



**2004 FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL
SOCIETY FOR VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY
ATLANTA, DECEMBER 15-18**

Jean Rouch Award in Visual Anthropology

The Wild East: Portrait of an Urban Nomad. 2002. 54 min. Color. Michael Haslund-Christensen, dir. Distributed by First Run Icarus Films, 32 Court St. Brooklyn, NY 11201. (www.frif.com)

MARK LIECHTY

University of Illinois at Chicago

Somewhere between documentary, ethnographic film, and cinema verité, Michael Haslund-Christensen's *The Wild East* is a film that is hard to pigeonhole but is well worth watching. The film introduces us to Jenya, a middle-class Mongolian man in his early twenties. We follow him around Mongolia's capital Ulaan Bator as he, his friends, and family eke out a living in the city's shaky postsocialist economy. With no voiceover narration, no facts and figures, and almost no text on the screen aside from subtitled conversations, the characters in the film simply go about their day-to-day lives and viewers are left on their own to figure out film's meaning. Shot in black and white, across the backdrop of a bleak postindustrial landscape swirling with the drifting snow, steam, and smoke of a bitter cold Ulaan Bator winter, the film has an edgy, visually stunning, and, at times, almost surreal quality (see Figure 1). The result is an understated but powerful film that captures something of the tension between the vivid dreams and dreary realities of young people in so many parts of the "non-industrial world."

One of the film's strengths is its collagelike presentation of scenes from the life of a city. Grim Soviet-era apartment blocks, a throbbing but decrepit urban infrastructure, swirling traffic, cigarette kiosks and street markets, road crews chipping ice off frozen streets, Buddhist monks engaged in ritual debate, steaming manholes on the streets,

truckloads of frozen animal hides and carcasses, TV reports of a rash of stolen winter hats, and thickly bundled young men leaning over ranks of open-air pool tables, their breaths steaming under the street lights. By continuously juxtaposing what to a Western viewer is familiar and "exotic," the film comes as close as any to capturing the experience of an alternative modernity.

This same sense of both recognition and distance comes through in the film's depiction of Jenya. The film opens in a dingy hospital waiting room where Jenya learns that he is a father. Home for Jenya, his girlfriend, and their infant daughter is Jenya's parent's small flat. Jenya's father is half Russian and looks back longingly to the days of socialism, before his "plans and dreams" were "ruined by democracy." For Jenya the new market economy offers far more choices but with much less security. Indeed, Jenya's quest for money is the film's main narrative strand. We follow Jenya and his friend Sasha as they try to sell sheep intestines from an Arab processing plant to Chinese sausage makers and German cell phones to local Russian expatriates. "But," laments Jenya, "nothing works." Even a trip to a large Buddhist temple, where Jenya and Sasha pay monks to recite prayers for "luck in business" and "courage" on their behalf, fails to put money in their pockets. Jenya pays good money for genuine Lucky Strike cigarettes but cannot buy himself a lucky break.

Identity and nationhood are other important themes. With one-quarter Russian blood, Jenya went to a Russian school, speaks Russian, and self-identifies as a Russian. But he and his Mongolian friends bemoan their country's dependency on China and Russia for everything from food and clothing to energy. Chinese people are "disgusting" and the Russians have pulled out, leaving Jenya and his friends the challenge of finding self-respect as members of a nation they see slipping further and further behind the rest of the



FIGURE 1. *The Wild East: Portrait of an Urban Nomad* (2002) is an ethnographic rendering of contemporary life in Ulan Bator, a city at the crossroads of tradition and modernity, communism and global capitalism.

world. The film closes with Jenya confessing that, in the years since Mongolia's independence from Russia pass, he finds himself becoming more and more Mongolian.

By the end of the film, the bitter cold winter has become a metaphor for Mongolia's modern condition. Like the ice-bound city, Jenya's life goes on, even though seemingly frozen in an immobile present with no real prospects for the future. As livestock freeze to death in the provinces and food becomes scarce in city markets, Mongolian pop stars stage a TV benefit concert for people hard hit by the weather. But in the face of massive socioeconomic problems, girl groups like "The Lipsticks" crooning for their frozen countrymen—even if well intentioned—seem only to caricature how piti-

fully unequipped the country is to solve its problems. The glitz and glamour of the benefit concert suggest that capitalism has opened windows onto global consumer desire, even while leaving Mongolia out in the cold.

This is a film that will provide plenty of material for discussion in the classroom. North American students will be able to "see themselves" in the cell phone-toting, electric guitar-playing, well-dressed Jenya. But seeing that modern, consumer self placed in the context of an underdeveloped, visually strange, and even exotic postsocialist, East Asian culture will bring home the fact that global capitalism helps to simultaneously create the conditions of our sameness and of our difference.

Award of Excellence

Sol de Noche: La Historia de Olga y Luis (A gleam in the dark: The story of Olga and Luis) 2002. 78 min. Pablo Milstein and Norberto Ludin, dirs. Spanish with English subtitles. Distributed by Documentary Educational Resources, 101 Morse Street, Watertown, MA, 02472. Phone: 617-926-0491, Fax: 617-926-9519. (www.der.org)

LINDSAY DUBOIS
Dalhousie University

Sol de Noche is a fresh account of the now rather well-known story of Argentina's dirty war (1976–83). It gets past the well-rehearsed statistics (30,000 disappeared) and images

(death squads, military juntas, and mothers of the disappeared) by examining the particular story of one disappearance: Luis Arédez, a much respected doctor who was also, briefly, the mayor of Ledesma, Jujuy. The Olga of the title is Luis's widow. The film divides its attention almost equally between the two characters. The story of Luis casts light on the larger circumstances and relations of power that produced this tragedy. Olga's story, less explicitly laid out, speaks of the effects of disappearance on the survivors. This biographical strategy is engaging—the 72-minute film was over before I thought to look at my watch.

The film also interrupts dominant narratives because of its location. Much of the literature and film on state terrorism during Argentina's last dictatorship focuses on urban centers like Buenos Aires and La Plata. Ledesma, however, is in northern Argentina. More importantly, Ledesma is a company town. According to the film, Ledesma's founders and majority shareholders, the Blanquiers, are the biggest landowners in Jujuy Province, with thousands of hectares and over \$500 million in assets. The town is the site of the largest sugar refinery in Latin America, but the company has diversified beyond sugar to alcohol, fruit, cattle, and paper. As the tale unfolds, the sinister role of the Ledesma corporation emerges. We learn that, as a young pediatrician, Luis moved to Ledesma in 1958 to work for the company as one of six doctors available to some seven thousand workers and their families. Every day, according to Olga, he saw 50 to 60 patients in the refinery's under-resourced clinic. He was fired a year later, accused of having written as many prescriptions as the other five doctors combined. Luis moved on to take up directorship of a hospital in a neighboring town but later returned to the town of Ledesma to work as a doctor for the union, defying local assertions that those out of favor with the company cannot live there. Eventually, with the return of Juan Domingo Perón in 1973, Luis, though not a Peronist, was persuaded to become mayor of the town. The reforms he oversaw included taxing the company for the first time in its 200-year history. After eight months, he was removed from power. The night of the 1976 coup, he was detained and held in a clandestine detention center. Released a year later, he enjoyed less than two months of freedom before disappearing forever (see also Proyecto desaparecidos n.d.). Luis's story, as told in *Sol de Noche*, allows us to see how the repressive apparatus of the state was available to, and acted in concert with, powerful groups like the Ledesma corporation. This connection, in turn, underlines the economic part of the military regime's agenda, an aspect that quite often falls from view.

An unusual, illuminating, and chilling aspect of the film is the firsthand accounts from apologists for the military regime. Mario Paz, former PR man for Ledesma, is most sinister. He takes credit for firing Luis from his position as company doctor (as well as 10,000 others over the years). The town priest, who claims to have been a friend, is not much better. Both argue that Luis was, as Paz puts it, "a little lefty doctor" who was, at the very least, led astray by

the communists. Both imply that Luis's disappearance and death are thus justified. These accounts are juxtaposed with those of Olga, the couple's children, and some less powerful friends. The film is so watchable, in part, because the filmmakers emphasize these testimonies, using voiceover narration and archival footage sparingly. The interviews combine to paint a vivid (if perhaps saintly) portrait, so much so that when we finally see a photograph of Luis about two-thirds of the way through the movie, he is surprisingly ordinary looking.

Olga's primary role is to tell us about Luis. In the process, we infer something of who she was and who she has become. When Luis disappeared, we gather that she was not very politicized—she recalls how irritated she was that her husband had an account at the pharmacy that he used to provide medication to his poor patients, but she was not permitted to use it to buy cream for herself. When we meet her in the present, however, she is organizing a protest in memory of the "Night of Horror," a local incident of terror in which 400 people disappeared, taken away in Ledesma company trucks. These images, Olga's comportment, and the footage of Olga marching alone in the town's central square suggest that she has been transformed by the disappearance of Luis. As her son says in the film, "I think they hurt her so badly she became strong. Now she is strong. She is beyond anything."

The film is so effective because one comes to care about the characters. In addition, the filmmakers use the contextual shots to great effect. The interviews are bracketed by evocative images of the town, the workers, and of other working-class citizens of Ledesma. A series of portraits, almost stills, depicting townspeople in front of their houses is especially rich, conveying the dignity of their subjects. *Sol de Noche* will be very useful in the classroom. It will certainly engage students. Importantly, it conveys a lot of information and raises some rather complex questions. Through its particulars, the film describes many of the larger processes that characterize the methods, motivations, and consequence of disappearance in Argentina's last dictatorship. It provides enough background information for students who are not especially knowledgeable about Argentine history, although a brief outline of dates and key terms might be helpful. It would be as effective for a course on human rights as for one on 20th century Latin America. Although social memory is not an explicit theme, the film is also a portrait of the struggle for and over social memories, raising useful questions here as well.

Sol de Noche won the Award of Excellence from the Society for Visual Anthropology—and deservedly so. It exemplifies the strengths of ethnography and visual anthropology, illuminating larger social institutions and processes "from the native's point of view."

REFERENCES CITED

- Proyecto desaparecidos
N.d. Luis Ramón Arédez. Electronic document, <http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/victimas/a/aredez/>, accessed January 8, 2005.

Award of Commendation

Blue Vinyl. 2002. 97 min. Color. Judith Helfand and Daniel B. Gold, dirs. Produced by Toxic Comedy Pictures. Distributed by Bullfrog Films, P.O. Box 149, Oley, PA 19547. (www.bullfrogfilms.com)

JEANNE M. FITZSIMMONS

School of American Research

What vinyl has going for it is that it's cheap. It's cheap because the real cost to people's health and the planet isn't factored into the price. If it were, it wouldn't be so cheap.

Blue Vinyl 2002

Filmmaker Judith Helfand's statement summarizes the reason why vinyl has become ubiquitous since its introduction in the 1960s. In *Blue Vinyl*, Helfand and codirector/cinematographer, Daniel B. Gold, take the viewer along on a five-year investigative odyssey—which is alternately hilarious and disturbing—into the human and environmental costs of vinyl.

The journey begins at the home of Helfand's middle-class parents in suburban Merrick, Long Island. Florence and Ted needed to replace their rotting wooden siding and choose to do so with vinyl siding. They point out that siding is cost effective and durable and that it will increase the resale value of their home. Indeed, a quick tour of the neighborhood proves that most of the houses have been re-sided with vinyl siding. Helfand was unable to dissuade her parents from their decision and so decides to begin her investigative journey.

Helfand's style of filmmaking is similar to Michael Moore's, except that she is less confrontational. When interviewing corporate executives, she incorporates a subtle, naive approach to tease out self-incriminating statements. Throughout the film, she has a piece of blue vinyl siding (from her parent's house) tucked under her arm. The use of irony and comic interludes in a film dealing with such a serious (and at times frightening) topic is one of the aspects of the film that makes it so powerful. During one such interchange, one of the vinyl representatives is very dramatic when stating, to an incredulous Helfand, that vinyl chloride is no more harmful than table salt. Incorporating animation (by Emily Hubley) into the film is not only creative but also educational. It helps explain some of the aspects of the chemical processes involved in the manufacture of vinyl—sort of a “vinyl science for dummies.”

Although polyvinyl chloride (PVC) products themselves are considered to be fairly harmless, during the manufacturing phase and at the time of disposal, toxic pollutants (called dioxin), which do not break down in either the environment or the body, are released into the atmosphere. In the event of a fire in which PVC is present, harmful dioxin is produced. The fire at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas

was an example of many deaths being caused, not by the fire, but by exposure to the dioxin created by the burning PVC in the hotel. The disposal of PVC is also problematic. Because the cost of recycling PVC is prohibitive, it is burned, releasing dioxin into the air.

