The Film Council of America and the Ford Foundation: Screen Technology, Mobilization, and Adult Education in the 1950s

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Note: This is in a draft and is not for circulation beyond this workshop.

In this research I examine the Ford Foundation’s support, through its Fund for Adult Education (1951-61), of the Film Council of America, a national educational film organization operating between 1946 and 1957. As a point of departure, we should note that the history and influence of non-theatrical film remains under-appreciated. Among non-theatrical genres, educational or instructional film – sometimes appearing under the even less appealing term ‘functional film’ – has been almost entirely neglected.\(^1\) To be sure, the often authoritative voice-overs, cheap sets, dreary composition and wooden dramatizations of the films we remember from our own school days are not inspiring invitations to passionate close examination. Nonetheless, their ubiquitous presence, especially during the post-WWII period, and the massive amount of resources poured into their circulation, indicate that educational film cannot be dismissed as marginal to our culture.

Indeed, I suggest that in many ways, educational film agendas set the stage for the current era of ‘technologizing the classroom’. The efforts of organizations like the Fund for Adult Education and the Film Council of America had a lasting impact upon
presumptions about the integration of media into curricula and, moreover, about where education takes place. In general, they assisted in the establishment of a critical vocabulary for cultural technologies, one that aided in the dispersal of classroom activity into other locations. Put differently, where much recent discussion of modernity emphasizes changes in artistic, leisure and work environments, we must also address the concomitant technological expansion of the sites of, and language about, education.

Acknowledging this dimension affirms that histories of media education – which encompasses education about and through media - have to confront the complex relationship of media forms to disparate educational sites, institutions and objectives.

With respect to non-theatrical film specifically, well into the 1950s it was still described as a wild field without central organizing institutional entities, and without clear differences between producers, distributors and exhibitors. Indeed, the very nature of non-theatrical might be said to involve a re-writing of core definitions of the dominant commercial film industry. This revisionist influence is most pronounced in exhibition, where the possible locations for conversion into sites of cinematic and instructional spectatorship include department stores, churches, community clubs, schools, museums, libraries, and sporting venues. Concentrating upon the 1940s and 1950s, as I do here, is not to say that there were not precursors. However, in the post WWII period we begin to see the normalization of the place and operations of non-theatrical film on a mass basis. In the U.S., national agencies emerge to attempt to coordinate this arena of exhibition, and it is here that the influence of philanthropies is most evident.

Driving the emerging visual educational procedures were a number of initiatives that took place under the umbrella of philanthropic, and at times industrial, support.
Beginning in 1935, several Rockefeller Foundation grants established the Motion Picture Project of the American Council on Education (ACE), which produced a number of important publications on education and film. The same agency offered substantial support to the American Film Center from 1938 until its demise in 1946. In an effort to coordinate the growing number of organizations, a further grant financed the Joint Committee on Educational Films, formed in 1940, an effort on behalf of American Library Association (ALA), Association of School Film Libraries (ASFL), the Motion Picture Project of the ACE, and the AFC. In 1943, the Educational Film Library Association (EFLA) was launched.

I make mention of these initiatives, if only in a cursory fashion, to indicate the presence of an agreement concerning the film’s potential as an educational instrument as we enter the 1940s. What continued to spark debate and study was the mode of its implementation, and here, the activities of funding agencies and the organizations they established show three general priorities. First and foremost was coordination among producers, distributors and users of educational film. This priority may have been in the name of efficiency, assuring that funding dollars were spent effectively. But, as noted above, industry observers at the time saw the non-theatrical scene as startlingly disorganized, with too many smaller participants and with inadequate market information. There seemed to be little accounting of whether or not educators were being served with films they actually wanted and found beneficial. Coordination among the principle parties was lacking, and hence became a funding target.

