

Mistaken Images in Serge: Cecil B. DeMille's  
*Northwest Mounted Police* (1940)

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Few examinations of the Classical Hollywood renditions of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have focused on the impact that the social and political culture of the 1940s and 1950s had on these questionable cinematic epics. That the producers and directors of such films as *Northwest Mounted Police* (1940), *Pony Soldier* (1952), and *Saskatchewan* (1954) saw the Canadian West as an extension of the American frontier suggests that they had a somewhat dubious understanding of Canadian political and social institutions. This is not to say that directors such as Cecil B. DeMille, Raoul Walsh, and Joseph Newman should have been students of Canadian history and politics; rather, it suggests that they and their fellow producers were products of a culture dominated by everything American. Their socialization experiences would probably have made them familiar with Owen Wister's *The Virginian* (1902) and Frederick Jackson Turner's *Frontier Thesis* (1893). DeMille, for example, did put in motion a research agenda that would have provided Paramount with considerable insights about Canadian political and social institutions, yet, in the end, his cinematic story of the Riel Rebellion was more novel than historical. These films about the Mounties seemed to be, for the most part, nothing more than light diversions from the usual Western genre fare. And the reason of course was that they saw Canada through the "red, white, and blue" looking glass. Although Canada shared a border with the United States, Americans had little inclination to move beyond the domestic realm of self-interest, a point that will be elaborated upon more fully during the concluding pages of this article. The "true story" claims that went along with the aforementioned films were stretched so thinly that it raises the question of how much the producers and directors knew about Canadian history and what type of research material had been used to develop the stories.

The question "how much?" is a key factor in understanding the manner in which the Mounted Police producers and directors framed their images of Canada

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historically. In the 1930s and `40s, Hollywood seemed to have developed a romance or infatuation with Canada's mounted gendarmes. The genealogy of the cinematic Mountie can be traced, via literary antecedents, to Hollywood's production of 575 films set in Canada between 1907 and 1956, most of which portrayed Canada in a stereotypical fashion.<sup>1</sup> In these films, Canada was basically about moose, Mounties, snow and muskeg. Their questionable interpretations of Canada's frontier past had certainly resulted from some rather paltry research, which subsequently culminated in some fairly exaggerated historical fiction. It is clear from archival evidence that DeMille and his fellow "dream merchants" were products of a smothering socialisation process, a conditioning experience that saw them succumb to the "popular chatter" of the times. They were, in short, being moulded by a political and social culture in mid-twentieth century America that could best be described as insular and parochial. Such "self absorption" has remained a constant throughout American society during the last century, and it had a dramatic impact on how film audiences saw Canada.

Compared to DeMille's research efforts, the historical investigations conducted by Joseph Newman (*Pony Soldier*) and Raoul Walsh (*Saskatchewan*), for example, were rather weak. Their seemingly minor research endeavours might have sufficed if the films had been scripted as fictionalized adventures of the Canadian North, as were most of the films within the Mountie sub-genre. But when DeMille and the others used the true story claim, then there was, perhaps, a duty to be truthful. As communications theorist Geoffrey Cowan has argued, although some dramatisation might be expected in films with an historical theme, the essence of the characters, the dialogue, and the story should remain faithful to the truth. The strength of the "true story" claim in these films would depend upon the nature of the historical research being rendered for these cinematic stories.

Much has been written about DeMille's cinematic showmanship, but few studies have touched on his how his film epics made use of or ignored historical research. In the case of *Northwest Mounted Police*, his research efforts were considerable, but so they were for all of his films. *The Register of Cecil B. DeMille Archives*, compiled by James D' Arc at Brigham Young University, shows the degree to which DeMille conducted research. What he bequeathed for cinematic posterity is truly outstanding. Some will probably suggest that his personal papers, etc. were the legacy of a tremendous ego, but all personal criticisms aside, his historical research and preparation of background information for his films were remarkable. *Northwest*

*Mounted Police* might have not benefited from all of his historical preparation, but the paper trail that DeMille left for the film suggests that had the research data been used with an historian's eye, the end result would have been a solid historical picture of the Canadian West. Of course, much of that research was left on the production meeting tables, and it left DeMille open to the wrath of critics such as Pierre Berton, who made the disparaging observation about the historical mettle of DeMille's film suggesting it was "The gospel according to DeMille."<sup>2</sup> Berton had little to say that was complimentary about DeMille's work on *Northwest Mounted Police*, but DeMille had made a concerted effort to compile useful historical information – gospel or no gospel. The other producers that followed would not be so zealous about the search for historical knowledge about the Canadian West.

Some observers of DeMille's work have suggested that his historical forté was the pictorial epic, that he was good at working the big historical picture with lots of colour and pageantry. It is a valid analysis of DeMille's craft. Sheila Petty has remarked that DeMille's understanding of historical accuracy was limited to material things, that he was, in other words, a "material historian."<sup>3</sup> Petty's observations are on the mark as far as his film goes, but DeMille did not make *Northwest Mounted Police* in a historical vacuum in the manner of Walsh and Rosenberg's questionable *Saskatchewan* saga. DeMille made sure that he had access to historical information on Western Canadian geography, Native and Métis peoples, and the Mounted Police, as well as government related historical documents regarding Métis land claims. Much of that information, of course, should have provided him with the means to be able to delve more deeply into the political and social history of the period. With the range of data that he had collected, such a story option was certainly possible. But when DeMille thought of box office, he seemed to settle on the surest road to securing the film's popularity – a good old-fashioned adventure story. The success of *Union Pacific* (1939) the year before probably would have convinced DeMille that the fictive elements of the story would prevail over historical accuracy.

