

## **Participatory spaces**

Negotiating cooperation and conflict in documentary projects

Willemien Sanders

© Willemien Sanders, 2012

ISBN 978-90-393-5844-3

Cover design: Jasmijn Van Gorp

Cover photo © Jasmijn Van Gorp

Film image from Disco and Atomic War (director Jaak Kilmi, 2009), used with permission

Printed by Ipskamp Drukkers, Enschede, the Netherlands

“Pour ne pas vivre seul, on’s fait du cinéma”

Firmine Richard as Madame Chanel in  
*8 Femmes*  
(director François Ozon, 2002)

“Und ich wollt’ heut’ abend nur spaziere gehe”

Rüdiger Weigang as Eduard Simon in  
*Heimat. Eine Chronik in 11 Teilen*  
(director Edgar Reitz, 1984)



## **Participatory spaces**

Negotiating cooperation and conflict in documentary projects

Ruimte voor participatie

Samenwerking en conflict in documentaire projecten

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Utrecht op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof. dr. G. J. van der Zwaan, ingevolge het besluit van het college voor promoties in het openbaar te verdedigen op vrijdag 26 oktober 2012 des middags te 12.45 uur

door

Wilhelmine Sanders

geboren op 28 oktober 1967

te Zutphen

Promotoren: Prof. dr. J. S. de Leeuw

Prof. dr. M. Düwell

Co-promotor: Dr. J. Hakemulder

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Ethics, documentary, and documentary ethics</b>	<b>11</b>
A word about ethics	11
Author documentary filmmaking	15
The process rather than the film	19
The filmmaker-participant relationship	21
Documentary and ethics, in theory	22
Practitioners' realities	49
<b>On creating a questionnaire</b>	<b>55</b>
Preparing the survey	56
Pilot study	64
<b>The aggie will come first indeed</b>	<b>69</b>
Sample, logistics, and response	69
Survey analysis	71
Patterns in filmmakers' experiences	81
Can context predict experiences?	102
<b>On designing case studies</b>	<b>113</b>
Theoretical framework	114
Methodological framework	117
<b>Joy, learning, and self-expression</b>	<b>131</b>
Alex	132
Ben	152
Chris	171
Debby	179
<b>The documentary discourse revisited</b>	<b>213</b>
Cooperation between filmmaker and participant	214
Conflict between filmmaker and participant	225
Consequences of participating	231

<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>237</b>
An alternative affair: the filmmaker-participant relationship revisited	239
A paradigm-shift for documentary filmmaking ethics	243
To conclude	245
<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>253</b>
<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>263</b>
<b>Appendix 3</b>	<b>333</b>
<b>Appendix 4</b>	<b>431</b>
<b>Appendix 5</b>	<b>437</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>449</b>
<b>Summary</b>	<b>463</b>
<b>Samenvatting (Summary in Dutch)</b>	<b>469</b>
<b>Biography</b>	<b>475</b>

## **Acknowledgements**

The dissertation in front of you has been a long time coming. Ever since I finished Film and TV studies at the University Utrecht in 1993 I have cherished the wish to return to research. But I found a great job at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) and discovered the joy of travelling, and I divided my time between these two. Only when I left this job in the spring of 2002, I started thinking about research seriously. It took me another two years to come up with something that could serve as first draft of a research proposal for my PhD. You might call me a late-bloomer, but what followed were years in which I discovered the pleasure of immersing myself in research and writing. And finally, after nearly eight years of juggling my academic ambitions with part-time jobs, here it is.

My experience at IDFA had taught me that the debate about ethics and documentary film aroused a wide array of opinions. But it also was stuck in a format that did not take it any further: debates focused on scenes which were apparently controversial or at least raised questions, followed by the dutiful talk with the filmmaker about the how and why. I attended many such events; they made me think and inspired me; they made me realise that the beauty of documentary film is exactly its complexity, somewhere between reality and fiction, between recording and constructing, and between working with and making use of participants. However, throughout the years some kind of dissatisfaction developed: surely the ethics of documentary film could be discussed in another way? The individual approach in which a moderator discusses single scenes with single filmmakers could not be the end of it, could it? And thus began an effort to create a feasible research project. The rest, as they say, is finally history.

As filmmakers are not the sole creators of a film, a PhD candidate is not the sole creator of a dissertation. I have many people to thank; for their information, for their advice, for their comments, for their practical support, for listening, for just being there, for cups of coffee, glasses of wine, beers, and for distraction. Some people deserve specific mentioning. First of all, I thank

## Participatory spaces

my supervisors Sonja, Marcus, and Frank for their critical assessment of my work as well as their generous support, and for sticking with me. Thank you for the freedom you gave me to do things my way, and for your trust. I left most of our meetings with new energy and fresh ideas. Thanks to the Research Institute for History and Culture for accepting me as an affiliated researcher. Feeling part of a community and having some practical support helped a lot and was valuable to me. I am indebted to 17 Dutch filmmakers and 158 questionnaire respondents who remain unnamed here as well as to four documentary participants, Alex, Ben, Chris, and Debby. They have all generously shared their experiences with me and I gladly acknowledge their contributions. Many, many thanks to my colleagues of TViT for their support, criticism, and the good times we had. Many thanks also to all colleagues at the attics I ended up working in throughout the years, both at Janskerkhof 13 and Drift 17. Thank you all for truly being great colleagues. Thanks Jurriaan, for providing steady ground, and for your patience.

The many travels I was able to enjoy prior to working on my PhD took me to many corners of the world. One of these was Syria, and I had the opportunity to return to Damascus in 2008 and again in 2011, to partake in the Dox Box International Documentary Film Festival campus for young filmmakers as documentary expert. I met a warm and tightly knit group of enthusiasts full of ideas. The struggle in Syria commenced two weeks later and has accompanied my work on the final chapters and my efforts to finish this thesis. As I am writing this, it keeps intensifying. Among the many killed is one of the young Dox Box campus filmmakers and festival volunteers, Bassel, who had returned from studying abroad to video-document the events and teach others how to do so. His death, a humbling experience in itself, made me aware once more of what a privilege is it to be able to do what you love to do in a safe and supporting environment.

## Thank you

albert	frank	mattiaz
alec	frans	menna
aleid	hans	mieke
alex	ingeborg	mies
äli	jacco	moshen
aliona	jan willem	mridu
andreas	jasmijn	nanna
anneke	joan	netty
annette	johanne	nicole
arjanne	jos	patricia
ben	josé	patricia
ben	josé	paul
berber	judith	paul
boudewijn	junting	petra
bram	jurriaan	pieter
chai	karin	rené
charles	kim	rob
chris	koen	roel
coco	leendert	roel
cynthia	lotte	ruxandra
dana	maaike	sarah
danielle	maarten	saskia
debby	maarten	sonja
digna	marjoleine	sven
edith	marc	tiago
eggo	marcus	thomas
eline	maria	truus
eva	marijke	vera
femmy	marina	vincent
frank	martine	



## Introduction

... while documentarists ought to be exposed and pilloried if they lie about the status of their footage, nevertheless such exposure must depend on a proper acknowledgement of the complexities of filming.<sup>1</sup>

*Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* (director Nathan Frankowski, 2008) addressed the position of Intelligent Design and its followers in the academic community, claiming that academics who adhere to Intelligent Design rather than Darwinism are slowly evicted from academia. P.Z. Myers was interviewed for this film. He however claimed that the production team invited him, as well as other scientists and public figures, such as Richard Dawkins, for interviews about the controversy between evolutionism, creationism, and intelligent design in the United States (MacAskill 2007, Myers 2007b). Later Myers found he had ended up in a totally different film with a totally different title. In addition, he was denied an explanation and access to a screening (Myers 2008). Considering the humorous way Myers reflected on the experience one might question whether it had any negative consequences for Myers. At the same time, somewhere the cooperation between the filmmakers and the participant seems to have gone wrong. Was Myers misinformed? Was he interviewed under false pretences? Did the filmmaker gradually change his plans for the film? Was he just sloppy in informing the many participants in the film about this? Did Myers regret his interview because he did not like his appearance?

The history of documentary filmmaking is sprinkled with projects that have caused concerns and have raised questions about ethics, either at the time of their production and release or later on: *Project Nim* (director James Marsh, 2011), *The Voyage that Shook the World* (director Stephen Murray, 2009), *Religulous* (director Larry Charles, 2008), *Sicko* (director Michael Moore,

---

<sup>1</sup> Brian Winston, *Lies, Damn Lies and Documentaries* (London: The British Film Institute, 2000), p. 1.

## Participatory spaces

2007), *Ford Transit* (director Hany Abu-Assad, 2002), going all the way back to *An American Family* (directors Alan Raymond and Susan Raymond, 1973), *Titicut Follies* (director Frederick Wiseman, 1967), *Triumph des Willens* (director Leni Riefenstahl, 1935), *Man of Aran* (director Robert Flaherty, 1934) and, at the very beginning of narrative documentary film, *Nanook of the North* (director Robert Flaherty, 1922). I will return to most of these examples in the course of this thesis. However, academic reflection on ethics in documentary filmmaking only occurred in the course of the 1970s, with Pryluck (1988) discussing the changes direct cinema had caused in the filmmaker-participant relationship, and Linton (1976) reflecting on the various relationships in documentary production, and on its relation to journalism. The debate was taken up at the end of the 1980s by leading documentary theorists. These efforts to contemplate the ethics of documentary film and filmmaking can first be characterized by a focus on the filmmaker-participant relationship, concerning questions of informed consent, representation, and legitimacy; and on the filmmaker-audience relationship, concerning questions of truth and reality. Second, this discourse was largely theory driven, dominated by questions about, for instance, the nature of documentary film and its technologies as well as about legal right of image-makers and the portrayed, and illustrated with individual examples. In the years that followed, this focus on theoretical questions and considerations continued (see, for example, Maccarone 2010). Third, and possibly as a result, the debate can be characterized by a focus on the ethics of specific films rather than of their or any production process (see, for instance, the recent special issue of the *Journal of Information Ethics*, volume 19, issue 2).

Ethics is a reflective discipline; it evaluates human action and poses the question how to decide what the right thing to do is. I will come back to this in the first chapter. For now it is relevant to note that in the documentary discourse, scholars raise questions about the ethics of documentary filmmaking. However, in doing so, they presuppose a certain documentary filmmaking practice: scholars rely on a certain understanding of the documentary filmmaking practice, and they then evaluate this practice ethically. However, this practice, including the perspectives of various individuals involved, is not itself subject to a systematic empirical inquiry.

Only recently have scholars included empirical research in the discussion of ethics of documentary filmmaking by including the perspective of documentary participants (see Nash 2009) and by examining their own practice as filmmakers (see Donovan 2006; Thomas 2010). Also, filmmakers' experiences and views have been addressed on a larger scale (see Aufderheide, Jaszi, and Chandra 2009). What distinguishes these recent research efforts from the preceding discourse is their focus on the process of making documentary films and their focus on how filmmakers and participants interact in such processes. Both Donovan and Thomas discussed and evaluated their ethical deliberations and their choice for a specific practice they engaged in, including a collaborative position for their participants. Nash focused on the interaction between filmmakers and participants and Aufderheide, Jaszi, and Chandra examined the perspective of filmmakers on their practice specifically in relation to ethical challenges.

As mentioned above, the documentary discourse on ethics presupposes a certain understanding of the practice; a specific understanding of the documentary filmmaking practice underlies the debate. This debate includes an ethical evaluation of this presupposed practice; it includes considerations of what documentary filmmaking entails, and of what can be expected from documentary filmmakers and from documentary participants. The empirical researchers mentioned above have evaluated specific practices from the perspective of ethics and have pointed to discrepancies between the presupposed practice and their own or others' practices. In this thesis I will also investigate the practice of documentary filmmaking, i.e., the perspective of both filmmakers and participants on the practice they are involved in, with a focus on ethical challenges. Moreover, I will confront these perspectives and the practice that surfaces through them with the presupposed practice that underlies the academic ethical evaluation of documentary filmmaking. To what extent is the understanding of the practice accurate? If it is not, what alternative understanding of the practice emerges? And what are the implications of an alternative practice for the discussion of ethics of documentary filmmaking? How efficacious is the ongoing debate? And if the practice underlying the evaluation in the discourse needs modification, does that imply a paradigm-shift?

## Participatory spaces

I have included the perspectives of both filmmakers and participants, as mentioned above. For while filmmakers are generally present in the public debate on documentary films, or at least on their own documentary films, participants often are absent, save the rare and mostly exceptional cases in which they seek publicity themselves (see, for instance, Bowler, Browne, and Herbert 2009; Bradford and Hull 2011; and Myers 2007a, 2007b, 2008). Questions concerning the attitude, position, and responsibility of the participant in documentary projects however remain under-addressed in the documentary ethics discourse. By including both the perspective of filmmakers and of participants I hope to investigate at least some aspects of the documentary filmmaking practice, as Winston (2000) advocated in the quote above.

But this thesis is not just about extending or ‘updating’ the discourse on documentary ethics. Documentary formats and in addition more hybrid formats are finding a place in mainstream media, not in the least on commercial channels. As these formats are based in reality in some way and deal with individuals whose lives continue after and beyond the media production in which they participate, there is a need for continuous reflection on ethical considerations in these changing practices. As practices evolve, affected by technological as well as cultural developments, reflection provides an occasion for evaluation and reconsideration of these practices. The practice under investigation here, which I define as author documentary filmmaking below (see p. 15) is not a new practice – on the contrary, it has a long standing tradition. But despite this tradition, there has been little academic reflection on this practice with respect to ethical deliberations. In addition, author documentary filmmaking is the documentary practice that is most akin to art, with maximum freedom for the filmmaker to express herself artistically as she sees fit, with a wide range of styles and techniques at her disposal. In general, documentary filmmaking is often regarded as a form of journalism, and I will come back to this later. However, professional standards that guide journalism, such as hearing both sides, impartiality, relying on at least two independent sources, and fact-checking (see, for instance, The New York Times Company Policy on Ethics in Journalism 2005; and the Press Complaints Commission’s Editors’ Code of Practice 2011), do not apply to author

documentary filmmaking. It is this freedom that defines this kind of documentary filmmaking, for which the filmmaker recruits, films, and represents other people as she sees fit. It is also this freedom to represent others that brings along ethical questions for which the filmmaker cannot rely on established or generally accepted rules and guidelines. This freedom and the absence of rules and regulations make this practice an appropriate starting point for the current research effort.

I have noticed in the course of this research project that ethics has a small place in the education of documentary filmmakers. A recent publication such as by De Jong, Rothwell, and Knudsen (2012), which aims to combine documentary theory and practice, spends few words on ethics, and most of these are dedicated to questions of truthfulness rather than the way filmmakers and participants interact with each other. But dealing with ethical questions is part and parcel of the profession, of making documentary films. I hope to contribute to the professional discourse on ethics by discussing the perspectives of two parties involved, the filmmaker and the participant. I hope to open up a space for further debate about the practice of making documentary films, and as a consequence about the ethics of that practice.

My decision to focus on filmmakers and participants entails that I do not include considerations of a filmmaker's ethics with respect to the audience. Although this is considered the other major dimension of documentary ethics, revolving around questions of truth and reality, it demands a different approach and a different research design, including, for instance, audience research. Although I believe there are interesting observations to me made in that respect, I am more fascinated by the considerations, motivation, and evaluation of the documentary participant, and how these relate to the considerations, motivation, and evaluation of the filmmaker, if only because of the increase in public display of individuals through all kinds of older and newer media. Hence I focus on the participant and her relationship with the filmmaker.

The questions I address in this project are the following: What moral issues do author documentary filmmakers and participants experience in the everyday practice of making documentary films and how do they deal with such issues? What understanding of the practice surfaces in this respect and

## Participatory spaces

how does this relate to the practice as documentary scholars understood it and which they evaluated? And what are the implications of a different practice for the scholarly debate of ethics in documentary filmmaking?

