



THE DOCUMENTARY ART OF FILMMAKER MICHAEL RUBBO

D. B. Jones

ISBN 978-1-55238-871-6

THIS BOOK IS AN OPEN ACCESS E-BOOK. It is an electronic version of a book that can be purchased in physical form through any bookseller or on-line retailer, or from our distributors. Please support this open access publication by requesting that your university purchase a print copy of this book, or by purchasing a copy yourself. If you have any questions, please contact us at ucpress@ucalgary.ca

Cover Art: The artwork on the cover of this book is not open access and falls under traditional copyright provisions; it cannot be reproduced in any way without written permission of the artists and their agents. The cover can be displayed as a complete cover image for the purposes of publicizing this work, but the artwork cannot be extracted from the context of the cover of this specific work without breaching the artist's copyright.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE: This open-access work is published under a Creative Commons licence. This means that you are free to copy, distribute, display or perform the work as long as you clearly attribute the work to its authors and publisher, that you do not use this work for any commercial gain in any form, and that you in no way alter, transform, or build on the work outside of its use in normal academic scholarship without our express permission. If you want to reuse or distribute the work, you must inform its new audience of the licence terms of this work. For more information, see details of the Creative Commons licence at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY:

- read and store this document free of charge;
- distribute it for personal use free of charge;
- print sections of the work for personal use;
- read or perform parts of the work in a context where no financial transactions take place.

UNDER THE CREATIVE COMMONS LICENCE YOU MAY NOT:

- gain financially from the work in any way;
- sell the work or seek monies in relation to the distribution of the work;
- use the work in any commercial activity of any kind;
- profit a third party indirectly via use or distribution of the work;
- distribute in or through a commercial body (with the exception of academic usage within educational institutions such as schools and universities);
- reproduce, distribute, or store the cover image outside of its function as a cover of this work;
- alter or build on the work outside of normal academic scholarship.



Acknowledgement: We acknowledge the wording around open access used by Australian publisher, **re.press**, and thank them for giving us permission to adapt their wording to our policy <http://www.re-press.org>

Conclusion

Influence ... Comparisons ... Importance

Rubbo's most salient influence—not always acknowledged—on documentary filmmaking is his use of himself, most famously in *Waiting for Fidel*, as an on-camera protagonist who drives the action, adapts to unforeseen circumstances, discloses aspects of the filmmaking process, and sometimes stumbles. In various forms the basic elements of this once-daring approach have become commonplace in documentary, most notoriously in Michael Moore's work. In *Roger & Me* (1989), his funny and biting report on how automobile factory closings in his hometown of Flint, Michigan, have all but destroyed it, Moore adapts to his own goal and personality Rubbo's role as on-camera storyteller and provocateur. He assumes a shambling, regular-guy persona. He borrows *Waiting for Fidel's* structure of failing to secure an interview, in this case with the film's eponymous character, the chairman of General Motors, Roger Smith. Here, though, the structure is more a conceit than an adaptation to dashed expectations. Rubbo's crew was in Cuba not in pursuit of a reluctant Castro but rather at his invitation. The failure to interview Castro was an unexpected setback to which Rubbo had to adjust while on location. On camera, Moore gives us no evident reason to expect an interview with Roger Smith. And in fact, according to the 2007 documentary film *Manufacturing Dissent*, he may even have gotten one, filmed it, and concealed it from the audience. In any case, for Moore, Smith is an outright villain with no redeeming qualities,

the man responsible for the plant closings, the laying off of thousands of workers, and the decline of Flint. Moore's quest for an interview is an act of aggression. Roger Ebert called the film "a revenge comedy, in which the stinkers get their comeuppance at last,"²¹ even though the only "stinker" who gets a comeuppance is a glib General Motors public relations flak who, we learn in the end credits, loses his job, too.

In his subsequent documentaries, such as *Bowling for Columbine* (2002) and *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), Moore has persisted with his aggressive version of Rubbo's method. In *Bowling for Columbine*, his treatment of subjects becomes more mocking and exploitative. He ambushes the entertainer Dick Clark to confront him about a restaurant Clark owns that Moore says exploits welfare mothers; Clark manages to escape in his chauffeured limousine van. Moore tricks Charlton Heston into a confrontational interview, in Heston's home, that is meant to make the octogenarian actor, who had been a prominent civil rights leader in the film industry—a fact Moore withholds—look cold-hearted and racist. In addition, he deploys acknowledged contrivances, such as taking some kids who were wounded in the Columbine High School shooting to the headquarters of K-Mart, which sells weapons. In a scene reminiscent of *Roger & Me*, the group attempts to meet with top management but are repulsed. They do manage, Moore says, to provoke K-Mart to announce, the following day, a commitment to stop selling ammunition. In *Fahrenheit 9/11* Moore's role as filmmaker-provocateur consists primarily in his acerbic commentary and satirical use of television footage. He appears on camera only a few times in this film, and when he does, it is only briefly. When he decides that congressmen ought to read a long bill they recently passed, he rents what looks like an ice cream truck and drives around Washington reading from the bill into a loudspeaker. The scene works mainly as a funny, throwaway line, as it lasts only a few seconds. His most extended on-camera intervention is a sequence in which he accosts congressmen and tells them they should ask their sons to enlist in the military and volunteer to serve in Iraq.

Nick Broomfield includes *Waiting for Fidel* in his list of five distinctively different documentaries "that broke the mould." The other four are *Housing Problems* (1935), by Arthur Elton, *Titicut Follies* (1967), by Frederick Wiseman, *Home from the Hills* (1981), by Molly

Dineen, and *Sisters in Law* (2005), by Kim Longinotto and Florence Ayise. Rubbo's film is the only one Broomfield cites for influencing his own work. "Fantastic," he calls it, "underappreciated—and the film that persuaded me to make myself a character in some of my own films."² Before discovering Rubbo's film, Broomfield had become adept at the traditional observational documentary format. *Soldier Girls* (1981), codirected with Joan Churchill, is a penetrating, sympathetic look at a company of American female army recruits undergoing basic training in Fort Gordon, Georgia. The feature-length film depicts the surprising rigor of the women's training, records in depth the struggles of two recruits trying to adapt, and reveals a thoughtful, tragic side to a male drill instructor who up to that moment had seemed merely harsh. There is only one, fleeting self-reference in the film, and it appears accidental: when one of the women who has washed out says goodbye to the friends she has made, she also says goodbye to the film crew. We see the microphone and a startled Broomfield for a brief moment.

By the time Broomfield made *The Leader, His Driver and the Driver's Wife* (1991), he had adopted an intensely self-referential approach and the conceit of the elusive interview. "The Leader," as he is called, is Eugene Terre Blanche, head of an Afrikaner white supremacist party dedicated to the continuation of white rule in South Africa. The party seems Nazi-inspired: its black, red, and white flag features an arrangement of three 7s vaguely resembling a swastika. Broomfield tries several times to get an interview with Terre Blanche, is repeatedly rebuffed, and tries confronting him on the street and at party gatherings. He finally secures an interview, which (as cut in the film) consists almost solely of Terre Blanche upbraiding Broomfield for his pushiness and lack of consideration. Terre Blanche comes off as a scary character but a bit of a fraud. His driver, with whom Broomfield spends considerable time on screen, is just as racist, but in Broomfield's treatment he becomes somewhat likeable and sympathetic nevertheless. Broomfield uses the same structure in *Tracking Down Maggie* (1994), wherein he chases the now retired, memoir-promoting Margaret Thatcher around London and across the United States in vain pursuit of an interview. He makes scores of unanswered inquiries to Thatcher's chief press liaison. He intrudes on book signings, speeches, and a reception, but is always rebuffed. In New York, his team manages to hack into Thatcher's

itinerary, enabling Broomfield to be waiting for her at each scheduled stop. At one point, Broomfield says his team feels intimidated; they fear they are being followed and that their phone calls are monitored. Broomfield has a singular talent for effrontery, and his films are amusing to watch and somewhat revealing, but they leave the impression that Broomfield does not really want the allegedly sought interview.

Broomfield and Moore are, for Jon Dovey, in his study of the triumph of first-person media in British television, emblematic of a documentary style Dovey calls “the film-maker as klutz, the film-maker who makes mistakes, forgets things, retraces his steps, and can’t get the essential interview.”³ Dovey cites Ross McElwee’s *Sherman’s March* (1986) as another example. McElwee had received some funding for a film retracing General William Tecumseh Sherman’s famous (infamous in the South) Civil War march through Atlanta to the Atlantic Ocean. However, as the film opens, we learn that McElwee has broken up with his girlfriend, which apparently discombobulates him enough that he shifts the film’s focus from Sherman’s historic march to his own inability to establish solid relationships with women. He does follow Sherman’s route, roughly, visiting now and then a historic site to tell us a fact or two about Sherman, but he lingers for long periods with various women from his past or that he meets on his way. Some have been foisted on him by relatives or friends anxious about his bachelor status, and others are women that attract him. In every case, no lasting relationship is established, and the fault lies mainly with him, as he acknowledges—sometimes directly, sometimes through the comments of others. He is too diffident with women. McElwee narrates the film’s progression à la Rubbo, and he often shows us what he is up to. A one-man crew, he frequently locks down his camera and speaks directly to it, in two cases at night, whispering, so that he won’t be heard. We see his reflection in a mirror now and then. He gets kicked out of places by authorities. He runs out of sound tape twice. The film includes a failed attempt to gain access—in this case to Burt Reynolds, who is in town in connection with a film project that one of the women in McElwee’s own film hopes to get a role in. McElwee’s film persona is self-absorbed—in one scene, he tells us through his locked-down camera that the night is unbearably hot “so I thought I’d just film myself unable to sleep”—but, nevertheless, most of the women he interacts with come

off as strong, intriguing persons, and he even manages to convey an interesting impression of Sherman in the few minutes of factual information he dispenses along the way. And at times the film's reflexivity is insightfully self-aware. At one point he wonders if "I'm filming my life to have a life to film," worrying that it may be the only way he can comfortably relate to women.

