

Early Cinema and the “National”

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Nationalist film-going without Canadian-made films?

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In urban, English Canada, the First World War was a significant marker of Canadian independence, maturing into a nation after British colonial adolescence. In defense of the British motherland, Canada found its national pride. This is especially applicable to Ontario, where stalwart Loyalist patriotism and a remarkable volunteerism signaled how Toronto would eventually eclipse Montreal culturally, industrially and economically as the national metropolis, having already done so in fact in the war effort.¹ But a Toronto-centric Canadian nation would never have that metropolis as a sentimental focus, neither as the heartland of a folk or an avant-garde culture, nor even as a center for a national mass-produced culture. As is first evident in the shift from Montreal to Toronto during the First World War, whatever Canadian nationhood meant, it would be a distinctly modern amalgam tenuously linked by an imported mass culture, distributed out of Toronto but not created there. This is certainly the case with cinema, in which the city supplied an exemplary prototype of nationalist movie-going, of consumption and showmanship.

In later decades, it became a cliché to note how Toronto cinemas turned up their lights every Saturday night, played *God Save the Queen*, and sent the audience home for a sober Sunday. This was in fact the law, but began only after the war, in 1919, as a nationalist memorial to the conflict and, to my mind, as a permanent reminder of the role movie-going had played in sustaining the patriotism of the homefront.² Already late in August 1914, showmen in Toronto collectively organized to make going to the movies part of the city's War Relief fund-raising campaign. The movies became a constant part of Toronto's war effort because a pseudo-professional and highly regulated system of civic showmanship was already in place by 1913. It was easily given the veneer of patriotism in August 1914, the final brushstroke to make movie-going an act of citizenship. The act of movie-going, of gathering as a mass public, demonstrated how the new mass culture effectively enfranchised those without formal citizenship. Juveniles, women, and foreign-born were welcomed to join the mass public, facilitated by the patronage of the city's showmen working collectively to make movie-going a form of practical patriotism.³

For the War Relief Fund, dollar donations from the middle-class, from merchants and industry, were solicited at prominent but still-exclusive mass meetings, the context given through battle hymns and stirring speeches. With their supplementary campaign, movie showmen uncannily and quickly introduced a more pragmatic form of mass gathering. Nickel and dime donations came indirectly through the box office, rewarded

not so much with a sense of patriotic pride but with ordinary entertainment. In that early effort, only film showmen donated their gross receipts directly to the fund, in hindsight a hint that the continuity of ordinary consumption would become key to the war effort. It is as if showmen upended aspersions of their audience's immaturity and provided a paternalistic way for the disenfranchised to give to the fund regardless of altruistic or patriotic intentions. While there might have been rousing songs and a speech, at least on screen there was no overt propaganda. The main program was focused on the same American-made films that would have been shown anyway.

Before long, cinemas became an important part of suburban training camps, where nightly movies were said to have eliminated requests for leave and absenteeism. Late in 1915, when volunteer recruiting was reaching its limits, Toronto's movie showmen again organized collectively by opening their doors for recruiting rallies, the only time Sunday shows were permitted in Ontario until the 1960s. In May 1916, the Ontario government formalized the prior two years' effort of showmen by sanctioning all movie-going under an amusement tax. Only in 1917 were official Canadian war films commissioned as propaganda, but they hardly had an impact on ordinary movie-going. When important propaganda features appeared like *Battle of the Somme*, *On the Battlefields of France*, and *Canada in Action*, they were sponsored by city newspapers rather than officially sanctioned by government. Unlike the amusement tax, propaganda was never inserted into theaters, except when 1918 Victory Bond films from Hollywood were supported, again, by the collective organization of dozens of ordinary showmen. I propose that Toronto's civic showmanship produced a nationalist form of film-going largely without propaganda and without Canadian-made films or even Allied imports. It thus stands as an important case for thinking about the relation of exhibition and regulation to nationalism in early cinema.

