Newcomers and Old-timers: The Cultural Production of "Canada" and "Canadians" in an Audio-visual Text

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Abstract

This paper examines the cultural production of "Canada" and "Canadians" in *The Newcomers,* a 1953 film produced by the National Film Board of Canada. Using a form of discourse analysis that sees talk as social interaction and identity as socially and locally constructed, this study illuminates how "Canada" and "Canadians" are talked into being in a film ostensibly about immigration and immigrants. While illustrating the moment-to-moment construction of these social identities in this specific context, this study also illustrates how ethnomethodological tools could be used to critically analyze the production of ideologies and identities in audio-visual media. Specific attention is paid to the marginalization of Aboriginal peoples in this governmental text.

Key words: Aboriginal Peoples, Canada, Cultural Production, Ethnomethodology, Identity, Indigenous peoples, Immigration, National Film Board, Talk as Social Interaction.

Résumé

Ce document examine la production culturelle du «Canada» et des «canadiens» dans The Newcomers, un film de 1953 produit par l'office national du film du Canada. En utilisant une forme d'analyse du discours qui considère la parole comme une interaction sociale, et l'identité comme socialement et localement construite, cette étude met en lumière comment le «Canada» et les «canadiens» sont persuadés de jouer dans un film soi-disant sur l'immigration et les immigrants. Tout en illustrant étape par étape la construction de ces identités sociales dans ce contexte spécifique, cette étude illustre également comment des outils ethnométhodologiques pourraient être utilisés pour analyser de manière critique la fabrication des idéologies et des identités dans les médias audiovisuels. Une attention particulière est portée sur la marginalisation des peuples autochtones dans ce texte gouvernemental.

Mots-clés : peuples autochtones, Canada, production culturelle, ethnométhodologie, identité, immigration, office national du film, la parole comme interaction sociale.

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Author's Note

Lyndsay Moffatt completed her doctoral work at The University of British Columbia, and a post-doctoral fellowship at Simon Fraser University. Her current research interests include critical approaches to literacy education, discourse analysis, teacher education and examining research data as social interaction. She thanks Indigenous and post-colonial scholars for their teachings, her colleague Robert Nellis for directing her to this film and the Social Science Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for its support during the research and writing of this paper. She also thanks the anonymous reviewers of an earlier draft of this paper for their suggestions. She can be contacted at (416) 841-9352 or lyndsay.moffatt@gmail.com .

Note de l'auteur

Lyndsay Moffatt a terminé ses études doctorales à l'Université de Colombie-Britannique, et un stage post-doctoral à l'Université Simon Fraser. Ses sujets de recherche actuels comprennent des approches critiques de l'enseignement en litératie, l'analyse du discours, la formation des enseignants et l'étude des données de recherche comme interaction sociale. Elle remercie les spécialistes autochtones et post-coloniaux pour leurs enseignements et le conseil de recherche en sciences humaines (CRSH) pour son soutien durant la recherche et la rédaction du présent document. Elle remercie également les lecteurs anonymes d'une version antérieure de cet article pour leurs suggestions.

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In any specific context, categorizations and the construction of similarity and difference can be treated as situated boundary work (Horton-Salway, 2001; p.147).

We could say that what dominant groups basically own is how it is that we see reality, and that there's an order of revolution which is an attempt to change how it is that persons see reality (Sacks, 1992; p. 398).

Introduction

From the time of first contact to the present day, issues of place and identity have haunted Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in North America. Questions concerning the legitimacy or illegitimacy of newcomers' use of resources, their potential contributions or strains on existing systems, and definitions of citizenship have dogged every foray that non-Indigenous settlers have made into Native land. While Canada is not the first, or the only, nation to struggle with issues of colonialism, as a relatively young nation — and as a nation that has in many ways grown up with motion pictures — it holds a unique position in the history of nation-building and global migration. Unlike many other nations, discussions of what it means to be a Canadian and representations of Indigenous people can be found in both documentary and fictional films since the turn of the 20th Century (Melnyk, 2004). Indeed, the very earliest films recorded in Canada were made by a Manitoba farmer, in the late 1890s and were used by the Canadian Pacific Railway to help promote immigration from the United Kingdom. The first dramatic film made in Canada was *Hiawatha the Messiah of the Ojibway*, a dramatized reading of a poem by Longfellow produced in 1903. While neither of these original films have survived to the present day, many other films concerning Canada's struggles with place, legitimacy, Indigeneity and identity are readily available for study thanks to the ongoing work of the National Film Board (www.nfb.ca), and the National Archives of Canada. Such documents allow for a close investigation of issues such as how a nation-state is socially constructed, or spoken into being, and how national identities are created and/or challenged. In addition, these documents provide opportunities for us to understand how colonialism has worked in the past, so that we can challenge modern forms of cultural domination.

