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An Exploration into the Potential of Irish Films (1896-1962) for Empathic Approaches to the History Classroom

Thomas McGraw Lewis

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An Exploration into the Potential of Irish Films (1896-1962) for Empathic Approaches to the History Classroom

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School of Media
Faculty of Arts

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Dr. Brian O’Neill
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Abstract:

This thesis applies historical empathy as a lens through which Ireland’s filmic heritage can be explored within the teaching of history. In its approach, the research asserts that critical perspective recognition and affective exploration can be achieved through a sustained model of historical narrative inquiry. Undertaking textual analysis of a series of pre-television films from the National Film Archive, it argues that there is value in these records for understanding the formulation and assessment of political and social representation in the nascent Republic. While remaining cognizant of the constraints placed on both the educational and archival professions in Ireland, the thesis determines that the unique characteristics of film make it an invaluable resource for history scholarship. It further emphasizes the manner in which working with the medium in an empathic mode exposes young people to a series of critical-theoretical subject positions that have wider benefits beyond the four walls of the Irish classroom.

Despite the fact that Ireland’s engagement with cinema, and film education, is as old as the medium itself, this thesis operates against a contemporary backdrop that sees film and moving image media explicitly ignored in the educational landscape. It argues that a number of politically and religiously determined actions in the middle of the 20th century relegated the initial momentum the medium maintained into a state of virtual non-existence. While recent revisions to policy and intent have created spaces for critically engaging with film and moving image media at both subject-specific and cycle-wide levels, the nationally sanctioned plan of action through the year 2020 sees working with any kind of media as little more than the capability to send an email. Through analysis of the filmic record and its use within the classroom – and a championing Ireland’s film heritage as viable and necessary to a comprehensive history syllabus – this thesis intends to redress such thinking.
Declaration:

I certify that this thesis which I now submit for examination for the award of PhD within the School of Media, is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others, save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

This thesis was prepared according to the regulations for postgraduate study by research of the Dublin Institute of Technology and has not been submitted in whole or in part for another award in any other third level institution.

The work reported on in this thesis conforms to the principles and requirements of the DIT's guidelines for ethics in research.

DIT has permission to keep, lend or copy this thesis in whole or in part, on condition that any such use of the material of the thesis be duly acknowledged.

Signature ___________________________ Date ________________
Acknowledgements:

Firstly I’d like to thank my supervisors Martin McCabe and Brian O’Neill for their support throughout this research process. Thank you Martin for the exacting criticism, insightful critique and occasional, pugnacious tête à tête. Thank you Brian for challenging dialogue and your ability to see things from a number of vantage points – especially when I could only make out one.

A huge thanks to the rest of the faculty at the Graduate School for Creative Arts and Media, from Aidan and Nollaig’s ability to procure any piece of arcane paperwork I could ever possibly need to Elaine’s constant support and wry observations, and Lisa’s selfless ‘yeah, sure I’ll read 350 pages, come see me in two days…’

Thank you to Mick Wilson for consistently saying this would get done, even when neither you, nor I, really believed it would.

To the rest of the GradCAM gang, I’m delighted that friendships forged ‘in the trenches’ will extend far beyond our tenure as research scholars.

Thanks to the present and former members of the IFI in both a professional and research capacity – fonts of knowledge always happy to share.

If my mother and brother didn’t live five hours behind me, I don’t know how I would have made it through lots of GMT all-nighters. Mom – thanks for minding my commas, Dan thanks for … everything.

This is for Nóinín.
List of Abbreviations

2RN: The predecessor to Radio Éireann (and by extension Raidió Teilifís Éireann)
404: the standard response for an unavailable webpage
ACARA: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
AHR: American Historical Review
AvSRSG: Audiovisual Strategic Review Steering Group
BAI: Broadcasting Authority of Ireland
BFI: British Film Institute
BUFC: British Universities Film Council
CECF: Commission on Educational and Cultural Films [UK]
CSO: Central Statistics Office
DAHG: Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht
DAST: Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism
DCENR: Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources
DES: Department of Education and Skills
DigiBeta: Digital Betacam, a ½ inch magnetic tape format developed by Sony that is viewed as stable enough for televisual archival purposes
EAVI: European Association of Viewers’ Interests
EU: European Union
Eurostat: Statistical Office of the European Union
GAA: Gaelic Athletic Association
GDP: gross domestic product
GPO: General Post Office, Dublin
HIST: History In-service Team
HP: Harry Potter, from the film series based on the novels by J.K. Rowling
HSE: Health and Safety Executive of the Great Britain
ICT: information and communication technology
IDF: Irish Defence Forces (1924-present)
IFB: Irish Film Board
IFI: Irish Film Institute
IFS: Irish Film Society
An Exploration into the Potential of Irish Films (1896-1962) for Empathic Approaches to the History Classroom

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INTRODUCTION

The Focus of the Thesis

At its core, this thesis explores the argument that Ireland’s film heritage is a rich and viable tool for history education. The research contends that film’s specific recording capabilities, coupled with its determinedly constructed nature, make it a medium particularly suited for historically empathic approaches to narratives of the past. The thesis is upheld through a sustained analysis of films housed within Ireland’s National Film Archive, in which these moving image texts are analyzed toward both curricular support and the promotion of wider historical reflection through individuated exploration and dialogic activity. Expanded from the discourse around historical empathy, and building upon the models of engagement authored by educationalist Sherri Rae Colby, the thesis argues that a multi-stage process of historical narrative inquiry maximizes film’s potential toward perspective recognition of, and affective identification with, the agents of history.

The context for the research exists across multiple disciplines. As well as international precedents for the use of film in the exploration of history, the thesis contends that Ireland’s own previous efforts in film-in-education initiatives strove for a momentum for the medium that dissipated in the wake of a series of religious and political maneuvers – leaving film in the contemporary Irish educational landscape a sparse and under-utilized resource. Crucial to the efforts of this thesis to change such attitudes is the argument that an active engagement with filmic records in the history classroom benefits both curricular outcomes for continuous and final assessment as well as bolsters critical faculties and skillsets necessary for wider civic participation beyond the four walls of the classroom. Staking these claims through theoretical and
textual analysis of more than 100 films from Ireland’s celluloid heritage, the thesis frames its arguments against recent turns in nationally sanctioned educational policy that see the future of film and media literacy-driven strategies and investiture uncertain. By articulating a model for filmic engagement drawn from the material of Ireland’s national moving image archive, the thesis intends to add to the discourse surrounding what can be done with moving image media in the classroom, identifying its possibilities, acknowledging its benefits – whether educative, civic or industrial – and championing its use.

The Academic Context of the Thesis
The arguments formed in this research report bring a series of disciplinary concerns and academic literatures to bear. Indicative of many humanities-based research agendas, the borders of the codified arenas of study begin to blur as the primary, filmic analysis of the thesis is informed by historical precedent and educational tradition – as well as the ruptures that have occurred within such routinized practices. In mobilizing wider thinking around the implementation of the thesis’ findings in the educational setting, the workaday practices of archivists and educators, as well as the respective policy decisions that inform and drive both professions are taken in to account. Working across archival research – encompassing both moving image work and an exploration of paper archives housed within the National Film Archives – the core of this project is grounded in sources that originate from the latter decades of the 19th century through the middle of the 20th – from digitally migrated films to highly flammable nitrate stock, mid-century trade journals and stakeholders’ ledgers to encyclical letters and specially-convened academic publications. In the surrounding analysis of precedents and practices that extend beyond curriculum-specific learning
outcomes, and in drawing critical precedent from the hermeneutical and
deconstructionist traditions, the thesis looks beyond strictly historical and
disciplinarily codified texts in the formation of its argument. This thesis contends that
the critical appraisal of film as a form of text unites these disparate disciplines around
the common concern of critically reflective, engaging, classroom-based study.

From an Irish film scholarship standpoint, this work is indebted to the research efforts
of Kevin Rockett, John Hill, Harvey O’Brien and Ciara Chambers, who have all
authored definitive texts on facets of Irish, non-fictive film history. While a number of
the films that appear within the central analysis of the thesis have been written about
in thorough film histories – and nearly all appear in Kevin Rockett’s authoritative
database of Irish-related films¹, the manner in which they are utilized within the pages
of this thesis, and the wider contexts in which they are placed with regard to
educational precedent, pedagogical strategy and contemporary policy make the work
of this thesis unique in its efforts and conclusions. Simply: in its multidisciplinary
analysis of the material under investigation, and the synthetical approach to theory,
practice and analysis, this thesis moves beyond comparative rigidity of Film and
Media Studies.

The Structure of the Thesis

In order to determine how film can be used in the history classroom and then bring
such arguments into the Irish context, the thesis breaks down into six constituent
sections. The first chapter looks to the emergence of film’s use in the teaching of

¹ (Trinity College Dublin, ongoing)
history within the academy. It traces the manner by which the medium moved from a form of record treated by professional historians and pedagogues as something suspect – standing anathema to the accepted forms of historical evidence – toward a historiographical artifact no more tendentious than any other form of recorded communication. As the film-in-history debate garnered traction, the first chapter shows how the nature of the film form has led to newer methods of historical documentation that challenge both the limits of filmic narrativity as well as the nature of the wider discipline of history. Taking into account the earliest efforts of historians such as J.A.S. Grenville and Nicholas Pronay and moving toward the metacritical subject positions of Haydn White, Robert Rosenstone and others who advocate a wholesale reappraisal of history – on film or otherwise – the chapter posits a series of debates that trace the move toward wider filmic acceptance for the teaching of history. Through its analysis, the first chapter sets its stall in understanding how film’s use in the teaching of history can benefit specific curricula and challenge students to investigate, and reflect, upon the nature of history in challenging ways.

The second chapter argues that, at the dawn of the previous century, Ireland’s relationship with film in the educational context was markedly different from where it exists today. Comprised of a history pulled from both secondary analysis of historical accounts as well as primary, archival research into the ledgers of the then-nascent National Film Institute and correspondence from some of Ireland’s cinema pioneers, it asserts that a nationwide programme for filmic inclusion across curricula began in earnest in the young Republic. Reconfigured by Vatican edicts and a series of political decisions – including the mid-century blacklisting of one of the nation’s foremost filmmakers and education advocates – the chapter argues that by the
foundation of Raidió Teilifís Éireann (RTÉ) in 1962, any momentum for the role of filmic material in the educational landscape was ground to a halt.

Having established both an academic and historical precedent for the use of film in the realm of education – and the specific location of the history classroom – the third chapter looks to establish the lens through which the cinematic texts and traditions of Ireland will be analyzed – and the method by which the texts will be questioned. The resultant analysis is twofold. Arguing the unique capabilities of the filmic record to make the narrative of history come to life in the classroom, first the chapter looks to establish a working definition of historical empathy – and a method for filmic analysis grounded in a multi-stage process developed by educationalist Sherri Rae Colby (2008). Arguing that the empathic approach to cinematic history breaks down into two interwoven, yet distinct, traditions, the third chapter articulates the manner in which students of history can critically and perceptively understand the subject-positions and motivations of historical actors through celluloid analysis. Taking pedagogical schematics from Colby, and amending them to suit a film-, and nation-, specific study of 20th century Irish history, the third chapter establishes the questions of specific texts the two subsequent chapters will ask.

Next the chapter stakes the claim that, through such analysis, students of history will benefit not just their knowledge of curricular material but also strengthen their ability to comprehend and critically assess polyvocal perspectives and the nature of representation. Identifying the theoretical groundings that motivate such manners of thinking, the analysis asserts that beyond any form of cumulative examination that
may occur in a classroom or lecture hall, such skillsets bolstered by filmic investigation are necessary for participation in wider, civil society. Tethering the actions of empathic exploration of Irish films to a rehearsal of the interpretation of the past rooted in a hermeneutic engagement with historical actors that finds its antecedents in the work of Vico’s *Scienza Nuevo*; it then takes this analysis through a theoretical exploration of further Vichian thinkers, and poses questions of representation inherent in both the archive as a wider conceit and the questions of revisionism tied to any nation-centred historical investigation. Finally the third chapter looks at the archive as both a bricks-and-mortar site for historical interrogation as well as wider, theoretical critique. Rooted in Derrida’s *Mal d’Archive* – his deconstruction of the archive as symptom and evidence of a wider crisis existent in the knot of history and memory – the chapter implicates what how working with archives, filmic or otherwise, requires the criticality to acknowledge specific ideological groundings and socio-political agendas at work in the preservation and maintenance of the historical record.

Picking up on the revised models of engagement posed by Chapter Three, the subsequent chapters move into the filmic archive. Countering reductive arguments that films are ‘fun and entertaining’ but of little educative merit, the chapters move across collections of primitive filmmaking, newsreels and amateur films – as well as informational and commercial works – to portray the manner in which such records can bolster an understanding of political narrative and cultural artifact. (de Buitléir, *et al.*, 2008, 5) Mirroring the approach to Irish history employed by the secondary cycle, which sees political and social histories as individuated streams of investigation, each chapter takes a respective historical tradition and moves through the archives
establishing how and where the records of Ireland committed to celluloid can strengthen the curriculum.

From primitive films as old as the medium itself to skillfully and professionally authored projects that display a fully modernized nation, the history of tumult, strife and independence and rapid expansion of political, infrastructural and cultural agendas are personified in investigation of these under-utilized resources. Drawn from a comprehensive and sustained engagement with the National Film Archives, the texts selected represent a rich and varied selection of the kinds of films that can be explored in the classroom to provide contextual backgrounds for the study of history, lead students toward in-depth questions regarding the nature of history – as well as specific narrativization of the past – and foster dialogic engagement drawn from their own unique insights founded within source-based investigation. Through invocation of the historical narrative inquiry model, students constantly question, and provide answers to the nature of the historical project in similitude, utilizing empathic approaches to politically and socially charged filmmaking, this thesis will argue, brings approachability and immediacy to such efforts.

Against the backdrop of archival practices, educational policies and legislative acts that make little concession for the pedagogical value of such films, the final chapter reasserts that their worth must be argued across these concomitant real-world arenas. Furthermore, as the research undertaken for this thesis is embedded across these interdisciplinary concerns, it shows the places in each stakeholder’s remit where such efforts may take root. Further placing an emphasis on the notion of film and wider
media literacy initiatives at European level, and the lobbying for the value of film by industries at home; the final chapter places the argument for filmic inclusion in the history curriculum within these wider discourses, asserting it as proof of their inherent validity and the necessity for thinking around the place of film within the curricular landscape.

Looking to European precedents for film in education, the thesis grounds the argument that the debate surrounding film’s capacity to energize the history classroom is tied to larger arguments about the role of moving image media in the cross curricular arena. The chapter equally acknowledges the difficulties inherent in such efforts, as the exhibition of films within the educational setting presently exists with a tentative state of legality. In discussing the workaday concerns of archives and educators alike, the final chapter poses measures set to unite the various stakeholders at play in this interdisciplinary study toward the concerted effort of garnering more critical, creative and cultural engagements with the medium of film in the Irish classroom.

**Contribution to Knowledge**

Working across the disciplines of film, history, education and critical theory, this study represents the first effort to comprehensively investigate the early film records housed within the National Film Archive and establish a model for working with them that has application for the Irish history classroom. Using the model of historical narrative inquiry, and placing an emphasis on the skillsets bolstered through empathic approaches to the cinematic record as primary source, the thesis proposes a unique
method for energizing the history curriculum while expanding approaches to the material found within national syllabi. Posing its arguments at a time when the questions surrounding the place of media across the educational landscape is in a period of transition, the thesis is primed to inform on-the-ground debates in a series of arenas including educational policy and practice, curricular design and statutes that govern the forms of media available to educators and students in their teaching and learning endeavors. The thesis asserts that the records housed within the National Film Archive are invaluable in the study of history, and, over the course of the next six chapters, posits how and why they can be used to best energize the explorations of students in the history classroom and benefit them in wider, civic life beyond their tenure in the education system. Before undertaking the work of the six constitutive chapters, however, an initial acknowledgement of the place of film in the Irish curriculum, the state of the Irish history syllabus and the precedents for a film-based study of history must take place.

The Subject Position of the Researcher
At the outset, it should be noted that this research is not being undertaken without precedent regarding filmmaking, film history/archival experience or educational practice. The author of this research report began his own academic career in filmmaking, specialising – at undergraduate level – in a school of production design. During his initial training in practical filmmaking, the author also worked with the Raymond J. Regis film archive in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Though the collection has subsequently been divided up between institutions, at the turn of the millennium it was the second largest non-commercial film archive in the United States, behind the National Library of Congress. The author moved to Ireland a
decade ago in the pursuance of a Master’s degree in Film Studies and has taught practical, theoretical and historical courses in film, media and journalism at third-level ever since.

Concomitant to his educational career, the author has also maintained a filmmaking practice working across documentary, fine art and commercial commissions, and has acted as lead researcher on a host of national film-in-education and media literacy initiatives. These have included *Film Focus* a 3-year study into the use of film in primary and second-level learning for the Irish Film Institute [IFI], Irish Film Board/Bord Scannán na hÉireann and the Arts Council of Ireland (McGivern and Lewis, 2012), and *The 12-13 Project* a nationwide investigation into media literacy levels in Irish young people making the transition from primary to secondary education. The latter was funded by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland [BAI]’s scheme for Sectoral Learning and Development and was conducted during the 2012-2013 school year (McGivern and Lewis, 2013). Like *Film Focus*, the BAI’s research initiative was based out of the Irish Film Institute. It was working with the IFI that allowed the researcher entrance into the National Film Archives.

During these research initiatives, the author worked in conjunction with the Department of Education and Skills to assist in the securing of a place for film, media and digital literacy in Irish education. As well as contributing to consultation documents and white papers about the manner in which the future of Irish education can be shaped, many of the arguments pertaining to the scope of media inclusion in Irish education that can be found in the introductory section of this doctoral thesis

The Place of Film in Irish Education; the English Curriculum

Presently the standardized use of film in Irish schools is relegated, at curricular level, to secondary English classes – where a prescribed feature film is treated as, and compared to, a novel, play or poem – and a singular, more-or-less bi-annual inclusion of one film-related question on the Higher Level Fine Art Leaving Certificate Examination. It must be noted that the Fine Art programme has not been revised in forty-two years and the suggested resources for ‘contemporary’ practices of art of any medium are three decades old. While revisions to the syllabus were explored as recently as 2007, where provisions were to be made for electronic, and digital, media within Irish art education, these plans have yet to be implemented.

In the English classroom, films appear on the comparative element of the Leaving Certificate Examination. Annually, a list of six films as determined State Examinations Commission [SEC] is given out for each Leaving Certificate Exam-taking class, and from the list of prescribed films the educator may choose to screen any, or all, of them. As they are placed within the context of comparative study, the films are then merited on their capacity to be analyzed against a host of forms of the written word. Looking at the films chosen between 2007 and 2013 a clear pattern

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2 The ‘suggested’ list of titles for use in the Leaving Certificate syllabus is populated by texts such as *New Grange* (O’Riordáin and Daniel, 1964) and Leask’s three volumes of *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings* (1955, 1958, 1960) toward ‘contemporary’ art, the syllabus recommends the *Modern Irish Landscape* slide pack (Arts Council, 1981) and Nicola Gordon Bowe’s *Recent Irish Stained Glass* slide pack (1983). (NCCA, n.d.)
emerges. Annually there exists one ‘black and white’ film, one subtitled film – an interesting inclusion on an English syllabus, a Shakespearian adaptation, an Irish feature such as 32A (2007, d. Quinn) or Inside I’m Dancing (2004, d. O’Donnell) and two additional films that are discriminating enough in their construction to carry the mantle of ‘art’ film, but straight forward enough in narrative and construction to find popular appeal. The films of Peter Weir and the recent addition of Alfonso Cuarón’s Children of Men (2006), as well as the examples by Fernando Meirelles and Baz Luhrmann, seem to fit into this taxonomy.

The films chosen appear under the auspice of comparing them to text-based forms of storytelling; even at Higher Level examination, the unique capacities of film, what determines ‘film as film’ as theorist Victor F. Perkins asserts (Perkins, 1972/1993, throughout), is lost in light of simply working through the ‘themes or issues’ raised in each example as well as the ‘values and attitudes’ portrayed by the actors in each tableau (SEC, 2011a, 4-5). In turn, the questions on the Ordinary Level examination asked students to analyze the ‘social settings’ in which actions took place or the ‘relationships between characters’ on display in any one of the texts he or she has texts read or watched over the course of the year (SEC, 2011b, 8-9). For both examinations, writing on film is wholly optional.

By engaging with the properties of the medium that are transferrable to dramatic or poetic forms of narration, the comparative element of the English Examination

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1 See the Appendix One for the complete list of films, 2007-2013.
focuses solely on the dialogue and its acted delivery found within these films – simply reading their screenplays would suffice. In many ways the English curriculum appears to operate under the fallacy identified by the British Film Institute [BFI] when they argue that:

[for many years ‘media literacy’ has been seen as a different, and often threatening alternative to print literacy. Media skills, it is assumed, are bound to dilute or displace learning about the written word. They are also seen as highly specialised: not only different from other literacy skills, but requiring a completely different pedagogy.]

(BFI, 2008, 9)

The treating of film as simultaneously other-than the printed word, but useful only in reductive comparisons of their written components does not allow the English curriculum to effectively engage the medium; the place of film in Leaving Certificate Art is equally problematic in its use of film.

The Place of Film in Irish Education; the Art Curriculum

Over the past six years, 2007-2012, only the Higher Level papers of four Leaving Certificate Examinations have included the choice of answering a question about any kind of film. The most recent example of the exam script posed the notion of the “suspen[sion of dis]belief” to students and asked those setting the exam to discuss any films they have enjoyed which ‘transport[ed] them to another time, another place [or] even another world’ (SEC, 2012, 6).

While this question leaves the choice of films to be discussed open to the student, other questions have been more prescriptive. The 2011 examination gave students the
option of discussing the merits, and entrepreneurial success, of Pixar animations, under the auspice that the studio has come to such popular, and populist, approval by strategically making films ‘firmly fixed on the understanding that the animated world should be based on the real world’ (SEC, 2011c, 5). Recent blockbuster successes such as the *Toy Story* franchise⁴, *Monsters Inc.* (d. Docter, 2001), and *Up* (d. Docter/Peterson, 2009) are given as examples from which the students could draw their elucidations (*ibid.*). The other portions of the question to which the test takers had to attend in the multi-part film assessment was a discussion of the visual appeal of the animations about which they chose to write – and a prompt to provide illustrations of the specific elements of these films they were addressing.

The 2011 question was a near verbatim reiteration of the single film-related question on the 2009 Leaving Certificate examination. In 2009, students were asked to provide insight into why the animated films of Pixar and Dreamworks ‘proved to be very popular’; similarly, the question asked for illustrative renderings of the films about which the students wrote (SEC, 2009, 5). This question was possibly drawn-up on the heels of *Toy Story 3* having taken over one billion US dollars at box offices worldwide the summer previous to the exam-sitting students’ final year (Box Office Mojo, n.d., online⁵). In 2008 the paper had students attending to why there might be broad-based appeal for recent films such as the *Chronicles of Narnia* series⁶, *The

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⁵ See Box Office Mojo: http://www.boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=toystory3.htm

Pirates of the Caribbean franchise⁷ and the adaptations of the Harry Potter novels⁸ (SEC, 2008, 5). No Ordinary Level art examinations within the 2007-2012 date set have posed any questions relating to film.

The argument can be made that the exhibition of film is resource heavy for teachers – requiring time and specificities of knowledge that not all art educators may possess. Since the nation of Ireland has, in the last decade, had the distinction of being the second-most cinema-attending nation on the globe, providing questions based on more populist fare – and blockbuster franchises – which students may have seen of their own volition in the local multiplex makes sense on a Leaving Certificate examination (Arts Council, 2004, 6). It pays credence to the medium without having to task students with film viewing during class time.

These two examples – of English and Art, and the problematic employ of them analyzed above indicate the level of Irish curricular investment in film and moving image media at Senior Cycle. On the heels of recent revisions to the manner in which History is taught within the Republic a brief, ill-fated pilot project attempted to utilize film within the history classroom; however, as its analysis will briefly entail, the medium has found no further uptake in the wider curricular landscape.


Recent Renovations to the History Curriculum

With a cumulative assessment ‘[p]erceived as [a] writing marathon’, that focused on rote, book-based learning with little to no context for the project of history, the task of the historian or emphasis on critical or analytical skillsets, 2002 saw 18.9% of ordinary level students failing their Leaving Certificate History examinations\(^9\) (HIST, 2004a). With a nearly 1-in-5-failure rate, by the 2001-2002 academic year, the Irish history curriculum had reached an undeniable crisis. Determining that both the approach and the examination process of Senior Cycle History needed to undergo significant revision, in the autumn of 2003, the Department of Education and Skills inaugurated the History In-service Team (HIST) to lead the charge in auditing the history syllabus and mobilizing changes that would first take effect with students being examined at Leaving Certificate level at the conclusion of the 2006-2007 academic year (NCCA, 2004). This effort marked the first time the history syllabus had been revised since 1969 (HIST, 2004a).

The Use of Primary Documentation

One significant point of contention for the in-service team regarding the then-accepted approach to teaching history was the fact that no concessions were made for the value of primary sources in the investigation of the historical record. Teachers were neither trained nor advised in how to engage with primary material, and the syllabus did not stress their importance for comparison with secondary sources such as the textbooks upon which the curriculum is based. In the revisions to the history syllabus, HIST would dedicate much of its efforts toward establishing approaches to

\(^9\) See Appendix Two for the percentages of failure on Leaving Certificate History Examinations, 2002-2010.
primary, evidentiary, data and arguing for the place of a number of pedagogical strategies grounded in the exploration of such forms of historical record. While the initial suggestions for the revised history program included passing references to film – to the extent that a single, brief pilot scheme introduced archival material into a handful of Irish classrooms\(^{10}\), by the time that the *Guidelines for Teachers* had been concretized and published in 2008 – in deference to photography, political cartoons and recorded, oral testimony – any reference to moving image material had been wholly removed from history education at the departmental level.

Previous to this, the 2004 draft version of the *Guidelines for Teachers* outlined the significant changes to the syllabus would be ushered in on the heels of the first phase of the HIST effort. It was argued that as well as ‘an emphasis on history as an investigation into available evidence’ galvanizing the classroom, ‘the methodology of research’ would also be foregrounded in the amended approach (NCCA, 2004, 2). Furthermore, a more historiographic mode of study concerning the entirety of subject matter, and the acknowledgement that history was not a set narrative, was outlined. No longer contented to be a history of great men, the revisions to the Leaving Certificate History Syllabus allow today’s students to recognize and investigate the ‘political, administrative, social, economic, religious and scientific’ activities of ‘ordinary people as well as leaders in society’ (NCCA, 2004, 3). The report further called for ‘an emphasis on history as a dynamic process’ told from a multiplicity of ‘different perspectives’ all of which are crucial to an understanding of both the past and the contextualization of the present (*ibid.*). The seeds of empathic approaches to

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\(^{10}\) The NCTE/RTÉ *Look at History* project
the discipline were being sown across the teaching strategies outlined in HIST’s recommendations.

**Multimodal Learning**

The strategies identified include appeals to different types of enquiry; different modalities of primary data are discussed throughout the document, including governmental papers, diaries, photography, press clippings and political cartoons, oral histories and even ‘videotaped extracts’ (*ibid.*). In a then-novel maneuver, social historical, and even empathic, modes of learning are given mention. From a strictly visual capacity, the ability of photographic record to display ‘aspects of society and economy as work practices, family life recreation, dress and the roles of women’ is seen as valid for discussion (*ibid.*, 26). While the guidelines find relevance in placing emphasis on the key personalities and actions of the events of the past, leading toward a synecdochic understanding of history writ large, the document steadfastly argues that such an approach ought act as a “gateway” […] to place specific events and trends studied within a contextual framework’ rather than an end in itself (*ibid.*, 49).

Similarly, the oral record – field recordings and interviews – are recognized for their immediacy and their ability to ‘help [students] empathise with the people of the past’ (*ibid*. 30). It must be noted that in the analysis of oral records and traditions “‘history from below’ i.e. the testimony of ordinary people whose perspectives are often missing from the historical record’ is championed (*ibid.*).
The Shape of the National History Curriculum

As determined by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment [NCCA], at Junior Cycle, modern Irish history is taught across two halves: the first being the political history of occupation, struggle and the formation of the nascent Republic, and the second the social milieux against which such political changes took place. This cleaving of political and social histories is carried through Senior Cycle in the Leaving Certificate’s formation of the sections of the examination that comprise the ‘Later Modern Ireland’ component of the curriculum (1815-1993) (NCCA, 2003, 34-39). There are six topics of study across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Ireland:

- Ireland and the Union, 1815-1870
- Movements for political and social reform, 1870-1914
- The pursuit of sovereignty and the impact of partition, 1912-1949
- The Irish diaspora, 1840-1966
- Politics and society in Northern Ireland, 1949-1993
- Government, economy and society in the Republic of Ireland, 1949-1989

In turn, each is broken down into the analysis of the ‘Politics and administration’, ‘Society and economy’ and ‘Culture and religion’ existent in the Ireland of its day (ibid.). For the final time period of study, ‘Government […] 1949-1989’, ‘science’ is added to the study of culture and religion. From the syllabus construction it is clear that the emphasis within the science frame is placed on RTÉ by way of its ‘impact [on the] communications revolution’ (ibid., 39). Given the geography and date set under which this thesis operates, some of the topics outlined in the curriculum will not appear in the analysis. Given the advent of film in the final decade of the nineteenth century, the first topic of study, 1815-1870 is out of bounds. Similarly, while the political situation in Northern Ireland is persistently looming over much of the
newsreel footage under investigation, the thesis’ focus is on the Republic, and many of the items pertaining to the six counties of Northern Ireland has been forgone until the final conclusions of this research report.

Across the revised history curriculum the move from rote rehearsal to ‘understanding’ via comprehension is promoted (NCCA, 2004, throughout). For a brief time within the last decade, a nationally sanctioned effort attempted to utilize filmic archives toward this very purpose. Drawn from the records produced by and housed within Raidió Teilifís Éireann, seven Dublin-based classrooms attempted to promote moving image media as part of their multimodal exploration of Irish history.

**The Look At History Pilot**

In January, 2006 fourth and fifth year classrooms across four schools took part in an attempt to integrate audiovisual material into the study of Leaving Certificate History Topic 6: Later Modern Irish History; Government, Economy and Society in the Republic of Ireland, 1949-1989. As a joint effort between RTÉ, scoilnet – the online ‘portal for Irish education’ and the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) the ‘government agency established to provide assistance, support and information on the use of ICT in education¹¹, given the stakeholders involved the project was as much about engaging with archival audiovisual material as it was a test of the potential for streaming mediated content into the classroom. Look at History

¹¹ In the 2011 Fine Gael/Labour *Programme for Government* the merger between the NCTE and the NCCA was announced (Fine Gael/Labour, 2011, 41). In answering ministerial questions in December, 2011, Minister for Education and Skills Ruari Quinn stated that this change had been effected by September, 2011. See Quinn, 2011. NCTE now falls under the wider operation of the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST).
revolved around teachers having access to 38 different clips from the RTÉ library to be used in investigations across three sub-topics: ‘The Impact of RTÉ, 1962-1972’; ‘Changing Attitudes toward Irish Language and Culture’; and ‘Social Change: The Changing Status of Women’. Crucially, none of the digitized clips were transferred specifically for the project, instead each was a record already migrated to digital, streamable format and was already available online on the RTÉ Library and Archives’ Look and Listen mini-site. Look and Listen is comprised of a series of thematically curated pages with content ranging from clips of television news, documentary and fiction, radio broadcast, still photographs and other ephemera that have been put together due to their relevance to present-day Ireland. As Liam Wylie, Content Producer for the website states:

    a television clip, a piece of radio, a scanned document, pieces of ephemera or a still image can exist providing multi-textual information on a topic. Approaching a subject in this way allows for the possibility of insights beyond the original intention of the individual programme. It becomes possible to present a fuller, more nuanced view or trace how a subject was treated over time, to show opposing sides of a debate […] throwing new light on both Irish social and media history.

    (Wylie, 2007, 245)

In the pilot project, clips that varied in length from 50 seconds to nearly 6 and a half minutes were embedded on the Look at History website, and a brief introduction, Using RTE television archival material in class, via the Scoilnet site was given to teachers to assist in their working through the audiovisual material (HIST, n.d.).

Arguing that the value of film lay in the ability to ‘expos[e] students to different types and repositories of evidence’ the clips chosen ‘offer[ed] students living examples of

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12 In this instance .wmv (Windows Media Video – a proprietary Microsoft compression codec)
oral history […] that make] history more personal and meaningful’ (ibid., 2). As well, the initial guidelines for teachers acknowledged that ‘as a medium with which most students are familiar as a form of entertainment, the use of film in teaching can help make certain issues more accessible and attractive’ (ibid.). To this end, the resource pack given to the participating teachers provided each educator with a series of questions pertaining to three examples of clips from the ‘Changing attitudes towards Irish language and culture’ heading.

The prompts used to prime students to filmic analysis came under three distinct headings; the first were quite literal observations regarding the tableaux, what was seen and heard upon viewing the clips with the provision of a small amount of context required from the students. The second category of questions asked for greater contextualization and critical analysis – touching on empathic methodologies and an acknowledgement of the moving images’ capacity for such approaches to historical context. These prompts required student reflection and the invocation of perspectives that may not be their own. The final questions seem more in line with quality assurance than any kind of point for dialogical engagement as they simply ask the students whether each clip ‘help[s] you understand more clearly the element, changing attitudes towards Irish language and culture’ (HIST, n.d., 4; 5; 613)? Each participating school was also provided with a laptop in order to access the Look at History website and a projector for displaying the clips in-class. The forethought to provide each participating educator with external speakers in order to make the clips

13 For an example of how teachers were directed toward working with the materials see Appendix Three
audible did not occur, and unless teachers had their own sound devices, much of
audio was imperceptible in the classroom setting (O’Mahony, 2006, 23).

The Material Convened for Look at History

From the initial addresses by Éamon de Valera and Cardinal John D’Alton
inaugurating the launch of RTÉ on New Years’ Eve, 1961 to examples from the long-
socio-religious subject matter\(^{14}\) as well as a number of excerpts from the ongoing The
Late Late Show\(^{15}\) (1962-present) portrayed social events from previous decades.
Excerpts from The Riordans (1965-1979) – notably the only work of fiction on offer\(^{16}\)
– concomitantly depicted an allegorical account of the lives of members of Ireland’s
agricultural community.

Regarding ‘Changing Attitudes toward Irish Language and Culture’, examples
included coverage of the ‘Language Freedom Movement’ clip from a 1967 broadcast
of the 7 Days\(^{17}\) current affairs program (1966-1976), the launches of the Irish-
language radio station Radió na Gaeltachta and the weekly newspaper Anois [Now],
in 1972 and 1984\(^{18}\) respectively, and two clips concerning the 1971 opening of a

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\(^{14}\) During its lifespan, The Radharc series produced over 400 documentaries in more 75 countries; 162
were made in and about the Republic of Ireland (see:
http://radharcfilms.ie/component/option,com_cinema/Itemid,40/task,viewcategory/catid,14/)

\(^{15}\) First launched in 1962, The Late Late Show has the distinction of being the ‘longest running chat
show in the world’. (see: http://www.rte.ie/tv/latelate/history09.html)

\(^{16}\) The Riordans was an agrarian-based soap opera that took place in the fictional town of Leestown,
co. Kilkenny

\(^{17}\) see: http://www.rte.ie/laweb/brc/brc_1960s.html

\(^{18}\) Anois folded in 1996, see Irish Times May 5, 1996; (Mac Dubhghaill, 1996).
gaelscoil [Irish language school] in Ballymun, North County Dublin. The gaelscoil is presented in both a brief, 90-second excerpt from a broadcast of Féach! [Look!19] (1967-1985) as well as a lengthier series of interviews with Ballymun residents.

In the final portion, ‘Social Change: The Changing Status of Women’, the facets of life on offer include the places of education and wider employment, including a 1970 move to train women in science and mathematics, as well as the roles of women in the agricultural industries – from the Landmark series – and the armed forces. The latter occurs as a 1981 report for RTÉ News in which journalist Michael Lally interviews the Republic’s first female recruits. Concerning political changes to the role of women in the requisite time span, material included the RTÉ News coverage of the 1973 ‘Status of Women Report’, the petitioning of the Josie Airey case to the European Court of Human Rights and the appointment of the Minister of State for Women’s Affairs – a position that was inaugurated and abolished with Nuala Fennell during the 24th Dáil. Five of the seventeen clips in this final section deal specifically with Mary Robinson, though with a cutoff date of 1989, per the Leaving Certificate examination, her election as Ireland’s first female president is not included in the historical survey.

Educators were given access to the webpage but not told which clips to show, or necessarily how to use them beyond the 7-page précis. Further hyperlinks were provided on each individual clip’s dedicated page; however, without a resource to

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19 An all-Irish-language current affairs program.
provide greater context, given the labyrinthine nature of link hopping, as well as the potential for 404 errors – as the links provided were ‘live’ rather than themselves ‘archived’ – ‘much more planning/preparation time than [the delivery of traditional methods’ was required and ‘technical difficulties [proved to be] plentiful’ (ibid, 71).

**Look at History – a Lack of Legacy**

Amongst the outcomes of the project were criticisms levied at the inevitable technological and equipment-based concerns, such as a lack of extension leads for laptops, intermittent broadband connectivity which problematized the streaming of the clips, the timetabling of shared projectors (in the instances of schools with more than one participating teacher) and a lack of blackout blinds for optimized viewing; however, a number of other further critical points were raised in the evaluation as well. While some of the teachers allowed discussions to form, and students to venture beyond the prompted questions to further their own interests in the historical sources, a number returned to the default position of “chalk and talk” or stymieing further dialogue by returning stuff of the syllabus in a hard and fast manner (Mahony, 2006, 9-10; emphasis in original). Mahony’s independent assessment of the pilot scheme notes:

> the importance of discussion, exploration, flexibility and engagement both amongst the students themselves to distinctly analyse the clips and contexts, but also between the teachers and students in the form of exploratory question and answer sessions [i]n contrast, non-flexible discussion and ‘lecture-type presentations of the material were at a minimum disadvantageous, but ultimately disengaging and tedious. 

*(ibid., 41)*
Despite its ‘positive outcomes’ and ‘improvements in students […] attitudes […] and] awareness’ the *Look at History* project had no further rollout. While it can be acknowledged that every one of the clips on offer to teachers and students via the mini-site hosted within scoilnet can already be found within the wider RTÉ website, the resources given to teachers of history do not direct them to either repository.

By 2008 the above draft teachers’ guidelines chiseled out four years earlier had been formalized into a series of reports including the *Guide to Documents-based Study* provided by the History In-service Team to prime teachers in working with historical evidence. Crucially, the only mention of filmic inclusion in any supporting documentation from 2008 onwards is a singular aside posing to teachers whether they can think of any films, or television documentaries, that might relate to a photograph of the December 9, 1973 Sunningdale Agreement which is included in the handout (HIST, 2008, 10).

As this 2008 document directs teachers through suggestions for introducing and closely reading a host of primary sources, including photographs, cartoons and oral histories, it articulates the need for students to attain “four C’s”: comprehension, comparison, criticism and contextualization (*ibid.*, 1). Despite the evidence that film and other archival sources, when properly facilitated provided a space where ‘[s]tudents became more academically engaged’ and ‘[t]he level of classroom interaction increased as a result of integrating […] students’ analytical and judgment skills’ into their own implicit proficiencies, it is only these static forms of image and transcriptions of oral sources that resources for teachers have been provided. At a
curricular level, in the wake of the singular, short-lived *Look at History* project, both any mention of the pilot, and any further reference to the medium film have been stricken from the Irish curricula (Mahony, 2006, 71). Such actions, however, appear to exist counter to a wider emphasis on film – and more particularly digital and media literacy – within international educational research and deployment, as well as a concerted effort on the part of the Irish media industries to centralize the place of media in education both for its pedagogical merits as well as industry-based – and revenue creating – points of focus. The final section of this introductory chapter will look beyond Irish shores and outside of strictly educational confines to place film education into a larger arena of debate.

**Placing Film in the Classroom into the Wider Educational Context**

Across the present educational landscape, the utilization of film and wider media in effective employs is stifled by the manner in which Irish curricula are presently conceived. Despite the evidence on offer throughout this thesis that film-based investigations pose benefits for the subject-specific classroom as well as wider learning outcomes and agendas, forthcoming changes to the manner in which Irish education is comprised still fail to acknowledge the capacity for multi-modal texts to engage students in worthwhile ways.

Toward this sense of a widening out beyond the history classroom, so too, must the analysis move beyond the notion of Thorold Dickinson’s ‘cinemate’ learner toward a term that has far greater currency in the realm of educational policy: the media literate learner (Dickinson in Smith, 1976, 9). While the discourse around media literacy
commands a wider agenda than strictly film-based forms of engagement, as a skillset and critical capacity it too has been difficult for educational policy makers to place within the wider remit for Irish schools.

Evidence of this can be seen when in July 2011 the Irish Department of Education and Skills [DES] published a new strategy to underpin the aims of primary and secondary curricula across the Republic of Ireland through the end of the present decade, the year 2020. *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life* places these titular skillsets at the core of this new educational framework (DES, 2011a). Acknowledging the influence of ‘[a]lmost 480 written submissions\(^{20}\) from stakeholders that included educators, community organisations and public bodies as well as concerned parents, the document addressed Ireland’s recent slippage in the triennial Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA] – a global league table of students’ aptitude administered by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] (*ibid.*, 7).

The nation’s 2009 scores returned a significant drop in both percentile, and placement, when compared to Irish students’ results in the 2006 and 2003 research reports. Ireland’s mean score for reading comprehension placed it 21\(^{st}\) amongst nations in 2009, compared to sixth and seventh amongst nations in 2006 and 2003, respectively (PISA, 2003; 2006)\(^{21}\).

\(^{20}\) Including, it must be noted, submissions from the IFI’s Education Department including McGivern and Lewis, 2010 and McGivern, 2011.

\(^{21}\) Mathematics scores fared worse in 2009 with the mean score of Irish 5 year olds placing the Republic 33\(^{rd}\) amongst 65 participating nations – below PISA’s arithmetic mean score (PISA, 2009).
While it is clear that at present, the Irish educational system is at a crucial interstice; through the year 2020, these dual notions of ‘literacy’ and ‘numeracy’ will continue to act as lightning rods for where policy is concerned. To that end it is necessary to determine what is meant by literacy, and where mediated texts and multimodal approaches can be implemented within such a finite definition. If film and film-centred classrooms are to acknowledged in contemporary educational policy, as this chapter will show, it will require an uphill battle.

**Defining Literacy in Irish Educational Policy**

In the autumn prior to the release of *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life*, the Department of Education and Skills released its draft national plan under the title *Better Literacy and Numeracy for Children and Young People* (DES, 2010a). The, curriculum-wide, draft plan presented a definition of literacy that succinctly set out its goals. ‘Literacy’, it argued:

> Conventionally refers to reading, writing, speaking, viewing, and listening effectively in a range of contexts. In the 21st century, the definition of literacy has expanded to refer to a flexible, sustainable mastery of a set of capabilities in the use and production of traditional texts and new communications technologies using spoken language, print and multimedia.

(*ibid*, 9)

The draft policy then asserted, in bold typeface, that:

> it is essential that every child leaving our school system […] is able to speak, read and write at a level that enables them [sic] to participate fully in education and in Irish life and society’.

(*ibid.*)

Borrowed verbatim from the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority’s [ACARA] publication *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: English*
(2009), the working definition of literacy in the Irish document appeared in a footnote and did not provide a citation identifying the definition’s provenance. Furthermore, elements found within the original Australian report that did not end up in the Irish draft plan placed the former in a stronger position regarding curricular development and wider learning outcomes.

The originary document expands its definition of literacy to include a sense of malleability necessary for young people in the navigation of the modern day world. ‘Students’ have, ACARA argues, the ‘need to be able to adjust and modify their use of language to better meet contextual demands in varying situations’, and they must be able to assert themselves across varying modes of communication: ‘listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing and creating’ (ibid, 6). This ‘creation’ is defined in the Australian document as ‘the production of multimodal texts in the same way that writing refers to the production of print text’; however, no such identification exists in Ireland’s educational strategy. Indeed, any semblance of multimodal ‘creation’ is wholly ignored in the Irish draft plan for the bolstering of literacy skillsets within the Republic (ibid.).

Back in Ireland, in the wake of the half-year long consultation process, the finalized educational strategy did make some concessions toward a wider variety of forms of media; however, the notions of creative value, explorative engagement, or the benefits of such actions – with any type of text – were still lacking. Arguing that for the national educational outlook ‘our understanding of literacy […] includes the capacity to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication
including spoken language, printed text broadcast and digital media’, the plan acknowledges the encroachment of digital media on the paper-centric classroom, as well as the wider world; however, it asserts that mastery of such analytical capacities of digital texts is requisite for ‘basic tasks, such as reading or sending an email’ (DES, 2011a, 8).

Furthermore, the only time any acknowledgement of ‘creative’ engagement with any medium appears in *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life* it is a singular observation, in footnote form, appended to the argument that as a nation, we require a greater rollout of standardized testing across the Republic – for the sake of keeping tabs on the progress of Ireland’s literacy standards – but that such ‘testing cannot measure […] students’] ability to write creatively’ (*ibid*, 75, *in footnote*). Remaining ill-defined in Irish educational policy, at a European-wide level a greater sense of media literacy – as well as insistence on the place of film in education – is already taking place.

**Media Literacy: Creating, Critiquing and Using Multimodal Texts**

Defined rather broadly by The Office of Communications [Ofcom], the British regulatory body for the communication industries, media literacy is ‘the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts’ (Ofcom, 2006, 3). For a more nuanced definition of the term, the work of the Europe-wide MEDIA programme (2007) and the 2009 European Association for Viewers’ Interests [EAVI], under the European Union’s Media Literacy Unit, point to expanded denotations.
Both are presented as more specific than Ofcom’s model, yet broadly multiplicitous in what they encompass under the rubric of ‘media literacy’.

The European Union’s MEDIA project defines media literacy as a enmeshing of ‘classical’ literacy capabilities; audiovisual comprehension skills grounded upon electronic, sequentially presented, materials such as film, radio and broadcast media and digital/informational literacies necessary to negotiate and organize the torrents of stimuli that present themselves to citizens whether via an active seeking-out of media or through the passive consumption that occurs in daily social life (Media Literacy, 2007, 8). Furthering the user-centric specificity, EAVI’s Study on Assessment Criteria for Media Literacy (2009), equally stresses the critical understanding of multimodal texts, in analogue and new media forms, as well as visual criticality and digital navigability.

In the shadow of Marshall McLuhan’s notion of convergent forms of technology and communication (McLuhan, 1964/2001) and with an acknowledged debt to the work of EU Kids Online director Professor Sonia Livingstone, EAVI moves beyond an understanding of literacy benefitting the singular, literate individual, and in turn argues that such media literacy capabilities are vital for social relations around the nexuses of civil society, education, policy and industry (EAVI, 2009, 8). Literacy is not just for ‘learning and life’ for the individual; for the EAVI it is necessary for civic participation and wider social discourse. Toward this definition, the EAVI presents a comprehensive graph to envisage all of the elements they fold into their pedagogical, andragogical, aims. The model also shows the manner in which these wider
relations, and indivudated critical-comprehensive and active ‘use’ skills, ultimately serve to foster creative endeavours as well social and industrial cohesion.

Figure 1: EAVI Model for Media Literacy (EAVI, 2009, 32)

Rather than compartmentalizing competing terminology regarding hyphenated prefixes often attached to the notion of ‘literacy’, the EAVI study points to a series of ‘similar terms and concepts including […] “cultural literacy”, “information literacy”, “audiovisual literacy” and “media education”’ that are implicit in the formation of media literate citizens in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century (ibid., 21). The fluidity of this 2009 model has had a lasting effect at European-wide policy level. In the September 2011 publication of the European Cooperation in Science and Technology [COST] summit proceedings on the theme of Transforming Audiences, Susanne Ding, who was then
serving as European Commission Directorate General for Education and Culture, acknowledged that it is the 2009 EAVI study which provides the guiding framework by which media literacy levels are to subsequently be assessed across the European Union (Ding in Livingstone, 2011, 5-6).

In her arguments, Ding cited the dually-oriented nature of the EAVI study, and its overt acknowledgement of individual skillsets and wider policy-driven – and infrastructural – elements as vital to understanding how to:

further strengthen the role of media literacy in these policy field[s], streamline the understanding of media literacy and the requirements for media literacy education, […] while constantly adapting to new results in media literacy research or the development of new technologies.

(ibid., 7)

While making accessions to ‘new technologies’ as they may arise, one facet of media literacy identified by Ding in her statements to the convened researchers and stakeholders was that of film: specifically ‘[t]he place of film literacy in European school education’ (ibid.).

**The Benefits of Film Education: The Wider Perspective**

Ding’s insistence on film literacy as a necessary component of scholastic remit, and the EAVI’s belief that film education lends itself to wider cultural benefits, is not without precedent. In the United Kingdom, the place of film in schools was demarcated as a ‘21st Century Literacy’ skillset in a three-year (2008-2011) lottery-funded research endeavour of the same name. The project aimed to ‘help children and young people to use, enjoy and understand moving images; not just to be technically
capable but to be culturally literate too’ (21st Century Literacy, 2008, 2). Across 10 pilot projects that incorporated both viewing and filmmaking practices, 21st Century Literacy distilled their findings into an equal number of primary arguments (21st Century Literacy and Available Light Advisory, 2012). As well as having the capacity for uptake ‘across the entire curriculum’ and ‘enhanc[ing] critical, cultural and creative abilities’, the study bolstered the notion that film, as a cultural artifact, can teach young people about the diversity found within their own nation, as well as the wider world (ibid., 6-10).

This idea of culture being transmitted through critical textual analysis is at home in the study of film, history and the moving image. Speaking in front of the European Parliament in October of 2010, German filmmaker, and president of the European Film Academy, Wim Wenders asserted that the effective implementation of film education can be a vital component in ‘the imparting of cultural and social competence’ and that, fundamentally, film is ‘a universal language that can be taught and learned’ (Wenders, 2010, 4). Wenders further asserts the critical ability to understand the moving image text – to be ‘cinemate’ – leads an individual from a state cultural consumption to one of cultural production. As Wenders states:

> We need to equip our children with the skills to decode images so they’ll still have the taste for their own ones, so we can continue in Europe to produce and project our own imagery, our **own image and identity**, in the future.

*(ibid., 6, emphasis in original)*

While such momentum has yet to be achieved in the Irish educational landscape, a series of indigenous stakeholders are posing arguments in line with the
acknowledgement of cultural identity being tied to regionalized notions of film in the words of Wenders, Ding and the EAVI alike.

**The Benefits of Film Education in Ireland**

In their efforts to tether film to Irish educational practices, a number of organizations have placed an emphasis on film’s ability to spark learning, bolster cultural identity and mobilise economic redevelopment. In particular Ireland’s film and animation industries have been argued to play a central role in functions of what Eurostat had, by the year 2000, deemed the “cultural sector” (European Commission, 2010, p. 5).

As one of the core domains outlined by *Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries* (2010) – the European Union-wide Green Paper soliciting thinking around, by and about professional cultural and creative content producers – audiovisual media plays a fundamental part in the ‘preservation, creation, production dissemination, trade/sales and education’ of Ireland’s indigenous cultural specificities (*ibid.*, 3). According to this document, education in, and production and transmission of film may lead to a ‘positive spill-over’ of such modes of engagement and thereby entrepreneurial thinking (*ibid.*, pp. 3-5). Simply put, students who have engagement with film, and other creative endeavours in the educational sector will benefit strongly in their scholastic and professional lives.

There is strong evidence that such thinking is not off the mark. In an April 2011 report presented to the Department for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht [Irish-language
regions\textsuperscript{22}, the Audiovisual Strategic Review Steering Group [AvSRSG\textsuperscript{23}] argued that the Irish industries they represented showed a sense of ‘resilience’ across the country, and that they are poised to continue to grow at speed, despite the ongoing, overwhelming economic despair in which Ireland had found itself (AvSRSG, 2011, 32). Having maintained positive growth during a time of significant fiscal retraction, the report identifies that the Irish film and broadcast industries grew from 694 fulltime employees in 1991, to more than 5,400 people by 2007 – and, at the time of writing, provided an industry worth more than half a billion Euro to the nation (\textit{ibid.}, i).

Ireland’s digital economy is still growing. In the current social and economic climate an 8% net industry growth per annum is achievable, the report argued, with projected employment totalling to 10,000 people working in a billion-Euro industry by 2016 (\textit{ibid.}, ii-v). The AvSRSG’s report further implored the government to place ‘education and training’ for young people as the preeminent catalyst for nurturing the innate talent that ‘constitutes the quantum of creative, entrepreneurial and technical’ skills necessary for the continued success, and ambitious expansion of the industry (\textit{ibid.}, 10). Central to this, the AvSRSG document asserts that it is ‘the education system […] in which the skills that develop creativity are fostered’ (\textit{ibid.}, p. 12).

\textsuperscript{22} The report was initially undertaken under the Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism; the departments were reshuffled to their present affiliations after the March 2011 election.

\textsuperscript{23} The working group was comprised of Brendan Tuohy, Cathal Gaffney (MD Brown Bag Films), Éanna Ó Conghaile (Department of Communications, Energy and National Resources), Ed Guiney (Director Element Pictures), James Morris (Irish Film Board, CEO Windmill Pictures), Larry Bass (CEO Screentime Shinawil), Margaret Lawlor (Department of Enterprise, Jobs and Innovation), Niall O’Donnchu (Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht) and Tristan Orpen Lynch (MD Subotica Entertainment) (AvRSRG, 2011, i-ii)
The invocation of the education system, and a wider definition of literacy itself, removes the document from the confines of the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht and places its advocacy squarely at the foot of its sister department, the Department in Education and Skills. Simply:

Film and television [...] are a contemporary form of communication and, as a visual medium, benefit the curriculum as a dynamic method of education delivery. This content would play a key part in delivering the Government’s objectives to build digital and media literacy.

(iband.)

While the Green Paper and the AvSRSG’s report make for strong argument for the expansion of the current role of film across Irish curricula, and lend financial return to the cultural advocacy supported by the arguments of Wim Wenders (2010), such implorations find little uptake within the Department of Education’s policy document. Despite the architecture of Ireland’s national educational plan, the interests of the cultural and industry stakeholders detailed above may yet gain traction. But as to questions of assessment and the intended outcomes of Irish education, these are being debated by other professional educational organisations.

The Process of Revision to Curricular Assessment, and the Potential for Curricular Inclusion of Film and Moving Image Media

At the same time that DES is calling for a return toward MEDIA’s notion of classically-oriented literacy as well as numeracy measures that can provide quantitative ends across primary and Senior Cycle curricula, the manner in which the interstitial years of the Irish Junior Cycle are organized and delivered has undergone significant scrutiny and debate toward forthcoming revision. After a call for consultancy submissions, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
[NCCA] presented their findings in relation to an overhaul of the Junior Cycle framework (NCCA, 2011). Chief amongst these findings was a call to implement wider ‘key skills’ based learning in the classroom (NCCA, 2011a, slide 2). In a wider concession than the Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life document, these skills include processes such as ‘communicating, being creative, working with others and managing information and thinking’ – as well as an emphasis on exploratory teaching and learning practices that are grounded in ‘practical and creative’ subjects, rather than text-oriented, rote learning in advance of cumulative assessments (ibid, slide 5).

Eighteen months later after the call to revise the Junior Certificate, the Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairí Quinn released a statement confirming that the ‘terminal Junior Certificate Examinations will be replaced with a school-based model of assessment which would place emphasis on the quality of students’ learning experience’ (DES, 2012). Beginning with the English curriculum, the phasing in of such measures will commence in the autumn of 2014.

It must be noted that the overarching aims of literacy and numeracy remain fixed as the primary goals for all Junior Cycle students. Rather than a rote-based learning system, these changes will focus on in-class assessments of ‘understanding and competencies’ as well as summative exams (ibid.). Towards a Framework for Junior Cycle draws upon twenty-four ‘Statements of Learning’, prized as overarching educational outcomes towards which all educators will strive. The qualities that are
reflected in the revised Junior Cycle curriculum run the gamut from entrepreneurial thinking – championed above by the AvSRSG as an inherent outcome of film-based criticality and problem-solving – to physical well being and healthy diet (NCCA, 2011b, 15). A number of the goals presented are applicable to the envisaging of film within the Irish curricula as indicated in the work of the BFI and wider European institutions such as MEDIA and the EAVI – all of whom place an emphasis on the integration of media into wider subject specificities.

Eight of the Junior Cycle’s key intentions for the revised syllabus are particularly relevant to the discourse around film in the history classroom established across this thesis. Equally, as excerpts from the wider twenty-four statements, each of these pedagogical aims can be seen as challenging and augmenting the core literacy and numeracy rationales explicated in the Department of Education and Skills’ overarching strategy document. Running the gamut from multimodal integration to an emphasis on creativity that went lacking in the *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life*, Statements of Learning 1, 2, 3, 7, 12, 19 and 21 read as follows:

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24 See Appendix Four for the complete list of ‘Statements of Learning’
1. The student communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts in L1.

2. The student reaches a level of personal proficiency in L2 and one other language in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

3. The student creates, appreciates and critically interprets texts (including written, oral, visual or other texts).

7. The student improves their observation, inquiry and critical-thinking skills.

12. The student values local and national heritage and recognises the relevance of the past to the current national and international issues and events.

17. The student creates, presents and appreciates artistic works.

19. The student uses ICT effectively and ethically in learning and in life.

[and]

21. The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which they live.

(ibid.)

In each of these ‘Statements of Learning’, film can be used in a far more nuanced manner than the medium’s current employ in the English and Fine Art syllabi. The manner through which filmic engagement with the stuff of history can be laid over these eight core concerns will be returned to in the final chapter of this thesis, at which point the fullness of the research report’s analysis can be linked to these learning outcomes. For now it must be noted that while changes are occurring at the level of the Junior Cycle, and the possibility of a ‘short course’ in Digital Media Literacy has been noted as coming on stream for Junior Cycle students, this sets up an ‘either/or’ dynamic which continues the trend of a lack of genuine integration.

