shot frames an image of Draper's still, seemingly lifeless, body. A few seconds pass, and keen spectators notice he is still breathing. Draper wakes up, quickly realizes the rocks are capable of burning because they contain oxygen, which has enabled him to breath on Mars.

A similar circumstance occurs when he locates a much needed water source. In his search, he pauses, seemingly coming to terms, yet again, with certain death. Suddenly the ground gives way beneath him. He falls a good distance managing to cling onto the edge of a cliff. Dangling over an abyss, he pulls himself up to find not only a pool of water, but one that is full of edible plants. Unsurprisingly, the film narrates his white masculinity as the key ingredient in a process of frontier planetary conquest that finds its explorers capable of surviving in the harshest climates and against the worst odds. White men's

natural talent for exploration, it suggests, positions them as the first to inhabit everything regardless of circumstance. This is especially poignant in the IRS context when Draper states into his audio recorder: “I feel a little bit like Columbus, set down in a strange new land full of new wonders, new discoveries.”

When the film introduces the character Friday, he is depicted in the same generic “native” ways we have encountered over and over again in the IRS film schedules. He looks like he has been plucked out of a colonial textbook about Ancient Egypt. With tan skin, long black hair with short bangs, roman sandals, and a wrap-around skirt similar to the Egyptian Shendyt, Friday operates as a clear referent for the Western version “Middle Eastern” cultures. Draper is quickly able to view and treat Friday as a clear subordinate, and Friday is thus understood as the embodiment of the lengthy etymology of representing cultural difference in racist ways on film we have been discussing, and which dictated the types of films exhibited in the IRS system.

That IRS film exhibitions demonstrated a clear interest in exposing students to such colonial narratives suggests that its racially derogatory pedagogy extended beyond projecting images of “Indians” in Westerns. Instead, IRS authorities reveal the global nature of their efforts, informed by colonial histories all over the world. Just as the students took on the language and behaviours of the “cowboy” during imaginative play, learning the terms with which they could racially denigrate themselves, they were to learn the terms of colonial oppression of those oppressed like them. In other words, the IRS system’s use of film was not only about defining the “Indian” as savage and brutal, but encouraging the student to adopt a colonial perspective of the world, always viewing other marginalized cultures in a racist and subordinate manner.

In this chapter, I have attempted to identify patterns that can explain why certain films were exhibited and why their content might benefit the ideological aims of the IRS system. I have also tried to illustrate the colonial nature of these exhibition choices, and the thematic similarities amongst the many films discussed clarify a pattern of exhibitive intent. In the simplest sense, the notable amount of Hollywood Westerns shown in the schools articulates efforts towards the cultivation of a self-destructive impulse in the students, one that succeeded when they adopted the racist norms of films that celebrated cowboys and denigrated “Indians.” As I have argued above, these films were the

culmination of a lengthy history and tradition of oppressive visualizations of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and cultures.

I have also tried deal with the complexity of these spectatorial moments. Although I believe colonial uses of cinema remain highly invested in a cause and effect type of spectatorship, in which the content encourages the spectator to adopt certain behaviours beneficial to colonial discourses, spectatorship in and of itself represents extreme interpretive plurality and always reminds us that we are dealing with interpretive pressures rather than clear correlations. With this in mind, I have drawn our attention to a relentless exhibition schedule of cultural difference that undeniably sanctifies white culture by chastising all others. This means that these film schedules, though they did offer aspects of recreation and likely even some level of enjoyment to the students, are in reality an aggressive bearing down upon them with highly problematic narratives and ideologies. As Thomas King speaks of his own experience with filmic representations of his people, "the only thing film had to do was collect such materials and cobble them into a series of functioning clichés" (34). Film exhibition within the IRS system embodies this educational approach, exposing residential school students to

> a generalizing definition and valuation of difference, whether real or imaginary, [that worked] to the advantage of the one defining or deploying them, and to the detriment of the one subjugated to the act of definition, whose purpose is to justify (social or physical) hostility and assault (*Memmi* 100)

CHAPTER THREE

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No Longer Vanishing: Nationalism, Assimilation, and the National Film Board of Canada at Indian Residential School, 1939-1969

"No child nor adult needs to feel disadvantaged by lack of access to the mass media." *C.W. Grey, National Film Board Projectionist, 1973.*

"A free weekly service of film programs in 12 residential schools owning projection equipment was set up." *Charley Marshall*, *NFB Itinerant Projectionist*, *1948*.

In the coming pages, I trace the interactions between the IRS system, and the National Film Board of Canada (henceforth, NFB). A detailed investigation of this relationship does not exist, but considering the Film Board's dedication to enabling 16mm film exhibition in remote areas of the country, contact with IRS schools is unsurprising. Archival documents consistently show the NFB went to great lengths to ensure the availability of its materials not only in urban centers, but also in remote communities. At the time, emphasis on rural distribution would have facilitated unprecedented access to film in areas of the country that otherwise would only sporadically encounter the medium. This usually involved the deployment of "travelling projectionists" operating what they called "rural circuits," typically driving from town to town, exhibiting NFB films in churches, schools, community centers, and other appropriate venues. My research verifies that Indian Residential Schools can be considered among these spaces.

Film scholars are well aware of this distribution history, in part because there exists a wide-range of documents, housed within the NFB Archives and the Library and Archives Canada, regarding rural distribution. Such circuits are also mapped in academic works; "rural circuits" are repeatedly referenced throughout the handful of scholarly publications concerning the institution's history[12]. This unique distribution

[12] See Brian Low, *NFB Kids: Portrayals of Children by the National Film Board 1939-1989*, pg. 38.

system is an essential component of the history and development of the film board. To understand the early work of the NFB without accounting for the network of itinerant projectionists would be to ignore its most substantial form of contact with Canadian audiences. The institution itself even went so far as to glorify this history in its 1989 production, *The Movie Showman* (1989), which portrays the

> NFB's itinerant projectionists during the 40's and early 50's, who travelled throughout Canada, bringing films and discussions to rural communities. The film uses a mix of dramatic re-enactments with archival footage and interviews with veterans of the movie circuit to shed light on an important period in Canadian film history.

Referring to the projectionists as "evangelists" who were "doing something to strengthen the country," the film contributes to mythologizing early film board operations, framing its contributions to Canadian society and nationalism, and its prominent position in the history of Canadian cinema, in sacred terms. This sense of historical grandeur is further apparent when Gerry McLeod, the NFB representative for southwestern Manitoba between the years 1946-47, is interviewed. He articulates the idealized and commonly held opinion concerning the rural circuits, stating that the work of projectionists brought "people more closely in-touch with, not only Canada, but the world."

Of course, NFB films were also distributed to commercial movie theatres throughout Canada and the United states. However as Brian Low points out in his book *NFB Kids: Portrayals of Children by the National Film Board of Canada, 1939-1989*, these exhibitions "merely serviced a narrow band of the populace near the American border," and that "it was the organization and expansion of an existing network of itinerant 'showmen' that truly enabled the Film Board (sic) to consider itself national in scope" (38). In other words, it was the rural circuits that helped the NFB build its nationalist message and brand, its sense of itself as successfully speaking to the nation. He reiterates this point, stating that

> in Canada, the audience problem was resolved when a way was found to bring films to the remotest regions of the country, ensuring that the NFB experience would truly be a national one and that the film board would be[…]the eyes of the country as a whole. (37-38)

Numerous "Field Reports," submitted by NFB representatives and projectionists, confirm the institution's efforts to reach an audience that could be considered national in scope. The extensive reach of this distribution is verified by a 1955 NFB administrative file which contains key records. The documents point out that projectionists were stimulating "interest in film at the 6000 showing points throughout Canada through discussion of selected items" (*Bovard* 1955). The report differentiates the NFB from the commercial cinema that, as Peter Morris has stated, predominantly depended upon urban populations in order to make the "multiplication of movie theatres and the consequent growth of the film industry possible" (27). Given that most of Canada's population was, and remains, located along the American border, the NFB's emphasis on rural distribution substantially increased the presence of film exhibition throughout the country, not especially close to the U.S., and specifically in locations incapable of supporting a commercial cinema.

In 2007, Zoë Druick complicated this history in her book *Projecting Canada: Government Policy and Documentary Film at the National Film Board of Canada*, discussing the evolution of this distributional method:

> with the rural, school, industrial, and trade union circuits of the war period, the NFB had centralized and institutionalized the concept of non-theatrical film screenings. At the end of the war, as the film circuit funding dried up, local film councils were established across Canada with the sponsorship and participation of the NFB; the bulk of their showings were NFB films. (92)

Arguing that rural exhibition allowed, in some way, for non-theatrical cinema to be centrally controlled by, and understood as, the product of the federal government, Druick illustrates the substantial extent to which such media dissemination was rendered highly institutional in its perspective, and, ultimately, its assertion of governmental policy and authority.

In later years, rural distribution became essential in challenging the nationalist identity it initially sought to create. In their extensive and informative discussion of activist documentary at the NFB, Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendon Baker, and Ezra Winton cite the importance of this distribution to the institution's turn away from its role as a "world class propaganda maker during World War II" (*Walz qtd. in Winton* 409),

towards ideals of political mobilization amongst marginalized classes and peoples, specifically through a "twin movement" that would bring "both production and distribution to 'the people'" (*Winton* 409). Outlining the NFB's nationalist ideology, which the socially concerned film and media programs such as *Challenge for Change* and *Société Nouvelle* sought to disrupt, Waugh, Baker, and Winton reference the rural circuits as essential in constructing a Canadian identity that would function to "normalize" government propaganda:

> CFC/SN did not invent community distribution *ex nihilo*, but carried over many of the ideas and activities begun by its parent, the National Film Board. Early on, the NFB was mandated to exhibit films to communities across Canada, the audience the nation as a whole, at a time when reaching distant communities was difficult. Too many citizens were located in regional pockets without a sense of nation…Although community distribution was to create a 'two-way flow of information between government and citizen' (Druick 2007, 81), this communication was, it seems, mainly intended to reinforce the idea of nation in communities across Canada by, among other things, normalizing the idea of government programs. (*Winton* 409-410)

Scholars have, as we see here, come to similar conclusions concerning rural circuits, understanding them as actively attempting to situate all cultures in Canada within a nationalist register, populated by culturally appropriate images and signifiers meant to garner a spectator response that would in effect define "Canada to Canadians and to other nations" (*Mission* 2015). In many ways, the early years of the NFB are concerned with providing its audience content that would enable them to speak and think about their country in particular ways. The films initiated a conversation, but that conversation is meant to be limiting in its generative capabilities, and the audience, understood as "the nation as a whole," is rendered a body meant to rearticulate support of the institutionalized perspectives of the government, its economic, commercial, cultural, and colonial interests.

This approach to distribution fits the agenda of the IRS system in many ways. Most importantly, though, is that in conjunction with the system's subjection of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis students to Western education, the NFB provided images and

signifiers meant to be absorbed and responded to in ways that would encourage students to articulate notions of their Canadian-ness, rather than articulating themselves as part of their own inherited cultures. My point is simply that the history of this distribution consistently returns to a belief in a consolidated national audience, and in this we see that both the NFB and the IRS system shared what I suggest was an intense impulse to rigidly define cultural identity and practices through an emphasis on a national unity. This, of course, veiled the nuance, complexity, agency, and plurality of such complicated notions of culture, race, and society. The aim of the IRS system was to eliminate First Nations cultures by reforming its peoples as Canadian and, unsurprisingly, the NFB could facilitate this effort.

Though knowledge of this distribution history is, as I have demonstrated, well established and easily accessible, my work is the first to investigate the ways in which the NFB, and its approach to representing Canada, engaged the IRS system by supporting its pedagogical imperatives of assimilation and cultural genocide. This chapter demonstrates that the NFB's rurally focused methods of distribution included visits to residential schools. Not only is this the case, my research also shows that as distribution shifted away from the work of itinerant projectionist towards the ongoing development and sponsoring of local film libraries and societies, the presence of the NFB in IRS classrooms flourished. Excavating this information allows for an important reading of the complicated engagement between these two state-operated institutional organizations, as well as their mutual, and sometimes conflicting, cultural influences and effects.

I outline the ways in which these institutions interacted, questioning whether the NFB engaged IRS schools simply because its methods of distribution made it convenient to do so, or if this connection demonstrates a clear attempt on behalf of the NFB to aid or participate in the culturally destructive and assimilative policies of the residential schools. I turn to archival evidence to verify this relationship, as well as film analysis that engages the NFB productions exhibited in residential schools through the ideological parameters of the IRS system. This work will show that these two seemingly disconnected entities in fact shared a substantial, and ultimately supportive, relationship, and will offer another example of the ways in which engaging residential school history through an analysis of its general integration into Canadian culture is a productive critical approach.

Things are here complicated in that we are now dealing with two separate, yet, as I will show, intertwined, entities, which in and of themselves make complex contributions to concepts of culture, race, and society. We must ask, then, how does their partnership alter or facilitate their individual articulations and efforts? Understanding that the pedagogy of the IRS system was implementing a policy of "cultural genocide" (*Honouring the Truth* 55), and analyzing the NFB films exhibited as an important aspect of this mandate, we can begin to discern the specific type of "Canadianness" being offered to IRS students. From here we can think about the ways in which these institutions engaged in a complimentary relationship, always bracketed by its larger motivations towards cultural genocide through assimilation.

My arguments are informed by the idea that film exhibition within the problematic educational parameters of the IRS system, as they were implemented through the complex and dynamic modes of its day-to-day operations, imperatives, and practices, by virtue placed a greater focus on the racially inequitable and colonially inclined narratives of NFB productions. Therefore, any subversive qualities inherent in the films would be, in this institutional context, severely limited in their communicative efficacy. Undoubtedly, this has to do with the IRS system as an example of institutionalized discipline; in a Foucauldian sense, as "a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets…as an essential instrument for a particular end" (*Foucault* 215). NFB films exhibited in the IRS classroom were situated as part of this already existing disciplinarity, as part of a tightly controlled organizational process designed to manage the students' physical and mental capacities on a daily basis, to help push the student to the end of the assimilative process. I am thus working from a position that sees the IRS system's investment in the institutional disciplinarity of assimilation as having created an environment of heightened colonial ideology dedicated to the cultural genocide of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. This, of course, would alter film spectatorship and exhibition in the ways I have suggested.

Finally, I view the relationship between the NFB and IRS system as one invested in the destruction and production of a culture. To do this, I turn to Raymond Williams's sense of culture as a constitutive entity. This concept is important in understanding why

depriving residential school students the materials of their cultures was a devastating, and culturally genocidal, act. Williams theorizes that culture is

> a constitutive social process, creating specific and different 'ways of life,' which [through history] could have been remarkably deepened by the emphasis on a material social process, [but] were for a long time missed, and were often in practice superseded by an abstracting uni-linear universalism. (17)

In simple terms, the IRS system's practice of removing First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children from their homes, and communities, and forcing them to speak and act in Canadian ways, actively sought to deny their engagement with the materials necessary for the continuing generation of their own cultures. Most notably, the system actively suppressed Indigenous languages, making the children speak either English or French, a practice, which as I have already articulated, inflicted severe damage upon them.