In *Photographic Memory* (2011), McElwee, now a father of a twenty-two-year-old son, Adrian, whose seeming fecklessness worries him, intercuts footage of Adrian as a charming little boy with scenes of the adult Adrian. McElwee muses on his difficulty connecting with his son, and decides to revisit a place in France where as a young man he had begun to find his own self and purpose. McElwee weaves from this varied material a meditation on relationships, the passage of time, and generally the evanescence of just about everything in life. McElwee seems interested in people primarily for what he can learn about himself through them. He is the driver of the action and its object. He seems to welcome having his expectations dowsed and his attention shifted. In the quiet of editing, he makes sense out of his material.

Morgan Spurlock's *Supersize Me* (2004) is another popular documentary adopting aspects of Rubbo's method. The film's premise is Spurlock's decision to eat nothing but McDonald's meals for thirty days and to record the results. Thus the entire film, not just a scene here and there, is an acknowledged contrivance. Spurlock is on camera almost all the time, sometimes embarrassingly so. He has an exhibitionist streak: we see him undergoing a rectal exam, he talks about a weird feeling in his penis, he discusses his problems getting an erection, he throws up after forcing himself to eat an entire McDonald's meal. There is a sequence showing Spurlock making numerous phone calls trying to schedule an interview with a McDonald's official.

Spurlock's self-focus is exceeded by Jonathan Caouette in his *Tarnation* (2005). *Supersize Me* had a pretense of investigating a social issue; Caouette's film is ostensibly about his mother Renee's troubled life, but it is mostly about him, about how his difficult childhood has affected him. He tells us that his mother was raped in front of him when he was a baby. He was placed in foster homes, where he experienced "extreme emotional and physical abuse." He was sold some contaminated marijuana. He vandalized his own house. He is gay. He

fantasizes about a rock opera about his life. Much of his narration is printed rather than spoken, and he refers to himself in the third person. He includes lots of home movie footage and family photos. He interrogates his grandfather but hardly lets him finish a sentence. The film might seem exploitative when the camera lingers on Renee while she is acting bizarrely, but the sequence is poignant nevertheless.

Except for Michael Moore, filmmakers adopting a klutzy persona tend to make films that are not overtly political. But the personal approach pioneered by Rubbo has powered the narrative of many a political film in recent years. An intriguing pair of examples is Josh Fox's anti-fracking film *Gasland* (2010) and Phelim McAleer's rebuttal, *Fracknation* (2012). In *Gasland*, Fox appears on camera quite a bit, motivates the action, openly contrives scenes (such as a test of tap water for contaminants), and shows himself attempting to get interviews at Haliburton and with oil-and-gas magnate T. Boone Pickens. He tells us about his idyllic childhood and his family home in a beautiful stretch of Pennsylvania woods he says are threatened by fracking. Wearing a gas mask at a Wyoming drilling site, he plays the banjo for the camera. *Fracknation*, in scene after scene, debunks claims Fox had made in *Gasland*. McAleer carries openness about the production farther than perhaps any of the filmmakers who have adopted that aspect of Rubbo's style. He tells us briefly about his Irish background so that we know something about him. He reveals in detail the source of his funding (almost entirely from Kickstarter). He films confrontations between himself and Fox. An ex-director of a water basin commission abruptly ends an interview with him and, in a parking lot, threatens to confiscate his film. He confronts a subject from *Gasland* on a public road in front of her house; he wants to ask her some questions. She threatens to sue him, says she is armed, and calls the cops. McAleer even shows himself trying, persistently but unsuccessfully, to get an interview with Josh Fox. In the film's credits, he thanks Kickstarter and, by name, apparently every individual who contributed to the film, saying at the end, "This is their film."

The method has been adopted even in historical documentaries. John Walker's *Passage* (2008), an absorbing Canadian film produced by the NFB in collaboration with various other agencies, sets out to recreate the two expeditions by John Rae to try to discover what happened

to an earlier British expedition of 128 men, led by Sir John Franklin, in search of a route through the Arctic to Asia. That expedition had not been heard from for years. Rae eventually discovered with near certainty that Franklin's party became ice-bound, that they resorted to cannibalism, and that those who were not eaten froze to death. After he reported his findings to the British authorities who had commissioned his search, the results were leaked to the press. Rae was vilified. Charles Dickens wrote scathingly of Rae's report and argued that the Inuit were savages who probably slaughtered and ate Franklin and his men. But the film doesn't recreate Rae's search and the aftermath in the expected way. It uses actors, but we see more of the actors researching their parts and rehearsing scenes than we do of the ultimate formal reenactments themselves. Walker is often on camera, although not intrusively, and he also contrives situations that yield unscripted results. For example, at one of the recurring meetings among the actors and advisors, Walker has invited an unidentified guest. When the guest is revealed as a descendent of Charles Dickens, an Inuit advisor on Walker's film confronts him and asks him to apologize for his famous forebear's slander against his people.

Dear Zachary: A Letter to a Son About His Father (2008), director Kurt Kuenne's film about his murdered friend Andrew Bagby and Bagby's son, who was born after his father's murder, shifts gears during filming to respond to dramatic events. The killer was the friend's ex-girlfriend, who fled to Newfoundland after the murder, got free on bail, and had the baby, Zachary. Bagby's parents move to Newfoundland and try to get visitation rights. By the time he's a toddler, Zachary relates very well to the grandparents. The mother curtails his visits, then murders Zachary and commits suicide. By the end, the film has morphed into an argument for various reforms in Canadian law that might have prevented these tragic events. The film is a good example of adapting to unforeseen reversals during production, although in this case there was no pressure of a limited shooting schedule, as had been the case with *Waiting for Fidel*. Indeed, *Dear Zachary* was years in the making.

The Act of Killing (2012), directed by Joshua Oppenheimer, is built almost entirely on enabling, encouraging, and watching dramatized demonstrations, directed by their perpetrators, of mass killings from

nearly half a century earlier. The events depicted happened in Indonesia after the fall of Sukarno in 1965. The victims were of two classes: real or suspected Communists who were thought to have threatened the Islamic country's independence; and ethnic Chinese, resented for their prosperity. The mass slaughter was never disowned or condemned by post-Sukarno regimes; perhaps for that reason the perpetrators apparently lack shame about it. Without using any archival footage at all, Oppenheimer reports on the killings entirely through staged reenactments proudly and lovingly directed mainly by Anwar Congo, now an old man. Congo and some of his former colleagues play themselves with gusto. But by the film's concluding minutes, the process of reenactment, which he first embarked upon eagerly, ends up making Congo deeply (and literally) sick at what he had done.

It's impossible to determine with certainty how much these personally driven narratives, and the fact that they emerged largely during filming, owe to Rubbo's *Waiting for Fidel*. Broomfield may be the only practitioner who has publicly voiced his debt to *Waiting for Fidel*. Moore is said to have credited the film for his approach in *Roger & Me*, and the claim is printed on the case insert for a 2004 release of *Waiting for Fidel* offered by Facets Video. I haven't been able to confirm that Moore himself credited Rubbo's film, but its influence on him has generally been accepted. For instance, in his recent (2010) book *Documentary*, Dave Saunders states that *Waiting for Fidel* "has proved an undoubted and obvious narrative influence on the 'unfulfilled' quests of [Michael] Moore and Nick Broomfield."⁴ As different as *Passage* may seem from Rubbo's work, Darrell Varga, in his book about the film, traces Walker's method to *Waiting for Fidel*.⁵ Perhaps the strongest evidence for the film's influence is, first, that there seem to be no competitors for the distinction, and, second, that in histories of documentary written in the last two or three decades, *Waiting for Fidel* is usually the earliest film cited (if any are) for having used the method.

Waiting for Fidel's likely distinction as the prototype for reflexive documentaries in which the director is an on-camera protagonist establishes or at least overwhelmingly suggests Rubbo's importance in the history of documentary. Although most of the films so influenced share common elements that seem traceable to Rubbo's work, they diverge among themselves in style, tone, and aim. A Broomfield,

Moore, or McElwee film bears its director's personal stamp beyond the mere fact of the filmmaker's on-screen presence. Thus the influence of *Waiting for Fidel* has been fruitful, inspiring a variety of imaginative and distinctive adaptations, not mere copies. But what may be lost in recognizing the diversity of personal styles that *Waiting for Fidel* helped birth is that Rubbo's films, too, are quite distinct from the films that *Waiting for Fidel* inspired. And his body of work, not just *Waiting for Fidel*, deserves far more attention than it has received. *The Oxford Companion to Australian Film* (2002),⁶ for instance, makes no mention of Rubbo. In Stella Bruzzi's *New Documentary* (2006),⁷ Michael Moore and Nick Broomfield, the two filmmakers most clearly influenced by Rubbo, are mentioned or discussed on twenty-four and twenty-eight pages, respectively, but Rubbo not at all. Numerous filmmakers whose careers predated Rubbo's are mentioned, several of them often. Rubbo's appearance in the text of the aforementioned history of Australian documentary film, *Australian Documentary: History, Practices and Genres*, is limited to a single page and occasional mentions about his tenure at the ABC in the 1990s. The book does credit *Waiting for Fidel* for its influence on documentary, but it is the only Rubbo film included in its filmography of roughly two hundred Australian documentaries.

I believe there are two main reasons for the comparative obscurity of Rubbo's work. One is that, except for a few films, it has not been widely seen. A second, and related, reason is that the spectacular success of his on-camera presence in *Waiting for Fidel* has distracted attention from other qualities in his work. As I hope my account has demonstrated, there is much more to his films than simply his narrative presence. They have a distinctive character that lies not in that single common element but in a combination of several traits found in his best films, and only—in combination—in his films.