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25 L1 is the primary language used within the school, whether English or Irish; L2 a secondary language.
between digital and creative skillsets and core course content that such skills can inform (DES, 2012).

A Call for Change

Now more than ever, there is potential for film and mediated texts to find wider uptake with the educational landscape. Despite the overarching concerns of literacy and numeracy as the prevailing motifs to which educators are presently responsible, as part of the Fine Gael/Labour plan for government outlined in the Spring of 2011, changes were to be made regarding the umbrella under whom technology, ICT and, by extension, mediated content would arrive within Irish schools.

In an October, 20, 2011 statement by Minister for Education and Skills Ruairi Quinn, it was stated that:

From September 2011, the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) will no longer be an aegis body of the Department. […] The process of integrating the functions of the NCTE with the support services and with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is underway. The new configuration will ensure greater integration of ICT within teaching and learning both in terms of policy and practice and will deliver synergies in this regard.

(Quinn, Dáil Éireann, 2011, 66)

Within six months, Minister Quinn along with Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources Pat Rabbitte declared that by 2014 every secondary school in the Republic would be hardwired for high-speed 100 MB/second broadband creating an informational infrastructure that is poised to ameliorate many of the problems suffered in the Look at History effort (Kennedy, 2012, online). A May, 2014 press release from the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources stated
that targets of end-2014 were still achievable with regard to this nationwide plan for connectivity, and the 17 of the Republic’s 26 counties had had their secondary schools wholly wired by the end of the 2013 calendar year (DCENR, 2014).

As this thesis will argue, the capacity for the filmic texts to engender empathic approaches to historical narratives, the critical thought processes undertaken in such efforts – leading to curricular and life-long benefits – and the call for wider saturation of media-centred policy make the time right for such ways of thinking. The exploration of Ireland’s film heritage can provide empathic ends that spark the historical imagination and strengthen students’ grasp of the nature of both the historical and the contemporary world, and the records housed within the National Film Archive are an underutilized resource waiting for classroom implementation. Before looking to Ireland as site of this thesis’ primary investigation, the manner by which film became codified as a viable historical source must first be explored.
Chapter ONE:
Film as a Viable Pedagogical Text for History

Through an analysis of the professional organizations, conference proceedings, special issues of journals and individually authored texts that have presented arenas for the shifting debates around film and history, this chapter will argue that the case and cause of filmic inclusion on the history syllabus has passed through – and can utilize – a series of positions within the wider discipline. The chapter will argue that the film in history debate has passed through three distinct modes of thinking, they are: film as a viable historical text; film as a referential, historiographical text and film as a medium with which students may explore the challenges to the edifice of history as faced via the criticality of postmodern historicity. While the analysis present within this chapter is rooted within the academy – and the altercations between a perceived arch-conservatism of the discipline of history and those who actively sought to utilize other forms record – the purpose of the rehearsal of these debates – the key players and the nuances found within their arguments – is to foreground the manner in which a revised approach to history at second level might utilize the film form, and how young people actively investigating film are avowedly fostering a series of critical skills the acceptance of which for the classroom were, indeed, hard won.

Beginning in the late 1960s, but breaking down, loosely, into constituent movements that echo the demarcation of the decades of the 1970s, 80s and 90s, and through to more curricularly-based concerns in the present day, the first part of portion of the chapter will examine the claim that film could simply be a historical text, and the manner in which film became accepted in the canon of forms of record through which history can be explored and disseminated within higher education. The second section
looks to the rise of narratology in the human sciences and posits the manner in which film can be argued as a historiographical text. Largely grounded in the work of Pierre Sorlin, this stage in the debate regarding film’s historical validity is rooted in the assertion that the material provides evidence of a living historical record. The efforts of Sorlin laid the groundwork for further critique of history through a lens of postmodern inquiry. Such a use for film is evidenced in the final section of this chapter, as the film as historical text debate gives way to the arguments of Robert Rosenstone, Marcia Landry and others as they assert that film is poised as an exemplary medium to look at the reflexivity of historical explication. Questioning the very malleability of the project of history, the third section of this chapter draws on Rosenstone’s idea of the ‘new history film’ as one which challenges the ‘intent, content and form’ of previous modes of historical engagement, and asserts that the filmic representation of the past has the capacity to fully explore a postmodern historicity as much grounded in the present as in the lives of our forbearers (Rosenstone, 1994, 4). This line of thinking in which historical films explain as much about the present as they do of the past lends itself to thesis’ utilization of historical empathy, and its employ in the Irish classroom, as a distinct feature that can be drawn from the medium. In charting the lineage of the film in history debate, greater insight into how the 21st century history classroom can avail of the medium, argue the validity of film as a primary source and, ultimately, pose critical question of the discipline itself begin to take shape.

Film as Historical Text;
The Initial Response to the Film-in-History Question

If the academy itself is renowned for its reticence toward change, the latent conservatism against which a series of pioneering historians met made history’s
validation of the cinematic record appear glacial to the casual onlooker. Within the Anglophonic academy, the general acceptance of film in both the scrutiny and teaching of history has been mired in controversy and admonishment. While such arguments were being waged within disciplinary circles in the second and third decade of the 20th century, it was only with the coeval, vociferous efforts of historians J.A.S. Grenville and Nicholas Pronay, the writings of Paul Smith and the singular determination for film’s acceptance in the university system of Thorold Dickinson, all 40 years later, that professional historians working within the academy truly acknowledged the potential of the moving image in the history syllabus. While the first portion of this chapter seeks to evince how these efforts played a part in a wider tabling of film for the, subject-specific, history classroom came about in the English-speaking world, attention must first be turned east.

By the midpoint of the 20th century, cinema, now in its sixth decade was beginning to be viewed as a viable tool for both the historian and the pedagogue in archives and research centers across mainland Europe. The first published efforts to theorize the uptake of the moving image occurred within the German academy, notably in the *Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film* [Institute for Scientific and Educational Films] and their 1953 publication of the *Referat für zeitgeschichtliche Filmforschung und Film dokumentation* [Report on the Contemporary History of Film Research and Documentation] (Smith, 1976, 1). By the date of publication, the *Institut*, which would become a dedicated, independent research centre by 1956, was liaising with the *Koblenz Bundesarchiv* [National Archive, itself founded in 1952] to produce edited collections of films from Germany’s cinematic catalogue for specific use in the teaching of history. This threefold model of engagement, between historian, film
archive and classroom, would soon be utilized to great effect in the British university system; however, while the critical synthesis of celluloid material and historical analysis was not present in these initial forays into film use, they would subsequently follow.

Acknowledging the efforts of his German predecessors, the antecedents of film-historical programming in the United Kingdom can be linked to Thorold Dickinson and his efforts during the decade of the 1960s as the first professor of film studies at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London. Having served as the director of UNESCO’s film services from 1956-1960, as head of the first film studies department in Britain, Dickinson routinely curated programmes of films for the university’s history department. For these screenings, Dickinson gathered clips from sources as diverse as ‘the National Film Archive, the Imperial War Museum and the Central Office of Information’ (Bawden, 1968, 32). Central to these programmes was the notion that the films selected, often newsreels or works of propaganda, were created for purposes other than the formal education sector, and that despite the professional historian’s secondary selection and juxtaposition of these films in the context of the lecture hall, such materials could be contextualized as pedagogical touchstones.

Dickinson would collate these widely disparate films, thematize their screenings and run programmes for student audiences at Slade. It must be noted, however, that these screenings took place outside of any classroom settings, and were viewed as supplemental to the course. Despite beginning as extracurricular engagements viewed
for the sake of intellectual curiosity – including a screenings of *Mise Éire* in the autumn of 1965 – by the following year, Dickinson was ever-increasingly attempting to programme his events in a manner tailored to the content delivered in the annual guest lecture series presented by historian, and televisual history enthusiast, A.J.P. Taylor (BUFC, 1968). The Taylor lectures proved to be the first effort within the British academy to intermarry subject-specific films to the history lessons they would illustrate, and in the 1966-67 academic year, twenty film programmes of material from the Second World War were run with a series of six lectures, each of which explored the conflict from the point of view of one Axis nation (*ibid.*).

Writing in the *University Journal*, Judith Stafford, then a post-graduate student in University College London’s History Department, provides an insightful overview of the interplay, or initial lack thereof, between Dickinson’s film programmes and Taylor’s speaking engagements. While Stafford asserts that the films and lectures remained wholly independent of one another – in Taylor’s speaking engagements, ‘no references [were made] to them’ – much could be gleaned, she argued, from the ‘evidence of general attitudes and social atmosphere’ portrayed in both films produced during the Second World War, and those made retrospective of it (Stafford, 1968, 13-14). In her analysis of the film series and lectures, it is argued that three approaches to history can be validated through the Dickinson’s film season. Firstly films are by nature analogous to the textbook as preparatory groundwork for the engaging with the Taylor lectures; in her argument, Stafford specifically cities compilation films made after the war and how each could be used to elucidate various perspectives of the armies and citizenry of combatant nations. Secondly, the films were used as illustrative ‘footnotes’ to the lectures themselves, as the author notes:
[t]he student may well gain more insight into the period from studying clothes, hairstyles, horses, cars, the tone of voice of newsreel commentators, than from the actual recital of events [... while] difficult to convey in speech or writing [...] in the film they are constantly present.

(ibid., 13)

Finally, the films were used as source material that makes manifest the ‘prejudice and misrepresentation’ in all evidence, written, filmed or otherwise (ibid.). By looking at films made by opposing sides during the war – and actively comparing the agency and authority each takes – Stafford argues that such films give particular ‘insight into the aims and propaganda’ used by the constructers of nations’ histories (ibid.).

At the same time, such questions around the ‘aims and propaganda’ a film portrays led other scholars to another form of historical inquiry – that of film production. Rather than simply programming newsreels and excerpts from archives and collections throughout Britain, J.A.S. Grenville and Nicholas Pronay argued that ‘[i]f the principal purpose of a film compilation is to analyze an historical problem [...] on the basis of scholarship, then the scholar must be in control of the film’ (Grenville and Pronay, 1968, 2).

**Historians as Filmmakers**

Concomitant to the film programmes occurring at Slade, Grenville and Pronay were selecting and ordering excerpts from film archives that depicted the Munich Crisis, specifically conceiving and constructing their film depicting the capitulation of Britain and France to the Third Reich’s annexation of the Sudetenland as tailored for
a university-level history audience. At the time of the 1967 production, Grenville was the Chair of International History at the University of Leeds and Pronay was an assistant lecturer and one of the earliest and most vociferous advocates of enquiry into communicative media ‘then considered somewhat tangential to mainstream history’ (Leeds, 1998). Beginning with this singular classroom resource, Pronay’s efforts would culminate in the founding of the Institute of Communication Studies at the same university in 1988 (ibid.). Whereas Grenville and Pronay articulated the necessity for the historian to ply his craft toward Peter Novick’s assertion of a ‘noble dream’, the scholars disregarded the fact that the processes of capture and selection of particular images and particulars narratives, as well as their own acquisition, restoration – where necessary – and storage in an archive, are as equally telling about the conditions of the film’s construction and archivilization as the subject matter to which the original cinematographers first turned their cine-cameras (Novick, 1988).

Despite being produced within the University of Leeds, with subsequent projects, the historians-turned-filmmakers quickly found cooperation in the Universities of Reading and Nottingham; this three institution group became the genesis of the British Inter-University History Film Consortium (IUHFC), established to provide an outlet for their The Munich Crisis film as the first in a series of cooperative projects envisaged to further promote research into, and practical filmmaking around, the historical subject (ibid., 2-5). During their thirty year lifespan the Consortium created a further fifteen productions about topics related to the Second World War26, the,

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subsequent, Korean War\textsuperscript{27}; the Great Depression\textsuperscript{28} and, during the height of the Cold War, explicatory films about the Soviet Union\textsuperscript{29}.

Despite their initial reticence toward archival films, the Consortium made a series of shorts from material in archives that provided moving image portraits of the likes of Neville Chamberlain (1974, d. Beattie, Dilks and Pronay) and Stanley Baldwin (1979, d. Ramsden). Along with The Munich Crisis, later education-oriented productions would see eventual distribution by the British Universities Film Council (BUFC\textsuperscript{30}), an organization established in 1948 with the specific intention of encouraging the production and study of film – and eventually television, radio and video – at third level institutions and in the professional research capacity. The Council is still active today and has made the films of IUHFC, as well as the compendia and other written information about them, available for streaming to all British university students.

In the wake of these initial films, the efforts of Dickinson and Taylor, Grenville and Pronay and other educators interested in the exploration of history through the moving image coalesced in the spring of 1968 with two events both revolving around the collaboration of the then-recently shelved UK Film Council and Consortium: the launch of the University Vision journal, a publication dedicated to the encouragement ‘of historians to make more use of film for research and teaching purposes’ (BUFC,

\textsuperscript{27} The Korean War, 1950-1953, (1992, d. Taylor)

\textsuperscript{28} The Great Depression (1976, d. Stead)

\textsuperscript{29} Origins of the Cold War (1975, d. Boyle)

\textsuperscript{30} Since 1983, the British Universities Film and Video Council
1968, 1), and an April 1968 conference held at University College London entitled 

Film and the Historian. The conference’s chief ambition was to:

bring together the holders of film – the publicly – and privately owned archives and libraries – and the potential users in universities [..., so] that the experience of those who had already used film could be shared, that some practical difficulties could be voiced and [...] most important – that some action could be taken to co-ordinate efforts and responses for the future.

(Bawden, 33)

In attendance were faculty from more than twenty institutes for higher education and representatives from museums, governmental communications offices and film production companies – as well as journalists from national newspapers (ibid.). The conference centred upon the screening and exploration of Grenville and Pronay’s The Munich Crisis (1968) and an extended critical viewing of R.L. Schuursma’s 1966 film about the Dutch fascist leader and founder of the National Socialist Movement (NSB) Anton Adriaan Mussert. Schuursma, who was the head of the Sound Archive at the Historical Institute of the University of Utrecht, already had success in creating compilation films that had seen uptake in departments of history throughout the Netherlands.

Anton Mussert authentic filmshots 1934-1945 (1966, d. Schuursma) and Schuursma’s next film history project The Battle of Arnhem, September 1944 (1967) – both co-productions with the Scientific Film Foundation, Utrecht – drew heavily on material from the Government Information Service, The Hague and the Netherlands Filmmuseum, Amsterdam. Both films were argued to be groundbreaking, as, unlike other compilation films, such as Mise Êire, they had been constructed in direct
collaboration with the formation of an undergraduate history syllabus (Schuursma, in BUFC, 1968, 15).

As the acknowledged predecessor to the work of Grenville and Pronay, five sections of the Mussert film were shown to the participants of the *Film and the Historian* conference and from this a number of questions were raised and practicalities explored. While the technologies of storage, reproduction and exhibition have changed in a manner inconceivable to the attendees at the *Film and the Historian* conference, the questions tabled during the proceedings are largely analogous to the impositions made against film in the classroom today including concerns of the cost, access and rights.

Regarding the cost of reproducing film it was noted that in Schuursma’s case the filmmaker had received funding from the national government and created the films on a voluntary basis, as such his costs were nominal; it was acknowledged that unless such funding can be secured, it is inevitable that cost becomes the first obstacle to creating such works. Likewise questions of how historians might gain sustained access to British film archives – as the process of screening and selecting films can be extremely laborious – was tabled. As well issues of copyright clearance and whether concessions of copyright could be made in instances of educational content creation were discussed. These debates foreshadow later chapters of this thesis as even in the present day, questions of copyright clearance and a lack educational provision in copyright law stymie efforts to put film, and other primary sources, in Irish history classrooms. Despite these questions of access to archives, reproducibility and
whether archival films versus those created specifically to address a curricular agenda – the celluloid elephant in the disciplinary room that loomed large over the conference, as articulated by Paul Smith of King’s College, London, was whether there could ever be ‘secure[d] for the film record the same sort of status as is accorded, and has long been accorded, to other types of records’ (Smith, in BUFC, 1968, 28)?

To attempt to further solve this query, in the wake of the conference, a number of coordinating activities were undertaken. The first was the formation of the University Historian’s Film Committee, with Smith serving as the inaugural general secretary. The second was the 1969 securing of a Social Science Research Council grant for the establishment of the Slade Film History Register under the supervision of Thorold Dickinson. The Register, which ceased primary research and was taken over by the British Universities Film Council in 1975, was created in the interest of maintaining a central database of ‘film material likely to be of interest to historians’ and included material from 1895 until 1962, the latter cut-off date necessitated by the first published release of the British Film Institute’s *National Film Catalogue* having made the need for such a database redundant (Ballantyne, 1996, 4).

**The History and Film Debate Spreads across the Atlantic**

While initially slower to gain traction, by the early 1970s in the United States, things were equally moving apace. In 1972, a conference convened by the National Archives, was organized to follow the lead taken by the BUFC and Slade four years previous. Nicholas Pronay was flown over to act as the European liaison to the first
inter-institutional meeting dedicated to the effort of implementing audiovisual archival materials’ use as original source materials in the classroom. Though the National Archives’ annual conference was in its eleventh year, crucially, the 1972 meeting was the first time had moved from the archives’ College Park location to a third-level setting – the University of Delaware.

In asserting the role of the newsreel in research, Pronay’s presentation had the dual effect of preaching to the converted while trying to shepherd the unwashed masses, as his intended audience during the proceedings was not ‘the fellow believers at the conference, but the unconverted mainstream historians who [were] ignorant of film as a historical source, who felt unprepared to study film sources’ (Jellicorse, 1973, 296). After his opening remarks, and with panels constructed of both the old guard of established historians and archivists, and young teachers, the conference examined both the theoretical and technological problems around the use of film across the educational spectrum. During the proceedings, many examples of suitable or critically applicable materials were viewed and dialogically analyzed for their educative capabilities; these ranged from the fragmentary holdings in the National Archive and early cinematic examples such as Edwin S. Porter’s Edison Manufacturing silent Uncle Tom’s Cabin (1903) to Pare Lorentz’s classic depression-era propaganda films The Plow that Broke the Plains and The River (1936; 1938) as well as then-current television news broadcasts (Jellicorse, 1973).

The inclusion of television was an issue upon which for some, including Robert A. Weinstein, ‘too much emphasis [was placed] and too much time […] allowed for
fruitless and self-righteous dispute[s] on the several moral and aesthetic responsibilities’ of the medium, rather than its educative potential (Weinstein, in Jellicorse, *et al*., 1973, 321). This seeming poisoning of the well of the debate and its prescience for the subsequent critique by the likes of Neil Postman raises many concerns still inherent to moving image media, and ICT at large, in the classroom. While the conference seemingly made headway in the aspects of visual literacy and how negotiating the filmic text could be of benefit when used in a coeval manner to the written source, the discussions held during the National Archives’ proceedings were determined to be ‘more successfully exploratory than conclusive’ (*ibid.*).

**Gathering Momentum**

If the sentiment of exploration was in the air, it was spreading farther and wider throughout the early 1970s, on both sides of the Atlantic, as the founding of further departments of film and media studies and the establishment of institutes for research into the moving image – as well as an increased emphasis on film in English, American Studies, and other humanities syllabi – bolstered the claim that film was ‘becoming fully assimilated into the accepted corpus of historical source materials and means of instruction’ (Smith, 1976, 3). With the 1976 publication of Paul Smith’s *The Historian and Film* – the first edited survey of historians, filmmakers, archivists and educationalists to consolidate many of the arguments being rehearsed at both the Slade conference and the University of Delaware – evidence was on offer that the place of film in the study of history was reaching larger audiences, and the edifices of the discipline were beginning to look far less codified. A number of the essays on display pose their arguments from a series of ‘hyphenated’ subject positions – socio-
history, semio-history, micro-history – and these further add to the exacting and unique nature of film as an exploratory tool.

Smith’s book argues that historians by nature ‘tended to be snobbish about materials, arranging them roughly in the order of the social strata which produced them’, and that such tendentiousness around the more populist, wider-reaching, medium of film is antithetical to the job of the historian (ibid., 5). As an initial salvo into a wider discursive position, Smith asserts:

> Whatever [source] exists has to be examined for whatever it can yield, [...] if the examination suggests new objects or methods of investigation they must be assimilated into the canon, for a conception of history narrower than our means of exploring history is an absurdity (ibid., 6)

From this standpoint, Smith argues that there cannot be any ‘hierarchy of sources’ of historical significance; he furthers this argument be by lambasting any debates around the ‘intrinsic purity or impurity’ of the historical text, filmed or otherwise – as validity of the filmic record to the events of history is just as suspect as the written word, and as such, every text can be assumed ‘impure’ until the historian has validated its use value via methodologically-grounded interpretation (ibid.).

Counter to the conservatism of many historians in attendance at the initial conferences – who placed the impetus of history in the written word, Smith asserts an idea that recurs throughout The Historian and Film: that no historical source is ‘untainted [or] unmanipulated’ in creation or presentation, and, therefore, the task of the historian is to equip himself with the skillsets necessary to effectively and critically engage any
The film’s evidential value – its narrative, testimonial and receptive capacities (ibid., 7). The essentialism to his argument is that all history is up for grabs. It is the craft of the historian, his research and his methodology, that moves a text from suspect to worthwhile, and that to use film in the portrayal of history is valid – if one sets to the task of investigating films’ historical capability. Whether chasing Novick’s ‘noble dream’ or simply comparing myriad sources in an effort to flesh out a historical narrative grounded in multiplicity, this ‘does not mean that all historians, or even all contemporary historians, are under the obligation to use film’, but rather, ‘only that none should exclude the possibility of doing so’ (ibid., 6).

‘Cinematacy’ and Postman

Borrowing a portmanteau from Thorold Dickinson, Smith argues that the effective use of film as historical text, for both educator and student, requires a ‘cinemate’, rather than ‘literate’ capacity – that is, historians require a set of literacies unique to the close-reading, visual acuity and thematic examination of the moving image (ibid., 9). This ‘cinematacy’, to further coin from Dickinson’s neologism, speaks to the greater, macro-critical skillsets all young people are tasked with acquiring in Irish schools. To return to the NCCA’s statements of learning, the critical evaluation of texts as well as the fallout from such engagements such as the thinking through of disparate viewpoints and wider local and national contexts is inimitably tied to an active capacity to ‘read’ a film or piece of moving image media (NCCA, 2011b, 15).

Looking back to the Postman’s thesis, with its primary argument that televisual media is locked into an arena of ‘competing successfully with the school curriculum [b]y
which I mean it damn near obliterates it’, and that engaging with moving image media
is an inherently singular act, rather than something that transpires in a wider social
setting Postman cites this presumed passivity as placing media in a distinctly *us
against them* scenario with education (1986, 146). He furthers this by lumping
together “Sesame Street31” and ‘MTV32’, “Nova33” and “Fantasy Island34”,
insuminating that there is an equally treacherous slope one slips down in the educational
stakes regardless of whether he or she is watching benign, friendly puppets
introducing preschoolers to literacy and numeracy, or that same 3-5 year old is placed
in front of ‘Jersey Shore’ (*ibid.*, 15135). Such a myopic view disregards any
semblance of dialogic engagement in the classroom, or students working through
films and workshopping the viewpoints of all participant learners in conjunction with
thorough and effective teaching.

**After Postman**

Toward the first of Postman’s criticisms, rather than simply taking what one is given,
an investigation into any kind of filmic text, or, printed text, a significant amount of
research and comprehension must be undertaken. As Lisa Pontecorvo argues:

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31 (1969-present)

32 Launched August 1, 1981

33 Nova is a multi-award winning science documentary series that has been running on Public Service
Broadcasting in the United States since 1974, itself based on the BBC2 production *Horizon*

34 (1978-1984)

35 Postman’s text mentions the first three programmes and the MTV network, while broadcast on
MTV, suffice to say *Amusing Ourselves to Death* predates ‘Jersey Shore’ which first aired in 2009, six
years after Postman’s death.
the historian who wishes to use film resources for historical research and training […] has to use quite a lot of initiative before he can be in a position to do so seriously and […] draw conclusions about a film’s value as historical evidence.

(Pontecorvo, 1976, 31)

Towards the second charge, that young people retained little of what streamed in front of their eyes, a later study by Seamus Hegarty would take this notion of the ‘cinematacy’ of young people, in this instance a group of 10- and 11-years-olds, and determine to what extent even passive viewer could recall and critically extrapolate from moving image media. Surveying the manner in which his test groups watched and engaged with film in their everyday lives, the author sought to determine the extent of their ‘grasp of content’ films (Hegarty, 1978, 43). The study found that this younger generation was far more adept at decoding the films than their teachers. Far from ‘amusing themselves to death’ by not heeding the admonishments of Postman, the 10- and 11-year-olds were, instead, critically and comprehensively analyzing the media they can across in their everyday life. While not explicitly stating the term ‘media literacy’ – as the discourse was emerging, but the now-contemporary lexicon still developing – the insights of Smith, Pontecorvo and Hegarty provide the antecedents of such skills, or the aforementioned 21st century literacy, for both the educator who must outline the manner in which mediated texts are to be worked through and the young person who is often far more implicitly adept at negotiating said texts than the educator at the top of the classroom.

Speaking to his students’ proclivities for audiovisual media, and the dynamism that is offered to the history classroom through the use of film, Arthur Marwick asserts that ‘film can show students things they could not otherwise see in the classroom, and the
film can break through the boredom of the traditional teaching situation’ (Marwick, 1976, 143, *emphasis in original*). Marwick is quick to defend his use of film as something more than just an classroom-enlivening carrot and stick; however, this requires preparatory effort as the teacher must be informed as to how the film is to be used in order to avoid the ‘degenrat[ion] into the soft option of smart cocktail chat or high-flown woffle unrelated to any hard analysis’ from befalling the classroom setting (*ibid.*, 151).

In Marwick, this approach of priming students’ historical investigations, thereby speaking to, and building upon, their inherent competencies allows students to approach films in a manner that fosters a dialogic engagement between the students and the educators. Marwick’s use of film acts as catalyst for a truly exploratory sense of learning. This placing such agency within the student of history is seconded by Bryan Haworth’s statement that ‘[f]ilm must not be made the excuse for further exercises in dull comprehension and tedious writing, it must be the springboard for discussion, dramatisation and sympathetic understanding’ (Haworth, 1976, 161). The learning styles and performances of knowledge evinced in this quote cannot be ignored; rather than simply a recapitulation of dates and names, Haworth’s classroom is energized with a sense of becoming historically charged through an affective engagement with the stuff of record. For both Marwick and Haworth, filmic inclusion in history lessons can lead to an approach to learning that would latterly be deemed ‘scaffolding’.
As a metaphor initially posed by the educational psychologists David Wood, Jerome Bruner and Gail Ross, scaffolding is a method of engaging young people in the attainment of fundamental literacy skills – textual, visual or otherwise – that begins with the pedagogue actively assisting in the acquisition of knowledge, slowly tapering off his engagement so that the young person may bolster his own capabilities via self-assertive learning – much the same way a scaffold is erected when starting building or renovation work, only to be removed piece by piece as work gets completed (Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976). Dialogue and investigation are favored components of the scaffolded classroom when compared to the ‘chalk and talk’ style of delivery viewed as a hallmark of classical education. Indeed, it is this premise of scaffolding and working through mediated texts that sees the film-centred lesson standing heterodox to the zealous protestations of Postman.

Having found wide uptake in the teaching of language acquisition, the strategy of scaffolding is itself and extension of the Vygotskian notions of zones of proximal development (ZPD) where the psychologist asserted that learning takes place in the interstitial space between what the pedagogue asserts and in what the student engages (Daniels, 2003). By tailoring the delivery of educational material toward the ends of forcing the hands of young people toward the development of their own ever more-detailed enquiries, as the scaffold is removed from the edifice of inquiry, the student will have the capability to discursively stand on his own.

Marwick argues that the history educator must strike a balance between ‘too liberal’ a model and ‘the unduly authoritarian model […] of the older ivory tower’, in an effort
to counter the approach to teaching and learning where ‘the lecturer or tutor is confident of his mystical abilities to divine [to students]’ that he is master of the discourse of history (Marwick, 1976, 150). By priming students to actively view films in a specific context – outlining key questions for which they will be responsible and making them aware of elements that should come under scrutiny – for the duration of the screening, Marwick argues, the students will be critically focusing on what they ‘ought to be able to do after viewing and analyzing the film material [in ways] that they could not do before’ (ibid., emphasis in original).

The assertion that education, Irish or otherwise, is the attainment of skills that can be self-utilized after engagement furthers the argument that the job of education extends beyond the four walls of the classroom. In history, or otherwise, such approaches construct more assertive individuals who are prepared to engage in wider, civic life. While such thinking can be found at the heart of classroom exercises that champion wider skills, Marwick acknowledges such methods stand counter to the totalizing of student achievement via measurable examination processes, offering instead ‘new perceptions and intuitions which cannot be pinned down, […] and therefore] cannot, presumably be assessed’ (Marwick, 1976, 151).

Despite the difficulty of numerical assessment, a scaffolded environment can be viewed as an asset to the project of learning ‘valuable in taking students out of the rigidities of the traditional […] education’ (ibid.). This impasse strikes at a crucial quandary for both educational policy makers and teachers on the frontline who have
to negotiate the historical project in 40 minute blocks, and both Marwick and Haworth hone their arguments in on this.

Haworth places emphasis on the notion of critical faculties as the intended end result of a student’s history education. In such types of exploration, young people fundamentally articulate ‘textual’ criticism of quite a high order (Haworth, 1976, 167). Toward the rigor of critical thinking, all films can have value in Haworth’s assessment. He argues that examples that embody the ‘good’ history lesson are just as educationally rewarding as those that appear to portray the past poorly. In such instances, students can raise issues of a film’s shortcomings based on the knowledge gained from the totality of the history lesson. Haworth states:

[c]riticisms should be encouraged of what is left out of the film or what is insufficiently covered. In this way the film becomes more than a pulling-together of class activities – it acts as a reinforcement of what has been learnt and, incidentally, stimulates a critical assessment of word and picture.

(ibid., 165)

Marwick takes these critical capabilities one, crucial, step further, asserting that the taken-for-granted visual literacy skills honed in his students’ exercises can be utilized to encourage the questioning of all historical sources as he poses whether ‘the obvious tricks of the filmmaker may have also been practised, in a more subtle way by the parliamentarians and preachers of the past’ (Marwick, 1976, 152). Such evidencing of subterfuge speaks to the emergence of debates around the possibility of a cinematic language being thrashed through in the arenas of high theory far removed from the stuff of historical representation. It would not be long, however, before questions of
film’s critical theoretical capacities of representation would influence the debate around historicity, teaching and learning.

The Unique Representative Capabilities of Historical Film

As well as the dialogue that can be construed between the words of Arthur Marwick and Brian Haworth, one further contribution to Smith’s inaugural text requires further investigation; in short, while William Hughes’ essay *The film as historical evidence* stands out in Smith’s collection as a singular cine-structuralist analysis amongst the wider collection, Hughes’ assessment of film language in the context of the classroom presupposes many of the methodological approaches and considered acceptances of fictive forms of film that become further points of contention for the film in history debate. Setting out to determine not just how the moving image operates under the aegis of historical text, but also whether conventions found within different genres of film might provide different avenues for investigation into history, Hughes’ contribution sets to the task of answering these two questions. To the first proposition, the assertion is concise: ‘film is just like other historical documents’ (Hughes, 1976, 49). The second answer requires further elaboration, and as unique to Smith’s collection, Hughes’ contribution moves the grounds of the debate from access to materials and film-within-a-wider-syllabus compliance to the realm of communication theory and a critical reading of the codifications of language from which generic conventions of the film form arise.

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36 Hughes’ stylization regarding capitalization
In his establishment and analysis of disparate cinematic codes, Hughes passes criticism on broad ‘typologies’ of film rather than setting to the task of methodologically evaluating individual texts. His rationale for such a decision is rooted in the archaeological arguments of K.C. Chang as he asserts ‘types and modes [of film] are better suited for historical study than individual artefacts […and that] different formats may provide different kinds of historical information’ (Hughes, 55).

While such a method has problematic applications within the classroom setting – without prior knowledge of cinema history, there is difficulty in reducing a series of films to their cinematic conventions, codes and hallmarks – the elucidations reached by Hughes’ analysis, coupled with textual analysis and deep readings of individual texts in light of generic study can further the explorations articulated by Marwick and Hayworth. Also distinct in Hughes’ arguments is the emphasis of such historically grounded interpretative skills directly affecting the quality and caliber of films made about historical subjects by students themselves. No other contributors make the leap from the acquisition of critical analytical skills to the practical outcomes that may benefit young people when they find themselves behind a camera in their own right.

In his close reading of non-fictive filmmaking, Hughes outlines a series of arguments that find uptake across the proponents of film’s employ in the history syllabus. Non-fictive films are, by default, a partial record of events and people, but the more technologically advanced the apparatus and production of film have become – with multiple set-ups, codified aesthetics and more refinement in finished product – the less this is the case. The better a society gets at making film, the deeper our cinematic
The language develops, and the further we move from being ‘primitives and pioneers’\(^{37}\), the greater reliance we place on artifice and simply making ‘good’ films.

Furthermore, in the instances of serial filmmaking (such as newsreel) one can read a historical, receptive critique into the work – a corpus of films created in installments operates as an ongoing evidence of ‘what’ and ‘how’ a public saw the stuff of their lives. It becomes a living history. If such films are sponsored by a particular institution, the conditions of their production evidence the socio-economic indicators of the day, and, thus, the historian working with film can make assertions about styles of visual and mediated communication as well as the techniques of persuasion inherent in the film’s creation. The manner in which films present ‘non-fiction’ prime the medium to act as interlocutor for a gamut of socio-economic concerns, political motivations and moral templates to which the producing society ascribed. Broader than the subject matter of the film, the sentiments, concerns and values of a society are explicitly detailed in every frame. For the historian, this can be exceptionally telling when instances of censored footage and outtakes that never reach public dissemination are uncovered (Hughes, 62-65).

Unlike previous efforts to determine the place of film in the historian’s repertoire, Hughes turns his attentions from ‘factual’ to ‘feature’ films and the historical use value of fictive modes of filmmaking. This move in his analysis pre-empts the wider turn toward historiographic reading of film that is instigated in the work of Pierre

\(^{37}\) The notion of a ‘primitive’ cinema first found uptake in the work of Thomas Elsaesser as used to demarcate the early filmmakers’ experiential formation of the cinematic language. See (Elsaesser, 1990). To this the British Film Institute added the notion of ‘pioneer’ with the release of their canonical two-volume compilation *Early Cinema: Primitives and Pioneers* on VHS and DVD formats.
Sorlin, which would be grounded in the latter’s argument that ‘history is just a mere framework, serving as a basis or a counterpoint for a political thesis’ that can be evidenced with the viewing of films (Sorlin, 1980, 208).

**Fiction Films and the Exploration of History**

Hughes asserts that the utility of his structural-anthropological analysis may yield insight into the manner in which the fictive films may be read, but makes the concession that reading individual features, rather than staking claims from broad analysis of typological formation, may provide greater insight into historico-material production and socio-historical conditions that surround the film. Echoed in such sentiments, historian Marc Ferro asserts that all films are worthy of such scrutiny:

> [a] documentary, a musical comedy, a compilation film are not the same thing and result from different cinematographic operations, But for social and cultural analysis, they are equally documentary objects.
> (Ferro, 1976, 81; emphasis Ferro’s own)

Such ‘surface reality’ of the fictive film – musical comedy, or otherwise is valuable to the historian because the text can ‘convey a partial record of a particular place in a particular time’ (*ibid*.).

In the most literal sense, Hughes borrows the arguments of architectural historian Reyner Banham, to elucidate the premise that American silent comedies, often shot on location in Los Angeles, provide ‘an archive of urban scenery around 1914-1927 such as no other city in the world possesses’ (Banham in Hughes, 65). There is also a
more sociologically driven, interpretivist claim for such ‘documentary’ status to be
given to the fictive films to which Hughes turns.

Despite writing his thesis a quarter of a century later, historian, theoretician and film
scholar Bill Nichols eruditely articulates a similar premise. Wresting the film as
historical text debate from the preserve of the historian and placing it firmly in the
realm of film scholarship in the process, he asserts that every film is can be construed
as a documentary through which we can understand social history. In order to
substantiate this claim, Nichols creates a bifurcated taxonomy of the genre stating that
there are both ‘documentaries of social representation’, those which are commonly
understood as utilizing the generic conventions of non-fictive documentaries, and
‘documentaries of wish-fulfillment’, so called because every one of these fiction films
displays to its viewer an idealized, reflective sense of the world as we would like to
see it, populated by people we would like to be.

[Documentaries of wish-fulfilment] give tangible expression to our
wishes and dreams, our nightmares and dreads. They make the stuff of
the imagination concrete – visible and audible. They give a sense of
what we wish, or fear, reality itself might become. Such films convey
[...] truths, insights and perspectives [...] They offer worlds for us to
explore and contemplate, or we may simply revel in the pleasure of
moving from the world around us to these other worlds of infinite
possibility.

(2001, 1)

Regardless of whether one is watching an anarchic comedy or slick, effects-laden
science fiction film, in both instances, Nichols asserts, the viewer is treated to a
hyper-stylized scenario in which the actors portray a perfected narrative wrought from
our own, culturally determined, sense of expectation and idealization. Studying such, we can learn of the values and desires of specific peoples in specific times.

Hughes himself foreshadows Nichols’ development in his own study of genre as he asserts that the American Western and the ‘romantic melodrama’ are existent as preeminent examples of this mythologizing self-projection. Robert B Ray would extrapolate analysis of the Western further with his ‘certain tendency’ of Hollywood cinema, wherein the latter author argues American film embodies and emboldens the genre’s motifs to the point where most mainstream Hollywood fare exists as either a blatantly overt or thinly ‘disguised Western’ (Ray, 1985, 65). Holding up *Shane* (1953, d. Stevens) as a quintessential example of a Western that reinforces the ‘thematic paradigms’ and codified, American values of ‘self-determination […] freedom’ and reclusive heroism, Ray cites such wide examples as Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers’ *Swing Time* (1936, d. Stevens) and Curtiz’ *Casablanca* (1942) as films which uphold his thesis (ibid., 70-72, 77, 102-106).

Toward the former, Ray asserts that Fred Astaire’s Lucky Garnett, trying to renounce dancing – as Shane had gun slinging – in the opening scenes, comes out of retirement ‘after nearly thirty-five minutes of a supposed dance movie, […] in a pas de deux with Ginger [Rogers, that] assumed the overtones of a gunfight’ (ibid., 77). Similarly, Bogart’s Rick Blaine, a retired revolutionary, with an unspecified past, who lives above a saloon in a frontier town – albeit in French Morocco, rather than the American West – eventually comes to pick up his gun again, shooting the man in black before heading off into the sunrise with Claude Rains’ Louis.
The arguments of Hughes, Nichols and Ray move the understanding of film’s historical validity into a more historiographic mode of thinking, where the conditions of production, conventions of narrative and even audience reception are as vital to the use of film in historical exploration as the elements on display in the centre of the frame. That the arguments for such a rollout moved from a grumbling acceptance of archival texts to the questioning of the theoretical of fiction films and Hollywood spectacle displays how much more widely the net of filmic history had been cast by the middle of the 1970s. The underlying discourse in all examples, however, revolves around film’s capability to exemplify the mythic nature of nationhood and the sense-of-self perpetuated by specific people in specific times.

From Historical Text to Historiographical Artifact

The work of Pierre Sorlin, in arguing the further place of the filmed record in the teaching of history, echoes sentiments in wider humanities discourses of the 1980s, and the narratological and socio-culturally specific mode of historiography then being worked through across mediated forms of communication. In his thesis Sorlin sought to problematize the understanding of history-at-large by placing the operational definition of the discipline within a series of malleable conditions, arguing that:

history is an attempt to clarify – to sort out what is probably from what is false, to establish the chronology of events, to show the relationships between them, to detect periods of strong social or political tension and define their characteristics […] We must go beyond this […] We know that history is society’s memory of its past, and that the functioning of this memory depends on the situation in which the society finds itself.

(Sorlin, 1980, 16)

In his 1980 text, *The Film in History*, the author sought to establish a systematic way of working through how films of a historical nature can be assessed for their value in
representing and investigating the ‘probably’ from this perspective. ‘Conceived as a method rather than a specific field of research’, a historiographic reading of films, their production, content and reception, is promoted as the manner from which such investigation can occur (*ibid.*, 41). Two observations central to his rationale are, firstly, the inescapable mass appeal of the cinema – citing that even in times of conflict people flock to the picture house in record-breaking numbers – and, secondly, an awareness that for many audiences, perhaps disinclined to rigorously evaluate a multiplicity of perspectives and historical antecedents, the onscreen version of the events of history is often read as the ‘definitive’ rendering of its subject.

Previous to the middle of the 20th century history and the manuscripts of antiquity were the sole preserve of the scholars of history, and whether a narrative entered the public domain or remained outside of it was down solely to the fastidious work of the historian housed within the archive. However with the filmed text, ‘historians have no monopoly over the material, nor are they alone in studying and disseminating it’ (*ibid.*, 4). Indeed, rather than come to the possibilities of film of their own volition:

> [t]he integration of film into the material used by historians […] has been imposed on historians through the use made of them by non-specialists or by specialists with no training in history. […] T]he historian’s task is no longer to compile otherwise unknown sources and make them available to all: he must learn instead to use material that is already widely available.

(*ibid.*, 4-5)

Sorlin leaves scholars little choice in this matter by saying that if professional historians do not utilize the cinematic in their work; these documents will exist as ‘history through pictures’ ‘in spite of them’ (*ibid.*).
Unlike the stand-alone programming of Dickinson or the archive-based production of Grenville and Pronay, Sorlin’s text only briefly takes into account the newsreel format. Immediately disparaging about the surface qualities of newsreels and archival footage as historical evidence he asserts that their ‘limited value’ is due to their ability to only cover ‘particular facts […] at definite points’ in the life of the society who created them (ibid., 13). For Sorlin, the production of such newsreels has resulted in an archival legacy ‘almost entirely limited to a series of brief, superficial glimpses of a small number of events’ (ibid.). These events and the conditions of their capture – necessitated by heavy equipment, ‘slow’ photosensitive stock, the availability of good light and the concerns of aesthetics – found most newsreels portraying official engagements announced long in advance of their occurrence. Such events were meticulously staged and dutifully captured across a host of media, often echoing the celebratory pomp and circumstance that radical documentarian Dziga Vertov called “the acted film in newsreel trousers” (Vertov, 1939/1984, 146). Robert A. Rosenstone adds to this critique of newsreels by arguing that newsreels ‘bow to the double tyranny […] of necessary image and perpetual movement’: only events that could be ‘illustrated’ and ‘quickly summarized’ were deemed worthy for early newsreel producers, and thus patriotic, highly choreographed spectacles are often the subject matter of their depictions (Rosenstone, 1988, 1180).

The act of newsreel production, as derived from this critique of Rosenstone is that a film crew would be attendant only when called forth due to a local, regional or national event. Upon arrival to this, often heavily scripted, affair, the crew would proceed to ply their stock-in-trade approach to the proceedings in an effort to shoot for the edit, and, barring any unprecedented action, the events for which the
production team was convened would be transcribed for history with a nearly
autonomic precision. The prevailing politics of the day would become the politics of
the editing suite as the production was cut in a manner that would illustrate for the
audience the bare essentials of the event at hand, or as Sorlin argues ‘the world as the
film-makers would like to see it’ (Sorlin, 1980, 15). Sorlin further problematizes the
effectiveness of the newsreel as he cites the manner and immediacy with which
important, unheralded events often occur. During the unprecedented, impromptu
moments that changed the course of history in the early half of the 20th century, Sorlin
disparages, ‘the still photographers took a few snaps and the cine-cameramen [often]
arrived when it was all over’ (Sorlin, 1980, 11).

Much like the wider task of history, therefore, audiovisual representations can never
provide definitive insight to any subject, making a historical document devoid of any
concrete articulation. ‘Film has no meaning […nor does any film] necessarily
demonstrate anything’; however, through the analysis of a film as a series of
producerial decisions, rather than a portrayal of historically precise events, we can
begin to understand the constituent values of the society under examination (ibid., 30-
31; emphasis Sorlin’s own).

For Sorlin a true ‘sociology of the cinema’ in unearthed when, counter to the
newsreel, his notion of ‘historical’ films come under scrutiny (ibid., 209). Defined by
the author as films that ‘set the action in a period which the audience unhesitatingly
places in the past – not a vague past but a past considered as historical’, such
examples act as an interlocutor for the ‘“basic historical knowledge” of a society’,

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casting light on the intellectual and cultural specificities of the culture by which such films are produced (ibid., 20, 208). These ‘historical’ films operate under the provision that despite a backdrop of historicity they ‘are all fictional […] even if they are based on records, they have to reconstruct in a purely imaginary way the greater part of what they show (ibid., 21). This rhetoric is the theoretical successor to the efforts of Siegfried Kracauer in whose own From Caligari to Hitler the argument is put forth that sentiments that inherently dictate a nation’s filmmaking output necessarily mirror the social conditioning of the day (1947/2004).

In evincing this each of the films read through Sorlin’s historiographic lens revolves around some semblance of conflict, either on a national or international stage. Citing the waging of war as an ideological period of ‘political self-definition with reference to the past’, Sorlin remarks that the historiographical portrayal of such wars, and their repercussions, proffers up a critical reflection of national sentiment (ibid., 44). Endemic to such are cultural specifications of benevolence and ire, nuances of action and typological signifiers that only a native audience – or even a subset therein – could easily identify. As the military strategist, decorated soldier and author Carl von Clausewitz theorized, ‘war is a continuation of policy by other means […it] is not merely a political act, but also a real political instrument, a continuation of political commerce’ (von Clausewitz, 1832/2008, 34).

With the backdrop of conflict, and an ever-present threat of diegetic violence, inherent to the majority of the films Sorlin analyzes, the further implications of a nation’s people on tenterhooks can be witnessed as they return to their basest
principles. As envisaged by Michael Parenti, in times of, or when reflecting upon, war, nations invoke a sense of ‘superpatriotism’ as a over estimation of national pride – often itself to the detriment of history; such overzealous thought and action naturally find themselves in celluloid-based artifact (2004, 2). Sorlin’s premise is that this socio-historical approach to the actions portrayed within the tableaux can be further elucidated by turning to what is existent beyond the frame; the events that take place at the box office can be just as revelatory. The interplay of indigenous reception in ‘particular societies’ and international critiques of each film upon export indicate further how cultures of the recent past interacted with one another in times of both war and peace.

Evidentiary of his comparative analysis is the use of the French anthem ‘La Marseillaise’ in both Abel Gance’s expansive Napoleon Bonaparte (1935, as a re-edit of the 1927 feature) and Jean Renoir’s titular La Marseillaise (1938). In both instances, the song’s use as a statement of praise for Republicanism finds equal relevance to the historical Marsellais as they assert themselves to the overthrow of the monarchy, and to the French who were attendant in the movie theatres in the mid-1930s; in the latter context, audiences would have been all too aware of Germany’s active re-armament, increasingly aggressive political stance on the world stage and the inevitable mobilization of the Third Reich.

Across French and Hollywood cinema, the song’s use became solidified as a cultural shorthand for French nationalism and Allied solidarity, and the inclusion of break-out rounds of ‘La Marseillaise’ in diegetic soundtracks has applications in films depicting
the World Wars of the first half of the 20th century in such strikingly similar scenes as the spontaneous singing of the anthem by prisoners of war during the detention centre talent show in Renoir’s *La grande illusion* [The Grand Illusion] (1937) and its impromptu rendition in Rick’s Café Américain in Hungarian émigré Michael Curtiz’ *Casablanca*. Both instances recall Laura Mulvey’s reading of ‘the gaze’ as evidenced by *Der blaue Engel* [The Blue Angel] (1930, d. von Sternberg), where the narrative gives pause to let the camera capture the entirety of Marlene Dietrich’s performance (Mulvey, 1975, 14). In both Renoir and Curtiz’ examples the narrative comes to a full stop, capturing the entire anthem and tacking its political colors to its celluloid mast in the process.

**Film and the Criticality of History’s Grand Narrative; Reading, Viewing and Analyzing Postmodern Historicity**

Sorlin’s attempt at creating a method for viewing historical films would be given a boost in the late 1980s by a series of American historians who further challenged the then-perceived myth of grand historical narratives in a special edition of the *American Historical Review* in December 1988. It was in this addition that the *AHR Forum*, the front piece for grounding debates that recur through special issues, was given over to an exploratory essay by Robert Rosenstone, where the question of the filmmaker’s ability to capture history in a visual record was proposed anew.

Rosenstone’s position as chair of this debate was unique. He is a historian whose works had been realized as both ‘a fifty-million-dollar Hollywood project and […] a quarter-million-dollar work largely funded with public money […] pitched […] at the
more elite audience of public television and art houses’ (ibid., 1173). Rosenstone’s experience of advising historical films on such disparate scales gave him an unprecedented insight to the problems inherent with the transmission of history’s written narrative into its cinematic counterpart.

For Rosenstone these films, Reds (1982, d. Beatty) and The Good Fight (1984, d. Buckner, Dore and Sills) are noble attempts at presenting the historical, but neither ‘fulfill[ed] many of the basic demands for truth and verifiability used by all historians’ (ibid., 1174). This is neither down to the former’s Hollywood indulgence, which garnered it three Academy Awards, another nine nominations and immense critical praise, nor the latter’s use of documentary-based interviews to conflate personal memory with historical substance, but rather, for Rosenstone because both of these films – and indeed all visual representations of history – are forced to distill their narratives into a single, linear recitation, ‘obviously den[y]ing historical alternatives, […] complexities of motivation or causation, and banish[ing] all subtlety from the world of history’ (ibid.). From this opening salvo, Rosenstone and the AHR invited a series of historians, to further weigh in on a more contemporary reading of the film and history debate than the works convened by Paul Smith more than a decade previous.

Responses by David Herlihy, Hayden White, John E. O’Connor and Robert Brent Toplin range from the skeptical and measured to the open embracing of film for history education; each provides fascinating insight to the merits of the film-as-history debate. Immediately resultant from these essays, the American Historical Review
asked Rosenstone to create a platform for critically assessing film within the journal. Under the editorship of Rosenstone, the Film Review section was present in every issue from 1989 until 1994, and a cursory survey shows that the feature continued to be published in the journal until the first issue of 2002 (ibid., 23, 2002).

In the first response, David Herlihy accepts – and in his professional capacity champions – the use of film but warns of its uptake as a generally placatory artifact when he warns:

[F]ilm can create illusions but not easily criticize or destroy them. In asking viewers to repress critical reserve, indeed to become part of the illusion, films make history seem too easy and our knowledge of the past appear too certain.

(Herlihy, 1988, 1188)

It is clear that, unlike other historians, Herlihy’s argument does not come from a suspicion of the technological encroachment on the profession of history – he was a pioneer in the use of computers to analyze historical data with his groundbreaking efforts that computationally analyzed the ledgers of 15th century Florence (Herlihy, 1992). Instead, the problem with this illusory certainty is that it rests with the ‘thick descriptions’ granted any historical representation when it is presented on film. That film can make history seem an ‘easy’, mundane exercise bereft of criticality strikes at the heart of the claims still made by those for whom film as historical text in the classroom is suspect. Herlihy’s prognosis concretizes the necessity for structured engagements with the medium, as without such a lead from the top of the classroom, while not necessarily invoking the morbidity in Neil Postman’s thesis, film can be viewed as simply ‘amusing’ an audience for the duration of class time.
While the practitioner of written history can choose which details to portray, and which to leave out, in the instance of film, everything within the tableaux is left open to interrogation. To this end, key elements such as set and prop design; make-up and costuming must be scrutinized before a single frame has been exposed. For Herlihy this presents the greatest challenge to filmic representations of history, but it also allows filmmakers and historians to recreate the past in ways that a text never can. To bolster this claim, Herlihy cites two examples of films on which he acted as historical consultant: the filmic adaptations of David Macaulay’s Castle (1983, d. Newington) and Cathedral (1986, d. King). Provided films are offering nothing ‘beyond simplistic explanations’, such as the Macaulay films – with live action recreations and cell-animation sequences that are meant to express the quotidian concerns of building and inhabiting their titular structures – such examples can then be ‘superb in representing the […] textures of the past’; simply, ‘[t]hey can show what it was like to be alive in times and places very different from our own’ (ibid., 1190-1).

The crux of this argument is an echoing of R.J. Raack’s belief that the technology presented by the motion picture camera ‘revolutionized the possibilities of representation and consequently deeply affected our patterns of thought’ allowing the historical filmmaker to ‘convey how historical people witnessed, understood, and lived their lives’ (Raack, 1983, 411, 416). This call to relate the everyday, quotidian lives of one’s ancestors in lieu of grand narratives becomes problematic given major motion picture studios’ fondness for the recreation of the epic grandeur and ever-more elaborate CGI-laden battles scenes which are often motivated by stock-in-trade dramatic sequences for which it does not matter if the participants are donning swords and sandals, or kilts and cudgels. For Hayden White’s radical interpretation of the
historiographic project, however, such discrepancies do not matter. In his contribution to the *AHR* debate, White presents a revolutionary reading of visual historiographical representation and, by ridding the term of its suffix rooted in the written *graphikos*, proposes a more apt neologism: ‘historiophoty’ (White, 1988).

As much a language game as genuine analysis and posed as a critical theoretical riposte to Rosenstone’s essay, White’s short piece questions the validity of historical representation at large – regardless of the form. Rooted in a narratological problematization of the historical subject, White argues that regardless of the medium of its conveyance, ‘[e]vents happen or occur [as opposed to facts]; facts are constituted by the subsumption of events under a description […] by acts of predication’ (White, 1988, 1196). White surmises the charges against filmic representations of history to include: ‘lost accuracy of detail, complexity of explanation, the auto-critical and inter-critical dimensions of historiographical reflection’, but he argues that these traits are never present in the writings of history either – because the written historical text is predicated on an equally tendentious falsehood.

Instead of the elaboration of the events of the past, recitation of history – on paper, on film or otherwise – must be grounded in a fidelity to ‘typification’ (*ibid.*). Filmed sequences, just as written narratives, should acknowledge that the task to which they set themselves is to portray events as they may have been. This is grounded in the belief that all history is the act of asserting the ‘veracity of the representation
hing[ing] on the question of the likelihood’ of its happening given what we know about the specific tenets of the era’s historical conditions (ibid.).

From such conditions, White asserts, historians can establish the dynamics of historical causes and effects: the substance of any historical narrative. All histories, White charges, compress time, events and the consequences of historical actions in an effort to make narratives manageable. Film ought not be considered any more suspect than history through the written medium because, regardless of the form of delivery, the invocation of the elements of history as explanatory events toward conclusive ends is founded on presuppositions that “characterize” history rather than elucidate it (ibid., 1199). In many ways the job of the historian is to assert mastery over what can best be construed as a paradoxical Schrödinger’s record: an articulation of a past that may or may not have been, but nonetheless, through rigor can be described as an estimation of the type of event that would have occurred. This analysis was, in some ways, nothing new. In the first dedicated study of the documentary film form, UK filmmaker Paul Rotha succinctly argued that, rather than look to the past:

[D]ocumentary must reflect the problems and realities of the present. [...] It can, and does, draw on the past in its use of existing heritages but it does so only to give a point to a modern argument. In no sense is documentary a historical reconstruction, and attempts to make it so are destined to failure. Rather it is a contemporary fact and event expressed in relation to human associations.

(Rotha, 1935/1952; 1975, 245)

White’s final analysis opens the discussion of history on to topics to which Rosenstone would attend in further work under the distinct mantle of postmodern historicity. Problematizing the historical narrative yet further, White ‘take[s into]
account the work of experimental and avant-garde filmmakers, for whom the analytic function of their discourse tends to predominate over the exigencies of “storytelling”. (ibid.) Films that investigate specific points in history but actively foreground their ‘forms’ rather than their historical ‘contents’ can show us ‘the criterion of for determining what shall count as “accuracy of detail”’ and lay bare the culturally specific, yet ultimately arbitrary, nature of history as a ‘function of imagination in the production of a specifically human truth’ (White, 1984, 33; emphasis in original). These reflective and reflexive practices are evidentiary of a move toward a postmodern conception of history, and the creation of films that alter perceptions of historical narrativity through a questioning of society’s relative comfort with both conventions of history and cinematic language. They become, in effect, celluloid language games.

Such audiovisual documents are indicative of what Rosenstone calls a ‘New History film’; one that challenges the ‘intent, content and form’ of previous modes of historical engagement ‘less to entertain an audience or make profits’, and more to understand the legacy of the past’ through an analysis of the challenges of the film to historical and memorial representation (Rosenstone, 1994, 4). Similar to Foucault’s rebuke of Derrida as ‘obscurantisme terroriste’ – wherein the writing is dense to the point of obfuscation, these films confound notions of history, narrativity and the acceptable film form in an effort to question the bounds of the medium, as well as the discipline of history itself (Searle in Faigenbaum, 2003, 169-170).
While any notion of ground rules governing the postmodern history film may seem antithetical to its exploratory manner, there are a number of recurring principles upon which Rosenstone draws his analysis. Despite their ‘unusual forms’ such films ‘accept the notion that the weight of the past has somehow helped us to shape [us in] the present’ (ibid., 222-223). Each of these postmodern films further ‘suspects logic, linearity, progression, and completeness as ways of rendering’ the past. These films challenge the, arguably outmoded, empirical belief that ‘the article or monograph, a work based upon well-researched data that is meant […] to become a building block for a huge historical edifice that will ultimately comprise all knowledge of the past’ is the preferable way to interpret the unwieldy stuff of historical research (Rosenstone, 1994, 6). In this way these moving image media ‘create and interpret a meaningful and useful history […] they embody its ongoing issues and insert themselves into the ideas and debates surrounding a historical topic’ (ibid., 7).