Preceding the two main empirical research projects, i.e., the investigation of the perspective of filmmakers and the investigation of the perspective of participants, was a smaller, preliminary one, which consisted of interviews with Dutch documentary filmmakers about their experiences with moral issues and the decisions they took. These interviews served both as a contemporary supplement to the analysis of the scholarly documentary discourse with which this research project started, and as a first check: did filmmakers mention similar issues or very different ones? How had they dealt with issues they had encountered? In both cases the aim was to create an overview of moral issues, strategies to deal with them, and contexts in which this happened.

In the company of filmmakers, ethics is often discussed with respect to individual experiences: on the basis of single scenes, a single filmmaker is invited to talk about her considerations, choices, and decisions. In this research effort I try to surpass the singular by investigating what a larger group of filmmakers experienced. I tried to investigate this through a survey, which I have designed. Research in ethics through a survey might not seem an obvious choice. But surveys have been used in other disciplines for ethical investigations and I will discuss this further in the relevant chapter. Moreover, it was my aim to include the experiences of many filmmakers to see what issues would surface as salient and whether this would be different between different subgroups of filmmakers, i.e., filmmakers who share certain personal characteristics, such as age or experience, or project characteristics, such as the people involved, and the budget and time available. Through my survey I hope to have come to the core of what ethics in documentary filmmaking entails for practitioners.

I tried to investigate the perspective of documentary participants through case studies, by which I return to individual experiences. These case studies include only four Dutch participants who, through semi-structured interviews, shared their experiences of participating in a documentary film. As participants' accounts of their experiences are so rare, I wanted to make sure

to tap into these experiences as much as possible and understand not just what moral issues they had experienced but what the experience as such was like for them. As my aim was to research the everyday practice of documentary filmmaking and include a random selection of filmmakers and participants, I have not focussed on filmmakers who often feature in considerations of ethics, such as Michael Moore or Kim Longinotto (see, for instance, Borden 2008; Malkowski 2007; Tanner 2004; Union Docs 2012); nor have I included their participants. My search for projects was informed by a focus on everyday projects and by practical constraints. I will address this in more detail in the relevant chapter.

By confronting the empirical findings on the practice of documentary filmmaking with the documentary discourse and the practice it presupposes, and more specifically the normative points of view expressed in it, what will emerge is a different understanding of the documentary filmmaking practice, different to the one scholars have so far based their discussions and evaluations on. Founded on my empirical findings I shall argue that the assumptions about the documentary practice that functions as a basis for scholars' normative points of view are inaccurate; scholars have evaluated a possibly outdated interpretation of the practice, and as a result their normative points of view themselves are sometimes off the mark. At the end of this thesis, I will propose new ways of understanding the documentary filmmaking practice and more specifically the filmmaker-participant relationship, and I will argue for a paradigm-shift, to include the contribution of the participant to the project as co-creator, and the consideration of the role of conflict in the documentary filmmaking practice, in addition to considerations of cooperation. As a result, ethical considerations need to take into account the participant's co-creatorship rather than start from a presumed necessity to protect her as a vulnerable victim.

Providing a contemporary conceptualization of the documentary practice in my view is a prerequisite for a sensible continuation of the discussion of the ethics of this practice. To bring the debate forward, a proper assessment of the practice needs to underlie any discussion of its ethics. This assessment should not be based on the occasional exceptional project that makes it to the front pages because of some disagreement, but on everyday

## Participatory spaces

projects and everyday practices that are not necessarily affected by public scrutiny. This research aims at providing the beginning of such an assessment, based on a limited number of cases.

As empirical research into the ethics of documentary filmmaking is part of a recent development, this thesis contains research that is exploratory in nature. Documentary film and filmmaking ethics are often discussed in the broader context of journalism and media (see, for instance, Gross, Katz, and Ruby 1988a; Winston 2000). The relationship between documentary and journalism is one of the core points of debate in defining documentary film (see, for example, Bakker 2005; Maccarone 2010; Ruby 1988; Winston 2000). Because I separate the two and I investigated author documentary filmmaking, which approaches documentary filmmaking *not* as journalism, I dismissed theories on journalism and media ethics.

In both empirical studies, theoretical discussions informed the questions I asked respondents. The analysis of both studies however relies on a grounded theory approach, which entails developing theory based on an analysis of data rather than based on other or larger theories (Glaser and Strauss 2006). In both I used somewhat unconventional methods, which adds to the explorative nature of this research. The survey I analysed with the help of an Exploratory Factor Analysis, which is a statistical method that uncovers patterns in a dataset without relying on an existing theory or model. I also used higher order factor analysis, which uncovers patterns that are hierarchically ordered. The interviews with documentary participants I analysed by looking for what was prominent in their accounts (rather than what they answered to my questions) while at the same time using salient concepts from the survey analysis as sensitizing concepts. In addition, I deconstructed these interviews, looking at how participants spoke, in order to get beneath the surface of the accounts and to see what assumptions and ideologies might underlie their accounts. I will go into these methods in the relevant chapters. While one can undoubtedly discuss the results of these efforts, I hope they will invite considerations of the possibilities both quantitative and qualitative research methods have to offer for research in the humanities. I also hope they will invite considerations of the possibilities for research into media practices, focussing on investigations of media production,

and including all involved.

In this project I am not a neutral outsider. I have a background in the documentary field, which fuelled my desire to investigate the topic of this thesis. To me, telling stories and sharing points of view on the human condition are vital elements in life: people make sense of the world through stories, which they share at many levels and in many guises. The opportunities to witness a variety of points of view, arguments, and ideas I have always considered a privilege. With that comes a preference for what documentary film might be, for what makes a documentary film a good documentary film. At the same time, my aim is not to develop any rules or regulations for documentary practitioners. I will not evaluate specific ethical theories with respect to documentary filmmaking, nor discuss the value of specific normative standards, such as the right to be treated with respect, to be informed about what one is invited to engage in, and to be protected from harm. So I will not come up with 'the ten do's and don'ts' of dealing with moral challenges. First of all because, and I repeat here what I have heard many documentary filmmakers say before: it depends. What is the right thing to do depends on the specifics of a situation, on the individuals involved, on the options available, and on possible constraints. The question of which options and constraints inform different individuals to take or not take certain decisions or steps is included in this research project through an investigation of the effect of participant, project, and filmmaker characteristics on filmmakers' experiences of moral issues in documentary filmmaking. Second, because the relationship between normative theories and empirical data is not straightforward and it is generally regarded as problematic to base a normative assessment of a practice solely on an empirical investigation of this practice. I will come back to this in the first chapter.

This thesis starts with a discussion of my research framework, followed by an analysis of some of the main theoretical documentary texts and of the preliminary interviews with Dutch documentary filmmakers. In the analysis, I investigate how ethics and morals are discussed in the documentary discourse and how filmmakers' experiences supplement this. This makes up Chapter 1.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> An earlier version of this chapter has been published in *Mass Communication and Society*

## Participatory spaces

The results of this literature study served as a starting point for a survey among an international sample of documentary filmmakers. Through this survey I aimed at making an inventory of the experiences of documentary filmmakers with an array of moral issues and ways to deal with them. I also tried to capture some of the characteristics of their projects, of the production circumstances, and of themselves. The design and development of this survey I discuss in Chapter 2. The survey results I discuss in Chapter 3.<sup>3</sup> Chapters 4 and 5 concern my case studies, the former addressing the theoretical and methodological framework and the latter presenting the results: the analysis of the accounts of four Dutch documentary film participants about their experiences of contributing to a documentary film. In Chapter 6 I reflect on the results of both the survey and the case studies and confront these with the scholarly documentary discourse to understand in which ways my empirical findings support, contradict, add to, or provide an interpretation of the various concerns and normative points of view in that discourse with respect to the documentary practice. Based on this, I assess a contemporary practice that challenges the presupposed practice documentary scholars evaluated. To conclude this thesis I will argue for a paradigm-shift toward the inclusion of the contribution of the participant to the project as co-creator, and the consideration of the role of conflict in the documentary filmmaking practice, in addition to considerations of cooperation.

---

13, no. 5, 528-553.

<sup>3</sup> A condensed version of this chapter has been published in *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 10, no. 3, 387-408.

# 1

## **Ethics, documentary, and documentary ethics**

... by all means castigate filmmakers" ... "sting broadcasters" ...  
"Boycott the products" ... "Unethical filmmaking should most  
certainly be exposed and the filmmakers should suffer the  
consequences of that exposure – the public destruction of their  
credibility."<sup>4</sup>

My research project is framed by two disciplines: ethics, and documentary film. Although my research focuses on an assessment of the practice documentary scholars evaluate rather than on ethical theories that might or should guide this practice, I will discuss briefly what the discipline of ethics entails, and how empirical data, such as the results of my research efforts, might be relevant to a normative ethical discussion about documentary filmmaking. I will then discuss my documentary framework, which includes a focus on author documentary filmmaking, on the process of development and production, and on the relationship between filmmaker and participant. Finally, I will present an analysis of the discussion of documentary film and ethics by documentary scholars, supplemented by Dutch documentary filmmakers. But let me first spend a few words on the concept of ethics.

### **A word about ethics**

In common parlance, people tend not to make a distinction between 'ethical' and 'moral', and use the words interchangeably. Most authors in the documentary discourse seem to endorse this, not defining or distinguishing these terms. But traditionally there is a difference. Aristotle introduced the term 'ethics' to designate the scientific occupation with customs and traditions (Düwell, Hübenthal, and Werner 2002). According to Aristotle, it was possible

---

<sup>4</sup> Brian Winston, *Lies, Damn Lies and Documentaries*, p. 165.

## Participatory spaces

to reflect intellectually on the human, individual, as well as collective ‘praxis’ (practice). Ethics then mark the outlines and the underlying principles for the right actions; in Aristotle’s days with a focus on the question of ‘eudaimonia’, the question of how to live a good, successful, and happy life. Nowadays we understand morality more in terms of what we owe each other, and ethics as the discipline that reflects on what we owe each other (Düwell, Hübenthal, and Werner 2002). This is how I will understand ethics: as a discipline that reflects on human action. Or, as Kettner (2002) describes it, ethics is the philosophy of morals. Morals can then be understood as the accepted norms and values of people, of a community. Morals concern the understanding of how our behaviour affects relevant others as well as ourselves (Kettner 2002). Norms and values, as well as the idea of who the relevant other might be, differ between different moral systems (for example, Christian, Western, et cetera).

As discussed above, my aim is to critically assess the practice that underlies the scholarly discussion of ethics of documentary filmmaking rather than discuss the ethical principles that should guide this practice or the moral rules thereof. My aim is to understand, from the perspective of two parties involved in the practice, the moral dimensions of this practice. I want to understand how filmmakers and how participants understand the moral dimensions of the endeavour of making a documentary film. I will not judge individual actions or give moral guidance. But because a discussion on a practice should include an understanding of the realities of that practice, and an understanding of the practice has so far been presupposed rather than assessed, I aim to create an account of the practice of documentary filmmaking by including the perspective of both filmmakers and participants, by letting both speak about it. This approach might be understood as a micro-ethical approach, focusing on the day-to-day interaction between individuals in everyday situations.

Micro-ethics relate to everyday situations and take everyday activities of individuals as a starting point (Nikku and Eriksson 2006). With reference to the medical practice, it concerns “what happens in every interaction” (Komesaroff 1995, quoted in Frank 1998, p. 37). According to Frank (1998), a micro-ethical approach acknowledges the reciprocal character of the relationship. This approach gives an opportunity to focus on the interaction

between filmmaker and participant in their everyday encounters. Rather than theorizing what rules and norms should apply in documentary filmmaking a priori, a micro-ethical approach allows for understanding what decisions and strategies filmmakers and participants apply to deal with certain moral issues in practice and why they might do this the way they do. Although I did not investigate filmmakers and participants working on the same project (rather, filmmakers and participants working on different projects), I will focus on everyday interaction and on the experience of this relationship. So I will let the everyday practice speak through individual acts.

A micro-ethical approach entails the risk of an is-ought fallacy. Philosopher David Hume pointed to this problem of deriving values from facts and making normative claims on the basis of practice (Nijsingh and Düwell 2009): because something is, it ought to be. However, it is generally assumed that empirical findings should not serve directly as a basis for normative claims. Schleidgen, Jungert, and Bauer (2010) discussed the commonly accepted insight that moral norms should not be “empirically impossible” (p. 65) and moral duties must be feasible for human beings: ‘ought implies can’. One of the aims of this research project is to investigate how the experience of moral issues in the everyday practice of making author documentary films relates to normative scholarly considerations of moral issues in documentary film and documentary filmmaking. This suggests that I am somehow relating empirical data to moral normative points of view. With the concerns expressed above in mind, what might the relation be between my empirical data and normative evaluations of the practice?

Although scholars speak of moral issues in documentary film and filmmaking, a proper theory of ethics of documentary filmmaking does not exist. There are no professional codes of ethics for documentary filmmakers, neither are there discussions of ethical theories dominating or guiding the documentary filmmaking practice. Also, the discussion of ethics in the documentary discourse, based on considerations of no harm, equality, justice, and autonomy, mostly consists of question and practice rules (Schleidgen, Jungert, and Bauer 2010): translations of such principles into rules “to come to terms with the specific limits of human thinking and acting” (p. 61).

Nijsingh and Düwell (2009) described the distinction between

## Participatory spaces

normative ethics as a prescriptive discipline and empirical research as a descriptive discipline. There are different ways in which empirical sciences and normative theories 'collaborate'. Schleidgen, Jungert, and Bauer (2010) discerned three positions: a parallel approach, which implies the complete separation of empirical sciences and normative theories; an integrative approach, which does the opposite and rejects a strict distinction between empiricism and theory; and a symbiotic approach, in which normative theories and empirical data rely on each other and together set an agenda (see also Nijssingh and Düwell). Schleidgen, Jungert, and Bauer argued that collaboration is necessary to measure and describe the effects of norms; to investigate the conditions under which specific norms can be put to practice; and to understand what new developments, such as technical developments, might require additional normative theories.

It is not my aim to induce normative principles from empirical findings, as I mentioned above. But what can my findings contribute? First and foremost, as I have mentioned above, they might contribute to an understanding of the practice of documentary filmmaking; my findings might help evaluate the practice that is being evaluated ethically (Schleidgen, Jungert, and Bauer 2010). Second, my findings might also be seen as an effort to identify "moral helplessness" (Schleidgen, Jungert, and Bauer, p. 68), i.e., to identify new moral debates that arise as a consequence of new developments, such as new technologies, and that have yet to be addressed in normative theories. Third, they might contribute to understanding in what circumstances those involved do or do not apply specific strategies; they will help detect the "bridging principles" (Schleidgen, Jungert, and Bauer, p. 62). Should these empirical findings then bear upon normative principles in any way? The methodological cores of empirical and theoretical disciplines are not interchangeable (Schleidgen, Jungert, and Bauer), so my findings will not change moral principles as such. However, because my findings will help understand the practice, they will also help in the translation of moral principles in practice rules more adequately if they indicate that the current translation needs improving. For example, the application of the moral principle of 'do no harm' might be nuanced based on empirical findings of what actually constitutes harm in a given situation. That would not change the

principle of not inflicting harm, but it could change a practice rule of what is not permissible or what is indeed imperative because it respectively inflicts or prevents harm. In other words: my empirical research might help to consider what to do in order to perform a moral duty in a given situation. Let me now turn to discussing my documentary framework, which first of all includes a focus on author documentary filmmaking.

### **Author documentary filmmaking**

Usually documentary is considered as a genre encompassing all kinds of film and television programmes believed to portray factual material about the world we live in, and to say something truthful about it. It might include reportage, reality tv, 'docu soaps' and traditional documentary films. Terms such as 'non-fiction' and 'factual programming' illustrate how these different forms are clustered.

