From Spiritual Matters to Economic Facts:

**Recounting Problems of Knowledge in the
History of Canadian Audiovisual Policy, 1928-61**

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Abstract

Using a theoretical model incorporating recent work in the field of historical epistemology and Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality this dissertation reconsiders key moments in the history of Canadian audiovisual policy as sites for examining the production of knowledge about national cultural activity. Drawing upon archival records, interdisciplinary research and a discursive analysis of policy documents, I argue that the resolution of questions regarding the nature of cultural expertise and the evidentiary value of different forms of knowledge accompanied changing state rationale towards film and broadcasting and foreshadowed the refashioning of Canada's audiovisual sector.

To illustrate, I focus on a period between the establishment of the first Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting in 1928 and the institution of Canadian content regulations for television in 1960. During this period there are important shifts in the ways the federal government conceived of and administered the audiovisual sector. In the 1920s and 30s, broadcasting and film production were nationalized and placed within publicly funded institutions such as the CBC and NFB. However, less than twenty-five years later, policy rationale towards the audiovisual sector had shifted, with measures put in place to support the development of the cultural industries. The CBC's dominance over broadcasting and regulation had been replaced by a new structural arrangement involving both public and private broadcasters regulated by independent agencies using content quotas to ensure Canadian programming on the airwaves. In Canada's film sector, the NFB's expansion into feature film and television production was halted through policy shifts encouraging the development of the independent film production sector.

Using case studies that explore the historical context behind the emergence of key administrative techniques I document the declining influence of cultural nationalists and humanistic approaches to cultural issues and the rising influence of accountants, statisticians, and scholars from the nascent field of communication studies in the policy process. These developments run concurrently to shifting government rationale towards the audiovisual sector away from developing "national consciousness" towards the creation of a "national economy" for broadcasting and film drawing on previous industrial development models borrowed from the automotive sector and 19th century National Policy.

Although scholarly attention in the field of cultural policy studies has generally focused upon understanding why these shifts occurred, this thesis is devoted primarily towards understanding *how* such shifts took place. Attention to these questions moves the field of study away from the pragmatic issues of policymaking and towards larger questions surrounding the triangulation between knowledge, state, and cultural production.

Résumé

Cette thèse met en place un modèle théorique s'appuyant sur les derniers travaux en épistémologie historique et sur le concept foucauldien de la gouvernementalité afin de ré-examiner certains moments clefs de l'histoire de la politique audiovisuelle canadienne en tant que lieux de la production d'un savoir sur l'activité culturelle nationale. J'affirme donc d'une analyse discursive des documents de politique que le réaménagement du paysage audiovisuel canadien s'annonce déjà, avant même sa mise en oeuvre effective, dans la façon dont les instances responsables se mettent à conceptualiser la nature de l'expertise culturelle et la valeur probatoire de différentes formes de savoir.

J'illustre ce propos en prenant comme exemple la période allant de la création de la première commission royale sur la radiodiffusion en 1928 jusqu'à l'imposition des règles de contenu canadien en 1960. On constate au cours de ces années d'importantes mutations de la façon dont le gouvernement fédéral conçoit et gère le secteur de l'audiovisuel. Dans les années 20 et 30, la radiodiffusion et la production cinématographique furent nationalisées puis confiées a des institutions publiques telles que la SRC et l'ONF. Toutefois, moins de 25 après, la rationalité justifiant les politiques audiovisuelles avait change avec la mise en place de mesures destinées a encourager l'expansion des industries culturelles. La pré-éminence de la SRC dans les domaines de la radio-télédiffusion et de la réglementation fut remplacée par une nouvelle structure mettant en jeu des diffuseurs prives et publiques réglementes par des agences indépendantes et des règles de contenu ayant pour fonction d'assurer une présence canadienne sur les ondes hertziennes. Dans le secteur cinématographique, la production de longs métrages et de séries télévises par l'ONF fut stoppée au profit de producteurs indépendants.

A l'aide d'études de cas mettant en relief les contextes historiques d'émergence de techniques administratifs clefs, cette thèse montre le déclin des approches culturelles nationalistes et humanistes et l'influence croissante des comptables, des statisticiens et des chercheurs de la nouvelle discipline de communications. Cette mutation se développe en parallèle a la transformation de la rationalité gouvernementale qui tend a délaisser la notion de « conscience nationale » au profit de l'institution d'une « économie nationale » de la radio-télédiffusion et du cinéma inspiré partiellement de modèles antérieurs de développement industriel.

Alors que les études des politiques culturelles essaient normalement d'expliquer pourquoi ces mutations se produisirent, cette thèse se concentre au contraire sur la façon dont elles se produisirent. Cette approche implique aussi que le champ d'étude évolue en s'intéressant moins aux questions pragmatiques d'élaboration des politiques culturelles et plus aux triangulation entre la savoir, l'État, et la production culturelle.

Acknowledgements

In a journey encompassing five years, four apartments, three cities, two computers, and one *rebuffade* at the Collège de France I have logged a lot of miles, scooped up a few souvenirs and learned an awful lot of lessons. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have helped make the experience of writing a dissertation so rewarding.

I have benefited most from the steady stewardship of my supervisor, Dr. Sheryl Hamilton. Given a license to explore freely and fail without consequences, I have always felt motivated throughout the project to expand my research horizons. I am grateful to Professor Hamilton for cultivating and protecting that creative space. Her excellent criticisms and strategically- timed prodding also helped to keep the project from running off the rails. Will Straw first encouraged me to consider revisiting the history of Canadian audiovisual policy during my doctoral coursework and introduced me to Foucault's work on governmentality. I would like to thank him for his insights and support throughout my tenure at McGill.

Martin Allor's suggestions during the proposal stages helped to further assist me in focusing the field of inquiry for this project. Over the past few years, some trenchant observations offered by Paul Attallah and Kevin Dowler have nourished the forthcoming pages in important ways. Since 2000, the School of Journalism and Communication at Carleton has provided me with the sanctuary and the salary to finish this dissertation in between teaching assignments and limited-term appointments. I am grateful to my colleagues and administrative staff at Carleton for their support.

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"Surely it is a mistake to expect Canadian culture to assume a form and expression
wholly different from the sources of its inspiration."
-Norman Rogers, *Canadian Forum,* 1932

Introduction:
The Knowledge that Counts

> In my first attempts to find an objective measure for the size of thoughts, I
> theorized (as most of us have at one time or another) that I had only to mount the
> narrow stairs to my attic, stand at the hypotenuse of sunlight that passed through
> the window there in mid-winter, and, concentrating, punch the thought in question
> once firmly, as if it were a pillow. The total number of tiny gold dust-monads that
> puffed forth from the thought's shocked stuffing would indicate, I believed, its
> eternal, essential size.
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> -Nicholson Baker, "The Size of Thoughts."[1]

Nicholson Baker's essay begins with the rather sticky problem of how to measure the size of one's thoughts. His hilarious methodology for determining the seemingly impossible marries a scientist's quest for objective truth with a child's enthusiasm that one day, he or she will be able to count the stars. When considering the ubiquity of methods and the eagerness of investigators in Canada to divine measurements of an equally difficult problem, how to measure "culture," Baker's impish technique comes to mind. Despite Raymond Williams' famous remark that culture represented "one of the most difficult words in the English language" and Theodor Adorno's observation that "culture might be precisely the condition that excludes a mentality capable of measuring it," many have tried a variety of methods to divine the health and welfare of Canada's cultural body.[2] In this dissertation, I take account of some of the individuals, techniques, and flights of fancy that have attempted to "size up" cultural activities for the purposes of policy-making. It is a project I undertake with the same gusto as the intrepid writer standing on the stairs, punching his way to enlightenment.

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[1] Nicholson Baker, *The Size of Thoughts* (New York: Vintage, 1997), 11.
[2] Raymond Williams, *Keywords* (London: Fontana, 1976), 76; Theodor W. Adorno, "Scientific Experiences of a European Scholar in America," in *The Intellectual Migration: Europe and America, 1930-1960.* Edited by Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn. (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), 346-47.

A Parallel Narrative

My dissertation focuses on a temporal horizon that opens with the establishment of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting in 1928 and closes with the institution of Canadian content regulations for television in 1961. During this period there are important shifts in the ways the federal government conceived of and administered the audiovisual sector. In the 1920s and 30s, broadcasting and film production were nationalized and placed within publicly funded institutions such as the CBC and NFB. Less than twenty-five years later policy rationale towards the audiovisual sector shifted, with measures put in place to support the development of the cultural industries. The CBC's dominance over broadcasting and regulation was replaced by a new structural arrangement involving both public and private broadcasters regulated by independent agencies using content quotas to ensure Canadian programming on the airwaves. In Canada's film sector, the NFB's post-war expansion into feature-length and television production was frustrated, a result of policy shifts encouraging the development of the independent film production sector.

In Michael Dorland's estimation there were two distinct environments that shaped these transitions.[3] The first was the *symbolic environment*, comprised of publicly owned cultural institutions and agencies (e.g., the CBC, Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunication Commission and so on); legislation that define their mandates (such as the *Broadcasting Act*), and parliamentary committees that help to direct their operations. The different components of the symbolic environment have "defined the rules, terms, conditions, or turns of language by which

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[3]Michael Dorland, "Introduction," in *The Cultural Industries in Canada*. Edited by Michael Dorland. (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1996), xii.

players are authorized to enter and play the cultural industries 'game' in the Canadian context."[4]

The second environment, characterized as the *industry environment*, took account of the different economic circumstances that impact upon the success or failure of a particular cultural sector. While Dorland did not define the components that constituted this environment, it is likely that they included private cultural institutions and their lobbying organizations, artistic and technical unions, and the shifting economic and regulatory mechanisms that have influenced cultural production and distribution.

Both of these environments were on display while I was working my way through the submissions of evidence, public hearings, and commissioned studies that constitute the records of various government bodies at the National Archives of Canada. However, in re-examining a number of key junctures in the history of Canadian audiovisual policy from this period, I uncovered a third environment that has also shaped these transitions. In this *factual environment* cultural policy issues were viewed as problems of knowledge, conundrums over the best methods, techniques, and expertise necessary to bring about resolutions. Within this environment there existed a number of individuals drawn from artistic, economic, legal, administrative, and academic circles using a variety of diagnostic techniques to take account of the size of the various components of Canada's film and broadcasting sectors.

From this perspective I tracked a fascinating parallel narrative featuring epistemological transitions that ran alongside shifts in policy practice. Here I was

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[4]Ibid.

able to view the declining influence of cultural nationalists and humanities-based approaches within the policy making process and the rising influence of economic nationalists and specialists drawing upon administrative techniques. A key aspect facilitating this change concerned the question of the "objectivity" of the various actors involved in the policy process. Objectivity, the characteristic of being free from bias or of judging only on the basis of the facts, had shifted away from being bestowed upon individuals holding general knowledge of cultural affairs and towards those possessing administrative knowledge that could be applied to cultural affairs through the use of methods drawn from statistics, the social sciences, and accounting professions. In spite of their distance from issues of cultural production, the authority given to such forms of knowledge offered their users the opportunity to enjoy what Lorraine Daston called "the escape from perspective" or a "view from nowhere."[5] When considered in conjunction with the shifting symbolic and industry environments, the events taking place within the factual environment revealed a more complex picture of the history of Canadian audiovisual policy.

A brief glance at the key moments under analysis traces the outline of the present study. In 1929, the *Report of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting* that advocated for a nationalization of Canadian radio made its case in less than nine pages. One of the report's most often-quoted statements, "Canadians want Canadian broadcasting," was made without supporting numeric evidence. Both the report's brevity and its bravado received plaudits in the Canadian press as symbolic of the commissioners' conviction on the importance of broadcasting to the development of a

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[5]Lorraine Daston, "Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective," in *The Science Studies Reader* edited by Mario Biagioli (New York: Routledge, 1999), 114.

national "consciousness." In 1951, the authors of the *Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters* were sceptical of the application of scientific and social scientific methodologies towards broadcasting and film. Instead, the commissioners shied away from statistical measurements -- including their own commissioned studies -- and chose instead to emphasise the moral and spiritual components of a unique Canadian culture that would derive through state involvement in the audiovisual realm.

The impact of these ethereal interpretations of the purpose for audiovisual policy was short-lived. While the Massey Commission was undertaking its investigation on the development of Canada's cultural resources, the federal government hired the accounting firm of Woods Gordon to undertake an administrative review of the National Film Board of Canada. The audit was undertaken to restore credibility at the institution after it was tainted by accusations of harbouring communist sympathizers. The report did more than help to restore the Film Board's reputation. It also had a significant influence in the legislation of a new *Film Act* and foreshadowed the popularity of numerous management control mechanisms to bring "accountability" to publicly funded cultural institutions. Less than five years later, the Royal Commission on Broadcasting helped refashion the Canadian audiovisual sector according to logics present in other areas of the Canadian economy, including from the automotive sector. Their final report featured a 500-page statistical study of Canadian radio and television by communications scholar Dallas Smythe. The study was deemed necessary by the commissioners to provide a dispassionate perspective on the "technical" matters of the newly conceived Canadian

broadcasting "system" amid concerns that the different voices involved in the policy process were too biased to offer any objective advice on the future of broadcasting.

Although scholarly attention in the field of cultural policy studies has generally focused upon understanding *why* these shifts occurred, this thesis is devoted primarily towards understanding *how* such shifts took place. In viewing these changes through the experiences of policy practitioners, I show how new forms of knowledge emerged in response to changing sets of policy problems around the administration of the audiovisual sphere. In their attempt to make sense of these activities, I argue that the actions of a number of key figures previously ignored within historical treatments of Canadian audiovisual policy presaged these shifts in policy rationale.

Policymaking as Framing, Knowing, and Solving

The word "policy" is at the centre of Michel Foucault's writings on governmental rationality, or "governmentality." Foucault described governmentality as a set of "rules for rule" that emerged in the process of transformation from sovereign kingdoms to international systems of states in the sixteenth century. A set of questions was posed by writers wrestling with how this transformation would impact upon the behaviour of sovereign leaders: "How to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to govern others, by whom the people will accept being governed, how to become the best possible governor."[6] The key developments of this shift saw the move away from direct applications of power by the sovereign towards an

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[6]Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect*. Edited by Colin Gordon, Peter Miller and Graham Burchell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 87.

ensemble of governmental practices working to produce and manage subject populations at a distance from direct intervention.

Policy is the main action that coordinates this ensemble. It functions as a form of administrative action taken to produce a well-ordered and managed civic or territorial community in the face of what J.G.A. Pocock calls "the unique, the contingent, and the unforeseen" through the use of what he terms "prudence and experience."[7] As David Glimp maintains, prudence is the ability to apply specialized knowledge and a workable grasp of past experiences to the present in order to direct the polity towards a stable and healthy future. As such, it represents the intellectual capacity that enables those who govern to provide intelligent and inventive responses to the challenges facing the commonwealth.[8]

There are three elements to Foucault's conceptualization of governmentality which are made possible through policy practices: the abstraction of concepts ranging from education to "culture" into problematic objects amenable to policy intervention; the creation of a complex array of governmental apparatuses intended to develop conditions for the enabling of productive bodies, and the production of economic knowledge derived primarily through political economy to mould the population into efficient citizens.[9] In other words, governmentality is marked by a couple of replacements: the "prince" with "population" as the source of governmental power, and the "home" with the "economy" as the locus of intervention and regulation.[10]

In this thesis I draw upon Tom O'Regan's operationalization of Foucault's analytic, the notion of "policy process analysis," as the basis on which to study the

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[7]Pocock quoted in David Glimp, *Increase and Multiply: Governing Cultural Reproduction in Early Modern England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 8.
[8]Ibid.

ways in which "economy" has been applied to the Canadian audiovisual sphere. For

O'Regan, an emphasis on the social and historical forces behind the various aspects

of the policy process moves the object of study away from the analysis of specific

policy measures and towards following the actors in the policy process, assessing the

trajectories of the various policy inputs, and showing how a particular policy is taken

up and extended in time and space.[11]

If the study of cultural policy is "the study of the process by which culture has

come to be perceived as a legitimate jurisdiction of state governance," as Mike

Gasher suggests, I argue that this has been made possible through the deployment of

crisis motifs. These have rendered Canadian film and broadcasting as inherently

"problematic" activities with administrative solutions.[12] The scope of these crises is

vast, ranging from concerns over creeping Americanization, anxieties over

communism, or instability over how to ensure a Canadian presence in new

technological spheres. In offering what Nikolas Rose calls "a history of

problematizations," I focus on the ways in which key moments in the history of

Canadian audiovisual policy served as staging grounds for the performance of a

number of battles over the forms of knowledge best able to bring about their

resolution.[13] This strategy permits a closer investigation of a number of issues

including the changing nature of authority, expertise, and evidence within processes

of policymaking.

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[9]Toby Miller, *Technologies of Truth* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 16-17.
[10]Ibid.
[11]Tom O'Regan, "Some Reflections on the 'Policy Moment'" *Meanjin* 51:3 (1992): 520.
[12]Mike Gasher, "From Sacred Cows to White Elephants: Cultural Policy Under Siege," in *Canadian Cultures and Globalization*. Eds. Joy Cohnstaedt and Yves Frenette (Montreal: Association for Canadian Studies 1997), 13
[13]Nikoas Rose, "Expertise and the Government of Conduct," *Studies in Law, Politics, and Society* 14 (1994): 361.

Within this context, the contribution of practitioners to the policy process represents a vital and underappreciated research area. For each Royal Commission, Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage, or internal review of government policy towards the cultural sector there is usually a raft of evidence created by journalists, lobbyists, scholars, statisticians, accountants, consultants, lawyers and bureaucrats to assist or influence key decision-makers in their deliberations. These are in response to a particular conception of the policy problem, a framing of the issue at hand, and as a result draw upon a wide variety of disciplinary traditions in order to bring about resolutions. In spite of their significance to the policymaking process, however, these figures rarely occupy centre stage once a final report has been completed. They can usually be found on the periphery, residing either in the footnotes or in the appendices.

Scholars within the field of cultural policy studies have engaged in similar acts of marginalization by choosing to emphasize political figures, chairs of investigative commissions, and the efforts of lobby groups as key determinants in the development of individual policy measures. While scholars in the sub-field of "critical cultural policy studies" have turned their attention towards analyses of how institutions such as the museum or library have become involved in the production of cultural citizenship, they have tended to leave questions regarding the relationship between the policy practitioner and the policy apparatus free from critical scrutiny.[14]

This tendency may be the result of an implicit assumption present within the field of cultural policy studies towards applied research and direct contributions to the

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[14]Jonathan Sterne, "Bureaumentality," in *Foucault, Cultural Studies, and Governmentality*. Edited by Jack Z. Bratich, Jeremy Packer and Cameron McCarthy. (Albany: SUNY Press, 2003), 116.

policy process. In this dissertation I do not quarrel with those who have chosen to follow that route. It is certainly a worthy path to produce research that engages directly with the making of cultural policy. It is also an effective way for students of cultural policy to earn additional money; my own consulting contracts for the Department of Canadian Heritage were essential in financing my doctoral studies.

As laudable as such initiatives may be, I maintain that a lack of appreciation of the role of practitioners within the policy process has left key questions regarding the relationship between knowledge and the state unexplored. In the next chapter I argue that by choosing to focus on the political forces behind the emergence of policy measures, the failure of cultural policy to adequately represent the public interest, or the analysis of specific policy measures, many scholars reproduce the same narrative present in governmental reconstructions of historical events. This is a product of their reluctance to consider questions regarding why certain forms of knowledge emerge within a particular historical context as useful for policymaking. A consideration of these questions moves the discussion moves the discussion beyond the matter of determining the extent of a scholar's collusion with the state apparatus or of combing through the archival records to unearth attempts by individuals to manipulate information to advance specific policy positions. Instead, such questions facilitate a more complex interpretation of key moments in cultural policy history by more accurately appreciating the multidisciplinary forms of knowledge involved in the conversion of cultural issues into policy problems.

In this thesis I argue that the impact of the information provided by policy practitioners does more than help to frame the issues involved or contribute to the construction of a final report. Following Giandomenico Majone, I suggest "the job of

the analyst is not only to find solutions within given constraints but also to push out the boundaries of the possible in public policy."[15] In other words, the successful integration of a particular piece of information into the policy process authenticates the inherent value of both the investigator and his or her analytical tools. As we will see, the utility of certain methods ranging from the use of Royal Commissions to the application of audits serves this dual purpose.

A turn towards the history of Canadian audiovisual policy represents an excellent opportunity to explore these issues in more detail. The multifaceted nature of both the technical design and the historical trajectories of audiovisual media reveal its interdisciplinary potentialities. Siegfried Zielinski wrote, "[i]n the historically different arrangements, the audiovisual overlaps with other specialist discourses and partial praxes of society, such as architecture, transport, science, and technology, organization of work and time, traditional plebeian and bourgeois culture, and the avant-garde."[16] As Maurice Charland has shown, overlapping discourses of communication and transportation form an important part of the rhetoric of "technological nationalism" in Canada, since both represent means of sending people and information across vast expanses and binding the various regions of the country.[17] In this thesis, I broaden Charland's conception of technology to encompass what Jim McGuigan called "the 'machinery' of institutional and organizational structures and processes that produce particular configurations of

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[15]Giandomenico Majone, *Evidence, Argument, and Persuasion in the Policy Process* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 35.
[16]Siegfried Zielinski, *Audiovisions :Cinema and Television as Entr'actes in History*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1999), 19.
[17]Maurice Charland, "Technological Nationalism," *Canadian Journal of Social and Political Theory* 10: 1-2 (1986): 186-210.

knowledge and power."[18] As a result, a vast array of components which make up the policy process, from the Royal Commission report to the statistical study, serve an important technological function in helping to produce the audiovisual as a zone for policy intervention. Taking this approach will allow me to reveal another set of overlapping discourses involving communication and transportation in which protective tariffs and content regulations serve as important elements as technologies of economic nationalism.

Other scholars have drawn attention to the ways that discourses of culture and security intersect around the audiovisual. For Kevin Dowler, culture serves both "as the nodal point around which security and policy interests converge" and as a technique in the production of Canadian nationhood.[19] As a result, subsequent cultural policy measures ranging from the establishment of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to the introduction of production tax credits represent extensions of a national security policy intended to secure a "metaphysical" line of defence from Canada's southern neighbour in the absence of military might.[20] In *Plateaus of Freedom*, Mark Kristmanson argues that Canada's security and cultural policy apparatuses frequently intersect, with RCMP agents monitoring affairs at the National Film Board of Canada and establishing arts granting policies at institutions such as the Canada Council.[21]

As inspirational as such analytical schemes have been to my research, they also expose openings that the present study hopes to address. In elaborating the

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[18]Jim McGuigan, *Culture and the Public Sphere* (London: Routledge, 1996), 17.
[19]Kevin Dowler, "The Cultural Policy Apparatus," *The Cultural Industries in Canada*. Edited by Michael Dorland (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1996), 338.
[20]Ibid., 329.
[21]Mark Kristmanson, *Plateaus of Freedom: Nationality, Culture and State Security in Canada, 1940-1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 123-125.

connection between the cultural and security apparatuses, readers of Dowler and Kristmanson may be prone to conclude that there is a one-to-one relationship between the two spheres. I also suggest that they will also miss the extent to which cultural or security discourses intersect with economic discourses also appearing concurrently during the time period under review. These too draw upon nationalist rhetoric associated with protection. In fact, the development of cultural policy measures within the broadcasting and film sectors between the 1920s and the 1960s appear to derive inspiration from a rationale drawn from the humanities, social sciences and industrial spheres rather than from those developed exclusively within the security system. As I will show, developments at the National Film Board of Canada in the post-Gouzenko era have as much to do with developments in the accounting profession as they do with the activities of secret agents. To explore these in more detail, I turn to examine these additional discursive arrangements that overlap with audiovisual media. When considering the changing forms of knowledge and expertise used to administer the audiovisual sector these "partial praxes of society" will reveal themselves more clearly as an equally important part of the epistemological architecture of the cultural policy apparatus.

A Note on Research Method

To bring these figures and hidden discourses out from the margins is to assume the role of an amateur private investigator, sifting through the memoranda, public hearings, transcripts and submissions of evidence at the National Archives of Canada. Such records perform an important enunciative function, in Tom O'Regan's

terms, allowing the researcher to look more closely into the processes of policy

making and to reflect upon the effects of certain kinds of testimony, evidence, or

arguments upon the production of the final report.[22] The frustrations I felt over lost

paper trails, Access to Information restrictions, and substandard cafeteria cuisine were

quickly offset by the elation felt when I uncovered new records that have yet to attract

scholarly attention.

These were usually found in the administrative files of cultural institutions

such as the CBC or NFB, or in Royal Commissions or in the personal files of

bureaucrats and royal commissioners. There I witnessed the evidence of the

knowledge producing aspects of the policy apparatus hanging in suspended

animation: résumés from interested researchers wishing to contribute to the policy

process; status reports from work in progress; statistical studies and correspondence

from two of the early scholars within the developing field of communication studies;

letters to newspaper editors asking to publish advertisements for public hearings; and

internal meeting minutes describing how to integrate commissioned research into the

final report. While such information was useful in helping me locate the presence of

certain figures within the policymaking process and to integrate them more closely

within the reconstruction of key events, additional research was necessary to provide

biographical information and to understand why certain forms of knowledge emerged

as influential within the policy process. For this, I undertook a series of lateral

moves into the secondary source material including newspapers, professional

journals, memoirs by former civil servants, a history of the accounting profession,

intellectual history, media studies, and policy studies. The result of this study is a

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[22]O'Regan, "Reflections on the 'Policy Moment'," 521.

shift in emphasis, a move away from analyses of specific policy measures towards a

view of key moments in the history of the Canadian audiovisual as the site for

knowledge producing projects regarding the administration of the audiovisual sector.

The interdisciplinary scope of my study means that some attention needs to be

paid to the interpretive framework I employed in treating this varied material. I turn

to that discussion and provide a brief review of the case studies that comprise the

chapters of this dissertation. I begin, however, with a discussion of how the present

project came into existence. My appreciation for the processes of policy-making

began in the office of a small theatre company, while applying for arts grants.

"Talk Numerically"

This project sprang to life during a visit to the offices of the Ontario Arts

Council a year before starting my doctoral work. My employer had dispatched me

there on a fact-finding mission to learn how the company could improve its chances

during the next round of funding applications. Like many Canadian arts institutions,

the company's existence was totally reliant upon the funding programs offered by

various granting agencies at the federal, provincial, and municipal level. A failed

application would likely disrupt the upcoming year's production schedule and force

the company to direct its creative energy towards fending off its creditors. With the

financial sword of Damocles hanging over the organization's head, I posed a simple

question to one of the council's liaison officers: What kind of evidence would I need

to make the next application more persuasive to the jury?

She reached into a filing cabinet and pulled out the company's previous

application, a thick document comprised of essay-style responses. Leafing through

the text-heavy pages, she suggested that this year's application should provide the same kind of information in a much more compact form. In place of paragraphs and long sentences the company should use charts, statistics, audited financial statements and budget forecasts. If the application could "talk more numerically" to the jury, she explained, its fortunes would likely improve.[23]

My meeting at the OAC reminded me of the vital communicative function played by numeric information in providing visual evidence of organizational efficiency and transparency.[24] As Mary Poovey explains, "translating sociality into numbers allows for a level of precision and certainty that could not be attained through narrative descriptions or comparisons of incommensurate things."[25] For Poovey, this is what gives numeric data its "effect of accuracy."[26] Since quantitative data represents the unambiguous embodiment of the facts they are usually respected as what John Durham Peters calls "trustworthy forms of discourse," offering the possibility for "systematically undistorted communication."[27] Theodore Porter goes even further when he maintains, "the impersonality of numbers is at least as crucial for their authority as is the plausibility of their claims to truth."[28] The authority given to such information is puzzling, since few people seriously scrutinize either the contents or the methodology behind the constitution of a balance sheet. Its very existence, it seems, is often good enough.

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[23]For a discussion of the impact of the administrative changes at the OAC, including the implementation of software which helps to calculate "the economic value of volunteers," see Barbara Godard, "Privatizing the Public: Notes from the Ontario Culture Wars," *Fuse* 22:3 (1999): 27-33.
[24]This is a point made eloquently by Edward Tufte. See *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* (Cheshire CT: Graphics Press, 1983).
[25]Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 108.
[26]Ibid.
[27]John Durham Peters, "'The Only True Scale of Representation': The Politics of Statistics and Stories," *Political Communication* 18 (2001): 435.

My adventures in arts administration piqued my interest in exploring the descriptive components of statistics and administrative procedures and their interpretive possibilities in more detail. An appreciation of the historical emergence of such techniques would shed light on the question of why trust became a contentious issue between publicly funded institutions and the state. It would also reveal how key figures, such as accountants, and diagnostic techniques, like audits, earned the authority to restore trustworthiness and, in turn, have transformed the administration of cultural affairs.

My research took on greater shape a few years later, this time while I was teaching a senior undergraduate seminar on Canadian cultural policy. As part of a lecture on Canadian film policy I asked my students to jot down the names of any five Canadian movies on a piece of paper and to share their results with their colleagues. The purpose of the exercise was to show students how difficult and contentious it can be to determine what constitutes a "Canadian film." The students produced a list that included films such as *The Sweet Hereafter*, *The Red Violin*, *Men with Brooms*, and *Crash*. When I divulged that the film *Titanic* made my "top 5," many students protested, complaining that the film "didn't count." Although the film's director, James Cameron, is a Canadian citizen, *Titanic* was deemed by my students to be "not Canadian enough" to qualify.[29]

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[28]Theodore Porter, "Objectivity as Standardization: The Rhetoric of Impersonality in Measurement, Statistics, and Cost-Benefit-Analysis," in *Rethinking Objectivity*. Edited by Allen Megill. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 189.

[29]The other films that comprised my list were *The Score*, a film featuring Robert De Niro and Edward Norton and a heist set in Montreal; *Rumble in the Bronx*, a Jackie Chan film in which the streets of Vancouver make a poor stand-in for the New York city borough; *Babar*, an animated film produced by the Canadian production company, Nelvana; and *Porky's*, a film made during the "tax shelter" era during the 1970s which was, until recently, the highest-grossing Canadian movie.

The exercise was fascinating for the way my students' assessment of "Canadian-ness" mimicked the scoring system used to determine a film's eligibility for various kinds of government assistance. For my students, Cameron's film did not qualify because it wasn't produced in Canada or didn't use enough Canadian talent or distinctive locations during filming. Each of these production components are assigned a points value by the Canadian Audiovisual Certification Office (CAVCO). Once a numeric threshold is crossed, the film is deemed to qualify as a "Canadian production." In determining what makes a Canadian film, my students had seamlessly integrated the point system into their own cultural calculations.[30]

The Cultural and the Factual

These examples serve as more than reminders of the power of numbers. They also point to the ways in which practices such as counting and classifying are significant in what Ian Hacking calls "making up people," creating categories of behaviour and aligning groups of people for the purposes of devising and implementing policy initiatives.[31] With this in mind, I consider the cultural to be a historically contingent and descriptive concept formed out of collective experience and political struggle. I argue that the cultural represents a zone of activity that takes its shape through state practices and forms of knowledge to render it amenable for intervention, analysis, and monitoring. Drawing upon Foucault's research on governmentality, Martin Allor and Michèle Gagnon explained that to govern in the

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[30]During a recent attempt to determine the list of the top fifty Canadian songs, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation sidestepped any potential conflicts over definitional issues by asking visitors to the "50 Tracks" website to "visit the CRTC website to find out what qualifies as a Canadian song." www.cbc.ca/50tracks/essentialcanadianmusic.html. Accessed 12 April 2005.

[31]See Ian Hacking, "Making up People," in *Reconstructing Individualism*. Edited by Thomas C. Heller et al. (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1986), 222-236.

name of the cultural involves the elaboration of new forms of knowledge (temporal,

spatial, and administrative) and new articulations of difference within society. For

Allor and Gagnon, the establishment of a cultural field permits specific interventions

of the state (such as ownership restrictions, subsidies, and quotas) in the production

and consumption of cultural materials in the name of the national (or in some cases,

provincial or municipal) interest. In addition, the formation of cultural space allows

for the formation of specific intellectuals, techniques, and styles of reasoning used

both to elaborate and contest the outcomes of individual measures of cultural

development.[32]

As useful as it has been in drawing attention to the historical practices of

government and in opening questions on the forms of knowledge and expertise used

to bring economy to cultural practices, an important limitation exists within the

literature on governmentality. My research has discovered governmentality is much

less effective when assessing the uses and impacts of such practices on the policy

process. This is because applications of governmentality tend to treat each set of

institutions, techniques, procedures and calculations as equal contributors to an

"ensemble" of policy, a *dispositif* that renders subject populations as objects for

governmental intervention. As critics have pointed out, Foucault is decidedly quiet

on questions of political administration, leaving him unable to account for the

agonistic relations between interested parties both within and outside of government

that impact upon the formation and direction of policy initiatives.[33] This means that

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[32]Martin Allor and Michèle Gagnon, *L 'État de culture: généologie discursives des politiques culturelles québécoises.* (Montreal: GRECC and Concordia University, 1994), 26.
[33]See Mark Neocleous, *Administering Civil Society: Towards a Theory of State Power* (London: Macmillan, 1996).

these studies do not explore either how different techniques function in the production

of cultural citizenship or why some forms of knowledge, levels of expertise, or styles

of reasoning are selected over others at a given point in time. Although techniques

such as statistics help to organize subject populations and create categories according

to probabilistic logic, both their design and their interpretation are not natural

developments; they emerge out of a social and historical process that brings them into

being.

Over the course of my research I have realized that the effectiveness of Royal

Commissions, tariffs, content regulations, and statistics as technologies in producing

subject populations is a more open-ended process. I therefore agree with some

Foucauldians that such methods do not amount to "some kind of crushing of the

human spirit under the pressure of a corset of habits, restrictions, and injunctions."[34]

As I will show, the application of such technologies is imprecise and the

interpretation of the results produced by such methods is not always as effective as

such techniques purport. Instead, there are many interpretive possibilities that are

present whenever one is confronted with a statistical study or administrative audit. I

therefore agree with Barry, Rose, and Osborne that "an analytics of technology has,

therefore, to devote itself, to the sober and painstaking task of describing the

consequences, the possibilities invented as much as the limits imposed, of particular

ways of subjectifying humans."[35]

To add considerable texture to a governmentality-inspired interpretation of

cultural policy development, three components are necessary. First, there needs to be

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[34]Andrew Barry, Nikolas Rose and Thomas Osborne, "Introduction," in *Foucault and Political
Reason*. Edited by Andrew Barry et al. (London: UCL Press, 1996), 13.
[35]Ibid.

an account of the historical and political context behind the emergence of key forms of knowledge within the policy process. Second, there needs to be an appreciation of the ways such forms of knowledge emerge over others as effective for solving the problems at hand. Third, there needs to be a more effective rendering of the multiple effects those technologies produce when integrated on the ground.

I have found that research within the field of historical epistemology to be particularly useful in addressing these issues in detail. According to Lorraine Daston, historical epistemology represents an attempt to examine "the history of the categories that structure our thought, pattern our arguments and proofs, and certify our standards for explanation."[36] She explained that while similar to another scholarly effort, the history of ideas, historical epistemology differs slightly in its orientation and poses different sets of questions of its research subject:

> [Its focus is] not the history of this or that particular use of say, infinitesimals in the mathematical demonstrations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but the history of the changing forms and standards of mathematical demonstration during the period; not the establishment of this or that empirical fact in say, the physiology of the mid-nineteenth century, but rather the history of the competing forms of facticity -- statistical, experimental and other -- in the physiological institutes and laboratories circa 1870; not the historical judgment as to whether this or that discipline has attained objectivity; and so, when and how, but rather a historical investigation into the multiple meanings and scientific manifestations of objectivity.[37]

As a study of determinations and effects, research in historical epistemology represents an attempt to grapple with the extent to which the facts achieve their status as true or false vis-à-vis historically specifiable styles of reasoning.[38] These provide

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[36]Lorraine Daston, "Historical Epistemology," in *Questions of Evidence: Proof, Practice, and Persuasion Across the Disciplines*. Edited by James Chandler, Arnold I. Davidson and Harry Harootunian (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 282.
[37]Ibid.
[38]Arnold Davidson, *The Emergence of Sexuality: Historical Epistemology and the Formation of Concepts* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 129.

many new ways of thinking and acting upon a given situation, and introduce new types of objects, evidence, sentences, laws, classifications, forms of explanations, and, in the end, new possibilities for action.

Statistical knowledge represents an excellent example of a historically grounded style of reasoning. Beginning in the 19th century, nation-states counted, classified and tabulated their subjects in entirely new ways and according to new characterizations of human activity. According to Ian Hacking, statistics helped determine the forms of laws about society and the character of social facts, engendered concepts and classifications, and created modern bureaucracies. These capabilities made statistics an essential technology of power within the modern nation-state. In the establishment of modern laws, Hacking observes that most of the law-like regularities were first perceived in connection with deviance, such as suicide, crime, vagrancy, madness, prostitution, and disease. Behind the desires to count and classify, Hacking submits, "lies the notion that one can improve -- control -- a deviant population by enumeration and classification."[39]

Although most work in historical epistemology has been concerned with the study of the physical and medical sciences, I believe that the utility of such an approach may also be valuable outside of this realm as well. I wish to take up Hacking's recent call that "there are many ways of bringing new objects into being that have nothing to do with the sciences."[40] In a recent publication, the author even pointed to applicability of such research within communication and cultural studies, claiming that "pop culture and self-help culture are both full of object making, and

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[39]Ian Hacking, *The Taming of Chance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 4.
[40]Hacking, *Historical Ontology* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 26.

there is a lot to be learned there."[41] A recent article by Nikolas Rose and Thomas

Osborne attempts to bridge the gap between the natural and social sciences by

explaining that both create phenomena through the procedures that are established to

discover them. Echoing elements of those working in the natural sciences mentioned

earlier, Rose and Osborne provide a roadmap for the use of historical epistemology

within the social sciences:

> If our concern is with what facts have come to be true in our world, how, and
> with what consequences, we can think along the following lines: that this is a
> matter of the emergence of certain descriptions rather than others; that some
> descriptions triumph over others through rather technical and practical matters
> arising from experimentation and intervention; that once they emerge,
> descriptions will survive if it is possible to do things with them and use them
> to produce effects. If these conditions are met, then we can say that a
> knowledge practice has created a phenomenon. And if we are content to think
> this way, we can understand the ways in which some of the knowledge
> practices of the social sciences create phenomena.[42]

Mary Poovey's *A History of the Modern Fact* serves as an example of this kind of

scholarship, both for its contribution to the literature on historical epistemology and,

through its deft handling of a wide variety of key textual materials, for its extension

into the field of cultural history. Poovey argues that facts possess peculiar

epistemological characteristics within modern constructions of knowledge,

representing the locus of tensions between two different approaches to the study of

the human experience. On one hand, the facts are represented as a unit of knowledge

based on the direct observation of particulars and therefore free from subjective bias,

theory or conjecture. On the other, facts represent important pieces of evidence

required to assess the verity of theories and hypotheses. As a result they cannot be

extricated from the contexts and assumptions that inform theoretical orientations.

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[41]Ibid.

Because of this peculiarity Poovey explains, "[d]isputes over the relation between facts and values, arguments over how data are gathered and packaged, and quarrels about the very possibility of objectivity can all be seen to derive, at least in part, from the peculiarity written into the epistemological unit of the modern fact."[43]

Poovey's project documents how these tensions emerged in England between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries and was a product of the emergence of new forms of knowledge deriving from moral philosophy, political economy, and the early social sciences and statistics to assist governments in administering over subject populations. She argues that statistical forms of knowledge came to constitute "the modern fact" because they became associated with the ability to bridge the gap between statements about observed particulars and general knowledge. Poovey does not provide a history of statistics; instead, it focuses on the debates around statistical knowledge. This approach allows for an examination not only into the effects of statistical rendering, but also on the way statistics operates as a form of writing about social activity:

> On one hand, as signs of (what looks like or passes as) counting, numbers seem to be simple descriptors of phenomenal particulars and because the mathematical manipulation of numbers is generated by a set of invariable rules, numbers seem to resist the biases that many associate with conjecture and theory. On the other hand because numbers also constitute the units of a system of knowledge production that is biased towards deduction - that is, mathematics - numbers inevitably carry within them traces of a certain kind of systematic knowledge: to assign numbers to observed particulars is to make them amenable to the kind of knowledge system that privileges quantity over quality and equivalence over difference.[44]

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[42]Nikolas Rose and Thomas Osborne, "Do the Social Sciences Create Phenomena: The Example of Public Opinion Research," *British Journal of Sociology* 50:3 (1998): 373.
[43]Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact*, 1-2.
[44]Ibid., 4.

To that end, my goals are similar to those of Poovey's; I am not attempting to provide a history of cultural statistics or a technical analysis of auditing procedures. Scholars working in the history of the physical and social sciences and critical accounting studies have dealt with such works in great detail.[45] Instead, what I offer here represents a number of junctures in which different forms of knowledge appear to emerge as necessary to the solving of problems facing the audiovisual sector and to examine the intersections between developments in audiovisual policy and those in a number of different contexts.

My decision to focus on the changes to the factual environment in Canadian audiovisual policy also draws its inspiration from the work of Daston, Davidson, and Poovey because it draws attention to the complex chain of construction that underwrites many of the concepts within the audiovisual realm. A return to the case of the Canadian film serves as a case in point. This is because within the domain of cultural policy a "Canadian film" represents a concept linked not only to a form of cultural expression (such as feature-length, documentary, short-film) or the content of that form (such as dialogue, cinematography, cultural references), but also to a particular economic arrangement, featuring institutions (such as production companies, screenwriters, actors, and representative associations), granting and regulatory bodies (such as the Department of Canadian Heritage, CAVCO, Telefilm Canada), and legislative regulations (such point schemas, subsidies, ownership requirements).

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[45] A partial list would include Patricia Cline Cohen, *A Calculating People: The Spread of Numeracy in Early America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); Bruce Curtis, *The Politics of Population* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001); Theodore Porter, *A History of Statistical Thinking, 1820-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986) and Stephen Stigler, *Statistics on the Table: The History of Statistical Concepts and Methods* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

In addition, specific measurements play an important role in structuring the way we think about cultural activity. In an article on English-Canadian cinema Charles Acland has shown that advocates for more aggressive film policy measures frequently point to one particular numerical figure of the 2 or 3% of Canadian films occupying "screen time" in Canadian movie theatres.[46] Although the source of the figure is rarely cited, and despite the fact it is frequently used to describe two different forms of measurement (screen *time* and screen *space*), Acland explains that figure is often stands as "shorthand evidence" of the weakness of federal film policy.[47] In other words, the identity or measurement of an aspect of filmic activity is also frequently used as evidence for arguments regarding the strength or weakness of individual cultural sectors, and, as we have seen in the case of James Cameron and the disqualified film, of the "Canadian-ness" of a given form of artistic expression.

Since these concepts do not fall from the sky it is essential to understand how certain conceptualizations of the Canadian-ness arise, and to make sense of the forms of evidence and styles of reasoning used to produce and circulate such "audiovisual facts" both within the public and policy spheres. By incorporating Foucauldian models of governmentality with research undertaken in historical epistemology, I will be able to provide insight on the changing construction of both the cultural and factual spheres.

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[46]Charles Acland, "Screen Time, Screen Space, and Canadian Film Exhibition," in *North of Everything: Canadian Film Since 1980*. Edited by William Beard and Jerry White (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2002). 10.

[47]Ibid. Acland traces this figure to, among other places, a 1994 report by the Quebec-based consulting firm Groupe Secor.

Chapter Overview

Each of the chapters in this dissertation represents a different attempt to wrestle with the problems associated with policy making. In the next chapter the critical problem is: *What is the object of study?* In my literature review of the field of "cultural policy studies," I contend that the answer to that question has typically depended upon when the research was undertaken and how that research relates to changing governmental rationale towards the cultural field. While there exists a considerable literature analyzing different policy measures and shifting government rationale, there has been little attention dedicated towards addressing these issues. When considered this way, a wide range of cultural policy literature including "survivalist" narratives, concerns over Canada's cultural dependency, and anti-elitist critiques of cultural policy development stand as claims over what kinds of policy measures should be undertaken to take a more accurate account of cultural activities. I argue that recent attempts to integrate a governmentality-led approach to cultural policy studies have had mixed results. On the one hand, such research has drawn attention to the practices of government in producing subjectivity. On the other, in operationalizing that research for policy advocacy, some of those applying governmentality have abandoned further elaboration of the theoretical groundwork already established in previous works.

One of the reasons for this, I suggest, has been the uncritical acceptance of Foucault's conceptualization of population. In reading recent works by Bruce Curtis, I have come to realize that applications of governmentality typically confuse population as a *statistical* conception associated with connotations of categorical, temporal, and historical equivalence with its *sociological* connotations as a zone of

subjected behaviour. These permit conclusions that "populations" appear naturalistically as objects for government, absent of social and historical processes that help to bring them into being. This gap, I suggest, opens a number of avenues for additional inquiry about the historical conditions and forms of knowledge that help to produce populations as part of the constitution of the audiovisual sphere.

Each of the remaining chapters examines a specific moment in the history of Canadian audiovisual policy. They provide an outline of how each moment has been previously considered within the scholarly literature and, how interpretations of these moments change after a reworking of the *mise-en-scène*.[48] The result is a narrative in which the practical issues of how to craft better policy intertwine with the epistemological questions about what forms of knowledge or expertise are necessary for dealing with that situation. This places a number of previously marginal figures in the centre of the policy-making process.

I begin with the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, held in 1928 and chaired by Sir John Aird. The "Aird Commission," as it is popularly known, occupies a prominent place as the starting point in narratives of Canada's cultural policy as the first Royal Commission held on cultural matters. I suggest that the commission emerges as an important technique both as a way of stemming numerous controversies surrounding radio broadcasting during the 1920s and placing the question of radio under the national purview. Here the policy problems are much more broadly conceived: *What should Canada do about broadcasting and who would be best suited to make that judgement?* With that in mind I suggest that the selection

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[48]I borrow the term *mise-en-scène* from Mieke Bal's discussion in *Traveling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 96-132.

of a newspaper editor, bank president, and technician was representative of a social group of cultural nationalists active during the 1920s and were also symbolic of the kind of expertise required to investigate into the problems of broadcasting. The presence of educated generalists did not go unnoticed during the hearings process, but was offset by the characterization of the commissioners as similar to members of the judiciary, and not subject-specific specialists. In this chapter I examine the commission through the eyes of one of the often under appreciated commissioners on the investigation, *Ottawa Citizen* editor Charles Bowman. I argue that Bowman's influence during the commission has been hindered by a tendency to focus attention only on the commission chair, John Aird. I also suggest that a closer appreciation of Bowman in placing the radio issue on the political radar, in constructing radio as a medium different than newspapers, and in influencing the final report, produces a different reading that previous accounts of the Aird Commission. Furthermore, I suggest that the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting achieves its significance for its introduction of what I call the "policy style" of writing about cultural activity, establishing both the rhetorical and the structural groundwork for the nationalizing of Canadian broadcasting.

In the next chapter I turn to another key Royal Commission, the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters, chaired by Vincent Massey and in operation from 1949 to 1951. My interest in the Massey Commission, however, is to locate the commission on the precipice of new developments in the forms of knowledge used to make sense of cultural affairs. The question facing the Massey Commission was more philosophical in nature: *What are principles upon which a national cultural policy should be based?* This question is

important to my discussion, because the commission's investigation occurs not only at a time of heightened cultural nationalism and in an environment of great national pride, but also in the context of a key battle between the sciences, social sciences and the humanities over how these different forms of knowledge would be of utility to governments in the post-war era. In the course of my research I discovered that in the middle of this discussion was Charles Siepmann, the head of the Department of Communication at New York University. Siepmann was commissioned to undertake a statistical study of Canadian broadcasting for the Massey Commission deliberations on the future of the medium. However, Siepmann's study was coolly received by the commissioners, who pushed it to margins of the main report.

In this chapter I argue that the reception of his study was coloured by larger questions not just facing broadcasting policy, but also questions regarding the value of different forms of knowledge, including statistics, as a way of making sense of cultural activity. The Massey Commission's call for a more humanities-based approach to cultural management represented not the grand moment of cultural articulation or a denial of the value of popular culture by cultural elitists, but a last gasp for a way of thinking about cultural activity which quickly recedes within a decade of the publication of the commission's final report.

The Massey Commission's passionate defence for humanities-based approaches to culture was fleeting, at best. Even from the moment of its publication, the Canadian government began to turn more aggressively to forms of knowledge borrowed not only from the social sciences but, in line with shifting government policy towards the cultural sector, from the administrative sciences in the running of government affairs. This was in response to increasing pressures put upon

governments to run their operations more efficiently and to make the administration of the cultural portfolio more in line with other areas of governmental activity.

In Chapter 4 I turn to one such example by examining the financial audit of the National Film Board of Canada undertaken by the accounting firm of Woods Gordon and led by its principal, the future politician Walter Gordon. In this chapter I situate the audit within a context of controversies occurring at the NFB around concerns over communism, pressures on the federal government to turn film production over to an ever-increasing private sector, and the rising influence of accountants as consultants in the administration of governmental affairs. Amid the scandals at the film board, the policy problem under examination in this chapter is: *How do you repair institutional credibility?* As a form of knowledge associated with key political concepts such as accountability, transparency, and efficiency, I show how the auditors were brought into the NFB to restore institutional credibility and to insulate the ruling Liberals from any political fallout coming from the film board. I also suggest that those who argued that the Woods Gordon report helped to exonerate the troubled film board are only examining the situation in the short-term. At the end of the chapter I speculate that the results of the report actually represented a "managerial turn," a move that would simultaneously inhibit the development of the NFB and establish new room for the emergence of private interests to become involved in cultural production as part of a turn towards a more industrial model of cultural policy.

In Chapter 5 I document the transformation of Canadian film and broadcasting policy over a ten-year period from 1955 to 1965. This period marks the reorientation of both sectors of the Canadian cultural environment due in part to the emergence of

television, a pro-business Conservative government, and concerns over the financial realities of centralizing cultural production at the institutional level. With the establishment of the Fowler Commission the policy problem changes once again: *How do you include the private sector into a "national system"?* In this chapter I argue that in providing the structure of the broadcasting system that exists into the present-day, the commissioners drew inspiration from previous models of industrial development that stretched back to the 19th century and from policies adopted for Canada's automotive industry during the early twentieth century. The production of film in Canada turns towards feature film production and the support of independent production companies, while the CBC's dominance over both broadcasting and regulation of the Canadian airwaves is surrendered in return for what would be called a "mixed, single system," involving private networks, independent broadcasting regulators, and content quotas.

In my concluding chapter I examine a study undertaken for the Fowler Commission by Dallas Smythe, a Canadian scholar based at the University of Illinois and one of the founders of the political economic approach to communication studies. I consider Smythe's massive study outside of the context of the Fowler commission because I believe it provides both a summary of the epistemological and practical shifts occurring over the course of this dissertation and a preview of the new problems that will face the Canadian audiovisual sector. Smythe's study was essential for two reasons: first, it met the Fowler Commissioners' objectives to integrate the private sector into a national broadcasting environment by figuring prominently in their discussion of achieving "balance" in Canadian broadcasting. As a result – and in contrast to the polite rejection of Charles Siepmann's statistical study

- the commissioners enthusiastically incorporated Smythe's study into the main body of their final report, hailing it as a model of objectivity necessary for an appreciation of the "technical" aspects of Canadian broadcasting.

Second, I argue that in numerically representing a week's worth of Canadian television and radio broadcasting, Smythe's study provides a numerical mapping of the Canadian broadcasting "system." This included public and private broadcasters, Canadian and foreign programming, over thirty different program genres, and an essential form of measurement, the percentage. These components make up the structure of the broadcasting system even in the present-day and through his study's emphasis on proportionality, foreshadow a key question that would shape future policy measures in the audiovisual realm: *What kinds of cultural production should the state support to ensure enough "content"*? The eventual introduction of Canadian content regulations and future policy measures such as point schemas intended to stimulate the production of certain "populations" of cultural activity, including dramas, entertainment news, and made-for-TV movies, represent both the forms of knowledge and the answers to the new policy problems.

An investigation of these epistemological components is an exciting development, reinvigorating archival material and placing cultural policy studies in conversation with a number of other areas of scholarly inquiry left largely unexplored, including social studies of science, intellectual history, and textual analysis. It also moves the field of study away from the pragmatic matters of cultural policy-making, a tendency that has been particularly strong within communication studies in Canada. As valuable as such work has been, I argue the overemphasis on the technical components of the cultural policy apparatus has obscured the strengths

of what Liora Salter characterizes as the "metadisciplinary" elements of

communication studies that facilitate analysis on epistemological problems.[49] I hope

to show that a greater appreciation of this factual environment can provide insight

into the complex processes and various forms of knowledge that have shaped the

policies that govern over Canada's film and broadcasting sectors and shed light on the

impact of managerial styles of reasoning on cultural production.

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[49]Liora Salter, "Taking Stock: Communication Studies in 1987," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 12:4 (1987), 29.