There had been rumours in Hollywood in the late '30s that DeMille was planning to make a film with a Canadian theme. Former Canadian Prime Minister Arthur Meighen had even volunteered resource people to DeMille if the Hollywood director followed through on his Canadian film idea. What type of historical information did DeMille and his associates have in mind for this pending film story about Canada? The film's theme still had not congealed in the early months of 1939. DeMille wanted to do an adventure story that combined history with some sort of

epical connection. His box-office success with the Western genre over the previous years, beginning with *The Plainsman* in 1936, appeared to be the most plausible thematic option, but nothing had been set in stone when he began the preliminary research for the film. The responsibility for searching out historical background material for the film was given to Frank Calvin, who spent the spring and early summer of 1939 in Regina and Southern Saskatchewan. DeMille's research secretary spent countless hours tracking down information that provided the historical backdrop for the film. That much of it was not communicated to film audiences via the story deprived filmgoers of some rather rich facts about Western Canada and the Métis people. Of course, audiences did not need to know every historical nuance, and all the details were not crucial to the film's story after DeMille had decided to play with the more fictive elements associated with the Western. However, DeMille had collected enough documentation that, had he decided to use it, the film would have substantially met Robert Rosenstone's criteria (engaging the film story within the ongoing issues and arguments associated with the period being represented) for a historical film rather than just a costume drama.<sup>4</sup>

What would DeMille have known about the Canadian West and the Northwest Rebellion from his research? The starting point for DeMille's investigation was recorded in a note of May 18, 1939, listing the items that Calvin needed to investigate about the Mounted Police, including the uniforms of the period, public health nurses, orders for mounting and dismounting, and because of the story ideas, whether any Americans had been decorated by the NWMP. DeMille, in a July 9 Western Union message to Calvin, requested details about such items as the routine for a day in barracks, and whether they did their own laundry.<sup>5</sup> In another request, Calvin provided DeMille with all sorts of data about the Police which included: Electric lights in Regina Barracks in 1905 and Constables always mentioned in reports thus: Reg. No. 3818 Const. J.J. Buckley. (Regimental number) (July 12, 1939 "Research" note).<sup>6</sup> This type of information request reinforces DeMille's preoccupation with material history.

Calvin had alerted DeMille to an uprising called the Northwest Rebellion. After reading Calvin's notes, it became apparent to DeMille that the rebellion had more drama and action than had any other Canadian historical event. Because the rebellion was located in the Canadian West, it also appeared to connect to DeMille's recent cinematic stories about the American frontier. DeMille saw an opportunity to

weave a “cowboy story” into the Mountie narrative. To DeMille, the Mounties would become upscale American cowboys!

Although his Métis film characters would reinforce Berton’s criticisms that they all looked like the Hollywood French-Canadian stereotypes in plaid shirts and toques, DeMille’s requests for background history on the Métis culture should have avoided such representations. On July 12, 1939, DeMille requested in a wire to Calvin: “For 1885 rebellion how did Riel and half breeds get ammunition...We find allusion to the fact that Riel set up a rebel government (sic) of what was the government composed and how did it function.”<sup>7</sup> Calvin also had recorded what Native tribes had supported the rebellion. In an August 3 communiqué, Calvin outlined Indians who did and did not rebel during the uprising. In the same telegram, DeMille’s own sense of history and film imagery would get the best of him and the “gospel according to DeMille” took over: “We are condensing event and costumes which will probably enable us to use the Stetson hat even though we are laying the scene in the Riel Rebellion but we will undoubtedly show some of the pillbox hats so we will want accurate data on both.”<sup>8</sup>

Geography was also on DeMille’s list of “musts.” On July 12, Associate Director Bill Pine wired Calvin noting that “Also maps and terrain of that particular country most important.”<sup>9</sup> Pine also requested specifics about the topography wanting to know “whether hills mountains flat plains or what (stop) This most important for decision on location.”<sup>10</sup> The issue of terrain for the picture was so important that Pine requested that Calvin go to the scene of the Duck Lake ambush to get pictures of the terrain (undated wire). Calvin was also rather meticulous in his attention to fine geographical details noting in an inter-office Paramount memo dated September 11 that “In the LeMay-Lasky script I do not think that the police served in the McKenzie river district in 1885 (Scene B-7)...the Peace River is some 4 or 500 miles, at least, from either Regina or Fort Carlton, and they could not very well have ridden there to pick out a ranch site. The Saskatchewan River would be more logical”<sup>11</sup> (this type of detail wouldn’t have bothered Walsh and Rosenberg in *Saskatchewan*). All of this legwork was being carried out by Calvin who appeared to be rather undaunted by the rigors placed on him noting in a July 18 telegram to Pine: “Will start sending photographs (sic) museum in next couple of days (stop) Been delayed illness...Colonel Irvine wants copying there prevent possible loss Made arrangements spend day with small detachment to get routine Wind still blowing and grasshoppers getting bigger.”<sup>12</sup>

DeMille also had access to magazine articles and Canadian Métis society documents on the rebellion. Magazine literature included feature stories from *The Canadian Magazine* spanning almost twenty years, beginning with a March 1916 story by H. W. Hewitt entitled “Batoche: A Forgotten Capital.”<sup>13</sup> These articles would have provided DeMille with interesting food for thought concerning the rebellion – certainly enough historical perspectives on the uprising that would have enabled him to present a quite accurate picture of the conflict. Yet DeMille stayed clear of using such valuable historical information in his story, relying more on historical fiction and cultural stereotypes than fact. DeMille’s cultural shallowness showed in his depiction of Natives and Métis. The Métis, in particular, are horribly characterized as the Canadian equivalent of twisted “outlaw” desperados from the traditional Western. Their rich cultural history deserved better, and they should never have been portrayed as plaid-shirted lumberjacks on the Canadian plains.