Arthur (2005) observed that "a more sensible approach would describe it as a mode of production, a network of funding, filming, postproduction, and exhibition tendencies common to work normally indexed as 'documentary'" (p. 20). Alternatively one can speak of "a group of identifiable genres within documentary practice which, like fictional film genres, exhibit 'family resemblances' and have the ability to mutate over time" (Arthur 2005, p. 20). This distinction between different practices makes sense. Needing a quick quote for your six o'clock news item is very different from being immersed in the life and activities of a person and documenting it over time. Working for a commercial broadcaster that will stop your programme unless you manage to draw a target number of viewers is different from working off hours to create your best film yet. Trying to convey what happened in the world today in a detached matter-of-fact manner is different from trying to convey personal observations through a narrative enriched with metaphors and symbolism. Linton (1976) stated that the television documentary was founded on the ethics of journalism functioning in an economic and regulatory system. But traditionally there was no question that the documentary filmmaker "as 'artist' was the formative force behind 'his' films" and that the filmmaker was responsible for "all decisions of consequence" (p. 19). Linton thus separated

## Participatory spaces

individual artistic documentary filmmaking from regulated and 'institutionalized' journalism. De Jong, Rothwell, and Knudsen (2012) described a "two-tiered system of documentary production: easy, accessible documentary, often described by broadcasters as 'factual' entertainment, and documentary" (p. 31), thus distinguishing between documentary films and other reality-based programmes. De Mare (2005) acknowledged that several different definitions of documentary might exist, and several different "circuits" (p. 55), and even several different audiences. In line with Arthur (2005) quoted above, Nichols (1991, 2001, 2010) recognized that something like a documentary practice exists. He pointed to the existence of an "institutional formation" (Nichols 1991, p. 14) with "a common, self-chosen mandate" (Nichols 2001, p. 25, see also Nichols 2010) and a common language. It is a specific circuit with a "shared sense of purpose" (Nichols 1991, p. 15, see also Nichols 2001, 2010), a "looser fraternity of the like-minded" (Nichols 1991, p. 187). Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b) pointed to the responsibility of documentary filmmakers to uphold the standards of their profession. John Grierson fostered the conceptualization of documentary film as a form of art (Winston 2000). His definition of documentary as the creative treatment of actuality has proven powerful (see, for instance, De Jong, Rothwell, and Knudsen 2012), though contested (see Winston 1995).

As ethics is part of practical philosophy, a discipline dealing with the question of what is the right thing to do and what it should be based on, an ethical discussion therefore should include a consideration of the practice involved. With such different practices being part of what constitutes 'documentaries', I focus on a specific practice, a specific type of filmmaking. I define this practice as author documentary filmmaking. Let me clarify what I mean with this.

Art as skill, the ability to produce artefacts, was replaced by art as sensibility, the ability to create with imagination (Raymond Williams, quoted by Winston 1995). Nowadays, despite being mechanical (or even digital) and mass-produced, film can be placed with the other 'high arts' (Winston 1995), positioning its maker among artists rather than artisans. The notion of authorship is related to considerations of skill versus imagination and originated within the realm of French film criticism, and more specifically

among critics of the Cahier du Cinéma. It was initially an effort to step away from the tradition of psychological realism in French fiction films and from the dominance of scenarios over directing qualities (the so called “Tradition of Quality”, Truffaut 1954, p. 9). Truffaut wanted to focus not on the filmmaker who merely “adds the pictures” (p. 15) to the scenario, but on filmmakers who were “men of the cinema” (p. 16). Filmmakers who not only directed but also often wrote the dialogues and sometimes invented the stories. The aim of author theory was to establish a body of filmmakers who were worth discussing and, contrary to the prevalent ‘metteurs-en-scène’, filmmakers who were distinguishable from each other. Critics thus used the term to distinguish between proper filmmakers worth writing about and other filmmakers ‘not worth mentioning’.

Bazin (1957), also a Cahiers du Cinéma critic, opposed the idea that a film was worth discussing just because of who the director was. He wanted to distinguish between the filmmaker and her films. He placed filmmakers and artists in general in their socio-cultural context and their technological background. Especially in critiquing American films, technical possibilities and means were crucial to consider. And, Bazin argued, even talents make mistakes or end up in less favourable circumstances, which might result in minor films. Minor filmmakers, not considered authors, might suddenly make a brilliant piece of work which is then overlooked by critics because author theory prescribes the filmmaker is not an author. But according to Bazin, talent always interacts with milieu, and author theory refused to see this. Bazin (1957) warned for what he called an “aesthetic personality cult” (p. 26) if taking the personality of the director as a static given. At the same time, the director is regarded as central to the artistic endeavour. According to Cameron (1962), also a critic, it is the director “who gives [the film] any distinctive quality it may have” and “who determines what finally appears on the screen” (p. 31). An extensive debate about author theory followed and continues today.

Kerrigan and McIntyre (2010) argued that the romantic idea of a filmmaker working on her own in mysterious ways, being divinely inspired as “individual artistic genius” (p. 113) is a misconception and far too simplistic. They argued for a distinction between the creation and the creative process, the latter including a number of people, not just the filmmaker. They also

## Participatory spaces

argued for a rational approach to creativity as a “broad human characteristic derived from a multiple set of factors in operation” (p. 113). A rational approach makes it possible to accept Grierson’s notion of documentary as the creative treatment of actuality by accepting actuality as the raw material and creativity as an “artistic/cultural process ... structured by material constraints” (Petrie 1991, quoted in Kerrigan and McIntyre 2010, p. 116). They defined creativity as “a documentary filmmaker’s ability to exhibit their masterful understanding of the form, format and medium they are working within” (p. 117) and stated it could be understood as similar to authorship, although they argued author theory is problematic for documentary’s truth claims. However, like fiction, documentary film is a construction, and in that sense “authored” (Bruzzi 2000, p. 163). And this authorship, or creativity, derives from the filmmaker’s “understanding and ability to deliberately construct and manipulate the ‘actuality’ that is unfolding” (Kerrigan and McIntyre 2010, p. 118).

Apart however from such theoretical notions about the role of the filmmaker, in documentary practice there is a group of filmmakers, a group of practitioners, who initiate their own projects, who work as independent creators, funding individual projects in various ways, possibly with the help of a producer, working with the aid of film, media, and art funds, broadcasters, and often with private money as well. They are independent in the sense that they make the films they feel the need to make. Of course they do depend on funds, broadcasters, and on crew members and other professionals. But they are not employees; they are creatively free to construct their own narrative and the films they make are unique, single films. (This at least is the case in Europe in general; see Aufderheide, Jaszi, and Chandra 2009 for a description of the situation in the United States of America specifically). It is the notion of authorship as well as this creative independence that characterise the kind of documentary filmmaking I try to investigate and that I define as author documentary filmmaking. In other words: author documentary filmmakers have and generally take the freedom to initiate individual projects and generally do not work on assignments or as employees for these films (they might and probably will have to take other assignments to make ends meet). It is the most personal kind of documentary filmmaking, ideally allowing for the

filmmaker's personal perspective on a topic and for artistic freedom. The resulting films are films in which a filmmaker tells her story in a personal style, using the medium of film or video as a means of expression in a well considered way. A filmmaker makes an informed decision about what means at her disposal she will use for this project. These films, apart from having an informative value, have an artistic value. They are first and foremost films, not television programmes, nor forms of journalism. Their makers are first and foremost filmmakers, artists. The ensuing films are programmed at (documentary) film festivals and in cinemas and art houses. I do not consider format-based serials and television documentaries, neither news reports to belong to this practice, although boundaries will sometimes be blurry. Such author documentary films, or rather such author documentary filmmaking, is the practice I will focus on in this research project. That means I will study the production process of such films, rather than the resulting films. Let me address this next.

### **The process rather than the film**

As I mentioned in the introduction and illustrated with *Expelled. No Intelligence Allowed*, numerous films have raised ethical questions. Wiseman's *Titicut Follies* (1967) generated much debate, because it showed criminal psychiatric patients who, according to Winston (1995), were unable to understand what they were getting into by letting themselves be recorded for a documentary film. The makers of the series *An American Family* (1973) were accused of abusing the family involved, though only after the family experienced the response of the press as negative to them and their lives (Gilbert 1988). More recently, Hany Abu-Assad's film *Ford Transit* (2002) was dismissed not so much because Abu-Assad used actors in a documentary setting, but because he had not told anybody (De Mare 2005). In *Religulous* Bill Maher, atheist and comedian, interviewed a variety of believers around the world about their religion. Goldstein (2008) quoted Maher admitting that the production team used some tricks to get people to participate: The team never used Maher's name nor mentioned he would do the interviews; they used a fake title for the film; and Maher entered the scene at the very last moment,

## Participatory spaces

making it hard for interviewees to respond off-the-record. Bowler, Browne, and Herbert (2009) complained about misrepresentation of interviews recorded with them for *The Voyage that Shook the World*. Scientist Tetsuya Endo criticised his representation in *The Cove* (director Louie Psihoyos, 2009; see Blair 2010) and Herbert Terrace also complained about his representation in *Project Nim* (Jalon 2011).

Debates such as these usually take the finished film as a benchmark: after watching the film it turns out ‘something is wrong’. According to Nichols (1991) and Pryluck (1988), the final film should serve as main evidence, as the image gives proof of the ethics of the filmmaker. But is the filmmaker’s behaviour always traceable in the images? Pryluck (1988) suggested that the interpretation of the audience should not necessarily be guiding. He asked what happens if just a few people see immoral filmmaking behaviour in the film. And what if “a basically honest interpretation is possible despite a blatant ethical violation?” (Pryluck 1988, p. 267). As soon as you decide to represent someone, there are ethical (as well as aesthetical and historiographic) questions to face (Nichols 1991). These questions apparently appear as a result of picking up the camera and pushing the ‘rec’ button. Hence, such issues of misrepresentation that the participants mentioned above complained about, start somewhere else, i.e., during filming, or in the editing room, or even when informing the participant, or refraining from doing so. Misrepresentation always refers to another domain, a domain associated with the right representation: an interview during the production process, someone’s daily activities, someone’s convictions and ideas. This implies there are limitations to the film text as proof or benchmark for evaluating documentary filmmaking ethics. The film does not necessarily serve as a fair representation of the ethics of its making. Hence, we should not just look at what’s left after editing. We should look beyond the images on the screen and the accompanying sounds and turn to the production process as object of investigation. As ethics concern reflection on human action, on practice, the research project presented here will focus on the process of making author documentary films rather than on the films themselves.

In a production process, filmmakers have to deal with financiers, crew members, participants, and, one could argue, the audience. Filmmakers thus

function in a network and have different responsibilities toward various others involved in the process of author documentary filmmaking. A final delineation within the field of documentary filmmaking therefore concerns the choice to focus on the filmmaker–participant relationship. Below I will discuss why.

### **The filmmaker-participant relationship**

In his discussion of the consequences of the development of lightweight equipment, and the ensuing observational filming style, pioneer Pryluck (1988) introduced a focus on the filmmaker–participant relationship. According to Linton (1976) the moral obligations of the filmmaker toward her participants are a “crucial consideration” (p. 19). Others followed suit. Rosenthal (1988b) stated that “The essence of the question [of ethics] is how filmmakers should treat people in films so as to avoid exploiting them and causing them unnecessary suffering” (p. 245). Nichols (1991) agreed that the overriding question of ethics is what to do with people and how to represent them appropriately. Winston (2000), in discussing ethics, contemplated the tradition of presenting people as victims with the purpose of improving their situation. He discussed how this became the staple of documentary, ‘powered’ by Grierson in the nineteen thirties, and he has been critical about it on numerous occasions (see a.o. Winston 1988b, 1995).

As these examples illustrate, the discussion of ethics in the documentary discourse has traditionally focused on the treatment and position of the documentary participant. However, and the documentary discourse is not unique here, the discourse is *about* them, rather than *by* them. Very rarely are participants asked what they feel and think and how they have experienced being in a documentary project. As I have mentioned, empirical data are generally absent in such research efforts. In the research presented here, I will explore the filmmaker-participant relationship further by including both parties in the research project and by investigating the experiences of both filmmaker and participant empirically, though in different ways.<sup>5</sup>

Above I have sketched my research framework and how it related to

---

<sup>5</sup> I will go further into the methodology of each research effort in Chapters 2 and 4 respectively.

## Participatory spaces

ethics and documentary film. Next I will discuss an analysis of how ethics with respect to documentary filmmaking has been discussed in the scholarly documentary literature.

### **Documentary and ethics, in theory**

In this section I analyse the scholarly discourse on documentary ethics, specifically in relation to the process of filmmaking and to the filmmaker-participant relationship. The question with which I addressed the literature was plain and simple: How do scholars see the ethical aspects of documentary filmmaking with respect to the filmmaker-participant relationship; what kind of issues do they discuss; and what other considerations and phenomena do they mention in this context? But first I discuss the discourse itself, and what it encompasses.

Documentary filmmaking and ethics are sub-disciplines of film and philosophy respectively. Film and philosophy have been regarded as an interesting team, as scholars have used philosophy to understand, interpret, and theorize the (motion) pictures. There is a wide range of books on philosophy and film.<sup>6</sup> There has also been a bit of reflection on documentary film and philosophy. Carroll and Choi (2006) included a section on documentary in their anthology on the philosophy of film, focusing mainly on defining the genre. Arriens (1999) discussed documentary film as film, representation, construction, and communication about reality. Contributing to a section on 'Documentary and reality-based programming', Valenti (2000) and Koughan (2000) mainly discuss ethics in relation to the blurring boundaries between fiction and non-fiction and the copying of what have traditionally been considered distinctive styles and aesthetics.<sup>7</sup> It seems that with respect to philosophy, mainly documentary's status, its construction, and its relation to reality are discussed.

---

<sup>6</sup> Examples include Ian Jarvie, *Philosophy of the Film: Epistemology, Ontology, Aesthetics* (New York: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1987); Andrew Light, *Reel Arguments: Film, Philosophy, and Social Criticism* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003); and Noël Carroll and Jinhee Choi, eds., *Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures: An Anthology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2006).

<sup>7</sup> These contributions illustrate the many environments in which documentaries function.

Carroll and Choi (2006) also included a section on ethics, dealing with film criticism and virtue (Kupfer 2006), pornography (Vadas 2006), and Riefenstahl's *Triumph des Willens* (Devereaux 2006). The latter is a prime example of films discussed in terms of morality of their message and the way this message is constructed and shaped. However, such debates focus on the films themselves and usually analyse how they work politically, in terms of reality, and as propaganda (see, for example, Mackenzie 2003; Sontag 1975). The ethics of documentary filmmaking, of the production process itself, is not part of the investigation.

A well studied example of a documentary film that raised many questions about ethics and morality is the aforementioned *Titicut Follies*. Anderson and Benson (1988, 1991) discussed dilemmas surrounding this classic, focusing on the problems of consent, artistic freedom, and privacy laws. They did not investigate the actual process of making the film, but reviewed the process in retrospect.

More recent film texts have also been discussed individually in terms of ethics. Michael Moore's films, especially *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), received criticism for twisting facts, misinterpreting, misquoting, quoting out of context and thus misleading the audience by presenting it all as truth (Keller and Hill 2004; Marshall 2004). Borden (2008) discussed Moore's *Sicko* (2007) within the framework of virtue theory and concluded Moore's performance was coherent albeit "not entirely consistent with the moral commitments of documentary filmmakers" (p. 3). De Mare (2005) discussed the debate in the Netherlands surrounding Abu-Assad's *Ford Transit* and well as *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Bakker (2005) also discussed *Ford Transit*, focusing on its truthfulness. These scholars primarily discussed the finished films and their effects, again not the production process. Although considerations of how the filmmaker 'treated' the participant in the film text are sometimes included, considerations of the production process in relation to the final film are not included; it remains unclear how the participants concerned regard their experience and whether they have a problem with the way they have been represented and included to serve the argument of the filmmaker. Such literature on film texts is therefore not included in my analysis.