Chapter One:
Cultural Policy Studies, the Elusive Object,
and the Possibilities of Population

In a recent review essay Oliver Bennett remarked that there exist two "torn

halves" within the field of cultural policy studies.[1] One half, operating under a

practical orientation, takes the notion of "cultural policy" as an unproblematic

concept, the outcome of however governments conceive of the cultural domain. For

those contributing to this strain of research, the aim is to develop and apply

instruments to meet existing policy objectives in the most efficient manner.[2]

The other half eschews the practical aspects of policy analysis for a critical approach

to policy research questions. Scholars working in this territory locate cultural policy

issues within a politics of culture, documenting the attempts by governments and

social elites to produce compliant or well-cultivated citizens. In detailing the

constructed nature of citizen formation, these works seek to blaze new pathways for

progressive or alternative political expressions.[3] Although the two scholarly projects

share the broad intellectual commitment to investigating the conditions under which

culture is produced, reproduced, and regulated, the fissures between the two

approaches represent, for Bennett, "yet another of the manifestations of that conflict

between critical intelligence and employability, which appears to be increasingly

experienced across all of the 'cultural' professions, even in those, such as higher

education, where one might least expect to find it."[4]

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[1] Oliver Bennett, "The Torn Halves of Cultural Policy Research," *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 10:2 (2004): 237.
[2] Ibid., 244-245.
[3] A good example of this kind of scholarly project is *Critical Cultural Policy Studies: A Reader*. Edited by Justin Lewis and Toby Miller (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003).
[4] O. Bennett, 246. For a similar account, see Jim McGuigan, *Culture and the Public Sphere* (London: Routledge, 1996), 5-29.

While Bennett's survey touched on the contributions to the field from scholars working in the United States, Britain, and Australia, an appreciation of the ways similar questions have unfolded within Canada was left to the side. At first blush, it is possible that Bennett would have concluded that a similar "torn halves" schema existed within the Canadian context. On closer inspection, however, the Canadian case reveals the divisions between the two are not quite as stark. Some scholars' tenure on the critical side of the debate may be short-lived as they become more actively involved in the policy process, only to return to a critical position on a different issue. It is likely that had Bennett examined these questions beginning with the Canadian situation, he would have examined more similarities than differences between the practical and critical policy scholarship.

A major obstacle in assessing the literature in cultural policy is the multiplicity of publishing sites. Even if one limits the study to broadcasting and film policy over a specific time period, accounting for the field of Canadian cultural policy studies is a daunting task. At one level this is due to the frustratingly inconsistent nature of Canadian academic publication. As Rowland Lorimer has observed, few Canadian academics choose to publish their research in the country's primary English-language peer reviewed journal, *The Canadian Journal of Communication*, opting for international journals or those outside of the discipline.[5] Such problems are magnified when it comes to cultural policy research, since most new knowledge is commissioned for Royal Commissions, White Papers, program reviews, interim

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[5]Rowland Lorimer, "Editorial: The Genesis of the Issue: Twenty-Five Years of the *CJC*," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 25:4 (2000): 4; See also Sheryl Hamilton, "Considering Critical Communication Studies in Canada," in *Mediascapes: New Patterns in Canadian Communication*. Edited by Paul Attallah and Leslie Regan Shade (Toronto: ITP Nelson, 2003), 17.

reports, and for organizations involved in policy process. There are also a

considerable number of book-length studies, both in English and in French, that have

taken the historical approach to policy issues by focusing on the early history of the

Canadian cinema, the politics of Canadian broadcasting, and the internal workings of

individual broadcasters or regulators as reported on by those inside those

organizations.[6] In addition, there are the numerous article-length treatments of

specific policy measures or initiatives that fill journals and edited anthologies. These

include works by scholars from Economics, English, Communication, Film Studies,

History, Political Science, and Sociology.[7] Some of the most influential writings on

cultural policy appear in anthologies that are required reading for undergraduate

students at Canadian universities. One of these volumes, *The Cultural Industries in*

Canada, is now ten years old, meaning that many of the individual chapters on

specific cultural sectors are now sorely out of date.[8]

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[6]For film I am referring to Peter Morris, *Embattled Shadows: A History of Canadian Cinema, 1895-1939* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978); Gary Evans, *In the National Interest* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) and Christopher Gittings, *Canadian National Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 2002). For broadcasting I am referring to Frank Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting, 1920-1951* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1969) and *The Public Eye: Television and the Politics of Canadian Broadcasting, 1952-68* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979) and Marc Raboy, *Missed Opportunities* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991). Examples of institutional histories include, Knowlton Nash, *The Microphone Wars* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1994); Andrew Stewart and William Hull, *Canadian Television Policy and the Board of Broadcast Governors, 1958-1968*. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1994), Michael Nolan, *CTV: The Network That Means Business* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001).

[7]A selective list would include: Alison Beale and Annette van den Bosch, eds. The *Ghosts in the Machine: Women and Cultural Policy*. (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1998); Jody Berland and Shelley Hornstein, Eds. *Capital Culture: A Reader on Modernist Legacies and the Value(s) of Art*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), and William Beard and Jerry White, Eds., *North of Everything: English-Canadian Cinema Since 1980* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2002). This obviously does not include those works contained within larger edited volumes dealing with specific media sectors or the concept of policy. For example, *Film* Policy. Edited by Albert Moran (London: Routledge, 1994); and Mass *Media and Free Trade: NAFTA and the Cultural Industries*. Edited by Emile G. McAnany and Kenton T. Wilkinson. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996).

[8]Dorland, *The Cultural Industries in Canada*.

With this in mind, what I offer here represents a very particular reconstruction of the field of cultural policy studies, one that attempts to locate a number of key texts dealing particularly with broadcasting and film within the historical context in which they were written. I do so in order to show the ways in which key themes within cultural policy studies interact with shifting discourses of state governmentality towards the cultural field.

From the moment the federal government established sovereignty over key aspects of Canadian cultural activity the central problematic has been methodological, of determining the best ways to intervene. As Ted Magder explained:

> How does one understand the nature of state intervention in the cultural sphere? Why and how has the state played a role in the development of Canadian cultural production? As often than not, analysis is framed around the limited nature of the Canadian government's intervention, the flip side of a massive dependence on foreign cultural products. As in most Western nations, the problems associated with the internationalization of cultural production—a growing homogeneity of cultural products and the ascent of transnational media firms—have been posed as problems for the state. More often than not the issue is framed around a nationalist strategy of protection and rejuvenation, as various Canadian interests struggle over the nature and extent of foreign cultural penetration.[9]

Among the unexplored "various interests" that Magder identifies here are those writing about cultural policy itself. In documenting the historical trajectories of Canadian cultural policy research I argue that both critical and applied strains of policy research have served, in Michael Dorland's phrase, "as an attempted conversation with the state in the form of a discourse between intellectual and scholarly forms of knowledge and those forms of knowledge of which state power is comprised."[10]

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[9]Magder, *Canada's Hollywood: The Canadian State and Feature Films*, 13.
[10]Dorland, *So Close to the State/s: The Emergence of Canadian Feature Film Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 19.

In this chapter I take Dorland's assertion a little further. I suggest that when considered within the historical context in which such works were written, such research has either mimicked governmental rationale in cultural policy or represented a final plea for an area of the cultural sector under threat while overhauls of the policy apparatus were taking place. When considered this way, we are able to revisit key texts within the literature on Canadian cultural policy in both broadcasting and film from the 1960s until the 1990s. Here we can also consider these texts more closely by examining some of the ways in which they contribute to a changing discursive field about both the nature and purpose of cultural policy interventions.

In addition to the methodological considerations outlined by Magder another key problematic has been the extent to which shifts in policy rationale have created new objects for study. Put a different way, the shift from "territory" to "population" present within governmentality literature has been reproduced within the sphere of Canada cultural policy. What results, I suggest, is a shifting object of government audiovisual policy away from asserting national sovereignty over communication infrastructure and towards the governance of different policy "populations" working in the national interest.

To illustrate I also want to draw attention to two recent strains of critical policy research. The first, which engages broadly with cultural studies, employs a critique of cultural policy formation through discourses of anti-elitism. The other, inspired by governmentality and applied most elaborately within the Australian context, centres around the role of cultural policy in the formation of citizenship. In briefly reviewing this literature I argue that both revolve around poorly theorized representative objects -- elites in the first critique, population in the second -- that

represent two different ways of constructing subject populations. The theoretical

softness of both strains of critical policy research on these questions results in a

failure to adequately account for the emergence of different forms of knowledge

within state and government apparatuses and their relationship to larger

epistemological questions that underlie the construction of the cultural sphere. A

discussion of these tendencies opens a number of new pathways for epistemological

investigations into policy research questions that need further articulation.

Accounts of Survival and Struggle

During the 1960s and 70s, evaluations of cultural policy measures in Canadian

broadcasting and film were often cast within survivalist historical narratives. In such

accounts, the existence of a Canadian television or film sector was a product of

government intervention undertaken to overcome geographical boundaries which

have linked the country to the United States on the north-south axis and frustrated the

national unity project on the east-west axis. Works that employ the survivalist

approach to historical narrative are particularly interesting because of their inherently

self-reflexive nature; in describing the history of Canadian broadcasting or film as an

outcome of struggle, many authors implicitly reveal the constructed nature of the

sectors under consideration.

This is particularly true when we consider the two major works in

broadcasting history written during this period. Both E. Austin Weir's *The Struggle*

for National Broadcasting in Canada and Frank W. Peers' two-volume work, *The*

Politics of Canadian Broadcasting and *The Public Eye*, are the product of former

CBC employees.[11] As a result of their experience working for the broadcaster, both men drew upon considerable amount of archival research, first-person accounts and unpublished correspondence, and interviews with key officials to produce impressive and comprehensive historical works. Both studies also share a similar stylistic characteristic: the absence of an introductory chapter outlining a thesis or guiding argument.

These positions can be found in their concluding chapters, which amount to a series of policy recommendations stemming from their historical reconstructions of Canadian broadcasting history. In Austin Weir's case, broadcasting in Canada represented a "history of struggles," a dialectical environment pitting different railway systems, transmission interests, jurisdictional authorities, private and public interests and program producers against one another. What emerged out of these struggles was the production of a distinctly Canadian approach to broadcasting, one Weir characterized as "the hectic kaleidoscope that has *constituted* Canada broadcasting and which has no counterpart anywhere in the world."[12]

The struggle motif was also present in Frank Peers' comprehensive account of the history of Canadian broadcasting policy. He presented the development of Canadian broadcasting policy as the epitome of Canadian compromise, with the various interests involved in the broadcasting issue coming together around the issue of broadcasting's national importance. According to Peers, the system of

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[11]The tradition of the CBC "employee-historian" continues in the present-day, as former broadcaster Knowlton Nash has written two different volumes on the history of the CBC and on relations between the public and private broadcasters. See *The Microphone Wars* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1994); *Cue the Elephant: Backstage Tales at the CBC* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1997); and *The Swashbucklers: The Story of Canada's Battling Broadcasters* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2001).
[12]Weir, 449. Emphasis mine.

broadcasting administration and regulation not only functioned in the public service,

but within the interests of ensuring the maintenance and development of the nation,

itself a struggle against various impediments:

> National control [of broadcasting] is not an end in itself, and never has been in
> Canada. It is the necessary condition for a system designed, in the North
> American context, to assist Canadians to know the changing society around
> them, and to adapt successfully to it. The framework for such broadcasting
> was established in Canada forty years ago, The struggle to improve, even to
> maintain it, is greater today than ever before, and more crucial still to our
> survival as a nation.[13]

Like Weir, Peers' study also implicitly pointed to the constitutive nature of Canadian

broadcasting policy, one circulated through discourses about broadcasting that appear

throughout various policy documents and within the public sphere. "Beginning with

the royal commission appointed in 1928," Peers stated, "the country's national goals

for broadcasting were examined and restated periodically -- by prime ministers and

other political leaders, by parliamentary committees, by regulatory agencies by

successive royal commissions and commissions of inquiry."[14]

As I mentioned earlier this literature could be characterized as survivalist,

highlighting the ways in which state institutions and cultural producers work against

the odds (economically, geographically, and so on) to promote Canadian cultural

production. These arguments have also appeared within Canadian literary works that

have articulated similar tropes in their rendering of English-Canadian national

identity's engagement with and against the Canadian wilderness.[15] Others, such as

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[13]Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting,* 450.
[14]Peers, *The Public Eye,* 413.
[15]The best example of this is Margaret Atwood, *Survival* (Toronto: Anansi, 1972).

Kieran Keohane, have pointed out such motifs are in line with "a long standing

tradition articulating enjoyment and endurance."[16]

However it is important to point out that in each of the works mentioned here

there exist important practical connotations to the themes of struggle and survival.

The struggle in this case is that of Canadian cultural institutions, most notably

broadcasting and film, during a period of major policy restructuring. This was

typified by the further development of "cultural industries policy," the expansion of

private broadcasters and networks during the 1960s and 70s in television and AM and

FM radio, and the diminution of both the CBC and NFB, once the major forces of

cultural production.

With that in mind, it seems to me that the survival present in these texts is one

of *institutional survival,* one that becomes conflated with the survival of Canadian

national identity. We can return here to Austin Weir's conclusion to see how notions

of institutional and cultural survival become blurred, as the success of the broadcaster

appears to be linked to the success of the country's "national" objectives. In the

context of the further withering away of the dominance of the public broadcaster and

the ascendant power of the private networks, Weir wrote, "[t]he CBC has been the

only distinguished and distinguishing feature of Canadian broadcasting."[17] This

represented the beginning of the institutional survivalist account that located the CBC

as "the most potential force for unity and understanding," and "an essential

complement and reinforcement of the East-West confederation of Canada."[18] The

broadcaster's future, "like the future of Canada itself will depend on the leadership it

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[16]Kieran Keohane, *Symptoms of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 111-126.
[17]Weir, 451.
[18]Ibid.

gets, and the degree of interest taken in it by those whom it strives mightily to serve."[19]

Dependency Theories and the Economics of Culture Arguments

By the 1970s and 80s, the object of policy intervention had extended beyond propping up public cultural institutions towards ensuring a place for Canadian cultural production within broader processes both of globalization and cultural imperialism. Studies of Canadian film and broadcasting became incorporated into works engaging with dependency theory to support the main argument that Canada's attempt to carve out its own cultural sovereignty amounted to a valiant defence against the imperialist forces from the culture industry to the south. Cultural policy measures that limited foreign ownership of broadcasters and film distributors, along with content regulations and program subsidies, were necessary to ensure Canadian presence on the airwaves and to ensure the country's cultural sovereignty in the shadow of its American neighbour.

Such actions derived not only from the particularity of the cultural industries themselves. Instead, the cultural industries represented yet another example of the peculiarity of Canada's political economy in which dependency on the United States both for protection, trade, and cultural exchange was the dominant organizing paradigm for policy action. The presence of these historical dynamics and the failure of the Canadian state to adequately protect its cultural industries allowed observers such as Dallas Smythe and Manjunath Pendakur to declare that Canadian film and broadcasting were examples of the country's cultural "submission" to processes of

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[19]Ibid.

American cultural and capitalist imperialism.[20] The studies by Smythe and Pendakur

come on the heels of a tide of cultural nationalist feeling, extending back to the end of

the 1960s and into the 1970s, regarding the importance of state involvement in

Canadian cultural production.

An important contributor to this debate was Paul Audley, a former staff

member in the federal Department of Communication. Audley's study, *Canada's

Cultural Industries*, was one of many monographs published in conjunction with the

Canadian Institute for Economic Policy (CIEP), an Ottawa-based think-tank operating

between 1979 and 1984 under the leadership of former Liberal finance minister

Walter Gordon. Audley's study represents a major development in cultural policy

research, one grounded not in historical analyses which touch on policy issues but in

providing comprehensive analysis intended to act directly within the policy process.[21]

Audley's project also represented one of the first major studies in Canada to

fall into the field of "cultural economics," which had been developing in the United

States and Europe since the 1960s to examine the relationship between economics

and the arts. David Throsby argues that although cultural activities were effectively

ignored within economics until well into the 1950s, the publication of a series of

essays by John Kenneth Galbraith in *The Liberal Hour* brought the subject into the

limelight. In the book, Galbraith examined the economic situation of the artist and

the potential for the promotion of exports within the field of manufacturing.[22] At

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[20]Dallas Smythe, *Dependency Road: Communications, Capitalism, Consciousness and Canada.* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing, 1981); Manjunath Pendakur, *Canadian Dreams and American Control: The Political Economy of the Canadian Feature Film Industry* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1986).

[21]Paul Audley, *Canada's Cultural Industries* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1983).

[22]David Throsby, "The Production and Consumption of the Arts: A View of Cultural Economics," *Journal of Economic Literature* 32:1 (1994): 2.

around the same time Lionel Robbins became the first British economist of modern times to analyze the economic role of the state in support for the arts and in financing public museums and galleries.[23]

However, Throsby asserts that William J. Baumol and William Bowen's study *Performing Arts - The Economic Dilemma*, written in 1966, was a watershed for the field of cultural economics:

> For the first time a major branch of the arts was subject to a systematic theoretical and empirical scrutiny [...] Since that time the field of cultural economics has acquired an Association (founded in 1973), a journal (first published in 1977), and international conference (first held in 1979), and a growing body of literature.[24]

These volumes were followed by the publication of two books in the late 1970s. The first, UNESCO's *Cultural Industries: A Challenge for the Future of Cultures*, was among the first to address the role of cultural industries on the marketplace. The other, *The State's Role vis-à-vis The Culture Industries*, was published by the Cultural Affairs Section of the Council of Europe and questioned the degree to which the state should become involved in culture.[25]

It is here where Audley's conclusions, called for the further establishment and maintenance of internal marketplaces for the circulation of Canadian cultural production in ways protected from international flows of like products coming from the United States and abroad.[26] At the same time Audley's presentation, an array of quantitative data mixed with sober commentary and policy recommendations,

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[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid., 3.

[25]Emile McAnany, "Cultural Industries in an International Perspective: Convergence or Conflict," in *Progress in Communication Sciences* vol. VII. Edited by Brenda Darwin and Melvin Voigt (Norwood NJ: Ablex Publishing Group, 1987), 16.

[26]This position was consonant with the CIEP's policy imperative that "Canada has no alternative but to strengthen its cultural industries." Quoted in Audley, xxi.

represented an important shift in the kinds of knowledge necessary to provide the

rationale for policy intervention. As Michael Dorland observed in the follow-up

publication published thirteen years later,

> If Audley's study was intended to outline the extent to which similar structural
> questions have bedevilled both the formation and maintenance of the different
> cultural industries, it paid little attention to the extent to which historical
> policy interventions may have played any part in creating the circumstances
> under which his research was undertaken.[27]

The arguments by Pendakur, Smythe and Audley represented new forms of

justification for continued policy involvement occurring in the context of historical

and intellectual currents. Rather than representing a call for the protection of

institutional survival, as Peers and Weir's historical surveys suggested, these works

appear to draw more broadly for the protection and development of a larger cultural

industry, comprised of numerous independent components. As I will argue later in

this dissertation these arguments represent in their own way a return to arguments

articulated in other areas of Canadian economic life, which stress the value of

developing a "home market" for domestic cultural production that were present

throughout historical treatments of Canadian economic history.

Critical Accounts of Cultural Policy Development

Beginning in the late 1980s and 1990s, two meticulously researched projects

-- one in television, the other in film -- attempted to renegotiate the survivalist and

dependency theory accounts to present the Canadian state as an active agent in within

the cultural sphere as a more active and dynamic process. In *Missed Opportunities,*

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[27]Michael Dorland, "Cultural Industries and the Canadian Experience: Reflections on the Emergence of a Field," in *The Cultural Industries in Canada*, 350.

Marc Raboy argued that an important point of contention regarding both the

assessment and direction of the Canadian broadcasting system was linked to

terminological confusion between "public" and "state." He explained that the

Canadian state effectively captured the notion of the "public" in the context of

broadcasting, to the point where the two may be seen as interchangeable.[28] As a

corrective to the nationalist or alarmist treatments that documented the "sell-out" of

Canadian television to private and commercial interests, Raboy outlined how the

notion of the "public" came to be taken up by numerous different interest groups on

both the public and private sides of the debate.[29] Through his detailed treatment of

government documents and his attention to the specific politics of Quebec within

nationalist efforts at crafting broadcasting policy, Raboy highlighted how the

nationalization of the airwaves may have actually stunted the democratic potential of

the media.

Ted Magder's *Canada's Hollywood* represents a similar attempt to re-examine

the traditional narratives that had previously accompanied the story of Canadian film,

particularly those operating through the dependency theory model. He argued that

Canada's subservience to the American film industry was representative not only of

American cultural domination; the film industry also represented the exemplary

model for Canada's dependent position within structures of global capitalism.

Magder's political economic approach is far more positive in its outlook, and credited

Canadian policy measures as necessary instruments in the industrial development of

Canada's feature film industry. Unlike previous assessments, which saw internal

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[28]Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*.
[29]For one account of the "sell-out," see Herschel Hardin, *Closed Circuits* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985).

dynamics within nation-states as having little impact on these overarching systems of domination, *Canada's Hollywood* highlighted important limitations of the dependency model: an overemphasis on an impersonal and powerless state; an under-appreciation of the varied ways Canadians respond to American cultural forms; and the role played by internal disputes in charting the direction of Canadian cultural policy. As Magder explained, "[t]he history of cultural policy with respect to the cultural industries -- and in particular its feature film policy -- must be understood in the context of imperialism, but also within the context of domestic social relations and political conflicts."[30] In his analysis, Magder cast the Canadian state and elements of the Canadian cultural sector not as the passive victims of processes of Americanization, but rather as active actors, rationally choosing particular paths with regard to the development of the domestic feature film industry in light of "the emergence of feature films as a revolutionary form of popular cultural expression in the twentieth century and Hollywood's Herculean dominance over filmmaking as a cultural industry."[31]

Both Magder and Raboy's accounts depicted a more assertive Canadian state. These approaches facilitate an appreciation of the extent to which, through successive governments of both main political parties and through its decision-making apparatus and governmental techniques, the state had repositioned the ground on which cultural policy measures will operate. These changes come as a result of changing government rationale towards the cultural sector, and in response to internal and external pressures. If such studies have helved to present the Canadian state as an

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[30]Magder, 18.
[31]Ibid., 231.

active actor within the political realm, they do not discuss the ways in which such actions have been influenced by changes in the different forms of knowledge produced about the cultural realm in the construction of policy initiatives.

From here my review of the literature focuses on a strain of cultural policy studies that emerged during the 1990s and into the next century. Inspired by the incorporation of approaches borrowed from cultural studies, such scholarship offered a critique that argued that previous policy initiatives were grounded in a set of taste politics inspired by Arnoldian cultural criticism and social elitism. Here, I will challenge such assertions in two different ways. First, I will argue that the elitist critique of cultural policy is conceptually imprecise, covering over the fact that similar critiques emerge concurrently in the commercial sector as a powerful rhetorical device to advocate for a further privatization of the cultural sphere. Second, I will suggest that such a critique operates as an important knowledge claim as well. Behind the populist critique of cultural policy development lies a critique not only of the policies themselves, but also represents a call to replace elitist approaches to cultural policy with those better representative of the "people."

Damn the Bureaucrats! The Anti-Elitist Critique

A line of critical cultural policy studies also emerged in the 1990s that focused on sharp criticisms of Canada's nationalist cultural policies and on the members of Canada's elite who have been responsible for the development of cultural policy measures. This critique generally concluded that a) Canada's cultural policy failed to appreciate what Canadians were *actually* watching on television or at the cinema and/or b) a cadre of English-language nationalist cultural elites chose to construct a

substantially different "culture," through the mechanisms and apparatuses of policy

regardless of the popular will, due largely to their fear of American cultural

imperialism.

In many cases the attack has focused upon the high cultural objectives of

Canada's cultural policy architects. In his treatment of the Massey Commission, Paul

Litt isolated elitism as a major factor behind the convening, staffing, and results of

many of the commission's final conclusions:

> The commission justified transforming their enterprise into a 'general survey
> of the arts, letters, and sciences in Canada' on the grounds that the
> government's cultural responsibilities could only be understood in the context
> of Canada's wider cultural life. Nevertheless, the expansion of their mandate
> was based on politics as much as logic. Leading figures in universities,
> national voluntary associations and governments were behind the founding of
> the Massey Commission. The cultural elite created the commission to protect
> its interests in public broadcasting and federal cultural institutions, then
> prodded the commissioners, who were drawn from its ranks, towards
> recommending funding for the universities, cultural organizations, and
> research of its members.[32]

While some shared Litt's assessment on the impact of elites on cultural policy

formation, others extended this point for a different outcome. In his provocative

account of Canadian television history, Richard Collins argued that the cultural policy

measures drafted by those in and around the nation's capital appeared out of touch

with the actual activities of individual Canadians. The blame for this, Collins

explained, was due to the activities of the country's cultural elites:

> Canadian cultural elites are best able to retain and extend their privileges and
> prerogatives under a nationalist rubric [...] It remains a central contention of
> my argument that the role of the nationalist elites in Canada has been of
> tremendous importance in the evolution of Canada's television policies, and

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[32]Paul Litt, *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 104.

that these policies have been less than optimal because of the assumptions and interests of those elites.[33]

A significant aspect of Collins' critique was an attack not only upon bureaucrats and members of Canada's upper echelons, but upon those cultural critics who seemed to underpin government rationale towards television and, by extension, who were responsible for the failure of much of its domestically produced programming:

> Contemporary Canadian television nationalism speaks in anxious and threatened tones and manifests itself in television programming that earnestly counterweighs its American opposition. 'For the Record' (characterized with seductive injudiciousness by one CBC source as the 'Disease of the Month' show) counterbalances the insistently up-beat, glitzy, jolts and jiggles of US television (to appropriate the terms of Susan Crean and Morris Wolfe) and exemplifies the pervasive tendency for Canadian public-sector television drama in both languages to speak in 'miserabiliste et viellissante' accents. It is unsurprising that such programs attract small audiences than does the competition emanating from the United States.[34]

In response to Collins comments I believe that the elitism charge, deployed either pejoratively to signal the commissioner's distaste for popular culture or descriptively to discuss the impact of the "culture lobby," requires a subtler rendering. In a later chapter I will argue that an obsession with exposing elites results in a misreading of the Massey Commission, a key moment in this line of inquiry. As we will see, rather than representing a grand moment for a group of Canadian mass culture critics, the Massey Commission had very little effect on Canada's film and broadcasting sectors.

While it is true that, over the years, Royal Commissioners have been derived from the country's intellectual and social cognoscenti, the level of participation

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[33]Richard Collins, *Culture, Communication, and National Identity: The Case of Canadian Television*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 332-333.

[34]Ibid., 333. For a review of responses within the Canadian intellectual community to Collins' book, see Paul Attallah, "Richard Collins and the Debate on Culture and Polity," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 17:2 (1992): 221-236.

during the public hearings process, featuring submissions from churches, voluntary associations, concerned individuals, towers over present public involvement in the hearings process, where representations on cultural issues have been turned over to arts groups, consultants, and business organizations. In other words, there has been less and less public participation within the cultural policy process and more decision-making by a different set of "elites."

An overabundance of attention paid to the elitism portion of the argument also comes at the expense at what is fundamentally a discussion over authority, over who should have a say in the development of future policy imperatives. Since the object at the centre of the discussion -- culture -- represents an abstract concept that resists easy characterization, the populist critique appears as the stand-in for the epistemological insecurity over the prospects of attaining the "truth" about the subject under review. If populism as a concept is, in Michael Denning's words, "a territorial process, stressing issues of land, territory, and community," then this particular strain of critique can be seen as a similar claim for territory, this time within the field of policymaking.[35] In other words, the net effect of such critiques has been to replace one kind of policymaking knowledge for another one offering more effective representation of the public's interest.

For example, Collins' claim that "policies have been less than optimal because of the assumptions and interests of those elites" from the citation mentioned above invites a counter-claim as to how better cultural policy could be made and to what forms of knowledge would be needed to produce more representative policy analysis.

[35]Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front*. (New York: Verso, 1996), 125.

Although Collins is cagey on the issue of policy recommendations in his book,[36]

Anne-Marie Kinahan's recent assessment of the purpose of Canadian cultural studies

is more direct, tying together the intellectual project, the authoritative knowledge it

possesses, and its applicability in the realm of policy:

> The explicitly political project of cultural studies -- the attempt to transform
> social relations -- gave intellectuals a specific role in the policymaking
> process. Armed with an appreciation of the role of popular culture in
> everyday life, they would be able to make informed interventions into the
> official realm of cultural policy.[37]

If we see this line of cultural critique as a process of authorization in the field

of policymaking, consider the way Catherine Murray simultaneously disposed with

important forms of knowledge that historically have underpinned the cultural policy

making process while explaining why the CBC, Canada's public broadcaster, has

been mired in "a policy trap":

> The strong association between nationalism as a movement, modernism, and
> public interest in culture has crumbled. The rise of free trade, the forces of
> economic globalization and digital networks, and the emergence of social
> movements pressing for recognition of minority groups, combined with
> postmodern cultural theory, have had a fundamental impact on cultural policy.
> Nationalism as a defensive cultural stance is being displaced by new forms of
> cosmopolitan identity or a resurgence of tribalism, or local ethnic identity.
> Eurocentric cultural elitism is in retreat. Modernist public interest discourse
> has little resonance in an age of post-modern politics. Left behind is a
> fundamental ideological vacuum at the heart of contemporary cultural
> policies.[38]

With this accomplished, Murray restated the questions that cultural policymakers are

struggling with: "Why do we need cultural policy? What does it represent? What

difference does it make? Who should decide? How can political support for culture be

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[36]Collins, 343.

[37]Anne-Marie Kinahan, "A Not So British Invasion: Cultural Studies in Canada," *Mediascapes: New Patterns in Canadian Communication,* 37.

[38]Catherine Murray, "Wellsprings of Knowledge: Beyond the CBC Policy Trap," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 26:1 (2001). Available online at www.cjc-online.ca. Accessed 10 May 2005.

mobilized? How can public broadcasting open up access to culture? What is the

political opportunity structure for advancing cultural policy?"[39] The answer for

Murray was to replace political economic models with techniques inspired by the

work of Pierre Bourdieu, and that "a cultural capital or resource-based frame for

cultural policy discourse establishes an instrumental need for culture, at the engine of

innovation" in "the knowledge economy."[40] The results of such a shift in analytical

methodologies are important and for Murray, resonated in populist language:

> This new liberal-democratic concept of cultural capital does not carry with it
> the elite, Eurocentric, or paternalistic values of earlier public interest theory.
> Or it need not. It stipulates that the gap between the knowledge-rich and the
> knowledge-poor should be reduced over time, and that the absolute condition
> of the knowledge-poor should be improved over time.[41]

Such works appear to have prefigured the existence of anti-elitist discourse

outside of intellectual circles in Canada when applied to cultural policy questions,

usually in the context of calls for the further liberalization of cultural policy. Until

this point, members of Canada's political and business-class (particularly those within

the private broadcasting lobby) were previously targets of elitist attacks by critics

pointing to their complicit relationships with each other to undermine the public

nature of Canada's cultural apparatus and push the country culturally closer to the

brink of Americanization. Now, it appears that the critics themselves are on the

receiving end of counter-claims coming from both members of the business

community as well as the academy. A recent speech by Canwest Global chairman

Leonard Asper before the Canadian Club of Ottawa represents one variation on this

theme:

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[39]Ibid.
[40]Ibid.
[41]Ibid.

Today, instead, I plan to speak primarily about the next 10 years instead of dwelling on the nostalgic world that some people, a vocal tiny minority, wish still existed. Today is not going to be about 1970, it will be about 2010. The debate about 1970 is largely held within the four walls of them mutual admiration society meetings of the media and political elite, and is one which does not resonate with the average Canadian. The elites, discomfited by the presence of a new voice, not part of their club, their geography or their ideology, can continue their bleating into their self-contained sound chamber and a few, disgruntled and opportunistic journalists who have been the subject of editing for many years, long before Canwest came along, will no doubt continue to abuse the word "censorship" and thereby gain their 15 minutes of fame.[42]

Even a casual glance at some contemporary documents within existing Canadian cultural policy reveal that such anti-elitist sentiments now appear within the pages of cultural policy documents, and have become the accepted wisdom for Canadian cultural policymakers. In a commissioned report on the troubled state of the English-Canadian drama, former CBC and Discovery Channel executive Trina McQueen pointed the blame squarely at similar communities for failing to recognize the viewing habits of Canadians:

Perhaps the central failure of drama has been the inability of its proponents to make a competing public case for its significance, and its potential. I think that is because so many policy makers and members of the elite watch little television and do not understand the quite amazing relationship Canadians have with television.[43]

Of note to this discussion was the ways in which cultural institutions have effectively adopted Ms. McQueen's distaste of previous attempts in policy to carve out "uniquely Canadian" television and film. In the current policy climate, the two

[42]Leonard Asper, "Inventing the Future," Speech to the Canadian Club of Ottawa, December 17, 2002. Available online at: www.canwestglobal.com/speeches/LAspeech_nov1702.doc Accessed 15 April 2004. A month earlier, Liberal MP Roger Gallaway wondered if the recently sitting House of Commons Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage should poll Canadians to see if they want Ottawa to cut funding to the CBC. He then suggested that the station should be run on a subscriber model, opining "All those elites out there who are so bound on having the CBC, let them pay for it," Jane Taber, "Liberal MP asks for poll to gauge CBC support," *National Post*, March 5, 2002.
[43]Trina McQueen, *Dramatic Choices: A Report on English-Language Drama* (Ottawa: CRTC, 2003).

major sources of funding for Canadian film and television production, Telefilm

Canada and the Canadian Television Fund, began to openly parrot such approaches in

public speeches. Perusing the public speeches of former Telefilm president Richard

Stursburg, one sees the virtual disappearance of public service discourses, only to be

replaced by the kind of language offered by the critical policy populists mentioned

earlier. In a speech to filmmakers in Toronto pedantically entitled "The ABC's of

Audience Building in Canada," Stursberg delivered the following stinging rebuke of

both the industry and the policymakers that came before him, finishing with a

repetition of the new policy mantra:

> We, as a country, should focus our resources to build English audiences for
> distinctively Canadian television. We should no longer gauge our success by
> the number of shows that are produced with our support. Rather we should
> focus on how successful these shows are in attracting viewers. Everything is
> audience. The litmus test for success is the simple question: Are Canadians
> watching?[44]

At a rudimentary level we can conclude that the anti-elitist discourse present

in the strain of cultural criticism mentioned earlier has been mimicked by the private

sector. In his account of the turbo-capitalism of the 1990s, Thomas Frank argues that

the "market populism," driven by "New Economy" rhetoric that economic markets

possess democratic tendencies. For Frank, the marriage of contentious issues of

cultural taste with laissez-faire economic policies within the cultural industries "bore

at least a superficial resemblance to the pedagogical populism of cultural studies"

along with the field's dismissal of the politics of economic issues.[45] By Jim

McGuigan's calculation, in such accounts of "cultural populism" or "consumptionist

[44]Richard Stursberg, "The ABC of Audience Building in Canada: Can We Do It?" Speech delivered to
the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, Toronto, Ontario, November 20, 2002. Available
online at: http://www.telefilm.gc.ca/upload/flash/discours-RS-Toronto-en.pdf. Accessed 1 April 2004.
[45]Thomas Frank, *One Market Under God.* (New York: Anchor Books, 2000), 287.

cultural populism," we see what he calls a close affinity with the ideal of the sovereign consumer in neo-classical economics and the philosophy of the free market, the currently dominant economic ideology.[46] In Canada, the last decade has witnessed an unprecedented level of cross-media concentration, featuring one convergence project -- where the largest telephone company owns the leading national newspaper and largest private television network, cable and speciality channels, Internet service, and satellite service -- unlike any other in the industrialized world. Since the country continues to maintain protectionist policies on media ownership the force of Frank's and McGuigan's un-Canadian accounts should be tempered somewhat.[47] What it does remind us, I believe, is to consider in more detail the function both of anti-elitism and of populism within cultural policy critiques, to consider, as Ernesto Laclau asked, whether such concepts represent movements or ideologies.[48]

Here I would like to re-state my intentions. The purpose of this discussion was neither to perform a Manheimian "unmasking" of the duplicitous work of policy researchers nor to undermine their direct contributions to the policymaking process. Instead, I suggest, this discussion served as a provocation for more of a long-view approach with which to track the conditions by which certain forms of knowledge,

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[46]Jim McGuigan, "Cultural Populism Revisited," in *Cultural Studies in Question*. Edited by Marjorie Ferguson and Peter Golding. (London: Sage, 1997), 139. In the same volume see Todd Gitlin, "The Anti-political Populism of Cultural Studies," 25-38. The earlier elaboration of this argument is in McGuigan's 1992 book, *Cultural Populism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992). A thoughtful consideration of this tendency—and an attempt to reconcile cultural studies with aspects of Adorno and Horkheimer's "culture industry" critique can be found in Imre Szeman, "The Limits of Culture: The Frankfurt School and/for Cultural Studies," in *Rethinking the Frankfurt School: Alternative Legacies of Cultural Critique*. Edited by Caren Irr and Jeffrey Nealon. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2002), 59-80.

[47]It appears that elitist claims are more common when dealing with the Canadian cinema as it emerged as an "art cinema," complete with its own circuit of festivals and film intellectuals during the 1960s. See Dorland, *So Close to the State/s*, 127-129.

and those who produce them, emerge as useful in the eyes of the state. As Nikolas Rose maintains, shifts in policy knowledge are part of liberalism's inherent dissatisfaction with government, resulting in a "perpetual questioning of where the desired effects are being produced, of the mistakes of thought or policy that hamper the efficacy of government, the imperative not necessarily to govern more but to govern better."[49] Furthermore, the ability of political actors to commission, authority, and construct forms of knowledge as useful -- and to relegate others as having little utility -- is an important part of the machinery of statecraft. That said, I follow Philip Abrams who argues, "Not to see the state as in the first instance an exercise in legitimation, in moral regulation is surely to participate in the mystification which is the vital point of the construction of the state."[50]

In the next section I return to the discussion of governmentality, to examine the ways in which such approaches have been utilized towards the study of cultural policy. As we will see, similar tensions regarding the role of such research in the practical domain of policymaking and, as we have seen in this discussion, these issues call attention to the presence of key undertheorized concepts.

Governmentality: Australian and Canadian Applications

Foucault's work on governmentality was enthusiastically received by a group of scholars working in Australia during the 1990s as a way to bridge the knowledge gap created as a result of the fissures in the cultural studies/political economy divide

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[48]Ernesto Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (London: Verso, 1977), 143.
[49]Nikolas Rose, "Government, Authority, and Expertise in Advanced Liberalism," *Economy and Society* 22:3 (1993): 292.
[50]Philip Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1:1 (1988): 77.

and to contribute directly to the management of cultural affairs. Within the context of the flourishing field of cultural studies and a radical restructuring of Australian universities, Australia's cultural policy "moment" came during the early 1990s.[51] It was the product of a body of work published by leading academics such as Tony Bennett,[52] Stuart Cunningham,[53] Colin Mercer,[54] Tom O'Regan,[55] and Meghan Morris[56] in cultural studies journals both domestically and internationally.[57] These authors argued that both culture and cultural practices were governmental in their aims and orientations, and that cultural criticism should be grounded in understanding the subtle ways in which powerful and disenfranchised groups negotiate with the state to advance or frustrate particular policy measures. As Terry Flew explains, the emerging interest in questions of cultural policy had significantly more practical objectives, aiming to incorporate insights from the social sciences as to how policy is made and to move Australian cultural studies from its anchor in neo-Marxist inspired cultural criticism towards a renewed concept of citizenship.[58]

Perhaps the most vociferous advocate for such an approach was Tony Bennett. Stemming from his work on the museum and through his collaborations with other researchers in the Institute for Cultural Policy Studies at Griffith University, Bennett

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[51]Toby Miller explains that that this transformation "included the requirement for greater relevance in research and teaching as judged in terms of the national interest', rewards for cooperation with private enterprise, and reduced time for professors to engage with the study of their choice," causing many to wonder about the future of humanities-based education in Australia. Miller, *Technologies of Truth*, 78.
[52]"Putting Policy into Cultural Studies," in *Cultural Studies* Eds. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson and Paula Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992): 23-37.
[53]*Framing Culture: Criticism and Policy in Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1992); "The Cultural Policy Moment Revisited," *Meanjin* 51:3 (1992); 533-544.
[54]"Research and the Governmental Imperative," *Media International Australia* 73 (1994): 16-22.
[55]"(Mis)taking Policy: Notes on the Cultural Policy Debate," *Cultural Studies* 6:3 (1992): 409-423.
[56]"A Gadfly Bites Back," *Meanjin* 51:3 (1992): 545-551.
[57]In this discussion, I am drawing upon the recent reflection by Terry Flew, "Critical Communications Research in Australia: From Radical Populism to Creative Industries," *Javnost: The Public* 11:3 (2004): 31-46.
[58]Cunningham, "The Cultural Policy Debate Revisited," 10-11.

argued that policy issues needed to be taken into consideration by cultural studies in

its engagement with questions of "culture." By focusing our attention towards the

policing elements of cultural policy, he argued that such an approach

> [P]oints to the more general consideration that the programmatic, institutional,
> and governmental conditions in which cultural practices are inscribed – in
> short, the network of relations that fall under a properly theoretical
> understanding of policy -- have a substantive priority over the semiotic
> properties of such practices.[59]

One of the key instruments in Bennett's "useful" prescription for a more applied

cultural studies was to engage the scholar with elements of the state apparatus in of a

consulting role in cultural policy matters:

> This might mean many things. It might mean careful and focused work in the
> service of specific action groups. It might mean intellectual work calculated
> to make more strategic interventions within the operating procedures and
> policy agendas of specific cultural institutions. It might mean hard statistical
> work calculated to make certain problems visible in a manner that will allow
> them to surface at the level of political debate or *to impinge upon policy-
> making processes in a ways which facilitate the development of administrative
> programs capable of addressing them.* It might mean providing private
> corporations with such information. One thing is for sure, however: it will
> mean talking to and working with what used to be called the ISA's
> [ideological state apparatuses] rather than writing them off from the outset and
> then, in a self-fulfilling prophecy, criticizing them again when they seem to
> affirm one's direst functionalist predictions.[60]

Tom O'Regan disputed Bennett's desire to move cultural studies out of its position as

a critical project towards policy making because it aligned too closely with

administrative and bureaucratic power that, in turn, set limits on its critical

capacities.[61] For Toby Miller, the decision by the Institute for Cultural Policy Studies

to operationalize governmentality represented a betrayal of Foucault's larger project,

[59]Bennett, "Putting Policy Into Cultural Studies," 28.
[60]Ibid., 32.
[61]O'Regan cited in McGuigan, *Culture and the Public Sphere*, 18.

relocating the moralizing claims associated with political economy into a cultural

studies now presented as a administrative science:

> The field is clearly being set up as an evaluative: cultural policy studies will
> decide the legitimacy and utility of cultural policies and programs. It will not
> question the project of moulding the populace, which is taken to be internal to
> culture and inalienable from it. There is a clear connection here to
> governmentality as a technology for managing the population. But unlike
> Foucault's ironized account, the institute's documents celebrate this
> development, using it to open space of influence for intellectuals; the cultural
> magistracy of consultancy.[62]

Unlike its central place within the Australian policy "moment," there have

been few attempts to extend governmentality theory into cultural policy practice

within Canadian context. The triad of security, territory, and population has proven

to be a productive means for extending Foucault's project into the field of Canadian

cultural policy studies. However it has not produce a body of literature of the size

and scope of the Australian interventions or debates surrounding its practical value.

What results in the literature, however, are tensions over whether such investigations

serve as theoretical engagements with Foucault or as indirect attempts at direct

engagement with the policy apparatus.

The most substantial articulations of governmentality within the Canadian

literature on cultural policy can be found in the work of Michael Dorland. In his

numerous publications examining Canadian film policy, Dorland attempted to

integrate both the nuanced political economy of Magder and the more theoretically

varied elements of the cultural studies approach towards an appreciation of the

Canadian cultural industries.

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[62]T. Miller, *Technologies of Truth*, 71.

Dorland's *So Close to the State/s: The Emergence of Canadian Feature Film Policy*, characterized as a "thick policy analysis," examines the changing practices and forms of knowledge that were behind the Canadian state's shift from showing a passing interest in feature filmmaking towards an active interest in this form of cinema. Through the transposition of national economy onto the cultural sphere (with the help of statistics); the changing nature of filmmaking practices amidst the emergence of television; and transformations in international political economy, the feature film -- and those institutions charged with its production -- became a cultural form enveloped within the structures of state governmentality.[63]

Dorland's investigation underscored the role played by governmentality in delineating the contours of Canadian feature film policy and by extension, establishing the borders on which discussions about Canadian feature film were contested and negotiated. Dorland's study also pushed the envelope further by claiming that the easy adoption of state forms of knowledge within intellectual circles has tended to idealize notions of the "Canadian film," a move that has impacted on Canadian film historiography and the role of the academic within the policy process. In this regard, he explained that much academic output has both mimicked and contributed to advancing discourses of policy when thinking about filmic activity. "Rather than extricating the production of cultural knowledge from the state, these forms of knowledge have only strengthened the governmentalization of the cinema in the Canadian context."[64]

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[63]Michael Dorland, *So Close to the State/s*, 36-57.
[64]Ibid., 22.

If *So Close to the State/s* is marked by the author's impressive archival

research and its delicate account of the relationship between the state and film

production, a certain tension exists as to the project's ultimate purpose. By the end of

this book, it is unclear if Dorland's account serves to promote further study into

governmentality or if whether it stands as an indirect appeal within the rubric of

policymaking. In his final chapter, Dorland characterized Canadian film as

representative of a "generalized failure of a policy formation."[65] He also asserted

that "ludicrous misconceptions of basic facts" and "arguments-from-ignorance" have

played a role in the shaping of Canadian film policy and have been largely repeated

by the arena of film scholarship.[66] The final sentence of the book, stating that "[t]he

present work, it is hoped, contributed towards reorienting both policy and scholarship

in the study of Canadian film history and cultural policies," further leaves the reader

unsure whether, after trying to unstaple the two fields from each other, Dorland has

inadvertently united them in the end.[67]

Zoe Druick's doctoral dissertation, *Narratives of Citizenship:*

Governmentality and the National Film Board of Canada applies the Foucauldian

analytic at the institutional level. Druick's project offered a reinterpretation of the

rationale behind the creation of the NFB in 1939 and the emergence of documentary

film at a historical conjuncture of knowledge projects including statistics, quantitative

social science, and public opinion research.[68] She argued that while shifts in

documentary style run parallel to changes in "evidential epistemology" from different

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[65]Ibid., 139.
[66]Ibid.,148.
[67]Ibid., 149.
[68]Zoe Druick, *Narratives of Citizenship: Governmentality and the National Film Board of Canada*
(Ph.D Dissertation: York University, 1998).

periods in the NFB's history, "each style tells the truth in the manner in which truth-telling is conceived by the social sciences at the time."[69] Furthermore, she explained that such films are thematically linked to "their concern with governmentalized identities," always reproducing fields of representation present in government departments of the welfare state such as Health and Welfare, Indian and Northern Affairs, and Labour.[70]

An important theoretical rendering of governmentality within the Canadian context is Kevin Dowler's article, "The Cultural Policy Apparatus." Here Dowler argued that the purpose of cultural policy was to provide security on the metaphysical plane, against the threat of continentalization and in the interests of securing the continued existence of the Canadian state. He further argued that the Canadian state formation follows from the securing of national sovereignty over physical space, with cultural policy attempting to secure national sovereignty over the metaphysical plane. With that in mind, he identifies the cultural policy apparatus as "a set of structures and procedures designed to bolster security, not to shape identity."[71] Using the early work of Harold Innis, Dowler explains that the "uniqueness" of the Canadian state stems from society's dependence on government investment and ownership for economic development and security. The net effect of that practice sees government investment in communications and transportation infrastructure responsible for coast-to-coast as well as south-to-north economic and cultural flows. In other words, for Dowler, a system designed to establish Canadian independence actually undermined the country's economic and military goals, leaving the increased onus on "culture" to

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[69]Ibid., 20-21.
[70]Ibid.
[71]Dowler, "The Cultural Policy Apparatus," 330.

"provide the bulwark to construct a strong nation with all its critical faculties intact, and to ward off the potentially harmful effects of creeping continentalism in the form of American mass culture."[72] Dowler's article concludes with the suggestion that the areas most in need of additional study are the relations between culture and the national security apparatus, cultural policy and national economic strategies and the interrelationship between defence and communications.[73]

An important point Dowler does not make in his article is that in order for the cultural to fall under the aegis of policy, it must first become problematic on a national scale. In other words, culture has to be identified as a "problem," one that requires intervention for fear of undesirable circumstances. Dowler's treatment of the problem appears too late in his analysis, for cultural matters in film and broadcasting become identified as "national problems" during the 1920s and 30s, well before they become identified within discourses of national defence during the Massey Commission era.

This is the period in which the young country experiences a major reorganization of the activities under its dominion. In a forty-year span between 1898 and 1938, more than 200 Royal Commissions were held covering issues ranging from broadcasting to mining and urban development. In the years between 1930 and 1960, the government expanded the federal bureaucracy, creating a large administrative class of civil servants. The period that followed was marked by the dominance of the federal Liberal party, including an eighteen-year reign of uninterrupted leadership between 1936 and 1954. Along with Canada's experience during two World Wars,

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[72]Ibid., 337.
[73]Ibid., 344.

the developments occurring in the new country brought issues regarding the country's management and future development of the country into the forefront.

I have drawn tremendous inspiration from the work of Dorland, Dowler, and Druick for my research, and believe that the present study represents both an elaboration and extension of this previous work. However, I also believe that there exist some key critical weaknesses in Foucault's governmentality analytic that need further reflection. I turn to this discussion for the remainder of this chapter.

Governmentality and the Problem of Population

However useful Foucault's notion of governmentality has been in opening up fields of analysis within the field of cultural policy studies, some research inspired by this critique has, at key junctures, appeared to mirror some of the ambiguity characteristic of Foucault's work. Following the work of Bruce Curtis, I argue this is due to what appears to be a lack of engagement with Foucault's inconsistent musings about the state and administration and particularly, an elision of the concept of "population." What results is a lack of critical attention towards the notion of "population" as a sociological theoretical construct, thereby making it easy for some Foucauldian critics of cultural policy research to effortlessly replace political economists as government advisors on cultural policy matters.

As mentioned earlier "population" plays a central role in Foucault's discussions on governmentality. It serves as the object through which to examine shifts from direct forms of disciplinary authority to more diffuse, decentred styles of government at a distance, made possible through the emergence of political economy and organized through various security apparatuses. However, "population" is not

only important within Foucault's late work on state formation; it appears at various sites throughout his research on the history of sexuality and emergence of social health programs, as well as in his studies of incarceration practices.

As Curtis points out, population has received curiously little critical treatment from those extending governmentality into different spheres of inquiry, despite its centrality to Foucault's late work. This is unfortunate, he explains, because Foucault uses the term imprecisely, causing him and his interlocutors to conclude that populations were "discovered" by the state. Curtis maintained that this assertion implied that, as an object for government, subject populations were already "out there" ready to be found by state officials. Instead, he explains that populations are not discovered, but constructed, and represent "a way of observing social relations."[74] In his study of state formation and the Canadian census, Curtis detailed how this construction occurs in the production of statistical populations:

> Census-making is a political-scientific activity. It is a general condition of scientific practice that objects of knowledge and targets of intervention must be represented theoretically before they could be known scientifically...The practical work of making a census involves attempts to translate prior conceptual postulates about the organization of social relations into a body of empirical knowledge. How "population" is imagined or postulated tends to change from one census to the next, both as a practical consequence of past attempts to observe it and, to the continuing chagrin of social scientists, as a consequence of changing political and administrative interests.[75]

At the same time, census-making is an object of social struggle and contest, an outcome of the "contending and conflicting social imaginaries sustained by social classes, groups, and political parties [which] produce antagonistic or competing representations of social relations as population."[76]

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[74]Curtis, *The Politics of Population* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 24.
[75]Ibid.
[76]Ibid., 28.

While not mentioning governmentality in her discussion of the politics of statistics in the context of Spain's Basque communities, Jacqueline Urla attempts to represent both techniques such as statistics and concepts such as population as more open-ended and dialectic in their orientation. Admitting that "being a Basque speaker no longer means sharing an essence or inherited identity; it means sharing a set of behaviours or skills that can be measured or comprehended quantitatively," she explained forms of knowledge like statistics can be used in a "bottom-up" fashion as well as through the "top-down" application.[77] "In the hands of the socially or politically disenfranchised," she explained, "numbers may also be a language of social contestation, a way that ethnic groups, women, and minorities can make themselves visible, articulate their 'difference' from the dominant society, and make claims upon the state and its services."[78] "Rather than viewing the emergent uses of statistics as indices of co-optation," Urla concluded, "we may see them as indices of new sites of struggle in modern society."[79]

Both Curtis and Urla's observations have particular resonance for cultural policy studies. This is because many of the objects of both intervention and analysis can be considered to constitute "populations," each taken up and effectively politicized in their construction. Thinking about cultural indicators in this way produces a number of interesting observations about the construction of the facts about cultural production. If we see "populations" as constructed objects and not natural manifestations, then we are able to examine the ways in which governmental

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[77] Jacqueline Urla, "Cultural Politics in an Age of Statistics: Numbers, Nations and the Making of Basque Identity," *American Ethnologist* 20:4 (1993): 818.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid., 838.

practices and technologies produce cultural policy populations as objects for policy intervention.