When PVC first emerged on the market, it was under suspicion as a carcinogen within a few years. Dr. Cesar Maltoni of Venice, Italy, was doing research into the effects of vinyl chloride on animals in 1972. His research showed that exposure to vinyl chloride resulted in several types of cancer in laboratory animals, including an extremely rare form of cancer of the liver—angiosarcoma. Although the European vinyl industry shared the results of Dr. Maltoni's research with the U.S. vinyl industry in 1972, it did so only because the U.S. representatives signed a secrecy agreement. In the late 1960s, vinyl chloride was also used in aerosol hairspray. Women who used hairspray on a regular basis were being exposed to higher levels of vinyl chloride than vinyl industry workers.

It was only after four workers at one vinyl chloride factory in Louisville, Kentucky died of angiosarcoma between 1968 and 1974 that the vinyl industry set a one part per million (1ppm) standard for the acceptable level in vinyl factories. At that point, vinyl chloride was also quietly removed from hairspray, but without any acknowledgement concerning the possible health risks to the public.

The Vinyl Institute (the trade association for the U.S. vinyl industry) insists that it is only the resin workers, those responsible for turning vinyl chloride gas into polyvinyl chloride pellets, who were at risk and that the 1ppm standard has removed any danger. There is evidence, however, of employees who worked in the fabrication and packing phases of the manufacturing process developing angiosarcoma as well. At a vinyl chloride factory in Venice, there were over 150 workers who died from cancer and 600 more were adversely affected after being exposed to vinyl chloride. Many scientists believe that the 1ppm standard is not safe and can still lead to angiosarcoma, as well as other forms of cancer. They state that exposure to vinyl chloride, at any level, is dangerous and insist that more testing is needed at all levels.

One-third of the PVC manufactured in North America is from Louisiana. Lake Charles, Louisiana is home to a large PVC manufacturing facility. The filmmakers interviewed residents of the town, workers at the plant, and local environmentalists. A local lawyer, Billy Bagget, has taken on numerous clients who were either employees of the plant or family members of deceased employees, who now wish to bring lawsuits against the company.

This film compares the way issues of industrial pollution and corporate social responsibility are treated differently across international boundaries. In Italy, 31 individual vinyl manufacturing executives were tried as criminals for endangering workers. In the United States, the

interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment, which gives corporations the status of “legal persons,” is usually used to side-step the prosecution of individual executives during lawsuits. In the recent film, *The Corporation* (2004) Michael Moore states, “a corporation is considered a ‘legal person’ but without the morals. The only interest is the bottom line.”

Helfand also looks at the issues around the use of PVC from the viewpoint of the consumer. Helfand’s parents are convinced that vinyl siding is the most cost-effective, maintenance-free way to update their house and increase its resale value. The homeowner usually is not given any nonvinyl options when renovating. The filmmakers are on site during the construction of one of the 25 “all vinyl” homes built by Habitat for Humanity (sponsored by the Vinyl Siding Institute) for low-income families. As Helfand points out, “if you can’t afford a house in the first place, environmentally correct siding isn’t going to be your top priority.”

In the latter part of the film, Helfand convinces her parents to remove the vinyl siding from their house, and they discover how difficult (and expensive) it will be to find an alternative that will not adversely affect the environment at any point in its lifecycle, from production to disposal. Helfand’s father points out that there is also the issue of what to do with the vinyl siding once it has been removed from their house. It is the conversations between Helfand and her parents that allow the viewer to see, not only how the production of polyvinyl chloride affects the environment and the public health but also how individuals can affect the vinyl industry. Helfand states that by making the film, “I wanted to make a point. That consumers have the power to transform a market and make a hazardous product obsolete.” At one point in the film, Helfand asks her father if he had known about the environmental side effects of the vinyl industry five years earlier when they put the vinyl siding on their house, would he have chosen vinyl. Her fa-

ther states, “I hope not, but they didn’t write that on the box.” Helfand and Gold’s film is an attempt to fill in what was missing from the box.

The emphasis on the importance of community activism, both within and surrounding *Blue Vinyl*, is also an important aspect of the film. Members of the community in Louisiana form “bucket brigades” to test the air quality around the vinyl factory. The levels were found to be ten times higher than the ambient air. This resulted in the Environmental Protection Agency deciding that it is important to monitor the air on a regular basis. There is also a community organizing and education campaign, which is promoted on the website www.myhouseisyourhouse.com. Similar to other recent films (including *The Corporation* [2004] and *Fahrenheit 9/11* [2004]), people are being encouraged to organize screening and discussion parties for *Blue Vinyl*.

Is *Blue Vinyl* going to be useful for teaching anthropology? Although it is not your typical film used in anthropology classes, its emphasis on environmental issues and community activism are very important. Showing examples of corporate culture and raising the issue of corporate social responsibility (or the lack thereof) are also important points of discussion for the classroom. Considering the ever-increasing number of business majors in the university population, it would be a very important film for both undergraduate and graduate students. One criticism of the film has to do with its length. Although it covers a great deal of material, I think that it could have been a bit shorter. At 97 minutes, its length is problematic for classroom use.

REFERENCES CITED

- Achbar, Mark, Jennifer Abbott, and Joel Bakan
2004 *The Corporation*. 145 min. Big Picture Media Corporation. California.
Michael Moore, dir.
2004 *Fahrenheit 9/11*. 122 min. Columbia Tristar Horn. Culver City, CA.

Award of Commendation

Sin Embargo: Never the Less. 2003. 49 min. Color. Judith Grey, Katherine Cheng, and Eva Orner, dirs. Distributed by Documentary Educational Resources, 101 Morse St. Watertown, MA 02472. (www.der.org)

JOAN WILLIAMS

Anthropology Film Center

Sin Embargo celebrates, with many examples, the ingenuity and great high spirits of the citizens of Cuba. The emphasis is on inventions and clever solutions to shortages of every kind, experienced as a result of the U.S. embargo imposed in 1962 and, later, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992. Vehicles are proudly demonstrated—a motorized bicycle put

together with Chinese and Russian parts and a “car” made of pipes, with a wheelchair seat and an eggbeater-like contraction of three bicycle chains, hand-pedaled at handlebar height by the driver. Less dramatic are small household items, like a doorbell made from a salvaged telephone dial, and dishes of melted and reformed plastic. An aluminum cafeteria tray sits on a rooftop pole, with holes punched into it “to let the wind through.” It has been up for several years, giving service as a TV antenna.

Self-employment was legalized in 1993 in Cuba, and currently 150,000 people are registered as such. Restrictions, however, do apply and can lead to a need for black market-type sales. For example, bicycle tires made from sliced up truck tires are of better quality than the state-supplied ones,

and must be sold covertly. Other entrepreneurs rebuild washing machines to spin faster than originally manufactured, and another workshop reams out porcelain toilets and sells them with a 40- or 50-year warranty. The owner of a guitar workshop, facing a total shortage of guitar strings, tries several times to create a machine to make strings using mostly wood, as metal was not available.

These mechanically able people say substitution is not enough. You have to invent things, and they have shown a great capacity to do just that. Two other examples of imaginative accommodation is recounted by two women

who were teens in the 1960s: "There was no Maybelline, so we used shoe polish on our eyebrows and made sandals of fabric, cardboard cake boxes, and vinyl beach balls." And a choreographer, sometimes faced with eight-hour electrical outages at her performance location, developed and staged a lovely silent production. *Sin Embargo: Never the Less* is a subject especially suited to a visual medium. Through their many solutions to years without access to goods that are usually taken for granted beyond Cuba, the film shows the ingenuity and creative fun in problem solving, as well as a lot about the people of Cuba.

Award of Commendation

Drowned Out: We Can't Wish Them Away. 2002. 75 min. Color. Franny Armstrong, dir. Distributed by Bullfrog Films, P.O. Box 149, Oley, PA 19547. (www.bullfrogfilms.com)

NANDINI GUNWARDENA

University of California, Los Angeles

This is one of three recently produced documentary films on the ever-controversial Narmada dam that this reviewer has seen. Each one captures an equally disturbing aspect of this tragic drama of displacement, dislocation, and disruption of marginal-indigenous populations in India.¹ The others, Aradhana Seth's *Dam/Age*, which documents Booker prize-winning writer and political commentator Arundhati Roy's encounters with the Indian justice system in her fight against the Narmada dam, and Sanjay Kak's *Words on Water*, which assesses the moral and ethical violations inherent in the Narmada scheme, complement the perspectives presented in the film under review. All three, in their unique ways, manage to evocatively document the devastation caused by the Narmada dam for India's *Adivasi* (indigenous) communities. However, Armstrong's intimate portrayal of the people of Jalsindhi village comes closest to the genre of ethnographic film.

Narrated from the perspective of Luhariya Sonkariya and his wife Bulgi, an *Adivasi* family in Jalsindhi village, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, *Drowned Out* strives for an emic perspective of a community facing imminent eviction with the impending flooding of their village. The strengths of this film include a contextualization of big dam projects in India's development trajectory, an examination of the contested technical feasibility aspects of the Narmada dam, and an exploration of the symbolic dimensions of the Narmada, including ritualized protests. Its appeal as a documentary, however, lies in the manner in which it captures the social agency of the *Adivasis*. This dimension is vividly portrayed in contrast to the authoritarian assertions of state representatives, technocrats, and judiciary members, which betray the hegemonic social locations of these actors and the institutions they represent. The juxtaposition of these two

narratives carries us through the diverse accounts of the Narmada. Curious blends of fact and fiction are concocted to justify the megadam construction, with police brutality summoned in its service. The *Adivasis* must navigate the indifference of state authorities and the arduous maze of the state-judicial bureaucracy.

Depicting the pathos of a seemingly irrevocable fate that has befallen the *Adivasi* communities of Madhya Pradesh, *Drowned Out* documents how India's national development decisions have repeatedly and consistently opted to overlook the well being and survival needs of indigenous populations. Ironically, the unwavering determination of the latter to challenge and protest the government's decisions reveals how notions of *karma* as irreversible (in a land where *karma* is considered to effectively seal one's fate) are, in reality, interpreted with far more elasticity than commonly presumed. A compelling counternarrative to the discourse on karmic beliefs is provided by the footage of individual and collective acts of agency: the colorful protest rallies organized by the 15-year-old "Save the Narmada" campaign and its most media-worthy advocate, Arundhati Roy; the hunger strikes; and the *satyagraha* campaigns where *Adivasis*, refusing to budge from the inundation of their villages, stood in water on one occasion for 26 hours.² Although in their reflective moments, Luhariya and Bulgi comment on their sense of uncertainty about the future, including the seeming futility of their struggle and the injustice of social erasure faced by all *Adivasi* communities, we also witness their calm resolve to assert their inherent right to land, natural resources, and civic justice.

The film captures another aspect of social agency that is of interest to anthropological audiences—the specific manner in which *Adivasis* lay claim to their ancestral land. In a telling scene, an *Adivasi* elder recounts the names of 12 generations who have inhabited Jalsindhi village, akin to the ways in which indigenous peoples the world over establish their claim to territorial sovereignty. This manner of tracing ancestry is more than a matter of establishing their right to remain in Jalsindhi. It is also a means of asserting rightful place, locating social identity and history in the face of the

searing implications of the dam for Adivasi survival, well being, and continuity as a people. Several scenes document their anxieties about the threat to their lives and livelihoods resulting from the flooding of forest and grazing areas, the chaos of resettlement, and the expected impoverishment in urban slums. As such, we learn of the Narmada's symbolic role, in terms of being a repository of cultural memory, heritage, and more.

The symbolic significance of riverine bodies in Hindu India is familiar to anthropological audiences. The filmmaker's sensitivity to this particular aspect of the Narmada story, the depiction of the symbolic meanings vested in the Narmada river, and the Adivasi counter rituals to destroy the "demon of development," adds layers of value to this film from an ethnographic perspective. It is said that although a bath in the Ganges holds the power to purify, only a gaze at the Narmada is needed to invoke its purifying effect. Nonetheless, it is clear from the bathers who frequent the Narmada, along the entire length of its course, that similar to the Ganges, complete submersion is clearly essential for absorbing the purifying effects. For Adivasi populations, the inconceivability of the Narmada dam lies not merely in the purposive harnessing of a natural resource, and its destructive social and ecological consequences, but also in the inherent sully of a sacred body of water with a technological (read antisacred) intervention. Thus, Luharia's poignant statement about the rising water levels of the dam, "Our Gods have been submerged, our Gods have drowned," informs us of Adivasi cosmological beliefs (i.e., the inhabitation of supernatural beings and deities in rivers, streams, rocks, and forests), and the sense of loss over access to the purifying bath in the river running its natural course. It also signifies the disruption of the relationship between the Narmada river and the community of worshippers.