One of their most distinctive characteristics is the painterly quality most evident in *Sad Song of Yellow Skin* and *Solzhenitsyn's Children*. It contributes to aesthetic satisfaction. His films, although usually structured as stories, thus possess an expressive quality beyond the primarily indexical, chronological structure of most documentaries, even personal ones. Of the personal filmmakers who followed after Rubbo, only Ross McElwee's work has something analogous—in his case not a visual or cinematic richness but an expressive literary overlay that

adds to his films' enjoyment and without which his films might well seem inane.

A second Rubbo trait is a subordination of ego. Early on, Rubbo was criticized for inserting himself into his films. That he did. It took a strong ego to be the first one to do it, and to keep on doing it despite the difficulties it caused for him and for the distribution of his films. But now that the technique has become pervasive, he seems remarkably self-effacing compared to most filmmakers employing a version of the technique. He may place himself at his film's center as a motivator of events, but he is not the center of attention. Rubbo always shares his stage: with Stirling and Smallwood, with Louis Robitaille and the New Philosophers, with the three Anglophone candidates in Westmount, with Francis, Daisy, Moreau, Atwood, Olive, and his YouTube subjects. His on-camera antics are almost always intended to advance the action and our understanding. His interest in himself is minor compared to his interest in his subjects. He never puts them down without allowing them to respond in kind. In any on-camera confrontation, whether intense like the argument with Stirling, or friendly like the discussion with the Cuban mental health patient, or sexist like in *Persistent and Finagling*, the subject gets the last word. His films are not about him. While some of the filmmakers we have discussed allow themselves to look ridiculous now and then, most of them are the stars of their films: the cheeky, wisecracking muckraker (Moore), the intrepid, relentless investigator (Broomfield), the super-sensitive male (McElwee), the heroic guinea pig (Spurlock), the victim (Caourette), the crusader (Fox), the relentless fact-checker (McAleer). John Walker, of *Passage*, and Joshua Oppenheimer, of *The Act of Killing*, manage the role of protagonist in a more self-effacing way than Rubbo, but with less spontaneity and on-the-spot creativity.

Rubbo's respect for others goes deeper than simple courtesy. In his best films, his subjects are presented as characters in the round. If they are on the "right" side (i.e., Rubbo's), such as Smallwood or Auf de Maur, they have flaws. They're neither idealized nor idolized. If they represent the opposition, such as Stirling, Blaker, Springate, or the Shakespeare traditionalists, Rubbo can disagree with or even disapprove of them without disparaging them. Stirling seems to have a good heart, Blaker reliability, Springate a soft side. Rubbo and Jean-Guy

Moreau, on opposite sides of a contentious issue, seem to enjoy each other. Most of the various New Philosophers, despite their self-importance, evasiveness, insistence, or derisiveness, are in Rubbo's treatment people you might to like hear more from. It's hard not to like, at some level, Rubbo's opponents, villains, and popinjays.

Rubbo's openness to his human subjects finds a parallel in his openness to situations. He has acknowledged a predilection for thrusting himself into situations with only limited preparation, the better to remain open to what reality has to offer. He has changed the arc of several of his films just before or even during the shooting as a result of unforeseen events or discoveries. His willingness and ability to switch directions while on location served him well in *Sad Song of Yellow Skin*, and without such existential poise it is doubtful he could have come up with the marvelous character study in *Waiting for Fidel*.

But if reality doesn't present enough surprise, Rubbo, with his audience's knowledge, will contrive situations in order to generate it. Probably Rubbo's three most imaginative—and gutsy—contrivances were persuading Stirling to allow his argument with Rubbo to be filmed, leaving the camera with the Atwood family, and allowing Olive to direct the reenactment of a childhood incident that affected her deeply. Walker used the tactic effectively in *Passage* more than once, in each case with essentially the same group, his team of actors, writers, and experts—and a surprise guest. *The Act of Killing* is built almost entirely on reenactments enabled by the filmmakers and directed by the film's protagonist, the effect of which can't be foreseen.

The construction of situations in which subjects are placed may seem manipulative, but besides yielding lively, sometimes dramatic cinema, it is arguably a means of producing truth of character. It allows the documentary director to engage in something roughly analogous to what is known in dramatic filmmaking as *mise-en-scène*—of making things happen instead of waiting for things to happen. Of course all documentary filmmakers engage in manipulation. Even when time is limited, control of events scant, equipment Spartan, and preconceptions minimized, choices are continually made that contribute to something like *mise-en-scène*—but only at a primitive level. Rubbo figured out a way to shape actuality without essentially distorting it or disguising the construction. He is involved in his subjects' performances while

giving his characters free rein. The fun of the reenactments in *All About Olive* lies not in the events reenacted, but in watching Olive direct and respond to them. The constructed yet spontaneous “reality” is what’s interesting—and real. In these ways, Rubbo shapes and reveals reality without violating the implicit contract a documentary filmmaker has with his audience not to deceive them.

The issue of ethics is a huge one in documentary theory and criticism. The first chapter in *Introduction to Documentary* by the influential theorist Bill Nichols asks, “Why are ethical issues central to documentary filmmaking?”⁸ For most people who ponder such things, the issue of ethics for the documentary filmmaker points in two directions: to his audience and to his subjects. In the view of Brian Winston, the

relationship between participants and documentarists is far more pregnant with ethical difficulties than is the connection of film-maker to audience. Unlike the audience, the vast majority of which remains usually unaffected (in measureable ways, at least) by any documentary it sees, participants are engaged in an exercise that could be life-changing.⁹

Most members of the documentary community would probably agree with Winston. For his livelihood, the documentary filmmaker depends on people whose trust he must gain (unless he is a muckraker or an attack documentarian) and whom he does not pay. He likely will affect their lives far more than they will affect his. He owes them not just fairness but concern. What do his subjects get out of it? Jean Rouch, codirector with Edgar Morin of *Chronicle of a Summer* (1961), one of the earliest and most influential self-reflexive films, remarked to James Blue that people

behave very differently when being recorded, “but what has always seemed very strange to me is that, contrary to what one might think, when people are being recorded, the reactions that they have are always infinitely more sincere than those they have when they are not being recorded. The fact of being recorded gives these people a public.”¹⁰

Rubbo's subjects get to present themselves to a public and never in a disparaging way. It is a form of public validation of their selves. This is the other half of the "exchange of valuables" that Rubbo says should take place in the filmmaking process. In his above-referenced interview with Geoff Burton, Rubbo added that documentary filmmaking "is all about encounters, sensing their meaning and their value to the project at hand, while at the same time being a feeling human being who likes people and wants to spend time with them for other reasons."¹¹ This attitude comes out in his films, in part because Rubbo uses that tool of ultimate control—editing—to help make his subjects likeable and perhaps people one would want to spend some time with.

One prominent filmmaker who may outdo Rubbo in generosity to her subjects is Molly Dineen. In *Home from the Hills* (1987), *Her African Farm* (1988), *Heart of the Angel* (1988), and *In the Company of Men* (1995), Dineen employs a primarily observational approach enriched by frequent off-camera questioning and occasional references by her subjects to her, her crew, or her film. She seems intensely interested in her characters, and her only agenda, apparently, is to show them in an honest but sympathetic light. *Her African Farm* is a warm portrait of a crotchety old landowner who has decided to sell her farm, at about a third of its value, to her servants, keeping only her house. While she is generous, accepting, and fatalistic, she is also somewhat imperious to her servants and their families. Her chief servant, by contrast, says that while his boss can be mean and stubborn, he will take care of her until she dies, because she is old and needs him. *Heart of the Angel* conveys, with sympathy and appreciation, the often dreary, frustrating work lives of the men and women who make a busy commuter train station function. *In the Company of Men* is a three-part documentary on The Prince of Wales's Company of the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards during their deployment in Northern Ireland as peacekeepers. The film explores the pressures of leadership, the pain of imposing harsh discipline, and the camaraderie of military men. While occasionally a soldier or an officer expresses annoyance at Dineen's presence, they generally accept her and are open with her about their doubts and dreams. *Home from the Hills* follows a British subject who is forced to relinquish his Kenyan farm and spend his last years in England. He accepts his

fate, wrapped in his acknowledged decline of white superiority, with sadness but also grace.

The closeness that Dineen achieves with her subjects suggests a limitation to the director-as-protagonist documentary. While filming, she intervenes only to ask questions, which we hear off camera. She is rarely, if ever, seen. But in a 2003 interview with David A. Goldsmith, she stresses that her approach is not that of a detached, uninvolved director (the “fly on the wall” once championed in observational documentary). She spends considerable downtime with her subjects, sometimes moving in with them. While filming, although off camera, she is “right there with them,” interacting with them, drawing them out. But, she says, “I don’t want me as a character.” Nor does she violate the trust between her and her subjects; she deliberately leaves out anything that might embarrass them. And yet her off-camera involvement allows her, as Rubbo’s on-camera method allows him, to shape reality in order to reveal it: while she and her sound recordist lived for a spell with Colonel Hook in *Home from the Hills*, “we cooked, and we shopped, and talked together, and it helped create the reality we were trying to capture.”¹²

Perhaps the observational but engaged method, when employed by someone with Dineen’s talent and attitude towards people, ultimately is more generous to its characters than a documentary featuring the director’s strong on-camera presence can be, simply by granting the subject(s) all or almost all the screen time. At the end of *Home from the Hills*, Dineen asks Colonel Hook if he is happy. “Oh, blissfully happy, in your presence. Otherwise, I represent divine discontent.” His comment is pretty strong evidence that in this film an “exchange of valuables” has occurred. In Dineen’s films, one gets the feeling that her characters appreciated being taken seriously, that their lives were enriched at least a bit by the experience. The self-effacing *Soldier Girls* (1981), which Nick Broomfield codirected with Joan Churchill before adopting the director-as-protagonist approach, is far more interested in and empathetic to its subjects as individuals than is *Tracking Down Maggie* or *The Leader, His Driver and the Driver’s Wife*.