This is notable for the reason that Williams extends his notion of culture as a generative social process to language, citing it as a "constitutive faculty," as an "entity that constitutes both parties as they communicate. Not simply as a tool for communication" (32). In this sense, the system needed to ensure that it deprived IRS students of all materials that would allow them to engage, and thus constitute their own cultures. The denial of language is, of course, highly important to cultural disruption, which is precisely why the IRS system disallowed the students to use their own upon entering the schools. The system can be understood as a cultural eraser, dependent upon entities such as the NFB, that would then help to substitute the student's inherited cultural discourse by offering new culturally constitutive materials—Williams would suggest in the form of new language, images, ideologies, traditions, etc. In other words, the NFB was not essential in a literal process of cultural deprivation, which was the task of the IRS system, but necessary in presenting surrogate, "socially constitutive," materials meant to sway the student's cultural articulations as generative in specifically Canadian ways.

Given that the history of the NFB repeatedly demonstrates its obsession with concepts of nation, we have to answer that its usefulness to the IRS system was in this culturally constitutive manner. As Christopher Gittings suggests, the NFB was creating a "culturally homogenous, unitary idea of nation," through "a white Anglo-Protestant or Anglo-Saxon, male camera eye that projects itself as the normative 'we' of the imagined

community of Canada" (8). "Although," he continues "the NFB [later] becomes a site of struggle for contested imaginings of nation where films such as *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance* interrogate and challenge hegemonic constructions of nation" (21), in its first two decades the institution surely "reproduces a nation of subjects who form a community of belonging to a specific imagining of Canadian nation" (20). If this is the Canada that the NFB was initially interested in representing, then of course, it is no surprise that its filmic content consistently supported notions of First Nations as outside of this Eurocentric, white-male, normative "we," which was predicated on similarly racist ideals, and would be useful to the IRS system.

For example, in 1957 at the Beauval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan, the students were shown the NFB production *No Longer Vanishing* (1955). This reference appears, in a student publication, under the heading "Best Films We Saw Since New Year's" (*Editor* 1957). The film presents a very positive image of Aboriginal assimilation, and seems, for the most part, entirely unaware of the inherent colonial rhetoric and impositions it projects. Of course, because the film was commissioned by the Indian Affairs Branch of the federal government, the authorities responsible for its production, I believe, knew precisely what it was seeking to accomplish; that is, to promote the cultural assimilation of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in benevolent terms to both Canadian and Indigenous audiences.

Looking at the film's production notes, however, we see that the NFB filmmakers naively undertook the project without accounting for the fact that inherent in their language and thought exists a common and pervasive pattern of asserting the identity of these cultures by projecting a false, but apparently concrete, knowledge of their history. An archived letter outlining what the film was to accomplish shows employees of the NFB came to the conclusion that they were responsible for the preservation of these cultures. The film was in turn framed by the idea that only the dominant Canadian culture and authorities were capable of documenting the complexity and nuance of these other cultures. They clearly saw themselves as preservationists, archiving important knowledge of Indigenous peoples, which they believed to be vanishing from all forms of knowledge and communication. In a self-congratulatory tone, they proclaim that, "if these films are

not made, the cultural patterns of the past will be lost. The longer these films are delayed the more difficult they are to make" (*NFB Employee* 1955).

When *No Longer Vanishing* (1955) was exhibited to the IRS student at the Beauval Indian Residential School, they encounter, on the one hand, an overt attempt on behalf of the Indian Affairs to brand government-enforced assimilation in positive terms. It was functioning as documented proof, verifying to the students that assimilating into Canadian culture was a necessary transition, and that in the process they would reap attendant benefits of modern technology and capitalist culture. On the other hand, the students would experience what I see as attempts to rebrand their cultural memory by consistently positioning the film as possessing the "true" knowledge of "Indian" cultures. We see the IRS system's forceful severing of the children from their cultures, supplemented through efforts to replace this knowledge with that produced by, in this case, the NFB. With its "Voice of God" narrator, the educational imperative of the film presents its information authoritatively, bearing down upon the student, by confidently declaring that its documentation of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis cultures is more informative than the child's own cultural experiences.

Attempting to reconstruct the cultural memory of marginalized subjects represents a pattern of colonial power, and at once offers insight into the systemic racism of the IRS system and the NFB, as well as nuancing how *No Longer Vanishing* (1955) was to operate in the residential school context. Exhibiting this film potentially sought to produce the subject's inability to recall their culture outside of the ways in which it is depicted by the hegemonic authority. Homi Bhabha, for example, speaks of such culturally disruptive efforts in relation to postcolonial theory, stating,

> the enunciation of cultural difference problematizes the binary division of past and present, tradition and modernity, at the level of cultural representation and its authoritative address. It is the problem of how, in signifying the present, something comes to be repeated, relocated and translated in the name of tradition, in the guise of a pastness that is not necessarily a faithful sign of historical memory but a strategy of representing authority in terms of the artifice of the archaic. That iteration negates our sense of the origins of the struggle. It undermines our sense of the homogenizing effects of cultural symbols and icons,

by questioning our sense of the authority of cultural synthesis in general. (34-35)

The film's imagining of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis cultures as a "pastness" is important to its ideological operations. There is no evidence to suggest that its historical representation of these cultures offers a "faithful" signifier. However, plenty of evidence is presented to verify its use of images of Indigenous peoples as an "artifice of the archaic," in order to signify and assert the authority of a modern and industrial colonial party. When the student encounters early sequences that depict Aboriginal peoples in a pre-colonial state, the film ensures they encounter evidence of a primitive, antiquated, society that, by comparison, frames Canada as an image of a new and modern industrial state. This juxtaposition argues that Canada is the rightful owner of not only the land, but also in an advanced state of civilization, a point used to justify the assertion hegemonic cultural authority. If this is an act of constructing a new cultural memory for the residential school student, it is not surprising that built into the narrative is the assumption of Western authority.

The film consistently engages this juxtaposition of past and present, a point repeatedly articulated by positioning images of a modern industrial Canada, and a nomadic, primitive, and rural "Indian." This agenda is immediately stated in the first image we encounter. A drawing appears of First Nations man wearing, what is supposed to be, but the film does not verify is, traditional garb. As the credits roll, the man's cultural attire fades away, and is replaced with a superimposed Canadian military uniform. The title appears over this altered image, and film's central thesis is clearly implied: because First Nations culture is vanishing, Canadian culture provides its remaining peoples a much needed home.

This categorization continues, as we are shown three Aboriginal men riding on horseback, finally arriving at a small, pre-colonial, community. The narrator refers to them as the "original Canadians," clearly emphasizing that their land always belonged to Canada, that they have always been Canadians first. He goes onto state, "the teepee was not a museum piece then, it was a home. The camp was not in a fixed place, it could be moved…the white man was yet to come, the white man with his gun, the guns that made hunting so easy." The binary of past and present is reiterated with the "teepee" relegated to the museum, and the white man's "guns," associated with modernization of hunting.

The camera pans through the community, the indigenous culture we see looks right out of a Hollywood Western. Close-ups of the characters smoking pipes appear as the narrator concludes

> these were people toughened by challenge and experience, with much to give and much to share. But the old skills and ancient customs passed on from father to son were not enough to keep pace with the rest of the world. Over the generations the Indians survived, but in dwindling numbers, a vanishing race.

Dissociating the Canadian government and citizens from the violence of colonialism, the film proclaims that instead of suffering the challenges settler culture has imposed upon Indigenous peoples, they suffer instead because of their "old skills" and "ancient customs." In other words, these cultures are to be remembered, the film suggests, only through the ways in which Canadian authorities are capable of curating them.

This pattern continues when the film documents First Nations ranchers. "In Alberta," the narrator claims, "many Indians still ride the prairies and foothills as their fathers and grandfathers did long ago. But they ride herd on beef cattle now, and only the old men speak of the old buffalo hunts of the past." Earlier in the film, during a sequence depicting a First Nations couple on a date at the Assiniboine Zoo in Winnipeg, the narrative again associates buffalo hunting as an antiquated aspect of their culture. In this case, the reference is only made in order to insinuate Canadian culture has rendered it an unnecessary practice. The two characters look upon the buffalo in the Zoo: "I kidded George and asked him if he had any statistics about buffalo. He said all he knew was that they had stopped dying out and were on the increase again." Their knowledge of the animal is essentially void. George and Theresa are meant to represent a new "Indian," one that no longer retains information of their cultural history, which as the film suggests, naturally vanishes with their dying elders. They look on as a white man feeds a captive buffalo. In this image, the film suggests that though Indigenous peoples once held the knowledge of these animals, it is now held by a white, colonial, authority who ensures they are "on the increase again," that they, like Indigenous peoples, are *No Longer Vanishing*.

Literally every sequence in the film is dedicated to depicting this "transition," as it is referred to, from past to present. We see images of First Nations people becoming

industrial laborers, scenes of them welding, using industrial farm equipment, building car engines, and fishing on a commercial scale. At one point we encounter First Nations men working for a boat building company. The narrator states, "perhaps inheritability and tradition play a part here. Although there is a big difference between a birch bark canoe and a modern luxury cruiser." The skills of these cultures, the film shows us, have been rearticulated in modern, colonial, industrialist, capitalist terms. In this case, these people used to build canoes, but now, in a more "advanced" state, they build proper boats for recreational use.

Zoë Druick aligns the film's intentions with the IRS system's ideology, stating that it was made to "correspond with government assimilation policy" (106). We can better understand its educational effect, by situating Druick's archival research in concert with my own. She references public school children responding to the film, citing a student's claim, "I enjoyed the film on Indians. I learned that Indians are the same as we are, just with different skin" (108). This statement shows that in one way the Canadian spectator was to conclude First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people as physically, but not culturally, different. And though it appears that the students come to understand a need to be accepting of other cultures, they are also to understand that such acceptance, as the film suggests, always positions Indigenous peoples as essentially Canadian. For example, the film's emphasis on racial equality is undermined in its own articulation; the narrator states that First Nations are "Canadians of Indian birth [who] will stand with their fellow Canadians on terms of equal opportunity." Equal opportunity did not exist then, nor does it exist now. What we actually encounter in statements like this one is a failure to discern the fact that assuming First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples are "*Canadians* of Indian birth," is, in and of itself, a racially charged assumption that implies the assimilative process. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples are always, the film iterates, Canadian over and above their own cultural heritage.

Perhaps, at the time, gestures towards notions of equality represent some form of progress. However, the fact that the student's statement assumes that aboriginal people are to assimilate into a dominant culture suggests otherwise. It might not be as blatantly horrible in its racist articulation as other moments encountered in the archive, but of

course that does not mean it is any less problematic. For example, in 1947, a report regarding NFB activities in British Columbia states that,

> in Caribou, in B.C., there is a race problem—the Indians. Harold Box did his best to foster tolerance and understanding. At several times, when Indians were barred from the halls at which Mr. Box was to show films, he refused to exclude them but moved to another public room, even though it was not as large as the first one. One keen lady though to put a clincher to her arguments for exclusion with, 'well, after all, you know they smell!' (*Report From the Field* 1947)

This offers some insight into the cultural climate we are dealing with, and in conjunction with the Canadian public's acceptance of the IRS system, it is hard to imagine that we are confronting anything other than an extremely racist country. This is clear in that Box suggests that these problems can be solved, not by educating Canadians about cultural difference, colonialism, and the systemic construction of racial inequality but rather through segregation: "the time is now ripe for our Ottawa office to work out or suggest a film program with the department of Indian Affairs to cover the Indian populations in areas serviced by the NFB" (*Report From the Field* 1947). Additionally, he seems to echo the highly racist statement about First Nation peoples "smelling" by associating them with low level "health standards." My point is that when we encounter a response to a film that appears potentially progressive, it quickly devolves into racial persecution. It maintains the appearance of progressivism, but simply communicates a less obvious form of racial persecution, one masquerading in the guise of empathy and equality.

Comparatively, students at the Beauval Residential School describe the film as "an encouraging picture of several vocations and walks of life open to young Indians who come out of schools like ours" (*Editor* 1957) It is important to take note of the grammatical quality, and clarity of this sentence. The document claims that these statements were written by the students, considering the notoriously low academic standards associated with residential schools, it seems very unlikely. Rather, and I am speculating here, it seems more likely that this commentary was produced by a teacher. If this is the case, we can understand the statement as an assessment on behalf of a school authority, and from this perspective we can read its content as revealing the reasons why this film was chosen for exhibition in this context. Conversely, if a student wrote this

statement, the reason for exhibiting the film appears to remain the same. Both readings clearly support the argument that the film was meant to frame government assimilation as essential to the student's well being and sustenance as a people, and that exhibiting these films in this context was meant to offer the students an education in what was sold as their cultural vanishing.

This juxtaposition shows us that the film obviously functions differently in relation to Canadian and Indigenous audiences. However, it pushes both to reach similar conclusions. On the one hand, the Canadian children are to view First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples as culturally void, as essentially Canadian but with a physical difference. They are to believe assimilation is a good practice because it will, the film implies, help Indigenous peoples realize their Canadian-ness. On the other hand, the First Nations children are pushed to "make good," as the narrator states, "on the white man's terms," and that assimilation is beneficial for the reasons that it will help them do so. This all seems indicative of a complementary relationship between these institutions, a point the film makes as its narrator concludes by finally endorsing the subjection of First Nations to Western education specifically for the purpose of assimilation; Canada needs to "look to the classroom," he states, and that "more schooling is only a part of what is needed to enable the Indians to fit Canadian life as a whole."

Archival materials again verify that the extent to which these institutions engaged each other was substantial. In a 1953 letter sent to "All Principals except Aklavik and F.C." (*Cook* 1953) (which I believe references the IRS school in Fort Chipewyan Alberta), Henry G. Cook, then superintendent of the Missionary Society of the Church of England in Canada, granted approval to principals of Anglican-operated schools to purchase a particular filmstrip directly from the NFB. The letter states,

> attached is a copy of an Information Sheet on a new color filmstrip produced by the National Film Board entitled THE HURON CHRISTMAS CAROL. We are advised by officials of the National Film Board that this filmstrip has no slant or bias towards any particular denomination and is suitable for any Christian body. If you would like to have one of these filmstrips for your coming Christmas activities and have a filmstrip projector, you are authorized to place an order with the National Film Board for a print. (*Cook* 1953)

The Huron Christmas Carol, written by a French missionary in the 17th century, essentially articulates the birth of Jesus Christ using Indigenous characters, and while it may not have a "slant" towards a particular sect of Christianity, it positions First Nations in the symbolic register of this religion. The value of this filmstrip within the IRS system is located in the fact that it problematically suggests to the children that their cultures were already demonstrating a predilection towards Christianity before European settlements arrived. That prior to colonialism, Christianity already had a claim on their land and their cultures. While the letter excludes the schools in Aklavik and Northern Alberta, it does not exclude other IRS schools in these areas, and for now my point is simple: this document exhibits a continuing working relationship between the NFB and IRS schools. The content provided by the NFB again aligns with notions of assimilation, and does so not simply in one province or territory, but rather in nearly all provinces and territories operating schools. Moreover, residential schools were located in eight provinces—Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia—and the two territories at the time—Yukon, and Northwest Territories. Nova Scotia was the only province in which the Anglican Church did not operate a residential school. In this case, access to the NFB's *Huron Christmas Carol*, verifies contact between these two institutions on a substantial scale.

In his essay, "Huron Carol: A Canadian Cultural Chameleon," John Steckley discusses the song's history. Important to my purposes, he points out that

> in their missions around the world, the Jesuits were quick to use the culture of the people they were trying to convert, a strategy they used often to good effect in…locations such as Japan, China and India in the seventeenth century. Employing the rich songs of the Wendat people would be an obvious choice as a tool for Jesuit missioning (57-58).