DeMille’s fictive elements in his film story were, at times, grounded in reliable historical information. Gary Cooper’s role as a Texas Ranger seeking a fugitive in Canada required some sort of historical validation. DeMille had contacted the State of Texas Department of Public Safety requesting information on the arrest of a fugitive from the state of Texas in the Dominion of Canada. DeMille received a response from the Director at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas dated July 18, 1939, stating “In reply to your letter of June 26, in regard to the arresting of a fugitive...you are advised, that if the culprit was in custody, the Texas Ranger would present a warrant and extradition papers to the Canadian agency having custody of the prisoner.”<sup>14</sup> The response that DeMille probably appreciated most, given the direction of the film’s eventual story, was “If the culprit is not in custody, the Texas Ranger would solicit the aid and assistance of a member of the Northwest Mounted Police...to aid him in the search of this wanted person.”<sup>15</sup>

*Northwest Mounted Police* was, of course, about the Mounted Police and much of the historical material collected had to do with DeMille’s preoccupation with the material and visual history associated with the Force. Calvin’s shoes must have needed new soles given the historical legwork involved. In a July 13 message, Calvin outlined a number of areas that he had investigated which included the preliminary steps involved in joining the Force, recruit training at the Regina Depot, arrangement of mess tables, bed types, and retirement ages for enlisted members. This data collection reinforced a research pattern of DeMille. While he had been provided with literature on Western Canadian history and the political ramifications of the rebellion,

he seemed to have given the most attention to the visual aspects the story. This was soon reflected in the film's story where the attention to barrack camaraderie, bugle calls, and the mounting and dismounting instructions given the constables prior to leaving Fort Carlton became visual centrepieces for the film. In a January 13, 1940, wire to Colonel Irvine, Calvin requested, "Could you please send airmail a copy of the notes of the regimental bugle call of the Mounted Police."<sup>16</sup> All of this was fairly typical of DeMille's attention to material history. The Mounted Police might have been hesitant to open their mail or telegrams at the Regina Depot knowing that DeMille had written to get more information about the Force.

At a story conference on July 20, 1939, DeMille's sense of film history was defined in his own words: "You want to come away from this picture and say, 'We saw a body of men the like of which the world hasn't enough of.' And in that you get your scenery – where these men go – their spirit and power. You can't believe these damn stories you read...I want to get inside the barracks and see how they eat and how they behave...this picture has got to be the spirit of the Northwest Mounted Police."<sup>17</sup> Although it was material history at its best, it also suggested clearly what attracted Hollywood producers and directors to the Mounted Police sub-genre – a romanticised image of men in scarlet. The story meetings for *Northwest Mounted Police* were testimony to how imagination and American socialisation got in the way of Canadian history and the Mounted Police.

The story for *Northwest Mounted Police* was shaped during a series of production and story meetings from May to August 1939. During this time, DeMille and his associates would put together the fictive and factual elements that would form the basis for the story. It is clear from the minutes of the meetings that DeMille's excellent research would fall prey to a more imagined picture of the Mounted Police and the Canadian West. That fiction over took history as the basis for the story could be traced to a somewhat generalized understanding of the Mounted Police and the Canadian West. DeMille's production team appeared to have an armchair historian's view of Canada – long on opinions, but lacking a keen analytical eye.

Much of DeMille's research for the film is not in view during the story meetings. Most of the discussion focuses on the development of the story's plot. Except for the periodic references to the Mounted Police, the location for the film could have been set in any frontier environment. At a June 20 story conference, DeMille associate Frank Lasky mentions "We begin with the Rangers pursuing a very

tough Texas bandit, a man like Sam Bass, a man who successfully held up several banks.”<sup>18</sup> Much of the subsequent discussion played with the notion of a Texas Ranger pursuing a bandit to the far off Canadian Yukon. DeMille appeared frustrated at the direction of the film’s story noting toward the end of the meeting that “Your story hasn’t much to do with the Mounted Police. You certainly couldn’t call it ‘The Royal Northwest Mounted Police’...When you come to the first part, you have got to put your imaginations on the stuff...Something different – the Hudson Bay posts, Mounted Police posts, the Eskimos, trapping camps, the reindeer drive, the story I read the other day about a man being killed by a walrus.”<sup>19</sup> To DeMille, such ideas had story potential, but he was apparently frustrated that the plot for the film had failed to materialise, at least not to his tastes. Ironically, these images of Canada would haunt not only DeMille’s notion of Canada; they would become part of Hollywood’s stereotyped promotional representations of Canada for other Mountie films as well.

The use of researched information during the story meetings reinforces the image of the armchair historian’s view of events. In attempting to focus on a plot for the film, DeMille and his associates bandied about a number of ideas, all of which pointed to rather fragmented bits of historical information. Calvin noted at a June 16 meeting that “I read in the 1929 Report of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that there was a branch of the Doukhobors called the ‘Sons of Freedom’ who also advocated naked prayer meetings. They burned a number of schools.”<sup>20</sup> He later added: “An instance where men were shot by the Mounted Police was when a dope peddler was called upon to halt and didn’t halt.” The drug-related story didn’t last the month, but it prompted DeMille to note: “One thing about it is that it gives you a vicious, oriental group of people [perhaps DeMille had seen one too many Charlie Chan movies]...a smuggler is a very distasteful character.”<sup>21</sup> Very little headway, it seemed, was being made towards an historical picture of the Canadian West, but the ideas would have made for great film noir!

The June 27 luncheon meeting continued to reinforce a commitment to the Mountie-Texas Ranger scenario for the film. Central to the film’s story was the romance triangle between Cooper, Preston Foster, and Madeleine Carroll. DeMille wanted to make sure that his film characters had some historical credibility. He asked Calvin if anything had been done to clarify the nurse role in the story. Calvin responded, noting: “Just a little bit, Mr. DeMille. We have written for it. Today I found out from a nurse who to write to, a nurse who had been in the public health

service in Canada, who told me they worked very closely with the police.”<sup>22</sup> The research methods employed by Calvin, while they made for effective investigative journalism, suggested a somewhat casual approach to historical research. Calvin referring to his nurse contact, added: “She said undoubtedly some one had written his memoirs, and that, if I would write to this woman in Canada, whose name she gave me (Miss Elizabeth Smelley, Ottawa, Canada), she would tell me some book we could get.”<sup>23</sup>