But Winston underrates the filmmaker’s responsibility to his audience. The effect of a film on its subjects is localized and can be deep, but a film’s diffuse effect on its audience can have consequences, too,

however hard to measure; it contributes something to their view of the world. The former effect can hurt a person. The latter can harm society or alter its sense of history—which is misinformed easily. Here the issue of ethics morphs into the problem of truth. Hence the value of meaningful reflexivity in a film.

In his highly theoretical *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*, Bill Nichols posits four modes of representation in documentary: expository, observational, interactive, and reflexive.¹³ While acknowledging that these modes can overlap, Nichols places Rubbo's work, along with that of some others, neatly into the interactive mode, apparently because Rubbo interacts with his subjects in front of the camera.¹⁴ He also says that such work is now untenable, because "what we learn in ... *Sad Song of Yellow Skin* or *Waiting for Fidel* is restricted to what Rubbo himself knows or learns since he places himself in the foreground as an inquiring presence."¹⁵ This observation seems to ignore that Rubbo also narrates his films and, like all filmmakers, edits them (or supervises the editing), where the ultimate power of representation lies. I don't know how a film can deliberately show more than the director knows. It is limiting to conceive of reflexivity merely in terms of a self-conscious avowal and questioning of the filmmaker's stratagems.

Films often contain token reflexivity, but showing the sound man now and then tells a modern audience nothing it doesn't already know. Disclosing how an event was discovered or shaped certainly does. Rubbo doesn't always disclose a contrivance. He presents his meeting with Robitaille at the Communist Party rally as if it were their first. The pretense hardly adds to the film. Rubbo could have said that he had arranged to meet Robitaille at the meeting, and still filmed himself making his way through the crowd and looking for him. Little or no substance would have been lost. Similarly, there seems to be no reason for Rubbo to have downplayed Daisy's association with the Film Board. Daisy's interaction with the man waiting with her in the doctor's office was set up, but it is amusing and in character. Occasionally, Rubbo's contrivances add amusement but not much else. The swarm of Corvettes in *Yes or No* is an example. Harmless deceits, perhaps, but if you're aware of them and are unfamiliar with Rubbo's body of work,

you might become suspicious that there could be greater ones. Having followed and studied his work for years, I believe there aren't any.

Reflexivity, when done sincerely and well, helps the viewer judge the validity of whatever view of reality a film presents. Unfortunately, it can also work as a disclaimer, giving the filmmaker license to go ahead and do what he wants with his subject. A nod toward reflexivity, or even extensive use of it, doesn't guarantee the reliability of a filmmaker's presentation of reality. Used extensively, it can turn narcissistic, revealing more about the filmmaker than his ostensible subject. Reflexivity has disappointed the hopes documentary theorists had placed in it. It is not a fail-safe key to assessing a film's representation of reality. There is no such key.

The question of documentary "truth" has vexed theorists, critics, and filmmakers themselves. The relation of a documentary to the reality it purports to depict is ineluctably problematic. It's now a commonplace that regardless of approach, the filmmaker to some extent fabricates a view of reality. Seeking to determine a well-made film's truthfulness by comparing it against some idea of the objective reality it depicts is a fool's errand for anyone but an absolute expert in that reality. Rubbo seems to have intuited this early in his career. And he began to invent a repertoire of reflexive strategies that may not be noticed as such because they are done naturally and without intellectual self-consciousness. With reference especially to *Waiting for Fidel*, Jeanette Sloniowski observed that "the idea of getting to 'the truth' becomes impossible in a Rubbo film."¹⁶ I trust documentary filmmakers who probe important but morally complex realities in search of truth but don't claim to have found it. Rubbo's films embody this attitude. The one common characteristic in the various techniques comprising Rubbo's documentary style is that each of them, in its way, undermines Rubbo's authority. For those who notice it, the painterly quality of his films acknowledges implicitly that his interpretation of reality is created from surfaces, or images. At this level, his interpretation is impressionistic. His often imaginative but distinctively self-deprecating reflexivity reveals his role in finding or shaping those images. His willingness to enter a situation without knowing how it might develop indicates an openness to experience that we often associate with significant art and literature. He'll even provoke reality by contriving situations likely

to bring out character. His occasional use of intermediaries further undermines any assumption that his films represent the views of an all-knowing director. When he and his film are only at the periphery of the real action, he acknowledges this implicitly or openly. His generosity to his characters resembles the empathy of a novelist, who can see the good and bad in people. Both literally and tonally, his own on-camera words and his voice-over narration imply uncertainty and often make explicit his doubts. And yet who, after watching any of his best films, can complain honestly of having learned nothing of importance about the subject at hand or the human condition? It's almost as if the reticence itself pulls back the veil on reality, revealing complexity and reinforcing uncertainty.

Reticence is an odd trait to accompany boldness; it is not often associated with the kind of personality that would put itself in the midst of the action as Rubbo does. His boldness probably owes something to his Australian origins. His reticence may have something to do with Canada. The documentaries that especially appealed to him as a film student, and which influenced his thesis film, were films made by the NFB's Unit B under Tom Daly's collaborative leadership. The Canadian critic Peter Harcourt's 1965 *Sight & Sound* essay on Unit B, "The Innocent Eye," noted that whatever the subject of a Unit B film, there was "something else as well, something not so easily defined ... a quality of suspended judgment, of something left open at the end, of something undecided."¹⁷ Those words could apply to Rubbo's documentaries. And they were, roughly twenty years later. Piers Handling, in disappointment, applied the phrase "suspended judgement" to Rubbo's later work up to 1984.¹⁸

It was Unit B's films that drew Rubbo to Montreal. When he got a job with the Film Board, the unit system had just been disbanded, but he gravitated to Tom Daly, and made his breakthrough, *Sad Song of Yellow Skin*, with Daly as his producer. But there's a surprising irony here. Harcourt made another acute observation about Unit B: the films were "so much the product of a group that the names [of the filmmakers] do not matter."¹⁹ From *Sad Song* on, Rubbo's best films were so much *not* the product of a group that the name of the director was what mattered most. Inserting himself into his films as a main, or even *the* main, protagonist was as contrary to the Unit B aesthetic as

could be. Harcourt had said of Unit B's personality that there "is something Canadian in all this."²⁰ And nothing Australian, one could add. And yet, despite his once-maligned but ultimately influential personal presence as narrator, participant, and instigator, Rubbo's films have a strong touch of that open-ended "quality of suspended judgment" that Harcourt saw in Unit B's best work.

Rubbo is of course not the only filmmaker of his generation who delivers insight without claiming to have discovered truth. Molly Dineen, Frederick Wiseman, and Errol Morris are three such filmmakers with a substantial body of work. Their styles are as distinct from one another's as they are from Rubbo's, but they each share Rubbo's openness to truth, and they each manifest that openness in their reluctance to tell the viewer what to think. All three are far better known than Rubbo. Documentary aficionados who are attracted to the intelligent open-endedness of their work likely would appreciate Rubbo's films as well. And younger filmmakers might benefit from seeing that it is possible to be personally involved in a documentary's storyline while remaining committed to the truth. Or better, to see that personal involvement and respect for truth can work in concert.

Michael Rubbo Filmography

(This list does not include films Rubbo has made and posted on YouTube; see below for a selected list of these titles.)

Adventures (1967)

Direction, script, editing. Cinematography: Igmarr Remmler. Producer: Nick Balla. NFB. 10 mins.

All About Olive (2005)

Direction, cinematography, production. Editor: Henion Han. The Helpful Eye. 55 mins.

Atwood and Family (1985)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Andreas Poulsson, Zoe Dirse. Coproduced with Barrie Howells. NFB. 30 mins.

Bate's Car: Sweet as a Nut (1974)

Production. Direction, cinematography: Tony Ianzuelo. Editor: Malca Gillson. NFB. 16 mins.

The Bear and the Mouse (1966)

Editing, narration. Direction, camera: F.W. Remmler, Igmarr Remmler. NFB. 8 mins.

Beware, Beware, My Beauty Fair (1972)

Production. Direction, editing: Jean Lafleur, Peter Svatek. Cinematography: Douglas Kiefer. NFB. 29 mins.

Cold Pizza (1972)

Production. Direction: Larry Kent. Cinematography: Savas Kalogeras. NFB. 19 mins.

Courage to Change (1986)

Coproduced with Tanya Tree. Direction: Tanya Tree. Editing: Hedy Dab. Cinematography: Kent Nason. NFB. 54 mins.

Daisy: The Story of a Facelift (1982)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Susan Trow. Coproduced with Giles Walker. NFB. 58 mins.

Here's to Harry's Grandfather (1970)

Direction. Cinematography: Tony Ianzelo. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB. 58 mins.

I Am an Old Tree (1975)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Andreas Poulsson. Coproduced with Tom Daly. NFB. 57 mins.

I Hate to Lose (1977)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Andreas Poulsson. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB. 57 mins.

Jalan, Jalan: A Journey in Sundanese Java (1973)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Paul Leach. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB. 20 mins.

Labour College (1966)

Narration. Director: Mort Ransen. Cinematography: Roger Racine. Editing: Alan Davis. Producers: John Howe and Morten Parker. NFB. 23 mins.

The Little Box That Sings (2000)

Cinematography, editing, narration, production. Codirected with Katherine Korolkevich-Rubbo. Editing: Geoffrey Wheeler. ABC. 55 mins.

Log House (1976)

Codirected with Andreas Poulsson. Cinematography: Andreas Poulsson. Editing: Les Halman. Producer: Roman Bittman. NFB. 28 mins.

