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[INSERT FIGURE 3.1 (Frontispiece) HERE. Frame enlargement from *Daughter of Dunedin* (1928). Courtesy of the Hayward Collection, New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua).

Chapter 3

Rudall Hayward's Democratic Cinema and the "Civilising Mission" in the "Land of the Wrong White Crowd"

Jeanette Hoorn and Michelle Smith

Between 1928 and 1930, Rudall Hayward made 23 two-reel feature films, which now form a cycle that are referred to as his *community comedies*. These titles took full advantage of the fashion for alliteration of the day featuring *Winifred of Wanganui*, *Tilly of Te Aroha*, *Patsy of Palmerston*, *Natalie of Napier* and *A Daughter of Dunedin*. This chapter argues for a re-assessment of these special silent films which recognises Hayward's cycle as part of an international movement to make more populist films in which everyday people starred in the towns and cities in which they lived. We argue that these remarkable films and other Australasian and American examples constitute a unique manifestation of itinerant filmmaking because of the special ways in which the filmmakers used locality. Relying entirely on what was available in the location in which the films were shot; requiring no studios, professional actors or scriptwriters;

and utilising local talent, scenes, architecture and landscape, Hayward produced a unique cycle in the history of New Zealand cinema. Fired by socialism and a desire to contribute to New Zealand's emerging national identity through film, he revealed what was possible for a skilful director and cameraman to achieve on a small budget, by involving ordinary people and harnessing community generosity and spirit. Each film followed an identical script, the only differences being the location and cast, which in each case was made up of the citizens of the towns in which each film was shot. Seeing them today is something like watching *Groundhog Day*, but for the viewers of the period who had been involved in making the films and who saw it with their families at the 'world premiere' screening at their local theatre, it was a unique and exciting experience.

Significantly, the films record a celebration of the cities in which they were shot as modern, white and, above all, civilized. The vision of New Zealand modernity that is presented is grounded in an image of a homogenous society. By introducing each film with scenes depicting fashionably dressed white men and women amid the hustle and bustle of city life and by foregrounding the motorcar and signs of architectural and horticultural achievement, each film's construction of New Zealand's progress depicts a prosperous white nation. Maori do not appear in any of the community comedies. This at first glance seems at odds with Hayward's career as a filmmaker, which is distinguished by a preoccupation with race relations and with Maori myth and legend, especially in his later films. When Hayward made films set in the past, he focused upon stories about the white settlement of New Zealand and did not avoid the issue of racial conflict. However, the community comedies championed a modern,

sophisticated and up to date New Zealand that proudly competed with anywhere in the world when it came to innovation and industry. It followed that the modern New Zealand “self” constructed in these films, as a sign of the successful establishment of civilization, is white, and that Maori are not part of the celebration of the cultural achievements of each New Zealand city that the films present.

In addition to examining the films’ engagement with race through the absence of Maori, we will also consider their relationship with the subject of modernity in gendered terms. This cycle of films was produced at a time when modern femininity, a fascination with Hollywood stardom and the beauty contest, and the desire to send New Zealand talent to the United States collided. The films were marketed as bringing something of the US film industry to culturally isolated New Zealand, as reflected in Hayward’s company name “Hollywood on Tour”. Interestingly, this type of itinerant filmmaking popularised in New Zealand’s community comedies and comparable Australian examples may have fed back to the United States, with the majority of similar extant American examples emerging from the mid-1930s. The potential reverse flow of the genre from Australia and New Zealand to the United States defies conventional thinking of a largely one-way transmission of cultural forms from America.

Hayward produced a unique series of comic-burlesque films set in New Zealand’s towns and cities. His offsider, Lee Hill, made four more. Hill had worked on Hayward’s films and branched off on his own, making *Mary of Morton*, *Nellie of Nelson*, *Betty of Blenheim* and *Frances of Fielding* by working with exactly the same

formula. All four of Hill's films have survived, whereas only four of Hayward's still exist: *A Daughter of Dunedin*, *A Daughter of Invercargill*, *A Daughter of Christchurch* and *A Daughter of Masterton* are what remain of Hayward's twenty-three. These were prefigured by *The Bush Cinderella* (1928), which shared a number of their themes though it had aspirations to being a more serious and rounded portrait of the trials of a young woman which took on some of the interests of Raymond Longford's *The Woman Suffers* (1918).