Early Canadian film history can be treated entirely as exhibition history. Not even a staunchly nationalist collection of dozens of obscure exceptions of local films can allow one to pretend that there was a national film production industry, at least not before government-sponsored filmmaking culminated much later with the National Film Board.⁴ This means Canadian film history too often has been conceived as a lament, given the obvious lack of its own object of study, Canadian films. Exhibition becomes the focus by default, searching for the prohibitive cause of the phantom corpus of unmade films rather than out of a genuine curiosity for the character of showmanship and mass consumption. American domination is the failsafe culprit, rarely acknowledged as the predetermined result of the framing problematic. It was thus with great surprise that my study of early movie-going in Toronto, pursued as a project in urban sociology and initially without a national scope or nationalist intentions, uncovered a rich, regional sensitivity in the history of showmanship. I consistently found that local voices, showmen, reformers, and regulators alike, accepted Ontario film exhibition's place within the American domestic market rather than lamented those conditions, and proceeded to forge a prototype for nationalist film-going without Canadian-made films. In effect, I am presenting a simple reminder of the relative independence of production from exhibition and regulation. More ambitiously, I want to tentatively argue for the priority of regulation and exhibition in establishing any nationalist or propagandist system of film production.

Perhaps I have spoken too strictly of the lack of Canadian-made films, for there is an exception, even for Toronto. In the winter months early in 1915, advertising began for the Toronto-made films of the Conness-Till Company, founded in April 1914 by Edward H. Robins, with backing from financiers in his hometown Philadelphia. The men whose names formed the company's moniker also contributed money, American

theatrical producer Luke Edwin Conness and Toronto businessman Louis A. Till.⁵ The company's first move was a publicity campaign and amateur screenwriting contest in August 1914, and Robins began a weekly newspaper column, "Behind the Screen".⁶ \$50,000 was spent building a studio in suburban Toronto. After first releasing a few short films of Toronto scenes, by the end of January 1915 ads for Conness-Till began appearing in the weekend newspaper editions' film pages, announcing "All Ready Mr. Exhibitor To Talk Service", with a schedule of four upcoming film titles. The logo for the company was a beaver on top of a maple leaf, and the films were known as the "Made In Canada", or even just "M in C" films.⁷ It was no hands-down success, as the local scandal sheet printed a cynical exposé, citing with glee how the American actress employed as the company's star was complaining about the bitter cold and low pay.⁸

A preview of Conness-Till's first film, *On the King's Highway*, was held at the city's premiere movie palace, but ultimately opened in only a small downtown theater.⁹ The film was screened for a few days, although that theater did book subsequent Made in Canada features. At least five other neighborhood theaters advertised a Conness-Till film between February and April.¹⁰ In the meantime, preview screenings were held for showmen in Montreal, where another feature, *Canada in Peace and War*, played at that city's key early movie palace.¹¹ Back in Toronto, there were attempts to hype the hometown studio as sharing in the glamour and fame of the movie business. Actors, directors, and managers of Conness-Till appeared at an important neighborhood theater for a special "formal opening". The following week Robins and other players from the studio appeared in person at another.¹² After three months releasing new multi-reel features almost weekly, on 17 April the *Star Weekly* published a lengthy illustrated article about the company with a photo of the studio, the actresses, the acting company under the bright arc-lights, and a dramatic scene being filmed. Although the article began with the understatement, "quite a number of people in Toronto are perhaps not aware that the business of film production in this city is now an accomplished fact", the profile then proceeded with praise:

These people enjoy the signal honor of being the first in the Canadian market to promote this particular industry, hence their slogan 'Made in Canada'. ... Speaking to some of the local talent who have embraced the movies as an occupation, the *Star Weekly* man learned that the business though hard was interesting and in many ways opportunities arose for advancement for those persons who were sincere in their efforts.¹³

The story took a tour through the sound stage with a ballroom scene under direction, the prop room, developing room, drying room, printing room, and lunch room. A sense of the technical expertise and high cost came with a calculation that the high-voltage arc-lights cost \$300 a day to keep lit. The studio was an all-in-one fully operational facility that could deliver finished prints to the local distributor. The ad just below this article, one of the last, listed ten films available, averaging three reels each. There must have been some dissatisfaction or impatience on the part of the Philadelphia financiers, because late in April 1915, the company was reorganized and renamed with its own surname.¹⁴ A month later, in the middle of production of an anti-smoking social issue film, *Nicotine*, the suburban Toronto film studio went up in flames.¹⁵ Despite some insurance on the property, the investors called it quits rather than renew their investment. No copies of the company's films remain.

