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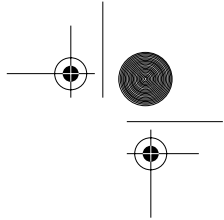
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Glasgow's Progress: The Films of Glasgow Corporation 1938–1978¹

• Elizabeth Lebas

Our other films have either been on glossier aspects of Scotland or on industrial achievements. Here we come to grips with a whole field of social activity.

Forsyth Hardy (1965)²

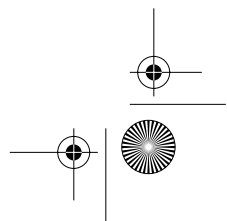
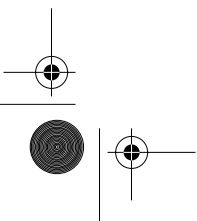
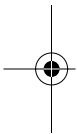
It was thus that Forsyth Hardy, then Director of the Films of Scotland Committee (FSC) conceded the difficulties of co-sponsorship with Glasgow Corporation to another Committee member, the cinema owner and film distributor Ronald Singleton. The occasion was the making of *Health of a City* (1965). The Corporation had approached Films of Scotland to make a film to celebrate the centenary of its Public Health Department under the guidance of Dr. Horne, its medical Officer of health. Horne's insistence on showing Glasgow's slums and harking back to the Corporation's earlier achievements by using Thomas Annan's photographs of wynds and closes,³ and demanding new shots of Loch Katrine, the source of the city's water supply, had been found depressing and outdated by the FSC and its associates, who included the eminent documentary film maker John Grierson.⁴ FSC members apparently had neglected to consider the Corporation's own well established visual language. This was the language of a distinct social democratic political institution whose remit lay beyond showing what were now declining 'industrial achievements', and which as far as the 'glossier aspects of Scotland' were concerned could define Loch Katrine as its own sublime and symbolic hinterland.⁵

As related in an earlier essay,⁶ Octavia Hill's encounter with Thomas Annan's photographs marked a turning point in the representation of social reform – from that of emotional written

appeal to that of realist visual document.

In his insistence on using some of the same photographs by Annan, Horne implicitly laid claim not only to the Corporation's reputation as innovator of social reform, but also to its part in originating this kind of modern visual sensibility. The film *Health of a City* had been three years in the making and Horne had had to struggle with the ageing members of the Scottish documentary film movement associated with the SFC to ensure,⁷ although perhaps not consciously, that the determining purpose of the Corporation's long engagement with photography and film would be maintained. This included not only recording the discarded aspects of the city's past before their disappearance, but also reporting the Corporation's achievements. The films sponsored by the Corporation inscribed its role as guardian of the city's memories, both negative and positive.

The present essay covers the Corporation's film sponsorship activities between 1938 and 1978: from the last film made for the Necessitous Children Holiday Camp Fund, *Give the Kids a Break* (1938), to the last sponsored footage, *Glasgow's Progress*, a film record of the Corporation's urban renewal programme made between 1968 and 1978. Although the Corporation ceased to exist in 1975, when it was amalgamated into Strathclyde Regional Council, the company recording *Glasgow's Progress*, Ogam Films, continued to receive funds from a pre-amalgamation budget, and went on filming until the money ran out. Films of Scotland, the executive arm of its precursor, the Scottish Film Council, founded in the 1930s with officers of the Corporation, co-sponsored





• The Films of Glasgow Corporation, 1938–1978



• Caption

the Corporation's last four films before it was dissolved in 1982.⁸

In an essay on the first period of the Corporation's film sponsorship between 1922 and 1938,⁹ I proposed that these municipally sponsored films were more than merely 'instructional', given that they existed within the context of a socio-political project laid down after the Great War which attempted to create a new civic and urban identity – a new way of living in the modern world, which is a world where local government plays a crucial part. Here I account for the Corporation's later films in terms of the evolution they appear to chart of this modernising socio-political project; how as political instruments their imagery of the city and their implied audiences responded to shifts of power both within and without the Corporation, while the purposes they served and the message they conveyed were neither as simple nor as

obvious as their departmental or individual sponsors in the Corporation claimed them to be.

In this century-long project of visual documentation which Glasgow Corporation promoted, the city's visual identity changed from one at first photographically defined by its reformers, to one cinematographically defined by its workers and citizens after the Great War; then, after the Second World War, to one objectified by urban professionals; and finally, once the industrial power of the city had collapsed and its institutional powers had been curtailed, to the city as consisting of residential places and moments. This last representation was symptomatic of a new kind of politics. Unlike the encroaching populist intimacy of documentary television, established documentary film conventions of the representation of Glasgow as the beating heart of industrial Scotland, as the city of worker-citizens, could hardly address it.



• Caption

The last films the Corporation sponsored, almost all in conjunction with Films of Scotland, demonstrate tensions in style, in representations of the city, and in purpose and mode of address, which all point to the end of the project.¹⁰

If in the first phase of film sponsorship there was coincidence between real and imagined audiences and the representation of the city, it was because the films, as political 'local topicals', represented a reality consisting of their own audiences. As previously noted, the actual audiences of the sponsored films consisted mostly of women and children, and in them Glaswegians saw themselves as others saw them – fellow citizens, workers, and pupils.¹¹ After 1938, however, the influence of the Scottish documentary film movement began to make itself felt in terms of its ambitions to create a 'Scottish cinema', to be shown to the rest of the world, and a shift in mode of address can be

detected from that of engagement, to model and statement – from 'this is what we are doing' to 'this is how it should be done', and during the post-war period of reconstruction, 'this is what will be done'. When the influence of the documentary film movement began to decline, as the SFC engaged in co-sponsorship with the Corporation, the purpose of film sponsorship seemed less obvious and the films' mode of address correspondingly less clear, while the identity of the city as a whole and the films' intended real and imagined audiences become less certain.

The films sponsored by the Corporation inevitably invoke wider contexts of imperialism, war, reconstruction, Scottish nationalism, renewed conservatism and finally, local government decline. However, a full consideration of these contexts is beyond the scope of this essay, whose first purpose is to



- The Films of Glasgow Corporation, 1938–1978



- Caption

make these films better known and to assert their significance as visual documents of twentieth-century social democratic politics.¹²

This essay begins with an introduction to films sponsored mostly by the Corporation's Public Health Department in the late 1930s and relates their making to the involvement of some Corporation members with the founding of the Scottish Film Council and Scottish non-fiction cinema. Examples of these late 1930s Corporation films are compared to films made by Bermondsey Borough Council¹³ in an attempt to trace a perceived shift in terms and modes of address in municipal cinema influenced by the ability of Scottish film documentarists to enlarge the institutional framework and scope of the audience of the films commissioned. At the same time, the Education Department sponsored simple classroom films whose purpose seem to

have mainly been to assert the Department's reputation for innovative teaching methods.

Films of the immediate post-war period and later are then considered in terms of political changes both within and without the Corporation related to post-war planning and reconstruction. After the Second World War the Corporation found itself at odds with national planning policies and set out its own agenda for public housing and reconstruction. A series of films using Glasgow as a means of teaching civics to school children touches upon changes in the representation of the films' social and urban models and relates them to the 'adult' films of reconstruction. The symbolism of the child in the Corporation's representation of city reform is also considered. The final section of this essay on the last films sponsored by the Corporation in conjunction with Films of Scotland examines the



tensions in urban imagery and subject matter symptomatic of the beginnings of the decline of a societal project of reform.