The origins of the community comedies' storyline, in which rival suitors battle for the heroine's affection, building to a climactic kidnapping and car chase, were likely American. Chris Watson notes that school board elections, which figure among the films' stock scenes along with shots of the local fire brigade and schoolchildren, were not conducted as they are in the films in New Zealand.¹ The script may have arrived in New Zealand from the United States via Australia, given the degree of similarity between the plot of the earlier "Adventures of Dot" films, discussed later, and the community comedies. Lee Hill did work with the Australian production company prior to involvement with Hayward's itinerant films, so it is possible that he brought the script with him to New Zealand.

The Presence and Absence of Race in Hayward's *Oeuvre*

Hayward's films appealed to local values and pride that to a certain extent avoided the nationalistic rhetoric of the First World War and the inter-war years. They were, nevertheless, strictly Pakeha. Set in cities and towns throughout the country, from the top of the North Island to the bottom of the South, viewers could have no inkling of

the existence of a substantial Maori minority in New Zealand by looking at them.

There is no discussion of the interaction of Pakeha and Maori in the films at all, and it is hard to find any indigenous faces, even in the panning shots of crowds that appear regularly. A simple explanation for the absence of Maori from Hayward's community comedies is that they would not have been physically located in the cities and towns in this period. This prompts the question of why Maori were absent from the country's major cities, and what significance this holds for the presentation of modernity in Hayward's films.

The community comedies are, in fact, about the whitening of New Zealand and the introduction of British culture. The spoils of modern civilisation are abundantly portrayed through new motor cars, women's and men's fashion, the new woman, commerce, architecture, and civic pride witnessed through botanic gardens and well appointed public squares. But Maori are not part of this narrative. Much of what is celebrated replicates quintessentially British symbols such as *Daughter of Christchurch's* visual focus on "punting on the Avon" and the flowing expanse of the Botanic Gardens' rose bushes. The community series operates in a white bubble that celebrates the success of the civilising mission in converting New Zealand from a southern wilderness into a prosperous European community in which commerce, fashion and the exigencies of modern life are represented in an orderly and seemly fashion and in which there is no hint of the displacement of Maori or even the existence of a powerful indigenous community. The films, unlike many of those which were to come from Hayward's stable, are shamelessly populist, designed to appeal to a broad audience and modeled on Hollywood prototypes in which race is

only represented in pejorative ways. Hayward, however, was too progressive to attempt that, instead he left Maori out entirely.

As mentioned earlier, the absence of discussion or reference to race issues in the series is not typical of Rudall Hayward's film oeuvre. Several of his early features were taken up with race issues, including his first, *My Lady of the Cave* (1921), followed by *Rewi's Last Stand* (1925) (later remade in sound as *The Last Stand* in 1940), and *The Te Kooti Trail* (1927). The films that he made after he married his leading lady, Ramai Te Miha, who is of Maori descent and now a very senior and revered elder in the Maori community in Auckland, were very engaged with race relations. His interaction with cultural tensions in these films produced a representation of Maori that is, according to Sam Edwards and Stuart Murray, "positive," but "firmly immersed with Pakeha logic."ⁱⁱ They go on to suggest that the Pakeha version of New Zealand life contained in the community comedies outlines a model of success related to the "dynamics of settlement," attaining a husband and setting up the possibility of starting a family.ⁱⁱⁱ However, an important part of the ritual of finding a partner—the central plot point of the comedies— must be considered in light of the absence of Maori in the films. The settlements are not only successful because they show markers of civilisation and culture, but because, within the films, they stave off the potential of miscegenation. The romance plot unfolds within a white world where there is no likelihood of inter-racial relationships

[INSERT FIGURE 3.2 HERE. Location shoot for *Nellie of Nelson* (1928). Courtesy of the Hayward Collection, New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua]. The universality of whiteness in the representation of each city across the cycle sets up a dynamic that Richard Dyer describes as equating

whiteness with “the human condition” that therefore “secures a position of power”.^{iv}

Through the omnipresence of whiteness in the films, there is an underlying expression of how power operated in early-twentieth century New Zealand in relation to race.