Drowned Out serves as an ideal learning tool for applied anthropology courses that explore the dilemmas of development. It captures the classic problems with big dam projects encountered elsewhere in the world. These problems include the need for, and the typical lack of the following: informed consent from those affected; the dilemmas of just compensation and involuntary resettlement; the inevitable consequences of displacement and social disruption as those who are forced to relocate are not only removed from their livelihood base but also distanced from networks of kin support; the inevitable problems of adjusting to a new eco environment; vulnerability to food insecurity; and the resulting malnutrition and destitution. From a planning perspective, the film portrays how an economic rationale is typically instrumental in justifying big dam projects. It also illustrates the Indian government's specific set of justifications for embarking on the Narmada dam (i.e., it is part of its nation-building efforts that date back to the ambitions of the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru). Black-and-white archival footage of Nehru's plans for a modern India, interspersed with recent footage of official ceremonies heralding the construction of the dam, provides glimpses into the hegemonic role of the state in defining

development goals, with little regard for those deemed antithetical to the project of modernity—the indigenous populations. The technical explanations of the benefits of the Narmada dam by engineers, while masking the disparities conferred to urban populations and industries as compared to land-bound, rural, and marginal groups, also reveals the entanglement of notions of modernity with technological prowess and the compulsion to establish Indian superiority in technical-engineering knowledge.

Footage of the state representative's perspectives of the Narmada dam provide insights into the way in which megadevelopment projects have come to symbolize far more than infrastructure improvements, which are meant to assure basic needs such as water and electricity. In *Drowned Out*, the hypocritical stance of national pride enmeshed in megadevelopment projects is captured in a matter-of-fact manner, via farcical quips by political figures such as the Minister of Irrigation for Gujarat state. His glib assertions, such as, "if you have to sacrifice a little bit of your own to help society, do it gladly, willingly, smilingly," are indicative of the prioritization of nation building at the expense of those at the margins of society. We follow the Jalsindhi villagers' journey through the morass of bureaucratic apathy. State officials respond to the queries posed by Luharia and fellow villagers with rhetoric and delay tactics, while a supreme court decision weighing the merits of a case against the Narmada dam meanders over a laborious six-year labyrinth of justice, only to arrive at a two to one decision in favor of proceeding with the dam.

Armstrong's efforts to investigate the environmental and economic costs of the Narmada are also commendable. She probes the outcomes of the already constructed dams, such as the Bulgi, and the possible alternatives—rainwater harvesting and smaller, more technically feasible local solutions—that avert the human costs of big dam projects. We are shown how the Bulgi dam is currently reaching only five percent of the agricultural population it claimed it would. This is contrary to the initial grand claims of benefits to drought-stricken communities in northern desert regions, revealing the overestimation of the expected benefits of dam construction in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan states. In this manner, the film moves between local and national-global issues, while emphasizing the importance of small, people-centered development over large megaprojects. It is a brilliant balance of investigative journalism and human pathos and will be useful for courses in applied anthropology, South Asia studies, and global-international development studies.

NOTES

1. Classified as "Tribals" to ensure their distinction from "native" Indians and avoid the contentious debates on proper indigenous identity in a nation with an ancient history of colonization, tribal and low-caste populations are categorized under the "SCTC" label to demarcate their designation in the lowest strata of the Indian social hierarchy.
2. Satyagraha campaigns are nonviolent protests first popularized by Mahatma Gandhi.

Award of Commendation

Aftertaste. 2004. 36 min. Color. Ceridwen Dovey, dir. Distributed by Documentary Educational Resources, Watertown, MA. (www.der.org)

NANDINI GUNWARDENA

University of California, Los Angeles

Aftertaste is a poignant and complicated film, partly because of filmmaker Ceridan Dovey's ambivalent stance on the state of things in postapartheid South Africa, and partly because of the complex nature of a society struggling to redress the legacy of racial segregation. This legacy has left an indelible scar in the form of a distinct social and economic divide between whites and blacks, including populations formerly classified as "coloreds." This film is certainly neither in the genre of protest films nor a polemic tract against the persistence of social and economic subordination of black populations in the postapartheid context. In fact, on the surface, the film may even be read as an apolitical text avoiding a full exposé of the persistent disempowerment of the black community in the aftermath of apartheid. This is because Dovey's optimism about the transformation possibilities presented by the end of white rule is the metatext of the film. However, the clue to this film's critical stance on the aftermath of apartheid is in the clever title: *Aftertaste* signifies the not-so-palatable social and economic conditions still endured by black South Africans. The import of this film is that, despite its hesitation to condemn outright the inadequacy of changes that have taken place so far in bringing about significant forms of equity, it accomplishes precisely that task. It unearths the masked threads of racial domination, internalized notions of racial hierarchy, and the economic deprivations that are embedded in the social fabric that apartheid left behind. As such, it is a subtly provocative and nuanced portrait of the minimal gains, and the persistent constraints, experienced by blacks in a society challenged with overturning three centuries of racial and economic oppression.

Focusing on the black farm communities in the Western Cape region of South Africa, this film documents contemporary living conditions of black farm laborers and the little reformed patterns of social relationships prevailing today. These relations are marked by few alterations to previous patterns of white dominance and paternalism. Touching on key concerns in the community, the film explores several critical issues, evincing how contemporary South Africa shows only a few radical departures from the historical patterns of exploitation of "colored" labor in the wine industry in the Western Cape. Some of the issues explored include the following: the continued use of traditional forms of deference by black laborers toward the white farm owners (indicative of the history of racial hierarchy and subordination that the society has internalized); the "dop" system of compensating workers with alco-

hol for their work, and the related problems of alcoholism; HIV/AIDS; and the squalid living conditions associated with the poverty still experienced by "colored" populations.

Opening with a statement about the historical use of enslaved blacks and the indigenous Khoisan labor in the South African wine industry, the film sets its critical tone in a scene between the white owner of Sonop Farm and the black community members who supply the labor for the farm. In a gesture meant to introduce a greater degree of social equality, the farm owner initiates a conversation that is intended to do away with the social distance between himself and the workers, as manifested in deferential terms of address. Yet, throughout the film, the workers continue to use terms such as "master" and "sir" in referring to the white representatives of the farm. This is indicative, on one hand, of their cognizance of the entrenched social divide that separates themselves, as mere workers, from the farm owner. On the other hand, it exemplifies the superficiality of attempts to change forms of address, without the attendant changes sorely needed in the system of ownership. Comedic exchanges at this meeting convey the pathos of the situation as the workers engage in a form of self- and social reflection. This conversation, especially the commentary by the workers on their hopes and expectations, is truly revealing of the appalling disparities in the quality of life between whites and blacks in postapartheid South Africa. As benign as this conversation may appear, the specific priorities identified by the workers, such as decent shelter or housing and access to water and electricity, reveal their concerns about meeting basic needs—a powerful commentary on the stark inadequacy of postapartheid developments in bringing about widely equalizing social reforms.

One aspect of the legacy of exploitation inherent in the Cape wine industry, as mentioned earlier, is the "dop" system—the payment of farm workers with alcohol in place of wages. History informs us that the dop system was devised by the white farm owners in the early years of colonial settlement at the Cape. It was a means of inducing indigenous populations in South Africa to work on farms for in-kind payments of tobacco, bread, and wine with no cash reimbursement. Hardly innocuous, the dop system represented yet another element in the insidious forms of social control imposed over indigenous labor. The contrived dependence it created, together with pervasive alcoholism and disempowerment, kept the farm labor populations tied to a farm even under atrocious labor and living conditions because of the crippling effects of alcoholism, and the lack of any means to extract themselves from the labor system. Accounts of alcohol dependence narrated by several workers provide glimpses into the continuation of the dop system until recent times. These personal narratives give insights into the havoc created in their lives via the dop system, and their attempts to overcome their dependence on alcohol. Although the film does not touch on other adverse

impacts of the dop system, such as the high incidence of fetal alcohol syndrome in the Western Cape and alcohol related trauma, it does hint at the disruption of family life and interpersonal relations. Eighteen-year-old Johan, for example, is imprisoned for six months for his involvement in a violent incident, apparently alcohol related. Izzy finds herself divorced, as she is unable to reconcile herself to her husband's inability to give up drinking.

The film also includes a brief, entertaining vignette on the community's efforts to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS: Izzy putting together a play featuring children in the community. The acts of the play to which we are privy offer us a glimpse at how black communities across South Africa are mobilizing to educate the youth and address this pandemic. The decision to cover this issue is indeed a wise one, as the newly independent South Africa finds itself in the midst of an AIDS pandemic, and given the proliferation of self-mobilized social movements of people infected and directly affected by the pandemic. With over 4.2 million people living with the disease, South Africa possibly has one of the highest HIV infection rates in the world.

The central drama in this documentary, however, is about the community empowerment efforts currently sweeping South Africa, as embodied in the "Winds of Change" wine label and its professed commitment to the concept of social change in the winery. Partly in response to the pressures from the new South African government to reform labor and living conditions, and partly because of popular mobilization, empowerment projects are attempting major transformations on contemporary vineyards. The film makes reference to the sale of portions of the farmland back to the laborers, and depicts the efforts by the farm to create a sense of ownership via community revitalization programs. Sonop Farm provides an incentive of 1,000 rand for improving the appearance of the housing tract via a "clean-up" competition. Snippets of the perspectives by various community members reveal their initial concerns and

reservations, and the dulled enthusiasm about the clean-up effort. In a social context in which the vast majority of the population was deprived of basic needs and services, including proper housing and related amenities, the empowerment projects are symbolic of the promise of a higher standard of living for the black populations. Yet, the intercutting between the spacious and tastefully furnished guest house of the Sonop Farm and the bare housing of the farm laborers reminds us of the persistent disparities between whites and blacks in postapartheid South Africa. As such, without any breast beating, *Aftertaste* exposes the grim reality of contemporary South Africa, where race, class, privilege, and power, which epitomized the apartheid era, are still prevalent.

One of the curious questions embedded in this film is the muted militancy in the race-class consciousness of this population of low-income black South Africans. Indeed, the individuals captured in the film are not of the caliber of the fiery political critics of the African National Congress (ANC) but, rather, they are the silenced black masses who have long endured oppression and exploitation. While they grapple with the tasks of adjusting and adapting to the social and political shifts that are expected at the end to white rule and social supremacy, their lives continue to be circumscribed by white dominance. *Aftertaste*, in effect, affords a glimpse into the subdued consciousness of black workers, who appear to be engaged more in a struggle for survival and concerned with ensuring a decent quality of life. This aspect of the film prompts us to consider the role of internalized oppression in maintaining (if not averting a full disruption of) racial and economic divides.

Weaving its story out of the discourse of its subjects, the dreams they pursue, and the nightmares that haunt them, the film depicts the tensions between dependence and strivings for autonomy, and the dire need for continuing radical change in South Africa. Ultimately, *Aftertaste*, whether it sets out to do so or not, is more a commentary on the immense lengths South Africa still needs to travel in engendering the transformations necessary for full social equity.

Honorable Mention Award

Breaking the Silence. 2003. 51 min. Color. Steve Connelly and John Pilger, dir. Bullfrog Films, Olney, PA. Distributed by Bullfrog Films, P.O. Box 149, Oley, PA 19547. (www.bullfrogfilms.com)

PETER BIELLA

San Francisco State University

This film makes an aggressive inquiry into the structured silence about, and popular ignorance of, U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Grounding itself historically and ethnographically, the film explores deceptions, abuses, motives, and catastrophic results of the "War on Terror." It

charges the Bush-Blair governments with hypocrisy and terror campaigns of their own.

With a subject so loaded, writer-journalist John Pilger must marshal—and succeeds at doing so—an impressive array of speakers whose many areas of expertise contradict official versions and confront the placidity and ignorance of the U.S. viewing public. The film's approach is very different from that of another silence-breaking strategy—humor—tried by Michael Moore (2004) in *Fahrenheit 9/11* and, the televised *Daily Show* with Jon Stewart. In Pilger's work, there is nothing funny, except the black humor of the journalist's irony when he places speeches of Bush and Blair echoing over images that give them the lie.