Classroom and Empire

The Second World War interrupted the Corporation's film sponsorship activities for virtually a decade, although two films were released in 1940: *The City's Farms* and *Vital Statistics*. These belonged to a series of seven silent films all made in 1938 for the Public Health Department by Campbell Harper Films, established in Edinburgh around 1935 and one of three Scottish film production companies operating before the war. The other two were Scottish Film Productions Ltd. founded in Glasgow in 1928 and Elder-Dalrymple Films, established in 1933 in Ayrshire. In the late 1930s the Public Health Department began to employ Campbell Harper Films and the Education Department employed Elder-Dalrymple Films to make a number of very short classroom films.¹⁴ After the war, Scottish Films Productions Ltd., which in the late 1930s had made a number of films for Films of Scotland and a short film for the Corporation's Education Department,¹⁵ became Thames and Clyde. For over twenty years these Scottish or part-Scottish companies were the only film producers commissioned by the Corporation.¹⁶

What motivated the Public Health Department to commission so many films and the Corporation to finance them?¹⁷ Corporation minutes offer some clues. The Clinical Sub-Committee heard in April 1936 an application from the Glasgow School of Art to produce a film to 'illustrate the work of a school clinic and at a children's hospital' and turned this down, while another item in the same Minutes announced 'that a cinematograph film be made of the various branches of the Health Department'.¹⁸ The Public Health Department had a duty of care towards public and patients and it was not going to be outdone.¹⁹ This may not have been the only proposal to be received from local amateur filmmakers who may have looked to the Corporation as a potential sponsor, and a

Scottish Amateur Film Festival held in January 1936 attests to a very active amateur filmmaking culture.²⁰

The Clinical Sub-Committee requested the Medical Officer (MOH) to submit a report which he did in October 1936. This proposed making a film on the work of the Public Health Department and suggested hiring a firm of photographers to make the film at an agreed rate per foot, then buying a portable projector to show it. The committee's response to his proposal was lukewarm and it asked the MOH to submit a further report and provide 'experimental photos of the work of certain branches of his department'.²¹ By June 1937 the MOH had persuaded the committee to authorise the making of a film illustrative of his department's activities not exceeding 800 feet. This decision anticipated the announcement of a national health publicity campaign by the Department of Health for Scotland in the following September, to be organised in conjunction with education departments and to include the distribution of free pamphlets and posters. The next Clinical Sub-Committee Minutes referring to film making appeared more than a year later in September 1938, and showed that the Committee had radically changed its mind, with members of the Health Committee invited to view 'films which have been made illustrative of the work of the Department'.²²

The films were already being projected during the summer, as Corporation Minutes mention that a request for the loan of one of the film, *Country Homes* (on children's convalescent homes), had been received from the Invalid Children's Aid Association and from the National Council for Maternity and Child Welfare. One other reference to the films occurs in Corporation minutes, in June 1938, reporting that they were being periodically exhibited at the Empire Exhibition currently being held in Glasgow.²³ We might wonder how the MOH's first modest proposal for an 800 feet film to be shown with a portable projector was transformed into seven professionally made films shown at the Empire Exhibition, although how precisely these were financed is unknown.



- The Films of Glasgow Corporation, 1938–1978



- Caption

However, these films could be compared with the earlier amateur ‘instructional’ municipal films made for by Bermondsey Borough Council and the later films in ‘documentary style’ it made for the Education Department in the late 1940’s.²⁴ Although the topics of the Campbell Harper films are similar to those of the Bermondsey films (the provisions of health, child care and safe milk), and show similar step-by-step visual demonstrations of labour processes and procedures for access to the benefits of a modern everyday life, there are also significant differences between them. These suggest a transition from an instructional to a documentary mode of address, premised on the acquisition of a new kind of audience for a different political agenda.

For example, Bermondsey’s *Maternity and Child Health* (1927) and Campbell Harper’s *Bathing the Baby* (1938) both feature the technique of bathing a newborn, apparently in real time.²⁵ Both are idealised instructions for a delicate and elaborate work process. However, the first film is set in the dark kitchen of an actual working-class home and the mother bathes her baby as her toddler looks on, while the second film, professionally lit and edited, is set in a comfortable nursery where a uniformed nurse, using an astonishing array of baby equipment, attends to the child. The first film finishes with the mother putting her baby to her breast, while the second closes as the baby is returned to its cot, followed by an intertitle: ‘All is made clean and tidy for the next time’.

Another example is Campbell Harper’s two-reeler, *Stobhill Hospital: The Story of a Modern Hospital* (1938). Possibly inspired by the scene of the visit to the mother in an ultra-modern hospital ward featured in the NCHCF film, *Tam Trauchle’s Troubles* (1934), this is a detailed survey of the specialist and support activities necessary to the running of a 200 bed hospital and a nursing home for small children. Unlike Bermondsey’s film on the treatment of tuberculosis, *Consumption* (1932), it spares the viewer the sight of bodies in the terminal stages of illness. Whereas both films couple modern medicine with citizenship, in *Consumption* the message is one of responsibility for the care of the self. A young man realises he has soiled his handkerchief with blood and goes to see his GP – in this case the actual doctor he would have seen; Dr. Salter, a Bermondsey Alderman and MP for Southwark. After charting the journey of the young man’s treatment and recuperation, the film ends with him returning home to his wife, careful not to infect her as he charmingly resists her advances. In *Stobhill Hospital*, however, the focus is on the efficiency of modern medical provision and professional care, closing with the scene of a satisfied patient in a hospital ward and the declamatory intertitle ‘It is the result of such diligent labour that makes it possible for a patient to win back gradually his former good health and resume his place as a happy and useful citizen’. While *Consumption* offers both participants and audience a mirror of their own recognisable selves *Stobhill Hospital* virtually imposes a model of health care on a recipient whose identity is defined by receptivity and usefulness.

Only in *Child Welfare*, a step by step journey from the first visit to the maternity clinic to the mother’s relinquishing of her child to the care of a nursery, is there any intimation of the child poverty so much in evidence in the NCHCF films. Before the little boy joins his fellow inmates in the nursery available only ‘for mothers who have to leave their homes to work’, he is first stripped, scrubbed and given clean nursery clothes. Like *Some Activities of Bermondsey Borough Council* (1932), *Vital Statistics* is a film about the many



responsibilities of a port municipality. It emphasizes the 'hidden' and abstract work of municipal bureaucracy: testing, recording, sorting, compiling, and thus signals themes that Corporation films would project after the war, of administrative efficiency and, implicitly, the promise which education offered to accede to such local authority white collar jobs.

The difference between Campbell Harper's films and Bermondsey Council's 'in house' productions is more than one of professionalism.²⁶ Campbell Harper films were influenced by the context of imperial exhibition, the models they project acting as modernised messages of imperial control which seem to be returned to the actual original audience. Their mode of address and implicitly, their audiences have changed: in their typified settings, their death-defying modernity and their focus on professionalism, they reach out beyond the reality of the lives of a local working-class towards an imagined mass, and thus implicitly classless, audience beyond Glasgow, beyond Scotland itself.²⁷

That these films are likely to have been made specifically for the Empire Exhibition of 1938 needs to be considered in terms of a particular conjuncture of attempts to establish a Scottish documentary cinema. In a talk given for the BBC in March 1938, publicising the existence of the Scottish Film Council (SFC) and the films to be shown under its sponsorship at the Empire Exhibition, John Grierson advocated 'proper Scottish pictures under proper Scottish auspices'.²⁸ He reminded his audience that the celebrated *Night mail* (1934) was produced and directed by Scots – and that 'we took good care that it ended in Glasgow'.²⁹ Complaining that big industries and towns had been rather slow to join the SFC's scheme, he nonetheless also praised a very active group in the SFC 'who are doing far and away the best work in Britain to develop the use of film in education'.³⁰ Grierson not only turns Glasgow into a cipher for Scotland but also alludes to supporters of the SFC in one of the big towns, mostly likely the Corporation itself. Not only had Grierson been involved with *Give the Kids a Break*, the last film made for the NCHCF,

but in his supervisory role in producing SFC sponsored films specifically for the Exhibition, he had also been involved in the making of *The Children's Story*, a film about educational activities in Glasgow and Edinburgh schools.