Examples such as Hiroshima Mon Amour (1959, d. Resnais), Hitler: Ein film aus Deutschland [Hitler: A Film from Germany] (1977, d. Syberberg) or even George Morrison’s Dublin Day (2007) are indicative of such a turn in the mannerisms of historical thinking and subsequent, filmic depiction. The latter, Morrison’s most recent feature length work, both recounts and lovingly pays homage to Joyce’s Ulysses, as told through Ken Burns-styled photographic collage, archival film, animation and narration – in voiceover and direct-to-camera delivery by Senator, and renowned Joycean scholar, David Norris as he traces Leopold Bloom’s Dublin odyssey and compares the modern day iterations of the places Bloom encountered with Joyce’s turn-of-the-previous-century prose. Dublin Day’s mixed-format approach portrays the travels of a fictional character, and his contemporary proxy, as
they tell an early 20th century tale against the present-day backdrops of 21st century Dublin. The use of archival materials in its recreation of the capital city in 1904, further complicates this journey in a manner that promotes Rosenstone’s assertions about the unique capacity of audiovisual media. To this end the film exists as a documentative curiosity and while not wholly historical is neither ‘ahistorical but [remains] central to the folklore that inheres in popular history’ (Landy, 2001, 12). That the film’s portrayal of the Dublin of 1904 and 2007 should bookend Liam O’Laoighaire’s A Portrait of Dublin from 1952 with such symmetry makes further investigations of the material history of quotidian Dublin all the more useful in the presentation of Ireland’s 20th century development.

What is evinced in the work of Rosenstone, White and their fellow contributors to the postmodernist history debate is a fundamental reversal of the arguments posed by the antecedents of the film-in-history dispute. In a metacritical maneuver these thinkers, all professional historians and pedagogues, cease to enquire how can film operate for history and proceed to ask the question: how does the manner in which history operates coincide with films, and other narratives, that deem themselves to be grounded in historicity?

Such a move takes the project history away from a goal of comprehension and into the realm of understanding. While this may seem like a semantic splitting of hairs, arguments posed by the self-avowed postmodern historians assist in the move away from a history syllabus grounded in rote, repetitive learning that places impetus on the capability to reel off a series of dates, names and locations around which events took
place. Counter to this, the acknowledgement of a multiplicity of historical agents, perspectives and viewpoints accomplish in the history classroom a series of coeval concerns.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that the initial forays into teaching history with film, and acknowledging it as a valid source of historical record were first viewed as a supplemental endeavor that lacked the rigidity necessary for primary scholarly inclusion. In the Anglophonic academy, it was only through the persistence of a host of academic historians, on both sides of the Atlantic, that film found its way into curricular engagement – and only, at first, in a very tertiary manner.

As the conceptions of, and concessions to, history shifted positions along with the wider human sciences, so too did the notion of a text’s navigability; from this an acceptance of film as educative tool emerged. As the discipline of history became more amenable to the medium, and further subject-specificities such as film, media and cultural studies became more enshrined within academic discourse, the initial suspicions given to the film form began to wane. Picking up pace in continental Europe, the United Kingdom and eventually the United States, the acceptance of film as a potential text for historical investigation began to increase. So too did the level of critical thinking around the capabilities, and capacities, for the medium in the classroom. Rather than being seen as operating in a similar fashion to the written text, the celluloid representation of historical events began to be viewed as a distinctly
constructed viewpoint that has the twofold luxury of belying an objective disposition for the sake of socio-political conditions and providing for the student of history a photorealistic sense of recall. As questions of structuralism began to find their way into the debates of historians and other scholars of the human sciences, pronouncements of the narrativity of the film form began to be both championed and challenged. Subsequent to this, the work of Pierre Sorlin established a methodological claim to the validity of the filmic record that aligns itself with such thinking.

Looking to both that which is contained on celluloid as well as the conditions of a film’s production and reception, Sorlin sought to utilize film as a series of nationalistic cultural ascriptions. Arguing that the manner in which films portray a sense of character, a sense of pride and a sense of justice against the backdrop of conflicts evinces a great deal about national sentiments and belief sets. Rather than a singular focus on the subject matter being represented in the center of the frame, films are further acknowledged to create an archive of scenery and design, moray and mannerism for cultural historians to study – thus making the medium specifically suited for understanding the nature of cultural intricacy. History’s inherent constructedness plays to films strengths as well, as historiographical, and *historiophotic*, assertions about the fundamental outlay of narrativity. The debates convened by Rosenstone, White and others point to an active investigation of film and history at large, rather than a passive acceptance of the stuff of the history lecture. Rosenstone and Landy’s New History films operate under these conditions, and, in doing so, push Grierson’s famous maxim of documentary as the ‘creative treatment of actuality’ into its logical, and myriad, conclusions.
As the technological requirements necessary to utilize audiovisually-based lessons became more widespread and the wired-for-ICT classroom more prevalent, while not necessarily in name, in spirit each of the positions rehearsed in this chapter finds itself reflected in the efforts of educationalists, policy makers and individual teachers who champion filmic history. While not having found uptake in the Irish educational landscape – the key deficit that the work of this thesis seeks to address – across the globe and up to the present day, scholars and educators are now folding in the lessons of Pronay and Smith, the methods of Sorlin and the concerns of Rosenstone and White into approaches to the cinematic record of history, crafting a series of approaches to material that can be of great benefit to teachers and can nurture the interests and analytical skills of students alike. It is necessary to identify, however, that this paucity of thinking in Ireland was not always the case, and that the young nation of Ireland was on the forefront of educational reform and classroom inclusion of filmic material.

In 1943, Brigid Redmond posed a scenario in which Irish ‘education [via] the film may bring about a revolution as far-reaching as that begun centuries ago by the printing press’ (Redmond in Devane, 1943, 40). In an essay entitled Can Movies Educate?, she grounds her arguments in the belief that ‘film is supplanting the printed word as a means of communicating ideas [it] can flash a message to the mind with greater speed, vividness and force than a thousand printed words’ which led her to postulate whether:
[i]nstead of condemning or ignoring the cinema, the problem of all educationalists must be, how to use this powerful medium, “not merely as a light diversion for idle hours”, but “as a bearer of light, appositive guide to good”, an instrument of education and culture in the widest sense.

(ibid.)

Seventy years later, the question remains unanswered, and rather than posit potential thinking around the capabilities of film and moving image media in the classroom, the medium has, largely, been condemned or ignored. Despite the fact that the history of cinema in Ireland is as old as the medium itself, and a series of pioneering individuals strove for both an Irish film industry and a space for education that centred around using film in the classroom, a series of political and religious censorings reduced such efforts to almost nil, resulting in the state of affairs that stands counter to the thinking through an effective use of film as examined within this chapter.
Chapter TWO: 
The Emergence of Cinema and Cinema Education

Despite a reticence to acknowledge the applicability of the historical record on film in the present-day Irish educational landscape, previously, and as recently as half a century ago, with the work of the emergent National Film Institute [NFI] and a series of filmmaking and educational pioneers, the Republic of Ireland was on the forefront of thinking around the role of film in education – if not around its implementation. Despite myriad efforts on the part of policy makers and strategists, film societies with radical tastes and Catholic interlocutors to shape the manner in which film could best be utilized across the curricula, by the launch of Raidió Teilifís Éireann in the early 1960s, any momentum that had been gained for placing film central to the manner in which education on the island was facilitated had been wholly dismissed.

The chapter is broken down into four constituent sections. The first provides a pre-history to Irish film culture, as – despite a history of cinema attendance – film appreciation and education did not begin in earnest in the Republic, save for a notable few pioneers, until the medium’s fourth decade. Centered largely on the United Kingdom, whose political, cultural and technological influence over the nascent Irish nation cannot be denied, Part One will take into account the early engagements with film and its effects on young people, educative and otherwise, before moving into an investigation of the debates put forth on the role of film in schools, a debate that was itself largely predicated on projects that revolved around the teaching of history. This section will show how the question of film’s validity as historical teaching tool was directly responsible for the founding of the British Film Institute [BFI] – the United Kingdom’s national organization for the promotion of film culture, appreciation and
education. It will also argue that the founding of the BFI was, in many ways, responsible for the shaping of Irish attitudes on the educative power, and remit, of the moving image.

Before moving forward, Part Two also looks back to the emergence of film in Ireland. It establishes the parameters under which a clearly definable point of genesis for an indigenous Irish film industry has been problematized. The lack of clarity on whether Ireland has ever had a sustained film industry is a motif that recurs throughout the chapter. This section will take into account the pioneers of Irish non-fictional filmmaking and the problems faced by an industry in its infancy.

The analysis posits that three key events occurred in 1936 that led to the emergence of film education in the country: the founding of the Irish Film Society; the mobilization of the BFI within both the British and Irish public – which established classes and events rooted in the exploration of film education and the publishing of the encyclical letter of Pope Pius XI entitled the *Vigilanti Cura* which was a call-to-arms for Catholics of the world to play an assertive role in their nation’s film programming. Each of these events, the analysis contends, had a significant role in the formation of the National Film Institute – the precursor to the present-day Irish Film Institute [IFI].

Part Three plots the emergence of the National Film Institute as a body established for film education. By looking at the individuals instrumental to the organization, and the manner in which they proposed and implemented educational measures, this analysis
will outline the momentum with which film education, appreciation and educational film production were bolstered by newly founded Republic. This section will also look at notable individuals, such as Liam O’Laoghaire, and organizations, such as *Gael Linn*, who were involved in shaping the policies and attitudes of film education, and how different interpretations of the Irish narrative and living history were depicted on screen in films such as *A Nation Once Again* (1946, d. B. Stafford), *Our Country* (1948, d. L. O’Laoghaire), and the *Amharc Éireann* collection. These three disparate examples portray an emergent sense of Irish non-fictional filmmaking and articulate how such films were used to exemplify a series of nationalistic projects not all of which had similar ends in mind.

The final portion of the chapter turns on this idea of nationalism and the viability of an Irish film industry. Part Four chiefly contrasts the early work of Ardmore Studios, ostensibly the first Irish film studio, and George Morrison’s archival-historical documentary feature *Mise Éire* (1959). This period coincides with the launch of Teilifís Éireann and the foregrounding of moving images’ applicability as a historical text in academic debates on both sides of the Atlantic – the evolution of which was plotted in the previous chapter. As evidenced by analysis of the historical record, in many ways the questions posed at with the emergence of the NFI remained unanswered by the time RTÉ had been founded, and much of the momentum for film and its educative possibilities was lost with the coming of television.
Before the Irish Discourse –
Film in Education and the Founding of the British Film Institute

The United Kingdom’s claim to early film history lies in the proto-cinematographic efforts of William Friese-Greene, an inventor who took out a patent in 1889 for a “Machine Camera” that could display a series of images on a strip of celluloid film stock and, projected by dissolving lantern, be able to intimate movement at a rate of up to 6 frames per second (Gosser, 1977, 176-9). Subscribing to the, contested, viewpoint, that film history began with the public exhibitions conducted by the Lumière Brothers, cinema arrived in the United Kingdom in February, 1896 with the debut of the Lumière’s programme of actualities at the Regent Street Polytechnic Institution. While the, American-born, English cinematographer Birt Acres had presented a private screening of his own ‘kinetiscope’ a month earlier to the Lyonsdown Photographic Society on the 10th of January, it was Louis and Auguste Lumière who brought such an exhibition to the wider, paying public. So successful was their Polytechnic debut that the following month the Empire Theatre of Attractions on Leicester Square was hosting a series of sell-out repeat performances. Within a fortnight Acres and his business partner Robert W. Paul had booked out a rival Alhambra Theatre, also on Leicester Square, with their newly christened Theatrograph, and an indigenous industry heralded as a leader among nations during the first age of cinema was born (Eyles, 1985/2002, introduction).

In the educational sphere, by 1917, the National Council of Public Morals [NCPM] had published its exhaustive report of the convened Cinema Commission of Enquiry entitled The Cinema: Its Present and Future Possibilities. The final report was divided into two sub-sections: the first on moral and social aspects of cinema for all
audiences; the second was entitled ‘The Cinema in its Relations to the Education of Children’ (1917). Among the 42 respondents passing evidence into record, 7 were educationalists speaking directly to the place of cinema in the English classroom. The findings of the report show that, despite many conflicting accounts:

[t]he general opinion, however, appears to be that [film] may render assistance in the teaching of subject as nature study, geography and to a less extent in the teaching of history in the elementary and secondary schools[.]

(NCPM, 1917, lxii)

Moving on from the arguments set out by *The Cinema: Its Present and Future Possibilities*, a series of organizations and individuals spent the interwar period promoting the widespread uptake of film in the classroom. The progenitor for much of the debate around the use of film specifically in the teaching of history could be found within the Historical Association. Established by Alfred Pollard in 1906, the Historical Association acted as an intermediary between historians, academics and teachers of second level education. In its current manifestation, the organization has expanded to include a wider promotion of history, and history education, in primary schools and in the public at large.

In his overview of the first fifty years of the society, then chairman Herbert Butterfield notes that as early as 1923 the question of the role of film as an emergent method of history teaching arose at the Exeter meeting of the Association’s fellows.

38 These witnesses were: John Kay and J.W. Bunn [both Head Masters and representatives from the National Union of Teachers]; Margery Fox [from the Head Mistresses’ Association]; The Rev. The Hon. E. Lyttelton [Head Master of Eton]; C.W. Kimmns [Chief Inspector of LCC Schools]; Percival Sharp [Director of Education for Newcastle-upon-Tyne]; and Alfred Perceval Graves [former Inspector of Schools, Chairman of the Representative Managers of LCC Elementary Schools].

39 See: http://www.history.org.uk/index.php
(Butterfield, 1955, 15). The topic of film in the history classroom was tabled by G.T. Hankin, who would prove to be integral to the pursuance of the moving image as teaching apparatus. Serving as the chair of The Historical Association’s Committee on Films until from its inception in 1929 until its merger with the Committee on Illustrations in 1938, Hankin initiated a series of pedagogical experiments concerning film and history throughout United Kingdom. During this time he also held the positions of head of the British Council for School Broadcasting to the Ministry of Education, adviser to the Rome-based Educational Cinematographic Institute – established by the League of Nations in 1928, and as the representative to the International Congress of Educational Cinematography held in Rome in 1934


What was novel in Hankin’s approach was that in addition to teaching with films already produced, he proposed that historians task themselves with the writing of screenplays to turn over to ‘commercial firms’ for the sake of commissioning for-the-classroom films. The schematic he established was that educational films, first and foremost, ‘should obviously be prepared by a practical teacher who will know what points he wishes to impress upon a class’ (Hankin, 1923/2007, 275). From that point Hankin argues that:


41 Of note is the concomitance of these efforts to John Grierson’s coining of the term ‘documentary’ as ‘the creative treatment of actuality’ in relation to Robert Flaherty’s Moana [1926]; see: Grierson, 1933, 8.
[t]his scenario will be handed over to the professional producer who realizes the possibilities and limitations of the camera. With the help of an historical expert whose name will carry authority he should be able to produce a film which will be accurate both as regards archaeological detail and historic atmosphere, and which the teacher will confidently employ as an additional instrument in the classroom. (Hankin, *ibid.*)

Putting this idea into practice, he wrote the first scenario himself – a screenplay entitled ‘Woollen Manufacturing in England’ (Butterfield, *ibid.*). Casting his as the initial salvo, the ‘first sacrifice to the altar of criticism’, from his fellow historians, divisive debate erupted as to whether the moving image could serve as a useful pedagogical tool or a distraction from a more traditional, text-based model of historical investigation – an arena of debate that would both ignite the wider academy with the films of Schuursma and Pronay some forty years later and still concern educators and policy makers today (*ibid.*). While Hankin maintained that the use of film in the history classroom ought to be limited to one film ‘per term’ – bringing students into contact with ten or twelve such films during their educational careers – he acknowledged that a multimodal approach that must be taken when utilizing the moving image, arguing that the use of film ‘should never be used except as part of a complete scheme of work’ that thoroughly investigates the text (Hankin, *ibid.*).

In the January 1924 issue of *History*, Herbert Heaton provided a measured response to Hankin’s ‘Woollen Manufacturing in England’, stating that the ‘obvious danger’ posed by film was that one might perceive the act of ‘sit[ting] still and watch[ing] a film [as] merely a short cut to knowledge, leaving dormant both the creative and the reasoning powers’ (Heaton in Butterfield, *ibid.*). Heaton did, however, recognize both the educational potential for students ‘more susceptible to visual impressions than to
instruction of any other kind’, and that the utilization of film in schools might serve to ‘awaken’ the historical imagination thereby ushering in an appetite for history in the more traditionalist sense (ibid.). Arguing that the task of the history teacher was to assess the film texts available to him to best ‘ensure that the films […] are] historically sound’, Heaton further assessed that, given the examples of teachers already utilizing film and the success in fostering dialogue that fell out of historical investigation supplemented by moving image, ‘the addition of the film to class-room apparatus is probably only a question of time’ (ibid.).

The debate about the validity of film as educational tool carried on in the Historical Association’s writings and general meetings. In resolutions that would remain stock-in-trade for decades to come, Albert Pollard asserted that, at its core, film was fundamentally incapable of ‘mak[ing] visible the really vital things’ of history (ibid.). President of the Historical Association A.G. Little concurred suggesting ‘that the historical value of scenes was small in comparison with the true subject matter of history, the “things unseen”’ (ibid.). Adding to this debate Professor W.J. Harte expressed interest in both the ability and the inability of film to properly engage the historical narrative, and the critical faculties that are exercised in determining between the two. While he argued for film’s deficiency as historical text, he further articulated that such films ‘might be turned into an asset, since teachers might show their students where such films were good and bad, and the cinema habit might be made to supply an education in criticism’ (ibid.).
Butterfield notes that further controversy surrounding the issue of film in the history classroom came to a head as the Historical Association became aware of both the 1924 film *Wolfe and Montcalm* (d. K.S. Webb, produced by Chronicles of American Photoplays) – a co-production between the Yale University Press, the Departments of History and Education\(^2\) – and the 1927-8 educational experiment conducted by Knowlton and Tilton wherein 521 7\(^{th}\) grade students were shown the aforementioned film (as well as nine others from the *Chronicles of American Photoplays* series) and their historical retention tested over a period of three to seven months (Saettler, 2004, 227). The resultant data showed that student engagement with the films ‘made a large contribution to the teaching of an enriched course […] increasing the pupil’s learning by about 19 per cent’ (Knowlton and Tilton in Saettler, *ibid.*). Crucially, the photoplays were thought to best reinforce the ‘enrichment and retention’ as well as ‘the creation of interest’ (Knowlton and Tilton, 1929, 7). This was not the United States’ first foray into the assessment of educational film. As early as 1913, Alfred H. Saunders undertook a report for the Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Education\(^3\) citing that schools in the United States, at all levels, were using films from England, France, Germany and Italy in the teaching of a vast array of subjects; Saunders also outlines a radical programme established by Dean Reber of University of Wisconsin where he implemented state-wide educational film traveling library service, intending to cover all schools in the forthcoming 1913-14 school year (Saunders, 1913, 590-5).

\(^2\) Matthiessen (1992) provides a comprehensive overview of the film series.

\(^3\) Reformed as the Department of Education under the Carter administration in 1979/80.
In the wake of the Yale report and the growing discourse around film in schools, and due, largely, to the further efforts of Hankin, the Film Inquiries Committee was established in 1928 (Butterfield, *ibid*.). Educationalist Frances Consitt was appointed to head the Film Inquiries Committee’s research, and, during the following four years, she would produce three separate studies on the use of film in the teaching of history. The first, authored on behalf of the Committee, piloted the use of film in the teaching of history across 52 schools ‘to include children from 7 to 18 years of age in all sorts of school in both rural and urban areas’ (Low, 1997, 10). Consitt’s *The Value of Films in History Teaching*, the reported findings of the project, was published in 1931.

The conclusion of the pilot programme had determined that the experiment was indeed successful and Consitt reported that teachers’ attitudes toward the use of film changed, for the better, during the course of her research. Consitt found that within the history class, students’ responses to the films shown made ‘history more interesting [helping them to] assimilate and retain, and also to enjoy their history lessons’, and that films ‘dealing with social life, biographies, events and causes [that are] historically accurate’ were of particular use in the classroom (*ibid.*, 12). Perhaps most tellingly, Consitt concluded that the most efficient use of film in the history classroom would come via the commissioning of films produced out a co-operation of teachers, historians and film producers; however, in her closing remarks she noted – without any sense of irony – that such films probably would not ‘provide adequate financial returns to the producer’ (Consitt in Low, *ibid*.).
The second report authored by Consitt was a wider, inter-curricular study undertaken on behalf of the newly established Commission of Educational and Cultural Films [CECF – the direct antecedent of the British Film Institute], via its Scientific Films Commission. Launched as a direct result of the Historical Association’s efforts, the Commission’s report looked at the applicability of 16mm projection in a number of subjects in British schools. Simultaneously, Consitt undertook a third project, that came to be known as the Middlesex Experiment, that specifically targeted the use of sound films in the classroom; more than 3,000 students, of the ages 8 to 18 took part in the study (Western Electric and British Movietone, 1931). British Instructional Films, Western Electric and British Movietone co-sponsored the effort, the results of which had the cumulative effect of being published as Sound Film in Schools in December 1931 and the establishment of libraries and technology-hire operations being set up by Western Electric and British Instructional Film – two organization who had partnered under the aegis of British-Gaumont between the project’s launch and its conclusion (ibid., 11-12).

In October 1932, the findings of the CECF were published as The Film in National Life, and at its core was the argument for the necessity for motion pictures’ inclusion in the students’ curricula. Chapter Five of the report, ‘The Education of the Child’ contested that:

[t]he taste of the next generation is largely formed at school; therefore the school cannot afford to neglect so important a factor as the film in education of a generation which goes regularly and naturally to the cinema.

(CECF, 1932, 58)
With the publication of the report, came the founding of the British Film Institute [BFI], initially registered as a private company in 1933. The history is the Institute is well rehearsed; however, the manner in which it helped shape the attitudes and policies of the Irish nation trying to establish itself on the world stage warrants closer investigation. Before exploring the cross-fertilization the British organization and the emergent Irish film-in-education movement, however, a turn back toward the genesis of the cinema is necessary to frame the Irish attitude toward the moving image.

A Brief Introduction to Cinema in Ireland

Before an analysis of the educative endeavors of Ireland’s filmmakers, educationalists and policy makers can take place, an introduction into cinematic exhibition and indigenous production in Ireland is necessary to establish the attitudes towards cinema at large, and non-fictive motion pictures in particular, in the first half of the twentieth century. Such efforts culminated in the formation of the National Film Institute in 194344. Unlike Ireland’s neighboring countries, a codified film industry does not predate the push toward educational policy formation for the use of films in the classroom; as such, this brief synopsis will provide a context for how both coevolved from the early 1940s onward.

However small its contribution to, Ireland’s participation in, cinema history is nearly as old as the medium itself. Less than five months after the first public exhibition of Auguste and Louis Lumière’s cinématographe – famously held in Paris’ Salon Indien

44 This section is a cursory glance at early Irish cinema history, for a comprehensive overview, see: Condon, 2008; Flynn, 2006; O’Brien, 2004; Slide, 1988 and the canonical Rockett, et al, 1988.
du Grand Café on 28th December, 1895, and less than one month after its record breaking run in the Empire Theatre of Attractions – in April, 1896 with the Empire’s equipment on loan, Dame Street’s Star of Erin Music Hall (now the Olympia Theatre), Cork’s Assembly Rooms on the South Mall (still a Protestant-run meeting hall) and Belfast’s Grand Opera House played host to the Lumière brothers’ programme of actualities. By accounts, the Dublin debut of this initial screening programme was fairly shambolic, with technical problems and an ill-darkened theatre leaving the images on display fairly unintelligible. It was not, however, enough to dissuade Irish audiences of the captivating power of this new medium. A second programme of Lumière shorts came to Ireland in late-October, 1896, and, as Harvey O’Brien notes, the ‘fact that over seven thousand people attended [in the] the first week […] is a testament to the mass nature of their reception’ (O’Brien, 2004, 23).

Returning to Dublin the following year, to a newly rechristened Empire Theatre (Johnston, 1987, 145) Lumière cineaste Alexandre Promio deployed the ‘standard marketing strategy’ conducted by the Lumière brothers in which the second iteration of their cinématographe45 was demonstrated by ‘shooting scenes in the city in which they were exhibiting’, only to display them to a homegrown audience later that day (ibid., 21). Included in this 1897 programme are at least twenty-five 17m-long, single-shot actualities captured between Dublin and Belfast – with each running for a duration of approximately 50 seconds. These films depict a series of travelogues on the train between Belfast and Dublin, images of the Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire) harbour, a series of staged shots of the Dublin fire brigade and – most readily-

45 While a proprietary technology, this Lumière Triograph utilized Edison-type (triograph) sprockets and could thus be used more widely – it was one of the first cameras to be sold commercially from 1898 as “Le Cinématographe (Model B)” (Barnes, 1987, p. 125, footnote 67).
identifiable as Dublin – a view from Carlisle Bridge (now O’Connell Bridge) of what-
was-then Sackville Street incorporating not just the Daniel O’Connell monument,
General Post Office and Nelson’s Pillar, but the public passing by on foot, on bicycle
and by horse-drawn carriage as well.

Figure 2: the View from Sackville Street, 1897, Alexandre Promio for the Lumière Brothers; the
frame makes an interesting counterpoint to Dublin’s main thoroughfare today

In spring, 1897, Henri Joly, presenting as Professor Jolly’s Cinématographe,
followed the Lumière brothers with a six week run in the Irish capital. Included in his
programme were further films incorporating the city centre and its inhabitants,
including the hand-tinted shorts People Walking on Sackville Street and Traffic on
Carlisle Bridge (both 1897) (Rockett, et al., 1988, 4). Later that year, exhibitions in
Dublin would continue in the Rotunda and the Gaiety amongst other venues (Johnston 1987, 145). Cinema, in Ireland, had arrived.

By 1909 the Volta, of James Joyce fame, had opened on Mary Street and in quick succession the Sackville and Grafton theatres opened their doors to Dublin audiences. Of particular interest beyond the capital city is the 1910 opening of the Horgan Picture Palace in Youghal, Co. Cork. Initially, the cinema was extended out from the family home and a portion of the projection booth doubled as the Horgan’s kitchen (Slide, 1988, 2).

The Horgan brothers, Thomas and James, were not just cinema operators, but also amateur filmmakers and, fortunately for researches, fastidious record keepers. Under the title of *The Youghal Gazette*, the Horgan brothers produced a number of documents and newsreels, between the turn of the century and the early 1920s, which depict a life outside of Dublin – establishing an audio-visual record of a more rural Ireland than the Dublin-centric *actualities* of Promio, Joly and other early pioneers.

The Horgan’s work a included momentous occasions such as King Edward and Queen Alexandra’s 1904 visit to Lismore Castle (Lismore, Co. Waterford), local events such as flats racing and the local Corpus Christi parade as well as more prosaic, daily affairs such as the congregation leaving Youghal’s parish church, a day trip to the sea and ships pulling into the Youghal harbour. In the shadow of Georges Méliès, the Horgan brothers also created Ireland’s first special effects-laden short
Youghal Clock Tower (1910), through compositing images the film depicts the town’s clock tower leaving the earth, performing a pirouette, turning itself upside down and righting itself again to the delight of audiences.

Despite other newsreels being produced in Ireland contemporaneous to the work of the Horgans by English, French and American production companies, the Youghal brothers provide the first identifiable instance of indigenous filmmaking (Slide, 1988, 1).

Throughout the next two decades a number of false starts toward the creation of a bona fide Irish film industry would be engendered, leaving Anthony Slide to assert that writing about the early Irish film industry is nearly tantamount to ‘a volume on the snakes of Ireland’ (ibid., vi). While no nationalized industry took shape, however, a number of independent producers of film were working in both fictive and non-fictive modes. During the period from the 1916 Uprising and through the free state era, as the Republic fought to establish itself on the world stage, so too did its
filmmakers. By 1917, three laboratories for developing film stock and creating prints were operational in Dublin (Flynn, 2006, 21-23). Both a lab dedicated to the production of the *Irish Events* newsreel for the General Film Supply Company of Ireland, and another specifically for The Irish Animated Picture Company were established on Pearse Street. Lord Edward Street also housed a laboratory owned and run by Gaumont (O’Laoghaire, 1946, 156; Flynn, 2006, 21). As well as locally-based newsreel services, the General Film Supply’s notable contribution to historical drama was the 1920 film *In the Days of St. Patrick* (d. N. Whitten) – a picture mixing reenactment with a tour of the sites associated with Saint Patrick from across Ireland (Rockett, *et al.*, 1988, 37).

Other film companies were established in Ireland at this time; however, much of the product made in the country was still the result of foreign companies using the backdrop of Ireland for international productions. The year 1916 saw the release of the first film by The Irish Film Company – *The Miser’s Gift* (d. J.M. Kerrigan) a rural drama set in Killaloe, Co. Clare, and by the following year the company had made an actuality entitled *The First Irish Pilgrimage to Lourdes* (d. unknown, attributed 1916/17) as well as announcing the establishment of ‘a library of 10,000 feet of Irish scenery—a very useful asset in film-making when the inspiration of the scenario gives out’ (O’Laoghaire, 1946, 157). Despite such effort in the late-19teens, the Irish Film Company’s indigenous production was halted in 1920 when the company’s founder James Mark Sullivan immigrated to the United States (Felter and Schultz, 2004, 24).
Given the overwhelmingly international nature of the films arriving in Irish cinema, by the end of the 1920s, there was a vociferous call for policies directed at film and young people. Writing in the *Irish Statesman* in December 1929, George Russell stated:

[w]e have in Ireland a Government which is using all powers a State can exercise through the schools, colleges and universities, to strengthen and maintain a national culture. But every afternoon or evening boys and girls who have been at those schools go for their amusement to the cinema. The culture of Hollywood fights, day by day with national culture everywhere.

(Russell in Devane, 1942, 3)

Russell’s words were being written at a time when cinema attendance throughout the Free State was incredibly high. A 1934 survey undertaken by Thekla Beere showed that in 18.25 million admissions were recorded across Ireland’s 190 theatres (O’Laoghaire, 1946, 5). Given that the census indicated that, two years later, there were 2.9 million inhabitants in Ireland, there were a total six and one third visits to the cinema for every man, woman and child in the country (Central Statistics Office, n.d.).

By the next decade the number of cinemas had risen to 250 and the number of inhabitants decreased slightly, from these numbers we can assert, as Liam O’Laoghaire stated, ‘[c]inema is now one factors that influences our lives and short-cuts experience for us’ (O’Laoghaire, 1946, 5). Throughout the 1930s the groundswell for these policy measures revolved around two motifs: nationalism and moralism, and it is these two themes that dominate the organizations, policy decisions
and practical outlets for training educators that are enacted through successive decades.

Three events in the mid-1930s played an integral role in how such endeavors would take form. The first was the establishment of the Irish Film Society [Cumann na Scannán] in 1935; the second, the 1936 mobilization into the public arena of the BFI under the directorship of Oliver Bell and, finally – also in 1936 – and most instrumentally, the publication of the Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius XI on the Motion Picture, the Vigilanti Cura [Careful Watchfulness] from a papal decree on the 29th of June of that year.

The Irish Film Society was founded in Dublin by Edward Toner, Sean O’Meadhra, Patrick Fitzsimmons and Liam O’Laoghaire and was initially housed in number 5 North Earl Street at the intersection where, today, the Spire of Dublin rests. The four cinema enthusiasts who were ‘keen to watch foreign art films’, wanted to provide an opportunity to ‘present the best films of all countries’ to Irish audiences (O’Laoghaire, 1945, 7). The efforts of these men would be given a boost in 1939 with the passing of Ireland’s revised Finance Act (Wills, 2007, 303). Overturning the previous declaration in the 1932 Finance Act seven years earlier, the Exemption from Cinematograph Film Duty stated that motion pictures brought into to Ireland:

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\text{by or on behalf of a club, society or organization [...] wholly or mainly for the purpose of the study of film techniques by the members [...] and persons invited to such an exhibition by a member [...] provided that no payment (other than the annual or other periodical subscription) [...] taken from any person for admission [...] could be imported without payment of said duty[.]}\
\]

(Finance Act, 1939)
While their first year in operation saw the screening of five German features and one Italian short film, through their subsequent film seasons, many hallmarks of the classical age of cinema were brought into Ireland through Film Society screenings (Wills, 2007, 303). Notably, the first Russian film screened in Ireland, Eisenstein’s *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) led the *Irish Catholic* to denounce the society in 1936 as ‘a communist cell’ (Wills, 2007, 303; O’Laoghaire in Hoctor, 2006, 8).

![Image](image.png)

**Figure 4:** An advertisement from the Film Society’s 8th season, 1943, shows their continued emphasis on the canon of continental European cinema (from, Devane, 1943; also reproduced in Wills, 2008; Rockett, 2011).

Amongst their principal, founding members, the Youghal-born O’Laoghaire was arguably the single-most vital individual in the emergence of film culture in Ireland. In many ways, he was certainly the most vociferous. Necessitated by this, O’Laoghaire’s contributions to film appreciation, education and documentary theory, as well as some of the most incendiary examples of Irish filmmaking, such as his *Our Country* (1948) will be discussed further below.

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46 As with many of the instances of an investigation into the history of individuals and organizations straddling the Irish – English divide – and in this instance having worked in feverishly in both Ireland and England, Liam O’Laoghaire is often alternatively seen in print as O’Leary or O’Laoire, the spelling O’Laoghaire is utilized in this thesis as it is the spelling he chose himself in his introduction to *Invitation to the Film.*
As explored previously, in 1936 the British Film Institute began a series of programmes and publications concerning the effects and impact of film on everyday life for Britons. These included the first catalogue of the British National Film Library, which was undertaken in 1935; the first public screening commemorating the 40th anniversary of the Lumière brothers first programme in London’s Empire Theatre the following year and, also in 1936, the convening of the first BFI Summer School with A. Maxwell Lewis teaching courses in *Film Appreciation*, a term he coined writing in *Sight and Sound* in 1934 (Bolas, 2009, 22).

By 1939, Ireland sent over to London an interdepartmental delegation – described in more detail below – to tour England’s production studios and the BFI’s own headquarters in the hopes that their models could be emulated in the new Republic. As the BFI’s Oliver Bell noted, it was Pinewood and Denham studios that the consortium visited, leaving the British director hoping for ‘the possibility of the Eire Government subsidizing its own production of Irish-made films’ (Bell, 1939). In the same year, these government-sponsored, secular efforts would be challenged, however, both at home and from abroad – notably from the Holy See.

The final, and most galvanizing, event of the mid-1930s under examination was the publication of the *Vigilanti Cura*, a document that ratified and expanded upon the earlier declarations made by Pius XI in the August 1934 address to the International Federation of the Motion Picture Press. In the ratified letter, the Pontiff dictated that the ‘essential purpose of art, its raison d’être, is to assist in the perfection of the moral personality’ and thus ‘the motion picture’ must be *moral, an influence for good*
morals, an educator’ – words which were themselves to become the credo of the National Film Institute and the banner under which its publication, National Film Quarterly, was printed (Pius XI, 1936, no page numbers; italics Pope Pius XI’s own).

Laid out in three sections, the Vigilanti Cura first establishes the American Legion of Decency, as a fight against Hollywood, it would be they whose subsequent job would be to boycott films wherein ‘crime and vice are portrayed […] sin […] is openly approved and acclaimed [and] false ideals of life are no longer presented in so flagrant a manner to the impressionable minds of youth’ (ibid.). Calling for still further vigilance, the second section, titled ‘The Power of the Cinema’, acknowledges the ‘there does not exist today a means of influencing the masses more potent than the cinema’ (ibid.) The letter states – and the National Film Institute would reiterate – that:

[s]ince the cinema is in reality a sort of object lesson which, for good or evil, teaches the majority of men more effectively than abstract reasoning, it must be elevated to conformity with the aims of a Christian conscience and saved from depraved or demoralizing effects.

(ibid.)

A third section, ‘A Work for Catholic Action’, called for films to be a cause of social improvement, given their capability to strike at ‘the moral fibre of a nation’, and that Catholics in each country were required to establish a national review office for the censoring of films deemed to fall beyond the standards of ‘morality’ and are evidence of the ‘plague of evil and pernicious[ness of] motion pictures’ (ibid.). The final portion of the Pope’s encyclical letter calls for the titular ‘painstaking vigilance’ on the part of all Bishops of all nations, in the hopes that they would follow the strict
instructions of the Papacy so that Catholics and non-Catholics alike would be influenced only by those films seen to be ‘promoting the highest ideals and truest standards of life’ (*ibid.*).

It would not just be Rome, however, calling for a centralized organization that would promote, and thereby safeguard, cinematic exhibition and filmmaking in Ireland. The nation herself would take to the task of safeguarding the eyes and hearts of its film-going populace. The possibility of education via film would also be included in further debates about film industry and culture in the new Éire.

**The Move toward Film in Education**

With the ratification of the Constitution in 1937, an increased pressure was placed on the newly founded country to establish a national film industry. The argument was tabled in Dáil Éireann that same year, and an inter-departmental committee was formed to discuss how to proceed. This motion was further bolstered when the Federation of Irish Manufacturers put forth a plan to Seán Lemass, the then-Minister for Industry and Commerce, for an industry that would provide ‘economic importance [… and] enormous national and social value’ (de Blaghd, 1938, 388). The proposal called for a centralizing of Irish filmic efforts, as by 1937 the *Irish Trade Journal* was reporting a total of 58 independent ‘film and kinema [sic] companies with a combined nominal share capital of £1,208,100’ and no aegis under which they were all operating (Kinematograph Weekly, 1937, 14).
Earnán de Blaghd [Ernest Blythe], who was by this time out of politics and directing the Abbey Theatre, sided with the manufacturers’ federation, imploring the Committee to establish thinking around the educative merit of the film in Irish schools – specifically identifying the Irish-language film as integral to the education of children in the newly ratified state. de Blaghd argued:

there is no possibility of restoring the Irish language to general use or even of preserving it where it still survives if we have no films in Irish. […] If the picture house is to remain the preserve of English, all that can be done in the schools and in the club-rooms of all the national organizations existing or yet to exist will not prevail against it. (ibid.)

This deficit of indigenous production, as Gaeilge or Béarla, would be dealt another blow at this time when, as John Gerrard notes, the Emergency Powers Order banned the import and exhibition of any films that could be viewed as propagandistic ‘in favour of the Axis or Allied Powers’ (Gerrard, 1947/48, 159). Specifically, during the War, ‘Mr De Valera insist[ed] that Irishmen shall be neutral in thought, word and deed – and also neutral at the pictures’ (Daily Mail, 1942, in Ó Drisceoil, 1996, 30).

Suffice to say films such as Chaplin’s The Great Dictator (1940) and Casablanca were banned outright during this time on account of their ideologically grounded subject matter (Rockett, 2004). Thematic elements deemed religiously offensive continued to be censored as well. Ó Drisceoil recounts that the list of grievances against Gone With the Wind (1939, d. Fleming) were so severe that producer David O. Selznick pulled it from the country altogether, rather than screen an eviscerated print within the Republic (Ó Drisceoil, 1996, 35). Ó Drisceoil does counter the example of
Gone With the Wind’s wholesale censoring with a further example of the extent to which films in Ireland were reconstructed for indigenous audiences. Citing the slapstick comedy I Want a Divorce (1940, d. Murphy) a film starring real life married couple Joan Blondell and Dick Powell that billed itself as ‘FUNNIER THAN TEN THOUSAND MOTHER-IN-LAW JOKES!’; the film was allowed to screen in Ireland – under the amended title of The Tragedy of Divorce – after it had been re-cut as a morality play where the subplots involving double cross and suicide ceased to be played for laughs (ibid., 36; Rockett, 2004).

Similarly, in the wake of the Emergency Protection Order, and the Second World War, Casablanca was indeed screened for Irish audiences; however, since within the film’s narrative Ingrid Bergman’s Ilsa was still married, despite believing her husband to be dead, the entirety of Rick (Humphrey Bogart) and Ilsa’s love affair – the conflict upon which the characters of the film stand, against the backdrop of war – was swept from beneath it. While Irish audiences were allowed to be made aware of the fact that Isla discovered that reports of the death of Paul Henreid’s Laszlo were, indeed, mistaken, for ‘30 years’ viewers were left wondering what Paris had to do with anything, and what exactly the ‘problems of three little people that [didn’t] amount to a hill of beans47, might actually mean, to the point where ‘Irish audience could have been forgiven of being left absolutely bemused’ by the film (Rockett in Reilly, 2004, available online).

47 Casablanca, 1942
By 1939, the Dáil’s inter-departmental committee report seems to have fallen by the wayside; there remains no record of its launch or any such publication. However, from a critical, appreciation standpoint Ireland’s film enthusiasts were gaining momentum. By 1940 the Irish Film Society, with a membership roster of more than 600, had moved its office to number 41 South Circular Road and had moved its exhibition space from a room hired in Dublin’s Mansion House to the, much larger, Classic Cinema in Terenure (O’Laoghaire, 1945). On February 17, 1940, the Society convened its first conference to ‘divert […] this great medium of entertainment and culture into proper channels which will render it a great service to the community’, and it was hoped that the three papers delivered to the society’s membership – Liam O’Laoghaire’s ‘The Social Responsibility of the Film’, Louise Gavin Duffy’s ‘Visual Impressions’ and Earnán de Blaghd’s ‘Gaelic: The Child and the Film’ would ‘be a starting point for such work in Ireland’ (Ni Chanainn, 1992, 8).

Following from these engagements, the Children’s Film Committee was established with the explicit dual purpose of investigating ‘The Film in Education’ and ‘The Film in Juvenile Entertainment’ (ibid., 9). The Committee founded a library of educational materials and created a Teacher Group who, under the tutelage of Liam O’Laoghaire, set to the production of subject specific films for Irish schools. Further credence was lent to the work of the Committee when, on September 16, 1942, the BFI’s Oliver Bell delivered a keynote address on film as a teaching aid at an educational conference established by the Irish Film Society. Through the efforts of the headmaster at Blackrock’s Avoca School, Cyril Parker48, who was already using film

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48 In many ways Cyril Parker, with his wife Cerise were forward thinking educators. Newpark Comprehensive School (the amalgam of Avoca and Kingstown School in 1972) credits the Parkers.
successfully in his school, the Children’s Film Committee was replaced, in 1943 by a more all-encompassing *Comhairle na nÓg* [Young Person’s Council] that furthered the work of the Teachers’ Group and Production Unit and sought to establish Saturday matinees of acceptable material. The first of such programmes launched on December 18, 1943 in the Olympia Theatre, and weekly matinees were quick to follow in both Dublin city-centre and suburban cinemas (Devane, 1943, 5). As Father Richard Devane noted:

> [t]his increasing public interest in the position of the cinema in national life and in the establishment of a film unit fully equipped for the production of documentary films, newsreels, educational and other films will prove beneficial to the whole cinema trade, and it is hoped that the co-operation which it is their power will be forthcoming and that every member of the trade will help to play a part of strengthening the role of the cinema in national life.

(*ibid.*)

The Irish government would further bolster the work of the Committee, when Éamon de Valera’s Fianna Fáil party passed a 1944 resolution that ‘called for a ban on the attendance of children under 17 years of age at theatres and kinemas [sic], except where programmes had been approved or prepared by the Department of Education’ (*Kinematograph Weekly*, 1944, 27).

From the observed success of the Saturday matinees, and using the *Vigilanti Cura* as its opening gambit, *Comhairle na nÓg* directly petitioned the Department of Education in a memorandum which came to the conclusion that:

with the founding of Ireland’s first Parent Teacher Association, the pioneering of intelligence quotient testing in Ireland as well as the development of sex education, nature-based lessons, music and art courses. See URL: [http://newparkschool.ie/ethos/history/](http://newparkschool.ie/ethos/history/); it should be further noted that the Protestant leanings of Avoca inevitably stood counter to the ideology of the Film Institute.
Ireland must incorporate the 16mm film in its educational syllabus as soon as possible. [...] It is imperative that the teachers have the full benefit of this powerful new medium in education, especially if we are obtain the highest possible results in the revival of our national language and the continuation of our national ideals and culture.

*The Film in Education: Memorandum for Minister for Education,* cited in, Ní Chanaínn, 1992, 13)

Of particular interest is the acknowledgement that a classroom-based engagement with film is viewed by many as a distraction from the core syllabus and the emphasis that should be placed on the material that needs to be covered in advance of the examination process – a critique that is as salient today as when it was first written. To these charges, the memorandum responds that ‘[t]his attitude is a fallacy that films are an addition to the normal classroom work [...,] they are merely an aid to good teaching and on par with any other piece of apparatus in the classroom’ (*ibid.*, 55).

Furthermore, it is here in this letter dated May, 1944 that the first insistence of film’s use value in the Irish history classroom is made explicit, as ‘Irish History [...]films] have to be not an extra part of the school programme, but a definite part of the syllabus’, arguing that films must ‘fit into the syllabus as it is normally designed [my emphasis]’ (*ibid.*, 56). To facilitate this endeavor, *Comhairle na nÓg* began a series of lectures, both in film theory/language and of practical projection techniques in schools throughout Dublin. Late-July, 1945 saw the first instance of a *Comhairle na nÓg*-directed summer programme of teacher training. Held at the Peacock Theatre, the inaugural summer school was attended by fifty educators, with some traveling ‘from as far away as Galway and Mayo’, as well as a number of Department of Education staff (*ibid.*, 20). Members of the Scottish Film Council were in attendance to help facilitate the event. Lectures given included a reprise of Liam O’Laoghaire’s
‘The Film in Education’, a level-specific discussion operating under the title ‘Film in Primary Schools’, talks on film form – such as ‘The Documentary Film’ and a subject-specific case study aimed at advancing the study of ‘Geography Through the Film’ (ibid.).

Concurrent to the formation of Comhairle na nÓg, 1943 also saw the founding of the National Film Institute under the patronage of the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. John Charles McQuaid. It must be noted that while both the Irish Film Society and the National Film Institute had the interests of a developing industry in mind, the secular nature of the Film Society stood in direct contrast with the piety of the Film Institute. As Harvey O’Brien argues, the rhetoric around the formation of the National Film Institute saw the fight against Hollywood as a spiritual war openly calling for the ‘indoctrination’ of the public into the insights of the Pope’s memorandum and citing the Reverend Reginald Walker’s call to ‘take a page from the enemy’s book by concentrating on the young’ (Walker, 1950 in O’Brien, 2004, 62). If a totalizing stake in the Irish cinematic landscape was the intention of the Catholic-driven Institute, they had their work cut out for them; by 1943, there were 277 cinemas in operation across the Republic, with 56 alone in the Dublin49 and a further 36 in Cork (Devane, 1943, 161-72).

Using the Vigilanti Cura as its point of departure, the moral, national and educational aims of the nascent Institute were outlined in a five point remit; the task of the

49 In 1943 Dublin came in as having the second highest number of cinemas per county on the island of Ireland, as it was pipped by one with county Antrim’s total of 57 operational cinemas (Devane, 1943, 161-72).
National Film Institute was to: firstly, uphold the statements of Pius XI; secondly, to ‘direct and encourage the use of the motion picture in national and cultural interests’ including the tasks of acquisition, distribution and exhibition across all manifestations of education; next, to ‘act as a clearing house’ for educational films and material about their employ; to promote the production of films ‘of a distinctive national interest; and finally, to use film in the promotion of the Irish language and indigenous culture (*ibid.*, 16). The work-in-earnest of the National Film Institute was benefitted greatly by a 1945 grant of £2,000 and the provision of further, annual grants from that point forward. The money given was earmarked specifically for the creation of a library of educational material and the production of homegrown films, though it should be noted that the Archbishop gave a further £250 to the Institute for the procurement of 3 projectors and a host of morally permissible films toward the establishment of traveling film units that could further deliver the Institute’s five point agenda throughout the wider Republic (*ibid.*).

![National Film Institute advertisement](image)

**Figure 5:** An original advertisement/announcement for the National Film Institute, 1943; note the call for those interested in ‘Cinema as a moral and national force’, in Devane, 1943.
The minutes taken during meetings of the National Film Institute illustrate how the organization took to the task of centralizing the nation’s film training courses within their expressed aims, and on April 12, 1946 the first Film Institute-organized teacher training took place. Housed between the Film Institute and St. Patrick’s Teacher Training College in Drumcondra north of Dublin’s city centre, the attendants toured the newly christened Central Film Library and received instruction on maintenance of film projectors; echoing the BFI’s foundational documents, a lecture under the title ‘The Film and National Life’ was delivered, a subsequent lecture ‘The Film in the Classroom’ was delivered two weeks later (minutes of the National Film Institute, 1946). By the following month, the Institute was convening similar courses for personnel from the Department of Education (ibid.). A year later in July 1947, the first annual summer school was up and running in St. Patrick’s, and, as well as teacher training, the event included public symposia and a book fair that included selling titles dealing with topics such as *Teaching with a School Projector*, and more technically-oriented manuals such as *Amateur Film-making* and *Film Editing* (minutes of the National Film Institute, 1947).

In the mid-1940s, it was not just literature around filmmaking that was being promoted by the National Film Institute. With a Department of Education investment of £3,000 – the first significant funding given to an indigenous production – the National Film Institute produced the historical documentary *A Nation Once Again* (1946, d. B. Stafford) – a commemoration of the ideas of the nationalist and writer Thomas Davis on the occurrence of the centenary of his death. The film was financed at the behest of the Department of External Affairs. This model of various
governmental departments and agencies funding National Film Institute productions via the Department of Education was to continue until the late 1970s.

Davis’ story is not ‘that of a man’ but rather ‘that of a nation’, and across its 18-minute duration, the film counters images of a modernized Dublin with nationalist sentiments, and reconstructions of Davis and other New Irelanders (with voiceovers taken from his writings) as well as imagery of the rural Irish people reading Davis’ own *The Nation* in an effort to hearken back toward a traditionalist viewpoint. As Harvey O’Brien notes, *A Nation Once Again* proved ‘how informational films could easily be turned to articulate political ideas under the guise of a history lesson’ (O’Brien, 2004, 65). Such a sentiment would be carried throughout the recurring calls for a widely established Irish film industry. One such effort was vocalized by John Gerrard in *Sight and Sound* when he argued ‘[a]t least we can offer that which no outside producer can make – a genuinely Irish film expressing whatever genius we may happen to posses as a nation’ (Gerrard, 1947/8, 159). Citing the history of Ireland’s formation, Gerrard predicted an industry could ostensibly be based upon a ‘sympathetic understanding’ of Éire’s ‘romantic subjects’ with ‘a less materialistic and more religious atmosphere [that] may be expected from a country so closely attached to Christian ideals’ (*ibid.*).

While the question of a uniquely Irish film industry was being debated, other hallmarks of the cinematic experience were also being weighed up. ‘Criticism in Ireland’ for example ‘is not in a very healthy condition’, declared Film Society founder Liam O’Laoghaire:
[t]here is no doubt but that a critical magazine devoted to the film in this
country would be appreciated by those keen-filmsgoers who at present
depend on foreign press-reports and broadcasts to get first-rate opinions
on the cinema.

(O’Laoghaire, 1945, 142-3)

Responding to this self-identified deficit, O’Laoghaire penned an introduction to the
study of film, for educationalists as well as those who were simply interested, with a
specific impetus on Irish policies and outlets in 1945. *Invitation to the Film* marks the
first substantive effort to provide a historical, technical and theoretical account of
Ireland’s stake in motion pictures, and given O’Laoghaire’s place at the center of all
manner of filmic engagements in the country, there was no better individual to author
the book.

O’Laoghaire’s is a call to arms that advocated the use of film to reinforce a proactive
national character and indigenous cultural product, arguing that film ‘alone can
provide the stimulus to national action’ and, in what may have been a side swipe at
the work of the National Film Institute, he furthers this by intimating that [s]omebody
must have the courage to disturb the rubble that lies about us and to clear the way’,
asserting firmly, ‘[t]he film must be used’ (ibid., 103). One could further argue that
O’Laoghaire’s criticism extended to the greater indebtedness of Ireland to the
Catholic Church when he includes this aside in defense of the content on cinema
screens in the face of critics who ‘foist prejudices of their day and age upon a
changing world’.
the appalling ignorance, hypocrisy and suppression of correct 
information on the subject of sex in Ireland makes a poor antidote to the 
superficial sex-relations of men and women shown to adolescents in the 
movies.

(O’Laoghaire, 1945, 150)

With O’Laoghaire’s text published, combined with the inaugural publication of *Irish Cinema Quarterly* in 1948, which was to become the *National Film Quarterly Bulletin* two years later, Ireland found itself with outlets for film criticism and an arena for debate about the merits of film – educational or otherwise – by the end of the decade. As well as in-depth investigations into documentary and its social function – which was indebted to Griersonian rhetoric – regarding the role of motion pictures in Irish education, *Invitation to the Film* is notable for three later chapters each dedicated specifically to: ‘The Film as a Teaching Medium’, ‘The Use of the Film in the Classroom’ and a practically oriented set of strategies entitled ‘Making Educational Films’ (O’Laoghaire, 1945). Much of the material in these chapters would appear to be analogous to the lectures delivered in concomitant teacher training courses, with data from the Scottish Film Council bolstering many of O’Laoghaire’s claims.

‘The Film as a Teaching Medium’ sets itself out to dispel three claims, each echoing the sentiments outlined in the Film Institute’s statement of intent. O’Laoghaire argues that compared to the pedagogic rewards, the investments of time, money and technical training required to implement film-based lessons in the classroom are wholly justified. Citing the installation of 10,000 projectors in German schools by 1934 as well as 2,220 in educational establishments throughout Great Britain by late-
1940 – ‘represent[ing] an upward trend interrupted by the advent of war’, O’Laoghaire let the numbers speak for themselves (ibid., 123). What O’Laoghaire did not mention was that within 4 years that German number had doubled to 20,000, and the 1938 records show that there had been in excess of 175,000 educational films distributed up to that point in the country. In the mid-1930s in France, 50,000 films had been distributed across the classrooms availing of 9,460 projectors, and in the United States, while 17,000,000 young people were seeing films in class, with an additional four and a half million encouraged to see films after school with teacher-authored study guides in-tow (BFI in Devane, 1943, 83-85). It was not a matter of deciding whether Ireland would utilize film in education, it was simply a matter of needing to play catch-up on a world stage.

To the question of whether utilizing film becomes an extra burden for teachers – a distraction to the stuff on the lesson plan – O’Laoghaire argues that the immediacy of the moving image saves the educator from ‘long and often complicated descriptions’ (ibid., 124). Finally he allays the fears that the motion picture may replace the educator at the top of the classroom, arguing instead that film ‘illustrate[s] a point’, provides a background or ‘act[s] as a revision’ to the lesson plans being implemented by the teacher – thereby reinforcing the primary classroom content (ibid., 125).

*Invitation to the Film* next establishes the manner in which sub-standard films could be used across a number of subjects. To elucidate this it is a film used specifically in

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50 Here O’Laoghaire is using the term to mean 16 millimeter film – or any gauge smaller than the industry standard, and prohibitively more expensive, 35 millimeter stock on which most feature length
an inter-curricular teaching – taking in the subject of history – that O’Laoghaire uses as his case study for his defense of the film in the classroom. He exemplifies how the English short *The Life of Michael Flaherty*\(^5\) (1941, attributed to: J. Eldridge and M. Curtis), a docu-drama based on the life of a Connemara man, can foster critical engagement in students and stimulate ‘various mental faculties and develop taste, judgment and personality’, attributes which – by other names – multimodal lessons still strive to develop (*ibid.*, 134).

The film begins with a historical contextualization of Ireland’s west, followed by re-enactments of the daily toil of the protagonist and his community as they work together, against the elements, to farm, fish and tend to livestock. The film ends with a pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick. Incorporating maps to establish Irish geography, ‘references to landscape and climate’ as well as reading significant Irish-language artifacts such as ‘Padraic O Conaire’s sketches, or stories by Padraic Pearse’ – each, the author concludes, provides ample material for further historical investigation. O’Laoghaire proffers up the ability to take the film-based lesson into the realm of civics as he argues students could further write down their responses to the economic situation in Connemara and the teacher could ‘indicate means which are being taken to solve the [such] difficulties, e.g., Gaeltacht Services’ (*ibid.*, 135).

\(^5\) There seems to be slight confusion about the title of this film, as both the Trinity College Dublin Irish Film and TV Research Archive and the Irish Film Institute identify it as *The Story of Michael Flaherty*, see the Trinity record: http://www.tcd.ie/irishfilm/showfilm.php?fid=37304 and the inclusion of the film in an IFI archival programme: http://www.irishfilm.ie/cinema/dispfilm_07.asp?filmID=7201&Date=10/01/202&pageID=15, both accessed, January 5, 2012.
The advocacy of motion pictured-centered lessons, and those wherein students trained in the techniques and language of cinema set to creating amateur, educative films of their own, indicate the direction in which the Film Society, the Film Institute and Comhairle na nÓg all hoped to see Irish educational policy move. Through the establishment of the Educational Library and the myriad examples provided by O’Laoghaire of other nations that were well-on-their-way to the integration of film-based lessons into their curricula, what Invitation to the Film attempts in its explication and incitement is a fascinating milestone in the effort to nationalize attitudes about film in education; however, O’Laoghaire ends his text on a note not altogether optimistic for the future as he states, ‘[i]n a country where criticism is stagnant and education superficial, we can hope for no better ending to what always opens as a glorious adventure’ (ibid., 160).

O’Laoghaire as Filmmaker

It was perhaps some of this sentiment, as well as his distaste for the ‘25 years of native government’ of Fianna Fáil that led O’Laoghaire to direct the 1948 missive, Our Country – the film that O’Brien calls ‘perhaps the most important Irish documentary of this or any period’ (O’Brien, 2004, 67). O’Laoghaire had already dismissed A Nation Once Again as ‘ballyhoo propaganda’, and, in return, Our Country was a political announcement for the newly formed Clann na Poblachta [Family of the Republic] party (Rockett, 1988, 74). As well as introduce the voting constituency to the political tenets of the nascent party; it also sought to

52 From the introductory narration by Noel Hartnett, chief advisor to Clann na Poblachta, in Our Country (1948, d. L. O’Laoghaire).
demythologize the rhetoric around Ireland’s modernization undertaken during the de Valera years.

Produced by London’s Elstree Studios, the film intercuts dole queues, crumbling tenement buildings and discussion of the tuberculosis epidemic with bucolic scenes of rural Ireland with especially damning results. While this landmark film will be discussed at length later – within the context of its value in the present-day classroom – it is necessary to mention here, as it is vital to the chronology of Liam O’Laoghaire’s filmographic output. It also presupposes O’Laoghaire’s own immigration due to future films being censored – and espouses O’Laoghaire’s belief, outlined in Invitation to the Film, that documentary cinema’s:

intention is to supplement or even inspire the working of democratic machinery, by giving the people a clearer idea of the issues involved [..] its aim is to put the life of the nation on the screen […] in the interest of national well-being.