Steckley and others have argued that the Huron Carol was a "product of European and aboriginal cultures," situating them, in some way, on equal terms. Yet, as his essay makes clear, the purpose for bringing these cultures "together" was to more effectively communicate with, and condition, Aboriginal peoples towards assimilation. The fact that the song originally utilized the Wendat language, and later other languages such as Algonquin, does not make it any less dedicated to cultural genocide through assimilation.

In fact it does just the opposite in that the languages were used, specifically, and only, because of their ability to facilitate the process. In this case, the NFB's production and distribution of this filmstrip demonstrates that it was an ideological partner to the system, propelling, as Steckley points out, assimilative practices common amongst 15th century missionaries in North America, into the IRS system as it operated throughout the 20th century.

In a 1954 survey titled, "NFB Operations – Prairie Provinces," the institution's commitment to visiting IRS schools is again referenced. Authored by L.W. Chatwin, who was, at the time, the NFB coordinator of Non-theatrical Distribution, the report begins by stipulating the "map showing the settled and travelled portions of each district representatives territory...do[es] not include some isolated Indian schools and northern settlements which receive film service, but which are not ordinarily visited by a district representative" (*Chatwin* 1954). In lieu of the fact that most of this report, including the cited map, is missing, the document still offers up important information. It stands to reason that if IRS schools in geographically isolated locations received film service through the NFB, those situated within an acceptable distance of the travelling projectionists, would have as well. These schools would most likely have had some form of direct contact with NFB representatives in their area, whether in the form of an exhibition in their school, or more generally in their community, while those in the more difficult to access locations, would likely have experienced NFB content by borrowing 16mm films through local film libraries.

To make this less speculative, in 1948, Charley Marshall, the NFB representative for British Columbia and the Yukon Territory, claims, during a meeting of NFB regional supervisors, that a "survey revealed a decided lack of visual material to the Indian population for school, adult, and health education. A free weekly service of film programs in *12 residential schools* owning projection equipment was [therefore] set up" (*Marshall* 1948). For the reason that the IRS system was "constantly underfunded," (*Milloy* 94) the importance of a "free" film service cannot be understated. In this case, the NFB is predominantly responsible for exposing IRS students to film when, as Marshall suggests, the medium otherwise would have had a limited presence in these communities. Furthermore, because this NFB service utilized residential school classrooms and

auditoriums for exhibition purposes, presenting NFB films not only to students, but also to adult First Nations, they, in some way, are also responsible for extending this assimilationist doctrine back into the community. Not only did it bring First Nations adults into contact with films used in the schools to aid assimilation, but it also enacted a process of encouraging former students to return to the residential school environment, to return to the site of their enforced assimilation. The function of exhibition in this context became more than an effort to reach the student body, it, effectively repositioned former students within its buildings, calling them back to the schools which had already subjected them to a dominant, institutional, and colonial authority.

Such clear facilitation of the IRS system's utilization of film represents the NFB's active participation in the practice of assimilation, especially when you consider the fact that of the films I know that were exhibited in the IRS context, they all seem to demonstrate a clear investment in educating the students concerning the rituals and traditions of British Imperialism and industrialism in Canada. In a school publication, for example, IRS students describe seeing the NFB production *Canada at the Coronation*, citing it as "a rich film, in colour," that provided "the illusion of being in London when our queen was crowned" (*Editor* 1957). Again, it is certainly questionable as to whether the students wrote this description. However it does verify that the intent of the exhibition was to foster their ability to view the Queen of England as their ruler, and to view imperial Britain in a celebratory manner, rather than as a colonial oppressor.

In another instance, an IRS student references seeing the NFB's *The Story of Oil* (*Sylvester* 1958). The film ascribes to the pattern of promoting Canadian culture as a modern industrial civilization, similar to that which we encountered in *No Longer Vanishing*. The student articulates, "I saw and learned many things that I had never seen or learned before" (*Sylvester* 1958). A sense of encountering a new modern culture appears, of seeing and learning things unknown to his/her cultures, suggesting the film confirmed to the student the industrial prowess of the dominant society. Both of these films offered students culturally constitutive materials that constructed Canada's sense of cultural superiority through images of either industrial achievement or monarchal pageantry. It is this type of information that was to foster their willingness to assimilate into the dominant culture.

In a 1947 "Report From the Field," NFB representatives in Manitoba discuss the use of itinerant projectionists to exhibit health films in Northern indigenous communities:

> A project to show health films to the Indian communities along the Hudson's Bay route, was carried out jointly by the Manitoba Department of Health, and the National Film Board. Miss Margaret Nix, director of health and welfare education for the provincial department and Norman Wiens, of our Winnipeg office, went on the trip showing films from the Pas to Churchill. By train, gas car, speeder and canoe they transported their equipment. In freight sheds, halls, schools, and living rooms 24 programs were shown in nine towns, to a total of 2385 persons. While audiences were mainly Indians, they included also trappers, miners, traders, fishermen, missionaries, and others. At Wabowden 235 children and adults were so enthusiastic about the films that a trapper offered to advance enough money to buy projection equipment for the community. (*Report From the Field II* 1947)

IRS schools in northern Manitoba included those in Clearwater Lake, Cross Lake, the Pas, and Norway House. Although the document does not verify specific schools, it demonstrates the incredible geographical lengths the NFB went to reach First Nations audiences. Additionally, it states that "schools" were among the locations it used for exhibition, and that the majority of its audience members were "Indian." There is an emphasis on exhibition to children, and Wabowden Manitoba is within reasonable travelling distance from both the IRS schools in Norway House, and Cross Lake. Exhibitions in The Pas would have situated the tour in direct geographical contact with the schools there, as well as the school in Clearwater Lake, which was a mere 40 km away. While this document does not absolutely prove the NFB in this instance entered the IRS classroom, it certainly suggests it was likely. It situates NFB representatives in proximity to IRS schools on a tour specifically interested in exhibiting film to First Nations, referencing school children as making up a substantial portion of these audiences.

In other instances we encounter more direct contact between NFB services and the IRS classroom through the arrival of NFB representatives or projectionists. The system, as I have suggested, was heavily engaged with the NFB through the company's extensive network of film libraries. On April 25th 1950, Dorothy Macpherson of the NFB,

responds to Bernard Neary, the head of Education Services at Indian Affairs, concerning the branch's efforts to establish the Outpost Film Library in the Northwest Territory. The letter reads, "I enclose a further list of films which you might like to consider for inclusion in the Outpost Film Library. I believe that *Indian Gardens in Oklahoma*, *A New Frontier* and *Trail To Health* have already been screened for some members of the Indian Affairs Branch, but we could have any, or all, brought in for preview" (*Macpherson* 1950)." This document was located in the RG 10 School Files, the archived collection of the IRS system's administrative documents. I note this here for the reason that it verifies a moment in which Indian Affairs and the IRS system reached out to the NFB. We learn that when IRS administrators showed interest in film for educational purposes, they clearly thought to contact and partner with the NFB. In this case, the NFB was solicited to aid the establishing of a film library that would increase the ability of IRS schools in the north to access and thus utilize the medium.

Macpherson attaches a list of potential films, but oddly they are not NFB productions. Rather, like the films mentioned a moment ago, they are produced by the United States Indian Services Department. Of the eight films listed, six are fittingly designated as "Produced by federal gov't for use in Indian Education." The films consistently position First Nations characters in need of the American government. For example, in the *The River People* (1948), produced in 1948, the Pima Nation of Arizona, described as a farming culture, find their source of water has been taken by the "white folks" who, the narrator states, "meant no harm to the friendly Indians, but they needed the water for their own fields so that they could raise crops and raise a living." The devastation to the Pima nation is then documented, only to show how, in the end, they have been saved by a "great white father," who established a substantial irrigation system that essentially fixed the very drought that he/they, the settlers, had created. This film obviously fits the mold of the IRS mandate of assimilation, as it essentially articulates the idea that First Nations need a "great white father" to lead them into the dominant culture. This paternalism continues, as the film ends, and the narrator states that "many Pimas still have to learn to try to be helped. This rehabilitation should not be left for the next generation." The film recommended by the NFB to be shown within the IRS context demonstrates that as an institution it understood what type of information could facilitate

and or support the system's emphasis on First Nations assimilation, and that they had little or no reservations in making such recommendations.

Further discussion concerning the establishment of film libraries capable of servicing these schools appears at the 1948 National Film Board "Conference of Regional Supervisors and Agents." A panel made up of NFB and Indian Affairs representatives discussing the institution's role in First Nations education, again focuses on this issue. Calais Calvert expresses that "successful" film exhibitions to Aboriginal audiences "proved the need of a substantial film library" to service their communities and schools in Northern Ontario (*Calvert* 1948). The conversation then references service in the NWT as J.W. Mckinnon of Indian Affairs suggests they were "amazed" at the work of the NFB there, and that his "department was [therefore] providing 1000 dollars for films to supplement the service" (*McKinnon* 1948).

This of course meant that the schools would also need to purchase the necessary projection equipment. Indian affairs engaged the NFB on this issue. In 1948 Bernard Neary wrote Mr. N Chamberlin of the NFB articulating that

> as a follow-up to our telephonic conversation, will you kindly give us the details of the machine you recommend for the [Roman Catholic operated] Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan. This projector must be a sound machine complete with the necessary accessories." (*Neary* 1948)

The NFB responded by recommending the purchase of a "Bell and Howell projector."

Another document concerning this exchange shows that the principal of the Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School claims that if they were to receive a 16mm projector, he would utilize the provincial Department of Education's recently established film library which was making "films available to its schools…[and] will also rent such films to our Indian Schools in the province" (*Qu'Appelle Principal* 1948). Cross referencing this information with an NFB distribution report from 1957 and 58 shows that roughly ten years after this request, the Department of Education Provincial Library was the most substantial point of access to NFB material in Saskatchewan. In this case we see Indian Affairs, and the NFB, coordinating their efforts to ensure film equipment and rentals become readily available to IRS schools in the region.

We encounter the outcome of this partnership in action again at the Beauval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan. The school issued publications throughout the year entitled *Voice of the North*, dedicated to documenting student life, and school news. In a 1957 edition, students thank "those who have facilitated weekly cinema programs," specifically, the "National Film Board of Canada," and the "Department of Indian Affairs" (*Editor* 1957). The NFB's presence at the school is further documented in the 1959 edition of the publication, which thanks the "Federal Government for supplying[…]educational movies" (*John* 1959).

In a 1961 edition of *Voice of the North*, the children reference watching a film titled a *Modern Guide to Health* (*Blackbird* 1961), brought to the school by a local nurse. Despite the fact that this film is not an NFB production, it is referenced in NFB distribution reports along with NFB produced films such as *Water: Friend or Enemy* (*Rental Receipt* 1950) and *World in a Marsh* (*Bell* 1960), which the children also reference seeing. Though "Nurse Kerr," the person responsible for exhibiting *A Modern Guide to Health* (1947), was not an NFB representative, by retrieving a film distributed in Canada by the NFB she represents what I believe was also commonly taking place: a community member or a teacher utilizing film library services established in conjunction with the NFB in order to facilitate film exhibition at IRS schools.

Another example shows that in the Northwest Territory, C.W. Grey, regional supervisor for the NFB, went to extensive lengths to bring the institution's films to the area. Again in 1948, Grey emphasizes his work in First Nations schools and communities stating that "Films on health, social conditions and particularly films interpreting Canada are most popular," and that they "are welding people together ever more closely as they bring understanding that breaks down barriers" (*Grey* 1948) His comments clearly echo the NFB's famous mandate "to interpret Canada to Canadians and other nations," and, as we have learned the NFB during these years was clearly supporting the IRS system, Grey's claim that film was breaking down barriers, surely means the First Nations people in these communities were, in his assessment, simply acting more Canadian because of his NFB exhibitions as a travelling projectionist.

In 1948, supporting Grey's work in the area, Indian Affairs representative McKinnon tells him that the branch has

> an extensive building program going on in the Mackenzie District and all schools had two classrooms with divided doors that could be turned into community centers for film showings. Filmstrip projectors were provided to schools and they hope by next year to have the visual aids service to that district completely organized. (*McKinnon* 1948)

Ten years after this meeting, Grey undertakes an extensive report of film services of this area. He visits numerous locations coming in contact with both public and, as he refers to them, "separate schools" (Grey 1959). While there, he attends a "special" screening of NFB film "The Living Stone" in the public school auditorium in Inuvik. Both the students of the Anglican and Roman Catholic operated residential schools of Grollier Hall and Stringer Hall also attended.

Though *The Living Stone* (1959) depicts Inuit mythology, and even records Inuit languages, which suggests its interest in objectively documenting this culture, the presence of British narrator signals that we should be wary of ascribing to it an unbiased perspective. Much like Edward Said's citing the fact that Napoleon, in conquering Egypt, brought academics with him to transcribe the culture into Western terms, thereby making knowledge of Egyptian culture an entity owned and controlled by the west, the film, in some ways represents a similar effort (*Said* 43). Rather than encountering this culturally distinct narrative by directly contacting individuals of this culture, the film becomes a resource, so that learning about the Inuit in Cape Dorsett is done through the perspective and censorship of the West. In the middle of the film, a sequence appears framing Inuit stone carvings, while classical music plays in the background. This museum-like perspective articulates an interest in representing this culture as one of the past by positioning the carvings as relics to be curated and interpreted by the west. That the film was exhibited to an audience consisting of IRS and public school students implies efforts to dictate the terms of this cultural knowledge to both the dominant Canadian and indigenous communities. In this case, this NFB production, no matter how well intentioned, facilitates the IRS system's mandate by presenting Canada's ownership of the student's cultures, shaping and dictating it in very controlled ways, always on Canadian terms, and in support of Canadian state interests.

It is worth noting, here, that in later years the NFB would present much more progressive interpretations of Aboriginal issues in Canada. Towards the end of the 1960s, NFB productions were becoming less prescriptive and didactic. In some cases, films were critical of the IRS system. A noteworthy example appears in 1967. *Pow Wow at Duck Lake* documents a conference about intercultural issues facing First Nations, Métis, and Canadian citizens. Throughout, criticism of inequality imposed upon First Nations and Métis is prevalent, and becomes especially poignant when associated with residential schools. Speaking to the crowd, notable Métis academic and activist Howard Adams states: "you had segregated residential schools built for Indians, run by white people. This is segregation, this is apartheid. The principle behind this kind of rule is that all men are not created equal." This is followed by an exchange in which First Nations peoples present criticism of the IRS system to a highly defensive priest: "The Indians have never had a voice in their own education," and "they're not equipped to go to university because the kind of education you give them in a residential school doesn't equip them to go to university."

Ronal Niezen points out that *Pow Wow at Duck Lake* was one of the first films produced as part of the *Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle* program "aimed at highlighting the social concerns of disadvantaged communities from the perspective of the community members themselves" (27). The film was also released prior to efforts to "reposition the native film within a native perspective," an initiative undertaken in 1971 by the "National Indian Training Program initiated by NFB and accompanied by the Company of Young Canadians" (*Waugh* 414). The plan was to cultivate a "native perspective" by equipping First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples with filmmaking knowledge and ability. However, Waugh, Winton, and Baker also point out, it encountered a limited degree of success (414). In the case of *Pow Wow at Duck Lake*, First Nations/Métis issues are presented from the perspective of the "outsider/colonizer." However, despite this positioning, it captures a powerful aboriginal activism challenging to colonialism. The poignancy and clarity of this resistance is noteworthy because, as Niezen suggests, it would not have been presented by the NFB just a few decades earlier (28).