It is likely that Grierson was referring to, among others, a particular group associated with the Corporation. Sir Charles Cleland, Convenor of the Corporation's Education Authority between 1919 and 1928, instigator of the NCHCF films and a key figure in the Institute of Adult Education's conference held in 1929, which led to the creation of the British Institute (BFI) in 1934, was also to become its Chair between 1936 and 1938.³¹ R. M. Allardyce, Chair of the Education Department is credited with being the 'driving force' behind the creation of the Scottish Film Council, as it was he who called a public meeting in the Glasgow Education Offices in June 1934 chaired by Sir Robert S. Rait, Principal of Glasgow University, which led to its establishment.³² Among its founding members was James Welsh, a member of the Cinematographers' Exhibitors Association who became Provost of Glasgow between 1943 and 1945. As soon as it was established, the BFI set up a Scottish Branch in Glasgow and in 1939 made a £400.00 grant to the SFC.³³ In the absence of any other evidence, it would seem that it was the combined power of the Public Health Department and reputation and influence of Cleland, Allardyce, Rait and Welsh on the SFC which prevailed upon the Corporation to finance the seven films made by Campbell Harper.

The prestige of the Education Department allowed it to sponsor instructional films which could have been purchased or borrowed from the several commercial educational film distributors then currently operating. Between 1934 and 1938 it sponsored some 25 films from Elder-Dalrymple Films. What became known as the *Carrick Classroom Series* consisted, with one exception, of very short black and white silent films averaging about 120 feet on topics as diverse as *Horse and Harness*, *Netting Salmon*, *Puppies*, *Launching a Ship*, *Pigs*, *Modern Bakery*, and the like – topics of town and country which were shown in Glasgow classrooms on school



- The Films of Glasgow Corporation, 1938–1978

projectors as part of the Education Department's drive to establish visual education. Corporation Minutes show no evidence of their sponsorship or financing. The arrangement with Elder-Dalrymple Films seems to have been quite informal, as the last film it sponsored from the company in the late 1930s is the 375 foot *Cape to Cairo. Wildlife Nature Scenes* (1936–38), a compilation of shots taken by a member of the film company during his travels in Africa. The Corporation did not employ the company again, except for a film on the re-housing of families living in tenements flats, *Mungo's Medals* (1961) made during the height of its public housing drive.³⁴

After the formation of the Scottish Film Council, the Scottish Education Film Association (SEFA) which included active members from the Education Department, joined forces with the educational branch of the Council and by 1938 was setting up teachers study groups and lobbying for the establishment of a non-commercial educational film library. The Central Scottish Film Library was duly established in 1939 with a £500 grant from the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust.³⁵ The Central Scottish Film Library was thereafter to be the Education Department's main supplier of short instructional films and the Department appears to have ceased either borrowing from commercial distributors or commissioning films from commercial film companies. The *Carrick Classroom Film Series* may have been commissioned by the Corporation to demonstrate what kind of educational films it considered suitable in a classroom situation. In the 1950s, the Education Department undertook to promote actively its Schools Museum Service and, with the Glasgow SEFA Production Group, sponsored a number of educational films made by the artist Louise Annand who was also Museums Education Officer.

These short films of between four and fourteen minutes focused on museum exhibits and events (*At the Museum*, 1953) and (*Annual Art Competition*, 1955) demonstrations of the museums' 'behind the scene' work (*Model Indians*, 1955, and *Preparing a Wax Resin Re-Lining*, 1956, B/W), along with demonstrations of

the use of old weapons, including *Arms and Armour* (1955), a prize-winner at the Scottish Amateur Film Festival. Although it is clear that there was much interest in cinema and filmmaking amongst Corporation officers and teachers, Annand seems to have been the only Corporation employee to have been directly involved with film making – other than the staff of Albert Secondary School in Springburn, who in 1951 made a thirteen silent minute film on domestic science entitled *Housewives of Tomorrow*.

The commissioning of films from Campbell Harper and Elder Dalrymple can be interpreted as an inter-departmental strategy, not only to 'educate', but also to consolidate the Corporation's prestige as a modern Scottish cultural force in its own right, whose influence could be projected far beyond Scotland. If the work of the Public Health Department was deemed suitable for projection to the Empire, the Education Department's more limited sponsorship and audience guaranteed authority in national and Scottish educational circles.³⁶ After the war the Education Department's film sponsorship was to entail a much more ambitious project which would this time relate to another Corporation department on the ascendant, the Housing Department.

City and Citizenship

It was not until the late 1940s that the Corporation renewed its film sponsorship activities, with a total of 18 films between 1946 and 1949. The Education Department sponsored 12 films as part of its civics scheme for Junior schools along with two other films associated with the Children (Scotland) Act, 1947. The Welfare Department sponsored one film,³⁷ while the Housing Department sponsored two and the Planning Committee one. All the films, except for *Play Centres* and *Youth Centres* (1949) sponsored by the Education Department and *Glasgow Today and Tomorrow* (1949) sponsored by the Planning Committee, were made by either Campbell Harper Films or Thames and Clyde.³⁸ Other than the films themselves, some production stills and



• Caption

the school text accompanying the *Civic Series* films, little direct written evidence has yet been found to explain this renewed cinematographic interest, although the return to civilian life, a new Labour government and a raft of new social and planning legislation were obvious motivations.³⁹ Apart from funding films produced for schools in the 1950s and one film made in 1961 on re-housing, the Corporation did not sponsor another film again until *Health of a City* (1965).

The discussion below focuses on films sponsored by the Education and Housing Departments and the Planning Committee. Like other films of national reconstruction, these promote consent to large-scale urban re-building and planning as part of a comprehensive redefinition of civil society after the war.⁴⁰ Since 1933, Labour had dominated Corporation politics, but between 1946 and 1949 gains by

the Progressives were such that, in 1949, they had overall control – although Labour regained control in 1952.⁴¹ Whether a relationship existed between political dominance and phases of Corporation film sponsorship would require a close examination of the political composition of its various committees, although during the fifty-odd years the Corporation sponsored films it was overwhelmingly Labour controlled. However, the Corporation's post-war films, whether for children or adults, made a covert appeal for consent to central government Labour policies in general and to the Corporation as a Labour local authority in particular. This might suggest that film sponsorship was the prerogative of Labour supporters within the Corporation and that in this period it served more openly as a political strategy.

The political situation was made more complicated by the Corporation's resistance to



- The Films of Glasgow Corporation, 1938–1978

central government proposals for decantation of some of the population into New Towns and overspill developments which threatened both its traditional political support and its revenues. While a new Planning Committee was set up under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 to execute Glasgow's post-war re-building along Abercrombie lines, Robert Bruce, the City Engineer, had his own grand vision of Glasgow's future, encapsulated in the Bruce Plan, and the films separately sponsored by the Housing Department and the Planning Committee suggest that at this point internal differences existed within the Corporation as to what direction it should take.⁴² Although the Bruce Plan was eventually dropped, in the 1950s the Corporation re-asserted its own direction by undertaking a massive house building programme, largely made possible by the interwar expansion of its boundaries which gave it control over a considerable reserve of under-built peripheral land.⁴³ By the 1970s, the Corporation was the largest public landlord in Europe.⁴⁴

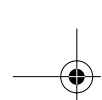
The films of the late 1940s were both documentaries and unusually explicit political documents. Through them the Corporation projected an undisputed authority to define its reconstruction projects and to implement its social policies on its own terms as a Scottish local authority. Made by Scottish film companies, whose members had by then gained considerable experience in the documentary genre, working for Films of Scotland and the Crown Film Unit during the war, these films express a new discourse of class and cultural identity.⁴⁵ Their tone had changed from the pre-war instructional to the war-time propagandistic and so had the idea of their audience.