Pilger's message has historical importance for concerned citizens, but it is important for students of anthropology, in particular. It can make significant contributions in classes on the anthropology of human rights, political and visual anthropology, the Middle East, unpopular culture, women's studies, and discourse analysis. First, *Breaking the Silence* presents a model of courage, because it speaks truth to power. Pilger confronts high-ranking Washington war spokesmen and think-tank dogmatists unflinchingly, and with a mastery of facts. Second, the film has the courage of its convictions. It dares to document its argument with the often-slighted and silenced, but fundamentally correct, research of Amnesty International, the Centre for Public Integrity, and Human Rights Watch—all critics of the "War on Terror." It also marshals more mainstream sources, from the Congressional Record to interviews with officers from Intelligence, NATO, and the UN. Third, the film is of interest to anthropologists of media because it experiments interestingly with media styles and worlds, juxtaposing ethnographic interviews, verité footage, processed imagery, and televised mainstream speeches.

Pilger also demonstrates to anthropologists the main difficulties of "studying up." His hostile interlocutors include John Bolton, Undersecretary of State, Douglas Feith, Undersecretary for Defense for Policy, and William Kristol, editor of the *Weekly Standard*. These interviews show the troubles to be met by anthropologists and anyone else seeking admissions from individuals of high prestige and power, individuals who are either ignorant of historical facts or are lying. Bolton, for example, ends his interview by suggesting that Pilger is a communist. Yet, the film contains no appeals to state ownership of the means of production or cries for revolution. Bolton's confusion apparently stems from Pilger's objections to state-generated disinformation and human-rights catastrophes. Feith's interview is abruptly terminated when an off-camera Army colonel objects to further questions about the fact that the United States supplied Saddam Hussein with the weapons of mass destruction he used to slaughter his own people.¹

The Krystal interview concludes in a way that is even more telling. He is asked to comment on the fact that the United States is perceived to be an aggressive nation by much of the world.

Krystal: How many countries has the United States attacked in the last fifteen years?

Pilger: Well, since World War II, there have been seventy-two interventions by the United States.

K: Oh, is that right . . . ?

P: Yes.

K: That's ludicrous.

P: Well, it's not ludicrous. It's true.

Gore Vidal (2002:22–41) places the number of incursions closer to 200, but he defines the word somewhat differently. In any case, after the interview, the film abandons Krystal to his unfortunate sense of the ludicrous and scrolls,

down screen, the names of dozens of nations. Pilger speaks in voiceover: "These are some of the countries where the United States, directly and indirectly, has overthrown governments, manipulated elections, and attacked popular movements since 1945. Bush's 'War on Terror' is just another brand name replacing 'The Red Menace' as justification for a systematic oppression. This is well documented. Yet it remains a kind of secret history, seldom reported in the West, as a war of terror."

The film then documents U.S. incursions in one of the "post-war" decades, the 1970s. It notes that the United States helped overthrow the democratically elected government of Chile, facilitating an estimated 30,000 deaths. Its bombing of Cambodia and Laos killed hundreds of thousands, its use of Agent Orange, a weapon of mass destruction, in Vietnam is responsible for birth defects even today, and its backing of Suharto's Indonesia led to as many as a million deaths in East Timor.

The discursive strategy of *Breaking the Silence* is to move from exposing massive military silences to more local cover-ups and government disinformation campaigns. One argument that Bush used to justify his war on Afghanistan was that the United States was needed there to liberate women. With much fanfare, televised footage shows Bush introducing Dr. Sima Samar, who was appointed to the new Afghan government as a force of women's liberation. Pilger notes: "But no sooner had the applause in Washington died away than she was forced out." Following is an argument on continuing women's oppression, presented by speakers from Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and an underground educational and medical association called "The Revolutionary Women of Afghanistan." They describe several examples of current police and Northern Alliance abuses and atrocities against women. Says "Marina," veiled to protect herself from reprisals: "We don't believe there is much difference [in the treatment of women] between the Taliban and the Northern Alliance, or the commanders who are now in power. . . . Because the origin is the same. They believe in the same thing. Their nature is the same."

The first ethnographic vignette of the film depicts Orifa, an Afghani woman who weeps in the ruins of her demolished home. She tells the camera that she has lost eight family members when a U.S. bomb struck her house. Then, when she presented her claim for reparations at the U.S. embassy in Kabul, she says she was told: "Go away. You are a beggar." Whether to forestall audience disbelief in Orifa's story, or to give greater accessibility and credibility to it, the woman is shown on a second trip to the embassy, accompanied by an U.S. citizen, Rita Lasar (cf. Halpern 2002). Lasar's brother, Abe Zelmanowitz, died in the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center, when he attempted to help a friend in a wheelchair. The tragedies of the two women are linked in the sense that Bush mentioned the brother's death in a speech intended to whip up passion for his proposed war against Afghanistan. As Rita Lasar describes it: "I immediately knew that my country was going to use

my brother's death to justify killing innocent people in Afghanistan."

A later segment of the film moves the focus to a related Bush–Blair "disinformation campaign." Both Bush and Blair justified their next war, against Iraq, on the grounds that it possessed weapons of mass destruction and supported al-Qaeda terror networks. Subsequent events have proven these war-promoting claims to be false, but Pilger shows that their falsehood was widely known at the time. Interviews with analysts who were in the CIA and Australian Intelligence confirm this, but the most prescient critique of Bush's information is given by Denis Halliday, former UN Assistant Secretary General and former head of the UN's humanitarian program in Iraq. He says:

It reminds you, I think, of the days of the fifties, when people . . . children were told to go under their desks because an atomic bomb might hit you or something. I mean, it's just ludicrous what's going on. And the whole twist of dragging Iraq into "The War on Terror," the "Axis of Evil," all of this fundamental sort of rubbish, you might say, is part of the political games that have been played by Bush given the opportunity that 9–11 has presented to him and his regime and the survival thereof, and the future thereof for the next election in 2004. [For a more recent statement, see Halliday (2004)]

Another prescient segment presages the Abu Graib torture revelations by a year. An U.S. Colonel outside the Baghreb Air Base is asked about Amnesty International's allegations of torture, murder, and disappearances. He answers smoothly that "the United States is not known for torturing prisoners." His words echo the same wishful thinking expressed after Abu Graib, passed by a Lieutenant Colonel the morning before one of his Marines killed an unarmed, wounded Iraqi prisoner in Ramallah: "We're the good guys. We are Americans. We're fighting a gentleman's war here—because we don't behead people" (Sites 2004).

The film concludes with somber references to the Iraq war, in light of Geneva Conventions and decisions of the Nuremberg Trials. Torture and abuse of prisoners flaunt the Conventions and constitute war crimes. At Nurem-

berg, moreover, it was understood, in Pilger's phrase, that "unprovoked aggression is the supreme war crime." Thus, a preemptive strike against a sovereign state meets the Nuremberg criterion. *Breaking the Silence* provides a grim echo of Robert McNamara's admission (in Morris 2003) that his decisions in World War II and the Vietnam War could readily be seen as war crimes, crimes against humanity.

NOTES

1. That interview is also interesting, because it is punctuated with the undersecretary's frequent denial of facts: "I . . . I don't . . . I don't know that that's true!" he stammers. Feith's denials are particularly intriguing in light of the recent disclosure that he heads the Pentagon's official source of disinformation called the Office of Strategic Influence (Shanker and Schmitt 2004).

REFERENCES CITED

- Halliday, Denis
2004 Resistance: In the Eye of the American Hegemon: Preemptive Strike Policy and the United Nations. Swans Commentary, Special Issue on Iraq, February 2. Electronic document, <http://www.swans.com/library/art10/iraq/halliday.html>, accessed December 21.
- Halpern, Sue
2002 A Peaceful Mourning: Some of Those Who Lost Relations on September 11 Are Finding Comfort—and Fellowship—by Turning Grief into a Force of Peace. Electronic document, http://www.motherjones.com/commentary/commons/2002/09/ma_90_01.html, accessed February 25, 2005.
- Moore, Michael, dir.
2004 *Fahrenheit 9/11*. 122 min. Columbia Tristar Horn. Culver City, CA.
- Morris, Eroll, dir.
2003 *The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara*. 107 min. Columbia Tristar Horn. Culver City, CA.
- Shanker, Thom, and Eric Schmitt
2004 Pentagon Weighs Use of Deception in Broad Arena: Value of Disinformation; the Nation's Credibility is at Risk, Military Critics Contend. *New York Times*, December 13: 1, 12.
- Sites, Kevin
2004 Kevin Sites' Blog. Open Letter to the Devil Dogs of the 3.1, Sunday November 21, 2004. Electronic document, <http://www.kevinsites.net>, accessed November 24.
- Vidal, Gore
2002 *Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace: How We Got to Be So Hated*. New York: Thunder Mouth Press/Nation Books.

Student Award Winners

A Wedding in the Yuntag. 2003. 43 min. Color. Kimberly Hart, dir. Distributed by Kimberly Hart. 609 S. Washington. Bloomington, IN 47401.

Face Value. 2003. 36 min. Color. Li Xin, dir. Distributed by IWF, Göttingen. (www.iwf.de)

LIAM BUCKLEY

James Madison University

Anthropology has an ambivalent attitude toward visual data. The discipline is both fascinated and unconvinced by visual material. It is in love with the realist faith that

imagery will clearly illustrate, act as a visual citation or epigraph, and make the written word more comprehensible; it is wary of how the visual either suggests too much information or holds it back, apparently hindering the clear emergence of meaning. So maybe we should ask some direct questions of Li Xin's *Face Value* and Kimberly Hart's *A Wedding in the Yuntag*: Why film? Why such an overtly visual medium and not a written text? Is "reading" the film as a text the only way to engage or be engaged by such visual material? Why actually watch the films that are reviewed? Why not just read a detailed review of the films? Wouldn't knowing the films' narrative be enough to allow one to speak of them?

It is all too easy to write about an ethnographic film in a way that omits to mention its filmic qualities, those undeniable aspects that make it a film and not a book. With that in mind, let me briefly attend to the films' respective narratives, to what they are about. Both films are about weddings. *Face Value* concerns the practice of photography and video during the course of three weddings in China. The film has three parts, each with its own on-screen textual subheading—we view one couple undergoing the process of getting a photograph taken and added to their wedding license, another couple getting dressed up and posing for their wedding photographs, and a third couple being videoed as their wedding day unfolds. *A Wedding in the Yuntag* follows the procedure of a wedding in western Turkey and, as indicated by the use of textual subheadings on the screen, covers subjects such as the groom's mother rejoicing, the dowry, feasting, henna-night dancing, decorating the bride, burning the mother-in-law's pants, going to get the bride, the toll at the bride's door, the bride entering her new home, the men's final prayers, and the groom entering his new home. To focus only on the narratives of *Face Value* and *A Wedding in the Yuntag*, however, would be to miss the fact that they are films that are visually engaging. There is a recalcitrance to the visuality of these films and therein lies their meaningfulness. You would have to studiously close your eyes to ignore it.

Early on in *Face Value* a bride looks at her brand new wedding license, now complete with the photograph of her and her husband, and comments, "There's not much on it—how can two people be tied together in such a simple way?" The license photograph is a mundane visual. It formalizes a relationship between the state and the married couple, but more importantly it initiates a relationship of visual reciprocity between the wife and the husband. As they get ready to be photographed, they advise and comment on each other's appearances. They already have license to compliment and groom each other—how many more times will they do this in the course of their lives together?

Photography posits an affinity between the self and society—however this membership depends not only on a person's ability to assume specific forms of presence but also a similar capacity on the part of the material of the photograph itself. Although routine, the license photograph does not have an immediate materiality. Its emergence as a visible object requires that it be printed up, cut out, mounted, adhered to the license booklet, and sealed. The photograph is just one of the materials involved and manipulated in the process of photography. The second section of the film shows the appearance of the bride and groom being prepared for the wedding photograph. Eyelashes are brushed and kept their shape as they are painted and thickened. Skin on the cheekbone gives as it moves, following the circular motion of the sponge applying the make-up, and then returning to its original contour. The bride's dress has an opening in the back that will be pinned up so that no one can see it. For photography, nothing is given. The material components—whether human or inanimate—of photogra-

phy require creative intervention if they are to be rendered visible.

Face Value shows how photography certifies presence according to local aesthetic standards, and how persons and objects become visual by assuming specific forms of visible presence. For the most part, the couples in the film wear wedding attire that looks "Western." When one couple appears adorned in a way that is clearly "non-Western," the film offers no information as to the locale or tradition of this dress. All we learn from one of the subtitled remarks is that the couple's "eyes are full of love" for each other. This makes sense, given that visualizing the appearance of being in love—as opposed to belonging to a certain ethnicity or nation or race, for example—is the sovereign concern of wedding photography.