The Long Haul Men (1966)

Direction. Cinematography: Tony Ianzelo. Editing: John Spotton. Narration: Stanley Jackson. Producer: John Kemeny. NFB. 17 mins.

The Man Who Can't Stop (1973)

Direction, editing, narration. Coedited with Graham Chase. Cinematography: Don McAlpine. Producers: Tom Daly and Richard Mason. NFB and Film Australia. 58 mins.

Margaret Atwood: Once in August (1984)

Direction, editing, narration. Coproduced with Barrie Howells. Cinematography: Andreas Poulsson and Zoe Dirse. NFB. 57 mins.

Mrs. Ryan's Drama Class (1969)

Direction. Cinematography: Tony Ianzelo, Paul Leach, and Martin Duckworth. Editing: Eddie Le Lorrain. Producers: Tom Daly and Cecily Burwash. NFB. 35 mins.

Much Ado About Something (2002)

Direction, cinematography, editing. Coproduced with Penelope McDonald. Editing: Jane St. Vincent Welch. ABC/WHBH/The Helpful Eye/Chili Films. 85 mins.

Not Far from Bolgatanga (1982)

Editing, narration. Codirected and coproduced with Barrie Howells. Cinematography: Fred Coleman. NFB for the Canadian International Development Agency. 28 mins.

OK . . . Camera (1972)

Direction. Cinematography: Eugene Boyko, Pierre Letarte, Jacques Forget, Claude Pelland, Cameron Gaul, and Simon Leblanc. Editing: Marie-Hélène Guillemin. NFB. 27 mins.

The Peanut Butter Solution (1985)

Direction. Writing: Vojtec Jasný, Andree Pelletier, Louise Pelletier, and Michael Rubbo. Cinematography: Thomas Vámos. Editing: Jean-Guy Montpetit. Production: Rock Demers, Jim Kaufman, and Nicole Robert. Productions La Fête. 94 mins.

Persistent and Finagling (1971)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Jean-Pierre Lachapelle. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB. 56 mins.

The Return of Tommy Tricker (1994)

Direction, writing. Cinematography: Thomas Vámos. Editing: Jean-Pierre Cereghetti. Producer: Rock Demers. Productions La Fête. 97 mins.

River (Planet Earth) 1977

Writing, editing. Director: Peter Raymont. Cinematography: Robert Humble. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB/Environment Canada. 28 mins

Sad Song of Yellow Skin (1970)

Direction, narration. Coedited with Torben Schioler. Cinematography: Martin Duckworth and Pierre Letarte. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB. 58 mins.

Sir! Sir! (1968)

Direction. Cinematography: Tony Ianzelo. Editing: Alan Davis. Producers: Cecily Burwash and Tom Daly. NFB. 20 mins.

Solzhenitsyn's Children . . . Are Making a Lot of Noise in Paris (1978)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Andreas Poulsson, Michael Edols, and Michel Thomas-d'Hoste. Producer: Martin Cannell. NFB. 87 mins.

The Streets of Saigon (1973)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Martin Duckworth. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB. 28 mins.

Summer's Nearly Over (1971)

Direction. Coedited with Eddie Le Lorrain. Cinematography: Tony Ianzelo. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB. 29 mins.

Temiscaming, Québec (1975)

Coedited with Martin Duckworth, Serge Giguère, Gérard Sénécal, and Ginny Stikeman. Direction and Cinematography: Martin Duckworth. Producers: Dorothy Todd Hénaut and Len Chatwin. NFB. 64 mins.

That Mouse (1967)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Igmarr Remmier. Producer: Nick Balla. NFB. 14 mins.

Tigers and Teddy Bears (1978)

Direction. Cinematography: Robert Humble and Andreas Poulsson. Editing: Torben Schioler. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB. 32 mins.

Tommy Tricker and the Stamp Traveller (1988)

Direction, writing. Cinematography: Andreas Poulsson. Editing: André Corriveau. Productions La Fête. 105 mins.

The True Source of Knowledge These Days (1965)

Direction, camera, editing, narration, production. Stanford University. 28 mins.

Vincent and Me (1990)

Direction, writing. Cinematography: Andreas Poulsson. Editing: André Corriveau. Producers: Rock Demers, Daniel Louis, Claude Nedjar. Productions La Fête. 100 mins.

Waiting for Fidel (1974)

Direction, editing, narration. Coproduced with Tom Daly. Cinematography: Douglas Kiefer. NFB. 58 mins.

The Walls Come Tumbling Down (1976)

Narration, editing. Codirected with Pierre Lasry and William Weintraub. Cinematography: Douglas Kiefer and Andreas Poulsson. NFB. 25 mins.

Wet Earth and Warm People (1971)

Direction, editing, narration. Cinematography: Paul Leach. Producer: Tom Daly. NFB. 59 mins.

Yes or No, Jean-Guy Moreau (1979)

Direction, narration. Cinematography: Pierre Letarte. Editing: Tina Viljoen. Producers: Judith Vecchione, Tina Viljoen, and Barrie Howells. NFB in co-production with WGBH-TV Boston. 58 mins.

Michael Rubbo YouTube Films

[Selected]

An Artist of Malacca (2013)

Avoca Beach Theatre: Our Little Treasure (2012)

Bicycle Art Drawing (2012)

Bicycle Art Drawing: Part Two (2012)

Bike It Or Not (2010)

Bike Share and Helmets Don't Mix? (2009)

Bike Share for Fremantle? (2010)

Classical Australian Regional Cinemas (2013)

Councillor on a Bike (2010)

Electric Bikes—The Great Electric Bike Comparison (2009)

The Inlet Cinema (2013)

Maggie Chiou Here on Show (2013)

The Man Who Swam Away (2010–2014)

Melbourne Bike Share in Trouble? (2010)

Message to Melbourne from Dublin Bikes (2010)

No Bike Mirror . . . Suicidal? (2014)

No Helmet, Please (2009)

Olive Sees a Shark (2008)

Olive Sings a Song About Katie (2007)

Parking Woes at Avoca Beach (2014)

The Regal Reborn (2014)

Someone Peed on the Fish (2008)

Sue Abbot Fights Bike Helmets (2009)

Supporting Julian Assange (2010)

Swanpool Magic: Community Cinema at Its Best (2013)

A Taste of Avoca (2012)

Notes

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Piers Handling, "The Diary Films of Michael Rubbo," in *Take Two: A Tribute to Film in Canada*, ed. Seth Feldman (Toronto: Irwin, 1984), 215.
- 2 *International Encyclopedia of Film*, ed. Ian Aitken (New York: Routledge, 2006), vol. 3, s.v.v. "Sad Song of Yellow Skin," "Waiting for Fidel."
- 3 D. B. Jones, *The Best Butler in the Business: Tom Daly of the National Film Board of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) and *Movies and Memoranda: An Interpretive History of the National Film Board of Canada* (Ottawa: Deneau, 1981); Gary Evans, *In the National Interest: A Chronicle of the National Film Board of Canada from 1949 to 1989* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

1 | LEARNING THE CRAFT

- 1 Raymond Bellour, "Psychosis, Neurosis, Perversion," in *A Hitchcock Reader*, ed. Marshall Deutelbaum and Leland Pogue (Iowa City: Iowa State University Press, 1986), 311–331.

2 | MAKING IT PERSONAL

- 1 John Balaban, *Remembering Heaven's Face: A Story of Rescue in Wartime Vietnam* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2002), 183, 231, 281.
- 2 John Steinbeck IV and Nancy Steinbeck, *The Other Side of Eden* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2001), 291–296.
- 3 Michael Rubbo, "Remembering Tom," *Point of View Magazine*, Winter 2011, n.p.
- 4 Handling, "The Diary Films of Mike Rubbo," *Cinema Canada*, October 1977, 35.

4 | FILMMAKER FRONT AND CENTER

- 1 D. B. Jones, "On Rubbo: The Man in the Picture," *Lumiere*, April 1973, 8–9.

6 | HOW IT WORKS

- 1 Ray Argyle, *Joey Smallwood: Schemer and Dreamer* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2012), 19. Unless otherwise noted, all further references to Smallwood are drawn from Argyle's book.
- 2 Argyle, *Joey Smallwood*, 144.
- 3 Joey Smallwood, *I Chose Canada: The Memoirs of the Honourable Joseph R. "Joey" Smallwood* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973).
- 4 Jeannette Sloniowski, "Performing the Master Narratives: Michael Rubbo's *Waiting for Fidel*," in *Candid Eyes: Essays on Canadian Documentaries*, ed. Jim Leach and Jeannette Sloniowski (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 105.
- 5 Trish FitzSimons, Pat Laughren, and Dugald Williamson, *Australian Documentary: History, Practices and Genres* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 166–167.
- 6 Alan Rosenthal, "*Sad Song of Yellow Skin* and *Waiting for Fidel*: Interview with Michael Rubbo," in *The Documentary Conscience: A Casebook in Film Making*, ed. Alan Rosenthal (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 244.

7 | WHERE THE ACTION ISN'T

- 1 René Lévesque, *An Option for Quebec* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968), 7.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 27.
- 3 Daniel Poliquin, *René Lévesque* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2009), 119.
- 4 This recap is drawn from Graham Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2001), 54–63.
- 5 Handling, "The Diary Films of Mike Rubbo," 38.
- 6 Handling, "The Diary Films of Michael Rubbo," 213.
- 7 Fraser, *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois*, xlvii.
- 8 Poliquin, *René Lévesque*, 145.

8 | SOMETHING'S HAPPENING

- 1 Timothy Erwin, John L. Sutton, and Bill Monroe, "Introduction," *Chicago Review* 32, no. 3, "The French New Philosophers" (1981): 5.
- 2 John Hughes, "Michael Rubbo: Hiding Behind the 'I,'" *Cinema Papers*, January-February 1981, 44.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 45.
- 4 Jonathan Dawson, "*Solzhenitsyn's Children ... Are Making a Lot of Noise in Paris*," *Senses of Cinema* 35 (April 2005), http://sensesofcinema.com/2005/35/solzhenitsyns_children/ (accessed 14 July 2016).