Here we can return briefly to the work of Tony Bennett. In *Accounting for Taste*, Bennett, along with Michael Emmison and John Frow, produce an analysis of taste formations within "Australian everyday cultures," stating "[o]ur likes and dislikes have a definite pattern, one which emerges from the roles played by social class, age, gender, education, and ethnicity in distributing cultural interests and abilities differentially across the population."[80] Here Bennett takes "population" as the metonym to refer to the entire Australian populace -- or at least the group of Australians that filled out the various surveys -- but each of the subcategories presented here are themselves populations in the sociological sense.[81] Bennett makes this point evident in his earlier articulations:

> In arguing for the anthropological plenitude of Williams's extended definition of culture versus its aesthetically restrictive sense in defining its object, then, cultural studies has misperceived at least some aspects of the organization of its field of study. Culture is more cogently conceived, I want to suggest, when thought of as a historically specific set of institutionally embedded relations of government in which the forms of thought and conduct of extended populations are targeted for transformation—in part via the extension through the social body of the forms, techniques, and regimens of aesthetic and intellectual culture.[82]

Within the context of my discussion here, there are two different components worthy of further discussion. First, we can interpret Bennett's production of research on "everyday cultures" as a form of governmental rationality, if you will, from the

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[80] Tony Bennett, Michael Emmison and John Frow, *Accounting for Tastes: Australian Everyday Cultures*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1.

[81] Bennett et al., 6: The authors state "Our discussion of class, for example, would have benefited if we had asked about the ownership of shares and other assets. That said, it is notoriously difficult to obtain statistically reliable information about the cultural practices of the richest and most economically powerful classes, and we remain unsure whether asking questions of this kind would have thrown much light on the cultural preferences of the high bourgeoisie who [...] remain more of less invisible."

bottom-up, with the object of study now operating to produce and reproduce the population as an object for governmental intervention. Second, we can view such developments as the opportunity to critically interrogate the complex ways in which processes of governmentality operate. These include the ways in which various forms of cultural activity come to fit into their categories, and the ways in which statistical investigations serve as a way to organize and reposition various forms of cultural articulations.[83]

This is at the heart of Jonathan Sterne's recent critique of the field of cultural policy studies. While applied to the Bennett-governmentality research strain, Sterne's critique applies to both critical models to emerge in this period of late capitalism. Arguing that through its simple engagement of the policy field cultural policy studies work "portrays itself as providing a service -- acting in the name of helping someone."[84] However Sterne maintained that there are a number of key questions remaining about exactly in whose interests cultural policy studies purports to represent. He argues that, with only a generalized notion of the cultural citizen, cultural policy studies is engaged in a kind of 'negative populism', claiming to represent a desire to make policy studies work better or work differently on behalf of an absent populace.[85] By operating in the name of groups whose definition will be divined at a later stage, Sterne admits that Bennett's critique does not allow radical questionings of discourse or of interrogations into the politics of representation. The way into that kind of analysis, he explains, is to re-engage governmentality scholarship with questions dealing with knowledge and expertise, including

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[82]Bennett, "Putting Policy into Cultural Studies," 26.
[83]Curtis, *The Politics of Population,* 3.
[84]Sterne, "Bureaumentality," 122-123.

"genealogical work done on the relation of academics to policy processes and apparatuses, especially as this relation is enacted through cultural policy studies."[86] Such investigations would help to facilitate a move away from what he terms the "reform versus revolution" dichotomy that has dominated cultural policy research.[87]

Conclusion

In this chapter I have broadly traced the contours of the field of cultural policy studies for two reasons. First, I suggested that the various strains of policy research are part of a broad conversation between the researcher and the state, one in which justifications for cultural interventions appear to run parallel to state rationale towards the sector. The justification to even have a cultural policy has changed over time from securing sovereignty over territory to the government of population at a distance. As we will see in the Canadian case, these have resulted in moves away from cultural nationalist discourses that equated the survival of particular centralizing Canadian institutions with the survival of Canadian culture as a whole towards arguments that cultural protection is necessary to develop a "home market" for domestic production. As I have attempted to show here, the position of cultural policy research within those tendencies -- as part of changing forms of liberal governmentalty -- needs to be taken into account to understand the relationship between knowledge production and state policy in the audiovisual realm.

This discussion was necessary for an understanding of the second part of my literature review. I interrogated the uncritical use of the concepts of elitism and

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[85]Ibid.
[86]Ibid., 116.
[87]Ibid., 111.

population present within recent strains of cultural policy research both to suggest the ways in which such projects have become engaged in attempts to displace one set of knowledge about cultural policy for other representations of the cultural. I raised this example -- and some of the unintended consequences for the poor consideration of key terminology -- in order to point out that the question of how certain ways of thinking about cultural production and policy emerge, why governments choose particular ways of seeing over others, how certain categories of artistic activity come into existence and what forms of evidence are given to support those changes, remain still to be answered. "An analysis of classifications of human beings," Hacking writes, "is an analysis of classificatory words in the sites they are used, of the relation between speaker and hearer, of external descriptions and internal sensibilities."[88]

Whether involving conceptualizations of nation, elites, or populations, much policy research tends to operate from what Toby Miller calls ideal types of policy, those which "derive from empirical observations, themselves interpreted from a particular theoretical position."[89] The problem with such formulations, Miller reports, is that "ideal types are constantly ramified rather than falsified, undergoing so many successful extrapolations that they assume the status of *donnés* far beyond the conditions of their initial formulation."[90] Moving the research problematic towards understanding how that process take place, I suggest, opens up questions regarding the forms of knowledge used to produce the various populations that comprise the audiovisual field and the arguments and evidence used to produce them. The research

[88]Hacking, "Inaugural lecture: Chair of Philosophy and History of Scientific Concepts at the Collège de France," *Economy and Society* 31:1 (2002): 9.
[89]T. Miller, *Technologies of Truth*, 93.
[90]Ibid.

challenge then slides following Curtis, towards "discover[ing] its conditions of possibility."[91]

Having drawn inspiration from the works presented here, I direct the remainder of my dissertation towards documenting the forms of knowledge used to make Canadian culture *cultural*, and amenable to policy. It is through that experience, I would like to hypothesize, that we can gain insight on what Lorraine Daston calls "the history of the categories that structure our thought, pattern our arguments and proofs, and certify our standards for explanation,"[92] including evidence, objectivity, and authority. It may also reintegrate what have seemed to be tangential fields of inquiry, such as the history of the social sciences, into the policy conversation. If we are able to bring these areas together, we may quite possibly be able to stitch together many of the "torn halves" of policy research Oliver Bennett pointed to at the beginning of this chapter, ones which have produced two different forms of speech about policy, never to converse with one another.

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[91]Curtis, "Foucault on Governmentality and Population," *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 27:4 (2002): 511.
[92]Daston, "Historical Epistemology," 282.

Chapter Two:

**General Knowledge, Natural Monopolies, and Radio Consciousness:
Non-Statistical Reasoning, and the Cultural Policy Style During the Royal
Commission on Radio Broadcasting, 1926-1931**

"The birth of facts," according to Nikolas Rose and Thomas Osborne, "is often

preceded by controversy."[1] However the authors maintain that it is not the mere

presence of factual information that puts a halt to controversies. Rather it is *because*

the controversy has settled that a reality effect is produced and objectivity and authority

are conferred upon certain forms of information that assume their position as facts.[2]

Underpinning this assertion is the idea that when controversies arise, questions are

raised that deal with not only the question of whether or not the issue will be solved but

also what kinds of information will be needed to bring about its resolution. Once this

has been accomplished, Rose and Osborne maintain, "the phenomenon exists. Now it

is time for it to be investigated, explained, analyzed, refined, purified, categorized,

classified, utilized. It becomes a usable kind of thing, usable in science, usable

elsewhere."[3]

The example Rose and Osborne use to support their assertion is the

development of public opinion research in the 1920s and 30s and the recognition that,

through increases in literacy rates and the proliferation of mass communications

technologies, more and more members of the public were able to be both reached and

heard. As a result of these developments Rose and Osborne explain, "political and

sociological commentators began to argue that they were able to speak of the public in

terms of the 'people as a whole.'"[4] The controversy in this case centred on the value of

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[1] Nikolas Rose and Thomas Osborne, "Do the Social Sciences Create Phenomena?" 372.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., 374

such knowledge. Would it provide the moral direction to guide policy decisions and direct good government or be a threat to those very principles? Walter Lippmann's seminal work, *Public Opinion,* addressed these questions, arguing that knowledge of public opinion was necessary to ward off surprises and threats to governmental authority. As Rose and Osborne explain, "[i]n 1922, he [Lippmann] thought that the question for those who governed was to form public opinion: controversial questions should be thrashed out before government commissions in order that 'a public opinion in the eulogistic sense of the term might exist.'"[5]

While public opinion research did not significantly take off until the middle to late 1930s, the use of commissions to produce a public opinion in the *eulogistic sense* occurred in the Canadian experience with radio broadcasting a decade earlier. In this sense, we can say that the facts about Canadian radio broadcasting assumed their own set of reality effects by the end of the 1920s with the settlement of a number of controversial issues concerning the position of radio within Canadian society. These concerned more than technical matters of frequency allocation and transmitter power or the larger issue of how Canada should capitalize upon the new medium's untapped potential. From a policy perspective, the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, created in 1928, also helped to resolve how the young country would conceive of and administer the new medium.

As previous historical investigations have shown, the development of radio in Canada was linked to a series of external and internal pressures: the country's geographical and cultural proximity to the United States, an environment of social and moral reform within the English-Canadian middle classes, and amid questions of

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[5]Ibid., 375.

federal-provincial jurisdiction over the new medium.[6] As a result, the question of how radio should be managed and incorporated into national life was representative of a larger issue, one involving what Marc Raboy characterized as "a struggle involving different conceptions of Canada."[7] By the end of the decade that struggle unfolded on the national stage, culminating in the establishment of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting in December 1928. The investigation placed the issue onto the federal purview and raised questions about the place of government involvement in radio, the entities that should own radio stations, the value of freedom of expression, and the federal government's jurisdiction over the mass medium.

With this in mind, we can see the Royal Commission serving a number of important roles. On an operational level, the commission attempted to quell public concern over the "chaos" within the country's radio environment; to offer an area of investigation seen to be free of government interest or bias; and to produce a set of policy actions set to function that would be representative of the public interest. On an epistemological level, the commission served a technical purpose as a means to assemble, organize and disseminate facts about broadcasting, a process Giandomenico Majone calls "the institutionalization of discussion."[8] Implicit within this function reside questions regarding the qualities required of the investigator, the nature of the evidence, and their relationship to the commission's conclusions as representative of a style of reasoning about cultural issues. It is here where the experiences of one of the commissioners named to the radio inquiry, Ottawa Citizen editor Charles A. Bowman, offers an opportunity to pursue these questions in greater detail.

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[6]In addition to works by Peers and Raboy, see Margaret Prang, "The Origins of Public Broadcasting in Canada," Canadian Historical Review 46: 1 (1965): 1-31, and Mary Vipond, Listening In: The First Decade of Canadian Broadcasting, 1922-1932 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).
[7]Raboy, Missed Opportunities, 18.
[8]Majone, Evidence, Argument and Persuasion in the Policy Process, 3.

As a newspaperman with no experience working in radio Bowman represented an interesting choice to be named to the commission. His views on radio nationalization were known well in advance of the Royal Commission hearings and his opinions on other matters pertaining to radio can be found within the pages of the commission's final report. Bowman's position on the need for a national, government operated radio system was a product not only of a newspaper editor's fear of declining revenues that would result with an advertising-driven system, but also of his beliefs in the fundamental differences between radio and newspapers as information media. A central feature in Bowman's position on radio was that it represented a "natural monopoly" and that, because of radio's intimate qualities to enter the home bringing uninvited information, that it should be subject to different treatments than newspapers. These differences were articulated in Bowman's editorials in the *Citizen* leading up to the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, and served as his most passionate defence during the commission hearings. Since some of these ideas reappear within the pages of the Commission's final report, I argue that the minimal place accorded to Bowman within Canadian cultural historiography has severely downplayed this important relationship between media forms as a component of the formation of Canada's broadcasting structure during the 1920s.

An important feature in the structuring process of the Royal Commission is the policy report itself as a style of writing about cultural activities. In Bryan Green's assessment, policy documents represent "scripts for government" which inscribe problematic areas, provide justification for their intervention, and, once in circulation, serve as a legitimating exercise to underpin future actions.[9] In this chapter I wish to

[9]Bryan S.R. Green, *A Textual Analysis of American Government Reports on Aging*. (Lewiston NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 103.

examine further the notion of the cultural policy report as a genre of writing, a specific

form of making sense of cultural activities. My analysis of the text of the report will

focus on two elements. First, I wish to show discourses of cultural nationalism

intersected with prevailing conceptions about the power of radio, particularly around

the idea that policies towards improved communication represent the bridge between a

current stasis and a mythologized future. This is accomplished by the use of metaphors

that draw connections between improved radio service and discourses of national

consciousness. Second, an examination of the reception of the report's contents within

the popular press will reveal the extent to which the report's size symbolized the

decisiveness of the commissioners in dealing with contentious issues and underwrote

the value of Royal Commission as technique for dealing with cultural matters.

Pre-Commission Broadcasting, Controversies and the End of "Political Football"

In her history of the first decade of Canadian broadcasting Mary Vipond argued

that the federal government did not show much initiative in terms of radio policy before

the end of the 1920s. The 1913 *Radiotelegraph Act* established government control

over the licensing of broadcasters within the Radio Branch of the Department of Marine

and Fisheries. However Vipond explained that there was little evidence of policy-

making decisions within the Radio branch, let alone consultations at the ministerial

level or House of Commons on policy matters until the end of the decade.[10]

Until that point Canada's radio landscape developed along lines similar to the

United States. As it emerged as a broadcast medium radio stations proliferated,

particularly in major Canadian population centres. Among the early proprietors of

radio stations included churches, the governments of Manitoba and Quebec,

universities and community organizations as well as newspapers. These stations were subsidized through the sale of radio receivers, with consumers expected to pay a licensing fee, although many that purchased radio receivers did not register. By the middle of the 1920s there was increased attention to enforcement, with some within government suggesting that those flouting government registration rules be tried in a court of law.[11]

One of the early users of radio was the Canadian National Railway. Running the signal through its railway lines, the CNR was able to create a network of limited scope, bringing programming nation-wide to its paying customers. Programs airing on the CNR network included comic operas, concerts featuring Toronto's Hart House Quartet and Toronto's Symphony Orchestra, and a series of dramatic presentations of Canadian history created by the director of CNR's radio department, E.A. Weir and writer Merrill Denison.

The ascendance of radio at the end of the 1920s into the governmental gaze can be attributed to a number of factors, including internal disputes over frequency allocation (both internally among interested Canadian parties and continentally in dividing up the radio spectrum with the United States); complaints over audio interference caused by stations competing over limited spaces on the radio dial, and jurisdictional issues regarding the operation of radio stations by the provincial governments of Manitoba and Quebec. Such issues crystallized amid the fallout of the decision by the Radio Branch of the Department of Marine and Fisheries to seize the

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[10]Vipond, *Listening In*, 110.

[11]Ibid., 112. Vipond explains that technological innovations making exterior aerials obsolete made it even more difficult for radio inspectors to determine exactly who did and did not have radio set receivers in the home. In addition to this, Vipond reports that many felt the $1 license fee was so small as to be inconsequential within the minds of radio listeners. Others felt that they were not getting good service for their money; even Sir John Aird, chairman of the 1928 Royal Commission on Broadcasting, admitted publicly that 'I hesitate myself sometimes to pay my dollar for some of the stuff you get over the air now."

broadcast licenses of the stations operated by the International Bible Students Association, or IBSA. After initially being denied stations, licenses were granted to IBSA stations in Saskatchewan, Edmonton, Vancouver, and Toronto. However, a number of complaints came into the Radio Branch regarding IBSA stations on the grounds that the stations interfered with other stations and had become involved in political and civic affairs. Reports coming into the Radio Branch had charged that the stations had condemned vaccination, inoculation, canned foods and the medical profession and had been critical of the British Empire, making IBSA stations subject to charges of sedition.[12]

The decision to rescind the IBSA licenses produced a significant public outcry, with letters flooding the radio branch and the offices of members of parliament applauding and criticizing the Department's action. As Vipond explained, an important reason for the controversy was the mishandling of the IBSA license renewal situation by the government itself. Without any policy guidelines that responded to issues of radio's capacity to transmit ideas, the Radio Branch found itself presented as an adjudicator of rules where none were present.[13] The controversy was fuelled by the decision to reassign the IBSA station to CFCA, a station operated by *The Toronto Star*. The decision to cancel the IBSA station was seen by some as an arbitrary move in order to free airspace for the newspaper's new station raising questions about the possibility of bias within the department.

On the heels of the controversy over IBSA and the Toronto wavelength allocation controversies the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, P.J.A. Cardin, went

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[12]Raboy, *Missed Opportunities,* 20. For an interesting discussion on early religious radio in Canada, see Russell Johnston, "The Early Trials of Protestant Radio, 1922-38," *Canadian Historical Review* 75:3 (1994): 376-402.
[13]Vipond, *Listening In,* 202.

before the House of Commons and declared that matters pertaining to radio had become a "political football" that had attracted attention across the country. In response to criticisms about possible bias within the department, Cardin went on the defensive:

> I may be lacking in many qualifications possessed by others both in and out of the house; I may not be so impartial as many others but from the point of view of fairness, honesty, tolerance and sense of justice I have no leaves to take from the book of anyone in or out of the house.

Concluding that "[t]he sooner I can get rid of this and have it taken out of my department, the better it will be for me," Cardin suggested that a different form of authority should be called upon to settle matters pertaining to radio broadcasting.[14]

By characterizing disinterestedness as a skill deficiency against more innate qualities of virtue Cardin established one of the important qualifications that would be needed to investigate the future direction of radio broadcasting. To stop the games of political football, he explained, "[w]e should change that situation and take radio broadcasting away from the influences of all sorts which are brought to bear by all shades of political parties."[15] Such a move, he continued, would "avoid much trouble for the government and I think will result in greater satisfaction for the public at large."[16]

What was needed first, according to Cardin, was a mechanism to collect and process information about the broadcasting scheme to better inform government of future actions. However immediately after his plea Cardin tipped his hand as to the kind of information he was expecting the investigation would find:

> We are not prepared to evolve a scheme at present, because we have not in our possession all the information we will need. We are inclined to follow that plan which has been established and which is operating at present in England, our idea would be to establish a company, the shares of which would be the

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[14]House of Commons, *Debates*, 1 June 1928, 3600.
[15]Ibid., 3662.
[16]Ibid.

> property of the Canadian government and to appoint special men, who are
> called governors in England, to look after the issuing of licenses and the
> regulation of everything else in regard to this important business.[17]

The next day Cardin asked Parliament for an allocation of $25,000 to finance a royal

commission to investigate the Canadian broadcasting landscape. Cardin's vision for

the commission was vast; its members would travel throughout Canada, the United

States and Europe in order to determine "the best means for Canada to adopt in dealing

with radio broadcasting."[18] Cardin then provided what Mary Vipond considered to be a

"broad hint" regarding the conclusions of the commission: "We want this information

before coming to parliament with a bill nationalizing the system, or some such

method."[19]

The Safety Valve: Royal Commissions as Technologies of Governance

Despite their central place within narratives of Canada's cultural policy history,

the study of Royal Commissions has received curiously little scholarly attention within

the communications literature. If previous works have been successful in delineating

the contours of the governmentalization of Canadian broadcasting through critical

analyses of the notions of public and nation they have left a number of epistemological

questions about the role played by royal commissions and the policy report itself in the

production of knowledge open for investigation.

This is not only restricted to cultural matters. Jane Jenson recently observed

that, in addition to providing moments of pause for governments handling tricky

political issues and offering avenues of engagement with the policy process, royal

commissions serve as "locales for some of the major shifts in the ways Canadians

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[17]Ibid.
[18]Ibid.
[19]Vipond, 205.

debate representations of themselves, their present, and their futures."[20] It is odd, then, that while holding a prominent place in so many aspects of the political, social, and economic lives of Canadians, the role of Royal Commissions in providing structure for that experience has been, in Jenson's estimation, "not widely studied."[21]

The decision to subject the question of radio broadcasting to the device of a Royal Commission was not a novel practice within Canada during the early part of the twentieth century.[22] In fact, the period between 1898 and 1938 saw what an explosion of investigative Commissions, with over 200 called within Canada.[23] As a result, it would be incorrect to see the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting as an isolated event, but rather as one of a long line of other areas of activity the federal government investigated in the years following Confederation.

According to J.E. Hodgetts, Canada did not exactly adopt the Royal Commission in the same form as it was practiced in Britain. Two important deviations were made. First, while Canada continued to use the royal designation to refer to the Queen's Warrant as a symbol of the formal status of the investigation, the reliance on Royal Commissions had, "tended to rub off some of their royal purple," in Hodgetts' assessment.[24] Furthermore, some of the powers given to Royal Commissions under the *Public Inquiries Act*, such as the ability to subpoena witnesses, call for papers, and hear evidence under oath go beyond the general powers possessed by British commissions.

The second major difference is that Canadian Royal Commissions tend to be substantially smaller operations than their British equivalents. The small size of Royal

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[20]Jane Jenson, "Commissioning Ideas: Representations and Royal Commissions," in *How Ottawa Spends 1994-95: Making Change*. Edited by Susan Phillips (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1994), 40.
[21]Ibid.
[22]I borrow the term "device" from Harold Gosnell's article, "British Royal Commissions of Inquiry," *Political Science Quarterly* 49:1 (1934): 93.
[23]V.C. Fowke, "Royal Commissions and Canadian Agricultural Policy," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Social Science* 14:2 (1948): 165.

Commissions came as part of the belief that the variety of opinion on matters should appear not within the commission's composition but in the testimony before the commission during the public hearings. This may also have to do with the difficulty in finding individual Canadians who are able to or interested in serving as Royal Commissioners and the judicial nature of Royal Commissions "sustained by the heavy reliance on the bench for chairmen and often sole members of royal commissioners and on the bar for commission counsel."[25]

Writing in the *Canadian Journal of Economics and Social Science* in 1948, V.C. Fowke identified four main purposes of a royal commission: to secure information as a basis for legislative policy; to educate the public or legislature; to sample public opinion; and to investigate the judicial or administrative branches of government. "Whether or not the taxpayer likes it," Fowke went on, "royal commissions are surely used for two other purposes. Namely, to permit voiding of grievances and to enable the government to postpone action on an embarrassing political question."[26] This is the Royal Commissions "safety valve function."[27] It was clear, then, that in the case of radio, the establishment of the Royal Commission serves precisely these purposes, and re-asserted the government's authority over the issue at hand by declaring it a matter of national interest.

"We are paying him to find out": Charles Bowman and the Question of Expertise

The issue of who would sit on the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting was resolved in Cabinet in the months leading up to its formation. On December 6,

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[24] J.E. Hodgetts, "Should Canada Be De-Commissioned?" *Queen's Quarterly* 70 (1964): 476.
[25] Ibid., 476-77.
[26] Fowke, 164.
[27] Ibid.

1928, three men were appointed to the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting. Sir

John Aird, the President of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, was named as the

Commission's Chair. Also named to the commission were Dr. Augustin Frigon,

director of the École polytechnique in Montreal and director-general of technical

education for the province of Quebec and Charles A. Bowman, editor of the *Ottawa*

Citizen. Donald Manson, a chief inspector of the Radio Branch was hired to act as the

commission's secretary.

If Aird has been viewed in the historical literature as a pragmatic moderate, and

Frigon and Manson were seen as technical experts,[28] assessments of Bowman's role in

the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting often fall into two categories. First there

are those who note his position in the English-Canadian "nationalist network" of

middle-class intelligentsia and whose opinions were formed in advance. Then there are

others who point out his position as a newspaper editor looking out for his own interests

in what would become a competitive advertising environment.[29] However, I believe

that this assessment is incomplete, failing to adequately locate Bowman's influence on

the commission's final report.

Bowman's contribution to national broadcasting has eluded extensive

examination due to a certain *auteurist* tendency within Canadian cultural policy

historiography. Through the shorthand identification of Royal Commission reports

with the chair, such treatments of Royal Commissions imply a certain centralization of

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[28]Manson would go on to become an ardent supporter of public service broadcasting and would eventually work for the CBC. There is some debate as to the extent to which he was able, probably in concert with Bowman, to influence the final outcome of the report. See Prang, "The Origins of Public Broadcasting in Canada," 7 ff.15. Also see Laurent Duval, "August Frigon, C.M.G., D. Sc.," *Fréquence/Frequency: Journal of the Association for the Study of Canadian Radio and Television* 7-8 (1997): 91-106.

[29]Raboy, *Missed Opportunities,* 23; Mary Vipond calls Bowman "either a catalyst or an accomplice" in the decision to form the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting. Vipond, *Listening In,* 208. Also see Vipond, "The Nationalist Network: English-Canada's Intellectuals and Artists in the 1920s," *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* 7 (1980): 32-52.

vision and singularity of leadership. This tendency is particularly dangerous in the case of the Aird Commission, for much of what formed of Canadian broadcasting, including its structure as a national system run without advertising messages, can be outlined in Bowman's editorials and letters written before, during, and after the establishment of the Aird Commission. It is not my intention here to suggest that Bowman is singularly responsible for many of the outcomes brought about by the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting. However, the archival records of his writings in the *Citizen*, in his private memoirs and personal letters represent an interesting lens with which to view to the question of how to conceive and administer radio as a governable space for cultural policy activity, when previous forms had been free of regulatory structures. Bowman's contribution to the social construction of radio as a form of media with nation-binding properties fundamentally different than the newspaper represents an essential part of my investigation.

Originally employed as a draftsman and engineer for the Department of Railways and Canals, Bowman joined the *Citizen* as a writer. He worked his way up through the paper's hierarchy becoming a prominent columnist, and eventually became the editor of the paper. In 1926 Bowman was invited to accompany Prime Minister MacKenzie King to London as a "public relations member" of the Canadian delegation for the final Imperial Conference. He joined other prominent Canadian figures, such as Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs O.D. Skelton and Vincent Massey on the voyage to England. While in London, Bowman met with W. Gladstone Murray, a representative of the British Broadcasting Corporation, who was particularly interested in having King read a speech on the air. Although he had resisted previous invitations King agreed to speak on the BBC only if Bowman penned the text of his speech. Bowman's memoirs describe the tone the speech would take:

> I had decided that he should break new ground: telling about Canada in winter. Up to that time, official publicity soft-pedalled the Canadian winter. Rudyard Kipling's "Our Lady of the Snows" had given an unfavourable impression. Kipling did give a better impression, however, than the lectures of missionaries in Eskimo raiment, on "Canoe and Dog-train" to church audiences. Our broadcast told of the glorious winter landscape: white under the blue sky and golden sunshine. It gave a glowing picture of a day on skis in the Gatineau Hills-over the "Top of the World" and down the Canyon Trail-as though Prime Minister King had actually done that himself![30]

However, before getting to the task of repairing Canada's international image, Bowman took the opportunity to have King present a complementary assessment of the British Broadcasting system and its listening public:

> I should like to preface my brief remarks on Canada with a nod of congratulation to the engineers and officers in change of broadcasting in Britain. While I cannot speak as an expert on the subject, it does seem to me that the British method of regulating the use of radio for the public entertainment has much to commend it. My opportunities for listening-in have been, unfortunately, all too few; but the radio programmes which are published from day to day do impress one as being maintained on a very high order of excellence. They furnish evidence to me that the British people have not succumbed so completely as they have in some other parts of the world to the craze for jazz and the jangle of some modern dance music. The British radio public is, indeed, to be congratulated upon having the air kept largely free from the clangour of discordant noises.[31]

The British broadcasting experience cemented the views of both King and Bowman on the direction Canada's broadcasting system should take. King's positive experience on British radio had further encouraged the Prime Minister about the prospects that a national radio service could offer the Canadian nation. This sentiment was strengthened a year later when he participated in a broadcast, aired nationally across the Canadian Pacific Railway lines of Canada's Diamond Jubilee celebration. The broadcast was widely hailed as a triumph of national co-operation and unity, and as evidence of the nation-building prospects the mass media could offer within a pluralist

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[30]Charles A. Bowman, *Ottawa Editor* (Sidney. British Columbia, 1964), 97.

[31]Ibid. Bowman maintains that King had read the speech for the first time minutes before going on air.

Canadian society.[32] The British experience had also convinced Bowman that the

Canadian broadcasting model had become askew and that the Canadian government,

which had shown little interest in the matter previously, become more engaged on the

subject of radio broadcasting. With the success of the King broadcast, Bowman wrote

in his memoirs, "[m]y vision of a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation began to become

practical politics."[33]

One of Bowman's primary acts of "practical politics" was to promote the

establishment of a national radio system within the pages of his newspaper. On April 4,

1928, nearly eight months before a Royal Commission was formed, Bowman published

a front-page story entitled "Canada May Have Gov't Radio Control: Whole

Broadcasting Business May Be Taken Over By the State; Would Be Like British

System" in the *Ottawa Citizen*. On that same day Bowman sent a letter out to the editor

of the *Calgary Herald*, Charles Smith, attaching a copy of the newspaper article and

advancing the cause for radio nationalization. Pointing to speeches made on the subject

by then-opposition leader R.B. Bennett, Bowman mentioned to Smith that although

governments had not shown much interest, "[p]erhaps by next session public opinion

will have become fully awakened," and changes would be brought to bear.[34] In the

next two weeks Bowman sent letters to other influential Canadians, including the

Southam newspaper family and the Premier of Ontario Howard Ferguson to solicit

support. In a letter to the head of Ontario's Hydroelectric Power Commission (and

close aide to Ferguson) Charles A. Magrath, Bowman outlined the task at hand:

> I feel sure that the increasing influence of the United States publicity through
> the medium of radio broadcasting must be of concern to him [Ferguson]. In

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[32]For a detailed discussion of this event see Robert Cupido, "The Medium, The Message and the Modern: The Jubilee Broadcast of 1927," *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 26, Fall (2002): 101-127.
[33]Bowman, *Ottawa Editor*, 97.
[34]NAC, CBC Archives, RG41 Vol. 303 File 14-2-1, Letter Charles A. Bowman to Charles Smith April 4, 1928.

Great Britain a steadily increasing use of radio is being made for educational purposes. Schools of this province may some day want to give the children the benefit of this new educational instrument. Many people regret that the motion picture industry has been allowed to pass into the hands of United States promoters, but it would be far more regrettable to allow radio broadcasting to be so lost in the community.[35]

Anticipating questions about federal and provincial jurisdiction on broadcasting, Bowman explained that while calling for a system administered at the national level, radio "may also be a provincial question too."[36] He even suggested to Magrath that "some kind of inter-provincial conference on the subject may be deemed desirable."[37] The sentiment was passed onto Ferguson, who seemed more concerned about the American influence than issues of federal encroachment. He wrote that "[t]he insidious penetration of American atmosphere, one of the greatest dangers with which this country is threatened...are our greatest menace."[38] "If the *Citizen* would stick to high national ideas of this kind," Ferguson went on, "I would be one of its most enthusiastic agents."[39] By December 1928, Bowman was named to sit as a Commissioner on the Royal Commission of Radio Broadcasting. If circumstances were different, Bowman would have been one of two prominent newspapermen to join Aird, Frigon, and Bowman on the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting. The editor of the

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[35]NAC, Charles A. Bowman Papers MG30 D79, Microfilm Reel M-826, Letter Charles A. Bowman to Charles A. Magrath April 4, 1928.

[36]Ibid.

[37]The relationship between Bowman and Magrath was long standing. In the first page of his autobiography, Bowman mentions receiving a prize from the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers, a $200 prize donated by Magrath, who had served as Chairman of the International Joint Commission "to promote the competition for draft plans to organize the government's technical services on a more efficient basis." Bowman, *Ottawa Editor*, 1-3.

[38]NAC, MG30 D79, Microfilm Reel M-826, Letter Howard Ferguson to Charles A. Bowman April 24, 1928.

[39]Ibid

Manitoba Free Press, John W. Dafoe, was selected by Mackenzie King's cabinet but declined the offer.[40]

Although he was at the top of Prime Minister King's list of candidates to serve on the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, questions remained in Parliament over why Bowman, a newspaper editor lacking in any broadcasting experience, was playing a vital role on the future of a competing media form at the centre of controversy.[41] When the list of commissioners was named during a session of the House of Commons an opposition member of Parliament, Hugh Guthrie, asked if Bowman was Charles M. Bowman, the Waterloo based Chairman of the Board of the Mutual Life Assurance Company. When Cardin replied that it was the Charles Bowman of the *Ottawa Citizen*, Guthrie was puzzled. He asked, "What does he know about broadcasting?" leaving the minister to respond dryly, "We are paying him to find out."[42] Guthrie pressed Cardin further, asking the Minister whether or not Bowman the journalist or Aird the banker had any technical knowledge of the radio apparatus. Cardin responded by comparing the commissioners to members of the judiciary whose personal characteristics in and of themselves are sufficient for dealing with cases that may fall outside of the scope of their field of expertise:

> I am not in the position to say whether or not they have any technical
> knowledge. I contend that it is not absolutely necessary to have that

[40]King's diary entry on November 29, 1928 highlights King's preferential order of the serving commissioners: "This afternoon we had another cabinet meeting at which some real progress was made in getting consent of members to these names of radio commissioners. 1st Charles Bowman of the *Citizen*, 2nd Sir John Aird and 3rd John Dafoe. That with a fourth from Quebec would make a strong commission on an all important subject….Bowman is a modest fellow but well merits this recognition. I had a word with him after council." *The Diaries of William Lyon Mackenzie King*. November 29, 1928. Accessed online at http://king.archives.ca/EN/default.asp. Dafoe would later serve on the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, otherwise known as the Rowell-Sirois Commission
[41]Radio stations run by newspapers included the Toronto *Globe* and *Evening Telegram;* the Calgary *Albertan;* The *Edmonton Journal, Regina Leader, London Advertiser, London Free Press, Kitchener News-Record, La Presse, Manitoba Free Press, Winnipeg Tribune,* and the Vancouver *Province, Sun, and World* newspapers. Vipond, *Listening In,* 44-45.
[42]House of Commons *Debates*. June 6, 1929, 3340.

knowledge in order to inquire into a matter of this kind. A judge can sit in his court and hear the argument of counsel and the evidence of expert witnesses and is able to give a judgement on a technical matter and these men are sitting as judges in this inquiry.[43]

Cardin's characterization and defence of Bowman and Aird as educated generalists here is presented to Parliament as a necessary function of the Royal Commission, and a complement to the technical experts that rounded out the composition of the commission. He would later support this claim by stating in the House of Commons, "I contend that there is no necessity for a man being an expert to inquire into such a situation in this or any other country."[44] Although questions over Bowman's capabilities did not appear to inhibit his authority as a Royal Commission, his expertise in newspapers would come to represent an important factor during the commission's hearings across Canada, and in the formation of Canada's broadcasting policy.

Bowman, Media Competition and the "Natural Monopoly"

During a three-month trip across Canada, the commissioners visited twenty-five Canadian cities to solicit opinion and advice on how to deal with the issue of radio broadcasting in the country. The commissioners received 164 written submissions and heard from 124 individuals and representatives during that time span. Previous scholarship on the Royal Commission on Broadcasting has effectively pointed out the extent to which the commissioners attempted to lead witnesses during testimony and to tip off obvious biases with regards to their own position on the role of radio within

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[43]Ibid.
[44]Ibid.

Canadian society.[45] Before each session Aird provided a summary of what the commission had heard over the course of previous hearings on the state of radio broadcasting. In Windsor, Aird, reported that testimony in other Canadian cities had maintained that political and religious controversies should not be allowed in broadcasting, that programs should promote communication between the various regions of Canada, and that advertising was stifling the potential of radio to perform these services.[46] Furthermore, a number of newspaper articles appeared in the Canadian press seemingly foreshadowing the commission's findings, causing many to wonder if the members of the commission had already made up their minds.

An issue pervasive in the Commission's hearings across Canada was the fundamental differences between radio and newspapers as forms of communication. Bowman's thinking on the subject, both in his writings and in the available transcripts of the Royal Commission meetings across Canada concerned the issue that radio represented a "natural monopoly," a form of communication that, due to the limited number of frequencies and should subsequently be placed under national control. Although an obvious difference between the two media forms, notions of natural monopoly formed the primary defence whenever any attempt at comparing radio broadcasting and newspapers as advertising-driven media were advanced during the public hearings. In Fredericton a representative from the Rotary Club, W. Kierstead, maintained that like radio, newspapers played an integral role in the forming of public opinion, yet were not subjected to government regulation. Bowman resisted the implication, naively claiming that anyone could start a newspaper and that the

[45]See Mike Gasher, "Invoking Public Support for Public Broadcasting; The Aird Commission Revisited," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 23(2): 1998. Available online at www.cjc-online.ca. Accessed 1 April 2005.
[46]Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting*, 39.

newspaper reader's ability to filter out unwanted or unnecessary information was greater than that of the radio listener. "In one case, the reader has the choice of what he will read and what he will not."[47] "In radio," Bowman maintained, "the radio listener has no choice, he must either listen or turn off."[48] The following *tête-à-tête* ensued, in which radio's natural monopoly becomes Bowman's robotic defense to comparisons with newspapers:

Bowman: You refer to the similarity between newspapers and the radio; you are doubtless aware that there is a fundamental difference between the two. So long as there is the common demand for newspapers, there is no limit to the number of newspapers that can be printed in any one community, but there is a very decided limit to the number of radio stations that can be operated at the same time in any one community

Kierstead: That is to say they cannot use the air at the same time

Bowman: Like a water system or a telephone system

Frigon: The fact that you cannot have more than one telephone system is due to the economic question. It is a physical impossibility to have more than two or three stations operating at the same time.

B: It is a natural monopoly.

K: Yes. In the forming of ideas and habits of people the newspaper and the radio are very much alike; they carry on that unconscious educational purpose

B: There is a fundamental difference in the reading of a newspaper and the listening to a radio. In one case, the reader has the choice of what he will read and what he will not; in the radio the listener has no choice, he must either listen or turn [it] off.

K: You must read the newspaper provided

B: There is a comic strip for instance. If you do not want to read it, you can remove the page

K: The newspaper writes up a political or economic problem from the

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[47]RG42 Vol.1077, File 227-11-5. Transcripts from public hearings, Fredericton, New Brunswick June 13, 1929.
[47]Ibid.
[48]Ibid.

> point of view of certain interests and the danger is not in seeing the
> comic section but in seeing the biased approach
>
> B: If you do not want to read the editorial page you do not need to,
> but you have no such chance in broadcasting
>
> K: My point was the very opposite. There is a mighty close relation
> between the two when you come to deal with them
>
> B: I am not putting forth the merits of the newspaper when a person
> compares a newspaper with radio. I would point out that there is a
> fundamental difference in the actual control and operation of the
> two. One is a natural monopoly and the other is not.
>
> K: May we say there is a difference in degree? One of the great
> things today is the way great syndicates are buying newspapers and
> practically making a monopoly
>
> B: There is a resemblance and also a fundamental difference in that
> one is a natural monopoly and the other is not.[49]

This sentiment about radio's qualities in the home and the theme of the inherent

differences in user control between radio and newspaper was an opinion not limited to

Bowman. In fact it represented the almost verbatim position of P.J.A. Cardin on radio

broadcasting made before the House of Commons upon establishing the Royal

Commission on Radio Broadcasting:

> Certain people have said: Well, we have freedom of the press, we have
> freedom of writing and so on. But the same principle cannot be applied to
> radio broadcasting. If you are not satisfied with a book you are not forced to
> read it; similarly, if you do not like the way in which a newspaper is
> conducted you are not forced to read it; and if you are not in sympathy with
> the objects of a meeting you are not obliged to attend and listen to the
> speeches. But in view of the fact that radio receiving sets are not yet so
> perfected as to enable you to eliminate any station you do not wish to listen to
> you are forced to listen or not use your receiving set at all.[50]

Bowman's personal mission to protect newspapers from comparisons with radio

continued throughout the commission hearings, but was also present in a series of

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[49]Ibid.
[50]House of Commons, *Debates* June 1 1928, 3600.

editorials published in the *Ottawa Citizen* a year earlier.[51] In the final editorial

Bowman reminded readers that while it was true that newspapers and magazines mix

advertising content with articles, readers could "read the news without being distracted

by the insertion of advertisements between the paragraphs" and possessed enough

control over their faculties to filter out the advertising messages.[52] "In radio," the

article went on "the audience has no such choice: the interruptions have to be tolerated -

- until someone can devise an automatic method of cutting them out."[53]

This particular line of reasoning in Bowman's argument, evident in the

available commission hearings and in his *Citizen* editorials, is significant for a number

of reasons. On one level, Bowman's advancement of the cause for radio as a national

instrument with limited advertising can only partly be explained as a reaction to the

increased competition a fully profit-driven system would have on the operations of

newspapers. As Gwyneth Jackaway has pointed out, the threat to newspapers by radio

was also more fundamental level, a question of "power in the domain of meaning-

making" within North American society. As the primary news medium for over a

century newspapers had enjoyed crucial roles within the democratic public sphere.

Radio's capability to both contribute to and potentially alter the shape of both the

public sphere and the newspaper's role within it served as a threat to newspaper editors

and journalists.[54]

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[51]The titles of the editorial published in the *Ottawa Citizen* include National Radio Influence"(April 3, 1928); "Canadian Radio Channels" (April 7, 1928) and "'Please Stand By'" (April 10, 1928).
[52]"Please Stand By."
[53]Ibid.
[54]Gwyneth Jackaway, *Media At War. Radio's Challenge to the Newspapers* (Westport CT: Praeger, 1995), 4-7. Also see Robert W. McChesney, "Press-Radio Relations and the Emergence of Network, Commercial Broadcasting in the United States, 1930-1935," *Historical Journal of Film, Television and Radio* 11:1 (1991): 41-57, and Jeff A. Webb, "Canada's Moose River Mine Disaster (1936): Radio-Newspaper Competition in the Business of News," *Historical Journal of Film, Television, and Radio* 16:3 (1996): 365-376. The role of Bowman and other newspaper editors during the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting raises serious questions about the "Press-Radio War" being a product of the 1930s media pressures.

According to Jackaway, the main form of defence was the deployment of

"sacred rhetoric" about the print media, and the threat radio posed to the journalistic

institution of newspapers:

> Radio journalism, they warned, posed a threat to the journalistic ideals of
> objectivity, the social ideals of public service, the capitalist ideas of property
> rights, and the political ideals of democracy. In the name of preserving these
> ideals, print journalists argued that they, and not the broadcasters, were the
> only ones suited to gather and disseminate news in this country. Thus, as a
> means of defending their own interests, they defended the interests of the
> nation.[55]

Within this context we can see the strength of Bowman's apparent hierarchy of both

media forms and their corresponding audiences.

Beliefs about radio's mysterious and uninvited access to audiences expressed by

both Bowman and Cardin was also reflective of the prevailing wisdom among many

circles of the power of the new medium and its essential differences with newspapers.

The twin characteristics of radio as possessing an "aura of cultural uplift" and a

mysterious power to penetrate private spaces and prey upon the weaknesses of the

human condition were present in many descriptions of radio at the time.[56] As Catherine

Covert explains, many felt that the physical and visual presence of the newspaper gave

the reader more control over its contents that the virtual presence of the radio montage.

Furthermore, the evanescence of the radio broadcast meant that utterances thrown out

into the ether could never be recovered or reviewed, whereas newspapers offered an

archive for future reference:

> Once tuned to a particular station, radio provided a flow of impression like
> time itself which, as Bergson had said, permitted no repetition, no return. The
> radio listener was indeed helpless, concluded *Radio Broadcast* in 1922. "You
> turn on your switches and wait. It may be a selection from 'Aida' wonderfully

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[55]Jackaway, *Media at War*, 7.

[56]Roland Marchand discusses the ways in which advertisers worked within that characterization in order
to make the sponsorship of radio programming more palatable to radio audiences during the 1930s. See
Advertising the American Dream (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 88-116.

executed, or it may be nothing but a scratchy, cracked phonograph record. You have nothing to say about it.[57]

Implications of anatomical and sensory hierarchy placing the ear and hearing at a disadvantage to the eye and visualization in its ability to decode, analyze and resist media messages formed a part of the newspaper journalist's radio critique. Jackaway quotes Frank Stockbridge of the American Press who stated, "[m]ost folks are eye-minded. They only get impressions through their ears; they get facts through their eyes."[58] An important factor for this distinction was immediacy of the radio message and the subsequent shrinking of distance between the event's occurrence and its reportage. As Covert explains, "[n]o longer could an encounter with strange experience be delayed by its conversion into newsprint, while its language was tidied and its moral dangers removed. Now the listener was instantly present and vulnerable at the event."[59] The prevailing opinion of radio's essential differences with newspapers will come to figure prominently within the pages of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting's final report.

Royal Commission Reports and the Policy Writing Style

The final report of a Royal Commission represents the output not only of weeks of research, filtering, editing, and rumination. As a formative text, the document must be seen as the temporary end point of a process that delineates zones of representation and intervention. I identify this as a temporary end point because once an area of activity is placed under the aegis of policy it is then part of a continuous process, one

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[57]Catherine Covert, "'We May Hear Too Much': American Sensibility and the Response to Radio, 1919-1924," in *Mass Media Between the Wars: Perceptions of Cultural Tension, 1919-1941*. Edited by Catherine Covert and John D. Stevens (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1984), 209.
[58]Jackaway, *Media at War*, 65.
[59]Covert, 211.

that H.K. Colebatch refers to as a "continuing pattern of events and understanding

which is structured by a sense of authorized decision-making."[60] He continues:

> For instance, a demand for a population policy is built on a shared perception
> of the possibility of the conscious use of governmental authority to change the
> population pattern. The policy process encompasses all the action that takes
> place around the possibility of this use of governmental authority to structure
> action, and policy documents -like White Papers or ministerial speeches-are
> part of this process of structuring.[61]

A vital part of this "process of structuring" that Colebatch is alluding to is the creative

act of policy writing. As an act of textual construction, policy writing can be

understood as a practice identifying and producing spaces for intervention. This is

accomplished in order to create coherence on an issue in which there is continuing

ambiguity and contest.

As linguist Donald Schön has pointed out, the development of social policy is

based not upon *problem-solving* but first upon *problem-setting*, and that understandings

of policy "have more to do with ways in which we frame the purposes to be achieved

that with the selection of optimal means for achieving them."[62] Neil Bradford explains

Canada's national policies have been rooted in ambitious intellectual constructs that

frame choices for decision-makers at two interrelated levels in the policy-making

process. First, he explains, national policies present moral visions or public

philosophies about the economic and social priorities of the nation and desirable forms

for their development. Second, national policies elaborate programmatic 'action plans'

that specify the public policy instruments to be directed towards the practical tasks of

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[60]H.K. Colebatch, *Policy*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 111.
[61]Ibid.
[62]Donald Schön, "Generative Metaphor: A Perspective on Problem Setting in Social Policy," in
Metaphor and Thought, 2nd edition. Edited by Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
1993), 138.

implementation.[63] It is necessary, then, to examine the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting's final report to determine the means, both linguistically and through the physical structure of the report itself, in which the radio broadcasting policy problem is inscribed.

The Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting stands out as an important moment in Canada's cultural history, with many of the elements that characterize the way Canadians think about the broadcasting system in the present-day (fulfilling a national purpose, facilitating the exchange of "Canadian stories" and acting as a bulwark against the perpetual flow of American programming) derive almost directly from the pages of the commission's final report. The phrase, "Canadian listeners want Canadian broadcasting," found in the text of the Royal Commission's final report represents one of the country's most powerful and skilfully constructed expressions.[64] On the one hand, the phrase united the mixed views on the question of whether broadcasting should be a private or a publicly administered system by positioning broadcasting as a national concern. As well, the phrase effectively harmonized politics and leisure through the coupling of two previously distinct constituencies under the national umbrella: audiences and citizens.[65] These themes were present within popular discourse about culture within Canada and continue to dominate the policy debates over the future regulation of cultural affairs at the federal level. The Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting represents, then, a symbolic point of departure for discussions about mass communication particularly within English-speaking central Canada.

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[63]Neil Bradford, *Commissioning Ideas: Canadian National Policy Innovation in Comparative Perspective* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 3.
[64]*Report of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting* (Ottawa, 1929), 6.
[65]For a provocative discussion on this subject, see Keohane, *Symptoms of Canada*, 19-30.

The contents of the Report of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting were displayed in almost the same order as the requirements of the Order-in-Council. A brief discussion of the broadcasting methods used in other countries is presented, followed by a section outlining the "Situation in Canada." The remainder of the report outlined the report's recommendations with regard to the future organization, staffing, management, control and financing of the broadcasting system.

Immediately following the author's index of the number of hearings and submissions received by the members of the commission in their tour across Canada, the reference to unanimity of opinion on the need for "Canadian broadcasting" among the diversity of opinion on other matters pertaining to radio was enunciated. In other words, coherence on the subject of radio broadcasting was produced through the selection of a rhetorically innocuous term which, from this point onward, minimized the dissent expressed on the other, more contentious issues of broadcasting. As Mike Gasher suggested, while a large number of Canadians expressed the desire to have access to Canadian radio stations and were frustrated by interference with the more powerful American networks, there were others who had few problems with the presence of American radio in Canadian airspace.[66]

With this in mind the following two paragraphs represent the most philosophical musings of the Aird Commission report. The commissioners reasoned that radio was able to deliver "education in the broad sense, not only as it is considered in the schools and colleges, but in providing entertainment and of informing the public on questions of national interest."[67] The authors wrote that a number of people represented themselves before the commission favouring an exchange of programs from the

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[66]Gasher, "Invoking Support for Public Broadcasting."
[67]*Report of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting,* 6.

different regions of Canada. Concluding that "a majority" of material on Canadian radios was being "heard from other sources outside of Canada," the authors warned of deleterious consequences, pointing to the fact that "the continued reception of these [programs] has a tendency to mould the minds of young people in the home to ideals and opinions that are not Canadian."[68] As a result, "broadcasting will undoubtedly become a great force in fostering a national spirit and interpreting national citizenship."[69] These were themes present in Bowman's critical distinction between radio and print media and in Charles Smith's *Calgary Herald* editorial published two months earlier. With radio reconceived, a new national broadcasting system financed with public monies and comprised of a few powerful stations providing "good reception" across the country with minimal advertising, would be, in the eyes of the commission, the optimal method to fulfil broadcasting's national objectives. Pointing to a future area of government interest, that of program content, the authors of the report stated only "the general composition of programs will need careful study."[70]

The *Report of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting* would serve as a vital document, providing the impetus for the establishment of the influential Canadian Radio League, which saw the new medium, as, in the words of its founder, Graham Spry, "the greatest Canadianizing instrument in our hands."[71] The Canadian Radio Broadcasting Corporation was established three years later, in 1932 and, in 1936 the CBC was formed. As Vipond has suggested, terms like "nationalization," "government control," and "national broadcasting policy" did not necessarily refer to monopolization of radio - just better regulation. After 1929, the language tended to be less ambiguous.

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[68]Ibid.
[69]Ibid.
[70]Ibid., 10
[71]Graham Spry, "The Canadian Broadcasting Issue," in *Documents of Canadian Broadcasting*, Ed. Roger Bird. (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988), 64.

In his post-mortem of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, Frank Peers described two of the three commissioners, Aird and Frigon, as "predisposed to favour private ownership and development of radio broadcasting."[72] The men changed course, Peers maintained, because they had come to agree with Bowman's point of view "as they became convinced the prevailing system would deny Canadians Canadian programs."[73]

Perhaps the most surprising element of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting's final report was the profound absence of statistics. Aside from a table listing the number of licensed broadcasters and receivers buried deep within the appendix, the document contained no numerical information in its analysis of the broadcasting situation in Canada or in many of the proposed recommendations. Furthermore, it does not appear from the hearing transcripts that anyone presenting themselves before the commission utilized statistical information to support any of their substantive claims about the direction of broadcasting.[74] As a form of justification numbers were not needed to provide ideas of impartiality and authority, nor were they offered up to represent public opinion during the hearings process. Filling in its place, however, were a couple of key themes that helped to conjure up and nationalize the audiovisual as a sphere for policy intervention.

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[72]Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting*, 441.
[73]Ibid.
[74]One piece of evidence from the archival records bears mention here. During the Windsor, Ontario hearings in January 1929, public school inspector J.E. Bensen submitted a 2-page study, entitled "The Radio in the School," written by Annie M. McIntyre. The study represents a detailed breakdown of the radio program offerings available during school hours. The study relied almost exclusively on the radio program listings published in newspapers or magazines for radio enthusiasts and provided a summary account of radio activity in Canada, the United Kingdom, and Britain. Since, according to McIntyre "No Canadian station has provided programmes during school hours for school children" McIntyre focused on the programming available on American stations WEAF and WJZ. From this, McIntyre concluded that 68% of the material broadcast on these chain stations contained musical programming, the "highest standard" of educational programming available on radio. See RG42, Vol. 1077 F16, File 227-9-3.

Nation, Spirit, Consciousness

During the 1920s, discussions drawing reference to Canada's "national spirit"

and "national consciousness" were being held among many of Canada's largely

English-speaking cultural leaders. In a speech entitled "The Building of a Nation" to

the Empire Club of Canada during Canada's Diamond Jubilee year of 1927,[75] J.T.