An investigation of these issues can be seen as particularly pertinent now, as various nations and nation-states continue to negotiate what it means to be a nation, who can claim ownership of particular places, and how to critically examine assumptions of national identity. These issues continue to be relevant in Canada as Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples continue to co-construct what this place should look like and what relationships to land and place will be recognized in the coming decades.

While a growing body of Indigenous scholars have worked to redefine research methodologies and to re-map issues of place, resistance, and belonging (Atleo & Fitznor, 2010; Battiste, Bell, Findlay, Findlay, & Henderson, 2005; Deer, 2009; Donald, 2009; Hare, 2005; Marker, 2009; McIvor, 2010), as a non-Indigenous person who has benefited

in countless ways from centuries of colonialism, I feel a responsibility to use the research methodologies I am familiar with to investigate these issues and to support a broad engagement with critical readings of "Canadian" culture. In this paper, I specifically examine how a nation-state works to establish its legitimacy and create a national identity on contested land. To do so I consider the use of "category work"(Hester & Eglin, 1997) in *The Newcomers*[1](Bennett, 1953), a 1953 film created by the Canadian government for mass consumption by local audiences This paper is designed to 1) Raise questions about the social relations and values reflected and constructed in this specific text; 2) Illustrate some of the ways that nation-states and nationalities are spoken into being; and 3) Suggest the potential of one form of analysis for current studies of the cultural production of social relations and values.

This paper is designed particularly for secondary school educators and teacher-educators as these members often struggle with how to "read" or talk about audio-visual texts with their students. While many provincial and state curricula now include expectations concerning viewing and composing audio-visual texts, educators and teacher-educators frequently struggle with translating these expectations into classroom practice. This paper is also designed for educators and teacher-educators who hope to address issues of Indigineity, place, race, and legitimacy in their classrooms without igniting defensiveness on the part of white settlers and their descendents, or creating discomfort for their Aboriginal students. Similarly, this paper is for educators, teacher-educators, and researchers who are interested in discussing the social construction of nations and national identities, and yet feel the need for new methods.

Literature Review

A range of recent studies have examined issues of national identity and colonialism in film, video, and television. For example, Beus (2008) has explored questions of identity and nation in "transnational Chinese cinema" emanating from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan; Keller (2003) has examined issues of race and historical accuracy in "Westerns" produced after the Regan administration in the United States; Tslaiki (1995) has investigated how the Greek media has worked to establish a national identity via broadcast television and Morgan (2003) has investigated issues of colonialism and cultural identity in Claire Denis' film *Chocolat*. In terms of Canadian cinema and television, Longfellow (1996) has investigated issues of globalization and national identity in three Canadian films, while Kaye (1994) and Marshall (1993) have explored issues of gender and national identity in an English film and in a French television series.

However, in examining these studies, it bears noting that few, if any, have investigated how nation-states or national identities are produced through talk. While all of the studies cited above address issues of national identity or colonialism, none offer a close reading of how language is used to build up — or break down — national identities or produce colonial relationships. Recent analyses of talk-as-social interaction (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Baker, 2000; Edwards, 1998; McKinlay & Dunnett, 1998) suggest

[1] This film can be viewed at http://www3.nfb.ca/objectifdocumentaire/index.php?mode=view&language=english&filmId=14

that a close attention to language can help illustrate how particular social identities, relationships and values are built up and broken down. In this context, an examination of how colonial relations are naturalized, and how national identities are produced in and through language could be seen as a step towards challenging unequal social relations and questioning the work of nation-states. In the next section, I outline some of the theoretical frameworks that inform this kind of an investigation. I then offer a close reading of three excerpts from *The Newcomers* (Bennett, 1953) and discuss the implications of this analysis for educators and researchers.