As a consequence I have relied on the main documentary theory for a

## Participatory spaces

discussion of ethics in the discipline (for example, work by Brian Winston, Bill Nichols and Michael Renov). Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988a) collected contributions on the representation of different subjects (as victim, Arabs, minority groups), informed consent, autobiographical films, and property rights. Rosenthal's (1988a) section on documentary ethics deals with the participant as victim, ethics between filmmaker and participant, experiences of the makers of *An American Family* and CBS's *60 Minutes*, and with misleading the audience.<sup>8</sup> It is such works that the following discussion on ethics of documentary filmmaking in the documentary discourse is mainly based on. As mentioned above, the discussion was initiated in the course of the nineteen-seventies by Pryluck (1988) and Linton (1976). As direct cinema entered its second decennium, it was this style of filming that initiated concerns about ethics. The prolonged observation characteristic of direct cinema and its aura of non-intervention made the films look like neutral records of the daily goings on in public institutions in films by, for instance, Frederick Wiseman, and of popular artists in films by, for instance, D.A. Pennebaker. However, as with any form of filmmaking, the material was edited into an argument, which entailed selection and construction, and thus a specific representation of the people included in the material. In addition, it became possible to follow people wherever they went and to film them while they might not be aware of it. Although a variety of styles has developed since, observational cinema remains one of the most widely used styles in documentary filmmaking, whether or not in combination with other styles.

The scholarly debate on ethics and documentary film is characterized by a discussion of instances in documentary film and filmmaking that invite ethical reflection and moral decisions and of normative points of view with respect to the practice. My discussion here focuses on issues regarded as moral issues in documentary film, relevant contextual aspects, and proposed ways to deal with moral issues (which I refer to as strategies). Moral issues include issues scholars related to ethics, issues that need ethical reflection or have a moral dimension, such as representation, disclosure, and informing the

---

<sup>8</sup> In Rosenthal and Corner's 2005 edition the section on ethics was replaced by a section on ethics and aesthetics, containing previously published works, including a review of *Bowling for Columbine* (director Michael Moore, 2002). I have not included this section.

participant. It is not a fixed set of issues, but a list derived from the documentary discourse. In the following discussion of these issues I will specifically address normative statements in the documentary discourse. Such normative statements include observations of how things are or how they should be in documentary film and filmmaking, hence statements that are both descriptive and prescriptive in nature. I begin by discussing a concept central to the debate of ethics, which the documentary practice borrowed from medical practice: informed consent.

### Informing the participant and getting her consent

“Most answers to such accusations [of taking advantage of someone] rely on some notion of consent (usually “informed”) as the ethical touchstone” (Becker 1988, p. xii). Informed consent has often been regarded as a must in documentary filmmaking and, with reference to practice rules mentioned above (see p. 13), it can be understood as a translation of the basic principle of personal autonomy. By making sure the participant is informed and gives consent, her personal autonomy is respected. Informed consent has its origin in medical ethics and concerns the idea that a patient be fully informed about (experimental) treatment, the risks involved, and the results expected, following which she may decide, completely free of any pressure, upon taking the treatment or declining it. Consent here involves not just permission, but permission to act, to conduct a procedure (Faden and Beauchamp 1986). Replacing patient with participant and medical doctor with filmmaker and it serves as a “fair definition of a filmmaker’s duty of care” according to (Winston 1988b, p. 284), though he later acknowledged that things are a bit more complicated. Referring to the Nuremberg Code, which regulated research on human beings and were drafted in response to Nazi experiments on human beings during the Second World War and named after the city that hosted the trials of some of the main perpetrators, Winston (2000) observed that if these were adapted as a rule, “It would be the end of the ethical problems of documentary film-making. ... but then most of the films would not exist either” (p. 148). The discussion on informed consent, the questions it raises and the practical challenges associated with it are addressed extensively by Faden and

## Participatory spaces

Beauchamp (1986). With reference to documentary filmmaking, the concept raises lots of questions too. Many scholars agreed it is impossible to inform (potential) participants completely about all risks involved in participating and the consequences participation might entail (Anderson and Benson 1988; Bakker 2005; Becker 1988; Gross, Katz, and Ruby 1988b; Katz and Milstein Katz 1988; Nichols 1991; Rosenthal 1988b; Winston 1988b, 1995, 2000). In documentary filmmaking there seem to be no uniform protocols for informed consent. In addition, apart from such practical considerations, according to Winston (2000), informed consent does not match freedom of expression: if the filmmaker needs to ask permission, she is no longer free to make the film as she sees fit. Here, Winston seems to question whether the right to self-determination should always override the right to freely express oneself.

A common phenomenon in documentary film production is the quit claim or release form, as materialization of informed consent: a contract by which the participant agrees to participate and allows the filmmaker to use the filmed material (Winston 2000). However, there are no uniform protocols for this either, nor standard contracts. Moreover, a contract assumes the participant knows what she is getting into (Winston 2000). Although they are often considered important phenomena, both informed consent and quit claims are very unspecified. Questions about the amount of information exchanged, the amount of knowledge about what the filmmaker is planning to do, and the amount of a filmmaker's responsibility abound. Therefore, I will include the component parts rather than informed consent itself in my research project. These component parts are informing the participant, getting her consent, and voluntariness as a dimension of the latter. Whether or not a contract has been signed is not important for the discussion here. There are additional ways of capturing or recording consent; I will return to this below.

Informing the participant has been a central element in the debate on ethics from the beginning. Pryluck (1988) for many hit the nail on the head when he observed there is a "fundamental ethical difficulty in direct cinema" (p. 258) of using people in film and thereby putting them at risk, without informing them sufficiently about those risks, because filmmakers cannot know those risks: "it is presumptuous of them to act as if they did" (p. 258, see also Anderson and Benson 1988; Bakker 2005; Winston 1995). Because of the

inherent uncertainty Winston (2000) found regarding prior consent as informed consent problematic. Becker (1988) summed up three key points concerning informing the participant, related to what it covers and to what can be known: nobody knows exactly what she is getting into as no contract can cover everything; events in life, and thus in filming, are highly unpredictable; and so filmmakers will not know exactly what they will do when they start. Gilbert (1988) shared his own experiences and observed that it can be hard to explain what your film is about, especially when it is about “more general questions of human behavior” (p. 292). Using an observatory approach he concluded that “a precise, definite, conclusive answer ... would have been misleading” (p. 292). Another reason to not be completely open and transparent is “The old cliché” (Gilbert 1988, p. 291) that we never see ourselves as others see us (see also Rosenthal 1988b).

Notwithstanding such reservations about informing the participant, filmmakers should still inform participants, to get consent (Anderson and Benson 1988; Bakker 2005). They should give all the information that might influence the decision about their participation (Pryluck 1988). And as participants might not realize or understand they can be easy targets and might fail to understand the implications of participating (Pryluck 1988, see also Winston 1995, 2000), filmmakers should inform them about potential effects as best as they can (Pryluck 1988). Filmmakers should also be more open when they are likely to be the only source of information for the participant (Katz and Milstein Katz 1988). Specifically for the helpless and the powerless, it is irresponsible to feign innocence about possible consequences (Anderson and Benson 1988). Smaller consumer cameras, portable carriers such as video and DVD, as well broadcasting platforms, such as Youtube, Vimeo and podcasts, have gradually democratized the media, but as Winston (1995) already pointed out, such developments have not prevented a whole industry feeding off teaching politicians, CEOs and the likes how to behave and perform, including in front of a camera. At the same time, Nichols (1991) argued that in the end, the right to know is best served by letting events unfold in whatever way they do. “Those who participate in an event must be assumed to be aware of the potential consequences...” (Nichols 1991, p. 88); or at least be aware of some of the implications, here in Europe where media are

## Participatory spaces

omnipresent (Bakker 2005).

As part of the information process Pryluck (1988) proposed to include in documentary filmmaking the practice of social scientists to do a member check: to inform the participants of their own understanding in their own words and check with the participants their interpretation, and thus come to a “collaborative seeking after knowledge” (p. 263). Some filmmakers invite their participants to watch rushes and give feedback, and thus enable them to gain knowledge of the material and its inclusion in the film, as well as to gain some control over ‘their’ images; however, showing participants the final cut is more common (Pryluck 1988; Winston 1995).

Winston (2000) observed there are “everyday little white lies and omissions” (p. 138) characterizing the filmmaker-participant communication, including “downplaying the levels of disruption involved in having a film-crew about” (p. 138), not being honest about the length of the filming period and about other participants involved, and not mentioning “possible fall-out” (p. 138) once the film is broadcast. Nichols (1991), commenting on the concept of informed consent, stated that “many filmmakers choose to disregard it” (p. 47) relying on their role as journalists and the ensuing right and access to information (see also p. 31).<sup>9</sup> Bakker (2005) noted that filmmakers are not always in a position to inform their participants of the end result.<sup>10</sup> There are also explicit exceptions to the obligation to fully inform the participant, for example, when a greater good will be the result of the film or when the participant is a public figure (Winston, 2000). I will discuss such considerations of exceptions to central concepts and values in more detail in a later section, dealing with contextual aspects of moral issues in documentary filmmaking (see p. 43).

The other element of informed consent is permission, to be granted by the participant. Faden and Beauchamp (1986) discussed such permission as

---

<sup>9</sup> Although I argue against the conflation of documentary filmmaking and journalism, this illustrates how documentary filmmaking often is regarded as a form of journalism and the filmmaker as a species of the journalist.

<sup>10</sup> De Mare (2005) discussed some interventions filmmakers apparently find acceptable, and one is indeed informing participants: in a scene in a Dutch film in which a salesman rings at various people’s homes, these people have been informed beforehand by the filmmaker. Apparently, the sales run smoothly and De Mare discussed this as a construction of non-existing scenes, even though the salesman “plays himself” (p. 15).

authorization: authorization to act, to perform. In documentary filmmaking this would amount to authorization to film and to use the filmed material for the film in production. The need for formal consent for documentary filmmakers falls somewhere between the crucial requirement in advertising and the absence of such a requirement in journalism (Winston 2000). Consent is widely discussed as a relevant concept related to ethics and documentary filmmaking; scholars have addressed the procedure of getting it (Anderson and Benson 1988; Bakker 2005; Pryluck 1988; Winston 1995, 2000); the people giving it (Pryluck 1988; Winston 1995, 2000); what it covers (Katz and Milstein Katz 1988; Pryluck 1988); how long it covers that (Winston 1988b); reconsidering it (Winston 2000); exceptions to the need for consent (Bakker 2005; Katz and Milstein Katz 1988; Pryluck 1988; Winston 2000); and the underlying ideas (Butchart 2006).<sup>11</sup>

Informed consent should be given (or denied) free of coercion or pressure; the participant should be informed and understand the procedure she is deciding on; and she should be competent to understand it and to give permission or reject it (Winston 1995). Frederick Wiseman and Albert and David Maysles filmed their participants giving consent to be filmed (Pryluck 1988). However, according to Pryluck this is not sufficient, first of all because faced with a camera participants are already caught up in a filming situation, so there is some pressure to say 'yes'. Secondly, the way in this case Wiseman phrased the question ("Do you have any objections", Pryluck, p. 256)<sup>12</sup> demands an affirmative refusal; this entails duress and does not meet the requirement of voluntariness. Instead, Pryluck suggested, affirmative approval would be better. On the other end of the scale, silence on the part of the participant is also considered consent (Anderson and Benson 1988). But ideally, consent is procedural rather than contractual (Anderson and Benson 1988). And in general it is presumed that prospected participants are capable of consenting (Winston 1995). Becker (1988) however, based on Anderson and Benson's (1988) discussion of *Titicut Follies*, specifically observed a contradiction between filming in direct cinema style and obtaining informed

---

<sup>11</sup> Winston (1995) also addressed how consent relates to legal considerations, but as this is outside of the realm of my research, I will not go into this.

<sup>12</sup> The example Pryluck discussed probably concerned *Hospital* (1970).

## Participatory spaces

consent from participants.

Usually filmmakers ask permission when they start filming, some ask permission (again) for the completed film (Winston 2000). When it comes to the final film, it is however usually the filmmaker who decides what it will include and who presents a more or less finished product to the participants (Pryluck 1988). Pryluck advocated a collaborative approach in which the participants are included in the editing of the film and give their consent provisionally, based on an extended rough cut, or throughout various stages and after having been consulted about their representation (see above).

Viewers might continue indefinitely to watch a film and make meaning out of the images and sounds, so being included in a documentary film entails a never ending and highly unpredictable journey (Anderson and Benson 1988). Winston (1988b) considered that an audience, watching an older film, might find it hard to grasp that between the production and release of the film and the moment of watching it, circumstances and people might have changed; an audience might judge it as if it were produced in the present. He suggested limiting the extent of consent in light of a film's lasting life and he thus questioned how long consent given at a specific moment should last. Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b) saw a central role for the issue of consent. At the same time, however, they acknowledged that this is not always a meaningful concept in practice; the family Raymond and Raymond had portrayed in *An American Family* (1973) had agreed to all episodes; as mentioned above, the trouble began after the broadcast, with the reviews (Gilbert 1988). Anderson and Benson (1988) discussed consent issues in the case of *Titicut Follies*, the title of their contribution leaving little to the imagination. According to Butchart (2006), the idea of consent implies

... that there is some kind of truth behind the negotiations that lead up to a documentary production, and that participants, save from being victimized in the process, need to be protected from the possible concealment of a producer's intentions and the persuasive strategies of savvy negotiators, as well as from manipulation in the process of production. (p. 429)

Butchart proposed an altogether different approach to ethics, based on virtue ethics and the need to disclose the truth of a situation, i.e., the truth of

filmmaking, which is the visual mode of address. I will come back to this when I discuss proposed ways to deal with moral issues (see p. 40).

The voluntariness of consent implies prospected participants can freely accept or equally freely decline to participate. However, not giving consent or having second thoughts about it is a problem because it unilaterally abridges the filmmaker's right to speak; therefore concept of consent needs to be re-evaluated in light of its relation to freedom of expression (Winston 2000). According to Nichols (1991), discussing the practice of interviewing and the ethical questions it might raise, many filmmakers refrain from asking consent, arguing that "the process of social or historical inquiry benefits from the same principles of free speech and a free press that allow considerable license to journalists in their pursuit of the news" (p. 47). In other words, as was the case with informing participants, filmmakers, according to Nichols, here seem to rely on a role as journalist, for whom different considerations for consent apply.

The discussion above illustrates that both informing the participant and getting consent are not matters of course. I hope to shed a light on how filmmakers deal with these issues in their daily practice and what the role of participants might be. However, in what follows I will first discuss other salient issues scholars mentioned with reference to documentary ethics, again with a focus on normative statements expressed in the academic discourse.

#### Salient moral issues in the documentary discourse

"Ethics in general were not on the agenda..." is how (Winston 1995, p. 24) described the early documentary practice: filmmakers such as Flaherty and Grierson and his colleagues were blind to the consequences of filming people and screening the narration constructed from the material. This did not really change with the subsequent generations: technological innovations made their entry in documentary filmmaking and it became an altogether different business, but the new technology simply ignored ethics, relying on the same ontological status of documentary material and the absence of ethics in the documentary discourse (Winston 1995). Until the 1960s: enter direct cinema with its portable equipment.

## Participatory spaces

“While one can argue about whether we can ever know what *really* happens, inevitably in filming actuality, moments are recorded that the people being photographed might not wish to make widely public...” said Pryluck (1988, p. 256, emphasis in the original), while considering the morals of direct cinema. In the old days (before the age of direct cinema) Pryluck considered moral issues “manageable” (p. 255); unfortunately, he did not elaborate on what this means. The changing aesthetics direct cinema brought about however did involve another morality, one which became more problematic because by filming in direct cinema style, a *filmmaker* became all the more invisible. Direct cinema, or filming actuality, caused a growing consciousness of and reflection on moral dilemmas in documentary filmmaking (Pryluck 1988). However, the many issues Pryluck raised are not unique to direct cinema filming, even though this technology-inspired stylistic development initiated his thoughts and ideas. The same questions keep reappearing in the documentary discourse, despite further technological as well as artistic developments.

Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b), introducing their collection on image-making, including filmmaking, discussed four “moral imperatives ... common to all ‘professional’ production and use of images” (p. 6), which include the image maker’s commitment to herself to make images in accordance with her intentions as much as possible; the responsibility to adhere to standards of the profession and to commit to the financing institutions (see also Nichols 1991); obligations to her subjects; and obligations to the audience. However, in the documentary discourse it is the concern for the participant that dominates, as “The relationship between participants and documentarists is far more pregnant with ethical difficulties than is the connection of film-maker to audience” (Winston 2000, p. 158). Scholars discussed the filmmaker-participant relationship in terms of an awareness of the social interaction (Pryluck 1988), contact (Winston 1995), and a “communicative situation” (Bakker 2005, under “Act I: Filming”). In “scrupulously ethical productions” the crew is aware it is in “social interaction” with the subjects (Pryluck 1988, p. 267). This relationship is the key to ethical filmmaking and the interaction should surpass the production process (Winston 1995), something that has been under-addressed by scholars and filmmakers alike (Winston 2000).