The pre-war films never denied the class differences of their participants, actually drawn from their audiences, although for instructional purposes the films' essential distinction is that between teachers and learners (children sometimes teaching adults or each other, as in the NCHCF films) – both being equally engaged as citizens worthy of instructing each other and, to a lesser degree in the Public Health Department films, an Empire. The focus is on

personal transformative possibilities offered by the Corporation, within a sense of class belonging. The post-war films on the other hand emphasize receptivity to changes which lie outside the direct control of the films' main participants. In the two films which open and close the 'Civic Series', the films' participants are explicitly acting their parts as members of a lower middle class family, or more precisely, of a family of indeterminate class projected as the 'audience' for the Corporation's plans and at the same time assumed to be the 'audience' of the films themselves. This comfortable representation of family life may have meant to reassure the young post-war scholars of civics, but it could not have reflected the socio-economic situation of most Glaswegians at that time. The teachers are now almost exclusively the urban professionals employed by the Corporation in control of these changes. The father and mother also play the part of teachers, but of teachers who defer to the Corporation and its professionals. Except for the films related to the Children's Act of 1947, the Corporation's post-war films are either about the Corporation's re-building policies or about the diverse labour processes related to servicing the city, which has replaced the class defined individual as the object of transformation.

The twelve films of the 'Civic Series' were silent films intended for screening in schools with the teacher talking over the images. A textbook, *Glasgow Our City, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, wall charts and film strips accompanied the films. The films were part of a scheme devised by the Museums Education Officer, with the support of the Civics Committee, in response to a call issued in 1944 from the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland for 'a fresh approach to the problem of civics instructions in schools'.⁴⁶ Their very titles emphasize the message of juvenile civic pride in belonging to the city.

Glasgow our City (1949) and *Our City Today and Tomorrow* (1949) acquaint us with the Macdonald family: Mr Macdonald, his wife Nell and their son John, at home in their cosy sitting room. Produced by different film companies (Campbell Harper and Thames and Clyde) but



both directed by Stanley Russell of Thames and Clyde, the films use the same opening device of John writing a school essay on 'Glasgow our city' while Mrs Macdonald sits quietly knitting. The scene is re-enacted in the text book, except that John does not arrive on the scene until a telling conversation takes place between Mr and Mrs Macdonald following a radio broadcast by the Lord Provost and his chief planner on Glasgow's future developments.

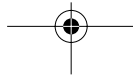
The conversation is an opportunity for the MacDonalds to give their support to the Lord Provost's plans – 'People accept the past because it has happened, but they shrug their shoulders about the future and say the picture painted about it is too good to be true'⁴⁷ – and to defend them pre-emptively against criticism by the likes of Harold Laski and Aldous Huxley. After introducing Corporation plans for outlying 'townships' and some well versed statistics, Mrs Macdonald muses, not inaccurately, on how Glasgow will be in fifty years' time: 'Areas like the Gorbals gone and in their place houses and schools and offices with plenty of elbow room – blocks of flats ten storeys or more high on the Moss Heights pattern'.⁴⁸ The Macdonald parents, who don't appear to be amongst those needing to be re-housed in a township, resolve there and then to make a tour of the city.

The two films are effectively the tour of the past, present and future of Glasgow which the Macdonalds would have taken. As introduction to the Civic Series films, the first reel of *Glasgow Our City*, in which John begins to write his school essay, offers what was to become a formulaic representation, beginning with seventeenth and eighteenth century prints, of the city's views and industries, with suggestions of their closeness to the countryside and the coast. The second reel shows images that act as visual metonyms of the city's parks, transport and services. The ten films of the Civic Series which follow expand on the themes of the second reel. It is not known in what order the films were shown in schools, although two, *Our Police* and *Our Schools*, were made in 1948 and the rest in 1949.⁴⁹ The first is possibly a re-make of an earlier silent film shot by Stanley Russell in the 1930s for the Meteor Film

Producing Society, entitled *Police: 10 Minutes with the City of Glasgow Constabulary* (c. 1938) intended to have particular appeal to schoolboys contemplating a career in the police. The opening intertitle, 'The story of how 2000 men and women of the Glasgow police force guard your person and your property', not only introduces us to the varied work of the force, with the police box as front-line sentinels, but also surveys the various kinds of jobs available in the force (none held by police women).

The significance of ensuring control over circulation and flow is illustrated in *Our Transport Services* and *Our Water Supply* – 'The story of water from Loch Katrine to your tap'. This last film shows the continuity since Annan's album of 1877 of the political imagery of pure water to represent civic power – technology applied to nature – and the changes in its audience and appeal, where the school child has replaced the notable and the tap the memorial fountain. Control is also a theme of *Keeping Our City Clean* but in this film it is expressed in terms of the unending repetitive processes executed by man, horse and machine to manage waste and in the call to every boy and girl to use a litter bin.

Possibly made at the instigation of the Museum Education Officer, *Our Art Galleries and Museums* pre-figures the later films by Louise Annand for the Museums Service, while *How Our City is Governed* shows the local democratic process in action and the first Council session after the 1949 elections. Themes of earlier films are re-visited in *Our Homes*, *Our Public Parks*, and *Our Health Service*. The first two films can be envisaged as a modern child-cantered version of *Glasgow's Housing problem and its Solution* (c.1917–1922) and *Parks Department* (1922), except that *Our Homes* serves as explicit propaganda for the Corporation's housing drive, closing with the intertitle: 'Largely as a result of the Housing Department's activities, Glasgow of tomorrow will be a very different city from Glasgow of to-day'. Produced by Campbell Harper *Our Health Service* largely re-uses images from the Public Health Department films of the 1930s made by the same company.





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The series closes with *Our City Today and Tomorrow*, which begins with John Macdonald finishing his school essay. Again, as in *Glasgow Our City*, there are many shots of the city and its commercial and industrial activities, but its appeal is to a boyish, almost patriotic pride, incited by a montage of newspaper headlines and stirring intertitles, the best being ‘Glasgow people most intelligent in the country!’ Shots of models of the Bruce Plan for Glasgow’s inner and outer ring roads and industrial estates are framed by the sombre rallying cry of the opening and closing intertitles: ‘The future of Glasgow is in your hands’. The film acts as a junior counterpart to the sound film, *Glasgow Today and Tomorrow* (1949), separately sponsored by the Planning Committee and produced by Moviegram Films.⁵⁰ This was made to coincide with an exhibition of the same title held at Kelvin Hall in 1949 to present the Bruce Plan. Although the plan was eventually scrapped, both films present house building and factory building projects as if they were already achieved, while at the same time use aerial views of the city’s housing projects and shots of plans, charts, diagrams and exhibition models (animated in *Glasgow Today and Tomorrow*) to project a futuristic Glasgow. The junior film ends with the boy playing with a Meccano set, the senior film with construction workers on a building site – a scene almost identical to *Glasgow’s Housing Problem and its Solution*.

The two films directed by Stanley Russell for the Housing Department, *Progress Report* (1946) and *Progress Report 2* (1949), act as preface and post-face to the Corporation’s re-building policies. Presented as newsreels (with music by Peter Russell for *Progress Report 2*),⁵¹ the first focuses on the alacrity of the Corporation’s response to the city’s housing shortage with many shots of housing projects in Knightswood, Cranhill, Pollocks and Tollcross, intercut with shots of maps and plans and the interior of the Architect’s Department crowded with busy draughtsmen. In one sequence, two women push prams in an otherwise empty new modern suburb, until a be-suited man appears. In another, overhead, shot, children play on a

completely barren site, and a man cycles past. The bright empty suburban spaces evoke the dark and overcrowded slums of the centre – ‘An area of mean streets and dilapidated tenements and skies continually clouded’ – the very place a family is moving from, to live in a cottage on the new Pollock Estate in *Progress Report 2*. This last film, which features the paradigmatic ‘threshold scene’ of the new tenants entering their new home for the first time (the mother turning the key), not only has many shots of new construction, but also contains the only interior shots of a new council property: ‘the kitchenette has built-in cupboards’, and the bedroom where the pretty mother sits at her mirror is ‘bright enough for even a starlet to do her hair’. The future for Glasgow’s new suburban residents – including its pets⁵² – is promising.