Thorson, Dean of the Manitoba Law School, spoke at length about the importance of

fostering national consciousness within Canada's borders. Canada, Thorson

maintained, contains a number of "materials for the building of the nation."[76] He

referred to the presence of "sound men and women of various racial origins,"

tremendous natural resources, expanding industries and great systems of transportation

and distribution.[77] The country's performance during the war effort had improved the

country's position on the world stage, and the country was now negotiating its treaties

with other nations, and had even established its own embassy in Washington.

However, he continued, "[b]ricks alone do not make a building, a firm foundation to

bring those bricks together must be necessary."[78] For Thorson, a national

consciousness represented the mortar to bring all of those component parts together and

be central to the country's development:

> You may well ask me, why should we concern ourselves with the
> development of a national consciousness in Canada, a sense of nationality
> distinctively Canadian. I am not using the term in the original sense, for that
> implies community of racial origins and that we do not possess in Canada.
> Nor am I using the term in a purely legal sense, implying solely community of
> allegiance, for we owe that allegiance in common with India and the Gold
> Coast. I am using that term perhaps in a special sense. I mean by it the spirit
> that holds the inhabitants of a country together, that places the country in
> which they live first in their affection, brings them from periods of adversity
> to periods of success, makes them a united force ready to defend their country

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[75]Sir John Aird was a member of the Empire Club at this time.
[76]J.T. Thorson, "The Building of a Nation," *The Empire Club Speeches.* Text available at
www.empireclubfoundation.com. Accessed 20 July 2005.
[77]Ibid.
[78]Ibid.

and give their lives if need by the order that the honour of that country be preserved and that it may continue free and prosperous. I mean by the term the same spirit that inspired Leonidas and his noble band of Spartans to lay down their lives at Thermopylae that the Persian horde might not over-run Greece the land they loved; the sprit that moved Drake with his tiny English fleet to attack the invincible Armada and sweep it to the seas, and so saved England from the maw of Spain; the spirit that held the British line intact at Waterloo and saved Europe from Napoleon; the spirit that actuated the French at Verdun, expressed in the words "They shall not pass' that kept the Germans troops out of Paris; the same spirit that held the Canadians fast in that hell of poison gas at the Battle of Ypres.[79]

Thorson's solution for further building up of this consciousness comes through the attendant development of national policies in economic and social spheres to overcome the disintegrative effects of "sectionalism." To achieve this required a greater appreciation of the economic needs of the various areas of Canada to create "a sense of national interdependence in order that each section of Canada may develop according to its needs, for the common welfare of Canada as a whole."[80] Using anatomical metaphors Thorson explained that "[t]he health of the body depends on the health of all of its organs."[81]

Themes involving the body at the individual, local, and national level, are prominent within much Canadian discourse throughout the 1920s. As Mariana Valverde has written, beginning at the turn of the century, a strong "social purity network" emerged comprised of church members, educators, doctors, and social workers who were engaged in activities intended to "raise the moral tone" of Canadian society, particularly within Canada's working-class communities. Such efforts came on the heels of an increasing secularism, one which resulted in greater amounts of leisure

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[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid. Other speeches given at the Empire Club alone between 1926 and 1929 alone include those with titles such as "Optimism vs. Pessimism" (April 1, 1926); "Canada at the Crossroads" (October 14, 1926); "Our Spiritual and Moral Inheritance"(April 27, 1927); "Patriotism and Poetry"(November 1, 1928); "Canada Turning the Corner" (January 31, 1929); "What is a Canadian Citizen" (April 25, 1929) and "By-Products of Empire" (November 14, 1929).

time, more feelings of individualism, and new competition for the church from sports, the cinema, and radio broadcasting.[82] In undertaking efforts to solve the problems of poverty, crime, and vice, Valverde explains, "[t]hey envisaged this reform not as a series of small isolated measures but as a grand project to 'regenerate' both society and the human soul."[83]

However, the significance of such a phrase within the context of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting's final report can be better understood by locating these ideas within the context not only of current of English-Canadian nationalism, but also in the ways in which such ideas intersected with the beliefs about the power of radio-and of improved communication in general-to serve as a bridge to a better society. The ideas were echoed earlier on in *Maclean's Magazine* in 1924 in an article entitled "Canada's Radio Consciousness." The author, Elton Johnson, asks in the sub-heading, "How can radio be best utilized to inculcate national ideals and foster national unity?"[84] Examples given about the kinds of programming given over the airwaves, including music and educational programming, which offer tremendous potential to the Canadian listenership:

> Radio does not destroy but builds up the happiness of the home. Radio is an indoor entertainment which can be, and is, enjoyed by the women-folk and the children equally with the man in the house [...] That radio will have an important influence in moulding and changing Canadian home life will be admitted. But will radio have anything to do with our national consciousness? Will it serve to unite or dis-unite the several provinces and communities in this Dominion? Will it increase or diminish our national patriotism?[85]

[82]See Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, and John English, *Canada, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 197.
[83]Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soup, and Water: Moral Reform in English-Canada 1880-1925.* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), 17.
[84]"Canada's Radio Consciousness," *Maclean's*, October 15, 1924, 29.
[85]Ibid.

The teleological qualities inherent in utopian discourses of communication are similar to those present within nationalist ideology, particularly within the context of discussions of national identity. As Gabrielle Hecht explained, the subject of national identity is one of continual negotiation and renegotiation and often stands as a bridge between a mythologized past and a desired future. Nations, Hecht argued, are imagined through *telos*, where a "future" appears as the fulfilment of a historically legitimated destiny.[86] This is similar to what John Durham Peters termed as "the utopian dream of perfect communication" where thoughts of "better communication" are positioned as opportunities to bridge the chasm preventing the perfect communication between souls.[87]

Within that conception, notions of national progress also typically involve similar notions of forces acting to impede or hold back those progressive impulses, as Daniel Pick explains:

> The notion of decline, it held at the sufficient level of generality, can evidently be identified at numerous points in the history of political discourse. Held at that level, one could say that theories of progress always seem to involve the implication of potential inversions, recalcitrant forces, subversive 'others', necessarily to be excluded from the polity. Hence there may appear to be a continual discursive tension between the construction of political identities and the designation of the pathological and insidious outsider.[88]

It is here where the country's proximity to American radio and popular culture as well as its vast geographical expanse form the "forces of geography" inhibiting the kind of national cohesion present within the grammar of English-Canadian nationalism.[89] These would form the basis of new Prime Minister R.B. Bennett's rhetorical evidence

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[86]Gabrielle Hecht, "Technology, Politics, and National Identity in France," in *Technologies of Power*. Edited by Michael Thad Allen and Gabrielle Hecht. (Boston: MIT Press, 2001), 255.
[87]John Durham Peters, *Speaking Into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 29.
[88]Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, 20.
[89]I borrow the term "grammar" from Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (New York: Verso, 1991), 163.

in establishing the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Corporation: "[w]ithout such control radio broadcasting can never become a great agency of communication of matters of national concern and for the diffusion of national thought and ideals, and without such control it can never be the agency by which national consciousness may be fostered and sustained and national unity still further strengthened."[90] With radio broadcasting linked to the constitution of the national soul the two would move in step with each other, with discourses of adolescence, youth, and middle age going hand in hand and with discourses of national security tied to the metaphysical security offered by the broadcasting system. In addition, such an approach formally intertwined notions of the "weakness" of the Canadian broadcasting system with discourses of "national weakness."

"A Model of Conciseness and Decisiveness"

The impact of the commission's findings was not matched by the size of its report. The final *Report of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting* is less than thirty-five pages in length. Once you have excised the repetitious portions of the document (the order in council, commission mandate, and summary of recommendations) and the report's appendices, the Aird Commission report contains approximately nine pages of discussion. The size and presentation style of the Aird Commission report was not a trivial matter. In fact, discussions about the brevity and clarity of the report were greeted by some within the Canadian press with a degree of relief that the controversy over radio had been put to rest.

What emerged, then, were characterizations that served to reinforce both the Royal Commission as a technique of dealing with these matters and the authors of the

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[90]Bennett quoted in Vipond, *Listening In*, 270.

commission as agents of authority, free from bias. Writing in the weekly "Gossip of

Lobby and Gallery" column, E.C. Buchanan told *Saturday Night* readers: "[t]he report

of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting is a model of conciseness and

decisiveness."[91] *Le Devoir* commented, "this report is all that could be desired. None

so far have presented a more clear and logical report relating to Radio in Canada, nor

suggested a more practical and equitable solution on this problem." The *Hamilton*

Spectator lauded the commission "that it has not skated around the subject, but has

advanced a clear cut plan." The *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix* stated that the commission's

findings represented "the result of an exhaustive investigation and must be taken

expressing their candid and unbiased views on the best policy for Canada." Finally,

Charles Smith's *Calgary Herald* took an extra day to consider the matter before

declaring "[t]he magnitude of the research work done by Canada's royal commission

on radio broadcasting is clearly manifest in the comprehensive report the

commissioners have made to the government and in the clear cut, definite

recommendations which accompany that report." Here we see an important fact,

underlined by Harold Gosnell that "journalists tend to classify royal commissions as

business-like or useless, straightforward or evasive, courageous or timid, timely or

obnoxious, depending on the bias of the paper and the character of the report"[92]

Perhaps we can keep this in mind when we consider the assessment from Vancouver's

Daily Province which wrote "Canadians from one end of the Dominion to the other will

rise up and call members of this radio commission blessed for the commonsense

recommendations submitted to the Dominion government in the report published

yesterday."

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[91]The headlines and citations in this paragraph were found in a collection of news clippings contained in the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting files. NAC RG25 Vol. 1527, file 1008.
[92]Gosnell, "British Royal Commissions of Inquiry," 110.

If many major newspapers were supportive of the Royal Commission's

findings, those writing in the Radio columns, often of those same papers, offered

substantially different responses. Writing in *The Canadian Magazine*, J.D. Relyea

began his monthly "Radio News and Reviews" digest with the following rebuke and, at

the same time, identifying those most affected by Royal Commission's report:

> A heavy silence succeeded by a storm of cat calls and hisses has greeted the
> appearance on the stage of this country's affairs of the report recently made by
> the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting...Actually the only folks who
> seem to be in favour of the interesting but drastic changes proposed by the
> commission are the members of the Commission themselves. The dissenters
> and critics comprise radio technicians, broadcasting stations, radio advertisers,
> musicians, and a large section of the general public.[93]

Relyea's tirade identified, the fact that listeners would be confined to essentially one

radio Canadian station per province, meaning "most of us would be listening to United

States stations."[94] Finally, Relyea warned that, in spite of the claims to the contrary,

Canada's radio would be, almost inconspicuously, a political and politicized medium:

> What Solon is going to be set up in a high place to determine what the people
> of Canada shall hear along these lines? Would we submit for one minute to
> the dictates of any governing body as to what our reading should be in regard
> to the matters mentioned above? Why should we then saddle ourselves with
> any radio governing body whose nominal function would be issue lovely and
> unobjectionable material to the public, but which would really be the tool of
> whatever political party was in power.[95]

After the commission had finished its investigation Charles Bowman returned to

the *Ottawa Citizen* on a full-time basis. He spent the better part of the next year as the

most vociferous defender of the report's principles - often in response to criticisms

made by the editors (and radio station owners) of the Montreal newspaper, *La Presse*,

that radio and newspapers were similar media forms, and should be left free of

government regulation. In his fourth editorial defence of the commission's conclusions

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[93]J.D. Relyea, "Radio News and Reviews," *The Canadian Magazine* October 1929.
[94]Ibid.
[95]Ibid.

published in response to criticisms Bowman once again appeared to go out of his way

once again to distance the two media from each other:

> It is quite erroneous to compare radio as being "like the press." There cannot
> be any such free competition between radio broadcasting stations in one
> community as there is between newspapers. So long as there are customers
> for newspapers, there need be no limitation to the number of papers published
> in any other city. The number of broadcasting stations is limited, however, by
> nature. There is only a limited number of wavelengths available for
> broadcasting. Radio transmission is, in effect, a natural monopoly. The result
> of free competition would be chaos in the radio realm. At the same time, it is
> as economically unsound to promote competitive broadcasting stations in one
> community as it would be promote competitive telephone exchanges.[96]

Bowman would go on to be an active supporter of the nationalization of radio in the

Ottawa Citizen, and would aid Spry and Alan Plaunt's Canadian Radio League in their

cause for a national broadcasting system, which would materialize three years later first

with the establishment of the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Corporation in 1932 and

with the formation the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in 1936.

Conclusion

To a large extent this chapter was about repositioning. First, I attempted to

consider the Royal Commission on Broadcasting as a moment in the production of

cultural knowledge. I have suggested here that it is therefore impossible to understand

the events surrounding the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting without an

appreciation for the techniques used to bring broadcasting under the national umbrella.

A discussion of Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, therefore, is more than an

analysis of the ways in which Canada's radio direction was consciously steered along a

path different from that of the United States. It is noteworthy, as Mike Gasher

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[96]"Radio Public Service for Canada: Some Questions Answered, Part IV," *Ottawa Citizen* December 31, 1929.

suggested, "for the extent to which it invoked public testimony to support the central measures it proposed, representing itself as a conduit for the public will."[97]

As I have suggested here closer examination of the Aird Commission also offers opportunities to engage with what Henri Lefebvre considers to be "state knowledge" about the cultural. Lefebvre describes state knowledge as "knowledge at the service of power, intermingled with the exercise of power [which] does not consist in the recognition of contradictions in economic or social life. It ignores them, it denies them [...] State knowledge proceeds by a reductive process, at the limit by a process of [the] destruction."[98] To appreciate that reductive process, I undertook a second act of repositioning, one that placed Charles Bowman, and not John Aird, at the centre of the royal commission process. Through an account of the "Bowman Commission," I was able to explore how issues over the question of "media expertise" transpired in the construction of the inquiry staff. Bowman's social status within English-Canadian society, his practical experience with the nationalizing potential of radio along with his inherent concerns over the difference between radio and print media played a significant role during the hearings process, in the production of the final report and in the formation of discourse about the unique nationalizing purpose of Canadian broadcasting within a wider media landscape.

However, there is more to Bowman's place within the Royal Commission on Broadcasting that is important to us here. In the years that follow, the place of what we could call "generalists" within the policy process slowly begins to fade out of view, beginning in the 1920s. They are quickly replaced by educated men and women who, in leaving the halls of academe for the civil service saw themselves according to

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[97] Gasher, "Invoking Support for Public Broadcasting."
[98] Lefebvre quoted in Michael Dorland, *So Close to the State/s*, 148.

Douglas Owram "as specialists in their discipline rather than deviant historians,

philosophers and philosophers."[99] Among those specialists to emerge over the next

twenty years were those trained in the social sciences who began to enter into key

positions in the civil service, bringing with them their own research methodologies and

a view of governmental administration as a series of technical operations ranging from

case work methods to statistical operations.

At the heart of these developments, Owram explains, were sets of key questions

facing the federal government:

> If the state was to be defined in terms of the service it provided, then two
> questions remained to be answered. First, how was it to be decided what
> services were necessary? Second who was to take responsibility for the
> design and administration of these? If was not sufficient to assume, in
> populist fashion, that the public would make the right choices and define what
> was needed in the way of policy.[100]

While such questions began to be posed within the government at large in the late

1920s and 30s, they emerged most forcefully within the cultural realm nearly twenty

years after the Aird Commission report, when the Royal Commission on National

Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters was created and Vincent Massey

installed as the commission chair. It is that dual problematic that frames my

investigation of the Massey commission in the next chapter; I treat it not only as a key

moment in the development of Canadian cultural policy, but a moment where the

debates over "useful knowledge" present in other areas of government extend into the

cultural realm.

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[99]Douglas Owram, *The Government Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 121.
[100]Ibid.

Chapter Three:

The Principles and Broadcasting:
Charles Siepmann and the Battle Over Cultural Knowledge
During the Massey Commission, 1949-51

The Massey Commission occupies a fascinating place within Canadian cultural

history. In a country stereotypically known for its moderate political leanings and its

emphasis on peace, order, and good government, the Massey Commission acts as a

lightning rod for rigid conclusions regarding its composition, conclusions and impact.

Many regard the commissioners (comprised mostly of members from Canada's social

cognoscenti) and their positions on the function of electronic mass media (to protect

susceptible Canadians from infection by material from "alien sources" creeping across

the border) as representative of either the apotheosis of elite cultural nationalism or the

nadir of highbrow mass cultural criticism during the postwar era.

These conclusions colour the broad-ranging assessments of the commission's

overall impact. Alison's Beale's reading of the Massey Commission's overall

significance represents an excellent case in point of the conventional wisdom when she

concluded, "[k]ey cultural and media institutions, as well as the guiding principles for

administering subsidies to the arts, and university teaching and research owe their

essential forms to the commission."[1] As we will see over the course of this chapter,

such accounts tend toward overstatement. This is because they mistakenly assume that

the commission's great strides in some areas, such as in providing funding for

universities and establishing the Canada Council, extend to other areas. A closer look

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[1] Alison Beale, "Harold Innis and Canadian Cultural Policy in the 1940s," *Continuum: The Australian Journal of Media and Culture* 7:1 (1993). Available online at: http://wwwmcc.murdoch.edu.au/readingroom/7.1/Beale.html. Accessed 12 June 2005.

at the commission's impact on broadcasting and film reveals more mixed results that temper claims about the magnitude and scope of the Massey moment.[2]

Following Maria Tippett's suggestion that the commission represented a key moment in the administration of cultural affairs -- and not in the creation of Canadian cultural life -- I would also like to select a more moderate treatment of the famed "culture commission."[3] In this chapter I suggest that the commission can be best understood when situated within the context of a number of debates not just about the state's role in the culture, but also of the knowledge required to govern over that domain. I remind the reader here of my contention to examine the intersections between debates concerning how best to administer the cultural realm and those concerning issues of the kinds of evidence needed to produce that administrative space.

An interesting place to view this tension is through the experiences of Charles Siepmann, one of the experts called by the commission to produce a statistical study of Canadian radio broadcasting. As the chair of the Department of Communication at New York University and a prominent defender of the public service responsibilities of American broadcasters, Siepmann shared similar beliefs with the commissioners about the potential for broadcasting to bring higher education and entertainment to listening audiences. However the commissioners tepidly received his study before pushing it into the report's appendix.

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[2] A look at the string of funding cutbacks and administrative measures imposed upon arts institutions to produce institutional efficiency, the application of market-based criteria in the granting process, and the emphasis towards industrially-friendly academic research projects are reminders of the evanescence of the Massey moment in the two keystone areas of Massey's legacy as well.
[3] Tippett.

In this chapter I speculate that the reception of Siepmann's study had very little to do with the results of his investigation. Instead, the study emerged in the context of a heated debate occurring within the humanities and the social sciences over the applicability of different kinds of knowledge to government in the post-war era. I argue that the polite rejection of Siepmann's report was related to the commissioners' ambivalence over the value of statistical knowledge and their preference for a humanities-based approach to cultural issues. Seeing the commission not only as a nationalist intervention in cultural affairs, but as a quest for knowledge for the best means of governing over the cultural produces a subtler interpretation of the Massey Commission's larger significance.

"To Know as Much as Possible"

The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters occurred at an important juncture in Canadian history. The country's participation and sacrifice in the fight against fascism gave Canadians feelings both of national pride and great despair over the legacy of World War II, the threat of the bomb, and the onset of the Cold War. On the domestic scene, a period of economic expansion and an expansion in resources trade brought a feeling of economic security among many Canadians, stimulating a consumer and housing boom.

The period immediately following World War II also saw increasing concern over the influence of American power on Canadian soil. Ties between the countries had strengthened during the war effort, and the two began to work together on continental defence issues. These included Canada's involvement in the North Atlantic

Treaty Organization, the North American Air Defence plan (NORAD), and the distant early warning line. As Philip Massolin explains, many began to express concern that in working with its more powerful neighbour, "Canadian governments presided over the Americanization of Canadian defence policy."[4] Such actions were seen by some as signals of the slow decline of the country's sovereignty.

At the political level, the end of King regime and beginning of Louis St-Laurent's brief tenure as Prime Minister brought different voices to the Liberal political forefront. Originally disinterested in supporting the cultural sector (an action characterized by St-Laurent as "subsidizing ballet dancing"[5]) the subject fell under the new Prime Minister's purview due largely to the efforts of key advisors. At the forefront of these developments were Minister of Defence, Brooke Claxton, Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester Pearson, and J.W. Pickersgill, head of the Prime Minister's Office. These men believed strongly that a reconsideration of the state's relationship to Canada's cultural sectors and universities would be a necessary part of Canada's post-war reconstruction effort, and believed that Canada's cultural outlook had not kept pace with its newfound material progress.

Efforts by Claxton, Pickersgill and others added a persuasive set of allies to those groups that had vigorously lobbied the government for increased attention to the state of the country's cultural affairs in the years leading up to World War II. In 1941 the Kingston Conference of Artists expressed concern about their marginal status within Canadian society and called upon the federal government "to make the arts a

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[4]Massolin, *Canadian Intellectuals, the Tory Tradition, and the Challenge of Modernity,* 12.
[5]St. Laurent quoted in Donald Creighton, *The Forked Road: Canada 1939-1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 181.

creative factor in the national life of Canada and the artists an integral part of the

country."[6] Such efforts gathered pace over the course of the 1940s, with artists uniting

around the idea of a greater role within Canadian society.[7]

To provide the rationale for an initiative dealing with a wide variety of issues

from the funding of Canadian universities to the future of television, subtlety was

employed in the framing of the commission's mandate. This was because "culture"

was a politically sensitive term connoting notions of elitism and of images of

government agencies imposing highbrow values upon the leisure habits of ordinary

Canadians.[8] Instead, the commission's Order-in-Council framed the inquiry as both a

nationalist project of soul-searching and an effort in knowledge gathering, a response to

gaps in the raw data regarding numerous aspects of Canadian life: "That it is desirable

that the Canadian people know as much as possible about their country, its history and

traditions; and about their national life and common achievements."[9]

The people entrusted to chart Canada's cultural course came from the upper

echelons of Canadian diplomatic, higher education, and business sectors. The Chair,

Vincent Massey, returned from a stint as the High Commissioner in London and was

working as the Chancellor of the University of Toronto before taking up the position.

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[6]Litt, 23.

[7]Ibid. As Maria Tippett argues, such developments can be seen as part of a greater push towards the professionalization of artistic activity, Tippett, *Making Culture: English-Canadian Cultural Institutions Before the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 164-185.

[8]As Litt points out, future commissioner Georges Henri-Levesque would remind his colleagues that while such associations were present within English Canada, the word culture did not have the same "unhappy associations" within French-speaking Canada. See Litt, 40.

[9]The idea of both producing and disseminating knowledge about Canada was not only for internal purposes. The commission believed strongly in the importance of disseminating cultural knowledge about the country to develop older initiatives such as the promotion of trade, tourism and immigration, and to encourage cultural exchanges to facilitate Canada's civilizing process. See Donna Palmateer Pennee, "Culture as Security: Canadian Foreign Policy and International Relations from the Cold War to the Market Wars," *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 20 (1999): 191-216.

George-Henri Levesque, a Catholic minister and Dean of the Social Sciences at the Université Laval served as the representative of the province of Quebec. Dr. N.A.M. MacKenzie, the president of the University of British Columbia, served as the commission's western representative. Hilda Neatby, a well-regarded historian from the University of Regina and the only female member of the Royal Commission, rounded out the quartet of university-affiliated commissioners.

The final member, Arthur Surveyer, was an interesting choice to join the commission, and was an exception to the scholarly orientation of the other members. A professional engineer based in Montreal with varied connections in the arts and Canadian business, Surveyer was selected, because "he was erudite and cultured, at home and in the business world, and well known for his integrity," and "more moderate" in his nationalism than his brother, a federal judge.[10] The other staff named to the commission included the commission secretaries, Archibald Day and Réné Garneau, and the commission's legal counsel, Peter Wright of the Toronto-based firm MacMillan Binch and Guy Roberge, a lawyer from Quebec City. Together, the commission staff comprised a combination of the country's intellectual vanguard with connections to many of the arts and educational institutions the Commission was intended to review.[11]

The composition and broad mandate of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences did not go unnoticed by government

[10]This citation derives from an account published in a corporate history on Surveyer's company, SNC (now named SNC Lavalin). See Suzanne Lalande, *SNC: Engineering Beyond Frontiers* (Montreal: Libre Expressions, 1992), 94.
[11]Litt, 45.

critics. Many seized on the commission's wide scope and wondered what outcome would result from such an investigation. The Conservative opposition leader, George Drew claimed the government's objectives were too vague and served as a tool to further its plans for active state intervention into the arts and culture. St. Laurent's response re-stated the idea that this Royal Commission was not a pragmatic matter like those previously called to deal with matters such as waterways, the banking system, and federal-provincial relations. Rather, it represented an existential search for the country's spiritual principles: "[t]here is another side to human life that is quite as important as the dollars and cents resulting from trade. Upon that side of the normal activities of civilized, Christian human beings, sufficient attention has not been focused nation-wide."[12]

Although positioned as a philosophical exercise in national soul-searching the Massey Commission resembled previous Royal Commissions complete with public hearings, research, and representations from various artist and community organizations. In light of the apparent disconnect between the rhetoric around the inquiry and the process by which the commission undertook its inquiry, it is important to understand how the commission gathered the facts to arrive at its final decision. An exploration of this process reveals that the commission itself also occurred within the context of changes occurring at Canadian universities that will not only influence the commission's conclusions on higher education but on the direction for Canadian broadcasting policy as well.

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[12]Ibid.

Knowledge For What?: The Debate Over Scholarly Utility

Over the course of two World Wars, Canada's universities had moved away from providing liberal-based educational initiatives and towards offering practical training that could be easily applied outside the university lecture hall. Some scholars held the opinion that in light of these developments within Canadian universities as well as those aspects affecting the world at large, the time was ripe for a revisiting of the key principles guiding Canadian society and a reorienting of the country along a more humane path. Others believed that both the university in general and the humanities in particular had an important role to play as the defender of tradition amid a sea of changes occurring in post-war life.

According to Philip Massolin the increasing influence of a "social service ideal" within universities to produce applied knowledge for governments represented an important by-product of Canada's war effort.[13] The general feeling within Canada was that universities should provide more applicable training and cultivate scholarship producing knowledge for a better functioning society. The tragedy of the depression brought on feelings of distress among many that government could no longer help, raising doubts about competence of advice from politicians, interest groups, and civil service that many saw as more a product of patronage than ability.[14] As Barry Ferguson and Douglas Owram describe, "the climate of opinion was receptive to those

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[13]Massolin, *The Tory Tradition*, 27.
[14]Douglas Owram and Barry Ferguson, "Social Scientists and Public Policy from the 1920s Through World War II," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 15:4 (1981): 3.

who could, with some legitimacy, claim to be able to give the state systematic and disinterested advice."[15]

With an environment receptive to new forms of knowledge to solve public policy problems, the social sciences began to assert its presence more strongly within Canadian public affairs, expanding their curricula, bringing about a process of professionalization and specialization, and eventually becoming part of a new class of civil servants to enter into the public service.[16] By the end of the 1930s, many academics sat on boards, became royal commissioners, took part in social surveys, and provided expert testimony for committees.[17] This was made possible, according to Barry Ferguson, because of the social sciences' ability for converting national concerns into administrative problems.[18]

Among the most active was the field of political economy, whose practitioners began to monitor and document the transformations occurring within Canadian society during the periods of modernization and industrialization, and employed social scientific methods to document and understand these changes. According to prominent University of Toronto political economist James Mavor, the political economist was like "a master mechanic tinkering with the machinery of society only to the degree to maintain maximum stability and efficiency. Armed with an empirical knowledge of

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[15]Ibid., 4.
[16]For an example of this see Barry Ferguson, *Remaking Liberalism: The Intellectual Legacy of Adam Shortt, O.D. Skelton, W.C. Clark, and W.A. Mackintosh* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).
[17]Massolin, *The Tory Tradition*, 34.
[18]Ferguson, *Remaking Liberalism*, 218.

economic history the social scientist guided society to an orderly and rationalized technological future."[19]

Within Mavor's statement is an important distinction that emerged between the humanities and the social sciences. Whereas the humanities viewed themselves as representing the quest and appreciation for social and aesthetic beauty, the social sciences, borrowing from their scientific cousins, viewed the understanding of social progress through the control and management of those things that threatened moral and social chaos. By linking the fulfillment of societal advance with the achievement of social order, the practices of the social scientist reduced, in Christopher Shannon's assessment, "the prophetic to the predictive."[20] For Robert Lynd, one of leaders of the practical social science movement in the United States, social science represented a normative pursuit and the study of culture, "carries the social scientist to the margins of inquiry, where chaos rules."[21] Social science for Lynd represented the tool for re-establishing of the social order against a reality existing in a constant state of flux.[22]

An important technique used by social scientists to produce social order was the use of social survey methods drawn from data derived from the census, to account for developments occurring within society at large. Social scientists in both the United States and Canada were engaged in such efforts to not only collect and distribute such information, but to also provide a link for government policymakers between the

[19]Mavor quoted in Massolin, *The Tory Tradition*, 28.
[20]Christopher Shannon, *Conspicuous Criticism: Tradition, the Individual and American Social Thought from Veblen to Mills* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 72.
[21]Robert Lynd quoted in Shannon, 107.
[22]Ibid.

quality of information gathered and the efficiency of government operations.[23] Fred

Schindler and C. Michael Lanphier explained the value of such information to

government operations in Canada:

> In certain respects social surveys have qualities which uniquely render
> themselves as important instruments, especially in the initial stages of policy
> formation: usually that part which is devoted to fact-finding on the part of the
> governmental agency in question. Initially, there may exist a certain level of
> scepticism on the part of governmental personnel that a survey is indeed
> warranted: facts may be assumed to be in existence. In such a case, a survey
> becomes a justification for the obvious-but-previously-not-explicitly stated.[24]

Such techniques were also seen to insulate the investigator from questions of

personal bias or influence, allowing analysis of observable phenomena from a distance.

In his 1939 call to arms for the social sciences, *Knowledge for What?* Lynd explained

that social scientific inquiry began with the separation from the social scientist from his

object of study and ends with the person distinguished from and set above all of the

social forces that impinge upon him. Adam Shortt, one of Canada's first political

scientists to join the Canadian bureaucracy, viewed the role of the social scientist in

similar terms. As Barry Ferguson explains:

> The political scientists' work was to study all political and economic matters
> but above all government policy, and provide 'accurate and full knowledge' of
> them. What distinguished their examination was not any 'exclusive or
> transcendental knowledge' but rather their independence from special interests
> and capacity for reflection. Freed from the constraints of special interests or
> incomplete information, the political scientists' 'free discussion' and 'full
> knowledge' meant that their work was essential in determining policy
> alternatives and public choices [...] Shortt looked to the example of one of the
> traditional professions. The surgeon's work best exemplified the role of the
> social scientist. Just as 'the surgeon's injecting needle [introduced] into the

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[23]For discussion of the American debate over the utility of the social sciences, see Mary O. Furner, *Advocacy and Objectivity: A Crisis in the Professional of American Social Science, 1865-1905* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1975); Mark C. Smith, *Social Science in the Crucible: The American Debate Over Objectivity and Purpose* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994).

[24]Fred Schindler and C. Michel Lanphier, "Social Science Research and Participatory Democracy in Canada," *Canadian Public Administration* 12 (1969), 487.

proper tissues' of the body the means for recovery, so too would the advice of social scientists enter the body politic and 'diffuse itself by way of the proper channels throughout the whole system.[25]

Through such an "escape from perspective," a process that sees personal opinion supine to the discipline of objective evidence means that the social scientist enacts a set of norms of civic decorum. "As a set of communication practices," John Durham Peters explains, "quantification claims to establish open relations among colleagues, present clear standards of evaluation, and subject opinions to evidence. It reveals, in short, a norm of an enlightened self and community, of altruistic people who bow to the best data and power whose sole source is evidence."[26]

The Humanities Respond

For many critics, attention to the practical elements within universities had come at an important cost, as many had failed to recognize the extent to which a humanistic education could contribute directly in the fields of social and political leadership. These critics maintained that the failure to recognize this aspect of a humanistic education carried serious consequences. In an undated document entitled "What Can the Humanities Do for Government?" historian Donald Creighton outlined that the triumph of the sciences and the decreasing importance of a humanities based education may have had consequences in the recently completed war effort. "One sometimes wonders," Creighton wrote, "whether if the old liberal education had continued in its old sway, the modern world would have had so many illiterate

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[25]Ferguson, *Remaking Liberalism,* 28.
[26]John Durham Peters, "'The Only Proper Scale of Representation': The Politics of Statistics and Stories," 446.

megalomaniacs as leaders, and whether such a cowed and intellectually humiliated civil

service would have been tolerated so often and in so many countries."[27]

The question of the utility of the humanities was also a central feature within the

Massey Commission's investigation. Many of the commissioners were firm believers

that the role of humanities both within educational circles and within the field of

government had gone astray in favour of more technically based knowledge. Massey

himself was an outspoken critic of developments within the field of education that

emphasized technical ability over other forms of intellectual development. This was a

balance that he would have liked to redress:

> The universities had a very and very vital function to perform in the field of
> the humanities. Technological and scientific progress had not made the
> function obsolete: it has made it more necessary...It is obvious that
> technology is of tremendous importance in modern life, but while it is good
> and necessary servant it must not be allowed to be our master. No one passing
> through a university should fail to come under the influence of the humanities,
> because it is in this field—that of liberal education—that the student is
> enabled to acquire a true sense of values, to understand something about the
> relationship of man to society, to distinguish between the real things in life
> and the fakes, to put first things first, and then to sharpen his mental
> curiosity.[28]

Other commissioners shared similar opinions as the Commission chair. Neatby,

Mackenzie and Levesque were also believers in the value of liberal education,

particularly as it represented a philosophical brake against creeping industrialization,

standardization, and other negative influences on the country's social fabric.[29]

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[27]This comes from an unpublished manuscript written by Creighton and quoted in Massolin, *The Tory Tradition*, 54.

[28]Massey quoted in Massolin, 54.

[29]In his 1947 address to the National Council of Canadian Universities, MacKenzie, then president of the organization, emphasized the importance of the humanities to the post-war reconstruction effort: "If man is to be happy, balanced, and a fully developed individual living in peace and security with his fellow men...he must find an important place in his scheme of things for...the humanities." Mackenzie quoted in Massolin, 127.

This discussion continued within the special studies prepared to supplement testimony offered during the commission hearings across the country. Among those contributing to an assessment of the country's intellectual state of affairs included scholars such George Grant, Harold Innis, and Northrop Frye, journalists such as B.K. Sandwell and Wilfrid Eggleston, and artists such as Sir Ernest MacMillan. Many dealt directly or indirectly with the subject of the role of different forms of knowledge within the governance of Canadian national life. In an eloquent essay on the state of the humanities in Canada, Malcolm Wallace attempted to reposition the field in a more practical light, highlighting its utility for government over other technical forms of knowledge:

> If a successful democratic government demands a widely diffused degree of intelligence in the general population it is even more dependent on a continuing supply of able men who will give it direction and modify its character in accordance with changing conditions. Technicians can perform only a minor role in this program; the statesman will always derive from the humanities his chief capacity for his high office.[30]

I have broadly outlined the contours of the debate between the humanities and social sciences over scholarly utility because I suggest that such debates provide the backdrop for understanding the commissioners' position regarding different forms of knowledge within the inquiry into cultural matters. Their position regarding the status of the humanities played an important role in the commission's position on the direction for Canadian broadcasting, and on their reaction to the evidence presented during the hearings process about cultural regulation.

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[30]Malcolm Wallace, "The Humanities in Canada," in *Royal Commission Studies: A Selection of Essays Prepared for the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951), 108.

The Principles of Broadcasting

When viewed as site for the production of knowledge and as a deliberative

body, the commission's abstract mandate towards the broadcasting sector is easier to

understand. In its Order-in-Council, the commissioners were charged only with

determining the "principles upon which the policy of Canada should be based" in the

areas of radio and television broadcasting policy. In effect, then, the commission was

given a theoretical exercise about cultural regulation that would be applied at a later

juncture.

However there were a number of more practical problems facing the

broadcasting sector at the time of the Massey inquiry. First, the acrimonious relations

between the CBC and the country's private broadcasting sector forced the issue of the

role of the public broadcaster into the limelight. Such issues were increasingly made

public through the efforts of the private broadcaster's lobbying organization, the

Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB). Once free from regulatory authority,

private radio operators believed that for over twenty years Canadian officials were

doubly punishing them. First, by being reduced to relay stations for CBC programming

and second, by being subjected to regulation applied by the same institution. In

numerous parliamentary committees and public relations initiatives the CAB pushed

the issue for a separate regulatory body, with each effort being resisted by government

officials throughout the 1940s.[31] The CBC's decision to launch the Dominion

Network, a second radio broadcasting network for English-Canada, further stoked the

passions of those who believed the organization had acquired too much power over

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[31]For a discussion of these efforts, see Frank Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting*, 351-365.

broadcasting affairs, including within political circles in Ottawa. Standing in the House of Commons on February 25, 1944, MP John Diefenbaker foreshadowed a position that would be taken by his own Conservative party when it would rise to power by the end of the 1950s:

> Since the national radio in recent years has become ever increasingly commercial in its scope and activities, there must be set up a new type of national authority to control broadcasting in this country...An independent body should be set up...similar to the radio commission in the United States...The broadcasting corporation is in the position of being both litigant and judge, both investigator and jury.[32]

Along with the increasingly effective lobbying efforts of the private broadcasters and a vocal opposition party in favour of a separate regulatory body for private stations, many government officials believed that a re-examination of the role of the private sector within a system deemed essential for promoting national unity was necessary.

The second issue facing broadcasting concerned the financial health of the CBC. During this time many began to realize that the network could no longer fulfill its mandate without a considerable infusion of financial resources greater than those derived from a levy on radio receiver sales. Critics argued that the poor fiscal position of the broadcaster and lack of audience data resulted in substandard programming and a poor understanding of the listening public.[33]

Third, the government had to contend with the issue of television. Like radio, television promised to Canadian society unheard of prospects for social change. As was the case with the ever-popular medium of radio, issues regarding frequency

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[32] Diefenbaker quoted in Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting*, 359.

[33] As Ross Eaman points out, the CBC lagged far behind its counterpart in the United Kingdom in creating an effective audience research unit, leaving the broadcaster open to charges that it had no evidence it was adequately serving Canadian public. See Ross Eaman, *Channels of Influence: CBC Audience Research and the Canadian Public*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 48-68.

allocation, program content, and American influence would once again rise to the top

for governments dealing with media matters. However, unlike the government's slow

response to radio earlier in the century, the fundamental choice according to Frank

Peers, had to be made at the beginning: "[w]ould television for Canadians start under

private or public auspices, and how would it be extended over the country?"[34]

The subject of the state and future of Canada's broadcasting system was raised

by a number of social action groups and voluntary associations over the course of the

commission's tour across Canada. Such interventions were complemented with

testimony and submissions from the CBC and its regional operations, as well as

individual private stations and representatives from the CAB. In order to provide a

more comprehensive account of radio broadcasting in Canada, the commission went

back across the border, hiring Charles Siepmann of the Department of Communication

at New York University to undertake a study. While the lack of archival evidence

showing correspondence between the commission and Siepmann makes it difficult to

ascertain exactly how the commission came to hire him for the commission research,

the decision to employ the NYU professor seemed like an appropriate choice, as much

for his experience as his apparent alignment with many of the commissioner's

established positions on mass culture.[35] As we will see the different approaches to the

study of broadcasting had dramatically different impacts on the commissioners

themselves and on their dealings with broadcasting in their final report.

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[34]Frank Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting*, 394.

[35]Not everyone, however, was in favour of hiring a scholar to undertake this research. According to Claude Bissell, Surveyer was concerned "that a report by an academic would betray a bias toward government control" and suggested instead that the commission seek advice from representatives from the major U.S. networks. Massey, according to Bissell, "turned a cold eye to the suggestion. See Claude Bissell, *The Imperial Canadian: Vincent Massey in Office* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 210.

Siepmann

In spite of his role in the development of British broadcasting in the 1930s and his place within American radio research and cultural criticism during the 1940s and 50s, Siepmann receives curiously little attention within mass communication literature. In one assessment of the "remembered history" of American communication research, Siepmann failed to make the list of the editors' international list of 65 contributors to the development of the field.[36] In another he receives a brief mention as "a British radio expert who had worked for the BBC."[37] Siepmann's contribution receives similarly muted treatment within the literature on the Massey commission, despite the fact that he was the only non-Canadian to contribute research for the commission and that his study, "Aspects of Broadcasting in Canada," represents one of the earliest statistical accounts of the broadcasting sector on a national scale.[38]

Born and educated in England, Siepmann moved into radio in 1927 after performing military service and working as a housemaster at a British prisons reform school for delinquent boys.[39] He moved into radio in 1927, joining the British Broadcasting Corporation in only the broadcaster's second year of operating as a state-supported system. Over the next twelve years he held numerous positions at the BBC, including directorships in the adult education, talks, and the programme control board. He had established an appreciation of local, rather than centralized programme planning while working at in the position of director of regional relations in the mid-

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[36]Everette E. Dennis and Ellen Wartella, Eds. *American Communication Research: The Remembered History* (Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996), 181-192.

[37]Everett M. Rogers, *A History of Communication Study*. (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 220.

[38]For a typical treatment, see Peers, *The Politics of Canadian Broadcasting*, 413.

[39]Christopher Stirling, "Siepmann, Charles A., 1899-1985," *The Museum of Broadcast Communications Encyclopaedia of Radio*. Ed. Christopher Sterling. (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004), 1266.

1930s. According to historian Asa Briggs, Siepmann produced an important assessment of the value of regional transmissions "in which for the first time an official of the BBC fully explored the social and cultural aspects of regional broadcasting."[40] As Christopher Stirling explains, this marked the beginning of Siepmann's own appreciation for the local, rather than only centralized, program planning.[41]

After helping the BBC in its preparations for the impending war in Europe, Siepmann came to the United States on a Rockefeller Foundation grant to study how universities utilized radio.[42] He then worked at Harvard and joined the government service during the war effort, working first with the radio division of the short-lived Office of Facts and Figures and then in various posts with the Office of War Information. After completing his war service Siepmann moved to New York City, where he headed up the Communications Department at New York University and published a number of works examining the pedagogical and psychological capabilities of radio. In 1941, he contributed an article, entitled "Radio and Education" to a special issue of *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science* devoted to contemporary problems in mass communication research.[43]

Siepmann's major contribution to American broadcasting came in his role as consultant to the FCC on broadcasting matters. He was one of the principal authors of

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[40]Briggs quoted in Stirling, 1267.

[41]Ibid.

[42]For an account of the Rockefeller Foundation's activities in Europe - including Siepmann's recruitment - see William J. Buxton, "John Marshall and the Humanities in Europe: Shifting Patterns of Rockefeller Support," *Minerva* 41 (2003):133-153. See also Tippett, *Making Culture*, 162-163.

[43]The issue, a collaborative effort between the Institute of Social Research at Princeton and the Office of Radio Research at Columbia featured articles by Theodor W. Adorno, Harold Lasswell, Herta Herzog, and Paul Lazarsfeld. Siepmann also took part in a number of seminars on the educational capabilities of communication technology at Allerton House, along with other communications luminaries including Wilbur Schramm and Dallas Smythe. See Hanno Hardt, *Critical Communication Studies: Communication History & Theory in America* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 108.

the March 1946 report *Public Service Responsibilities of Broadcast Licensees*. The

report, also known as the "blue book" after its cover colour, issued a scathing critique

of the programming and advertising practices of selected commercial radio stations

during the war period and became the centrepiece of the struggle between the

broadcasting industry and the regulators over the direction for broadcasting. The

inherent failure of the American broadcasting system to capitalize on its unique

promise to provide education and edification for domestic audiences was a subject that

occupied much of Siepmann's energy during the 1940s. Siepmann's books were best

sellers, placing him in the company of celebrated cultural critics such as Gilbert Seldes

and John Crosby. Each of these authors was read by members of the Massey

Commission.[44]

Although his attention focused primarily on maximizing radio's educational

potential, issues regarding the methodology and purpose of media research were

subjects of great interest to Siepmann. Many of these ideas were outlined in the final

chapter of *Radio Television and Society*, written presumably during the concluding

days of World War II and published in 1946. In that chapter, entitled "Plan for the

Future," Siepmann began by briefly outlining the future direction for radio studies by

linking the goals of radio research more closely to policy making: "[a]part from

program reviews, there are broader questions of policy. The philosophy of the radio

industry, the policy of the commission [the FCC], the new problems raised by scientific

discovery -- all of these are our concerns."[45] For Siepmann, three main obstacles

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[44]Litt, 98.
[45]Charles A. Siepmann, *Radio's Second Chance* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1946), 256.

inhibited radio researchers from pursuing these goals: lack of sufficient source data; a

paucity of organized university research devoted to radio studies; and the poor

communication skills of researchers.[46] In order to reach a wider reading public,

Siepmann suggested that social scientists make a greater attempt to blend the

quantitative aspects of their research with qualitative evaluation methods. "We have

too much dry-as-dust scholarship," he wrote, "too much sheer piling up of facts

regardless of their meaning and implications."[47] In articulating a new program for

radio research, Siepmann emphasized critical engagement both as a way of thinking

and a style of writing:

> Research and interpretation in such a social context as that of radio are
> inseparable. Radio indeed offers a promising field for a new kind of research
> writing-accurate but not abstruse, elaborate but only relevantly so. We need
> analysis combined with critical acumen, study related to and inspired by a
> social philosophy (the democratic philosophy will do) and a sense of purpose.
> And we can do that with writing that observes the timely precept 'Think like a
> wise man, but communicate in the language of the people'.[48]

Ironically, such skills were not demanded of Siepmann in his research for the

Massey Commission, as he was expected to simply produce a quantitative study of

Canadian radio broadcasting. The study consisted of the results of survey

questionnaires distributed to every radio station operating within Canada, asking for an

account of the programming aired during the week of April 3-9, 1949. When he met

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[46]Ibid., 259: "Not all the facts about radio are easily accessible. Some have to be dug up, more have to be correlated, analyzed, interpreted. Radio research is still in its infancy. Apart from fine work done by the Columbia Broadcasting System (Frank Stanton's collaboration with Paul Lazarsfeld in the 'Radio Research' studies is an example), the industry offers little to the public. There is perhaps no reason why it should. Much research is anyhow better undertaken independently, unhampered by the risk of revealing trade secrets or exposing unwelcome facts...Such research is particularly desirable of universities...But only the surface of the ground has been scratched."
[47]Ibid., 261.
[48]Ibid.

the commission members on November 7, 1949, Siepmann was encouraged that the

positive number of responses made an acceptable sample for a detailed analysis of

Canadian broadcasting. According to the meeting minutes, the Commission agreed that

Siepmann's studies would focus on the following areas: a) the effect of sponsorship on

program content; b) the "broad effects of the American origin of programs and the

broad effects of the Canadian origins of programs;" and c) the extent to which certain

aspects of Canadian life are reflected in radio programs.[49]

Two months later in the drawing room of the Château Frontenac in Quebec

City, Siepmann requested assistance from the commission as to how a study of French-

language programming would be undertaken. He concluded that "the figures available

from the questionnaire did not lend themselves to a study of any special services to

French speaking groups in Canada, and went on to point out that no further deductions

concerning basic differences between English and French stations could be made on the

basis of the questionnaire."[50] The commissioners concluded that Pierre Boucher, would

prepare a separate study for the commission on French-language broadcasting, after

Levesque had confirmed the parameters of the study.[51]

As we will see in the reception of Siepmann's study, the tensions between the

relations between the social sciences, the humanities, and government impacted upon

the kinds of knowledge deemed by the commissioners to be most essential in dealing

with specific problems facing the broadcasting sector. In commissioning Siepmann to

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[49]NAC RG 2 18 vol. 181, file R-20-A. Minutes of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters, 26th meeting, 7 November 1949.
[50]NAC RG 2 18 vol. 181, file R-20-A Minutes of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters, 32nd meeting, 9 January, 1950.
[51]Ibid.

study Canadian broadcasting, the Massey Commission appeared to bridge the humanistic perceptions of broadcasting with the application of social science techniques. It was hoped that Siepmann's findings would provide the numbers needed to illuminate the commission on the extent of broadcasting's effects. However, the commission quickly realized that such conclusive information would be hard to divine from Siepmann's work, leaving the numeric data on Canadian radio broadcasting open for interpretation.

"Doctor Charles A. Siepmann, Consultant"

Siepmann returned to Quebec City on April 11, 1950 to formally testify before the Royal Commission hearings. In an earlier meeting, the commissioners determined that the coverage of material in Siepmann's testimony would be restricted, and agreed that "it was no part of Dr. Siepmann's duties to appear before the Royal Commission to discuss his own attitude towards broadcasting problems in general."[52] Instead Siepmann began his public testimony by answering general questions about the scope and size of his duty to the commission to "prepare a report in statistical form."[53] Rather than placing the report findings onto the public record, the commissioners chose instead to have Siepmann recount the impact of the "Blue book" on public policy towards broadcasting in the United States. Commission lawyer Peter Wright began by asking Siepmann to compare the study for the commission to the "Blue Book" prepared for the American Federal Communications Commission. Siepmann explained the differences

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[52]NAC RG 2 18 vol. 181, file R-20-A, Minutes of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters, 33rd meeting, 10 January, 1950.

between the two studies by emphasizing the impersonal and uncritical nature of the

Massey study as compared to the inductive nature of the FCC investigation:

> The report I prepared for the commissioners is a much more exhaustive
> statistical analysis of the content of programming than the one as shown in the
> blue book. The blue book is not is not based on anything like as
> comprehensive or full an analysis of programming as is this report. This is
> strictly a statistical report. The blue book was a critical report. In other
> words, the blue book was trying to achieve the confirmation of certain
> hunches which were held with respect to broadcasting by making an analysis
> of the programme.[54]

When Massey asked if the FCC's admonishment provoked any changes in the way

private broadcasters ran their broadcasting operations, Siepmann characterized the blue

book as giving "considerable publicity to the importance of broadcasting in public

life."[55] When Mackenzie asked for Siepmann's assessment of the relations between the

broadcasters and the FCC, Siepmann explained that there was "an uneasy relationship"

between the two: "[t]he industry has always feared and resented the power of license

revocation which the Federal Communications Commission possesses which at one

time, was described by the president of one of the networks as a sword of Damocles

hanging over the broadcaster. To the radio industry, the blue book is as a red rag to a

bull."[56]

I interpret the commission's decision to steer Siepmann away from the specific

elements of the Canadian broadcasting study in favour of a discussion on the "Blue

Book" in two ways. On the one hand, the discussion highlighted the important role

played by government in policing the affairs of the private broadcasters. On the other

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[53]NAC RG 33 28 Microform, C-1998, Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, *Public Hearings*, April 11, 1950.
[54]Ibid.
[55]Ibid.
[56]Ibid.

hand, however, an extended discussion of the value of regulatory institution divorced

from a broadcasting operation seemed to place Siepmann in the position of advocating

for such a body in Canada, a move which the private broadcasters would support and

many of the commissioners would reject. A similar set of mixed signals emerge from

Siepmann's study results and the reactions they elicited from those involved in the

determining the future direction of radio broadcasting in Canada.

"Aspects of Broadcasting in Canada"

Siepmann's study, entitled "Aspects of Broadcasting in Canada," was 42 pages

in length, including four appendices. The report was based on the questionnaire

responses of 96 radio stations from across Canada, an amount that represented for

Siepmann "more than an adequate representative sample of broadcasting activities in

Canada."[57] From the information provided Siepmann was asked to provide an analysis

of the "general nature of programme content" on the CBC network operations and those

operated by the private, unaffiliated stations, and to study specific aspects of

broadcasting, including:

    a. The incidence of music programmes (serious and popular)
    b. The incidence of recorded and transcribed programmes
    c. The extent of controversy (i.e.: many-sided discussions in programmes)
    d. The nature and extent of programme services, which, apart from news and sports, in any way reflect Canadian life
    e. The extent of programmes originating outside of Canada
    f. The extent of sponsored and sustaining programmes
    g. The bearing (if any) of sponsorship on programme content
    h. Acceptance of network programmes by affiliated stations.[58]

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[57] Siepmann actually received 118 responses from Canadian radio stations, but had to discard 18 questionnaires "because of irreconcilable statistics in the summary sheets which could not be accounted for" and 4 were received too late for inclusion. *Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences and Letters* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1951), 443.
[58] Ibid.

The study examined broadcasting both over the course of a full programming day and during the prime listening hours, between 6-11 p.m. Before revealing his findings, Siepmann presented a list of seven methodological cautions that suggested "restrained interpretation of the [study] findings."[59] These included time pressures which inhibited pre-testing of the questionnaire, the randomness of the program week as an indicator for measurement, and the dangers of reading group averages as indicative of individual station performance.