The final section of *Face Value* shows the ceremony surrounding a wedding. Here, the "ethnographic" film reveals its own materiality, as it is edited to include sequences of the visual record made by another camera. As the film comes to an end, the work of this second wedding-video camera takes over and runs uninterrupted. In terms of content, this part focuses mainly on the wedding reception, its speeches and toasts, and then the joking, antics, and games that follow the couple to the bridal suite in the evening. At this point in the ceremony, the couple's appearance is a lot less formal—the groom, for example, is now stripped to the waist, wearing a pair of shorts as he plays the good-humored games of reversal and degradation set up by his friends to guarantee good fortune for him and his wife. The bride has changed out of her wedding dress into something more "everyday." Her hair, however, remains undisturbed and her wedding coiffure intact. There appear to be no photographs being taken during this period. Instead, it seems that videography is more suited to recording the process of rapid dishevelment that ends the day's visual work. The wedding decorum of the day requires its own visible undoing.

In good Lévi-Straussian fashion, *A Wedding in the Yuntag* concentrates on the exchanges of gifts and services that accompany the ritualized transfers at a wedding. Persons and things are always on the move. The film allows our eyes the chance to settle and observe the role of the visual in getting the participants committed to, and engaged in, the wedding. For example, we watch the service that one woman provides for the bride by applying make-up to her face. With hands that look skilled, gentle, and strong at the same time, she holds the bride's face and applies lipstick and then mascara. Next, the bride and the groom are in a room full of people. Here they will dance with the groom's mother. But before that, someone puts a necklace around the bride's neck. Much like the make-up, the necklace is a gift that is meant to be seen, to be viewed by everyone in the room. The film shows, as only a visual medium could, how weddings serve to distribute the look of a woman being wedded throughout a room, so that everyone has the chance to feel the particular pleasure of looking at the bride.

In several sequences, the talk is left untranslated. Without any subtitles to read, we are left with only the visual.

There is a section that shows women decorating the bride with henna. The women sing and talk—but none of their words are translated, and so all we can do is actually watch the film. Her feet are covered in muddy-looking henna. A woman takes hold of one foot and wraps it in newspaper, tying it at the top. The other foot is wrapped, and then both feet are slipped into red silky socks. The bride's head is covered with a red veil—I wonder what she can see, whether her eyes are open at all, whether she is allowed to open them, whether everything looks red if she is looking through the gauze of her veil. Her hands are hennaed and wrapped in the same way. Later on, when her hands are unwrapped, she finds money in the bindings and is surprised—she hadn't seen the women put it there. The film shows how weddings administer visibility—the closing off and opening up of certain persons and things to view—and how they manage the question of who has the right to look and when.

Dressed and looking like a bride, she cries, and is looked at, kissed, and held by well-wishers. Visual appearance is not a static entity, and itself requires continual attention and maintenance. As viewers, we can see her onlookers carefully watching for a slip of her veil—they reach over and rearrange the dress that is about to crease and pull up the sleeve that is about to move down too far over her hand. The materiality of the visual is such that it almost yearns to be touched. For example, the bride is speaking of her relationship with her husband-to-be. She is sitting on the floor behind an impressive dowry of stacked and folded fabrics, different designs and colors piled up on top of one another. As she speaks, she lifts up and then lowers a top section of cloth. She repeats the movement again and again. I wonder at her pleasure when she will have the time to finally unfold and open out all the bundles, and look at them lovingly as they are spread out in front of her.

The film of the wedding is interspersed with film of a conversation between two women on the subject of marriage and what it is to be a wife, to be married, and to have a husband. One of the women is older than the other. When we see them for the first time, they appear for a startling mo-

ment to be looking directly at us, the viewers. One woman says, "Both of us can see." However, the women are not looking at us; they are looking at the camera set up in the room to film their conversation. From the beginning, then, all of us—the viewers and the women on the screen—know that *A Wedding in the Yuntag* is really a film. All of us share this knowledge because of the very materiality of film. The film that was being made in full view of the conversing women remains a film in front of our viewing eyes. *A Wedding in the Yuntag* does not allow its "film-ness," and the fact that it was actually made by people creating and caught up in social dynamics, to disappear from view. It does not become, yet another, spontaneously generated text.

The series of visual exchanges during the course of a wedding finally establishes an aesthetic community of onlooking well-wishers. *Face Value* and *A Wedding in the Yuntag* are hyperaesthetic—they make us viewers more sensitive to the social aesthetics of everyday life in the films' respective locations. The films present social aesthetics that comprise not only ideas about elegance, beauty, and refinement but also the look of the material environment, the practice of decoration and furnishing, and the rules of conduct and self-presentation—in other words, the ways that life can be managed and made to be convivial and worth celebrating. As such, these aesthetics are not adjuncts to but, rather, preconditions of the "larger questions" of social belief and structure. At a wedding, individuals who are about to embark on a new life together experiment in creating social aesthetics, ways of negotiating, and, finally, calling on the moral support of their guests and onlookers. Not to be left out, we viewers are also part of this aesthetic community. In addition to being ethnographic films, *Face Value* and *A Wedding in the Yuntag* are also wedding videos—they are both films about weddings and films of weddings, which might finally belong to the participants of those weddings. These ethnographic films do what good wedding videos are supposed to do. They are so visually engaging that we viewers not only see how people contributed to and experienced the happiness of the big day but also come to feel some of that pleasure ourselves.

2004 MARGARET MEAD FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

No Story Is Ever Just a Story

EMILY YATES-DOERR

New York University

Abstract The 41 films at the 2004 Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival showcased a multiplicity of styles and approaches, thus widening the perspective of “what counts” as ethnographic film. The two main events—A Tribute to Jean Rouch and Native Voices—epitomized the festival’s commitment to diversity and creative talent. Despite the festival’s awkward location in the American Museum of Natural History, the films tackled challenging political subjects and directly addressed questions of representation. Postscreening musical performances, informational panels, and audience–director discussion sessions shaped the festival itself as an ethnographic experience, as well as being a venue for the year’s best documentary films. Festival highlights were *Raven Tales: How Raven Stole the Sun* (2004), *Mr. Patterns* (2004), and *Beauty Academy of Kabul* (2004). [Keywords: ethnographic film, documentary film, Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival review, American Museum of Natural History]

I admit it: I am not a native New Yorker with childhood nostalgia for the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) and it initially baffled me that this museum was the venue for the Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival. Natural history museums are known for portraying foreign cultures in romantic, static, and simplified terms and the AMNH—with its “culture halls” that highlight traditional lifestyles and customs—is no exception. Glass cases of *Homo habilis* and *Homo erectus* foregrounding films about Afghan beauticians, American Indian exercise instructors, and Cuban brides in Germany? Sure, Margaret Mead worked in the museum for half a century. Yes, the festival did originate 28 years ago as a tribute to her recognition of the significance of film in fieldwork and to honor the way she brought anthropology to a mainstream audience. But, as we learned in Jean Rouch’s Friday night film *Margaret Mead: A Portrait by a Friend* (1978), she also thought that anthropology’s future was in space colonies. Certainly she would support the changing needs of modern times.

In fact, the AMNH, with its regal halls and numerous large theaters, was a fine venue for the 41 films screened between November 11 and November 21. Enlightened audiences engaged in the experience of the films, generally ignoring the museum’s cultural naïveté. Although 18 Haida Indian models in a dugout canoe welcomed crowds at the museum’s “festival-only” side entrance, the signs marking “Human Biology and Evolution” were barely visible in the distance. Only one film required the audience to walk through the gigantic wooden totem poles and sculptures of ancient Indians in Boas’s hall of northwest coast life. This opening night crowd pleaser, *A Touch Of Greatness* (2004; see Figure 2), was about Albert Cullum, an elementary school teacher in Rye, New York: Certainly not the ethnographic “other” one might expect from a museum filled with sculptures of “primitive man” [sic].

Afterward, while hall-of-fame filmmakers mingled with the common folk, feasting on fancy cheeses and decent wine in the hall of gems, a former sixth-grade student

of Cullum’s (now a Harvard graduate) told me, “I always thought that ethnographic films were far away and exotic. Like they need rainforests or scary animals. But look, they can be five blocks away. I would have never thought that ethnographic films could be about me.”

The pace of the films also blurred the physical locality of the festival. An ambitious viewer might make it to eight films a day, from two-minute *Native Pride* (2004) to 105-minute *Marry Me* (2003), using up a big chunk of their 12-film–\$99 pass in the process. Although a viewer would notice that technical malfunctions—absent sound, missing footage, and overscheduled theatres—were not uncommon, he or she would also be treated to the broad scope of techniques that exist in the documentary world. Selected from over 1,000 entries, the 41 screenings demonstrated a variety of media: film, video, 3D animation, observational



FIGURE 2. The opening night film, *A Touch of Greatness* (2004), depicts the unorthodox teaching philosophy of Albert Cullum, who used poetry, drama, and imaginative play in his elementary school classroom. Film by Leslie Sullivan. 2004. 53 min. (U.S.) NY Premiere.

documentary, verité-style production, investigative journalism, discussion panels, flip-book cartoons, and photograph collages. The varied list of directors comprised social scientists, independent producers, cinema students, and indigenous media makers. Spanish, German, Farsi, Hopi, Pintupi, Portuguese, Hindi, Russian, and English were spoken throughout the films, which were shot in every continent of the world, save Antarctica.

In 1978, one year after the inaugural Mead festival, anthropologist-filmmaker David MacDougall said the label “ethnographic film” served a largely emblematic function, lending a semblance of unity to extremely diverse efforts. Although the festival does not identify itself as an “ethnographic” film festival, it fits MacDougall’s definition to a T. Individual films at the Mead festival may have seemed inappropriately suited for the “Top 40” of documentary films (*Rez-Robics* [2003] and *Mona Mon Amour* [2002] come to mind), but the films in the festival cohered despite their diversity. From the opening night image of elementary students running across a playground map of the United States—“What’s between the Atlantic and the Pacific?” the teacher asks. “America!” the students yell. “That’s right, the United States!” the teacher responds—to the closing night final image of a swastika made of \$100 bills, articulating corporate oppression in Argentina, the festival spilled freely across a range of disciplines and represented myriad voices and viewpoints.

For those unfamiliar with festival life, the experience of watching a film that is part of the Mead festival is entirely different from watching a film in a theater. The stories do not end when the lights turn on, rather, interactive discussions emerge and directors are usually present to clarify and elaborate their experiences. As the films end, both savants and yahoos have their hands in the air with questions and opinions. Often director discussions or informational panels accompany the films, illuminating visual images with dialogue, debate, or an occasional musical performance. The Mead festival does not simply showcase documentary, it is an ethnographic experience in itself. Returning to my criticism of its location in the AMNH—the museum is a part of the festival, but it is a small part: The quality of the films overshadows the awkward locale.

The Friday night event of the festival honored Jean Rouch, where his own 1978 film about Margaret Mead accompanied Ann McIntosh’s premiere, *Conversations with Jean Rouch* (2004). Although the films were cinematographically docile (what can you expect; they were tributes), the event drew a full house and initiated interesting dialogue about the filmic process. The question and answer session became a reunion of old friends as well as a chance for a number of prominent filmmakers to share stories about Rouch: “He always wore blue socks, tan pants and a blue shirt. He had to simplify his clothing because his life was so complex.” “He always answered a much more interesting question than the one that was asked.” The crowd expressed uncritical admiration for the way Rouch blended reality and fiction, illuminating the volatility of truth. Honoring Rouch

was also a way for the festival committee to emphasize criteria for the selection films; as in Rouch’s own work, the films chosen for the festival did not follow a specific doctrine or a fixed set of rules. They were, instead, selected because they tackled diverse and challenging subjects, treated the camera as a passport to freedom, and used film as a medium for poetry.

Picture Afghan women with children crawling around their feet surrounded by red and brunette wigs, a U.S. instructor shouting in the background, “Don’t you want to be beautiful?” *The Beauty Academy of Kabul* (2004), a documentary by Liz Mermin, depicted the efforts made by U.S. women from Beauty without Borders to start a salon in Afghanistan (see Figure 3).