Second, it was felt that potential users of educational film were lost in a new environment of pedagogical options without training in how to acquire and select
appropriate materials. Teachers and group leaders confronted an array of films, some easily accessible and others not, without ready selection criteria to assist them. Even more rudimentary, some were without a basic idea of how to borrow a film and how to thread a projector, let alone how to incorporate it into a lesson. Along with coordination of non-theatrical organizations and circulating information about new audio-visual education methods, initiatives placed an emphasis on systems of evaluation. Sometimes this involved establishing preview centers that would write synopses, assess the functionality of films and compile catalogues. Sometimes this involved elaborate surveys and post-screening reports. One might think of this aspect as the coordination of educational film expertise and knowledge.

Third, the thousands of pages studying instructional uses of motion pictures generally zeroed in on a balance between the selection of the title and of its incorporation in the service of an educational goal. Invariably, this involved a recommended orchestration of screening and discussion, this in contrast to film as an illustration of a lecture and to film as a self-contained educational technology that one witnesses passively. Now, this may seem somewhat obvious and commonsense to us today. With the sustained attention this receives for several decades, not to mention the massive amount of funding, I am convinced that this was far from taken for granted as a pedagogical approach (or that a good portion of educators needed concrete evidence to be reassured that they as teachers were not being replaced).

To illustrate these claims, I want to introduce the most visible, national and influential U.S. film education organization of the 1940s and 1950s, the Film Council of America (FCA). The FCA can be seen as a product of widespread interest in the
educational uses of new technological forms, one that encompasses the aforementioned three dimensions. The FCA’s work helped to settle decades of attempts to negotiate the educational challenges posed by new media, in particular concerning film. It drew from both the earlier ‘better films’ movement and had links with its contemporaries, the more aesthetically invested film appreciation societies. But it displayed its own character, particularly in the realm of education, new teaching methods and mass mobilization.

The origins of the FCA are in the Office of War Information’s (OWI) plans to mobilize the U.S. population in service of the war effort. One central program relied on film’s effectiveness in explaining world events and in outlining the patriotic contribution individuals could make. The government’s wartime film program encompassed distribution as much as it did the production of ideologically appropriate informational shorts. Beginning in 1943, one of the OWI’s film objectives was to capitalize upon and expand existing school and community media facilities, helping orchestrate channels through which government information could reach local audiences. The committee created to achieve this acted to gain access to established resources, most importantly the over 25,000 16mm sound projectors held in educational and community institutions, according to estimates used at the time.\(^5\) The head of the National 16mm Advisory Committee was C.R. Reagan, of Visual Education, Inc. in Austin, Texas and with the National Association of Visual Education Dealers (NAVED). The Advisory Committee coordinated the work, and relied upon the resources, of seven commercial and educational organizations active in 16mm informational film: ALA, EFLA, National University Extension Association (NUEA), National Education Association (NEA), Allied Non-Theatrical Film Association (ANTFA), National Association of Visual
Education Dealers (NAVED), and Visual Equipment Manufacturers Council (VEMC). With their assistance, volunteers organized film screenings in support of the war effort. Through their activities, war-related film programs reached labor unions, church groups, women’s clubs, schools and other community organizations. In essence, the initiatives opened up both public and private materials to designated community leaders, all in the service of the nation in a state of emergency. By the end of the war two years later, they estimated their audience to have been 300 million.  

After the cessation of hostilities in Europe, and the disbanding of the OWI, the Committee became the National 16mm Victory Film Committee, launching a five-month campaign to sell victory bonds, to close out 1945. Their evident success encouraged those at its final meeting in Washington, D.C., January 1946, to transform the Committee into a civilian operation, one that would continue to promote film as a catalyst to community action and instruction, and one that could be called upon to mobilize people should the government require it. With the termination of federal support at the war's conclusion, a largely voluntary film education movement stepped in to fill that void. The members formed the Film Council of America on January 17, 1946. The first orders of business were to encourage and affiliate local film councils that would be community centers of instructional film information and would organize film events, to document the wartime activities of National 16mm Advisory Committee, to target larger consumer groups for closer relationships, to assure the Library of Congress would continue to provide access to wartime films, to support the establishment of an AV division of the U.S. Office of Education, and to lobby for national support in the free flow of international film.
The FCA remained a joint effort on the part of the original seven member organizations of the OWI Committee, with Reagan still in charge once elected as the first FCA president.\textsuperscript{10} According to its constitution, the FCA was a non-profit, educational association whose mission was “to increase the information and work toward the general welfare of all people by fostering, improving and promoting the production, the distribution, and the effective use of audio-visual materials.”\textsuperscript{11} It was to pursue these ideals by coordinating and supporting the activities of community-based councils and national AV organizations, whether commercial or educational.\textsuperscript{12} Its main function over the years was to be a clearinghouse for information about film, its availability, and its classroom and community use. In this way, the FCA would help address what 16mm film reviewer for the \textit{Saturday Review of Literature} Cecile Starr later called “the staggering confusion in the distribution field.”\textsuperscript{13}

