



# Screening the St. Lawrence Seaway

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East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

by

Marsha Ann Tate, Ph.D.  
The Pennsylvania State University

# Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. [http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/storage/Pages/1721/seaway\(SLSMC\).jpg](http://www.lre.usace.army.mil/storage/Pages/1721/seaway(SLSMC).jpg) (accessed March 14, 2009)

# St. Lawrence Seaway



U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower  
and Queen Elizabeth  
[www.eisenhower.archives.gov](http://www.eisenhower.archives.gov)  
(accessed March 14, 2009)

- Opened to ocean-going vessels on April 25, 1959
- Officially dedicated on June 26, 1959
  - Dignitaries who attended the ceremony included:
    - Queen Elizabeth II
    - U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower
    - Canadian Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker

# Study Overview

- Study consists of a survey of fictional and non-fictional audiovisual depictions of the St. Lawrence Seaway and its environs
  - Survey includes works produced from the late 1890s until 2009
- Goal of the Study
  - To gain historical insights into the number and nature of the audiovisual works devoted either fully or in part to the St. Lawrence Seaway and its surrounding region

# Survey Methodology

- Survey includes 108 audiovisual works of varying media formats/types and languages
- Information about individual works derived from:
  - Canadian and U.S. archive and library databases
  - Print and online film and television catalogs, directories, and databases
  - Sundry print and online sources, including:
    - Journals
    - Magazines
    - Newspapers
    - Websites

# Survey Methodology

- The following information about each work was entered into an Excel worksheet for subsequent analysis:

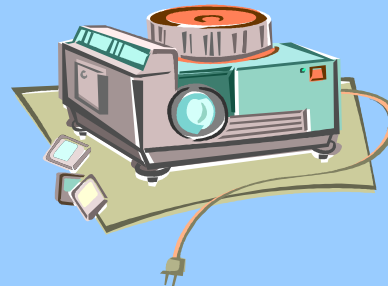
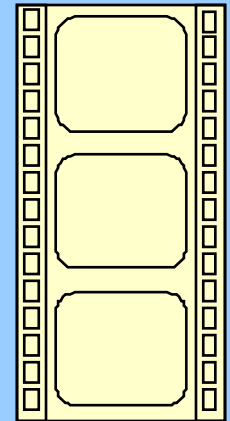
Production date	Production responsibility	Primary subject/Theme of the work
Format/Type of work	Producer(s)	Target audience of the work
Language	Director(s)	Summary of the work
Running time/Length	Writer(s)	Miscellaneous notes

- A catalog of all works included in the survey is available at [http://www.personal.psu.edu/mat1/StLawrenceSeaway\\_Filmography.pdf](http://www.personal.psu.edu/mat1/StLawrenceSeaway_Filmography.pdf)

# Survey Findings

## Media Formats/Types

- Works represent a diverse array of media formats and types
  - Feature films
  - “Shorts” (i.e., films of less than 30 minutes duration)
  - Newsreels
  - Educational films
  - VHS tapes
  - DVDs
  - Television programming
    - Series
    - Individual programs
    - Program segments
  - Slide sets
- Works principally “factual” (e.g., documentaries)
  - Notable exceptions