Theoretical Framework

This paper is informed by theories of cultural production and ethnomethodological approaches to analyzing talk (Francis & Hester, 2004; Willis, 1981). As noted by Levinson and Holland (1996) theories of cultural production have asserted a unique perspective on "culture." While culture is often spoken of as a static demographic factor, theories of cultural production suggest culture is found in the *processes* through which social relations and values are created, maintained, or challenged. These theories draw attention to the cultural work people do every day to build up, break down, or maintain various social relations and institutions. This perspective differs significantly from much of the research found in the social sciences, as rather than attempting to document what people with particular (pre-determined) identities or people from particular (pre-determined) cultures might say, or do, in certain situations, this perspective recommends the investigation of how identities and cultures are locally produced in interaction. This perspective also recommends viewing local productions of culture and identity as related to larger social, historical and political narratives. Approaching the study of nation-states and national identities with theories of cultural production opens up a range of questions about how nationhood and national identities are produced in day to day ways and how they are related to the production of un/equal social relations and un/egalitarian values. A cultural studies approach suggests it is important to pay attention to how texts like *The Newcomers* (Bennett, 1953) both reproduce and resist unequal social relations and unegalitarian values.

Analyzing talk as social interaction: Ethnomethodology

Ethnomethodology is the study of "practical activities," "common sense knowledge," and "practical organizational reasoning" (Lynch & Peyrot, 1992). At times, it has been described as the study of "members' methods for getting things done." Like theories of cultural production, ethnomethodology views culture and identity as phenomena that are created in social interaction. In other words, while identity and culture are conventionally used either to explain particular social phenomena (e.g., 'she reads that text in such and such a way because she is a white middle class woman') or as a way of classifying subjects (e.g., 'participants were working class boys'), an ethnomethodological perspective suggests identities and cultures are topics that require investigation (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Zimmerman, 1998). From this perspective, how identities are performed and how cultures and institutions are reproduced or changed are fruitful questions for research.

In this way, while some analysts might look at a text like *The Newcomers* as representative of "Canadian" filmmaking citing a range of reasons why a film like this is reflective of the "Canadians" who wrote and directed it with their "Canadian sensibilities." or others might study a selection of "Canadian" writers and directors and then report certain themes or techniques as attributable to the fact the filmmakers were "Canadian," ethnomethodology asks us to come at "Canada" and "Canadian-ness" from a very different angle. Ethnomethodology asks us to think about how "Canadian culture" and "identity" are brought into being, or enacted, through very routine descriptions and interactions or through how people "do" "being Canadian".

As noted by Hester and Elgin (1997), this kind of perspective asserts that "culture is constituted in, and only exists in, action" (p.20). This approach to culture and identity can be seen as closely aligned with that of feminist post-structural theorists and discursive psychologists such as Bronwyn Davies (1993, 2000), Wendy Hollway (2001), Mary Horton-Salway (2001), and Valerie Walkerdine (1985; 1987; 1990).

While phrases and terms may mean different things to different people, an ethnomethodological approach suggests we can learn a great deal about social structures and society by paying close attention to what interlocutors make relevant, what they do not make relevant and how they respond to each other. In this way, analyzing utterances in sequence has been an important part of an ethnomethodological approach to analyzing talk. Focusing on sequential organization has been particularly important for Conversation Analysis (CA), the most widely known branch of ethnomethodology. A lesser known, but equally robust, method of analysis is Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA) (Hester & Eglin, 1997). This form of analysis focuses particularly on the ways that people use categorization work to accomplish everyday activities. For example, Hester (1998) has used MCA and CA to examine how "deviance" is recognized in elementary schools, Baker (1984; 2004) has used MCA to examine how adults and adolescents locate themselves and each other along a continuum of "stages of life" and McKinlay and Dunnett (1998) have used MCA and CA to examine how gun owners construct themselves as "average citizens." In addition, recently, Kitzinger (2005), has illustrated how CA and MCA can be used to examine the ways that heterosexism is reproduced in calls to an after-hours medical clinic.

If, as Baker (2004) asserts, tracing members' use of categories, or the ways they describe themselves and others in talk, can be a "means for showing how identities, social relationships and even institutions are produced" (p.164), then analyzing talk as social interaction could be a useful means for illustrating how nations and national identities are constructed or produced in texts that include talk like *The Newcomers*.