Other industry and educational enterprises voiced support for the rumblings of coordination in the non-theatrical field. The Photographic Industry Coordinating Committee, with Manager of the Films Division at Bell & Howell, president of ANTFA, and FCA member W.F. Kruse as its chair, backed the FCA. Several of its constituent organizations were founding members of the FCA as well.\textsuperscript{14} By early 1951, thirty organizations had affiliated with the FCA, including American Automobile Association, American Jewish Congress, American Nurses’ Association, Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith, Boy and Girl Scouts of America, Canadian Film Institute, International Ladies Garment Workers’ Union, and National Safety Council. Counting the membership of each, the FCA claimed to have access to 13,000 chapters and 17 million members.\textsuperscript{15} They, and their supporters, reasoned that this put the FCA in a unique
position to reach the estimated potential market of 2,000,000 programmers of non-
theatrical film.\textsuperscript{16} By June, 1951, the FCA had more than 150 local councils, and they had
developed film information centers in more than 1200 towns.\textsuperscript{17} Headquarters were in
Chicago until 1952 when they relocated to larger offices in Evanston.

The national umbrella organization received funding support from these
institutional members, and other industrial donations. The local chapters collected
membership fees, and relied upon their own fundraising to survive. The sale of
publications covered the cost of production and little else. From 1954-57, the FCA
collected registration fees from the American Film Assembly film festival they ran. Still,
as with most voluntary societies of its kind, it operated very close to the line. Their first
fundraising coup came from the Carnegie Corporation (CC), which after several years of
assessing the educational film scene offered support. CC saw their 1948 grant of $10,000
per year for two years as complimentary to one given to the ALA for facilitating
distribution. The FCA’s grant was for garnering audiences and using film
“intelligently.”\textsuperscript{18} Or, to use the priorities noted above, CC divided their funding
intentions between the coordination of film circulation, performed by the ALA, and the
coordination of film expertise and promotion, performed by the FCA (though CC was
well aware that the FCA activities encompassed the former too). The Carnegie grant was
to be for the executive director’s salary, which at the time would go to the newly elected
Glen Burch.\textsuperscript{19} The Carnegie Corporation followed this with a final grant of $16,000 over
1950-1952.\textsuperscript{20}

Just as these funds were coming to a close, and there were no prospects for
renewal, the Ford Foundation was in the midst of launching its Fund for Adult Education
The FAE initially ran its operations from Pasadena, before moving to New York in the mid-1950s. Now, the FCA, strictly speaking, was not focused upon adult education, and was interested in serving all manners of audio-visual instruction. Adult education, in this context, encompassed both formal university extensions and informal programmes of continuing instruction as conducted by social clubs, religious organizations, and community-based groups. It seemed opportune, then, to highlight the work they could feasibly undertake in this area, whether expanding their status as a clearinghouse for film information, as a preview center for film programmes, or as a promoter of proper deployment of films. As the grant request was about to be reviewed by the Ford Foundation, head of the FAE Scott Fletcher, an active and founding FCA board member and president of Encyclopedia Britannica Film, estimated that their chances were 9 to 1 that the FCA would receive funds. Some machinations had to have been in motion, for within a few weeks, the Fund for Adult Education announced awards of $20,000 then $30,000 for 1951 and 1952 respectively, and that outgoing FCA executive director Glen Burch had been hired to work for the Fund. The FCA’s work in promoting film in adult education secured it the more substantial sums of $75,000 for 1952-53, $180,000 in 1953-54 and $220,000 in 1954-55 from the same agency. Using the FCA to conduct a variety of educational experiments, and to prepare and publish written material on education film usage, the total amount of FAE support for FCA was $738,500.