9 | FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

- 1 Joan Nicks, "The Documentary of Displaced Persona: Michael Rubbo's *Daisy: The Story of a Facelift*" in *Documenting the Documentary*, ed. Barry K. Grant and Jeannette Sloniowski (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 302.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 314.

10 | LONG SHOTS

- 1 Handling, "The Diary Films of Michael Rubbo," 215.
- 2 *Ibid.*

11 | A BREAK FROM "REALITY"

- 1 Steve Dobi, "Who's Who in Filmmaking: Mike Rubbo," *Sightlines*, Fall 1978, 20.
- 2 Michael Rubbo, "Love and Life in Children's Films," *Take One* 1, no. 7 (1967): 20.
- 3 Art Gallery of New South Wales, *Antonio Dattilo Rubbo*, Sidney, 2011, <http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/education/online-catalogues/antonio-dattilo-rubbo/> (accessed 17 July 2016).
- 4 National Film Board of Canada, *Michael Rubbo: The Man and His Films* (Montreal: National Film Board of Canada, n.d.).

12 | NEW TOOLS OF THE TRADE

- 1 Geoff Burton, "The Man Behind the Picture: An Interview with Mike Rubbo," in *Second Take: Australian Film-makers Talk*, ed. Raffaele Caputo and Geoff Burton (St. Leonard's, AU: Allen & Unwin, 1999), 193.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 204.
- 3 "A Bard in the Hand? An Interview with Michael Rubbo," *Frontline*, WG-BH-Boston, 9 December 2002, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muchado/etc/rubbo.html> (accessed 19 July 2016).
- 4 *Ibid.*
- 5 Burton, "The Man Behind the Picture," 212.
- 6 Stanley Kaufmann, "On Films: Examined Lives," *New Republic Online*, 25 February 2002, <https://newrepublic.com/article/66143/examined-lives> (accessed 19 July 2016).
- 7 John Hartley, "Problems of expertise and scalability in self-made media," in *Digital Storytelling, Mediatized Stories: Self-representation in New Media*, ed. Knut Lundby (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 205.

- 1 Jones, *The Best Butler in the Business*, 228–229.
- 2 Rosenthal, “Interview with Michael Rubbo,” 236.
- 3 Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, ed. Clifford Geertz (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 29.
- 4 Roger Scruton, “Scientism in the Humanities,” in *Scientism: The New Orthodoxy*, ed. Richard N. Williams and Daniel N. Robinson (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 142.

CONCLUSION

- 1 Roger Ebert, *Roger Ebert’s Four Star Reviews—1967–2007* (Kansas City, Missouri: Andrews McMeel, 2007), 651–652.
- 2 Nick Broomfield, “Five documentaries that broke the mould,” *The Independent* (London), 31 October 2008.
- 3 Jon Dovey, *Freakshow: First Person Media and Factual Television* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 32–33.
- 4 Dave Saunders, *Documentary* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 73.
- 5 Darrell Varga, *John Walker’s Passage* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 63–64.
- 6 Brian McFarlane, Geoff Mayer, and Ina Bertran, eds., *The Oxford Companion to Australian Film* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- 7 Stella Bruzzi, *New Documentary* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
- 8 Bill Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 1.
- 9 Brian Winston, *Lies, Damned Lies, and Documentaries* (London: British Film Institute, 2000), 158.
- 10 “Jean Rouch Interviewed by James Blue,” in *Imagining Reality: The Faber Book of Documentary*, ed. Kevin MacDonald and Mark Cousins (Boston: Faber and Faber, 1998), 268–269.
- 11 Burton, “An Interview with Mike Rubbo,” 202.
- 12 David A. Goldsmith, *The Documentary Makers: Interviews with 15 of the Best in the Business* (East Sussex, UK: Sheridan House, 2003), 26.
- 13 Bill Nichols, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 43–47.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 47.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 119.

- 16 Sloniowski, "Performing the Master Narratives," 107.
- 17 Peter Harcourt, "The Innocent Eye," *Sight & Sound* 34, no. 1 (Winter 1965): 21.
- 18 Handling, "The Diary Films of Michael Rubbo," 215.
- 19 Harcourt, "The Innocent Eye," 21.
- 20 Ibid.

Works Cited

- Aitken, Ian, ed. *International Encyclopedia of Film*, Vol. 3. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Argyle, Ray. *Joey Smallwood: Schemer and Dreamer*. Toronto: Dundurn, 2012.
- Art Gallery of New South Wales. Antonio Dattilo Rubbo. Sidney, 2011.
<http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/education/online-catalogues/antonio-dattilo-rubbo/>.
- Balaban, John. *Remembering Heaven's Face: A Story of Rescue in Wartime Vietnam*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2002.
- Bellour, Raymond. "Psychosis, Neurosis, Perversion." In *A Hitchcock Reader*, edited by Marshall Deutelbaum and Leland Pogue, 311–331. Iowa City: Iowa State University, 1986.
- Broomfield, Nick. "Five documentaries that broke the mould." *The Independent* (London), 31 October 2008.
- Bruzzi, Stella. *New Documentary*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Burton, Geoff. "The Man Behind the Picture: An Interview with Mike Rubbo." In *Second Take: Australian Film-makers Talk*, edited by Raffaele Caputo and Geoff Burton, 193–214. St. Leonard's, AU: Allen & Unwin, 1999.
- Dawson, Jonathan. "Solzhenitsyn's Children . . . Are Making a Lot of Noise in Paris." *Senses of Cinema* 35 (April 2005). http://sensesofcinema.com/2005/35/solzhenitsyns_children/.
- Dobi, Steve. "Who's Who in Filmmaking: Mike Rubbo." *Sightlines*, Fall 1978, 17–20.

- Dovey, Jon. *Freakshow: First Person Media and Factual Television*. London: Pluto Press, 2000.
- Ebert, Roger. *Roger Ebert's Four Star Reviews—1967–2007*. Kansas City, MO: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2007.
- Erwin, Timothy, John L. Sutton, and Bill Monroe. "Introduction." *Chicago Review* 32, no. 3. "The French Philosophers." (1981): 5–10.
- Evans, Gary. *In the National Interest: A Chronicle of the National Film Board of Canada from 1949 to 1989*. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1991.
- FitzSimons, Trish, Pat Laughren, and Dugald Williamson. *Australian Documentary: History, Practices and Genres*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Fraser, Graham. *René Lévesque and the Parti Québécois in Power*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2001.
- Frontline*. "A Bard in the Hand? An Interview with Michael Rubbo." WGBH-Boston, 9 December 2002. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muchado/etc/rubbo.html>.
- Geertz, Clifford. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." In *The Interpretation of Cultures*, edited by Clifford Geertz, 3–30. New York: Basic Books, 1973.
- Goldsmith, David A. *The Documentary Makers: Interviews with 15 of the Best in the Business*. East Sussex, UK: Sheridan House, 2003.
- Handling, Piers. "The Diary Films of Mike Rubbo." *Cinema Canada*, October 1977, 32–39.
- . "The Diary Films of Michael Rubbo." In *Take Two: A Tribute to Film in Canada*, edited by Seth Feldman, 205–216. Toronto: Irwin, 1984.
- Harcourt, Peter. "The Innocent Eye." *Sight & Sound*, 34, no.1 (Winter 1965): 19–23.
- Hartley, John. "Problems of expertise and scalability in self-made media." In *Digital Storytelling, Mediatized Stories: Self-representations in New Media*, edited by Knut Lundby, 192–212. New York: Peter Lang, 2008.
- Hughes, John. "Michael Rubbo: Hiding Behind the 'I.'" *Cinema Papers*, January-February 1981, 41–45, 81.

- “Jean Rouch Interviewed by James Blue.” In *Imagining Reality: The Faber Book of Documentary*, edited by Kevin MacDonald and Mark Cousins, 268–270. Boston: Faber and Faber, 1998.
- Jones, D. B. *The Best Butler in the Business: Tom Daly of the National Film Board of Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996.
- . *Movies and Memoranda: An Interpretive History of the National Film Board of Canada*. Ottawa: Deneau, 1981.
- . “On Rubbo: The Man in the Picture.” *Lumiere*, April 1973, 8–15.
- Kauffmann, Stanley. “On Films: Examined Lives.” *The New Republic Online*, 25 February 2002. <https://newrepublic.com/article/66143/examined-lives>.
- Lévesque, René. *An Option for Quebec*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968.
- McFarlane, Brian, Geoff Mayer, and Ina Bertrand, eds. *The Oxford Companion to Australian Film*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- National Film Board of Canada. *Michael Rubbo: The Man and His Films* (pamphlet). Montreal: NFB, n.d.
- Nicks, Joan. “The Documentary of Displaced Persona: Michael Rubbo’s Daisy: The Story of a Facelift.” In *Documenting the Documentary*, edited by Barry K. Grant and Jeannette Sloniowski, 302–317. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998.
- Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.
- . *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.
- Poliquin, Daniel. *René Lévesque*. Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2009.
- Rosenthal, Alan. “Sad Song of Yellow Skin and Waiting for Fidel: Interview with Michael Rubbo.” In *The Documentary Conscience: A Casebook in Film Making*, edited by Alan Rosenthal, 232–244. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.
- Rubbo, Michael. “Love and Life in Children’s Films.” *Take One* 1, no.7 (1967): 20–22.
- . “Remembering Tom.” *Point of View Magazine*, Winter 2011, n.p.
- Saunders, Dave. *Documentary*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Index