Linked to the films’ showcasing of successful white settlement, is their display of pride in its modernisation. In *A Daughter of Christchurch*, achievements in cultivating the environment to conform to civilised norms are emphasised through the display of “one of the finest” rose gardens “in the Southern hemisphere”. New Zealand’s progress and achievements are shown to be keeping pace with other former colonies and dominions. Modernisation is most obviously apparent in the cities bustling with pedestrians, coaches and motorcars. The city centre itself is viewed through sped-up footage, making the pace of life appear quicker and size of the population greater than the reality. Intertitles refer to each city as a “Great Throbbing Metropolis”, which is “Getting more like New York every day”. **[INSERT FIGURE 3.3 HERE. Inter title from *Daughter of Dunedin* (1928). Courtesy of the Hayward Collection, New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua]** The degree of civilisation is not only being measured in contrast with British norms, but also in light of the America that New Zealanders knew so well from the cinema.

Situating the Community Comedies within the History of Itinerant Filmmaking

The community comedies occupy a unique place in the history of the cinema, along with other little-known or “orphan” examples of formulaic, itinerant films produced within local communities and for local audiences in two of the countries with greatest cultural influence on New Zealand. Hayward’s films may have been influenced by

American and Australian examples of itinerant filmmaking that were flourishing in the late-1920s. Dan Streible has written in detail about an “orphaned” 1926 silent film from Anderson, South Carolina that recreated the popular “Our Gang” comedies and showcased the town’s children.^v Closer in subject matter to the New Zealand community comedies, father and son duo Daniel B. Dorn and Daniel W. Dorn produced 35 short films in and around New Jersey from 1927 that were designed to devote screen time to local businesses, schools and churches. Roger Smither points out that the itinerant film was suited to “dispersed, largely rural communities” such as these New Jersey locations and country towns in Australia and New Zealand.^{vi} In the same year as the Dorns began their films, director Cyril J. Sharpe and cameraman Reginald Young produced *The Adventures of Dot*, a series of silent films shot throughout rural New South Wales, Australia. There are three surviving films, featuring the towns of Grenfell, Young and Temora, which share the community comedies’ plot of a schoolteacher pursued by two suitors. The similarities between the “Dot” films and Hayward’s include standard shots of groups of schoolchildren, the conduct of a municipal election, a false newspaper story designed to blacken the name of the hero, and the drama of a fire brigade call-out to extinguish a blaze. There is also another, lesser-known Australian series of local short films, none of which has survived. This series was produced as a promotional venture by production manager William R. Reed and cameraman Dal Clauson, using a script by Jack McLaughlin. The first was a three-reel film made and screened at the Capitol Theatre, Tamworth, on 5 February 1928, entitled *Tam of Tamworth*. It replicated the conventions of using a local cast and the plot also reportedly contained the stock-standard fire sequence. Other films with the same premise and alliterative titles were produced, including

Olive of Orange and *Priscilla of Parkes* and, according to Eric Reade, locations covered a large area of New South Wales from Grafton to Wollongong.^{vii}

Apart from the Dorns in New Jersey, however, Hayward's community comedies constitute the largest known collection of local silent films produced in this era, being filmed in 23 different New Zealand cities and primarily designed for local consumption in the city in which they were filmed. They all followed the same formula, with similar inter-titles and with the same plot and narrative structure. When a teacher arrives in town, she is courted by two suitors, one a good fellow, a farmer, called Bill Cowcocky, the other a newspaper reporter and a villain who in each film goes by the name of Freddy Fishface. In his attempts to win the heroine's affection, Freddy tries to blacken the name of the farmer by writing a false story about him in his newspaper, which turns the heroine against him. The hero spends the rest of the film trying to win the schoolteacher back, and after kidnappings and exciting chase scenes, in the end good triumphs over evil. Filmed in different locations in New Zealand, each uses the same script, which is adapted to the conditions of the city or town in which it is set so as to allow local attractions or pastimes to be featured. In addition, each film used amateur actors from the local area as well as using local talent and members of the community as extras. There are large panning shots of the primary school children from the local school, and of crowds that made up the extras for a number of scenes, as well as members of the local polo club, the fire brigade and scenes incorporating the wives of the cities' prominent men all sporting bobs and short skirts **[INSERT FIGURE 3.4 HERE. Rudall Hayward filming children during the production of *Daughter of Invercargill* (1928). Courtesy of the**

Hayward Collection, New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga**Whitiāhua]**