The FAE’s declared its purpose as resolutely liberal, emphasizing the individual as a unique, self-contained person and as a citizen. Their guiding policy stated “As a citizen of a free society the individual is the means for the preservation and continual
improvement of the kind of society which makes possible the fullest development of his own capacities and those of his fellow citizens.”

To achieve this lofty goal, the FAE was to promote reflection and moral concern through a liberal arts education, as distinct from the repetitive procedures of training and the “inculcation of beliefs” of indoctrination. While privileging the life-long and informal nature of learning – as their policy proclaims, “Education terminates only with death” – mass media and communication channels appear as essential elements to this modern liberal education. Of special note is the balance to be struck between the wide and easy diffusion of mass media and the requirement of individual study and discussion. Accordingly, one of their first initiatives was to fund the production of three films with a grant to Encyclopedia Britannica films, through the University of Chicago, on the mechanics of adult group discussion. They were Room for Discussion, How to Organize a Discussion Group, and How to Conduct a Discussion Group. Intended for distribution through the film councils and libraries, television was an equally desired venue.

The FCA fit neatly into these plans. In an early cooperative endeavor, the FCA and the FAE orchestrated the making of a film depicting an informal adult film discussion. It was the Louis de Rochemont produced “Cleveland Council for World Affairs,” demonstrating and promoting film discussion techniques. The first grant recommended the FCA as the obvious choice to distribute the FAE’s Experimental Film Discussion Project once it is through the testing phase. The Fund’s grant to increase local councils, film information centers, and experiments in distribution in the service of adult education came at virtually the same time the FCA promised to put all of its resources at the disposal of training and informing citizens about the looming
international crisis, again a holdover activity from the FCA’s wartime predecessor.

While the agendas of community service and adult education are not mutually exclusive, nor are they equivalent. In fact, representatives of some local councils begin to complain that there is too little attention to them, too much attention to adult education, and not enough “safeguarding against infiltration by undesirable persons.”\textsuperscript{30} This comment was an oblique reference to Congressional investigations into philanthropic tax exemption by Carroll Reece, which questioned the patriotic pedigree of the foundation.

One of the FAE’s major initiatives was its Experimental Discussions Project, which received over $2,100,000 in its first five years (1951-56).\textsuperscript{31} Glen Burch was the director of this project from its beginnings as the Experimental Film Discussion Project through to its cessation of activity, ultimately writing its final report in 1960.\textsuperscript{32} The first \textit{New York Times} article on the project in 1952, which at the time spanned 59 groups and over 2000 people, put its guiding query as follows: “Will the development of a combination of materials – films, essays, guides and posters – used together in a series of programs, help relatively untrained discussion leaders and inexperienced adult groups get more out of the discussion of some of the important problems of our time?”\textsuperscript{33}

FAE did some of its own promotion for its first two series, “World Affairs are Your Affairs” and “Great Men and Great Issues,” as it effectively began by testing its test programmes.\textsuperscript{34} The former, clearly internationalist in design, consisted of ten films, corresponding essays and discussion manuals, each taking on a different “tension area.” While the principles include world peace and democracy, groups were to understand the importance of “the economic foundations of the free world” and “the threat of totalitarian communism.”\textsuperscript{35} Of the test programmes assembled, “World Affairs are Your Affairs”
had perhaps the greatest longevity and viewership. As the leader’s manual indicates, participating groups were to meet weekly over three months to “read about it, see it happen, talk it over.”