Cultural Production and Ethnomethodology as Strange or Not-So-Strange Bedfellows

In thinking about using MCA or CA to examine the cultural production of colonialism, nation-states and national identities it bears noting that until recently these tools were not widely used to examine what might be called critical issues. As noted by Zimmerman (2005), a casual perusal of studies that use CA, could suggest a lack of interest in "social problems" and a deep interest in "the mundane and the trivial"(p. 445). Nonetheless, in the past 10 years, a new wave of scholars has begun to argue that the tools of MCA and CA could be effective in helping to investigate critical questions such

as how sexism, heterosexism, linguicism, and racism are reproduced and resisted in local contexts. The work of Kitzinger (2000; 2005), Ohara and Saft (2003), Stokoe (2003), Stokoe and Smithson (2001), and Talmy (2009a; 2009b;) has begun to illustrate how microanalytic tools such as MCA and CA could be useful for examining critical questions. These scholars suggest that MCA and CA could be fruitful tools for critical research regardless of the fact that they have rarely been used in this way.

When thinking about using these tools in the context of analyzing an audio-visual text, it should also be noted that these tools were developed specifically for the analysis of what has been called "naturally occurring talk" . While some scholars have used CA to examine institutional talk (Heritage, 2005), and while Stokoe (2008) has recently experimented with using CA to analyze a television sitcom, many traditional conversation analysts would likely disapprove of the use of this kind of data with these kinds of tools. Similarly, while there have been a few discussions concerning the use of ethnomethodological tools on fictional narratives (McHoul, 1987) or on images (Goodwin, 2001; Lepper, 2000; Macbeth, 1999), few studies have used MCA or CA on scripted talk or on audio-visual texts. In this paper, I look to extend the work of critics like Kitzinger (2000; 2005), Ohara and Saft (2003), Stokoe (2003), Stokoe and Smithson (2001), and Talmy (2009a; 2009b;) and to illustrate how these tools could be used to critically analyze a scripted audio-visual text. In the next section, I offer a synopsis of the film and outline how I approached the data for analysis. I then illustrate how some of the tools of MCA and CA might be used to examine the production of "Canada" and "Canadians" in three short excerpts from *The Newcomers*.

Synopsis of *The Newcomers*

The Newcomers is a documentary film written and directed by David Bennett and produced by Tom Daly for the National Film Board of Canada in 1953. The film is narrated by a masculine voice and includes a range of images of people working and going about their daily activities. People are seen building, commuting, cooking, digging, harvesting, planting crops and working with machinery, among other things. The film is ostensibly about the contributions of immigrants to Canada. The opening and closing lines of the narration establish that immigrants have enriched Canada and that they bring "new talents, skills, and knowledge" to "the nation." With the exception of the opening and closing narration, the film consists of short profiles of "recent immigrants" or companies owned by recent immigrants and their work in different regions of Canada. For example, we meet "Peter Drummond" who has immigrated from Britain and who makes building materials in Edmonton. Similarly, we meet "the Krantzes," a German couple, who are both doctors, living and working in rural Alberta. All of the immigrants profiled in the film appear to be white. Towards the end of the film, a few people of colour have cameo appearances as patients of the Krantzes. Indigenous people, or "Indians" as the film calls them, are mentioned only in the context of the Krantzes' visit to a reserve.

Method

For the purposes of this paper, I have focused my analysis on the opening and closing narration in the film. In a subsequent paper, I intend to include a consideration of the images that are used in this film as well. However, for this paper, my focus is on the words spoken by the narrator. The opening and closing lines of the film were chosen for close analysis, as openings and closings are often important sites of negotiation. In reflecting on children's play, Sacks (1992) asserted that important "mapping" often happens when children begin a game, change games, re-start a game, or integrate a new player. Much the same could be said about adults in conversation and the openings and closings of narrative sequences. Initial exchanges, changes of topic, and closings are rich sites of negotiation and description. These are the places where we establish what will be important to our discussion or repeat what we think is most salient. In this way, these moments were chosen as ideal sites to examine the categorization work in *The Newcomers* and how the film produces "Canada" and "Canadians" on contested land. In the following section, I provide the first few lines of narration and then offer an illustration of how CA and MCA could work with this piece of data. I have chosen not to elaborate on the "hows" of CA or MCA here, as I believe it is more fruitful to see these tools in action. However, it bears noting that, as demonstrated by Kitzinger (2005) categories that are unspoken often have a role to play in social interactions as well as categories that are spoken.

Producing Canada and Canadians: Opening Sequence

Below is a brief excerpt from the opening sequences of the film. This narration begins after the credits that establish the film is presented by the National Film Board of Canada for the Department of Citizenship and Immigration.