The films were a raging success, attracting large crowds to the screenings in the cities where they had been made. In an interview held in the New Zealand Film Archive, Hayward described their popularity: “You couldn’t keep them out the theater with iron bars.”^{viii} The films were also very inexpensive to make. Shot over a few days, they involved principal actors recruited with well-publicised "auditions", together with many crowd scenes. Very soon, while excitement was still hot, as Chris Watson, who has written about the Lee Hill films, points out, the "world premiere" was organised in the local cinema. The obvious irony is that, at the time, any New Zealand film was unlikely to travel much further than its homeland. Hayward’s community comedies generated a unique resonance given the isolation of New Zealand and its fledgling film industry so distant from Hollywood. New Zealand had a comparatively large number of theatres and relatively high attendance figures, and its largest supplier of films from 1914 onward (excluding 1915), well ahead of Britain and Australia, was the United States.^{ix} The sheer mass of imported American entertainment consumed in New Zealand lead journalist and eventual film censor Gordon Mirams to comment in the 1940s: “If there is any such thing as a ‘New Zealand culture’ it is to a large extent the creation of Hollywood.”^x

Gender, Modernity and Manufactured ‘Stars’

A Daughter of Dunedin was among the most popular of the community comedies, possibly because it featured Dale Austen, the actress from Hayward’s previous film,

The Bush Cinderella (1928), in the lead. Austen had won her role in *The Bush Cinderella* as part of her prize as the reigning Miss New Zealand. The beauty quest, advertised as a “Search for a Screen Type”, was sponsored by the Fuller-Hayward chain (the largest theatre circuit in New Zealand) and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, and Austen won her crown courtesy of the votes of 250,000 theatre patrons. This complex relationship between the cinema, the beauty queen and the public spectacle of the contest did not end there, as Austen was also awarded an acting contract including travel to Hollywood as Miss New Zealand.

The cinema constituted a crucial aspect in the formation of the modern feminine ideal of the 1920s. Brigette Sjøland argues that the “energetic physicality” of movie stars captivated young women internationally after World War I: “For young women it was this combination of a healthy, active, and energetic body and an exuberant personality [embodied by the movie star] that constituted a ‘modern’ female style.”^{xi} This modern femininity is clearly evident in the dress of the young women featured in the community comedies. The films reflect the revolution in the manners and dress of the middle-class that was taking place in other Western nations. Like elsewhere, the 1920s in New Zealand saw the transformation of women and men’s bodies from a formal style of dress and comportment to a more relaxed and less rigid set of parameters. All of the heroines in the community comedies are new women. All emulate the modern boyish look made famous by Coco Chanel and have their hair cut in a bob and wear cloche hats, which were also the rage. All wear dresses either just above or just below the knee. In the scenes in which the heroine mixes with a group

of upper-class women, all have bobs and all are dressed *à la mode*. The heroes also wear the latest male fashions, with white flannels and bright ties the order of the day.

During the First World War, New Zealand held provincial “Queen” carnivals to raise money for the war effort. Various districts and companies chose a queen, usually a married woman or spinster, to head their bid to raise money. While these wartime queens were celebrated for their virtuousness, by the 1920s physical appearance and youth had taken precedence. Sandra Coney notes that after World War I, the ideal body shape became less voluptuous and thinner, and the transformation from the “matronly, mature ideal of beauty to a youth one was marked in New Zealand by a series of beauty contests and film quests in the late 1920s which provoked an astonishing level of public interest.”^{xii} The new idealised femininity of the ‘20s was wrapped up in ideas of beauty and fame. In particular, the New Zealand public was captivated by the prospect of one of its own “daughters” finding success in the American film industry it so readily ingested. When Dale Austen left for Hollywood after winning Miss Otago, thousands thronged the railway station to bid her farewell on her journey to stardom.

The audition process for the community comedies tapped into the same concept of public spectacle as beauty pageants that offered related prizes and held the allure of travel to Hollywood. Similar contests that invoked beauty, national identity and the cinema were held in Australia. Beryl Mills, the first Miss Australia in 1926, toured the United States as an advertisement for Australian girlhood and subsequently made public appearances at picture theatres in New South Wales. In her study of the way in

which popular images of women were used by countries to define their relations with one another, Liz Conor suggests that “In Australia, the search for national authenticity, indeed cultural distinctiveness, was carried on by opposing the fraudulent American cinema to a naturalistic Australian cinema.”^{xiii} By contrast, New Zealand’s desire for *its* own girls to become Hollywood stars, evidenced by the public interest in these competitions, speaks to its immersion in American popular culture, as does the replication of several distinctly American stock scenes in Hayward’s community comedies. Nevertheless, there are elements that define a unique New Zealand identity that resist a reading of straightforward reproduction of Hollywood conventions in Hayward’s films. For one, as Chris Watson suggests, the villain Freddy Fishface is portrayed as a stereotyped American figure and is costumed to resemble 1920s silent film star Harold Lloyd.^{xiv}