(O’Laoghaire, 1945, 100)

*Our Country* helped the *Clann na Poblachta* and the other opposition parties of the day defeat Fianna Fáil in the February 1948 election – prompting the creation of the coalition government and the removal de Valera from the office of Taoiseach from 1948 until 1951. During this time, O’Laoghaire made a series of educational and public information films under the aforementioned inter-departmental production scheme. These included traffic safety films such as the generically comedic *Safe Cycling* and *Mr. Careless Goes to Town* (both 1949). In 1950, he began *Portrait of Dublin*, a 20-minute advertisement for the capital city funded by the Cultural Relations Committee. Despite its being a largely prosaic, heritage-oriented affair, by the time it was to be released in 1951, Fianna Fáil had resumed control of the Dáil and
Minister for Foreign Affairs Frank Aiken withheld the film from general circulation. With this effective blacklisting, O’Laoghaire left Ireland to work in the film industry in the United Kingdom. He would not return for 15 years. The effect the immigration of Ireland’s leading proponent of film and education had on the national outlook for curricular inclusion cannot be over stated.

Other Nationally Sanctioned Films

O’Laoghaire was not the only filmmaker working under the auspices of public service and informational production. As well as creating films for educational purposes, the National Film Institute produced technical training films for the public sector (minutes of the National Film Institute, 1949). These included dual language films for the Department of Health on issues such as food safety, hygiene in restaurants and shops, dental care in children and, later, Diphtheria and the dubbing of other nations’ public service productions into Irish, a film for Bord Fáilte on hospitality and hotel management as well as films for the Department of Agriculture calling for modernization of farming means such as Science and the Farmer (1954, d. J. Sheridan) and The Hungry Land/An Talamh Traocha (1950) – a film that encourages the use of lye in the soil, produced by James Ginnell for the Film Institute at the behest of the Irish Sugar Company, an industry that had been nationalized by 1933.

53 Everybody’s Responsibility, Everybody’s Business/Gnó Gach Éinne (1951, d. T. Inglis)
54 Your Teeth/Na Fiacla Sin Agat (1951, d. R. Roberts)
55 Stop Thief!/Cosc na Gadaí! (1953, d. G. Healy)
56 An Creidill Chiúin [The Silent Death] (1950 d. S. MacCrait) initially a Canadian Department of Health production – with additional titles added explaining the treatment of tuberculosis and asserting to the Irish populace that all treatments of the disease were free, see Irish Film and TV Research Archive at URL: http://www.tcd.ie/irishfilm/showfilm.php?fid=37339, status checked January 3, 2011.
57 The Art of Reception (1954, d. G. Healy)
Other public service announcements of an educational remit were produced for the public at large throughout the 1950s and 1960s; these included a series of dual language shorts from the Department of Post and Telegraphs on the merits of saving money – in a Post Office account\textsuperscript{58}.

By 1950, other independent bodies had further tabled the investigation of the educative capability of film. Specifically looking to establish a popular cultural appeal for the Irish language, \textit{Comhdáil Náisúnta na Gaeilge} [the National Gaelic Congress] argued in 1950 that ‘[w]ithout films in Irish all the work done for the language in the schools, on the radio and by voluntary organizations is doomed to ultimate failure no matter how effectively it is done’ (in White, 2003, 106). In 1953, under the patronage of the \textit{Comhdáil}\textsuperscript{59}, \textit{Gael Linn} was established with the specific aim of raising awareness of the Irish language and promoting native speaking. Among their early ventures was the creation of the \textit{Amharc Éireann} [Landscape of Ireland; View of Ireland] series of newsreels that were produced between 1955 and 1964.

Taking the form of Irish-language hard news story as well as cultural magazine, 350 films were exhibited in 290 programmes throughout the series’ run. All of the \textit{Amharc Éireann} productions would be directed by Colm O’Laoghaire, who had previously worked as an assistant cinematographer on \textit{A Nation Once Again} and had made –

\textsuperscript{58} These films included: \textit{Where Does the Money Go/?Ca nIomainn an tAirgead?} (1954, d. G. Healy); \textit{Our Money at Work/An tAirgead ag Obair} (1957, d. Colm O’Laoghaire) and \textit{For Love and Money/ An Thaisce agus a Stór} (1961, d. R. Liles).

\textsuperscript{59} Literally ‘Irish Pool’ – as the organization was initially established to raise funds, and thereby awareness of the Irish language, through betting on Gaelic Athletics Association matches – borrowing the idea from community-based football betting pools in the United Kingdom.
amongst other works – an educational puppet filmed aimed at children that warned them of the spread of tuberculosis\textsuperscript{60}. The newsreels began as single-item news stories, but had, by 1959, moved to weekly packages being distributed by the Rank Organisation; Rank would fold \textit{Amharc Éireann} productions into their own newsreel package, programming them to precede feature films at cinemas throughout the country. During this time, an estimated 750,000 people saw \textit{Amharc Éireann} productions each month (O’Brien, 2004, 105). Coupled with the Central Statistics Office’s provision of population data for 1956 and 1961 – 2.9 and 2.8 million inhabitants, respectively – the newsreel’s saturation was in excess of a quarter of the population of the isle (Central Statistics Office, n.d.).

O’Laoghaire called his films “pocket documentaries” inasmuch as they had a ‘technical polish calculated to counteract audience prejudices against films in Irish’ as well as to further the school of Irish documentary filmmaking (O’Laoghaire, 1957, 9). In his writing about the \textit{Amharc Éireann} collection, O’Laoghaire is quick to weigh the implications of a project undertaken for the purposes of acceptance of a language of which many cinemagoers had little-to-no comprehension and the reconciliation of this remit with a particularly visual medium.

The filmmaker’s further insistence is that the \textit{Amharc Éireann} project was to stand as an initial salvo for a dedicated Irish-language documentary industry, one that was

\textsuperscript{60} Tony Bacillus and Co. (1946), made with the Dublin Marionette Group, recently restored by the National Film Archive with a new score composed by Anaïs-Gaëll Lozac'h, December, 2010, in partnership with the Paris Conservatory of Dance and Music, see URL: http://www.europafilmtreasures.eu/PY/409/see-the-film-tony_bacillus_co_, status checked January 5, 2011.
distinctly nationalistic, and decidedly anathema to the traditions of the British tradition – a form of filmmaking he reckoned to be ‘logical, statistical and often, rather boring’ (ibid., 10). Less antagonistically, O’Laoghaire argued that the documentary form in England was antithetical to the teachings of the Catholic Church, and he argued that Ireland had a need for its own, less-hubristic documentarian voice, as film, by nature, was susceptible to becoming ‘an ideal humanist propaganda weapon [given that it is…] a triumph of scientific and industrial collaboration’ – ‘another vindication’ of the ‘belief of man’s unlimited intellectual powers’ (ibid., 11).

The distribution deal ended with Rank and was carried over by Universal in 1958, and by the final two years of the project’s life it was an independently distributed production. Examples of Amharc Éireann’s programmes, and how they can be approached in an understanding of the past will be investigated more thoroughly in subsequent chapters; however, what makes them unique was their capture of an Ireland in both cultural and technological change. In many ways the newsreel preempted its own fate given that its role as the primary point of dissemination for Irish news waned considerably with the launch of Teilifís Éireann, on New Year’s Eve, 1961. Despite increasing its output to a multi-story programme by 1962, in 1964 Amharc Éireann had exhibited its final reel. Television had won the day.

Lost Momentum, ‘A Record of Neglect’ and Teilifís Éireann

For the Irish film and, newly emergent, television industries, the period of between 1959 and 1960 was an integral hallmark in the Irish motion picture history –
educative and otherwise. By 1955 the Department of Industry and Commerce had been conducting a ‘hush-hush investigating committee […] to report on the possibility of making feature films in the Republic’ (Sunday Express, 195561). One of the prime catalysts for the enquiry was Michael Morris, Third Baron Killanin who, with Brian Desmond Hurst, had established Four Provinces Films in 1951. Killanin had co-produced The Quiet Man (1952, d. Ford) and, under the Four Provinces aegis, would later go on to produce Ford’s The Rising of the Moon (1957) and Playboy of the Western World (1962, d. B. Desmond Hurst) as well as attempt to finance other, unrealized Ford productions in Ireland including Famine (begun in 1952, with a scenario by Liam O’Flaherty) and a film to which Katherine Hepburn was signed nominally titled Drama of Inish (begun in 1956) (Gallagher, 1986, 531-45). It would appear that Killanin was first and foremost concerned with simply getting films, rather than necessarily meritorious films, produced, as Rising of the Moon was critically derided as ‘a tourist eye view through Blarney-coloured glasses’ (Films and Filming, 1957, in Grant, 2009).

Nominating Lord Killanin as advisor to the Film Industry Enquiry, he, Desmond Hurst, cinematographer George Fleishmann and the National Film Institute spent 12 months devising a report for Minister William Norton. Submitting the report in September, 1956, the stated general consensus was that:

61 Hand-typed copy extract from Sunday Express, September 11, 1955, page number and author unattributed. From the papers of Michael Morris, Third Baron Killanin, housed within the Irish National Film Archive, Irish Film Institute.
Ireland should concentrate on the production of short or documentary films, for which, there is a world-wide demand. Feature films, if, made, should be low-cost productions – outdoor sequences, no lavish settings – but we should go slowly in this sphere.

(National Film Institute: Film Industry Enquiry, 1956\textsuperscript{62})

Later in the report, the committee makes mention of educational film as a vibrant industry unto itself, and in their further analysis of the documentary film in Ireland, the National Film Institute asserts ‘apart from Irish teaching films, for which there is a great demand here’, ‘we constantly see […] documentary and travelogue films produced […] by other countries’ (\textit{ibid.}). Citing this perceived underutilization of the documentary form, the report recommends that – barring the educational, sub-standard film – non-fictive productions should ‘be made with a view to foreign consumption […] otherwise these films could not pay their way’ (\textit{ibid.}).

Despite these recommendations, one landmark film would be released in 1959 that was both historical and distinctly created for an Irish audience: \textit{Mise Éire [I am Ireland]} (d. G. Morrison), a film produced by \textit{Gael Linn}, who was meeting with success in the marketing of the abovementioned \textit{Amharc Éireann} programmes. The film compiles moving image and still photographs sourced from archives all over the world to create a stirring, emotionally compelling view of the struggle for Irish independence – primarily focusing on the events from Easter 1916 until January 1919’s proclamation of Ireland as a Free State. With a view toward the capability of film to articulate the Irish narrative in a manner different than that of the history book, at its premiere during the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Cork Film Festival, it was declared that ‘the most

\textsuperscript{62} Unpublished, from the papers of Michael Morris, Third Baron Killanin.
important achievement of this film is that as a visual record it confirms and supplements history in a unique way’ (unattributed, Cork Film Festival Programme, 1959, 40, in O’Brien, 2004, 106; emphasis in original).

Concomitant to the screening of Mise Éire, was the debut at the Cork Film Festival of the first film from Emmet Dalton’s Ardmore Studios in Bray, Co. Wicklow. This Other Eden, directed by Muriel Box – also notable as the first Irish feature directed by a woman. This Other Eden was a comedic, historical drama based on an Abbey Theatre play of the same name – itself a descendent of Shaw’s John Bull’s Other Island. Set during the War of Independence, with direct allusions to Michael Collins and his assassination at Béal na mBláth, the film offers a revisionist history and a ludic take on Ireland’s Republican past.

As Ruth Barton notes, the thrust of the film was that ‘English-Irish hostilities were a matter of small misunderstanding […] and that it is Ireland’s duty to forget the past’ (Barton, 2004, 80-1). This should have come as no surprise as, despite its Irish address, Ardmore was founded with the intent of creating films that would be ‘shown on American television, and […] get a cinema release afterwards as [internationally exhibiting] second features’ (Farley, 2001, 15; Rockett, 1987, 107-111). Writing of its founding in the Irish Press, Julia Monks notes that the primary function of the output from Ardmore was to court the American tourist dollar, as:
all [optioned Ardmore scripts] have humour and hilarity, and will depict the less sombre side of Irish life [...] and no doubt Cinema and TV audience throughout the world – especially the US – will find them entertainingly ‘Irish’ and pencil in Ireland as a ‘must’ for their next summer holiday.

(Monks, 1958, 4, cited in Farley, *ibid.*)

To further understand the plight of an indigenous industry, it should be noted that as well as attempting to bring foreign investment into Ireland – rather than foster Irish filmmakers – under the auspices of the paucity of technical training in filmmaking in Ireland, it was the British technician’s union who worked in all the below-the-line positions on all Ardmore productions; this policy effectively shut out any Irish personnel from working on feature films, and further stymied national professional development.

Louis Marcus, assistant editor to George Morrison on *Mise Êire* argued that despite receiving more than £250,000 from the Irish government to build and run Ardmore studios it was only ‘Irish carpenters and plasterers, canteen and office workers [who] were casually employed’ by the facility (Marcus, 1967, 8). Writing in *Scannán* [Film Magazine], Riobárd Breathnach seconded Marcus’ sentiments, attacking the producers behind Ardmore’s inaugural feature for being ‘obdurately myoptic [sic]’ and pandering to international audiences – thereby reducing Ireland, ‘the craggy Irish mind and its own intense drama’ to nothing but ‘[k]itsch’ (Breathnach, 1959, 4; emphasis in original). The criticism instead championed Morrison’s work for its endeavors, arguing ‘[a]fter seeing *Mise Êire* one feels that there is (as there must be) a truly native film industry’ that produces films diametrically opposed to the efforts of Ardmore (*ibid.*) In Breathnach’s view, *Mise Êire* was unique in that it approached the
story of Ireland – and the transmission of that historical narrative ‘the right way, by cherishing what might be irretrievably lost, by showing us a remarkable visual panorama of the Irish people’s recent history’ (ibid.).

Continuing Breathnach’s praise for *Mise Éire* and its investigation of the Irish narrative, Leon O’Kennedy attempts to outlay what that ‘truly native film industry’ might be (O’Kennedy, 1959, 12). In his analysis, he expresses a need to film the ‘magic’ of Ireland’s history, providing nearly two dozen examples of moments in the formative Irish narrative he argued to be strong starting points for a celebration of the island and its people. O’Kennedy asserts that without an firmly established film industry, heterodox to the model put forth by Dalton and Ardmore, the Republic would remain ‘a victim dumping-ground for the Wild Western bilge of Hollywood’, and that ‘[b]ecause it [Ireland] does not know itself, it is not taking its rightful in the comity of great nations to which its history entitles it’ (ibid., 13).

Louis Marcus argues that this is tantamount to Ireland’s *Record of Neglect*, in his scathing indictment of the national cultural programme: the ‘irrelevance’ of Ardmore, strong but precious little annual documentary production and perceived non-existence – by 1967 – of an indigenous, Irish feature film, lead Marcus to assert that ‘after seventy years of film history and nearly fifty years of native rule, Ireland – almost alone among nations – has no film industry’ (Marcus, 1967, 3).
Television and a Change of Mindset

Ironically, if the garnering of acceptance of the educative power of the motion picture in Irish history, or simply Irish historical film, was a hard-fought battle – one that begins at the end of the nineteenth century and gains true acceptance over sixty years later – the mindset of the nation had changed appreciably by the launch of Teilifís Éireann. Writing in the RTV Guide in January, 1962, University College, Dublin Professor of Modern History Thomas Desmond Williams asserted ‘the coming of Irish television should affect the historian [as t]he relevance of the TV for the historian is not merely limited to its function as a recording machine; it also has possibilities for instruction’ (Williams, in Wylie, 2007, 244).

Encompassed within the work of the Historical Association; the early experiments of educationalists and cinematic pioneers; the insistence of the Irish Film Society and the fastidious work of the National Film Institute was a backward look at historical texts that was equally tethered to a thinking around future policy and educative action. These sentiments are echoed by Desmond Williams as he adopts the critiques and possibilities for moving image-based historical education toward the emergent technology of his day:

TV apparently serves the present and the future. But the present of today will be the past of tomorrow and technical developments in this direction can only enlarge later acquaintance with the recorded facts.

(ibid.)

Television had arrived in the Irish home, and, on both sides of the Atlantic; however, just as the potential for the moving image in the teaching of history was beginning to
be articulated in University syllabi on the other side of the Irish Sea – through the works of Grenville, Pronay and others, in Ireland with the coming of the broadcast medium, any thinking around the possibility of film for class-based use, and curricular development, was altogether forgotten.

**Conclusion**

Evidenced in the pioneers of Irish cinema studies, filmmaking efforts and pedagogic enquiry, the arguments posed by Earnán de Blaghd and Liam O’Laoghaire, and their attempts at establishing a protocol for using film in education was drawn from and inspired by efforts undertaken by the United Kingdom, its mandate-specific British Film Institute, and throughout the wider world. Despite initial momentum, however, a series of religious and political declarations meant that such an educative trajectory proved unsustainable. The Vigilanti Cura’s waging of war against what the Catholic Church perceived Hollywood, and the popular cultural film form to be – namely an unshakeable enemy – relegated the medium to an ideological threat to moral righteousness. Such thinking removed the cultural value of film, and critique, unless it abided by Papal declaration. Despite the efforts throughout the 1940s to standardize how film could be used in the classroom, and to educate teachers in both the practicalities and criticalities of working with the medium, by O’Laoghaire’s exile in the early 1950s, on the heels of the censorship he faced in the wake of Our Country, much of the energy and dynamism around film education had been lost.

While films were being made within the borders of the Republic, that they were few, far between and largely created to cater for offshore audiences further bolstered the
sense of jeopardy in which the Irish industry found itself. It was not until the founding, and sustaining, of the *Amharc Éireann* collection, and the subsequent *Gael Linn* efforts of *Mise Éire* that a true sense of an ‘Irish’ industry could be determined. Even when this occurred, such productions had to vie for attention against the less culturally determined, but equally far more lavish productions coming out of studios such as Ardmore.

The nationalistic sentiments found within both Colm O’Laoghaire’s newsreel series and Morrison’s compilation film cannot be denied – the former by way of inculcating audiences to the Irish language as a product through relating everyday news via the idiom, and the latter by forging an implicitly supranational portrayal of the politics of the early 20th century via an appropriation, and sometimes re-appropriation, of the archival depictions of the conflicts responsible for the emergence of the Irish Republic. That such films are of benefit to the teaching of history from both the practical side – attempting to determine what happened, and what it looked like, as well as the theoretical questioning of how are events portrayed, cast and recast by those who narrativized them – make such efforts invaluable to the investigation of history in the Irish classroom.

As determined in the thesis thus far, the discipline of history is a pristine example of a syllabus primed for the inclusion of moving image material within its resources. The remaining chapters of this thesis will attempt to undertake a strategy largely left behind more than 60 years ago – picking up where O’Laoghaire’s *Invitation to the Film* left off. The ideas, motivations and outcomes understood and emphatically
championed by early film-in-education pioneers, have, in their wake, been relegated to extracurricular activity, or ignored altogether. The remainder of this thesis seeks to argue them anew. By looking to the archival legacy of Ireland’s film output, and demarcating the capacity for the nation’s cinematic history in the classroom-based exploration of political and social histories, the remainder of this research project will attempt to stake a claim for a ‘better ending’ for the ‘glorious adventure’ O’Laoghaire depicted more than half a century previous (O’Laoghaire, 1945, 160). Using historical empathy as the method of working through these films, the actions, motivations, thought processes and cultural distinctions of a young Ireland, the nation’s allies and adversaries, will be displayed within the frame and critical approaches toward such investigation will be laid bare.
Chapter THREE:  
Defining the Method of Exploration: Empathy, Narrative and Documentation 

Introduction 

The analysis in the previous two chapters has been grounded in two contentions. The first is that a distinct lineage of thinkers, historians and educationalists from beyond Ireland’s shores has, since the latter half of the 20th century, forged a discourse around the use of film for history teaching. In so doing, their arguments evolved from a position where the medium was used as a supplemental form of engagement – such as in the Dickinson/Taylor lectures, toward the possibility of historical record that could stand as equally didactic – as well as equally problematic – as any other form of recorded testimony; subsequent thinkers have extended the use of film further in their use of the medium toward a method for a greater inquiry of the discipline of history at large, setting the constructed nature of the medium toward a critique of the concerns and constraints of the wider historical project. Counter to the efforts of the educators explored in Chapter One, at a system-wide level, the current history syllabus in the Irish Republic does not share such enthusiasm for film.

As evidenced in Chapter Two, this distinct lack of audiovisual engagement in the contemporary Irish educational landscape stands counter to historical precedent, wherein the then-emergent nation was tied to a number of film-in-education projects. Working across the wider thinking explored beyond the Republic’s borders, and acknowledging this deficit in Irish syllabus construction, the remainder of this research report is dedicated to an exploration of Ireland’s film heritage toward a determination that uptake within the national history syllabus can augment the manner
in which the subject is approached. Through a critical, archival survey of the films housed within Ireland’s National Film Archive, and an interrogation of the material in light of the history syllabus, the thesis will pose instances and approaches where such films prove to be of great reward for history education. In an effort to engage the study of history as an ongoing, critical and affective process, this exploration is undertaken by investigating such films through the lens of historical empathy.

At the interstice between the first two chapters – dedicated to textual and archival research that frames the film-in-history debate for a contemporary Irish educational landscape – and the subsequent chapters which actively investigate the films held within the Irish Film Archive for their pedagogical applicability in making the Ireland of the early twentieth century come alive to the student of history, this third chapter seeks to evince a manner and a method for interrogating such history. In its efforts much of the active scholarship undertaken for this research project owes its impetus to the notions of narrative investigation authored by American educationalist Sherri Rae Colby. While not specific to the medium of film, Colby argues that the place of empathically-motivated educational practices makes history scholarship both an imaginative and methodologically rigorous endeavour in which young people simultaneously undertake the roles of ‘historian/inquisitor, investigator, formulator and philosopher’ (Colby, 2008, 61). While the roles of historian and investigator are self explanatory within the confines of the history syllabus, the latter portion of this chapter will delve into the implications of the student of history utilizing empathic thinking in the taking on the dual mantles of ‘formulator’ and ‘philosopher’. In this process, the analysis will demarcate how the utilization of the medium of film makes
allowances for greater critically oriented thinking than a more straightforward, book-based historical investigation provides young people.

This chapter breaks down into four constituent parts. First the chapter will look at the provenance of empathic thinking and determine how the term has found uptake within history and education. Taking into account the precedent for thinking through historical empathy, and concomitant ways of envisaging its use, the first portion of this chapter ends with a unique definition of historical empathy constructed for this thesis. The next task of the chapter will be to determine a method of engagement for archival films that draws actionable outcomes out of empathic investigation. Turning again to Colby, and her procedures and models for narrative inquiry, the thesis will streamline her thinking in an effort to make it more specific to the medium under interrogation. The second portion of this chapter will end with the proposing of an amended heuristic for working through filmic texts with a Colby-inflected strategizing of historical empathy. The third portion of this chapter will look to the analytical precedents on offer through the empathic heuristic. Through an acknowledgement of the formulatory and philosophical ways of working that underlie empathic thinking, the analysis will argue that film-centred historical investigations provide students with a series of critical capabilities that have benefits beyond the four walls of the Irish classroom. Finally, by building upon the analysis of the first three sections of the chapter, a study-specific set of models will be proposed for the active research that follows in chapters Four and Five. This final section will outline how the subsequent chapters are thematized and constructed, thereby establishing how the historically empathic investigation of archival film ties directly into the curricular concerns of modern Irish history. Fundamental to a determination of how
historical empathy operates – and how it can be of benefit in the classroom, a return to first principles must be, briefly, acknowledged, as ‘empathy’ is a term that carries with it only 100 years of discursive precedent – having entered into the English language, via psychology, in the first decade of the 20th century.

The Emergence of Empathy
Previously theorized as *Einfühlung* [feeling into] in German psychological discourse, the coining of the originary idiom was first attributed to Robert Vischer – who was responding to, and making it distinct from, the already in-use term of *Mitgefühlung* [feeling with; sympathy] – in 1873 (Montag, *et al*., 2008, 1261). Initially understood as the process by which human beings approached, and appreciated, inanimate objects in the aesthetic realm – namely works of art or elements of nature – it was not until 1903 with the writings of Theodor Lipps that the trait of *Einfühlung* was articulated as a method through which a person might forge an understanding of the rational, or affective, register of another human being. For Lipps, *Einfühlung* was a vital component of the interconnectivity of humankind; it is necessary and responsible for facilitating us as social animals (Gallese, 2003, 175).

Writing himself into his own research, Lipps notes in *Einfühlung, innere Nachahmung und Organemfindung* [Empathy, Inner-imitation and Body Sensation] that upon witnessing an acrobat traversing a tightrope, the psychologist observed that he began to ‘fühle mich so in ihm [feel myself so inside of him]’ (Lipps, 1903, in Gallese, 2008, 175). Lipps’ interest here is in the apprehension he feels witnessing the performer and the dangerous task to which the latter had set himself; however, his
insistence was that it is not Lipps’ own fears stirring within him, but rather the ‘feelings emotions and thoughts’ of the other man balancing upon the rope (Gallese, 2008, 175).

Such identification, the titular ‘inner imitation’, Lipps asserts is indicative of the foundational, ‘interindividual relation’ on which ‘self-other’ dynamics are predicated; in order to be social creatures we imitate the, perceived, experiences of another in an effort to maintain sociability with him (ibid.). As Gallese argues, Einfühlung embodies the ‘membership fee all individuals have to pay in order to self-guarantee the sense of belonging to a larger community’ (ibid., 172).

This concept would enter into the arena of English-language debate six years later as Edward Titchener, citing Lipps, translated Einfühlung into the then-neologism empathy. Later, in a lecture discussing the analytical processes of Karl Bühler, Titchener proposed how thinking through empathy could be an activity unto itself – in this sense, thinking with empathy became thinking empathically. This assertion was framed by meditation upon the succinct question ‘what do we experience when we are thinking’ (1909, 90)?

To get to the root of this problematic, and to make empathic thinking an experiential engagement, Titchener asserted that psychiatrists must conduct experiments upon individuals who have been trained in the ability to articulate and recall their own thought processes. For Titchener the concept of empathy is crucial here, when he
makes the distinction that: ‘[t]he experimenter must be in full sympathy with his observers; he must [also] think, by empathy, as they think, understand as they understand, speak in their language’ (ibid., 91). Applying an expanded conceptualization of kinaesthetic knowledge formation to such experiments, Titchener’s convening interrogator attempts not to comprehend his own sense of self, but rather, have himself ‘mirror […]such] corresponding feelings’ in the observed individual (Montag, et al, 2008, 1261). Drawing on one’s own ‘experience’, the empathic observer ought to be able to leverage such a sociably-inclined thinking in discerning the ‘if and why, and nevertheless, and therefore’ of another’s manner of thinking and action (Titchener, 1909, 185).

While empathy was picked up by philosophical discourse, and explored further by tethering it to the phenomenological projects of such as those of Husserl, Edith Stein and Merleau-Ponty63, it was quickly eclipsed in the psychological realm by ‘experimental psychology and early behaviorism’ (Montag, 2008, 1261). In many ways, it was in the arena of pedagogy – and approaches to learning – where empathy most found favor. Expanding on Lipps’ necessitation for empathy in social settings, the recent work of Martha Nussbaum on the manner in which education ought to be delivered in the Western tradition focuses on the trait as ‘conduc[ive… for] a certain form of community’, which is a necessity for ‘defining a creature as wholly human’ (Nussbaum, 1997, 90). This sense of community does not need to be limited to those within our own social setting, as in recent decades this notion of empathy-as-pedagogical-strategy has also found uptake within the study of the past. Built upon

63 See: Husserl’s notion of intersubjectivity in Cartesian Meditations (1931/1960); Stein’s The Problem with Empathy (1916/1989) her doctoral submission, supervised by Husserl and Merleau-Ponty’s treatise on experience The Phenomenology of Perception (1945/1962).
the edifice established by Lipps and Titchener, the emergence of historical empathy utilized an engagement of *Einfühlung* of an ‘other’ divided by both corporeality and time.

**Historical Empathy as a Pedagogical Strategy**

One of the first instances of the appearance of historical empathy in contemporary pedagogical theory can be attributed to the 1987 Christopher Portal edited text *The History Curriculum for Teachers*, wherein Portal, Rosalyn Ashby and Peter Lee posit that, within British schools, the trait is necessary for sustained historical engagement and that such outcomes are best sought through dialogic participation and role-playing. Such active engagements are akin to the experimentation proposed by Titchener eight decades earlier, as each is poised as an attempt to understand how individuals simply ‘think’ – or, in the instance of the history lesson, thought (Titchener, 1909, 91).

The Portal text argued that as early as in late-primary school, young people have the maturity and cognitive capabilities to step outside their own senses of self in order to identify with historical agents, and that through nurturing these skills the history classroom could move beyond a simple recapitulation of fact to become a more critically engaged – and engaging – affair. While Portal and his coauthors provided an initial salvo with regard to what young people could be capable of, the qualitative assessment, at least of the American educational system, provided by Sam Wineburg in 1991 articulated that students were indeed a long way from such astute observational skills identified in Portal’s text. Subsequent to Portal, Ashby and Lee, it
is Wineburg’s study from which much of the thinking around historical empathy, and
its place within the secondary school classroom, can be attributed.

**The Wineburg Experiment and Textual Animation**
**as a Tool for Historical Understanding**

At its core, Wineburg questioned how, and more primarily – if, students of history
could perform a sense of ‘textual animation’ necessary for a critical understanding of
the actions of historical agents that are ignored and oversimplified in the ‘inanimate
texts they read’ in typical history classrooms throughout the United States (Wineburg,
1991, 496). While not giving this technique the specific mantle of historical empathy,
the author argues that the mark of the professional historian is his ability to ‘see
human motive in the texts we read […] to brave the fact that certainty, at least in the
understanding of the social world, remains elusive beyond our grasp’ (*ibid.*, 518). Immediately, Wineburg’s seeing the human motives at play in the social world,
hearkens back to the originary notion of empathic thinking in which feeling into the
thoughts and motivations of others establishes the sense of communitarian being
necessary for interpersonal, social action.

In Wineburg’s experiment, professional historians, to return to Titchener, had such
capacities for the *ifs, whys, neverthelesses and therefore* upon which the actions of
our forbearers were based; contrary to the capability to understand texts in this way,
even high achieving students – the ‘successes of [the American] educational system’
– could not differentiate between recorded history and polemic (*ibid.*, 501). Students,
Wineburg opines, ‘read their historical texts [no] differently from their driver’s education manuals’ (*ibid.*, 519).

Crucially, writing from the standpoint of an educational psychologist rather than a historian himself, Wineburg convened two sets of test subjects – a group of eight historians from disparate disciplines and a similarly numbered group of above-average high school seniors, all of whom had scored in the upper percentiles on standardized questions from the United States’ National Assessment of Educational Progress’ U.S. history assessment. He then had each group read and orally work through a series of primary and secondary sources relating to the American Revolutionary War. It should be noted that only half of the historians were experts in American history, others had not studied the Revolutionary War since their own time in high school, and in some instances students performed better on pre-test examinations concerning the details of the conflict in question than their professional, doctored counterparts (*ibid.*, 497).

After being brought up to speed on how Wineburg wished for each participant to talk through his or her findings, the test-subjects read and then dialogically explored the texts in their larger groups; however, during the course of the research, the students and the academic historians were kept from one another. While the level of erudition achieved by each group was not surprising, what Wineburg discovered was that though ‘students had little problem formulating the main idea of these documents, predicting what might come next, locating information in the text [or] answering
literal and inferential questions about what the text was about’, they took what they read as explicit fact (ibid., 501-502).

Most tellingly, of all of the texts – including an excerpt from a historical fiction – the historians placed the high school textbook as the least evidentiary of the assembled sources, whereas the students ‘rated the textbook as the most trustworthy of the eight documents’ arguing that the textbook was ‘just reporting the facts’, and it, rather than eyewitness testimony, should be cited as the preeminent source material (ibid., 501; emphasis in original). Unlike their professional counterparts, students were ‘as dependent on authors’ hearts as on their heads’ (ibid., 518).

For Wineburg the capabilities of the professional historian are based on the acknowledgement that history is malleable; the assembled scholars had an implicit understanding that there is ‘human motive in the texts we read’, and through diligence such historians can ‘brave the fact that certainty, at least in understanding the social world, remains elusive and beyond our grasp’ in their measured depictions of the past (ibid.). As such the study does not proffer up suggestions for how to move forward, but rather acts as a call to arms for school systems to alter the manner through which the historical record is approached – and the classroom lesson is comprised – in order to stem the perceived breach between the skills of the historian and the rote engagement of the student:
If history classrooms are to look different [...] the history curriculum must become more than a source of texts to use in studies of inserted headings or embedded questions. School history must move from a context variable, peripheral to the topic being investigated, to a site of inquiry in its own right, a place to explore the complex cognitive processes we use to discern pattern and significance in the past.

(ibid.)

Wineburg concludes that ‘school history possesses great potential for teaching students to think and reason in sophisticated ways’; he then challenges school administrators and course supervisors, as well as teachers and young people to utilize a sustained engagement with history toward more rigorous, albeit creative ends. One such method of heightened, critical thinking derived from the engagement with the stuff of history is empathic perspective taking: a strategy that, in the wake of Wineburg, would gain significant traction from educators toward the end of the 20th century.

From Animating a Text to Thinking Empathically

Charting the discourse around historical empathy and moving toward a working definition is an exercise is fraught with controversy and a multiplicity of shades of meaning. As Keith Barton and Linda Levstik point out ‘[p]erhaps no feature of history education has inspired as much discussion, debate, criticism, and avoidance as the concept of empathy’; however, at its core, educationalists and researchers on both sides of the Atlantic agree that the central tenet of the approach to the stuff of history is a attempt to understand the actions of historical actors and align the historian to historical agents’ perspectives – no matter how foreign their experiences may be from our own (Barton and Levstik, 2004, 206).
Before delving further in what historical empathy is, apophatically one can ascertain what historical empathy is not by looking to the work of Stuart Foster – who argues that empathic engagements with history must never resemble an overt form of identification with the motivating factors that led historical agents to choose their actions (Foster in Davis, *et al*., 2001, 169-170). Simply, students working with empathic approaches to the material of history do not, and can not, fully understand the experiences of the historical agents about whom they are learning, but rather can begin to explore the motivations and mitigating factors that led them to act in the manners borne out by the historical record. Crucially, it is thinking through the motivations of others, all the while maintaining a sense of otherness and critical distance from the subject of study (*ibid.*). As Barton and Levstik agree, in invoking a perennial straw man of mid-20th century history, they assert that they ‘want students to understand Hitler’s outlook but not to accept it as their own’ (Barton and Levstik, 2004, 208).

While this example seems overly simplistic, the intention is well informed. In order for history to be viewed as genuinely dynamic and a place for scrutinious investigation, ‘sides’ cannot be taken. Nor, for Foster, should empathy be conflated with sympathy for our predecessors. Admittedly while sympathetic feelings for some people maligned by the actions of other historical figures ‘is perhaps welcome in the classroom’, Foster is steadfast in the assertion that ‘it is not the central purpose of history’ (Foster in Davis, *et al*., 2001, 169-170). Historical empathy must thereby be a conscientious exercise in which data and accounts are utilized to align one’s self with the motivations of our forbearers; however, the amount of intuition which one adds to
such efforts – the ability that Wineburg argues separated the historian from the student of history – remains mired in debate.

Foster ascertains that ‘at its core historical inquiry remains primarily a cognitive, not affective, act and one that is chiefly dependent upon knowledge, not feeling or imagination’ (Foster in Davis, et al, 2001, 170). Matthew T. Downey agrees with this sentiment as he asserts that the strategies invoked in classroom exploration begin with the acknowledgment that the world – and thereby worldview – of historical agents was different from our own, and, therefore, the ability to discuss such difference must be mitigated by historical evidence (1995, throughout). Preferring the term ‘perspective taking’ to historical empathy, Downey’s method for investigation as outlined is singularly rational in approach and execution (ibid.). What Foster and Downey argue in their analysis of models of exploration is a complete remove from establishing a wider connectivity with the past beyond that which can be drawn from rigid analysis. Similarly, Phillip VanFossen and James Shiveley assert that there is inductive rigor to historical empathy on par with the scientific method, and that it is up to teachers to ask questions of concerning historical motivations and then have their students form hypotheses, collect source material – whether from prescriptive lists or otherwise – and lead them toward the generation of conclusions based on their findings (1997, 71-77).

A further, oft-cited, definition bolsters the arena of empathy-as-cognitively-based inquiry. Both wonderfully simple and equally obtuse, O.L. Davis states that the trait of historical empathy can be surmised as the invocation of the historical ‘imagination
restrained by evidence’ (Davis in Davis, et al, 2001, 4). Unlike the above-mentioned educators, in this call toward evidence Davis does not diminish outright the emotional content found in empathic thinking. Instead he calls the affective register ‘too valuable’ to be stricken from the historian’s arsenal (ibid., 3). Much like Downey, Davis operates under the mantle of ‘perspective taking’. In his analysis he also leverages the intuitive processes of VanFossen and Shiveley, stating that once students have acquired a working knowledge of the facts of history, perspective taking-based exercises allow them to ‘analyze, puzzle and wonder in their [own] historical thinking’ (ibid., 9).

In Davis, students first arrive at a sense of knowledge, and this followed by a sense of care. Conversely, in the four stages of empathic thinking identified by Barton and Levstik, knowledge is, crucially, the final goal. In their arguing of this inversion they chart the growth of the empathically inclined student as he engages with the perspectives and affective content of historical agents, their depiction of knowledge is requires the display of comprehension via the student’s authoring of some semblance of response. In Barton and Levstik, students first arrive at identification; followed by analysis; moral understanding, and finally, an active exhibition of knowledge that folds in both their analytical and emotive understanding of the events of history and the circumstances that mobilized such efforts and actions (2004). Citing the moral implications of this model, to abide by Barton and Levstik’s four-step process, an affective dimension in historically empathic thinking cannot be removed from the history classroom. In response to this, the authors bifurcate empathy into two separate modes of thinking through historical evidence: empathy as perspective recognition and empathy as caring.
Citing precedence in Joan Skolnick, Nancy Dulberg and Thea Maestre’s *Through Other Eyes* (2004), they assert that these ‘two distinct cultural tools’ are integral to effective, and affective, comprehension (Barton and Levstik, 2004, 207). As an anathema to the rigidity of those who liken perspective taking to cold analysis – such as VanFossen and Shiveley – Barton and Levstik argue that these two principles are simultaneously and ‘intimately bound with […historical] narrative’, and that classrooms in which such caring is not placed in the armory of skills from which students can draw impart a history that cannot be used for, or in, the present – a criticism which they argue ‘is a concise description of most history education in the United States – study without care’ (*ibid.*, 240-1).

**Defining Historical Empathy**

In amalgamating the arguments of the educationalists discussed across the opening portion of this chapter, it is clear that there are gradations of meaning throughout the rhetorical positions and professional practices of those who advocate empathic approaches to the study of history. In light of the above analysis, the thesis will define historical empathy as such:
Historical empathy is an approach to engaging with the material of history that is rooted in evidentiary investigation. Historical empathy accounts for both the critical understanding of the perspectives of historical actors based on an acknowledgement that their socio-political and cultural values were different from our own and an inescapable engagement on the emotive register with the stuff of history. Crucial to such thinking is that the affective response to history is tempered by analysis drawn from a multiplicity of viewpoints. Historically empathic exercises utilize both the perspective recognition of, and caring for, the people of the past and are well suited for dialogic formats where a myriad of viewpoints can be fostered – and different, critically informed opinions can be expressed with a respect to one another and the source material from which they are synthesized. Finally historically empathic analysis requires students to evidence their comprehension of the past through rehearsals of their understanding and the knowledge that such investigation has achieved.

Toward a Method for Empathic Engagement – Colby’s Historical Narrative Inquiry

As explored in the first chapter of this research report, the moving image is a form of historical record for which a great amount of precedent for exploration exists. Film presents a unique view of history as it was lived, and the history of Ireland’s early 20th century was duly recorded and subsequently preserved through the medium. The remainder of this research report will show how using the moving image with the approach of historical empathy can present students with a mode of historical enquiry that leads to a greater understanding of the historical record and the nation’s own forbearers. In order to work with both material and approach, however, a method for filmic engagement must be established.

For this thesis, the analysis of films from Ireland’s archival collections toward a determination of use value in historically empathic approaches to history will construct a model grounded in the process of narrative inquiry as devised by Sherri
Rae Colby. Colby’s contribution to the pedagogy of history echoes the sentiments of Barton and Levstik’s multi-stage process, but moves further again toward a continuing criticality within historical investigation. In order to simultaneously invoke the multiple disciplinary concerns of historicism, formulation and philosophy identified in the opening paragraphs of this chapter, Colby’s classroom draws on her own ‘historical narrative inquiry model’, arguing that it is through this multi-step investigation that students can empathically engage with the documents of history in a living continuum (ibid., 60; emphasis Colby’s own). Arguing that the inclusion of primary documentation ‘offers resuscitative prospects for the teaching of history through authentic accounts of historical events’, Colby’s narrative inquiry is a cyclical, six-stage process (ibid.).

Figure 6: The ‘Historical Narrative Inquiry Model’ (Colby, 2008, 61)
Drawn from her own experience as a history educator, Colby’s is a ‘generative’ model aimed at ‘open[ing] new possibilities of historical empathy’ (ibid., 61) within students. Akin to Barton and Levstik, once students are acquainted with texts, self-directed exploration and resultant reporting on one’s findings is required. Echoing the six stages of her historical enquiry, Colby posits an equal number of outcomes that students ought to achieve through the model’s implementation (ibid., 60).

Four of these are outcomes are directed at the exploratory nature of critical historical assessment, they are: fostering a fundamental interest in the past; developing ‘procedural knowledge’ of the historical enterprise – which echoes Marcus, et al, in its notion of ‘doing history’; garnering the ‘ability to analyze and critique authentic historical documents’ and actively acquiring of the interpretive skills that allow students to recognize ‘content, truthfulness, argument, language and structure’ within such records (ibid.). Colby argues that such refining of the skills of young historians leads them toward the two further, action-centred outcomes as well: forming historical perspectives based on evidentiary texts and, finally, toward the articulating of such perspectives via sustained, critical argumentation that focuses on further reflection on what the process has elucidated about the conceptualization of history for the learner (ibid.). While these six learning outcomes appear to be inherent in much of the discussion that proceeds the analysis of Colby’s model, in placing them within a rigorous, generative framework, and articulating how each can be built upon the previous, the manner in which students can begin in a typical history classroom – and leave with critical, interpretive skills borne out of their own analytical abilities –

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64 (Marcus, et al, 2010, throughout)
presents a model of learning equally focused on the outcomes of the investigation as well as the processes necessary to arrive at such findings.

**Historical Narrative Inquiry: Process**

Colby’s process begins with a provision for ‘contextual beginnings’ in which the educator ‘attempts to excite students about history, […] establish foundational skills in procedural knowledge and historical narrative analysis’ (*ibid.*, 66). The provision of these beginnings follows Wood, Bruner and Ross’ scaffolding model in all but name. Once students’ appetites are whetted toward the discipline, Colby asserts that they should be in a position to formulate their own introductory questions concerning historical events and how they have been narrativized, drawn from their own understanding about the discipline of history. To direct the move from students’ questions toward textual analysis, Colby puts forth a heuristic model for historical inquiry in which the events of history are analyzed through both primary and secondary sources. Colby includes the students’ factoring of social milieus, economic forces and political concerns into the manner in which scaffolded contextualization takes place.
The impetus in this model is for students to develop an empathic sense of history over the course of their primary investigations, and to have this understanding play a central role in their own ideas about the events that transpired and the discipline at large. Colby’s ‘student authorship’ comes from these historical inquisitors drafting their own understandings of narratives of the past and sharing them – whether through written or spoken channels (ibid., 74). The ‘event storyboard’ that appears at the bottom of Colby’s heuristic is simply one example of rehearsal of knowledge – which will lead students toward Colby’s final two stages of the narrative inquiry model (ibid., 68). Analyzing their own arguments and understandings for their strengths, and the unique insights they provide, the final stage of the historical narrative inquiry model allows students to ‘participate in [the] learning community’ with a sense of shared experience – an idea which Colby asserts is a hallmark of her empathic engagement (ibid., 78). Working through material along this Colby-based model can produce students who, according to Patricia Hannam and Eugenio Echeverria, can
think ‘critically, creatively, collaboratively and with caring’ (2009, 13). Such skills not only benefit the learner in school, they equally foreground critical skillsets necessary in civic participation. In invoking the ‘formulator’ identified by Colby, the ability to find and sustain a reasoned account of narrative amongst a series of competing sources, authors and texts cultivates students as individuals poised to participate in wider society.

**Negotiating ‘Formulation’**

Analogous to Rotha’s critique of documentary film – that it looks to the past, but is decidedly grounded in the present – an engagement with history on film can have benefits that extend beyond the Irish classroom. Bruce VanSledright argues that the student of history who thinks critically and engenders a sense of historical empathy through the evaluation of primary sources essentializes the characteristics necessary for healthy democratic life (VanSledright in Davis, *et al.*, 2001, 57). VanSledright’s thesis echoes the sentiments of Martha Nussbaum’s community-oriented drive when he argues that a sense of the empathic is necessary for participatory engagement in both the scholastic setting and wider world. Analogous to Nussbaum’s championing of citizenship via empathy as a necessary component for ‘cultivating humanity’, rather than looking at the discipline as a series of names and dates to be compartmentalized via rote repetition, history becomes complex; it becomes the stuff of a series of individuals whose perspectives and motivations can be interrogated and upon whose actions the contemporary world has been shaped (1997).
The fostering of such skills leads students toward forming critical acceptance of a multiplicity of viewpoints and reinforces the abilities necessary to negotiate the wider worlds in which young people live. As Bruce VanSledright argues an implicit honing of historical empathy:

[…] makes possible the reconstructions of past events in a way that helps us appreciate the significant differences between the present world and the world being described […] it makes us less quick to judge […] and by extension we therefore would be less quick to judge those in the contemporary world […] which is] essential to the health of pluralistic democracies.

(VanSledright in Davis, et al, 2001, 57)

Textual analysis fosters in students the capacity for them to be architects of their own, critically informed, opinions that are borne out of the sifting through and synthesizing of a polyvocality of historical voices. In their efforts toward perspective recognition and affective understanding they truly formulate their own senses of history – and by VanSledright’s extension civic reality – anew. To place this construction one step further, invoking Colby’s ‘philosopher’ mantle, students also establish their critical selves through identification with their own senses of timeliness sutured into the living historical record. While students engaged in history lessons that ignite the empathic mind are not necessarily bringing the arguments of key philosophers to bear, thinking through history in such a manner places students in a lineage of critical positions that are part of a hermeneutic tradition of history that has played a role in the appraisal of the discipline since the eighteenth century. In many ways both the ‘formulator’ and ‘philosopher’ of Colby fall in line with the clean break from the traditions of history evinced with the work of Giambattista Vico, and the interrogation of archival material students undertake recalls the examination of places of record keeping portrayed more recently in the meditations of Jacques Derrida, and those who
have followed in the wake of his meditations upon the archive. In both instances, such hermeneutical thinking is implicit in classroom-based archival analysis.

‘Philosophical/argumentative Reflection’

Despite its more recent emergence in the lexicon, the antecedents of historical narrative understanding rooted in a humanist tradition such as empathy can be traced back to the thinking of Giambattista Vico and his Scienza Nuovo [New Science] (1730/44; 2001). In lieu of the ‘cold rationality’ of Descartes’ – predicated on investigations into naturally ordered, rather than causal, subjectivity – Vico’s history was a one of men, and the lives of those men as being inherently messy and illogical. History, in Vico and in the classroom, must be more than an orderly, diachronic distillation of politics and a categorical description of events (Baridon, 2005, 296).

Evidenced in On the Study Methods of Our Time, an inaugural lecture delivered to his incoming students in 1708, Vico tasked historians with understanding the perceptible world populated by societies comprised of individuals. In light of theorizing the natural order Vico, instead argued:

\[
\text{it is an error to apply to the prudent conduct of life the abstract criterion of reasoning that obtains in the domain of science. A correct judgment deems that men [...] are ruled not by forethought, but by whim or chance. The doctrinaires judge human actions as they ought to be, not as they actually are (i.e. performed more or less at random). Satisfied with abstract truth alone, and not being gifted with common sense [...] those doctrinaires do not bother to find out whether opinion is held by the generality and whether the things that are truths to them are also such to other people.}
\]

(1990, 35; emphasis in original)
In the wake of this lecture, the *New Science* would become Vico’s life work.

For Vico the natural order could not be fundamentally understood by human endeavor – despite ‘all the philosophers [who] have so earnestly pursued a knowledge of the world’ – because this overarching schema was beyond the realm of mankind; it was the singular creation of God (Vico, 2001, 120). Counter to this inability to comprehend the machinations of the natural, Vichian understanding asserts that the ‘civil world is certainly the creation of humankind’ and an understanding of the agents of the past, within the order of the civil societies in which they lived, can be undertaken ‘within modifications of the human mind’ (*ibid*., 119-120; emphasis in original). Determining the methods through which such modifications could take place is at the core of his titular ‘new science’. What is required in this novel scientific outlay – itself the initial salvo into what would 260 years later be debated under the guise of ‘perspective recognition’ – is education. Simply, becoming a ‘new’ scientist is grounded in the capacity to change the way one thinks and disregard any initial reticence towards critically assessing the affective dimension inherent in historical study; it is an awareness, an acceptance, and a defense of Davis’ historical ‘imagination’ (Davis in Davis, *et al*., 2001, 4) and Colby’s capacity to inquire into narrativity.

In this pronouncement, Vico works through a sentiment at which he arrived in a work written previously to *New Science* entitled *De antiquissima Italorum sapientia* [On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians] in which the author proposes the distinctly anti-rationalist principle: ‘*verum esse ipsum factum*’ – or ‘the true is precisely what is
made (Vico, 1710/1988, 45-46). In Vico, it is a civilization’s aretefacts that encompasses such truth, and, therefore, the historical specificity of each nation is accounted for by the actions and sentiments of the men who lived within its time and place, this perspective-specific truth became codified by what he chose to record – in written form, on celluloid or otherwise. Vico argued that one could engage the livelihood of any set of historical actors, in a sense thinking through their world, through an active recognition of their perspective worldview.

As the creation and preserve of men, history, by way of empathic textual analysis, can be comparatively investigated to further yield the ‘history of human ideas’ and the extrapolation from these studies casts light on the evolutionary path that we took from a state of pre-literacy to the contemporary sphere where, for example, the merits and pitfalls of moving image media in the classroom setting can be contended in a doctoral thesis (ibid., emphasis in original). Such work forms the frame of a distinct reimagining of metaphysics based upon the advocacy of the sensus communis – which while translating directly to ‘common sense’, in Vico is evocative of a sense, a condition, of critically knowing – and thereby being – that is indistinct between the peoples of the present day and those who lived at any other point during the historical record.

65 A more transliteration might stand as ‘truth exists as constructed by Self’

66 The term sensus communis is utilized heavily, and in titular form by Vico scholar J.D. Shaeffer (1990), Italian editions of Vico have it remain senso commune, see (Vico, 1730/44; 1862 throughout)
In this community – its place, nation and people – the history of the age is determined by the actions of men. Therefore, across the historical trajectory a multiplicity of worldviews arises, and a sense of ‘copia’ – a profusion ways of creating and informing the world – proliferates (ibid., 252\(^67\)). This polyvocality establishes a series of culturally specific yet universally co-determined points in the historical record. The task of the historian is to reformulate the conditions of such specificity, to uncover the true intentions of such nations and exemplify the culturally specific myths such nations endeavor to sustain.

**Myth and the ‘True Homer’**

Vico asserts that the mythologies that are passed down through generations can elucidate for the historian as much about the manner in which specific creation myths existed as how systems of governance and ideologically-bounded morays operated within each nation and in each time. To articulate his premise, the work of the ‘new science’ determines what Vico calls the ‘True Homer’ as existent in the space between a poet who may or may not have lived and died three thousand years ago, a likeness of whom has been carved from innumerable slabs of marble, and an idea upon, and through, which the vicissitudes of law and ‘truth’ endemic to the Grecian society who called him their own could be read. In Vico the idea of Homer, the conjuring him up as a symbol of ancient Grecian culture, acts as a lightning rod whose namesake can be invoked to justify the actions and belief-sets of a civilization *post-hoc*. This is not just a historical condition, however, as societally we do much the

\(^{67}\) It must be noted that the Marsh translation does not use the term ‘copia’ (from the Italian ‘[…] quando in questa copia di lingue uno stesso vocabolo significa spesso diverse ed alcuna volta due tra loro contrarie cose.’) instead simply translating this phrase as ‘[an] abundance of languages, [where] a single word often has different and even contrary meanings’ (Vico, 1730/44; 1862, 215; Vico, 1730/44; 2001, 251).
same today, only with different ideologues. Adulation for heroes it not something that was endemic only to ancient Greece, and as centenary events in and across Ireland begin to be proselytized in advance of Easter, 2016, many similar motivations are being brought to bear in the contemporary landscape. In effect, Vico’s Homer was the first great man of history, corporeal or not.

Such an invocation of the great man, or men, in Vico is far more nuanced than the ideas originally posed by Thomas Carlyle, or the detractions to Carlyle’s thesis appended by Herbert Spencer. Acknowledging the bardic poet, who in Carlyle’s text is responsible for the term’s coinage, the Scotsman asserts that it was the lives and legacies of individual that become transfixed in the historical record – and further asserted that it is Homer who is ‘veritably present face to face with every open soul of us’ rather than some Grecian society ‘[d]esolate for thousands of years; away, vanished; a bewildered heap of stones and rubbish, the life and existence of it all gone’ (Carlyle, 1840/1970, 264).

Conversely, Spencer would argue that such an engendering of the individual to the place of record must take into account that even the great man of history ‘must be classed with all other phenomena in the society that gave him birth, as a product of its antecedents’ (Spencer, 1896; 2003, 34). In short, Carlyle’s great man of history stands above and beyond the confines of a once great society, while in Spencer, what historians attribute to Homer, they too must attribute to the society under whose conditions he lived and to whom he related his tales. However, in Vico neither is the
case; the Italian’s middling position between the individuation found in Carlyle and the sense of utility found in Spencer has deeper implications.

Acknowledging that the ‘True Homer’ was not some blind, bardic poet, but rather a transposition of then-contemporary Grecian morays and values into a mythologically rich series of tales of daring means that ‘the history of the natural law of the Greek nations [no longer] remained hidden’ (Vico, 1730/44; 2001, 387). In kind, it is the viciousness and cunning venerated within the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* that speak to the rule of law in the specific Grecian state from which the stories arose. Similarly, the films that give adulation to the heroes of the revolution of 1916, or the films made fifty years later, which perpetuated an ideology of modernization and greater Europeanization in the Lemass era, reveal the socio-politics of the days they were made. To bastardize the oft-quoted line delivered by Maxwell Scott [Carelton Young] to Ransom Stoddard [James Stewart] in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (d. Ford, 1962), ‘when the socio-political conditions of the society in question are laid bare by the facts; print the legend’.

Since time immemorial, such legends have been an integral socializing point for societal makeup, and in the modern age they have been written, printed on celluloid, or codified and stored by other means. That about which a society chooses to write, and how it enshrines such motivations, dictates what and how a society chooses to record and archive its own, then-living, history. Whether something is ultimately preserved and how it is read when viewed by the historian, or student, adds a further dimension to the narrativity of history. In order to glean these ‘True Homers’ of text –
It is to archives that historians, student-philosophers and the present analysis must turn.

**Interrogating the ‘Archive’ in the History Classroom**

The exploration of archival records is vital to the project of history. It is that upon which the profession is based, and it is a necessary critical faculty to be fostered in students for the success of the history classroom. In an effort to make students no longer view the historical record as they would their ‘driver’s education manuals’, the capacity to discern the thoughts and proclivities revealed in the analysis of historical texts cannot be underestimated (Wineburg, 1991, 519). The use of film in this process is unique. The celluloid form of historical record must be treated as both distinct from, and similar to, any other type of source.

Toward the former, the film form and its capacity to record and present both the monumental and mundane – Ferro’s ‘equal […] documentary objects’ (1976, 81; *emphasis in original*) – has been discussed at length in the analysis throughout the previous chapter; toward the latter, the filmic tableaux, as well as the conditions under which such films were made and preserved for posterity are equal parts of Wineburg’s call to understand the ‘human motive in the texts we read’ – the antecedents of which lie within Vichian thinking (1991, 518). The motives Wineburg cites in his analysis can be understood as the politics of archivilization. As well as the store of records waiting to be ordered and disseminated in a historicized narrative – the factors of socialization and politics are never removed from the archive. This distinction is a result of ‘the archive’ as a theoretical conceit through which we can interpret the
concessions of the age – as well as a bricks-and-mortar building constructed to preserve and house the records and artifacts of history.

This connotation of archive, much like the concept of history problematized by Hayden White and Robert Rosenstone, is grounded in the simple, fundamental question of ‘what can we know?’ Approaching the archive as a theoretical concession, in his *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault posits that rather than a simple repository, as a metaphor the archive demarcates a line between having the capacity for knowledge from the position of not being able to know (2002, 142-150). The entire rhetorical landscape – that which encompasses the things a society can reach for under the auspice of knowing – falls into his estimation of what the term archive denotes. This metaphor still captivates; as Manuel DeLanda argues, to speak of the archive in any contemporary guise one must hold the discussion as analogous to the Gregorian calendar as a matter delineating whether such conceptualizations exists ‘before [or] after Foucault’ (2003, 8).

For Foucault, the archive ‘is that which differentiates discourses […] specifying] them in their own duration’, and as nations and their capacities for knowledge grow and evolve beyond their own boundedness, so too will their archive shift and change in similitude (2002, 146). Such estimation leads Michael O’Driscoll to determine that Foucault’s archive, as metaphor and as conceit, acts as simultaneous ‘s/citation’ of knowledge from which we can derive history (2002, 284-5). This s/cite is a site – or place – for recollection as well as cite – or citation – from which our knowledge, and
thereby argumentation, gains provenance and leverages previous thoughts and actions.