Always innovative in its pedagogical approach, the Education Department conducted experimental health lessons in schools in 1947, during which films on personal hygiene were shown. The report which followed concluded that in terms of visual aids, more appealing films, preferably in colour and graded to suit different ages, were to be preferred. Proposals were put forward for short films for younger children ‘illustrating a child’s day at home and at school from the standpoint of health’ and a film for older children with scenes of prominent footballers and athletes to appeal to boys and tips on health and beauty (‘. . . something along the lines of the Scottish Council for Industrial Design film *A Question of Taste*’), to appeal to girls.⁵³

No films on health education were sponsored by the Education Department, although its Youth Service sponsored in 1949 two short black and white silent films from the Scottish Educational Film Association, *Play Centres* and *Youth Centres*. While these show the range of activities available to children aged over eleven, their address and their intertitles suggest that they were directed as much towards parents to inform them of new services as to the children themselves. The same can be said for the last films sponsored by the Education Department – *Education at your Service* (1954), *Our Three R’s* (1961, in colour)



• Caption

time of *At School in the Cairngorms*, it is young athletes and outdoor men and women that are depicted. This aspect of the reform project having been completed, as it were, thereafter children cease to feature as protagonists in Corporation sponsored films.

Glasgow's Progress: the Last Films

A small white car, a Hillman, comes to a standstill precipitously on the edge of a new fly-over, in the last shot of *Glasgow 1980* (1970), directed by Oscar Marzaroli, photographed by Martin Singleton, edited by Bill Forsyth and scripted by Douglas Eadie. A mid-term report on the Corporation's twenty-year redevelopment plan, the films hums along to the rock and roll music of Ian McHaffe.⁵⁵ It is an updated version of *Glasgow Today and Tomorrow*, crowded with shots of new high-rise flats, maps of new redevelopment areas and aerial views of new constructions and road works, old prints of Glasgow standing in for the past, computer labs at Strathclyde University for the future; and it is also something else.⁵⁶ Its colour, music, fast editing and mood turn towards television advertising rather than the documentary: this is a 'film for the people' the voice-over announces as shoppers, disco dancers and sun worshippers also fill the frame. The city centre is shown encircled by devastation.⁵⁷ In the opening sequence taken from a speeding car, the Townhead area looks like a war zone – the first time any of the Corporation's films had shown extensive demolition projects. The film was so popular when shown at the *Glasgow 1980* exhibition held in the former gas centre in Sauchiehall Street in the spring of 1971, that another print had to be ordered.⁵⁸

The files of the Scottish Screen Archive relate to films made in co-sponsorship between the Corporation and Films of Scotland which include not only *Health of a City* and *Glasgow 1980*, but also *If Only We Had the Space* (1974), *Places or People* (1975) and the unfinished *Glasgow's Progress* (1968–1978), a ten-year project of recording the city's changes brought about redevelopment first suggested to the Corporation

on educational services and *At School in the Cairngorms* (1965, colour) on the activities of the Corporation's Outdoor Centre.

The Corporation's 'reconstruction' films of the 1940s, with their many overhead images of building sites and planning models, portray the city as a whole and abstract territorial entity, as an object to be rehabilitated, while earlier films had concentrated on people, particularly children. Yet in these post-war films the boy in particular continues to play a long-established role as symbol of the city's future (the post-war future is to be male). As Irene Maver has shown, since the early nineteenth century children had served as a measure of Glasgow's well-being in reforming discourses on the city; the city's improvements being formulated in terms of the welfare and education of its children.⁵⁴ In Annan's photographs of wynds and closes, groups of children pose as if for school photographs – a symbol of what they could be, as future school children. By the 1940s, all of Glasgow's children attend school and many have gone to summer camp while fewer are sick or malnourished; in fact most of them should be living in families such as the Macdonalds. By the



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by Forsyth Hardy during the making of *Health of a City*. Another film, *Pollock: A State of Nature* directed by Donald Cruickshank, on Pollock House and Gardens commissioned by the Parks Department, may also have been co-sponsored by Films of Scotland.⁵⁹ The files include correspondence between these authorities and other officials, film makers, film proposals, synopses, treatments, voice-over texts, shot lists, budgets and accounts.⁶⁰

They also show the difficulties of co-sponsorship at a time when the Corporation's interest in commissioning films was declining. Between the wars, Corporation officials had keenly promoted non-commercial cinema and been active in setting up the Scottish Film Council, but altogether the Corporation had been a disappointing patron. The only time it made overtures for co-sponsorship was for *Health of a City* in 1962. Otherwise, Films of Scotland, mostly under the vigorous management of Forsyth Hardy, initiated the film projects, hired the film companies, acted as intermediary between the film companies and the Corporation, networked with government officials and other notables, then had the films shown, distributed them and generally ensured standards of quality – mostly in terms of fending off any association with television.

Films of Scotland films could not be television programmes. Comments by 'J.C.G.' (possibly John Grant an employee of Films of Scotland) addressed to Forsyth Hardy on Derek William's film treatment of the 'MOH Centenary Film' (*Health of a City*), expressed the thought that 'TV style' (ordinary people speaking directly to camera) was acceptable only because 'Anstey used it in the 1930s in *Housing Problems*, so there is a cinema precedent in the grand documentary tradition'.⁶¹ Warding off Grierson's concerns about the film's costs, J.C.G. added, 'What is being produced is no "quickie" television piece of reportage on 16 mm. It will be in the cinema sense a "production" – and should cost accordingly.'⁶² Almost ten years later Ronald Singleton, who had informally replaced Grierson as advisor on the Corporation films and was unenthusiastic about *If Only We Had the Space*,

was to ask even before filming began, 'Is this film to be more ambitious than a TV programme?'⁶³ If the threat from television seemed real enough, Films of Scotland nonetheless offered to the Corporation its partnership in terms of producing quality films which would be a legacy of its achievements. In this sense, the films were no longer means of propaganda or persuasion but were being endorsed, particularly in the case of *Glasgow's Progress*, as future archives.

The idea for *Glasgow 1980* was set out in a paper drafted by Films of Scotland, to 'produce a memorable film on Glasgow in its transition stage' which was sent to the Town Clerk in the hope that he would bring it to the attention of the Lord Provost. The proposal was to make a film record with an annual budget of between £750–£1,000 which would eventually make an 'interim' film 'about a new Glasgow in the making'.⁶⁴ This idea eventually became *Glasgow's Progress*, but the final costs of the 'interim film', *Glasgow 1980*, amounted to over £7,250, 'owing to the enthusiasm of the film unit's members', which Hardy persuaded the Corporation to pay.⁶⁵ A film on area improvements, *Places or People* (1975), was first proposed by the Department of the Environment to Films of Scotland as a film on landscaping work around a number of housing estates.