Auditions for the community comedies were publicised heavily in each local area, serving to drum up interest not only among the town’s aspiring actors and beauty queens but also functioning as a promotional forerunner to the screening of the finished film. A generic advertisement produced in 1929 to attract townspeople to participate in Hayward’s films connected the search for movie stars with refining New Zealand’s identity **[INSERT FIGURE 3.5 HERE. Acting applicants advertising circular for Rudall Hayward’s Community Comedies (1928). Courtesy of the Hayward Collection, New Zealand Film Archive Ngā Kaitiaki O Ngā Taonga Whitiāhua]**. Likening film to the developing nation itself, which was declared an independent dominion only seventeen years earlier, the circular proclaimed that “The dominion’s film industry, now rapidly emerging from the days

of infancy to those of lusty childhood...is in need of Screen Personalities.” The creation of Hayward’s community comedies can be situated as part of a process in which the New Zealand film industry gradually developed its own identity. As part of this self-definition, these films importantly promised and delivered the prospect of ordinary New Zealand citizens viewing themselves and their neighbours on the screen. This idea constituted a predominant aspect of the films’ marketing. *Patsy of Palmerston*, for instance, was promoted as not only featuring the three leads, but also “Charming Palmerston girls, the fire brigade, Rough-riding cowboys, and hundreds of citizens and bonny schoolchildren.” Local scenery and local “gags” are also mentioned in the advertisement, enabling New Zealand surroundings, rather than the backgrounds of the cinematically familiar United States, to be highlighted. Nevertheless, the most exciting element of the films is clearly the potential to see “yourself as others see you!”

Looking at the genealogy of these films, it is clear that, in addition to American and Australian itinerant films of the same era, they owe a great deal to the adventure films involving flappers and new women that were being made in the early twentieth century, from those starring the Australian actress Fearless Nadia in Bollywood to Pearl White’s *The Perils of Pauline* in Hollywood from 1914 into the 1920s. They shared in common an interest in using alliteration to full effect in their titles as well as in the names of those who starred in the productions. Films such as *Rio Rita* (1929), *Flapper Fever* (1924), *The Expert Eloper* (1919), *The Mating of Marcella* (1918), *Moonshine Molly* (1913), as well as *Wild and Woolly Women* (1917) and *The*

Bondage of Barbara (1919) were all part of Hollywood's response to new and sexually daring roles for women in the cinema.

But perhaps the most prominent of this series and probably the greatest influence on Hayward may well have been the *Perils of Pauline* series. These deal with the fate of a young heiress kidnapped by villains whose interest it is to prevent her from gaining the inheritance which is rightfully hers; inevitably there is a kidnapping scene in which Pauline is truly placed in peril, and in which she is famously tied to the railway tracks, rescued seconds before a locomotive looms before her. The narrative of a *Bush Cinderella*, the feature film that Hayward made before embarking on the community comedies, took from the narrative of *The Perils of Pauline*. Like Pauline, *The Bush Cinderella*, or at least her daughter (both are played by Dale Austen in the film), is left an inheritance when her wealthy uncle dies, and whose secretary attempts to prevent her from gaining her inheritance, seeking to keep it for himself. The fact that the secretaries of uncles in both the *Perils of Pauline* films and in *Bush Cinderella* are the villain cannot be a coincidence. All of the community comedies, unlike the Australian "Dot" films, involve what are supposed to be dramatic kidnapping and chase scenes. Another commonality between American silent serials like the *Perils of Pauline* and Hayward's films is the tension between celebrating and restraining modern femininity. Shelley Stamp argues that the *Perils of Pauline* films functioned as cautionary tales "in which independence is always circumscribed by the shadow of danger, the determinacy of familial ties, and the inevitability of marriage".^{xv} While the limitations of the itinerant filmmaking formula did not allow for the same degree of narrative subtlety, the community comedies similarly safely contain the lives of the independent female schoolteacher heroines through marriage. Distinctly, the courtship

narrative is not only concerned with placing bounds around modern femininity, but also about continuing to secure the modernisation and whitening of New Zealand's cities.