Indeed, the historical record has repeatedly shown cultures of the world that the way to effect change within a society’s borders – or to wage war and destroy another society from beyond its borders – is through the razing of its archives. From the burning of the library in Alexandria in 642 to the systematic destruction of the Mayan archives by the colonizing Spanish forces in the 16th century, history is replete with examples of archival destruction leading to a loss of national identification. More topically, the 1922 destruction of the Four Courts in Dublin – which then housed the Public Records Office – speaks to the irrevocable loss of such cultural, genealogical and legislative artifacts within the nation of Ireland.

Counter to this Foucauldian archive as a largely benign critical theoretical construct that simply defines a culturally determined capacity for knowledge, an oppositional reading of the archive, the interpretation of Jacques Derrida, sees the concept as far more menacing. In Derrida, the archive is stricken with an immutable ‘sickness’ for which there is no cure, and the political repercussions of this reading leave the citizenry of a society with little recourse for escape (1996, 91).

Derrida’s Archive

For Derrida, archival construction under the guises of data preservation and historical research has serious implications for the present day. Given the ubiquity of archives
and storage devices in the contemporary world, and our impulsive need for acquisition and collation of data, he posits a significant ‘breakdown of […] memory’, the byproduct being a crisis in how we create ordered, socialized identity, and thereby history (1996, 11). Writing in *Mal d’Archive*, he asserts ‘[n]othing is less reliable, nothing is less clear today than the word “archive”. […] Nothing is more troubled and more troubling’ (*ibid.*, 90).

Inherent to archives, in Derrida, is a sense of the proprietary. To stake this claim, Derrida takes the term archive back to its etymological root, citing that *arkheion*, in Greek, simply demarcates ‘the residence of the magistrate [arkhon]’ who governed a city-state (*ibid.*, 2). In the field of archival production and maintenance, largely immune to the trappings of theoretical discourse, this sense of the proprietary was made manifest when, in 1975, the American archivist Gerald Ham argued that members of his profession must exercise what deemed the ‘archival edge’ necessitated by the deluge of archivable information made possible with the advent of digital storage (1975, 12).

Previous to this declaration, archivists the world over toiled under the auspice of the *Manual for the Arrangement and Description of Archives*, known colloquially as the *Dutch Manual*, penned in 1898 by Muller, Feith and Fruin, a document that – at its core – mandated a methodological claim of *respect des fonds*, or truth to the source material and its context (1898/2003, xx). Archivists were to dismiss outright the idea of placing records from different sources together for fear of decontextualizing the linear depiction of history such documents would dictate to the historian as he acted
as passive, objective interlocutor of the records he was utilizing to tell the story of the past (Ketelaar, 1996, 31). Gerald Ham’s belief was that, less than a century on from the Dutch Manual, archivists had to acknowledge that the sheer amount of ‘potential archive data’ was ‘forcing [the archivist] to make choices that he never had to make before’ (1975, 6). Calling for archivists to acknowledge their ‘archival edge’, Ham argued that archival professionals and record holders had to cease to operate under the passivity of being ‘true to the record’ and to actively acknowledge that they had a role in the acquisition and de-acquisition of material that is determined by them to be of historical significance (ibid., 12). It was enough that at the beginning of the next decade, Ham declared the profession had clearly moved into a ‘post-custodial era’ (1981, 53; emphasis in original).

This ‘edge’ of which he spoke, a ‘demanding intellectual process’, meant that professional archivists were put in a position where they must now decide what material ought be acquired for the historical record (Ham 1975, 6). Concomitantly, such archivists must determine what records ought to be de-acquired on account of their lacking historical significance. While de-acquisition is a workaday concern for archivists, the conscious act of asserting what records will be binned, burned, shredded, deleted or wiped from the historical record is problematic in Derrida’s calculation. While not necessarily requiring students of history to take up a titular ‘edge’ within their own investigations, the implications of Ham’s provisos on archival selection require students to further interrogate the ideological operations at play in the selection of shots and the hierarchical arrangement of narrative elements on display within the films on offer. Ham’s post-custodial critique echoes the sentiments
of Pierre Nora in what he calls ‘the acceleration of history’ which is the byproduct of our ever increasingly busy, and documented, lives\textsuperscript{68} (Nora, 1989, 7).

Given the veracity with which we presently archive our lives within a media and information-saturated society, Derrida asserts that we consign our very notions of self away. We imbue repositories, hard drives and digital cloud services with the power to dictate our own identity formation – and what is at stake in his ‘sickness’ is our capacity for memory making, since we look to such locales and devices to store and then to benevolently resign our archivable records and data back to us. For Derrida this place, or site of memory – to reframe the arguments of Nora, immediately questions records’ viable historicity. While archives allow us to attend to ‘multiple meanings’ uncovered by ‘interrogating not only the administrative context, but also the social, cultural, political, religious contexts of […the] creation, maintenance and use’ of films, photographs or any other form of archivable text, if the past has already undergone an erasure, or the whole of an object is not there to provide material for evaluation, the question of history becomes all the more stymied, if not moot (Ketelaar, 2001, 141).

The tenability of knowledge creation, retention and dissemination are made problematic whenever any object – text, film or otherwise – is cordoned off and demarcated within the space of archive. Perspective recognition founded in empathic engagement with the records of history must maintain such criticality. While records

\textsuperscript{68} By way of singular example, the United States Library of Congress [LOC] receives an estimated 22,000 items for potential inclusion into its repositories every working day (LOC, n.d. online).
and memories are ‘transposed into a[n externalized] teaching’ tool, from which we can investigate and strive to understand history (Hawlbachs, 1992, 188), students must do so in a manner that approaches Wineburg’s ‘human motive[s]’ identified as the unique preserve of the professional historian (Wineburg, 1991, 518). Crucially, recent concessions to more critical traditions of history scholarship make it possible to make such inroads within the Irish educational landscape at present.

This analysis has shown the processes inherent to Colby’s model and how thinking with empathy places the student of history in a lineage of thinkers that have conceptualized and challenged the normativity of history. While young people may not be conscious of a utilization of Vichian hermeneutics or a deconstruction archives-as-metaphors in keeping with Derridean thought, there is still an educative sleight-of-hand at play within such classrooms. While students are undertaking an acknowledged historical study, through the scaffolded environment that posits empathic thinking and critical, inquisitive perspective recognition as guidelines with which to engage in the study of primary documentation, young people are engaging with the kernel of each of these philosopher’s modes of analysis.

**Amending Colby to Suit the Study**

In determining the role that Colby’s thinking can play in the examination of Ireland’s film heritage, this thesis abridges Colby’s model. Since the research project interrogates a single form of primary historical text – the motion picture – an amended model dispels the discrepancy between primary and secondary forms of documentation. Looking to determine how film can augment the history syllabus, as it
exists in its revised state, the secondary material of the textbook exists with the initial stage of the revised model. As such, an amended form of Colby’s narrative inquiry model that will carry the thesis through its completion appears as such:

Figure 8: amended Historical Narrative Inquiry model

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In the amended model, a greater emphasis is placed on the comparative elements of the filmic and other forms of text and the dialogic engagement of working through the findings of filmic analysis in a group – placing emphasis on the acknowledgement of others’ interpretations, insights and opinions. Similarly, an amended heuristic provides a the model for how the films of the National Film Archie can be utilized in empathic investigations into political and social history of 20th century Ireland. The new model for engagement is grounded in two types of outcomes: first learning and then actionable engagement. Across both the political and social landscapes, the mode of study simultaneously draws on formal, filmic analysis and a bifurcated empathic approach to the material of history. To the latter form of examination, emphasis is placed on asserting how the perspectives and affective registers evidenced by the films can be understood in the contemporary classroom, populated by 21st century young people.

Similarly, the final actions of the above model: Presentation, Dialogue and Critical Reflection are further broken down into two constituent pedagogical outcomes. The first looks to the benefits of history for history – and how the investigation of filmic texts can augment the book-based learning, and other forms of document-based study, that occur within the classroom. As well, this newly minted model poses the manner in which the film-centered exercises, dialogic engagement and scaffolded lesson construction can be of greater benefit to the learner beyond the scope of the history syllabus. The revised heuristic that carries the analysis of the next two chapters looks like this:
<table>
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<th>Textual Basis</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Film Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political Development of Ireland</td>
<td>• What does the film evidence?</td>
<td>• What narratives can be drawn from the film?</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• What techniques are being utilized?</td>
<td>• What critical and affective motivations appear?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who was the intended audience?</td>
<td>• What relevance do such narratives have today?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Development of Ireland</td>
<td></td>
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**Overarching Narrative:**

THE EVOLUTION OF EARLY 20th CENTURY IRELAND

Figure 9: amended heuristic
Placing an emphasis on both avenues for perspective recognition and empathic caring, the filmic analysis will break down into texts that can be used for the benefit of teaching and working through political history and the history of Irish social development. Taking into account the historicity of the debates surrounding empathy as teaching tool as well as the philosophical underpinnings shown to inform such efforts, the textual analysis presented in the following chapters, and the practical considerations for their dissemination, will form an initial, exploratory salvo into the argument that the lack of inclusion of Ireland’s film heritage in the teaching of Irish history poses an oversight requiring amelioration.

**Selecting the Films for the Thesis, Derridean Critique**

With argumentation founded in the critique of the power and provenance of historical records posed by deconstructed archival theory, it must be acknowledged that the stock of films to which teachers, and students alike, can turn has fallen victim to the inherent constructedness of the Derridean archive. As Curator of Irish Film Programming at the Irish Film Institute Sunniva O’Flynn notes:

> In the absence, until relatively recently, of a national film archive, much early indigenous material which still exists does so because it was salvaged as a material of “historical” importance […] the newsreel items which have survived are illustrative almost exclusively if political and “historical” activity, without the balancing effect of the social interest/magazine items which were common in complete newsreels at the time.

(O’Flynn, in Smither and Klaue, 1996, 57)

Fortunately, for the sake of approaching Irish history, it is in the exceptions to this rule – as well as the work of amateur cineastes, Irish-language revivalists and non-
indigenous productions made in Ireland that provide a host of resource materials – that can be appropriated into the strategies through which the intentions put forth in the reformulated *Guidelines for Teachers* can work.

The next two chapters will draw on 102 examples of films from the holdings of the National Film Archive which can be utilized to cast light on 20th century Irish history. The list is not a definitive example, but rather an introduction to the archives’ stacks drawn from an extensive exploration of the material housed within the repositories. Two conditions were placed on the films selected for inclusion, the first was that the films included in this thesis must have already undertaken migration from film reel to a more sustainable format; the second was that all of the films in question have had the rights holders identified already.

The insistence upon films that have been migrated onto a more stable format is as much a necessity of the nation’s film archive as it was for the thesis. While many celluloid examples have been transferred on to more permanent formats, notably standard and high definition DigiBeta, the capacity to exhibit such records is largely limited to professional media organizations – schools remain unable to access much of this material. Migrating these films further, whether for online streaming or DVD dissemination requires intent, knowledge of the holdings available, ability to navigate the databases and, crucially, access, time and finances.
Regarding material still on celluloid, the national archive does not have professional telecining capabilities, and such efforts must be undertaken in either a makeshift fashion or be processed out-of-house, at further incurred expense. The capacity for working with filmic materials from the first half of the 20th century is further problematized, as many of the films shot before the advent of ‘safety’ stock in the early 1950s were completed on a nitrocellulose base. Anyone familiar with the etymology of the adage about ‘fire in a crowded theater’ will be aware of the fact that nitrate film is highly flammable, has the capacity to auto-ignite at very low temperatures, produces poisonous nitrogen dioxide vapor upon burning and its fire can prove to be extremely difficult to douse as it continues burning under water (Slide, 2000, 1; HSE [GB], 2010, 2). No archive in Ireland has the capacity to transfer nitrate film to safety stock, nor is the Irish Film Archive insured to keep it on its premises. Any transferring of historically relevant material for retention within the Irish archive requires hazardous material transit across the sea for processing in the British Film Institute, where it joins the queue of films to be transferred, and, likewise, incurs no small cost in the procedure.

An example of this process is the on-going preservation efforts of the ‘Ballinlough Film Club Collection’. The series of short reels were collected by two brothers – now in their seventies – in a suburb of Cork in the 1950s. In February 2011, the collection was found in the attic of the amateur cinéastes’ younger sister’s home in a manner

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69 Telecine is the process by which film, most often played at 24 frame per second is videotaped to both change its format and align the rates of frame, as the standard PAL format is 25 frames per second (though progressive scans that ‘blend’ frames can run at both 50 and 60 frames per second). This can be done with precision-timed transfer instruments or in a makeshift fashion, which is simply projecting a film onto a wall and videotaping the proceedings – which often results in noticeable flicker. Irregular synchronization frame rates means that, unlike NTSC which requires blending of frames, film is generally viewed 4% faster than initially shot and captured a single frame at a time. See (Waggoner, 2010, 69)
dubbed by Tony Tracy as the ‘biscuit tin phase’ of film history (2010, 28). The two-dozen reels were in a rusting Mikado box waiting either to be found, appraised and conserved or left to disintegrate – or ignite.

It would appear that the brothers collected the films from a number of sources throughout Cork including a local chemist and other amateur projectionists. They would then house their own ‘screenings’ with ‘Free Admission’ on Friday and Sunday evenings in their home of Clotilde, Ballinlough. All of fragments were silent, substandard material varying in length from 20 to 900 feet, though most exist between 20 and 200 feet – or 30 seconds to 5 minutes of running time. As well as local fare, including still advertisements on glass slides, a host of dramatic, sports and comedic shorts from the likes of Popeye and Charlie Chaplin and a series of newsreels from both Ireland and beyond the nation’s shores were found in the Ballinlough collection. In the box were pristinely archived clippings from trade magazines, a homemade program for one weekend’s screenings hand written in an A6-sized notebook and another note that detailed a series of newsreels, many of which did not appear in the original program. Many of the films and fragments housed in the collection piqued the interest of both the National Film Archive and the British Film Institute.

After an incredibly expeditious survey of the material on hand, given the National Film Archive’s inability to keep nitrate stock in their stacks, a series of digital records

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70 David Elkins calculates 16mm stock to 36 feet per minute at 40 frames per foot when running film for synchronous sound. Given that these films were silent, and, possibly hand cranked/projected, these are, at best, approximations. See: Elkins, 2005, 432

71 See Appendix Four for scans of the original ‘program’ and the notes about the newsreel cataloged in the Ballinlough Film Club Collection
were made and the, salvageable, noteworthy examples were sent via certified, licensed, hazardous material carrier to the British Film Institute for transfer on to safety stock. At the time of completion of this thesis, they remain in climate-controlled, fire retardant limbo. The films that were not of interest to the archives and those that had decomposed too far to warrant reconstruction were returned to the original owner under the auspice that she would be disposed of via a certified hazardous waste specialist. While the impetus of this thesis is not the workaday concerns of the archivists within Ireland’s national repositories, this brief glimpse into the technical steps necessary to get material from ‘tin’ to screen casts light on the process of collating and disseminating potential educational materials. Once disseminated, however, a subsequent problem arises.

**Exhibiting Archival Film; Copyright and the Classroom**

Before further questions of transferability and exhibition for the classroom can be concretized, it must be noted that the national archive’s remit is that of custodian, rather than rights holder. This means that copyright, and right to exhibition, remains with the initial holders in every instance where one can be identified. This presents a notable problem for the grey area that is the exhibition of media, of any kind, for educational purposes. The Irish Copyright Act of 2000 states that films and recordings of broadcast material and musical performances remain within copyright until the last principal participant on the production has been deceased for 70 years; in the case of film, the significant death date plus 70 years can rest with the director, the producer(s), significant actors or the screenwriter(s), determined singularly by who of these individuals is last to shuffle off this mortal coil. Within this lifetime plus seventy years timeframe, films can be reviewed and utilized for education without an
infringement of copyright under the ‘fair dealing’ clause provided for solely for ‘the purposes of research or private study’; this occurs in isolation and only with officially sanctioned copies of the work (Attorney General, 2000, 48).

In wider educational use and actual classroom context, even the written word may only be disseminated provided it has not been reprographically reproduced; that is, only if an educator has gone to the trouble of transcribing a piece of text, or a musical score, and acknowledged its provenance, is it deemed to not infringe copyright (ibid., 43). However, given the inherently reprographic nature of film, this becomes an impossibility. The Irish statute book contends with this issue by declaring that if the teacher who intends to use the material makes a sole copy himself, or herself, for inclusion in a single classroom, rather than wider exhibition, and that copy remains on his person, rather than being lent out, such material is determinately within the letter of the law (ibid., 53). This means that any effort to exhibit materials in history classrooms across Ireland with any semblance of prescriptive engagement requires every clip, for which copyright is acknowledged, cleared in writing by each expressed rights holder. For a project such as Look at History which was housed within the library of the producing body, RTÉ, this can be done with little effort; for the films housed within the National Film Archive, the owner of every newsreel, clip and excerpt would have to be located in order to be in compliance with a statute book that makes little concession for education.

Beyond the history classroom the wider implication of this statement is that in every instance where an educator shows a DVD, uses a clip in school, plays a podcast of a
timely radio debate, logs in to YouTube (when the website has been cleared by that school’s administration) to further illustrate a point or principle – that educator is in violation of copyright law unless clearances – between €100 and €200 for a film watched by up to 500 individuals where no admission has been charged – have been paid to the Motion Picture Licensing Company [MPLC]. While studios that are included in the official list are acceptable for screening, upon receiving payment, screening the works of studios and producers who do not fall within the MPLC remit, including indigenous films such as those produced with funds from The Irish Film Board/Bord Scannán na hÉireann, require individual copyright brokerage.\(^{72,73}\)

While the issue of Irish copyright legislation and the letter of the law must be flagged in this thesis, educators and school administrators often remain unaware of the nominal illegality of their actions as they go about their daily business of teaching – whether it is a history class or otherwise. Furthermore, since the Attorney General does not make a habit of levying fines at individual teachers or schools, many classrooms go on using films, videos and excerpts blissfully nescient to the any

\(^{72}\) See Appendices Six and Seven for the complete list of producers with whom the MPLC has reached agreements and the costs incurred for screening films in compliance with the MPLC and Irish copyright law

\(^{73}\) By contrast the United Kingdom makes concessions toward copyright clearance in two manners. First, films shown as educational material do not find themselves in contention of copyright – unlike Ireland’s statutes they can be used for teaching and learning in good faith and is given acknowledgement (Copyright, Designs and Patent Act, 1988, section 32/F1). Secondly, all other films screened in schools, such as in film clubs, or as a ‘treat’ at the end of a term, are provided for under a blanket, nominal sum incurred by schools as brokered via the Public Video Screening License [PVS License], which acts as a catchall for anything housed within the repositories of Filmbank [UK], a distribution service that includes most major and independent producers. The provision of a PVS License means that there is no further charge for the exhibition of films in non-admissions-fee situations. Unlike the Irish system, films can be rented, brought from home or purchased and screened as many times as required (see Appendix Eight for the studios that participate in the PVS License system).
infractions being perpetrated, thereby reinforcing the notion of film viewing operating within a legal grey area within the scholastic setting.

In 2012, largely in response to digital piracy and intellectual property theft, the Irish government began the process of actively amending the laws governing copyright (Taylor, 2012, online; RTÉ News, 2012a, online). While digital distribution remains the primary motivation for such, subsequent thinking through the concessions that could be made toward education has been raised. The initial consultation period for stakeholders’ viewpoints, expertise and interests expired on May 31, 2012, and at the time of submission the manner in which the remit of educators will be amended, or remain the same, has yet to be determined (RTÉ News, 2012b, online).

The raising of these two fields of concern – digitization and copyright – is in an acknowledgement that the work of this thesis exists in a largely exploratory manner. Given the outright lack of filmic engagement with on the history syllabus, this research report stands as an initial salvo that actively catalogues a series of films and approaches and weighs them against models of narrative investigation and empathic understanding that can assist in the bringing to life Irish social and political history. While each film presents a unique insight into the composition of history, in an effort to typify them toward codification, the 102 films identified across the next two chapters break down in the following manner:
British Newsreels 33
Irish Newsreels (*Amharc Éireann*) 18
Primitive and Early Actuality and Travelogues 23
National Film Institute Productions 15
‘Officially’ Sanctioned Tourist Films 4
Priests’ Collections 3
‘Other’ 6

**Figure 10: breakdown of types of films included in the analysis**

Exactly half of the works under consideration are of the newsreel variety. As noted in the O’Flynn quote above, films of a political nature, notably efforts such as newsreel content, often received precedence regarding acquisition and preservation. Likewise, the above chart makes clear that British organizations, rather than indigenous film producers, authored a much larger percentage of the newsreels on offer. As Ciara Chambers notes, ‘most available footage was produced by British companies’ (2012, 1) and:

> [b]y far the most significant cinematic account of this period is provided by the Pathé company. […] British Pathé is the longest-running newsreel operator (1910-1970) to cover Ireland […] Pathé offers 1,600 items in relation to Ireland, 42 percent of the [newsreel] coverage, and as such, is highly representative of the material that audiences would have accessed.[..]  

*(ibid., 3)*

It must be noted that Chambers’ own study is compiled from the records of the BUFVC, rather than National Film Archive in Dublin, and that the argument of this thesis does not rest in a comprehensive analysis of Pathé’s holdings, but rather an overview of material, analysis and techniques for classroom inclusion is drawn from the examples provided.
On the other end of the political spectrum, the social history of Ireland is on display in many of the Colm O’Laoghaire directed *Amharc Éireann* series of newsreels. On the heels of a digitization project undertaken by the archive, this thesis draws on a number of examples *Amharc Éireann* to portray the manner in which the nation was rapidly modernizing during the tenure of the newsreel service – this analysis will be form a central tenant of Chapter Five. Also in the fifth chapter, examples of the tourist film will be viewed as such genre pictures carry great significance for the manner in which Irish filmmakers, and filmmakers from beyond Ireland’s shores, concocted a notion of national identity, space and place.

As well as the nationalist agenda, within the thesis the collections of three Catholic priests are analyzed, as the social history of Ireland in the middle decades of the twentieth century was inseparable from religiosity. Furthermore, the notion of cine-literate priests – who had access to many members of the community – is a curious recurrent motif in Irish non-fictional film history, worthy of inclusion in this study. The final ‘other’ categorization includes advertisements, a handful of film essays – elegies for locations and ways of life – and other amateur footage that does not befit the previous categories.

In its analysis, these films will be discussed from a multidisciplinary perspective. Moving beyond the taking stock of what each film contains, the textual examinations will provide historical context of the films, filmmakers and events they portray as well as possible inroads for empathic engagement determined from the strategies put forth in the summation of historical empathy. Grounded in what each can add to the
history curriculum, and tied to the Leaving Certificate History Syllabus as authored by the NCCA (2003), the analysis presented over the next two chapters is intended to both augment the manner in which history is taught within the Irish educational system and place such efforts against the wider backdrop of filmic inclusion in curricular development.

Conclusion

This third chapter has presented a series of competing ideas regarding how historical empathy can be comprised, striving to define the term in a novel and comprehensive manner, this chapter has looked to the precedents established by psychologists and educators alike as they have attempted to delineate the manner in which empathic thinking operates, and how it is a necessary attribute that requires fostering within young people if they are to grow into actualized, civically-participating adults. The centrality of the work of Sherri Rae Colby – from her stance that young historians investigating narrativity through empathic means take on a series of concomitant learning roles, to her models for engagement, understanding and action – leads this chapter through its multiple analyses, suturing together filmic analysis, creative and democratic thinking and the hermeneutic and deconstructive philosophical traditions of Vico and Derrida respectively.

Inherent to all of the educationalists on offer in this chapter is the assertion that history can be taught in a more fulfilling manner, and that through a systematic, scaffolded environment, the documents of the past and their subsequent interrogation,
can lead students toward unique and insightful understandings of the events of history and the concessions of the historical project. By articulating medium-specific turns on the models presented by evolved from Colby’s initial heuristic, and utilizing the understanding of historical empathy defined by this chapter’s analysis, the next two chapters will articulate how the filmic traditions of Ireland can be utilized by students in the ‘siting and citing’ the perspectives and affective motivations of historical actors toward an understanding of the past; equally the analysis will articulate how the past can be made manifest within the contemporary landscape and mindset of 21st century Republic. Through this effort history can come alive in the dialogically-oriented classroom, and, rather than being the sole preserve of the textbook that retains the imprint of a reading of the past, investigation and discussion can centre around a moving, tactile interpretation of history’s agents. From this understanding, and operating under the joint mantles of historian, investigator, formulator and philosopher young people can benefit from turning the prognosis of Barton and Levstik on its head. Thinking through empathy warrants ‘study with[…] care’ (2004, 241). The purpose of the next two chapters is to provide inroads for how such care can be made manifest via Ireland’s national film heritage.
Chapter FOUR:  
Empathic Approaches to Political Historical Film

Writing in *The Irish Cinema Handbook* in 1953, J.B. O’Sullivan recounts the interview process he underwent to secure a place in the Irish Film Society’s training programme for young directors. From a list of more than a hundred applicants, only a handful of potential filmmakers were to be chosen. During the series of questions posed to him, O’Sullivan was asked whether he had ‘any ideas about the exploiting of the medium (O’Sullivan in Devane, 1953, 131)?’ In recollecting the interview process, and the answer to this question in particular, he stated:

> Here I was on surer ground. There had been an idea in the back of my mind for some time: to do a simple documentary on the lifeguard at a bathing resort. I became quite voluble about my ambitions. There were two or three other features I would like to do. Of enormous interest to the average Irish cinemagoer would be the screen portrayals of life as lived by the thousand-and-one kinds of people who have their being among us. My Life. A Day in My Life. The cobbler, the postman, the tinker, the tailor, the candlestick maker – each had a story to tell, yet he was overlooked when screen material was sought, the quiet drama of his daily routine ignored. Yet we have sat through – and enjoyed – this simple kind of documentary when served up by British and American film companies, who cleverly exploit the appeal of the commonplace.[\textit{ibid.}]

In O’Sullivan’s arguing that the workaday lives and experiences of the denizens of the young Republic would be of interest to his peers, his ‘simple documentaries’ also lay the groundwork for filmic records that, when viewed as memoirs of the past, can illicit in historians an understanding of the actions and motivations of those who the films portray. The previous chapters have argued that such ideas carry with them a great amount of precedent beyond Irish shores, and that through a method of empathic engagement and interrogation, the indigenous archival holdings of the National Film
Archive can provide many opportunities for students of history to understand the ‘thousand-and-one kinds of people’ and the nation they forged across the twentieth century.

For this thesis, the use of the term ‘indigenous’ encompasses films made in Ireland, about Ireland and the Irish people, without an insistence on the documents having been created by Irish production companies. This distinction is predicated on previously explored debates in Chapter Two concerning whether enough films were made in an ‘Irish’ idiom to persuasively argue whether a film industry did, indeed, exist at any point during the 20th century. Looking at both Irish-made and foreign productions further offers the capacity to draw distinctions about how the young nation chose to represent itself to its citizens – and to the wider world – and how that wider world chose to respond in kind in its own depictions of codified Irishness.

As noted toward the end of the previous chapter, many of the films, especially those viewed under the auspice of what they might inform regarding political history, were made by British cinematographers and newsreel services. While they stand as a testament to the visual record of Ireland’s tumultuous early 20th century history, they must be viewed, as they were in their own day by those ‘of a nationalist disposition,’ as flagrantly ‘partisan in favour of occupying forces’ (Chambers, 2012, 1).

Grounded within the collection housed within the National Irish Film Archive, the following chapters explore films created before the launch of Raidió Teilifís Éireann
on December 31, 1961, as with the advent of television the manner of media dissemination and archivilization changed dramatically. Furthermore, as the thrust of this thesis is toward critical approaches to the exploration of filmic history, rather than archival science and database construction, the work undertaken by these chapters – their survey and analysis of films for their potential use value in the teaching of history – must be acknowledged as an exploratory study rather than a comprehensive taxonomy across the entirety of the Archive’s holdings. In order to determine how such films can bolster the core curriculum, the manner in which the syllabus is prescribed, and how it views original documentation, must be investigated.

Concessions for Film in History Textbooks
Beginning in the Junior Cycle the history promotes ‘the job of the historian and the methods s/he uses which will inform the rest of the course’ (NCCA, 2003, 39). In many ways this point of departure lays the groundwork for the first two stages – Conceptual Beginnings; Curricular Engagement and In-depth Questioning – proposed in the amended narrative inquiry model in the previous chapter. Despite the integral foundation that students receive in their Junior Cycle History experience, a brief survey of 7 of the leading comprehensive texts for Junior Certificate History preparation showcases a lack of standard acknowledgement of film, of any kind, as a viable source for historical investigation (ibid. 3). While looking for variation among them, and filmic inclusion within them, it must be acknowledged that each individually authored textbook is working toward the stipulations outlined within the curricular guidelines, and as such, many recurring themes emerge. Many texts utilize the same examples as references and primary case studies for wider historical analysis.
The first chapter of each of the following textbooks is a turn on the theme of what history is and how the role of the historian can be defined. It is in each respective first chapter that a discussion around the types of sources at a historian’s disposal can be found. As stressed by the Junior Cycle syllabus, essential outcomes for the study of history include ‘enabl[ing] students to distinguish between fact and opinion, detect bias identify propaganda’ and each textbook highlights these notions in its detailing of types of source material (ibid., 2). In the instances in which film is made reference to, it occurs under the auspices of a visual source; in other instances film is altogether disregarded by omission.

Much like the Guidelines for Teachers, the most recent editions of both the Education Company of Ireland’s Living History textbook and Folens’ Uncovering History omit the mention of filmic evidence of any kind. In the former, under the title ‘Where do historians and archaeologists get their evidence?’ the examples provided of visual sources are ‘photographs, drawings or paintings’, and in a rather perfunctory manner the notion that such sources ‘help us to find out what people looked like and how they dressed’ is offered as the strength of such examples (Collins, et al, 2000/2004, 6). Equally, Seán Delap and Paul McCormack’s text points out that ‘[v]isual sources such as photographs and cartoons are very useful sources’; however, it adds the strict provision that ‘[a]s with written sources, historians have to be careful with photographs. Photographs can be changed’ (2011, 6). As with a number of other example of Junior Cycle text, two pictures of Joseph Stalin, one with an unnamed former party-ally removed, are used to defend this point (ibid.).
Charles Hayes’ Gill and Macmillan-published 2009 text *New Complete History* makes a fleeting reference toward filmic inclusion in its opening pages. In a sidebar it presents to students the idea that ‘[h]istorical sources take many forms’ including ‘Pictorial’ sources – which incorporate ‘photographs, painting and documentary films (films about actual people and events)’ (Hayes, 2). While Hayes’ definition of documentary may not have the nuance of John Grierson, and lumps both actuality and investigative treatments together under one aegis, other texts make the wider distinction clear.

Discussing ‘Photographs, Paintings and Documentaries’ in *The Past Today*, Dermot Lucey posits that:

> Photographs and paintings capture a moment in time. Documentary films, which use film of real events, add sound and action to give us a better understanding of what life was like. But the director of the documentary can use film in a biased way.

(2009, 2)

Lucey elaborates this sense of bias with an inclusion of the previously mentioned pictures of Stalin as proof of the suspect nature of such photographic evidence. To this analysis, the author adds workaday objects and indigenous architecture to the visual armory from which historians can draw inferences about the past. In a manner more explicit than many of his peers, Lucey’s text sets out for the student of history a line of argument that states:

> Pictorial sources show us the way things were – the living conditions, the dress, the buildings and the transport. In the case of famous leaders, pictorial sources put faces to the names of the main characters of history and make them more real. We can also use pictorial sources to compare the past with the present.

*(ibid.)*
Lucey’s utilization of these myriad sources comes with caveats. Anathema to the manner in which the likes of Pierre Sorlin argued that fiction films can act as a cipher through which political and social representation can be viewed, in Modern Europe and the Wider World, a more question-specific text aimed at students preparing for the Leaving Certificate, Lucey argues that under no uncertain circumstances, ‘[d]o NOT list historical fiction – books or films – as a source’, regardless of whether such films portray people who had actually existed (2010, 418; emphasis in original).

Patsy McCaughey adds to Lucey’s sentiment in the Discovering History textbook wherein he likens ‘stories, photos, songs, newspapers, films, books, paintings [and] documents’ to ‘jigsaw pieces’, and goes so far as to isolate the capacity to ‘examin[e] photos, videos and films about events’ as one particular element of historical analysis vital to both historical studentship and professional craft (n.d. 3-4). McCaughey’s introductory chapter takes a closer look at many types of new media in a manner wholly unlike anything else on offer to the Junior Cycle curriculum. As well as discriminating between ‘videos and films’ the author acknowledges that the student of history must be cogent in ‘[r]esearching (finding out about) information on the internet’ and points to archival ‘TV and radio reports’ on the attacks on US soil on September 11, 2001 as evidentiary, primary sources (ibid., 4).

Where McCaughey’s examination of contemporary sources, as well as addressing the online habits of contemporary students, is more wide-reaching than other texts on

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74 While there is no date provided in the front matter of Discovering History, the Mentor Books website records a publication date of March 1, 2010. See: http://www.mentorbooks.ie/book.aspx?contentid=231
offer, Patricia McCarthy’s analysis of the repercussions of visual investigation exceeds this textbook survey in other manners—citing that ‘from photos, we can learn much about the daily life in the past – living conditions, fashions and hairstyles for example’ (2010, 3). The author then describes film in a manner wholly unlike any other textbook for Junior Cycle History.

In the past 100 years, film has become very useful to the historian. Films of historical events, taken as they happened, are known as documentaries. Since 1900, film records have been kept of such events as World War I and Ireland’s 1916 Rising. The later developments of sound and colour mean that since World War II (1939-45), the quality of documentary films has improved and their value to the historian has grown as well. As with photographs, we can also learn much about the ordinary life, clothing, hobbies and so on from films.

(ibid., 4; emphasis in original)

McCarthy’s stance on celluloid sources proves to be the most informed, and informing. From the empathic perspective that approaches both the critical and affective registers, creating a portmanteau of Lucey’s argument that such primary documentation can provide a face for the ‘great men’, and women, of history – as well as McCarthy’s stance that moving image media provides the student of history with a previously unprecedented glimpse into the quotidian lives of the agents of the past – would provide a Junior Cycle textbook with a comprehensive introduction to the manner in which film can be used toward the political and social-historical ends around which both curriculum and assessment are designed.

Separating Historical Fiction and Source Material:
The Example of Michael Collins

Acknowledging that Patricia McCarthy’s analysis is the exception rather than the rule, an example drawn from one final textbook warrants inclusion for the manner in which
it stymies the potential of the medium of film. Looking to how cinema is represented in the textbook *Timeline* and contrasting it with original, and accessible, counterexamples will provide this chapter with its first case study. In a manner analogous to the *Guidelines for Teachers* document and the work of Collins, Delap and their respective co-authors, *Timeline* notes the effective use of primary sources as including ‘[v]isual records of the past’ such as ‘[p]hotographs, posters, [and] paintings’, but sees these forms as the extent to which visual texts can play a fundamental role in understanding history (de Buitléir, *et al.*, 2010, 4). Rather than identify the merits of filmic sources, de Buitléir and her co-authors dismisses film outright in a manner that is unique amongst the curricular texts. Utilizing the example of Neil Jordan’s 1996 biopic *Michael Collins*, *Timeline* asserts:

> Movies [are a]n interesting way to learn about history, e.g. Michael Collins. [However m]ovies such as Michael Collins can be a fun and entertaining way to learn about events in the past but they may not be very accurate.

(de Buitléir, *et al*, 2010, 5)

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**Figure 11:** Liam Neeson as Michael Collins (d. Jordan, 1996), deemed 'fun and entertaining' by *Timeline*, the textbook does not acknowledge that there also exists a host of archival material depicting the man himself.
While the portrayal of the titular national icon by Liam Neeson, above in a recreation of a 1918 rally speech, can inspire a genuine curiosity in the events of history as well as de Buitléir’s ‘fun and entertain[ment]’, it is afforded such via many of the trappings of the Hollywood feature: in this instance cinematographer Chris Menges’ sweeping crane shots; epic, swelling strings courtesy of Elliot Goldenthal’s score and, in the pictured scene, dozens of *camán* wielding extras. In the feature, the further reduction of the narrative to an analogic dynamic of Collins as hero and Alan Rickman’s de Valera as his villainous foil maligns the complexity of history and the lives of these two men, as well as the ideas for which they struggled.

Whether or not de Valera actually uttered the screenplay’s famous line that ‘[… ] in the fullness of time history will record the greatness of Michael Collins, and it will be recorded at my expense’, nonetheless his on-screen portrayal comes across, succinctly surmised by the late Roger Ebert, ‘as a weak, mannered sniveling prima donna whose grandstanding led to decades of unnecessary bloodshed in, and over, Ireland’ (Ebert, 1996, *online*). Indeed de Buitléir’s charge that the film ‘may not be very accurate’ is warranted (2010, 5). However, while *Timeline* raises concerns over a production backed by ‘Warner Brothers, which agreed to a $25-million budget’ nearly three quarters of a century after the military strategist’s death, it does not even address the existence of a wide collection of materials that portray the actual Collins as a soldier, politician, patriot and, simply, a man amongst his family, colleagues and the wider Irish populace (Merivirta-Chakrabarti, 2007, 122).

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75 De Valera’s words appear at the end of the film and appear in Coogan, 1990, 432, whether or not it is an apocryphal ascription has come under question, see for example Dolan, 2003, 87.
Such films, and the investigations that can be opened out through them, are available through the collections housed within the National Film Archive. During the Free State era and until his death in August 1922 a series of British Pathé Gazette newsreels exemplify a greater understating of Michael Collins in a manner far more historically rewarding than an analysis of his Hollywood-scripted imago, and, in the process, give a sense of the time, size and urgency to his revolutionary efforts. In particular two films from the first half of March 1922 during which time Collins vehemently delivered his Treaty-as-necessary orations with candor and wild gesticulation to thousands in the center of Cork City and on College Green in Dublin, depict a man far more real than de Buitléir’s condemnation affords. While acknowledging that they are inherently constructed, by looking at the original source material – and analyzing how each is built, and what each portrays – students of history can garner a more well-rounded understanding of this pivotal moment in the formation of the Irish Republic.

The two Pathé items from the Cork coverage portray Collins in a medium shot as he rallies the crowds who can be seen intercut with the speech in sweeping overhead frames. From an empathic perspective the crowds of Cork seem to openly receive Collins’ Free State agenda; however, ‘a few malcontents’ marked the occasion with distraction and disturbance, shooting their pistols into the air. While it appears that the

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76 These two items are: Great Cork Treaty Meeting. Mr. Michael Collins receives enthusiastic reception from the huge gathering despite salvoes of shots from a few malcontents (16/3/1922) and Our Cameraman was there! Revolver shots and free fights at Mr. Michael Collins’ Free State Meeting in heart of republican area (20/3/1922)

77 These news events are Carrying the Treaty to the people - tremendous ovation greets Michael Collins speaking in [sic] behalf of the Free State. which depicts the massive crowds street side and the, very famous, footage of Collins speaking titled Ireland's "fighting leader!" (9/3/1922)
shots were not fired in the intention of harming anyone, the Pathé cameramen captured both high angle and ground level footage of members of the audiences actively restraining the offenders. Common to Pathé, footage used in the first newsreel covering the Cork speeches on March 16th, 1922, would be recycled in a further newsreel four days later. While the first news item focuses on the reportage of the speech itself, and the size of the crowd in attendance, the subsequent analysis provided by the second newsreel, entitled *Our Cameraman was there! Revolver shots and free fights at Mr. Michael Collins' Free State Meeting in heart of republican area*, perhaps depict Pathé as more critical of the event and the nature, and civility, of the assembled Irish audience.

While there are few clues to where within the confines of Cork’s city centre this speech took place, perhaps more relatable to the contemporary student of history is the footage from the speech delivered a week earlier on College Green in Dublin. In a similar frame, Collins is seen in a level, profile shot as he speaks; however, this footage is predicated by wide, high-angle panning shots of the crowd who are a sea of humanity thousands of individuals deep spread from the former Parliament Building to Trinity’s Arch and down towards Dame Street. By way of historical contrast, photographs of the reception given to U.S. President Barack Obama’s May 2011 visit and speech on the same spot can be utilized to portray to students the size and scope of Free State fervor that Collins’ speech conveyed.

Going back another ten days from Collins’ oration in Dublin’s city center, in late February, Pathé captured the final changing of the guard at the Irish Parliament’s
House of Lords colonnade at the same College Green location. It was then that British Royal Forces rescinded control of the building to the Irish National Army. The distinction between British rule and Irish control is immediately obvious; rather than masses of people in support of the Free State campaigns, orderly columns of British officers stand at attention with razor wired bollards framing everyone within the tableaux. Ten days later, the location has been transformed into an arena for public spectacle and political presentation.

![Image of the final changing of the guard as captured by Pathé's reporters (February, 1922)](image1)

Figure 12: the final changing of the guard as captured by Pathé's reporters (February, 1922)

![Image of Michael Collins stages a pro-Free State campaign captured by Pathé on the same spot (March, 1922)](image2)

Figure 13: now in Irish hands, ten days later Michael Collins stages a pro-Free State campaign captured by Pathé on the same spot (March, 1922)

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78 See: Changing Guard: I.R.A. Troops replace British at the old Irish Parliament Building in College Green. (27/2/1922)
Immediately questions of a comparative nature can be used to make inroads into both the historical biography of Collins the man as well as questions surrounding the handover of power between the occupying British forces and the newly formed Irish Free State. On both fronts, further newsreels containing footage of Collins assist in the depiction of the statesman as a political and military strategist as well as a man motivated by his Irish heritage. One collection of Michael Collins footage from disparate Pathé news items, now digitized, compiled and housed within the National Film Archive, shows the leader shaking hands and knocking on doors as he goes electioneering in West Cork in 1922. While the collection is intercut with Collins delivering a speech, possibly in Limerick, and using the audiences who appear previously in the Cork newsreel for reaction shots, much of the footage is simply Collins chatting with the people of West Cork. He laughs at, and smiles for, the camera, exchanges pleasantries with a young woman milking a cow, two older women in a donkey cart and a collection of men standing out front of a campaign poster alike. As Collins passes a small boy he affectionately jostles his hair. Finally Collins’ boyhood school is photographed, as it doubled as the local polling station.
where people young and old cast their ballots In an attempted transliteration of the West Cork brogue, and intertitle reads ‘Och, shure you’ll win Miceal’ as Collins is greeted by an elderly woman in a black cloak. As well as meeting with locals he is filmed standing in the remains of the Collins’ burnt out homestead. For the student of history, this husk of a building can provide a reminder that the efforts of the Irish Republicans were at once both ideologically and personally motivated.

Later in 1922, upon his death, In Memory of Michael Collins – Soldier Statesman and a MAN., a further Pathé newsreel with a title card bordered in shamrocks and embellished with harps, uses much of the above footage again as a repurposed obituary for the slain leader who was ‘loved, respected and feared’. With a ‘peculiar melancholy’ the eulogy includes the last known recorded images of Collins, as he presciently stands graveside at Arthur Griffith’s funeral as the latter political leader’s coffin is covered with earth. Six days later Collins would be killed in Béal na mBLáth outside of the village of Bandon in West Cork.

Compared to these images of a man in his local surroundings, the implications of Collins’ impact on the national stage, and the necessitation for his being entrenched in the narrative of the nation is on display in the August 31, 1922 newsreel More than half a million mourners bid silent farewell at the passing of Michael Collins – Ireland’s soldier statesman. In it the Collins family, preeminent statesmen, members of the Free State army and general citizens of all ages line both sides of O’Connell Street as the procession removes Collins’ casket from Saint Mary’s Pro Cathedral on Marlborough St, wraps it in a tricolour and travels down Dublin’s main thoroughfare.
Moving on to Glasnevin Cemetery where Collins’ body would finally be interred, officers lay wreaths upon the coffin and the army band plays – despite the newsreels lack of audio track. The newsreel ends as men fire their rifles skyward in salute.

Working with the Collins Material in an Empathic Manner
In providing the contextual background and rich source material for an investigation into Michael Collins, the range of scenarios on display within these few short clips help to paint a vivid picture of the man that lends itself to an immediacy beyond what any textbook can depict. The nature of archival material about Collins assists in portraying both a critical and affective portrait of the nationalist fighter. Furthermore, such examples move the capacity of film in the classroom from an artifact that is ‘fun and entertaining’ toward a resource that can energize a 40 minute class period (de Buitléir, et al, 2010, 5).

From the perspective of the five-step process demarcated in the last chapter, working with these newsreels can be extremely beneficial for students in their understanding of the actions and motivations of Collins, as well as others who fought for Irish freedom. To return to the de Buitléir text, Collins makes sporadic appearances across the 10 pages of the book that deal with the period from the emergence of Sinn Féin (1905) until the 1923 ceasefire that ended the Irish Civil War (2010, 307-316). If the primary text presents students with conceptual beginnings for the history of both man and conflict, the films on offer assist in the subsequent immersion in the historical record. For instance, as Collins is introduced into the narrative of Timeline a small photograph of the man is in the margin, accompanying the picture is a small box that
announces that: ‘Did you know? Michael Collins was from Cork. He fought in the GPO during the Rising. When he was released he used his organisational ability to build up Sinn Féin and the Volunteers’ (ibid., 307). Looking at the historical material presents a far more in-depth portrait of the man. Beyond the simple fact that Collins ‘was from Cork’, the Pathé collection depicts the man on his viewing his family homestead and the local people of and around Clonakilty, West Cork. In a sense, these small, intimate portrayals lend to Collins a sense of why he fought. Counter to the images from West Cork, the tens of thousands gathered to hear Collins speak at College Green in March, 1922, as well as Cork and Limerick cities, give credence to his importance to the struggle for an independent Ireland. While Timeline perfunctorily states that ‘[…] Collins was killed in an ambush at Béal na Bláth’, More than half a million mourners bid silent farewell at the passing of Michael Collins – Ireland’s soldier statesman further lend a sense of scale to Collins’ influence and impact on the War of Independence (ibid., 315). That the 1911 census shows that there were 477,196 persons living in Dublin City and County – and 505,654 in 192679 – the British newsreel’s estimate of ‘more than half a million mourners’ indicates Collins’ influence during the period (CSO, n.d., online).

From the perspective of empathic reading of the filmic text, these examples – and the dialogic questions and exploration they foster can lead students toward a greater understanding of both the period and the historical actors who inhabited it. While the information provided in the textbook is historically accurate, it only begins to skim the surface of Collins’ – and the wider Irish citizenry’s – critical and emotive

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79 The taking of the census which should have occurred in 1921 was delayed on account of the War of Independence. See the Central Statics Office’s historical reports (CSO, n.d., online).
registers. Engaging in these kinetic, primary records can lead students toward a better understanding of the events of history, which, in-turn, promotes in student-historians a greater sense of questioning of texts as well as the discipline itself.

Regarding subsequent historical texts, in the case of Collins, much of this footage has been viewed before – utilized, appropriated and, in the instance of the final reels of George Morrison’s *Saoirse?*, intercut with Anti-Treaty events concomitantly delivered by Éamon de Valera in a tension building, shot and counter shot tête à tête. Looking at the originary newsreels, followed by Morrison’s propagandistic recasting of them can promote further dialogue regarding the manner in which all histories – from initial production to the contemporary textbook choose to narrativize source material within specific archival agendas.

Regarding Pathé’s coverage of Michael Collins, all of the above analyzed footage is housed within the Irish Film Archive – and has been migrated onto stable formats that will not degrade. Given Pathé’s recent digitization efforts, with a quick Internet search, much can be found online, albeit in a greatly compressed, watermarked format. However, it must be noted that material related to the slain nationalist is only a gateway in to a much wider collection of historical evidence.

Of note, is that all of the films mentioned in the Michael Collins analysis can also be viewed free of charge on the British Pathé website, which – unlike youtube – is readily accessible in schools. Per the archive’s splash page, a (British) Lottery grant saw that the entirety of British Pathé’s 90,000 newsreels, made between 1896 and 1976, have been digitized and placed online for stream or purchase. See www.britishpathe.com
Examining the Easter Rising: 
Topical Budget’s *The Dublin Rebellion* (1916)

As noted previously, the political developments of the early 20th century Ireland have far more archival precedent from which to begin an examination. Prior to the late-1980s when the Irish Film Archive began ‘actively identifying, acquiring, preserving and providing access to films’, the groundwork for such filmic investigation was laid by two projects that occurred in the middle of the 20th century (O’Flynn, 2004, 39). The first took place shortly after the ratification of the Irish Constitution when, in the 1940s, the National Library began collecting ‘material deemed of political significance from [sources such as] the national film censor’s office, from the Irish Film Society and from private sources’ who were willing to donate their collections (O’Flynn, 1996, 57). The second motivation for the collection of politically oriented films, in this instance those that were shot before the 1922 Free State declaration, was the *Gael Linn* funded archival reconstructions of George Morrison. Both *Mise Éire* and *Saoirse*? make use of many of the British newsreels shot by the likes of Pathé and Topical Budget, recontextualizing the newsreel items toward greater cultural and linguistic propagandizing purposes. As noted above, this is not to say, however, the in their originary forms, the newsreel exist without an inherent bias.

A further example of an event that was comprehensively constructed by original newsreel sources – to be reedited by Morrison – is the Topical Budget Company’s coverage of the aftermath of the events of the 1916 Easter Rising. Intercut throughout the second act of Morrison’s *Mise Éire* – when the original Topical Budget newsreel, entitled *The Dublin Rebellion*, is viewed in its unadulterated state – it paints a far
more vivid picture of the destruction wrought upon Ireland’s most famous thoroughfare, albeit from a decidedly pro-British perspective.

While the Junior Certificate text *Timeline* dedicates two brief pages, three captioned pictures and one illustrative map to the events of April 24, 1916, the 22 shots that comprise *The Dublin Rebellion* across four, roughly, one minute sequences add a kinetic sense of the events of Easter 1916 to the understanding achieved by any student of history. The de Buitléir-authored textbook includes a still photograph from inside the gutted remains of the General Post Office and another of a northeast facing view of O’Connell Bridge and the North quays. The latter includes the caption ‘O’Connell St in Dublin was badly damaged during the Rising’ (de Buitléir, et al, 2008, 306). While these two images, both of iconic within the Rising’s narrative, are included in the newsreel footage, from an empathic perspective the recorded views of the locations across the city where the rebels took up position, and the images of the ordinary denizens of Dublin trawling through – and the forces of the British policing – the aftermath of the uprising create a much fuller picture.

Echoing the photograph in *Timeline*, the newsreel begins with a section entitled *Exclusive pictures of the scene of the fighting in Dublin. The ruins of Sackville Street*. The newsreel opens with a pan across the mouth of what is now O’Connell Street, from a height, from the intersection of O’Connell, D’Olier and Westmoreland Streets, on the south side of the river. Many of the buildings up the quays are seen to be extensively damaged, presumably from the shelling undertaken by both the *Helga* and the guns mounted in Trinity College, and most prominently, the building on the
southeast corner of the street – most recently and until its wind-down a branch of Irish Nationwide Building Society – has been razed totally to the ground.

The newsreel next offers views that are not on offer in the history textbook, as the following shot portrays a static glimpse of the Four Courts from a vantage point that appears to be the Church Street Bridge. The next shots show British soldiers marching with rifles mounted upon their shoulders and on horseback drawing carts laden with heavy artillery. In the background rubble still smokes. It is clear to the viewer of the Topical Budget item that the filmmakers are evincing the British soldiers, and their superior firepower, having restored a sense order to the streets of Dublin. Counter to these soldiers, the next frames portray Irish men and women surveying the ravages of the Rebellion. In one shot men climb about and pick through the remains of a destroyed Sackville Street building. The only portion of the structure left standing is a chimney five stories tall. The hearths remain stacked one atop the next.

The next shot encapsulates the aftermath of the Rebellion in a manner unlike the history textbook. Capturing a tableaux of Usher’s Quay with St. Paul’s Church seen on the right hand side of the frame, people are watching a progression of soldiers as they march across the frame; however, the view of these soldiers is largely obscured as an uprooted lamppost bisects the image.
The next sequence, *The Post Office and Metropole Hotel after the battle, the interior of the Post Office which is completely gutted. Sackville St ruins*. returns to the damage visited upon the west side of O’Connell Street. Beginning with a pan across the grounds on which the Metropole was standing a week prior, the frame rests on the General Post Office [GPO]. In *Mise Éire*, Morrison cuts the newsreel’s initial pan across Sackville Street with this right-to-left pan. While the action match between the two fluid camera movements is cinematically appealing – as it creates a balance of movement, much like the *Timeline* text 40 years later, it is clear that Morrison places primary emphasis upon these two images – opting for the large-scale and iconic, rather than individuals.

The newsreel’s next shot portrays the remnants of the GPO. An interior shot reveals chaos as girders and ironwork have fallen from the ceiling onto the ground; unknown people populate the background of the frame. The following three shots appear as a staged reenactment of the fire brigade attending to what remains of the Metropole
Hotel. Since there is no pressing emergency, the Topical Budget cameramen have the luxury of composing their frames for maximum effect – images are squarely framed and balanced, pacing and blocking are established between the camera’s movement and the charging of the fire brigade and, as the ladder is raised against the now-bare girders of the Metropole, it is situated perfectly in the middle of the shot. While there was precedent for staged fireman procedural films, the inclusion of this sequence belies the relative safety felt by the film’s producers; it was clear that the fighting had ended and all of the Volunteers had either fled the scene or were already in custody.

Beginning with the footage of a sandbagged window the final two sequences are the most contentious, and in many ways proffer up to the contemporary viewer and student of history something more than simply a pictorial compendium of city centre destruction. As the newsreel depicts images of soldiers standing guard and others marching across the frame, an intertitle stating batches of rebels being marched off to the Quay explains to the viewer who the men in suits marching amongst the soldiers are. These figures take on a new resonance as it is assumed that by being marched off to the quays they are being herded toward prison, deportation or their executions. The subsequent shot relates the political encoding, and provenance, of the newsreel. After the capture of said ‘batches of rebels’ three British soldiers are seen reclining streetside as they have their lunch. The inference is clear; having put down the insurgence they have restored a sense of peace to Dublin and are at their leisure to pause, rest and dine in relative comfort.

One of Promio’s early Dublin films Pompiers: Dublin [Dublin Fire Brigade] saw firefighters tearing up Grafton Street and onto Stephen’s Green to the delight of the assembled onlookers – indeed only a few scant seconds of the film shows the crossing of the frame by the firefighters, the rest is the crowd’s reaction to being filmed. (1897) Sagar Mitchell and James Kenyon routinely filmed fire brigades, complete with mock infernos as evidenced in Cork Fire Brigade Turning Out. (1902)
Toward a nationalist sentiment, Morrison’s film takes the same frame of supine soldiers and instead cuts it against a scene of Irishmen swinging picks amongst the rubble. In the commemorative reconstruction the inflection is wholly changed so that in the face of the rebuilding efforts the British look on with insouciance. Much like the theories of montage that would be posed by Kuleshov\textsuperscript{82}, Eisenstein and Pudovkin\textsuperscript{83}, the inferences drawn about what the reclining of the soldiers may mean lies in the order in which they appear in the sequence of shots. While Morrison’s methods are none-too-subtle, his intended message is clear.

![Figure 16: a 'rebel' is marched upstream, while soldiers eat their lunches in a relaxed position (Topical Budget Company, 1916); the implied reading sees an end to hostilities to the extent that the British soldiers can now enjoy a leisurely lunch having returned the, occupied, status quo to normal](image)

\textsuperscript{82} Teacher of both Eisenstein and Pudovkin, Lev Kuleshov is alleged to have conducted an experiment where an actor’s face was shot and intercut with a series of images with varying emotional tenors. Audience members identified a range of emotions upon the actor’s face, despite the same footage being utilized as corresponding with the images that preceded and followed them, this is the first instance of the theorizing of the subjective nature of sequential viewing. See: (Thompson and Bordwell, 1994, 132)

\textsuperscript{83} Eisenstein cites, and perhaps embellishes, the debate between himself and Pudovkin, where the former sees editing as ‘the conflict of two pieces [of film] in opposition to each other’, he reckons Pudovkin sees ‘linkage’. (Eisenstein in Dyer MacCann, 1949\textit{ trans/1966}, 34-5). Pudovkin argues that ‘[t]o the film director each shot of the finished film subserves the same purpose as the word to the poet. […] The film is not shot, but built[,]’\textsuperscript{ emphasis in original} (Pudovkin in Dyer MacCann, 1950\textit{ trans/1966}, 24)
It is interesting to note that the images of sandbags, smoldering rubble and smashed windows would become part of the Topical Budget Company’s own film archive and that this footage would reappear, decontextualized from the narrative of the Easter Rising, six years later. In a 1922 newsreel depicting the Irish Civil War and the bombing of the Four Courts, the same, now stock, footage from The Dublin Rebellion would be recycled as it was footage of Irish buildings destroyed in the then-contemporary armed conflict. In the eyes of the Topical Budget filmmakers, rubble was rubble, regardless of the aggressors – or their political allegiances (McKernan, n.d.).

The final shots which follow an intertitle announcing Sinn Fein Rebels – Disarmed rebels marching from Military Barracks in Dublin to Kingstown for deportation. Are, for empathic approaches to history, the most humanizing – and the most harrowing. The first shot is titular in that it is a host of men in crumpled suits being marched along a dirt path by uniformed men with rifles upon their shoulders. The second shot pans across a series of 6 men, flanked by armed guards, before they are to be removed from the land for which they fought. The guards seem to be grinning for the camera. The final image is a medium shot of two of the prisoners from the previous frame. Acknowledging both the critical and the affective register of historical investigation, neither of the prisoners looks to be older than a teenager. Three guards stand behind the men as they are on display for the camera, notably it is the most static shot in the entire 4 minutes of newsreel footage.

Figure 17: putting everyday faces on the Easter Rising; rather than focusing in on the primary signatories of the Proclamation, the presentation of average, unnamed citizens – and their relative youth – brings a side to the events of the Easter Rising left out of the history textbook.