A

Abbot, Sue, 194–95
Act of Killing, The, 211–12, 215
Addiego, Walter, 124
Adoteye, Matthew, 142
Adventures, 17
Albania, 112
Algeria, 115, 118
Alinsky, Saul, 10–11
All About Olive, 185–90, 191, 216
American Public Broadcasting Service, 139
Andrieu, René, 108, 117
Anka, Paul, 14–16
Anselme, Daniel, 114–15, 122, 124, 125
Apu Trilogy, *The*, 7
Arcand, Denys, 55
Artist of Malacca, An, 192
As You Like It, 184
Atwood, Margaret, 143–50, 164, 166, 198, 203. *See also* *Atwood and Family*; *Margaret Atwood: Once in August*
Atwood and Family, 143, 149–50
Auf der Maur, Nick, 89–93, 98, 101, 214
Aurore, L', 102
Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), 64, 169–72, 179, 189
Australian Documentary: History, Practices, and Genres, 80, 213
Australian Film Commission, 177
Australian Film Finance Corporation, 177, 189–90

Australian National Film, Television, and Radio School, 1, 139–40, 169
Autogestion, 114
Avoca Beach Theatre: Our Little Treasure, 193
Ayise, Florence, 207

B

Back-breaking Leaf, The, 9
Bagby, Andrew, 211
Balaban, John, 29
barbarie a visage humain, La, 105
Bear and the Mouse, The, 17
Bélisle, Lionel, 85–86
Bellour, Raymond, 14
Bethune, 9
Biggs, Julian, 73
Bike Share and Helmets Don't Mix, 193
Bill 101, 89
Blaker, Rod, 39–45, 147, 214
Bliss, Charles, 64
Blue, James, 216
Boafo, Sam, 142
Board. *See* National Film Board of Canada.
Bochner, Sally (as Sally), 38, 39
Bonvalet, Douceline, 103
Bourassa, Robert, 87, 88, 90, 93
Bowling for Columbine, 206

Breitrose, Henry, 9, 14
Brittain, Donald, 22, 24
Broken Hill, 185–57
Broomfield, Nick, 206–8, 212, 214, 218
Broyelle, Claudie, 113–14, 120
Broyelle, Jacques, 113–14
Bruzzi, Stella, 213
Bujold, Genevieve, 55
Burton, Geoff, 170–71, 184, 217

C

Caine, Rick, 167
Caldersmith, Graeme, 173
Calment, Jeanne Louise, 163
Cambodia, 110, 112
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
(CBC), 34–35, 53, 64, 77, 79–80,
123, 139–40
Canadian International Development
Agency, 140, 142
Candid Eye series, 14
Caouette, Jonathan, 209–10, 214
Carretier, Marie-Pierre, 103
Cars That Ate Paris, The, 62–63
Castro, Fidel, 65, 69, 74–75, 80; Castro
and Honecker, 74–75
Chaliand, Gerard, 118–19
Chase, Graham, 62–64
Chekhov, Anton, 181
Chicago Review, 100
China, 112–14
Chiou, Maggie, 192
Chirac, Jacques, 109
Christopher's Movie Matinee, 154
Chronicle of a Summer, 216
Churchill, Joan, 207, 218
Churchill's Island, 199
Cilento, Diane, 176
Cinema Papers, 122
City of Gold, 9
Clark, Dick, 206
Closing Circle, The, 38
Coconut Monk, the, 28, 33–34
Coleman, Fred, 142

Collerton, Emma, 164
Commoner, Barry, 38–39
Congo, Anwar, 212
Corral, 9
Councillor on a Bike, 193
La Course Tour du Monde, 169
La cuisiniere et let mangeur d'hommes, 105
Czechoslovakian uprising of 1968, 106–7,
116

D

Daisy: The Story of a Facelift, 131–41, 147,
151, 219
Daly, Tom, 5, 14, 16, 21, 22–23, 31, 64,
76, 81, 154, 171, 199–201, 221;
Daly's aesthetic, 199–201; influence
on Rubbo, 31, 199–201
Daniel, Jean, 111–12
Dawson, Jonathan, 124–25
Day After Day, 9
*Dear Zachary: A Letter to a Son About His
Father*, 211
De Bellefeuille, Daisy, 131–40
Decalogue, 87
Demers, Rock, 155
Denby, David, 77–79
Descartes, 108
Deuxieme retour de Chine, 113
Digital Storytelling, Mediatized Stories, 190
Dineen, Molly, 206–7, 217–18, 222
Dispatch News Service, 23
Divine Comedy, The, 116
Dobi, Steve, 153–54
Documentary, 212
*Documentary Conscience: A Casebook in
Filmmaking, The*, 83
Dong, Pham Van, 82
Dovey, John, 208
Drapeau, Jean 38
Drexel University, 4
Drifters, 140

E

Ebert, Roger, 206
Eder, Richard, 79
Electric Bikes—The Great Electric Bike Comparison, 196

Elleinstein, Jean, 108, 109

Elton, Arthur, 206

Erhart, Steve, 23, 27, 29–32, 56

Erlich, Paul, 47

Evans, Gary, 5

Every Day Except Christmas, 140

F

Fahrenheit 9/11, 206

Fainberg, Viktor, 107

Fairhead, Harold “Shorty,” 89–91, 93, 98

Faye, Jean–Pierre, 106

Le Figaro, 102

Film Australia, 57–58, 64, 189

Film Board. *See* National Film Board of Canada

Film Forum, 78–79, 123

FitzSimmons, Trish, 80

Fournier, Guy, 132

Fox, Josh, 210, 214

Fracknation, 210

Fraser, Graham, 97

French Communist Party, 110

Fristacky, Jackie, 193

Frontline (WGBH–TV), 139, 177, 182–84

G

Gadd, Charmian, 172–74, 176

Garatchi, John, 142

Garcia, Jerry, 13

Gasland, 210

Geertz, Clifford, 202–3

Gibson, Graeme, 144

Gimme Shelter, 140

Glucksmann, André, 105, 109–11

Goldsmith, David, 218

Grande, Doctor, 82–83

Grey Gardens, 140

Grierson, John, 9

Grierson Seminar (1978), 121–22, 124

Grin Without a Cat, A, 123

Guernica, 116

Gulag Archipelago, The, 99, 105, 116

H

Handling, Piers, 1, 34, 94, 96–97, 150–51, 221

Harcourt, Peter, 221–22

Harlan County U.S.A., 140

Hart, Roger, 16

Hartley, John, 190

Harvard University, 154

Hatch, Robert, 124

Hawes, Stanley, 57

Heart of the Angel, 217

Hearts and Minds, 34, 35, 140

Her African Farm, 217

Here's to Harry's Grandfather, 19–20

Hersh, Seymour, 23

Hoberman, J, 123–34

Hoengeng, General, 49, 51–52

Hoffman, Calvin, 176, 177

Home from the Hills, 206, 217–18

Honecker, Erich, 74, 75, 80

Hoover Institute, 101

Housing Problems, 206

How to Build an Igloo, 51

Howells, Barrie, 140, 142

Hughes, Dick, 23, 26, 27, 29, 31, 56

Hughes, John, 122

Humanité, L', 102, 108, 111

I

I Am an Old Tree, 81–83, 99

I Chose Canada, 73

I Hate to Lose, 87–97, 101, 127

Ianzuelo, Tony, 16

In The Company of Men, 217

Indonesia, 7, 47–54, 211–12

Inn, Tham Siew, 192

International Encyclopedia of the Documentary Film, 4

Introduction to Documentary, 216
Island of Peace, 23, 25, 28, 33–34, 56

J

Jackson, Stanley, 16, 17
Jalan, Jalan: A Journey in Sundanese Java,
56–57
Janes, Barbara, 79
Johnston, John, 172, 173
Jutra, Claude, 55

K

Kant, 108
Karyo, Tchéky, 162
Kauffmann, Stanley, 185
Kennedy, John, 83
Khmer Rouge, 99, 110
Kieslowski, Krzysztof, 87
King Lear, 116
Klein, Bonnie Sher, 9–10
Koenig, Wolf, 16
Koestler (Arthur), 116
Kolyma, 116
Korolkevich, Katherine, 171, 177
Kravchenko (Victor), 116
Kroitor, Roman, 16

L

La Trobe University, 4
Lacanians, 119
Lasry, Pierre, 86
Lavater, Johann Kaspar, 134
Leader, His Driver and the Driver's Wife,
The, 207, 218
Legg, Stuart, 199–200
Lévesque, René, 87–88, 93–97, 127, 136
Lévy, Bernard-Henri, 105, 115–18, 123,
124
Liberal Party, 87–89
Life of Riley, The (blog), 190
Listen to Britain, 140
Little Box That Sings, The, 171–76, 181, 182

Little Fellow from Gambo, A, 73
Log House, 85–86
London, Artur, 107, 124
Lonely Boy, 9; influence on Rubbo, 14–16,
40
Long Haul Men, The, 16
Longinotto, Kim, 207
Low, Colin, 16, 76, 171
Lumiere, 4, 53

M

MacLennan, Hugh, 127–28
Maggie Chiou on Show, 192
Mallet, Marilu, 114
Man of Aran, 140
Manufacturing Dissent, 167, 205
Man Who Can't Stop, The, 57–64, 66
Man Who Swam Away, The, 192
Man Who Was "Shakespeare," The, 176–77
Mao Tse-tung, 112–14
Marchais, Georges, 102, 114, 120
Margaret Atwood: Once in August, 143–49,
151, 203
Marker, Chris, 123
Marlowe, Christopher, 177, 178
Marsellaise, La, 109
Marxism. Marxism-Leninism, 99–100,
108, 115–17, 122–23
Maslin, Janet, 123
Matin, Le, 102, 111
"May '68," 100, 110
McAlear, Phelim, 210, 214
McElwee, Ross, 208–9, 213–14
McGill University, 97
McWilliams, Don, 121–22
Measure for Measure, 184
Melbourne Bike Share in Trouble?, 195–96
Melbourne International Film Festival
(1972), 53
Melnik, Debbie, 167
Memorandum, 9, 22, 24
Message to Melbourne from Dublin Bikes,
196
Michael Rubbo: The Man and His Films,
166