The Impact and Legacy of the Silent 'See Yourself in the Movies' Genre

Hayward's political orientations reflected the democratic temper for which New Zealand and Australia were famous in the first decades of the twentieth century. There was a strong civic interest in popular culture in New Zealand, reflected in the enormous popularity of cinema. According to the New Zealand historians Barbara Brookes, Erik Olssen and Emma Beer in their study of women, men and modernity in Southern Dunedin, by 1916 more than a third of the population went to the movies once a week.^{xvi} The Queens Theatre on Princess Street screened films continuously from midday until 10.30 pm, and most picture palaces had two three-hour sessions every day except Sundays. Hayward's uncle, Henry Hayward, was the largest theatre owner and film distributor in New Zealand in the 1920s. The Haywards were outspoken socialists and religious sceptics. They celebrated the values of the ordinary bloke. The socialist point of view evident in their films is later reflected in the emergence of a school of socially oriented historians, such as the prominent left-wing historian William Pember Reeves and Keith Sinclair, whose work, as John Stenhouse has argued, promoted New Zealand as "a city upon a hill", pioneering enlightened race relations, votes for women, industrial and labour legislation, age pensions and humane and progressive politics.^{xvii}

In this phase of Rudall Hayward's career, we might identify a peculiar cinema emerging out of the local, the popular, the communal—indeed, there seems to have been for a brief period a form of local cinema which operated in parameters defined by geographical and regional boundaries that is rare in the international history of the cinema. This was a cinema that could function on a relatively low budget because it did not require a costly professional cast of actors or scriptwriters whose task it was to produce original scripts from scratch. Itinerant filmmakers producing local films emerged at the end of the silent era, before production requirements would ostensibly have precluded such inexpensive and hastily completed films. Hayward recalled in a 1962 interview that later films produced with sound did not approach the popularity of the silents from the late-1920s.^{xviii}

As a curious footnote, there are American silent examples that were produced long after the arrival of sound and New Zealand's community comedies. The "See Yourself in the Movies" genre proliferated in the 1930s and '40s in the United States, much later than in New Zealand. Stephanie Elaine Stewart suggests that sound was not introduced in these films because it was unnecessary, with "audience dialogue" (upon recognition of friends and family) becoming "the primary sound accompaniment".^{xix} The only known American itinerant female director and cinematographer, Margaret Cram Showalter, shot a series of silent films with a 16mm camera in New England towns from 1936 to 1939. These films, such as *Bar Harbour Movie Queen* (1936), which are documented in detail by archivists Karan Sheldon and Dwight Swanson,^{xx} clearly connect the heroine, played by a local actress, with the idea of Hollywood fame. The actress played the part of a Hollywood star or "movie

queen” who returns to her hometown, visits local stores (which may have paid for the privilege of “product placement”), and who is then kidnapped and subsequently rescued by the local hero. By 1941, the genre was still being produced in America and colour “See Yourself in the Movies” films finally came into vogue.

Itinerant director H. Lee Waters’ produced over two-hundred and fifty silent “Movies of Local People” between 1936 and 1942 in the Carolinas, Virginia and Tennessee. All were shot in black and white until the final two years of his productions.^{xxi} Like Hayward’s films, Waters’ movies of local people were advertised in local newspapers with taglines such as “See Yourself as Others See You”. He distinctively immortalised a diverse cross-section of the communities in which he filmed, including both African Americans and white Americans in each town, despite the era of segregation in which both sections of the community could not view his films in the same theatre.^{xxii} Notably, his multi-racial *Kannapolis N.C.* (1941) has been included in the Library of Congress Film Registry for its rare record of African American life that was otherwise excluded from the filmic archive of the first half of the twentieth century. Hayward’s earlier community comedies do not achieve this same outcome, excluding non-white New Zealanders from their celebration of modernity and settlement.