Excerpt 1: Narrators First Lines

> *Since World War Two, Canadian life at every level has been enriched by new forces from without. New hands are at work beside the old, learning, labouring, contributing, creating. They are the hands of immigrants whose activities reach into every corner of the country. Already, the new arrivals have expanded the home market for Canadian business, leaving the country less dependent on foreign trade. Taken together, recent immigrants form a new market for goods and services larger than the city of Toronto.*

Baker (2004) suggests, we can often begin a membership categorization analysis by looking at the data as if the person speaking was saying "this is who I am, these are my relevancies, this is who you are and these are your relevancies"(p.166). In looking at this first segment, the narrator provides a succinct account of Canadian-Immigrant relations. He tells us that immigrants are creative, working people who contribute to the lives of Canadians in many ways. He also asserts that immigrants are a market for Canadian goods. In doing so, *The Newcomers* begins to paint a social landscape that connects the interests and activities of "Canadians" and "Immigrants." The narration

begins with a simple "category contrast"(Hester & Eglin, 1997), pairing Canadians and Immigrants as two different, but linked, categories.

The narrator's identity as "a Canadian" is established both through the opening credits — he has been officially sent to speak to us from the Canadian government — and through his ease in talking about Canadian-ness. As noted by Sacks (1992), part of being a member of any category is that you rarely draw attention to the fact that you are indeed a member. In this way, the narrator can be heard to be speaking "as a Canadian."

Within these first few phrases the narrator also makes clear what activities he thinks are most relevant of being Canadian. "Working," "contributing," and being a "consumer" are presented as highly relevant activities for immigrants, while producing goods for consumption appears to be highly relevant to being Canadian. In fact, as the film continues, these activities are repeatedly made relevant to this discussion of Canadians and Immigrants: we are nothing if we are not consumers and producers of goods and services.

Notably, the narrator also invokes a vision of Canada where there are only two categories of people: "Immigrants" and "Canadians." In doing so, the film entirely omits one category of people from this portrait: Indigenous peoples[2]. While Indigenous people have rarely had an official seat at the table during discussions of what it means to be a Canadian, there is little doubt that they have always been part of the discussion of where Canada lies. From the beginning of colonization, with every movement of the borders of Upper and Lower Canada, to the creation of our most recent map, Aboriginal-white relations and who lives on the land have been significant points for discussion. Yet, the category "Aboriginal person" or "Indigenous person" is rendered "irrelevant" to this discussion of "Newcomers" in a few brief seconds. If we accept that the narrator can be heard as "a Canadian," then one of the other things we are learning in these first few seconds of the film is that part of being Canadian is being to be able to distinguish between "Canadians" and "Immigrants" and knowing that there are only two relevant groups to any discussion of Canada and Canadian identity. In this way, we can hear that to ignore Aboriginal claims to the land, Indigenous people and Indigenous history is as Canadian as sugar pie[3].

As noted by Horton-Salway (2001), to approach talk as social interaction alerts us to the kinds of actions performed by sequences of talk, to the ways that speakers manage dilemmas of stake and interest in their talk, and to the ways that they account for particular actions. In examining this short extract concerning "Newcomers" to Canada, it bears noting that the film was produced for mass consumption by an official arm of the Canadian government during a backlash against labour organizing, a revision of the Indian Act, and a pivotal time in building the welfare state (Heron, 1996; McInnis, 2001).

One of the first actions we can see in this excerpt is a move to limit the terms of discussion concerning who is "Canadian." This action is accomplished first by refusing to recognize the existence of Aboriginal people, but it is also accomplished by beginning the current narrative at a recent date. The narrative begins "Since World War Two," and in doing so works to make the near past and the present the only time relevant to our

[2] For discussions of why the term "Canadian" is not appropriate as a term for Indigenous people, see Brown (1999) and Speilmann (2009).

[3] As suggested by Godlewska, Moore & Bednasek (2010), ignorance of Indigenous peoples in Canada can be understood as a "cultivated" ignorance rather than an incidental or neutral ignorance.

discussion of "newcomers." If the start of the narrative had been set even a few decades earlier (e.g., "Since 1900"), let alone a few hundred years earlier, Aboriginal people — who have inhabited this land for at least 12,000 years — would be the only people who could not be described as "newcomers." Beginning the narrative after World War Two can be seen as way to manage the interests of the Government of Canada in this discussion, and to help produce the legitimacy of Canada's claim on Native land.