At a July 11 meeting, DeMille and his production team heard from a Mr. Thackerary who had been a member of the Force from 1932 to 1936. He fielded a variety of questions from DeMille’s associates ranging from “What happens if you get tied up with a skirt (woman)?” to “Why did the Commissioner ask you if you played a musical instrument?”<sup>24</sup> His answers had little bearing on what would eventually show up in the film except for one general observation about the Force and Canadians in general. It would say a great deal about the political culture of Canadians and would come to represent much about the symbolic nature of this and other Mountie films. Thackerary observed: “The Canadian people have been taught to respect...the Mounted. You don’t break your word, and you don’t bully and browbeat people. And when you make an arrest, you don’t shout at your man...You are a servant of the people.”<sup>25</sup>

During the story meeting on June 12, an interesting exchange about Canadian history occurred. It again reinforced an armchair notion of history. The discussion centred on a number of historical issues ranging from the animosity of the Mounted Police towards American peace officers and background information about Louis Riel. The responses suggested a somewhat piecemeal and scattergun understanding of Canada’s history. DeMille’s production associates, it seemed, had a tendency to change anecdotal information into historical fact. Bill Pine mentioned “I know a specific incident. Sanders told me they were after a thief in America, and they spotted him in a certain town in Montana. They called the Marshall on the telephone, and the Marshall wanted \$5,000.00 to hold him.”<sup>26</sup> Jane MacPherson, referring to the Manitoba Uprising responded: “They wouldn’t be getting any guns from the Fenians, would they, the 365 who came over to work against the government because it was English – the bad part about that is that in the First Rebellion Riel took the side of the government and shooed the Fenians off. That was the reason he was a member of the legislature.”<sup>27</sup> Such discussions suggested that Pine, Lasky, MacPherson, and DeMille had read a number of historical sources, but it appeared that they had

gathered more of a surface knowledge rather than a full understanding of Canada's history. It is surprising given the number of well-respected universities in the Los Angeles area that DeMille would not have made use of their research facilities in history and politics for his film. Academics and historical experts, it appeared, were not part of DeMille's research culture.

If one production-related meeting represented the "Gospel according to DeMille and his associates" it was the *Rose Marie* projection meeting of July 17. After discussing a number of scenes from *Rose Marie* including the Totem Pole dance and the trapper atmosphere of the film, the discussion turned to the Riel Rebellion. Lasky mentions that "I think one of our troubles is that we haven't thought enough of what the Rebellion was about."<sup>28</sup> The ensuing discussion points out not only a rather general comprehension of Canadian history, but also a thinking process rooted in the American experience. Lasky makes an observation that is at odds with the historical account of the Riel Rebellion. He notes: "Here is a land that has been the free hunting ground of trappers and Indians, and it's soon to become a farming world, and the change was a change of blood and struggle and made possible only by the Mounted Police."<sup>29</sup> In actual fact, the Mounted Police had played a very small role in the rebellion. LeMay responded stating "That's right. I believe that is authentic."<sup>30</sup> Pine adds that the same principle is at work here as in *The Plainsman*, that the region must be made safe for the settlers. Lasky, referring to the American range experience, adds: "Yes, it is the struggle of the 'Fence Men' the men who fenced the range of Texas. It is the same thing."<sup>31</sup> LeMay makes a stronger connection to the Canadian setting when he adds "There's one historical 'must' hitch there: that is that Riel's people were worried about their lands; they had farms too."<sup>32</sup> Further discussion centred on whether the re-surveying of the lands proved to be the major cause of the rebellion, prompting Pine to observe "Yes that was what it was." He further added with somewhat less historical and cultural insight: "I asked a fellow in Canada what distinction – what, if anything, there was distinctive about a half-breed. He said, 'He wants a blue-serge suit and a fedora hat. Then he is satisfied; life is beautiful.' I think some of them have gotten to high places in Canada."<sup>33</sup> Bill Pine's name appeared as Associate Producer on the film credits for *Northwest Mounted Police*. Thank heavens it wasn't as an official film historian!

The story conferences also clearly indicated that while the story was about the Mounted Police and Canada, the story itself had to be directed at American audiences. The historical research that Frank Calvin had diligently pursued for the

film could not eliminate the American perspective of the story. During the afternoon story meeting on July 17, Bill Pine mentions “There are no ‘musts’ on the writers: there’s only one thing that DeMille has asked – is to keep the Ranger in there. Basically, it is a swell idea when you first hear it, the Ranger and the Mountie.”<sup>34</sup> DeMille’s perspective on the story was clear. He added: “That is what sold so quickly. It is different; it has a human side instead of being just a Mountie story, which we would like not to have.”<sup>35</sup> DeMille’s observation here is crucial from an historical perspective, for while the picture focuses on Canada and the Mounties, from a commercial point of view it had to play to American sentiments. DeMille noted that “From the standpoint of box-office and dramatic values, having a group of Texans sitting around discussing the Mounted Police, and brushing flies off their ears, and trying to spear a piece of cow dung with their tobacco juice, and the fellow finally gets it with a toothpick – if he will set out that story with the same freedom that he will sit down and write a story on his own.”<sup>36</sup> DeMille had conjured up a wonderful image of the rural, laid-back Texas demeanor; the Canadian character, however, would never fully emerge in the film. From DeMille’s perspective it was clear that *Northwest Mounted Police* was going to be just as popular in Houston as in Halifax.

By the latter part of July 1939, DeMille had the Riel premise for the film firmly in hand, and Calvin had provided much of the background material for the film. What DeMille and his production team did with that research would go a long way in determining the historical credibility of the story. Much of that historical information was discarded for story purposes. Comments at the story meetings in late July continued to imply that this screenplay would not measure up to Rosenstone’s historical standards. Mounties were still being referred to as Troopers in the screenplay, and DeMille noted at a July 20 meeting that “The Mounted Police and the Canadians say that the Riel Rebellion is the only dramatic thing that has happened in Canada since 1812. And they are just about right – with the exception of the arresting of some cattle thieves or something like that,”<sup>37</sup> an obvious reference to the Cypress Hills Massacre (in 1873 American wolfers, ranging north into the Cypress Hills region of Southern Saskatchewan in search of stolen horses, killed 36 Assiniboine natives). Although a considerable amount of advance research had been done for the film story, DeMille’s armchair notions of history would serve as an omen that this film would serve up some rather questionable historical representations of Canada’s past.