The film makes the complexity of cross-cultural encounters tangible. We see the project director demand that the studio be built with large windows; later we see her confusion when the beauticians crowd the back of the room so passersby will not look through the windows. We hear the U.S. instructors—including two women who fled Afghanistan during the Taliban—lecture the women of this war-stricken country about the importance of makeup: “Lose the burka, ladies. Get a car!” When speaking of the importance of the Afghan beautician, one teacher explains, “She is healing a country, one by one—that’s what hairdressers do, they heal people.” The film masterfully balances the irony of the encounter with the humanity of those involved. Unlike many of the films in the festival, *Beauty Academy* addresses itself directly as a documentary project: People in the film respond to the camera and speak directly to Mermin. In one instance, the instructors ask an Afghan woman what the country would be like if it were run by women. When they meet her response—that this would never happen; men would not permit it—with silence and sadness, the woman turns to Mermin to ask if she gave the



FIGURE 3. *Beauty Academy of Kabul* (2004) documents the efforts of a group of optimistic U.S. beauticians, as they open the first beauty school in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban. Film by Liz Mermin. 2004. 74 min. (Afghanistan). Photo courtesy of Magic Lantern Films.

wrong answer. During the postscreening question and answer session, Mermin said, “I was drawn to this story because it did seem absurd, but the closer I got the more it turned around, this absurdity collapsed in on itself and revealed something much deeper.” Like many of the festival’s films, this story was filled with kernels of provocation that raised a number of complex questions about the nature of cross-cultural interactions.

The festival boasted a substantial Native American presence with the special event *Native Voices, Northwest and Southwest*, honoring six films from Native filmmakers. These represented a diverse range of styles, including grassroots activist videos, excerpts of a comedic exercise series, and animation. To emphasize that these films were best understood as events and not simply as formal documentaries, they were accompanied by panels, testimonies, and musical performances (see Figure 4).

Although several of these videos seemed rough (admittedly, Victor Masayesva’s films *Paatuwaqatsi* [n.d.] and *Pensoyungkam* [n.d.] were works in progress), their explorations of Native issues were an important addition to the festival, and served to uphold the festival’s reputation for honoring diversity and presenting a range of perspectives. Pam Belgarde gave a moving introduction that highlighted the devastating effects of diabetes in her community. She described her work, *Rez-Robics for Couch Potato Skins* (2003), as an effort to “unfold the blanket of denial” that exists around diabetes in the Native American community (see Figure 5).

The excerpts of *Rez-Robics* that were shown would hardly appeal to a highbrow audience, but to its credit, the video is not intended for New York film critics. Rather, it purports to use “Indian humor” to reach Indian audiences.

One of the festival highlights emerged from the Native Voices event. *Raven Tales: How Raven Stole the Sun*, is



FIGURE 4. Simon Dick, who composed all of the music in *Raven Tales* (2004), performs a song on the Linder Theater stage while Pam Belgarde models an indigenous northwest coast button-blanket. Photo by author.



FIGURE 5. The production crew of *Raven Tales* (2004) adorns Pam Belgarde—a Chippewa and director of *Rez-Robics*—with the gift of an indigenous northwest coast button-blanket robe, as Simon James explains the significance of storytelling for his Kwakwaka’wakw people to the Mead festival audience. Photo courtesy Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival.

the first computer-animated video to be written, directed, and produced by a Canadian Indigenous Indian team. The animation illustrates the Northwest Coast legend of how Raven brings light to the world through deception, trickery, and manipulation (see Figure 6). Director Simon James (Kwakwaka’wakw), who introduced the film, quipped: “10,000 years of market research have told us that this is a story worth watching.” The beautifully produced computer animation integrates subtle humor with dark visual images, exposing us to the complex genesis legends of Native Northwest tribes, in which protagonists are not necessarily good or bad and children’s fables do not always provide allegorical lessons. Throughout my own Alaskan upbringing, Tlingit stories of Raven delighted and frightened me, and I found this animation effectively true to character.

Another festival highlight, *Mr. Patterns* (2004), was a cinematically poetic film that collaged archival and modern day footage to tell the story of Australian Geoff Bardon’s involvement with the western desert Australian Aboriginal community at Papunya. Through indigenous director Catriona McKenzie’s portrayal of Bardon—affectionately nicknamed Mr. Patterns by the children he worked with—the film raises issues of racial inequality, government corruption, cross-cultural friendship, and the constraints of realism. The film describes Bardon as the catalyst, “the right person at the right place at the right time,” for helping launch the dot painting movement that swept through Australia and the world. It also tells of the disabling toll that this involvement had on his life. This film takes us through a historical account of Bardon’s arrival at welfare-dependent Papunya in the mid-1970s, his blue Kombi packed full of art supplies and video equipment. It tells the story of how he encouraged the people to paint their traditional designs



FIGURE 6. In *Raven Tales* (2004), a traditional Kwakwaka'wakw myth meets 21st century computer animation. The video, produced by an all-Canadian Indigenous Indian team, is part of a series that chronicles the comic misadventures of Raven, Eagle, and Frog. Film by Simon James and Chris Kientz. 2004. 22 min. (Canada) NY Premiere.

using western materials and—in defiance of the government's plans for assimilation and subordination—to sell their paintings to gain economic independence. The archival footage, filmed by Bardon himself, depicts how Papunya artists were able to “create something out of nothing,” expressing submerged stories and alternate interpretations of the world through unique artistic patterns. This footage, in which the people appear relaxed and uninhibited, often looking directly into the camera, demonstrates Bardon's intimacy with the community. The film also catalogs Bardon's journey from humble energetic art teacher to a man sandwiched between government and aboriginal conflict—throughout which he suffered depression ending in a nervous breakdown—to an unorthodox treatment from which he would never fully recover. “When I was at Papunya I learned about friendship in a mature way... where I could be respected and give respect,” said Bardon, just prior to his passing in 2003. Nonetheless, juxtapositions of archival and modern footage portray a once vibrant man largely defeated. This powerful story, told with McKenzie's symbolic use of creative cinematography, provides the audience with profound insight into the complexity of Papunya's history.

Unfortunately, not all the films were as successful. Sonia Goldenberg made *Memorias del Paraíso* (2003) in simplistic journalism fashion—no well-trained ethnographer today would begin a film saying, “This is a story that has never been told.” Her film investigates the terror that villagers in the town of Paraíso experienced, trapped between poverty and drug lords, the Shining Path guerrillas and the Peruvian military. Although the testimonies of people who had lost family members were powerful, the style of the film itself was hardly original: beautiful scenes of Peruvian landscapes contrasted with images of suffering and poverty—a recipe more than overdone. Her audience, however, did not seem to mind. They were interested in what to do about coca production, and what she thought about the Shining Path and the current government. Goldenberg defended her commitment saying she “actually traveled to Paraíso three times in order to make the film,” as if this level of commitment were unheard of. Content, the crowd left

ethical concerns surrounding community representation untouched.

Joe Berlinger's, *Gray Matter* (2004) also fell into the investigative-reporter genre, in which a compelling story compensated for an otherwise average film. Berlinger and his crew—complete with undercover cameras and token neurologist—take the audience on their quest for Heinrich Gross, an Austrian psychiatrist whose name appeared on the death certificates of hundreds of allegedly “disabled” children who had been committed to the Spiegelgrund mental clinic during the Holocaust. Gross was never held accountable for their deaths and Berlinger saw the documentary as a “unique opportunity to confront someone directly involved.” This dark film, interspersed with haunting black and white photographs of the children, winds through laboratories filled with glass jars holding specimens from the children's brains, to an official burial for 600 of the brains held in 2002. Berlinger interviews handfuls of scientists, lawyers, and even Spiegelgrund survivors. We meet Anna Meierhofer, who was admitted to the hospital after she told her teacher she was a Jehovah's Witness and could not worship Hitler because he was human; Johann Gross still suffers the echoes of the former labels—“inferior, antisocial”—although he has two grown sons and a successful career. Berlinger's inability to locate and interview Heinrich Gross epitomized the political doubletalk and lack of true contrition that he saw among the Austrian government. Although Berlinger's personal journey was at times self-aggrandizing, the film opened a timely dialogue surrounding the need to examine our present day denial about the government's enduring ability to create justification myths for perpetuated human atrocities.

Marry Me, directed by Uli Gaulke and Jeannette Eggert, was one of the most intriguing and mysterious films of the festival. The film begins in a Cuban disco on the night that protagonists Gladis and Erik meet. Erik, from Germany, soon professes his love to both Gladis and her eight-year-old son, Omarito. Encouraged by her friends and recognizing that she had found a way to escape from Cuban poverty, she and Erik marry and move to cold and austere Hamburg, where Gladis and Omarito begin their life anew. The film documents their hope, disappointment,

and endurance through conflict and comedy: honeymoon fantasies dissolve over the struggle to put together IKEA furniture; they fumble through communication with her in-laws when Omarito refuses food foreign to him; Gladis teaches a German tobacco shop owner, with whom she cannot commute verbally, to roll cigars. In the end of the film, after the birth of their child (we witness the birth on camera), Omarito asks, "Mama are we going to stay here?" "Of course, why would we want to go back to the past," she responds. "Well you have to try harder to learn German then," he tells her. The film is a touching portrayal of migration that joins Gladis's optimism with cultural alienation to tell the story of cross-cultural departure and arrival. Its largest weakness lies in the ambiguity surrounding its production. Aside from the introduction text, "Based On A True Story," the filmmakers opt for a fly-on-the-wall style that gives no clarification as to whether the characters in the film are themselves, actors, or acting themselves. Although overt reflexivity is certainly no longer a prerequisite of documentary film, the camouflaged-camera effect of *Marry Me* ambiguates and distracts from the impact of the film. Gaulke and Eggert were also not present to discuss their film (oh, how the Mead festival spoils us), leaving audiences to mumble their way out of the theatre: "Was that true? Did that happen? What did we just see?"

Despite *Marry Me's* dismissal of how the process of observation unavoidably alters the behavior of the observed, representation was a central theme to the Mead festival. Many of the films documented the everyday life of storytellers, artists, film aficionados, or television viewers, providing a metaethnographic look at the construction of filmic reality. "When we run a matinee like this one, I wake up the next day a new man full of awe and pleasure," says the movie-theatre operator, Jose Zagati, in Sergio Bloch's *Mini Cine Tupy* (2003). Geoff Bardon describes aboriginal art saying, "You can see Papunya in a minute. There's nothing there, and yet this place contains the treasures of Aladdin's cave. And there's much that we can never know." "It's useless to have information. We need to develop thoughts," says the Argentine taxi driver cum avant-garde artist in Sergio Morkin's *Oscar* (2004). "A story is never just a story," said Frog during *Raven Tales*. "Some are true; some are inspiration."

Once understood as a collection of anthropological works, the Mead festival now redefines anthropology as a montage of many voices. Embodying the heart and soul of low-cost independent cinema, the films raise poignant questions, both political and personal, about cultural relations and provoke thought about the complexity of the international world and its inhabitants. Because the festival not only reflects what is out there but also shapes the future of documentary, Mead festival film and video lovers can rest assured that it will remain a creativity-driven venue.

Despite the problems of the AMNH, this festival will make Frog proud; the stories it presents are filled with truth and inspiration.

For further information on the Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival and this year's films, visit <http://www.amnh.org/programs/mead/index.html>.