The fire destroying the Conness-Till film studio might be seen as an abrupt end to Toronto-made movies. On the other hand, a more "natural" death of bankruptcy seems just as likely, given the promotions alongside its "Made in Canada" newspaper ads. The small, independent Toronto film company could not even monopolize the local

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wartime patriotism that was its hook. Conness-Till's patriotic advantage paled next to the *Strand Weekly* war series, scenes of preparations and news from Europe (The Toronto Strand was an early link in the Mark-Brock chain, which had opened the Broadway Strand in New York in 1914).¹⁶ There could hardly have been a worse time to enter the film business. In exactly these months the serial melodrama fad was at its peak, and there were six stories blanketing the city in theaters and in print. Even the Toronto-made advantage was lost as it was announced that Toronto-born Lottie Pickford, sister of Mary, would star in the serial, *Diamond from the Sky*.¹⁷ Mary Pickford herself, in the few months of the Conness-Till film releases, had become the highest paid and best known movie star, and newspapers began claiming her Toronto roots as cause for celebration.¹⁸ The same week that the *Star Weekly* profiled the local film studio, the Strand downtown had a special Pickford repertoire festival, playing a different film of hers every day and offering lady patrons a souvenir, "Mary Pickford's Own Story".¹⁹

In retrospect, even worse, a parallel advertising campaign began early in 1915 to brand and anchor Paramount feature films from Famous Players-Lasky productions. Mary Pickford, along with other well-known stars of the moment, was listed as exclusively appearing in Paramount films. The young local manager of the Famous Players Film Service was a heavy self-promoter who got his picture printed and "meteoric" career written up in the paper. He probably did not exactly intend to sabotage the efforts of the Conness-Till company, but advertising for the Paramount films of the Famous Players company were often adjacent to the Made in Canada campaign. Compared to the stoic beaver on top of the Conness-Till maple leaf were pithy slogans to forcefully argue and claim the importance of Paramount films, as if Mary Pickford alone was insufficient:²⁰ "Give the Public What They Want", "I Am Going to Make Paramount a Household Word", "Does Quality Mean Anything to You?" as well as occasional more direct links to the local audience, "The Toronto Theatres Listed Below Show Our Productions", followed by a list of several dozen local theaters.²¹

The emerging corporate transnational structure of the film business was even becoming a topic of general interest for feature stories in Toronto's weekend newspaper editions. The *World* printed a story early in 1916, "Life of One Film in Canada, What Happens to a Film After It Reaches Toronto", and another proudly proclaimed, "Canada is No Longer Graveyard of Features".²² In general, film distributors used their regional branches to both situate local showmen in a personable and manageable regional context as well as openly claim the advantages of economies of scale that the continental reach of a chain structure afforded. In trade press ads, Canadian cities (not Canada as a nation) were equals alongside American cities. In this solidification of the chain structure of the film market, the Conness-Till Company's Made in Canada films are remarkable not for their failure but for their relative success. There were not many other companies anywhere in North America that were as small but still managed to release a film each week for three months. Had it been founded just a few years earlier, it might have really taken off. In the end, only a handful of local theaters picked up the Made in Canada films and promoted them, even as all of the 90 movie theaters in Toronto were specifically mentioned as offering Paramount, World, or Metro features, not to mention serials from Mutual, Universal, or Pathé.