However, filmmakers are not always able to show the final result (Bakker 2005). How this might be so, or how such a relationship develops in practice, scholars did not address.

Inequality is the main problem in the documentary filmmaker-participant relationship (Winston 2000). Filmmakers “depend on the collaboration of individuals who are not otherwise involved in the enterprise” (Pryluck 1988, p. 261). Becker (1988) put himself in the shoes of a participant and stated that to be truly informed requires that a participant knows as much about filmmaking as a filmmaker. Although there is a rising media awareness, making documentaries remains an alien activity for most (Winston 2000). This introduces an hierarchy in the filmmaker-participant relationship, an “abyss of technology” (Winston 1988b, p. 52) related to the traditional difference in access to technical, but also to financial, and institutional means to produce and distribute film and television between those involved in media institutions, such as documentary filmmakers, and individuals on the other side of the abyss subjected to it, including the audience as consumers. In addition, there is a difference in knowledge about the production process (Winston 2000). This constitutes the filmmaker as authority over the process of making and screening films and thus as the more powerful of the two. Winston (2000) observed that not only do filmmakers fail in being “unimpeachable” (p. 112) but they are largely unrestrained in their powerful relation to participants. Although the abyss might be somewhat bridged by the development of smaller, lighter, better quality, and cheaper cameras now included in virtually every mobile phone as well as in many photo-cameras and other mobile devices, and by the introduction of self-tube platforms such as Youtube and Vimeo, the traditional media as institutions seem to remain alien and inaccessible to the average Jane.

To deal with this Winston (1995) argued for abandonment of the powerful position of the filmmaker as artist as a necessary prerequisite for ethical filmmaking: “... with the amorality of the creative artist aside, there is no reason why such a documentarist could not put the relationship with the participants on the pedestal...” (p. 258); also the participant as victim needs to disappear in order for the “ethical mess” to be “cleared up” (p. 258). But filmmakers and participants will never truly be peers in filmmaking, even in

## Participatory spaces

terms of their social position: no matter what her position in the filmmaking process, the filmmaker, specifically in the expository mode, will always remain in control of the voice and the subject of the film (Nichols 1991).

As a result of the hierarchical relationship, exploitation of the relationship is another central concern of documentary scholars, although opinions about its meaning differ; what constitutes exploitation needs to be defined (Winston 1988b). Pryluck (1988) described it as the “use of people for our advantage ... in its extreme” (p. 261). Winston (1995) observed that “Most times what can be more clearly discerned [than the quality of relationship between filmmakers such as Richard Leacock or D.A. Pennebaker and their participants] is the opposite, a filmmaker wittingly or unwittingly exploiting the subject to one degree or another” (p. 232). Butchart (2006) phrased exploitation in terms of taking advantage of participants and discussed this as part of the context in which truth in documentary is traditionally defined, something he rejected and to which I will return later. At the same time, the use of participants as an element in and thus as a means of filmmaking seems to some extent inevitable. Pryluck (1988) quoted Marcel Ophuls as saying that filmmakers are always exploiting (p. 257). Gilbert (1988) seemed to agree with that, acknowledging that filmmakers “we are *using human beings* to make a point. To invoke a harsh but accurate word, we are ‘exploiting’ them” (p. 293, emphasis in the original). Rosenthal (1988b) phrased it as something filmmakers should avoid; however, he also quoted Henry Breitrose discussing “political exploitation ... *using* his or her subjects-most often to make a substantive point, or to achieve a strategic objective ... Film subjects are thus a means to an end...” (p. 248, emphasis in the original). Exploitation is thus considered both as the inevitable use of people, and as the *abuse* of people for a documentary film.

Exploitation can also work the other way around: the participant can use the filmmaker to her advantage (Winston 1995, 2000), turn against her (Bakker 2005), be “celebrity-hungry” (Arthur 2005, p. 23). As Becker (1988) phrased it: “the bargain is seldom one-sided” (p. xv). Winston (2000) observed that it is even “possible for participants to be more exploitative of the filmmaker” (p. 141) rather than the other way around; a phony participant out to “con the broadcaster into allowing an appearance” (p. 141) according to

Winston is the most extreme example of a reversal of the traditional power relationship. Apart from such explicit exploitation, scholars also discussed the motives and agenda of the participant. “Many individuals and groups have cooperated in the work of image makers because they believed that ‘their story’ would be captured and told...” (Gross, Katz, and Ruby 1988b, p. 20).

Appearing on television can also empower participants and they can get a kick out of it (Winston 1995). Without explicitly exploiting or abusing, participants here use the opportunity to appear on the screen to their own ends.

Exploitation might occur in various guises. For example, the use of force or coercion is discussed in relation to obtaining informed consent (Anderson and Benson 1988; Katz and Milstein Katz 1988; Winston 1988b). But coercion can also take place with respect to disclosure, with respect to what a participant might and might not want to talk about. Usually, contracts specify the control over the use of the filmed material and put that control and thus the level of disclosure in the hands of the filmmaker (Winston 2000). Forcing participants to disclose “feelings they might prefer to keep hidden” touches on their basic human rights and “public revelations of private moments” that have been coerced are objectionable (Pryluck 1988, p. 259). Pryluck’s observation about the inevitability of shots participants wish not to be made public (see p. 32) suggests that considerations of what to disclose and what to keep to oneself are present in many if not all documentary projects. (With reference to consent in science Pryluck suggested that the disproportion of status between the filmmaker and the participant discussed above is in itself subtly coercive. I will return to the comparison between documentary filmmaking and science in Chapter 3.) According to Winston (1995), it is questionable whether coercion can be understood as encompassing more than ‘just’ “actual or threatened physical force” (p. 221); Winston discussed ‘undue influence’ as a more recent concept and as possibly more useful, though legally problematic because disadvantage for participants is difficult to prove.

Related to the use of coercion or force is the abuse the filmmaker can make of her power and authority. Motivated by a public row on documentary films, Winston (2000) wished “something of a plague” on “documentarists who abuse their position as public communicators, less for lying to their audiences and more for duping those whom they involve in their projects...” (p. 1).

## Participatory spaces

However, Aibel (1988) discussed how his decision to interfere and prevent participants from taking decisions that would actually cause disadvantage to them resulted in a debate with his colleague filmmakers about changing the “normal course of events” (p. 114): “I had a gut feeling that it would be unethical to pretend ignorance unless we felt that our answers would do *them* more damage than good” (p. 116, emphasis in the original). So a decision that was beneficial to participants was discussed because it changed ‘reality’. Here it is not lying that is at stake, as an abuse of one’s powerful position, but keeping silent. By keeping silent, the participants would be duped, which caused Aibel to speak out. It is his power in terms of his knowledge that he used, arguing that these participants’ behaviour was already modified because of the presence of the filmmakers. In the end the consensus seems to be that filmmakers should not dupe their participants, whether through lying or through keeping silent.

Putting pressure on participants or coercing them conflicts with the right to privacy (Pryluck 1988). The public’s right to know is one reason to coerce (see also my discussion on contextual aspects, p. 43), but it is not necessarily more important, certainly not in the era of direct cinema Pryluck is addressing, the era of unobtrusive filming. In general, disclosure, speaking and appearing, either in the research phase, during filming, or in the final film, is discussed as ethically problematic when the participant/discloser loses control over the disclosed and finds the disclosed excessive (Katz and Milstein Katz 1988). At the same time, as long as the subject is comfortable with it, there is no problem, even though it might be uncomfortable to watch (Katz and Milstein Katz 1988).

Trust, and goodwill, is needed to settle disputes not covered by any contract (Becker 1988). In autobiographical projects, there is a pre-existing level of trust between family members, “never achieved or even strived for in other films” (Katz and Milstein Katz 1988, p. 120). Anderson and Benson (1988) discussed trust in terms of faith in the filmmaker’s abilities: the procedure of consent “creates a situation of trust in the film-maker’s judgement rather than a situation of truly informed consent” (p. 84). By consenting, participants place their trust in the hands of the filmmaker, they rely on her capabilities. In addition, scholars discussed trust in relation to the

audience and their faith in the represented (Nichols 1991; Rosenthal 1988a; Winston 2000).

To avoid exploitation Rosenthal (1988b) asked what duties filmmakers have when it comes to care and responsibility toward participants. He made an appeal to filmmakers' sensibility, compassion, and concern for their participants, while Winston (2000) called for a duty of care as a guiding principle, observing that the duty of care is too often not properly "discharged" (p. 30). Other scholars also considered care and the preventing of harm to participants as a basic principle in the filmmaker-participant relationship, discussing it in terms of protecting those least able to protect themselves (Pryluck 1988); distinguishing between public and private personae or personae from different classes, and between the level and kind of care both deserve (Rosenthal 1988b; Winston 1988a). They also considered the acceptability of committing harm for the sake of a greater good or misrepresentation because the participants do not deserve protection (Winston 2000). I will return to this in the section on the relevance of such contextual aspects (p. 43).

As mentioned above, Nichols (1991) considered questions of representation as paramount (see p. 21; see also Nichols 2001). Representation relates to both participants' physical appearance and their appearance as persons, with experiences, ideas, convictions, et cetera. Pryluck (1988) addressed the former when he discussed the appearance in extreme close-up of a teacher wearing extremely thick glasses, in *High School* (director Frederick Wiseman, 1967). Such images that make viewers judge on appearance should be avoided, as should unflattering speech (Pryluck 1988). Nichols (1991) argued that while "A long shot ... can suggest restraint or respect ... close shots might seem intrusive or distracting, perhaps morally suspect" (p. 94). Winston (1988b) contemplated the tradition of presenting people as victims with the purpose of improving their situation. Bruzzi (2000) quoted from her interview with Chris Terrill: "Our stock in trade [in documentaries] has to be honesty..." (p. 90). Bruzzi discussed honesty with respect to representation, of which the representation of the participant is a part. Bruzzi also discussed the violation of documentary 'rules' such as using a location not associated with the participant and thus linking participants to

## Participatory spaces

locations that might not be relevant to them.

Pryluck (1988) also observed that the strength of direct cinema, the unique people appearing in it refracted through the personality of the filmmaker, is “vitiating” (p. 265) when the filmmaker imposes her own personality in the film. In view of the collaboration between filmmaker and participant in direct cinema, ideas about artistic control and self expression that were relevant to “old-style documentaries” have become “inappropriate” (p. 265). For Nichols (1991) what counts is to let participants speak for themselves “uncontained, unembalmed” (p. 228) instead of representing them, including explanation, description, or interpretation in ways that matter little to those involved; any “totalizing explanation” (p. 241) should be avoided.

At the heart of considerations of ethics lie issues of purpose (Winston 1988a). What does the filmmaker want, what are her intentions? Katz and Milstein Katz (1988), considering autobiographical filmmaking, were suspicious of filmmakers who have no intention to contribute socially and are only concerned about their own personal, financial benefit. An important motive in general is the public’s right to know, but in autobiographical film, this motive is not self-evident as washing one’s dirty linen in public is not always appreciated, according to Katz and Milstein Katz. But “Lacking the motive, they seem suspect. To many, they seem self-indulgent and manipulative: un-ethical” (Katz and Milstein Katz 1988, p. 128). Discussing the detached professional gaze, Nichols (1991) observed that it finds itself “at the boundaries of the ethical” (p. 87), presumably relying on the public’s right to know in a detached, ‘objective’ manner. However, this is “hardly defensible if intervention might have saved a life” (Nichols 1991, p. 87).

The possible clash between considerations of the film and considerations of the participant is also addressed: for filmmakers, apart from being *unable* to explain fully what it is they want exactly (see my discussion on informing the participant in the previous section), it is also tricky, as they run the risk of being sent away (Gilbert 1988; Rosenthal 1988b). Their agenda needs to remain concealed somewhat to safeguard their plans. Nichols (1991) described a documentary filmmaker’s professional stance as demanding a certain distance to the reality she is making a film about: “Their loyalty remains divided: between making representations and taking on the issue

represented” (p. 186). Apart from any involvement with or concern for the participant, the filmmaker’s professionalism hence demands that she not be carried away by the subject matter of the film, but also focuses on turning this into a good film.

Nichols (1991) linked ethics to ideology. In his documentary theory, Nichols distinguished between four modes of representation. Each mode brings its own moral issues into play.<sup>13</sup> In the expository mode there is the moral issue of voice: How the text speaks, what this means for the one spoken for (the subject or participant) as well as for the audience. In the observational mode questions of intrusion and the consequences of being caught on film are more prevalent. In the interactive mode there are moral questions of (the negotiation over) the limits of participation and the tactics for including people in an interactive way, including in interviews. And in the reflexive mode the moral issue focuses on how to represent people in two distinctive ways: as part of the story of the film and as element in the construction of the film, for consideration for the audience. The latter increases the risk of manipulation of people for the sake of showing the film’s construct (Nichols 1991).

Although Nichols (1991) chose another perspective to discuss ethics, he taps into similar moral issues as mentioned by others, issues which arise in all modes and which he discussed in later work as well (see Nichols 1993): representation, intention of the filmmaker, interpretation, authority, rights and legitimacy of the filmmaker, the audience’s right to know, privacy and individual rights, consequences and damage to the participant, voluntarism and informed consent, (in)equality, and the agenda of the filmmaker and the participant.

So when it comes to moral issues in documentary filmmaking, scholars discussed many. Appendix 1, Table A1.1 (p. 253) includes an overview of the moral issues derived from the literature, which I subsequently used to design a survey, discussed in the next two chapters. This table includes notions derived from the literature and the interviews with Dutch documentary filmmakers, which I will discuss below (see p. 49). Analysing both, I have gathered issues that were mentioned in relation to ethics, grouped similar ones and included

---

<sup>13</sup> In his 2001 edition, Nichols distinguished six modes. However, he did not go into the different moral issues these different modes raise here.

## Participatory spaces

either the literary source or the Dutch filmmaker-respondent number, or both if applicable. For instance, as discussed above, scholars discussed the need to inform the participant about what they were getting into, and respondents also mentioned this. So I included the scholars who discussed this and the respondent numbers of those respondents who mentioned it, to give an idea of the sources of these notions. I included both in a single table to present the results concisely. How all these issues might be related and which might be more prominent I investigated through this survey. However, not all notions scholars discussed are moral issues per se. Some notions refer to ways to deal with moral issues. Separately but not completely separable, and I already touched on this, scholars mentioned circumstances that might influence the experience of moral issues. I address these phenomena in the next two sections.

## Ways to prevent or deal with moral issues

“If one is serious about using direct cinema to make valid statements about people, then collaboration should be welcome ... Collaboration fulfils the basic ethical requirement for control of one’s own personality” said Pryluck (1988, pp. 265-266). As this quote illustrates, Pryluck advocated a collaborative approach, in which filmmakers share control over the film with participants, which should facilitate collective understanding and decision making. Winston (1995, 2000) agreed but, discussing other media practices, he also argued that, by engaging with specific communities, media makers might no longer put the truth first. Likewise, engaging with a community might be at odds with a filmmaker’s creative authorial freedom discussed above (see p. 15). Gross (1988) argued that groups should be allowed to speak for themselves; however, he foresaw these groups probably would end up speaking to themselves as well. Becker (1988) called for a redistribution of power and building oppositional communities and organisations. All these solutions may be understood as collaborative in some sense. Linton (1976) had reservations about “*completely* abandoning” (p. 20, emphasis in the original) ones prerogatives as filmmaker and regarded such moral absolutes as dangerous; a filmmaker “must assume *some* degree of responsibility” (p. 21, emphasis in the

original) for her film, especially when “the goodness of the subject” (p. 21) is no matter of course. Pryluck (1988) also advocated provisional consent (for a rough cut) before giving final consent for the film (see page 30). Rather than provisional consent Winston (1995) discussed the option of participants viewing the (edited) material and indicating what they would prefer left out.