By the mid 1970s wholesale reconstruction and massive infrastructural projects were no longer politically viable and the Corporation's urban policies were shifting towards housing rehabilitation, area improvements and conservation projects. The last two films sponsored by the Corporation, *If Only We Had the Space*, on home improvement grants, and *Places or People* (1975), on area amenity improvements, both directed by Charles Gormley,⁶⁶ address this shift in policy, and in so doing also demonstrate the changes which had taken place since the Corporation's films of the 1940s in notions of representation of the city and its people. As the Corporation had yet to start any major rehabilitation schemes and had actually none to show, *If Only We Had the Space* has mostly interior shots of tenements before and after rehabilitation, and relies, in 'TV style', on



interviews with actual Glaswegians. In his film treatment, Gormley had been insistent: 'And finally we have ordinary Glaswegians, in their own homes, telling us about the improvements they have had made, being themselves'.⁶⁷

When Mr Gordon, Mrs Gibbons and the couple who don't want to move, have their say on home improvement grants they represent the policy of the Corporation by representing themselves, not as workers or citizens, but primarily as residents, working-class because they qualify for the grants. A sequence in *Places or People* shows a community meeting between residents, social workers, the design consultants and officers from the Corporation's Environmental Improvement Office. Both films have some formal views of Glasgow, but their focus is on recycled tenements and landscapes and their ordinary residents. The slums and big projects have gone, but so it seems has the city and its future. Gormley had imagined *If Only We Had the Space* 'as a chance to make an optimistic film about a few small corners of the city', but Singleton's hand written comments on Gormley's treatment are more telling about the direction in which the representation of the city was heading:

My guess is that the future of Glasgow as a whole etc. etc. should be touched on only *en passant* and the concentration should be on local areas, conservation areas, community, amenity, perhaps on the theme of recreating village Glasgow by preserving and rehabilitating the old tenements in areas where the locals want to remain.⁶⁸

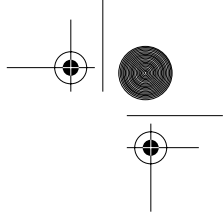
Although the Corporation bought eight copies of *If Only We Had the Space*, there is no evidence of the film having been shown. Barrie Ellis-Jones, who replaced Hardy at Films of Scotland, tried to have *Places or People* shown at the Habitat Conference held in May 1976, but its programme was already full. The BBC was not interested, although Visnews might be and the film was being regularly hired from the Films of Scotland Library. Only the Toll Cross Residents' Association, which had featured in the film, wanted to have a public showing.⁶⁹

The last work on *Glasgow's Progress* took place in 1978 and as such qualifies as the last film

sponsored by the Corporation. Although he had had the idea when *Health of the City* was being made, Forsyth Hardy did not approach the Corporation Planning Department until June 1969 with the proposal of a film record 'of the extraordinary changes at present taking place in the appearance of Glasgow'. An annual budget of £500 over two or three years, he added, could eventually produce for £10,000 a high quality film which would correct some false impressions of the city and tell 'an exiting story reflecting credit on Glasgow'.⁷⁰

By the autumn of 1969 the Corporation had agreed to an annual budget of £1,000 subject to review and Hardy had hired Oscar Marzaroli of Ogam Films as cameraman. In December Mr Gavin, Director of the Planning Department was submitting a list of areas likely to change in the coming year. Hardy was concerned that Marzaroli hadn't filmed the recently demolished Hutchison's Boys Grammar School, although Templar Films was assembling material from the shooting of *Health of a City* which could be incorporated. In February 1970 Marzaroli was shooting material on the Alhambra and Metropole Theatres as well as St. Andrews Hall and the Cardowan Gallery – all 'vulnerable to change'. The first year's shooting was shown at the Cosmo Theatre (owned by George Singleton, long-time member of Films of Scotland and last Honorary President) in June 1970 to staff of the Planning Department. In the making of this film record, the Planning Department managed to have the upper hand over Hardy, as did Hardy over Ogam Films. Hardy's main job was to pass on lists of sites and public functions submitted by the Planning Department to be filmed to Marzaroli and Martin Singleton (Marzaroli's partner in Ogam Films and nephew of Ronald Singleton), and ensure they had no direct contact with the Planning Department. Hardy paid Ogam Films but never discussed a budget with the company.⁷¹

By 1974 Marzaroli felt that he had sufficient footage to make a three-reel film to replace *Glasgow 1980*, which was perfect timing given that regionalisation was on its way.⁷² In fact Films of Scotland feared that regionalisation would put



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an end to the project and wrote to the Planning Department, thanking it for its co-operation in shooting the film record, with the hope that the incoming District Council would continue to support it:

The Committee regards this record as of great value to Glasgow and to Scotland as a whole. That of the rebirth of one of the world's major cities should be systematically captured on film is at once unique and of vital importance. It is the Committee's hope that the incoming District Council will proceed with the filming.⁷³

Despite this flattering appeal, the District Council showed no interest in producing a film, although the Planning Department continued to issue its instructions until November 1977 (these included the Kelvinhaugh and Finneston Ferries, Waverly and Kelvindale to Dawsholm Parkway). In the meantime Marzaroli himself had long been making his own personal photographic records of Glasgow and its people.⁷⁴

The Glasgow record material received only one private showing at the Cosmo Theatre on 22 November 1974, for members of the Planning Department. In November 1982 James Wilson, who was overseeing the winding up of Films of Scotland, wrote to Marzaroli, now very ill, to tell him that he would be in touch with Janet McBain at the Scottish Screen Archive 'about the film cans decorating his office'.⁷⁵ Thus ended the Corporation's history of sponsoring a visual record, which effectively began a century earlier with a similar project undertaken by Thomas Annan to photograph the city's disappearing wynds and closes.

Conclusion

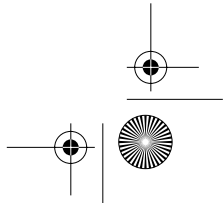
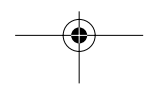
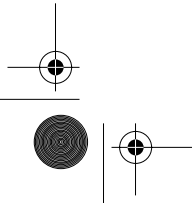
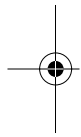
This essay, together with its companion covering the earlier period of the Corporation's film sponsorship, are only a first account. More films and documentation will doubtless be discovered, and other interpretations will be made. Scottish local authorities other than Glasgow, such as Aberdeen, Dundee and particularly Edinburgh, also sponsored films, but Glasgow Corporation was exceptional because of the duration and

extent of its involvement with film sponsorship, and because of its connections with early documentary photography and later with the documentary film movement in Scotland from its beginning to its end. In this respect, these two essays may contribute another facet to the history of documentary cinema in Britain.

However, my focus has been on the role of the sponsored films in the depiction of audiences and the city, which for the Corporation were also its political and social constituencies. I have tried to suggest that film sponsorship served several purposes, of which instruction and persuasion were no more important than an evolving representation of the body politic. As such, these representations whose political value is bound up with the modernity of their medium are useful to review our understanding of the imaginary of social democracy and the part which imagery of the city played in its construction. It is suggested that later tensions in the filmic representation of the city as a whole anticipated the Corporation's own institutional demise. Corporation films not only represented audiences to themselves and the Corporation to its audiences, or represented the Corporation to its own political members, officers and employees, and ultimately to Britain and Empire, but they represented these constituencies' representation of Glasgow as an exercise in political power.

It is difficult not only to judge whether Corporation-sponsored films influenced their audiences, or attitudes within the Corporation itself, or indeed whether this mattered. Once made, even ostensibly as historical records, the films fulfilled whatever purpose was currently attributed to them in the classroom, in the Saturday morning cinema, in the Council Chamber and occasionally in an exhibition or a national or imperial venue – and then disappeared. As the outcome of fairly *ad hoc* decisions, the films sponsored also served as indicators of interdepartmental power, professional ascendancy or policy options now forgotten, despite their surviving impact.