Probably one of the most telling story meetings for the film occurred on July 17, 1939. It would leave no doubt the DeMille and his associates were in the entertainment business and were not historical chroniclers. The conference meeting focused on the plot development for the story and little, if any, historical information entered the discussions. DeMille had made it clear to his colleagues that he wanted to develop a human element that would connect with the audiences. LeMay commented that “You also have a Romeo and Juliet enmity”<sup>38</sup> (It would be hard to believe this discussion focused on a film about Canada's national police force). This was probably a reference to the yet fully developed relationship between Robert Preston and Paulette Goddard in the film. While there are references to the rebellion during the discussions, it is clear that this film would be as much a love story as a history lesson. DeMille tries to put the screen story in perspective, noting that LeMay's reference to Shakespeare is where the story is heading:

That is all the story we have so far. There is going to be a rebellion, and we have seen a Texan come up and say 'I am after a man for gun running and killing a man.' We have seen a girl in love with a Sergeant. She says, 'I love you,' and he says, 'I am sorry, I can't marry you.' We have a trooper in love with a half-breed, and I don't know whether he [Brett] wants them to be married or not...along comes the American, and he casts an eye on Carol, and they still say, 'there is going to be a rebellion.'<sup>39</sup>

What they really had developing at the meeting was the makings of a good afternoon soap. It also underscores what made these films so questionable historically: the balance between historical fiction and historical fact. Geoffrey Cowan had stated earlier that film audiences might expect some historical latitude within a story, but when the story, as in the case of *Northwest Mounted Police*, becomes a highly fictionalized version of history, it raises the question over historical credibility and the use of the “true story” claim. It would be difficult for DeMille to establish a historical mood or climate for the film. Stephen Jay Gould argues that “We cannot hope for even a vaguely accurate portrayal of the nub of history in film as long as movies must obey the literary conventions of ordinary plotting.”<sup>40</sup> It is this fact that makes *Northwest Mounted Police* and the other films such questionable renderings of historical events about Canada. The fictive elements that emerged in these films about the Canadian frontier distanced the truth dramatically from recorded history. When the tales took on all the familiar plottage from the American Western, the “true story” claim was even further diminished.

It is probably safe to say that the romantic image of the Mounted Policeman in his red serge was one of the major reasons why these Mountie films were made. David Weiss has noted that Americans held the Red Jacket of the Mounties in the same high regard as the U.S. Marine dress uniform.<sup>41</sup> In *Northwest Mounted Police*, there was enough “Red” in view to perhaps make a film on the Russian Revolution. But as historical records show, in the case of the Northwest Rebellion, the NWMP had a less than stellar role in the Rebellion’s outcome. The Canadian Militia would put down the rebellion with most mounted policeman secure in their barracks. Dick Harrison in his introduction to Rudy Wiebe’s *Riding West from Duck Lake* puts the Duck Lake skirmish in perspective: “In the Northwest Rebellion of 1885, the NWMP played only a limited and undistinguished part. They encountered the Métis in force only once, at Duck Lake, when Superintendent Leif Crozier led about a hundred police and civilian volunteers in an attempt to recover supplies commandeered by the Métis. They were routed by a larger force under Riel and Gabriel Dumont, and subsequent judgment held that Crozier should have waited for the force of NWMP under Commissioner Irvine to join him at Fort Carleton. After Crozier’s defeat, the entire garrison withdrew to Prince Albert where they spent the rest of the war waiting to be called into action by General Middleton.”<sup>42</sup>

DeMille, of course, would have had this type of historical information, but romantic images of the force won out over fact in the film. Most Canadians probably didn’t mind either. The red serged Mounted Police lined up in formation at Fort Carleton must have created a swirl of nationalistic pride in Canadian audiences – and perhaps, even with American audiences too!

The historical and cultural distortions in all of these films point to a historical and political parochialism that made it difficult for the filmmakers to move beyond the realm of red, white, and blue. In the case of *Northwest Mounted Police* the domestic trailer (transcript dated July 31, 1940) narration, while trying to capture the romanticised image of the red serge, succumbed to American notions of the frontier:

...the story of a people’s heroism – and of men and women who struggled to create a great Dominion. As in the violent youth of the United States, so in Canada’s growth, it was natural that her people should be at cross purposes...to bring order out of chaos – to create unity out of diversity – there was only a little band of gallant men in scarlet coats – the North West Mounted Police.<sup>43</sup>

DeMille's "unity out of diversity" almost sounds prophetic in terms of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Canadian political history. But its relevance is lost in the comparison to the violence of the American frontier experience. DeMille, it seemed, could never quite complete the full story. He was forever an "armchair historian," always a few pages, or a few chapters, or a few reels short of the complete truth.

A final irony associated with *Northwest Mounted Police* is that this was a film where the filmmakers went to great lengths to conduct historical research and visit the geographical region where the rebellion took place. DeMille had collected enough historical information that he could have probably made a sequel to *Northwest Mounted Police*. Yet the final product looked more like a stage play than a story that unfolds in the great outdoors. The new technology of Technicolor could not hide the artificiality of the film's backdrops, which in most cases were painted canvas. The shooting and location schedules for the film were living proof of the contrived geography made to look like the wooded areas of Saskatchewan. So many of the location shots for *Northwest Mounted Police* took place in a Paramount arena that perhaps DeMille should have made a film about hockey or lacrosse.

*Northwest Mounted Police's* cinematic cousins were *Pony Soldier*, *The Canadians* (1961), and *Saskatchewan*. They depicted Western Canada in the late 1870s and the policing of the region by a small detachment of red-coated officers. While the colour of the tunics in these post-*Northwest Mounted Police* films were scarlet, little else seemed to resonate historically with the period. The films, of course, all claimed that they were based on true historical events, but research has suggested that they were more historical composites of the period and of the Mounted Police. Historical accuracy in these films also succumbed to some rather highly fictionalised accounts of the Canadian West.