Reflexivity is another strategy to deal with ethical concerns mentioned. It has its roots in post-revolutionary Russian filmmaking of the 1920s and is based on the idea that the audience should understand how film works and how it is constructed (Winston 1995). Butchart (2006) approached reflexivity from the perspective of ethics and draws on Alain Badiou’s concept of an ethic of truths. Butchart proposed to abandon philosophical ideas about (the rights of) the ‘other’ and to focus on the same, the situated shared truth: the truth of the situation of filmmaking, which is the visual mode of address. This entails showing the world as it is perceived, through a device, edited in a meaning-creating way, for infinity. Participants would then be better enabled to understand the truth of what they are getting into: you will be filmed by a camera for a film to be assembled from images produced this way and pasted together to tell a story that might last forever. Butchart argued that charges of misrepresentation are “virtually impossible to sustain” (p. 444) when filmmakers practise an ethic of truths and the visual mode of address is disclosed in the film. He proposed three ways to do this: by doubling the address, for instance, by having participants look into the camera or by addressing the power relationship between filmmaker and participant; by making the making of the documentary part of the narrative; and by consistently doing so. Applying such strategies, which might be understood as more or less reflexive, “formally exceeds all moralizing judgment about what the documentary did not represent . . . the only thing that can be seen to have *actually* happened will have happened onscreen: the presence of the camera as it mediates reality and the real” (p. 443, emphasis in the original). Ruby (1988) also defended reflexivity as a solution: “Reflexivity has gotten a bad name. . . . I believe, however, that an intelligently used reflexivity is an essential part of all ethically produced documentaries” (p. 314); “I would extend the argument to all image makers” (p. 317). Nichols (1991) discussed *Shoah* (director Claude Lanzmann, 1985) and *Obedience* (director Stanley Milgram, 1965) and said

## Participatory spaces

that “the filmmakers represent themselves with a particular honesty that allows us to see the process of negotiation that leads to the result they seek. We can make our own assessment of their conduct” (p. 46). Katz and Milstein Katz (1988) stated that autobiographical documentaries are more open and transparent and more reflexive: “We may question the motives behind their actions (...); the actions themselves are ... open to scrutiny. The filmmakers in autobiographical films are on stage. Traditional filmmakers are backstage... We as viewers know that they play both roles” (p. 131). Nichols (1991) discussed the reflexive mode as one mode of representation (see p. 39), the idea being that by showing the making of the documentary film, the interaction between the filmmaker and the participant becomes visible and thus might reveal possible problems. He wondered though what additional moments could deserve a place in the final film. Winston (1995) also discussed reflexivity but sees this as the film giving proof of making a documentary film rather than of any moral standards.

Winston (2000) defended freedom of expression but aligned himself with Pryluck (1988) when he called for serious commitment to ethical behaviour by adopting ethical standards on a voluntary basis, including carefully informing the participant, even if this jeopardizes her contribution: “The aggie should not come first” (p. 161). He argued that wrong behaviour should be shown and punished, as the quote that opens this chapter illustrates. On another level Winston (1988b) opted for extending the protection of private personae in public areas and for assessing the effects of media exposure and exploitation.

Appendix 1, Table A1.2 (p. 257) includes an overview of strategies deemed relevant in the scholarly discourse, and it also includes those mentioned by Dutch filmmakers (see p. 50ff). The third category of notions relevant to this discussion includes the circumstances in which filmmakers experience and deal with moral issues. Below I will discuss the contextual aspects relevant to documentary ethics discussed in the documentary discourse.

## The relevance of context

“Film-makers might undertake a form of ethical risk assessment to determine the extent of the difficulties or dangers involved in recruiting a person to their project” (Winston 2000, p. 158). Winston (2000) mentioned four points for ‘ethical risks’: whether the filmed person is a public or private person; the degree of social bias of the act being filmed; whether the place of filming is public or private; and where and for what audience the film will be screened. These four areas of risk all refer to circumstances rather than to moral issues or strategies: the private versus the public, the content of the film, and the screening circumstances (see also Winston 1988b). Moral issues might occur with respect to any of these and they might affect decisions on how to respond and act. Such considerations of circumstances I discuss here are contextual aspects of moral issues.

A distinction between the public and the private, or public and private personae, upon which I touched above, is acknowledged widely (Gross, Katz, and Ruby 1988b; Katz and Milstein Katz 1988; Nichols 1991; Winston 1988b). Scholars argued that there is a difference between the participant in private roles/spaces and in public roles/spaces (Katz and Milstein Katz 1988; Winston 2000) as well between the less powerful and the more powerful (Pryluck 1988) in the extent to which, for instance, fully informed consent is required. In these cases, the more public/powerful, the less information is required and the less there is a need for consent. Linton (1976) observed that the opposite has often been practised with respect to the right of veto: the rich, the famous, the powerful, “Those who need it the least are the most likely to receive it” (p. 20). Or, as Pryluck (1988) put it, only in rare cases, when people such as queens and pop stars are included, could the veto over what will be included in the film *not* lie solely with the filmmaker. For private personae “a clear, limiting and binding duty of care from filmmakers” (Winston 1988a, p. 33) should apply. This distinction, which relates to the characteristic of documentary film, and specifically of direct cinema, to publish the private, the personal, the invisible, scholars stretch to include various alternatives. Rosenthal (1988b) referred to individuals with higher levels of “intelligence and sophistication” (p. 250); for such people, the duty of care is less demanding and the public’s right

## Participatory spaces

to know outweighs matters of privacy (Rosenthal 1988b; Winston 1988b). Pryluck (1988) advocated that those least able to protect themselves should be protected most by others. And the participants' lack of knowledge about the filmmaking process requires an "additional duty of care" (Winston 1988b, p. 283).

The behaviour or personality of the participant is also an aspect affecting moral considerations. For Winston (2000) misrepresentation is allowed if the audience has a right to know and if participants are "so morally culpable as to no longer warrant the protection that informed consent gives to innocent parties" (p. 149). Winston (2000) argued that in some situations, participants can not only be at fault at what they do, but in addition be so insensitive to their everyday failings that they consent to being filmed, as he observed was the case with public servants in *Titicut Follies* (1967). He concluded that "The participant's deviant lack of civic standards conditions the ethical justifications ... [to] film without permission" (p. 161). In addition, consent is irrelevant when participant exploits the filmmaker (Winston 2000). For people who mislead, "overdisclosure" is acceptable and can be gained by deception and manipulation (Katz and Milstein Katz 1988, p. 125). With respect to the final film consent is not necessary or even not possible to secure when a filmmaker is not in a situation to show the result to a participant (Bakker 2005).<sup>14</sup> This implies that a distance, geographical or otherwise, between filmmaker and participant might also affect the experience of moral issues.

"Cultures other than our own are not the only ones that pose problems for filmmakers and their subjects. Even renditions of cultures and lifestyles we think we know something about are filled with pitfalls for the people involved" (Pryluck 1988). For Nichols (1991), both ethics and politics concern an ensemble of social relationships, which form the texture of a culture. Cultural differences are widely discussed as a relevant aspect affecting the filmmaker-participant cooperation and the moral issues related to it (see also Gross, Katz, and Ruby 1988b; Ruby 1988).

Katz and Milstein Katz (1988) concluded that the issues of disclosure

---

<sup>14</sup> With ongoing developments in interactive media and the Internet though, some obstacles such as geographical distance might be levelled out.

and motive play a different role when filming a family member because of the intimacy between filmmaker and participant and because of the private nature of the relationship. So filming a relative might be of influence on moral issues in documentary filmmaking (see also Winston 2000). In addition, there is a bigger chance of exploitation within the family relationships of autobiographical filmmaking, as feelings of family obligations might override personal judgements (Katz and Milstein Katz 1988; Winston 2000).

In the sideline Katz and Milstein Katz (1988) mentioned other circumstances that might have influence, such as the aesthetics of the film (usually more reflexive in nature in autobiographical films). According to Nichols (1991), moral questions are most manifest in the organization of cinematographic space, which is transferred through the camera gaze. Nichols (1991) divided the camera gaze into several anthropomorphic categories, each with a different “ethical code” (p. 82). The way the filmmaker is looking at the world and the participant conveys her moral stance (see also p. 20). Ruby (1988) wondered where to draw the line between actuality and aesthetic needs.

The goal one has with a film has been mentioned by Pryluck (1988) as an aspect of influence. Winston (1995) acknowledged that the goal of a documentary film can be to expose something, and this can justify the means; the “ethical indefensible” (Winston 2000, p. 125) is defensible and justified when a greater good, such as public knowledge or uncovering criminal acts and corruption, is at stake, specifically when the care or lack thereof is outside the realm of life and death. Ruby (1988) wondered, “Is it ethical to lie to an assumed evil person in order to perform what you regard as a positive act?” (p. 316). Nichols (1991) saw the goal one has with a film as not just relevant to the filmmaker, but also relevant to, for example, the distributor.

Direct cinema means there is less time for reflection on one’s own actions, according to Rosenthal (1988b). Here, time seems to be an aspect that influences how filmmakers deal with moral issues. Implicitly, Winston (2000) also dealt with the influence of the available budget when he said that “the industry tends to make moral behavior an unaffordable luxury” (p. 162). According to Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b), also of influence might be the ideology and competencies of the filmmaker. They acknowledged that the image industry is dominated by white, middle-aged men who seek to reinforce

## Participatory spaces

their own image and destroy alternative world views.

Appendix 1, Table A1.3 (p. 259) gives an overview of the contexts that are deemed relevant in the literature: a range of situations and circumstances might influence specific moral issues.<sup>15</sup> How this works remains to be investigated. However, it seems valid to distinguish moral issues and strategies from the circumstances in which they are experienced or are applied.

Above I have discussed the documentary discourse with respect to ethics and documentary film and filmmaking. I have distinguished between moral issues in making documentary films, ways one might deal with them, and the context in which this might occur. The discourse also addresses, implicitly rather than explicitly, considerations of the documentary participant. Because the participant is central to the discussion of ethics and at the same time rather absent in this discourse, and because she is also one of the focus points in the current project, I will discuss next how the documentary participant is perceived in the discourse.

### On the documentary participant

As discussed above (see p. 27), participants might not see “... that they make easy targets, or during the editorial screenings they become so entranced with their images that they are unable to consider the implications of the persona on the screen” (Pryluck 1988, p. 266).<sup>16</sup> In addition to the discussion on moral issues, ways to deal with them, and contexts deemed relevant, the documentary discourse also addresses aspects of the documentary participant and implicitly rather than explicitly characterizes her as part of the presupposed practice evaluated in the discourse. Because I focus on the filmmaker-participant relationship, because the perception of the other bears on this relationship, and because the participant occupies a place in the

---

<sup>15</sup> Again, this table also includes contexts mentioned by Dutch documentary filmmakers (see p. 50ff).

<sup>16</sup> As mentioned before, the presence of various types of ‘old’ and ‘new’ media in society has grown dramatically since many of the works discussed here have been published. Many people have a video camera, use their phones to film, place images and sounds on Facebook, Twitter, or a blog, and thus express themselves via media to the world outside. This raises questions about individual’s experiences with and involvement in ‘broadcasting’ in old and new ways; questions that go beyond this project.

background in the discourse, I will here briefly discuss how the documentary participant has been discussed and perceived.

Winston (2000) distinguished three categories of participants: those who benefit and never have second thoughts; those who benefit a little but also suffer; and those who just suffer. Winston (1995) mentioned that "... the attitude and sensitivity of the film-maker to the subject and the relationship they establish is the clue to ethical film-making" (p. 240), but an analysis of what that relationship might be like is missing. One concern is the extent to which participants are competent enough to understand what they are getting into. Rosenthal (1988b) wondered "To what extent does the subject realize what is really going on, what the implications and possible consequences of being portrayed on the screen, or of being interviewed, are?" (p. 246). Participants are generally perceived as ignorant on the practice of documentary filmmaking and media in general, as discussed above. Winston (2000) stated that although people in general develop more media awareness, making documentaries remains an unfamiliar activity for most (see also p. 33). He quoted the Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC) code which states that "Many potential contributors will be unfamiliar with broadcasting..." (Winston 2000, p. 137). Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b), based on the essays in their book, drew a similar conclusion and wondered whether "...the interests of the subject must always be sacrificed in the process of image production..." (p. ix). As noted above, participants are considered to not see the implications of their participation. And if they do, participants, with or without a contract, likely are inhibited to withdraw because they "cannot unilaterally abridge the documentarist's right to speak" (Winston 2000, p. 83). Winston (1988a) stated that "It is the case that the majority of documentaries deal with social issues and normally concentrate on people in society who are unable to fend for themselves" (p. 30). On the other hand, they have their own reasons for participating, as Becker (1988) noticed (see p. 34). Some desire media attention, which according to Winston (1988b) raises problems, though what problems remains unclear.

The consensus is that documentary participants have little or nothing to gain from the experience of being in a film (Gross, Katz, and Ruby 1988b; Pryluck 1988), including nothing economically (Rosenthal 1988b), even though

## Participatory spaces

it can be a life-changing experience (Nichols 1991; Winston 2000). About the family that featured in *An American Family* (1973) Pryluck (1988) wondered “can their lives be the same as before they allowed CBS to use them in a film?” (p. 259). Pryluck also quoted the family’s mother, addressing the consequences of their participation in the documentary series for her children: “They may never be able to ... get away from it” (p. 260). Winston (2000) mentioned the “persistent rhetoric of participant empowerment and public guidance where little or no evidence exists to show these actually occur” (p. 153).

To sum up, apart from many questions and concerns about the participant’s well-being and the risks involved in documentary participation, documentary participants are perceived to be unfamiliar with filmmaking and broadcasting, and with their implications; some desire media-attention which is deemed problematic; and in any case there is little to no gain for them in participating.

The scholarly documentary discourse consulted for this research project largely dates back to the late 1970s and 1980s and its core has developed little since. The discourse focuses on the question of which moral issues filmmakers might encounter while making films, specifically with respect to the filmmaker-participant relationship. It suggests a few ways to deal with such issues and it addresses relevant circumstances. The participant is perceived as someone with little knowledge of the process she is engaging in and little access to media production in general. In addition, she will be deployed in the filmmaker’s narrative and will probably be victimized in the process. In any case, there will be little to no gain for her.

In this project I aim to assess the experiences of both filmmakers and participants with moral issues in making documentary films in order to describe a contemporary author documentary filmmaking practice. As a first way to assess the moral issues, strategies, and contexts derived from the literature, and to see if contemporary practices included additional concepts, I interviewed Dutch documentary filmmakers to see what they would have to add. I briefly discuss these interviews next.

## **Practitioners' realities**

To relate the findings from my analysis of the scholarly documentary discourse to the contemporary practice of making documentary films, I interviewed a number of Dutch documentary filmmakers about their experiences with moral issues. What kind of moral issues had they experienced in their work and how had they dealt with these? This first assessment of the practice of making documentary films hence focused on filmmakers because they are, in the filmmaker-participant relationship, the professionals, and I expected ethics to be part of their professionals concerns (apart from private concerns). Scholars mostly discussed ethics in relation to filmmakers' responsibilities rather than to participants' responsibilities. Also filmmakers are available through their public appearances as well as through professional organisations whereas participants function more in the background and are not organized. Hence, within the framework of this research project, filmmakers were the obvious party to turn to at this moment. These interviews served as a kind of preliminary research, a way to explore the topic in a more contemporary environment. Therefore, I will discuss the results briefly, focusing on what these practitioners had to add to the findings so far. Below I will first go into the selection of interviewees and then address the interview analysis and the results.