This may explain to some extent why there was so little counter-imagery to the Corporation's presentations of its policies, despite Glasgow's





vigorous Left film culture. Made as a critique of *Progress Report 2*, and in response to Corporation council house sales, *Let Glasgow Flourish* (1952), by the Dawn Cine Group, is the only alternative filmic representation to the Corporation's approach available. After re-organisation in 1975, tenants and youth groups made films and video for television and their own local consumption, but an account of these, or of two promotional films made by the new authority, *Glasgow, the City That Works* (1981) and *Glasgow 1984*, is beyond the remit of this study.⁷⁶

Notes

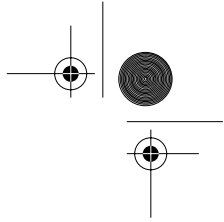
- 1 My warmest thanks go to Janet McBain and her colleagues at Scottish Screen Archive, Sara Stevenson of the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland, Ian Christie, Felicity Edholm and Leonardo Ciacci for their knowledge, support and patience. Thanks also to Middlesex University, without which this study would not have been possible.
- 2 Letter from Forsyth Hardy to Ronald Singleton, 23 August 1965. Scottish Screen Archive (SSA), File 4/11/464.
- 3 After the passing of the Glasgow Improvement Act in 1866. Thomas Annan was commissioned to produce what was published as *Photographs of Streets, Closets, etc. Taken 1868–1871*, consulted at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, PH 1980.0358:001-031. See references to this in my earlier article, Lebas, 'Sadness and Gladness: the films of Glasgow Corporation, 1922–1938', *Film Studies* no. 6, Summer 2005, pp. 27–45.
- 4 Grierson had first been mooted to direct the film but had settled for an advisory role with Robert Riddle Black of Templar Films as director.
- 5 Loch Katrine, associated with Sir Walter Scott's *Lady and the Lake*, was and remains Glasgow's source of pure water, made available by an enlightened political elite at the end of the nineteenth century. The history and course of the water's journey from Loch Katrine to Kelvingrove Park's Memorial Fountain is recorded in a volume of twenty-seven photographs taken by Thomas Annan for the Corporation. See *Glasgow Corporation Waterworks. Photographic Views of Loch Katrine and of Some of the Principal Works Constructed for Introducing the Water of Loch Katrine into the City of Glasgow by Thomas Annan with descriptive notes by James M. Gale, M.Inst.C.E., Engineer to the Commissioners, M'Laren and Erskine, 1877*. National Portrait Gallery of Scotland.
- 6 Lebas, 'Sadness and Gladness', p. 27.
- 7 Original members of the Scottish Film Council, such as Forsyth Hardy and Charles Oakley, were still sitting on the Films of Scotland Committee and John Grierson was still acting as advisor.
- 8 Jo Sherington, *'To Speak its Pride'. The Work of the Films of Scotland Committee, 1938–1982*, Glasgow: Scottish Film Council Publication, 1996. 61 pages. Hardy (1910–1994) was a Director from 1955 to 1974, after which Ellis-Jones took over the role of negotiator between Films of Scotland and the Corporation.
- 9 Lebas, 'Sadness and Gladness'.
- 10 See Tanya Barson, 'Time Present and Time Past', in *Making History. Art and the Documentary in Britain from 1929 to Now*, Tate Publishing, 2006, pp. 9–25.
- 11 Lebas, 'Sadness and Gladness', p. 29.
- 12 This essay draws on a greater diversity of sources than the previous study of the Corporation's film sponsorship. Besides the films themselves and Corporation Minutes, it relies on some primary 'published' evidence – a school text book and the script of a radio programme written by John Grierson, some secondary published sources and files of correspondence between the Corporation, Films of Scotland, film makers and others related to the making of the last four films commissioned by the Corporation. These files would in themselves constitute an independent object of study. Unlike many of the films mentioned in the first essay, which are held in the BFI National Archive [NFTVA], all the films discussed here are held in the Scottish Screen Archives and can be viewed on the Scottish Screen Archive website.
- 13 See Elizabeth Lebas, "'When Every Street Became a Cinema". The Film Work of Bermondsey Borough Council's Public Health Department, 1923–1953', *History Workshop Journal*, no. 39, 1995.
- 14 See David A. Cloy, *Campbell Harper Films Ltd; A Research case study into Scottish Film Production, 1938–1972*. MA Dissertation, University of Glasgow, Film and Television Studies, 1995.
- 15 This film, *Glasgow's Festival of Fellowship*, made in 1937 as part of Glasgow's celebration for coronation year, was an 8 minute *reportage* of an outing of school children to the Ardgoil Estate as part of the Corporation's celebrations of Coronation Year is reminiscent of the NCHCF camps films and features a number of local and Corporation notables.
- 16 The last film produced by Thames and Clyde was *Expressive Movements for Primary School Children* (1959) and *Mungo's Medals* (1960) produced by Elder Film Productions. The latter was on re-housing.
- 17 These include *Pasteurised Milk*, *Bathing Baby*, *Stobhill Hospital: the Story of a Modern Hospital*, *Country Homes* and *Child Welfare* all released in



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- 1938 and *The City's Farms* and *Vital Statistics* released in 1940.
- 18 Public Health Department Clinical Sub-Committee, Items 3 and 4, Glasgow Corporation Minutes, 8 April 1936, p. 1357.
- 19 In my research on municipal cinema in Britain, I have found no evidence of any refusal on the part of the public to be filmed.
- 20 'Full Results of Festival', *Kinematograph Weekly*, January 1936. The future animator Norman McLaren came to the attention of Grierson through his student film-making at Glasgow School of Art in 1933–36.
- 21 Sub-Committee on Clinical Services, 'Proposed Film Work of the Public Health Department' – Report by Special Committee', Glasgow Corporation Minutes, 12 October 1936, pp. 2336–2337.
- 22 Sub-Committee on Clinical Services, 7 Oct. 1938, Item Items 3 and 4, Glasgow Corporation Minutes, 9 September 1938, p. 2629, p. 2835. The films were duly shown on the 19 October in the Magistrates' Room.
- 23 Sub-Committee on Clinical Services, Glasgow Corporation Minutes, 1 June 1938, p. 1979 and 5 August 1938, p. 2354.
- 24 Elizabeth Lebas, "'When Every Street Became a Cinema'. The Film Work of Bermondsey Borough Council's Public Health Department, 1923–1953", *History Workshop Journal*, no. 39, 1995.
- 25 There seems to have been a number of films on the 'scientific management' of baby care and bathing circulating local authorities as part of maternity and child health campaigns. Footage of a film in the London Borough of Hackney Archive in entitled *Day Nursery* and made by Kodak in 1935 features a nurse (and baby) rapidly engaged in the mechanics of bathing. No eye contact passes between nurse and anguished child.
- 26 All of Bermondsey Borough Council's films were made by officers of its Public Health Department. (See Lebas, *op. cit.* 1995.)
- 27 This series of Campbell Harper films recalls the photographs of large-scale models of 'reconstructed Glasgow' which Thomas Annan took at the 1911 exhibition – as a kind of reconstruction of what has been a real thing for another purpose than what this real thing may have implied. See Lebas 2005 *op. cit.*
- 28 The SFC arranged social service programmes at the Empire Exhibition. See *Film Renter* vol. 12, June 1938.
- 29 John Grierson, 'Film Making in Scotland: Men and Matters', Text for BBC Talk, 3 March 1938, 10 pages. Stirling University Grierson Archives G3A:41:1 (version 1).
- 30 Grierson talk, 1938, p. 2.
- 31 Ivan Butler, 'To Encourage the Art of Film'. *The Story of the British Film Institute*. Robert Hale, 1971.
- 32 [Anon] *21 Years of the Scottish Film Council 1934–1955*, Glasgow: [publisher unknown], 32 pp, Mitchell Library G/791.4, p. 7.
- 33 Butler, 1971, *op.cit.* p. 23.
- 34 St. Mungo is Glasgow's patron saint.
- 35 See J. B. Barclay, *The Film in Scottish Schools*, Edinburgh: Private Publication, 1993.
- 36 Classroom films and their showing were not only a successful means of mobilizing teacher participation, but also the subjects of numerous Scottish and British educational reports. For example, Barclay (1993, p. 8) relates that a questionnaire sent in 1937 to Scottish teachers to suggest new films produced 600 completed returns. The result of this enquiry was the *Report by the Advisory Committee of the SFC and SEFA on the General Principles Governing the production of Educational Films with Lists of Subjects for Films*, published by the University of London.
- 37 *Glasgow Takes Care of its Old Folks* (1949), produced by Thames and Clyde and directed by Stanley Russell, was on the Corporation's Old Folks' Homes, Forest Hall, Crookston House and Woodburn Home, and reminiscent of the pre-war series sponsored by the Public Health Department.
- 38 *Play Centres and Youth Centres* (1949), sponsored in response to the Children (Scotland) Act, 1947, appear to have been made by the Scottish Educational Film Association (SEFA) while *Glasgow Today and Tomorrow*, directed by Erica Masters, was made by Moviegram Films.
- 39 The Children (Scotland) Act and the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 were particularly significant as they placed new responsibilities on the Corporation, while the formation of the National Health Service took away others from the Public Health Department.
- 40 The documentary film movement, even before the Second War (for example, in *Housing Problems*, 1935) found questions of housing reform, town planning and reconstructions congenial to its social democratic perspective. See John R. Gold and Stephen Ward, "'We're going to do it right this time": cinematic representations of urban planning and the British New Town', in S. C. Aitken and L. Zonn, eds., *Place, Power, Situation and Spectacle: a geography of Film*, Savage, Rowman and Littlefield, 1994. The only other municipality which seems to have made its own 'reconstruction' film is West Ham, which in 1947 commissioned Stanley Read who later became director of the British Film Institute, to make *Neighbourhood 15*, an upbeat account of how this local authority was coping with extensive war-time devastation.
- 41 See Irene Maver, *Glasgow*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2000, p. 240.
- 42 This was the Bruce Plan, a massive comprehensive re-development of Glasgow along modernist lines prepared by Robert Bruce, the City Engineer, in 1945 which both the Housing and Planning Departments supported. The internal differences may have