There was a similar studio in Montreal in 1913, the British-American or Bri-Am Company. Louis Pelletier, researcher for Pierre Veronneau at the Cinémathèque Québécoise, has recovered much more about this case.²³ Its single feature, *The Battle of Long Sault* (1913), turned up in Toronto and elsewhere in Ontario, and it received a great deal of publicity that hyped the Canadian theme and production and looked

behind the scenes in Montreal sets and locations. It might even have been a box office success for its day. However, it was a single feature film. It played for a week and moved on, as did every film in this and other second-tier cities. In Toronto, it would seem that no film lasted more than two weeks at a single theater until after the war, nationalist or otherwise. *Queen Elizabeth* played a week at the first-run Strand in November 1912. *Quo Vadis?* was booked as a roadshow event at the Princess Theater for just two weeks in June 1913. Beginning in January 1914, each episode of *Adventures of Kathlyn* ran a single week or less, whether first- or twelfth-run. There are two obvious exceptions in the twin extravaganzas of *The Birth of a Nation* in 1915 and *The Battle of the Somme* in 1916, each representing a distinct sort of imported nationalism – that of the epic blockbuster of the United States and that of British wartime patriotism. Thus two films out of a few thousand had any staying power. How could a single Canadian-made feature spur a national industry in that environment? The dozen features from Conness-Till in 1915, even if they were well-made entertainments with strong box office (which they weren't), hardly made a ripple in the ocean of film distribution and exhibition.

In this context of mass exhibition, the problem of a Canadian national cinema is not really a matter of nationalism, although the U.S. border makes it look like it. I want to bracket the decades of subsequent debates over state intervention and free trade in order to think about the first decades of cinema on their own terms. The Canadian problem then becomes instead a matter of how the mass practice of the film industry undermined regionalism in general, perhaps even eliminated it. In other words, to ask why there was no film production in Canada – in Montreal, Toronto, or anywhere else – makes as much sense as asking why there was none in Buffalo or Cleveland. Such questions do surface in the U.S. about the failures of studios to take root in Florida and endure in New Jersey, or why the Chicago network of Selig, Essanay, and American lasted a mere decade.²⁴ But even if one thinks of the Chicago or Florida question in terms of Hollywood imperialism, it is not really framed in terms of nationalism. Consider the case of the Cincinnati-in-Motion studios alongside my Toronto story of Conness-Till.

From 1913 to 1915, the dominant film advertiser in Cincinnati was a local studio, billing its products as Cincinnati-In-Motion. It specialized in industrial, advertising, and local films, but was also the Ohio Valley stringer for the Universal news weekly.²⁵ The studio was able to combine income from specialty industrial production and its duties as a news service with an emphasis on the appeal and immediacy of local and regional film viewing. It advertised constantly and with great hype, and stood out as unique in a city strangely restrained in movie advertising overall. Its ads were the first to mention neighborhood theaters around Cincinnati, compiling a list of the places showing their local films and calling them the largest chain of theaters in the region. At one point it listed 50 by name, more than one-third of those then operating. It is truly a remarkable and exceptional case of local showmanship carving out a space for its marginal product, and lasted several years. In terms of regionalism, the Cincinnati case could become a point of pride, a relatively successfully system of local film production, distribution, and exhibition. If Cincinnati-in-Motion had to be thought of in terms of regional autonomy and nationalism – as Toronto's Conness-Till and Montreal's Bri-Am always are – it would similarly have to be considered a failure. In all regions of North America, there was simply no room for local production within the integrated system of continental distribution.

Looking back to 1908 and the Edison Trust agreements, it seems ironic that the Canadian border prompted direct vertical integration rather than protecting against

consolidation. The Trust could not be enforced north of the border, where there were similarly notorious problems with copyright enforcement. But if the law could not pass through customs, capital investment easily could. American film companies responded by buying Toronto film exchanges wholesale and later by setting up franchises run by their own envoys. For example, Percy Waters is listed as the head of the Dominion Film Exchange in Toronto by 1909, as far as I can tell months before his involvement, in April 1910, in the organization of General Film Company that took control of branch film exchanges throughout the United States.²⁶ Already by 1910, there were effectively no autonomous film exchanges in Toronto, as all either represented the Sales Company or were branches of General Film. That situation was already in effect when Canadian provincial governments began strict bureaucratic regulation and censorship, in Ontario from 1911.