Scholars prepared essays of about 2,000 words in length for each of the nine of the ten weeks, while the films were already in circulation, some of which were several years old. “Great Men and Great Issues,” a series of nine film packages, was nationalist in intent, presenting US heritage through historical figures like Benjamin Franklin and Abraham Lincoln. As the material reiterates and reassures, again and again, essays and discussion questions, and in some cases the films themselves, were prepared by a qualified authority on the subject. Evident is the core democratic idea of bringing ‘ordinary’ people together and encouraging them through free exchange to work through complex political and historical problems. The Experimental Discussion Project recommended that discussion groups be a maximum of 25 people. In actuality, numbers ranged from six to eighty. Though the interest remained informal education, many of the sponsoring bodies were university general education or extension departments.

Table I: Films Selected for “World Affairs are Your Affairs” Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film Title</th>
<th>Producer/Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>World Trade for Better Living</td>
<td>Encyclopedia Britannica Films, 1951</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmers of India</td>
<td>United World Films, 1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan and Democracy</td>
<td>March of Time Films, 1950</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oriental City</td>
<td>United World Films, 1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iran in Crisis</td>
<td>March of Time Films, 1951</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tropical Mountain Land</td>
<td>United World Films, 1948</td>
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Tito, Our Ally? (March of Time Films, 1951)

Challenge in Nigeria (British Information Services, 1951)

Picture of Britain (British Information Services, 1951)

World Affairs are Your Affairs (Cleveland World Affairs Council, 1952)

FCA received $88,500 to distribute the first two Experimental Discussion programmes, which involved 20,000 participants and 1000 groups. The FAE handed over the full administration of them in November 1952. The FCA handled the distribution of materials (essays, films, leader’s kit, and discussion guides) for these two programmes. The first year’s evaluations captured a feeling that the “Great Men and Great Issues” films were “too amateurish and shallow” and “too immature for adults.” Feedback on the “World Affairs are Your Affairs” films tended to be more positive, though some felt they were out-of-date and dealt too much with agrarian societies and “underdeveloped countries.” Regardless of these criticisms, from November 1952 through the end of June 1953, the FCA distributed 1394 set of the “Great Men and Great Issues” essays, and 3036 of the “World Affairs are Your Affairs” essay sets. In 1953-54, the FCA distributed 1412 of the former, and 4041 of the latter. These numbers do not reflect actual usage as it is unclear how often booklets were reused, and some councils and societies only made essays available on a lending basis. By the Fall of 1954, as the FAE expanded the project to cities rather than programmes, the FCA role ended.

The “test cities” phase of the Experimental Discussion Project carried forward the small group, guided discussion idea, though various media were introduced and
monitored. The project consisted of twelve city and one regional community laboratories in the local conduct of informal adult education. Each test city experimented with following: 1) harmonization of schools, councils, libraries and other community groups in the service of a liberal educational programme; 2) development of ‘lay leadership’ skills and interest in adult education; 3) cooperation among existing organizations; 4) examination of the effects of educational materials and methods used; 5) exploitation of mass media to achieve adult educational objectives; and 6) potential for ongoing, community-based, financing for lifelong learning. The role of mass communication here was to develop “a relationship between liberal adult education programs carried through the mass media and those in face-to-face situations.” As a priority, their five-year report claimed that “No educational endeavor on the local level has experimented more and made more significant contributions in the utilization of the mass media for the stimulation of thought and the encouragement of participation in educational activities than have the Test Cities.” The integration of television, film, radio, newspapers, group meetings, essays in pamphlet form not only disseminated an educational programme, but assisted in the material gathering of audiences with the formation of discussion groups. “Such integration of the mass media and discussion groups is not only possible but also highly practical and simple. Natural Friendship groups seem to offer the best basis for the organization of such discussion nuclei.” This sort of ‘schooling without walls’ was said to have transformed the San Bernardino Valley “into a `classroom’.”