The Topical Budget newsreel *The Dublin Rebellion* is an invaluable resource for the history classroom and can fundamentally alter the manner in which the teaching of the events of 1916 uprising take place. The four-minute film gives students a sense of the events undertaken and the damage wrought on both the physical and personal levels. Like many of the Pathé scenes in the previous example of the Michael Collins collection, for students from Dublin, or those who have traveled to the nation’s capital, many of the vistas on display present iconic buildings in landscapes seen innumerable times. Appealing to the sense of knownness of these locations, the power of witnessing archival sources, and the effects of conflict upon them, is vital for igniting the historical imagination. As the newsreels on offer portray both the ‘great men’ who find themselves in bullet-point heavy boxes in the margins of history textbooks as well as the everyday young people inspired toward revolt, the dual natures of perspective recognition and empathy for caring can be approach and appealed. Questions that can be posed of students so that they critically engage with the Topical Budget newsreel can include thinking around the individuals shown on screen – both of Irish and British decent, the locations and how the O’Connell Street
that depicts such destruction differs from the thoroughfare of today and questions regarding the scalability of a conflict that saw buildings left in ruin on the heels of the failed Uprising. More critically-oriented questions can be drawn out of the cinematic narrative as well. Reflections on the general orderliness of the British soldiers – whether guarding smoking rubble or marching quayside – in contrast to the scenes of post-conflict chaos speak to the perceived role of the occupying forces with the nation. Such depictions, however, are not limited to Ireland’s first city.

**Newsreel Films and the Portrayal of the Formation of the Free State**

Further examples of newsreel films show the progress made as the nation moved toward its newly independent status. Moving beyond Dublin, films that can assist in bringing the formative years of the Free State to light include the dubiously-titled *Ireland’s Agony – Desolation follows Mystery Fires in Cork*, a Topical Budget production that depicts the still-smoldering remnants of Cork’s Saint Patrick’s Street in the wake of the 1920 razing of the city centre by the Black and Tans. In a nod to its country of provenance, the title card for *Ireland’s Agony* notes the ‘mystery’ of the fires that erupted throughout Cork City’s main artery – alerting the history student to the inherent bias in its production. When the footage reappears in the second act of *Saoirse?*, Morrison utilizes the newsreel’s images of devastation while intercutting newspaper clippings discussing the ‘Sea of Fire’ that swept over Cork. While the intercut images create a sequence in the visual spectrum, the voice over narration pointedly argues that the tragedy occurred at the same time Lloyd George was discussing an armistice with Éire in Westminster. Morrison’s maneuver is meant to incense, and while the latter is as equally unsubtle as the decrying of ‘mystery fires’,
the effect is exacting. Indeed, across much of the combat footage shot by newsreel organizations, Morrison’s later addition of gunfire, mortar reports and explosions across the audio track gives a false sense of record and obtrusive embellishment to the display of originary source material.

In honing the aptitude of students to acknowledge the constructedness of film – and wider historical narrative at large, a further example where critical viewership leads students of history to assess conclusions antithetical to their onscreen portrayal comes by way of the Pathé newsreel series produced during the Anglo-Irish Treaty process. For example, critical counter-readings that lend themselves toward empathic understandings are on display beyond the center of the frame in Pathé’s newsreel Sinn Feiners in Downing Street. Mr. de Valera meets Mr. Lloyd George and Peace Prospects are Bright (1921). That there was support for Ireland’s Free State status, even in the United Kingdom, can be viewed in the opening moments of the film where a number of tricolours are on display throughout members of the crowd. As a car pulls up and de Valera alights the vehicle, he is greeted by an explosion of flash bulbs and seemingly raucous applause; after the delegates enter the door on Downing Street, women are seen on their knees praying and making the Sign of the Cross upon themselves. It appears that diasporic Irish men and women were praying for peace both at home and abroad.

Back across the sea, in an item entitled Omens of Peace :: Remarkable scenes in Irish Capital – Crowds cheer Unionist Delegates, said crowds do not look terribly displeased; however, the allegation that audiences were animatedly cheering appear
remarkably wide of the mark (1921; *emphasis in original*). The crowds appear to, at best, tolerate the visiting officials. For the canny student, from a cultural and design-oriented perspective of history, it is interesting to note the bowler hats on the Unionist delegates who were entering the Mansion House on Dawson Street. The British men appear to stand out amongst the sea of flat panel caps worn by the Irish who fill the frame. By the subsequent newsreel item, however, the self same crowd looks near riotous. In *Unattended and unprotected General Macready attends the Meeting. he [sic] was escorted by Sinn Fein Volunteers!* one of the ‘volunteers’ is holding a walking stick above his head shouting at the crowd for restraint; the other four men escorting the man – about to be relieved as the final Commander of Forces in Ireland – are each holding an arm out straight to push back anyone who may manage to break free from the crowd (1921).

In a move that is, perhaps, more humanizing than much of the history textbooks would proffer up, just a few months later, in a 1922 Pathé newsreel entitled *Dublin. Demobilised R.I.C. Auxiliaries in a light hearted mood leave Beggars Bush Barracks and Ireland – for ever!* [sic] the British infantrymen in the film appear elated to be discharged of their duties. As they are told to vacate the barracks and move toward Kingstown harbor (Dun Laoghaire), the men throw their hats in the air in jubilation. Some are seen kissing their papers of removal and smiling in a self-aware manner toward the camera. As they pack their kits, one man throws his bag of golf clubs over his shoulder; another pushes his bicycle toward the barracks’ exit. These British soldiers, it would appear, had a life beyond their station, and as well as serving in Ireland, they lived their recreational lives in Ireland as well. They were – it would appear – were eager to get home. The possibilities for empathic engagement on both
sides of the conflict’s divide are readily apparent. *Demobilised R.I.C. Auxillaries* presents a view of the occupying forces that is rarely glimpsed in the more nationalistically oriented narrativization of the emergence of the new officially recognized state. In understanding the motivations of historical agents, this brief newsreel alone makes history a multi-perspective endeavor. Working with the short film, students of the discipline can ask pointed questions about the official accounts of occupation and conflict – and can develop wider thinking around historical agents as multi-faceted people rather than simply exponents of political agendas.

Giving further credence to the Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921), on January 16, 1922 the handover of Dublin Castle to the newly appointed Dáil president Arthur Griffith was undertaken, and in no small amount of British understatement the Pathé newsreel depicting the day stated:

*IRISH FREE STATE*

*DUBLIN CASTLE*

symbol and citadel
of British Rule in
Ireland for centuries
“surrenders” to Sinn Fein
Provisional Government

This title card is followed, directly, by another intertitle stating: *The official entry was singularly undramatic – though a moment that will live for ever [sic] in Irish minds,* and while a small crowd is seen waving a tricolour, the visages of Michael Collins, Cosgrave and Kevin O’Higgins were more than happy to take ownership of the building (*emphasis in original*). King George V had already weighed in his opinion
on the proceedings when Collins was in Downing Street the previous December.

“Splendid News!” Says the King – his eyes reflect the Irish Sunshine.\textsuperscript{85}

The Modernizing of the Armed Forces, the Modernizing of the Nation

While the above-mentioned Topical Budget newsreel creates a marked distinction between the sense of order the British troops display counter to the Irish civilians left to clear away the damage of the conflict, many further newsreels can be utilized in exploring the political and military history of Free State Ireland beyond the time span with which Morrison was working, and in the history classroom, the active comparison of such films evinces the manner in which the nation developed apace. Upon viewing, the historian can garner a sense of technological innovation as well as how the Irish armed forces grew in size and acquired a sense of professionalization. Many of the Topical Budget and Pathé films of the mid-1920s depict how the revolutionaries revered in Morrison took to the task of erecting the infrastructure of the nascent government as it was formed in 1922\textsuperscript{86}, others portray the funeral processions, masses and vigils honoring those self-same leaders of the Republic. In the winter of 1921-2, during his tenure as first President of the Irish Republic\textsuperscript{87}, Éamon de Valera traveled west to Galway with Cathal Brugha and Richard Mulcahy. Captured in Pathé’s \textit{De Valera accompanied by Minister of Defence and Chief of Staff visits Galway} (1922) the view of the western port portrays a township far removed from Ireland’s third largest city as it stands today. In every scene, wherever the motorcade travels both Irish National Army members and scores of Irishmen and

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  \item \textsuperscript{85} Peace Council at the Palace, (1921, p. British Pathé).
  \item \textsuperscript{86} See: Historic Pictures of the elected representatives of Southern Ireland who approved the Treaty, ~
  together with the Members of the Provisional Government (1922, p. British Pathé).
  \item \textsuperscript{87} (August, 1921 – January 1922)
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women flank the unpaved, earthen track. Comparing the concomitant views of Dublin’s central city streets, where elements of the architecture have remained – despite recent takeovers of landmark buildings by the likes of Abercrombie and Fitch – with the views of Galway shot in the same few weeks of 1922, what can be clear for students is how the remainder of the country has quickly modernized across the intervening 90 years.

While in the West, De Valera, Brugha and Mulcahy also reviewed the Volunteer Forces; the standing army, which included a women’s unit, would be inaugurated officially the following month as the Western Division of the Irish National Army [INA]. Over the course of the next twenty years British Pathé would capture a series of newsreels in which de Valera was seen inspecting members of Ireland’s armed forces. While de Valera’s official title would change from President of the Irish Republic to the President of the Executive Council only to succeed himself as the first, and longest serving Taoiseach, the manner in which the national army developed in scale and professional stature is on evidence when viewing the examples in succession.

For example in a December 1921 newsreel entitled *I.N.A. Western Division Under Review* while the officers are seen in full military dress, the majority of the men marching and being called to attention are wearing 3 piece suits and flat caps (p. British Pathé). The only ‘heavy’ armaments on display are two men in long topcoats with Thompson machine guns. After showing them to camera, they point their weapons directly at the cameraman in a bid to show off their presumed lethality.
The following month, however, *Soldiers of the Free State* (1922) would see these same enlisted men getting fitted by tailors for bespoke uniforms replete with embossed harps on the buttons of their overcoats (p. British Pathé). While the soldiers were effectively becoming uniform, and unified, as a distinctly Irish armed service, the full title card of the newsreel again pays homage to British Pathé’s country of provenance – this time with little irony. Stating: *Soldiers of Irish Free State receive first uniforms which, paradoxically enough, are almost identical with 'Tommy's' the description accompanying the images of the soldiers’ fittings could be viewed as either invoking a bit of harmless quipping, or belittling sardonicism. A similar tone would be echoed a year later when a Pathé newsreel announced that – rather than ‘volunteering for’, ‘subscribing to’, or even ‘joining’ the new Irish police force – *Ex-officers and men of the old I.R.A. [were] flocking to join the Free State’s new Civic Guard* (1923) the organization that was direct predecessor to *an Garda Síochána ne hÉireann* [Guard of the Peace of Ireland]. In both of these instances the language invoked in the title cards articulates, with little subtlety, the attitude held by the filmmakers regarding how the newly self-governing Irish were to be perceived. Insinuating that the emergent defense force would heavily borrow from the styling of the British Army, whether by accident or intent, rings of paternalism, while the ‘flocking’ of scores of rebels toward an organization that was founded with a peace keeping remit may have encouraged a smirk from the home audience.

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88 Tommy, short for Tommy Atkins, is an affectionate, nationalistic term for nameless British soldiers. While the etymology of the term is uncertain, it gained particular popularity during the Anglo-Boer Wars. Rudyard Kipling’s poem *Tommy*, itself from *Barrack-Room Ballads* (1892) has been attributed responsibility for much of its widening usage throughout the second Anglo-Boer War and the First World War. See: (Attridge, 2003, *throughout*)
By 1924 the INA had been reconfigured as the Irish Defence Forces [IDF] and would continue to recruit, and thereby grow, apace. In 1933, a newsreel similar to its predecessors in subject matter shows de Valera watching over demonstrations and drills of a far more mechanized army. This time occurring in Phoenix Park in Dublin, and during an unrepentant rain shower, many of the soldiers marched under army-issued ground sheets that doubled as ponchos. Whereas the newsreel on offer a decade previous portrayed two men with Thompson machine guns as the heavy weapons division on display, in the latter film de Valera watches over heavy cannons pulled by horse and cart, a motorized armored division, military ambulances and an air force comprised of a number of bi-planes parked in formation. Five thousand troops were on display within the park’s Fifteen Acres and, despite the torrential downpour, de Valera stood and watched the drilling forces for ‘close-on two hours’ (1933, p. British Pathé). Equally, de Valera is the only person in the newsreel to appear bareheaded, upon which the commentator remarks 89.

In 1941, serving as Taoiseach leading the Fianna Fáil government and presiding over a post-Constitution Éire, de Valera returned to Limerick for what was, at that time, the largest parade ever organized in the city. Along with Mulcahy, de Valera inspected the regional divisions of the now-diversified armed forces. Labour leader William Norton accompanied the men of the Republican Party on the journey. Per the narration, it must be acknowledged that there were 3,000 frontline soldiers parading through the streets as well as the 4,000 reservists also taking part in the

89 Pathé phased sound into their newsreel services throughout the early 1930s, despite the advent of sound occurring at the tail end of the previous decade, films issued as late as September, 1932 such as Ireland. New Cadets for Free State Forces. Minister of Defence presents Commissions at the Curragh, appear without an audio track.
demonstrations; however, all of these individuals were strictly part of an indigenous defense force, as Ireland’s insistence on neutrality during the Second World War kept these men and women out of the conflict that was raging across Europe.

The forces that would remain immobilized included a mechanized division replete with caterpillar-treaded tanks, the final example of which seemed to be suffering clutch issues; a Maritime Inscription Corps comprised of a second line of naval defense; auxiliary military police forces and air raid precaution servicemen and servicewomen. Included in the procession were members of the Irish Red Cross and an ambulance brigade that showcased two fully bespoke, modernly fitted ambulances and a third mobile medical unit towed by a Volkswagen Beetle. It is clear that in the intervening years, the modernizing impulse and defense outlay grew exponentially. Despite the unprecedented size of the Limerick display, and the steadfast policy of neutrality during ‘The Emergency’, the newsreel item ends with a speech by de Valera in which he calls for a wider civic and military volunteerism.

On account of Ireland’s neutral stance during the war effort, Great Britain refused to export goods to the Republic. Coupled with Ireland’s own inability to keep up with demand for food, fuel and other raw materials necessary for daily living, and the previously mentioned tuberculosis epidemic, by the end of the Second World War Fianna Fáil’s approval rating had taken a battering. The party, and its progenitors, who had been in power for a quarter of a century, shouldered the blame for Ireland’s state of affairs. Much of this sentiment was brilliantly articulated in one, five-minute, film that had repercussions throughout the Irish political spectrum, assisting in the
toppling of the then-government. Today it stands as a document necessary for understanding mid-20th century Irish political life. As a masterstroke in utilizing perspective recognition as a motivating political force it is a vital component of the cinematic history of Ireland; at the same time, however, it remains largely unseen.

**Films of the Coalition Government**

The 1948 election proved to be a brief respite from Fianna Fáil’s entrenched governing. The coalition government, the first inter-party effort established in the Republic, was negotiated under the leadership of Clann na Poblachta. Two films that came from the newly established party are fascinating additions to mid-century political historical study, and the ramifications of both films are still equally relevant today. The first – which was retroactively determined to have played a significant part in Fianna Fáil’s losing of the 1948 election – was Liam O’Laoghaire’s *Our Country* (1947). The second, which cogently outlined the then-government’s anger at the partition of the Republic and the British territory retained in Ulster, is an appearance by Séan MacBride at the Chicago-based WGN headquarters during Easter in 1949. MacBride’s speaking to American audiences coincided with enshrinement of the Republic of Ireland Act that forced the cessation of royal involvement in the affairs of the Republic, and, thusly, further solidified the separation of the 6 northern counties from Ireland’s jurisdiction.

**Our Country (1947)**

Making its debut at the *Ard Fheis* [party conference] of the newly formed Clann na Poblachta in late-1947, *Our Country* begins with Noel Hartnett rhetorically
questioning the audience as to whether they ‘ever think as much as [they] should about things here in Ireland?’ (d. O’Laoghaire). In a bid to debunk Fianna Fáil, and de Valera who had been at the head of every successive government since the Home Rule parliament, Hartnett points that that Ireland was living with ‘25 years of native government in this part of the country, how have we utilised it?’ (ibid.)

In answering his own question in voice over narration, he proceeds to damningly critique the Fianna Fáil government of the day. Citing food and goods shortages and the ever-pressing threat of mass immigration – ‘an immigration which should not be necessary […] “a slow bleeding to death of our nation”90, – the narration is played over dole queues and idle plows. Hartnett then discusses the fact that ‘the death rate of children under the age of one year is among the highest in the world’, as he lists ‘unemployment, malnutrition, inadequate wages, lack of social security and bad living conditions’ as largely responsible for this jarring statistic (ibid.). The footage here is the most affecting of the work, and some of the most incendiary ever committed to film in Ireland, as children play amongst the falling down, decrepit Georgian tenements in which they, presumably, live.

90 The latter portion of this quote Hartnett attributes to Rev. Dr. John Dignan, Bishop of Clonfert
Figure 18: children play amongst debris and in an alleyway; their parents trapped by poverty, they are harbingers of both malaise and disease (tuberculosis), as alleged by Clann na Poblachta (1947)

Discussing the deflation of the Irish Pound [Punt], and its lack of purchasing power both at home and abroad, Hartnett quips 'our shops are filled with imported luxury goods at high prices which the majority of our people neither want, nor can afford' (ibid.). From images of white goods in shop windows, the film then cuts to a constructed sequence in which a woman goes shopping, with the shopkeeper none other than O’Laoghaire himself, and, after acknowledging the food shortages on the shops shelves, is nonetheless astounded at how little change she receives after her goods are purchased. The shopkeeper simply shrugs.

Given the filmmaker’s appearance in front of the camera, it is clear to the student of history that the film is inherently constructed; what the viewer is witnessing is not documentary evidence, but instead an exactingly crafted polemic created with a specific narrative intention in mind.
After questioning whether the population – which in pre-famine times was in excess of 7 million and was, at the time of filming, hovering below 3 million – had been well served by Fianna Fáil’s policies, Hartnett then cites tuberculosis as another significant reason for the population’s contraction. After a brief glimpse of a sign reading that ‘Tuberculosis [is] responsible for 64% of deaths amongst young people’, he turns the narration of the film over to Noël Browne, who states directly to camera that ‘only two of the existing 42 so called sanatoria provide full treatment facilities’. Pointing out that tuberculosis was ‘indeed curable and preventable’ he then questions why the death toll was so high (ibid.)?

It should be noted that this was not the first time that Noël Browne had spoken about the matter of tuberculosis on film, as, in 1946, he made *Dr. Noël Browne ‘s TB Film*
(p. Browne and the NFI). The film depicted the events that occurred between initial diagnosis and full recovery. This was at the same point at which the aforementioned *T. Bacillus and Co.* was using marionettes and rudimentary stop motion animation to warn audiences, young and old, to drink clean milk, gently handle their food, thoroughly wash all utensils and, importantly, not to spit upon the city streets – or one another – lest the highly communicable germs spread.

What separates *Our Country* from Browne’s earlier efforts is its political agenda. Rather than informative works dedicated to understanding and preventing tuberculosis, the latter film’s intention is prevail upon the fears of the viewer to squarely place blame for the epidemic at the feet of the ruling party. When Hartnett returns to the screen, he opines that ‘too many victims of the diseases arising from bad living conditions are denied the hospitalization so necessary for their recovery’ (1947, d. O’Laoghaire). This audio is overlaid onto images of the same children playing within the confines of the crumbling garden behind the inner-city Dublin tenement building⁹¹.

Following a quick, indecipherable pan that is used in lieu of a wipe, the camera and synchronous sound is now dedicated to a final message from Seán MacBride, founder of Clann na Poblachta as he addresses ‘you the people’ who have the capacity and responsibility to ‘stem the decadence which was undermining the spirit of our nation’.

⁹¹ Housing, and in particular public housing, would be the subject of another controversial film as George Fleischmann would go on to shoot *Fintona – A Study in Housing Discrimination* in 1953 on behalf of the Department of External Affairs. Shot in co. Tyrone the work explores, even with investigative, hidden camera techniques, the manner in which Catholic, nationalist citizens of Fintona were seemingly being passed over regarding public housing in favor of loyalists.
MacBride charges the then-present government with ‘public indifference’, arguing that much of their programme of government was based upon and ‘flag waving [...]’ and personality’ rather than any semblance of ‘authority based upon reality’ (ibid.).

On the heels of *Our Country*, Fianna Fáil would be ousted as the ruling party for a few brief years, owing in some small part to the power of O’Laoghaire’s cinematic image. Rather than a de Valera-led political structure, the coalition government led by John Costello’s first tenure as Taoiseach, would shape Irish policy at the mid-point of 20th century Ireland.

For the student of history *Our Country* both contextualizes the politics of the latter 1940s and identifies the ways by which the coalition government sought to campaign, and endeavored to change, what they felt was a failing system. As a piece of indigenously produced propaganda, the film is an incendiary text. The question of identifying propagandistic tendencies is necessarily moot in *Our Country* since the film, as remarkable as it is, works precisely because it is flagrant and exacting. Ultimately, as discussed previously, its effectiveness destroyed O’Laoghaire’s career.

As an exercise in an empathic approach to its subject matter, viewing the manner in which *Our Country* appeals to critical, discursive positions – the startling facts and figures, the argument that de Valera and his colleagues had driven every successive Free State government to that point – as well as affective persuasions, such as mothers unable to provide food for their families and images of children playing amongst crumbling tenements while the threat of tuberculosis loomed, show how thorough students must be in their investigations into multiple sources and points of view.
Focusing on the plight of the average Irish person, appealing to his sense of justice, moral indignation and an incitement toward anger – the film makes the ousting of the Fianna Fáil government seem like the only rational option. In the contemporary viewer, both the perspective recognition of Clann na Poblachta’s platform and the empathic persuasion to see them as a viable alternative to the government of the day are utilized with striking effect. For the present-day viewer – where governmental discontent, harsh economic reality and a return to mass-immigration are all everyday realities – it makes for a compelling example of how political discourse is shaped, power construed and narrative constructed. Taken as an acknowledgingly biased account of the first two decades of self-rule, Our Country can be read against governmental accounts of the same period in an effort to raise questions of who is given a voice – and who is rendered silent by omission – in the creation of the text. The film was effective upon its release and remains an important – though under-viewed – resource for understanding mid-century Irish political discourse. Looking back over the intervening seven decades, students can determine whether the film is still an effective rhetorical touchstone, and whether the changes called for within its platform have sufficiently come to pass.

WGN Chicago (1949)

In the second year of the coalition government, acting as Minister for External Affairs [now the Department of Foreign Affairs], Seán MacBride was in Chicago as a guest of honor for the Midwestern city’s Easter Festivities. While in the city, MacBride spoke to WGN – the local television and radio station, delivering at least three answers to, presumably, set questions for broadcast. Three short excerpts from his talk have been preserved within the National Film Archive. As well as providing a face
and a voice to coincide with the historical account of MacBride that can be found in history textbooks, the clips also portray the official policy position of the nation at the point at which she became a Republic. The Minister discusses the relationship that Ireland and the United States maintain as he ruminates on how he would like to be at home in Dublin during Easter, as well as to commemorate the passage of the Republic of Ireland Act, then he notes:

I thought over it and realized that it was to America that the Irish people were driven from their own shores by economic circumstances, by famine and by pressure I realized then that if we were able to secure international recognition for the Republic of Ireland on Easter Monday, 1949 it was largely as a result of the inspiration, the initiative and the support that we received from the freedom-loving people of the United States. Hence I decided to come over. I decided to follow the old trail that so many of our forbearers followed. To be with you on this historic occasion.

(WGN, 1949)

Despite the announcement of the end of engagement between the newly decreed Republic and the Crown, MacBride also addresses the partition of Ireland. Tactfully he appeals to American Cold War sentiment, in his discussion of the fracture of the island of Ireland:

Of all democratic rights, the one which is the most fundamental one is the right to national self determination. In other words the right of a nation to decide its own destiny without interference from outside. It is this very right which Russian imperialism behind the iron curtain so flagrantly violates. It is the same right for which we are seeking recognition in the case of Ireland.

(ribid.)

Pointing out that the British ‘retained six of our counties which, incidentally, contain the industrial portion of the country’, MacBride uses his time on American television
to speak to issues that are still not resolved over 60 years later (ibid.). While the WGN footage appears out of sync with many of the films analyzed throughout this thesis – it is the only example of a ‘talking head’; the film was shot in the United States – the candor with which MacBride speaks allows the student of history to acknowledge both the coalition line and the statesman’s own opinions on the division of the island of Ireland. The brief clip also recognizes the perspectives inherent to the assembled parties’ stance on the declaration of the Republic in the face of the official loss of the majority of industrialized Ulster. As well, working in an official capacity on his visit, the words of MacBride are useful in understanding the relationships Ireland shared with its direct neighbors to the north, east and west – acknowledging the latter required a trip across an ocean that had been made by many in the previous century out of a sense of necessity.

Rendered largely impotent on the heels of Noel Browne’s support, and the Catholic Church’s admonition of, the Mother and Child Scheme, by 1951 Fianna Fáil was voted back into power and the experiment of the first inter-party coalition came to an end. By that point, however, the political structures of the Republic were concretized in the manner in which they remain today. In many ways, the changes that occurred beyond the mid-point of the century are of greater relevance to the next chapter – the social history of the nation.
Narrative Inquiry and Political History

Through the examples discussed in this first, of two, chapters dedicated to filmic analysis, the intention has been to elucidate how films from the National Film Archive can flesh out the third and fourth steps of the revised narrative inquiry model.

![Diagram of the revised narrative inquiry model]

Figure 20: excerpt from the revised narrative inquiry model, for full model see Figure 8, page 176

In analyzing the film- and subject-specific examples drawn across this chapter, it is clear that the examples drawn upon depict actions, events and individuals that inform and challenge historical narratives, revisionist texts and cumulative, secondary sources. In the political spectrum, the first films analyzed have been, by necessity, those created by foreign production companies operating on the island. In investigating how films were shot, images were juxtaposed and silent films matched to explicatory intertitling, questions of voice and agenda within these films can be interrogated. Similarly, through sustained, scaffolded learning environments, examples such as Michael Collins at home in West Cork or the demobilization of British soldiers as they leave Ireland and return home can assist students in formulating depictions of history that are nuanced and more encompassing than a
textbook may offer. In drawing comparison and contrast between the landscapes, material cultures and actions of people throughout the first half of the 20th century – and making them analogous to the lives of students today, the manner in which films can place such students within a hermeneutical critique of history as an ongoing process furthers the benefits of such exercises both within and beyond the classroom. Across each subsection of analysis, this chapter has sought to provide a critical reading of the core archival texts upon which it draws as well as create distinct in-roads into empathic thinking and dialogic exploration of what they reveal for the student of history.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has sought to show how looking at a series of films that detail the political changes that befell Ireland during the early 20th century can breathe life into the teaching of, and investigations into, the history curriculum. Documentary evidence, such as the films analyzed, allows young people to contextualize damage and conflict; acknowledge reconstruction and growth and identify with greater familiarity the exponents of the historical narrative. The ability to put a ‘face’ on the antecedents of history, and to see the sentiments and fervor with which historical actors – such as Michael Collins – operated enlivens history in the classroom. Equally, the inclusion of many anonymous Irishmen whose support for such groundswell is a constant reminder to the historian that the past is comprised of more than the people who adorn the covers of history books, and about whom biopics are made. From an empathic perspective, the acknowledgement of the concerns displayed by the subjects of these films – immigration, joblessness, sovereignty, supporting
local industry as well as wider European initiatives – are as present in today’s political milieux as they are of the recent past.

This chapter has sought to advance a series of texts – and questions that arise from their employ – that can be used in the historical narrative inquiry model. By appealing to the centre of the frame, elements surrounding the points of focus, the language invoked and cinematic techniques employed across a number of films – in isolation or via direct comparison – the analysis presented has sought to assert that Ireland’s film heritage can bolster the study of political history and move film from simply a ‘fun and entertaining’ escape toward a valuable resource for the development of exploration, discussion and reflection that strengthen historical understanding and fire the critical imagination (de Buitléir, et al, 2010, 5)

As stated in the opening of this chapter, it operates as the first part of a twofold analysis that, much like the history syllabus itself, acknowledges the past – and the documents through which one can study the past – as a multifaceted narrative. While this chapter focused on a series of films that can be tied to the political project of the first half of the 20th century, the next will step back to the turn of the century to attend to the same narrative from a social historical standpoint – examples of which truly make the empathic register of historical actors come to life.
Chapter FIVE:
Investigating Social History via Amateur and Professional Film

In a manner similar to the structuring of post-primary curriculum, while the previous chapter looked to films that could be utilized in empathic approaches to the study of Irish political history of the 20th century, much of the wider value of film as a visual source is, to recall the words of Patricia McCarthy, in the capacity to evoke what ordinary life was like for the people of the past (2010, 4). The ability of film to depict quotidian detail, portray cultural values and social mores and allow each of these to be compared to the present day is on offer in many films housed within the National Film Archive. Removed from the vestiges of formality, or the immediacy of conflict, many of the films analyzed in this chapter provide fascinating glimpses into the manner in which daily life was lived during 20th century Ireland. Unlike the films analyzed in the previous chapter – the overwhelming majority of which were official newsreels made by non-indigenous companies, the bulk of the examples put forth in this, latter, survey are distinctly Irish and encompass both professional camera operators and amateur, community-based cinephiles who recorded their surroundings unaware of the historical significance their efforts might later yield.

Such arguments, however, do not wholly discredit the value of the newsreel in the perspective recognition and affective understanding of social history removed from conflict. Against Grierson’s protestations that ‘[t]he peace-time newsreel is just a speedy snip-snap of some utterly unimportant ceremony’, this thesis will argue that, with the benefit of looking backward, newsreels can present a vivid snapshot of the modernization of Ireland as a young state (in Dyer McCann, 1966, 208). Looking to the Amharc Éireann collection, and surveying a small representative sample of its 350
reels that were completed between the late 1950s and early 1960s, the films further demonstrate the manner in which socio-historically-oriented texts can cast light on how the Republic sought to present itself to its own denizens. Comparing these films with a selection of other, officially sanctioned, films from a similar time period allows a further contrast – and perspective recognition – regarding how the Irish also chose to represent themselves to the wider world.

In the opening pages of the final portion of the *Timeline* text, de Buitléir and her colleagues state that the 20th century in Ireland was ‘a century of social change’ and that such effects were felt ‘in the way people live their everyday lives’ (de Buitléir, et al., 2010, 419). Included in *Timeline*’s estimation of such social change are the homes, clothes, professions, transport and leisure activities of Ireland’s populace (*ibid.*). Over the course of the following chapter, amateur and professionally photographed films that run the gamut from home movies to road safety advertisements, tourism films to catwalk fashion shows will be viewed and discussed for the manner in which they can bring to life the experiences of these Irish men and women. As in any good survey, however, it is best to commence at the very beginning.

**Early Actuality and the Work of Amateur Filmmakers**

Of the earliest actualities shot in Ireland, the first to be attributed to Irish filmmakers are those that comprise the *Youghal Gazette* – photographed and edited by the Horgan brothers whose Cork-based Picture Palace has been discussed previously. Shooting their local surroundings in East Cork and Co. Waterford from 1904 onwards, but with the predominance of the material made between 1910 and 1920, the Horgans’ *Corpus*
Christi Procession and A Day at the Sea, which recorded the citizens of the Horgan Brothers’ local parish represent the dichotomy inherent to some of their early recordings (both 1917, see Figure 3 above, p. 105). Of the same vintage and geographic location, the films portray the people of East Cork in solemnity and at play, and both provide fascinating glimpses of large groups of people.

Another 1917 example of a brief Horgan-shot actuality housed within the Irish Film Archive is the short Leaving Sunday Mass. While the film functions in a manner much the same as a number of Sagar Mitchell and James Kenyan shorts made a decade and a half earlier, when the early, British pioneers were operating throughout Ireland in 1901 and 1902\(^2\), the Horgan’s Leaving Sunday Mass also displays the relative comfort of the parishioners with the cinematic device the filmmakers were using in the latter part of the century’s second decade. By contrast in all three of the Mitchell and Kenyon examples, few of the churchgoers actually leave mass; instead the as they leave church, parishioners appear transfixed by the camera; many simply stand and stare at the British cameramen.

In the Horgan’s film, the camera is simply placed on a tripod as the filmmakers capture the titular retreat from mass, with one pan of the camera to adjust the frame mid-sequence. As the people of Youghal leave the gates, the short graphically echoes the original Lumières actuality Sortie d’usine [most commonly proffered up in English

\(^2\) These include: Congregation Leaving St. Patrick’s Church in Cork, Congregation Leaving St. Mary’s Dominican Church in Cork, Congregation Leaving Jesuit Church of St. Francis Xavier, Dublin, all 1902.
as ‘Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory’] (1895). While the Horgans’ portrayal of parishioners is nominally a simple field recording, it is interesting to look at for both the sense of fashions that the members of the community were wearing, as these were the rural people of Munster presumably in their ‘Sunday best’, as well as the generational differences on display.

Figure 21: on the left, workers leave the Lumière sewing machine factory, 1895; on the right, parishioners leave mass in Youghal, co. Cork, 1917

As well as very young boys entering and exiting the frame in short pants and sailor-inflected clothing, what is of particular interest is the manner of dress of women in their young adult and middle aged lives – dresses with great embellishment and hats that seem to get larger and more intricate with each woman who comes down the stairs. Bows give way to flowers; flowers give way to feathers. From the gradations of grey in the frame it can be presumed that a host of colored fabrics were on show.

After the young families descend and exit the frame the priest emerges with the older generation, many of whom are lone women, presumably widows, whose are all enrobed in black shawls, with a small portion of tightly pulled middle-parted hair
peeing through an otherwise all-encompassing ensemble. Crucially for the time, every woman has entered, and left, the church with her head covered. For the student of history such films can act as evidence that depicts a world not dissimilar from our own – one that is divided by the tastes and predilections of different generations and social strata. Such differences in presentation speak to marked distinctions in the Ireland of the 19th and early 20th century, and as Tony Tracy articulates such fashions provide ‘a useful index of social class and function […] illustrating] a fascinating window on a disappeared world’ (Tracy, 2010, 28). This notion of a disappearing world is a recurring motif across films shot throughout rural Ireland over the course of the remainder of this study, and, arguably, is carried through more recent examples that are still being produced into the present day.

**The Seasons (1935)**

A further testament to rural Irish life in the first half of the 20th century is John Benignus Lyons’ *The Seasons* (1935). Recently restored by the Irish Film Archive, the film relates the story of a year in the life of the village of Killkelly, Co. Mayo as photographed by Lyons – an amateur cineaste who served as the dispensing pharmacist within the parish. Shot with both black and white and color film stocks and with homemade inter-titles, the film relates all of the community-centred work that was required to take place for the sustained life of the village. The film begins in spring as the first buds are forming and ends with the blanket of snow that covers the Mayo village at the end of the calendar year.

93 Perhaps the most famous recent example of such an intentional archivilization is the David and Sally Shaw-Smith produced *Hands* series that aired on RTÉ from 1978-1988 in which the traditional craft industries of Ireland – from textiles to woodwork, Belleek pottery to leather bound curragh building – were captured for archive of history before the traditional artisans who practiced such skills were lost to younger generations who lacked such craft-based capabilities.
As well as plowing land and sowing seed for crops, and taking care of livestock, there is an extended sequence where the residents of the town pitch in together to collect turf for the oncoming winter. Along rigidly codified generation- and gender-specific roles, as men foot the turf, children collect the bricks and their mothers stack them for optimal drying out. Later in the film, these same young people are seen at school and at play. From the perspective of an empathic engagement with those who appear on camera, the fact that much of The Seasons subject matter is dedicated to the lives of young people makes it especially useful in student-led investigations of history.

Figure 22: much of The Seasons depicts the lives of the young people of Killkelly, this assists in making historically empathic inroads when exploring the film

Leisure time is depicted as men play handball in courts emblazoned with pro-IRA graffiti and in a later sequence a man is seen in full farm regalia relaxing as he casts a fly into, what is presumably, the river Trimogue. It is interesting to note that this vignette occurs during a period in the film dedicated to leisure time pursuits; however, as the man is casting his rod – a staged event that was repeated for the camera for the sake of multiple angles within Benignus Lyons’ edit – a woman is seen in the background lugging a bale of hay, that dwarfs her frame, on her shoulders.
Upon professional restoration, *The Seasons* screened in the 2009 Jameson Dublin International Film Festival, with a live accompaniment by harpist Cormac de Barra and members of Kíla. Twenty-one months later the film was ‘returned’ to co. Mayo as it received two screenings in the Linenhall Arts center in Castlebar in November, 2010. A number of residents of Killkelly were in attendance including one woman who appeared in the 1935 film as an infant. Since then the film, and its accompanying score, has traveled to Irish-themed screenings in New York City. For students trying to picture what life was like in rural Ireland eight decades ago, *The Seasons* proffers up many examples of what the existence of young people yielded in a nation concomitant to the enshrining of the *Constitution of Ireland* in 1937. Despite the existence of the reconstructed film on a digital format, however, there are no further plans to roll the film out widely. In its present state as touring curio, rather than source for historical analysis, *The Seasons* capacity to provide a rich and unique example of early-20th century Irish life remains out of reach for the contemporary classroom.

**The Amateur Films of Ireland’s Clergy**

Just as Lyons was working as the local pharmacist, and was, therefore, a man of means who could afford cinematographic equipment, Sunniva O’Flynn, Curator of Irish Film Programming with the Irish Film Institute, points to a further substratum of amateur filmmakers proven to be ‘uniquely Irish’ phenomenon within early filmmaking: cinema literate members of the clergy (O’Flynn, 2004, 39). Fr. Francis ‘Frank’ Browne is perhaps Ireland’s most famous clerically-minded cinematic export. Having become internationally recognized for his photographs of the *Titanic*’s maiden voyage as it traveled from Southampton to Queenstown harbour (now Cobh)
– and capturing what would become the final images of the ship before her April 14, 1912 meeting with disaster, Fr. Browne would receive further acclaim for his 38 minute-long sub-standard *Eucharistic Congress* documentary, shot in 193294.

While not necessarily portraying individual sentiments or responses to the visit of Pope Pius XI, the sheer scale of the proceedings – with its million-plus attendants to events throughout Ireland, the Phoenix Park mass attended by 250,000 people, and the infrastructural arrangements required to facilitate such events – speaks to the ambitions of, and place of Catholicism in, the young Free State (O’Brien, 2004, 31-5; O’Flynn in O’Brien and Barton, 2004, 39-51). At the same time that Fr. Browne was capturing the eventual nature of the Congress, however, a number of other clergymen were producing their own, often more personal, works.

Though lacking the sense of gravitas inherent to the *Eucharistic Congress* film, the collections of Dublin-based Father Jack Delaney and a compilation reel put together of the actualities captured by a Father Courtney in Dublin’s East Wall depict more telling portrayals of the everyday life of Irish people in the 1930s. Removed from the pomp and circumstance of Catholic festivity, the Delaney collection, in particular, presents an altogether more intimate picture of the capital city and its inhabitants (various dates, estimated 1930s).

94 As an event the had resonance throughout the Catholic world, naturally the newsreels were there to cover it as well; see *A Million People Kneel in Worship* (30/6/1932, p. Pathé Gazette); *A Million at Mass* (p. British Paramount News) and *Millions Worship in Phoenix Park Mass* (p. British Movietone), both 1932.
Vacant lots, tenements and many scenes of young people either lined up for the camera or making the most out of playing around their urban environments are contained within the collection. Children are photographed amidst empty and decrepit buildings, some wearing no shoes. Other young people are minding still smaller children who follow them in tow. Providing action that depicts the ordinary lives of these Dubliners, many of the subjects of the single-reel shots are the young people who inhabited the blocks of flats in north inner-city Dublin’s Amiens and Sean MacDermott streets; they provide pointed examples of what inner-city Dublin life was like decades ago.

Images of these small, daily occurrences are were captured alongside more religious fare, including parades of young communicants and Corpus Christi processions, as well as many shots of nuns and young priests in training for their vocations. Market traders on the street, derelict Georgian houses and rooftop play spaces are filmed, as are scenes of ‘penitents’ in the Sisters of Charity of Refuge laundry established on the corner of Gloucester and Sean MacDermott streets: the ‘Gloucester Diamond’. These Magdalens are seen smiling for the priest, and appear quite contented under the gaze of Fr Delaney’s camera. Writing about the Magdalen sequence during a 2010 exhibition of the Delaney collection as part of the Irish Film Institute’s Heritage Week of programming, Tony Tracy states:

\[
\text{[t]he images here are haunting because of what we know now; not so much for what they show as what they conceal. A slow panning shot across the happy faces of these young women gives them a humanity no amount of reports will[.]} \]

\( (ibid., 29) \)

\( ^{95} \) One of the last laundries to close, the Gloucester Street location finally shut its doors on October 25, 1996. See: (Culliton, 1996)
In recent times the same footage has found its way into a number of films and documentaries made since the closure, and wider exposure, of the Magdalen Laundry system. Excerpts from the Fr. Delaney footage have been utilized in works including the States of Fear series (1999, d. Mary Rafferty) and the episode of Channel 4’s Witness entitled Sex in a Cold Climate (1997, d. Steve Humphries) (Smith, 2007, 117; Tracy, 2010, 29).

While a valuable document for historical analysis, it must be noted that despite its potential misappropriation of intent, none of Delaney’s reels were shot in with any sense of affect. Rather than judge, or expose, Delaney was simply capturing what was occurring in daily life.

That people neither shied away from his camera’s gaze, nor did the filmmaker himself engage in any form of self-censure concerning subject matter, is telling of his role, standing and relative popular authority within his community. While these scenes may be harrowing, more for their historiographic context than in their cinematographic content, they are invaluable in the understanding of the formative years of the Free State.

Other excerpts from Fr. Delaney’s collection may be more mundane, but also are more immediate in their empathic connection with today’s young people. These include scenes of schools’ sports days and stage productions, general athletics classes and a prototypical sense of mischief that occurs when a camera is placed in the

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96 An example of such appropriation can be seen in another film that uses the Gloucester Diamond footage. In The Magdalene Sisters (2002, d. Peter Mullan), the footage is recreated in its entirety as Fr Fitzroy (Danny Costello), channeling the footage of Delaney, is seen filming four women. The next scene portrays Fr Fitzroy sexually abusing Crispina (Eileen Walsh), leading Sunniva O’Flynn to declare ‘The priest [Fitzroy] is an amalgam, conflated from unrelated facts’ (O’Flynn, 2004, 50).
vicinity of children, their teachers and other adults. That Delaney’s subjects are often seen grinning for, and talking to, the camera, makes the young people portrayed in the footage appear universally similar to their contemporary student counterparts despite generations of remove between the two. While Fr. Browne’s portrayal of the event that was the Eucharistic Congress was largely detached, though often beautifully composed, Fr. Delaney’s observational films appear to be captured by a man who was very much part of his community. Returning to the analysis of Tony Tracy, there ‘is a real sense of solidarity and shared humanity’ in the films of Fr Delaney, which provides ‘a welcome contrast to the increasingly common consensus of the Catholic Church as devoid of empathy and interest in the poor’ (ibid.).

Similarly, across O’Connell Street., Fr. Courtney’s collection of films Snapshots from Church Road ushered in the new decade by portraying the everyday goings-on of young people with an equally keen sense of observation (1940). Depicting the opening of the then-new St. Joseph’s Boy’s National School on North Lotts in the center of Dublin, the film portrays its students as they present their geometry lessons, prepare for their First Communion – alongside the girls from the local convent school – and practice their drilling and hurling exercises as part of physical education. What makes this series of films more personable than these rote exercises is an excerpt wherein the young men are being marched toward, obligatory, confession. As the students walk across the frame, from left to right, many make sure to puff up their chests and exude a, winking, bravura as they cross the center of the frame. To return to the words of J.B. O’Sullivan, these ‘quiet drama[s…] of daily routine’ bring to light, for the student of history, the manner in which young people were, are and continue to be, young people henceforth (O’Sullivan in Devane, 1953, 131). Despite
an Ireland that presented itself to the globe as an inimitably Catholic nation, the play acting by these young people, in the face of piety, creates an immediately human, nuanced interaction with the filmed subjects that any synopsis of the role of religion the young Ireland fundamentally fails to capture.

While instances of young people acting up in front of cameras are a universal occurrence, it begs the question of how people, and ultimately nations, present themselves in the face of such recording devices. To this end, tourism films about Ireland, made by both foreign and indigenous producers, take such critique to their logical conclusions.

In each of the following examples, the films denote a package of what the tourism scholar Michael Hall argues to be ‘real or imagined cultural traditions and representations, often focusing on a particular interpretation of the enterprise history of a place’ (Hall, 2005, 105). In the instances of foreign productions about Ireland, familiar tropes such as bucolic, rural farming, horse drawn traps and hearty, smiling agriculturalists in thatched roof cottages were perennial favorites. In stark contrast to the perceived ‘Irishness’ to be found in such advertisements, homegrown films sought to promote Ireland in general, and Dublin in particular, as a thoroughly modern and cosmopolitan European cultural center.
Early American Tourism Films *With Will Rogers in Dublin* (1927)

Gary D. Rhodes notes that ‘[f]rom at least as early as 1900, Ireland became the topic of many different expeditionary, ethnographic and current events films screened in the United States as part of the broader category of “foreign views”’ (Rhodes, 2012, 139). While many of these turn of the century films were shot to accompany lectures given by the filmmakers for American audiences, in 1903, Charles Urban’s Warwick Trading Company began shooting a series of films that were then sold to distributors throughout the United States – effectively making the first wide-reaching travelogues to be screened of their own merit. While a number of the films have been lost in the intervening century, their titles provide a sense of their subject matter, and where the importance of Irish *leitmotifs* was placed for American audiences. Films such as *At Work in a Peat Bog, Irish Peasants Bringing Their Milk to a Cooperative Creamery* and *Scenes of Irish Cottage Life* (all 1903) lay bare the manner with which they chose to depict the nation of Ireland (*ibid.*, 154). Of course the Warwick Trading Company could simply be accused of giving American audiences what they wanted in the first place; as put forward by Rhodes, the fact that such titles were still appearing for purchase in film catalogues ‘some three to five years after their initial release suggests that they sold well’ (*ibid.*, 155).

In the wake of the formation of the Free State, many films were made specifically to entice visitors, often American, to travel to, and spend money in, the nascent nation. One such example was the travelogue of the comedian, writer, and, per the film’s title card, ‘America’s Unofficial Ambassador’, Will Rogers who embarked upon a tour of Dublin in 1927 with a particularly biting – and at times thoroughly patronizing – sense of wonderment (p. Sterns Clancy and Pathé Incorporated).
With Will Rogers in Dublin begins with the comedian working his way through the city center. Rogers begins by pointing out that ‘cattle are as thick on the street as Fords at home’ (ibid.). This fact is corroborated within the history syllabus as, for example, in an effort to help students understand the Dublin on 80 years ago, Timeline posits that in the first half of the twentieth century ‘there were as many as 6,000 cows housed in yards in the middle of the city’ – a fact that, when seen on film, may surprise contemporary students reared in a Dublin patched with motorways, ring roads and city centre traffic (de Buitléir, *et al.*, 2010, 439). Rogers is then welcomed into the country by President of the Executive Council William T. Cosgrave and the government’s Vice President, Justice Minister and, according to Rogers, all around ‘cool bird’ Kevin O’Higgins. After the requisite handshakes, Rogers begins his sojourn through the nation’s capital (1927, p. Sterns Clancy and Pathé Incorporated).

While the Pathé newsreel of Michael Collins’ speech on College Green showed the immensity of the crowds gathered, Rogers’ first stop on his tour provides a glimpse of the same street a decade later. In the latter view, the modern-day student of history is presented with wide shot displaying the traffic patterns at the centre of the city. Goods trucks, trams, the odd personal-use car, bicycles, pedestrians and horses – though none of the noted cattle – all negotiate the thoroughfare. In what seems anarchic to a modern day audience, they all appear to share this roadway without any signage. Where street signs are available, Rogers is quick to tease. With a sense of irony eighty-five years later, the narrator stands on the corner of Echlin Street – near the Guinness Brewery and Storehouse. As Rogers beckons toward the sign above his head the viewer can see that it appears, as all street names throughout the capital, on a
dual language sign reading ‘Echlin Street’ as well as ‘Sráid Echlin’. Another quick, albeit prescient, quip is added via intertitle:

They’ve recently renamed all their streets in Gaelic, their native tongue ~ but they’ve kept the English names so the Irish can see what the Gaelic means.

(ibid.)

When the intertitles are used to ‘speak’ for the Irish people Rogers comes across in his journey, they present a transliterated text, hyper-stylizing the perceived accents of the Irish and belittling the natural cadence of their speech. When Rogers comes across a Dubliner with a long beard and hat, he insinuates that the man is a Hasidic ‘Jewish gentleman who speaks with an Irish brogue’. When the narrator asks the man whence he came in Jerusalem, the man replies, via intertitle: ‘Faith an’ I did not. I’m from Ballyroe in County Kildare’. Other local citizens’ answers to Rogers’ questions appear to be peppered with ‘foine’s’ and ‘begorra’s’, in a perpetuation of stereotypical linguistics and quaint patterns of speech (ibid.).

While Rogers is quick to extol the virtues of Dublin and the city’s denizens, his gross reduction of the recent political conflicts from which the new nation was forged into a cheap, throwaway gag further implicates that the film was destined for an audience who cared little for geopolitics. Standing on the quays on the southern bank of the Liffey, the narrator opines: ‘There’s the famous Four Courts building, you’ll note it has yet to recover from the last home-talent war’ (ibid.).

97 a stylized writing of the Irish pronunciation of “fine”

98 a stereotypically Irish, colloquial oath, as if “by God”
Instead of delving into the recent history that brought Free State Ireland to be the country only half a decade old at the time of Rogers’ filming, the narrator heads, instead, to an obligatory tour of the Guinness Brewery. Pint quaffed, Rogers then engages in further gentle mockery of the men and women of the city – the men are ‘all big enough liars to be in New York politics’ and the women, working in a street market and hawking fruit and household items by pram are simply an ‘ingenious people […] with] the baby-buggy’s [sic] working all the time’ (ibid.). Rogers then crosses the Liffey for the film’s final sequence, which occurs in Phoenix Park. Briefly witnessing an Army demonstration akin to the manoeuvres observed by de Valera in the Pathé newsreels of the previous chapter, Rogers declares his tour of Dublin to be ‘washed up’ (ibid.). With a cut to black after this admonishment, the film ends with little summation or any form of appeal to visit the island nation.

**From Dublin to Erin, the Films of Fitzpatrick and Castle**

If, for Rogers, Dublin is *craic*\(^99\) and banter, for subsequent filmmakers, beyond the Pale of the capital city exist homely folk willing to further entertain Americans with their seemingly backward ways. By the next decade, the advent of synchronous sound had changed the manner in which cinema was constructed, and with it audio commentary, rather than intertitled sarcasm, further sold a codified notion of Ireland to American audiences.

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\(^99\) a uniquely Irish word approximating ‘fun’ or ‘entertainment’
One such example, James Fitzpatrick’s *Glimpses of Erin*, begins with a medium shot of a thatched roof cottage, one of many audiences will see in his 8-minute travelogue (1934). ‘We are in Old Ireland’, the film begins, as an ‘old toppled-down shack still stands as a silent reminder of yesteryears, when a good thatched roof cottage was an emblem of peace and security in the land of the shamrock’ (*ibid.*). From this point of departure, it is clear that neither socio-politics, nor the then-recently completed Ardnacrusha hydroelectric power station – a project seen as essential to the independence of the nation – would feature in Fitzpatrick’s travels.

As horses and carts pass one another along *bóithrins*¹⁰⁰ and children and dogs scurry about amongst yet more thatched roof abodes, Fitzpatrick notes that ‘the real charm of old Erin is in her picturesque and peaceful countryside, where the vast majority of her people engage in agricultural pursuits in humble, but happy, circumstances’ (*ibid.*). Fitzpatrick’s Ireland is removed from politics, nation building, and, it would appear, the trappings of modernization. It is also removed from any semblance of poverty as the audience is informed that:

> [n]o matter how poor a family may be in the Emerald Isle today, there is no excuse for them being hungry, for as long as the soil produces thanks to the proverbial generosity of Irish farmers, there is enough for all.  

(*ibid.*)

Depicted as a land of bounty and plenty, this is made manifest as the audience is the introduced to Dick Harrell the, self-proclaimed, ‘fattest man to ever step foot in this isle’ (*ibid.*). With a lilting, pipe music score we learn that Dick is 5’11” and 560 pounds – though he has a ‘perfectly normal’ son, and, as he surveys his land with his

¹⁰⁰ unpaved lanes; diminutive of *bóthar* – road
sheep dog by his side, the sense is that there is no hardship in Fitzpatrick’s Emerald Isle (ibid.).

After a brief sojourn to a farmers’ market the film moves to ‘Galway: a charming little town in the South of Ireland [sic]’ where the audience meets the foil to the Irish farmer – a host of Irish mothers in their ‘little stone houses’ who ‘sip cups of tea and who tell [stories] so well’. Fitzpatrick opines:

[...] the native mothers of any country always inspire certain sentiments, but the older Irish mothers as we see them in the little towns of Ireland today appeal most to our emotions. For we know there is hardly one among them who has not a son who left to seek his fortunes in some far away country, especially the United States. (ibid.)

Fitzpatrick’s move from the west of Ireland to the capital is abrupt, and the film spends the remainder of its running time covering a few shots of Dublin. The first frame is a view of Trinity College ‘founded in 1591 [sic101]’ taken from College Green. The audience is told that Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund Burke and Thomas Moore, ‘three of Ireland’s most illustrious sons’ received their educations at the college. Presumably these three examples are cited by Fitzpatrick as it is they whose statues form a triangle around the entrance to Trinity’s Arch (ibid.).

Fitzpatrick then crosses the Liffey to O’Connell Street and frames his shot with the Daniel O’Connell monument and the Nelson Pillar on either side of the frame. Introducing his viewers to O’Connell ‘known as “The Liberator” who devoted his life

101 Trinity College was founded in 1592.
to Irish freedom’, Fitzpatrick is speaking in the audio track, the visuals cut to the Nelson Pillar – the controversial monument dedicated to the British naval strategist and hero which was itself destroyed in an IRA bombing in 1966. It is clear that Fitzpatrick’s film has tenuous concerns for history, sensitivity or even the merits of research. After this glaring oversight, the audience is treated to a final shot of the sun setting over the Liffey with the Four Courts framed on the right side of the screen, Fitzpatrick rhetorically asserts that ‘for Ireland is one of the most interesting, healthful and picturesque countries in the world’, and the film ends (ibid.).

Two years later Castle Films’ World Parade: Come back to Old Ireland would lift much of Fitzpatrick’s visuals wholesale while presenting an ostensibly new travelogue (d. Castle, 1936). While much of the footage is from Fitzpatrick’s stock, new observations are added in Eugene Castle’s film. For instance, rather than being regaled with the ‘humble hap[iness]’ of the Irish people, when the same footage of two horse-drawn carts passing one another along a dirt path is shown, the audience learns that ‘donkey carts make life doubly picturesque’ (ibid.). The producer includes footage along the river Shannon in his short film and also portrays Cork as he includes a sequence around Blarney Castle and the inevitable ‘silver tongue’ one receives for kissing it (ibid.).

Traveling east to Youghal, Sir Walter Raleigh’s Avondale House is displayed; other monuments from across the country are then shown with little regard for geographic continuity, these include the Magdalen Arch in Drogheda and a nondescript, ‘mysterious’ round tower (ibid.). This scattershot approach prompts the question of
whether the entire film is simply a re-appropriation of stock footage. Adding injury to insult, *The World Parade* borrows Fitzpatrick’s scenes from Dublin and then proceeds to offer up a few others historic buildings such as the General Post Office which, by way of title card, the audience is informed is the famed ‘Abbey Theatre’ (*ibid.*).

Indicative of the notion that what Castle presumed Americans wanted to see was a beautiful tableaux, without any fidelity to geography – or fact, the same footage used by Fitzpatrick to show farmers traveling toward the Galway market is here described as people ‘on the road to Connemara’ (*ibid.*). From Connemara it is a quick jump to Killarney, Co. Kerry, and, as the films ends and Eugene Castle regales ‘farewell to Ireland, beloved of shamrock, story and song’, the two regions conflate into one as a brief sequence gives the audience a montage of Galway’s Kylemore Abbey, Killarney’s Torc Waterfall and, a scenic view of a non-descript lakeside – possibly from the Killarney region.

What is clear in each of these examples is that the perception of the Ireland that filmmakers from beyond the isle’s borders wanted to portray was simply a land that time forgot. Key images are those that show a rural landscape full of breathtaking vistas and convivial, albeit simple, natives. When the urban centre of Dublin must be paid credence, the sole impetus is on filming grandiose buildings that are, crucially, older than America itself. In many ways, the personification of Ireland in Fitzpatrick and Castle became a box ticking exercise. Provided enough of Dublin’s ‘old world Europe’ was on display to evince a sense of history, no matter how superficially engendered, the remainder of the isle could remain thoroughly history-less.
It should be noted that newsreels, as well, were guilty of such portrayals of canned ‘Irishness’. Examples from British Movietone News in 1929, shot by Vincent Corcoran and George Fleischmann, utilize the developments in synchronous sound photography to further typify the Irish. In the sequence Katie Laden of Liscannor\(^{102}\) says her piece the photographers managed to find perhaps the single-most freckled child on the entire isle to recite ‘Hush-a-bye Baby’ (1929\(^{103}\)) in the thickest brogue imaginable. Similarly, On primitive Inishmore, in Galway, where Gaelic is still the only language (1929) Irish set dancing is on display as, per the title, something ‘primitive’ rather than ‘traditional’. In the newsreel item, four elderly people practice the form of set dancing thus making it appear as a relic of a long-forgotten past.

Cork fares better in British Movietone’s estimation as their 1930 clip, Bells of Shandon Call Back to Erin, wherein the ‘[r]omantic Irish landmark, famed in song and story rings out over Cork’ is, thanks to Corcoran and Fleischmann’s cinematic training, a series of well composed images of the city bathed in light that in many ways lay the template for RTÉ’s daily Angelus.