More than a decade earlier, for a short period between 1928-30, there emerged a third level or genre of filmmaking that complemented the international and national cinema that was already emerging in New Zealand. Its nature was indeed local; it relied entirely on what was available in the location in which it was shot. It required no

studios, no professional actors or scriptwriters and utilised local talent, scenes, architecture and landscape. These films drew on American and Australian itinerant filmmaking influences and participated in a celebration of modern New Zealand and modern femininity, but did so within the context of white settlement and civilising discourse. While they are democratic reflections of modernity and depict a cross-section of the white community in each town and were produced in an egalitarian spirit, the Maori population is not evident. Given Rudall Hayward's overt interest in exploring race relations in New Zealand in many of his other films, the absence of Maori from the community comedies marks them out as focusing on producing an image of a modern white culture in which intentionally or otherwise, a kind of apartheid seems to be in operation. The democratic medium of the itinerant film is not used as progressively as it might have been, such as in the examples of H. Lee Waters' American films. Instead, these community comedies can be read as celebrating the apparent success of the civilising mission, which is displayed through the replication of bustling cities in New Zealand and the replay of the white courtship narrative in each, rather than creating a social document of the whole of each town's community, including both Maori and Pakeha as well as New Zealand's other racial minorities.

Notes

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- i. Chris Watson, "*Frances of Fielding* (Lee Hill, 1928) - a community comedy: New Zealand's populist answer to Hollywood," *Screening the Past* 8 (1999): <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/screeningthepast/firstrelease/fr1199/cwfr8c.htm>

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- ii. Sam Edwards and Stuart Murray, "A Rough Island Story: The Film Life of Rudall Charles Hayward," in *New Zealand Filmmakers*, ed. Ian Conrich and Stuart Murray. (Detroit, Mich.: Wayne State University Press, 2007), 44.
- iii. Edwards and Murray, 45.
- iv. Richard Dyer, *White* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 9.
- v. Dan Streible, "Itinerant Filmmakers and Amateur Casts: A Homemade 'Our Gang', 1926," *Film History* 15 (2003), 177-192.
- vi. Roger Smither, "'Watch the Picture Carefully, and see if You Can Identify Anyone:' Recognition in Factual Film of the First World War Period," *Film History* 14.3/4 (2002), 392.
- vii. Eric Reade, *History and Heartburn: The Saga of Australian Film, 1896–1978* (East Brunswick, N.J.: Associated University Presses, 1981), 64.
- viii. "Tracking Shots: New Zealand on Film," *New Zealand Film Archive*, <http://www.filmarchive.org.nz/tracking-shots/close-ups/TopTowns.html>
- ix. Miles Fairburn, "Is There a Good Case for New Zealand Exceptionalism," in *Disputed Histories: Imagining New Zealand's Pasts*, ed. Tony Ballantyne and Brian Moloughney (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2006), 155.
- x. Gordon Mirams, *Speaking Candidly: Films and People in New Zealand* (Hamilton, NZ: Paul's, 1945), 5.
- xi. Birgitte Sjøland. *Becoming Modern: Young Women and the Reconstruction of Womanhood in the 1920s* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2000), 60.
- xii. Sandra Coney, *Standing in the Sunshine: A History of New Zealand Women Since they Won the Vote* (Auckland: Penguin, 1993), 146.

- xiii. Liz Conor, *The Spectacular Modern Woman: Feminine Visibility in the 1920s* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004), 89-90.
- xiv. Watson.
- xv. Shelley Stamp, *Movie-Struck Girls: Women and Motion Picture Culture after the Nickelodeon* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 126.
- xvi. Barbara Brookes, Erick Olssen and Emma Beer, "Spare Time? Leisure, Gender and Modernity," in *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, ed. Barbara Lesley Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 182.
- xvii. John Stenhouse, "God, the Devil and Gender," in *Sites of Gender: Women, Men and Modernity in Southern Dunedin, 1890-1939*, ed. Barbara Lesley Brookes, Annabel Cooper and Robin Law (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), 318.
- xviii Rudall Hayward interview with Walter Harris and Ray Hayes, 1962. Held at the New Zealand Film Archive. Reference Number A0004.
- xix. Stephanie Elaine Stewart, "Movies of a Local People and a Usable Past: Mill Town Treasures and Transcendent Views, 1936-1942," *The Moving Image* 7:1 (2007): 57.
- xx Karan Sheldon and Dwight Swanson, "The Movie Queen: Northeast Historic Film," in *Mining the Home Movie: Excavations in Histories and Memories*, ed. Karen L. Ishizuka and Patricia R. Zimmerman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 185-190.
- xxi. Stewart, 52.
- xxii. Waters also produced some films exclusively in African American sections of towns for screening in black theatres.