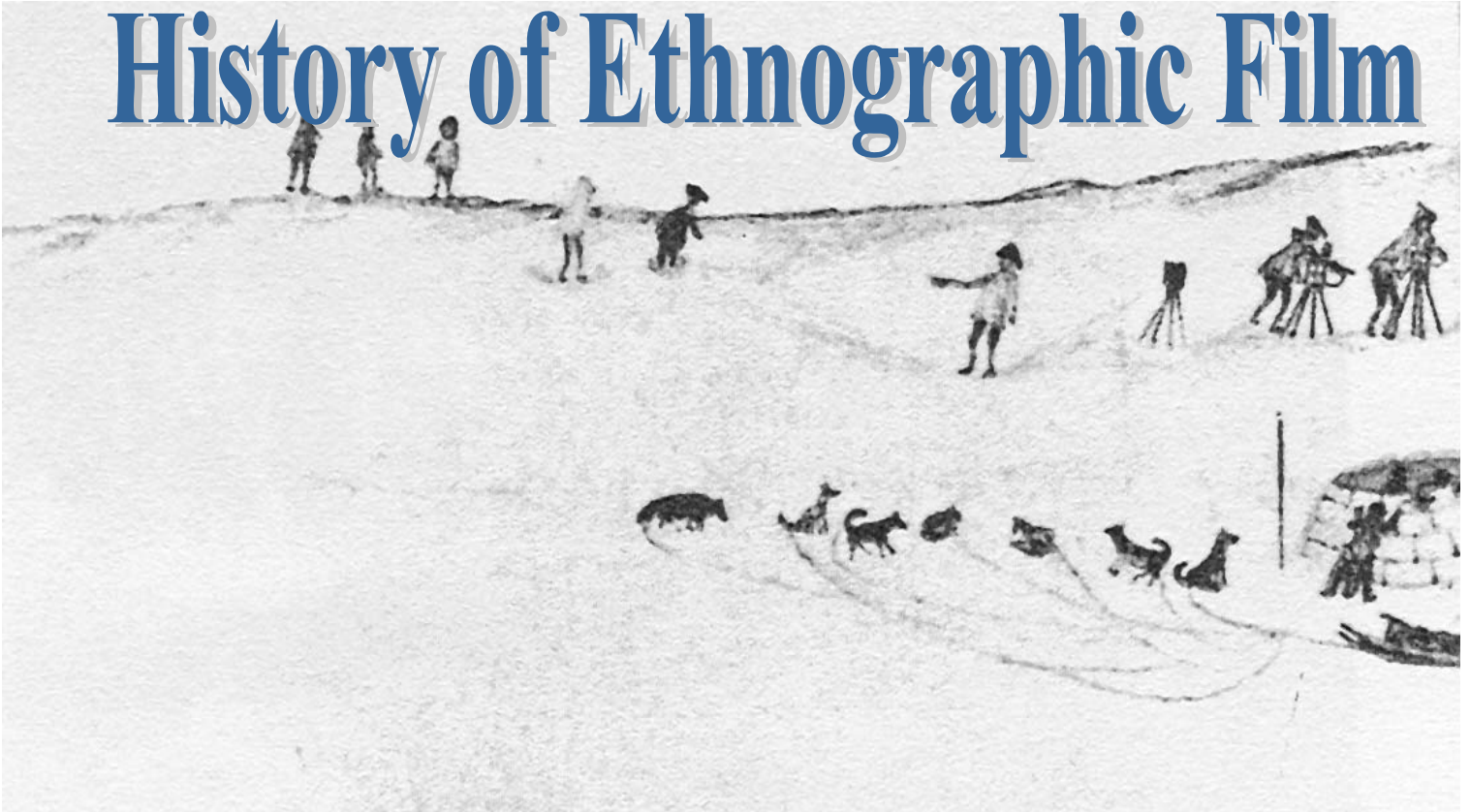


**Session 7**

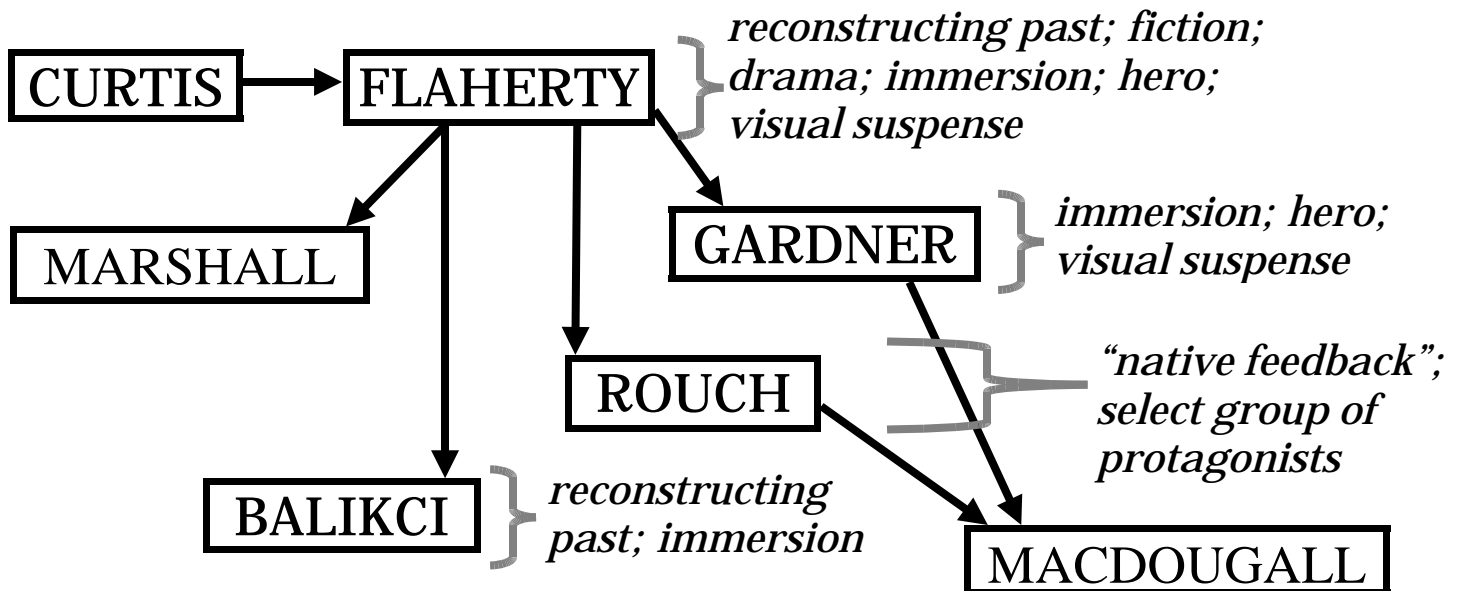
# History of Ethnographic Film



**[Download the Handout for this Session](#)**

## “Genealogy” of Ethnographic Film

### “The Humanistic Family”



(a) Intensive immersion

(b) The presentation of a drama focusing on a specific individual

(c) Native feedback

(d) Visual suspense

### In the Footsteps of Flaherty

→ *The Hunters* (1958)

→ *Dead Birds* (1964)

→ *The Netsilik Eskimo Project*

### “The Scientific Family”

Reignault, cross-cultural study of movement (handout)

Bateson and Mead, *Bathing Babies in Three Cultures* (handout)

## **Typology of Ethnographic Films**

*ethnographic fiction films, explorer films*

*educational-film*

*anthropological teaching film*

*commercial film* ventures with an ethnographic base

*social documentary films*

→ Dziga Vertov, *Kino-pravda*

→ showing ordinary people in their everyday surroundings

*cinema vérité*

shared anthropology

*Ethno-art film? Forest of Bliss*

*Deconstruction of Primitivism and Exoticism*

- *Cannibal Tours*, 1988, Dennis O'Rourke
- *Incidents of Travel in Chichén Itzá*, 1997, Quetzil Castañeda & Jeffrey Himpele

## **Ethnographic Film vs. Anthropology?**

1. early 1900s rely less on visual technologies in favor of the detailed ethnographic monograph
  2. shift from the evolutionism of 19<sup>th</sup> century to cultural relativism and structural functionalism of twentieth century—questioning of anthropometry
  3. self-consciousness of its public reputation as a serious scientific discipline
  4. “Retreat from the world”
  5. emphasis on the intangibles of social structure
  6. perceived loss of “primitive society”
- angst of anthropological self-definition and disciplinary self-protection