The NFB's support of these indigenous perspectives is evident in the film's editing. For example, when Howard Adams speaks about "segregated residential schools," the film cuts to close-up shots of young aboriginal children in the crowd providing visual force to his statements. The decision to dedicate nearly half the film to a confrontation between a priest and former residential school students, also evidences the NFB's siding with First Nations and Métis perspectives. The priest is shown to be incapable of adequately responding to their challenges of the IRS system, and eventually abandons the conversation after he is told to be talking "crap." In this, the film identifies the resistant power of First Nations who succeed in exposing the violence of the IRS system and those responsible for its operations. Ultimately, *Pow Wow at Duck Lake* marks an important moment in which the strength of aboriginal activism was beginning to find support, rather than resistance, from institutions like the NFB.

To close out this chapter, I turn the to the 1958 NFB film *Northern Schools*, described as "introduce[ing] us to First Nations children educated in a residential school in Moose Factory" Ontario. Here the NFB advertises assimilation, representing life at residential school in benevolent terms that contradict what we know of the system's aims at cultural genocide. Additionally, this very footage was distributed by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation under the title *A New Future* (1955). Both are addressed to a national Canadian audience, and both sell the IRS system as important in attempts to enlist and solidify public support for First Nations assimilation. On the one hand, we have learned about the NFB's efforts to gain entrance into the residential schools. On the other hand, this film demonstrates further their complicity in IRS operations as they construct and project images of the system outwards to Canadian audiences.

Both versions of the film have all the markers of the IRS ideology. The narrator in the NFB edition stops short of using the term assimilation, stating instead that, "the school at Moose Factory reflects the Canadian government's aim of trying to make the country's 150,000 Indians increasingly independent and self-supporting. Education is the keystone of this policy." While the CBC version proudly emphasizes the scope of the system's assimilative efforts:

> one of Canada's 69 residential schools scattered in key locations as far north as the artic circle. They have a total of 11,000 pupils, orphans, convalescents, those

> who live too far in the wilderness to get to a day school. They learn not only games, and traditions, such as the celebration of Saint Valentine's Day, but the mastery of words, which will open to them the whole range of the ordinary Canadian curriculum.

The students are situated as "orphans" and sickly "convalescents," and as the NFB version suggests, are often from "broken homes." The film in essence pleads for help from Canadians, not only selling them the notion that assimilation is good, but also, in the words of the narrator, that the students "seem to enjoy it thoroughly." Such a breadth of misinformation is disconcerting, and perhaps a fitting end to this chapter is to pause on the frame showing a chalkboard with a list of words the students are to learn. Ironically, the film captures a lesson in which the students are taught the word "conceal," one that has so much resonance in relation to the misleading images of the IRS system with which we are here presented.

The NFB, however, like many Canadian institutions at the time, did not discern their engagement with the IRS system as facilitating cultural genocide. My archival research verifies this, and often suggests the NFB's interaction with residential schools was fulfilling its own institutional agenda to bring film technologies to places that otherwise might do without, or to enable schools in such remote locations as the Northwest Territories to be considered among the "6000 showing points" (*Bovard* 1955) NFB authorities often bragged about. But if popular cinema, which most often did not represent Canadian culture and identity, could function in IRS schools as a way to inform students of the heroic white-male, or the white-female marginalized by patriarchy, or their position as ethnicized other, then, as I suggested earlier, the Canadian-centric content of the NFB films enabled IRS teachers to use the medium more specifically, to potentially orient the student identities in a more distinctly Canadian direction. What the NFB brought to the IRS system that popular cinema did not, was the social norms of Canada (though they were highly constructed), the culturally generative materials that might solicit the student's responses to the films in accordance with the terms and conditions of the culture in which they were to assimilate.

In the following and final chapter, I continue to examine film's use to promote the IRS system, its operations and ideology, to Canadian audiences. How did such

benevolent representations as those mentioned above contribute to a Canadian public as largely willing to accept assimilation as positive entity? I will demonstrate that Canadians were subject to a substantial public relations campaign established by Indian Affairs and IRS officials that worked to misrepresent the day-to-day life and operations of the IRS system. Film and moving images were essentially utilized to advertise residential schools, to cultivate a public image of cultural assimilation that appeared highly ethical as way to actively discourage public resistance to the cultural genocide taking place in their midst.

CHAPTER FOUR

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Filming the Indian Residential School System Through *The Eyes of Children*: Moving Images as Public Relations

On June 11, 2008, Stephen Harper, the Prime Minister of Canada at that time, apologized to the victims of the IRS system. Delivered in the Parliamentary House of Commons, and aired on national television by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Harper expressed that "the government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian Residential School policy were profoundly negative." Though a national apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian Residential School System was necessary, scholars have been quick to argue that its wording attempts to sever the Canadian government and peoples from this problematic institutional history. Willow J. Anderson's analysis of the apology argues the PM adopts a paternalistic tone. She reads Harper's claim, "'we apologize for failing to protect you,'" as a phrase that "simultaneously reaffirms the responsibility of government as protector, distances the government from the abuses committed, and suggests that the government did not know the abuse was happening" (578). Harper at once apologizes to IRS victims, while mitigating the role the Canadian government and Canadians played in its operations and existence. A calculated expression, the national apology was a careful moment in public relations.

In this concluding chapter, I examine moving images as they were employed to contribute to a public relations campaign regarding the IRS system. Just as a nationally televised apology for the IRS system was utilized, however insidiously, to shape a public image and knowledge of residential school history, my research consistently verifies that visual media were employed throughout the existence of the IRS system in similar ways. I illustrate how moving images were used to disseminate a benevolent image of residential school policy and operations to the Canadian public, and in turn question how this supported the IRS system's culturally genocidal operations. I focus on two films produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in the mid-twentieth century: the

1962 made for T.V. documentary, *The Eyes of Children: Christmas at a Residential School*, and, *A New Future*, a 1955 news segment depicting daily life at the Bishop Horden Indian Residential School. I situate these films as part of a substantial public relations campaign associated with the system, and argue they contributed to governmental and church efforts to actively mislead the Canadian public concerning the poor state of, and injustices suffered at, Indian residential schools. While Stephen Harper stated "we *now* recognize" the incredible violence and trauma of the IRS system, the promotional use of moving images in the mid-twentieth century, I believe, essentially obstructed the ability of the Canadian public to have made this conclusion decades ago.

Throughout its existence, the IRS system managed its public image, and the productions I discuss are best understood as a continuation of the system's use of photography to promote its work. The TRC *Final Report*, for example, highlights that

> at the beginning of each residential school year during this period (1867-1939), newly arrived students were stripped of the their home clothing and provided with a school-issued wardrobe. At many schools, photographs were taken of students in their new uniforms and used to publicize the work of the schools. (*Canada's Residential Schools* 511)

Images depicting students before and after their residential school education have become synonymous with IRS study. The most notable photo is the oft-cited image of the Regina Indian Industrial School student, Thomas Moore. The photo initially appeared in a 1904 publication of the Department of Indian Affairs *Annual Report*. It situates an image of Moore dressed in the cultural garb of his Muscowpetung Saulteaux Nation, in juxtaposition to an image of him looking slightly older, and dressed in his school uniform. Such pictures visualized the assimilative agenda of the IRS system in chronological terms that could be quickly and easily consumed by the Canadian public. Depicting the transition of First Nation, Inuit, and Métis children out of their own and into a Canadian culture, the photographs "publicize the work of the schools," encouraging their audience to conclude the ideological grounds upon which the IRS system was established were in the process of being fulfilled.

The prevalent use of photography to publicize the IRS system has ensured that the major Indian Residential School fonds, such as those housed at the Library and Archives

Canada, The Shingwauk Archives, and the National Research Center for Truth and Reconciliation, are overflowing with images depicting school life in positive terms. The National Research Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, for example, holds over 18,000 images. The photographs consistently depict students throughout the twentieth century sitting in class, attending church, or posing for group shots with school buildings as a backdrop. Quite simply, the volume of images depicting the IRS system suggests that teachers and administrators sensed a need to document and present the "reality" of system and its pedagogical initiatives.

Carol Payne has studied the NFB's use of photography during its first two decades of operation, and certain photographic initiatives of the film board align with the IRS system's application of the medium. Payne, for example, suggests, photo essays depicting Inuit peoples contributed to "presenting the First Peoples of the North as one of the Canadian Nation's Others" (174), and that "many images and accompanying texts, clearly directed at southern Euro-Canadian and international audiences, exoticize and infantilized their subjects" (175). For Payne, even when Inuit subjects are photographed alone, the specter of colonialism remains; she states that although "whiteness is not made visible, it is nonetheless omnipresent" (175). The NFB's use of images to advertise certain ideological and cultural positions regarding First Peoples is similar to the IRS system's efforts visually construct itself, and demonstrates a larger pattern in Canadian culture dedicated to imagining Indigenous/Canadian relations in benevolent terms.

Administrative documentation further verifies the IRS system's promotional use of visual media. In 1949, a letter sent "To All Principals" by Henry Cook, on behalf of the Indian School Administration of the Missionary Society of the Church of England, solicits principals to send "usable" images for the "famous Church calendar" (*Cook* 1949). Cook suggests the "pictures must be clear and in sharp focus on glossy paper," that "unposed action shots are more desirable," and that images of "children at play or at work about the school or in craft rooms make good material and create interest" (*Cook* 1949). The content of these photographs serves to craft a benevolent frame for the system. In particular, the term "usable," while Cook is referencing pictures of a clear quality, also implies a level of censorship, suggesting that only images depicting the positive content outlined can represent the inner workings of residential school.

Framing the IRS system in this steady, ordered, positive manner represents a prevalent narrative throughout residential school history, and was likely born out of the Department of Indian Affairs' desire to present assimilative policies as highly ethical and efficient. Citing the 1879 publication of the *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds*, John Milloy states that

> for most of the school system's life, though the truth was known to it, the Department of Indian Affairs maintained the fiction of care, the common public rhetoric that schools were 'the circle of civilized conditions' providing children the 'care of the mother' and a good education. In 1967, after nearly a century of contrary evidence in its own files, the Department still contended that the schools were 'operated for the welfare and education of Indian children' and that it worked each year 'to develop improved services for children' so that ' the best possible care should be given to these young people (xiii).

Jim Miller also affirms Indian Affairs' dedication to representing residential school operations in misleading ways. He points out that, from the late 19th century and onwards, it "quickly became part of Indian Affairs' public relations strategy" to use "visits by prominent people to showcase residential schools, the better to advertise the brilliant success of the departments policies" (145).

A departmental investment in shaping the public perception of the IRS system is also evident in 1897: "a report on Industrial Schools [reveals] Indian Affairs official Martine Benson complained of the proliferation of brass bands at IRS schools while acknowledging their importance to help advertise the schools" (*Honouring the Truth* 355). Celia Haig-Brown references a similar moment in the 1940s, in which school authorities agreed "native students performing in public was seen as a positive public relations move" (75). In 1967, a teacher commented that while sports could be utilized to encourage assimilation, "it was also felt that public demonstrations of Aboriginal athletic skills would be positive public relations for the work that Indian Affairs was doing" (*Canada's Residential Schools* 462). From the late 19th, through the 20th century, IRS authorities consistently oriented public relations around the visual, always framing IRS students performing some sort of Eurocentric cultural activity, and then presenting these

performances to the Canadian public as "evidence" of a successful assimilative process and educational program, often using photography and later film.

Extending this type of public relations campaign to the moving image was, however, complicated; filmmakers would need to be employed, funding would have to be secured, and methods of distribution were more challenging than publishing photographs in church calendars or local newspapers, or having students participate in sports competitions and other public performances. In 1945, for example, some of these challenges are documented; the physical fitness director for the federal government attempts to, but fails, to secure funding for an NFB produced short film about physical training at the St. Joseph's Mission Residential School in British Columbia. In his estimation,

> such a film would be 'a worthwhile item insofar as not only would it credit the Indians with this training and focus attention upon how far Indians could go with good leadership, but it would also be a stimulator to the white people in Canada when they are challenged with these documentary facts to the ability of Indian boys and girls. (*Canada's Residential Schools* 461)

Despite arguing the film would support the ideology of the IRS system by illustrating to "white people" the benefits of residential school education, funding did not become available. In essence, the complex nature of film production, at times, challenged the IRS system's promotional efforts. Moving the IRS system's public relations beyond photography and public performances would have to account for these medium specific issues, while also ensuring Indian Affairs' presentation of IRS schools as the "'circle of civilized conditions'" (*Milloy* xiii) continued to be supported by the more elaborate narrative structure of film.

When moving images were successfully employed, they, like photography, associated IRS operations with the credibility of the visual. This thinking is apparent in the above quote in which the physical fitness director for the federal government argues for film's ability to present "documentary facts." Documentary film became the ideal genre to promote IRS operations based upon its perceived ability to carry

> fragments of social reality from one place or one group or one time to another…it collects evidence of experience in the most far-flung precincts, in coal mines,

> cornfields, cell blocks, convention halls, corporate board rooms, and city slums. Then it delivers these social facts to a broader public, where they can be used for a variety of ideological ends. (*Kahana* 2)

The documentary format of *The Eyes of Children* (1962) and *A New Future* (1955) was to offer viewers a "real" glimpse into the residential school experience in the mid twentieth century. Yet, the film's version of the "real" is highly constructed, presenting images of an idealized institutional environment in which students can only smile as they "learn not only games and traditions, such as the celebration of Saint Valentine's Day, but the mastery of words, which will open to them the whole range of the ordinary Canadian Curriculum" (*A New Future* 1955). Documenting the social reality of IRS students for the Canadian public, these productions were positioned to work on behalf of Indian Affairs, to help cultivate a public support of system's assimilative work and aims, to contribute to the promotional efforts that had, since the late nineteenth century, helped to ensure the dark operations of the IRS system were kept out of the public eye.

The films are in no way critical and appear resolute in their insistence that the IRS system was operating ethically. Yet, understanding why these images presented such inaccuracies is complicated. I engage these works, therefore, as Griersonian style documentaries invested in shaping content meant to serve a specific set of ideological aims, and suggest that it was the IRS authorities dictating the representational strategies and content of the films. Substantial efforts to control the system's public image, I believe, ensured that visiting filmmakers encountered select residential school environments prepared for filming, environments that lent themselves to ways of presenting school life that worked in concert with broader the public relations efforts of the IRS system.

The films in question ascribe to the conventions of postwar Canadian documentary, that which was thoroughly established by the first commissioner of the National Film Board, John Grierson. Ian Aitken describes Grierson's theory of documentary, stating that it "was primarily an aesthetic of symbolic expression, which utilized documentary representation as a means to an end" (6). To clarify this, Aitkin points to Grierson's oft-expressed skepticism of documentary as a "naturalist representation." Grierson makes himself clear, for example, stating that "you don't get

truth by turning on a camera, you have to work with it…you don't get it by simple peep hole camera work…there is no such thing as truth until you have made it into a form, truth is an interpretation, a perception (*qtd. in Aitkin* 7).

None of the residential school films participate in a vérité documentary style attempting to reveal the IRS system in an unobtrusive manner. While they do, at times, offer images of IRS students in candid moments, the films are highly constructed. *A New Future* (1955), for example, is, in its entirety, a well-organized montage serving a singular purpose. With its images of students playing hockey, sitting attentively in class, and ringing church bells, the film depicts residential schools as an absolutely disciplined environment that operates without issue.

The Eyes of Children (1962) offers a similar representation, however, it provides more evidence that the filmmakers were potentially coaxing students to perform for the cameras, evidence of their partaking in a less observational, and more aesthetic and symbolic documentary. The elaborate camerawork throughout the film suggests sequences were highly directed. A bedtime routine, for example begins with the camera focusing on a young girl brushing her teeth. As she finishes, the camera tracks her movement through the dormitory to her bed. The students then begin their evening prayers, with close-up shots depicting their participation in the religious ritual. Once they climb into bed, we hear them say, "Goodnight sister." The camera cuts to an image of a nun standing by the door. She shuts off the lights and responds, "Goodnight girls, and god bless you." The sequence then returns to its original subject, the girl brushing her teeth, who, seemingly without instruction, leads another group prayer. A tracking shot pans through the now darkened dormitory capturing this apparently impromptu religious outburst. Here, the filmmakers organize an elaborate sequence, identifying one student as the main "character" in order to animate the movement of the camera in highly specified ways. The synergy exhibited among the students, the disciplinarity of the institutional environment, and the teacher is, at the very least, exaggerated by the film's deliberate sequencing. The "truth" constructed by the filmmaker serves the ideology of the system in its imagining IRS students thriving within its assimilationist policies.

This type of coerced filmmaking is further evident during the opening sequence of *The Eyes of Children* (1962). The film begins by framing the Kamloops Indian

Residential School from a distance. The camera is perched high atop the hills surrounding the school, composing it together with the village in which it is serenely situated. The audience is immediately presented with the idea that IRS schools are simply a component of the community and easily blend in with both Canadian culture and the aesthetics of the vast and beautiful Canadian landscape. Nothing appears to be out of the ordinary, and what we encounter here is a filmic arrangement that again renders these culturally genocidal institutions seemingly indiscernible from the cultivated benevolence of a nationalist identity promoted by early Canadian documentary (*Morris* 29). The message to the Canadian viewer conveys that there is nothing questionable at stake here.

In the background, we hear students singing "The Twelve Days of Christmas." This is followed by three successive shots; a close-up of the school chapel, a holy-cross atop its spire, and then the school's principal emerging from the building, dressed in ministerial garb. Immediately, throngs of what appear to be excited and joyously happy IRS students swarm him. This sequence feels very staged, and the audience is presented a charitable scene, offering some insight into why the word "benevolent" was so often associated with the IRS system. Andrew Woolford takes up the paradox of benevolence in his book-length study, *This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States*, pointing out that "although boarding schools were often touted as a 'benevolent experiment,' such claims are belied by the sheer destructiveness of these institutions" (3). Indian Affairs' often-touted benevolence of the IRS system is on display in *The Eyes of Children* (1962), and the film appears to be born out of a deliberate public relations history and campaign.

The benevolent function of *The Eyes of Children* (1962) is further verified in relation to its promotion in a December 22, 1962 publication of the *Ottawa Citizen*. The newspaper article advertised the film articulating "the eyes of children sparkle at Christmas time. At the Kamloops Indian Residential School in British Columbia, some of that sparkle is captured on film." It then goes on to declare that the IRS system highlighting the school was "built in 1923 and is the largest of its type in Canada." The idealization of the system continues as the article concludes, stating that in the "producer's original plan, the Indian school film was to fill a 15-minute segment of a Christmas special from Vancouver. [George] Robertson was so charmed on his first

encounter with the children that he decided to devote the entire program to them" (*Unknown Journalist* 1962). While the article aligns with the promotional patterns associated with the IRS system, more importantly, it raises the idea of an "Indian school film," and titles the genre of film, or moving image segments, we are here dealing with.

Indian school films participated in constructing a mediated public sphere that promoted the political work and value of the Department of Indian Affairs through benevolent images of IRS operations. Filmmakers had a role to play, and although *The Eyes of Children* (1962) and *A New Future* (1955) operate in this manner, there is no evidence indicating that their producers deliberately chose to misrepresent the realities they encountered at the Kamloops and Bishop Horden Schools. Instead, the history of IRS public relations further suggests the unlikelihood that Indian Affairs would allow the filmmakers to openly contradict the public image they had actively constructed throughout decades of IRS operations. I am suggesting that the schools were prepared for filming. Jim Miller verifies a history of IRS system engaging these preparatory efforts stating that

> another early advertising thrust was visits by the Governor general to carefully selected reserves and schools…not surprisingly, then residential schools whose populations could more easily be controlled became a prime destination for official visitors, press representatives, and even casual tourists. Governor generals visited the prairie region regularly, and often they called at residential schools whose staff and students had been very carefully prepared for the occasion. (145)

The residential schools in question here likely offered these qualities, and were carefully selected destinations for the "press representatives" coming from the CBC. *The Eyes of Children* (1962) and *A New Future* (1955) could not, I believe, expose inherent problems of the IRS system because the Department of Indian Affairs was not, in any way, interested in allowing its problems to reach the Canadian public. The prime component of the Indian school film is not, therefore, the filmmaker's aesthetic or ideological tendencies, but rather those of Indian Affairs and IRS authorities. Ensuring that the intentions of IRS authorities dominated the screen involved preparing schools to be properly represented in the presence of outsiders, a type of public performance that Indian Affairs had demanded of its institutions for decades. This means that when George

Robertson and his film crew, for example, arrived at the Kamloops school they could only, as the *Ottawa Citizen* article suggested, be "charmed" by the school and its students.

Indian Affairs' valuation of media for promotional purposes can be further verified by their commissioning the National Film Board to produce *No Longer Vanishing* (1955). As discussed in the previous chapter, the film promotes cultural assimilation by detailing the lives of First Nations people who have successfully integrated into the dominant Canadian culture. The film's production notes nuance the documentary parameters at play in *The Eyes of Children* (1962) and *A New Future* (1955). Discussing the kind of film they would make, the producers debated the merits of a "survey documentary," or a "story film." The latter they believe would "tell a great many people a great many facts about Indian life in Canada," and would do the "work of a pamphlet, or a newspaper reports, or a magazine feature article with pictures" (NFB fonds 9). The former they believe offers a more engaging spectatorial experience:

> the effect on the audience is electrically different to that of the by-now-hackneyed survey-documentary. Not a mild dose of facts, but people and their trouble, rouse an audience to its highest pitch of interest and sympathy. Facts are abstract; delightful, of course, to the curious; mildly satisfying to the great mass of us. But honest, sympathetic presentation of people – sad, happy, alive, miserable, troubled, smug, delightful – awaken and move us. (10)

A New Future (1955) participates in a "fact" based representation of the IRS system, presenting the Bishop Horden Indian Residential School in a segment less than three minutes in length. Its narration is informative, pointing out the school is "just south of James Bay," "500 miles North of Toronto," that it is one of "Canada's 69 Indian Residential schools scattered in key locations as far north as the Artic Circle." *The Eyes of Children* (1962), on the other hand, was appealing to the sympathies of the audience, exploiting a construction of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children as in need of, or thankful for, the charity and the care of the state. For example, towards the end of the film, and while most of the students have left the school for a winter holiday, a female student staying at the school during the break, sits brushing her hair. The camera frames her through a window, slowly zooming to a close-up of her face. She states,

> well I've been here since knee high, and I enjoy it around here. You know, I consider it a second home. I find it rather, a bit lonely because you're so used to the big crowds and all the noise. You know, when the kids leave, you kind of have to get used to the loneliness. After grade twelve I want to go into training to be a nurse.

The student expresses a sense of her future as one in which she participates in Canada's dominant cultural norms, allowing the film to offer her as a "sympathetic presentation" to its Canadian audience. The student's seemingly "genuine" interest in becoming a registered nurse simply represents the success of IRS system, suggesting her assimilation is complete and that she is now ready to enter Canadian culture in accordance with her IRS education. The message conveyed to the dominant audience once again aligns with this compulsion to depict residential school assimilative policy as unquestionably successful by equating the interests of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples as exactly those of Canadians. The film garners a "sympathetic response" in this moment by suggesting the student and the dominant citizen share the same struggles and aspirations.

Why Indian Affairs was dedicated to misrepresenting the value of the IRS system and its own departmental policies is not entirely clear. There does not ever appear to have been much reason to mislead anybody regarding the struggles of the IRS system, and perhaps if Indian Affairs had participated in a more honest public relations campaign, Canadians may have demanded better funding for the schools. Instead, what these films appear to have participated in allowing IRS authorities to cover their tracks, to maintain abusive environments, to persist in failing to meet the basic human rights of children. For example, our first encounter with the Kamloops Indian Residential School principal, Allan Noonan, in *The Eyes of Children* frames him as utterly cherished by the students; walking in front of the school, students run up to and embrace him. Noonan playfully wraps some of the students in his trench coat. The camera then cuts to shot of more children running and laughing. Smiles and laughter flood the soundtrack and round out the scene.

Contrary to this image and characterization of Noonan, evidence shows that he supported harsh physical and psychological punishment of the students. We learn in "a lecture on discipline [Noonan] delivered in the 1960's," that although he saw "corporal

punishment as now obsolete," and favoured its use only in certain circumstances, he made

> it equally clear that [he] believed that principals had a right to develop their own unorthodox and violent punishments. He thought that if older boys got into a fight and refused to apologize, their supervisor should 'put them in the ring and supervise a boxing match until both boys are too tired to care anymore. For a bully this is good medicine too—let five little fellows with gloves on push him around the ring. The bully will get tired especially if he is made to box on his knees.' All this was clearly in violation of the 1953 discipline policy. (*Canada's Residential Schools II* 393)

Though a direct correlation between Noonan's support for this disturbing and inhumane form of punishment and its actual implementation on his behalf is unclear, numerous references to its use throughout the system appear in survivor-testimonies. Beverly Albrecht, a victim of the Mohawk Indian Residential School in Brantford, Ontario, recalls being forced into boxing matches, and speculates it was an effort to create animosity between students, to make them "fight" each other rather than directing their anger or frustration with the system towards teachers and principals (Albrecht 2013). Another victim of the school verifies these types of punishments in a 2015 interview with the *Hamilton Spectator*. While providing a tour of the same now-abandoned Mohawk institution, former pupil Ivan Bomberry speaks of a basement room where "boys would be put in there to fight each other…they wouldn't let them out until one of them had beaten the other" (*Dunphy* 2015). Another survivor talks of coming into this room after her brother had been "fighting, and the walls were covered, just covered in blood" (*Dunphy* 2015)

The film continues in this misleading vein, and of note is its focus on the buildings of the institution. A hugely important component of IRS history has located and studied evidence regarding the general disrepair of the schools. In fact, poor building construction and maintenance is often cited as a major factor in the incredible number of students who died while enrolled. The TRC *Final Report* states that "Poorly built and maintained buildings were firetraps. Nineteen boys died in the fire that destroyed the Beauval, Saskatchewan, school in 1927. Twelve children died when the Cross Lake,

Manitoba, school burned down in 1930" (*Canada's Residential Schools IV* 3). In 1955, just prior to the filming of *The Eyes of Children* (1962), Indian agent H.N. Woodsworth wrote that "'most buildings in the Agency are in a state of disrepair and some of them are actually becoming unfit for human habitation'" (*Canada's Residential Schools II* 508). On the one hand, numerous reports show that the government was aware of the fact that the institutions of the system were crumbling. On the other hand, the CBC, a government-funded media agency, offers an opposing view by filming the Kamloops Indian Residential School as though it is a pristinely maintained beacon of the system. The film's opening contributes to this by presenting a sequence of shots that map the institution for the spectator: images of well-kept school buildings appear, as well as a white chapel, a barn, an open field and a swing set, students giggling while they toss paper airplanes out their classroom windows to a group children below them. The immaculate school grounds are peppered with students enjoying recess, and eventually, at the request of a teacher, lining up, entering the chapel, and beginning their day. What the audience is presented actively combats any sense that might be surfacing in the public ethos that the schools were uninhabitable, or that they were in any way placing staff and students in danger.

The Kamloops Indian Residential School was not an exception to the system's state of decrepitude. In 1917, "first-time principal" Reverend J. Salles came to the school and immediately concluded that the "condition of its buildings, farm and livestock was deplorable" (*Milloy* 125). Ten years later, a government report stated that the school's "poor construction had contributed to numerous infections, colds, bronchitis, and pneumonia during the past winter." This link between living conditions and student health is well known and hotly debated, as IRS research repeatedly shows that the derelict state of the system's buildings was highly detrimental to the student body. Many scholars and Indigenous leaders are left to question whether a combination of poor design and lack of maintenance can be proven to be deliberate efforts intended to proliferate widespread illness amongst student populations. Yet, in this case, film is utilized in one way to obscure these issues, meaning that the audience was not provided the information necessary to engage in a discussion concerning genocide, or even one regarding the fact

that the poor state of the Kamloops school was undeniably affecting the health of its occupants.

The extent of misrepresentation here is further evidenced by the fact that throughout its operational existence the school was constantly dealing with issues beyond simple maintenance. In 1890, just after the Kamloops school was constructed, J.A. MaCrae, a government inspector, expressed concern over the fact that "all emanations from the cellar, which is unventilated, now flow into the dining room and main building (*Milloy* 79). In 1965, an inspection showed at Kamloops "fire protection was assessed as being inadequate, due to the 'inferior highly combustible construction materials used in the main residence'" (*Canada's Residential Schools II* 327). During a follow-up visit, government inspectors "noted little improvement," stating that "the alarm system was in 'poor condition,' and the fire extinguishers were 'old and battered'" (*Canada's Residential Schools II* 327).

John Milloy further discusses the poor construction of the Kamloops school, confirming that it was a hazardous building. He notes a report citing the "'building's breakneck stairs,'" pointing out that

> when the Department [of Indian Affairs] investigated that observation, it became apparent that the Kamloops School had been built to the same design as Elkhorn in Manitoba and thus had the same defects, stairs and all. The local agent found them 'steep and narrow' and suggested that they 'were probably made so to save material and expenses and are by no means of the safest kind.' (167)

Viewing the building through *The Eyes of Children*, the well-documented history of Kamloops Indian Residential School as a poorly built, neck-breaking, disease spreading institution, is hidden.

The film is combatting any sense the public might have that the system was physically falling apart. A tracking shot slowly travels down the aisle of the Chapel. The children are shown hunched forward, dutifully reciting religious text. The next shot, taken from an upward angle, situates the spectator at the feet of a statue of the Virgin Mary. This is followed by separate tracking shots progressing down a hallway, passing by a stairwell into a recreational room, and landing its focus on a Christmas tree, all while we continue to hear the students reading scripture. The audience is given a tour of the

school; everything is pristine, everything appears to be normal, and the film offers no reason to question whether these buildings are inhabitable.

A New Future (1955) depicts the IRS system in a similarly misleading vein. Each film is dedicated to presenting a bright and peppy story with corroborating imagery in order to define and advertise the system's intents and purposes for and to the Canadian public. The film shows Bishop Horden Indian Residential School in Moose Factory, Ontario, and is dominated by images of children laughing and playing. We see them having a vigorous game of hockey, while students and community members stand at the edge of the rink watching and cheering. Students are shown skipping rope, attending gym class, enjoying a game of ping pong, and, of course, parading through town on a enforced pilgrimage to a Sunday church service. Again, everything appears proper and normal. During an English class, they appear highly attentive, and a sequence of close-ups exhibits their smiling faces suggesting their embracing the process of being systemically oppressed into learning and communicating exclusively in the dominant colonial language.