However Siepmann warned that the primary limitation hindering the study's conclusions were associated with the ambiguities of program classification. In some cases, different stations carrying the same program used different categories to describe them, creating the opportunity for confusion:

> Thus, for example, a programme titled "Cross Section" was variously
> described by different stations as "Talk Informative," "Labour Discussion,"
> "Drama," "Child Psychology," "Special Event," "Citizenship" and
> "Education." Another programme, titled "Can You Top This?" was variously
> described as "Talk Informative," "Narrative," "Comedy" and "Drama and
> Feature."[60]

In other cases where there was more uniform interpretation by the different stations, the categories were simply too broad to derive any conclusive information. "Thus," he explained, "'semi-classical' music lends itself to equivocal interpretation. 'Drama', likewise, is a category comprising programmes ranging from Shakespeare to Soap

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[59]Ibid., 444.
[60]Ibid. Later on in the study (p. 447) Siepmann would provide another example of the liberal interpretations of program content offered by the private radio stations: "'Artistic talent': "Station returns suggest that this term lends itself to variant and catholic interpretation. Programme titles listed under this head included "Wrestling Match," "Youth for Christ" (religion), "Market Broadcast" (farm news), "Actualities Feminines (*conseils de beauté*), "News" (news commentary) and three religious programmes totalling 135 minutes."

Opera."[61] As a result of these ambiguities, Siepmann explained, "[f]uller information on pertinent facts and considerations is needed before judgement can fairly be passed on aspects of any given station's performance which seem to invite critical comment."[62] However, he concluded that its limitations, the study disclosed "characteristics of Canadian broadcasting which, broadly interpreted, may be held to be true and perhaps illuminating."[63]

Perhaps most illuminating about Siepmann's study was the breadth of the report's findings. The contents of Siepmann's report presented the research findings in a rather distanced way, resulting in assessments of the Canadian broadcasting system which fail to register either for their blanket applause for the CBC or for their criticisms of the private broadcasters. Siepmann divided his findings according to what he called a "functional distinction between the two main aspects of broadcasting in Canada," the CBC and the local station operators. The differences between the two groups was described this way:

> The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, with its owned and affiliated stations, exists to provide, insofar as coverage permits, a varied and well balanced national service of programmes with emphasis on the fullest reflection of distinctive facets of Canadian life and culture. The function of the local station operations, (whether over stations affiliated to CBC or over private, independent stations) is to supplement the national service with alternatives of programme choice over as wide a range of subject matter as possible and with particular reflection of local life and talent.[64]

This is a distinction he would repeat later on in the study, claiming that the CBC operated as "non-profit organization and aims at service to the nation," while the

[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., 444-445.

private broadcasters were "profit-seeking entities and are concerned with serving their local or regional community."[65] As a result of this functional distinction, Siepmann explained that a comparison of the program activities of the two groups "not only odious but in large measure irrelevant. The programme resources available to the two groups vary in extent and in nature, as does their function."[66]

In his analysis of the CBC's master program schedule, Siepmann concluded that the network had exercised "even handed justice" in its distribution of a wide range of program varieties, giving consideration to "the interests of lesser majorities and major minorities of taste."[67] While he remarked that programs in the "talks" and "serious music" categories seem to number "in proportions far greater than might result from the findings of a public opinion poll," he also pointed that serial daytime dramas made up over eleven hours of programming during the week over the CBC's Trans-Canada English-language network. The CBC's commitment to program diversity also ran through in the network's prime-time schedule, with Siepmann remarking that the program schedule appeared "in marked contrast" to the sponsored programmed that catered "to the major appetites of the majority listener."[68] Here, however, it was unclear whether Siepmann's assessment of this practice is laudatory or critical. While on the one hand, he appeared to compliment the network for its "like concern for lesser majorities and major minorities of taste" in designing its night-time program schedule, he also appeared to suggest that "at the same time, concessions are made in terms of

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[65]Ibid., 458.
[66]Ibid.
[67]Ibid., 445.
[68]Ibid.

programmes with broad popular appeal."[69] He also noted that controversial

programming in the sense of many-sided discussion of issues of public significance was

"conspicuous by its total absence" on each of the three CBC networks in the English

and French language.[70]

Siepmann's conclusions regarding the privately-run non-affiliated stations

offered few surprises. These stations typically carried more advertising and sponsored

programming, but offered significantly less programming of U.S. origin that those

distributed through the CBC network. Finally, Siepmann appeared to offer sympathy

for operators of private stations unaffiliated with the CBC by providing a summary of

the challenges such stations faced over the course of their day-to-day operations.[71]

Siepmann and the CAB

According to Paul Litt, Siepmann's report seemed to support the commission's

already held opinions on the function of public broadcasting. He concluded that

Siepmann "essentially confirmed the culture lobby's suspicions that the profit motive

made private stations poor vehicles for cultural development and Canadian content,"

while lauding the CBC for its commitment to balanced programming and Canadian

talent.[72] However, this assertion cannot account for the extent to which elements of

Siepmann's study were warmly received by the private broadcasters. In a response

paper to the commission, the CAB capitalized on all of Siepmann's "broad

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[69]Ibid.
[70]Ibid., 448.
[71]Ibid., 467.
[72]Litt, 143.

interpretations" to advance their own position for a restructuring of the Canadian

broadcasting system.

To begin, the report, prepared by CAB president and Lethbridge radio station

manager William Guild, considered Siepmann's study to be particularly valuable for its

confirmation of "two broad principles of radio broadcasting," the simultaneous

recognition of the value of private broadcasters and acceptance of their inherent

differences from the CBC. Both of these aspects of Canadian broadcasting were

advanced by the CAB in previous briefs to the commission:

> We refer, in the first instance, to…the introductory remarks in which the
> functional distinction between two main aspects of broadcasting today has
> been defined. We presume that this clear distinction of functions was evident
> from the material submitted and it points up the fact that the CBC
> monopolizes the opportunity of doing what is referred to in the report as 'the
> fullest possible reflection of distinctive facets of Canadian life and culture."
> Similarly, Dr. Siepmann has apparently discovered, quoting again in part that
> the function of the local station operators…"is to supplement the national
> service with alternatives of program choice over as wide a range of subject
> matter as is possible and with particular reference to the reflection of local life
> and talent."[73]

The CAB brief continued by reasoning that Siepmann's reluctance to compare the

private and state-run broadcasting systems as "confirmation of our contention that in no

matters relating to radio broadcasting in Canada, including the use of live talent, of

recordings and transcriptions, or including commercial content can the activities of a

free-enterprise broadcasting stations be condemned or [word illegible] on the basis of

comparisons with the CBC."[74]

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[73]NAC, RG 33 28 Microfilm Reel C-2002, Canadian Association of Broadcasters brief, "Notes and Comments by William Guild on the Analysis of Canadian Radio Stations Prepared by Dr. Siepmann."
[74]Ibid.

Guild maintained that Siepmann's distinction served as evidence that the CBC

and the private broadcasters represented different "aspects" of a national broadcasting

system. As a result, private broadcasters acting as CBC affiliates or as independent

stations performed a "supplementary" but integral role in the country's broadcasting

environment, one which has been frustrated by CBC's dominance. As a result, the

CAB used Siepmann's study as a way to make its case for the two main principles,

distinctiveness and recognition, which it felt would result in the transformation of the

country's regulatory environment. "We feel that Dr. Siepmann's report," the brief

concluded, "points up the need for giving free-enterprise stations the right to set up

their own networks and thus make even greater use of live talent when the cost of such

talent can be spread over a number of stations."[75]

The CAB's enthusiasm for aspects of Siepmann's report may have come as a

result of the chilly response the commission gave to its own key set of numerically-

driven evidence. The organization had the firm of Elliott-Haynes, one of the country's

leading public opinion firms, undertake a study on public sentiment towards the

ownership of Canada's broadcasting system. As Marc Raboy pointed out, the firm had

pioneered radio audience ratings during the 1930s and had been hired during World

War II by a consortium of fifteen Canadian corporations to survey public attitudes on

socialism and private enterprise and on the issue of the socialization of certain business

industries. The results were updated and company president Walter E. Elliott presented

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[75]Ibid.

the findings as they related to radio broadcasting to the Massey commission.[76] In short,

the population surveyed was more favourable to what the questionnaire called

"independent ownership" as opposed to "government ownership," both in general and

specifically regarding radio broadcasting, and more strongly so in 1949 than in 1944.[77]

Despite such apparently convincing findings, the commission appeared to

challenge the firm's president as to the survey methodology employed to arrive at the

data. In response to a question pointing to the training background of those working in

the field collecting the survey data, Elliott revealed to Levesque that only those with a

high school education were used to process the information because "we find the

university student and the college student are very likely to draw the answer of the

question over to their side."[78] The contents and conclusions of that report are nowhere

to be seen in the Massey Commission's final report.

A Humanistic Approach to Cultural Policy

The preoccupation with the commission's elitist tendencies has caused many

commentators to skate over the obvious positioning of the commission's mandate as an

exercise in national knowledge production. This can be seen right from the beginning

of the report itself, featuring an epigram from St. Augustine's *City of God*: "A nation is

an association of reasonable beings united in a peaceful sharing of the things they

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[76]The firm had also undertaken a study of radio listening in southern Saskatchewan, based on coincidental telephone surveys, which was submitted by radio station CKCK in its testimony. See Reel c-2001.

[77]Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, 101.

[78]NAC, Reel 2019, Testimony of Walter Elliott, 18 November 1949.

cherish; therefore, to determine the quality of a nation, you must consider what those things are."[79]

In the first chapter detailing the commission's mandate, it was clear not only what activities will be covered, but also how the commissioners tried to approach an understanding of that knowledge in preparing their report. "There have been in the past many attempts to appraise our physical resources. Our study, however, is concerned with human assets, with what might be called in a broad sense spiritual resources, which are less tangible but whose importance needs no emphasis."[80] Such a statement, the report's authors explain, suggested two basic assumptions:

> First, it clearly implies that there are important things in the life of a nation which cannot be weighed or measured. These intangible elements are not only essential in themselves; they may serve to inspire a nation's devotion and to prompt a people's action. Our country was sustained through difficult times by the power of this spiritual legacy. It will flourish in the future in proportion as we believe in ourselves. It is the intangibles which give a nation not only its essential character but its vitality as well.[81]

With this in mind, the commission's discussion on Canadian universities reads in such a way as to recover the humanities as the branch of knowledge best suited for dealing with the challenge laid out in the commission's mandate. The commission's three and-a-half pages of discussion on "the plight of the humanities" pales in comparison to the two paragraphs devoted in the introductory discussion to the status of scientific research in Canada. The reconstitution of the humanities began with the commissioners comparing the humanist to the scientist. Scientists, according to the report's authors, pursue questions of power and control:

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[79]*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences and Letters*, p. xxiii.
[80]Ibid., 4.
[81]Ibid.

> The scientist pursues knowledge, it seems safe to say, for pleasure and for intellectual enlightenment and power. The application of the scientist's work is the material control of the forces of nature, or of men, and its use in such a way as to increase the pleasure and comforts of life, to broaden its activities, and to prolong life itself or to shorten it. The increasingly effective control over the forces of nature through the work of scientists has been the most spectacular achievement of the modern age, and the findings of science affect every aspect of life. If the scientist has not yet persuaded the stars in their courses to fight for him, he has done almost everything else.[82]

The humanist, on the other hand, was presented to readers as the defender of spiritual endeavours, and clearly the best suited for the kind of investigation the commissioners were entrusted to undertake:

> The humanist examines the non-material stuff of human life for pleasure, for understanding, for spiritual satisfaction. He professes to offer answers for every generation to the questions that every generation asks, questions about the meaning and direction of life, for the individual and for society. To say that a "scientist" could not answer such questions would be as absurd as to say that a "humanist" could not understand Boyle's Law. But the answers to questions about the fundamental problems of human life will naturally be sought less in the natural world that through a general examination of 'all that man ever thought or ever did.'[83]

In between the sciences and the humanities stood the status of the social scientist. Here, the commission appeared to take a more critical stance, and in doing so, pointed to the weaknesses of the social scientist's claims to methodological objectivity:

> We have heard much of a relatively new and increasingly active group, the "social scientists." Because of their use of many scientific methods, including precise observation, experimental techniques and statistical investigations, they are often grouped with the natural scientists. Their necessary preoccupation with many material problems might seem to place them there also. Yet few doctors would describe themselves simply as scientists and we learn that some scholars in the social sciences refuse to do so for similar reasons. Studies dealing with the whole of human life, or even with the special aspects of it, can never be pursued with complete scientific detachment and only to a limited extent is it possible to employ scientific techniques.

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[82]Ibid., 159.
[83]Ibid.

'Every social thinker [...] must have some philosophic conception of the nature of society and its ends'.[84]

When the commissioners turned to the issues of radio and television broadcasting, the question of the value of the humanities in other spheres of activity is apparent. In its introduction to radio broadcasting, the commission restated its mandate towards the medium by once again highlighting the relationship between radio listening and the "spiritual" elements of national citizenship:

> Our immediate purpose is to consider how well Canadian radio has served the nation and whether...it has in fact provided Canadian radio listeners with Canadian broadcasting in such a way to foster a national spirit, to interpret national citizenship and to give Canadian listeners the best programmes available from home and abroad."[85]

In a final connection before elaborating upon their recommendations for radio broadcasting policy, the commissioners situated the humanities alongside nationalism in approaching broadcasting policy questions.

> But national unity and knowledge of our country are not the only ends to be served. These important purposes are also a means to that "peaceful sharing of the things we cherish," in St. Augustine's phrase cited at the beginning of this volume. We are thus further concerned with radio broadcasting in that it can open to all Canadians new sources of delight in arts, letters, music, and the drama. Through a fuller understanding and heightened enjoyment of these things Canadians become better Canadians because their interests are broadened, they achieve greater unity because they enjoy in common more things, and worthier things. This view of the principle or purpose of Canadian radio broadcasting, as we see it, dictates Canadian policy.[86]

Siepmann's Anonymity in the Massey Report

On July 26th, 1950, the commission members met to discuss aspects of the preparation of the final report. Commission counsel Peter Wright then turned those in

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[84]Ibid.
[85]Ibid., 28.
[86]Ibid., 280.

attendance towards matters dealing with the section of the report that would concern radio and television broadcasting. According to the minutes of the report, the commissioners "agreed that the recommendations on broadcasting and television have to be justified by a considerable body of reasoned argument and fact."[87] Pointing either to the failure of Siepmann to provide the necessary data or to the unnecessary nature of his statistical information to provide justification, the commission "further agreed that no mention should be made of Dr. Siepmann's report and that no direct reproduction of large passages of it should appear in the report."[88] Furthermore, the commissioners agreed that only a section of Siepmann's report (Part I) should be published as one of the special studies that would be appended to the main report.[89] What the report's authors did do, however, was to draw generally on Siepmann's conclusions and to quote directly from his other published works.

The commission's review of radio broadcasting began by retelling the story of the emergence of Canadian radio broadcasting policy, and by re-stating the goals and objectives laid out by the Aird Commission over twenty years before. Highlighting the commission's concern that a broadcasting system "which drew so largely on alien sources," the Massey authors restated the Aird commission's reasoning that broadcasting should be an instrument of education and national unity.[90]

In describing the role of the private broadcasters, the authors of the report appeared to distance themselves from Siepmann's "functional distinction" between the

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[87]NAC RG2 18 vol. 181, File R-20-A. Minutes of the sixty-fifth meeting of the Royal Commission on Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters, 26 July 1950.
[88]Ibid.
[89]Ibid.
[90]*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters*, 24.

local objectives of privately-run and the national objectives of publicly-run broadcasting operations. Pointing to the fact that private broadcasters were operating in spite of the instruction that they be purchased by the national broadcaster, the commissioners subtly repositioned private broadcasters not as providing a supplementary service, but as outlets for the national service, working in the interest of economy. "The most important function of the private stations, however, is that they serve as regular or occasional outlets for national programmes, thus giving to the national system a coverage which could not otherwise be achieved except at great public expense."[91] As Raboy points out, such a tactic acted as foreshadowing; for formally recognizing a place for the private sector within a national system of broadcasting, the commission established a framework that would be more fully articulated when applied to television by the end of the 1950s.[92]

As part of a review of the structure of radio broadcasting systems around the world, the commission drew particular reference to broadcasting in the United States. After characterizing US radio as a system that functioned "primarily as a means of entertainment open to commercial exploitation," the report drew particular reference to the FCC, and, in particular, the FCC "Blue Book."[93] Without mention to Siepmann's testimony, the commission stated more broadly "it has been reported that the *Bluebook* had a salutary effect on certain radio programmes."[94]

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[91]Ibid., 26.
[92]Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, 108.
[93]*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters*, 277.
[94]Ibid.

In spite of the apparent nod toward an independent regulatory authority, the

commissioners' recommendations called for a retrenching of the CBC's dual position

within the broadcasting and regulation of Canadian broadcasting. Acknowledging the

private broadcasters' "frankness and clarity," the commission concluded that detaching

the regulatory responsibilities from the CBC towards an independent agency would

"either divide and destroy, or merely duplicate the present system of national

control."[95] "Legislation to set up a separate regulatory body," the authors went on,

"would alter the present national system and would result in two independent groups of

radio broadcasting stations, one public and one private."[96] The language deployed by

the commissioners here was perhaps more important than the obvious weakness in their

argument that the two systems were in fact different and as a result, requiring of a

separate system of regulatory activity. However, the independent regulatory body, and

those that would supposedly benefit from such a development, are given the seditious

characteristics by the authors of the commission report. In fact, the report's authors

return to the same topic on the next page of their recommendations, in order to

elaborate on this rationale:

> We must return then to the statement that a new regulatory body would either
> destroy or duplicate the present national system of control. If the national
> system were not to be destroyed, a separate body could do only what the
> present Board of Governors is supposed to do. If it did not mark the end of
> the national system, it could not possibly be 'the separate and completely
> impartial body not connected in any way with the CBC', which the CAB has
> requested.[97]

The commissioners summed up Siepmann's report with the following paragraph:

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[95] Ibid., 285.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid., 286.

We noticed, first, that the national networks do in fact live up to their ideal of producing balanced programmes. Time is found for popular music, drama, serious music, news, sports and comment, talks, variety shows, educational programmes for children and religious periods, approximately in that order of emphasis. The French-language network devotes more time to music than drama; otherwise, programme structure on the French and the Trans-Canada networks is about the same. The Dominion network, offering a lighter programme structure for the evening only, gives special prominence to popular music and variety shows. All three networks give decidedly less attention to children's, educational, and religious programmes. Of the three networks, the Trans-Canada gives the most time, 7.6 per cent in all, to these kinds of programmes.[98]

Discussing the popularity and effectiveness of the CBC's radio programmes, the authors referred to a laudatory section of Siepmann's analysis of Canadian broadcasting in *Radio, Television and Society*, while at the same time, choosing to refer to the professor only obliquely as "a contemporary authority on radio."[99] While this section of the book is more complementary arguing that the CBC has to "make a little go a long way," Siepmann mentioned on the same page that inadequate funding of the broadcaster has resulted in effective ignorance of audience size and scope:

This situation is disturbing in that it precludes any measurement of progress. Is the audience for CBC's programs greater or smaller than it was, or than that for Canada's commercial stations? And how many Canadian listeners tune in to stations in the United States? Continued ignorance about such questions deprives the CBC of the healthy and necessary stimulus of competition and makes an important national enterprise more speculative than it should be.[100]

In spite of the fact that his report appears to have curried favour with the interests of the private broadcasters, Siepmann's opinion on Canadian broadcasting in *Radio, Television, and Society* clearly tends toward favouring elements of the existing system,

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[98]Ibid., 37.
[99]Ibid., 30.
[100]Siepmann, *Radio, Television and Society*, 160.

including the CBC's position as broadcaster and regulator. In assessing the CBC's dual

role, Siepmann explained:

> Compared with its achievements in actual broadcasting, CBC as a regulatory
> agency has performed less well. As with the FCC, its supervision and
> enforcement of regulations have been superficial, though for different reasons.
> It has remained unaffected by commercial radio's lobbyists (who, though
> active, are less powerful than here in the United States), and it has not been
> constantly harried by members of the Parliament, which has confined itself to
> an annual review of broadcast operations...Like the FCC, its main function is
> to maintain a rearguard action against flagrant abuse of a public trust on the
> part of the private stations.[101]

Siepmann went on to say that the broadcaster's claim for a system administered

by a non-competitive entity, while making for a convincing case, breaks down if one

realizes that the public and private broadcasters are not engaged in a competitive

relationship, but rather are sharing in the responsibilities carrying forward a service

acting in the national interest. "Private stations," Siepmann explained, "are vestigial

organs, like the human appendix, surviving from a past era in which neither of

Canada's paramount requirements of radio-that it should be widespread and

predominantly native in its cultural accent and emphasis-was satisfactorily met."[102]

Siepmann positioned the role of the private broadcasters as "a necessary adjunct of the

national service both as local outlets for network broadcasts and as servants of the

needs and interests of local communities," blending two different descriptions of the

private sector written both by the commissioners and himself.[103]

What can we make of Siepmann's study? I would like to offer a few

explanations, beginning with the least plausible. First, it is highly unlikely that the

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[101] Ibid., 162.
[102] Ibid., 164.
[103] Ibid.

commissioners buried the study because it did not produce the most conclusive results to underwrite their own already held opinions on the principles that should govern over broadcasting. It is unclear whether or not the use of Siepmann's findings by the Canadian Association of Broadcasters served as the reason to largely ignore its results. Instead, it seems that the commission's mixed reaction to Siepmann's statistical work and its more enthusiastic deployment of his non-numeric writings point to the ambivalence of statistical evidence within the commission's humanities-inspired approach to cultural issues. As we will see, concerns over both the value of statistical evidence and the social scientist's claim to what Lorraine Daston calls "aperspectival objectivity" will be pacified the next time a Royal Commission is held to examine Canada's broadcasting situation, and the next time someone is entreated to undertake a quantitative analysis of Canadian radio and television.[104] For the time being, however, we turn to the commission's concern over the direction of Canadian television.

A Prudential Approach to Television

In establishing the policy framework for Canadian television, the commission did not feel the need to undertake significant study of the new medium. For example, commissioner Hilda Neatby went to the United States in the winter of 1949 to conduct an informal study of her own of the new medium of television. Based on a series of informal discussions with television viewers, an interview with a Canadian working in television and Neatby's own experience watching, the University of Regina historian described television to be an "an unrewarding occupation," due largely to its

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[104]Lorraine Daston, "Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective," 111.

domination by commercially-sponsored programs.[105] Aside from Neatby's

investigation, there were no special studies undertaken for the Commission on the

subject of television. Furthermore, as Michael Dorland reminds us, the commission

"made no effort to understand either the organizational mechanisms or the political

economy of this awesome deployment of US power."[106] The resulting report and

recommendations, were significant only for their astounding generalizations and, as we

will see, their transposition of radio broadcasting regulations onto a different media

form.

In their introduction, the report's authors outlined the two "commonly accepted

fact about television." First, television evoked "great interest and enthusiasm among

the general public, the advertising industry, and in all groups whose interest it may be

to inform, entertain, or influence public."[107] The second accepted fact about television

was its unpredictability; since no one was exactly sure what the new medium would

look like, the commissioners suggested simply, "its history indicates that we can be

certain only of its uncertain future."[108] In other words, the commissioners combined

the promise of the new medium with fears of its potential, thereupon establishing the

basis for policy intervention in this regard.

The commission then provided a series of thumbnail sketches of the

development of television in the United States, France, and Great Britain. The

commission pointed out that, in each of these countries, policies previously applied to

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[105]Litt, 282 n.25.
[106]Dorland, *So Close to the State/s*, 15.
[107]*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters*, 42.
[108]Ibid.

radio broadcasting had simply been extended into the television spectrum. "In Canada," the report's authors continued, "television is in the proverbially happy position of having as yet no history."[109] The report made mention of the cost of television programming being significantly greater than for radio broadcasting, making for a challenge for the CBC, who had advised that Canada take a careful approach to the planning of television in the country. The commission then went on to briefly outline many of the basic elements that would be involved in television's development, including technical specifications, the invention of colour, and the role of advertising. In a comparison made between British and American television systems, the commissioners characterized the American broadcasting system as "essentially a commercial enterprise" where stations aim to deliver mass audiences to enthusiastic advertisers. The directors of the British system, the authors reported, were driven not by profit but by their "moral and cultural responsibilities," to do, in the words of BBC Director-General Sir William Haley, "not what the noisy uninformed clamour tells them to do, but what they believe to be right," and that the public expects the BBC to operate "as a governor and a guide."[110] Having established the limited background of television, the report laid out the challenge for the new medium: "The Canadian problem is to make the best possible use of this new medium, within the limitations imposed by Canadian conditions and by costs."[111]

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[109]Ibid.
[110]Ibid., 48.
[111]Ibid., 49.

As J.G.A. Pocock has written, policy action employs a combination of prudence and experience in the task of dealing with unique or unforeseen events.[112] By characterizing television through a pairing of promise and unpredictability, the commissioners were able to construct television as a policy object. In doing so, the commissioners also established the key early subject populations for policy intervention: the public, advertisers, and any group "whose interest it may be to inform, entertain, or influence public."[113] The suggestions for the new medium, then, used the knowledge borne out of a previous experience, that of radio broadcasting, towards the newer and unpredictable similar medium.

Stating that making recommendations on the new medium of television was the commission's "grave responsibility," the Massey Commission began by stating that both the recommendations and the evidence used to justify them "follow from the fact that the considerations leading us to recommend the continuation of a national system of radio broadcasting seem to dictate much more strongly and urgently a similar system in television."[114] Here again, the commission employed the same principles to television regarding its potential for monopoly and its utility in promoting national unity. As a result, the commission continued to place the private broadcasters on the sidelines of television's development, suggesting that allowing private television stations access to the limited number of airwaves would be "dangerous" and inappropriate for upholding the principles of Canadian broadcasting. The commission also concluded that the direction and control of broadcasting in Canada should be

[112]Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, 28.
[113]*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters*, 42.
[114]Ibid, 301.

placed in the hands of the CBC; that "no private television broadcasting stations be licensed until the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has available national programmes and that all private stations be required to serve as outlets for national programmes," and that eight of the recommendations applied to radio broadcasting be extended to television as well.[115]

Conclusion

More than simply a reassertion of cultural nationalism, a retrenching of anti-American fear mongering, and an articulation of elitist views towards popular culture, the Massey Commission is significant for its engagement into the battle between the humanities and social sciences occurring at the time and the way in which the commission's position on those battles impacts upon the direction of Canadian television and radio broadcasting policy. For the most part, the commission's attention to a more humanities-based approach to dealing with cultural questions attempted to reconstitute, to borrow a distinction from Peter Dear, the value of experience over experiment, a move toward knowledge based on a set of generalized statements about the way things typically occur rather than a set of statements used to describe specific events.[116] The facts expressed by the Massey commission were not distinct from the experiences of their observer, a point which the commission made clear in both its deliberations towards the broadcasting sector and, in a related vein, in its viewpoint on the position of the humanities vis-à-vis the physical and social sciences.

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[115]Ibid., 303.
[116]Dear quoted in Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact,* 8.

In selectively reading Siepmann's report, ignoring most statistical forms of

evidence, and choosing instead to make a series of largely generalized characterizations

of one media system (radio broadcasting) which were then applied even more loosely to

another system (television broadcasting), the Massey Commissioners in effect located

the broadcasting question not only within a nationalist sphere, but within a triangulation

in which nationalism, broadcasting, and the humanities interrelate. Two elements of

the report, however, serve as important cracks in the Massey Commission's defence for

a humanities-based governance of the cultural sphere.

The first was Arthur Surveyer's dissenting opinion, entitled, "Reservations and

Observations," found appended to the main body of the report. Although he had agreed

with many of the commission's recommendations, including the formation of the

Canada Council, Surveyer had serious reservations on the commission's position with

regard to radio and television broadcasting, and particularly with the issue of an

independent regulatory body. In his report Surveyer applauded the entrepreneurial

efforts of private broadcasters, and suggested that an independent regulatory board to

govern radio broadcasting was a matter of "elemental equity." The new board would

have far-reaching powers, including the control over the establishment of networks;

control of the character of all programs and advertising broadcast by the CBC or the

private stations; and control over the use of broadcasting for political purposes.[117] In

addition to providing for a more level playing field for Canada's private broadcasting

sector, Surveyer further explained that the formation of a separate organization would

actually be beneficial to the CBC, allowing the organization to focus more closely on

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[117]*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters,* 394.

developing a sound television network. As I will argue a little later, Surveyer's

dissenting opinion on both the value of an independent regulatory board and the further

recognition of the value of private broadcasters, becomes the majority position on

broadcasting in less than five years when the Royal Commission on Broadcasting is

formed and Robert Fowler is installed as commission chair.

Before turning to a discussion of the Fowler commission, it is necessary to

explore in further detail a second item found within the Massey report. Here I am

referring to an administrative audit of the National Film Board, the country's most

important film institution, by the consulting firm of Woods Gordon. The audit was

undertaken by the firm on the suggestion of Vincent Massey in light of a series of

controversies swirling around the film board near the formation of the Royal

Commission. We turn towards a more detailed discussion of the report here, for if

Surveyer's dissenting report foreshadowed future changes to broadcasting policy, a

discussion of the Woods Gordon report permits an understanding of shifts present

within the administration of Canadian cultural activity.

Chapter Four:

Administrative Screenings:
The Woods Gordon Report, Accounting and the Production of
Credibility at the National Film Board of Canada, 1948-52

In the years following World War II the image of the National Film Board

among federal politicians underwent a dramatic transformation. Once considered as an

essential agency during the war effort, the NFB quickly became the subject of intense

scrutiny in the immediate post-war era. Concerns ranged from the possible infiltration

of communist sympathizers to charges that the board had become what one opposition

member characterized as "a white elephant," rife with inefficiency.[1] On November 19,

1949 an article was published in the *Financial Post* revealing that the Department of

National Defence used private companies to produce films because of security concerns

at the NFB. The article also disclosed that the RCMP had been secretly watching the

activities of NFB employees for over a year. The premier of Quebec, Maurice

Duplessis, ordered his censor board to review NFB films on suspicions of leftist and

federalist content; he would later bar the distribution of films in the province altogether.

In light of these events and under pressure from opposition members in the House of

Commons, the government of Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent informed Canadians of

their plans to complete a formal screening of NFB employees. The government also

announced that it had already hired a management consulting firm, Woods Gordon, to

review the film board's administrative operations.

Less than a week after the *Financial Post* story hit newsstands, an article critical

of the government's treatment of employees at the film board was published in the

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[1] Gordon Fraser, an MP from Peterborough, characterized the film board this way during a session of the House of Commons, quoted in "National Film Board Should Be 'Cleaned Up', Fraser Tells Commons," *Globe and Mail*, February 26, 1948.

Ottawa Citizen. The author of the piece, an NFB staff member writing under the

initials "B.T.R.," noted how the concept of screening, once referring to "nothing more

than sifting out the furnace ashes to make sure that no coals were thrown away," had

become *de rigeur* in Ottawa as an expedient symbol to represent the cleaning up of

government affairs to the electorate.[2] This was ironic, according to B.T.R., because the

concept of screening had important cinematic connotations. In film circles, "'to screen'

is to show a film on a screen and the first screening of a batch of film, fresh from the

cutting tables, is an exciting and often memorable event."[3]

In this chapter I pick up on B.T.R.'s reflection on the multiple sites of screening

at the NFB during the post-war years. A significant amount of attention has been

devoted to an analysis of the *security screenings* at the NFB after former cipher clerk

Igor Gouzenko's revelation to the RCMP of a possible link between the institution and

Soviet espionage.[4] In addition, a solid literature within film studies exists that

documents the *cinematic screenings* of NFB films in the years after Grierson's

departure.[5] My particular interest in this chapter concerns the *administrative*

screenings of the NFB during this time, namely the review of the film board by the

consulting firm of J.D. Woods & Gordon. The study became an important tool in the

Liberal government's attempts to shield both itself and the NFB from controversy, and

it eventually became the medium through which discussions about the NFB's future

[2]"On Being Screened," *Ottawa Citizen*, November 23, 1949.
[3]Ibid.
[4]See Mark Kristmanson, *Plateaus of Freedom*, 49-85; Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse, *Cold War Canada: The Makings of a National Insecurity State, 1945-57* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 227-258.
[5]See Zoë Druick, "Re-examining the 1950s National Film Board Films About Citizenship," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 9:1 (2000): 55-79, and "'Non-Theatrical With Dreams of Theatrical: Paradoxes of a Canadian Semi-Documentary Film Noir," *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 12:2 (2003): 46-63. See also Peter Morris, "After Grierson: The National Film Board, 1945-53," in *Take Two: A Tribute to Film in Canada.* Edited by Seth Feldman (Toronto: Irwin, 1984), 182-194; Pierre Véronneau, Résistance et affirmation: la production francophone a l'ONF-1939-1964 (Montreal: Cinematheque Québècoise, 1987); and Chris Whynot, "The NFB and Labour, 1945-55," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 16:1 (1981): 13-22.

were undertaken. In conjunction with the hiring of former *Macleans* editor Arthur

Irwin as the NFB's new director, the report was the final step in the recuperation of the

film board's national credibility. The recommendations formed the basis of a new *Film*

Act, complete with a new mandate for the NFB, which was passed into law in June

1950. This was despite the fact that many of the report's recommendations were

simply reassertions of prior suggestions made by government ministers and NFB

executives.

This chapter begins by revisiting the controversy surrounding the National Film

Board. I argue that in addition to the critiques of the film board lodged by members of

the opposition and by those within the private film production industry were a number

of critics from within the Liberal government, including the new minister responsible

for the board. These amount to more than concerns about communism in the

government or pro-business tendencies, but are reflective of an essential critique about

the operation of the emerging welfare state itself, and of the principles that should

govern the operations of government.

It is within this context that accounting emerges as an effective resource for the

new management of government affairs both as a profession and as a rhetorical trope

associated with accountability. I locate the hiring of Woods Gordon within the context

of an important period of re-evaluation occurring within the accounting community

about the profession's role within society. With techniques able to deliver discipline to

unruly institutions, an ethic associated with transparency, and a style of writing with

built-in impersonality and authority, the accounting profession began to imagine itself

as more than a passive stenographer of commercial activity but rather as an independent

reporter of organizational fidelity. This argument was conveyed in professional

journals arguing for a greater role for accountants in government affairs. In this chapter I show how accounting takes on greater significance as a medium for communicating values of openness, flexibility, and truth. These values become equated with democratic principles by a business community anxious for assistance in the defence of Western-style capitalism within the context of the Cold War.

This will be apparent in the case of the NFB, both in terms of the Woods Gordon consultants and the report's author, Walter Gordon. In light of concerns over the inherent *lack* of control within the NFB itself, the cluster of values represented by the themes of accounting meant that anyone who could associate themselves with notions of efficiency would play a role in driving the final decisions at the NFB. The success of the Woods Gordon report in exonerating the film board will also carry a self-validating effect of the process of audit itself as a means for dealing with contentious issues in general, and cultural issues in particular. I suggest that the NFB is at the forefront of what Michael Power calls a "managerial turn," which accelerates the influence of management consultants and the incorporation of administrative logic borrowed from the business sector into government affairs. This became a trend that expanded to other areas of the cultural sector in the years following the Woods Gordon report.[6]

"Film Board Monopoly Facing Major Test?"

Although the *Financial Post* article is typically viewed as an example of the Cold War hysteria surrounding the film board, overt anti-communist themes are secondary to the larger discussion concerning the film board's business practices.[7]

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[6] Michael Power, *The Audit Society: Rituals of Verification* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 67.
[7] "Film Board Monopoly Faces Major Test," *Financial Post* 19 November 1949.

Those that use the article to situate the film board in the context of anti-communist concern typically focus on the first few paragraphs, beginning with the first sentence, "Is the NFB a leftist propaganda machine?" and then highlight the article's discussion of the Department of National Defence's decision to employ private contractors to handle classified film work.[8]

The remainder of the article, however, deals almost exclusively with the administrative problems that plague the NFB's operations in its dealings both with private companies and with other government agencies. It's overall tenor is typical of the kind of coverage given to government affairs by the *Financial Post*. As historian Patrick Brennan noted, the newspaper had long articulated its belief in the increased role of business principles within the administration of government affairs during the reconstruction effort.[9] The twin concerns over security and financial irregularities made the NFB an easy target for the paper, a symbol for the poor management of all government departments.

The headline, "Film Board's Monopoly Facing Major Test?" suggests very little to readers in the way of red-baiting. Rather, news of the RCMP's outsourcing decision served as an excellent opportunity to use the suspicion about communists at the NFB to publicize the administrative deficiencies of the film board's operations. If the question posed by the headline writer was whether or not the film board would stand up to this latest "test," the main body of the article seems to provide the answer. It suggested that

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[8]Whitaker and Marcuse, 249. This excellent account of Canada's Cold War experience focuses exclusively on the security issue, leaving possible relationships between administrative issues and security issues behind. In his biography of former NFB director Arthur Irwin, David Mackenzie claims the first paragraph of the *Post* article "caught the public's attention." The same can be said for Mackenzie, who leaves the remainder of the article's contents unanalysed. See David Mackenzie, *Arthur Irwin: A Biography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 232.

[9]Patrick Brennan, *The Business of Government: Press-Government Relations During the Liberal Years, 1935-57* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 36, 77-79.

the developments at the film board did not call for a purging of staff, but rather that it "shoot[s] the government monopoly so full of holes" that an overhaul of the entire structure of the film industry itself should also be in order.[10]

The critique of the film board's affairs in the *Financial Post* article was comprised of six components: 1) the NFB's tendency to charge "high prices and special charges for production"; 2) an apparent lack of cooperation between the film board and its client agencies within government; 3) an inability to gather a "firm bid" on production costs from senior film board officials; 4) long delays to receive finished production and the practice of what are described, without specific reference, of "un-businesslike methods"; 5) the film board's use of pressure tactics to restrain competition for government contracts and force screenings of its films, and 6) inefficient production methods which resulted in "extravagant waste."[11] In sum, this sextet of complaints fell into two broad categories -- institutional intransigence and fiscal mismanagement -- that would become prominent themes in attacks lodged against the NFB.

To support its arguments, the *Post* relied on the report of the Auditor General of Canada, Watson Sellar, which pointed to the high number of accounts receivable on the NFB's books and the slow rate of collection by the film board's administrative staff and markers of administrative sloppiness.[12] Even the kind of paper and size of the film board's annual reports became an object of outrage in the *Post*'s treatment of the NFB. "The NFB reports," the article noted, "are done on ultra-glossy stock replete with pictures and a big build-up for what the Board is doing for Canada." [13]

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[10]"Film Board Monopoly Faces Major Test."
[11]Ibid.
[12]Ibid.
[13]Ibid.

It is important to point out here how this assessment represented a politicization of accounting terminology. If the National Film Board were a business operation, the total number of outstanding accounts and the high number of unpaid accounts receivable along with the lassitude of the film board in retrieving the funds would be markers of institutional sloppiness and financial precariousness. However, both "accounts" and "accounts receivable" are abstract terms that become problematic only when the future existence of the organization is at stake and when the "year-end" of a business organization is of particular interest. However, when dislocated from this context and simply given a position as standardized accounting terms in a business publication, such concepts inhere with connotations that equate the film board with wastefulness and sloth.

Despite its role in publicizing the issue, concerns regarding the future direction of the National Film Board in the post-war era did not begin with the publication of the article in the *Financial Post*. After the board's first director, John Grierson, stepped down in 1945 to take the job of Director of UNESCO's Mass Communication office in Paris, questions abounded about whether his replacement, Ross McLean, was fit to run the film board. According to NFB historian Gary Evans, Citizenship minister J.W. Pickersgill characterized McLean as someone who "had a hard time organizing a trip, let alone administering anything," and had little confidence he would be able to run the film board's operations.[14] The Minister for National Revenue, J.J. McCann, admitted to Vincent Massey that an overhaul of the film board was necessary to correct numerous administrative deficiencies. These included making film board contracts legally binding, offering benefits to employees, and ensuring a steady working capital

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[14]Gary Evans, *In the National Interest*, 8.

fund for the film board.[15] Others pointed to the fact that the Film Board's operations, dispersed across nine different locations across Ottawa, often in buildings of decaying status, resulted in a chaotic, inefficient, and unsafe work environment.[16]

Key government officials including the new minister responsible for the film board, Robert Winters of the Department of Resources and Development, shared similar sentiments about the institution's future position within the national film sector.[17] Early in his tenure Winters revealed his vision for the direction of the country's film sector. In a speech to the Canadian Motion Picture Exhibitionists Association at the Chateau Laurier shortly before the *Post* article's publication, he explained, "I should like to see more films made by Canadian producers shown on Canadian screens-not only short films made by the National Film Board or other Canadian producing agencies, but feature films made by Canadian companies."[18] Furthermore, Winters believed that the Canadian films could play a larger role not only in domestic affairs but as a key resource for international trade: "I should still like to see developed in Canada a film industry which could offer Canadians a greater opportunity to bring their achievements and hopes to the attention of people all over the world."[19] In subsequent weeks, Winters distanced himself further from the operations of the Film Board, most notably in his disagreement with the Film Board's submission

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[15]Ibid., 11.

[16]A letter from Winters to Robertson complained of the poor state of the NFB offices, and called to speed up the process to make arrangements for new buildings. NAC RG 2, Privy Council Files, Vol. 172 File N-13, Letter Robert H. Winters to Norman Robertson, September 13, 1949.

[17]The NFB fell under Winters purview as a result of an administrative shift which terminated the wartime Department of Reconstruction and Supply, created the Department of Resources and Development and moved the NFB out of the portfolio of the Department of Trade and Commerce.

[18]NAC, MG32 B24 Vol. 1, File 2-9-1-1 Vol. 2 Robert H. Winters papers. Speech to Canadian Motion Picture Exhibitionists Association, Ottawa Ontario, October 12, 1949.

[19]Ibid.

to the Massey Commission report on the institution's role within the field of television

production, saying the position did not reflect government policy.[20]

Members of the opposition shared similar feelings about reforming the NFB.

Throughout 1948, Conservative MP G.K. Fraser waged a one-man campaign against

the film board in the House of Commons, repeatedly calling for a re-evaluation of the

Board's mandate and a review of its operations. In one of his strongest attacks, Fraser

reiterated his request that a study be undertaken to rid the organization of "unessential

persons," based on the fact that the NFB had paid more in salaries than it did for the

production of films for that year. According to a report in the *Globe and Mail*, Fraser

"said the annual financial reports were cleverly drawn up and it had taken him and an

adding machine some time to get a proper breakdown of the figures."[21] Citing the film

board's use of its own still photographers to cover major events over private

contractors, Fraser characterized the film board as "socialization of the worst kind."[22]

In a final salvo, Fraser reasoned that if the film board had "nothing to hide," it would

submit to a "full-scale investigation of its activities," and remarked that any possible

savings garnered from such an investigation could be transferred to the country's

hospitals.[23]

Leaving his creative solution for health care funding aside, Fraser's last point

represents an important prelude to what will follow for the National Film Board. By

equating any reluctance for a review as a sign of inherent guilt, the NFB's

organizational status and trust is immediately displaced as these characteristics are

placed in the hands of independent investigators and in the opaque concept of "review."

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[20]See Ted Magder, *Canada's Hollywood*, 80-81.
[21]"National Film Board Should Be 'Cleaned Up', Fraser Tells Commons."
[22]Ibid.
[23]Ibid.

Issues about who should undertake the review, how the review would be undertaken, and what the review would uncover were elided as a result of the discursive power of Fraser's statement, which implicitly carried the idea that the NFB had something to hide. It was a situation the film board confronted a year later, when it submitted to an organizational audit intended to restore its tarnished image.

"Someone from Outside the Government": Enter Woods Gordon and Arthur Irwin

Once the story about the NFB was published in the *Financial Post*, Winters went to Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent for advice on how best to deal with the situation. St. Laurent turned the matter over to two of his most influential cabinet colleagues: the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, J.W. Pickersgill and Privy Council Secretary Norman Robertson. According to Pickersgill's memoir, it was suggested to Winters that a review of the NFB's business administration be undertaken in addition to security screenings of employees by the RCMP.[24] To accomplish this, Pickersgill recommended to the Prime Minister and Winters that the management consulting arm of the accounting firm J.D. Woods & Gordon be retained to perform the review.

The subject of an administrative review of the film board and of the relevance of Woods Gordon to undertake that review had been a subject discussed in government circles for some time. In the minutes of one of its early meetings in August with NFB commissioner Donald Buchanan, the Massey commissioners recommended Walter Gordon as an appropriate person to undertake a review of the board's activities which

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[24] J.W. Pickersgill, *My Years With Louis St. Laurent.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 148.

would in the end help to "encourage the staff at the film board."[25] The next month, the

commissioners stated again that "someone from outside the government" be retained to

prepare a report on the NFB's activities.[26] On December 7, 1949, Winters announced

to the House of Commons that although now widely publicized, the administrative

deficiencies at the film board were an issue of some interest to him since assuming

ministerial stewardship over the operation. He then announced that Woods Gordon had

been retained days before the story had come out in the *Financial Post* "to investigate

into and report on those matters which can be classified as business administration."[27]

With the announcement of the hiring of Woods Gordon, Winters gained both

credibility and distance from the situation present at the NFB. A Conservative MP,

James Macdonnell, told the House of Commons he was "glad to hear" of Winters

decision to bring in "the services of what I consider to be a very reputable firm, and I

should think, it would be very useful in the matter of improving business methods" at

the institution.[28] Since neither Winters nor Macdonnell ever provided any clarification

as to what activities would qualify under the category of "business administration," the

fact that he had used that phrase in a discussion about the government agency seemed

to indicate the subtle change in which the NFB's business practices would become

more influential than its cultural output in diagnoses of its overall operations.

Less than a month after the consultants began their investigation, the

government issued a press release announcing further changes to restore credibility at

the troubled institution. The government announced that commissioner Ross McLean's

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[25]NAC, RG2, Privy Council Files 18 Vol. 181, File R-20-A, Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Royal Commission on the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, 4 August 1949.
[26]NAC, RG2, Privy Council Files 18 Vol. 181, File R-20-A, Minutes of the twenty-third meeting of the Royal Commission on the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, 9 September 1949.
[27]House of Commons, *Debates*, December 7, 1949, 2860.
[28]Ibid.

contract would not be renewed and, effective immediately, the National Film Board

would be run by W. Arthur Irwin, former editor of *Maclean's* magazine.[29] Irwin had

been reluctant to take on the position, but was convinced by External Affairs minister

Brooke Claxton that the appointment at the NFB would be only a stepping-stone in a

long career in the public service, and that a diplomatic posting abroad would come after

order had been restored at the NFB.[30]

Management Consulting and Government Reform

The hiring of Woods Gordon also marked the continued presence of

management consulting firms acting as advisors in government affairs. This was a

process that began earlier in the twentieth century, where consultants were enlisted to

deal with overhauls of the still-developing civil service. In 1918, Prime Minister

Robert Borden hired an American firm, Arthur Young and Company, to develop a

classification system for the federal government in order to protect the bureaucracy

from accusations of patronage appointments. The firm and its principal, Edward O.

Griffenhagen, were hired based upon their experience in remaking Chicago's city

government, which had been wracked with charges of corruption and

mismanagement.[31] Griffenhagen's major accomplishment was the creation of the Civil

Service Commission as an "organizational branch" to conduct efficiency operations

within the public service.[32]

[29]NAC, RG2, Privy Council Files, Vol. 172 File N-13, Press Release, December 16, 1949.
[30]In 1953, Irwin would begin an eleven-year stint in the diplomatic corps including positions as the High Commissioner to Australia, and Ambassadorships to Brazil, Mexico, and Guatemala.
[31]Alisdair Roberts, *So-Called Experts: How American Consultants Remade the Canadian Civil Service, 1918-21.* (Toronto: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1996), 33-46.
[32]Roberts, 43.

Less than thirty years later, many consultants began to assume a direct role in government affairs, including sitting as chairs for Royal Commissions. In 1946 one of the firm of Clarkson Gordon's senior executives, Walter L. Gordon, was asked to serve as Commissioner on the Royal Commission on Administrative Classifications, a follow-up on the work on the civil service done by Arthur Young and Company. In a recent reassessment of Gordon's career, Stephen Azzi described how Gordon's performance as a commissioner reflected his particular style:

> He rushed the commissioners' work and later expressed pride that they had spent only three months on the job. With so little time, however, the research was bound to be superficial. The commissioners, for example, conducted no in-depth studies of personnel systems in other countries. Gordon's two colleagues, travelled to Washington, but they went without Gordon or the commission's secretary, and stayed only a few days. At best they could carry out only a rudimentary examination of the American bureaucracy. Furthermore, the commissioners met with the senior officials of the Civil Service Commission (CSC) just once, for about an hour. After the Royal Commission published its report, two representatives of the CSC, Chairman Charles Bland and Stanley Nelson, convinced the prime minister that Gordon had made up his mind before beginnings his investigation and had not given them an adequate opportunity to present their views.[33]

With only twenty-eight pages of text in the final report and a series of brief recommendations, the combination of the report's brevity with backlash from the civil service meant that the report was ultimately shelved by the King government.[34]

In spite of this, the prestige of J.D. Woods & Gordon Limited continued to rise and Gordon became managing director of the firm. Between 1944 and 1959 Woods Gordon was hired a number of times to investigate the problems of government departments. Projects undertaken by the firm during this time included restructuring Ontario's Hydroelectric Power Commission and the decentralizing operations at the

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[33]Stephen Azzi, *Walter Gordon and The Rise of Canadian Nationalism*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 23-24.
[34]Ibid. One of the only recommendations adopted was a salary increase for senior public servants.

Department of National Defence.[35] After working on the National Film Board, Gordon would go on to investigate the Ontario Highways Department, devise a new fiscal arrangement between Ottawa and the provinces, chair another Royal Commission on Economic Prospects and pursue a long career in the Liberal government. As Azzi explained, by the end of the 1950s Gordon's firms had so many contracts from the Ontario government alone that, according to one civil servant, "there seemed to be a man from Clarkson Gordon or Woods Gordon behind every pillar in Queen's Park."[36]

After Clarkson Gordon merged with the industrial engineering firm. J.D. Woods & Gordon in 1940, the company dramatically expanded its client base outside of the business sector and accepted assignments for governments at all levels, hospitals, professional associations and educational institutions.[37] Such actions were the industry standard; by the 1950s many major accounting firms branched off their operations into management consulting divisions and, as a result, extended their specialized services beyond advising on accounting procedures and incorporated systems analysis, paper work flow, and the installation of electronic equipment needed to run a large-scale organization.[38]

In the case of the NFB the consultants were brought in at the moment when accountability could no longer be sustained by internal relations of trust and had to be formalized, made visible, and subject to independent validation. To paraphrase Michael Power, the impact of the screening process is that conceptions of accountability become shaped in such a way that favour screening as the solution. This

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[35]Ibid.

[36]Quoted in Azzi, 25.

[37]This list comes from Clarkson Gordon's own corporate history, *The Story of the Firm, 1864-1964* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 61. An updated history commissioned by the firm, *The Clarkson Gordon Story* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989) is penned by, I believe, the same of author of Irwin's biography – David MacKenzie.

[38]Hodgetts, *The Canadian Public Service*, 25.

self-validating process is one that does not restore trust to the institution, but rather displaces it, reinvesting it in new batches of screening expertise such as management consultants and auditors. From this point onwards, the Woods Gordon report will occupy an important place in the discussions about the NFB in the months leading up to the release of its final report. The Liberal government will be able to use it to insulate itself from criticisms about its own management of the situation, and to restore credibility to the damaged situation both within the government itself and at the NFB in general. Furthermore, in the process of constructing the National Film Board as an "auditable" object for external investigations, locally-based structures of trust, management, and control became displaced and disturbed. From this point onward, the "specific" aspects of the national film board's operations will disappear as it begins the process of falling structurally in line with other business entities, beginning with its accounting procedures.

A discussion of the rise of accounting is important to our discussion here. This is because accounting serves not only as a set of business practices and a style of writing; it also serves an important symbolic function, as tool to bring about "accountability" in troubled institutions, such as the NFB. In the period under review accounting also emerged as part of a process of recuperation for Canada's business community in which certain commercial logics -- namely those of institutional transparency and openness -- become synonymous as markers of a free and open society. During the Cold War, these themes begin to assume a different connotation, as business principles begin to tether more closely with principles of democracy. It is within that context that the accounting profession emerges as an effective ally in the battle for public opinion and an advocate for the values of business principles. As we

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will see, it is attempts by politicians and practitioners to align accounting with principles of transparency, rigidity, and objectivity will serve to make it a valuable resource for dealing with government problems, including the National Film Board of Canada.