Discussion programmes moved with increasing rapidity into general circulation, some of which were “Your Money and Your Life,” “Human Freedom,” “You and Modern Art,” “Mass Media,” “Life Under Communism,” “World Affairs (Europe),” and
“Discussion Leadership.” Apropos of this last programme, in 1959, NYU, in the Division of General Education, participated in the training of informal adult education discussion leaders specially prepared to lead film programmes prepared, tested, and promoted by the FAE, including “The Ways of Mankind,” “Looking at Modern Poetry,” and “World Politics.” The FAE adapted “The Ways of Mankind” from Lister Sinclair’s CBC radio series, which had received rave reviews when the FAE financed its US broadcast in 1952.

Evident in this array of activities, beyond an interest in discussion and leadership of discussion, we witness the premium placed upon an interaction among media. These educational projects sought out relations among media forms. Though FCA direct responsibility for the discussion project ended, FAE support for the association did not stop. The grant renewal in 1955 funded their preview centers, their publication and clearinghouse operations, and the American Film Assembly, a film festival for informational film. And the FAE underwrote FCA’s affiliations with educational television, including televised film discussions. In Chicago, the FCA had an agreement with television station WTTW to select and supply films for broadcast.

The growth of what we might call multimedia education through the 1950s was nothing short of astounding. By the start of 1959, there were an estimated 595,000 16mm projectors in the U.S., or one for every 305 persons. Organized around this growth is a two-fold configuration of responses: first, that the opening up of sites of education required monitoring by cultural authorities, and second, that the technologizing of instruction dramatically expanded an educational market. Both responses worried about ethical mismanagement and under-exploited potential. For example, after decades of the
film library idea, only 112 of the almost 7,000 U.S. public libraries had circulating non-theatrical film collections in June 1952. With this budding alignment of a dispersed educational market, one can see how the 1958 National Defense Education Act (Title VII) institutionalized, and solidified, much of the earlier activity of the 1950s. Perhaps it is no wonder that Scott Fletcher becomes one of twelve appointees to the Act’s National Advisory Committee on New Educational Media in January 1959.

By way of conclusion, I’d like to introduce a few of my own discussion points, albeit in a speculative manner, and I’d like to do so by returning to Edward Berman’s 1983 volume, which argues that philanthropic foundations promoted an internationalist liberal agenda in order to smooth the way for imperialist conduct. To make his case, he uses a rather straightforward theory of hegemony to explain the social control and consensus sought by U.S. elites over international ones, all with the ultimate objective of furthering U.S. foreign policy. Much of his study remains instructive, and it is convincing in its documentation of the career trajectories of philanthropic luminaries and key projects. For instance, in 1961, Kennedy makes Philip Coombs, an officer with the Fund for the Advancement of Education from 1952 onward, his assistant secretary of state for education and cultural affairs; Ford Foundation President Paul Hoffman had been director of the Marshall Plan; and the Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Corporation’s War-Peace Studies Project, 1939-1945, which recommended access to foreign raw resources and which argued that international prosperity makes for better trading partners, became the basis for the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. More recently, Frances Stonor Saunders reiterates the claim writing, “At times, it seemed as if the Ford Foundation was simply an extension of government in the area of
international cultural propaganda…working closely with Marshall Plan and CIA officials on specific projects.”

Still, I am drawn to wonder about some of the contradictions of what Berman terms an ideology of “democratic elitism.” For instance, the book does not contain much detail about what was actually being investigated, and instead, draws its conclusions from broad ideological assessments and the fact of institutional liaisons. He does emphasize that among their main programmes and objectives, the foundations “encouraged experimentation in the fields of teacher education, instructional technology, and non-traditional modes of education.” With his focus on foreign policy, he concludes “Third-World nations, particularly in the 1960s, were frequently laboratories for the application of novel educational techniques imported from the United States and subsidized by the foundations, the Agency for International Development, and the World Bank.” However accurate this may be, as the preceding documentation shows the U.S. population was an earlier lab for many of these innovations. Further, this lab may have brought an agenda of U.S. domestic and foreign policy to the table, but it equally valued a humanist mode of communal assembly and rhetorical exploration, the structure of which is perhaps more telling than the content.