In addition, the narration works to construct this information about Canada and Canadians as "facts." As noted by Horton-Salway (2001), whenever speakers provide a description or account, particularly a controversial one, there is always the possibility that their version will be discredited as serving their own interests. In this way, speakers work to manage accusations of "stake" or interest via a device described by Potter (1996) as a "stake inoculation." By constructing the opening lines as facts, rather than as opinion, the narrative inoculates himself against accusations of stake or interest. These lines are constructed as facts through the use of specific discursive devices. Edwards and Potter (1992) have delineated nine main techniques of fact construction. Several of these techniques can be seen in this passage. For example, the use of the passive voice which appears to remove the influence of the speaker and makes the statement sound objective: "Since World War Two, Canadian life at every level has been enriched by new forces from without."

Similarly, the narrator's use of a list — "learning, labouring, contributing, creating" — and the use of details — "Since World War Two" and "Canadian life at every level" — can be heard as establishing a feeling of thoroughness or completeness. As Horton-Salway (2001) suggests the use of such details helps to assure the speaker that the account is credible, accurate, and real. The authenticity of this account of Canada is also suggested by using the narrative structure. As noted by McKinley and Dunnett (1998), the plausibility of a claim can be increased by locating that claim within a narrative structure. By beginning this sequence with "Since World War Two," the narrative suggests the factual status of everything that is to come. In presenting this account of Canada as factual, *The Newcomers* effectively counters the accusation that this version of Canadian history might serve particular interests. In the following section, I examine the production of Canada and Canadians in the final sequences of *The Newcomers.* I then discuss some of the ways that this text both reproduces and challenges unequal social relations and what this analysis might mean for educators and researchers.

Producing Canada and Canadians: Closing Sequences

After profiling a number of "new immigrants" to Canada and a few companies owned by new immigrants, *The Newcomers* begins to close with the following narration:

Excerpt 2: Closing Part I

> *As in all other great periods of Canadian expansion, the present flow of immigrants has played a part in national growth with every new contingent. Canada is gaining new talents and skills, new capital and strength, new knowledge and experience. Adjustment takes time, but the new relationship has always proved fruitful to the nation.*

In attempting to analyze this sequence of talk as social interaction, it is useful to think about some of the things it achieves. One of the first things to note is that the narration establishes the current era as a "great period of Canadian expansion" by suggesting it is one of a series of "great periods of expansion." The sequence begins, "As in all other great periods of Canadian expansion." In doing so, it simultaneously asserts that there have been other "great periods of expansion" and that the current era is one such period. This sequence also works to present Canada as a "nation." To suggest that "the present flow of immigrants has played a part in national growth" is to suggest that there is a nation that can "grow." This assertion that there is in fact a "nation" can be seen again when the narrator tells us that "the new relationship" (presumably between immigrants and other people) has "proved fruitful to *the nation*." In this sentence, the existence of "the nation" that could benefit or suffer is a given. In this way, *The Newcomers* works to produce Canada as a nation, not as an idea or as an imagined community, but as a physical object or a thing. This account helps to obscure the fact that nations are politically constructed entities, and as such, their boundaries shift and are remade over and over again, often with serious consequences for the people living on the land.

This sequence, like the opening sequence, also makes use of the category "immigrants" and in doing so establishes a contrast between "immigrants" and those who would not be considered to be immigrants, or "non-immigrants." The narration works to connect specific activities to the category "immigrants" such as contributing to national growth, as well as bringing new "talents, skills, capital, strength, knowledge and experience." Through this narration we learn what we can expect from immigrants and, by default, what we can expect from non-immigrants. In other words, if bringing new skills and talents to the nation is an activity attached to immigrants then it is not an activity we can expect from non-immigrants. Non-immigrants may have talents or skills, but they cannot be expected to be "new" or to contribute to national growth. Similarly, we can start to hear these activities as some of the obligations, responsibilities, and rights of these particular categories. As noted by Lepper (2000), pairs of categories often come with a range of obligations, responsibilities, or rights. This is particularly true of "standard relational pairs" such as parent/child, teacher/student, or counsellor/client. However, it can also be true of less standard categories. In fact, it could be argued that this document is doing the work of binding specific obligations, responsibilities, and rights to the categories "immigrant" and "non-immigrant." From this narrative we gain a world-view in which "immigrants" have an obligation to bring "new talents and skills" and non-immigrants have a right to expect that new immigrants bring such skills. It is at this point that we may begin to wonder who these immigrants are and who technically qualifies as an immigrant or as a non-immigrant. An answer to this question may be found in the final sequence of the narration.