While the scenes are bucolic, the questions of bias and prejudice that every history textbook on the Irish curriculum seeks to ingrain in inquisitive history students provide an apt lens to dismantle the work of these films. In the history classroom, active comparisons of the methods of representation and intentions of production of

\(^{102}\) Co. Clare.

\(^{103}\) In the newsreel A Glimpse into the Heart of Erin – On the road to Killarney, deep in the byways of the Emerald Isle, Katie is preceded by two other sequences, the first simply portrays six elderly women with donkeys and carts, the next declares Town criers are still the daily newspapers of rural Ireland before a man shouts indecipherably (p. British Movietone, 1929).
these films warrant further investigation. In contrast to these examples, the
advertisements made to promote Ireland from an indigenous perspective show a
markedly different nation, casting off the notions of quaint thatched roofs and an
agrarian people, they struggle to assert the nation’s emergent position amongst
modern, 20th century Europe.

A Modern Irish Nation, as Depicted by Advertisement
In their discussion of the changes that occurred in the early decades of the 20th
century, de Buitléir, et al’s Timeline textbook notes the rising popularity of family-run
department stores in major cities in Ireland – citing Roches Stores, in Cork, and
Clery’s as the standard bearers (de Buitléir, et al, 2010, 439). One short from the
collection housed within the National Film Archive that reinforces this point is a 1932
advertisement by an unknown director for Clery’s department store. The film was
originally produced to run between screenings in Irish cinemas. Regarding generic
convention, the clip is still, in many ways, for the promotion of tourism – albeit of an
internal variety. The advertisement goes to great lengths to stress that ‘men come
from distant parts of Ireland to have their clothes made, they come for their favourite
tobacco, […] women come to have their hair waved and to shop in ideal conditions’
(p. Clery’s, 1932). For its material historical value, the capacity to bring the
textbook’s argument to life, and given the location’s immediate recognition as a still-
prominent shop on Dublin’s O’Connell Street, this 2-minute film is of interest for any
educator attempting to enliven the understanding of the evolution of the Free State in
the early 1930s.
Beginning from one of its wrought iron balconies, and panning across the store’s interior, the advertisement then presents a series of overhead views of many of the ‘more than 50 departments, a township of shops’ in what was the world’s first purpose built department store\textsuperscript{104}. Informed that ‘Clery’s always has some novel attraction to draw delighted crowds’, the audience is then presented with an animatronic display of life-sized animals: lions, tigers, cheetahs and an elephant in full circus regalia. In posing the question ‘what have Clery’s got [sic] this week?’ the advertisement sets this department store apart from its rivals (\textit{ibid.}). Furthermore, if fully articulated puppets did not peak viewers’ interests in the early 1930s, perhaps a trip down to the bargain basement might – as it is:

\begin{quote}
[a] happy hunting ground for keen buyers, one never knows what he or she may find there, but you can be sure that whatever you find is useful, interesting and a real bargain.
\end{quote}

\textit{(ibid.)}

Interestingly, as ‘one of Dublin’s busiest and liveliest centres’, the bargain basement of Clery and Co. appears the sole preserve of women, and a single male staff member diligently folding garments amongst the frenzy. The short advertisement concludes by venturing that no finer a surrounding for ‘tea, or what about lunch?’ could be had than within the comfort of their very own cafè (\textit{ibid.}).

Appearing in the historical record directly in between the playfully patronizing Will Rogers travelogue and the wholly infantilizing pitches of Fitzpatrick and Castle, this advertisement poises Dublin as a bustling centre of exchange, with skilled artisans

\textsuperscript{104} The present-day Clery and Co. building was rebuilt in 1920, four years after the destruction of Sackville Street, which took the original building with it. Its predecessor, the Palatial Mart, founded 1853, was purported to be the first such department store in the world. (see Liddy, 2005, 66)
and hungry shoppers. It portrays a middle class totally removed from any presentation of Ireland to foreign interests. Building upon this sentiment, in the latter half of the 1930s several Irish travel organizations would further perpetuate the idea that Dublin warranted an influx of visitors, from both home and abroad, who were looking for something more authentic than begorra and a turf fire.

**Dublin of the Welcomes (1936)**

The use of advertising could also be subtler in the establishment of particular agendas. In 1936 a distinctly contemporaneous view of the city and its environs was presented in the Irish Travel Club-produced *Dublin of the Welcomes* (d. unknown). Beginning in Dun Laoghaire harbour and showing vistas of Killiney, Co. Dublin, as the narration tells of the original Viking settlers who inhabited Dublin’s surroundings, the film then moves to the city centre with views of a number of the now-familiar sources: Government Buildings, Earlsfort Terrace and O’Connell Street – ‘one of the widest streets of Europe; a street that can hold its own with the history and dignity of any of them’ (p. Irish Travel Club, 1936).

During the shooting day on O’Connell Street a parade of Trinity College students processed down the central thoroughfare with all of the celebration, costumes, banner waving and flagrant imbibing-in-public such an affair requires. This leads the narrator to sardonically observe:
A University Rag [...] Like students everywhere these jokers have not a great deal of respect for established institutions or persons of authority. We do not hold ourselves responsible for any libels that appear on the banners, nor the weird and wonderful costumes, but we have a soft spot in our hearts for the jolly looking faces on the fun makers.

(ibid.)

After this aside *Dublin of the Welcomes* markedly, and curiously, shifts its tone. Moving to Ballsbridge, the film portrays ‘an example of Irish efficiency’ and depicts the offices of the Ireland Sweepstake – which would be inaugurated as the Irish Hospital’s Sweepstakes the following year. The film takes the viewer into the Sweepstake office and introduces him to the massive operation entailed inside – where many attractive young women are busily packing tickets for the sweepstake, punching counterfoils and fielding telephone orders in many languages of the globe; similarly, these women are counting banknotes in ‘43 currencies’ *(ibid.)*.

This interior sequence is intercut with scores of punters queuing for the opportunity to purchase tickets in outside the building, in Sweepstake Plaza. Many of these customers are not Irish, but have traveled to Dublin to take part in the draw. Always in the audio track during the second half of the film is the reminder that ticket holders have the opportunity to win unprecedented sums of money, even a half a million dollars; however, without a ticket such opportunities will be lost *(ibid.)*.

The charitable nature of the Sweepstake is discussed*¹⁰⁵*, and a former winner is interviewed. The next sequence presents the day of the draw. A parade is held where

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¹⁰⁵ Nominally established as an organization to raise funds for Irish hospitals, ‘[o]f the millions that poured in, it has been estimated that less than one tenth went to hospitals. The remainder turned rich
women are seen pulling a giant Trojan Horse; some are dressed as stereotypical Native Americans – with tassels, beads and feathered headdresses – others as Valkyries or in hyperfeminized knights’ outfits. After the equally garish draw, former Minister for Labour Joseph McGrath, presented as ‘one of Ireland’s most popular and capable public men’ and the co-founder of the Sweepstake, is introduced (ibid.). The final shots are of horses racing, presumably connecting them with the potential to strike it rich.

That *Dublin of the Welcomes* serves a more precise purpose than simply garnering an interest in tourist revenue is hardly in doubt, and the questions of bias to which students of Irish history are directed toward become readily apparent. When viewed in light of the fact that, concomitantly, gambling in such a fashion was illegal in the United States and, in the wake of the 1934 Betting and Lotteries Act of the United Kingdom, participation in this, or any similar, scheme was forbidden in with the UK, the film’s ulterior motives crystallize.

As a travelogue, produced by the Irish Travel Club, such a film could nominally be seen as existing for the benefit of Ireland at large. By representing the Sweepstake simply as an epic event that occurs in the wider life of the Irish capital, it could be argued that the film was neither an advertisement for, or glorification of, gambling culture – and was therefore not in breach of either US or UK laws. Though, as Marie

men into multimillionaires’ and found the profits, and those who wielded them – including people on both sides of the Atlantic with IRA ties, playing a significant role in politics, political control and backroom media embargoes through the middle of the 20th century (Dodd, 2003).

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Coleman points out, attempting to inhabit some legal loophole was hardly beyond the workings of ‘the Sweep’, as in its entirety it was one of the most intricate gambling syndicates in recent history (Coleman, 2009). Untangling the film, its agenda and its historical context against the backdrop of a newly emergent nation, the manner in which representation is *Dublin of the Welcomes* truly ‘welcomes’ people to Dublin makes for an insightful glance into the manner in which film can act as a propagandizing force.

A Modern Irish Nation, as Depicted by the Tourism Industry; *Dublin – Capital City of Ireland* (1939)

Certainly less partisan, though still eager to portray Dublin as a bustling epicenter of modernization, *Dublin – Capital City of Ireland* was released three years later under the patronage of the Irish Tourist Association/Bord Fáilte (1939, d. Barry). As well as portraying the usual sights that were by then *de rigueur*, the immediately noticeable difference in this film is the use of color photography. Here was the first instance in which Ireland could be viewed with a palette wider than grey tones, and rather than remaining in keeping with any perceived ‘thousand shades of green’, the filmmakers utilized the reds, yellows and pinks of flowers, in scenery or as macro-photographed cutaways, with regularity.

An example of this can be seen in the artistic license taken with oddly balanced framing; in one sequence that portrays people walking along paths in Phoenix Park, the strollers are shunted to the far edge of the frame intentionally foregrounding wider swathes of color. Some of the flowers that appear in the film are planted beside, or are
attached to, another recent development in the capital city: newly constructed suburban housing estates. The film attempts to intermix storied tradition with then-current examples of Ireland’s modernizing tendency. As well as the new neighborhoods on display, the film captures more traditional fare such as traders on Moore Street, a city centre bird market and a lightning-paced hurling match between counties Kilkenny and Limerick. The latter occurs in Croke Park where viewers are reminded of the Bloody Sunday atrocities that befell GAA supporters decades earlier (Barry, 1939).

After the tour of central Dublin, the film then travels north to Rush, the northern edge of the county. As soon as the centre of town is behind the cameraman, the film immediately recalls the earlier, American, works of Fitzpatrick and Castle. The bustle of the capital gives way the dirt roads, a gentleman passing the filmmakers on a horse drawn cart, and the obligatory thatched roof abode. The closing shot is of a field of tulips in Rush with the added commentary that the locale is Ireland’s own ‘little bit of Holland’ (ibid).

While not necessarily evocative of a particularly Irish sentiment, the final sequence is certainly full of color. For use in the Irish history classroom, *Dublin – Capital City of Ireland* provides a unique snapshot of a city that, at its centre, echoes the bustle found in Clery’s bargain basement but still maintains the sense of an older world so overblown in the previous, American examples. While *Dublin* presents images of thatched cottages and horse drawn carts without the affect found within the likes of Fitzpatrick and Castle, it warrants further mention that rather than leaving the closing shot of
fields of flowers to stand as exemplary of bucolic Ireland, instead Bord Fáilte likens
the image to another European location. Ireland in its newfound independence and
modernizing tendency was aligning itself with a wider European sentiment.

Using Indigenous and Foreign Tourism Films in the History Classroom
To return to the mode of empathic engagement presented in this thesis, the tourist
films made by both American and Irish filmmakers can be of great use in the
empathic understanding of students. Both sets of films can pose questions of authorial
intent, representation and the manner by which Ireland was being presented for target
audiences. In the examples of Fitzpatrick and Castle, the Ireland that was
concomitantly being purported as modernizing, and Europeanizing, was still the
preserve of an ancient way of life. The framing of Ireland as a land of Viking history
and Celtic myth is also utilized by the filmmakers at the helm of Dublin of the Welcomes. By framing their presentation of the Irish Sweepstake as a yet another
boon to this ancient isle, albeit a more financially lucrative one, the Irish filmmakers
equally play up to the stereotypes of Ireland that foreign audiences may hope to
experience. Even Dublin – Capital City of Ireland which strives to depict a modern
Ireland finds itself succumbing to horses, carts, thatch and bóithrins. In each of these
examples, both the grinding poverty depicted in the actualities of non-professional
camera-wielding clergy and the emergent middle classes eager to shop at the likes of
Clery’s are nowhere to be found. From the position of perspective recognition, the
amended Historical Narrative Inquiry model places as much emphasis on who is
given a voice as who remains unseen and unheard. Such films, made for non-
indigenous audiences, appear to cherry-pick their depictions of Irishness so that, if
only by omission, they end up playing as fast and loose with Irish history as the
cutting humour of Will Rogers. While the emergent suburbs shown in *Dublin – Capital City of Ireland* connote some sense of changed, the film still does not present the lived experience of the newly independent nation. By the latter part of the 1940s, however, at least one Irish filmmaker was presenting a more rounded view of Dublin and the city’s environs. On the heels of *Our Country* Liam O’Laoghaire created a series of works for the coalition government of the day, many of which provide fascinating insight into how far the nation had come.

**Portrait of Dublin (1952) and the Final Pre-exile Films of Liam O’Laoghaire**

Beyond *Our Country*, O’Laoghaire also created a film about the capital city that charts the further progression of Dublin as it passed the mid-point of the 20th century. However, before looking at his *Portrait of Dublin* (1952) Two short public service advertisements must be mentioned. In 1949 *Safe Cycling* – a campaign for road safety made during the inter-party coalition government and *Mr. Careless Goes to Town* from the same year, comically portrays the misadventures of ‘Sean Careless’ and his colleagues ‘Liam and Sheila Careless’ as they proceed to break most major statutes that comprise the rules of the road – and evade common sense in the process. As the audience learns that ‘impatience is a frequent cause of bad manners’ they are treated to the chief protagonists of the films losing control of their machines in a slapstick manner (O’Laoghaire, 1949). Wheels get caught in tram tracks, pratfalls occur whilst cyclists attempt to showboat and others try to ride while laden down with any number of cumbersome objects.
While the providing a series of laughs and imparts some, fairly commonsensical, rules of the road, of interest for the student of history are two key observations. The first is that many of the tracking shots and montage sequences provide absolutely spectacular footage from all over the nation’s capital – from weaving in and out of dense city traffic to leisurely spins through the Sally Gap, Co. Wicklow, by way of Killiney Hill, Co. Dublin. These sequences were all shot by veteran cinematographer George Fleischmann and utilized both a multitude of angles and then-novel techniques such as car-based traveling shots.

What is also fascinating, and explicitly discussed within the narration, is the sheer amount of bicycles that exploded onto the roads in the middle of the last century. Bicycling, the viewer learns, became a major source of employment throughout Ireland as a quarter of a million bikes had only been recently imported to the island and needed to be constructed, serviced and sold to consumers by trained professionals (ibid.). As well, by the numbers, the film makes clear that of the 8,000 road accidents that had occurred in the in the previous year, 1948, one in ten was attributed to cyclists. While the number of deaths on the road in 1948 pales in comparison to the figures of today, 49 compared to 161 in 2010^106, the frequency with which bicycles were involved is indicative of a society with far fewer personal automobiles and a greater reliance on two-wheeled transportation (RSA, 2013).

^106 See: (RSA, 2013) Of note, the total loss of life for 2012 was the lowest since the Road Safety Authority began compiling annual records, this begs the question of the uptake of automobiles per-capita on Irish roads during the decade of the 1950s; certainly the number of automobiles appearing in the films of this period, when compared to the 1949s, would indicate an ever-increasing reliance on the automobile.
O’Laoghaire’s next film, *Portrait of Dublin*, as noted earlier, was to be his final film completed before his own emigration (1952). Produced with the assistance of the National Film Institute at the behest of Séan MacBride for the Cultural Relations Committee of Ireland, by the time the film was finished, the make-up of Dáil Éireann had reverted back to a Fianna Fáil-controlled government. Having not been in the best of graces with Fianna Fáil in the wake of *Our Country*, the film was never shown during O’Laoghaire’s lifetime – only making its debut on television in 2009 during the broadcast of the TG4/Irish Film Institute-produced archival compilation series *Seoda* [Treasure]. Despite being bereft of any form of political sentiment, the film was embargoed to punish the filmmaker. O’Laoghaire would spend the next thirteen years working in the National Film Archive in the UK. Upon his return to Dublin in 1966, he was put in charge of checking the status of prints before RTÉ transmission. Then he tasked himself with traveling the country to find any films of Irish interest on which he could place his hands. These efforts laid the foundation for Ireland’s own National Film Archive (Brownlow, 1992). By the time of his return, O’Laoghaire had moved from filmmaker to archivist. Despite working with the medium until the time of his death 40 years later, *Portrait of Dublin* was the last film he would ever create.

With voice over narration provided by John Jordan, *Portrait of Dublin* follows many of the conventions of the early 20th century mode of filmmaking known as the city symphony. Using *Berlin: Symphony of a City* (1927, d. Ruttman) and *Man With a Movie Camera* (1929, d. Vertov) as the totemic examples, a city symphony is very precisely defined by Verrone as ‘a particular kind of film that takes its inspiration from the city itself that is being documented or captured through imagistic history. These kinds of films present a vivid depiction of a particular city, using various techniques, like fast/slow motion, superimposition, collage, and image-text-audio juxtaposition to create a portrait of the (given) city’ (2011, 127). While O’Laoghaire’s style is more classically...
coastline, ‘Dublin’s aspirations are reflected in its characteristic piety, [and the] day begins with prayer’ (O’Laoghaire, 1952). From scenes of men at mass, people next begin routinized morning work: delivering paper and milk, as children go to school. Despite this industriousness however, the ‘tempo is gentle and leisurely; friendliness is proverbial, for everyone has time to be interested in his neighbor’ (ibid.). A lilting harp motif scores the sequence.

After a quick cutaway to people shopping, and overhead views of O’Connell Street’s businesses, the audience is reminded of the leisurely attitude of Ireland. ‘Beside the busy shopping centre of Grafton Street lies the pleasant park of Stephen’s Green’ where older men read the papers, younger men and women flirt with one another and children feed ducks and race model sailboats. Next O’Laoghaire moves from leisure to sport as he photographs a hurling match. He then interweaves the urban push toward modernization and the rustic sense of the historical in a manner heretofore not seen in any tourist film, whether from Ireland or abroad.

By bringing the viewer into the Royal Dublin Society’s [RDS] horse grounds, he depicts the grace of show jumping; however, rather than focus on the spectacle of equestrian feats, Jordan’s audio commentary notes:

The annual shows of the Royal Dublin Society are reminders that Dublin is the capital of an agricultural community, and this society that was founded in the 18th century, has not only fostered rural activities, but has provided Dublin with many cultural amenities.

(ibid.)

restrained than his Soviet and German counterparts, through the Irish Film Society he would have been familiar with their works and intents.
After the trip to the RDS, the film then provides a description of many scholars and notable literary and artistic figures born and reared in Dublin in the 17th and 18th centuries before ‘tyranny opposed the land of freedom loving patriots’ (*ibid*.). Further mixing the canonical and the everyday, as well as naming a series of individuals noted across history textbooks for their roles in Irish freedom, O’Laoghaire’s film argues that many nameless individuals fought and died for the Irish Republic, and have gone unremembered.

Figure 23: ‘in the Liberties and secret places of the city, united Irishmen planned revolt that ended tragically in the dock of Green St Courthouse. Death, imprisonment or exile came to many’ (O’Laoghaire, 1952)

Next the film discusses the formation of the Gaelic League and the literary revival, both *as Gaeilge* and in English spawned by through League’s efforts. After a brief recitation from Geoffrey Keating (Seathrún Céitinn), there is a tabletop pan across a series of books that could have been pulled from any undergraduate Irish literature syllabus. In an unintentional nod to Dublin’s cosmopolitan nature in the 1950s, or perhaps the middle class and decidedly anti-Catholic sentiments of O’Laoghaire that

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108 See Appendix Eight regarding the digital reconstruction of images demarcated with this symbol (‡)
have been discussed previously, as the camera begins to cross-dissolve into a scene of the Abbey Theatre – mid-pan – housed between A.N. Jeffares’ *Yeats: Man and Poet* and Lady Gregory’s *The Story Brought by Brigit* sits a statue of the Buddha in contemplation.

From the Abbey, further impetus is placed on the artistic revival begun at the turn of the last century, and how it was interrupted by the events of 1916 and through the 1920s.

In a brilliant piece of cinema, O’Laoghaire begins his political extrapolation of the first half of the 20th century with a series of stock photographs. Interspersed across the audio track are sounds of stock gunfire and explosions much like Morrison’s archival films. However, this sequence is followed by a series of graphically matched long shot as he discusses the stuff of nation (re)building in the wake of the formation of the Free State, and eventually the enshrinement of the Constitution. Rather than speak to
a series of individuals – which he has done throughout the treatises on art, literature and drama, the long shots and depersonalized account of political change make the rhetoric of the nation about the country as a whole.

By way of visualization, the following images are from this sequence and move in a clockwise manner from the top left image: the scaffolding of rebuilding, the vestiges of industry, then modernization – and internationalization by way of Dublin Airport – are followed by a shot of Áras an Uachtaráin (the home of the Irish president in the middle of Phoenix Park, Dublin), a symbol of indigenous governance.

![Figure 25‡: images of rebuilding, reconstruction, innovation and self-sovereignty as depicted in a series of graphic-match dissolves in Portrait of Dublin (O’Laoghaire, 1952)](image)

Returning to the city symphony motif, the film ends with a sense of closure on a day spent ‘touring’ Dublin, both in its geographical and historiographic iterations. After
work the men of Dublin, and O’Laoghaire’s roving camera, head into the pub, as the film, and the dizzying neon lights puncturing the darkness, argue that there is much to do in Ireland’s capital city by night.

The cultural and historical values of O’Laoghaire’s film are immense. The film is expertly made from a technical standpoint and its portrayal of Dublin is more nuanced than any examples discussed in the previous analysis. The history it presents is concise and informed, and the observations made are unique to O’Laoghaire and Jordan’s employ. From both a visual and auditory perspective the film can be utilized as a fantastic exercise in empathic thinking – the recognition of defined representation and the rhetorical tactics utilized to garner affective support for the young nation and its inhabitants.

While pastimes such as Irish dance and indigenous sport are discussed they are neither treated with reverence for the old, nor contempt in the face of the new. It is clear in the film that Ireland is attempting to play a part in the wider European discourse, but is simultaneously retaining ownership of the distinctions of cultural landscape, artifacts and proponent. From a design historical perspective, the modes of dress shown in O’Laoghaire’s film are both far more casual and varied than the examples from the early decades of the twentieth century, and while the revivalist movement for the Irish language is discussed, examples such as the Aer Lingus logo and the ‘Telefon’ signs on the payphones of the, then, Department of Posts and Telegraphs evince how the Irish language found uptake with contemporary
infrastructure, albeit with designs that eschewed an old sense of Ireland for more modern typefaces.

The native tongue would get a further boost through the remainder of the 1950s with the production of Ireland’s first, and only, sustainable newsreel format: Amharc Éireann. Produced by Colm O’Laohaire between 1956 and 1964, the Amharc Éireann series of newsreels stand as a testament to how an indigenous population sought to represent itself on an evolving, weekly, basis. Given that the tenure of the newsreel series produced 350 editions, the analysis presented presently is a brief survey of what the shorts have to offer the student of history. The selection of films was made easier as each comes from a 2010 pilot project in which 46 individual narratives were digitized and given to Irish language teachers for potential classroom inclusion. Regarding the future of such efforts, in 2009 An Foras Feasa [The Institute for Research in Irish Historical and Cultural Tradition], in collaboration with the National University of Ireland, Maynooth; the Irish Film Institute and Gael Linn set to the task of digitizing the entirety of the collection for deployment and use as a digital streamable archive for educative ends. The project is ongoing.

The Amharc Éireann Collection

As the longest running serial news service by an Irish company, Amharc Éireann’s films present a vivid snapshot of life across the country during the latter portion of the 1950s and early 1960s. While the early efforts of the production team were driven by subject matter rather than frequency, by 1960 the series had become a weekly package. This transition from single item story to weekly service was bolstered by the
1959 withdrawal of all foreign newsreels from Irish cinemas. For two short years, *Amharc Éireann* was the only audiovisual new service available in the Republic, and while ‘rarely controversial’ in subject, the topics covered often included ‘political and diplomatic activities, human interest stories, fashion and beauty competitions, sporting events, parades and state occasions’ (O’Flynn, 1996, 61). Despite its intended goal of ‘rejuvenat[ing] the Irish language’, even without pitch perfect comprehension of *Gaelige*, many of the clips portray a distinctly nationalist perspective on a series of events (*ibid.*). Coverage depicted by *Amharc Éireann*’s subject matter ranged from the wholly unprecedented to the everyday, and both are useful in the context of historical study.

Toward coverage of largely unprecedented affairs, the often-cited *Our Congo Dead: The Last Journey* (1960) – a rare, single-item newsreel\(^\text{109}\) – displayed the public’s turn out as full military honors were placed on the soldiers killed during the United Nations’ peacekeeping mission in 1960 (d. C. O’Laoghaire\(^\text{110}\)). Another example, perhaps more easily accessible to the student of history, was the, 1963 event *Dublin Tenements Collapsing: Growing Alarm*, which highlighted the death of Marion Vardy, aged nine, as one tragic victim in a spate of accidents where residents in crumbling tenement blocks throughout Dublin lost their lives.

\(^{109}\) Most *Amharc Éireann* editions, once the weekly service had begun, arrived to cinemas as a three-story package, with a running time of three minutes most stories were kept to 45-60 seconds.

\(^{110}\) The only name to ever appear attached to Amharc Éireann newsreel was producer/director Colm O’Laoghaire, despite the collaborative nature of the filmmaking process. As such, his name does not appear in the in-text citations in the following analysis. For an in-depth look at the others involved in under-the-line positions throughout the newsreel’s lifespan, see: (Pratschke in Flannery and Griffin, 2009, 22)
Vardy and her friend were buying sweets when the building on Fenian St collapsed. In the news item a further story of a husband and wife killed in similar circumstances just across the River Liffey, on Bolton St, is related. As a precautionary measure, people living in the tenements were forcibly removed from their homes so that the buildings could be torn down, and as some of the inhabitants argue with their local Teachta Dála [TD111], Le Corbusier-esque blocks of flats are proffered up as a potential solution to Dublin’s ever-increasing housing problem. In its visual representation and narrative construction, the newsreel aims for little by way of objective reporting.

Whereas most Amhrac Éireann newsreels utilize music that is innocuous enough to fade into the background, in Dublin Tenements Collapsing the overwhelming strings and minor arpeggios from the brass section create a sense of dread and sorrow. The cinematography appears far more composed in this newsreel than in most other offerings shot by the Gael Linn team.

An insert of a picture of a picture of Christ offering a blessing has remained intact amongst the rubble and piles of broken furniture. Throughout images of the chaos of destroyed home wares, children’s dolls appear, conveniently, atop the debris. In the background of another shot, a man is seen shoveling rubble while a Grecianesque statue sits atop a dresser in the middle ground; the statue perfectly bisects the frame, and it can clearly be seen as sitting atop a stack of objects that have been shimmed to make it remain in place. This appears with a curatic sense within the tableaux, as

111 [elected representative]
these elements are arranged as though they were specifically organized to maximize
the plight of tenement dwellers. For the student of history attenuated to notions of
bias and propaganda, as well as appeals to the affective register of audiences, these
techniques make the film less-than-subtle viewing.

Figure 26: images from Dublin Tenements Collapsing (Amharc Éireann, 1963); note the framing
of the right-hand imaged with a Grecian statue shimmed to appear upright in the middle of the
frame

In a further investigation of the perspectives of the Amharc Éireann filmmakers, other
newsreels that used examples of glaring, non-diegetic, music offer clues for the
contemporary viewer about how the prejudices of the 1960s were embodied. An
erratic horn blast announces the title Taking Census of the Travelling People as two
members of An Garda Síochána walk toward a traditional caravan (1960). The arrival
of the gardaí is intercut with images of children throwing dice. In Taking Census,
Sean MacDonald is the first man to emerge from a caravan and speak to the officers.
Presented as clever and civil, though without possession of fundamental literacy
skills, Sean and his compatriots explain to the officers that permanent housing, or
better facilities, and access to education for their children are of paramount
importance to their community.
While such issues were important to MacDonald in 1960, they also remain relevant in the present day. A 2002 survey showed that two thirds of Irish Traveller adults had ceased schooling before ‘the then minimum statutory age of 15’ (Pavee Point, 2005, 4). As Pavee Point argues, this number represents a statistic that is more than four times the national average (*ibid*.). Nonetheless, the news item provides stereotype-reinforcing cutaways of emaciated dogs and children riding bareback ponies – further perpetuating an image of Travellers that was, and continues to be, in keeping with a host of nation-wide, if not nationally sanctioned, sentiments.

Toward the end of *Amharc Éireann*’s lifespan, O’Laoghaire and his crew returned to a halting site in Tallaght, South County Dublin to film *Tackling Ireland’s Apartheid* (1964). While the newsreel found recourse to include inserts of dogs and horses, and the burning of furniture to keep a fire alight, the focus of this particular ‘pocket documentary’ was on the founding of a school on the site and an observation of the successes made in promoting literacy amongst the youngest generations within the Travelling community. . In a fascinating, if not dispiriting contrast, while many of the events, technologies and styles depicted within the *Amharc Éireann* newsreels now seem outmoded, or even *kitsch*, many of the elements Colm O’Laoghaire utilizes to identify the members of the traveling community remain conventional stereotypes on into the present day.

A similar sense of othering is on display in another *Amharc Éireann* short entitled *Nigerian Independence Ball* (1960) where a dinner and dance, replete with a show band – another frequently displayed element of early 1960’s Irish culture – is
presented to the audience. Dublin’s Lord Mayor, Maurice Dockrell, is in attendance with dignitaries from the African nation that had only just garnered its independence from the United Kingdom. Men and women are dancing to a very ‘swinging’ score in the Shelbourne hotel and Nigerian men are seen happily dancing with Irish women. It is in the final third of this 37 second long clip, when the narrator makes mention of the ‘great hats’ worn by the Nigerian men that the newsreel’s objective gaze becomes suspect. The final five shots in the sequence are a series of portraits of Nigerian men in traditional dress. Counter to the newsreels’ casual reportage, these short shots take on an air of anthropological study more akin to a *mondo* exploitation rather than coverage of a news event. Given that in the 2006 census the Central Statistics Office identified Nigerian immigrants living in Ireland as comprising the fourth largest migrant cohort, the manner in which O’Laoghaire’s camera lingers over the visitors to the *Independence Ball* may surprise some students of history (CSO, 2006, 36).

**The Everyday as Depicted in the *Amharc Éireann Collection***

Many of the topics covered in the *Amharc Éireann* series present far more mundane, daily affairs than the subjects described above. Issues of the day included snapshots of emergent technologies, the expanding consumerism of the Irish and the trappings of then-contemporary fashion. As such, these films catalogue the modernization of mid-century Ireland and the social historical changes to the nation that are explored throughout the history curriculum, albeit in a format whose attention and emphasis was to make the traditional, national language palatable and vital to audiences who were, themselves, caught up within such transitions.
B. Mairéad Pratschke observes that the weekly occurrence of newsreel construction and dissemination in the early 1960s was, itself, an anachronistic gesture as many newsreel services were coming to the end of their productions by the time *Amharc Éireann* began producing its weekly offerings (2009, 34). The concomitant newsreel service of the period ‘although outdated elsewhere in Western Europe and North America’, she argues, ‘was oddly appropriate for Ireland as a relatively late starter in the European wave of postwar development’ (*ibid.*). Indeed, while by the 1960s Americans were seeking alternatives ‘for such tasteless travesties of the mass society as white bread, suburbs, tailfins, and “plastic”’, such cultural and design-oriented artifacts are what are on offer in much of the *Amharc Éireann* collection (Frank, 1998, 13).

In what approximates a, genuine, Irish version of the American Movie Channel’s *Mad Men* series (2007-present), *Nowadays – ‘Say it with Plastics’* (1960) presents a trade show where businessmen could peruse the latest in advertising accessories: custom-molded, internally lit, revolving signage. Comparing ‘*Say it with Plastics*’ to images of Ireland from the previous decades, whether horses and carts in North County Dublin, or Fitzpatrick’s ‘fattest man’ with his acreage and faithful working dog, stark contrast becomes self-evident. The emergence of an Irish middle class, with purchasing power and internationally informed aesthetics led Irish people toward consumerist choices unseen in previous generations. This spilled over into the size and shape of the population, as demographer Michael Hout points out: ‘*[t]he economic expansion of the 1960s and the ensuing structural mobility of the [emergent] Irish labor force’ was responsible for the first reversal of patterns of immigration for 120 years (1989, 324).
A similar sentiment can be found within the Irish banking sector as on offer in *Dublin’s First Drive-in Bank* (1961), which portrayed the opening of Ireland’s first drive-through teller service at the Allied Irish Bank on Baggot Street. The newsreel depicts schoolchildren and bankers alike as they witness then-T.D. for Dublin’s Northeast district Charles Haughey conduct the inaugural transaction. While the school-aged young people’s mode of dress has moved on significantly in the intervening 50 years, it is interesting to note how bankers’ fashions have not. While lapels have become thinner, and jackets less sack-like, the suit remains the uniform of choice of the finance sector and political class. Furthermore, students of history may take interest in Charles Haughey’s completion of an accountable deposit recorded to historical veracity, which proved anomalous to much of his latter financial dealings.

Figure 27: technological developments and conveniences on display in *Amharc Éireann*. Businessmen surveying recent developments in shop fitting, 1960; by the following year these same entrepreneurs could deposit their earnings without leaving their automobiles, just as Charles Haughey has here on Baggot St in 1961

Such technological and efficiency-centered newsreels were not the sole preserve of the nation’s capital. Beyond Dublin, Batchelors’ factory in Athy, Co. Kildare is on
display in 1960 in the wake of their installation of an ‘Electric Eye’ to automate the process of sizing and grading peas\textsuperscript{112}.

Counter to such displays of innovation, examples such as Tórramh an Bhairille? [Funeral of the Barrel\textsuperscript{113}] (1959) show the potential downsides to the cosmopolitan leanings and ever-encroaching speed-up of Irish life. The film portrays the redundancy of Guinness’ artisanal coopers in the wake of the switch to mass-produced stainless steel kegs. Unlike the embracing of advancement perceptible in many Amharc Éireann clips, the tone of this early offering is more critical, as it speaks to the loss of native industries and traditional skillsets – in many ways the films set the precedent for the Shaw-Smiths’ future endeavors captured in RTÉ’s Hands series two decades later (1978-1993) where the knowledge, skill and unique nature of a host of Irish crafts was preserved under their anthropological lenses.

**Depicting Changing Fashions**

Given the wide subset of Amharc Éireann newsreels dedicated to consumerist tendencies and middle class desires, information about what to wear and how to wear it in an effort keep viewers up-to-date in the fashion stakes was routinely presented. In many ways, such examples are, perhaps, one of the greatest points of distinction between the American films created by nostalgia merchants in order to evince a sense of timelessness and the vibrancy of self-perception within Ireland’s more leisured

\textsuperscript{112} Sorting Peas by ‘Electric Eye’ (1960)

\textsuperscript{113} The initial series of documentaries presented their titles as Gaelige; despite the spoken language remaining as such, title cards were produced in English throughout Amharc Éireann’s lifespan as a weekly series, from 1960-64.
classes. As well as providing a fascinating glimpse into the design history of the middle of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, the use of such clips in the classroom can add levity to the prompting of the historical imagination. Examples such as the \textit{Lovely Legs Contest} numbers 1 and 2 (both 1961) – in which the camera lingers over a series of Irishwomen from up and down the country as they parade in front of a panel of judges in sensible kitten heels and dresses that fall well below the knee – can invoke a smile at their relative conservatism, but can also add a sense of just how social mores and attitudes toward sexuality and femininity have changed in Ireland across the intervening fifty years.

While today’s viewers can ostensibly view them as \textit{kitsch}, coupled with further examples of beauty pageantry and fashion catwalks from subsequent years, the manner in which the attitudes and aesthetics transmogrified during the period can be understood. Examples of fashion shows, such as those in aid of the \textit{Polio Clinic} and \textit{Unicef} (both 1960) – the latter featuring models walking dachshunds on leads – evidence a host of new fashions and key trends, including stylish, \textit{chic} purebred dogs, entering Ireland. Similarly, \textit{Colourful Beachwear from New Synthetics} (1963) presents its audience with a plenty of swimwear and options for sunnier climes with the added benefits of the quick drying and breathability that an all-nylon fabrication could afford. Unlike previous examples of seasonal garments, here wild patterns are on display – from floral prints to striped 2-piece ensembles described by the narrator as ‘like a zebra’; likewise, while the fashion show depicted is displaying titular beachwear, the amount of bare flesh on display, when compared to earlier ‘lovely legs’ competitions and runway shows, is indicative of greatly changing attitudes toward modesty within Irish young people.
In noting the marked contrast between these runway fashions and the more traditionally-oriented clothing on display less than a decade earlier can be contrasted more strongly by looking toward an advertisement depicting the works of one of Ireland’s most renowned fashion designers. In the 1957 Irish Linen Guild sponsored the film *Irish and Elegant*, in which the works of Sybil Connolly – and the designer’s capacity for making beautifully intricate lacework from indigenous linens – is portrayed. Rather than the sense of cool timeliness – in both image track and, relatively, raucous soundtrack displayed in the *Amharc Éireann* shorts, *Irish and Elegant* filmed its models against the backdrop of Adare Castle, Co. Limerick, and strives to present an image of immutable, timeless sophistication. The comparison makes it clear that the *Amharc Éireann* programme, and the demographic it reached, attempted to stifle a sense of tradition in light of a more European offering.

Figure 28: barefoot, ‘beehived’ and smoking, there is an outré sense of ‘cool’ on display in aid of a Polio Clinic, 1960; also a mid-twirl in a matching swimming outfit, with cape, made all the more modern with its synthetic fabrics, and all the more risqué with a significant amount of leg on display 1963 (both *Amharc Éireann*)

Even hairstyles get scrutinized in *Amharc Éireann*, and while the final two examples fall beyond the date set of this thesis, as they were amongst the final newsreels made by the service in 1964, the inclusion of *What’s New in Hair Fashion* and “Get-With-
It” Hairstyles for Men can both provide further insight into the aspirations of the fashion forward throughout Ireland.

Looking back through the films offered up by the analysis of the Amharc Éireann collection, there is a clear shift from a sense of Ireland’s modernization occurring against the backdrop of what has made Ireland unique – from both historical and cultural perspectives – to a shift toward agglomerating Ireland into the wider world. The films viewed depict a country attempting to move its social and cultural standings to a place where its inhabitants were as knowledgeable and contemporary as anyone, anywhere. Providing a ‘clear picture of a relatively prosperous and stable period’ in the nation’s history – where men and women alike had the time, technology and finances to be successful, engaged and perfectly coiffed, the Amharc Éireann collection is unique in history as its provision of a ‘distinctly Irish picture of Ireland’ (O’Flynn, 1996, 61).
As a stand-alone archive, the *Amharc Éireann* collection presents a fascinating and insightful glimpse into events both large and small as they befell Ireland across the latter portion of the 1950s and early 1960s. Made largely redundant with the launch of RTÉ, the series presents itself as a primer in the events deemed significant and entertaining to Irish audiences of the day. Students must realize, however, that as a venture undertaken by the *Gael Linn* organization, the efforts *Amharc Éireann* went to in ensuring that homegrown productions maintained a reverence for the Irish language must be acknowledged. These social and political agendas must be recognized to be at play in every example on offer.

When compared to the stuff of the history textbook, or the previous examples of social history on film, what makes the *Amharc Éireann* collection fascinating for young people are the myriad examples of films made about the youth of Ireland. To return to questions of intended audience to determine the messages that can be gleaned from investigations of the collection, students must be reminded that unlike the tourist films outlined above, Colm O’Laoghaire’s efforts were made for Irish audiences. In a pre-televisual era, they provided cinemagoers – presumably themselves young and upwardly mobile – with a sense of what was going on in their Ireland. Furthermore, given the weekly format into which the collection eventually settled, the films did not always need to convey a sense of eventual historicity. While examples such as *Our Congo Dead* and *Dublin Tenements Collapsing* capture important moments in the history of the capital city, with the former on a permanent loop in Collins Barracks’ *Soldiers and Chiefs* exhibition of military history, many other articles provide ephemeral glimpses at the social fabric – and social history – of an ever-changing Dublin.
A Modern Ireland and an Elegy for the Past
*Ireland In Spring* (1958) and *The Irish Village* (1959)

When compared and contrasted, two final films reinforce the social, cultural and technological ramifications of the rapidly developing Ireland of the late 1950s and early 1960s displayed by the *Amharc Éireann* collection. While the first looks to establish the entirety of the Republic, rather than just the capital city, as a modern nation that is more European than Irish, the latter provides a requiem for the way of life that had been romanticized in decades prior by the above-mentioned American travelogues. Toward the former, and made while he was overseeing the production of the *Amharc Éireann* newsreels, Colm O’Laoghaire’s *Ireland in Spring* (1958), produced for *Bord Fáilte Éireann* [Irish Tourism Board], takes the *An Tóstal* [The Pageant] festival as its point of departure for a tour of the nation – showcasing both Ireland’s unique cultural ascriptions and more Europeanized tendencies. Against this, the Ealing Studio-trained James Clark’s documentary *The Irish Village* (1959) about the County Cork hamlet of Crookhaven portrays both a village and a way of life that were concomitantly facing extinction in the face of modernization.

Presenting ‘Catholicism, nationalism, nostalgia and sporting events in a representative cocktail of Irish culture’, *An Tóstal* ran across the country annually from 1953 to 1958 (Daly in Kenny, 2003, 269). Capturing the final iteration of the festivities, Colm O’Laoghaire’s film depicts a hybridization of a distinctly Irish sense of being and European-encapsulating sentiment. Despite the fact the film’s title card is shot against a background of green and orange-flecked tweed, equally vibrant in the film is the neon glow from the Dublin’s city centre under the cover of night.
Like its colorized predecessors, the O’Laoghaire film begins with a montage of flowers – nearly one minute of them, followed by Spring lambs and men tilling fields by horse drawn plow, before the film arrives in Dublin with an address by President Sean T. O’Kelly – wherein he announces the opening An Tóstal’s festivities. In a nod to the transnational industries and currencies running through the Dublin of the day, the footage of floats paraded down O’Connell Street portray a flower-laden vehicle clearly sponsored by the Dutch Brewery Amstel rather than the offerings of St. James’ Gate. Another quick shot depicts the Aer Lingus float replete with an army of smartly dressed airhostesses.

In its depiction of the events taking place in Dublin, the Ronnie Walsh-delivered narration is quick to point out that while ‘homecraft, mosaic and sculpture’ exhibitions by leading members of the traditional crafts movements were occurring, of equal excitement was the fact that the Munich State Opera was in town (d. C. O’Laoghaire, 1958). The options do not stop there; however, as the film then counters such emblematic sites as the Gate and Abbey theatres with the buzzing nightlife on offer in the city centre. A montage of neon tubing that illuminates the evening sky and the merriment to be found within the Dublin pub are portrayed to the viewer. Sporting events are also on display, and as ‘Croker’ plays host to a series of GAA matches, polo is played in Phoenix Park. At the same time, men fish, and boast about their catches, on Howth Pier, Co. Dublin and a ‘nearly 1000 mile cycle race’ which delights the nonnative participant by ‘passing through typical scenery and little towns’ is presented (ibid.).
Using this narrative segue to take its leave of Dublin, the film boasts that Killarney, Co. Kerry – previously photographed by Castle – has all of the beautiful vistas associated with the Ring of Kerry in which the village sits. Furthermore, boasts the film, it also has plenty of links golf. Without any continuity in the geographical stakes, the viewer is then transported to Co. Kildare’s Punchestown’s horse racing track which ‘is only 25 miles from Dublin, so city people as well as country people [can] mingle’ if they fancy a punt on a winner (ibid.). Crisscrossing back to Galway, the trout fishing is purported to be the stuff of legend, then the citizens of Ennis, Co. Clare are shown as having erected a stage in the middle of the town’s crossroads – all traffic has stopped for a traditional music festival that will ‘carry on into the small hours of the morning’ (ibid.).

The inference is clear, in Ireland during An Tóstal, even the small towns and rural counties are bustling. Back to Galway the film depicts the currach [wooden framed rowboat] championships, including some innovative in-boat camerawork that displays the finesse of maritime navigation. As ‘Irish speaking fisherman guid[e their] pitch and canvas craft’, the audience further learns that having absolutely no idea what is transpiring is perfectly acceptable. As Walsh notes ‘[…] and there go this year’s champions, but whoever they are it makes no difference to the unique character of a day spent amongst Western folk’ (ibid.). In Cork, however, spending time with the people of the West will also mean spending time with people from more Easterly geographies as the International Choral Festival is advertised as underway.
In a wonderfully contrived sequence, the Welsh participants are milling about Fitzgerald Park on the River Lee when the Ukrainian team decides that the same venue ‘is a good place to rehearse’. ‘The Welsh join in this […] outstanding cultural event’ only to be joined by ‘the lads and lasses of Scotland’, ‘and now the Spanish señoritas’, only to find that ‘naturally, you couldn’t keep the Irish out’ of what becomes a great, colorful, multi-cultural bricolage of singing, dancing and friendly cultural exchange-cum-one-upmanship (ibid.).

*Ireland in Spring* is a place and a season where both the rural and the urban can co-exist. The events that occur at the Royal Dublin Society’s annual show further this assertion as the concurrent show jumping and bloodstock sales – and the disparate classes of people they draw – are depicted as genuinely intertwined interests. The film intercuts between show jumping, watched by people who are extravagantly dressed, and the ‘machinery paddock’ where people who work in the agricultural industries can survey the newest innovations in mechanized farming. For a film that began with a man plowing his field by horse-drawn means, the Ireland on offer has embraced the conveniences of 20th century living – life is better, more advanced and colorful; there is more to see and do, and certainly more to buy (ibid.). In its closing sequences, the film manages to brilliantly, if somewhat jarringly, suture an Aer Lingus advertisement, which is clearly borrowed from a completely different production, into *Ireland in Spring*’s own running time. While still in the RDS, the cameraman is led to ‘the stand of Aer Lingus, the Irish airline company that reminds us’:
[the film cuts to a wholly different Aer Lingus advertisement shot at Dublin Airport, also, seemingly, narrated by Ronnie Walsh, in a wide shot of the terminal and a twin propeller plane with passengers, airhostesses and the captain disembarking] Dublin Airport is only a few hours away from most European cities; whether you are eastbound from America or ending up staying in Europe, you can easily stop off at the Emerald Isle. And for those of you who prefer to travel by sea[…]

(ibid.)

With that, the film cuts right back into itself where O’Laoghaire and Walsh relate the ways by which Ireland can be arrived at via ship.

Regardless of how one has touched down, once on land there are a host of travel options available ‘to suit all budgets’: from bus tours to ‘railways with diesel trains’ as well as car hire companies and limousine services (ibid.). Drivers can take advantage of Ireland’s ‘low traffic density’, and ‘several first class car hire companies offer models to suit every pocket’, even if one would like to be chauffeured by ‘some charming lady drivers [who are] attached to one firm’ (ibid.). Images of brand new fleets of hirable automobiles, showcased by young, attractive women further entice the would-be tourist to make Ireland a must-visit destination. The final utterance in Ireland in Spring perfectly sums up the pitch of the piece and the manner in which Ireland found itself, in 1958, enmeshed in a modernizing project that saw it negotiating its cultural precedent and European future, as it states: ‘Dublin hotels are internationally recognized, including former castles and mansions, now modernized, throughout the country’ (ibid.).
A ‘dying’ Way of Life

Despite the growing affluence depicted in Ireland in Spring, and chronicled in Amharc Éireann, in instances where such modernization had not occurred, ways of life were being left behind, and many communities throughout the country were being decimated. James Clark’s The Irish Village is nominally about the fishing community of Crookhaven on Cork’s Western seaboard; however, the filmic essay is also about the loss of a wider way of life that was occurring across the rural tracts of Ireland. Making explicit the rationale for the production, the filmmaker states in voiceover narration:

it is because of this threat of extinction that we decided to make a film of life in an Irish village. An ordinary place, with nothing special about it, except of course that it’s dying. […] ‘The old die; the young leave and those of us who remain are sad at the prospect’. (d. Clark, 1959)

Based on the day-to-day life of the O’Sullivan clan, and narrated by their patriarch, the film depicts a village whose livelihoods centre upon agriculture and a diminishing fishing industry where ‘there’s few modern amenities […] and the likelihood of getting running water, drainage or electricity becomes more and more remote’ (ibid.). Given that it is largely structured around a day in O’Sullivan’s life, from sun up to sun down, in many ways it plays out as a city symphony does, although without the urban location.

Immediately, the viewer learns that many of the fish caught and lobsters potted by the villagers are not for Irish consumption, but are instead are sold on to French fisherman. Rather than spending all of his own days in a boat, however, the head of the O’Sullivan family also gives a portion of his day over to traveling to the dairy co-
operative where fresh cream can be exchanged for goods ‘with no merchant or middleman getting his cut out of the deal’ (ibid). The co-op, and its system of exchange was a far cry from the likes of the multi-story facade of Roches Stores 120km east on Cork’s Saint Patrick’s Street, or the Clery’s depicted in the 1932 advertisement analyzed above.

As well as a place to obtain the staples necessary for daily survival, O’Sullivan notes that the co-op is where many men met to socialize, as a number of the residents of the wider area tended not to venture forth into the village save for ‘Church on Sunday or the occasional wedding or wake’ (ibid.). Indeed as the camera languishes on a long shot of an adolescent girl framed by a doorway, O’Sullivan opines that ‘a young girl wouldn’t want to be hanging around here, sure she’d rather be in England earning money and having a gay time’ (ibid.). Regarding the lives of the fairer sex in Crookhaven the narrator admits:

life for the women can be very dull, especially in Winter, there’s nowhere to go, nothing much to do, generally it blows a gale or pours with rain and it’s dark by four o’clock; they just wait for the Summer.

(ibid.)

While ‘farming is gradually becoming more mechanized in these rural parts’, it is clear that the O’Sullivan clan still tills and sows their fields, and tend to their cattle, wholly by hand (ibid.). Despite the fact that ‘some men go over to England for a few weeks to earn enough money for the hire of a tractor’, this appears to not be an option for the narrator, and so he and his family toil from sunrise until the late afternoon, at
which point Gaelic football and sean-nós dancing\textsuperscript{114} are in the offing, providing respite at the end of a long day’s work (ibid.).

In the evening generations young and old of those who live in and around the town retire to the pub. Children play as they, and the women of Crookhaven, listen to men who regale the villagers in song, music and dance while supping pints of stout. In a wide shot it appear that the pub is the only building that is lit, dimly, by incandescent light, at least on that particular evening.

As the day ends, and the night becomes more ebullient, O’Sullivan opines:

to an old fogy like me, this party is great fun, but I suppose it’s not much compared with the dance halls, picture palaces and all that which the young people can get in the cities. They can’t think of it much because they’re leaving and although there may be enough work for the haves, there’s nothing left for the have-nots. There is no alternative but to immigrate, or go on the dole.

(ibid.)

From an empathic perspective, The Irish Village is of interest both for its alien nature to much of 21\textsuperscript{st} century Irish life, but also for its similarities to a contemporary Republic where, much in the manner of the relevance of Our Country, economic uncertainty, sustainability and the ever-present threat of immigration are once again the stuff of daily media discourse. Contrasting Ireland in Spring with The Irish Village, the student of history can read both as celebrations of uniquely Irish culture, and each captures the spirit the crossroads of mid-20\textsuperscript{th} century Irish history in its own way.

\textsuperscript{114} traditional Irish step dancing
**Conclusion**

As a single chapter, the analysis presented in this portion of the thesis has analyzed and rehearsed the merits of both professional and amateur films for the empathic light they can cast on representations of the social and cultural histories of early 20th century Ireland. Covering a time in which the nation went from being a country under colonial rule toward self-governance and ultimately independence – from agrarian society to rapidly modernizing Republic – the changes in attitude, and of landscape, that occurred throughout the six decades under scrutiny in the analysis are echoed in the films the period proffers up.

Some, such as the works of tourist boards and travel documentarians present carefully constructed representations of Ireland and the Irish people, toward commercially minded outcomes. Students of history grounded in the capacity to uncover historical bias will find much to analyze in critically recognizing the perspectives of such filmmakers and their subjects. Other films, such as those of Fr.s Delaney and Courtney simply allowed people to be natural in front of their lenses, as observational works of documentation they shed light on the day-to-day lives of those under their cameras’ gazes. Both of these modes of representation are equally valid, and equally tendentious for the student of history, and each informs investigation about the social structures and strictures of the formative years of the Irish Republic.

Rehearsing works of Father Browne, and both Liam and Colm O’Laoghaire, this second chapter of film-specific analysis has investigated the historical value inherent to many of Ireland’s non-fictive filmmaking pioneers. Viewpoints and voices, rapidly
expanding cities and diminishing country villages articulate the dichotomy of an evolving nation. From a host of travelogues and films with touristic agendas, the competing politics of representation – whether Ireland is a land of tweed and begorra or a multi-ethnic, assuredly European destination – paint a vivid picture of the mid-century Republic and further iterate to students that the role of the historian is the collection of sources and voices, rather than the steadfast avowal of one, or another. Looking to Ireland’s only sustained newsreel, itself an ideologically grounded, prolanguage project, provides further glimpses into a catalog of events both unprecedented and quotidian.

Taken in conjunction with the analysis found within the previous chapter – as together they make two sides of a singular, investigative argument – the films analyzed and posited as valid for inclusion within the wider history curriculum provide a rich, moving picture of Ireland that begs further research by the keen student of history. Posing the lens of historical empathy as both cognitive and effective assignation to the positions of historical actors, the vividness of filmed history – its victories and tragedies, its celebration, and even its day-to-day mundanity makes for equally valid points of departure for critically informed, dialogic classroom investigation.

Based on the argument that historical narrative inquiry lends itself to empathic approaches to the records of the past, the analysis posed across the previous two chapters has sought to tie films from the National Film Archive into curricular material in an effort to provide background context, pose in-depth questions, investigate source materials and legitimate areas for further reflection – about the
films themselves, about the nature of archives and what they collect, about the constructed nature of representation and about the practice of actively making history comprised of lives and events that shaped the progress of a nation. The work undertaken by this thesis has shown that film is a viable resource for historical investigation, and that empathic approaches to the study of history via film can yield unique and enriching results within the classroom and that Ireland has both a precedent for, and an archive full of preeminent examples of, texts of value to the scholar of history. In returning to the revised heuristic amended from Colby’s model in the third chapter, it is clear that the analysis presented across the films on offer has utilized the bifurcated approach of formal and empathic filmic analysis. Looking to both the political and social modes of historical research, the textual analysis of films – whether newsreel, professional or amateur – has moved beyond the explication of 20th century tableaux, technique and intended audience and moved into an active exploration of how each can be narrativized in a 21st century classroom.

Furthermore, in an effort to draw empathic points of departure for students looking upon such films today, much of the analysis has been directed at evidencing the manner in which similarity, and difference, between the lives of historical agents and those living in the contemporary sphere can be drawn out of the analysis of these films. Again, to return to the central tenants of perspective taking and empathy for caring as identified by Barton and Levstik, such efforts are not engaged with to have students identify wholly with the actions of those of the past, but rather to provide a document-based acknowledgement of how and why such historical actors may have been prompted to act.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Development of Ireland</th>
<th>Social Development of Ireland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What does the film evidence?</td>
<td>• Who was the intended audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What techniques are being utilized?</td>
<td>• What narratives can be drawn from the film?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What critical and affective motivations appear?</td>
<td>• What relevance do such narratives have today?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Figure 30:** the ‘Research’ half of the amended heuristic, see Figure 9, page 178

Over the course of this chapter, the arguments put forth have taken the films investigated and analysed them thematically according to the above model of research for historical understanding. Beyond a perfunctory analysis of the mise-en-scène of each film, questions of intent, authorial presence, and relevance to an understanding
of both the past and the present have been put forth. In many instances across this analytical framework, questions rather than answers have been posed to ignite the historical imagination in a manner that can be operationalised through filmic investigation. It should be noted, that while ‘research’ is presented as the first half of the above heuristic, the second portion of the model is ‘action’ – which will be addressed at the beginning of the next, and final, chapter.

Despite the merits of working with such films in the history classroom – as argued across the two previous chapters, moving from ‘research’ to ‘action’ is fraught with a host of obstacles requiring changes to accepted policy, educational intent, and, in some instances, the statues enshrined in Irish law. The final chapter of this thesis will pull back out of the archive to look further at questions of implementation and how efforts such as those presented in this research report might be made manifest within the contemporary educational landscape of Ireland – how action can take place. In doing so, the analysis will argue that the merits of the film-based study of history can be of great benefit beyond simple curricular uptake. However, as evidenced across this final chapter, to mobilize such thinking runs counter to previously analysed elements of the educational domain in which policies and practices across the Republic currently operate.
Chapter SIX: 
Synthesizing the Contributions of the Thesis; Determining the Next Steps

The purpose of this final chapter is to bring together the elements of the previous analysis undertaken across the thesis in order to articulate how working with the films on offer in the political historical framework of Chapters Four and the social history displayed in Chapter Five can be found to assist the critical questioning necessary to effectively engage the historical imagination and charge the Irish classroom with historically empathic assessment of the nation’s formative years.

The two previous chapters have outlined instances where the holdings of the Irish National Film Archive can be utilized in the enlivening of the teaching of history through an exploration of moving image media and empathic approaches to the historical record in both political and social narratives. Drawn from the assembled research into historically empathic processes outlined by the early efforts of Portal, Ashby and Lee; the Wineburg experiment and the more concerted thinking through the pedagogical strategy expanded upon by Barton, Levstik and Davis, this exploration was undertaken through the application of an amended reading of Sherri Rae Colby’s Historical Narrative Inquiry model. Arguing that elements of Colby’s model and heuristic could be utilized for the specific attributes of film-based investigation, the analysis sought to provide inroads to students’ greater understanding of both political and social history of Ireland in the 20th century. Given the capacity for students to identify with the film form, and acknowledge the motivations and inspirations of both those portrayed upon, and those responsible for committing such texts to, celluloid, the arguments for cinematic inclusion within the history syllabus are clear.
As evidenced by the historical analysis of both the film in history education arguments as well as the historical analysis of Ireland’s own working with film as a tool for teaching, a significant amount of precedent exists for such endeavors. While what is being presented is a departure from how history education is presently delivered within the Republic, as determined in the early chapters of this thesis, film pedagogy – and history specific learning – are nearly as old as the medium itself, and reach back over ten decades of foundational thinking.