Like the Kamloops School, though, Bishop Horden Indian Residential School suffered similar problems, which *A New Future* (1955) overlooks. The *TRC Report* reveals that in 1947,

> the antiquated sewage system at Moose Factory, Ontario, led to a "serious outbreak of typhoid fever among the staff and the pupils"…Three year later, Dr. B.H. Harper of the Moose Factory Indian Hospital pointed out the sewage system was still inadequate. He wrote that in the spring and fall of 1949, fluid from the septic tank were "seeping through the grounds in the immediate vicinity of the back door of the school and the odour caused thereby both outside and inside building was most repulsive." (*Canada's Residential Schools II* 208)

The report also points out that in "1950, it was necessary to hospitalize a number of students who had 'developed rashes due to uncleanliness" (*Canada's Residential Schools II* 208). What we see here is a similar pattern of neglect, and an unwillingness to remedy problems and ensure the students would at least be provided living conditions that would not make them sick.

At one point in the film, "principal Eric Barrington" is shown applying a bandage to a young boy's head. The narrator paints him in the most positive light, stating that he "dispenses first-aid among his many other duties." The music is cheerfully present in the background associating the staff with the imagery of compassion and concern. These ideas are easily undermined, however, with archival evidence of Barrington operating in a manner entirely contrary to his televisual characterization. In November 1956, for example, while Barrington was the principal of the Pelican Lake Indian Residential School in Sioux Lookout, Ontario, four students ran away from the school. This was a common problem within the system, and of this particular episode, the *TRC Report* states that

> an Ontario Provincial Police officer became involved in the search. He was informed, incidentally, that two other boys, Tom and Charles Ombash, aged twelve and eleven had run away from the school one month earlier, on October 5, 1956. The four boys that the police had been called in to search for were located, but by December 19, the Ombash brothers were still missing. Not only had Sioux Lookout principal Eric Barrington not informed the police about the brothers' disappearance for over a month, but he had not informed Indian Affairs either…the boys were never located and there appears to have been no negative consequence for Barrington. He remained as principle of the school for another five years, until he was appointed principal of the Wabasca, Alberta, school in 1961. (*Canada's Residential Schools II* 347)

Sioux Lookout is located in Northwestern Ontario relatively close to the Manitoba border. Winters there are long, and notably harsh, and by not properly searching for the boys, Barrington essentially forced them to survive in incredibly arduous conditions. Their survival would have been shocking. As far as we know the boys did not survive, and by not initiating a proper search party, Barrington essentially left them to die in the wilderness. This matter is, as even the notably harsh R.F. Davey of the Indian Affairs Branch stated in a letter to the area's Indian Agent, "inconceivable." (*Canada's Residential Schools II* 347). But for all his concern, Davey does nothing to ensure Barrington would face criminal charges or, at least, never work within the system, or with

children, again. Sadly, the boys were never located, and the whereabouts of their bodies remains unknown.

In these Indian School Films, we encounter a troubling paradox. However, considering the Department of Indian Affairs' investment in promoting an idealized public image of IRS experiences and operations, that film would be employed in this manner, or thought useful in the way, is unsurprising. In fact the use of moving images to represent the IRS system seems in clear alignment with early public relations campaigns interested in displaying the children playing sports or participating in some sort public performance. The far-reaching broadcast abilities of television, in fact *The Eyes of Children* (1962) was a nationally broadcast "Television Special" aired on Christmas Day in 1962, and the ability of documentary to present a "real" perspective, appear to have been utilized as a way to modernize the common promotional patterns employed by Indian Affairs. Another example appears in the 1965 edition of Beauval Indian Residential School newspaper, *The Voice of the North*. The students recall being filmed for television:

> we changed into our uniforms. We practiced our songs. After a while a man came and called us into the television studio. We sang four songs. The songs were "Michael Row the Boat Ashore," "I Was Seeing Nellie Home," "We Shall Overcome," and the last one of all was "Brighten the Corner Where You Are." After we sang there were a lot of phone calls. (*Fiddler* 14)

The performance garners a response from its audience, and verifies that promotional efforts were not without effect. In this sense, the moving image simply became another way to advertise IRS operations and agendas in misleading ways. These efforts, I believe, contributed to sustaining the IRS system by providing the Canadian public little reason to question its institutional operations.

In the present context, these films have, of course, become important artifacts capable of informing engagement with IRS history in significant ways. We know that the IRS system operated with culturally genocidal intent, and that these films contributed to this by presenting the idea that residential schools were, in essence, good. Watching them now, while fully aware of the misrepresentation of the IRS system they present, the films begin to function differently. Rather than operating as evidence verifying residential

schools as participating in a type of ethical labour, they signify a dark history, and in this awareness we can glimpse the failure of their images to obscure the IRS system's violence and racism.

For example, in regards to the editing of *The Eyes of Children* (1962), the continuity between images is clearly flawed. In other words, throughout the film, images are organized to create the illusion of a cohesive moment, when in fact their arrangement seems more likely to be a collection of disparate moments edited together to appear chronological. The students are shown in class learning the proper "courtesy for answering the phone." The camera frames the teacher speaking to the class. A shot-counter-shot unfolds, and fittingly its focus shifts back and forth between the teacher and students. Clearly the filmmakers suggest the students are responding directly to the teacher, that they sit in this classroom, and that their reactions are to this specific educational moment in this specific educational environment. Yet, the close-up shots of the individual students offer plenty of reason to doubt the authenticity of this narrative. First of all, the camera's close proximity to the child's face obscures the context in which they are situated; they are framed against a heavily distorted background, meaning that the audience's sense of the student being in the classroom is more so a result of editing, than of the film offering adequate and informative visual context. Secondly, the audio of the students shown is clearly muted; in close-up we see, but do not hear them speaking. In contrast, when we see them from the teacher's perspective, they sit quietly and attentively, not speaking at all. Finally, when a student answers a question posed to them by the teacher, the image of the boy speaking does not align with the film's audio. Add to this the fact that this superficial continuity is so poorly constructed that the sequence simply feels jarring, and out of sync.

Though the film is not a collection of entirely random images, its low-grade filmmaking certainly makes it feel that way, and it is disruptive to the spectator. Watching in the present, the discomfort of the editing is then exacerbated by our knowledge of the culturally genocidal and physically and psychologically violent moments these children were facing daily. In this way, we can begin to view the images against the grain of the film's intended narrative. While *The Eyes of Children* (1962) initially asks its audience to view the residential school as a benevolent institution,

contemporary viewings reveal the film as a collection of moments in which we face the children and cultures we so aggressively institutionalized. The film offers the contemporary viewer a stilted encounter with the IRS students, and the infinite complexity of the child's face radiates in "the inescapably hyperbolic nature of the close-up" which is "always, at some level, an autonomous entity, a fragment, a 'for-itself'" (*Doane*, 90). Mary Ann Doane articulates these ideas stating that the

> most heavily used close-up, that of the face, fragments the body, decapitating it… The close-up in general is disengaged from the mise-en-scène, freighted with an inherent separability or isolation, a "for-itself" that inevitably escapes, to some degree, the tactics of continuity editing that strive to make it "whole" again. Space is "used up" by the face or object, and the time of the moment…is expanded at the expense of the linear time of narrative. The close-up embodies the pure fact of presentation, of manifestation, of showing—a "here it is." (90-91)

The face of the IRS students present the complex "for itself," or "here it is," and the films' become a collection of moments in which encounter the IRS students, not as simple participants in the daily life of IRS operations, but as interruptions to the film's narrative framing. Watched in this way, the students transcend the IRS system's promotional veil; rather than exaggerating their apparent happiness, the close-up gestures to their oppression.

When we encounter these faces onscreen, not only is it devastating in light of the violence that they, their families, and their cultures are experiencing in these precise moments, but also that Canadians have been encouraged to misread these encounters through exposure to cultural products such as *The Eyes of Children* (1962) and *A New Future* (1955). Taiaiake Alfred states, we need to embrace moments that aggressively shake us out of the mundaneness of our colonial privilege, and these encounters, I believe, do this, encouraging rumination on "the bold and unchallenged white arrogance and racial prejudice against indigenous people," and questioning of "the personal and mundane maintenance of colonialism and colonial power relations through words and behaviours on a one-to-one level, conversationally and socially" (50). These films and others like them, in other words, offer important artifacts as evidence of our culture's history of promoting the IRS system in positive terms; and also, in a contemporary

setting, they offer an important confrontation with the harms of our history of, and ongoing engagement with, the colonial oppression of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and cultures.

Finally, I turn once more to *The Eyes of Children* (1962). In particular a scene in which an IRS teacher has taken a small group of male students into town, highlights many of the issues I have raised throughout this work. Leading the group through a busy downtown street, the teacher clearly offers the locals a glimpse of the IRS students dressed in Western attire, and dutifully ascribing to the orders of their IRS authority. We encounter a promotional aspect here because the work of the IRS system is undertaken in the public eye, and exhibits "proof" that IRS policy is working. While the group stops to look into the window of a toy store, the camera films them from inside the store. This type of shot would have taken coordination, and again highlights the constructed nature of the film, its coaxing students to represent IRS life in benevolent terms. Finally, when the camera takes the perspective of the students, we see them coveting *Gunsmoke* (1955), and "Deputy," costume sets. From what I can see, the costumes include toy guns, holsters, and maybe a cowboy hat. *Gunsmoke* was of course a television series of the Western genre, and here, we encounter the IRS system's promotional use of film eliding with ideological thrust that saw Westerns notably incorporated into residential school exhibition schedules. When the camera takes the perspective of the children, when it looks through *The Eyes of Children* (1962), we see the IRS students being confronted again with their identity as a racial stereotype—the Hollywood Indian—that which consistently appeared onscreen at residential schools. In a film promoting IRS assimilative practices to the Canadian public, we are reminded that the same medium was priming IRS students to be constantly reminded of their problematically ascribed racial inferiority, that film and the moving image were engaged with the IRS system in a multifaceted and complicated manner.

Conclusion

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Assimilation and Film Study: Historicizing the Indian Residential School System as an Articulation of Canadian Culture

At its core, this dissertation was built around original archival research that evidenced and detailed the practice of film exhibition in the IRS context. It has unveiled an interrelationship between film and the IRS system, having produced a collection of materials through which we can untangle how the system employed the medium's communicative abilities, and associated technologies, in pursuit of cultural genocide. In this concluding chapter, I will outline what this dissertation has accomplished. Informed by the methodological paradigm of useful cinema, it has contributed to the diversification of Canadian film studies in a politically engaged direction. I rearticulate the reasons my approach to film analysis was necessarily foundational, and assert that continued study of film exhibition in the IRS context will utilize the list of films known to have been associated with the system—compiled here as an appendix—to fully engage issues of resistant viewing and the postcolonial theory of the "third eye." I end by discussing the difficulties of object and institutionally specific archival research, arguing that my methodology has engaged a more culturally oriented and expansive approach to IRS study than has thus far been presented.

This work aligns with recent trends in film studies tracing the medium's operations away from the movie theatre, and seeking to document its highly diverse non-theatrical history throughout the twentieth century. Wasson and Acland's concept of "useful cinema" is influential here, in particular its dedication to studying the medium's function in culture as a citizen-building tool. This engages issues of governmentality by locating where, and studying how, film is embedded within varying and sometimes surprising institutions and institutional networks, governments and policies, among other formations, during the mid-twentieth century. More generally, they outline useful cinema as a theoretical paradigm, dedicated to archival work, unveiling "a body of films and

technologies that perform tasks and serve as instruments in an ongoing struggle for aesthetic, social, and political capital" (3). By adopting this archivally based, case study, methodology, and taking up the author's invitation to extend this work to nations outside of their focus on the United States, I diversified Canadian film history, revealing the medium's function to serve the politically motivated and culturally genocidal aims of the IRS system. This offers a study of film in context, providing new information to the history of obscure exhibition sites in Canada, which Acland claims "have been under-researched in Canadian film studies" (3). In essence, I veered from a Canadian film studies heavily invested in aesthetic analysis of identifiably Canadian or Quebecois cinema. The results isolate film as important to the IRS system's pursuit of social and political capital, its exposing IRS students to racist and culturally biased narratives and images that prescribed to them the terms of Canadian culture and their subordinate position within it.

By compiling a list of films associated with IRS schools, my archival research has produced a document important to future studies. These films offer scholars materialist anchors evidencing aspects of a culture and time capable of operating the disciplinary procedures necessary to the IRS system. The medium as a historical source therefore attaches "a very different evidential value to film than aesthetics: in this approach the value of film is not to be found in its artistic or formal properties but in what it reveals about social and historical conditions at the time at which it was made" (*Chapman* 73). Through film, we gain an abstract and complicated access to IRS life and curriculum, one that examines how the system was more thoroughly engaged with, and gained power from, the materials born out of the culture surrounding it. Although watching these films will not reveal the exact effects spectatorship had on the marginalized students, issues of reception remain central to culturally oriented studies of the medium.[13] Yet the activities and film discussed here are nonetheless new and important sources that both inform and complicate Canadian film and IRS history. It is because of my dissertation that we are

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[13] As I have already noted, James Burns cites the difficulty scholars have had in discussing the tangible effects of film exhibition in a colonial state or environment:

> Just because [colonized] people were seeing Hollywood movies does not mean that they were becoming by them. While there is a broadly held view that Hollywood was remaking the world in its own image, historians have been hesitant to speculate regarding the influence of the cinema on audiences. (178)

now able to encounter materials viewed by IRS students, and thus can further question how they informed the system's ideology and operation.

Beyond the context of the IRS system, a more expansive aspect of this dissertation is related to its function as a general case study for examining the use of film and moving images to serve culturally destructive ideology and systemic racism. What can this work tell us about this use of film in relation to other similar instances in Canada and around the world? Recent scholarship concerning film's representation of genocide has predominantly shown interest in the medium's ability to reveal the "untold and perhaps unexplored complexities about genocide and its representation" (*Wilson* 8). Indebted to trauma studies, these scholars focus predominantly on what film content can do to better "appeal to the mind's need for logic and understanding when faced with the unfathomable facts of genocide" (*Cooper* 191). In other words, how can visual mediums potentially establish productive confrontations with the horrors of genocide? Conversely, my emphasis on exhibition context shows that the IRS system essentially rendered ordinary films oppressive, culturally genocidal events. While scholars have dealt with film's ability to facilitate thinking about genocide, my work illustrates how film was used to aid genocide, and offers an under utilized context specific methodology useful to further study of other similar and applicable uses of visual media.

Such applications of cinema are not always clear or easy to identify. Institutionally specific archival research is therefore essential in locating films, which at first glance may appear disconnected from repressive efforts. Take, as an example, the IRS system's exhibition of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1939). The film would, in the absence of the archival research completed here, remain disconnected from the IRS system's assimilationist history. My research has forced it into a discussion concerning how it may or may not have facilitated these efforts. Typically, as Lee Grieveson points out, colonial film history is studied in terms of the "establishment of institutions to foster the production of didactic film," that would clearly position "the efficacy of film and fiction for [the benefit of] (colonial) government" (4). In fact, Grieveson and Colin McCabe have established the Colonial Film Database collecting and archiving films of such a description. This dissertation demonstrates the need to additionally compile lists of

non-colonist cinema, as I have done, used in environments aiming to further such pursuits in order to accurately trace the history of genocidal or colonial uses of cinema.