Excerpt 3: **Final Closing**

> *Canada has been called a nation of immigrants and it's not surprising, for even the oldest communities keep green their memories of their beginnings in the wilderness and the new ones are alive with pioneer energy. Meet a Canadian*

almost anywhere and when you search deep enough, you will find that he or his forefathers came to Canada from lands across the sea.

In thinking about the categories "immigrant" and "non-immigrant" in this sequence, there is some clarification concerning how such terms could be used, as this sequence, like the opening sequence, includes a second category: "Canadian." By introducing this second category, this sequence reminds us that "Canadian" can be an alternate term for "non-immigrant." However, trading on the audience's understanding that being an immigrant generally means having come from "lands across the sea" – this sequence quickly complicates the earlier category contrast between "immigrant" and "non-immigrant"/ "Canadian." Within seconds, the contrast between immigrant and Canadian is dissolved and the audience learns that this division is somewhat arbitrary, because "when you search deep enough," you will find that all Canadians or their forefathers came from across the sea. This move can be seen as an attempt to encourage welcoming attitudes on the part of more settled populations in Canada, who no longer see themselves as immigrants. Indeed, part of the historical context of this text was the influx of displaced persons after World War Two and the government's attempt to ease these new relationships. However, by blurring the line between "Canadians" and "Immigrants" and making them all "Canadians" another contrast is created where "Canadians/ Immigrants" are on one side and the unspoken but always present Aboriginal nations are on the other. This amalgamation of Immigrants and Canadians leaves the audience with the impression that Immigrants/Canadians have contributed greatly to the land, transforming it from "wilderness" into something "fruitful" with their "new knowledge and skills." In this way *The Newcomers* makes "improving the land" a category bound activity and binds it to Immigrants/Canadians. The category contrast that is left is between Immigrants/Canadians and those who are not Immigrants/Canadians — in other words, Aboriginal peoples. The underlying assertion is that this category has not "improved" the land and does not have the knowledge or skills to transform "the wilderness."

Reproducing and resisting unequal social relations and unegalitarian values

So, how does *The Newcomers* reproduce unequal social relations and unegalitarian values? By refusing to acknowledge the existence of a significant, although marginalized group of people — and by refusing to acknowledge that human beings, Canadians, Immigrants, and Aboriginal people alike are not just producers and consumers of goods and services — this text works to reproduce unequal social relations and unegalitarian values. While it is often difficult to remember, we are not born merely to keep capital flowing. Unequal social relations between white settlers and Aboriginal people have been built on this kind of "forgetting" or purposeful erasure. Unequal social relations between owners and workers have been built on similar myths that assert our main responsibility as human beings is to produce and consume rather than to think, love, connect, or preserve.

How does this film question unequal social relations and unegalitarian values? By laying down this description of the world, of Canada and Canadians, *The Newcomers* forces us to ask, 'Is this how it is? Is this how it should be? Has the text forgotten anyone

or anything? And what, if anything, does it mean that this text was produced at a particular time, by a particular government body for a particular audience?'

Implications

Educators and teacher-educators are often charged with teaching their students how to critically evaluate and engage with audio-visual texts and yet few educators feel comfortable examining such texts in detail. This study provides an illustration of how one audio-visual text could be read critically. As argued by Baker (2000), membership categorization analysis provides a means to analyze the ways that discourses are "locked into place" and in turn can help us to "open talk to critical examination" (p.99).

Educators and teacher-educators interested in addressing issues of Indigineity, place, race, and legitimacy in their classrooms are often struck by the difficulty of discussing such issues without creating a climate of discomfort or defensiveness for Aboriginal students or settlers and their descendents. This study presents one possible way to open up these discussions via the critical analysis of an archival text. By examining these issues in terms of the *effects of language*, rather than the intentions of speakers, or the ultimate distress of loss, it is hoped that we can begin to understand some of the processes of colonization to prevent further damage and encourage healing.

This study also helps illustrate how some of the tools of ethnomethodology could be used by educators and researchers interested in analyzing film and video-texts. Further research is needed to see how these tools could be taught to teacher candidates, practicing teachers or secondary students. However, this study opens the possibility of bringing such tools to these audiences.

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