Could DeMille's film be classified as reliable history? The film studio tried to get audiences to buy the claim that the story was based on true events, but no one specific event in the films is documented as such, except *Northwest Mounted Police*, which was supposedly about the Northwest Rebellion. That claim, however, soon loses credibility because of the historical and cultural distortions in the film. Daniel Francis observes that "DeMille prided himself on his historical authenticity," adding that in spite of this claim, "he got everything about the rebellion wrong."<sup>44</sup> Francis notes:

He misrepresented the Métis scandalously, and portrayed the police in their familiar fictional role as saviors of the Canadian West. The picture, said the *Motion Picture Herald*, dramatized the rebellion, which was put down by fifty North West Mounted Police in a manner celebrated by Canadians in song and story. So much for General Frederick Middleton's five thousand militiamen. So much also for Louis Riel, who was portrayed as a weak-willed figurehead, controlled by sinister "halfbreeds" who wanted a free hand to sell whiskey to the Indians.<sup>45</sup>

The irony, of course, is that DeMille did such a remarkable job of collecting research for the film. That he ultimately ignored a great deal of it (the sense is that too much historical detail would have overwhelmed American film audiences), speaks to the power of the American socialisation experience. Cecil B. DeMille has, on many occasions, been described as the Barnum of Hollywood films, "the hokum merchant par excellence." He was all of that, but he did have an interest in historical research. It is unfortunate that in the case of *Northwest Mounted Police*, he decided to use so little of it.

As Mark E. Neeley cautions: "Films didn't bother with historical advisors fifty years ago."<sup>46</sup> A number of Mountie filmmakers, it has been noted, relied on the expertise of ex-Mountie and Hollywood advisor Bruce Carruthers, but it didn't seem to matter. These films, in the end, attempted to mythologize the Mounted Police. Audiences and critics should have expected as much. Steeped in the myths surrounding the American West, the film creators of the Mounties played out these stories on familiar historical ground – their own. It was a process that resulted, in part, from a society that was so self-reliant that it needed little in the way of outside cultural or political stimulation. This fact would be mirrored in the popular culture of the day. Some observers (such as Andrew Cohen and Doug Saunders) have argued that such notions remained a part of American life throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>47</sup>

The stories associated with the Mounties served Canadians by providing them with a way to interpret their history and a sense of pride in the way that their history was played out in a peaceful and lawful manner. Michael Valpy (2001) notes that Canadians have tended to see the Mounties as an extension of themselves.<sup>48</sup> Such pride or nationalistic glow should have shielded Canadians from Hollywood's overpowering historical exaggerations. Contemporary critics such as William Cobban and Bill Cameron (1998) have implied that Canadians might have been embarrassed by Hollywood's depiction of Canada and the Force<sup>49</sup> but it is clear that the Regina

public and perhaps Canadians in general were excited and supportive of Hollywood's efforts to portray this period of Canadian history in the manner that they did. Such outbursts by the Canadian public seemed to be in marked contrast to Margaret Atwood's observation that Canadians prefer their heroes to be losers. Dick Harrison, commenting on the popularity of the Western genre, noted "They [Canadian readers] obviously love the heroes in American Westerns,"<sup>50</sup> a sure reference to films about the Mounties too. Harrison further suggests that conclusions such as Atwood's might be typical of many Canadian nationalists, adding "Misleading as this conclusion is, it usually passes unchallenged...because there is no indigenous popular culture to breed specifically Canadian heroes. Thus an accident of history has become a national character trait."<sup>51</sup> The history might have been faulty in these Mountie films, and the plots might have been borrowed from an "American Western," but DeMille's film, it seemed, had garnered the approval of Canadian audiences and had released a burst of patriotic zeal. Canadian audiences might not have suffered from bouts of "manifest destiny," but perhaps *Northwest Mounted Police*, from a Canadian perspective, helped remind Americans that things were slightly different above the medicine line.

The American socialisation process was self-absorbed and parochial. As Seymour Lipset has suggested in much of his writing, American uniqueness centred on its ideology of "The American Creed." It affected nearly all aspects of American life and symbolised notions of liberty and egalitarianism. Louis Hartz had defined such congealed thinking as "Americanism." By the mid-twentieth century its ideological power had created an inward-looking America where citizens and politicians alike would find it difficult to comprehend that other cultures did not see things from an American perspective. Bruce Daniels observes that few people praise or appraise themselves as much as Americans do: "To put the matter simply, Americans seem obsessed with their country."<sup>52</sup> Hollywood producers fared no better. They conducted research on the Mounties, and sent researchers to Western Canada but in the end saw Canada as an extension of their own historical experience. Their major audience would be those same Americans, and the filmmakers weren't, it seems, inclined to provide their public, or themselves for that matter, with an accurate picture of Canada.

Implied throughout this discussion of Hollywood's portrayal of the Mounted Police is the notion of "political culture." Comparative studies of the two North American democracies have pointed out clear ideological and cultural differences, the major one being the revolutionary (United States) and counter-revolutionary (Canada)

attitudes that have predominated the conditioning process of the two countries. While Australian and British people, for example, might attach a broad cultural sweep to the two countries, in some cases referring to the region as just “America,” the cultural differences are profound. Canada, growing up in the shadow of the United States appears, at times, to suffer from a cultural inferiority complex. The fear, of course, is of being swallowed up by American political and social values. Canadians, according to Bruce Daniels, have, at various times, viewed their southern neighbour with “admiration and contempt, envy and disdain, trust and fear, as the United States grew from a bumptious republic to the most powerful nation in history.”<sup>53</sup> The perpetual re-creation of the “spirit of manifest destiny” in American society is a product of the nation’s socialisation experience. In the case of Hollywood, of course, it has tended to “manifest” itself in films about other countries. The film title *The Ugly American* (1963) might have suggested that “three words are stronger than a thousand pictures,” the implication being that Americans, at times, are completely unenlightened as to what is happening outside their cultural domain, so much so that they fail to recognize the distinctiveness of other countries. It has certainly affected how other countries have reacted to the powerful pull of American culture.