Mitterand, François, 120
Moir, Bruce, 64
moitié du ciel, La, 113–14
Momma Don't Allow, 140
Monde, Le, 102
Montague, Andrew, 196
Montreal Gazette, 53
Montreal Star, 53
Moore, Michael, 167, 205–6, 208, 210,
212, 213, 214
Moreau, Jean-Guy, 127–31, 135–36,
214–15
Morin, Edgar, 216
Morris, Errol, 222
Mrs. Ryan's Drama Class, 17–18, 22–23
Much Ado About Something, 177–85, 188
Museum of Modern Art, 125

N

Nanook of the North, 140
Nation, The, 124
National Film Board of Canada (NFB;
Film Board; Board), 1, 4, 9–11,
14–15, 78–79, 129, 131–32,
138–40, 199–200; Challenge for
Change, 10–11; founding and man-
date, 9–10; New York office, 78–79;
structural change in mid-1960s,
21–22; Studio D, 138; Unit B,
14–15, 21, 221–22; World War II
era, 199–200
Nelson, Willie, 137
New Documentary, 213
New Republic, The, 185
New York Times, 79, 123
Newfoundland, 67–68, 73; confederation,
67–68; Liberal Party leadership
convention of 1969, 73
NFB. *See* National Film Board of Canada.
Nice Time, 140
Nichols, Bill, 216, 219
Nicks, Joan, 138
Night Mail, 140
Nixon, Richard, 34–35

No Bike Mirror ... Suicidal, 196
No Helmet, Please!, 194
North Korea, 112
Not a Love Story, 11
Not Far from Bolgatanga, 140–42

O

O Dreamland, 140
OK . . . Camera, 55
Olympia, 140
Oppenheimer, Joshua, 211, 214
Option for Quebec, An, 87–88
Ottawa Citizen, 53
Oxford Companion to Australian Film, The,
213

P

Pacific Film Archives, 123
Page, Asmira Woodward, 172, 175
Palestinian resistance, 118
Paris Commune of 1871, 105–6
Parisien, Le, 102
Park, Suzie, 174–75
Parti Québécois, 87–89, 93, 96–97
Passage, 210–11, 215
Patrushev, Pyotr, 192
Peanut Butter Solution, The, 155–56, 158,
164
Persistent and Finagling, 37–45, 47–49, 53,
57, 58, 66, 147, 214
Photographic Memory, 209
Picasso, 181
Plato, 108
Poliquin, Daniel, 88, 97
Population Bomb, The, 47
Prague Spring, 116
Presse, La, 102

Q

quotidien du peuple, Le, 102

R

Race Around the World, 169–70, 179

Ransen, Mort, 154

Ray, Satyajit, 7–9

Remembering Heaven's Face, 29

Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary, 219

Return of Tommy Tricker, The, 155, 158–60, 163

Riley, Olive, 185–90

Robitaille, Louis-Bernard, 101–121, 122, 147, 219

Roger & Me, 167, 205–6, 212

Romeo and Juliet (Zeffirelli film), 177

Rosenthal, Alan, 83, 201

Rouch, Jean, 216

Rubbo, Antonio Dattilo, 164–65

Rubbo, Michael: artworks, 197–99; children's films at the NFB, 17–20, 153–54; children's films with Rock Demers, 154–66; digital film-making, 170–90; documentary criteria, 170, 184–85; doubt, 25–26, 83–84, 122; early travels, 7–9; exchange of valuables, 144, 170, 217; masks, 136–38, 147; meeting Satyajit Ray, 7–9; narration, 3, 20, 180–81, 203; on-camera argument with Geoff Stirling, 73–75; painterliness, 148, 197–203, 213–14; paper edits, 179–80; stamp collecting, 7, 163–64, 165; at Stanford, 9–16; use of intermediaries, 25, 28–29; YouTube films, 191–97

Rylance, Mark, 181

S

Sad Song of Yellow Skin, 23–35, 37, 47, 48, 53, 56, 78, 95, 96, 97, 147, 149, 213, 215, 219, 221

Salesman, 140

San Francisco Chronicle, 124

San Francisco Examiner, 124

Sartre, Jean-Paul, 102

Saunders, Dave, 212

Savio, Mario, 12

Schaffer, Tony, 176

Scone, Australia, 194

Scourby, Alexander, 22

Scruton, Roger, 202

Sedikin, Ali, 51

“September Song,” 137

Senses of Cinema, 124–25

Shakespeare in Love, 177

Sherman's March, 208–9

Shulman, Sheila, 38–39, 41–44

Sight & Sound, 221

Sightlines, 153–54

Silicon Valley, 12

Sir! Sir!, 18, 19

Sisters in Law, 207

Slánský, Rudolf, 107

Sloniowski, Jeanette, 77, 220

Smallwood, Joey, 65–77, 147, 214; his political rise, 67–68; rejection by the students, 73

Society to Overcome Pollution (STOP), 37–45

Soho Weekly News, 124

Soldier Girls, 207, 218

Sollers, Philippe, 108–9

Solzhenitsyn, Alexander, 99–101, 105, 107, 114, 116, 119, 131

Solzhenitsyn's Children ... Are Making a Lot of Noise in Paris, 1, 99–125, 127, 147, 149, 150, 166, 176, 202, 213

Song of Ceylon, 140

Springate George, 89–91, 93–95, 98

Spurlock, Morgan, 209, 214

Stanford University 4, 9–15, 45, 101; film program, 4, 9–15

Steinbeck, John IV, 23, 28, 29, 31, 33–34, 56

Stirling, Geoff, 65–77, 147, 214

Stone, Judy, 124

STOP (Society to Overcome Pollution), 37–45

Stradivari, Antonia, 173

Stratton, David, 63

Streets of Saigon, The, 56

Structuralists, 119

Sue Abbot Fights Bike Helmets, 194
Summer's Nearly Over, 20
Supersize Me, 209
Surfacing, 143, 144
Survival, 145
Sutton, Francis, 59–63
Sutton, Joan, 59–63
Sydney Film Festival (1974), 62–63

T

Tagore, Rabindranath, 8
Tagore, Sharmila, 8
Take One, 154
Tarnation, 209–10
Taubin, Amy, 124
Terre-Blanche, Eugene, 207
Thatcher, Margaret, 207–8
That Mouse, 17
Tigers and Teddy Bears, 97–98
Titicut Follies, 206
Tommy Tricker and the Stamp Traveller,
155, 156–58
Tracking Down Maggie, 207–8, 218
Triumph of the Will, 140
Trong, Tran Hu, 25, 27
True Source of Knowledge These Days, The,
11–14, 16, 32, 95–96
Two Solitudes, 127–28

V

Vatiliotis, Harry, 171–76
Van Gogh, Vincent, 161–63, 166, 201
Varga, Darrell, 212
Vermeer, 201
Vietnam, 12, 23–45, 56, 82, 99, 106, 110,
112, 115, 116, 118
Village Voice, The, 123–24
Vincent and Me, 155, 161–63, 166, 201

W

Wainwright, Rufus, 159
Waiting for Fidel, 1, 4, 65–81, 85, 95, 96,
111, 121, 147, 167, 191, 205, 206,
211–15, 219, 220
Walker, John, 210–11, 214
Walker-Wraight, Dolly, 178, 179, 181
Walls Come Tumbling Down, The, 86–87
Webb, Ken, 38, 39
Weintraub, William, 86
Weir, Peter, 62, 63
Weisbord, Merrily, 145, 149
Welch, Jane St. Vincent, 180
Westmount, 87–97
Westmount Examiner, 93
Wet Earth and Warm People, 47–54, 56,
58, 66, 78, 95, 147, 149
WGBH-TV Boston, 128, 139, 155, 177,
182–84
Winston, Brian, 216, 218
Wiseman, Frederick, 206, 222
World of Apu, The, 8

Y

Yes or No, Jean-Guy Moreau, 127–31, 132,
135–36, 138–39, 147, 176, 219
YouTube, 167, 191–97, 202

Vietnam. Margaret Atwood. Plastic surgery. No matter the subject, when Michael Rubbo films it, his unique directorial vision is embedded in each frame. In *The Documentary Art of Michael Rubbo*, D. B. Jones reveals the development of Rubbo's innovative, personal, lyric, and spontaneous documentary style, from Rubbo's early career at the National Film Board of Canada, to his work as an executive with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, to his personal films for YouTube. In exploring this wide ranging body of film, D. B. Jones shows us not only the depth of Rubbo's films, but the depth of their influence on documentary filmmaking itself.

D. B. Jones has written, directed, or produced documentary films for American public broadcasting, Film Australia, Dutch National Television, and others. Jones is Distinguished Professor of Film at Drexel University, and has taught at La Trobe and Stanford. He is the author of *Movies and Memoranda: An Interpretive History of the National Film Board of Canada* (1982) and *The Best Butler in the Business: Tom Daly and the National Film Board of Canada* (1996).



Nobody knows the NFB like D. B. Jones, and nobody writes about documentary like him either. This is a terrific book: punchy, detailed, and eye-opening.

— JERRY WHITE, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR & CANADA RESEARCH CHAIR IN EUROPEAN STUDIES, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

Michael Rubbo brought to documentary filmmaking ... the voice of a filmmaker who *entered* the reality he was recording – doing so with unfailingly intellectual curiosity, good humor, and compassion. Rubbo's films ... underscore the importance of cultural and political differences. But more importantly, they allow us to appreciate those profound aspects of our shared humanity.

—KAREN COOPER, DIRECTOR, FILM FORUM (NYC)



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
Press

press.ucalgary.ca