"Reporting to the Public": Accounting as Virtuous Communication

In a speech before the Empire Club of Canada on February 10, 1949, the President of the Burroughs Adding Machine Company of Detroit, Michigan, explained to his audience the strange paradox facing North American businesspeople. "In Canada and across the border," John Coleman explained, "two of the places on this earth in which Business — buying, manufacturing and selling, has helped most to build world leadership — there are a few groups of people who are organized to make business less effective. More important still, there are even greater political forces who don't much care how effective Business is."[39] He continued:

> Some statisticians tell us that substantial numbers of our population feel that they would be better off if Business were under some system of greater government control than it is now. Business, and particularly that ogre, Big Business, is too often blamed for much of what is wrong with our two countries. Some of this blame is applied for political reasons, some through honest misunderstanding. Whatever the reason, though, the pubic at large has many serious misconceptions about Business and Businessmen.[40]

Coleman was clearly pointing to the continued scepticism felt among Canadians and Americans about the integrity of the business community on the heels of economic collapse before the start of World War II and the relative popularity of New Deal social reforms. The increasing power of unions and stepped up regulation of commercial

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[39]John S. Coleman, "Reporting to the Public," Speech delivered to the Empire Club of Canada February 10, 1949 and published in *The Empire Club of Canada Speeches, Text available online at* www.empireclubfoundation.com. Accessed 20 July 2005.
[40]Ibid.

activity and labour legislation sullied the prestige the business community enjoyed during the 1920s. As Elizabeth Fones-Wolf explains, principles of individualism, competition, and free enterprise as the means for societal progress were replaced by preferences for an active welfare state, industrial democracy, and economic equality among the working classes. Although the tremendous wartime productivity represented a step towards repairing their reputation, business leaders struggled to restore their authoritative position among the populace.[41] Many in the business community feared the relationship between workers, the state and organized labour would continue to dominate the post-war direction of the North American economy.

Since "these misconceptions are serious because they are likely to be the basis for action which can do a lot more harm than good," Coleman explained that it was the responsibility of North American businessmen to correct these misconceptions through an extensive effort of public relations.[42] In the United States, this took the form of a multifaceted campaign, including economic education initiatives, sponsored radio programmes, newspaper and magazine advertisements, and community relations events, intended to construct a vision which connected companies to citizens that stressed mutual responsibility.[43] "The way to dispel this ghost," Coleman continued, "is to remove it from the abstract: demonstrate that no conspiracy of corporations or tycoons exist; demonstrate that the collective term 'business' simply means around four

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[41]Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labour and Liberalism*, 1945-1960 (Urbana and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 2.
[42]Coleman.
[43]Fones-Wolf, 5. For examples of these policies in the United States see William Bird, *"Better Living": Advertising, Media, and the New Vocabulary of Business Leadership, 1935-1955* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1999) Howell J. Harris, *The Right to Manage: Industrial Relations Policies of American Business in the 1940s* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982).

million separate enterprises in this country and in the United States, all of which are competing with each other for their share of the consumer's dollar."[44]

For Coleman and others, better reporting practices, both in terms of corporate public relations and communications with employees and clients, represented an excellent way to improve the general position of business entities. However, he devoted a significant amount of time during his speech to the Empire Club pointing to a rather unlikely source to improve the cause of business. As the primary means for communicating the company's financial profile to shareholders and the public, a company's financial statements and those that produce it -- accountants -- were isolated by Coleman as an important weapon in the cause for recuperation.

Ironically, it was not simply the *technical* aspects that brought accounting to Coleman's attention here, but rather the accounting profession's *communicative* function, centred mainly around the concept of "reporting" that is of interest here. With a professional credo supported by principles of transparency, rule-bound discipline and objectivity, and an authoritative style of writing, accountants, like journalists, could play a role in better informing the public of the democratic function of business activities by presenting information about an organization's business and financial affairs, both its triumphs and its excesses, in a clear and accessible way.

For Coleman, the financial statements were an often neglected source of corporate public relations: "Many companies feel that the clay has passed when a four-page folder covered with dollar signs and technical accounting language can be expected to tell the public all it needs to-or should-know about a company."[45] However, he explained that the presence of complicated accounting language simply

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[44]Coleman.
[45]Ibid.

contributes to the perception that business entities are lying about their day-to-day operations. A greater appreciation of the financial statement reading public among those in the business community would result in more legible financial statements. This would in turn make such information easier for the public to digest and serve to benefit the position of the business sector within society:

> Just one or two simple examples can explain the sort of thing I mean. If the untrained critics of our system of business could be made to grasp the concept that a "reserve for depreciation," followed by a dollar sign and some figures in dollars and odd cents do not represent a neat pile of currency and coins being held "in reserve," in the president's safe, we would be making progress. And if the public could understand that a corporation which shows a million dollars in profit at the end of the year may still have no cash in the bank, then we'd really be getting somewhere....[i]f each business concern which does issue a statement can make its operations a little clearer to its public, the aggregate effect will soon begin to be felt in terms of less suspicion and more confidence.[46]

The *Financial Post's* editor, R.A. McEachern, echoed Coleman's sentiments, and also recognized the increasingly central role that accountants could play both in defending these principles and in assisting in the public relations effort for Canadian business. In a speech delivered to the Dominion Association of Chartered Accountants weeks before the release of the critical article on the National Film Board, McEachern explained how important accountants were in what he called "the new social climate" towards the business world, a point he punctuated with a decidedly anti-communist slant:

> First, of course, is the new social climate filled with the cries of the economic illiterates that profit is a bad thing. That particular piece of nonsense comes from all quarters, high and low. Unfortunately, there is considerable evidence to suggest that corporate profits at today's level are not adequate over the long run to maintain the health and reproductive apparatus of our economy. Some Russian economists, for instance, see proof that the capitalist system is bound to collapse in the fact that our profits are too low.[47]

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[46]Ibid.
[47]The speech was later published the organization's journal. See R.A. McEachern, "The Role of the Accountant in a Changing Social Climate," *The Canadian Chartered Accountant* 56: 4 (December 1949): 262.

The remainder of McEachern's speech was devoted to presenting the

accounting profession as an effort with similar objectives as the journalists in the

Financial Post in both communicating the efforts of business and seeking out corporate

malfeasance. McEachern began by characterizing the function of *The Financial Post* as

a kind of watchdog for shareholders too busy to pour over the finer points of corporate

reports:

> We go over financial statements with a fine-tooth comb. Then we set up the
> account in a standard form we have worked out where every item means
> exactly the same thing in every case. We watch for any new items in the
> report, watch for any unexplained deviations from previous years. We may
> then put questions direct to the company executive to get information which is
> important to all shareholders.[48]

"Today business lives in a glass house, whether it likes it or not," McEachern

explained, "and the number of businesses which have anything to hide, anything to be

ashamed of, is very, very small. This is a very powerful reason why today's business

should be eager to get its story -- the whole story -- into the hands of the public."[49] The

best way to do this, McEachern explained, "is not hiring professional propagandists for

free enterprise, not subsidizing political parties, but telling the simple facts about

itself."[50] Like Coleman, for McEachern accountants provided a powerful narrator in

these efforts. communicating information about business to the general public through

excellent financial records, the accountant can make clear "to the millions that business

is honest."[51]

In drawing reference to accounting as a means of communication, Coleman and

McEachern elaborated upon the longstanding impact of the accounting venture to

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[48]Ibid., 265.
[49]Ibid., 262.
[50]Ibid.
[51]Ibid., 264.

publicize business activity. In her discussion of sixteenth century double-entry bookkeeping, Mary Poovey elaborated on this idea by arguing that, as a system of writing, such early accounting practices produced two effects. First, the public presentation of financial records represents a proclamation of the honesty of merchants (a social effect), while the formal precision of the double-entry bookkeeping system produces the epistemological effect of accuracy, making its results not subject to challenge.[52] As a result, the double-entry bookkeeping system created an interface between a company's private books and the public institutions it relied upon for funding support.[53]

The position of the accountant as reporter and defender of "business principles," not specific business interests, was part of a move that saw the profession expanding beyond the parameters of bookkeeping and financial statements. Furthermore, the expansion of the welfare state system within Canada offered new opportunities for the profession that would have to require a continued re-evaluation of the function of accounting itself. An important part of that reorientation was to reposition the accountant's duties in a more active role and to relate the practice of accounting to larger principles associated both with the values of capitalism and democracy.

In an article written in the style of a manifesto for the *Canadian Chartered Accountant*, Douglas Irwin observed that the expanding role of government "over the lives of men and, in particular, the policies and practices of business enterprise" was becoming commonplace within Canadian society. "Whatever may be our private opinion of these developments," he continued, "it seems inevitable that we live now in

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[52]Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact*, 29.
[53]Ibid., 37.

a world in which the motivation is toward the welfare state."[54] However, Irwin explained the expansion of government machinery would mean a greater role for professional management, meaning the accountant will occupy an increasingly important position "as the interpreter and mediator between the state and the individual."[55] "With formal systems of financial expertise," he continued, "there is no hint that the standard of conduct or the principles of auditing and accounting should be changed in their basic concept but rather that they be applied with greater vision in order to adapt the role of the profession in present-day conditions."[56]

In order to fulfill that new role, Irwin pointed to a number of pedagogical changes that needed to be made. His explanation of the extent of the expertise of the public accountant cut across numerous disciplines, including law, social sciences, and the humanities:

> Besides having a grasp of the basic principles of accounting and auditing, the qualified public accountant must have fundamental knowledge of corporate finance, economics, the use and methods of statistical calculation, actuarial science and law. In addition he should have advanced training and an almost literary facility in the use of English, a capacity for analysis and synthesis, and the ability to present the results of such methods of investigation in clear and comprehensible terms. Finally, the standards of the profession should require an understanding of sociology and political economy, and of the citizen's duties and responsibilities.[57]

As for how accountants would be utilized outside of the business world, Irwin offered an interesting comparison that distinguished the profession as the on-the-ground practical scientists. "If lawyers have been recognized as the chief instigators of public

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[54]Douglas Irwin, "The Accountant in the Welfare State," *The Canadian Chartered Accountant* 57: 2 (April 1950): 157.
[55]Ibid.
[56]Ibid., 158.
[57]Ibid., 160.

policy," he explained, "accountants are becoming to an increasing degree the chief

executors of these policies."[58]

As a result of this increasing responsibility, Irwin encouraged accountants to shed

their image of anonymity and "step out into the limelight of public affairs thereby

helping to make the law."[59] In a final call for action, Irwin stressed the centrality of this

expanded purpose by relating it to the greater cause of societal progress:

> The professional accountant may not be an expert economist, tax authority,
> solicitor, or industrial engineer but he must have some experience in and
> knowledge of all these fields. In addition his practical science of accounting,
> his familiarity with corporate finance, banking, and the effects of business
> policy upon employer and employee cause him to be one of the most obvious
> and best qualified representatives of his fellow citizens in a democratic
> society.[60]

It is clear, then, that the reporting of the administrative problems at the National

Film Board by the *Financial Post* was not a concerted attack against the film board *per

se*. In the context of currents blowing within Canada's business community, its leading

publication and, members of the government itself, the concerns about security threats

within the film board served as the opening for a more sustained critique of how

government generally should be operated. By extension, the attack on the film board

also operated at the epistemological level, with regards to which kinds of information

should be moved to the forefront to better understand these operations in this new

climate. Within this context, accounting emerged as a necessary tool in the quest to

better understand the day-to-day activities of government affairs. The success of the

accounting profession in presenting itself as both an objective venture and as a formally

precise and accurate system assisted in incorporating it into government affairs as an

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[58]Ibid., 161.
[59]Ibid., 162.
[60]Ibid.

excellent means to quell controversy and deliver facts which could be actionable in the form of policy. This became the case for the National Film Board, as both independent consultants and accountants began to occupy sacred positions in the institution's recuperation efforts. The success of the Woods Gordon report in dealing with the film board helped to raise accounting logic into an authoritative position in driving future efforts at the NFB.

Balancing the Books: The Woods Gordon Report and NFB Historiography

In spite of its importance to the post-war direction of the NFB, the Woods Gordon report receives only a passing mention and at best, a few paragraphs within the scholarly literature. Even those taking the long view have failed to question the possible relationship between the author of the report, future political luminary Walter L. Gordon, and the history of the NFB. In two large biographies of Gordon the work for the National Film Board is almost totally absent from view.[61] The report has even failed to register in histories of the public service that describe the increasing influence of consultants in framing and directing government policy decisions, choosing instead to skip ahead to Gordon's role in two prominent Royal Commissions during the 1950s.[62] Some of the better accounts elaborate upon the findings of the report, and take the time to point out that, to many people's surprise, the Woods Gordon report was largely positive in its attitude towards the NFB.[63] Others are more laudatory not about the report's contents but about its overall form, drawing attention to both the authority

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[61]The only mention is a single sentence that can be found in Stephen Azzi, *Walter Gordon and the Rise of Canadian Nationalism*, 24. The report receives no mention in Denis Smith's *Gentle Patriot: A Political Biography of Walter Gordon* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1973) or in Gordon's own memoir, *Walter L. Gordon: A Political Memoir* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977).

[62]See J.L. Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins, 1935-1957*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998)'; J.E. Hodgetts, *The Canadian Public Service;* Denis Saint-Martin, *Building the New Managerialist State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

and the lucidity of the work.[64] For Gary Evans, the completion of the review process, changing of the administrative guard and enactment of new legislation signalled, "the worst was over" for the internal strife at the film board.[65]

Each of these evaluations share the same sentiment about the pivotal nature of the Woods Gordon report in exonerating the NFB and supporting its mission as a key cultural agency. They also seem to be in general agreement that the changes suggested by the report concerned only the prosaic matters of the film board's accounting practices.[66] Since the overall tenor of the Woods Gordon report was positive these assessors felt little need to quibble about the technical issues associated with the NFB's bookkeeping. However these conclusions have failed to recognize the impact such accounting changes may have had on the NFB or have chosen not to analyse the possible reasons why such issues assumed the importance that they did at that particular point in time. If these developments point to a bureaucratization of the NFB's activities, there has been no consideration of the process by which that transformation occurred.

This absence has important effects on interpretations of this moment in the NFB's history. I would like to suggest that the leading approach to the study of the NFB's history that focuses on the communist purge tends to overstate the impact of the security apparatus on the film board's operations after the scare. This is because such

[63]Véronneau, *Resistance et Affirmation*, 20.
[64]C. Rodney James refers to the report as a "lucid and precise work," while David B. Jones characterizes the report and the treatment of the NFB in the Massey Commission a year later as "lucid, unpretentious reports." C. Rodney James, *Film as National Art* (New York: Arno Press, 1977), 142, and David B. Jones, *The National Film Board of Canada: The Development of its Documentary Achievement.* (Ph.D. dissertation. Stanford University, 1976), 96.
[65]Evans, *In the National Interest,* 12.
[66]David B. Jones elaborates on this general conclusion: "The Woods and Gordon team expressed sympathy for the special management problems involved in filmmaking and simply recommended some revised accounting procedures." David B. Jones, *The Best Butler in the Business: Tom Daly of the National Film Board of Canada.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 47.

an explanation is, on its own, inadequate for dealing with questions pertaining to the specific elements of the newly established *Canada Film Act*, whose contents reveal more about the engagements with the administrative sciences than those of the security service. If the RCMP official and the "loyalty test" were actors in the production of individual credibility, the accountant and the administrative audit played similar roles in the production of institutional credibility needed to recuperate the film board's image both with the government and the Canadian public. As a result, referring to the simplicity of the shifts of procedure also reinforces the perceptions of accounting as an innocuous practice -- both in terms of its dullness and its harmlessness -- and therefore not requiring further investigation.

For an explanation of this tendency we can return to the concept of screening. Although its meaning connotes notions of exposure and filtering, screening also carries a third meaning, that of abstraction and obfuscation. Screening is an act of sleight-of-hand, drawing the viewer's attention to one area and away from something else transpiring behind the object providing the obstacle. In the management consultant's report a certain amount of screening is taking place.[67] Summoned to act as an independent observer to investigate and depict a true picture of organizational activity, the independent consultant arrives on the scene with authority embedded within the client's demand for assistance. The consultant would not be needed if the organization did not require an independent and objective voice to observe the situation at hand.

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[67]Those probing into the administrative status of the NFB come face-to-face with the practical aspects of screening, as the administrative records for the film board in the immediate post-war era are suspiciously absent from both the National Archives in Ottawa and the NFB's archives in Montreal. Correspondence between Woods Gordon and the National Film Board appears to be a casualty of this gap in primary source materials and attempts to find any information from the firm's latest incarnation, Ernst & Young, were unsuccessful. The preservation of the NFB's audiovisual record acts as a screen of comprehensiveness, obscuring the fact that the administrative records appear to be missing without any scrutiny as to why this is the case.

The apparent lack of critical attention indirectly and tacitly underwrites the legitimacy of the Woods Gordon report because of the author's status as management consultants shielded from scrutiny by affiliations with institutions enrobed with conceptions of accountability, efficiency, and expediency. However this also screens out the consultant's methodology in divining the information needed to arrive at their conclusions. The fact that consultants were brought in to deal with the NFB and the simple accounting suggestions that resulted from the report appears to be more important than issues dealing with the process by which the report achieved its status.[68] By placing those measures into relief it may be possible to view such developments as symbols of the rising importance of certain forms of knowledge about cultural affairs and subtler shifts in the way the film board was perceived and administered.

"A Tightening Up of its Administrative Practices"

Based on a methodological approach that incorporated qualitative, non-accounting specific methods such as the personal interview, an "examination of various statements and files" and the preparation of "certain information," Woods Gordon's *Survey of Organization and Business Administration* arrived on the desk of Minister Robert Winters at a slim 32 pages.[69] After providing a summary of its recommendations, the Woods Gordon report is presented in the form of a professional letter, addressed to Winters and beginning with the salutation, "Dear Sir."

The overall tone of the report approved of the film board's activities in general and of its staff in particular. This was accomplished first by repositioning the

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[68]This statement is an elaboration on Power's assertion that "the fact of audit is more important than the how of audit." See Michael Power, *The Audit Explosion*. (London: Demos, 1994). 48.
[69]*Survey of Organization and Business Administration* (Ottawa: Woods Gordon, 1950).

scrutinized staff alongside issues of managerial efficiency and, by extension, away from

questions of political affiliations such as communism. Gordon drew specific reference

to the fact that NFB staff members were anxious to see changes "in the Board's

practices which would improve the efficiency of the organization."[70] He further

suggested that many of the recommendations contained in the report came from NFB

employees themselves.

The report began by reviewing the NFB's historical development, both before

and through its establishment in 1939. The report recounted the NFB's role during the

war effort and particularly to the institution's central role in supporting the activities of

a number of government departments at the time, including the departments of defence,

munitions and supply, Wartime Prices and Trade Board, War Finance Committee, and

Wartime Information Board. Gordon then explained how the NFB began to assume

additional responsibilities such as poster and publication design and photo services as

well as the expansion of film distribution into non-theatrical venues. Considering that

it now covered more activities than had been originally intended, Gordon suggested that

the time would be appropriate for what he called "a redefinition of the Board's function

and of the scope of its activities."[71] If the first part of this sentiment expressed the need

for an appreciation of the film board's expanding role, the second general suggestion

pointed towards a more restrictive stance, suggesting at the same time "a tightening up

of its administrative practices, particularly with respect to planning, coordination and

control."[72]

The twin themes of recuperation and restriction continued throughout the

document, beginning with a revision of the Board's image. Rather than being the

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[70]Ibid., 2.
[71]Ibid.

author of its own problems, the film board was presented as the suffering victim of numerous "difficulties." These included a lack of trained staff; the dispersal of activities across nine different locations in Ottawa; the incompatibility of those buildings for film production; the presence of fire and explosion hazards due to a lack of sufficient storage facilities for nitrate film stock; a lack of adequate working capital; the seasonal nature of film scheduling artificially inflating film production costs; and the constant reshuffling of staff. Having gone considerable distance to prove that the NFB continued to produce in the face of these unfortunate working conditions, Gordon's next sentence, "It is obvious that some of the difficulties referred to above are inherent in government film production in Canada and will continue to be problems," may be considered as a less than supportive response.[73]

The report continued by explaining that any major adjustments that could be made to the NFB appeared to stem from within the organization itself. Gordon advocated measures that would move the NFB away from government interference, including a recommendation that the film board be established as a crown corporation. Other measures advocated included getting parliament to allot a larger and consistent working capital fund; to allow the NFB to enter into contracts without direct government permission; and to keep its accounting on an accrual rather than on a cash basis, thereby reorganizing the NFB's books along revenue and expenditure lines.

The Woods Gordon report then suggested an organizational structure for the revamped film board. To begin, the report suggested the NFB create a single position, Government Film Commissioner, to oversee all production of NFB films. Once established, the new commissioner should undertake "a detailed study of the types of

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[72]Ibid., 4.
[73]Ibid., 7.

work being done in each department to see if any present activities could be curtailed or transferred elsewhere."[74] Then Gordon suggested that the organization be divided into a number of different divisions: production, technical operations, financing, distribution, and administrative services.

Among the activities to fall under the administrative services department, according to Gordon, the accounting section would be the largest.[75] The report suggested that the accounting department should be under the supervision of someone with varied experience in commercial and cost accounting. This was particularly necessary, as the administrative controls and mechanisms present in the NFB were still areas in need of improvement. Gordon pointed to areas of administrative sloppiness, largely grouped under the category of "commitments made without any regard to the availability of funds," and called for greater attention to project budgeting and more precise production cost estimates.[76] He also cited the presence of over five thousand different accounts operating within the NFB's bookkeeping system, and called for a substantial reduction of the number of accounts on the books.[77]

The Woods Gordon report also called for closer cooperation between departments and the NFB on individual projects, particularly those undertaken with the department of External Affairs, and encouraged them to follow "the usual commercial procedure" in terms of payments to the NFB on a stage-by-stage basis as things pass along the production process.[78] On the subject of working with outside producers, Gordon explained that the topic stood outside of the study's terms of reference, but then proceeded to detail that "the Board's relations with outside organizations are

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[74]Ibid., 19-20.
[75]Ibid., 23.
[76]Ibid., 24.
[77]Ibid., 25.

sufficiently varied and extensive to warrant the establishment of definite policies

governing them."[79]

<u>Reaction</u>

While many considered the tone of the Woods Gordon report as appreciative of

the NFB, press reaction was less definitive. Editorials assessing the review picked

through the report and focused only on those areas that were representative of

organizational disorder and fiscal impropriety. In the *Toronto Telegram's* estimation,

the report had revealed the extent of "looseness that prevailed" within the film board's

operations. "The Film Board is an illustration," the editorial went on, "of what can

happen when a government agency of minor importance is permitted to run along under

its own steam with the cabinet taking little interest in it."[80] The editorial then

selectively pointed out the areas of the report that revealed examples of administrative

disorder: "It is stated there has been no major routine for approving production of new

films. Work on new films was sometimes staffed before detailed reports were prepared

or cost estimates produced. Difficulties have arisen because commitments were made

without regard to the availability of funds."[81] The *Montreal Gazette* repeated the line

from the report about the disconnect between decision-making and fiscal availability,

and characterized the film board as existing "in a state of financial chaos." The

editorial continued by telling readers that the results of the study should not have come

as a surprise to many, since "this is only what one would expect from so artistic a

department, which would be naturally disposed to consider the details of accounting to

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[78]Ibid., 30.
[79]Ibid., 33.
[80]*Toronto Telegram*, April 1, 1950.
[81]Ibid.

be of little import." The newspaper most sympathetic to the tribulations at the National

Film Board was not impressed with the results of the report. After months of defending

the film board's record and even suggesting that members from the private film

industry lobby were behind the controversy at the NFB, the *Ottawa Citizen's*

editorialists believed the report added little "to general knowledge of the government

film program or to the problem of administering it."[82]

However, it is back to the pages of the *Financial Post* where we see how the

situation at the Film Board stood as the case study for further administrative reforms

within government. The *Post's* editorial, entitled "Value for Our Money," brought

together the Woods Gordon report and the annual report of the Auditor General, R.

Watson Sellar, as examples of attempts to clean up of government affairs.[83] After

concluding that Sellar's suggestions for streamlining the public estimates system and

mechanics for parliamentary accounting were "worthy of close study," the editorial slid

into a discussion of Woods Gordon's assessment of the NFB as indicative of a larger

conclusion:

> The report on the NFB is an important examination of one particular branch of
> public business. That report absolutely confirms the need for reform and
> control in a body that spends some $214 million of public money annually.
> The report also suggests that other phases of public business might most
> profitably be put under the scrutiny of outside and professional
> investigation…What's needed is that the government now apply the business
> of the NFB report not only to the board itself, but to a whole range of
> government operations. The taxpayers load is too heavy now.[84]

Then the paper appeared to congratulate itself for bringing the financial problems at the

NFB to the forefront. "It has taken the white light of publicity, plus an independent

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[82]"Report on the Film Board," *Ottawa Citizen*, March 31, 1950.
[83]"Value for our Money," *Financial Post*, April 8, 1950.
[84]Ibid.

business examination," the report went on, "to disclose waste and inefficiency such as could scarcely exist in any properly managed business concern."[85]

Both Woods Gordon and the Auditor General figured prominently in the Massey Commission's assessment of the National Film Board. However, contrary to the negative focus of Canadian newspapers, the Massey Commission report emphasized the areas of the report that were more sympathetic to the film board's cause. Because of what they called Woods Gordon's "careful report" on the business administration of the NFB, the commission felt "relieved of the responsibility of researching a number of administrative details, and has left us free to devote ourselves to what seem to us to be more pressing issues, the proper function of the film board, and the manner in which the Board can most effectively contribute to the welfare of the nation."[86] Among the issues gaining attention among the Massey Commissioners was a reference to the poor conditions under which the NFB was working. Repeating what Zoë Druick characterized as the "tale of courageous survival" that is repeated through policy documents and most nationalist historiographies of cultural institutions the report explained that "[w]e have observed with anxious concern that the various premises in which the Film Board conducts its operations are cramped, scattered inconvenient and hazardous."[87] "In the interests of economy and efficiency," the report went on, "this deplorable situation should be changed."[88]

Both the report and auditor general, reappear, however, in the objections submitted by Arthur Surveyer, the most business-minded of the three commissioners.

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[85]Ibid.

[86]*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters*, 36.

[87]Druick, *Narratives of Citizenship*, 32. Druick explains that such an approach has ramifications for the study of the NFB as a whole: "this narrative of survival in a harsh climate isn't helpful in understanding either the fact of its [the NFB's] survival or, of equal importance, the meaning of its vast body of work."

[88]*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters*, 313.

The future founder of SNC Lavalin made the same equation between the findings of the

Woods Gordon report on the NFB and the more general observations about the

operations of government offered by the Auditor General:

> The JD Woods and Gordon report contains some pertinent suggestions,
> particularly on the question of the costing methods adopted by the Board. It
> refers to the advisability of showing clearly all expenditures. This is in
> agreement with the recommendation made, a year ago, by the Auditor
> General, Mr. Watson Sellar, to the effect that all reports by governmental
> departments or agencies should show clearly for each fiscal year total revenue
> and expenditure, in order to give to Parliament and to the people of Canada an
> exact idea of the cost of operating and maintaining each particular department
> of agency.[89]

Surveyer also accurately pointed to the report's inherent weakness in that Gordon did

not make any "comments concerning the efficiency or inefficiency of the operations of

the NFB," suggesting that that the investigators reckoned that it would be unfair to

criticize this aspect of the operations because its dispersed nature "handicapped" the

film board.[90]

A New *Film Act* and the Move Towards Private Film Production

Before the Massey Commission had completed its investigation, a new National

Film Act achieved royal assent on 30 June 1950. The new *Act* enshrined a large

number of the report's recommendations, including changes to the NFB's board

structure to further distance itself from government interference, gaining benefits for

employees, establishing a government film commissioner, and improved operating

funds.[91]

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[89]Ibid., 407.
[90]Ibid.
[91]National Film Act in *Statutes of Canada* 14 Geo. VI Vol. 1 (Ottawa: King's Printer 1950), pp. 567-574.
A useful comparison between the recommendations of the Woods Gordon report and the contents of the
National Film Act was prepared for another investigation two years later. See Special Committee on the
National Film Board, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, May 22, 1952, 35-36.

One aspect that did not appear to have come from the Woods Gordon report is the change in the NFB's mandate. Section 9 of the *Act*, entitled "Purposes of the Board" reads as follows:

> The Board is established to initiate and promote the production and distribution of films in the national interest and in particular
> a. to produce and distribute and to promote the production and distribution of films designed to interpret Canada to Canadians and to other nations;
> b. to represent the Government of Canada in its relations with persons engaged in commercial motion picture film activity in connection with motion picture films for the Government or any other department thereof;
> c. to engage in research in film activity and to make available the results thereof to persons engaged in the production of films;
> d. to advise the Governor in Council in connection with film activities;
> e. to discharge such other duties relating to film activity as the Governor in Council may direct it to undertake.[92]

The phrase "interpret Canada to Canadians," one of the more popular phrases in the NFB's lexicon, actually carries with it tones from the Maclean Hunter publications. The editorial programme at *Maclean's* in 1947, two years before Irwin joined the film board, was to "apply the best talent we can command to report the Canadian story, interpret the Canadian scene, dramatize the Canadian way of life."[93] The centrality of the phrase is also evident in Robert Winters conception of the film board's activities. In a memo sent a week after the release of the Woods Gordon report to board member Donald Cameron, director of the Department of Extension at the University of Alberta, Winters suggested that while interpreting Canada to Canadians was the "most important

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[92]*Canada Film Act* in *Statutes of Canada,* 569.
[93]*Maclean's* 1947 Editorial Programme quoted in Mackenzie, 205. The forward of the Irwin biography, written by former *Maclean's* writer Pierre Berton explained the magazine's direction in language almost identical to that of the National Film Board: *"Maclean's* task, in Irwin's credo, was to 'interpret Canada to Canadians.'" Government publications—including those from the NFB—erroneously associate the phrase "interpret Canada to Canadians" with the Act establishing the National Film Board in 1939, which contains the language "to help Canadians in all parts of Canada to understand the ways of living and the problems of Canadians in other parts."

function" of the NFB, the means for achieving this task were not to be held in the field

of film production. "The performance of these functions," Winters added, "is a matter

of distribution."[94] Winters explained to Cameron that the Government of Canada

needed to be able to exercise considerable scrutiny over the content and style of films it

uses, "just as the CBC must be in a position to broadcast to Canadians the type of

programs it considers to be desirable."[95] The problem, Winters told Cameron, was

whether or not the NFB should continue to handle this responsibility, or whether it

should be devolved into the hands of private industry. At this stage in the memo,

Winters appeared to be thinking out loud between a free market approach and that of a

more developmental capitalism:

> Moreover, having regard to the fact that Canada is not mature in the field
> of film making, perhaps the Government has a responsibility to maintain a
> nucleus in this field which can develop techniques in photography, music,
> sound recording, and other phases of the industry; thereby assisting private
> enterprise and encouraging them to maintain a high quality of product. On the
> other hand, the government wishes to give the greatest encouragement to
> private enterprise in all fields of activity and to assist it wherever possible.[96]

The assistance would come, Winters concluded, by paring back the National

Film Board's operations and by having the organization play the role of assisting

private industry by allowing private films to be shown in the NFB's distribution

network. In line with the administrative recommendations, Winters suggested that he

board "should aim at reducing its size to the minimum number of personnel and the

minimum amount of space required to achieve the objective of a film-making nucleus

that will concentrate on the production of a few high quality films."[97] With the

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[94]NAC, RG 2, Series B-2, Vol. 172, Privy Council Office. File N-13, Memo. Robert H. Winters to
Donald Cameron, April 5, 1950.
[95]Ibid.
[96]Ibid.
[97]Ibid.

personnel paring intact, the NFB should "have all other film work carried out under its

supervision under private enterprise" and should "stress its other important function of

developing an efficient distribution system which will bring film to Canadians in all

parts of the country and thereby interpret one part of Canada to the other."[98] "In that

distribution," Winters continued, "the Board should not hesitate to purchase and use

films produced by private agencies, provided they meet the Board's standard of

quality."[99]

Winters' approach to the film board was consonant with the Department of

Resources and Supply's overall approach to how government departments should be

used to facilitate the growth of Canadian private industry. In his first speech after

accepting the new ministerial post, Winters explained to the Junior Chamber of

Commerce the department's priorities on "resource development":

> First, great emphasis is placed on economic and intelligent use of resources,
> avoiding waste and safeguarding growth and replenishment. Secondly,
> opportunities for the development of Canadian resources are open to the
> fullest extent to private individuals and business firms who have the initiative
> and the ability to grasp the opportunities and to make the most of them.[100]

He then explained that in order to provide those opportunities, the department

needed first to understand what resources were actually available. The way to

accomplish this, Winters explained, "includes surveys of many kinds, including

geological, hydrographic, geodesic, topographical and economic surveys of natural

resources."[101] Once this stage is completed, the remaining stages for the department

were to help businesses ascertain the quality of the resources, provide significant

amounts of capital to aid private interests, and support resource development and

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[98]Ibid.
[99]Ibid.
[100]NAC, MG32 B24 Vol. 2. Robert Winters Papers File 2-9-1-1. Speech to Junior Chamber of
Commerce, February 13, 1950.

conservation measures.[102]   It is clear, then, that Winters viewed the NFB in the same

light, as an agency to facilitate the advancement of private industry into the film

production sector.

As we have seen in this chapter, the subtle recasting of the board's

administrative operations produced important consequences, with key accounting

concepts such as the number of accounts and "accounts receivable" becoming sites for

political intervention about the film board's affairs. Since accounting concepts function

both temporally (since financial statements are only financial "snapshots" of an

organization's activities determined which are gathered according to the calendrical

fiction of the "fiscal year") and spatially (whereby those activities are given categorical

'homes' along the balance sheet), such developments produce two effects. First, they

present evaluations of the film board based on abstracted concepts that connote

principles of transparency, efficiency, and trust. Second, accounting's capacity to

convert diverse and complex processes into a single figure or set of figures provides the

raw materials for standardized comparisons between entities, even if such comparisons

cannot be fairly undertaken. As Peter Miller explains, the effect of such calculation is

to efface much of the accounting figures context, to screen it from view. In one

example,

> By translating the process of car manufacturing, the assembly of electrical
> goods, or the administration of health care and education into a single figure,
> accounting makes comparable activities and processes whose physical
> characteristics and geographical location may bear no resemblance
> whatsoever.[103]

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[101]Ibid.

[102]Ibid.

[103]Peter Miller, "Accounting and Objectivity: The Invention of Calculating Selves and Calculable Spaces," in *Rethinking Objectivity*. Edited by Allen Megill (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 246.

Michael Dorland recognized this fact in his discussion of the NFB between the

mid-1950s to the mid-1960s. In response to an increasingly powerful and persuasive

private film production lobby making arguments based on economic measures, it was

clear that, as a government agency, that the NFB was "that it operated according to an

order of rationality that was not, as it would put it, 'economy' in the narrow sense."[104]

> Rather, the NFB operated under the form of governmental rationality that
> we termed, following Foucault, governmentalization, an unquantifiable
> principle of self-extension. What justified the NFB *to itself* was that it
> personified this principle of comprehensiveness, a voluminousness, a
> totality.[105]

In an interesting section dealing with the impact of the "statisticalization" at the NFB,

Dorland further suggests that the film board's mandate to produce and share

information with the private film sector produced the effects whereby the film board

was contributing to its own marginalization in the fields of feature film and television

production. Under this new arrangement, the NFB was be forced to justify itself on the

grounds of abstract numerical phenomena.[106] With the renewed emphasis on accounting

and operational efficiency placed upon the NFB before the period Dorland covers, the

information produced by such knowledge has a negative effect on the film board's

aspirations. This is because it is more than likely that private businesses as centres for

profit may run more effectively than the NFB, thereby indirectly supporting the claim

for greater recognition by the private sector that would emerge in the middle of the

1950s, thereby extending the governmentality of Canadian film.

On the back page of its 1949/50 annual report, the NFB explained that after the

series of investigations had been undertaken, a thorough "reorganization along the lines

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[104]Dorland, *So Close to the State/s*, 76. Emphasis original.
[105]Ibid.
[106]Ibid., 51-55.

laid down in the Woods Gordon report was proceeding."[107] One of those changes

occurred within the administrative branch, where the NFB hired C.A. Miller to head up

the accounting division. Miller, a registered industrial accountant, was a specialist in

the field of cost accounting the memo explained that such a change was necessary

because the previous system, in which the film board's accounting was performed by

the Comptroller of the Treasury was deemed to be "unsatisfactory" and that a "more

practical accounting procedure was needed." [108] In its comments, the report highlights

the significance of the hiring of Miller and what this will mean for the operations of the

board's accounting division:

> Although government accounting methods vary considerably from industry,
> the operation of the Accounting Division corresponds very closely with that of
> any business office. It is quite possible that the Accounting Division more
> closely resembles the company-operation more than any other department of
> the government (Crown corporations excluded).[109]

The emphasis on the financial performance at the film board would undercut

any other possible positive developments that would result. Leaving aside the specific

accounting questions, one can see how the NFB's operations were being slowly moved

away, piece by piece, through the imposition of certain management techniques. The

net effect on the NFB would be an internal sundering of its operations from the inside

out, driven by a subtle administrative re-statement of the terms on which the film board

was to be conceived.

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[107]NFB Archives, *NFB Annual Report*. (Ottawa: National Film Board, 1950).

[108]Ibid. The present-day equivalent of a registered industrial accountant is a Certified Management Accountant, or CMA.

[109]The undated memo, entitled, *Functions of the Administrative Branch* was probably written in the time between the completion of the administrative review and the film board's move to Montreal in 1954. NFB Archives, Code 1288.

Conclusion

The Woods Gordon report's effectiveness in restoring the credibility of the National Film Board can be determined along a number of temporal stages. In the short-term, the hiring of the firm and the application of the audit assisted the government in providing closure on a controversial event, even if the process by which that closure was achieved is apparently difficult to view. As Michael Power explains, "the advancement of credibility and the renormalization of practical common sense depends on eventually 'effacing' the context in which that closure was contested."[110] In the medium-term, however, the results were more mixed, since the end-user either selectively incorporates aspects of the report to advance an already held position on the NFB or disregards the elements of the report he or she does not accept. However, this does not impact upon the effectiveness of auditing technologies in the long-term. Here, the successful use of the report, even temporarily, authenticated both the credibility of the management consultant and of auditing practices. The consultant's ability to restore order in a disorderly situation was seen as representative of the effectiveness of the consultant's methods that construct certain organizational elements as objects for auditing activity.

Just over a decade after the Woods Gordon report had reorganized the National Film Board, the utility of management consultants for reorganizing cultural matters would reappear. Members of a Parliamentary Committee on the CBC suggested to the Board of Governors that they consider "the advisability of commissioning management consultants to inquire further into the operations" at the broadcaster.[111] The suggestion was made largely as a result of the relative success of the Royal Commission on

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[110]See Michael Power, "Auditing and the Production of Legitimacy," *Accounting, Organizations and Society* 28:3 (2003): 392.

Government Organization, chaired by J. Grant Glassco, a partner in Woods Gordon's

latest incarnation, Clarkson Gordon. The commission had been coordinated by new

Conservative Prime Minister John Diefenbaker under the belief that the bureaucracy

had become too close to the Liberal government, a product of the liberal's twenty-year

reign over the federal government. The commission was significant as much for its use

of outside management consultants, who comprised more than half of the investigating

officers, as for its findings.[112] Glassco argued that consultants were a necessary actor in

returning order to the public service. The impact of the report, according to J.E.

Hodgetts, was significant for the operations in the civil service:

> Over the decade of the sixties the commission's reports have had a profound
> impact on the Canadian public service, having been used as a source of
> argument (if not inspiration) for any conceivable administrative alteration in
> structure and procedures. Not only in their underlying principles but in their
> many detailed proposals the reports reflect the thinking of the business-
> oriented community on problems of managing and organizing large
> enterprises. We find the accountants' concerns with identifying 'real costs';
> we observe the businessman's concern for relating revenues from services to
> charges to services, for accrual accounting, and for the need to 'contract out'
> many operations now being undertaken within the public departments; we see
> the claim for the energetic adoption of systems analyses and other
> management techniques that have now proven their effectiveness in private
> business and in the provision of which the public service has lagged behind.[113]

According to Peers, before the CBC directors had any time to review the suggestion,

the parliamentary committee had already decided that the Glassco Commission itself

should undertake an inquiry into the CBC. Too busy to perform the investigation itself,

the commissioner hired G.W. Cowperthwaite, a chartered accountant to establish Peat

Marwick's first management consulting division, to undertake the study along with one

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[111]Cited in Frank Peers, *The Public Eye*, 208.
[112]The other half, according to J.E. Hodgetts, was drawn from executive positions in private industry.
See Hodgetts, *The Canadian Public Service*, 25.
[113]Ibid.

of the commission's key staff members, Harry Hindley.[114] Although key CBC

executives had major problems with the consultant's findings, they were unable to

mount a serious rebuttal of the results. This was because they were not given access to

the original studies prepared by the consultants, revealing once again the twin

connotations of transparency and opaqueness that are implicit within processes of

administrative screening.[115]

However, as we have seen in the case of the Woods Gordon report and the

National Film Board, imperatives to understand the practices of both the consultant and

the accountant were not necessary. This is because such actors are called into a

controversial situation with authoritativeness built-in, both in terms of the individual

investigator and of the precision of the method of investigation. As a result, there was

little need to question the impact both of the mode of the inquiry or the impact of the

results upon the subjects being investigated and those requesting that particular form of

intervention. In the case of the National Film Board, the application of business logic

was simply representative of the ascendance of the symbol of accounting, and the

practice of "reporting" in bringing the pure principles of business practice into

government institutions. By employing the same administrative standards as

commercial entities, the "simple changes in accounting procedure" produce more

significant long-term effects. As I have shown in this chapter, these will include the

marginalization of the film board's activities that will occur throughout the decade, and

will signify the increasing role of accounting technologies in impacting upon

government affairs and the conversion of cultural institutions into what Peter Miller

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[114]Peers, *The Public Eye*. 211-212.
[115]Ibid., 310.

calls "calculable spaces."[116] Once constructed this way, he concludes it is now possible

for the organization to be represented "as a series of financial flows, enables the

evaluation of these spaces according to a financial rationale, and allows particular

forms of action upon the component parts of the organization."[117]

However, such developments did not occur within a vacuum; the

administrative disciplining of the National Film Board of Canada was more than a

short-term political solution to concerns over the presence of communists within the

institution. Instead, the slow move towards economistic logic as seen by the increasing

presence of management consultants is part of a generalized shift in the rationale of

cultural policy during the 1950s, one which begin to imagine a national economy

within the cultural sphere, particularly within the Canadian broadcasting and film. A

turn towards this process of transformation is the goal of the next chapter.

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[116]Peter Miller, "Accounting and Objectivity," 253.
[117]Ibid., 254.

Chapter Five:

Parts and Labour, Partnerships and Quotas:
Economic and Automotive Components of Canadian Audiovisual Policy

Earlier in this dissertation I argued that the Massey commission should be viewed as a last-ditch defence for a humanities-based approach to cultural governance, an *intermezzo* before knowledge from the social sciences applied in other sectors of governmental administration crept into the management of Canadian cultural affairs. I also suggested that those preoccupied with highlighting the report's anti-Americanism or exposing the commissioners' elitism fail to appreciate the struggle over the applicability of certain forms of knowledge used to govern the Canadian citizenry that serves as the undercurrent of the Massey proceedings. They also miscalculate the long-term impact of the commission's findings, as the gulf between Massey's rhetorical heft and its direct impact on the cultural sector widened shortly after the report's publication. Within five years many of Massey's recommendations were being ignored, as Canada's film and broadcasting sectors begin to be repositioned along industrial lines. These developments foreshadowed the eventual erosion of the spirit and intention of the Massey report's approach to the cultural sector over the past fifty years.

With this in mind, the present chapter turns its attention towards documenting the changes to Canada's audiovisual sector that begin in the years after the publication of the Massey report. The government announced the creation of another Royal Commission on December 2, 1955, chaired by Robert M. Fowler. Its final report, published on March 15, 1957, accelerated a number of changes that continue to provide the structural foundation of Canada's broadcasting environment, when many of its

recommendations appeared in a new *Broadcasting Act* legislated by the new

Conservative government of John Diefenbaker. These included the inclusion of private

broadcasting networks (CTV and TVA), the establishment of an independent regulator

(the Board of Broadcast Governors), and the implementation of a "Canadian content"

quotas for Canadian television and radio.

The federal government also took steps towards restructuring Canada's film

sector during the same decade. These changes were institutional and aesthetic, with the

government turning its attention away from an NFB-centred focus on documentary

production towards developing an independent film industry producing feature films.[1]

According to Robert Fortner, the resulting changes produced "a new universe of

discourse," with the language of cultural and industrial development intermixed in the

public statements of politicians, bureaucrats, and representatives of the different parties

directly affected by the policy changes.[2]

In assessing this period in Canadian broadcasting history Marc Raboy arrived at

what appear to be two related conclusions. First, he maintained that the election of the

Conservative government served as the "occasion to restructure the system in the

interests of the private sector."[3] Then he reasoned that these transformations marked

the moment at which "Canadian broadcasting ceased to be primarily an agency for

political "nation building."[4] Between 1958 and 1963 "[t]he tension between the

political and economic purposes of broadcasting was never so evident as during those

years."[5] These two statements rest on the following assumption: in ceding the state-

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[1] Dorland, *So Close to the State/s,* 58-84.
[2] Robert Fortner, "The System of Relevances and the Politics of Language in Canadian Public Policy Formation: The Case of Broadcasting," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 12 3-4 (1986):19-35.
[3] Marc Raboy, *Missed Opportunities,* 137.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

operated monopoly to private interests, the federal government now viewed

broadcasting as a profit-making vehicle, one that no longer served the state in its citizen

building initiatives. In this chapter I depart from Raboy's interpretation by suggesting

there is a different dynamic at play. When viewed through a lens of changing state

rationality towards the audiovisual sector, what we see is not the tension between the

political and economic aspects of Canadian broadcasting but the fusion of these two

domains under a national aegis, never to return to their neatly conceived pre-Fowler

dichotomy.[6]

I suggest that this was accomplished through the twin actions of limitation and

extension within the changing political economy of Canadian broadcasting and film.

The activities of the both the CBC and NFB became frustrated as their mandates and

operations were reconceived in the context of resource allocation and fiduciary

responsibility. However this did not constitute the dissolution of the nationalizing

aspects of Canadian audiovisual activity. In the case of broadcasting, the move away

from a "single *channel*" model toward what the Fowler commission will characterize as

a "mixed, single *system*" did not mark the dawning of broadcasting's national purpose.

Instead, it represented a recasting of the characters that underlay that purpose, opening

the field for new actors and new techniques to emerge as key components in the

fulfillment of those same objectives. This was made possible through the formal

inclusion of the economy into discussions previously dominated by tropes of cultural

nationalism.

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[6]This is a position Raboy would later recognize when applied to the contemporary situation in broadcasting. See Raboy, "Public Broadcasting," in *The Cultural Industries in Canada*, 180.

Nikolas Rose argues that the imposition of economic order becomes possible through discursive mechanisms that represent the element to be governed as an intelligible field with interlocking components linked in a systematic manner. For Rose, "this is a matter of defining boundaries, rendering that within them visible, assembling information about that which is included, and devising techniques to mobilize the forces and entities thus revealed."[7] I argue that during this period a new narrative is used to re-draw the boundaries around both broadcasting and film in order to both apply economic order and to extend the governmentalization of Canadian cultural activity. However this new narrative is actually a rather old one, derived from models of Canadian economic development used in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in other areas of Canadian economic life, most notably from the country's automotive sector. At the centre of this model is a conjunction of interests made up of a group of commercial entities, a government desirous for economic growth, and the tariff, a technique that facilitates the development of local industry and makes possible a national economy transcending regional and linguistic borders.

The Fowler Commissioners and the "Pro-Business" Question

In contrast to the abundant literature on the Massey Commission, the Royal Commission on Broadcasting receives curiously little attention both within the field of cultural policy studies and within the under-populated literature that comprises Canadian television studies. Although recognized in some book-length histories of Canadian broadcasting policy, discussions of the changes to the broadcasting

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[7]Nikolas Rose, "Governing Liberty," in *Governing Modern Societies*. Eds. Richard Ericson and Nico Stehr. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 147.

environment of the 1950s typically focus on the creation of the Board of Broadcast Governors (the predecessor to the present-day CRTC) and the imposition of Canadian content regulations, which emerge to some extent out of the Fowler Commission's main report.[8] In an anthology of Canada's cultural industries the Fowler Commission receives little or no mention.[9] In addition, two of the leading introductory textbooks in Canadian media studies ignored the commission altogether in recounting broadcasting history.[10] Despite his status as the only Canadian to oversee two major investigations into Canadian broadcasting[11] and his role in the reorganization of Canadian broadcasting over a fifteen-year period, Robert Fowler joins Sir John Aird as a key figure in the formation of Canadian broadcasting policy whose biographical literature is dwarfed by the continued interest in the life and *pensées* of Vincent Massey.[12]

The differences between the Massey and Fowler commissions are made evident by comparing the Orders-in-Council which established the scope of their respective inquiries. The broad ranging activities that fell under the purview of the Massey Commission were reflected in its guiding principle that the inquiry function as a stock-taking exercise when it stated "it is desirable that the Canadian people should know as much as possible about their country, its history and traditions, and about their national life and common achievements."[13] In addition, the interest in the primacy of publicly-funded institutions was made clear through its identification of the CBC, NFB, National

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[8]See Raboy, *Missed Opportunities,* 117-136; Peers, *The Public Eye,* 55-91.
[9]Dorland, *The Cultural Industries in Canada.* See Chs. 5, 7, 8, 12, and 13.
[10]*See* Mary Vipond *The Mass Media in Canada.* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1992), 47-70; and Paul Attallah and Derek Foster, "Television in Canada," in *Mediascapes: New Patterns in Canadian Communication,* Eds. Paul Attallah and Leslie Regan Shade (Toronto: ITP Nelson, 2002), 216-234.
[11]The other would occur ten years later, in 1965.
[12]A recent contribution to the Massey literature is Karen Finlay, *The Force of Culture: Vincent Massey and Canadian Sovereignty* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).
[13]Order in Council republished in *Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Sciences, and Letters,* p. xi.

Gallery and Museum, and Library of Parliament as "agencies which contribute to these ends."[14] As a result, the goal of the Massey commission was to examine such agencies "with a view to recommending their most effective conduct in the national interest."[15]

With a focus only on television and radio broadcasting, the Fowler Commission's scope of investigation was significantly narrower. The commissioners were instructed to keep in mind two elements that would frame any future recommendation. First, they were reminded, "Canadian broadcasting must give expression to Canadian ideas and aspirations and reach the greatest possible number of Canadians."[16] Second, the commissioners were told that "the grant of frequencies or channels should continue to be under the control of Parliament, and the broadcasting and distribution of Canadian programs by a public agency should continue to be the central feature of Canadian broadcasting policy."[17] In other words, any changes offered by the commission would have to maintain a federalist model for broadcasting administered through a centralized regulatory apparatus.

If the Order-in-Council re-stated the standard components of the broadcasting environment, it also created an opening by expanding the participants working within that environment. This was accomplished by re-framing the CBC's mandate through the optics of resource allocation to destabilize its previously held position within Canadian broadcasting. Although mentioned only once in the Massey mandate, the words "finances" and "financial requirements" appeared four times in the Order-in-Council for the Royal Commission on Broadcasting, always in relation to the CBC's

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[14]Ibid.
[15]Ibid.
[16]Royal Commission on Broadcasting, *Report* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1957), 293. I will refer to this report hereafter as the Fowler Report.
[17]Ibid.

activities. However, the scope for the broadcasting inquiry was considerably wider, with the commissioners instructed to make recommendations upon "the licensing and control of private television and sound broadcasting stations in the public interest" and "the measures necessary to provide an adequate proportion of Canadian programmes for both public and private television broadcasting."[18] In announcing the Royal Commission on Broadcasting the St. Laurent Liberals drafted a mandate which would formally recognize the private broadcasters, limit the expansion of the CBC in television broadcasting, and identify programme content as a future object for policy.

In *Missed Opportunities* Marc Raboy claims that the commissioners selected to investigate Canadian broadcasting came with "free enterprise credentials."[19] Others, such as CCF leader Donald MacDonald argued that the commission was stacked against the interests of the publicly run broadcasting system.[20] While it is certainly true that the composition of the commission was not, in the words of former CBC broadcaster Knowlton Nash, "loaded with public broadcasting supporters from academia," a review of the commissioners' credentials suggests important flaws in these characterizations.[21] Rather than being free enterprisers the commissioners derived from Canada's merchant, media, and diplomatic class, often with experience working with government in systems of managed capitalism operating in the national interest.

The chairman, Robert M. Fowler, was a Montreal-based lawyer who had spent the better part of his career in both business and public affairs. He worked as a staff member on the Rowell-Sirois Commission on dominion-provincial relations, a general

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[18]Ibid.
[19]Raboy, 118.
[20]Peers, *The Public Eye*, 63.

counsel to the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, and as president of the Canadian Pulp

and Paper Association. He had been approached to sit as the chair for the commission

by Brooke Claxton, a leading figure behind the establishment of the Massey

Commission.[22] The other commissioners had similar pedigrees. Edmond Turcotte,

another former employee of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board and newspaper editor

of *Le Canada*, was called from his post as ambassador to Colombia to serve on the

broadcasting inquiry. Rounding out the commission was James Stewart, who like his

commission predecessor, Sir John Aird, worked as the president of the Canadian

Imperial Bank of Commerce. His nomination as Royal Commission caused George

Ferguson to observe in the pages of *Queen's Quarterly* that it was remarkable that the

direction of Canadian Broadcasting had twice involved presidents from the same

banking institution.[23]

Based on these credentials it is imprecise to apply the "free-enterprise" label to

Fowler, Turcotte, and Stewart. Rather than representing the interests of unfettered

flows of global markets, the commissioners represented domestic commercial interests

subjected to managed and protected forms of capitalist enterprise (banking, raw

materials). At the same time, these individuals were fluent with issues dealing with

government involvement in national economic administration both in terms of relations

between the federal government and provinces and in war rationing.