Ultimately, local censorship mattered because it was a direct outgrowth of the responsibilities of urban policing, and it was unfathomable and politically unpalatable for territories, especially across international borders, to accept an external authority, let alone the voluntary efforts of a self-regulating industry. But just what difference did censorship have in Ontario in terms of what ended up projected onto picture screens? With American film studios more attuned to censorship efforts closer to home, like the National Board of Censorship in New York, how did the Ontario Board of Censors really change what was being seen?²⁷ While the reciprocal effect on production is likely minimal, it is clear that the Ontario Board of Censors, under its first Chief Censor G.E. Armstrong, made radical cuts to reshape film according to a perceived particularity of the Ontario audience. Most obviously and widely commented on was the decision to bar images of the American flag if used with patriotic fervor. Just months after Armstrong's work began, a brief controversy erupted when a film based on the war of 1812 portrayed the American perspective to the detriment of the Canadian victors. British Loyalist Canadian soldiers had, after all, burned down the White House and won that war. In Toronto picture shows, the movie drew hisses and was interrupted by patriotic protests. Reports of the incident even reached the American film trade press.

Censoring overt American patriotism in imported films became the first urgent matter of the Ontario Board of Censors. Beginning late in 1911, scenes of Old Glory were cut from imported films before they were shown to audiences in Toronto. An October 1911 article sarcastically compared the censor's stamp to the mark of the devil and facetiously joked that waving the American flag was a "heinous offense indeed, far worse than the murders so vividly portrayed this past week!"²⁸ An editorial in the *Star Weekly* reviewed how American film producers were at first merely perturbed by the moral strictness of the Ontario censors for banning films "not considered injurious to the honest people of Kansas and Michigan". Soon, movie studios' indignation escalated, and they took the banning of the Stars and Stripes to the U.S. Secretary of State as a trade issue spilling over onto concerns of sovereignty. In Toronto, a newspaper editorial remarked that the more valid concern for sovereignty actually lay on the other side of the border with Canada.

This must be considered one of the most curious appeals ever made to a Government. These men bedeck their films with their own flag because they know their own flag appeals to the sentiments of their own people. Yet they actually fail to understand that our people want to see our flag bedecking similar pictures if they are to get equal pleasure out of them. ... Let them substitute our flag for their own on their total output for a month, and see

whether the people of the United States would be as tolerant for one night as we have been for years past in a matter of this kind.²⁹

Such sympathies with the Canadian side were not entirely unheard of on the other side of the border. Some writing in *Moving Picture World* recognized that patriotism run amok in films cheapened the possibilities of the art of filmmaking, not to mention limited profits from the international market for American films.³⁰ On a simple matter of good management, one Chicago film exchange dismissed the kaffuffle over which flag appeared on Toronto movie screens. His inspection of the Canadian territory convinced him that the centralized censorship boards of Ontario and Québec were liberal in judgment, and efficient in practice. Once passed through the board, exchanges had full and unobstructed access to the vast territories of Canadian provinces, in stark contrast to the local censor nuisance then rampant all over America.³¹

A dichotomy of nationalist approaches was articulated at the time: either to produce depictions of parochial life and Canadian history or to censor the worst flag-waving of imported American films. Advocates of neither side demonstrated a nuanced or complex understanding of the appeal of movie-going as a mass practice, imagining a nationalist cinema emerging either out of films of Canadian lumber camps or from simply cutting out the Stars and Stripes. With the censor board the only office in a position to act, the latter option emerged as a rule to fight the ill effects of incipient nationalism in American films. Garth Jowett speculates this sentiment did not emerge until after the war, when “the nation was in no mood to tolerate American movie claims which showed the Americans winning the War almost singlehandedly”³² In fact, resentment of American flag-waving was expressed most vociferously around 1911. An alternative form of nationalist cinema emerged only during the war, when movie theaters were used to produce nationalist *practices of gathering* to watch films, regardless of what movies were shown. That leads me to propose that a national cinema, a national system of filmmaking, can only emerge within the development of these urban and regional systems of film exhibition. Richard Abel has shown for both France and America before the war (implicitly for the dominant cities of film production, Paris, New York, and Chicago within those nations) that an increasingly nationalist and protectionist cinema emerged only after the *ciné* and the nickelodeon became widespread.³³ Recognizing national film production as distinct from exhibition processes embedding film into communities opens up the possibility that practices of film-going can be nationalist in character without the films themselves being produced nationally. This appears to be exactly what happened in Toronto during the First World War.

