

Chalk Talk

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PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES!!!

Letter from the Editor

Dear Subscribers,

I read a headline today reporting on a study declaring a ['Big comeback for humpback whales'](#). According to a network of whale watchers, the number of humpback whales in the North Pacific Ocean had increased from an estimated 1,500 in 1996 to between 18,000 and 20,000 from 2004-2006. Though encouraging, these numbers are still not enough to remove the whales from the endangered species list. Still, it made me feel good and hopeful. I mention this rare good news because in my research in preparing the many



Chalk Talk issues that deal with the Environment, it has been difficult to find reason for optimism.

Every generation has left its mark on this planet. Some more than others. It seems that museums are filled with artefacts — jars, coins, jewellery, eating utensils, sculpture — that speak to the

people and the culture that produced them. My generation and the way it lives and consumes may leave the biggest footprint ever. Sometimes I wonder what generations in the distant future will think of us when they excavate landfills full of Barbie dolls, computers, styrofoam, mass-produced knick-knacks, wooden(!) furniture, refrigerators, and all the rest of the **stuff** that we wanted so badly that we were willing to sacrifice our precious resources. What kind of people will they determine we were?

The NFB, in conjunction with the Canadian Memory Fund Projects' Canadian Culture Online, has introduced thematic Web site collections that have made it easier to find and view films, classroom resources and archival material about culture, animation, War History and, now, the Environment.

CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing classroom resources on a range of topics. We invite you to visit our website at www.4edu.ca to view the many free teachers' resources on offer.

[As always, your feedback is important to us.](#)

Mary Kovack

NFB — Focus on the Environment



Why did Albertans fight proposals to build a sour gas well on their land? What was the price of industrial growth in small-town B.C.? How has acid rain devastated eastern Canada's farmland and forests?

In Canada our lives unfold against backdrops of mountains, prairies, lakes, beaches, icebergs and urban sprawl. Canadians forge unbreakable ties to their surroundings. [Footprints: Environment and the Way We Live](#) is the one-stop Web site for exploring this relationship. Just *Click* to discover the ecological issues of seven decades. From a rich bank, the **National Film Board of Canada (NFB)** is offering 124 films, spanning 70 years, **free online**. The site also offers archival photos, audio clips, interviews and articles by experts will also get you fired up about the environment. Explore new challenges our people, wildlife and plants face as natural resources dwindle. Examine solutions in these times of climate change.



For Teachers



Teachers will find detailed lesson plans and 191 short film clips to bring this exceptional site into the classroom. **[Note: For Teachers—available soon online]**. For more information on the **Footprints** collection see the *Website of the Week* feature below.

Footprints: Environment and the Way We Live, the latest in the NFB's growing collection of educational Web sites which includes [Across Cultures](#), [Focus on Animation](#), and [On All Fronts: WWII and the NFB](#) can be viewed at www.nfb.ca/education.

[Source: National Film Board of Canada]

Issues at Stake



Stakeholders



The NFB and the Environment



FOOTPRINTS

Environment and the Way We Live

Discover how Canadians connect with their surroundings at the exceptional new NFB Web site *Footprints: Environment and the Way We Live*.

Footprints: Environment and the Way We Live presents films and teaching material that explore, document and bring to light various environmental problems Canadians have been facing for over half a century. Some Canadian films on the subject date back to 1928!

Films, excerpts, archival artefacts and more!

The site features 124 films from the NFB collection (57 in French, 4 without words and 63 in English in the English part of the site). This selection consists of documentaries, dramas and animation, from which 191 film excerpts (95 in English, 2 without words and 94 in French) were taken. Of those, 38 films (15 in English, 3 without words and 15 in French) include described video for the vision-impaired; 48 films (26 in English, 22 in French) are available with closed captioning for the hearing-impaired viewers. The site includes 30 items from the NFB archives and from a partner (audio material, stockshots, photos, etc.), as well as several interview clips. These 124 films are only a fraction of NFB titles on the environment, however, they are a representative sample of the NFB's output on this subject since the Film Board's creation. They include propaganda films as well as more critical or personal works on a subject that has grown more and more topical over the last few years. The films paint a fascinating, multi-faceted portrait of the way we live and above all survive in a world that will become endangered if we do not rein in our environmental depredations.

How the site is organized

Footprints: Environment and the Way We Live is divided into 6 sections which include 3 main thematic sections — **Issues at Stake**; **Stakeholders**; **The NFB and the Environment** — as well as **See Everything, Hear Everything** and **For Teachers**. The main thematic sections provide insight into the impact of the relationship between culture and environment on Canada's flora and fauna, explore the role played by the actions of a variety of stakeholders; and examine the backdrop against which NFB films have been made and the various points of view filmmakers have expressed. The **See Everything, Hear Everything** section, gives users access to all the material available on the site, including films, film excerpts, archives (audio clips, stockshots, photos, etc.), filmed interviews, articles by specialists, and opinion pieces from the general public (vox populi). **For Teachers** provides three types of educational resources: 1 general lesson plan, Culture and Environment, for the site as a whole; 1 lesson plan for the Players section; and 6 lesson plans for specific films.

See Everything, Hear Everything



[Source: NFB — 'Footprints: Environment and the Way We Live']

NFB Free Online Films — Environment — Suggested Viewing



Something in the Air

[Something in the Air](#) — 2001, Sylvie Dauphinais

Prince Edward Island—a rural paradise and a safe haven from the city. But is this image really a mirage? Many of the children on the Island can't catch their breath. PEI has the highest rate of hospital admissions for asthma in Canada, and many affected never leave home without an inhaler.

[The Barrens Quest](#) — 1997, Peter Blow

An environmental scientist opposes a proposal for a diamond mine in the NWT's tundra, ancestral home to the Dene First Nation.

[Worst Case Scenario](#) — 2001, Glynis Whiting

Capturing persuasive arguments from all sides, this spirited documentary reveals a growing conflict about the risks of a proposed



The Barrens Quest

DON'T MISS NFB'S ENVIRONMENT SERIES 'GREEN SCREENS'

May 26 to May 31 — Toronto & Montreal



The National Film Board's Mediatheque (Toronto) and CineRobotheque (Montreal) are going even greener this month offering a special expanded edition of its **free** monthly **Green Screens** environmental screening and discussion series. From Monday, May 26 to Saturday, May 31, 2008, **Green Screens** will feature the documentary **The World According to Monsanto**, tracing the history of the U.S. multinational, a leader in the development of genetically modified foods and considered one of the worst polluters of the industrial age, plus the documentaries **Up the Yangtze**, **Refugees of the Blue Planet**, **Weather Report** and **Toxic Trespass** – along with discussions and workshops. [For more information and schedules, click here.](#)

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE AND LINKS —

Statistics Canada's *Human Activity and the Environment* — Teacher's Kit

Educators — Get the latest on climate change! StatCan's [Human Activity and the Environment](#) publication (2007-2008) has been updated to include [a new feature article on climate change](#) (PDF available). You'll learn that although Canada has only 0.5% of the world's population, it produces about 2% of the global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and was with the U.S. among the highest per capita GHG emitters in the world. The article explains the science of climate change, describes Canada's sources of greenhouse gas emissions, and outlines some of the impacts of climate change in our country.

Each annual edition of [Human Activity and the Environment](#) features an in-depth article on a different topic - Transportation in 2006, Waste disposal in 2005 and Energy in 2004 (the last two available in PDF version only). Accompanying lessons plans are available for each of these topics.

[Source: [Statistics Canada](#)]



Tidewater glacier, Devon Island, Nunavut
Brenda Saunders, 2007

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