The post-WWII “messianic liberalism,” to use Daniel Yergin’s term (1977) describing the internationalism of the period, here coincides with other rising ideas about how mass society operates. And, I would suggest, this cannot be reduced to the more authoritarian plans stemming from psychological warfare agendas, as documented by Christopher Simpson. If we situate initiatives like the Experimental Film Discussion Project in the context of the emerging media theories of the day, theories that grow out of
research funded initially through John Marshall and the RF’s Humanities Division, we see that the two-step flow idea – an idea that ‘rediscover’ the role of interpersonal dynamics and reference groups in exerting influence in this mass age – was not only a theory: it was a dominant policy objective. The work of the FCA and the FAE was not simply about extending a single ideological case, or representing sanctioned foreign policy only, but of setting the terms for how a mass public was to be located and engaged, and who would be in a position to legitimately guide it, that is, a truly hegemonic pursuit, insomuch as it is about consent rather than coercion.

The problem of film education was never just how do we know film and the information it can impart, but how do we know people and communities, becoming a question of nationhood and of film evaluation and usage for social purposes. The concentrated efforts in the arena of film education resulted in the emergence of networks of cultural authorities taking on an organic (which is not to say progressive) intellectual function. This strata of educationalists succeeded in creating non-governmental and industrial agencies. The FCA was one force in the initiation and administration of the site and substance of film concerns. Film operated as a catalyst to modern democratic participation in community life, as social spark, poised against film as promoter of social malaise and apathy. It could only be so, however, if managed and guided appropriately, hence the solidification of certain patterns of cultural leadership, selecting, promoting, and guiding activity.

So, the expansion to multiple sites of education – the promises of informal and life-long learning - unsettle existing social relations, creating a space for non-authorized leaders to operate. In this staging ground for the delineation of the porous borders
between state and civil society, agencies acted to occupy this space with new networks of cultural authorities and instructional agendas. The three broad areas of interest - coordination of the audio-visual industry, the organization of media expertise, and the promotion of cross-media group discussion procedures – all participate in the refinement of this realm of cultural power. Along with a policy instilling and orchestrating a two-step model of mass communication, they helped to install mobilization, a term that encompasses both the movement of bodies and ideas, as a dominant concept describing how mass society might be managed.

Endnotes:


Philanthropy, eds. Theresa Richardson and Donald Fisher, Stamford, CT: Ablex, 1999, 177-192.


5 “Government Influence Dominant in 16mm Field,” *Film News*, 4 no. 1 summer 1943, 1, 14; “Advisory Committee Meets OWI,” *Film News*, 4 no. 3 December 1943, 6, 7.


7 “A Brief History of the National 16mm Victory Film Committee,” January 10, 1946, National Board of Review of Motion Pictures Collection, Manuscript and Archives Section, New York Public Library [hereafter designated as NBRMPC], box 26, folder 2, 1, 2, 3.

8 Minutes, “Film Council of America succeeding National 16mm Film Committee,” January 16, 1946, NBRMPC, box 26, folder 2, 1, 2, 3, 4. Gordon Adamson, who worked with distribution at the NFB and would soon become the executive secretary of the National Film Society of Canada, delivered an address in November 1945 to the Visual War Workers group in Washington, D.C. There, he laid out activities of the fairly well coordinated Canadian non-theatrical circuits and, importantly, presented a complete account of the function of community film councils and community film libraries. Washington Visual War Workers, from 1943, would soon after change its name to the Washington Film Council, and be considered the first chapter of the U.S. council movement. Though the audience would have been familiar with the initiatives Adamson narrated, the timing of and venue for this address make the event one point that coalesced ideas about how community film operations might be re-defined for a peacetime context. Gordon Adamson, “The Film and Canadian Communities,” November 28, 1945, Orville Goldner Papers, Iowa State University Library, Special Collections Department [hereafter designated as ISU], Ms. 528 box 12 folder 10, 1-17.