But what if the case of Toronto could be generalized? It would mean nationalism is most easily and perhaps necessarily first instituted through exhibition practices supported by state regulation and censorship, always already in response to the global, mass character of mainstream cinema. Nationalism then becomes a variation of reform, a parallel process to local policing and the management of showmanship. In this sense, nationalism – although civics is perhaps the best word – is the latent rationale behind the various attempts to reform the escapist character of film entertainment, such as the Better Films Movement and other civic and educational cases, or MoMA Film Library, or even the Catholic Legion of Decency.³⁴ Recent studies of these efforts and of film clubs and amateur cinema have reconstructed statistics to show that these efforts amassed great numbers of members, viewers, and enthusiasts. Yet, the efforts remained almost by definition marginal. They established alternative subcultures of exhibition and regulation created specifically against the global, mass culture of the mainstream. By contrast, but with a similarly civic impulse, Toronto’s showmen during the First

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World War were able to attach nationalist practices of movie-going to the mainstream of American-made movies.

Notes

1. Adam Crerar, “Ontario and the Great War”, and Paul Litt, “Canada Invaded! The Great War, Mass Culture, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism”, both in David MacKenzie (ed.), *Canada and the First World War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).
2. Ontario, *Statutes*, “An Act to amend the Theatres and Cinematographs Act”, 9 George V, Chapter 66 (24 April 1919).
3. For an elaboration of this argument, with further details of the case of the movies in Toronto during World War I, see the conclusion of my forthcoming book, *Now Playing: Early Movie-going and the Regulation of Fun* (Albany: SUNY Press).
4. Zoe Druick, *Projecting Canada: Government Policy and Documentary Film at the National Film Board* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007).
5. Peter Morris, *Embattled Shadows: A History of Canadian Cinema 1895–1939* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1992), 51–54.
6. Advertising for the Conness-Till Photoplay contest appeared in all Toronto daily newspapers for three days, from 27 August 1914. Reports of the progress of the Conness-Till appears in *Moving Picture World* [henceforth *MPW*] (19 September 1914): 1667, and (28 November 1914): 1257. The first microfilmed copy of “Behind the Screen Conducted by E.H. Robins” is in the *Toronto World* (8 November 1914): 8.
7. “Canadian-Made Motion Pictures”, *Star Weekly* (23 January 1915): 21. Ads for Conness-Till Film Co. first appear in *Star Weekly* (23 January 1915) and thereafter until 1 May 1915; they also appear in the *Sunday World*, in February 1915.
8. “Conness-Till Company Harshly Criticized”, *MPW* (23 January 1915): 550.
9. The Strand preview is noted in *MPW* (13 February 1915): 1021. See also the Photodrome playdates in *MPW* (20 February 1915): 1170.
10. “Toronto-Made Play at the Photodrome”, *Star Weekly* (6 February 1915): 21. Advertising first appears for these Conness-Till films: *On the King’s Highway* (6 February 1915), *His Awakening* (13 February 1915), *Motto On the Wall* (21 February 1915), *Canada in Peace and War* (27 February 1915), *Military Parade of the 2nd Contingent* (28 March 1915), *His Soul’s Affinity* (27 March 1915), *To Err is Human* (10 April 1915), and *The Morland Mystery* (17 April 1915). Three other titles are promoted as available, but never advertised as playing in theaters: *In the Hands of Fate*, *Sham Battle*, and the studio’s final feature, *The Faithful Servant*.
11. The preview is noted in *MPW* (13 March 1915): 1639. Playdates at the Montreal Strand are noted in *MPW* (17 April 1915): 431.
12. “Formal Opening of United Features Co.”, *Star Weekly* (6 March 1915): 21. Mary Pickford Theater ad, *Sunday World* (14 March 1915): 12.
13. “Film Plays are Made in Toronto”, *Star Weekly* (17 April 1915): 22.
14. “Beury Feature Film”, *MPW* (8 May 1915): 937.
15. The production of *Nicotine* is noted in *MPW* (29 May 1915): 1482. The film studio fire is reported in all Toronto daily newspapers, 1 June 1915.
16. Not really “news” as much as “views”, the *Strand Weekly* war series began in Toronto at the Strand on 21 September 1914, two weeks after the films first appeared at the Broadway Strand in New York City. There were at least 16 weekly programs in the series, and the films played elsewhere in the city after their debut at the Strand downtown.
17. “Lottie Pickford, Toronto Girl, Chosen for Big Part”, *Star Weekly* (10 April 1915): 21.
18. “A Toronto Girl Who Is Paid \$104,000 a Year”, *Sunday World* (21 February 1915): 1, 7; “Mary Pickford, Toronto Film Artist, Paid Great Compliment”, *Star Weekly* (31 October 1914): 21.
19. Strand ad, *Star Weekly* (17 April 1915), 23.
20. “Mr. P. Kauffman”, *Star Weekly* (6 March 1915): 21. “Philip Kauffman’s Meteoric Career”, *Star Weekly* (12 June 1915): 22.