Even geography cannot escape the philosophical debate over what constitutes the Canadian identity. Many Canadians and Americans have argued that the two countries are more attuned to “continentalism,” that Canada and the United States share common geographical landscapes that unite rather than separate the two countries. Canadians in Halifax have more in common with Bostonians than they do with residents of Vancouver. This of course has given rise to arguments that some Canadian institutions were created to ward off American expansionism and regional separation. The grain of North America runs north and south. The rivers, mountains, even economic interdependency in the form of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) move north and south. It is not difficult to understand, therefore, that Americans, such as those involved in Hollywood filmmaking, would think in pan-North American terms. Canadians reacted to this continental philosophy by creating an East-West identity in the form of national institutions. To unite Canadians, the government built a railway, and to protect and promote culture, government bureaucrats created the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. To make sure that Canadians would live long enough to use them, the Canadian government implemented a national health program. All of these measures were directly, or indirectly, unifying Canadian institutions that helped distinguish Canada from her southern neighbour. The United States might be a country of the mind, moulded out

of Lockean and Jeffersonian ideals, but Canada, it seems, has survived out of pragmatism. The image of the Mounted Police, at least in terms of popular culture, has drifted between those two ideological perspectives.

Dick Harrison argues that Canada is an anti-revolutionary nation that has evolved from an act of British Parliament in the “interests of peace order and good government, and its characteristic vision of order, as embodied in the Mounted Police story, is hierarchical rather than democratic...The Mountie represents the faith in an established, unseen order which characterizes the settlement of the Canadian West.”<sup>54</sup> Hollywood, however, hijacked the Mountie character, and created a different cultural and historical persona. Although the history of the Mounted Police in the Canadian West has provided “endless raw material... which would reaffirm the ‘primary cultural values’ of a nation devoted to principles of peace, order and good government, rather than to such revolutionary ideals as freedom and equality,”<sup>55</sup> American manipulators of popular culture saw the Canadian West much differently.

Doug Saunders described Hollywood during the 1920s as becoming the manager of the international world of entertainment, and the image of the Mountie was providing imaginative fuel for American writers and producers.<sup>56</sup> Harrison argues that despite the authenticity of the Canadian Mounted Police, “it was the American image that won out in the 1930s.”<sup>57</sup> The advent of talking pictures in the late twenties made going to the theatre a popular form of entertainment, and in the thirties, Westerns such as *The Plainsman* and *Stagecoach* would prove popular among the viewing public. After 1935, Hollywood would provide Canadians with glimpses of their national icon in *Rose Marie*, and *Northwest Mounted Police*. Harrison provides a rather insightful observation about how Canadian audiences viewed their own cultural hero, a perception that suggests that Canadians are perhaps as much to blame for acceptance of this cowboy image of the Mountie, although this notion might not sit well with Canadian nationalists. Harrison observes:

The fate of the Mounted Police story is interesting as a chapter in the history of the entertainment industry and as a reflection of Canada’s celebrated tendency to export raw materials and import finished products. But it also suggests something about Canadian attitudes towards the West. Unlike the American People, Canadians have not accepted their own West as a country of their imaginative escape. They prefer the more remote and impersonal choice of the American West as the scene of their escapist entertainment...Canadians have not accepted their West as the fabulous or mythic land of their

imaginations. For more than a century Americans have envisioned the West as that area of the country in which their national ideals would be realized...The Canadian people might have developed a “foundation ritual” out of the settling of the West, but they did not, and that choice is as basic to their culture as the difference between a revolution and an act of British Parliament.<sup>58</sup>

The Mounted Police mirrored this cultural identity, and it would become the fatal flaw in these Mountie movies that Hollywood failed to distinguish between the two political cultures. William Beahen and Stan Horrall (1998) suggested that the Mounted Police were agents of a Canadian political philosophy, “The National Policy,” which entailed performing state services normally provided by other agencies in a more mature society.<sup>59</sup> The manner in which the NWMP expedited the peaceful and orderly settlement of the Canadian frontier caused historian R. C. Macleod to dub Force members “Agents of the National Policy.”<sup>60</sup> The Mounted Police were a living testament to Canadian political and social values, but on the screen they had become “redcoats in blue.”

For all of his research on *Northwest Mounted Police*, DeMille was unable to portray the Saskatchewan region of Western Canada accurately. The major reason, of course, was that it failed to conform to the traditional stereotypes and landscapes associated with the American frontier. Canadian historian Michael Dawson observes that “most Mountie movies were U.S productions and occasionally American content would pervade the storylines,”<sup>61</sup> *Northwest Mounted Police*, of course, being one of these misrepresentations. The film, according to Dawson, was a classic example of an “American rewriting of history.”<sup>62</sup>

No less an authority on the Western genre than Phillip French in his book *Westerns* notes: “Take any subject and drop it down west of the Mississippi, south of the 49<sup>th</sup> Parallel and north of the Rio Grande between 1840 and World War 1, throw in the mandatory quantity of violent incidents, and you have not only a viable commercial product but a new and disarmingly fresh perspective on it.”<sup>63</sup> As French perhaps implies, images of the Mountie sub-genre could not clear Canadian Customs! In the end, *Northwest Mounted Police* served up mythical homilies about Mounted Police exploits on a Canadian frontier that was inherently American. Hollywood seemed to understand the myth – what it didn’t understand was the history.

Story meetings and publicity campaigns for *Northwest Mounted Police* and other Mountie films pointed to a generally shallow knowledge about Canadian

history, a condition that was the result of a society that had limited exposure to the outside world. It was a self-inflicted type of cultural isolation in a country that seemed self-contained and materially satisfied. This review of the cinematic images of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has recognised that the questionable application of historical research and weak cultural insights about Canada in these films was not intentional but rather the result of a suffocating cultural process that prohibited these filmmakers from venturing outside their own historical cocoon.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Christopher Gittings, "Imaging Canada: the Singing Mountie and Other Commodifications of Nation," *Canadian Journal of Communication* (Online) 23.4 (1998).

<sup>2</sup> Pierre Berton, *Hollywood's Canada: The Americanization of Our National Image* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), 146.