9 Minutes, “Film Council of America succeeding National 16mm Film Committee,” 2, 3.

10 Other officers were first vice-president David E. Strom (NUEA and AV Aids Center, University of Connecticut), second vice-president Irving C. Boerlin (EFLA), secretary Vernom G. Dameron (NEA), and treasurer Merriman H. Holtz (ANTFA and the Treasury Department).

11 “FCA Constitution,” March 4, 1947, Film Council of America [hereafter designated as FCA], ISU, Ms. 351 box 1, folder 1, 1.

12 Letter, Evans Clark to Carnegie Corporation, March 29, 1950, Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Carnegie Corporation Grants [hereafter designated as CCG], box 144.12, folder “Film Council of America, 1947-1957,” 2.


14 Among the member organizations, PICC represented the following, the first four of which were FCA participants as well: ANTFA, EFLA, NAVED, VEMC, Photographic Manufacturers and Distributors Association, National Microfilm Association, Master Photo Dealers’ and Finishers’ Association, and National Association of Film Producers for Industry and Commerce.

15 Glen Burch to Ford Foundation, April 3, 1951, Ford Foundation Archives [hereafter designated as FFA], reel 4736, B1076, FCA Section, p. 6.
Film Council of America, Grant Recommendation, circa 1955, FFA, FAE, box 2, folder 15, pp. 43.

As a point of comparison, the FCA had 130 affiliated councils in July 1949, which the National Film Society boasted more than 250 councils in Canada; “Summary Report on the Second Annual Meeting of the Film Council of America,” Film Counselor, 3.2, July-August 1949, np. Though FCA, and Ford Foundation, executives, repeatedly referred to the more highly developed Canadian community film scene, these tallies reflect the more centralized organizational structure of the US agency and not the size of educational film audiences.


“$20,000 Grant to F.C.A. – Glen Burch, new Director,” Film News, 8 no. 11, May 1948, 1, 9.

“Film Council of America,” circa May 1950, CCG, box 144.12 folder “Film Council of America, 1947-1957,” 1, 2.

Record of Interview, “Film Council of America,” May 1, 1951, CCG, box 144.12, folder “Film Council of America, 1947-1957.”

“Investing in FCA’s Future,” Film Counselor, 2 nos. 5/6, May/June 1951, 1, 2.


Ibid.

Ibid., p. 2


“Film Council of America,” circa May 1952, FFA, FAE box 1, folder 3, p. 13.


“Summary of Activities, April 3, 1951 to February 29, 1956,” FFA, FAE, box 3, folder 20, April 27, 1956


The other figures included Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, George Washington, John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, John C. Calhoun, Daniel Webster, and John Marshall (no, not him, the other one).


Film Council of America, Grant Recommendation, January 20/21 1955, FFA, FAE box 2, folder 15, pp. 43, 44, 45, 46.


“EFDP Evaluation,” circa 1953, FFA, reel 4736, B1076, FCA Section, p. 4.


“Agreement Between the Fund for Adult Education and the Film Council of America,” October 22, 1954, FFA, reel 4736, B1076, FCA Section, pp. 1-5.

The test locations were Akron, Bridgeport, Chattanooga, Kansas City, Little Rock, Lubbock, Memphis, Niagara Falls, Racine, San Bernardino, Sioux City, York and West Texas. “A Report on the Test Cities Project,” May 15, 1956, FFA, FAE, box 3, folder 21, p. 3.

Ibid., p. 3, 4.

Ibid., p. 4.

Ibid., p. 17.

Ibid., p. 17.

Ibid., p. 18.

“Educational Film-Discussion Project,” July 1, 1953 to June 30, 1954, Financial Report, FFA, reel 4736, B1076, FCA Section, Appendix A.


Film Council of America, Grant Recommendation, January 20/21 1955, FFA, FAE box 2, folder 15, pp. 43, 44, 45, 46.

61 “Progress Reports for Board Meeting, May 28-29, 1953, Film Council of America,” FFA, reel 4736, B1076, FCA Section, p. 33.
65 Edward H. Berman, 1983, p. 27
67 Edward H. Berman, 1983, p. 162
68 Quoted in Edward H. Berman, 1983, p. 43.