For the most part, then, this project discusses popular films typically disseminated to substantial public audiences, but focuses on the direct contact between films and IRS students, which, by comparison, represent a highly specific component of spectatorial contact. The films, I argue, function differently in relation to the dominant audience for whom they were constructed. Audiences in the IRS are by all reasonable definition imprisoned and compulsory ones. For this reason, when an archival reference to the use of a specific film title demanded engagement with traditional practices of film analysis, the ideological context established by the foundation of this study as one of an institution, effected how film criticism can operate. It is film exhibition within the IRS system that renders these encounters worth inquiry, and the quality and content of the films is important only in that it tells us more about the institution and its efforts.

Close analysis is, of course, necessary. However, while IRS spectators were not passive and without interpretive agency, offering advanced level film analysis as something young children forced to engage the medium through a second language, were participating in, seems dubious. Paul Landau and Deborah Kaspin discuss the power of colonial environments and representative abilities in *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa*. They state that, "in any environment in which people have power over those they depict, identity is a critical node of struggle…identities that they [the colonized] are supposed to hold 'naturally,' but do not" (19). As an environment defined precisely by power over First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, I have argued that the IRS system coupled this with film's ability mark the identity of its students with stereotypes and derogatory images. Although this reading may seem obvious, it is gauging the films in this regard that offers, I believe, the most accurate assessment of their usefulness to IRS administration.

As I have shown, many victim testimonies align with this argumentation by referencing IRS teachers pushing students to see and understand films in simplistic ways. Such accounts even, I suggest, demonstrate the students having received a potential education in film spectatorship, their being guided to watch films in uncomplicated ways. Victims recall being "encouraged [by teachers] to cheer for the cavalry when John

Wayne attacked the wild Indians on movie night" (*Nepinak* 2015), while Jim Miller states in his comprehensive history of the IRS system, the children were "schooled" by Hollywood to cheer for the oppressors of their ancestors" (281). The students reference Hollywood Westerns, a genre whose most common iterations scholars have convincingly argued limits the "possibility of a sympathetic association with the 'Indians,'" suggesting it "is simply ruled out by the POV conventions; [and] the spectator is unwittingly sutured to the colonial perspective" (*Stam and Shohat* 120). Situating the powerful racial stereotypes inherent in popular film within the discourse of IRS curriculum, students were presented a formidable articulation of racial and cultural inequality. As such, I believe the possibility of the students engaging a resistant spectatorship was limited, and my approach to interpreting the films in terms of their value to the system's ideology is further justified.

Scholars have, however, complicated issues of audience response and formation. Recently, Glenn Reynolds stated that the "once monolithic audience passively imbibing the ideological thrust of a film *in toto*, has now been reconstructed as micro-nodes of political engagement, variable response and conflicting interpretation" (9). Colonial cinema historians have also sought to define a disruptive agency inherent in the marginalized character and spectator. In order to engage such issues, it is necessary to undertake further archival research evidencing film in the IRS context as inadvertently establishing conditions for resistance. For example, "film night," as Jim Miller briefly notes, "could give rise to unexpected demonstrations of Aboriginal solidarity" (281). When information reveals student's challenging the racial inequality presented to them, film analysis can be pushed to more advanced levels. These moments provoke considerations of how and why film content and semiotics produce resistant responses antithetical to the IRS systems overbearing intent, and ask scholars to investigate film affect, form, theory and spectatorship in order to clarify function of spectatorial circumvention in the IRS environment.

One way to analyze moments of resistant viewing at residential schools is to employ the postcolonial theories of "double consciousness" and the "third eye." These concepts situate the marginalized spectator between recognition and disavowal. Fatimah Rony, for example, describes double consciousness as an awareness of a racialized glance

forcing a confrontation with otherness (19). She suggests the victim, in this formation, views him or herself objectively from a third position. The "third eye," as she titles it, then engages the racialized spectator in a complex orientation of "recognizing that he or she is racially aligned with the ethnographic other, yet unable to identify fully with the image, [and] is left in an uncomfortable suspension" (17). Rony, for example, uses these postcolonial theories to illustrate how marginalized characters functioned onscreen to disrupt the didactic racism of colonial cinema. She discerns a subtle irony in an image of a "laughing West African performer, read by the European as a childlike and authentic primitive" (217). This is, she argues, a disingenuous laughter that deconstructs the film's orientalist framing of West African, exposing the fallibility of racial identifiers and offering a character in uncomfortable suspension slipping the control of dominant signifiers. Moving forward, I intend to analyze the "Indian" consistently presented to the IRS student onscreen, seeking out nuances within this characterization that similarly disrupt its role as cultural stereotype. Although I have shown that the films exhibited at residential schools combined with the pedagogical imperatives of the system in a powerful presentation of marginalization, my future work will demonstrate that such films also embodied complex articulations offering the IRS student pathways to resistance.

My approach to the archives was dictated by highly specific references to film and film technologies, and such an object oriented methodology made the practical nature of this research difficult. For example, most of the information essential to the study of the IRS system is contained in the *RG 10 School Files Serie*s, housed at the Library and Archives Canada. This collection of administrative documents concerning the IRS system contains 317 folders of digitized microfilm, with each typically consisting of 2000 or more pages. We are dealing with hundreds of thousands of documents in this series alone. The materials were mostly disparately located, and without any real relation to a useful organizing principle. This has to do with the fact that film was never officially a designated school supply to be funded by the Canadian government, meaning the need to document the purchasing of the necessary equipment or rentals was not an administrative requirement. Despite these challenges, and the gaps in information that they produced, I was able to locate a substantial amount of pertinent documents, and to identify clear

patterns despite these gaps. The concept of using film for "educational purposes only," the consistent exhibition of Hollywood Westerns and films depicting Indigeneity around the world, contact with the NFB, and the schools holding "Movie Nights," represent the clearest patterns of use and have shaped this dissertation. Successfully facing these materials this work has demonstrated the need to go deeper into these archives, to arrange them much like Useful Cinema has done with film history, as a collection of case studies completing in-depth research on seemingly small components of the system. Constructing the history of the IRS system, as a mosaic of cultural influences and practices will better engage questions concerning how and why Canadian culture was able to support the systemic application of cultural genocide. I want to see this archival methodology applied to studies of the use of literature, engagement with local and national economies, and the role of sport and performance in the IRS context, and believe that such work will align with mine in better presenting the system as not apart from, but rather interwoven with, and gaining power from, Canadian life and culture.

In essence, this dissertation concerns the need to study the nuances of why Canadian culture allowed for the establishing and operation of an institutional system dedicated to cultural genocide. I have attempted to do this by researching the use of film at residential school, viewing the medium as offering a reflection of how culture "produces texts that prefer certain meanings, thematic structures and formal strategies" (*Turner* qtd. in *Gittings* 1) It is "within these forms and meanings we can find the ideology of the culture, the way it makes sense of itself and refers meaning onto its institutional practices" (*Turner* qtd. in *Gittings* 1). In this sense, the IRS system's application of cultural genocide is not only the result of an institutional system employing racist disciplinary procedures and incorporating film into these procedures, but also the cumulative effects of a collection of influences and entities coming from the culture surrounding its operations. It is such culturally oriented approaches to the IRS system and the archives that move IRS history beyond simply reconstructing what happened in the schools, and instead towards better understanding what conceptually and ideologically made them possible

FILMS EXHIBITED AT INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

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The following list compiles references to films associated with IRS schools. It is informed by archival documents verifying the rental of films by the Shingwauk IRS in Sault Ste. Marie Ontario, St. Phillips IRS in Fort George Quebec, Kamloops IRS in British Columbia, the Beauval IRS and Qu'Appelle Valley IRS in Saskatchewan, as well as a correspondence between the Department of Indian Affairs and the National Film Board of Canada, in which U.S. government documentaries are recommended to a film outpost established to serve, in part, IRS schools in the Northwest Territory. This list will function as a resource for further academic study, enabling scholars to examine these materials without having to establish the reality of film use in the IRS context, as I have done here. However, scholars will need to continue to rigorously account for the IRS context of exhibition, necessitating research into the nuance of audience formation and how it varies provincially, and all other details capable of better reconstructing the specificities of exhibition employed by each of the included IRS schools.

20000 Leagues Under the Sea. Science Fiction. Dir. Richard Fleisher. Science Fiction. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1954. 127 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

3 Stooges Meet Hercules. Comedy. Dir. Edward Bernds. Normandy Productions. U.S.A. 1962. 89 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Abbot and Costello go to Mars. Comedy. Dir. Charles Lamont. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1963. 77 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

A Boy Ten Feet Tall. Egypt/South Africa Adventure. Dir. Alexander Mackendrick. Michael Balcon Productions. United Kingdom. 1963. 118 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

The Absent Minded Professor. Comedy. Dir. Robert Stevenson. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1961. 97 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

A Bullet is Waiting. Western. Dir. John Farrow. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1954. 90 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Agent For H.A.R.M. Science Fiction. Dir. Gerd Oswald. Universal. U.S.A. 1966. 84 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

A Modern Guide to Health. Educational. Dir. Joy Batchelor. Central Office of Information. U.S.A. 1947. 9 Minutes. Beauval IRS, 1961.

A New Frontier. Educational Produced by Federal Government for us in Indian Education. U.S.A. 1949. 18 Minutes. Included on a list of films recommended for the Outpost Film library established by the education service of Indian Affairs in 1950.

A Night to Remember. Historical Drama. Dir. Roy Ward Baker. Rank Organization. United Kingdom. 1958. 123 Minutes. Beauval, 1962.

Apache Uprising. Western. Dir. R.G. Springsteen. A.C. Lyles Productions. U.S.A. 1965. 90 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Arizona Cowboy. Western. Dir. R.G. Springsteen. Republic Pictures. U.S.A. 1950. 67 Minutes. Beauval IRS, 1964.

Arizona Raiders. Western. Dir. William Whitney. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1965. 57 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Assault on a Queen. Drama. John Donahue. Paramount. U.S.A. 1966. 106 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

A Tiger Walks. Dir. Drama. Norman Tokar. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1964. 91 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Back to God's Country. Silent Feature. Dir. David Hartford. Shipman-Curwood Company. Canada. 1919. 73 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Back to God's Country. Adventure. Dir. Joseph Pevney. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1953. 78 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Beau Geste. France/North Africa Adventure. Dir. Douglas Hayes. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1966. 112 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Ben-Hur. Historical Drama. Dir. William Wyler. MGM. U.S.A. 1959. 212 Minutes. Beauval IRS 1962.

Best of Enemies. East Africa War Drama. Dir. Guy Hamilton. Dino de Laurentiis Cinematographica. Italy. 1961. 104 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Beyond Bengal. Colonial Travelogue. Dir. Harry Schenck. Showman's Pictures. U.S.A. 1936. 62 Minutes. Qu'Appelle IRS, 1948.

Black Arrow. Adventure. Dir. Lew Landers. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A 1944. 76 Minutes. St Joseph's Mission IRS, 1944.

Black Spurs. Western. Dir. R.G. Springsteen. A.C. Lyles Productions. U.S.A. 1965. 81 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Bullet for a Badman. Western. Dir. R.G. Springsteen. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1964. 80 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Boys Town. Drama. Dir. Norman Taurog. MGM. U.S.A. 1938. 96 Minutes. Kamloops IRS, 1940.

Canada at the Coronation. Documentary. Dir. Allan Stark. National Film Board of Canada. Canada. 1953. 48 Minutes. Beauval, IRS, 1957.

Carthage in Flames. Historical Drama. Dir. Carmine Gallone. Compagnie Cinematograph de France. Italy. 1960. 107 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Cat Ballou. Western/Comedy. Dir. Elliot Silversteen. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1965. 97 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Conquest of Space. Science Fiction. Dir. Byron Haskin. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1955. 81 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Country Music Holiday. Western/Musical. Dir. Alvin Ganzer. Aurora. U.S.A. 1958. 81 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

The Crimson Pirate. Adventure. Robert Siodmak. Hecht-Lancaster. U.S.A. 1952. 105 Minutes. Beauval IRS, 1965.

The Curse of The Werewolf. Horror. Dir. Terrance Fisher. Hammer Films. United Kingdom. 1961. 91 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Custer's Last Stand. Civil War/ Western. Dir. Elmer Clifton. Wiess Productions. U.S.A. 1936. 84 Minutes.

Davy Crockett the King of the Wild Frontier. Western. Dir. Norman Foster. Walt Disney Productions. 1955. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Destination Inner Space. Science Fiction. Dir. Francis Lyon. Harold Goldman

Associates. U.S.A. 1966. 83 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

Dessert People. Educational. Produced by Federal Government for us in Indian Education. U.S.A. 1947. 11 Minutes. Included on a list of films recommended for the Outpost Film library established by the education service of Indian Affairs in 1950.

The Devil-Ship Pirates. Adventure. Don Sharpe. Hammer Films. United Kingdom. 1964. 86 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Dingaka. African Adventure. Dir. Jamie Uys. Jamie Uys Productions. South Africa. 1964. 98 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Disorderly orderly. Comedy. Dir. Frank Tashlin. Jerry Lewis Productions. U.S.A. 1963. 89 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Donovan's Reef. Hawaii Adventure. Dir. John Ford. John Ford Productions. U.S.A. 1963. 109 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Double Your Money From Traps. Educational. Produced by Federal Government for us in Indian Education. U.S.A. 1947. 20 Minutes. Included on a list of films recommended for the Outpost Film library established by the education service of Indian Affairs in 1950.

The Dream Maker. Musical. Don Sharpe. K.N.P. Productions. United Kingdom. 1963. 86 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Escape From Zahrain Middle East Adventure. Dir. Ronald Neame. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1962. 93 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

The Evil of Frankenstein. Horror. Dir. Freddie Francis. Hammer Films. United Kingdom. 1964. 84 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Family Jewels. Comedy. Dir. Jerry Lewis. Jerry Lewis Production. U.S.A. 1965. 99 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Father Goose. Comedy. Dir. Ralph Nelson. Granox Productions. U.S.A. 1964. 118 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

First Men on the Moon. Science Fiction. Dir. Nathan Juran. Ameran Films. United Kingdom. 1964. 103 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Four Fast Guns. Western. Dir. William J. Hole Jr. Phoenix Films. U.S.A. 1960. 72 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Flipper. Adventure. Dir. Jack Cowen. MGM. U.S.A. 1964. 87 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1964.

Francis in the Haunted House. Comedy. Dir. Charles Lamont. Universal Pictures. U.S.A 1956. 80 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Fun in Acapulco. Comedy. Dir. Richard Thorpe. Hal Wallis Productions. U.S.A. 1964. 97 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Genghis Khan. Egypt/Historical Drama. Dir. Henry Levin. Columbia Pictures. United Kingdom. 1965. 127 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Girls! Girls! Girls! Comedy. Dir. Gordon Taurg. Hal Wallis Productions. U.S.A. 1962. 106 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Ghost and Mr. Chicken. Comedy. Dir. Alan Rafkin. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1966. 90 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

Great Sioux Massacre. Western. Dir. Sidney Salkow. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1965. 102 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Gunman's Walk. Western. Dir. Phil Karlson. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1958. 97 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Gunpoint. Western. Dir. Alfred L. Werker. Allied Artists. U.S.A. 1955. 86 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

The Guns of Navarone. Western. Dir. J. Lee Thompson. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1961. 158 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Hatari!. Africa/Adventure. Dir. Howard Hawks. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1962. 157 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Health: Your Cleanliness. Educational. Dir. Herk Harvey. Centron Corporation. U.S.A. 1953. 12 Minutes. Beauval, 1961.