# Survey Findings

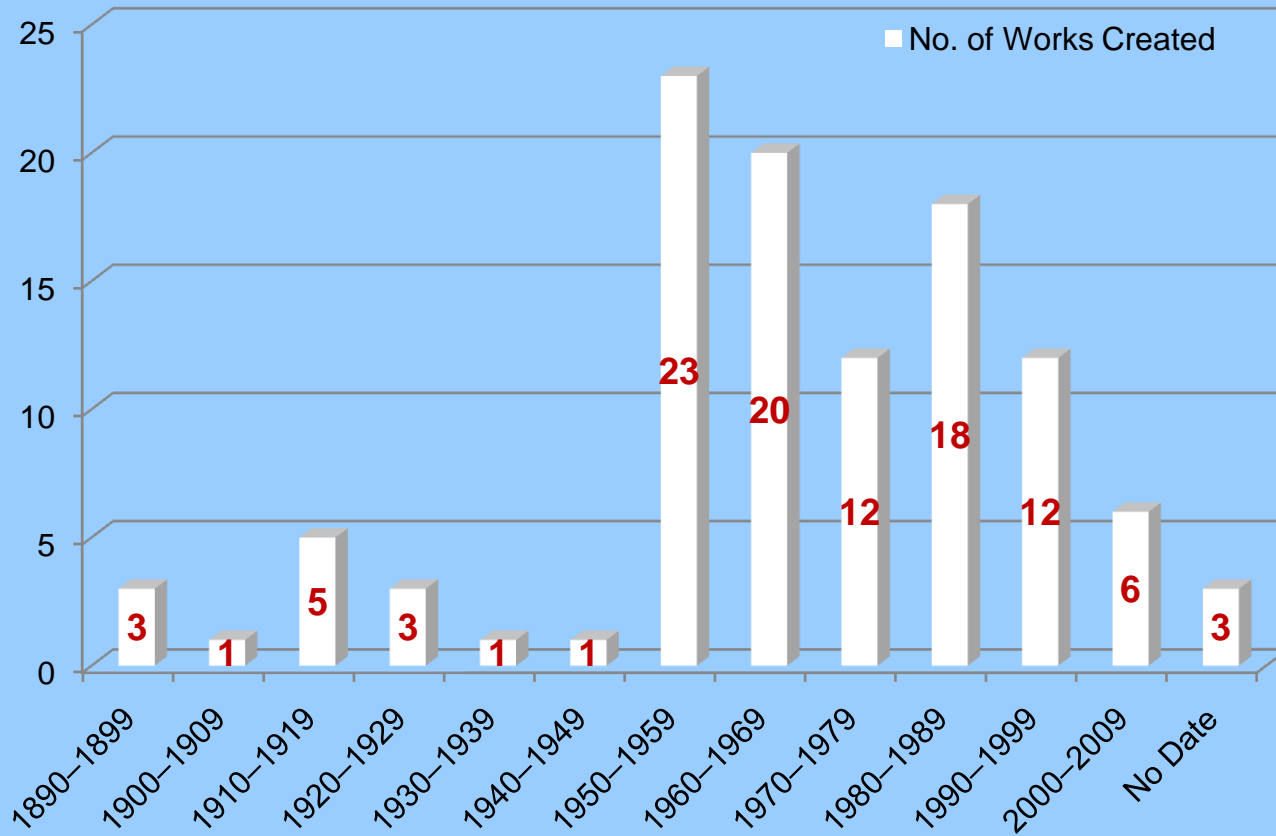
## Media Formats/Types; Production Dates

Decade	Motion Pictures (Features)	Motion Pictures (Shorts)	News-reels	Television Series	Television Series Episodes	Television Program Segments	Video-recordings	Filmstrips	Slide Sets	Misc. Film Footage	Total
1890–1899		3									3
1900–1909		1									1
1910–1919	2	3									5
1920–1929	2									1	3
1930–1939			1								1
1940–1949	1										1
1950–1959	2	8	5		2	2		4			23
1960–1969		5		1		1		11		2	20
1970–1979	1	2				1	3	2	2	1	12
1980–1989	1					7	10				18
1990–1999	1						11				12
2000–2009	1				1		4				6
No Date			1				2				3
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>108</b>



# Survey Findings

## Production Dates



# Survey Findings

## Production Responsibility

- Federal, Regional, and Local Governmental Agencies
  - National Film Board of Canada (NFB)
    - Produced 18 of the 108 works surveyed
  - Canadian Coast Guard
  - St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corp. (Cornwall, ON)/Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corp. (Washington, DC)
- Broadcast Organizations
  - CBC; CTV Television Network; CBS
- Major Hollywood Studios
  - Warner Bros. Pictures; Metro-Goldwyn Mayer

# Survey Findings

## Production Responsibility

- Independent Production Companies
- Educational Institutions
  - University of Ottawa
- Educational Publishers
  - Encyclopedia Britannica Educational Corp.
- Non-profit Organizations
  - St. Lawrence Valley Educational Television Council
- Businesses and Corporations (Non-media)
  - Royal Cruise Line
  - The Ohio Bell Telephone Company