21. These three Paramount ads were adjacent to Conness-Till ads: "Give the Public What They Want", *Star Weekly* (6 February 1915): 21; "I Am Going to Make ..." *Star Weekly* (27 February 1915): 21; "Does Quality Mean Anything ..." *Star Weekly* (20 March 1915): 21.
22. "John Doe's Release Tells Life Of One Film in Canada", *Sunday World* (30 January 1916): 2; "Canada is No Longer Graveyard of Features", *Sunday World* (6 February 1916): 3.
23. Louis Pelletier, "An Experiment in 'Historically Correct' Canadian Photoplays: Montreal's British American Film Manufacturing Co.", *Film History* 19.1 (2007): 34–48.
24. Richard Koszarski reviews the demise of New York City-based filmmaking in New Jersey in *Fort Lee: The Film Town* (Eastleigh, UK: John Libbey, 2004); Andrew Brodie Smith reviews the Western genre specialty of Chicago movie studios in *Shooting Cowboys and Indians* (Oklahoma City: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004).
25. My synopsis here is based entirely on local newspaper ads for Cincinnati-in-Motion.
26. Perhaps this is not so exceptional, and the groundwork to form General Film occurred in many other places and far in advance of the official incorporation and capitalization. Robert Anderson, "The Motion Picture Patents Company: A Re-evaluation", in Tino Balio, ed., *The American Film Industry* (2nd edn) (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 133–152.
27. Some examples of the analysis of censorship pressure at the time include Francis G. Couvares, "Hollywood, Main Street, and the Church: Trying to Censor the Movies Before the Production Code", *American Quarterly* 44. 4 (1992): 584–616; Daniel Czitrom, "The Politics of Performance: From Theater Licensing to Movie Censorship in Turn-of-the-Century New York", *American Quarterly* 44. 4 (1992): 525–553.
28. "Senseless Censors", *Jack Canuck* (28 October 1911): 8; "Bar Stars and Stripes, By Board of Censors, Talk With Men Who Inspect Moving Picture Films", *Telegram* (17 October 1911): 23.
29. "Editorial: Flags and Films", *Star Weekly* (4 November 1911): 20.
30. "Facts and Comments", *MPW* (28 October 1911): 272; "The Flag Question", *MPW* (11 November 1911): 487; "Canadian Censors and the U.S. Flag", *MPW* (9 December 1911): 795. "American Flag in Canada", *MPW* (13 December 1913): 1259.
31. "Chicago Letter: Interesting News of the Trade in Canada", *MPW* (17 October 1914): 317.
32. Garth S. Jowett, "American Domination of the Motion Picture Industry: Canada as a Test Case", *Journal of the University Film Association* 27. 3 (1975): 60.
33. Richard Abel, "Booming the Film Business: The Historical Specificity of Early French Cinema", in Abel, ed., *Silent Film* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 109–124; Abel, *The Red Rooster Scare: Making Cinema American, 1900–1910* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).
34. Jennifer Horne, *Exhibition and Inhibition: The Better Films Movement* (forthcoming); Haidee Wasson, *Museum Movies: The Museum of Modern Art and the Birth of Art Cinema* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); Frank Walsh, *Sin and Censorship: The Catholic Church and the Motion Picture Industry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).