Hell is for Heroes. War Adventure. Dir. Don Siegel. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1962. 90 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Incredible Journey. Adventure. Dir. Fletcher Markle. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1963. 80 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS 1965.

Indian Cowboy. Educational. Produced by Federal Government for us in Indian Education. U.S.A. 1947. 11 Minutes. Included on a list of films recommended for the Outpost Film library established by the education service of Indian Affairs in

1950.

Indian Forests of the Southwest. Educational. Produced by Federal Government for us in Indian Education. U.S.A. 1947. 18 Minutes. Included on a list of films recommended for the Outpost Film library established by the education service of Indian Affairs in 1950.

Indian Gardens of Oklahoma. Educational. Produced by Federal Government for us in Indian Education. U.S.A. 1947. 11 Minutes. Included on a list of films recommended for the Outpost Film library established by the education service of Indian Affairs in 1950.

I have Chosen Charity. <http://www.wcr.ab.ca/This-Week/Stories/entryid/1065>. Beauval IRS, 1960.

The Ipcress File. Mystery. Dir. Sidney J. Furie. Lowndes Productions. United Kingdom. 1965. 109 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

In Search of the Castaways. South America/Adventure. Dir. Robert Stevenson. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1962. 98 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

It's Only Money. Comedy. Dir. Frank Tashlin. Jerry Lewis Productions. U.S.A. 1962. 84 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

Ivanhoe. Western. Dir. Richard Thorpe. MGM. United Kingdom. 1952. 106 Minutes. Beauval IRS, 1958.

Joan of Arc. Historical Drama. Dir. Victor Fleming. Sierra Productions. U.S.A. 1948. 145 Minutes. Qu'Appelle IRS, 1949.

The King of Kings. Silent Drama. Dir. Cecil B. DeMille. DeMille Pictures. U.S.A. 1927. 155 Minutes. Beauval, 1957.

Kit Carson. Western. Dir. George. B. Seitz. Edward Small Productions. U.S.A. 1940. 84 Minutes. Beauval, IRS, 1957.

Lawrence if Arabia. Middle East/ Adventure. Dir. David Lean. Horizon Pictures. United Kingdom. 1962. 222 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

The Leather Saint. Drama. Dir. Alvin Ganzer. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1956. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Legend of Lobo. Adventure. Dir. James Algar. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1962. 67 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

The Light in the Forest. Western. Dir. Hershel Daugherty. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1958. 83 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

The Lone Ranger. Western. Dir. George W. Trendle. Apex Film. U.S.A. 1949. 81 Minutes. Kamloops IRS.

Lord Jim. Indonesia/Adventure. Dir. Richard Brooks. Columbia Pictures. United Kingdom. 1965. 154 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Lost Command. War/Adventure. Mark Robson. Red Lion. U.S.A. 1966. 129 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Love and Kisses. Comedy. Dir. Ozzie Nelson. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1965. 87 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Loyola the Soldier Saint. Adventure. Dir. José Díaz Morales. Calderon Productions. Spain. 1949. 93 Minutes. Beauval, IRS, 1957.

Ma and Pa Kettles on Old MacDonald's Farm. Comedy. Dir. Virgil W. Vogel. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1957. 81 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Man or Gun. Western. Dir. Albert C. Gannaway. Albert C. Gannaway Productions. U.S.A. 1958. 79 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Marnie. Thriller. Dir. Alfred J. Hitchcock. Alfred J. Hitchcock Productions. U.S.A 1964. 130 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Mchales Navy. Adventure. Sto-Rev-Co Productions. U.S.A. 1962. 93 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

The Moon Spinners. Adventure. Dir. James Nielson. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1964. 118 Minutes. Shinwauk IRS, 1966.

The Mountain. Adventure. Dir. Edward Dymtryk. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1956. 105 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Mr. Scoutmaster. Adventure. Dir. Henry Levin. Twentieth Century Fox. U.S.A. 1953. 87 Minutes. Beauval, IRS, 1957.

Munster Go Home. Horror/Comedy. Earl Bellamy. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1966. 96 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

My Six Loves. Comedy. Dir. Gower Champion. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1963. 101 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

The Naked Jungle. South America/Adventure. Dir. Byron Haskin. Paramount Pictures.

U.S.A. 1955. 95 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Nevada Smith. Western. Henry Hathaway. Embassy Pictures. U.S.A. 1966. 128 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

Nikki, Wild Dog of the North. Western/Adventure. Dir. Jack Couffer. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1961. 74 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Nine Lives Elfego Baca. Western. Dir. Norman Foster. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1958. 60 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

No Longer Vanishing. Educational. Dir. Grant McLean. National Film Board of Canada. Canada. 1955. 28 Minutes. Beauval, IRS, 1957.

No Name on Bullet. Western. Dir. Jack Arnold. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1959. 77 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Omar Khayyam. Middle East/Adventure. Dir. William Dieterle. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1957. 101 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Once Upon a Horse. Western/Comdey. Dir. Hal Katner. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1958. 85 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Our Neighbors the Carters. Drama. Dir. Ralph Murphy. Paramount. U.S.A. 1939. 85 Minutes. Beauval, IRS, 1957.

Papa's Delicate Condition. Comedy. George Marshall. Amro. U.S.A. 1964. 98 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Personal Qualities for Job Success. Educational. Coronet Films. U.S.A. 1952. 11 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1963.

Posse From Hell. Western. Dir. Herbert Coleman. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1961. 89 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Pilgrimage of the Indians to Notre Dame Du Cap. Beauval, IRS, 1957.

The Quick Gun. Western. Dir. Sidney Salkow. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1964. 91 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Quo Vadis. Historical Drama. Dir. Melvyn Leroy. MGM. U.S.A. 1951. 171 Minutes. Beauval, IRS 1963.

The Raiders. Western. Hershel Daugherty. Paramount. U.S.A. 1963. 75 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

The Rainbow on the River. Musical. Dir. Kurt Neumann. Bobby Breen Productions.

U.S.A. 1936. 91 Minutes. Beauval, 1962.

The Rare Breed. Western. Dir. Andrew V. McLaglen. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1966. 97 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Red Tomahawk. Western. Dir. R.G. Springsteen. A.C. Lyles. U.S.A. 1966. 82 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

Ride a Crooked Trail. Western. Dir. Jesse Hibs. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1958. 87 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

River People. Educational. Produced by Federal Government for us in Indian Education. U.S.A. 1948. 25 Minutes. Included on a list of films recommended for the Outpost Film library established by the education service of Indian Affairs in 1950.

The Robe. Biblical Epic. Dir. Henry Koster. Twentieth Century Fox. U.S.A. 1953. 135 Minutes. Beauval IRS, 1964.

Robinson Crusoe on Mars Robinson Crusoe on Mars. Science Fiction. Byron Haskin. Aubrey Scheneck Productions. U.S.A. 1964. 110 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Rob Roy: The Highland Rogue. Adventure. Dir. Harold French. Walt Disney Productions. United Kingdom. 1953. 81 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Roustabout. Musical. Dir. John Rich. Hall Wallis Productions.U.S.A. 1964. 101 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Rulers of the Sea. Historical Drama. Dir. Frank Lloyd. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1939. 96 Minutes. Beauval, IRS, 1957.

Samson and Delilah. Biblical Epic. Dir. Cecil B. DeMille. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1949. 128 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Sancho Homing Steer. Western. Walt Disney. U.S.A. 1954. 60 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

Sands of IWO Jima. War Drama. Dir. Allan Dwan. Republic Pictures. U.S.A. 1949. 109 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

The Savage. Western. Dir. George Marshall. Paramount. U.S.A. 1952. 95 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Savage Sam. Western. Dir. Norman Tokar. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1963. 103 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Seven Ways from Sundown. Western. Dir. Harry Keller. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1960. 87 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Shane. Western. Dir. George Stevens. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1953. 118 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Shenandoah. Civil War Drama. Dir. Andrew V. McLaglen. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1965. 105 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Six Black Horses. Western. Dir. Harry Keller. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1962. 80 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Six Gun Law. Western. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1948. 54 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Son of Flubber. Comedy. Dir. Robert Stevenson. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1963. 100 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

The Sons of Katie Elder. Western. Dir. Henry G. Hathaway. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1965. 122 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

The Spiral Road. Indonesia/Adventure. Dir. Robert Mulligan. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1963. 145 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

The Story of Esther and the Early Life of Saint Paul. Beauval, IRS, 1957.

The Story of Oil. Educational. National Film Board of Canada. Canada. 1946. 17 Minutes. Beauval IRS, 1958.

Sword of Ali Baba. Middle East/Adventure. Dir. Virgil W. Vogel. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1965. 81 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Sword of Lancelot. Historical Drama. Dir. Cornell Wilde. Emblem Productions. U.S.A. 1963. 116 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Taggart. Western. Dir. R.G. Sprinsteen. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1964. 85 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Taming of the Shrew. Drama. Dir. Franco Zeffirelli. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1967. 122 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Tarzan the Magnificent. Africa/adventure. Dir. Robert Day. Warner Brothers. U.S.A. 1960. 82 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Ten Who Dared. Western. Dir. William Beaudine. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1960. 92 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Texas John Slaughter. Western. Dir. James Nielson. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1954. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Those Calloways. Drama. Dir. Norman Tokar. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1965. 131 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Three on a Couch. Western/Comedy. Dir. Jerry Lewis. Jerry Lewis Productions. U.S.A. 1966. 109 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Tom Thumb. Musical. Dir. George Pal. Galaxy Pictures. United Kingdom. 1958. 98 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1964.

Tonka. Western. Dir. Lewis R. Foster. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1958. 97 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Town Tamer. Western. Dir. Lesley Selander. A.C. Lyles Productions. U.S.A. 1956. 89 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

The Trouble with Angels. Comdey. Ida Lupino. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1966. 112 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Truth About Spring. Adventure. Dir. Richard Thorpe. Universal Pictures. United Kingdom. 1965. 102 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Trail to Health. Educational. Produced by Federal Government for us in Indian Education. U.S.A. 1947. 20 Minutes. Included on a list of films recommended for the Outpost Film library established by the education service of Indian Affairs in 1950.

Under Ten Flags. War Drama. Dir. Duilio Colletti. Dino de Laurentiis Cinematographica. U.S.A. 1960. 92 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

Wackiest Ship in the Army. Comedy. Dir. Richard Murphy. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1960. 99 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

The War Lord. Historical Drama. Dir. Franklin J. Schaffner. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1965. 123 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Who's Minding the Store?. Comdey. Dir. Frank Tashlin. Jerry Lewis Productions. U.S.A. 1963. 90 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1966.

Wings of Chance. Adventure. Dir. Eddie Dew. Tiger Film Productions. U.S.A. 1961. 76 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1965.

The Wild Westerners. Western. Dir. Oscar Rudolph. Four-Leaf Productions. U.S.A. 1962.

70 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

Wild, Wild Winter. Beach Party. Lenny Weinrib. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1966. 80 Minutes. Shingwauk IRS, 1967.

World in a Marsh. Educational. Dir. Maureen Balf. National Film Board of Canada. Canada. 1955. 21 Minutes. Beauval IRS, 1960. Beauval IRS, 1958.

The Wrong Box. Comedy. Dir. Bryan Forbes. Salamander Film Productions. United Kingdom. 1966. 107 Minutes. St. Phillips IRS, 1969.

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20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. Science Fiction. Dir. Richard Fleisher. Walt Disney Productions. 1954. 127 Minutes.

"A New Future." *CBC Newsmagazine*. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. 13 Mar 1955. Television. 3 Minutes.

Back to God's Country. Silent Feature. Dir. David Hartford. Shipman-Curwood Company. Canada. 1919. 73 Minutes.

Back to God's Country. Adventure. Dir. Joseph Pevney. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1953. 78 Minutes.

Beyond Bengal. Colonial Travelogue. Dir. Harry Schenck. Showman's Pictures. U.S.A. 1936. 62 Minutes.

Bullet for a Badman. Western. Dir. R.G. Springsteen. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1964. 80 Minutes.

Canada at the Coronation. Documentary. Dir. Allan Stark. National Film Board of Canada. Canada. 1953. 48 Minutes.

Custer's Last Stand. Civil War/ Western. Dir. Elmer Clifton. Wiess Productions. U.S.A. 1936. 84 Minutes.

Escape From Zahrain Middle East Adventure. Dir. Ronald Neame. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1962. 93 Minutes.

Genghis Khan. Egypt/Historical Drama. Dir. Henry Levin. Columbia Pictures. United Kingdom. 1965. 127 Minutes.

Great Sioux Massacre. Western. Dir. Sidney Salkow. Columbia Pictures. U.S.A. 1965. 102 Minutes.

Gunsmoke. Western. Arness Productions Company. U.S.A. 1955.

Hatari!. Africa/Adventure. Dir. Howard Hawks. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1962. 157 Minutes.

The Light in the Forest. Western. Dir. Hershel Daugherty. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1958. 83 Minutes.

In Search of the Castaways. South America/Adventure. Dir. Robert Stevenson. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1962. 98 Minutes.

Kit Carson. Western. Dir. George. B. Seitz. Edward Small Productions. U.S.A. 1940. 84 Minutes.

Lawrence if Arabia. Middle East/ Adventure. Dir. David Lean. Horizon Pictures. United Kingdom. 1962. 222 Minutes.

The Living Stone. Educational. Dir. John Feeny. National Film Board of Canada. Canada. 1958. 32 Minutes.

Man or Gun. Western. Dir. Albert C. Gannaway. Albert C. Gannaway Productions. U.S.A. 1958. 79 Minutes.

Marnie. Thriller. Dir. Alfred J. Hitchcock. Alfred J. Hitchcock Productions. U.S.A 1964. 130 Minutes.

The Movie Showman. Educational. Dir. Harvey Spak. National Film Board of Canada. 1989. 29 Minutes.

The Naked Jungle. South America/Adventure. Dir. Byron Haskin. Paramount Pictures. U.S.A. 1955. 95 Minutes.

Nikki, Wild Dog of the North. Western/Adventure. Dir. Jack Couffer. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1961. 74 Minutes.

No Longer Vanishing. Educational. Dir. Grant McLean. National Film Board of Canada. Canada. 1955. 28 Minutes.

No Name on Bullet. Western. Dir. Jack Arnold. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1959. 77 Minutes.

Northern Schools. Educational. National Film Board of Canada. Canada. 1957. 4 Minutes.

Old Yeller. Drama. Dir. Robert Stevenson. Walt Disney Productions. U.S.A. 1957. 83 Minutes.

Once Upon a Horse. Western/Comedy. Dir. Hal Katner. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1958. 85 Minutes.

Personal Qualities for Job Success. Educational. Coronet Films. U.S.A. 1952. 11 Minutes.

Posse From Hell. Western. Dir. Herbert Coleman. Universal Pictures. U.S.A. 1961. 89 Minutes.

Pow Wow at Duck Lake. Documentary. Prod. David Hughes. National Film Board of Canada. Canada. 1967. 14 Minutes.

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