# Survey Findings

## Subjects/Themes of Works

- History, geography, and flora/fauna of the St. Lawrence Seaway and its surrounding area
- Construction and operation of the Seaway
- Economic and political aspects of the Seaway
- Ecological issues associated with the Seaway



Milwaukee, Wisconsin

## Survey Findings

# Subjects/Themes of Works

- **1890s-1920s:** Features and “shorts” (e.g., travelogues, dramas) produced by Edison Mfg., Burton Holmes Travel Pictures, Hollywood studios, et al.
- **1950s-1960s:** Works highlight construction and operation of Seaway; its impact upon trade and commerce; also era of NFB-produced documentaries
- **1990s-2000s:** Focus shifts to emerging environmental problems associated with the Seaway; works represent eclectic array of subjects/themes

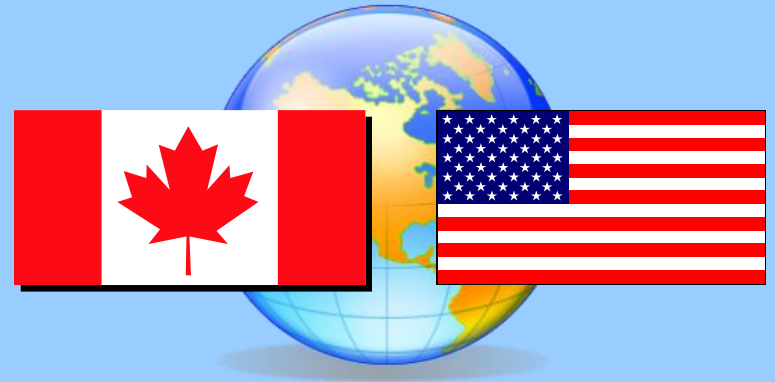
# Survey Findings

## Purpose of Works

- Education
  - K-12
  - Adult



- Promotion of trade and cooperation between the U.S., Canada, and other nations



- Promotion of specific cities and regions
  - Michigan's Silver & Gold (1970)



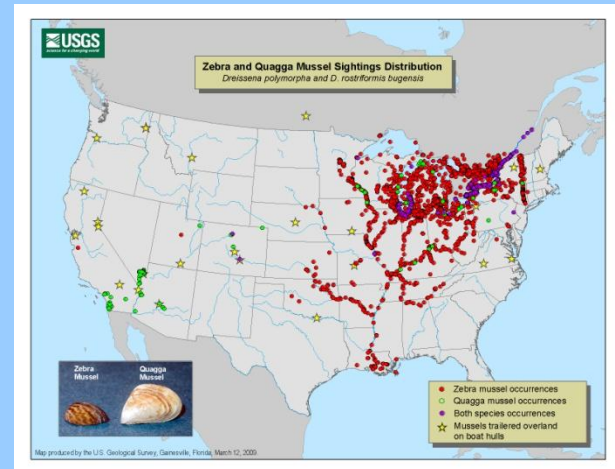
# Survey Findings

## Purpose of Works

- Promotion of Tourism
  - Cruise lines
  - Seaway, power projects, surrounding areas
- Highlight Environmental Issues
  - Invasive species
  - Pollution
- Entertainment



Frank S. McCullough, Jr. Hawkins Point Visitors Center and Boat Launch, New York [www.nypa.gov/vc/stlaw.htm](http://www.nypa.gov/vc/stlaw.htm) (accessed March 16, 2009)



U.S. Geological Survey,  
[http://nas.er.usgs.gov/taxgroup/mollusks/zebramussel/maps/current\\_zm\\_quag\\_map.jpg](http://nas.er.usgs.gov/taxgroup/mollusks/zebramussel/maps/current_zm_quag_map.jpg)