FILMS CITED

- Beauty Academy of Kabul
2004 Liz Mermin, dir. 74 min. Color. Distributed by Magic Lantern Media, 816 Accabonac Road, East Hampton, NY 11937. (www.beautyacademyofkabul.com)
- Gray Matter
2004 Joe Berlinger, dir. 59 min. Color. Distributed by Third Eye Motion Picture Co., Inc. c/o Radical Media 435 Hudson Street, 6th floor, New York, NY 10014. (berlinger@radicalmedia.com)
- Margaret Mead: A Portrait by a Friend
1978 Jean Rouch, dir. 30 min. Color. Distributed by American Museum of Natural History, Special Collections, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, NY 10024. (www.amnh.org)
- Marry Me
2003 Uli Gaulke and Jeannette Eggert, dirs. 105 min. Color. Distributed by Deckert Distribution, Peterssteinweg 13, 04107 Leipzig, Germany. (http://www.deckert-distribution.com/films/deckert_167.htm)
- Memorias del Paraíso (Memories of Paradise)
2003 Sonia Goldenberg, dir. 50 min. Color. Distributed by Journeyman Pictures, 75A Walton Road, East Molesey, Surrey KT8 0DP, England. (<http://www.journeyman.tv/?lid=12204>)
- Mini Cine Tupy
2003 Sergio Bloch, dir. 10 min. Color. Distributed by ABBAS Filmes Ltda., Rua Almirante Alexandrino, 3780 Bloco E1/apto S201, Santa Tereza—CEP: 20241-262, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (sbloch@terra.com.br)
- Mona Mon Amour
2002 Michael Sporn, dir. 8 min. Color. Distributed by Michael Sporn Animation, Inc. 35 Bedford Street, New York, NY 10014. (mspanimation@aol.com)
- Mr. Patterns
2004 Catriona McKenzie, dir. 55 min. Color. Distributed by Lucy Milne, Film Australia, 101 Eton Road, Lindfield NSW 2070, Sydney, Australia. (http://www.filmaust.com.au/programs/program_display.asp?sn=8700)
- Native Pride
2004 911 Media Arts Center/Young Producers Project, dirs. 2 min. Color. Distributed by 911 Media Arts Center, Annie Silverstein, Youth Programs Director, 117 Yale Ave N. Seattle, WA 98109-5428. (http://www.911media.org/youth/native_lens.html)
- Oscar
2004 Sergio Morkin, dir. 61 min. Color. Distributed by Nicolas Avruj and Sergio Morkin, San Luis 3157 "f" C1186ACI, Buenos Aires, Argentina. (elcampocine@argentina.com)
- Raven Tales: How Raven Stole the Sun
2004 Simon James and Chris Kientz, dirs. 22 min. Color. Distributed by Raven Tales Productions, 100 Park Royal, Suite 200, West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2, Canada. (<http://www.raventales.ca>)
- Rez-Robics for Couch Potato Skins
2003 Pam Balgarde, dir. 20 min. Color. Distributed by Gary Rhine, Dreamcatchers, 23852 Pacific Coast Highway #766, Malibu, CA 90265. (<http://www.dreamcatchers.org/rezrobics>)
- A Touch of Greatness
2004 Leslie Sullivan, dir. 53 min. Color. Distributed by Aubin Pictures, 136 Grand Street 5EF, New York, NY 10013. (<http://www.atouchofgreatness.com>)

2004 SECOND MOSCOW INTERNATIONAL VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY FILM FESTIVAL

Building Bridges and Traveling through Time: Ethics, Practice, and Priorities in the Second Moscow International Visual Anthropology Film Festival

STANISLAV SHECTMAN

Temple University

Abstract International film festivals are entangled spaces in which filmmakers and audiences negotiate aesthetic, ethical, political, and practical traditions and communities. This review of the Second Moscow International Visual Anthropology Film Festival explores some of the differences in ethics, practice, and priorities of anthropological filmmaking between Russia and the West. By providing a brief history of Soviet anthropology and a discussion of the festival's main themes, this review explores some of the historic and contemporary influences shaping the development of (one particular strain of) visual anthropology in post-Soviet Russia. [Keywords: cross-cultural ethics, film festivals, visual anthropology, Russia]

International film festivals are important occasions for cultural, artistic, and professional exchange. They are, at the same time, entangled spaces in which sometimes-incommensurable aesthetics, ethics, politics, and practices intersect. Filmmakers and audiences trail and redirect the trajectories of their own cinematic histories and experiences, as they work to understand and familiarize themselves with the forms and meanings of others' practices (Nichols 1994). In the process, they participate in the production and negotiation of professional and artistic communities and boundaries (Abu-Lughod 2004). This was especially apparent at the Second Moscow International Visual Anthropology Film Festival and Conference (May 24–27, 2004), which brought together scholars and filmmakers from divergent disciplinary traditions and professional and institutional contexts. The convergence of Western and Eastern European anthropological traditions and ethnographic sensibilities made for a dynamic and provocative event, which highlighted the limitations of theoretical perspectives and challenged the assumptions of practice in these diverse fields.

The film festival was held at M. V. Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU) on the eve of the university's 250th anniversary (see Figure 7).

The festival was founded and organized by the Center for Visual Anthropology at MSU, under the direction of Evgenii Alexandrov, along with the Russian Association of Visual Anthropology, the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and the National Association of Audiovisual Archives. (For a complete program, see the festival website: www.cnit.msu.ru/visan/mifva.htm.) This year's festival featured over 70 films by anthropologists and documentary filmmakers from Western and Eastern Europe, Japan, India, Central Asia, and various regions of the Russian Federation and newly in-

dependent states. Organized under the title of "Tradition and Object(ive) Lens. In search of Integrity,"¹ the festival's main goal was "to show how visual anthropology records images of traditional cultures around the world and facilitates the formation of a notion of a unitary human community" (Festival press release 2004). Although the festival drew anthropologists and filmmakers from the West and the East, the majority of the films were by Russian or Russian-trained anthropologists and filmmakers and dealt with the "traditional cultures" of Eastern European, Central Asian, and Siberian ethnic groups. The predominant emphasis of these films was on folklore, ritual, and material culture, including traditional crafts, architecture, and religious festivals. Live translation from Russian to English was provided for the films and discussions.



FIGURE 7. The central building of M. V. Lomonosov Moscow State University is one of seven skyscrapers, nicknamed "The Seven Sisters," that rise above Moscow and were commissioned by Stalin in the 1940s and 1950s. Photo by author.

As with many film festivals, it was impossible to see all the films shown. Except for the first day's screenings and the final day's round table, the festival spanned four venues across Moscow, each organized around a different theme: general screenings and debuts at MSU; "Visual Anthropology and Traditional Culture of Siberian and Far Northern Peoples," at the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology at the Russian Academy of Sciences; "Visual Anthropology: From Field Research to Humanitarian Practice," at the Institute of Heritage; and "Jean Rouch and the French School of Visual Anthropology," at the Museum of Cinema. The discussions focused mainly on methodological and practical issues, such as "video practices and video analysis," "research and preservation of cultural heritage," "visual anthropology in educational reform," and the application of "modern information" technologies, such as the Internet. This review deals mainly with the festival's thematic concerns and the work shown by Russian anthropologists and filmmakers. My aim here is to highlight some of the past influences and present discourses shaping the development of visual anthropology in Russia today.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Prior to the political and ideological liberalization of the Soviet Union's final years, anthropology in Russia did not struggle with the history of colonialism and racism that shaped the discipline in the West.² Although the discipline began at approximately the same time in Russia as it did in the West, it developed in a historical context largely isolated from the theoretical debates and ethnographic innovations of British and U.S. anthropology. This history was not entirely shaped from above by the Soviet state, although it was, as Valery Tishkov explains, steeped in the ideological demands and methodological dictates of its Marxist-Leninist "theory of nations" (1992:381). The anthropos of Soviet anthropology held little in common with the ones emerging in the West. Soviet ethnography was largely concerned with "ethnoses," ethnic masses or nations conceived as the "independent variables" and primary forms from which other phenomena arose (Tishkov 1992:380). Anthropology in the Soviet Union was thus primarily a descriptive and historical discipline, dealing mainly with the project of tracing the development of precapitalist societies and ethnic groups. In this sense, Soviet anthropologists were largely, although not uniformly, students of "the history of mankind and the evolution of human society" (Gellner 1975:596).

Soviet ethnography was thus driven less by theory than by the methodological demands of data collection. Fieldworkers did not necessarily set out to address preexisting theoretical dilemmas, but to map the lives and practices of their traditional subjects. It was within this methodological context that cameras entered the field. As early as the 1920s, Soviet state studios began producing "ethnographic" films aimed at recording various examples of folk practices and culture (Balikci 2000). These films, like Soviet ethnography in general, privileged material culture, collecting considerable amounts of footage of folk customs, crafts, rituals, and festivals while glossing over their religious and spiritual di-

mensions. This approach continued to characterize visual anthropology's contribution to the field on into the 1970s, when the Institute of Ethnography in the Soviet Academy of Sciences established its first ethnographic film unit.

It was not until the glasnost (Gorbachev's policy of openness) of the 1980s that Soviet visual anthropologists began regularly encountering Western anthropologists, films, and theories. Asen Balikci has written several reviews charting the major developments in these influential exchanges. The "First Contact" took place in 1987 at the Pamu Ethnographic Film Festival in Estonia (Balikci 2000). As in the past, the central themes of the Soviet ethnographic films centered on local ethnic traditions, folk rituals, festivals, and crafts. Balikci notes a clear ideological content in these films, which "tended to demonstrate that Soviet doctrine was appreciative of local folklore traditions provided that they were first cleansed of obvious religious elements and then preserved in the context of exhibits and performing ensembles, and finally aesthetically displayed on stage" (2000:21). Several years later, in 1991, Balikci and Mark Badger initiated a visual anthropology training seminar in the village of Kazim, Northwest Siberia, for a small group of native cultural activists, Russian ethnographers, folklorists, and filmmakers. Among them was Evgenii Aleksandrov, who subsequently established the Center for Visual Anthropology at MSU (Balikci and Badger 1992). Along with camcorders, Balikci and Badger introduced ethnographic field methods and "'observational cinema' strategies" to the students, and encouraged them to produce visual records of their own cultures.

Yet not all of the landmarks in the field are of Western origin. In 1989, Russia's first curriculum in visual anthropology was developed through the department of history at MSU. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the Center for Visual Anthropology has embarked on a number of innovative projects designed to expand the scope of and training in visual anthropological methods and practice. With a grant from the Ford Foundation, the Center established visual anthropology field schools and workshops in Tomsk and Krasnoïarsk, in Siberia, and organized workshops for the Siberian Regional Museum that focused on the use of video technology in museum exhibits and archives. In 1998, the Russian Visual Anthropology Association was created and was followed by the production of original scholarly publications and translations of Western texts. A number of subsequent film festivals have also been organized, including the first and second Russian Anthropological Film Festivals in Salekhard, Northwestern Siberia, and the First and Second Moscow International Visual Anthropology Film Festivals.

Much like the histories of British social and U.S. cultural anthropology, the history of the Soviet Union haunts the contemporary practice of anthropology in Russia. Although Russian anthropology has its own "crisis in ethnography," its issues are more recent, linked to the politicization of ethnic identity and the resistance of the discipline's traditional subjects that began in the last years of the Soviet Union (Tishkov 1992). The surge in ethnic violence and

resistance in the former Soviet Union has challenged both the validity of the field's previous work and its academic community. Russian anthropologists now find themselves pushed to reimagine their fundamental assumptions about culture, society, and ethnicity as well as their identities as social scientists. Tishkov further argues that the discipline's future depends not only on its ability to theorize new frameworks for its practice but also on its strength to shake off the "scientific ethos" conditioned by years of subscription to the "single universal or 'eternal' methodology" and institutional hierarchy of the Soviet social sciences (1992:372). This includes developing sensitivities to the legacy of unequal power relations between Soviet ethnographers and their traditional subjects, and creating new ethical stances for the post-Soviet context. As anthropologists move to "repatriate" ethnography in light of their new social, political, and economic situations (Tishkov 1992:374), events such as the Moscow International Visual Anthropology Film Festival and Conference become important arenas for the development of new theories, methods, and institutional relationships, both at "home" and "abroad."

BUILDING BRIDGES AND TRAVELING THROUGH TIME

It is, then, not surprising that the organizers of the film festival emphasized visual anthropology's potential contributions to the amelioration of ethnic tensions and the development of new methodologies for understanding culture and identity in the post-Soviet world. In a longer statement of the festival's goals, the organizers note the importance of "show[ing] how, with the aid of modern informational technology, a person can not only convey the sense of value, beauty, and diversity of cultures of the world, but also bring out a deep commonality, giving hope for the mutual understanding and interaction of separate worlds" (Russian Culture News, www.museum.ru/news/archive/RCN022420040129.htm). As the festival's organizing principle, this statement embodies a dual vision of visual anthropology as both a humanitarian project and a tool for the "preservation" of Russia's vast cultural heritage. Within the festival's discussions, these visions were illustrated with two related images: "bridge building" and "time travel."

The first of these tropes imagined visual anthropology as a humanitarian project with the potential of creating a sense of community, appreciation, and shared cultural heritage across diverse cultures and traditions. Alexandrov explained that the "art of film" could build "bridges of mutual understanding among the representatives of . . . diverse human communities, giving people a sense of wholeness, a spirit in life, and an emotional reaction" (letter to author, November 2004). In this view, it is the progress of the "modern" world that has led people to lose their "roots," their heritage, and traditions. This perspective was echoed in various ways throughout the festival's discussions, charging visual anthropology with the task of reconnecting modern people with their "lost" cultural heritage. It was, thus, the organizers' goal to explore ways of using film to create a "psychological space" that would inspire people "to want

to return home" (Alexandrov, letter to author, November 2004). The second major theme of the festival inquired into the potential of visual anthropology as a tool for the preservation of cultural heritage. Here the image of the "time machine" was the favored trope, called on to illustrate the idea that film could allow people of the present and future to "travel through time" and witness these "disappearing worlds." A clear premium was placed on the archiving of cultural material and of leaving something that can be used by future generations. The archiving of visual material, itself a major enterprise in contemporary Russian anthropology, was also closely allied to the goal of creating commonality across ethnic groups, as well as the employment of visual material in education and mass distribution.

A number of films seemed to embrace this philosophy, demonstrating keen senses of ethnographic detail but little, if any, explicit consideration of the tensions and contradictions of their uses of the terms *tradition*, *ethnicity*, or *community*. Many of them were recordings of traditional folk rituals, culture, or peasant life, although religion was also an important theme. Among them were Irina Klyueva's (2003) *Carpathian Music*, about a Gutsul wedding in the Ivano-Frankovsk region of Ukraine; Kazuo Okada's (1981) *Mayun-Ganashi*, about spiritual rites in an Okinawan village; Romualds Pipars and Anna Apsite's (2003) documentary about Gypsies in Latvia, *For all my life*; Janno Simm's (2003) film about Khanty fishers in West Siberia, *Autumn on Ob River*; and Kseniya Yakshimbetova's (2003) work on ethnic Chechnians, *Vainakh*. Other films focused more on specific families and individuals, such as Leonid Filimonov's (2004) *Family of Petr and Valentina*, and Orzu Sharipov's (1991) *Roots*. In addition to these documentary and ethnographic projects, several films followed more philosophical or artistic paths in trying to evoke the sense of longing, loss, or isolation that they read in the lives of their subjects. One was Valery Timoschenko's (2002) haunting and philosophical *Lonely Paradise* and the other was Victor Asliuk's (2003) moody, wordless, black-and-white film about isolation and life cycles, *The Wheel*.

Although many of the films attempted to address both of these issues, certain ones represented a specific emphasis on the documentation of "disappearing" cultural practices. Most of these films were subject driven, focusing on a single (usually elderly and white-haired) protagonist, whose narrated memories serve as the structure for flashbacks, cutaways, reconstructions, or observational recordings of traditional crafts and rituals. Two such films were Gaukhar Sydykova's (2002) *At the Junction of Two Springs, Red Butterflies . . .*, which followed the daily life of an elderly matron in Kyrgyzstan who continues to make felt cloth the "traditional" way. Temina Tuaeua's (2003) *The Last of the Mohicans* portrayed an aging artisan in the Caucasus who makes ornately carved bowls, plates, and ornaments while remembering the past and passing on bits of accumulated wisdom.

Interestingly, few films dealt explicitly with the tensions and contradictions between modernization and tradition. Among the ones that stood out were Vartan Akopyan's

(2002) *Duduk*, a touching and humorous look at a group of musicians in the Caucasus struggling to make a living with their music in the postsocialist world; Asen Balikci and Antonii Donchev's (2002) excellent exploration of the "invention of tradition" and postsocialist cultural transformation in Bulgaria, *Muslim Labyrinths*; and Dmitr Kabakov's (2003) *Brothers*, about a family in Dogistan, split between country and city, tradition and modernity.

WHOSE ETHICS? WHOSE PRACTICE?

During the final day discussions, two provocative dialogues developed between Russian and Western anthropologists that illustrate some of the differences in ethical concerns, practical objectives, and institutional needs. The first dealt with the ethics of shared filmmaking, and the second with the practice of ethnographic filmmaking.

As discussion turned to the future of visual anthropology, Balikci made an impassioned call for a "shared" anthropology that would teach video production methods to those who have no access to the dominant means of representation. In fact, Balikci's contribution to the festival, *Muslim Labyrinths*, was part of a larger project designed to teach production techniques to his subjects and employ them in his ethnographic research. Pointing to the successes of other indigenous image makers, including the Kayapo and Australian Aborigines, Balikci argued for similar attempts in Russia's field. However, a number of Russian filmmakers and anthropologists voiced serious ethical concerns about sharing the camera. They responded that ethnographic films should be made by "scientists and trained filmmakers" who understand filmmaking. Turning the logic of "shared anthropology" on its head, they pointed out the dangers that self-representation might pose to people who are not fully aware of its implications.

The Russians' response to Balikci's call for self-representation among anthropology's traditional subjects bears a striking resemblance to Western debates about "cultural authenticity" and indigenous media. Their fears about the dangers of handing over "alien" technology suggest a concern that latent ideologies and power relations are embedded in modern media technologies. At the same time, their suspicion of the ethics of self-representation recalls James Weiner's fear that indigenous image-making practices threaten to replace "genuine historical, linguistic, social, and cultural difference with an ersatz difference among electronic images" (1997:208). For him, film and video technologies represent the "death" of anthropology's project of engaging with radically different cultures by reducing that difference to a matter of the aesthetics and politics of image production. In their response to Weiner's essay, Faye Ginsburg and Terry Turner, among others, rightly argue against the problematic assumption that indigenous contact with modern technology and representational practices necessarily results in the loss of authenticity (Weiner 1997). I suspect that the Russians' ethical concerns are similarly based on the problematic assumption that the contact between "modern" and "traditional" cultures results in the loss of the latter's authenticity and difference. Given

the festival organizers' explicit concern with the camera's role in preserving disappearing worlds, the act of handing over the camera would, in their eyes, make them complicit in these disappearances. Although this dilemma may have its own history, grounded in the experiences of Soviet anthropology, it also suggests that Russian anthropologists are now dealing with tensions and contradictions surrounding the notion of "authenticity," similar to those among scholars in the West.

Another fascinating discussion arose around the subject of filming practices. A debate arose regarding different methodologies of visual production and the role of editing in ethnographic film. A French anthropologist suggested a difference between "ethnographic data" and an "anthropological film": The former was the "raw" footage from which the filmmaker crafts the latter, shaped in terms of the researcher's ethnographic interests and theoretical concerns. For the Russian filmmakers, however, all the footage held value. They expressed concerns over the "wasting" of footage by not, at the very least, archiving it and making it available for future researchers.

This exchange, too, highlights the different institutional demands and ethnographic priorities of Russian visual anthropology. It suggests that fundamental differences exist not only in the definitions and boundaries of "data" and "ethnography," but in the epistemology surrounding the production of knowledge, as well. For the Western anthropologists, raw footage was not transparent and needed to be framed by explicit theory and reworked into an ethnographic text. For the Russian anthropologists, the footage was itself an ethnographic document that held intrinsic value as an encounter with another culture.

CONCLUSION

In an article entitled, "The Soviet and the Savage," Ernest Gellner describes the "drastic and no doubt salutary culture shock" experienced by "someone trained in the British tradition of social anthropology who enters the world of Soviet anthropology" (1975:595). That "someone" is Gellner, whose flight from London to Moscow lands him in "a world which stands in sharp contrast to at least British, if not to all Western anthropology" (p. 595). The contrast, for Gellner, is not merely one of institutional atmosphere or political climate but also one of competing visions of the nature of society and the anthropological project of studying it. As an anthropologist steeped in the legacy of the "post-" critiques and representational crises of the discipline's last several decades in the West, and especially in the United States, I experienced a similar sense of "shock" at encountering an anthropology in which the notions of cultural "preservation" and "salvage ethnography" are in vogue and "tradition" is somewhat unproblematically opposed to "modernity."

Yet the heavy ideological baggage that labels such as "positivism" carry in the West, provides little explanation for the discourses and ideologies that surround visual anthropology in the Russian context. Svetlana Boym (1994) has made this argument regarding post-Soviet documentary

aesthetics. The positivist critiques leveled by historians in the U.S. context “would hardly apply to the Russian situation,” in which, since the 18th century, “history was written by major writers and poets, not by professional historians. [In Russia,] the ties between historiography and literature have never been severed” (1994:240).³ Boym’s point about the particular relationship between history and literature in Russia highlights the fundamental embeddedness of theory, ethics, and practice and raises critical questions about the limitations of Western postmodern, poststructuralist, and positivist critiques. It also suggests something about the humanistic and artistic ambitions of the festival’s organizers. Alexandrov explained that their project attempts to produce films that create an emotional and psychological response in viewers. “We strive to create an immersive experience for the viewer, a psychological space that engenders a sense of shared humanity” (letter to author, November 2004).

What I find interesting in this ambition is that the desired response is nostalgic for a “lost” home. Scholars and journalists alike have consistently noted the “culture of nostalgia” sweeping the former socialist states of Eastern Europe. This postsocialist nostalgia runs through a number of recent popular films that have emerged from Eastern Europe. Nikita Mikhalkov’s (1994) film *Burnt by the Sun*, which won the Best Foreign Language Film Oscar in the 1995 Academy Awards, tells the story of a revolutionary hero ultimately betrayed by Stalin’s policies of terror and paranoia. The film is one of several of Mikhalkov’s lamentations about the loss of Russia’s former glory. Wolfgang Becker’s (2003) *Goodbye Lenin!* reflects a more lighthearted nostalgia for the familiarity of everyday life before the fall of the Berlin Wall. It is not only interesting to note the echoes of these themes of “loss” and “tradition” in the films and discussions in the Moscow film festival but also to see the ways in which these popular and artistic discourses relate to the kinds of subjects, images, and discourses that characterized the films showcased at the festival. In all of these films, nostalgia becomes more than just a longing for home. It becomes a way of framing and commenting on the present by reimagining the past. The commentary suggests more about the construction of “home” in the present than about desires for a return to the past.

In this sense, Gellner’s too-sharp division between Western and Soviet anthropology becomes blurred in the post-Soviet context, in which the discourses and debates about authenticity and cultural heritage that have characterized the field in the West now shape it in Russia. However “isolated” Soviet anthropologists might have been in the past (Balicki 1995), their work now takes place on a global stage in which divergent traditions, ethics, and practices meet and transform one another, negotiating the boundaries and definitions of the field. The international audience in attendance at the Moscow film festival represents a moment in the process of Russian visual anthropology’s induction into the “trade routes” and discursive circulations of the world community of visual anthropologists (see Nichols

1994). The films that were selected for the festival and the discourses surrounding them illustrate one of the possible futures that the organizers have imagined for the field. The festival itself becomes a space in which Russian and Western anthropologists can experiment with new professional identities, institutional relationships, and ethical practices. It suggests, at the very least, that increased dialogues with the West are an important part of this future. Visual anthropologists in Russia are working in an exciting and dynamic time. It will certainly be interesting to see the theoretical, ethical, and practical responses that emerge from their particular anthropological history. Just as important will be the contributions that these responses will provide for the world community of visual anthropologists.

NOTES

Acknowledgments. Special thanks to Evgenii Alexandrov (MSU) for his gracious invitation to the film festival and for his comments on this review. Thanks also to Dr. Asen Balicki for his advice and encouragement.

1. The translation of *Traditsia i obektiv. B poiskah tselnosti* that appears on the festival program and website appears elsewhere as “Tradition and Lens: In Search of Wholeness” (www.museum.ru/news/archive/RCN022420040129.htm). Given the festival’s focus on the camera’s potential for facilitating “a notion of a unitary human condition,” I feel that the latter offers a more appropriate and accurate translation. This was, in fact, the meaning of *tselnosti* as it was expressed to me by Alexandrov.

2. In her response to Valery Tishkov’s essay, Katherine Verdery notes that the “terms ‘anthropology,’ ‘ethnography,’ and ‘ethnology’ have complex and contradictory definitions in the Soviet context and are not entirely congruent with those prevailing in Anglo-American anthropology” (Tishkov 1992:392). I use *anthropology* and *ethnography* as general terms, while, like Verdery, acknowledging that important variations exist between the two traditions.

3. Boym also points out the word *istoriia* is used for both “story” and “history,” signifying a close relationship between narrative, myth, and history in Russia (1994:240).

REFERENCES CITED

- Abu-Lughod, Lila
2004 The Adjacent Art of Documentary: A Palestinian Film Festival. *American Anthropologist* 106(1):150–151.
- Balicki, Asen
1995 The Sibiu Documentary Film Festival, October 20–22, 1994. *Visual Anthropology Review* 11(1):139–140.
2000 The Second Russian Anthropological Film Festival Salekhard, 29 August–4 September 2000. *Anthropology Today* 16(6):21–23.
- Balicki, Asen, and Mark Badger
1992 Siberian Seminar: In the Village of Kazim, Activists Learn to Portray Their Own Culture with Video. *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 16(1):68.
- Boym, Svetlana
1994 Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gellner, Ernest
1975 The Soviet and the Savage. *Current Anthropology* 16(4):595–617.
- Nichols, Bill
1994 Discovering Form, Inferring Meaning: New Cinemas and the Film Festival Circuit. *Film Quarterly* 47(3):16–30.
- Tishkov, Valery A.
1992 The Crisis in Soviet Ethnography. *Current Anthropology* 33(4):371–394.
- Weiner, James F.
1997 Televisualist Anthropology: Representation, Aesthetics, Politics. *Current Anthropology* 38(2):197–235.