### Interviewee selection

To assess and possibly complement the results from the scholarly documentary discourse, I invited 20 Dutch author documentary filmmakers to talk about what ethics in documentary filmmaking meant to them. These 20 I selected based on their sex (50% female, 50% male), variations in experiences (some also make fiction films), variations in age, and variation in producers they had worked with. They all had been active as author documentary filmmakers during the past five years and I was familiar with all of them through previous experiences in the documentary field. In the end, 17 filmmakers agreed to be interviewed. I held semi-structured interviews in which I asked three questions. First, I asked them what ethics meant to them

## Participatory spaces

in general. Second I asked them what ethics meant to them with respect to their work. And third, I asked them to give examples of moral issues they had experienced in their work and how they had dealt with these issues. (Contextual aspects were derived from these accounts of filmmakers' experiences as well, but I did not specifically ask about them, unless a question about it arose.) The interviews took place in May, June, and July 2005; they lasted between one and one and a half hours each and were recorded on tape. The analysis, which is similar to the one used for the scholarly discourse, focused on the moral issues, ways to deal with these, and contexts the interviewees mentioned.<sup>17</sup> Appendix 1, Tables A1.1, A1.2, and A1.3 (pp. 253-261) include, apart from the concepts discussed in the literature, the concepts discussed by the interviewees. Below I will briefly describe what the respondents had to add.

## Practitioners' contributions

I analysed the interviews the same way as I analysed the literature: by searching for notions filmmakers mentioned and related to ethics and to experiences of moral issues in their daily practice. The moral issues these filmmakers talked about were comparable to the issues discussed in the literature. There was one striking addition: communication. Scholars mentioned the relationship with participants (see p. 32), but filmmakers expressed their obligation to communicate continuously with their participants to inform them and explain or discuss their choices, as the following excerpts illustrate: "You have to stay in touch the whole time and talk about why your choices and motives are the way they are..." (m01<sup>18</sup>); "Because that is filmmaking, that is why it takes so long to make a good film ... you have to wait, you have to talk a lot, you have to build a rapport..." (m08<sup>19</sup>). One filmmaker discussed how this communication gradually ends after the film is

---

<sup>17</sup> The analysis of these interviews differs from the analysis I performed on the interviews with participants, discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. I analysed these filmmaker interviews just to see what kind of issues they recalled and how they dealt with them; to elicit examples from their own practice. Contrary to the participant case studies, my aim here was not to understand the experience as a whole.

<sup>18</sup> Interview 2 May 2005

<sup>19</sup> Interview 18 May 2005

over:

Afterwards ... if you stay in touch for a while, that you do not suddenly let go of them, that is very important, as regards ethics ... that it phases out, such a relationship ... visit a few times, call once more..." (m14<sup>20</sup>).

Scholars mainly discussed informing the participant in terms of informed consent and as a duty of the filmmaker toward the participant (see above). However, the interviews with Dutch documentary filmmakers included accounts of filmmakers missing opportunities to film when there was, according to them, an agreement on filming relevant events and on the participant informing the filmmaker about such events. Hence, informing can also function in terms of the participant informing the filmmaker.

Respondents mentioned additional circumstances that might be of influence on the experience of moral issues: the effect of a change in the situation with respect to the research period; cinematic 'rules' or patterns (deploying certain cinematic means will have a predictable effect); their crew members; examples set by others and related to the contemporary practice of (documentary) filmmaking; their own experiences and, related to this, their age; other personal aspects such as a filmmaker's own personality, situation, opinion, and safety; the interests of a third party (which is discussed by scholars in terms of the filmmakers' community); the existence of prior relationships (in addition to these being family members, see the discussion in the scholarly discourse), and how they tackled making the film in the first place.

But most strikingly, the respondents mentioned a lot more ways of dealing with moral issues. Some of these ways of dealing with moral issues are active, such as adapting oneself, searching for an alternative, and doing something in return, which can be complementary to paying the participant: "... I always do that. When people invest time in the film, I always try a trip or a present..." (m13<sup>21</sup>). But a reciprocal action can also take place at an immaterial level: "... so I try to enjoy as much as possible the process and to be with people and to have an exceptional time with them, something

---

<sup>20</sup> Interview 9 May 2005

<sup>21</sup> Interview 8 June 2005

## Participatory spaces

everybody benefits from and enjoys” (m07<sup>22</sup>). Other strategies are more passive, like giving up or surrendering to a situation: “... so I have to trust on a camera in an environment I cannot control at all...” (m17<sup>23</sup>). In other cases, filmmakers trivialized the matter: “Just very few people will watch that film and not at all the people you work with; they will zap to soccer on the other channel” (m08, addressing a participant<sup>24</sup>).

The accounts of these respondents about their encounters, as filmmakers, with moral issues suggest that moral issues occur all the time and are dealt with in many different ways. This process is very dynamic. And sometimes issues seem to be beyond solving: “I tried to speak to him but it's unsolvable ... there's nothing I can do about it” (m12<sup>25</sup>). All such strategies are also included in Table A1.2 (see p. 257) and in the survey I designed. Before continuing my research into filmmakers' experiences on a larger scale and discussing this survey, I will make some concluding remarks below.

## Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have discussed the documentary discourse with respect to ethics, including scholarly and practice-based considerations. I have investigated how the subject of ethics is discussed with respect to the filmmaker-participant relationship and what other aspects are deemed relevant. This resulted in three categories: moral issues, which ask for moral reflection; ways to deal with such issues, which I refer to as strategies; and contextual aspects deemed relevant to the experience and to dealing with moral issues, which I will simply refer to as contexts. Filmmaker-respondents confirmed most of the moral issues and contexts discussed in the scholarly literature; however, respondents mentioned many additional strategies and this generated a dynamic picture of the documentary filmmaking practice.

It is not clear, however, how all these concepts relate to each other. What moral issues and strategies do filmmakers experience most? What is the role or effect of contexts? To investigate this further, I conducted an

---

<sup>22</sup> Interview 8 June 2005

<sup>23</sup> Interview 29 June 2005

<sup>24</sup> Interview 18 May 2005

<sup>25</sup> Interview 25 May 2005

international survey. The next two chapters concern this survey. In Chapter 2 I discuss how I turned the concepts I found into a questionnaire. Readers who are not interested in these preparations for the survey but want to know about the results, I refer to Chapter 3 (see p. 69). I will begin the next chapter by addressing the use of questionnaires to investigate ethics, not an open-and-shut case in itself.



## 2

### **On creating a questionnaire**

In this chapter I will discuss my empirical investigation of the perspective of filmmakers on their experience with moral issues in their practice. What moral issues did they experience in their documentary projects; what decisions did they take; and what is the effect of the circumstances in which this happened? I used a survey to investigate this. Some might feel that a proper understanding of the subject matter of this research will not be possible through a survey, and that qualitative research methods, such as interviews, would be a more suitable approach. But quantitative research methods have advantages of their own, one of them being that it allows for a large sample. Also, data collected through quantitative methods allow for specific analyses and for comparison between respondents, due exactly to the quantity (if executed properly). Also, quantitative methods allow for generalizability, for making general statements based on the findings, provided they meet the relevant criteria. Specifically because I wanted to include many filmmakers in my research and go beyond individual experiences, I chose to conduct a survey. Using surveys to investigate ethics or other sensitive topics is not completely new. Below I will discuss the use of questionnaires in research on ethics in other disciplines.

One question that accompanies survey research is the value of the answers: How do you know that respondents 'tell the truth'? Let me be honest: you do not know. You can only try and encourage respondents to answer faithfully by, for instance, providing anonymity or confidentiality, and by trying to convince them that your goal as researcher is genuine and is also in their interest. But then how do you weigh their answers? Do their answers convey 'the truth' or 'facts' as positivists believe (Silverman 2006) or do they convey their ideals, their wishes maybe? In processing the results of the survey, I can only go by the answers respondents have given. In that sense I understand them as 'facts'. But interpreting the meaning of those answers provides an occasion for more reflection. Apart from aspects such as reliability and

## Participatory spaces

generalizability, the results should be understood as reflecting what filmmakers remembered, hoped, or believed they experienced, rather than what they actually experienced. Apart from interpreting the results as facts we should consider them as conveying an idea, or even an ideal to some extent.

Quantitative analyses come with numerous numbers, values, tables, and overviews, not to mention specific criteria, thresholds, and limits. It is not necessary to know and understand all of these to follow the argument I am making. To accommodate reading this thesis for those less familiar with quantitative methods, in this and in the next chapter I focus on what the reader needs to know to understand the argument. To facilitate this, I included most of the additional and ‘technical’ information for this chapter in Appendix 2 (see p. 263). I will refer to it where necessary, but the reader should be able to understand the argument without consulting the appendix. To make reading this chapter more comfortable I will mention some necessary numbers in footnotes, so they are easy to find but also easy to skip if desired. I will start with a brief description of the development of the questionnaire used for this research, including the pilot study (see p. 64). The survey itself, the various analyses I conducted, and the results I discuss in the next chapter (see p. 69). But let me first discuss the design and development of the questionnaire.

### **Preparing the survey**

In this section I will briefly discuss the preparation of the survey by addressing the research questions it needed to answer, the sample, and designing and testing of the questionnaire, including the pilot version. For a more elaborate account of the process of creating and testing this questionnaire, I refer to Appendix 2.1 (p. 263).

#### Looking over the fence: using surveys to research ethics

At face value it might seem odd or far-fetched to investigate ethics through a survey. Ethics and morality might be viewed not only as sensitive subject matter but also as something too complex to measure via a ‘clinical’

questionnaire.<sup>26</sup> But surveys and questionnaires have been used extensively in ethics research in other fields, including research about sensitive topics, and with reliable results. Yarhouse and DeVries (2000) investigated the ethical beliefs of psychologists by adapting an existing questionnaire. Dunn et al. (2008) used the American Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)<sup>27</sup> to ask students about unintentional injury, violence, suicide attempts, smoking, drug and alcohol use, sexual behaviour, weight, and physical activities. This questionnaire includes questions such as “During the past 30 days, how many times did you drive a car or other vehicle when you had been drinking alcohol?”; “During the past 12 months, how many times did you actually attempt suicide?”; and “During the past 30 days, on how many days did you have 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row, that is, within a couple of hours?”.<sup>28</sup> In their survey of alcohol use and sexual behaviour among university students Walsh and Braithwaite (2008) used similar questions.<sup>29</sup>

Brener et al. (2002) examined the validity of the 1999 above mentioned YRBS and assessed that overall it was reliable. May and Klonsky (2010) found that the validity of this measure was sufficient with respect to the suicide questions it contained. Osman et al. (2005) tested the Inventory of Suicide Orientation-30 (King and Kowalchuk 1994), and Muehlenkamp et al. (2005) tested the Positive And Negative Suicide Ideation (PANSI, Osman et al. 1998); both were found reliable. Priebe, Bäckström, and Ainsaar (2010) found that participants who completed their questionnaire - sexually abused and sexually inexperienced respondents who answered questions about sexuality and sexual abuse - moreover did not feel uncomfortable doing so, at least not immediately after. These examples illustrate that it is feasible to investigate sensitive topics via questionnaires. So in my view there is no a priori reason to abandon the idea of using a survey to measure experiences with moral issues.

---

<sup>26</sup> Some of the respondents to my questionnaire certainly thought it was an inappropriate method: “The idea that this form of objective questionnaire can yield anything of intellectual value is also a searing indictment of academic ethics” (respondent 06-094, personal communication 14 January 2008).

<sup>27</sup> See [www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/yrbs/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/yrbs/index.htm)

<sup>28</sup> Questions taken from the 2011 version, available on [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/yrbs/pdf/questionnaire/2011\\_hs\\_questionnaire.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/yrbs/pdf/questionnaire/2011_hs_questionnaire.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> To counter the effect of socially desirable answers given by respondents, they relied on the unmatched-count-technique (UCT). Previous research suggests this is “an advantageous self-reporting technique for sensitive items” (Walsh and Braithwaite 2008, p. 54).

## Participatory spaces

I will discuss what questions this survey should answer next.

### Research questions: experiences and patterns

The survey focused on the moral issues filmmakers experienced, the strategies they chose, and the context in which this happened. Initially I planned to focus on the way filmmakers reason about moral issues as well as on the decisions they take. However, as the development of the questionnaire progressed, it turned out this would be hard to capture in a new, to-be-developed questionnaire, given the time it would take to test and develop such measurements (see Appendix 2.1.1, p. 263 for a more detailed account of the construction of the questionnaire and the various sections I developed).

Although the topic of ethics in documentary filmmaking causes lively debates among filmmakers and audiences, as I have argued in Chapter 1, very little is known about the actual experience of moral issues in documentary filmmaking. It is not clear which issues are salient and which issues are less important or less present. To better understand what ‘ethics in documentary filmmaking’ is about, it seems useful to know more about which issues are more prominent or of greater concern, and which are less so. So I decided to focus on the experience of moral issues rather than on reasoning about them at this point. Therefore, the first research question is:

1. What moral issues do filmmakers experience in their everyday practice?

The filmmakers I interviewed mentioned a variety of ways to deal with moral issues (see Chapter 1, p. 51), with which they complemented scholarly considerations of how to deal with or prevent moral issues. It makes sense therefore to ask the same question about such strategies:

2. What strategies do filmmakers choose to deal with moral issues in their everyday practice?

Understanding the experience of single moral issues and strategies is only a first step in understanding the perspective of filmmakers. Investigating how the experiences of moral issues and strategies to deal with them relate and what patterns can be discerned in these experiences might help us further understand, and so the third research question is:

3. Are any patterns discernible in filmmakers' experiences of moral issues and strategies in their everyday practice?

Apart from what patterns filmmakers experience, it will also make sense to investigate the extent to which they experience these specific patterns, as that allows us to understand which patterns are more salient in filmmakers' experiences. So the fourth research question is:

4. What patterns are most salient in filmmakers' experiences?

Considering the definition of a community of practice of author documentary filmmakers (see Chapter 1, p. 15), it seems worthwhile to investigate how much of a community – with shared values and ideas – is discernible in my sample. To investigate this, I will include considerations of the differences in respondents' answers in terms of the standard deviations of scores.<sup>30</sup> I would also like to know what the effect of a variety of circumstances is on the experience of moral issues. Hence the final research question is:

5. To what extent can contextual variables predict the experience of specific patterns in author documentary filmmaking?

Answering these five questions will give some understanding of how documentary filmmakers experience moral issues and strategies in their everyday practice, not only as separate issues or strategies but also in relation to each other. Answers to these questions will also provide some understanding of the effect of circumstances. Before discussing how I devised and tested the questionnaire, I will first discuss the sample I used for my survey: the filmmakers I invited to share their experiences, and where I found them.

## Sample

As I argue that I study the ethics of author documentary filmmaking (see Chapter 1, p. 15), the sample for this research project had to consist of author

---

<sup>30</sup> For those not familiar with standard deviation: the standard deviation is a measure for the dispersion of scores. In a sample with a normal distribution (most scores around the mean score and a gradual even descent toward lower and higher scores, shaped like a bell), 68.2% of the scores are within the range of the mean score plus and minus once the standard deviation; 95.4% of the scores are within the range of the mean plus and minus twice the standard deviation. So if the mean is 3 and the standard deviation 1, 68.2% of the scores are between 2 and 4 and 95.4% of the scores are between 1 and 5.

## Participatory spaces

documentary filmmakers. And although I attempted at a definition of author documentary filmmaking, I also argue it does not make much sense to regard certain filmmakers as author documentary filmmakers by definition, for similar reasons Bazin (1957) used to criticize author theory (see p. 17). Filmmakers do many things and not all of these belong to the practice of author documentary filmmaking. They make television programmes, commissioned films, for instance, for companies and organisations, tv-ads as well as fictional work such as feature films and tv-dramas. So I decided to turn to the platforms par excellence for author documentary films: documentary film festivals. For my sample I selected documentary filmmakers who had a film shown at one or more of the following documentary film festivals in 2006: IDFA (Amsterdam, the Netherlands), Shadow Festival (Amsterdam, the Netherlands), Encounters (Cape Town, South Africa), Silverdocs (Silver Spring, United States of America), DokFestival (Leipzig, Germany), Visions du Réel (Nyon, France), Cinéma du Réel (Paris, France), É Tudo Verdade (São Paulo/Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), Docfest (Sheffield, United Kingdom), TIDF (Taipei, Taiwan), Docaviv (Tel Aviv, Israel), and Hot Docs (Toronto, Canada). I selected these festivals because of their credentials as important international documentary film festivals as well as their global dispersion.