I highlight the "managed capitalist" tendencies of the Fowler commissioners to

point out the historical "partnership" between private business operations and

government that is an important aspect of Canadian life, and a product of the limited

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[21]Nash, *The Microphone Wars*, 251.
[22]Ibid. 250.
[23]George V. Ferguson, "The Fowler Commission Report," *Queen's Quarterly* 64 (Summer 1957): 185.

size of the country's entrepreneurial class. Historian Michael Bliss explains that, in

Canada, "the competitive strategy of working *with or through* government, or otherwise

making use of it, has coloured the evolution of enterprise, the economy, and of

government itself."[24] In his early work on the fur trade and other studies of "staples"

economies Harold Innis is more specific, explaining the extent to which "the heavy

expenditures on transport improvements, including railways and canals, have involved

government grants, subsidies and guarantees to an exceptional degree."[25] If the

weakness of private capital has served as a factor that has coloured the development of

the Canadian economy, it has also rendered strict distinctions between the private and

public sectors tenuous.[26]

Such a discussion is particularly important to an understanding of the Fowler

commission. As I will show, it is during the time of the commission hearings that the

federal government begins to consider the audiovisual sector more in line with other

areas of the country experiencing post-war economic prosperity. The text of the Fowler

commission report represents that transitional period very well. Its pages indicate the

shift away from cultural nationalist justifications for state intervention in broadcasting

towards economic nationalist justifications employing a rhetoric of industrial

development which drew upon 19th century National Policy logics. A more detailed

treatment is necessary here to appreciate the important intersections between Canada's

audiovisual sector and other "infant industries," most notably the automobile.

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[24] Michael Bliss, *Northern Enterprise: Five Centuries of Canadian Business.* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), 14. Emphasis added.
[25] Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), 406.
[26] Dowler, "The Cultural Policy Apparatus," 331-333.

Protective Tariffs as Nationalist Technologies

Recent scholarship on the Canadian cultural policy apparatus has utilized

Maurice Charland's concept of "technological nationalism" as an important theoretical

prism for viewing the character of Canadian communications or examining the rhetoric

of cultural policy.[27] For Charland and his interlocutors the construction of space-

binding technologies such as the railway, telephone and broadcasting systems, intended

to link the east to the western regions of Canada also allowed American cultural and

economic products to effortlessly cross the border. In Kevin Dowler's estimation, the

paradoxical character of such initiatives altered the character of the notion of culture,

turning it into more than a means for the production of citizens, but also "a security

mechanism that compensates for dependency and works to secure the continued

existence of the Canadian state."[28]

Although it serves as a catalyst for an analysis of the triangulation between

rhetoric, nationalism, and technology, I suggest that technological nationalist position is

open to challenges on terminological and historical grounds. In the first case,

Charland's deployment of the notion of "technology" is somewhat limited in its

definition. When referring to Canada as a "technological state" Charland asserts "that

Canada's existence as an economic unit is predicated upon transportation and

communication technology," important for their space-binding and centralizing

tendencies. [29] When conceived this way, we can consider transportation and

communication as two facets in a diverse array of "technologies of management and

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[27]Ibid. See also Imre Szeman, "The Rhetoric of Culture: Some Notes on Magazines, Canadian Culture and Globalization," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 35:3 (1999): 212-230.

[28] Dowler, 336.

[29]Charland, 199.

government," to borrow Ursula Franklin's phrase.[30] These range from the collection of

statistics and the invention of social insurance[31] to the education of schoolchildren.

Each of these technologies perform a similar range of functions: articulating and

extending sovereignty; constructing subject populations for intervention and

administration; producing citizens; and exercising measures of control from a distance.

Furthermore, Charland's conception does not allow us to consider the ways in which

the social construction of such technologies may have derived from previous or

different applications. As Nikolas Rose maintains, "[t]he process of invention of a

technique or technology is neither simple nor automatic. It often relies upon the re-

utilization of technical devices that are already present at hand or are imported from

other spheres."[32]

It is also important to broaden our definition of technology in order to discuss

the second limitation of technological nationalism. The problem here stems from a

partial reading of a historical moment and a skewed interpretation of its consequences.

This leads those interested in "technological nationalism" to leave unexplored a parallel

nationalist narrative, one not of technological nationalism, but of particularly important

strain of economic protectionism. Although it represents an important part of Canada's

economic development and a key tool of national settlement and nationalist sentiment,

the railway was not the only major technological development deployed by the

Canadian state at the end of the nineteenth century.[33] It is important to point out that

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[30]Ursula Franklin, *The Real World of Technology* (Toronto: CBC Enterprises, 1989), 13.

[31]François Ewald, "Insurance and Risk," in *The Foucault Effect*, 197-198.

[32]Rose, "Governing Liberty," 146.

[33]A recent advertisement for Molson's "Canadian" brand of beer, entitled "Anthem," featured a re-enactment of the hammering in of the "last spike" of the CPR, complete with *faux*-sepia colouring and special effects to produce a scratched film effect. For a discussion see Ira Wagman, "Wheat, Barley, Hops, Citizenship: Molson's 'I am [Canadian]' Campaign and the Defense of National Identity Through Advertising," *Velvet Light Trap* 50 (2002): 77.

the westward expansion of the railway represents only one component of Sir John A. MacDonald's National Policy, and that attempts were made to protect against inflows of trade streaming across the border once the railway was completed. To fully elaborate upon those nationalist technologies is necessary in order to add texture to Charland's analytic.

National Policy

The singularity connoted in the phrase "National Policy" obscures both the diversity and complexity of this initiative. As a response to failed reciprocity talks with the United States and the increasing trend towards imperial commercial expansion and domestic market protections in other regions across the globe, the politicians of the newly congealing regional confederation recognized the need for commercial and labour expansion. The decades leading to Confederation saw the evolution of a strategy of defensive development which has been designated as the National Policy. In Ian Parker's assessment, this represented "a range of policies" related not only to the development of communication and transportation infrastructure, but the production of a national economy transcending regional boundaries through the "articulation of state fiscal and financial structures, disposition of land, encouragement of immigration, and settlement.[34]

An important component of the National Policy was a series of protective tariffs imposed upon the importation of a variety of natural resources and manufactured goods already produced in Canada. As a nationalist technology, tariffs appealed to

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[34]Ian Parker, "The National Policy, Neoclassical Economics and the Political Economy of the Tariff," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 14:3 (1979): 95.

governments searching to find key common ground among a diverse set of recently affiliated territories, each with its own particular set of cultural characteristics and grievances with the centralizing authority.

This is particularly important within the Canadian context. In crafting and implementing the National Policy, Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald was able to sidestep some of these divisions through perceiving the country as a singular national market, as Craig Brown explains:

> Appeals to a common language, a common cultural tradition or a common religion were simply impossible for Canadians and when they were attempted they were rightly regarded by French-Canadians as a violation of their understanding of Confederation. Most Canadians, especially those who built or paid for the building of the transcontinental railways, argued that the Canadian nation would have to built in spite of its geography and regarded their efforts as the "price of being Canadian."[35]

The protective tariff and the railway were complementary components of the nation-building projects of fiscal and technological expansionism-and that policy makers were well aware that the expansion of the railway would allow the easy flow of American products into more Canadian communities. As a result, a compensatory measure was needed to protect against inevitable absorption, a point made clear by lawmakers at the time. By establishing a cost barrier on the flow of selected goods across the national frontier and particularly from the south, the tariff channelled traffic between eastern and western Canada along the transcontinental railways.

The "selected" nature is important here, for it points to the fact that only certain industries and resources were seen as more important than others. As Ben Forster notes, Canadian manufacturers actively lobbied the federal government for protection by positioning themselves within a context of the country's economic development.

Fusing class, community and national goals around individual commercial interests,

manufacturers believed themselves to be the embodiment of national progress.[36]

Those that lobbied the government the hardest would find their sectors would qualify

for tariff protection, leaving others exposed to competition from foreign firms.[37] It is

important to note here that many manufacturers took a decidedly provincial outlook

with regard to the purpose of the protective tariff. As Glen Williams explained,

Canadian manufacturing magazines published editorials calling for the protection and

cultivation of the "home market" before concerning themselves with exploiting

international markets.[38]

Many have noted the pitfalls of this policy within the context of Canada's

economic development. Michael Bliss viewed the National Policy as a "limited form"

of economic nationalism: "Its effect was to resist only certain kinds of potential foreign

domination of Canadian economic life, while encouraging exactly those other forms of

outside penetration that are now, according to economic nationalists, our most serious

economic problem."[39] The "form of outside penetration" Bliss is referring to here is the

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[35]Craig Brown, "The Nationalism of the National Policy," in *Nationalism in Canada* Edited by Peter Russell (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Canada, 1966), 161.

[36]Ben Forster, "The Coming of the National Policy: Business, Government and the Tariff, 1876-1879," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 14:3 (1979): 39.

[37]Ibid., 46: "The textile industry...was very generously treated...But the generous treatment of the textile industry had other causes than the strength it gave to the conservative campaign, and generally speaking the tariff was not sufficiently a precise instrument to discriminate, say, between a Conservative stove manufacturer and a Liberal one. Staunch Conservative supporters did not always get what they wanted. Donald McInnes was aghast when the duty on pig iron was announced at two dollars a ton, rather than three or four he felt was absolutely necessary. Samuel Platt, the Goderich salt maker who had fought strenuously for the Conservatives, was greatly upset when the duty of salt was not as inclusive as he felt it should be. E.K. Greene grumbled that the duty on hats, caps, and furs would not reduce imports from the United States for years to come. Though not badly treated otherwise, distillers were shocked to find the excise duty on spirits made retroactive, for this meant a severe financial strain."

[38]Glen Williams, *Not for Export: Towards a Political Economy of Canada's Arrested Industralization.* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 20.

[39]Michael Bliss. "Canadianizing American Business: The Roots of the Branch Plant," in *Close the 49ᵗʰ Parallel: The Americanization of the Canadian State.* Edited by Ian Lumsden (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 30.

establishment of "branch plant" operations of American and British companies seeking

to skirt both internal import tariffs for the domestic Canadian market and international

tariff agreements made between Canada and the British Empire to encourage more

vigorous trade within the Commonwealth. Others, such as Glen Williams, have located

the National Policy within the context of an economic dependency model. By noting

the extent to which the protective market produced by "import-substitution-

industrialization" in the Canadian context mimicked similar initiatives present within

"the industrial strategies of the Third World," Williams argued such policies

permanently hamper the international competitiveness of the protected industry.[40]

However economically problematic the National Policy may be, it represented

an effective tool to bring together the disparate elements of the new Canadian

confederation. In other words, rather than dealing overtly with "cultural" matters the

National Policy sought to unify Canadians around key economic indicators, such as

employment and domestic production with anti-Americanism appearing as a built-in

feature. As a result, "the idea of protection embodied in the tariff became equated with

the Canadian nation itself. Protection and the National Policy, then, took on a much

greater meaning than mere tinkering with customs schedules."[41] Donald Creighton

understood MacDonald's National Policy in expansionist and protective terms, stating

that it allowed Canadians to "expand, develop, preserve, and defend" their

distinctiveness on the North American continent[42]; Macdonald himself fused cultural

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[40]Glen Williams, "The National Policy Tariffs: Industrial Underdevelopment Through Import Substitution," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 7:2 (1979): 339.
[41]Brown, 157.
[42]Creighton quoted in Massolin, *The Tory Tradition*, 249.

and economic issues together when he described the National Policy as producing "a union in interest, a union in trade, and a union in feeling."[43]

It is important to turn to a discussion of the policies underwriting the development of Canada's automotive industry for a number of reasons. First, the industry represents an excellent example of a sector of the Canadian economy taken under the National Policy umbrella first through protective tariffs to develop the "home economy" and then through import quotas intended to encourage "Canadian content" in manufacturing and domestic production. The move towards "Canadian content" in auto production comes as a policy middle ground, intended to mediate between the interests of foreign investment, domestic employment, and consumer demand for imported materials. Second, the reference to "Canadian content" regulations in the automotive industry allows for a consideration of the ways in which Canada's cultural sector intersect with its industrial cousins first in film, then in broadcasting. Such an exposition is necessary because it will show the extent to which distinctions between the industrial and cultural domains of Canadian life are effectively erased once placed within discourses of economic nationalism.

Canadian Content in Automotive Production

In an article published in the *Journal of Canadian Studies* Imre Szeman noted the irony over two stories that appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on the same day in October, 2000. The first article announced increased funding to Canada's magazine industry; the second announced the expiration of the US-Canada Auto Pact, a measure which created a continental market for automotive production. Both of these

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[43]Macdonald quoted in Glen Williams, "The National Policy Tariffs," 341.

developments were prompted by decisions made by the World Trade Organization suggesting that government initiatives in these two industries were in violation of international trade regulations.[44] While Szeman used the two stories to examine the place of cultural rhetoric in an era of globalization and neoliberalism, I see the pairing as a means for considering the way economy becomes articulated into cultural practices, in this case "national economy" into broadcasting and film policy. To further understand this we can look at the parallel fortunes of Canada's automotive, film, and broadcasting sectors in two different historical periods.

Originally protected by National Policy import tariffs as high as 35%, the automotive sector became part of a second tier of trade regulations as a result of a specific agreement with Britain at the turn of the century.[45] Originally a strong proponent of free trade during the 19th and early 20th centuries, Britain's role as leading industrial power waned by the middle of the 1920s and the country's claims to being "the workshop of the world" were being lost to countries like the United States and Germany. With a combination of protective measures and subsidies these countries had begun to fill the British marketplace with cheaper foreign products. As foreign competition grew more intense in the period following World War I a series of protective measures were imposed between 1919 and 1925, including the *Safeguarding of Industries Act* of 1921, applying 33.5% import tariffs on goods such as dyes, cutlery, silk, and optical goods, and the premise of preferential rates for other selected goods produced within the British Empire.[46] As Forrest Capie explained, "there was really

[44]Szeman, "The Rhetoric of Culture," 212.
[45]Bothwell et al. *Canada 1900-1945*, 71.
[46]Margaret Dickinson and Sarah Street, *Cinema and State: The Film Industry and Government, 1927-84* (London: British Film Institute, 1985), 6-7.

only one industry that enjoyed preferential rates that was significant to a Dominion (Canada) and to Britain and that was the motor car industry."[47]

The preferential trade relationship promoted the development of a Canadian automotive industry, primarily made up of branch plant operations of American car manufacturers looking to benefit from preferential producer status. However, not all American automobile manufacturers decided to establish branch plant operations on Canadian soil. Instead, there was the case of Sam McLaughlin, who signed an agreement with Buick in 1907 to import Buick engines to Oshawa where they were installed into McLaughlin cars. Less than a decade later, McLaughlin made similar arrangements with Chevrolet in the United States to produce cars under the Buick and Chevrolet names. During World War I, Canada's motor vehicle production increased and, by the eve of the Great Depression, had emerged as the second-largest automobile producer in the world.[48]

If the automotive industry had been successful in producing and co-producing Canadian-made automobiles some observers noted the failed attempts at producing an all-Canadian motor vehicle. One early directory of automobiles, published in 1906 listing 93 models of Canadian-made cars. However both this figure and the idea of an all-Canadian motor vehicle were under serious challenges by the end of the 1900s. Challenging the listing of Canadian-made models, Robert Collins offered a key proviso upon the dilemmas of definition and the realities of the globalization of automobile production:

> For one thing, what *is* a Canadian car? Few were of *total* Canadian design or constitution. Others, carbon copies of American models provided by

[47]Forrest Capie, *Depression and Protectionism: Britain Between the Wars* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1983), 135.
[48]James Dykes, *Canada's Automotive Industry* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1970), 30-31.

Canadian affiliates do not qualify. Probably the fairest criterion is any car that was produced here and was to some extent different, whether or not parts of its financing or anatomy come from outside the country.[49]

In another account, James Dykes provides a review of the failed attempts at producing a

"100% Canadian Car," the result of limitations of the Canadian marketplace:

> [These included] the "Grey Dart" at Chatham, Ontario, the "Thames" at Brantford; the "Amherst 40," the "Tallyho," and "Voiturette," the "Galt," and the "Universal," the "McKay," the "Winnipeg Six," the "Regal Understanding," and the "Maritime Six." All of these died early deaths because Canada did not have enough people to support the development of a native Canadian automotive industry. Even the tariff protection of 35 per cent could not induce independent production.[50]

By the end of the 1920s, the policies towards the automotive industry had

changed. Rather than acting to induce foreign capital and to establishment branch

plants, government policy switched towards demanding minimum content regulations

to ensure the development of Canada's parts manufacturing industries and to ensure

employment for local communities on the heels of the Depression. Content regulations

also emerged in the automotive industry as a result of consumer demand, as Canadians

began to complain about the high cost of automobile purchases due to the import tariff.

In exchange for lower tariffs, American manufacturers could guarantee that between 50

and 60% of the parts and labour going into cars sold in Canada were from Canadian

sources. An article which appeared in *The Globe* in 1931 explained Bennett's

rationale: "Premier Bennett's plan is to build up a real motor industry in Canada, an

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[49] A good example of this arrangement is the "Comet," a model produced by a Montreal company during the turn of the century, which had a moderate two-year run of success in Canada. "If nothing else," Robert Collins maintains, "its international mix of components featuring an Italian engine, a French rear axle, a German front axle, American radiator and a canvas-covered wooden body made in Quebec made the Comet "surely the most cosmopolitan machine in Canada." See Robert Collins, *A Great Way to Go: The Automobile in Canada* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1969), 19.

[50] Dykes, 17.

industry which will fabricate and assemble into the finished car all the component parts."[51]

A key advocate for a content regulation for the automotive industry was Walter Gordon, whose firm had prepared a special report for the federal Tariff Board's investigation of the industry in 1936. Clarkson Gordon's report to the board gently warned that the removal of the duty drawbacks based on the amount of Canadian content would mean that there would be "no incentive to the Canadian automobile manufacturers to qualify their cars as to 50% Canadian content."[52] In the spring of 1936 Gordon sent a confidential memorandum to the board, arguing, "manufacturing in Canada and employment will be reduced if the content requirements are eliminated, unless the rates of duty on automobiles and parts are considerably increased."[53] The Tariff Board followed Gordon's suggestions and advocated a new automobile tariff, a recommendation that Parliament soon adopted. Once formally put in place, the tariff system set up a series of conditions for parts to enter into the country duty-free. First, they were to be "of a class not made in Canada," and there was a British Empire content requirement, which, depending on the annual number of units being produced by the automobile manufacturer ranged from between 40-60% of the factory cost of the automobiles.[54] The changes to the tariff legislation had the effect of allowing Canadian motor vehicle manufacturers to incorporate Canadian or Empire labour and materials to the extent of 60% of their cost of producing vehicles.

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[51]"High Car Part Duty Is Leading Feature of Bennett Tariff," *The Globe*, May 29, 1931.
[52]Quoted in Azzi, *Walter Gordon and the Rise of Canadian Nationalism*, 19. Azzi continued by explaining that "Gordon later observed with satisfaction that one of the results of the new tariff 'was the growth of machine shops throughout Ontario, many of which were called upon to expand rapidly during the war to produce munitions."
[53]Ibid.

Domestic Production in Canadian Cinema

Similar accounts of the failures of domestic production appear in the history of

the Canadian film industry. Between 1914 and 1922, a number of film production

companies were established but few went on to produce any films. With a few

exceptions, Canadian film production during the period was a marginal exercise, due to,

a small and highly scattered market and the absence of private financial backing.[55]

It is for this reason that Christopher Gittings' assessment that "[t]he foundations

of Canada's film policy are utilitarian" is important for our discussion here.[56] Gittings'

reference to early state cinematic efforts as "adjuncts" to extra-artistic ventures such as

national and international trade represents a particularly trenchant observation,

particularly in the context of our discussion here, for the development of the country's

film policy ran parallel to the developments in other areas of the national economy.

The country's first state sponsored film agency, the Canadian Government Motion

Picture Bureau (CGMPB) was established for precisely these reasons, to make films

intended, in the words of the bureau's officials as "an inducement to capital to come to

this country."[57]

As was the case with automobiles during the same period, Canadian film

production was directly affected by the vagaries of British trade policy. The 1927

Cinematograph Films Act represented a concerted attempt to protect the British

production industry in the face of the increasing dominance of the domestic film market

by American film companies. The *Act* spurred on domestic production, imposed quotas

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[54]John Holmes, "The Auto Pact from 1965 to the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement," in *The Auto Pact: Investment, Labour and the WTO*. Ed. Maureen Irish (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2004), 6.
[55]Magder, *Canada's Hollywood*, 26.
[56]Gittings, *Canadian National Cinema*, 78.
[57]Ibid.

on British exhibitors, and forced American distributors to carry some of the increased

output. It represented one of a raft of protective measures undertaken by countries

throughout Europe to stem the imperialising influence of the American majors.[58]

Observers of Canada's film history are quick to point out the country's relative

inability to capitalize on the protective furor of the moment occurring across the ocean.

Peter Morris' statement that "the federal government in Canada took no action

whatsoever," however, requires parsing.[59] While Morris' is correct that the Canadian

government did not see the European quota fervour as an opportunity to apply the same

principles to the domestic film sector, this does not suggest that the government did not

take any action whatsoever. For Canadian film officials, the British screen quota

served as the opportunity to extend the national economic principles applied in other

sectors of Canadian activity towards film. CGMPB official Ray Peck, a strong critic of

the application of domestic screen and production quotas on Canadian soil, took on a

decidedly automotive approach to the opportunities afforded Canada by the British

protective measures, seeing film production as indistinguishable from other areas of

industrial activity:

> We are attempting, at all times, as Canadians, to induce American capital and
> manufacturing interests to come into Canada and establish branch factories. I
> look on the American film industry much as a branch factory idea insofar as it
> affects Canada. American motion picture producers should be established to
> encourage production branches in Canada to make films designed especially
> for British Empire consumption. [...] We invite Americans to come into
> Canada and make automobiles and a thousand and one other things, and why

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[58]They were also not the first. In 1921, Germany instituted the policy of restricting imports to 15 per cent
of the footage produced in the country during 1919...Four years late the system was revised, with
distributors being granted one import license for every German feature they had handled in the previous
year, thereby restricting foreign films to 50 per cent of the market. During the second half of the 1920s
and into the 1930s, other European nations established their own systems including Italy and Hungary in
1925, Austria in 1926, France in 1928 and Czechoslovakia in 1928." See Anne Jäckel, *European Film
Industries* (London: BFI, 2004), 5.
[59]Peter Morris, *Embattled Shadows*, 179.

not invite them to come over and make pictures, but make them the way the British markets demand?[60]

Between 1928 and 1938 Canada played an important role in the production of what would be later called "quota quickies," inexpensive films produced to satisfy British screen restrictions. During that decade, according to Peter Morris, a total of twenty-two films were produced in Canada by American film companies for the British marketplace, a level of production that would tail off only after rules changed in 1938 to exclude Dominion productions.[61]

The argument that the Canadian government "allowed the country to be used by the American film industry," as Pendakur asserted and "allowed itself to be exploited without protest by Hollywood," as Morris explained, is advanced by both observers as pejorative statements through the prism of an industrial development optic.[62] However, when such statements are taken in the context of the way other branch plant or "import-substitution-industrialization" initiatives figured into Canadian economic thinking during this period, a subtler rendering emerges. Furthermore, as Magder pointed out, there was a profound absence of political will among the different representative filmmaking organizations for the government to pursue industrial development policies. "In the eyes of many," he explained, "film remained a licentious form of entertainment to be censored, surely, but not encouraged."[63]

The absence of content regulations in the form of screen quotas for Canadian feature film represents the same problem. Instead, the utilitarian characterization of Canadian cinema outside of NFB production continued in the period immediately after

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[60]Peck quoted in Manjunath Pendakur, *Canadian Dreams and American Control*, 132.

[61]Morris, 182. See 182-188 for a discussion of the different branch plant operations to appear, albeit only for a brief period of time, to produce films for the British screen quota.

[62]Pendakur, *Canadian Dreams and American Control*, 133; Morris, *Embattled Shadows*, 181.

[63]See Magder, *Canada's Hollywood*, 19-48.

World War II when film policy intersected with national currency policy around the Canadian Cooperation Project, an initiative intended to lure American filmmakers to use Canadian landscapes as backdrops for Hollywood productions. Many saw the project as little more than a public relations exercise for its creator, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), and as an attempt by the Canadian government to make motion picture production contribute to the stanching of the national dollar crisis. Ironically, however, the stated purpose of the project, as explained by MPAA president Eric Johnson, appeared to be about what might be called the promotion of Canadian content, or perhaps the production of content *about* Canada through the production of a film detailing Canada's dollar crisis; better coverage of Canadian stories on US newsreels; the production and distribution of short films about Canada; the consideration of NFB film distribution across the United States; use of Canadian sequences and specific references in US feature films; radio recordings encouraging tourism and discussing Canada's problems by Hollywood film stars, and more careful selection of films showed in Canada.[64]

The distinction between "Canadian content" and "content about Canada" is significant, and represents one of the profound reasons why the Canada Cooperation Project receives the critical assessment shared by scholars who differ on other aspects of Canadian film historiography. At the root of the Canada Cooperation is the radical separation of Canadian content from Canadian labour used to produce that content. The benefits to Canada may have been to assist in the currency crisis in the short term, but it stood as a large failure within a larger industrial development imperative, one which is at considerable distance from the "quota quickie" model to serve the British

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[64]Dorland, *So Close to the State/s*, 79.

screen quota requirement. To put it a different way, the project did not even meet the requirements of the branch plant model of economic activity, a fact not lost on the class of Canadian entrepreneurs who may have been encouraged by the MPAA's assertion that the effort would help to nationalize foreign capital. As Michael Dorland asserts, "[i]f, as a number of Canadian private film producers believed, the project 'was instituted mainly to encourage film production in Canada by American producers in cooperation with Canadian studios, labs, and producers' then it was 'a dismal failure'."[65] As a result, I believe the Canadian Cooperation Project stands out here not for its place as yet another example of a long line of failed film policies or as another example of the way in which Americans have "exploited" Canada and mocked its land and people through cinema.[66] Instead, I follow Ted Magder's assessment that the project makes better sense through a more tempered explanation. "Hollywood," he explains "responded to the Canadian state's economic discomfort in 1947 with a program that involved as little commitment as possible. In consideration of its own macro-economic policy concerns, and unaware of any independent initiative from the Canadian film industry, the Canadian state took what it could get."[67] The Canada Cooperation Agreement, then, allowed the production of films about Canada in the absence of a domestic feature film industry producing films about Canada.

Film Policy/National Policy

In the decade that followed, the federal government took important steps towards repairing the film industry's production lacunae by making its first overtures

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[65]Ibid., 80.
[66]See Pierre Berton, *Hollywood's Canada*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975).
[67]Magder, *Canada's Hollywood*, 74.

towards developing a domestic film industry. This came as a result of a number of factors, including the controversies at the NFB regarding the presence of communist sympathizers and the accusations of administrative inefficiency, as mentioned in an earlier chapter.

However these internal matters did not occur in a vacuum and the problems experienced by the NFB came as a result of the government's rethinking of the purpose of the film board in the post-war era. As I discussed in Chapter 3, the federal government began curbing the mandate of the film board and encouraging domestic production to meet Canada's film needs. This strategy, supported by the then-minister responsible for the NFB, Robert Winters, was part of a larger post-war reconstruction effort towards creating employment and, in the process, increasing national wealth by emboldening private enterprise. Winters' approach to the film board was consonant with the Department of Resources and Supply's overall approach to how government departments should be used to facilitate the growth of Canadian private industry.

Similar arguments came from politicians advocating for the federal government to facilitate partnerships in the cultural sector with representatives from Canada's private cultural producers. A favoured discursive tactic was to tie cultural issues, such as the arts and education more closely with economic concerns. In a speech given before a conference of universities in Toronto, Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent compared the "crisis in higher education" to the prosperous functioning of the Canadian economy in the post-war era. The disjuncture between the country's economic success and the problems faced by the universities represented, for St. Laurent, the evidence that "our

cultural progress has not kept pace with our industrial expansion."[68] The reason for the

successful Canadian economy, St. Laurent reasoned, was through the combination of

private initiative and what he termed "appropriate government policies" to stimulate

industrial development. "At the time of Confederation," he continued, "Canada

consisted of several depressed regional economies which were more directly linked

with the United States than with each other."[69] Employing the nationalizing effects of

economic policy measures, St. Laurent continued by explaining, "It was said that their

political unification had created an artificial economic situation which could be

maintained only at the price of great sacrifices."[70] The historical preamble was

necessary for St, Laurent to outline the next step for the country's cultural sector:

> A distinct and strong national economy has been built up in Canada through
> the strengthening and development of our regional economies and the
> establishment of complimentary trade relations between them which are vital
> to their respective progress. Their admirable accomplishment has largely
> taken place as a result of private initiative, but it would not have been possible
> without government support. I think it is time for our cultural development to
> parallel what has taken place in the economic field.[71]

St. Laurent was referring to the relative inaction on the part of the federal

government in providing both the institutions and policy techniques necessary to assist

the entrepreneurial environment in the cultural sector that existed in other sectors of the

Canadian economy. The establishment of national cultural institutions, such as the

CBC, National Gallery and National Film Board represented only the first step along a

broader continuum. If these agencies were established as public centres for cultural

production in the national interest, new agencies were needed to facilitate private

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[68]St. Laurent's speech can be found in the published conference proceedings, *Canada's Crisis in Higher Education: Proceedings of the Conference Held by the National Conference of Canadian Universities, November 12-14, 1956.* Edited by Claude Bissell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 249.
[69]Ibid.
[70]Ibid.
[71]Ibid.

cultural production activities working for the same purpose. As Michael Dorland explained, St. Laurent's speech provided "a sense of the discursive horizons within which the extension of governmentality in the cultural sphere occurred" by outlining, "the object of policy was the reproduction within the sphere of cultural production of the predominant patterns of Canadian economic development."[72]

If the controversies that surrounded the NFB and the efforts of officials like Robert Winters helped to open the doors for the inclusion of private film producers into the discussion about Canadian film policy at the beginning of the 1950s, a number of developments occurred later in the decade to further assist in this cause. These included a stronger articulation for an economic re-modelling of Canada's cultural sector by members of both political parties, and by the changes brought to broadcasting in the decade to follow, beginning first with the Royal Commission on Broadcasting.

The Fowler Commission Hearings: Putting the Private Sector Back In

With an Order-in-Council guiding the commissioners to integrate the private sector into the national broadcasting environment it is debatable whether or not the public testimony before the commission, held in sixteen cities across Canada during 1956 was of any import to the commission's final report. On one subject at least there appeared to be agreement: The CBC's dominance over broadcasting and regulation required adjustment. As Frank Peers explained, "[a]lthough the emphasis varied from group to group, nearly all the submissions supported the system in which the CBC and private stations broadcast side by side."[73] The cause was helped appreciably by calls

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[72] Ibid.
[73] Peers, *The Public Eye*, 85.

from members of the Canadian press for the government to change the rules for

Canadian broadcasting. *Maclean's* magazine was particularly harsh, publishing

editorials asking, "Why can't we get our money's worth for CBC television?"[74] along

with a scathing critique by famed columnist Scott Young calling for an end to

"monopoly television."[75]

With that in mind, I suggest that a brief review of the testimony of both the

public and private broadcasting interests is important for examining the rhetorical

strategies used to position and re-position the key actors within the slowly shifting

Canadian broadcasting landscape. However, it is unfair to characterize the report's

recommendations as representative of the commissioner's approval of the private

broadcasters. As we will see, the commissioners dismissed many of arguments

advanced by the private broadcasters and its representative organization, the CARTB,

out of hand. Instead, when reading the pages of the commission's final report what

emerges are not the republished arguments of the private broadcasters, but a more

modified rhetorical tone drawn more closely from historical arguments for government

policy interventions, including the National Policy.

In presenting its case before the commissioners the CARTB reiterated calls for a

separate and independent regulatory body to oversee broadcasting independently of the

CBC. In addition, the broadcasters called upon the commission to recommend the

establishment of private "non-government" stations across Canada. To accomplish this

the broadcasters needed to accomplish two important goals. First, they needed to

demonstrate how the CBC had abused its powers to the point where a new regulatory

agency would be required. Second, the broadcasters needed to provide the explanation

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[74]"Why Can't We Get Our Money's Worth from CBC Television," *Maclean's*, January 21, 1956.

as to why additional stations were needed in Canadian markets where television service already existed.

Their success in achieving those goals was mixed. On a positive note, the broadcasters appeared to make significant gains by pointing to the capaciousness of some of the key concepts that underlay the structure of the broadcasting system. As Marc Raboy detailed:

> the CARTB offered a brief but trenchant critique of the way the CBC used the terms "national service," "national system", and "national programs." "Is the word "national' supposed to mean that which is heard or seen in all parts of the nation? Does it then mean at one time or different times? Or does it simply mean that which is owned by the State? Or is it intended to mean a specific type of program designed to serve a specific objective of the State?[76]

By pointing to the commission to distinguish between "national" and "state" broadcasting, the broadcasters could position themselves as performing a "public service" of equal or greater value than the CBC. "Each of these stations," CARTB vice-President T.J. Allard told the commission, "has a very proud record of public service and does service in the public interest to its or to their respective communities."[77] As a result such an approach represented an attempt to position the private broadcasters as important partners working within the national system of broadcasting. When Fowler asked the representatives of the association whether they wanted to "remain part of the national system," a Newfoundland broadcasting licensee, Geoff Stirling, affirmed this commitment, adding that the same system would be in place "with better shows."[78] Others, such as Finlay MacDonald of station CJCH in Hamilton represented the private sector as "links in the national system."[79]

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[75]"Let's Stop Monopoly Television," *Maclean's* May 1, 1954.
[76]Raboy, *Missed Opportunities*, 121.
[77]Allard quoted in Raboy, 121.
[78]NAC Microfilm Reel C-7013, Public Hearings May 3, 1956, 605.
[79]MacDonald quoted in Peers, *The Public Eye*, 76.

The private broadcasters deployed what Dorland calls "arguments from history" to document both the unfair treatment of the private broadcasting sector as well as reasserting its place within Canada's larger processes of economic development.[80] In a brief submitted to the commission, the CARTB offered a revised version of Canada's broadcasting history. They explained that current regulations hampered both the industry's development and the medium's potential and recommended, placing it on the wrong side of the country's developmental growth curve. As a result, the historical review concluded by stating that, "the burden of providing broadcasting facilities to the nation should be largely shifted from the shoulders of the taxpayer to Canadian industry."[81] In its final report, the commissioners recognized such arguments, stating that the private broadcasting industry had "not yet realized its potential" and did not want to remain in a broadcasting system "still hobbled by philosophical concepts not appropriate to a forward looking Canada."[82]

However the persuasiveness of the private broadcasters' presentations was undermined by the poor quality of its supporting evidence. First, the CARTB could not convince the commissioners that the CBC had behaved unfairly towards its members in its capacity as the sole national network and broadcast regulator. Fowler repeatedly called upon the private broadcasters to provide evidence of wrongdoing and expressed on numerous occasions his scepticism at the evidence provided by the CARTB. On a number of other occasions the commissioners issued direct challenges to the CARTB's evidence during the public hearings process, criticizing the organization and its

[80]For a discussion of how private film producers deployed such arguments as part of shifts in Canadian film policy, see Dorland, *So Close to the State/s*, 65-67.

[81]NAC, RG 33/36 vol. 25 File 16/25, "CARTB Brief: History of Broadcasting in Canada."

[82]*Report of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting* (Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1957), 148.

representatives for delivering opaque and contradictory information before the commission. The final report takes time to point to the weakness of the CARTB's approach, characterizing the organization's evidence as "one-sided"; "misleading"; "propaganda"; "colourful verbiage"; "falsely doctrinaire"; and "superficial."[83]

Instead, the private broadcasters' cause was assisted by a relatively tepid presentation by CBC representatives before the commission. When Fowler asked CBC Board of Governors Chair Davidson Dunton to explain how the broadcaster understood what constituted the "public interest," Dunton confessed that it represented "a very hard thing to define" and that "any individual has a different view as to where the exact public interest is in broadcasting."[84] When he was then asked how the broadcaster "assessed the public interest," Dunton did little in the way of provide any clarification to counter claims from private broadcasters:

> I would say to quite a large extent in two ways, both in reviewing the policies, deciding what should be done, but the other way is by looking at suggestions from the operating side or weighing the operating side and saying "this looks like a good start' and the Board considers that and decides that it fits reasonably into the broadcasting pattern, is a useful element of the broadcasting service, and it does see the flow, the stimulus, is going both ways, all the way up and all the way down all of the time. I do not think anyone can sit down at any one moment and put down an exact pattern and say that this could be public interest broadcasting in Canada for the next yen years having one half hour of something and one hour of something else and we do not believe it could be done. We think the best thing is to work at it, continually weighing things with the Board having the final say in an overall way, but using for guidance its sense of the various elements of what the public want or what expectations there have been from matters raised in Parliament.[85]

If Dunton's testimony at the beginning of the public hearings served to further obscure the CBC's claims for representation of the public interest, his later testimony at

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[83] For the full dressing-down, see Ibid.,139-40.
[84] NAC, Microfilm Reel C-7013, Public Hearings May 1, 1956, 384.
[85] Ibid.

did not help the CBC's cause. In suggesting that a separate regulatory body could be useful to mediate between both private and public broadcasters, Dunton appeared to undermine the CBC's position as broadcaster and regulator.[86] To some observers, this position symbolized the waving of the white flag by the CBC, an admission that the broadcaster was prepared to cede authority over broadcasting. An editorial appearing the next day in the *Globe* explained that Dunton had given the royal commissioners "the high-sign" and "the go signal" to remove the CBC's "absolute power over Canadian radio and television."[87] In agreeing with the establishment of an independent regulator Dunton had sanctioned the government "to hack away some of the bureaucratic jungle in which the CBC operates."[88] "An independent tribunal," the editorial went on, "could ensure that programs of a Canadian character were carried by private stations just as well as it could enforce the regulations of wave-length and wattage."[89]

Of particular significance to the Fowler Commission hearings was the relative weakness of the presentation of public broadcasting activists and other representative organizations. The Canadian Radio and Television League, a new organization following in the footsteps of Spry and Plaunt's Canadian Radio League, was formed in 1954 and comprised of members such as adult education activists E.A. Corbett, professors A.R.M. Lower and Frank Underhill and writer Pierre Berton, a membership characterized by the president of the CARTB, Finlay MacDonald, as "intellectual egg-heads."[90] While the organization attempted to articulate a place for public broadcasting

[86]Dunton quoted in Peers, *The Public Eye*, 70.
[87]"The Bureaucrat's Retreat," *The Globe* October 13, 1956.
[88]Ibid.
[89]Ibid.
[90]Quoted in Peers, *The Public Eye*, 65.

through its newsletters and public advocacy campaigns, its impact on the direction of

Canadian broadcasting paled in comparison to its predecessor. Its submission drew the

ire of the private broadcasters, who described its proposal for extended nationalization

as "socialism in its most radical form" and oriented towards extending the powers of

the federal government.[91] However a closer look at the League's brief finds that the

central argument appeared to be a rearticulation of logic drawn from post-

Confederation economic history. Referring to the establishment of the railway, the

formation of chartered banks and the enacting of protective tariffs, the brief explained

that Canada had "never hesitated to invoke the power of the state for national interests"

and that the country was built upon the "interactions between private and public

enterprise."[92] Failing to recognize the importance for the commission in continuing this

tradition, the League argued, would represent continued American imperialism. "The

only guarantee of continued national existence," the brief continued, "is the continued

nationalization of the key sectors of our national life, of which broadcasting is one."[93]

It is ironic that the changes brought to bear for Canadian broadcasting appear to

draw from the Canadian Radio and Television League's brief to the Fowler

Commission. The commissioners did not accept the pragmatic argument of the League;

neither did they agree with many of its proposals for the restructuring of Canadian

broadcasting. However, the vagueness of the terms "nationalization" and

"broadcasting" detailed in the League's proposal created the rhetorical breathing space

for the commission to work, bringing about changes to the broadcasting system that did

not appear to directly favour the private or public broadcasters, but functioned as the

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[91] Quoted in Raboy, 125.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.

new argument for state rationale in the broadcasting sector through a prism of national economy.

As I will argue the Canadian government's approach to broadcasting was different than its eventual approach to film in one important way: It nationalized television broadcasters while leaving the film exhibition sector, long dominated by American firms, intact. The longstanding dominance of Canadian exhibition by Famous Players and Cineplex Odeon, making it "one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Canadian film market," according to Magder.[94] That distinction was significant, because by including Canadian broadcasters as partners in the national system protected by restrictions on ownership it also carried an important set of responsibilities to contribute back to nation-building purpose through a commitment to Canadian content. Handling the two responsibilities is something the broadcasters have never fully been able to fully accept, which is why it is probably more accurate to characterize their position within the broadcasting system as representing, at best, a reluctant partnership.

Report

On first review, the report of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting is a confounding read. If the Massey report sounded a consistent and passionate *cri de coeur* for the development, protection, and maintenance of "Canadian culture," the text of the Fowler commission appears more tentative, moving between contradictory themes. Throughout the report one can find characteristics of broadcasting's potential

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[94]Ted Magder, "Film and Video Production," in *The Cultural Industries in Canada* Ed. Michael Dorland (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1996), 149.

through tropes of technological nationalism ("they can perform unifying and cohesive functions"),[95] Arnoldian concepts of cultural cultivation ("they can enrich us, extend our knowledge and deepen our perception"),[96] and "hypodermic needle" media effects models ("they can dull the sensibilities by endless repetition of the commonplace and the tawdry").[97] These sentiments were counterbalanced by critiques of state heavy-handedness ("paternalism by the state in the field of cultural values would be hard to defend"),[98] calls for the recognition of audience agency ("their different and independent judgement could safely be relied upon to deal adequately"),[99] and complementary evaluations of American programming ("many of them are, in a special sense, too good").[100] The CARTB's vice-president T.J. Allard noticed the report's Jekyll-and-Hyde character when he explained, "[i]n places the report is terse, highly perceptive and businesslike. In others it is vague; some paragraphs give the impression of sermon hastily prepared by a dyspeptic clergyman after a bad breakfast."[101]

However, in the context of my discussion thus far, I suggest that measured and complex tone can be read as representing a transitional moment in broadcasting policy. I suggest that the report served a bridging function, an attempt to construct a new narrative that attempted to introduce economy to broadcasting and, at the same time, moved the regulatory function of cultural policy towards the management of broadcasting at a distance.

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[95]*Report of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting*, 6.
[96]Ibid., 5.
[97]Ibid., 6.
[98]Ibid., 66.
[99]Ibid.
[100]Ibid.
[101]T.J. Allard, *Straight Up: Private Broadcasting in Canada, 1918-1958.* (Ottawa: Canadian Communications Foundation, 1979), 244.

This was accomplished by destabilizing some of the rationale for policy intervention present in previous broadcasting Royal Commissions and then reconstructing a new argument along the lines of industrial development. It was also made possible by the discursive shift of Canadian broadcasting away from a single "channel" -- a single route through which information passes -- towards a "system," in which private and public services comprise key components; a combination of parts forming a national whole. It is perhaps not surprising then that the dominant themes present within the pages of the Fowler report, then, concerned the "mixed" nature of Canadian broadcasting, and the need to bring "balance" into Canadian broadcasting, a move which moves broadcasting out of the hands of the CBC and simultaneously repositions the goals of government policy towards the broadcasting sector as facilitating industrial development. In conjunction with key policy changes legislated into the 1958 *Broadcasting Act*, these measures incorporated new populations as targets for policy intervention in the national interest, an enterprise whose purpose has not changed, even if the techniques and actors required for fulfilling that objective have been radically altered.

The report commenced on an upbeat note by declaring "these have been prosperous days for Canada and the future looks bright."[102] The commissioners explained that numerous forecasters had characterized Canada as country with a "growing population, increasing wealth, and mounting influence and responsibility in the world."[103] With the country on the precipice of great future the commissioners nodded to John Kenneth Galbraith's affluent society theorization by stating that an important social change would also be on the horizon, with the average Canadian

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[102]*Report of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting*, 1.

having more money to spend and as a result of a shrinking workload due to technological advance, more leisure time than in recent memory.[104]

The question of how Canadians would take advantage of this newly abundant leisure served as the question guiding the commission's investigation and giving the first chapter its ominous title of "The Problem." However, in describing Canadian leisure as representing "the other side of the economic coin," the commissioners appeared to conflate the two components on the same side of the ledger by mixing the consumptive and citizenship functions implicit in the notion of productive leisure time:

> We have been concerned, largely, with how Canadians will use this extra leisure and, to some extent, with how they will spend these extra dollars. Beyond the economic facts of the future, all the glamour of less work and more income has little realty unless the lives of individual Canadians are enriched in spiritual terms. Somewhat to our surprise, we found ourselves involved in these vital, non-economic questions.[105]

Another way to think through the above quotation is to suggest that it represents a bringing together of different connotations of value. On the one hand, the question the commissioners are asked is to consider how to map out a policy framework for Canadians to ensure that they are getting the most out of their leisure time in terms of the spiritual value offered by Canadian radio and television. On the other hand, by constructing a "leisure consumer" into the discussion of the quality of Canadian affluence, the commissioners are also recasting value in two important ways: as an abstraction which could be represented in quantifiable terms to divine measurements of national prosperity and as an economic object that views individual preferences through regulated choices in the consumer marketplace.

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[103]Ibid.
[104]Ibid.
[105]Ibid.

The remainder of the first chapter continues in this vein, first by highlighting broadcasting's intangible value both to Canada as a nation and to the "national consciousness" of individual Canadians. For the authors of the report radio and television are not merely appliances but are "a part of domestic life"[106] which "[w]e, and our children must adapt to our use, must accommodate them for our purposes, must weave them into the fabric of our lives."[107] The authors then extended the scope of investigation by explaining that an understanding of broadcasting's function within the domestic economy could be extended "in the larger groupings of the community, the region, and the nation itself."[108] It was the job of broadcasting policy to ensure that these benefits are passed onto the communities affected by broadcasting, and to protect against the possibilities of broadcasting to work "evil as well as good."[109]

From here, the commissioners restated the familiar logic regarding what it called the "special problems of broadcasting in Canada": geography, limited population, and proximity to the United States. While taking a more bashful approach to Americanization ("no nation is similarly helped and embarrassed by the close proximity of the United States")[110], the report repeated the call to arms for a distinctive approach to Canada's broadcasting situation:

> But as a nation we cannot accept, in these powerful and persuasive media, the natural and complete flow of another nation's culture without danger to our national identity. Can we resist the tidal wave of American cultural activity? Can we retain a Canadian identity, art, and culture—a Canadian nationhood? These questions do not imply a judgement on the values of the American broadcasting system; indeed, the dangers to Canadian national identity are much greater from the good American programmes than from their poor or clumsy productions. Assuming, as we must, that their broadcasting system is satisfactory and suitable for Americans, this is no basis for thinking it is

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[106]*Report of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting*, 4.
[107]Ibid., 5.
[108]Ibid., 6.
[109]Ibid.
[110]Ibid., 7.

desirable for Canadians. We may want, and may be better to have, a different system -- something distinctively Canadian and not a copy of a system that may be good for Americans but may not the best for us.[111]

In his discussion of the section that followed this assertion, Charland argued that the

Fowler report articulated the tried and true rhetoric of technological nationalism by

likening broadcasting's space-binding function to that of the railway. However, this

represents a selective reading of a large and extensive reason-of-state argument for

broadcasting regulation, which I quote in its entirety below. What is left out of

Charland's analysis is the fact that for the commissioners, the CPR represented "the

first of *many* devices to pull together into a nation the vast expanse of Canadian

territory."[112] The others involved partnerships between government, selected business

entities, and other governmental technologies used to manage the aspects of Canada's

capitalist economy hampered by geography and population, namely the protective

tariff:

> In different ways but with the same purpose we created a national financial structure through the chartered banking system and we sought to build up industry and trade through a protective tariff. At a later date we developed a national air-transportation system. There are many other examples of steps taken to make Canada a nation despite the forces of geography and the powerful attraction and influence of the United States. The natural flow of trade, travel and ideas runs north and south. We have tried to make some part, not all, of the flow run east and west. We have only done so at an added cost, borne nationally. There is no doubt that we could have had cheaper railway transportation, cheaper air service and cheaper consumer goods if we had simply tied ourselves into the American transportation and economic system. It is equally clear that we could have cheaper radio and television service if Canadian stations became outlets of American networks. However, if the less costly method is always chosen, is it possible to have a Canadian nation at all? The Canadian answer, irrespective of party or race, has been uniformly the same for nearly a century. We are prepared, by measures of assistance, financial aid, and a conscious stimulation, to compensate for our disabilities of

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[111]Ibid.
[112]Ibid., 9. Emphasis added.

geography, sparse population and vast distances, and we have accepted this as a legitimate role of government in Canada.[113]

Summarizing their conclusions the commissioners explained that if their recommendations were heeded, four main developments would result. First, the system of mixed ownership of private and public stations would be "here to stay."[114] Second, the CBC, referred by the commission as "the state agency," should continue to develop, but its functions were "not to be extended to do the whole job of providing radio and television services to Canadians."[115] Third, the private broadcasters should be required to justify their "grant of a public franchise" by being subject to performance reviews, but should no longer worry "about the bogey of nationalization" that has "filled them with suspicion and fear in the past."[116] Finally, the commission explained that, for the foreseeable future "we will continue to have a single broadcasting system in which all Canadian radio and television stations, public and private, present and future, will be integral parts, regulated and controlled by an agency representing the public interest and responsible to Parliament."[117]

Once again it is important to restate that these conclusions do not represent a selling-out of the national purpose of Canadian broadcasting, but rather the extension of policy over more areas of broadcasting activity through a partnership motif. It is also important to point out here that such developments were as much a function of the expansion of broadcasting's technical capabilities, mainly through the increasing number of channels and the improvement of cable, as with pressures to privatize the system from the country's commercial broadcasters and anti-CBC federal politicians.

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[113]Ibid.
[114]Ibid., 13.
[115]Ibid.
[116]Ibid.
[117]Ibid.

Understanding the way the Fowler commission accomplished this task is the challenge here.

As mentioned earlier, the Fowler Commission's re-reading of vague concepts that have been a part of broadcasting policy represents another one of the report's most fascinating elements. This was accomplished in a number of different ways. First, the commission devoted a considerable amount of attention towards articulating the precise place of both the private and public sectors within the larger context of the national broadcasting system. The authors continued to argue for the importance of the CBC, describing the network and its services in the English and French-language as the "central feature" and a "vital and essential feature of our broadcasting system," helping to protect the country against American cultural imperialism.[118] If the assessment about the CBC's vitality to Canadian broadcasting remained largely the same, the trope of "system" deployed by the commissioners created a discursive barrier for the public broadcaster's efforts. In the new characterization a broadcasting "system" controlled one by one "feature" would be largely incomplete, regardless of how vital or essential the CBC might be. Other components would need to be recognized in order for that system to stand in its entirety.

With broadcasting seen in a more systematic nature, the position of the private broadcasters underwent conceptual renovation as well. To designate private broadcasters as "adjuncts" to the national system as the Massey commission had done would place these broadcasters outside of the national purpose. However, by characterizing the same broadcasters as "integral parts of the broadcasting system," as the commission had done on numerous occasions throughout its final report, brought

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[118]Ibid., 159.

them under the national tent. Furthermore, the commission concluded that the previous

arrangement-the single channel model-was never intended to be "a permanent thing"

for Canadian broadcasting, and stood instead as a placeholder until "an adequate system

had developed" to replace it.

The decision to incorporate the private broadcasters into the national system did

not necessarily signal an all-out victory for commercial imperatives. In fact, receiving

membership into the broadcasting club carried important responsibilities for Canada's

private broadcasters that appeared to offset some of the benefits they would receive as a

result. The primary outcome of this new status, according to the Fowler Commission,

was that private broadcasters would be held up to different standards than in the past.

"Each private operator, as the holder of a valuable temporary right to use a relatively

rare public asset," the commissioners went on, "should justify the continued retention

of that right-and should be required to keep on justifying it."[119] The report continued

by stating:

> There have been times in the past when the continued existence of private
> stations has been uncertain. We recommend that the principle of retaining
> private elements in our broadcasting system should be placed beyond
> doubt...To put the matter briefly, we think that the presence of the private
> elements in our broadcasting system should be clearly accepted as valuable
> and permanent; but that the performance level of private stations should be a
> high one to justify the grant to them of valuable public rights-higher in fact
> than it has been in the past.[120]

This warning was not only a product of the Fowler Commission's scepticism towards

the true objectives of Canada's private broadcasting sector. Instead, it represented a

natural outcome of a shift in expectation for Canada's private broadcasters, one that

expected them to mix commercial and national interests into their day-to-day

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[119]Ibid., 144.
[120]Ibid.

operations. "Each application for a private television station license makes it clear that the station, if licensed, will be part of the national television system and the applicant undertakes to become a component of that system."[121] The challenge for the new regulatory body to oversee broadcasting was to make sure that the different components in the newly conceived broadcasting system are working in the national interest, while some of those individual components pursued commercial ends.