# Survey Findings

## Target Audiences

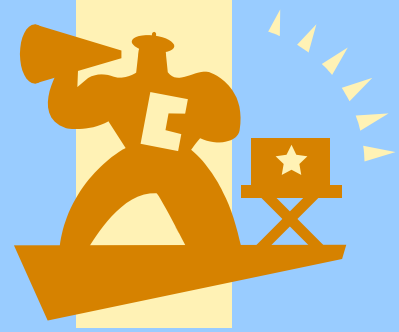
- Elementary and secondary students
- Adult learners
- Business/Industry
- Government agencies/legislators
- General public
  - Individuals interested in the environment/natural world
  - Individuals interested in history or various aspects of water transportation
  - Tourists
  - Movie-goers (especially during the “Silent era”)





# Notable Works

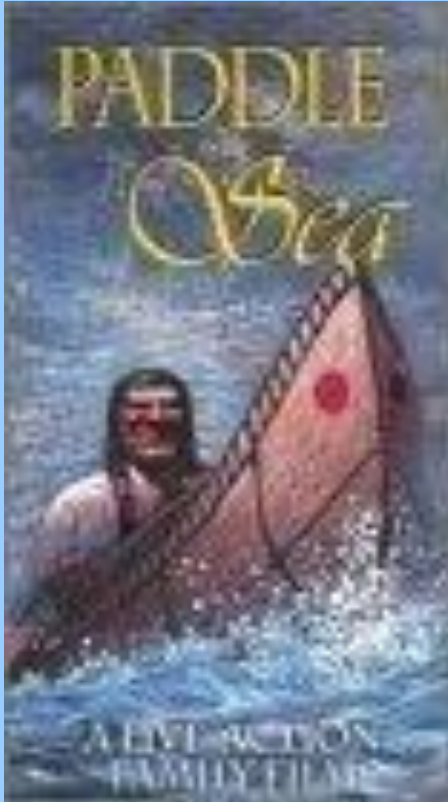
## *Pidgin Island* (1916)



- Motion picture—Drama
- 5 reels : silent, black-and-white
- Produced by the Yorke Film Corp. (Hollywood, California)
- Directed by Fred J. Balshofer
- Based on the novel *Pidgin Island* by Harold MacGrath (1914)
- Some scenes shot at Monterey, California

## Notable Works

### *Paddle to the Sea* (1966)



- NFB-produced 28-minute “non-verbal” film based upon Holling Clancy Holling’s 1941 children’s book *Paddle to the Sea*
- Film follows an Indian boy’s hand-carved toy canoe as it travels from a northern Canadian stream through the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway to the Atlantic Ocean
- Film nominated for an Oscar

# Notable Works

- *Wonders of Ontario (1962)*
  - 18-minute motion picture “short” produced by Columbia Pictures
  - “A musical tour of Ontario, showing the people, where they live, and how they spend their time. Includes views of Niagara Falls, the Martyr’s Shrine, the St. Lawrence Seaway, the International Nickel Mines, and the Canadian National Exhibition”  
(Library of Congress Online Catalog)
- *Billy’s Showboat (1950s)*
  - Children’s TV show funded by the Friends of the Milwaukee Public Library
  - Hosted by Billy the Bookworm
  - St. Lawrence Seaway-themed episode that featured then-Milwaukee mayor Frank P. Zeidler

## Notable Works

### *Seaway* (1965-1966)

- Hour-long adventure-drama television series
  - Followed exploits of police force that patrols the Seaway
- Produced by Seaway Films Limited
- Aired on CBC in Canada; later syndicated in the United States
- Scenes shot on location from Toronto to Halifax, as well as in studios in Montreal
- As of 1965, *Seaway* was Canada's most expensive television series to date
  - C\$3 million budgeted for first season

# Conclusion

- Diverse array of audiovisual depictions of the St. Lawrence Seaway and its environs produced over the past 100+ years
  - Works produced by public and private parties or a combination thereof
  - Subjects/themes/purposes of the works vary widely
  - Target audiences range from children to adults
  - Fictional works related to Seaway more popular in early 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Overall, the works reflect:
  - The political, economic and social conditions/issues of the times they were produced
  - The aims/goals of their producers
  - The prevailing media technologies of the era they were produced

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