From the early 20th century, the creation of learning-based works on film was presented to education systems on both sides of the Atlantic. A century ago, in the nineteen-teens, the United States’ Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Education was fostering research that acknowledged American schools’ use of films that were both indigenously produced and from abroad. At the same time, the United Kingdom’s National Council of Public Morals was publishing reports on the capacity of film for education as well as the role that the medium was then-playing in shaping the wellbeing of British children. By the following decade, both nations were actively discussing the tenants, and producing examples, of works that could be used within history teaching as a specific subject to which film was well suited.

Examples of such include the Chronicles of American Photoplays series, co-produced between industry and the academy, and the UK’s own work emanating from the Historical Association, as well as Frances Consitt’s history classroom-focused research that became the initial keystone of what would become the British Film Institute. Each of these elements paved the way for the academic debates that arose
out of the second half of the 20th century regarding the validity of film in the classroom, as a legitimate source for historical inquiry and the exploration of both reconstructed and original documentation in the transmission of the narrative of history. Given such precedent, and the theoretical implications born out of the approach to the historical material that champions empathic readings of the cinematic record, this chapter will look at the manner by which the next steps in research can be undertaken.

Moving toward Implementation

This study has focused on the approach of historical empathy, and the differentiation between the concomitant methods of critical perspective recognition and affective connectivity. In doing so, the thesis set to argue that historical narrative inquiry as a method of filmic and historical scholarship both maintains validity and asserts itself as the product of a lineage of thinking through the discourse of history. Armed with a unique definition of the term ‘historical empathy’ drawn from the strategy’s supporters and critics alike, the work of the thesis determined how Irish content housed within the National Film Archive could be empathically approached toward the benefit of Irish history education. Utilizing the dynamic of the history rubric, and breaking the traditions of exploration into politically-oriented and socially-constructed historical content, the thesis analyzed more than 100 films from the National Film Archive’s holdings in the concretizing of the argument for archival films’ place within the history classroom.
The findings of the research report assert that within the National Film Archive reside a host of sources that, when explored as primary evidence, can benefit the teaching of history in ways no other mediated form of record can. As standalone case studies that help to provide a more full, and reflective, picture of the figures and events found within the history syllabus, or as comparative elements that evidence the changes that took place in the 20th century – as Ireland moved from occupation to self-governance, from sovereignty to modernity and from a perceived sense of a parochial nature to an emergent European identity – the filmic heritage of Ireland and the amateur and professional cinematographers who pointed cameras in the directions of that which they felt deserved their attention provides an inimitable avenue in to understanding the motivations her antecedents. If history is, for Vico, ‘the history of human ideas’, film can lend credence to those ideas – and the narratives they encompass (Vico, 1710/1988, 46, emphasis in original).

Anathema to the national history curriculum’s assertion that ‘[m]ovies […are] fun and entertaining’, and nothing more, the textual analysis presented in the constituent chapters asserts that film adds a vibrant, rigorous element to the source-based investigation into early 20th Irish history (deBuitléir, et al, 2010, 5). The exposure to, awareness of and acceptance toward differing opinions and disparate voices, both of the antecedents of history – and colleagues whose interpretations differ from one’s own – fosters in young people an acknowledgement of multiplicitous perspectives.

Looking at contrasting examples, such as the films that advertized Ireland to foreign markets, the nature by which indigenous films and those made by others present the
nation provides students with an invaluable source for understanding the nature of representation and narrativity. Similarly films that deconstruct the nature of Ireland’s urban and rural environments portray, for students, the nature of change that occurred as Ireland modernized throughout the century; they offer a series of benchmarks against an Ireland that is still ever-changing.

Given the nature of educational policy and the present state of copyright law concerning duplication, transmission and exhibition, the work undertaken in this thesis and the research findings put forth, operate in a critical theoretical mode. While the research informs sustained argument and advocates for change, until the nature of copyright, educational concession and policy-driven intent are addressed and meet international standards discussed within the report, the arguments put forth remain an opening gambit toward wider study. To direct the National Film Archives’ records toward sustained educative benefit will require time, effort, finances and supporters willing to advocate change and institute further research. Initial thoughts on the manner by which the arguments put forth over the course of this thesis can be made manifest in practically-oriented classroom materials are elucidated at the end of this chapter; in the interim, however, educators must also be convinced.

This final chapter will be drawn up in three core components. The first will outline how subsequent teaching practices can be established that effectively utilize the arguments, analysis and critical theoretical positions arrived at over the course of this research report. In doing so, the heuristic presented as a model for working the cinematic record will be returned to, and, crucially, picked back up at the ‘action’
phase of its outcomes-based employ. The next series of conclusions drawn from the thesis pertain towards the academic administrators and educational policymakers who shape the manner by which curricula are delivered at national level. As history is part of a wider syllabus that place emphasis on both classroom-based and wider learning outcomes, this portion of the analysis will include a redrawing of connections between the work proposed and the literature around the development of young people, the benefits of cinematic – and wider, media and digital – exposure in the learning space, as well as arguments posed by further stakeholders on the necessity for critically aware, media savvy young people who can posit themselves within future industries. The final arena in which this sixth chapter operates is a discussion around the steps required to take the work of this thesis from critical theoretical claim to deliverable, classroom-based outcome. This final analysis is levied from the perspective of the educational and infrastructural positions in which the Irish school system presently finds itself.

The Work of the Thesis: Implications for Future Teaching Practices
As this thesis has argued, film has the capacity to energize the history classroom. Even archival footage that has already been digitized and distributed – either on its own or within wider compilation material – presents an invaluable point of departure for informed investigations into the emergence of the Republic and its development over the course of the 20th century. While exhibition of such sources remains in a legal grey area – as no educator has, thus far, been hauled in front of a magistrate for showing students a portion of *Mise Éire* or streaming a Pathé newsreel – the benefits of sustained filmic exploration are myriad. Students more thoroughly investigate the stuff of the history syllabus, are wont to engage in dialogic analysis and activate
critical capacities that have far reaching repercussions. Both political and social history can be approached on film, and the evolution of the nation throughout the 20th century can be viewed, analyzed and challenged through the cinematic record as a living history. Acknowledging the complexities of both perspective and representation in history begs similar questions about the contemporary world, and while the job of student is to answer questions, the goal of education in equally to get students asking questions in kind.

Throughout the research report, this thesis has articulated the premise that given students’ inherent capacity for media literacy, and their relative comfort with moving image media, film is uniquely suited for the classroom. As a nation, Ireland engages with film many significant ways: from the sheer enjoyment of viewing to the social aspects of discussing the merits of individual works or comparative analytics, to our housing of an industry which punches well above its weight on a global stage – we are immersed in the cinema. Indicative of this fact is the manner by which the medium appears on the Leaving Certificate Examination in Fine Art – rather than discussing films that have been screened during class time, the examination folds in questions grounded in the implicit understanding that young people watch films, and can discuss them, without further, classroom-based interrogation.

By posing a series of points of investigation that are drawn across the concerns of the discipline at large as well as specific, historical subjects and contexts, scaffolded engagements with film that begin with questions, proceed via analysis and end with further questions – rather than definitive answers – can cast light on the notion of...
historical representation. Bringing archival film into a largely print-based, secondary source-heavy classroom immediately raises questions about who the authors of history tend to be, and where agency lies in the interpretations of events that have been recorded and placed upon the Irish history syllabus.

While conditions of their production must be foregrounded in the analysis of such texts, films’ capacity to record events and give a voice to those who are not necessarily in the centre of the frame – as well as make the material of history spring to life – cannot be discounted. Films can be used to bolster questions of agenda setting making manifest explorations of what the Guidelines for Teachers of Irish history refers to as ‘the wiles’ of ‘bias and propaganda (NCCA, 2004, 6, 13). By recognizing the critical perspectives and acknowledging the affective registers of historical actors through dialogic exploration of film, such investigations get to the, far more nuanced, ‘why’ questions of history as well as the ‘how’ questions. Critically exploring the historical record through an engagement with the medium assists in the understanding of events, but, more importantly, it also creates a wider engagement with the context and condition of historical action.

The exercise outlined within this thesis does not end there, however. Per the Historical Narrative Inquiry model utilized throughout the above analysis, to truly reap the curricular and macro-level benefits that film can add to the history classroom, students must be made accountable for their own analyses and must, therefore, engage with the sentiments of their fellow classmates. Listening to, synthesizing and being critically constructive toward a multitude of viewpoints and considerations is a task
that looks both backward and forward. The act makes each student reconsider his or her own position within the historical analysis presented – opening wider questions about the nature of the discipline of history and subject formation. Returning to the ‘Action’ portion of the amended Colby heuristic, it has been argued that an engagement with archival film has great benefit both within and beyond the Irish history classroom. As noted by VanSledright and Nussbaum, such investigations can be argued to foreground the nature by which civic participation requires a tolerance for a multiplicity of sociopolitical positions.
### Textual Basis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Benefits for the history classroom</th>
<th>Benefits beyond the history classroom</th>
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<tr>
<td>Political Development of Ireland</td>
<td>• Augmenting historical understanding</td>
<td>• Challenging students’ viewpoints</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Incentivizing historical investigation</td>
<td>• Reinforcing criticality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Development of Ireland</td>
<td>• Promoting dialogue</td>
<td>• Fostering participatory thinking and acting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Encouraging reflective analysis</td>
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**Overarching Narrative:**

**THE EVOLUTION OF EARLY 20th CENTURY IRELAND**

**Figure 31:** amended heuristic, excerpt, see Figure 9, page 178 for full model

In working through the stuff of the first six decades of the 20th century via the film form, the heuristic presented places an emphasis on both individuated and dialogue-based understanding. Charging students with identifying the surface understanding of
what it transpiring within a film, or clip, as well as a more in-depth understanding of the elements of its production, the nature of its reception and the critical distance that observes how viewers in the present day understand the originary sources they are exploring creates competent and confident students of history.

These efforts can align themselves with the DES mandated changes being introduced at Junior Cycle-level that serve as the initial salvo in altering the manner by which second-level education is presently being delivered. The introduction to this research report highlighted eight of the twenty-four Statements of Learning drawn up by the Junior Cycle that can be mapped onto the manner with which empathic engagements with film history can be utilized in the classroom. Returning to such, the statements that appeared on page 41 on the introduction are as follows:
1. The student communicates effectively using a variety of means in a range of contexts in L1

2. The student reaches a level of personal proficiency in L2 and one other language in reading, writing, speaking and listening

3. The student creates, appreciates and critically interprets texts (including written, oral, visual or other texts)

7. The student improves their [sic] observation, inquiry and critical-thinking skills

12. The student values local and national heritage and recognises the relevance of the past to the current national and international issues and events

17. The student, creates, presents and appreciates artistic works

19. The student uses ICT effectively and ethically in learning and in life

[and]

21. The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which they live

(NCCA, 2011b, 15)

Across these eight Statements of Learning empathic filmic exploration can be of great benefit. Looking specifically at manner by which both social and political history are mined across the textual analysis presented by this thesis, a series of inroads to wider educative outcomes emerge. The multimodal approach adopted in engaging with audiovisual forms of historical record, the active exploration of them – and defence of students’ own subject positions via historical narrative inquiry bolsters the linguistic skills cited in Statements 1 and 2. Regardless of whether education is being delivered primarily through English or as Gaeilge examples such as the Amharc Éireann newsreel service that so uniquely brings mid-20th century Irish history to life can be explored in a bid to maximize critical proficiency in L1 as well as L2. Furthermore, as
noted in the analysis of the *Amharc Eireann* collection and its production grounded in a call to maintain and revivify the national language, a sense of how language is represented and its employ politicized becomes clear. Such analysis is further bolstered, explicitly, by a number of films that offer up the Irish brogue as something to be othered as a quaint or outmoded way of communicating. It is also implicitly on offer in a detailed and comparative analysis of many films which assert a modernity on Ireland and, specifically, its capital city during the period of infrastructural change in the middle of the last century.

In a wider concession to the role of media than is otherwise present in much of the educational architecture within the Republic, the NCCA’s insistence on ‘critical interpret[ation]’ of visual forms – and the concession toward ‘other texts’ found within Statement 3, as well as leveraging such criticality within Statement 7 – are in keeping with the amended heuristic through which the analysis of this thesis’ filmic examples operates. To return to the model for historical narrative inquiry that underpins such investigation, presented again below, by investigating the series of questions posed along its five-step, circular process – which builds toward a more critical understanding of both the historical topic as well as largely, disciplinary concerns – questions of materiality, voice, agency, perspective, explication and comprehension are raised through the work.
By challenging perceived notions of historicity, as well as students’ wider ideas concerning the validity of records and how the discipline is codified, learners make comparative and synthetical analyses that can cause them to view history in a far
more nuanced manner. Whether discussing political history – such as the depictions for both Irish and British audiences of divisive figures as Michael Collins or Lloyd George – or reflective social analysis of evidence of Ireland’s progression from independence to the present day, by coupling these investigations with the Vichian interrogation of similarity and difference inherent to the motivations of various historical actors, and the empathically thinking students themselves, emphasis is placed on challenging perceived viewpoints and focusing across the production, content and reception of historical texts. To then hold students to account for their positions and the insights they accrue fosters a further sense of dialogue within the classroom – both with the past and with students’ colleagues, transforming the educational space into an environment in which their opinions and belief sets can be openly discussed.

Such efforts clearly assert themselves into a direct reading of the NCCA’s Statement 12 wherein ‘local and national heritage’ is identified as relevant to ‘current national and international issues and events’ (NCCA, 2011b, 15). This Statement of Learning strikes at the heart of the Vichian interpretation of history and its hermeneutical exponents. Aligning with a concession to history borne out of Vico, a sense of embeddedness within the trajectory of history is an inherent outcome of scholarship. If taken to be the case, then the studying of historical perspectives and an empathically driven dialogue about reflections on perspective recognition inherently takes into account myriad voices within the classroom setting. Drawn from the sense of Vichian copia, Marwick, VanSledright and Colby alike argue that challenging canonical readings of historical records through textual analysis has further benefit to young people as they progress into civil society. Through an acknowledgement – if
not acceptance – of the motivations of historical actors and the differing opinions of their fellow investigators, the NCCA’s 21st statement is also upheld; young people acknowledge how varying actors, historical conditions and circumstances have played, and continue to play, a role in how Irish society is engendered in the present day.

The two final Statements of Learning that can be directly tethered to the undertaking of this research report make concessions to the film form and the requisite digitization and streaming necessary to engage with it in the classroom of today. Statement 17 insists that students will engage in the creation, presentation and appreciation of ‘artistic works’ (*ibid.*). Owing to Wender’s earlier statements regarding the manner in which film as a form and language can be taught, engaged with and investigated as a cultural artifact, such arguments are in keeping with the NCCA’s Statement 17. While notions of artistic appreciation – and certainly creation – are anathema to the framework found in *Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life*, avenues for change appear to be opening.

One such example where this is apparent can be found in January 2013, when the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and the Departments of Education and Skills, jointly recognised the launch of the *Arts in Education* charter (DAHG/DES, 2013). While steadfastly centred on a widening of the dynamic between ‘arts education and arts-in-education’, which are respectively defined as ‘mainstream teaching and learning of the arts as part of a general education’ and ‘artists of all disciplines visiting schools [or] engaging with arts and cultural practice
in the public arena’ (DAHG/DES, 2013, p. 3), there remains a concession in the document for arts-in-education to make inroads to ‘support learning in other curricular areas’ (ibid., 11). While not elaborated upon by the charter, the acknowledgement that ‘the arts’ have the potential to engage wider curricula gives credence to the ability for multimodal engagement to challenge the codified nature of the Irish educational system. Such an initial salvo could most certainly include projects that enliven the teaching of history. It must be observed however that while ‘music, painting, dance and drama’ and given credence within the charter, film and video as media, art or as teaching tools still face an uphill battle, as neither is mentioned within the charter (ibid., 7-8).

The final Statement of Learning that can be bridged via empathic engagements with historical film speaks toward transmission. Statement 19 seeks to equip students with information and communication technology skills that far outweigh the experience required by DES that can be evidenced by ‘sending an email’ (DES, 2011a, 8). Film and moving image media have the capacity to broaden the Irish mandate for literacy education in a manner in keeping with international precedents and the nation’s own recently revised outcomes for student development. This research report with its analysis of more than 100 films and excerpts of archival audiovisual material is just one such example of a project grounded in media that can bolster the classroom experience, and promote media literacy. The fact that all of the examples utilized within this analysis have previously been migrated onto more permanent media than the film stocks on which they were originally printed means that technologically, the examples are ready to be viewed by a classroom cohort.
The Work of the Thesis: Implications for Educational Policy

Regarding the manner in which educational policy is implemented in Ireland, there are three primary arguments that can be drawn from the findings of the research. First, through the analysis of filmic examples as well as the practical and theoretical concerns that underpin them, a space should be made in which film and moving image media are championed within the history curriculum. Given students’ implicit understanding of moving image media and the myriad resources that are presently available, even before further archival trawling and subsequent digitization projects may take place, both political and social history can be bolstered through the inclusion of dialogically structured filmic investigation.

Secondly, the Irish educational sector needs to acknowledge that when working with digital and moving image media, in all forms and across curricula, the blind spot in copyright legislation regarding media usage in the classroom can no longer be ignored. Many teachers and their students are already negotiating multimodal lessons and learning methods; a coherent policy on how such works can be utilized within the letter of the law must be formulated. While the fundamental thrust of this thesis has outlined how and where filmic texts can benefit the manner in which history education can be approached within the Republic, for wider thinking around the role of media in education for Ireland’s young people, a wider investigation across the curricular spectrum is required. With little proviso beyond a handful of films in English and an occasional, highly problematic, higher level Art Appreciation question at Leaving Certificate level, the only direction in which to move is forward. Students live in a media saturated environment. To disregard this between the hours of the
school day’s beginning and end presents a myopic view of the schoolroom’s place in the wider world.

Finally, there must be an awareness of the benchmarking taking place with regard to thinking and precedent around moving image media from beyond the island. As identified in the opening chapters of this research report, a number of organizations, stakeholders and efforts from Ireland’s nearest neighbors are actively pursuing a film-forward agenda in educational planning and delivery. Furthermore, as asserted in the second chapter, which looked at Ireland’s own unique history with film as a pedagogical text, it was an avenue previously highlighted by educational policy makers, individual teachers and members of industry alike. It is this momentum to which, this thesis argues, we must return apace. Following on from these three points of analysis, the last analytical point of this final chapter will be in outlining how the work undertaken within the research report can be moved beyond the thesis’ binding and into a tangible, physical delivery in the history classroom.

With regard to both history-specific and wider filmic engagement, there have been pilots such as Look at History that have tried, and ultimately failed, in this regard; however, a concentrated effort must be asserted regarding material that, unlike that convened for Look at History cannot be accessed elsewhere. The previous section of this chapter discussed the manner in which teachers can utilize film in the history classroom, and there are, doubtlessly, a number of educators who are already doing so of their own volition. However, to legitimize the place of film in the curriculum at department-wide level would stake a claim that Literacy[…] for Learning and Life is
a project genuinely dedicated to providing individual pupils with literacy skills that reflect their present surroundings and the world in which they live.

While the NCCA’s document articulates a place for the ‘encourage[ment of] innovation in schooling and teaching and creative learning in the classroom’, there is yet no mention of film as being one such example of an innovative technique for any such curriculum (NCCA, 2011b, p. 14). Through wider advocacy and a synthesis of the like-minded positions across the sectors from which support for film-in-education has been drawn, the benefits for both ‘learning and life’ that are arrived at through media-based investigation can find place and uptake within the Irish educational landscape. Crucially, the celluloid material that has been analysed across this thesis is already in existence and has been migrated onto more stable, digital, formats. These efforts can serve dual purposes as, firstly, the images they contain – and, where applicable, the soundtracks synchronous with them – are maintained for subsequent generations of scholars, but, as well, the capacity for wider dissemination of the material becomes increasingly easier as broadband speeds continue to increase in a manner that contrasts the ever-decreasing cost of data storage.

While the history syllabus has been revised within the past decade, amending its makeup with the recommendation of the inclusion of further primary, audiovisual texts has been shown to be of merit in the formation of critically engaged students of history. As classrooms become increasingly wired at this midpoint of the second decade of the 21st century, there is no time like the present to thoroughly explore the content of the past. As noted above, however, such distinctions must be made from
the top down in order to have the widest, national uptake. Foregrounding moving image media, and the teacher training on how to deal with such material on both practical and theoretical levels is necessary to implement at the macro-level of educational policymakers. Given the agglomeration at the beginning of the decade of the National Centre for Technology in Education within its parent body the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, it is from the NCCA that such training materials must be drawn up and delivered. One element that must be covered in continuous professional development for teachers working with media is how to engage students in a series of works that can be operationalized in a manner compliant with the laws of the land.

Given the custodial remit of the National Film Archive, and the lack of provision for concessions to educational exhibition in Irish copyright law, moving from analysis toward the utilisation of these, and other, films as a teaching tools is a battle for another day – and, as noted below, another research project. However, through the analysis presented across the six chapters of this research report, this thesis contends that further discussion around the concession for education in subsequent retoolings of copyright legislation must be actively considered and worked through. The caveat of ‘research [and] private study’ under which film can be screened by a single person does not create enough leeway for incidental in-class viewing, let alone sustained film-centred inquiry (Attorney General, 2000, 48).

In an effort to align the exhibition of moving image media with the legislation surrounding copyright, vociferous advocacy must come from within the Department
of Education and Skills. The concessions made for printed matter, and the prohibitions placed on other forms of recorded content, greatly restrict the forms and approaches educators in Ireland can take in the task of best doing their jobs. An acknowledgement of this may be the point of departure for garnering wider attention and support for the use of film, and other mediated content, in syllabi across the curricula.

Looking toward the United Kingdom’s good faith model for educational viewing of filmed content, it can be argued that such a system here in Ireland would greatly benefit teachers working with audiovisual material (Copyright, Designs and Patent Act, 1988, section 32/F1). Equally, the adoption of a system such as the, nominal, PVS fee paid by UK educational organizations on an annual basis would further be of benefit to on-the-ground educators. Garnering momentum from national educational bodies for petitioning the Attorney General to include such provisos in future copyright legislation is an outcome recommended by the work of this thesis with the utmost urgency.

Similar to the critique of copyright, by looking toward precedents across the wider European Union, where more novel and integrative approaches to curricular content create the space for a radical overhaul of the discourse around media in the education system, the manner in which film in the history classroom can be championed is not without its supporters. Many, as evidenced early in the work of this research report, unfortunately operate beyond Irish shores.
As well as benefits of a disciplinary nature, such efforts assist in the formation of well-rounded, media literate young people as prescribed by the EAVI model of subject formation that Europe has adopted as indicative of what the denizens of the continent require to be actualized individuals in today’s mediated world. Acknowledgement of representation; individual responses to such material – personal competencies – and social competencies that include the acceptance of other, equally critical, viewpoints that have emerged through dialogic engagement are all necessary steps along the EAVI’s outlined path for media and digital awareness.

Naturally, working with film and digital media requires technology, know-how and time. While short, archival films are perfectly poised to augment a class that is dictated by the period-based structure of the school day, in order to truly operationalize film in the Irish history classroom, discussion must take place not just within the classroom, but in the corridors and boardrooms in which such policies are decided upon. provisions for further exploration of the National Film Archives’ holdings, and a rolling out of examples of archived texts within the history classroom, will require resources: time, money and expertise. However, such efforts begin with an explicit interest – and an avowal that the manner by which the Department of Education and Skills sets out its stall regarding literacy, multimodal content and the integration of media and technology into defined syllabi is as in-keeping with European precedent as it is forward-thinking.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that advocacy of wider implementation of audiovisual media will require the support and confidence of teachers – many of
whom are already burdened by the immensity of their day-to-day tasks. Beyond acknowledging the pedagogical benefits of film and moving image media, requisite up-skilling and continuous professional development around the role of media in an integrated classroom experience must be thought through and implemented.

**Suggestions for Further Research: Creating a New Pilot**

In early 2006 five classrooms in four Dublin schools had a brief engagement with televisual history over the course of one month; no such engagement has been sanctioned since (Mahony, 2006). If empathic approaches to a filmic history empower students to operate simultaneously as ‘historian/inquisitor, investigator, formulator and philosopher’, energizing the history classroom toward the ends of both syllabus-based outcomes and wider, developmental, learning, the medium requires a more thorough and sustained inclusion across the Irish educational landscape (Colby, 2008, 61).

As this thesis was undertaken from an explorative, multi-disciplinary perspective, the avenues for further research are myriad. However, given the initial framing of the question around practices for teaching and learning, the most applicable course for further action would be to take the critical theoretical claims arrived at over the course of this thesis and manifest them in practicable, action-based outcomes.

Working in archives, alongside archivists, from the perspective that recorded history has much to offer students of the discipline, subsequent efforts should include the
compilation and creation of resource materials that meet the needs of teachers and comply with the iterations of copyright law that – at the time of submission of this thesis – are yet to come. Focusing on the securing of copyright-compliant filmic records as well as supplemental materials to assist educators in their approaches to such texts, would require a harmony across a host of stakeholders from policy makers to on the ground educators in an effort to ensure the most is garnered from the invaluable history of modern Ireland available on celluloid. An immediate, and beneficial, end for the work undertaken by this thesis would be the convening of a series of archival materials highlighted across this analysis to be worked through by students.

Such an effort would require negotiation with the National Film Archive, the clearance of copyright for each of the clips; the assembling of material via thematic headings, learning outcomes and timelines; creating a user-interfaces – whether streaming or on physical media – as well as supplementary material for both students and teachers alike. Continuous professional development for teachers working with the material regarding the films themselves, elements of the films to highlight in class as well as approaches to working with the materials will be required to make the most of any pilot-phase project. Such efforts should include how the outcomes that drive the filmic analysis can be mapped over the history syllabus as it stands. In a similar vein, the tailoring of material for students working with such materials will be required in an effort to take their innate senses of working through moving image media toward driving such into critically-inflected, empathic ends. Making explicit both the amended heuristic presented within this thesis as well as working models can provide young people with a template for how to produce their own critical, empathic
readings of the materials convened. As acknowledged with the DECNR’s statements on the broadband rollout presently being finalized across Irish secondary schools, there is significant scope to create digitally streamable audiovisual products of this nature in the years to come.

Finally, in order to be truly effective, the use of film in dialogic investigation must not be a singular occurrence. Integral to the manner in which the Historical Narrative Inquiry model operates is the notion that the process is cyclically grounded. Rather than simply being presented as a short project to be engaged with and completed, the overlaying of the history syllabus with filmic content and the ability to negotiate such must be an ongoing concern within the classroom. Mediated engagements, as well as empathic strategies, must be returned to so that the skills accrued during the exercises can bolster more critical, nuanced readings of the stuff of wider and deeper historical insight, whether occurring via readings of film, or otherwise.

Given the nature of these records and the outcomes that can be brought to bear through an active, empathic exploration of them in the history classroom, despite their subject matter being squarely within the past the time for such actions is decidedly the present.

**Conclusion**

This final chapter has served three primary functions. The first has taken the work of the thesis and made its analysis relevant to the teachers of history who operate on the
ground with students on a daily basis. It has argued that there is merit in working with film in an empathic manner – from its historical and educational contextualization to its perspective analysis grounded in hermeneutical exploration. While this thesis is concerned with the teaching of history in Ireland, by looking toward wider definitions of media and digital literacy, and acknowledging that such discourses have traction across the educational sphere, the larger outcomes of the project can be brought in accordance with European thinking through culture, education and industry. In its entirety, this thesis has argued that film has the capacity to engender the skills identified as necessary to the development of students as scholars and citizens in manner unlike any other medium.

However, as noted, the contemporary use of film in Irish schools, and the departmental thinking around the medium’s use in the face of the interplay between traditional definitions of literacy and creative content requires a change in national attitudes toward the merits of film for Irish learners. By contrast, the British Film Institute’s insistence on film and media literacy revolving around ‘the three C’s’ – film as a ‘critical, cultural creative’ artifact – provides an impetus for thinking through film in a context largely removed from the edicts of Ireland’s Department of Education and Skills. In looking to precedents that exist beyond Irish shores, this chapter reiterated the notion that a wider thinking of literacy for the 21st century is in order, and that history is simply one example where a rupture with the previous definition of literacy as a learning outcome can be engaged.
A novel approach to film, such as the empathic investigation of the historical record proposed by the work of this thesis, creates a space for conversations about a radical overhaul of the discourse around media in the education system. Such an approach is echoed in Wenders’ statements to the European Parliament and the Green Paper’s insistence that ‘[m]edia literacy education […] promote[s] citizens’ creativity and participation in the cultural life of society’, the scholastic benefits of which can be attributed to the fostering of ‘imagination, interpersonal skills […] and] critical and nonverbal thinking’ (Green Paper, 2010, 18).

That professionals, from Ireland and beyond, are calling for a greater emphasis placed on the role of education benefitting both hard-learning, classroom skills and wider macro-critical benefits alike is indicative of a shifting away of the notions of literacy from the codifying denotation under which the Department of Education and Skills presently operates. Changes to the approach to Ireland’s Junior Cycle are indicative of the fact that the old models of course construction and assessment are truly becoming outmoded. In scrutinizing the manner in which the work of this thesis directly correlates to eight of the twenty-four Statements of Learning adopted by the NCCA, and coming online for students beginning their Junior Cycle in September 2014, it is clear that in light of the efforts made by Liam O’Laoghaire more than half a century ago, and myriad examples of foreign precedent set in the intervening decades, film is presently poised to play an active role in the sweeping changes that are due for a necessary shake-up of the underlying architecture of Irish education.
To implement such changes will require a host of stakeholders to engage with the unique educative capabilities of film in similitude. Educators and policy makers alike must place an emphasis on the role that film can play within the classroom. The benefits both for curricular instruction and wider learning outcomes have been rehearsed across this chapter. Given the recent changes in thinking – for better and, more stymieing – worse, around film, media and literacy, the time to implement such changes to ways of thinking is imminent.

Similarly, a bringing to fruition the effort to secure archival films that can be ingrained into the framework of history syllabus will require effort and enthusiasm from key industry stakeholders – those who work in film as well as archives, in Ireland and beyond. Despite the acknowledgement that, regarding any authored media, Irish copyright law remains unfavorable to educational circumstances, reform on this front is underway. While there is a large amount of archival film migrated to digital storage within the National Film Archive, with effort, time, support and resources such materials could be made complicit with contemporary statutes or any subsequent iterations of rights clearance.

In its final turn, this chapter outlines the possible next steps for research into empathic approaches to moving image records in the Irish history classroom. Posed from the outset as a critical theoretical engagement, the next phase of this research requires the move to the classroom, and the establishment of a series of teaching and learning tools born out of the research undertaken. In an effort to cast a critical light on both the political and social histories of the young Irish nation, this thesis has argued that
working with the filmic record can incentivize the teaching of history in novel and worthwhile ways. Acknowledging the rapidly changing face of what Irish education can offer, from both an infrastructural as well as grounded theoretical point of view, this thesis argues that there are presently opportunities for working with and through digitized media that have never before been witnessed. The next step is to actualize these efforts. To such ends and in the contemporary, Irish educational landscape, the work of this thesis is largely unprecedented.
CONCLUSION

This thesis has undertaken a multi-disciplinary investigation in order to explore the potential for empathic approaches to Irish archival film for its applicability within the history classroom. Grounded in the argument that Ireland actively maintains a rich and viable history of the 20th century on celluloid – albeit one that remains underutilized – the research report has surveyed this material to determine instances and strategies wherein these resources can greatly benefit the present-day, media literate classroom. Equally, the research has acknowledged that through a series of policy platforms and legislative manoeuvres, the ability to bring such material into integrated, dialogic lesson plans remains an uphill battle. As evidenced by an inter-curricular survey of policy documentation, teaching guidelines and core textbooks, even having the architects of Irish education pay credence to film as a viable teaching tool in an era of overarching ‘Literacy and Numeracy’ is a task fraught with challenges (DES, 2011a).

As determined over the course of this research report, this contemporary lack of acknowledgement of the pedagogical utility of film in the classroom – whether for the history syllabus or otherwise – stands counter to a series of educational initiatives that began in earnest, concomitant to the formation of the modern nation. These projects continued to grow apace until a host of political decisions, religious edicts and cultural ascriptions stymied further advancement of the film-centric classroom.

This research report posed a repurposed mode of narrative inquiry as a practical method for working through historical films in a dialogic manner. Such an approach
to the material has been built upon the work of educationalist Sherri Rae Colby who proposes that through a multi-stage process of engagement with the narrativity of history, each student can simultaneously act as ‘historian/inquisitor, investigator, formulator and philosopher’ (Colby, 2008, 61). Tailoring Colby’s arguments to the specificities that film can afford, and that Ireland requires, the research investigated the manner by which the historical narrative inquiry model and its heuristic schematic could be of benefit in empathic approaches to the history via the filmic record. Breaking historical empathy down into traditions of the affective engagement and cognitive recognition of the motivations and actions of the antecedents of history, in order to argue that such methods and modalities have agency within the study of history, questions of the historical value of film itself had to be uncovered.

To this end, the introductory chapters of this thesis posed two concomitant histories to frame the research question. The first, Chapter One, sought to show how the latter half of the 20th century was marked with scholars across the Anglophonic sphere who waged a series of rhetorical battles in an effort to legitimize the film form as a unique and authoritative modality of historical record. Moving from an initial incorporation of film-as-addendum within wider historical lectures, toward a more central role in how history could be both interrogated and understood, the analysis showed how the nature of film’s capacity as record was posited within larger questions concerning the discourse of history as a series of subject positions sought to elaborate the manner in which the discipline operates. A number of these, more recent, concerns align themselves with Colby’s assertion of the student ‘philosopher’ as the part of the mantle taken on by those exploring the narrativity of the historical record (ibid.). Chapter Three further elucidates this when determining that students who utilize
empathic approaches to historical records ‘study’ with such ‘care’ that they act in accordance with a history that approaches Vichian concessions for what understanding can bring toward a hermeneutics of the people of the past (Barton and Levstik, 2004, 207).

This approach, and the understanding it can bring to history, has been argued to be of benefit both for the stuff of the syllabus as well as wider outcomes such as the ability for young people to identify myriad perspectives beyond the classroom. The latter of which is a skill that VanSledright, Nussbaum, Hannam and Echeverria, amongst others, argue is necessary for the development of skillsets that lend themselves toward the future democratic participation of then-students in subsequent civil engagement (VanSledright in Davis, et al, 2001, 57 Nussbaum, 1997; Hannam and Echeverria, 2009).

While the concessions for film, and the benefits outlined above, are largely an anathema to the manner in which the educational landscape is presently prescribed, the second history posed in this thesis, Chapter Two, showed that previous to the mid-point of the 20th century, this was not the case within the young Republic.

As the aforementioned debates about the merits of film-for-history at third level were raging in the 1960s and 70s across Britain and the United States, the second chapter showed that, far from being decried as heretical, such questions had 40 years of precedent within secondary school curricula. As articulated within the research report, the question of using film in history education, and the pilot schemes undertaken to
establish the medium’s place within the British curriculum was itself responsible for the formation of the British Film Institute – an organization that, in its early years worked within its own nation, as well as the young Republic toward the integration of film in the schoolhouse. This second chapter also explored how a series of indigenous filmmakers, educators and enthusiasts sought to make Irishmen, both young and old alike, engage with cinema in a learning capacity. Given the decisions taken by the de Valera government on the heels of the first coalition to oust him from power (1948-1951), as well as Pope Pius XI’s *Vigilanti Cura* – an encyclical letter calling on Catholics the world over to actively fight against the perceived ills of the film industry, any momentum the garnered by those who used films in an educational capacity was soon lost. By the formative launch of Raidió Teilifís Éireann on New Year’s Eve 1961/2, the possible role of film as an educative tool was wholly subsumed.

In arguing the merits of Ireland’s filmic heritage for empathic approaches to history, the active research phase of this project demarcated the subject into political and social histories. Towards applicability within the today’s history syllabus, this division echoes the manner in which text and examination exist in the present-day curricula. Through an active examination of more than 100 texts that have already been migrated to stable formats, this thesis has shown how empathic engagement with these films can greatly strengthen the history syllabus in the classroom. The unique capacity of film to act as a recording device – coupled with the inherent constructedness of its employ, and preservation, make film a form of historical record with which young people are eager to engage. Through an effective investigation of the medium – and dialogic engagement that strives to end with further questions,
rather than definitive answers, the holdings of the National Film Archive can animate
the birth of the nation, articulate its move from tumult, strife and war through the
period of mid-century modernization and make explicit the Republic’s greater sense
of aligning the Irish identity with a wider European sentiment. Films housed within
the archive display the boons of this period as well as the tragedies – some irrevocable
– that befell the young nation. Simply put: films make the history of 20th century
Ireland come to life.

Using the Historical Narrative Inquiry model posed by this research, new light is cast
on how these films can be used toward educative ends. Rather than simply looking
toward the subject at which the center of the frame was pointed, through an active
investigation, and comparison, of primary audiovisual documentation and historical
narrative – coupled with the posing of questions surrounding the intention of
filmmakers, their audiences and the resultant consequences of the films’ employ – a
 nuanced reading of the film in the history classroom can be raised. This thesis has
shown that whether working through the political history of 20th century Ireland or the
changes to the social standing of the nation and its people, cameras and filmmakers
were there not simply to record but to contemporaneously interpret the events of
monumental nature and the quotidian concerns of the denizens of a growing and
rapidly transforming nation. Film, this thesis has asserted, relates the concerns and
impacts of such transformations to students in a manner unlike any other medium.
Utilising the distinct inroads to the historical text on offer through perspective taking
and engaging with a concern towards caring, the analysis of primary sources is
elevated from a simple investigation of ‘what can be seen?’ toward a more critical,
hermeneutical questioning of how history can be understood. The bifurcation of the
empathic process leads such questioning of films – and their inherently constructed nature – toward insights around both what filmmakers thought and how they felt about the subject they chose to depict.

While this thesis has argued across its six chapters that film is a medium that has a strong, and decidedly unique, educative capacity, the thesis also levies real-world practicality against this critical theoretical mold. Given a lack of provision regarding films’ employ as pedagogical texts in the face of a series of workaday concerns – whether an incapacity to exhibit them in an educational setting in the face of copyright legislation, or the policy-driven oversight that does not acknowledge what film in the classroom can do – in its final analysis, this thesis argues that film in the history classroom is both necessary for the subject as well as for forming part of a wider debate around the preparation education provides Irish young people – across the move from the classroom to the nation, and world, beyond. Such benefits can be garnered through an engagement with the medium of film; this thesis has steadfastly argued that it can begin with the history syllabus.

Given the increasing mandate for the wired classroom across Europe – and the developed world – film and moving image media have an integral part to play in an envisaging of education that is of the present-day. Looking toward European precedents for the medium in the teaching of history as well as wider acknowledgement of film as a powerful and unique cultural artifact, this thesis’ approach to film, history, education and critical theory has been undertaken in an effort to assist in the bringing of the national educational curriculum in-line with the
history Ireland has to offer – one that is largely languishing within the climate controlled vaults of the archives that preserve such works. From the perspective of advocacy grounded by research, investigation, evidence and argument, the empathic approaches to Ireland’s cinematic history delineated by this thesis move towards an energizing of the classroom. With primary source material and dialogue grounded in inquiry and understanding, this thesis has argued that there is no time like the present to utilize the celluloid heritage that brings the nation’s past to life.
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12 Angry Men, (1957), d. S. Lumet.


A Nation Once Again, (1946), d. B. Stafford.

An Creidill Ciúin [The Silent Death], (1950) d. S. MacCrait.


Batches of rebels being marched off to the Quay, (1916), p. the Topical Budget Company.


Birth of a Nation, (1915), d. D.W. Griffith.

Bronenosets Potyomkin [Battleship Potemkin], (1925), d. S.M. Eisenstein.


Christmas Lights [Amharc Éireann], (1962), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.

Clery’s Advertisement, (1932), d. unknown.

Colourful Beachwear from New Synthetics [Amharc Éireann], (1963), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.


Congregation Leaving St. Mary’s Dominican Church in Cork, (1902), d. Mitchell and Kenyon.


De Valera accompanied by Minister of Defence and Chief of Staff visits Galway, (1922), p. British Pathé.

Dr. Noël Browne’s TB Film, (1946), p. The National Film Institute and Noël Browne.


Dublin Capital City of Ireland, (1939), d. David Barry for the Irish Tourist Association.


Dublin: Fashion Show Aids Polio Clinic [Amharc Éireann], (1960), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.


Dublin’s First Drive-in Bank [Amharc Éireann], (1961), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.


Dublin Tenements Collapsing: Growing Alarm [Amharc Éireann], (1963), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.

Eucharistic Congress, (1932), d. Fr Browne.

Exclusive pictures of the scene of the fighting in Dublin. The ruins of Sackville Street, (1916), p. the Topical Budget Company.

Ex-officers and men of the old I.R.A. are now flocking to join the Free State’s new Civic Guard, (1923), p. British Pathé.

Fascism, (1980), d. Polonsky, Joll and Hood, p. IUHFC.


Fintona – A Study in Housing Discrimination, (1953), d. George Fleishmann.

For Love and Money/ An Thaisce agus a Stór, (1961), d. R. Liles.


Gone with the Wind, (1939), d. Victor Fleming.


Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, (2002), d. Chris Columbus.


Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone, (2001), d. Chris Columbus.


Historic Pictures of the elected representatives of Southern Ireland who approved the Treaty, ~ together with the Members of the Provisional Government, (1922), p. British Pathé.

Hitler: Ein film aus Deutschland [Hitler: A Film from Germany], (1977), d. Hans-Jürgen Syberberg.

Hiroshima mon amour, (1959), d. Alain Resnais.

His and Hers, (2009), d. Ken Wardrop.

Horizon [television series], (1964-present), p. for BBC.

I Want a Divorce, (1940), d. Ralph Murphy.


In non ho paura [I’m Not Scared], (2003), d. G. Salvatores.


In the Days of St. Patrick, (1920), d. N. Whitten.


Irish Hearts, (1935), d. B. Desmond Hurst.


La grande illusion [The Grand Illusion], (1937), d. Jean Renoir.

La Marseillaise, (1938), d. Jean Renoir.

Leaving Sunday Mass, (1917), d. Thomas and James Horgan/Youghal Gazette.

Lovely Legs Contest I [Amharc Éireann], (1961), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.

Lovely Legs Contest II [Amharc Éireann], (1961), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.


Man With a Movie Camera, (1929), d. Dziga Vertov.

Moana, (1926), d. Robert Flaherty.


Mr. Careless Goes to Town, (1949), d. Liam O’Laoghaire.

Mr. de Valera visits Limerick, Ireland, (1941), p. British Pathé.


Nigerian Independence Ball [Amharc Éireann], (1960), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.


Nowadays – ‘Say it with Plastics’ [Amharc Éireann], (1960), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.


Origins of the Cold War, (1975), d. Boyle, p. IUHFC.

Our Cameraman was there! Revolver shots and free fights at Mr. Michael Collins' Free State Meeting in heart of republican area, (20/3/1922), p. British Pathé.
Our Congo Dead: The Last Journey [Amharc Éireann], (1960), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.

Our Country, (1948), d. Liam O’Laoghaire.


Our Money at Work/An tAirgead ag Obair, (1957), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.


People Walking on Sackville Street, (1897), d. Henri Joly.


Pompiers: Dublin [Dublin Fire Brigade], (1897), d. Alexandre Promio for Lumière Freres.

Portrait of Dublin, (1950/1), d. Liam O’Laoghaire.


RTÉ News, (1962-present), p. RTÉ.


Safe Cycling, (1949), d. Liam O’Laoghaire.


Snapshots from Church Road, (1940), d. Fr. Courtney.

Sinn Feiners in Downing Street. Mr. de Valera meets Mr. Lloyd George and Peace Prospects are Bright., (1921), p. British Pathé.

Sinn Fein Rebels – Disarmed rebels marching from Military Barracks in Dublin to Kingstown for deportation, (1916), p. the Topical Budget Company.

Soldiers of Irish Free State receive first uniforms which, paradoxically enough, are almost identical with 'Tommy's., (1922), p. British Pathé.

Sortie d’usine [Workers Leaving the Lumière Factory], (1895), d. Auguste and Louis Lumière.


Stanley Baldwin, (1979), d. Ramsden, p. IUHFC.


Stop Thief!/Cosc na Gadaí!, (1953), d. G. Healy.


Taking Census of the Travelling People [Amharc Éireann], (1960), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.

Tackling Ireland’s Apartheid Problem [Amharc Éireann], (1960), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.


The End of Illusions – From Munich to Dunkirk, (1970), d. Pronay, p. IUHFC.

The Father Delaney Collection [amateur compilation], (various dates, est. 1930s), d. Fr Delaney.

The First Irish Pilgrimage to Lourdes, (1917), d. unknown.
The Great Depression, (1976), d. Stead, p. IUHFC.

The Great Dictator, (1940), d. Charlie Chaplin.


The Hungry Land/AnTalamh Traochta, (1950), d. J. Ginnell.


The Lad from Old Ireland, (1910), d. Sidney Olcott.

The Late Late Show [television series], (1962-present), p. RTÉ.

The Life of Michael Flaherty, (1941), attribution, J. Eldridge and M. Curtis.

The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe, (2005), d. Adamson.


The Miser’s Gift, (1916), d. J.M. Kerrigan.

The Munich Crisis, (1968), d. Grenville and Pronay.

The Plow that Broke the Plains, (1936), d. Pare Lorentz.

The Post Office and Metropole Hotel after the battle, the interior of the Post Office which is completely gutted. Sackville St ruins., (1916), p. the Topical Budget Company.

The Quiet Man, (1952), d. J. Ford.

The Rising of the Moon, (1957), d. J. Ford.

The Riordans [television series], (1965-1979), p. RTÉ.

The River, (1938), d. Pare Lorentz.


The Third Man, (1949), d. Carol Reed.


*Them in the Thing*, (195x), the Castle Leslie collection.

*This Other Eden*, (1959), d. Muriel Box.

*Tony Bacillus and Co.*, (1946), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.

*Tórramh an Bhairille?* [Funeral of the Barrel; Amharc Éireann], (1959), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.


*Toy Story 3*, (2010), d. Unkrich.

*Traffic on Carlisle Bridge*, (1897), d. Henri Joly.


*Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*, (2009), d. Michael Bay.

*Unattended and unprotected General Macready attends the Meeting. he [sic] was escorted by Sinn Féin Volunteers!*, (1921), p British Pathé.

*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, (1903), d. Edwin S. Porter.


*View of Sackville Street*, (1897), d. Alexandre Promio for the Lumière Freres.


*Wexford Railway Station*, (1902), d. Mitchell and Kenyon.

*What’s New in Hair Fashion* [Amharc Éireann], (1964), d. Colm O’Laoghaire.

*Where Does the Money Go?/Ca nIomainn an tAirgead?*, (1954), d. G. Healy.


*World Parade: Come back to Old Ireland*, (1936), d. Eugene Castle.

*Your Teeth/Na Fiacla Sin Agat*, (1951), d. R. Roberts.
Appendix ONE:

The film component of the English Leaving Certificate Examination, Comparative Study Element, 2007-2013

2013

32A (2007, d. M. Quinn)
As You Like It (2006, d. K. Branagh)
Casablanca (1942, d. M. Curtiz)
Children of Men (2006, d. A. Cuarón)

In non ho paura [I’m Not Scared] (2003, d. G. Salvatores [Italian])
The Constant Gardener (2005, d. F. Meirelles)

2012

32A (2007, d. M. Quinn)
As You Like It (2006, d. K. Branagh)

Casablanca (1942, d. M. Curtiz)


In non ho paura [I’m Not Scared] (2003, d. G. Salvatores [Italian])
The Constant Gardener (2005, d. F. Meirelles)

2011

As You Like It (2006, d. K. Branagh)
Billy Elliot (2000, d. S. Daldry)
Casablanca (1942, d. M. Curtiz)

Il Postino [The Postman] (1994, d. M. Radford [Italian and Spanish])

The Constant Gardener (2005, d. F. Meirelles)

2010

Billy Elliot (2000, d. S. Daldry)
Casablanca (1942, d. M. Curtiz)

Il Postino [The Postman] (1994, d. M. Radford [Italian and Spanish])

The Truman Show (1998, d. P. Weir)

2009

Nuovo Cinema Paradiso [Cinema Paradiso] (1988, d. G. Tornatore [Italian])
Richard III (1995, d. R. Loncraine)

Strictly Ballroom (1992, d. B. Luhrmann)

The Third Man (1949, d. C. Reed)
The Truman Show (1998, d. P. Weir)

2008

12 Angry Men (1957, d. S. Lumet)

Much Ado About Nothing (1993, d. K. Branagh)

My Left Foot (1989, d. J. Sheridan)

Nuovo Cinema Paradiso [Cinema Paradiso] (1988, d. G. Tornatore [Italian])

Strictly Ballroom (1992, d. B. Luhrmann)
The Truman Show (1998, d. P. Weir)

2007

12 Angry Men (1957, d. S. Lumet)

A Room with a View (1985, d. J. Ivory, p. I. Merchant)

Henry V (1989, d. K. Branagh)

Il Postino [The Postman] (1994, d. M. Radford [Italian and Spanish])

My Left Foot (1989, d. J. Sheridan)

Witness (1985, d. P. Weir)

366
Appendix TWO:

**Percentages of Failure on Leaving Certificate History Examinations, 2002-2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Examination</th>
<th>Percentage of Higher Level Failures (E, F, No Grade)</th>
<th>Percentage of Ordinary Level Failures (E, F, No Grade)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<td>2008</td>
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<td>2007</td>
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<td>2006</td>
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<td>2005</td>
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<td>2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>18.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>18.9</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Mean rate of failure since the implementation of the revised syllabus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Higher Level</th>
<th>Ordinary Level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.35%</td>
<td>3.68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data compiled from State Examinations Commission Reports:

LC Results; 2011

LC Results; 2010-2008:

LC Results; 2007-2005

LC Results; 2005-2003:
http://www.examinations.ie/index.php?l=en&mc=st&sc=r4

LC Results; 2002
Appendix THREE:

The approach to interrogating clips from RTÉ’s Library and Archives in the Look at History Project

Part One:

Introduction to archival material
*The role of the Irish language in Irish society underwent considerable change throughout the late 1960s and 1970s. Some people questioned its relevance while others staunchly believed it was fundamental to the preservation of Irish culture and heritage.*

Clr 1. *The Language Freedom Movement 1967* (TV, 2'57")
In democratic Ireland one did not expect to see a police presence for security purposes at a public debate on the topic “Can it be shown that replacement of the English language by Irish is for the common good?” Yet the Gardaí were out in force at this Mansion House meeting. Why? The Irish language was an emotive issue as evidenced in this clip by the continuous heckling and the striking contrast in attitudes among the various interviewees. Note the young heckler was physically restrained

**Credits:** Reporters -- Brian Cleeve and John O'Donoghue; Programme -- 7 Days Language: English *Broadcast:* 06/10/1967

Part Two:

*The Language Freedom Movement, 1967* (www.scoilnet.ie/lookathistory/)

**Description**
1. What do we learn from this clip about the motivation behind the two meetings mentioned (one in the Mansion House, the other at the GPO)?
2. What evidence is there from the Mansion House meeting to suggest that people on either side of the debate hold very strong views?
3. What reasons for attending the LFM meeting are offered by people interviewed as they enter the Mansion House?
4. What views are expressed by people as they leave the meeting?

**Interpretation**
5. The banner on the top table at the meeting reads “Truth or treason?” What do you think the intention behind this slogan is?
7. [sic] What do you think is the impact of hearing the views of anonymous people instead of well-known personalities?
8. The main speaker on behalf of the LFM proclaims “as our numbers grow, so does the anxiety of the Gaelic establishment.” What do you think is meant by this statement?

**Wider context**
9. Does this clip help you to understand more clearly the element, *changing attitudes towards Irish language and culture*? Explain how.

---

115 (HIST, n.d., 3)
116 (HIST, n.d., 4)
Appendix FOUR:

The 24 ‘Statements of Learning’ from the NCCA document
*Towards a Framework for Junior Cycle*; November, 2011 (NCCA, 2011b, 15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The student</th>
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<td>24</td>
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Appendix FIVE:

The Ballinlough Film Club Collection Ephemera

Figure 1; The front and back covers, and pages 1-3 of the Ballinlough Film Club 'programme'
Figure 2; Pages 4-8 of the Ballinlough Film Club Programme Log
AFRICAN MISSIONS COLLEGE,
DROMANTINE,
NEWRY.

Figure 3; The front of a page detailing of more recently (?) collected or recorded newsreels
Figure 4; The back of a page detailing of more recently (?) collected or recorded newsreels.
Appendix SIX:

Major Producers’ Agreements with the Motion Picture Licensing Company

**MPLC MOVIE LICENCE – PRODUCERS’ LIST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buena Vista Pictures</th>
<th>Paramount Classics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cannon Pictures</td>
<td>Paramount Pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimension Films</td>
<td>Paramount Vantage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreamworks Animation SKG</td>
<td>Pixar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dreamworks Pictures</td>
<td>Polygram Filmed Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus Features</td>
<td>Republic Pictures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fox – Walden</td>
<td>Touchstone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fox 2000</td>
<td>Twentieth Century Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox Searchlight Pictures</td>
<td>United International Pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollywood Pictures</td>
<td>Universal Pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGM (Post 1986 Titles)</td>
<td>USA Films</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miramax Films</td>
<td>Walt Disney Pictures</td>
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<td>MTV Films</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nickelodeon Pictures</td>
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<td>Orion Pictures</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

MPLC © January 2010
Appendix SIX Continued:

Independent Producers’ Agreements with the Motion Picture Licensing Company

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Producer’s List</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actaeon Film</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ager Film</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Alley Cat Films</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>American Portrait Film</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Best Film &amp; Video Corp.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Big Idea, Inc.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Billy Graham Evangelistic Association/World Wide Pictures</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bridgestone Multimedia Group / Alpha Omega Publising</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>British and Foreign Bible Society</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bruder Releasing, Inc.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carrey Films Ltd</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Castle Hill Productions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CDA Communications Inc</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Central Park Media</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Christian Cinema.com</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Christian Television Association</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Contender Entertainment Group</strong>*</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Crown Video</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Current Wellness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dream LLC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EO International</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ERF Christian Radio &amp; Television</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Erie Valley Productions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Family Entertainment Library</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gateway Films / Vision Video</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gospel Communications International</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Greco Products / Evangelical Films</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grizzly Adams Productions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Harbinger Communications</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Harvest Productions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Harvey Entertainment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inspired Corporation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>InterComm, Inc</strong></td>
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</table>

* Limited Title
Appendix SEVEN:

Costs of Copyright Clearance with the Motion Picture Licensing Company

MPLIC®
Motion Picture Licensing Company

MPLIC MOVIE LICENCE - PRICE LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non Commercial Screenings, no admission charge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flat fee rate is based on audience capacity (plus VAT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience Size</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 200</td>
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<tr>
<td>201 - 300</td>
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<tr>
<td>301 - 500</td>
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<tr>
<td>501 - 750</td>
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<tr>
<td>751 - 1000</td>
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Flat rate fees are payable to MPLIC within ten (10) days of the invoice date or before the screening whichever is earlier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commercial Screenings, with admission charge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum rate of £100.00 or 35% of the ticket sales, whichever is greater (plus VAT)</td>
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<td>Number of Screenings Per Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>100.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Minimum rate fees are payable to MPLIC within ten (10) days of the invoice date or before the screening, whichever is earlier. Any additional percentage due from ticket sales will be payable within ten (10) days from the second invoice date.

Please contact MPLIC if your screening is a “non-standard” community cinema event, for example:

- Large audiences over 1000 people
- Outdoor venue
- Incidental film use, not a film club or film society
- Outside the UK

We may be able to help with licensing information for these types of events.
Appendix EIGHT:

Producers and Distributors Agreements with the Public Service Video License/Filmbank UK

Blanket Clearances

| Cinema NX | Lionsgate |
| ColumbiaTriStar | New Line |
| Delanic Films | Pathé |
| Entertainment Film Distributors | Renown Productions Ltd |
| Eros International | Sony Pictures Releasing |
| Granada International Media Limited | StudioCanal (aka Optimum Releasing) |
| Icon Film Distribution | Trinity Filmed Entertainment |
| Kaleidoscope Entertainment | Verve Pictures |
| Left Films | Warner Bros |

Limited Clearances

| 20th Century Fox | Inc: Education, Entertainment |
| Dream Works (UIP) | Ex: Worship, Coach, Care Homes |
| Fox Searchlight | Inc: Education, Entertainment |
| Miramax | Inc. Education, Entertainment, Hospitality, Clubs, Prisons and Retail |
| Touchstone | Inc. Education, Entertainment, Hospitality, Clubs, Prisons and Retail |
| Pixar | Inc. Education, Entertainment, Hospitality, Clubs, Prisons and Retail |
| Universal (UIP) | Ex: Worship, Coach, Care Homes |
| Paramount (UIP) | Ex: Worship, Coach, Care Homes |
| MGM | |
| United Artists | Ex: Worship, Caravan Parks and Camping Sites, Stand-alone Crèches and Day Care Centres, Coaches and Buses |
| Walt Disney Studios [UK] | Inc. Education, Entertainment, Hospitality, Clubs, Prisons and Retail |
Appendix NINE:

A note on proportions for images originally broadcast in the *Seoda* series (‡)

Many of the compiled works in the 8-part Seoda series originally existed in 1.37:1, or ‘academy’ ratio. When digitizing them for broadcast, they were transferred to an aspect ratio of 1.85:1, or 16:9/‘widescreen’, to accommodate modern day televisions. As well as stretching the image, a portion of the top and bottom of the frame was lost. Here is the original broadcast format, where, especially in still image, proportions are significantly off.
Dumping it into Photoshop, here is the same image compressed into a 1.37:1 frame ($y=0.741$); the frame appears too narrow here, presumably because pieces of the top and bottom were ‘removed’ before the frame was made to accommodate the change in format.

For this thesis a ratio of $y=0.8$ was determined to be a closer equivalent to the intended frame, to the extent that the visual field was available. The frame is no longer 1.37:1, rather 1.48:1; however, it presents a more true-to-life approximation: