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NARRATING POPULAR CONSCIOUSNESS:
TESTIMONY IN FRUITS OF DEFIANCE

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AFRICANA

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NARRATING POPULAR CONSCIOUSNESS:

TESTIMONY IN *FRUITS OF DEFIANCE*

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Introduction

Fruits of Defiance is a documentary film made in 1989 by two film-makers Brian Tilley and Oliver Schmitz at the time of the Defiance Campaign that began in August of that year. The Defiance Campaign was launched by the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) in the face of the government's elections for its tricameral parliament, which sought to trade off 'coloured' and Indian support for a semblance of power in the National Party government. A massive boycott of the election was organised as well as worker stay-aways to protest the election, and supporters of the MDM, in numerous mass actions across the country, demonstrated their defiance of apartheid laws particularly in relation to the government's bannings of organisations and individuals and of 'whites-only' facilities such as hospitals and beaches. These events included protest marches in all the major cities of the country, beginning in Cape Town and spreading to Johannesburg, Durban and others. These marches brought together the largest mass alliance of anti-apartheid protesters across all sectors of South African society and signalled "the existence of a widespread political consciousness" (Collinge, 1989: 6).

This is the political consciousness that *Fruits of Defiance* represents. It documents the events that occurred specifically in Manenberg on the Cape Flats, and places these within the macro socio-political context. It is an example of the many 'anti-apartheid' documentaries that emerged in the 1980s from within the movement of politically conscious documentary film-makers which developed alongside popular political movements in the country. To a large extent this documentary movement was strongly linked and integrated with the MDM, both in the establishing of the Film and Allied Workers Organisation (FAWO) in 1988 and in the documentary films and videos made. The documentary movement was not a homogeneous one however, as the term 'movement' might imply. Rather it had a number of diverse strands and trends, reflected in the different film and video production units that were established in the 1980s and in the different styles that emerged in the work of these units and in the work of independent film-makers. Some examples of these units include Afrascope and the Community Video Resource Association (later the Community Video Education Trust) in the early 1980s, and Dynamic Images, Video News Services and Free Film Makers established in the mid-1980s.[1]

One of the video production units that emerged in this period - the Video News Services (VNS), later called Afravision and now disbanded - produced *Fruits of Defiance*. In general terms, the documentary videos made by VNS were representations of popular experience especially within the worker movement and particularly the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Brian Tilley, one of the directors of *Fruits of Defiance* was a member of the VNS collective. The other director, Oliver Schmitz, had previously co-scripted and directed the feature film *Mapantsula* which was the first South African fiction film to successfully represent the brutal realities of apartheid from a popular perspective. The collaboration of these two film-makers within the production framework of VNS led to the making of an extraordinarily complex documentary *Fruits of Defiance*, which reflects an interweaving of documentary and fictional elements depicting a series of what might be seen as news items within a strongly formulated narrative structure, framed by representations of the macro socio-political context.

Film and Popular Consciousness

The strength of the film's narrative structure and the issues it highlights about the relationship between narrative and representation has determined the naming of the first half of the title of this paper - 'narrating popular consciousness'. The concepts of both 'narrative' and 'narration' are implied here - each complex in its own right - and my concern in this paper is to focus broadly on how both the **narrativizing** of *Fruits of Defiance* and the way in which it is **narrated** represents popular consciousness. By 'narrativizing' I mean the ways in which a 'story' is inscribed within the film. The link between this 'story' and the representation or 'telling' of popular consciousness is my focus. Usually narrative is associated with fiction film. Recent writings on documentary film however, propose that narrative is a valuable construct for the critique of documentary films.[2] A further complexity is added by examining how the film uses individual personal testimonies to confirm the popular consciousness it seeks to represent and, in particular, how it constructs one of these testimonies as its central narration.

The title of this paper implies the independent existence of a popular consciousness which can be simply and unproblematically narrated. The idea that a singular popular consciousness exists in the real world must however be problematised. As I mentioned

earlier, in the context of the late 1980s, when this film was made, a broadly-based mass movement resisting apartheid, reflecting an equally generalised popular consciousness, was apparent. In a sense this is the popular consciousness that *Fruits of Defiance* represents and defends. Beyond this, however, it is necessary to note the multiplicity and diversity of popular consciousness, and the concomitantly different forms it has taken in both the 1980s and 1990s.[3] The concept of 'popular consciousness' also implies an individual interior quality that is shared amongst a broad range of people. It is important to note that the shift from individual to popular consciousness - knowledge about popular consciousness - is determined by its representation in one form or another. Hence its existence can never be independent of the ways in which it is represented.

Film not only reflects social or historical reality it also constructs it. It is an intervention that in part determines perceptions of the real world and reproduces them by mediating visually and aurally between the real world and its formulation in consciousness. Since filmic representation is at one remove from reality it can be said to be always fictional, even when it is documentary film. Documentary film can therefore be seen as an intervention in audience perceptions of popular consciousness, acting as a statement that defines it. I am using the example of *Fruits of Defiance* to show how this is achieved. The film claims to represent popular consciousness at a particular moment and place in history and fulfils these claims in terms of both its subject matter and its filmic treatment of that content.

For Bill Nichols, one of the most significant theorists on the relationship between documentary film and history, documentary film "contributes to the formation of popular memory. It proposes perspectives on and interpretations of historic issues, processes and events" (Nichols, 1991: ix). An overriding issue in Nichols' work is how documentary film can motivate transformation in the historical arena which it represents. This issue needs to be considered in relation to the strategies that documentary film uses that can either contain or reveal 'questions of magnitude' - how it works against 'miniaturization' and for 'magnitude'. Since film may be seen as reducing events to a two-dimensional account of three-dimensional reality and at the same time, selecting its subject matter and using aesthetic or stylistic strategies to expose that subject matter, the potential for 'miniaturization' is great. In relation to this Nichols poses the question: "what structure might documentaries have that

will conjure or restore for the viewer those orders of magnitude appropriate to the full dimensionality of the world in which we live and those who inhabit it?" (Nichols, 1991: 230). The answer to his question lies in his argument that documentary film may be seen as a coalescing of three axes - narrative, history and myth. The narrative axis is defined as "a moving chain of situations and events, actions and enigmas that sweep (or drift) towards a conclusion" (Nichols, 1991: 244). It is on the narrative axis that the 'story' is told, whereby the film moves from its beginning to its end, opening and closing or resolving the questions that it exposes. A second axis is that of history. All documentary has historical referentiality - the events it seeks to portray or represent are those of the real world experienced by real people. There is therefore a strongly determined or implied relationship, in semiotic terms, between the referent and the sign. The axis of myth refers to how film "can represent social actors in a way that essentializes or fetishizes their attributes" (Nichols, 1991: 258). This is the axis whereby spectacle is made, which relies on complex psychological (mostly unconscious) processes of identification with the social actors as 'characters'. It is also the axis where aesthetics and style have significance. The 'pleasure of the text' relies heavily on spectacle. The interweaving of these three axes of documentary exposition determines the extent to which a documentary film opens up the magnitudes or reduces them and also determines the desire for and possibility of praxis - action for transformation in the real world.

Meaning in *Fruits of Defiance*

Contemporary literary studies would suggest that texts that make multiple meanings possible would be more ideologically open than those that preclude the possibility of producing multiple meanings. This is one way of interpreting Nichols' proposal for documentary film that opens up questions of magnitude. *Fruits of Defiance* is so compelling however, precisely because it arguably limits the possibility of deriving multiple meanings from its viewing - it contains its magnitudes - but it also acts against this containment in significant ways. Firstly, it is rooted in a political practice that links documentary film-making with popular consciousness and its expression through the MDM and in mass action. Secondly, through its content and its point of view (its 'voice') it closely associates itself with the popular consciousness that was widely prevalent across many sectors of the country at the time. Thirdly, it consciously breaks conventions in its

filmic style.

This last point refers especially to the state-determined (and therefore apartheid-determined) image control of the late 1980s. This was the period of a national state of emergency which in 1986 had been extended to include severely restrictive 'Emergency Media Regulations', prohibiting the recording of any of the kinds of police actions or mass demonstrations documented in *Fruits of Defiance*:

> "No person shall...in any manner make, take, record, manufacture, reproduce, publish, broadcast or distribute, or take or send to any place, within or outside the Republic, any film...or any photograph, drawing or other representation, or any sound recording, of -
> (i) any public disturbance, disorder, riot, public violence, strike or boycott, or any damaging of any property, or any assault on or killing of a person.
> (ii) any person present at or involved in any public disturbance, disorder, riot, public violence, strike or boycott, or any damaging of any property, or any assault on or killing of any person..." (*Government Gazette*, Vol. 252, No.10280, 1986: 6).

Even the state-biased SABC (South African Broadcasting Corporation) television news programmes were restricted by the 'Emergency Media Regulations'. In relation to the repressive silence that ensued in the mass media, the makers of *Fruits of Defiance* present a powerful statement of the popular consciousness that existed beneath that silence in opposition to the state.

The film-makers seem to have consciously chosen to break the cinematic conventions of SABC television news programmes in a range of ways. Firstly and most importantly the camera is often carefully positioned from within the perspective of the people resisting the police, demonstrating against apartheid, or the Manenberg community[4] - the film therefore reads as the interior point of view of 'the people' themselves. In many sequences the camera

seems almost to participate as an actor within the unfolding events rather than observing them dispassionately. For example, at the start of the sequence documenting the march to parliament which became known as the 'Purple Rain March' where police used water cannons filled with purple dye on the protesters, the camera is on the street observing a police van carrying shouting protesters which dominates the frame. The policeman driving the van leaps out, runs towards the camera in mid-shot and a freeze-frame holds him momentarily in this confrontational position. This filmic strategy is repeated in the next shot where a traffic officer walks up to the camera and the shot is frozen in a close-up on his torso, and also in a third shot where this time the policeman's hand covers the lens. The camera pans right and freezes on a shot of the empty street with the statement '52 journalists arrested'. This type of strategy makes it possible for the camera to shift to what might be seen as an exterior view of the marches or events, without losing the film's interiority. Soon after the sequence described here the camera observes the 'Purple Rain March' from a high-angle and pulls back at one point in the sequence to reveal the windows from which the cameraperson has shot the footage. In a conventional television news programme this would serve to exteriorise the viewer. In this film, however, this is not the case. How this is achieved is through layers of complex interiorising strategies.

One of these strategies is the placing of the camera geographically within the Manenberg community itself, thereby observing the events on its streets through the eyes of its residents. In one such scene, from the interior of a home we observe the police indiscriminately shooting at people on the streets. The strains of the signature tune of the soap opera *Loving* are heard in the background over the bursts of gunfire. The camera pulls back to reveal a silhouette of three small children's heads just above the window ledge with the curtain pulled back and the police on the street outside occupying the background of the shot. Seen from the perspective of these children in this intimate context it is a most chilling moment and most powerful in terms of the film's persuasive mechanisms.

A second way in which the film-makers break cinematic conventions is in the editing style which further underlines the camera's participatory positioning. For example, an early sequence in the film depicts a confrontation between a group of demonstrators and police. From within the group of demonstrators we see a policeman take aim and shoot. The image

on screen then loses focus and blurs and we see a series of frozen images edited closely together that gives the effect of a sense of tumbling in space. The viewer, through both the camera's positioning and the editing style in this sequence, is by implication positioned as one of the demonstrators - in effect is shot at - and is therefore bound to identify with them against the brutal actions of the police. In repeated sequences the film-makers use this type of participatory camera style combined with an innovative editing style to 'suture' the viewer into producing specifically determined meanings from the film. Yet at the same time, these stylistic features lend it a quality that opens up its ideological terrain in the context of the mass media representations commonly produced at that time.

The film focuses most specifically on this contradiction when towards the end of the film it features the new President of the country, FW de Klerk, in his inaugural presidential speech, making a statement about the events the film has documented to the international media:

> "During the night of the election deliberate attempts were made ... to prevent citizens from voting. Subsequent violent incidents led to the death of several citizens. I wish to convey my sincerest condolences to the bereaved. Under these circumstances ... the police had to respond to restore order, to stop the escalation of violence and to prevent the further killing of innocent people."

Here he is represented in a conventional television news shot, a mid-shot with the camera at a low-angle thereby slightly elevating him and providing him with a strong presence in the screen image. In a conventional national broadcast news programme, either devoid of context or including context shot from the police perspective, this would provide him with the stature necessary to make him and his position plausible. In *Fruits of Defiance* however, FW de Klerk is viewed against the backdrop of the previous sequence which narrates the "killing of innocent people" from the community's point of view. This powerfully undermines FW de Klerk's statements and in particular, his sentence offering condolences is made to appear extremely trite.

The sequence opens with a press conference at which the families of those killed are present

to give testimony to how the killings happened. What is usually presented as a statistic in the media is given an individuated human context that forcefully and emotionally draws the viewer to further confirm the film's representation of popular consciousness. Where the work of the film has thus far been to interiorise its perspective, this sequence underlines how inappropriate it is for grief to be exposed so publicly. The introductory words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu confirm this:

> "We don't enjoy exposing our pain. Grief ... is a private thing. And to bring our sisters and our mothers and our brothers and our children in this kind of way hurts ... because normally in our communities they would've been sitting at home with their friends and their family surrounding them and strengthening them. But ... this has been forced on us by a vicious government".

A woman identified as Mrs Cornelia Otto, the mother of Yvette Otto who was fifteen years old and pregnant, describes how her daughter was killed at point blank range by a policeman. As the sequence unfolds we engage more deeply with this communal intimacy as the camera joins the mourners at the Otto home and places itself close to the open coffin while young mourners file past and place flowers against the pallid face of the corpse of Yvette Otto. The futility of this loss of life is palpable as we join the funeral procession and participate in the church ceremony. At the burial site the camera is again placed alongside the grave and watches as the coffin is lowered and the mother cries out her grief in a medium close-up, collapsing onto a supporter from whose point-of-view the shot is taken, as if it is the viewer that she will fall on for comfort in her pain. Again the camera's position ties the viewer irrevocably into this exposition of grief. This is immediately entrenched by a montage of shots of a number of different bodies being buried. As the viewer emerges from this sequence, the sequence of FW de Klerk's inaugural speech described above begins. In the context of *Fruits of Defiance* particularly in juxtaposition to the community grief and burial sequence immediately before it, de Klerk appears as a perpetrator of political untruths in the mould of a neo-colonial dictator. This is a powerful portrayal from the interior perspective of a community - the people of Manenberg, and the masses of people demonstrating against apartheid and brutalised by it.

Testimony

In addition to the cinematic strategies that the film employs the testimony of a number of individual subjects often spoken directly to the camera, or almost directly to the camera, is used to confirm the film's representations of the events in Manenberg. In *Ideology and the Image*, Bill Nichols argues that the closer an interviewee comes to the zero-degree eyeline i.e. when the subject looks directly into the camera, the stronger the "demonstrative proof" (Nichols, 1981: 178).

In both the representation of the events and particularly in the words (and images) of the film's individual subjects, we are consistently exposed to 'demonstrative proof' that the events did indeed take place, but more importantly, that the events took place **in this way**. The testimony of individuals like Yvette Otto's mother and others in the Manenberg community generally act as 'demonstrative proof'. The testimony of one of these 'witness-participants', Mark Splinter, stands out from all the individual testimonies however, as a central organising feature of the film. Although on one level he is one of the film's subjects like all the others, he has an extremely complex relationship with the film as a whole.

Firstly, his testimony is used as verification of the film-makers' acceptance and inclusion within that specific community. This happens because Mark Splinter speaks in a particular linguistic form ('parole' in semiotic terms) that signifies his position within the cultural "structures of feeling" (Williams, 1977: 132) of that community:

> "Die Defiance Campaign het bewys dat it kan better conditions create in 'n area soos Manenberg...die marches it gee mense confidence dat [...] as jy iets force as jy wil dit hê dan kan jy dit kry man. En die Defiance Campaign het daai uitgebeeld na mense toe dat ons moenie pacifist moenie stil sit nie ... ons moet march...".
>
> (The Defiance Campaign showed that it can create better conditions in an area like Manenberg...the marches give people confidence that [...] if you force something, if you want to have it then you can get it man. And the Defiance Campaign has shown this to people, that we must not be pacifist, must not

sit still...we must march.)

In using this community-based linguistic form the interviewee accepts the film-makers and by extension the viewers into the community's cultural and political space. This is also the linguistic form used in the song that opens and closes the film so the framing of the film and Mark Splinter's testimony is linked.

While the interviews with specific individuals in the film are all shot in a personalised space, such as in their homes, or in a communal space, such as the street, the footage of Mark Splinter is shot in a way that separates him and elevates him from the Manenberg background while also tying him to it. (There is one occasion when Mark Splinter is shot in an interior space which I will elaborate later in this paper.) Splinter is elevated (he is probably on a stairway) against the background in a close-up or medium close-up. This means that his face fills the frame and brings his image and his testimony very close to the viewer. He is strongly in the foreground of the image. In the background is a section of a block of flats in Manenberg which acts in the same way as a two-dimensional theatrical backdrop. This has the effect of highlighting Splinter's relationship with Manenberg but somehow removing him from it. In this way his testimony, that speaks both about Manenberg and about the broader political context, is matched by the way he is framed and the shot is composed.

In relation to Nichols' axis of myth, the way he is positioned in the shot has the effect of ascribing to him a 'to-be-looked-at ness'. This quality is usually associated with Hollywood screen stars and characters, whereby identification with the star or character is reinforced. Mark Splinter's testimony, in comparison to the other testimonies, is given strong definition and focus in the film, for example by leading towards it with a panning shot of Manenberg with no ambient or community sounds and the music of Abdullah Ibrahim playing over the image. This has a fictional quality which ascribes a sense of spectacle to the film and since spectacle creates pleasure the fiction draws the viewer into the film's ideological framework. The relationship between the axis of myth and the other two axes, narrative and history, combine to construct the complexity of Mark Splinter's position.

On the basis of narrative, he acts as a link between the events portrayed within the film but

framing them in a broader historical narrative beyond the confines of the film itself. This broader narrative refers back in time to the Defiance Campaign of the 1950s:

> "... We should learn from the 50s, of the marches then ... history is repeating itself it's just the material conditions that's changing... Our comrades the volunteers ...that time, have done things in a disciplined manner and we should continue in that same spirit...".

In many ways he acts as the film's narrator. In conventional documentary film a narrator, often off-screen with resultant omnipotent authority, narrates the film directing the viewer through it. On-screen narration is also common, especially in a television news format. Both kinds of narration are directed at and spoken to the viewer. There is no narrator in *Fruits of Defiance*. Rather the film relies on written information to provide an introduction to the film and written statements or dates to orientate the viewer during the film. Nevertheless the film has a strong narrative which the film relies on in part to persuade the viewer of its representation of popular consciousness. This narrative structure is achieved in large measure by the chronology the film follows, beginning in August 1989 and ending with the release of Nelson Mandela in February 1990. It is Mark Splinter's testimony however that speaks the viewer through the film. His testimony not only verbally confirms the events we see, and locates them within a broader political framework, but it also comments on the political processes that the film represents. In this way Mark Splinter is given the authority to act as narrator. The power of this form of narration is that it is expressed from within the community perspective by an 'ordinary person' whose language is coded from within the community. Mark Splinter never leaves Manenberg in the context of the film yet he represents himself and his community as participants in the broad history of defiance.

Both the macro political context and Mark Splinter's testimony from within Manenberg frame the film in its entirety and this relationship between the two is repeatedly enforced throughout the film. This is illustrated by examining how the film begins. Firstly the context of protest is underlined by the familiar chants 'Amandla!' ('Power!') Awethu! ('To the People!'). Then a written explanation about the film is screened identifying its context and establishing that it "focuses on Manenberg - a working class area that was one of the centers of conflict". The

first images are in a montage series of people in Manenberg, men on corners, in doorways, a woman hanging washing, a shot of two blocks of flats with washing lines strung between them and children playing in the street. Music begins over this montage and as the camera pans from a moving vehicle along the streets of Manenberg the music becomes song - a song performed by Fuad Adams from Manenberg, in the same linguistic form as Mark Splinter's speech, about meeting his 'brother', having a smoke and talking about work: "weet jy hoe gaan dit by die werk, die lahnee vat my vir 'n poep" ("do you know how it's going at work, the boss treats me like a fool[5]"). The accompanying images illustrate the song, initially from within Manenberg, then reflecting worker protests and becoming broader to encompass police action against demonstrators. This sequence also includes police action shot from within Manenberg which corresponds with similar shots later in the film. The song continues: "kyk ons vra hom vir 'n increase, toe loop hy weg as of ons suffer from disease" ("see we ask him for an increase, then he walks away as if we suffer from disease"). As the song ends the image that fills the screen is a silhouette of a Manenberg skyline against a sunrise. The title *Fruits of Defiance* appears over the image. So, prior to our entry into the film proper, before the title, the film-makers have already established the symbiosis between the macro political context and Manenberg. It is important to note also that that context incorporates a worker perspective, further entrenching the film's representation of popular consciousness in keeping with the MDM's initiatives based on a multi-class alliance. This in turn enables the film to represent Manenberg as a microcosm of the broader popular consciousness existing at that time.

After the film's title we are again presented macro scenes culminating in a confrontation between protesters and police over Trevor Manuel (banned at the time and now Minister of Trade and Industry) and his defiance of his banning orders. The protesters chant: "an eye for an eye, a policeman must die" repeatedly and the scene fades. The chant continues briefly as the image changes to a panning shot of the Manenberg streets. The chant fades out and a haunting piano piece, from Abdullah Ibrahim, becomes the sound over a montage of images of Manenberg. Mark Splinter's voice begins speaking about the Defiance Campaign over this montage before we see him for the first time. In relation to the points made about Splinter acting as narrator it is important to note that this interview segment, or piece of narration, proposes that people should march to Parliament and to the 'whites-only' beaches.

Immediately after this, the image cuts to a sequence of protest at a 'whites-only' beach. It is as if at the bidding of Mark Splinter the people have risen to protest apartheid laws. Thus in the film's editing style as well as in its framing of Mark Splinter he is given the authority of narrator. It is his point of view that is represented, and most importantly, his point of view is the confirmed point of view of the people of Manenberg.

This is further achieved by Mark Splinter's own consciousness of speaking for the people of Manenberg, especially in his use of 'we' rather than 'I'. Although others that are interviewed also use 'we' if we look at his presentation in relation to the extensive use of interiorising strategies in the film, as well as the elaborate detail with which the film enters Manenberg and moves towards Mark Splinter's testimony each time he speaks, then it becomes clear that he is not simply another 'witness-participant'. Rather the film-makers have given him a particular stature in the context of the film to illustrate unquestionably the relationship between the broad popular political consciousness prevalent in South Africa at the time and the aspirations of ordinary people. Thus to give Mark Splinter the authority to determine and direct the film's narrative has the result of empowering his perspective as that of the ordinary people, not only of Manenberg, but of all communities or 'working class areas' like Manenberg.

The sense that Mark Splinter represents the voice of 'the people' is underlined in a number of ways. One sequence in particular achieves this most strongly when a montage of still shots of individual women and children dissolved into each other is presented with Mark Splinter's voice-over saying:

> "The way forward now ... is that we should continue with our defiance...".

Unlike the testimony of others in the film, Mark Splinter's 'we' is illustrated. The idea that his testimony is representative of a broad range of 'ordinary people' is thus not left to question. The power he is given to narrate the film as a representative of the community is further exemplified by the sequence which begins with his words:

> "Manenberg is one of the most potential areas...the working class areas that can change a lot in this country. It just depends

on the people and how determined they are for freedom...".

Immediately after this we see shots of people in Manenberg and then the second person interviewed specifically by the film-makers appears on screen. A number of additional interviews ensue inter-cut with illustrative shots and general shots of Manenberg and the people in it. Thus not only does Mark Splinter's testimony verify the macro events and in part direct the viewer in associating the broad political scenario with the specific experience of Manenberg, but his testimony itself is verified by the testimony of others who speak as if at his request thereby reinforcing it.

In his role as narrator Mark Splinter's testimony also resolves the film's narrative. In many ways its ending matches its beginning. The relationship between the representation of popular consciousness that the film has explicated and the cause of 'ordinary people' is reaffirmed. A sequence that highlights the events following the Defiance Campaign documents the release of political prisoners, the unbanning of the African National Congress and the release of Nelson Mandela. This sequence ends with a low-angle mid-shot of Mandela, which gives him stature, at a mass rally saying: "It is not the kings and generals that make history but the masses of the people". This confirms the film's representation of popular consciousness. Following it, however, the film returns to Manenberg in the same way as it has throughout the film and arrives at an interior shot of one of the interviewees Maqbool Moos. This time he is sitting alongside Mark Splinter who presents his final testimony from this space:

> "...Die struggle stop nie daar nie dit gaan voort, en mense moet ge-organise moet ge-mobilise rondom dinge ... alhoewel die ANC unbanned is, alhoewel die SACP unbanned is, alhoewel al die ander organisations unbanned is, die comrades released is en so aan, die struggle continue until such time apartheid removed is en die capitalist society removed is".
>
> ("...The struggle does not stop there it goes on, and people must organise and mobilise around things ... although the ANC is unbanned, although the SACP is unbanned, although all the other organisations are unbanned, the comrades released and so on, the struggle continues until such time as apartheid is

removed and the capitalist society is removed".)

The closing sequence of the film inter-cuts shots of Manenberg with shots of protest by workers and by demonstrators, and also of police brutality, as the end of the Fuad Adams' song which we heard at the start of the film plays the film out. The film's narrative is therefore circular, arriving at a resolution within its own framework. This is not a resolution for history however. Rather history's imperfection and the concomitant need for praxis is etched in the viewer's mind as Mark Splinter presents his final testimony and calls the viewer to continue 'the struggle' against apartheid and against capitalism.

Conclusion

In this paper I have teased out the relationship between documentary film and the narration of popular consciousness by examining the strategies used in a specific documentary called *Fruits of Defiance*. These strategies include the use of testimonies from specific individuals and particularly the testimony of one person, Mark Splinter, who speaks in a specific linguistic form placing him in an intimate relationship with his community and also in an interior relationship with worker and popular culture. He acts both as the film's narrator and as a representative of the 'ordinary people' strongly associated with the mass action during the 1989 Defiance Campaign, which the film represents.

The theoretical work of Bill Nichols on 'questions of magnitude' and the three axes of history, narrative and myth have provided a basis for analysing *Fruits of Defiance*. I have proposed that although the film seems to contain its magnitudes ultimately it in fact opens them up. It is rooted in a political documentary film practice; it makes oppositional stylistic choices; and it represents 'the voice of the people' from an interiorised perspective. This is important for the value of the film in promoting action in the real world.

Since documentary film both reflects and interprets historical reality its relationship to history needs to be explored further. It appears to closely resemble the historical reality it documents and is therefore useful as a source for understanding this reality. It enjoys

limited scholarship however and this gap needs to be addressed. This paper explores how history, narrative and myth combine to create representations of reality in documentary film.

Notes

1. There were also a number of university-based documentary film-making programmes in this period, as well as units and projects established to distribute films and videos and to educate and train people in visual literacy and basic video-making.

2. See for example Nichols, 1987 and 1991.

3. The outcome of the elections in the Western Cape in comparison with other regions is an example of the different ways that the broad-based popular consciousness to which I have referred was expressed. This suggests that this popular consciousness had diversified consciousnesses within it. Further exploration of this is not possible within this paper's parameters and I am therefore guilty, to a large extent, of unproblematically accepting this broad-based notion of a popular consciousness.

4. I use the term 'community' here without debate. It is however a problematic concept with diverse meanings. For example, Anderson is concerned with how community is 'imagined' and others are concerned with defining it in more conventional terms such as geographically and socially. In *Fruits of Defiance* Manenberg is defined geographically, economically, politically and socially and also its 'imagined' quality is highlighted by specific stylistic features which include the overlay of music.

5. Translation from the video sub-title.

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