- concerned which department was to have authority over re-developments.
- 43 See Irene Maver, *Glasgow*, p. 243.
- 44 For an analysis of the Corporation's post-war housing and planning policies see Miles Glendinning and Stephan Muthesius, *Tower Block. Modern Public Housing in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland*, Yale University Press, 1994.
- 45 For a discussion of Films of Scotland, and some of the 168 documentary films it produced between 1938 and 1982, see Richard Butt, *History, Ethnography and the Nation: the Films of Scotland Documentaries*. PhD Dissertation, Queen Margaret College and The Open University, 1996. The differences between representation of Glasgow in Corporation films and the symbolism of Glasgow in Films of Scotland films and Scottish cinema altogether deserve an analysis which cannot be pursued here.
- 46 Preface, W. G. Beaton, *Glasgow Our City, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*, Corporation of Glasgow Education Department, 1957 (first pub., 1948).
- 47 *Ibid.* p. 201.
- 48 *Ibid.* p. 202.
- 49 The ten other films which make up the 'Civic Series', influenced by war-time MOI films are in fact more propagandistic in their approach. *Our Homes* (1949) for example, emphasizes new construction projects and the Housing Department as the largest housing provider in Scotland. The series includes *Our Schools* (1948), *Our Police* (1948), *Our Water Supply* (1949), *Our Public Parks* (1949), *Our Homes* (1949) produced by Thames and Clyde; also *How Our City is Governed* (1949), *Our Health Service* (1949), *Our Transport Service* (1949), *Keeping our City Clean* (1949), *Our Art Galleries and Museums* (1949), produced by Campbell Harper Films.
- 50 Why the Planning Committee commissioned Moviegram Films is not known.
- 51 There is, according to the Scottish Screen Archive shot list for *Progress Report* (1946), a sound version, but the author has only viewed the silent version.
- 52 An intertitle accompanying a scene of a boy putting his rabbits in their new suburban hutch in *Our Homes* (1949) announces: 'To be healthy and happy, human beings, just like rabbits need lots of space, light and air'.
- 53 H. Stewart Mackintosh. *Report by the Director of Education on Experimental Series of Health Lessons given in Selected Glasgow Schools*, Corporation of Glasgow, 1947, 23 pages.
- 54 Irene Maver, 'Children and the Quest for Purity in the Nineteenth Century Scottish City', *Pedagogica Historica*, vol. 33, no. 3, 1977, pp. 801–824.
- 55 Except for Marzaroli, a distinguished photographer in his own right who died prematurely, those involved with the making of *Glasgow 1980*, and with *If Only We Had the Space* (1974), directed by Charles Gormley, were to become the faces of what became known as the 'New Scottish Cinema' of the late 1970s and 1980s.
- 56 Gavin, Head of the Planning Department, refers to 'an old film prepared by the Corporation some time around 1949' as a suitable model for the film. He also refers to a large stock of 35 mm transparencies owned by the Department and to a series of ten half hour programmes prepared by the educational television in Glasgow entitled 'Tomorrow's Glasgow Within the Last Two Years'. Neither transparencies nor the educational films have been traced. Letter from Mr. Gavin to Forsyth Hardy 1 August 1969, Scottish Screen Archive File 4/11/457.
- 57 The Corporation's urban renewal policies included 29 urban redevelopment areas and altogether the demolition of five of the city's 60 square miles.
- 58 File 'Glasgow 1980' SSA 4/11/457. The film also had a successful week's run at the Cosmo Cinema in Glasgow and was later shown at the Royal Festival Hall in London and at the Town Planning Conference.
- 59 Letter from Forsyth Hardy to Ronald Singleton 14 December 1972. Hardy thanks Singleton for his comments on the 'gardens film', *If Only We Had the Space*, File SSA 4/11/477. The film's production company is unknown.
- 60 It is difficult to know from the SSA files what precisely were the terms of funding, although it is clear that as intermediary between the Corporation and the film companies, the FSC received funds both from the Scottish Development Department and the Corporation in addition to receipts from showing its films as 'B' films in commercial cinemas.
- 61 Comments by J.C.G. (presumably John Grant) on proposals for *Health of a City*, 27 February 1965, File 'Health of a City', SSA 4/11/464.
- 62 *Ibid.*
- 63 Handwritten notes by Ronald Singleton on Charles Gormley, 'Film Treatment for *If Only We Had the Space*', File 'If Only We Had the Space', SSA 4/11/477.
- 64 Letter from Forsyth Hardy to the Town Clark, re *Proposal for a Film of Glasgow*, 22 September 1969. File 'Glasgow 1980', SSA, 4/11/457.
- 65 Letter from Forsyth Hardy to Mr. Gavin, Depute Director of the Planning Department, 3 February 1971. SSA 4/11/457.
- 66 See obituary of Charles Gormley. *The Guardian*, Friday 7 October 2005.
- 67 Gormley, Treatment for *If Only We Had the Space*.
- 68 Ronald Singleton notes on the above. SSA 4/11/477.
- 69 Letter from Barrie Ellis-Jones, Depute Director of Films of Scotland, to Hamilton Leck, Director of Environmental Improvements, Glasgow, 1 December 1976. File 'People or Places', SSA 4/11/545.



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70 Letter from Hardy to JF Falconer, Town Clerk
16 June 1969. File 'Glasgow's Progress',
SSA 4/11/458.

71 Interview with Martin Singleton, 3 November 2005.

72 Letter from Marzaroli to Forsyth Hardy, 3 October
1974. *Glasgow's Progress*. *Ibid.*

73 Letter from Knight to Rae 12 May 1975. Op. Cit.

74 See for example *Glasgow's People, 1956–1988*,
Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 1988. These

photographs dissolve any distinction between the
city and its people.

75 Letter from James Wilson to O. Marzaroli,
9 November 1982. *Ibid.*

76 For example, *Would You Like to Live Here?* (1985),
sponsored by Fernbank Tenants Association and the
Elmvale/Fernbank Working Party with Glasgow
District Council, Strathclyde Regional Council and
Strathclyde Police having additional credits.