<sup>3</sup> Sheila Petty, "(Re) Positioning the Unstable Frame: Early Cinematic Visions of the Canadian Prairies," *Plain Truth* (Saskatoon: Houghton-Boston, 1998). *Plain Truth* surveys the work of studio photographers and filmmakers who shaped the image of Western Canada between 1858 and 1950.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past: Challenge of Film to Our Idea of History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 79.

<sup>5</sup> Cecil B. DeMille, July 9, 1939 Western Union Wire to Frank Calvin, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B552/F3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>6</sup> Frank Calvin July 12, 1939 "Research" note from Calvin to DeMille detailing material items about the Mounted Police, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B552/F3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>7</sup> Cecil B. DeMille, Mackay Radio Radiogram dated July 12 to Calvin requesting information about the Rebellion, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B552/F3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>8</sup> Frank Calvin, August 3, 1939 note from Calvin to DeMille providing information about Indians who participated in the Rebellion – and DeMille reply, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B553/F1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>9</sup> Bill Pine, July 12, 1939 Canadian Pacific Telegram from Pine to Calvin requesting information on terrain in Saskatchewan, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B552/F1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>11</sup> Frank Calvin, September 11, 1939 Paramount inter-office communication note to DeMille noting a faulty geographical reference in the LeMay-Lasky script, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B552/F3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>12</sup> Frank Calvin, July 18, 1939 Canadian Pacific Telegram to Pine indicating that he had been ill and that he will be sending pictures in next couple of days, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B552/F1, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>13</sup> Frank Calvin, July 21, 1939 note to DeMille commenting on histories written about the Canadian West, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B552/F3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>14</sup> H. Garrison, July 18, 1939 Letter to DeMille from the Director at Camp Mabry Texas regarding the method of arresting fugitives from the State of Texas in Canada, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B552/F3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Frank Calvin, January 13, 1940 Western Union Night Letter to Colonel Irvine from DeMille requesting information about bugle calls, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B552/F3, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>17</sup> Cecil B. DeMille, July 20, 1939 Story Conference—DeMille comments about the inspirational character of the Force, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>18</sup> Frank Lasky, June 20, 1939 Story Conference reference to Sam Bass and DeMille's concerns about story ideas, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Frank Calvin, June 16, 1939 Story Meeting where Calvin comments about Doukobor history, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Frank Calvin, June 27, 1939 Story Meeting where Calvin notes he has obtained information about Canadian nurses, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Cecil B. DeMille, Notes from July 11, 1939 Projection Room meeting conference reviewing Mr. Thackeray's Slides and Film, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>26</sup> Bill Pine, June 12, 1939 Story meeting where Pine comment about a thief episode in Montana initiates a rather generalized discussion about Canadian history, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Frank Lasky, July 17 “Rose Marie” Projection Room Meeting where Lasky comments rather insightfully that they haven’t thought enough what the Rebellion is about, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Bill Pine, July 17, 1939 Afternoon Story Conference where Pine and DeMille both emphasize the importance of the Texas Ranger connection to the picture, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Cecil B. DeMille, July 20, 1939 Story Meeting where DeMille suggests that the Riel Rebellion is one of the few dramatic events in Canadian history, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>38</sup> Cecil B. DeMille, July 17, 1939 Story Meeting where DeMille comments on Lasky's Romeo and Juliet enmity in the film, *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B554/F14, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, BYU, Provo, Utah.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Stephen Jay Gould, “Jurassic Park,” *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies*, ed. M. Carnes (New York: Henry Holt and Company), 35.

<sup>41</sup> David Weiss, Promotional column material for SASKATCHEWAN (attachment to January 11, 1954 memo from P. Gerard to Universal publicity staff), B436/12908, Universal Collection, USC Cinema-Television Library, Los Angeles, California.

<sup>42</sup> Dick Harrison, ed., *Best Mounted Police Stories* (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1996), 72.

<sup>43</sup> Domestic Trailer – *Northwest Mounted Police* (July 31, 1940), *Northwest Mounted Police* Files, B562/F8, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Provo, Utah.

<sup>44</sup> Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), 79.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Mark E. Neely, "The Young Lincoln (Two Films)," *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies*, ed. Mark Carnes, (New York: Henry Holt and Company 1995), 127.

<sup>47</sup> Andrew Cohen, "The Nation that Makes the World Go Round," *The Globe and Mail*, 14 October 2000, A12-13; and Doug Saunders, "All the World's a Screen," *The Globe and Mail*, 17 October 2000, A14-15.

<sup>48</sup> Michael Valpy, "Myths of Canada: Mounties Always Get their Man," *The Globe and Mail*, 15 August 2001, A9.

<sup>49</sup> William Cobban & Bill Cameron, *Mountie: Canada's Mightiest Myth* (Montreal: National Film Board of Canada Documentary Transcript, 1998).

<sup>50</sup> Harrison, *Best Mounted Police Stories*, 15.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>52</sup> Bruce Daniels, "Everybody loves Abraham, Martin, John – and Paul and Meryl: International views of American Culture," *American Studies International* (Online) 30.2 (1992). Available from: EBSCOhost file: Academic Search FullTEXT Elite, Item: AN9609190005.

<sup>53</sup> Bruce Daniels, "Younger British siblings: Canada and Australia grow up in the shadow of the United States," *American Studies International* (Online) 36.3 (1998). Available from: EBSCOhost file: Academic Search FullTEXT Elite, Item: AN1316631.

<sup>54</sup> Harrison, *Best Mounted Police Stories*, 5.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>56</sup> Saunders, "All the World's a Screen," A14-15.

<sup>57</sup> Harrison, *Best Mounted Police Stories*, 15.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>59</sup> William Beahen & Stan Horrall, *Red Coats on the Prairies: The North-West Mounted Police 1886-1900* (Regina: Centax Books/Print West Publishing, 1998), 14.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>61</sup> Michael Dawson, *The Mountie from Dime Novel to Disney* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1998), 59.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>63</sup> Philip French, *Westerns* (New York: The Viking Press, 1973), 24.

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