The commissioners suggested two measures in particular that would be used by the new regulatory agency to ensure the efficient functioning of the broadcasting. For each of these initiatives the commissioners sought to distance broadcasting from two of the consequences from National Policy-inspired economic development, branch plants and protective tariffs, by offering two measures, foreign ownership restrictions and content regulations, which would act to nationalize capital investment in broadcasting stations and stimulate the development of a domestic production industry.

The Fowler Commission also took an important position regarding the development of Canadian film policy. In a section of the report entitled "Films on Television," the commission undertook the same processes of extension and limitation discussed in the context of the CBC and applied them to the NFB. In other words, the commission used a combination of concerns over limited financial resources and a conception of an expanding "cultural industry" as justification for proposals calling to stimulate Canada's nascent independent production sector. After providing a laudatory assessment of the NFB's accomplishments, the commission concluded that the organization should not be the "only source of supply for CBC film requirements."[122]

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[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid., 202.

This was not only a question of film form, where the commissioners believed private film companies could provide the CBC with more entertainment-based films. "Even in the documentary field, which is the board's specialty," the commissioners explained, "we believe a healthier situation and better films will result if private film producers are not only allowed but encouraged to compete, than if the Board virtually corners the market for television's documentary needs."[123] Finally, the commission concluded that the CBC should continue its development of filmed television serials for both domestic and international markets, but that it should limit its participation in "large-scale film production." Instead, the network should act as a facilitator, an incubator in the new entrepreneurial state, to "encourage with judicious vigour, and in some cases finance, Canadian producers to make films which may prove to be not only enjoyable to our television viewers but also profitable to the CBC and beneficial to our young and imaginative film industry."[124]

Broadcasting Policy/National Policy

For both of these proposals, the commissioners took pains to locate broadcasting within the context of National Policy rationale. On the foreign ownership issue, the commissioners took a bold stance:

> In making this recommendation for a limit on foreign ownership of broadcasting stations, we recognize the many substantial advantages that Canada has gained from foreign investment in other fields. In broadcasting, dealing as it does with media of public information and wielding so great an influence on opinion, we feel that facilities should be kept substantially in Canadian hands. If radio and television are to serve Canadian purposes which alone justify the difficulty and expense of maintaining a Canadian

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[123]Ibid.
[124]Ibid.

broadcasting system, these purposes should not be endangered by allowing individual stations to pass out the control of Canadians.[125]

The second policy measure dealt directly with the question of program content. First, the attention to program content represented the commission's belief that broadcasting policy should "go beyond the technical control of frequencies and power and should extend to programme content and station performance."[126] In expanding the policy purpose, the commissioners then expanded the value of program content within the national purpose placing the question of the "importation of programmes" and "Canadian production of programmes" alongside regulatory issues such as the amount of advertising and the quality of informational programming as key contributors "to a Canadian sense of identity."[127] Although such an opinion would lead one to conclude for the establishment of protective tariffs to stimulate Canadian production, as was the case in the National Policy, the commissioners explicitly stated their reluctance to the idea, once again distinguishing broadcasting from other manufacturing industries:

> Whatever may be the proper role of a protective tariff in building up the manufacturing industries in a young country, we have grave doubts about its applicability to musical, artistic, and dramatic works imported into Canada for purposes of broadcasting and doubts also as to the efficacy in achieving the objectives its proponents have in mind. There is much to be said for receiving into our system a variety of programmes from other countries. For reasons we have given earlier, we feel that the unlimited flow of programmes from our nearest and largest neighbour would engulf our cultural identity and some restriction and control of all network arrangements by the Board of Broadcast Governors and by regulations dealing directly with the use of Canadian talent and possibly the establishment of maximum percentages for broadcasting time devoted to imported programmes.[128]

What is particularly interesting about the two proposed techniques was the extent to which they appeared to pacify the two main tensions within English-Canadian

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[125]Ibid., 106-107.
[126]Ibid., 110.
[127]Ibid.

economic circles in the period between 1955 and 1965. On the one hand, the period is

marked by heightened calls from Canadians in broad sections of the business, civil

service, intelligentsia, and trade sectors for the government to repatriate the domestic

branch plants of American and global satellite corporations.[129] On the other, there

were others who believed that foreign capital investment in Canada was good for a

country with a small entrepreneurial class, and who believed instead that the emphasis

should be placed instead on ensuring that the management of Canadian branch plant

operations was placed in the hands of Canadians. The two policy measures, then,

appear to bridge the two impulses, by encouraging the establishment of domestic

industrial development, while allowing for limited foreign capital participation.

Despite their attempts to recognize broadcasting's distinctiveness, much of the

commissioner's rationale for what would eventually be a "Canadian content" regulation

was similar to the consumerist logic employed in the establishment of content

regulations in place of lower import tariffs in the automotive industry. The

commissioners explained that while a protective tariff would help to stimulate Canada's

production industry, "programmes would still be imported and would be made more

expensive by the amount of the tariff charged."[130] In the context of a Canadian

broadcasting system, such a development would mean that "many desirable and

valuable features of our radio and television fare would be withdrawn from Canadian

listeners and viewers with little chance of their being adequately replaced from local

sources, except at an excessive cost."[131] Furthermore, the measures would inhibit the

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[128]Ibid., 184.
[129]Philip Resnick, *The Land of Cain* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1975), 102.
[130]*Report of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting*, 184.
[131]Ibid.

prospects for Canada to develop an "export trade in Canadian programmes," because such measures would probably be met by countervailing tariffs by other countries.[132] "Our chances of success," the commissioners explained, "are much better if the former method is chosen."[133]

Many of the changes recommended by the commission were integrated by the newly elected Diefenbaker government. These included the 1958 *Broadcasting Act* and the establishment of the Board of Broadcast Governors shortly thereafter. The legislation established the Board of Broadcast Governors (BBG) as the regulatory body to issue broadcasting licenses and regulate Canadian broadcasting, a move that effectively broke the CBC's monopoly over the Canadian communications system. In addition, the *Act* echoed the opinions of the Fowler Commission report, arguing that some regulation was necessary to protect the Canadian elements of the broadcasting system. In response to the commercial pressures flowing from the expansion of channel capacity and the cultural pressures implicit from the absence of a substantial private Canadian presence on the air, the newly created BBG licensed Canada's first private-sector network, CTV, with the French-language network, TVA, to follow. In the text of the new *Broadcasting Act*, the CBC was put in its new place, defined as an institution created "for the purpose of operating a national broadcasting service," with the BBG was responsible for ensuring the sanctity of the "national broadcasting system" which would include both public and private components.[134]

Standing in the House of Commons to defend both the new act and the importance of the CBC, the Minister of National Revenue, George Nowlan, returned to

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[132]Ibid.
[133]Ibid.
[134]*Broadcasting Act*

the National Policy argument. For support, Nowlan drew upon the words of historian

Donald Creighton, who had met with the minister as part of a contingent of key figures

interested in protecting Canadian broadcasting. Nowlan entered the text of Creighton's

speech into the pages of Hansard:

> Canadian strength and Canadian unity ultimately depend upon Canada'
> maintenance of her autonomy and her spiritual independence on the North
> American continent. Throughout our history we have persistently followed
> national policies devised to strengthen our unity from ocean to ocean and to
> maintain our separateness in North America. Our defences against this
> 'continentalism', which has so often threatened us from the south, has been
> based on the east-west axis provided by nature, the strong line of the St.
> Lawrence-Great Lakes and the Saskatchewan. Confederation gave us our
> transcontinental political union. Sir John A. MacDonald's National Policy
> provided the framework for an integrated transcontinental economy. A
> national broadcasting system can do for us, in the realm of the mind and the
> spirit, precisely what these old and tested national policies have done in the
> political and economic sphere. A steady flow of live programs along the east-
> west lifeline will express Canadian ideas and ideals; employ Canadian talent,
> and help unite our people from sea to seas and from the rivers to the ends of
> the earth.[135]

Nowlan's comments incorporated the now-familiar rhetoric of the National

Policy into the soon to be familiar structure of Canadian broadcasting, one which unites

private and public sectors under the goal of ensuring the country's independence on the

North American continent, and which places the government in the role of indirect

facilitator of the audiovisual sector at a distance. The Board of Broadcast Governors'

new objective, ensuring an appropriate amount of "Canadian content," becomes the

technique for administering broadcasting in this new systematic environment.

Canadian Content in Television and Cars

On July 28, 1959, the BBG announced the "basic principles" of its Canadian

content regulations. These included a provision that the total Canadian content on any

station would not be less than 55% of the total programs during that week.[136] By

November 1959, the 55% figure had been changed to cover a four-week period, rather

than on a weekly basis. These requirements would be phased in gradually with no

minimum required before April 1, 1961, a 45% requirement up to March 31, 1962 and

the full 55% requirement after April 1, 1962. The Canadian content measure actually

came as the second-choice for the new BBG commissioners. The original proposal,

that a maximum of two hours of broadcasting time each day between the hours of 8

p.m. and 11 p.m. be reserved "for purposes to be prescribed by the Board of Broadcast

Governors, was scrapped after loud protests by both broadcasters and representatives

from the advertising industry." [137]

Not surprisingly, the major issue at the centre of discussions around Canadian

content regulations was how to define whether or not a program was, in the eyes of the

BBG, "essentially Canadian in content and character." A preliminary list of programs

that qualified combined concerns over promoting certain program genres and

encouraging domestic program production.[138] In its announcement of the new

Canadian content regulations, the BBG explained "it was impressed by the argument

put before it that if production in Canada is to expand, this will involve co-productions

and co-financing arrangements with the opportunity for distribution in markets outside

of Canada." By the beginning of the 1960s, then, the goals of Canadian broadcasting

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[135]HOC, *Debates*, August 18,1959, 3479.
[136]Stewart and Hull, *Canadian Television Policy and the Board of Broadcast Governors* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press), 30.
[137]Ibid., .32
[138]The criteria were as follows: "Any program produced by a licensee a)in his studio or using his remote facilities; and b) to be broadcast initially by the licensee; news broadcasts; news commentaries; broadcasts of events occurring outside Canada in which Canadians are participating; broadcasts of programs featuring special events outside Canada and of general interest to Canadians; and programs produced outside Canada in Commonwealth or French-speaking countries" quoted from *Documents in Canadian Broadcasting*, 288-289.

policy had changed from providing a publicly funded national programming *service* to facilitating a publicly funded and administered national programming *market*, a guaranteed home economy for domestic production through the licensing of private networks, and the prospects for international trade in cultural resources.

At the same time, similar issues were being examined in the automotive industry, with the federal government holding a special Royal Commission chaired by University of Toronto economics professor Vincent Bladen. Dr. Bladen was charged with the responsibility of providing the government with direction on how to improve the industry's welfare, virtually unchanged since the tariff adjustments of 1936. The commission was called while the automotive industry was experiencing a production crisis caused by the increasing penetration of imported cars and parts from Europe and the United States. Bladen's solution was to call for the rationalization of production in Canada and the integration with automotive production in the United States. He proposed measures promoting free trade in automotive products between Canada and the United States and invoked an extended "Canadian content" plan, replacing the 60% "Commonwealth Content" provision with a Canadian content requirement allowing duty-free entry if the content requirements were met. Shortly after Canada and the United States signed the *Automotive Products Trade Agreement*, also known as the Auto Pact, in 1965. The pact rationalized and fully integrated the American and Canadian motor vehicle production industries to comprise a single North American industry, triggering an immediate wave of investment in the Canadian industry.

As Michael Dorland explained the shift from live to filmed programming stimulated the potential for the internationalization of American television production through the expansion of the independent production sector. In the case of both motion

pictures and automobiles, to access the protected British television marketplace as "Commonwealth content," many American companies established subsidiaries in Canada to produce television programming. Like cinematic equivalents of Sam McLaughlin, entrepreneurs such as N.A. Taylor and Arthur Gotlieb built studios to offer American companies production facilities and technical know-how for support production. These measures had the effect of developing an "infant industry" argument to support the rhetorical support offered by increasing sympathetic politicians towards the development of a feature film industry and an independent production sector. As a result of this expansion in 'branch plant' television production "industry representatives began making regular contact with Canadian government officials to lobby for relief from taxes and customs duties for the importation of equipment."[139]

During this process of industrial formation the government hired University of Ottawa economist Otto John Firestone to examine the feasibility of establishing a feature film industry in Canada. One of Firestone's recommendations called for an arrangement between the United States and Canada that would create a continental market for film production. In light of the previous discussion, Firestone explained that the principle for the planned production arrangement

> would be similar to that embodied in the Canada-US Motor Car agreement of 1965 which provides that subsidies of American companies operating in Canada would share in accordance with a generally agreed formula in the increased business expected from the expansion of the North American market for motor cars and production parts."[140]

As Dorland detailed, American interests did not take to the continental approach to film production as they had to the production of motor vehicles: An unidentified U.S. film

[139]Dorland, *So Close to the State/s*, 50.
[140]Ibid., 103-110.

industry executive commented on the proposed Canada-U.S. Film Agreement: "So far as I know, Canadian oil is just as good as American oil and American cars are just as good as Canadian cars but if Canadian films are going to be handled on the same basis as oil and cars, it scares the hell out of me."[141]

Instead of choosing Firestone's proposed continental model for film policy, the Canadian government chose to take more developmental measures, creating the Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC) in 1967 to stimulate and promote the production of feature films based on commercial potential and artistic merit and to encourage international co-productions. As Dorland explained, "with the establishment of the CFDC, the task of severing the NFB from the economy of talk of the Canadian feature film was accomplished."[142]

Conclusion

Dorland's observation is important, because it serves as a reminder of the key theme of this chapter. Here I argued that the changes to government film and broadcasting policy do not represent the government's retreat from the position of supporting of cultural production working in the national interest. Instead, they marked the extension of government policy into new forms of cultural production.

By the middle of the 1960s, feature film producers, the Board of Broadcast Governors (soon to be re-named as the Canadian Radio and Television Commission), and private broadcasters networks were enlisted into the project of national cultural production through their reappearance, in the pages of policy documents, as partners

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[141] Ibid., 107.
[142] Ibid., 113.

working in the national enterprise. As I have argued in this chapter, this rearrangement was made possible by situating cultural production along the lines of previous models of economic development, including the National Policy, the protective tariff, the branch plant, and the import quota that appear throughout the interconnecting histories of the broadcasting, film, and automotive industries in Canada. Part of this process occurred at the discursive level, through an emphasis on a "mixed" Canadian broadcasting "system" comprised of public and private components. What resulted was a formal transition away from audiovisual policy built on cultural nationalism and towards a policy regimes rooted more strongly in economic nationalist motifs. As I argued earlier, the overemphasis on the security and military components of "cultural protection" have obscured an appreciation of the historical trajectory of industrial protection I have outlined in this chapter.

However, as my study has shown, another part of this process occurred at the epistemological level, through the techniques and evidence used to visualize such a system and to render it actionable for policy intervention. To illustrate, I conclude with a discussion of a major statistical study of one week's television and radio programming undertaken for the Fowler Commission by Dr. Dallas W. Smythe, a leading figure in North American media research and one of the founders of the political economic approach to communication studies. I have chosen to discuss this outside of the present chapter because I believe that reviewing Smythe's study for the commission serves as an excellent pivot function. In briefly outlining the study's design and use in the Fowler Commission process, the report facilitates a review of the issues I have discussed in this dissertation regarding the relationship between knowledge and state rationale towards the audiovisual sector. In addition, because of

its position at the end of the time period under review, I argue that an analysis of the study is useful as a window towards future actions in the audiovisual sector and for mapping out a number of pathways for additional research.

Conclusion:

Dallas Smythe, Proportionality, and the
Future Problems for Canadian Audiovisual Policy

Along with his predecessor and fellow FCC "Blue book" co-author Charles

Siepmann, Dallas Smythe's contribution to the Royal Commission on Broadcasting has

received curiously little attention within the scholarly literature. Typically, Smythe's

work for the commission occupies a passing mention in a summary of the scholar's

biographical accomplishments. It follows a discussion of his training as an economist

at Berkeley, his involvement with the Department of Labour, Central Statistical Board,

and Federal Communication Commission, and of his troubles during McCarthyism.[1]

Even Smythe himself saw the study as a passing footnote to his career, as work

undertaken before donning the "the political economist's cap" within the developing

field of communication studies.[2]

In order to support his claims that critical scholarship represents one of the

founding pillars of a uniquely (English-) Canadian approach to communication studies,

Robert Babe disregarded Smythe's work for the Royal Commission as a minor detail

related only to other "purely quantitative" content analyses undertaken in the early part

of Smythe's career. This appraisal tried to isolate the "critical" Smythe from his more

"administrative" accomplishments that would have placed the scholar in the same

company as a number of other American social science researchers during the 1940s

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[1]See Janet Wasko, Vincent Mosco, and Manjunath Pendakur, eds. *Illuminating the Blindspots: Essays Honouring Dallas W. Smythe.* (Norwood NJ: Ablex Publishing, 1993); John Lent, Ed. *A Different Road Taken: Profiles in Critical Communication* (Boulder; Westview Press, 1995), 17-80; Vincent Mosco, *The Political Economy of Communication* (London: Sage, 1996), 82-85.

[2]Smythe, *Counterclockwise: Perspectives on Communication.* Edited by Thomas Guback (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 47.

and 50s.[3] This account seriously underestimates the significance of this important

chapter of Smythe's career and within the Royal Commission on Broadcasting. With

over 500 pages of data, Smythe's study remains one of the largest statistical

investigations for a Royal Commission. As a significant research accomplishment and

an important piece of evidence that impacts upon the Fowler Commission's conclusions

about the future direction of Canadian broadcasting, some additional investigation of

Smythe's contribution is needed to move beyond assessments of its "purely

quantitative" characteristics.[4]

Before considering Smythe's study for this chapter I should state here that I

have little interest in impugning the scholar's work or exposing the inherent

weaknesses or biases of the study. As I have argued in this dissertation, the intention of

my study was not to plumb through the archives to play "armchair quarterback,"

checking over the work of commissioned research studies. Such work is unnecessary;

for as we will see, Smythe was fully aware of both the strengths and weaknesses of his

research. Furthermore, I am not suggesting that attempts were made to hoodwink the

different parties involved in the Royal Commission in the production of the research

study. There is no evidence of this kind of activity from my review of the archival

records, and such an argument serves to distract from the point I wish to make in my

own situated analysis.

Instead, this dissertation has focused on the contributions of commissioned

researchers, accountants, and royal commissioners for two different reasons: from a

historiographical perspective, this approach adjusts the narrative framework in which

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[3]Robert Babe, *Canadian Communication Thought: Ten Foundational Thinkers* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 112-139; see also Hardt, *Critical Communication Studies,* 89-90; Rogers, *A History of Communication Study,* 284-285.
[4]Babe, *Canadian Communication Thought,* 15-18.

the history of Canadian audiovisual policy has been structured to emphasize the centrality of the policymaking process on the policy results. From an *epistemological* perspective, this approach allows for a deeper consideration of the ways such "authoritative figures" are representative of the different forms of knowledge that have contributed towards the "making up" of the problems and solutions within the audiovisual sphere. My study has been intended to shed light not only on what Simon Shaffer calls "the historical connection between changes in the concept of evidence and that of the person giving it," but also on the historical connection between changes in the concept of evidence and the direction of policy measures towards Canadian film and broadcasting policy.[5]

With this in mind I conclude with Smythe's study for three reasons. The first is to show once again the process of the production of statistical knowledge. Decisions on how to account for Canadian broadcasting activity provide a window into that constitutive process and help us to understand both the descriptive and prescriptive components present when turning to an analysis of the study. I argue that the study – an account of one week of Canadian radio and television broadcasting – does more than provide an inventory of Canadian broadcasting activity. It also represents a mapping exercise which reveals the new Canadian broadcasting "system," comprised of public and private broadcasters from Canada and the United States and different kinds of domestically produced and what it calls "imported" programming. I argue that the picture of the broadcasting system painted by Smythe's study foreshadowed the fields of intervention for future policy measures in the audiovisual sphere, most notably

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[5]Simon Shaffer, "Self-Evidence," in *Questions of Evidence, Proof, Practice and Persuasion Across the Disciplines*. Edited by James Chandler, Arnold I. Davidson and Harry Harootunian. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 56.

through the application of content measures by identifying the areas of production activity most needing of intervention and regulation.

The second reason I discuss Smythe's study is because it allows us to consider once again the variety of different kinds of reception to the work of the policy practitioner. Rather than pushing Smythe's study to the margins, as the Massey commission did to Charles Siepmann's work, the commissioners lionized the report, hailing it as a study of the "technical" aspects of Canadian broadcasting and as form of objective knowledge needed to mediate between the different "subjective" voices involved in the debate over the direction for broadcasting policy.

Finally, I have highlighted Smythe's study to speculate upon the ramifications of such work on the epistemology of Canadian audiovisual policy. Like the Royal Commission and the administrative audit, I have argued that the successful integration of Smythe's study does more than produce calculable spaces for policy intervention. They also provide new discursive openings for discussions about cultural issues and, at the same time offer the prospects of a variety of interpretations. Finally, I have argued the recognition and integration of such studies into policy has an important self-authenticating function, underwriting the value of the form of inquiry for solving policy problems. I conclude this dissertation by suggesting how an appreciation of these three issues opens a number of research pathways to account for policy developments occurring beyond the time period under consideration.

A Statistical Study of Canadian Broadcasting

Fowler originally contacted Dr. Angus Campbell of the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan to undertake a statistical study of Canadian broadcasting.[6] The centre was one of a group of public opinion research institutes stationed in American universities that emerged from government statistical and propaganda bureaux during wartime.[7] In his letter Fowler explained to Campbell that his first choice was to have the research study performed by Canadians, because they would be in a better position to understand their own broadcasting system. However he admitted without elaboration that dispassionate voices on the subject were hard to find, and that there were few organizations in the country that could perform the kind of interview and sampling techniques that American firms could offer.[8]

After Campbell turned down the offer, he suggested the commission contact Smythe, then a faculty member of the Institute for Communication Research at the University of Illinois.[9] The two men had worked on content studies of American television during the early 1950s, and Smythe had recently attracted a significant amount of attention for a content analysis of American television undertaken for the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, an effort that earned him national attention in the pages of *Time* magazine.[10] Smythe met both Fowler and commission

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[6]Other American firms that contacted the commission offering research into Canadian broadcasting were the New York-based American Institute for Expression Analysis, led by Dr. Henry W. Lohse and the Chicago-based Science Research Associates, directed by Dr. Murray Wax. NAC, RG 33/36 vol 1, file #4

[7]As Daniel Robinson explains, opinion polling research in Canada and the United States comes on the heels of experiments in market research, which extend back into the 1920s See Daniel J. Robinson, *The Measure of Democracy: Polling, Market Research and Public Life, 1930-1945.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999). See also Jean Converse, *Survey Research in the United States: Roots and Emergence, 1890-1960.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 340-378.

[8]Robinson, *The Measure of Democracy.*

[9]Fowler reported in his letter back to Campbell that Smythe was "already on my list," NAC, RG 33/36 vol 1, file #4 letter Robert Fowler to Dr. Angus Campbell, 28 February 1956.

[10]See *Time*, February 5, 1951.

secretary Paul Pelletier in Montreal to discuss "a study he wanted me to plan and conduct that was to cover a week's programming of all Canadian TV and radio stations."[11] The two men agreed that Smythe would go back to Illinois and draft proposals for the commission to review while the public hearings were underway in the coming weeks.

In a memorandum sent to Pelletier shortly after the Montreal meetings Smythe's proposed two different methodological approaches to achieve the study goals. The "extensive" study offered an in-depth review of programs using a hired team of monitors analyzing program content from a sample of radio and television stations as they were being broadcast. The second method, an "intensive" study, involved the repeated viewing of individual programs by a panel of experts using kinescope recordings provided by broadcasters for a selected week of programming. Both of these methods were major undertakings, involving the recruitment and training of monitors and supervisors, situating them in different cities to watch the live broadcasts, making arrangements for expensive kinescope recordings to be sent to Urbana, and composing panels of experts and devising criteria for artistic merit and cultural value.

The commissioners expressed concern about both the scope and expense involved in carrying out either of the two proposed studies and agreed on a third methodological approach. Using program logs completed by officials from the CBC and the private stations, Smythe would undertake a program analysis in an attempt to "determine, as well as may be, the character of television and radio programmes"

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[11]Smythe initially warned Fowler that because of his involvement with activist organizations such as the American League for Peace and Democracy and the Washington Co-operative bookstore the commission may be tempting controversy by working with an "ex-New Dealer." The Chairman informed Smythe that the two men shared the distinction of coming under investigation by the House Un-American Activities Committee in his capacity as president of the Council on Pacific Relations[11]. He then shrugged off the concern and reminded Smythe, "'New Dealer' is not a dirty word in Canada." See Smythe, *Counterclockwise: Perspectives on Communication.* 47-48. Emphasis original.

across the country. The character of Canadian broadcasting would be drawn from the written contributions from representatives from Canadian television stations and a sampling of radio stations for a single week from the previous January.[12]

Smythe cautioned the commissioners of the limitations of what amounted to a content analysis reliant upon the written accounts of Canadian broadcasting from station and CBC representatives. Without an important component from both the original proposals, "namely the actual observation of the programmes broadcast." the commissioners needed to understand the characteristics of the data Smythe would be providing. "While the determination of the character of the programmes from the log study is thus necessarily subject to a considerable degree of uncertainty," he explained, "the relative cheapness of the method permits making determinations of other differences in programming as between different types of broadcast stations on a statistically reliable basis."[13] Smythe later contacted Pelletier to explain how, in light of the financial constraints placed upon the research team, the study data could maintain its credibility by adhering to the rules associated with sample design:

> Our objective is to design a sample which will provide an optimum amount of information useful to the commission at the lowest possible cost. The term "useful" in this connection has at least two distinguishable meanings. The information must be provided in categories which are meaningful to the commission's purposes in using such information [...] In the second place, the information must be useful in that it has tolerable limits of sampling precision.[14]

By stating that the mathematical consistency offset the problems associated with inferences drawn from the program descriptions and the time and cost limits placed

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[12]Smythe would also study the television content of two border stations, WBEN-TV in Buffalo and WXYZ-TV in Detroit. However, rather than using station logs, the data for the televised content of these stations was derived from station listings in issues of *TV Guide* and program descriptions in local newspaper articles. See Smythe, *Canadian Television and Sound Radio Programmes*, 5 n.1

[13]NAC, RG 33/36 vol. 1, file #4 "Memo to the Royal Commission on Broadcasting from Dallas W. Smythe."

[14]NAC, RG 33/36, vol. 1, File #4, Letter Smythe to Pelletier, August 3, 1956.

upon the study, Smythe's explanation to the commissioners themselves assisted in

reconceptualizing the information to be provided as valuable evidence. The study's

quantitative nature and claims to social scientific precision were enough to give what

Mary Poovey calls "the effect of accuracy."[15] If we remember from our earlier

discussion that the commissioners were frustrated with the vagueness and

ineffectiveness of other forms of knowledge presented during the hearings process,

Smythe's ability to produce credible and trustworthy data came to serve as an important

adjunct to the commission's needs, even with the limitations imposed upon the study.

Prescriptive Statistics: Percentages and Broadcasting Proportionality

In considering "Canadian Television and Sound Radio Programmes," Smythe's

500-page survey of Canadian broadcasting undertaken for the commission, I remind

you of the study's constructed function. The art critic John Berger writes that although

images were first made to conjure up the appearance of something that was absent, it

gradually became evident that such images could outlast that which represented. It

showed, "by implication how the subject had once been seen by other people [...] a

record of how X had seen Y."[16] As I have argued earlier, I believe that it is productive

to see such mundane administrative aspects in artistic terms, for it allows the intrepid

investigator to explore in more details similar questions regarding composition, accent,

subtlety, materials, and medium. If the photographer or painter's "way of seeing" is

reflected in the choice of subject or the marks made on canvas or paper, as Berger

explains, can the content analysis not be representative of the analyst's way of seeing

the subject under review?

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[15]Poovey, *History of the Modern Fact*, 30.
[16]John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*. (London: Penguin, 1972), 10.

The review of Canadian radio and television programming is similarly photographic in both its scope and its temporal orientation. The study captured everything broadcast over the air in Canada, with the survey shutter opening on January 15, 1956 and closing 7 days later. It also represented a snapshot of broadcasting activity, an artificial endpoint of an endless flow of programming and advertising. In addition, the messy universe of Canadian broadcasting appeared in a state of cosmic order, with every program, minute and second accounted for according to a variety of classifications based on language (English and French); ownership and affiliation (public, private CBC affiliates; private independent); program types (41 different groups and subgroups selected by the researchers such as "serious drama," "comedy drama," "musical comedy drama" and so on); program origin (domestic or "import"); time (general, adult, children's or daytime hours); and format (live or recorded).

Smythe was fully cognizant of the difficulties such a study offered as a piece of authoritative knowledge about Canada's broadcasting ecology, and explained the methods used in order to produce order in his study. He explained that the log analysis did not "facilitate fine distinctions in the quality of programmes," but did allow "broad distinctions between 'classes' of programmes where the classification rests on subject matter, on the form of programmes, and on their manifest intention to communicate with one or another type of audience." In making those distinctions and building these categories, Smythe also revealed that programs achieved their position in such categories on the "basis of their predominant content." He also explained to the reader that the emphasis on quantitative data came at the expense of a qualitative discussion of the results: "[a] fully satisfactory discussion of the data would interpret them in relation

to their causes, if not also to their effects"[17] "In reading the following," Smythe warned readers, "that the avoidance of qualitative judgements, while necessary in a report of this hand, handicaps both writer and reader by imposing a style which is somewhat difficult to read."[18]

Smythe's disclaimer was important, because it presented the information contained within the study as purely descriptive in its orientation: "Thus," he explained, "the reader will not find in this report the amount of 'good' or 'bad' TV or sound radio programmes broadcast by the CBC or the private stations, or by English or French stations." However, I would like to suggest that a close look at the study challenges the conclusion that the report is either "purely quantitative" or simply descriptive of Canadian broadcasting. Instead, I argue that the report, both in its form and its content, contains important prescriptive qualities that make it of interest to the commissioners during their deliberations.

By elaborately representing the landscape of Canadian broadcasting numerically and through the formulation of abstract descriptions, Smythe's study gave broadcasting its systematic nature, a rationality with routine patterns of programming, rates of growth, and quantity standards. The selection of the "programming week" as the basis for measurement is, of course, an arbitrary measure, one not dissimilar to the concept of the "fiscal year" that we viewed in the accounting controversies at the National Film Board. According to Smythe, the January sample week was selected because the programming during the winter season "is generally of better quality than in the summertime" and that it contained within it no unusual events that would make it unrepresentative of the programme offerings of Canadian television and radio

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[17]Ibid., xiv.
[18]Ibid.

broadcasters.[19] The measure of the week itself was selected because "there are known to be characteristic differences between the composition of broadcast programming on different evenings of the week." As a result, in describing the results of the study, the study also prescribes a vision -- a way of seeing broadcasting activity -- in terms that will make broadcasting a subject amenable for policy.

What is the prescriptive policy measure carried within these numbers and tables? To speculate upon this I believe we can examine the mathematical operations performed on the Canadian broadcasting system during the week of January 15-21. Here we can see that of the statistical operations displayed throughout the study arguably the most prevalent were those that dealt with the issue of proportionality across the different classes and categories mentioned earlier. The dominant numerical measurement of proportionality, the percentage, appears prominently throughout the study.[20] However, proportionality is not only a numeric concept pertaining to the different components of a larger totality. It is also tied intimately to non-broadcasting related concepts of harmony, balance, and symmetry. With this in mind, a number of questions arise: what constitutes appropriately proportional programming? At what point does proportionality exist? Is such proportionality reasonable? As we will see the overwhelming emphasis on proportionality and the answers to these questions was not lost on the commissioners, who integrated these themes into the pages of their final report.

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[19]Ibid., 8.

[20]Ibid. For a list of the 32 different measurements of Canadian broadcasting proportionality, see "List of Numbered Tables," p. xii.

The Fowler Commission, Smythe, and the Question of Objectivity

As I mentioned earlier, the most effective component of the private broadcaster's arguments before the commission were those that challenged the CBC's hold over the "public" and "national" components of broadcasting. To this end, the pages of the Fowler report contain numerous references to the role of the private broadcasters as "integral parts of a single system," whose accomplishments, both in providing decent programming on limited financial budgets, and in serving their communities, should be commended and encouraged. However, most of the criticism lobbed at the private broadcasters came through attacks on its representative organization, the CARTB, and the quality of the evidence provided to the commission. The report characterized the organization's evidence as "one-sided"; "colourful verbiage"; and "falsely doctrinaire."[21] Furthermore, the commission rejected many of the private broadcaster's claims, including evidence that the CBC had abused its powers as broadcaster and regulator, that broadcasting was "like the press," or that the current broadcasting system had been negatively affecting the state of Canadian democracy. Similar complaints were directed toward the CBC, whom the commission argued had been "too timid in bringing to the attention of the Canadian public the vital function it is performing in public life," leaving the broadcaster open to attacks from members of the Canadian press, individual citizens, and the private broadcasters.[22]

The failure of both sides to provide an effective rationale for government action was not only due to what the authors called "traditional prejudices and past misconceptions" but, more importantly, was also due to the fact that neither side had effectively imagined Canadian broadcasting in a systematic way. What was missing for

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[21]For the full dressing-down, see *Report of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting*, 139-40.

the commissioners was *the correct information* which could be used to bring economy

onto Canadian broadcasting. When the commissioners explained "to advise on the

operation of a machine requires some knowledge of the machine itself -- and the

performance expected of it," they were making an important statement not only about

broadcasting but of the evidence required of it. In order to counterbalance the poor

evidence presented by different parties, the commission felt "that we should obtain a

more impersonal and objective analysis of the Canadian broadcasting fare which would

assist us in making our recommendations and would also assist parliament and the

Canadian public in their future consideration of these problems."[23]

The chapter of the Fowler report devoted to Smythe's analyses began by

attempting to separate any of the study's potential persuasive or prescriptive elements

from its descriptive qualities. In characterizing the report as "entirely objective,"

"based on fact, not an individual's tastes or prejudices," and "qualitative, not

quantitative," the commissioners constructed Smythe's work as above the reproach

reserved for the various parties involved during the process.[24] Then, the

commissioners explained that the value of Smythe's study lay not in its claims to be

able to provide a serious analysis of broadcast content, but in its ability to provide an

outline of the broadcasting system's primary components:

> Dr. Smythe's analysis, therefore, does not reveal whether the symphonic
> broadcast by station ABC was nothing but nerve-shattering caterwauling or
> whether the jazz programme by station XYZ was a beautifully done
> symposium of modern rhythms. The analysis merely reveals that at a certain
> time station ABC was broadcasting symphonic music and station XYZ a jazz
> programme.[25]

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[22]Ibid., 137. It is important to state here that the archival records are unclear as to the extent to which
Smythe may have written the chapter located in the Royal Commission on Broadcasting's main report.
[23]Ibid., 39.
[24]Ibid., 43.
[25]Ibid., 44.

In spite of their desires to explore the elements of Canadian sound and television broadcasting with scientific precision and rigour, the commissioners framed the chapter on the programme fare in decidedly ambiguous language. They concluded, "in general, we can say that the weight of evidence indicates that Canadians like the programme fare they are getting" and, as a result, "both public and private broadcasters seem to have been able to please more than some of the people, more than some of the time."[26] This statement hearkens back to the non-numerical generalizations such as "Canadians want Canadian broadcasting" that formed the rhetorical architecture of the Aird Commission report almost thirty years earlier.

As I mentioned earlier, an important component of Smythe's study of Canadian broadcasting was its emphasis on measurements of proportionality. I argued that one of the effects of such an approach was to imagine Canadian broadcasting as existing in a state of perfect harmony with the different components of the system -- broadcasters, individual programs, programming schedule, and format -- both represented and placed in relation to one another. In its discussion of the programming content on Canadian broadcasting, however, the commissioners appeared to pick up on the significance of such figures, as an important sub-theme throughout the report was the importance of the broadcasting system in providing "balance" for Canadian viewers and listeners. If we return to the previous quotation which characterized the function of Smythe's study, the sentence following this assertion explained that although the study could provide only a descriptive inventory of the material on the air, such information was invaluable "because it has enabled us to determine how well public and private broadcasters meet what should be their main objective, and that is to offer well balanced programming.

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[26]Ibid., 40.

"Balance," the commissioners continued, " is the key word -- balance as between the various functions that can be performed by radio and television."[27] These functions included, to inform, to enlighten, to entertain and to sell goods. The commissioners explained that "any broadcaster who performs only one of these functions and none of the others, or even too much of one and too little of the others, is not a good broadcaster."[28]

Then the commissioners gave examples from Smythe's study revealing the lack of balanced programming across Canadian radio and television. Using the Toronto market as an example because of its larger number of stations, the commissioners first turned to the private radio stations, providing a minute-by-minute inventory of the week's broadcasting content:

> during the 19 hour period from 6am on Wednesday January 18,m 1956 to 1am the following morning, the programming on station CKEY consisted of 15 hours and 19 minutes of popular and dance music—this is what CKEY's brief to the Commission whimsically described as 'the recorded folk music of the American continent"— 2 hours and 40 minutes of news and weather, 42 minutes of sports news and 19 minutes of old-time or western music. This organized apotheosis of the juke-box may be good business, but it is hardly balanced programming.[29]

And then to the CBC's second network, the Dominion Network:

> From 6am to seven minutes past midnight—a period of 18 hours and 7 minutes—this publicly owned station broadcast 11 hours and 6 minutes of popular and dance music, 1 hour and 45 minutes of serious music, 1 hour and 16 minutes of news and weather, 50 minutes of sports news, 30 minutes of personalities or oddities, 30 minutes of variety, 30 minutes of prose or poetry readings with musical background, 20 minutes of children's variety, 15 minutes each of Canadian activities, comedy, old-time or western music, foreign lands or peoples, social and human relations, and 5 minutes of the family living type of programme.[30]

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[27]Ibid., 44.
[28]Ibid.
[29]Ibid., 46.
[30]Ibid.

If the first part of the study dealt with the question of balance in terms of programme content, the second part of the chapter dealt with balance in terms of program production. There Smythe found varying percentages of live or recorded Canadian programmes across both radio and television and throughout the different broadcaster categories. In examining the "Canadian content" of television and radio, the commissioners took great pains to suggest that this was not an attempt to demonize American programming or seek measures to prevent Canadians from accessing such programming. The issue, once again, concerns the question of balance. For the Fowler Commission, it becomes part of Canada's national interest to "match such American programmes," even if such an attempt represents "a difficult, but essential task."

The systematic nature of Canadian broadcasting is an important part of the Fowler Commission's fascinating reconceptualization of Canadian broadcasting. By referring to broadcasting not as a "single channel" but as a "mixed, single system," the commission created discursive breathing space for Canada's private sector by viewing the sector not as adjuncts to broadcasting, as Massey had done, but as components of a system of broadcasting, working in the national interest. Then the commission switched to the question of content by stressing the need for what it called well "balanced programme fare." By resituating of the broadcasting problem to one of balance and proportionality the commissioners were able to turn components like country of origin and specific program genres into objects for policy intervention and measures of broadcasting's success or failure. This then allowed the commissioners to single out the dearth of programs on "Canadian heritage," "agriculture" and "fisheries," and to encourage the CBC to broadcast more children's television on its English-service, and less *téléromans* on the French-service.

The shift of emphasis to programming facilitated by Smythe's study is important, because it also counters the argument that the commission's results represented the sell-out of the broadcasting sector to private interests. What we see instead is an outsourcing of national responsibilities onto those interests, bringing broadcasting in line with other sectors of the Canadian economy and rearticulating the significance of the historical partnership which exists featuring a conjunction of interests between selected private entities, government, and some protective measure.

In 1968, a new *Broadcasting Act* was passed defining the entirety of Canadian broadcasting, including the commercial sector, as a public service system. In language present in the Fowler commission report and evident in Smythe's study, the *Act* outlined that broadcasting in Canada was intended to be "a balanced service of information, enlightenment, and entertainment for people of different ages, interests, and tastes covering the whole range of programming in fair proportion."[31] The *Act's* other accomplishment, the establishment of the Canadian Radio-television Commission (later to be named the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission) was intended to ensure the broadcasting system was living up to the *Act's* instructions, most notably to ensure the fair proportion of Canadian content programming, the subject populations *par excellence* in the new regulatory environment. The shift from territory to population is complete three years earlier. In 1965 another broadcasting investigation was undertaken, also chaired by Robert Fowler. The first line of its report sets the tone with the first line of its report: "The

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[31] *Broadcasting Act* quoted in Richard Collins, *Culture, Communication, and National Identity*, 67.

only thing that really matters in Canadian broadcasting is content." "The rest," the report continued, "is housekeeping."[32]

The Future Problems of Canadian Audiovisual Policy

My reconsideration of the history of Canadian audiovisual policy stops with Smythe's study for the Fowler Commission because it marks both an end and a beginning. By focusing on the period between the first Royal Commission to deal with broadcasting in 1928, and the introduction of Canadian content regulations for television broadcasters in 1961, I have demonstrated the interrelationship between changes at the policy-making level and transitions occurring at the level of knowledge production.

These can be summarized under four different headings: policy problem, policy rationale, policy practices, and policy expertise. From the first perspective, I have shown how the problematic situations facing the audiovisual sector move from cultural nationalist concerns regarding the national and moral infrastructure of the audiovisual sector toward economic nationalist concerns regarding the national and industrial infrastructure of the audiovisual sector.

From the perspective of cultural policy rationale in the period under analysis, I have documented a shift away from the constitution of public institutions as the sole protectors of Canadian cultural expression towards the extension of nationalizing responsibilities for cultural production to include "private" forms of investment working under state-managed capital markets. This can be seen in the movement from the nationalization of the Canadian broadcasting system during the Royal Commission

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[32]Government of Canada, *Report of the Advisory Committee on Broadcasting* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1965), 3.

on Radio Broadcasting in 1928 towards the nationalization of individual components working within that system, namely the independent production sector, which is exemplified by the establishment of Canadian content regulations in 1960. It can also be seen in the shift from the centralization of cultural production activities within single institutions, such as the CBC and NFB, towards the centralization of cultural regulation of production activities, through organizations such as the Board of Broadcast Governors, the precursor to the modern-day CRTC.

From the perspective of cultural policy practices, I argued that there emerges a shift away from state policies aimed at assuming sovereignty over the physical infrastructure of broadcasting and filmmaking towards the establishment of policies intended to govern over individual policy populations. This is accomplished using a series of what Dowler calls "administrative tactics" working at a distance from direct forms of government intervention.[33] I demonstrated how certain forms of knowledge, particularly statistics and accounting, rise to prominence through their connotations of transparency and claims to systematic comprehensiveness which insulate both the form of knowledge itself and its producer from concerns over bias or prejudice and eventually trump other forms of evidence previously used to support policy action in the cultural sphere. This can be viewed, broadly speaking, as a move away from humanistic approaches towards the governance of the cultural sphere towards social scientific and administrative forms of cultural representation. This relates to my final perspective, that of cultural policy expertise, where I tracked the move away from a generalist, a member of Canada's social or intellectual cognoscenti able to comment on

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[33]Dowler, "The Cultural Policy Apparatus," 336.

cultural matters towards the specialist trained in administrative methods constructed as "objective."

I say that Smythe's study represents an "end" because after the Fowler Commission, no other Royal Commissions are held to outline the direction of the broadcasting sector. While there have been innumerable investigations into the various facets of Canadian broadcasting, including task forces, White Papers, special reports and standing committees, the mechanism of the Royal Commission has yet to reappear. To a large extent, this is because there has been little need to reassert the national importance of broadcasting, one of the Royal Commission's key functions. Nor has there been any need to change the rules of the game under which policy making occurs. Even outside of the Royal Commission process, policymaking is a still a quasi-judicial experience of testimony, evidence, and cross-examination. Any changes that have occurred in the broadcasting sphere in the years that follow the period covered by this dissertation then, do not represent a considerable renovation of the basic structures of the broadcasting industry, but rather serve as a rearranging of the furniture, in a manner of speaking, a constant reshuffling of the different components and techniques working to ensure the efficient function of the national "system."

It is interesting to note that the national film sector has never had its own Royal Commission, but has played a supplementary role in other Royal Commissions mentioned here. In the Aird Commission report, the structure of Canada's motion picture industry was used to argue in favour of greater governmental interventions in the field of radio broadcasting. It was argued that, without significant governmental intervention, Canadian broadcasting would come to resemble the domestic film industry, characterized by minimal domestic production and extensive American

investment in distribution. In the Massey Commission report, Canadian film appeared alongside a diverse range of artistic activities ranging from broadcasting to ceramics that needed steering to encourage distinctive forms of cultural production. Finally, the Fowler Commission report's discussion of Canadian film occurred primarily in the context of developments to Canada's television industry. In expanding the national purpose of Canadian broadcasting to include Canada's previously marginalized private sector, the Fowler report entrenched the NFB's position as a peripheral component to a national film industry, discursively opening the door for the expansion of the domestic private production industry.

Since the 1960s, government policy towards the audiovisual realm has moved in two directions. With the technological extension of broadcasting services to cable, pay television, and satellites, the government has attempted to reproduce a similar structural model, allowing for Canadian re-broadcasters of American programs, an extension of the CBC, and programming content regulations of varying degrees. Similar plans are currently in place for satellite radio, with the CRTC ruling on eligible licensees and content regulations in near future.

Secondly, government policy has been oriented towards promoting or stimulating certain forms of audiovisual production. In 1967 the Canadian Film Development Corporation was established to stimulate the production of feature films in Canada. Since that time, film policy has constantly changed the meaning of the "feature film" to be supported, from art-house auteur driven cinematic works, to box-office driven films featuring American actors to made-for-TV movies and now, for quirky "indie" films that would help to attract English-Canadians to the box office. Similar efforts have been made in broadcasting, first with "Canadian content" for

television and radio stations, and, increasingly towards specific genres of production. Recently, much attention has been paid to the poor state of the "English-Canadian drama," however, this is the latest in a strong of program genres that have attracted the attention of policy makers, from the made-for-TV movie to "entertainment-news" programming to stimulate interest in the poorly performing Canadian film industry.

During this period, new forms of knowledge emerged to assist in the efficient functioning of the cultural policy realm. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, the field of cultural economics emerged during the 1960s and 70s alongside the post-war "leisure economy" and the increasing economic importance of the "culture consumer" to the industrial and trade sectors.[34] In addition, communication studies program began appearing in Canada, beginning with Loyola College in Montreal, offering students and scholars an opportunity to engage with policy studies. These were accompanied by the work of researchers employed by think tanks, such as the Fraser Institute, CD Howe Institute, or Institute for Research in Public Policy as part of a heightened engagement in the process of policy design.[35]

In 1972, York University established a Bachelor of Administrative Studies to train students in the area of arts administration. By the 1990s, the school (now renamed the Schulich School of Business) began granting MBA degrees in the field of arts administration, a program I completed before my doctoral studies. This represents another move which is part of the "professionalization" of the Canadian cultural industries -- one that is precipitated by the needs of arts organizations to provide employees equipped with an understanding of the rationalities of modern-day granting

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[34]For example, see Alvin Toffler, *The Culture Consumers* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1962).
[35]For example see Stephen Globerman, *Cultural Regulation in Canada* (Montreal: Institute for Research in Public Policy, 1983); and Dale Orr and Thomas A. Wilson, eds. *The Electronic Village: Policy Issues of the Information Economy.* (Toronto: CD Howe Institute, 1999).

organizations as well as the demands of private sector "partners." Since then, there has

been a tremendous jump in coverage of arts management issues in professional journals

and specialized publications. A few years ago, a professional journal, *the International

Journal of Arts Management* began publication out of the Hautes études commerciales

at the Université de Montréal. In a survey of articles published since 1970, Yves Évard

and François Colbert show "a marked increase in scientific articles in arts management

[...] from only 20 in 1970-1979 to 63 in the first six years of the 1990s."[36]

I suggest that in order to appreciate this development it is productive to view

these as discrete audiovisual policy "populations," particular arrangements of creative

talent, technical staff, production companies, subsidy-granting institutions, and

knowledge producers, point schemas. As I discussed earlier in my literature review, an

appreciation of the historical constitution of policy populations offers an excellent

opportunity to explore the variety of actors and enumerative techniques involved in

isolating certain forms of cultural production as "problematic" and provide a deeper

appreciation of the changing nature of the "audiovisual fact."

In particular, greater appreciation is also needed to account for the triangulation

of knowledge, state, and cultural policy governance. From my review of the literature

mentioned earlier, it appears that previous treatments of these questions have been

content to stop with analyses of political economy as the producer of state knowledge.

The recent emergence of cultural studies both as a discipline within universities and as

a producer of knowledge for changing cultural policies calls for additional investigation

in this regard. As I suggested in an earlier chapter, what is necessary is a move away

from questions regarding the complicity of cultural researchers to the policy process

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[36]Yves Evrard and Francois Colbert, "Arts Management: A New Discipline Entering the Millennium?" *International Journal of Arts Management* 2:2 (2000): 10.

and what I consider to be the uncritical deployment of "anti-elitist" discourse towards

an appreciation of the relationship between changing forms knowledge and shifting

government policy in the cultural sector in different national and regional contexts.

Interpretations of the distinctive nature of Canadian communication studies that

reproduce the political economy/cultural studies divide cannot account for the changing

relationship between the scholar, state, and policy knowledge. As Harold Innis wrote

on this very subject, "the innumerable difficulties of the social scientist are

paradoxically his only salvation."[37] A recent exploration of the cultural policy work of

Pierre Bourdieu, Régis Debray, and Michel de Certeau, written by Jeremy Ahearne,

serves as inspiration for future work in the Canadian context.[38]

There is also further need for studies of "administrative screening" within

cultural institutions both as extensions of security technologies and through

mechanisms such as audits, elaborated accounting techniques, and management control

procedures, attempts to bring discipline to cultural institutions and are linked to

governmental rationale towards a specific cultural sector. However, as I indicated in

my introduction, I do not believe that we can understand the emergence and influence

of these new forms of governance of the cultural sphere as simply representative of the

further extension of technical rationality over Canadian cultural producers (and the

assumed notion of suppressed spontaneity that follows as a result of the careless

application of bureaucratic systems). Subjectivizing techniques are plural in their

effects and relations between the applier of technical rationality and the applied is more

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[37]This is from a 1935 article entitled "The Role of Intelligence: Some Further Notes," republished in Innis, *Staples, Markets and Cultural Change*, 432.

[38]Jeremy Ahearne, *Between Cultural Theory and Policy: The Cultural Policy Thinking of Pierre Bourdieu, Michel de Certeau and Régis Debray*. Centre for Cultural Policy Studies, University of Warwick Research Papers, Volume 7. Available online at www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/theatre_s/cp/publications/centrepubs. Accessed 22 January 2005.

open and agonistic. What is needed, therefore, is further study about the relationship between the two to understand how cultural populations both come to be aggregated as objects for policy and how those react to changing membership within cultural populations and the application of other forms of measurement in the administration of their cultural affairs.

With this in mind, I think it may also be productive to undertake an ethnographic approach, by studying the ways in which institutions on the receiving end of interventions like audits, or who are affected by changing membership inside and outside of certain cultural populations, react to those developments.[39] The ethnographic work by Georgina Born in British and French cultural institutions serves as inspiration for work "from the ground up" as well to elaborate upon the continued importance for further exploration of cultural policy issues by those in other academic fields, as there remains, particularly in the Canadian case, a marked absence of empirical social research on cultural institutions.

Each of these projects will add considerable texture to cultural policy studies, and provide an alternative to the policy-oriented approach that has dominated the field of study. As a result, the number of participants in the "field" of policy studies could be considerably greater, including contributions from the humanities, social and administrative sciences, and media studies. In the end, this would allow for a deeper appreciation of the variety of actors, techniques, and forms of knowledge used to produce the cultural as an object for policy intervention.

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[39]See *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995) and "From Reithian Ethics to Managerial Discourse: Accountability, Audit, and the BBC," *Javnost: The Public—Journal of the European Institute for Communication and Culture* 10:2 (2002): 61-80.

In discussing the ways in which culture becomes *cultural* in Canada, I am not advocating for a return to a rarefied conceptualization of "culture," one that is free of administrative conditions. In this regard I follow the recent reflections by Terry Eagleton and Zygmunt Bauman have highlighted the regulatory impulses present within the meaning of the word "culture." If we draw our understanding of culture from its agrarian connotations, then notions of husbandry, cultivation, and development, suggest both regulation and spontaneous growth.[40] Furthermore, as Bauman points out, the word "culture" was historically viewed as a descriptive term, a summary name for the already achieved, but "came to mean the way one type of 'normatively regulated', regular human conduct different from another type, under different management."[41] When applied to the artistic sector, Bauman explains that we can see that culture and management represent impulses that are constantly in tension with one another, part of a "long story of 'sibling rivalry' with no end in sight."[42] Instead, I argue for a consideration of the history of audiovisual policy in terms of "the successive topological displacements and complications of this liberal problem-space,"[43] to borrow the phrase from Colin Gordon. An appreciation of the intersection between cultural policy and the politics of knowledge facilitates a more textured account of the pitched battles between cultural producers and those attempting to measure them.

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[40]Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture*. (London: Blackwell, 2000), 4.
[41]Zygmunt Bauman, "Culture and Management," *Parallax* 10:2 (2004), 65.
[42]Ibid.
[43]Gordon. "Governmental Rationality: An Introduction," 16.

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