This means I used a form of non-random sampling: filmmakers were not selected by chance and not every filmmaker had an equal chance of being selected (Deacon et al. 1999). My way of sampling can best be described as convenience sampling (Deacon et al.). This sampling method entails a risk of bias because filmmakers who did not have a film in the 2006 edition of one of the above mentioned festivals were excluded from the sample by definition. Also, festivals select films, and such selections adhere to certain criteria deemed relevant within the community (or industry). This selection causes further bias. Experimental documentary films will probably be underrepresented as these festivals tend to programme for a general audience, and experimental films usually draw a specific audience and occupy a niche in the festival programmes. Therefore my sample might be dominated by filmmakers with authored yet relatively mainstream documentary films.

I used the above mentioned festivals' catalogues to collect the names of filmmakers who had their film screened at one or more of the 2006 editions. I

eliminated filmmakers connected to a retrospective, such as the student filmmakers included in the Australian Film Television and Radio School retrospective at IDFA, because otherwise student filmmakers would become overrepresented. I also took from the list those who had passed away, and a few people who were credited as directors but were not filmmakers, such as the Chinese citizens who were given cameras and filmed their first local elections for the film *China Villagers Documentary Project* (2006). A few filmmakers had been involved in the preliminary stages of this research project, such as the filmmaker interviews or other, informal conversations about it; I eliminated them from participation because they knew more about the project than others, which might affect their answers. Finally I eliminated filmmakers who had obviously not worked with participants (but, for example, made animated documentaries or documentaries based on found footage and/or archive material). I ended up with a sample of 1033 documentary filmmakers. I used part of this sample for a pilot study. Below I will discuss the development of the questionnaire up to the pilot version.

#### Devising and testing the questionnaire: from scratch to pilot version

The initial draft of my questionnaire included seven sections, intended to measure the following: A. the recognition of moral issues; B. project characteristics; C. the experience of moral issues (in the project described in section B); D. the experience of strategies (in that same project); E. Personal and production circumstances; F. moral reasoning of the respondent (the Ethical Position Questionnaire (EPQ), Forsyth 1980; more on this measure on p. 62ff); and G. filmmaker characteristics. The order of the sections is mainly based on an effort to guide the respondents through it in a way that makes sense. Appendix 2.1.3 (p. 268) includes the first draft of the questionnaire.

In this initial design I used vignettes (small scenarios) to measure the extent to which filmmakers recognize moral issues as well as how they reason about them. I also tried to measure the effect of contextual aspects through the vignettes by adding circumstances to the scenarios followed by additional questions. However, in discussions with filmmakers who were invited to test and comment on the questionnaire, it soon became clear that filmmakers

## Participatory spaces

found it very difficult to respond to somewhat simplified representations of often complex realities. They often started their responses with “That depends...”. Since it would take too much time to develop the vignettes in a way that suited respondents, I decided to adapt the questionnaire and focus on the experience of moral issues rather than the recognition of moral issues. As a result, what filmmakers understand as moral issues I left to their discretion. The interpretation of the moral issues is theirs. It might be that some filmmakers understand issues in a different way than others, or than me. For example, the same situation or event might be interpreted by one filmmaker as humiliating, while another thinks it is not. However, very few respondents queried the issues presented to them as moral issues.

To measure the experience of moral issues and strategies gleaned from the literature and interviews (discussed in Chapter 1), I had to translate such concepts to questions for the survey. In the course of the process and based on various comments, I chose to work with statements rather than questions, to try and prevent respondents from feeling they had to account for themselves. For example, the moral issue of manipulation I translated into the statement “I have manipulated the participant to get or avoid a certain scene”. Paying the participant I turned into the statement “I gave the participant some money or a gift” (to extend payment and include alternatives to giving money). I provided a semantic bipolar 0-6 scale, ranging from ‘never’ to ‘all the time’, for respondents to indicate to what extent they had experienced the moral issues and strategies under investigation. I also included statements addressing opinions about the profession of documentary filmmaking, such as “Participants should always tell directors why they want to participate.”

In addition, I included the EPQ because I wanted to include a more general measure for morality, to be able to understand how respondents thought about ethics and morals in general, apart from their work and their everyday practice. As discussed in Chapter 1, morals represent norms based on underlying principles (see p. 11ff). Forsyth (1980) assessed moral ideologies by taking into account on the one hand the extent to which respondents reject or accept universal moral rules (idealism) and on the other hand the extent to which respondents assume that by taking the right action, a good outcome is always possible (relativism). Dichotomizing (high/low score) and crossing the

scores on these two scales results in four classifications: absolutists (high on idealism and low on relativism), exceptionist (low on idealism and low on relativism), situationist (high on idealism and high on relativism), and subjectivist (low on idealism and high on relativism). These four classifications are consistent with four major philosophical schools of thought, including deontology, teleology, and scepticism perspectives (Forsyth 1980; Forsyth, O'Boyle, Jr., and McDaniel 2008).

I had several reasons to choose the EPQ rather than another measure: the EPQ is not concerned with moral development (such as measures based on Kohlberg's theory on moral development, see a.o. Puka 2002; Rest et al. 1999) but rather with ideologies that govern people's thinking and judging. The EPQ has been widely used among different (sub)cultures. A meta-analysis indicates that the EPQ should be used with caution particularly when translated and administered to non-US cultures (Forsyth, O'Boyle, Jr., and McDaniel 2008). On the other hand, predictions based on the Ethics Position Theory and other studies of cross-cultural differences were mostly confirmed in this meta-analysis, despite its limitations. In addition, the EPQ is fairly short and simple, consisting of 20 statements and a scale for answering. Given these considerations, the EPQ seemed the best option. (A more extensive discussion of my evaluation of this measure and some alternatives is included in Appendix 2.1.2, p. 265).

As the questionnaire was intended for international distribution, I designed it in English. The expected group of author documentary filmmakers to complete the questionnaire would contain non-native speakers, so my intention was to phrase simple, straight-forward questions and statements, using basic vocabulary. Appendix 2.1.4 (p. 291) gives a more detailed account of the various steps in developing the questionnaire, through testing and adapting it. After five rounds of testing and discussing the questionnaire with film students and filmmakers followed by the necessary adaptations, the version I intended to use for a pilot still consisted of seven sections. Table 2.1 shows the various sections and their content. I instructed respondents to answer the questions for one specific participant in their latest completed independent documentary film, so the first section focused on a description of that project and on one participant in it. (I used the term 'independent project'

Table 2.1 Construction of the pilot questionnaire

Section: title	Content
Section A: Your latest project	Questions about production circumstances and about the participant
Section B: About your documentary film experiences	Questions about the experience of moral issues
Section C: About decision you have taken	Questions about the choice of specific strategies, with the request to elaborate on three specific answers
Section D: About influences on your decisions	Questions about specific influences on decisions
Section E: About your profession	Questions about the profession of documentary filmmaking, inspired by the EPQ
Section F: About ethics in general	The Ethical Position Questionnaire
Section G: About your personal situation	Questions about the filmmaker

because I assumed that the term ‘author documentary’ might not be meaningful to respondents and within the industry I think ‘independent’ is the most suitable alternative or equivalent. I will come back to this in the discussion at the end of this thesis (see p. 245). The next three sections deal with experiences in that project and with that specific participant; the final three sections deal with the profession of documentary filmmaking in general, ethics in general, and with the filmmaker/respondent herself.

I conducted the pilot not only to see how respondents might react to the questionnaire itself, but also to test the way I was planning to send it, including the accompanying reminders. Below I will discuss the pilot study, focusing on the changes I implemented as a result of it.

### **Pilot study**

The pilot was primarily aimed at testing the questions as well as testing the survey logistics. One explicit goal was to find out which questions did and did not work, with the aim of shortening the questionnaire, as its length, 170

questions, was of some concern. Below, I will address the main procedures and findings. A detailed account of the pilot study is available in Appendix 2.2 (p. 308).

### Pilot sample and logistics

The pilot study included a subsample of 99 respondents from the overall sample (see p. 59ff). To select these respondents and to make sure the respondents in the subsample mirrored the geographical dispersion of the total sample, I first divided the sample into nine groups representing nine regions, according to the country of production of the films (Africa, Australia and New Zealand, Asia, Europe, Central America, the Middle East, North America, Russia/former USSR, and South America). If two or more countries were listed as country of production, I categorized the film under the one most likely to be underrepresented. For the pilot sample, from each group, a random 10% was selected.<sup>31</sup> For smaller groups the number was rounded down, for larger groups it was rounded up. This resulted in a pilot group of 100 respondents. For one director I could not find any contact details, so I deleted this director from the sample, leaving 99 respondents in the pilot group. I intended to use e-mail as a means of communication with the respondents. E-mail is generally a reliable way of communicating. Apart from that, it's fast, cheap, and accessible. And it is used globally, which makes it easy to contact filmmakers around the world. If I had not found a direct e-mail address of the filmmaker, I used contact details of others involved in the film: a co-director, a producer or production company, a distributor, or a sales agent, and asked to forward my request and materials to the filmmaker.

The pilot version of the questionnaire was designed as an Excel file, to be sent as an attachment. But first, to introduce myself and the survey, I sent each filmmaker a personalized announcement, indicating she would receive a questionnaire on documentary filmmaking and ethics within a few days, and I attached additional information. Two days later, I sent the questionnaire, accompanied by a cover letter.

---

<sup>31</sup> I used a standard function in Excel to make the random selection of filmmakers for the pilot.

## Participatory spaces

Filmmakers who did not respond in some way received a short reminder a week after I had sent the questionnaire. I sent another reminder two weeks later if necessary and a final reminder another 4 weeks after that. Upon return of the completed questionnaire, I sent a thank-you-note. All this standard communication I included in Appendix 2.2.1 (p. 308). Filmmakers who responded and asked questions or shared comments received personal responses in return. If necessary, we agreed on separate individual deadlines. This way, I tried to make the communication and cooperation as personal as possible, hoping to maximize the response.

## Response to the pilot

Of the 99 respondents in the pilot group, just 21 completed and returned the pilot questionnaire (21.21%). Another 34 responded in some way but did not return the completed questionnaire, and an additional 7 explicitly refused to complete the questionnaire. This was due to a lack of time or a language barrier. The total response rate including all these responses was 62.00%. As the number of completed questionnaires was too small for a meaningful analysis of patterns in these data, I only conducted descriptive analyses, which I used for further adaptation of the questionnaire. I refer to Appendix 2.2.3 (p. 316) for these descriptive analyses and the subsequent changes to the questionnaire. The resulting version was the questionnaire that I used for the survey discussed in Chapter 3 (p. 69).

In addition to changes to the questionnaire, I changed some of the logistics. Because some respondents had trouble working with the electronic Excel file, I also created a PDF version, which respondents could print, complete, and return free of charge. I also offered to send a hard copy to any address provided. In addition, the pilot taught me that that the majority of the respondents were filmmakers I had contacted directly. In cases where I had sent the questionnaire and accompanying letter to, for example, a producer, it was not always clear what happened with it. Some dutifully informed me they had forwarded it, some never responded. Given the amount of time it took to communicate with these 'secondary' contacts and the number of successful results, it made sense to focus on those filmmakers for whom I had a direct,

personal e-mail address, whether it was a private or a company address. I tried once more to find direct e-mail addresses of the filmmakers for whom I initially only had a secondary contact. This resulted in a list of 659 filmmakers I could contact directly. After this update of my sample and the creation of the final questionnaire it was time for 'the real thing'. In the next chapter I will discuss the survey and the analysis of the data it provided.



### 3

## **The aggie will come first indeed<sup>32</sup>**

Filmmakers' perspective on ethics - a survey

If you are a documentary filmmaker you run into that quite a lot. With each subject matter I weigh: how far do I go, what are the rules of the game?<sup>33</sup>

In this chapter I will discuss the survey logistics and the analysis. I have used statistical methods to analyse the data, but here I will discuss the results, with a focus on what you need to know to understand my argument. Additional information about the survey analysis, such as tables, calculations, and additional tests, is included in Appendix 3 (p. 333). I will refer to the appendix more specifically when relevant. The questionnaire itself is included in Appendix 3.1 (p. 333). Before discussing the survey results, I will first address the sample, the logistics, and the response to the survey.

### **Sample, logistics, and response**

My original sample consisted of 1033 documentary filmmakers and for the pilot study I used 10% of this sample (see Chapter 2, p. 59ff). For the remaining 90% I updated the contact details I had (see p. 67), to be able to contact as many as possible directly. This resulted in a sample of 659 documentary filmmakers to address the survey to. The logistics of the survey were the same as those of the pilot study with respect to the announcement, reminders, and personal communication (see p. 65). Examples of the standard communication are included in Appendix 3.2 (p. 357). As discussed above, I had decided to also create a PDF version. So I sent all filmmakers two versions

---

<sup>32</sup> Documentary participant Nanook to filmmaker Robert Flaherty. See Erik Barnouw, *Documentary. A history of the non-fiction film*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 36.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with Dutch documentary filmmaker m05, 25 May 2005

## Participatory spaces

of the questionnaire: one as an Excel file they could save, complete and return via e-mail, and one as a PDF file they could print, complete with a pen or pencil and return to a business reply service free of charge. (This version is included in the appendix.) I also offered to send a hard copy to any address of their choice if they so desired. I sent and collected the questionnaires between October 2007 and March 2008.<sup>34</sup> I sent personal responses to anyone who responded with a question or a comment. I also agreed to individual deadlines and facilitated answering in different ways. For example, a few respondents I met during a film festival and they completed the questionnaire there in my presence.

Of the 659 respondents in the sample, 166 completed and returned the questionnaire (25.19%). Another 86 (13.05%) responded in some way but did not return the completed questionnaire, and an additional 65 (9.86%) explicitly refused to complete the questionnaire. Some simply were too busy and did not have time; some said their knowledge of English was not sufficient to answer the questions; and some had difficulties working with the electronic files and were, I assume, discouraged. Others disagreed with my method and pointed out that something as complex as ethics in documentary filmmaking cannot be investigated properly with a questionnaire (see Chapter 2, p. 57, note 26). And a few said they just never completed questionnaires anyhow. The total response rate including these responses was 48.10%.

Seven respondents had over 20% missing values. They had not or not correctly responded to at least one whole section of the questionnaire. I decided to exclude these from the analysis. Furthermore, in one case the questionnaire was completed by the researcher and respondent together in quite chaotic circumstances with lots of distractions. Ultimately, I decided to delete this questionnaire from further analysis as well. In one case it appeared that the questionnaire was completed not by the filmmaker it was intended for but by a colleague. This questionnaire was not added to the data as it was not a response from the filmmaker.

The result was a data file with 158 valid cases, 59 female and 99 male respondents, with an average age of 40.43 years (standard deviation 10.6

---

<sup>34</sup> A breakdown of the university's e-mail system in October 2007 caused some delay in sending and collecting the questionnaires.

years). Of these filmmakers, 79 had finished film school, 79 had not. The sample included 93 respondents from Europe, 28 from North America, 10 from Asia, 7 from the Middle East, 7 from South America, 4 from Africa, 5 from Russia/former USSR, 3 from Australia and New Zealand, and 1 from Central America. Appendix 3.3 (see p. 364) contains details on data preparation, such as dealing with missing values.

Below I start my discussion of the survey analysis with some descriptive statistics of the individual variables measuring the experiences that respondents reported through the survey. Any details relevant to statistical calculations, such as correlation coefficients and levels of significance, I will mention in footnotes in order to prevent unnecessary interference with reading this section, while at the same time making them available to those interested.

### **Survey analysis**

The first and second research questions phrased in the previous chapter (see p. 58) relate to the experience of individual moral issues and strategies respectively. To discuss these, I will first look at the descriptive statistics and discuss what moral issues and strategies occurred least and most often, i.e., which have higher and lower mean scores. Research questions 3 and 4, which concern the patterns in the survey data rather than individual scores (see p. 59), I will address in the next section, starting on p. 81. Research question 5, concerning the influence of contextual aspects, I discuss at the end of this chapter. These variables play a different role as they are expected to affect the experience of moral issues and strategies (see Chapter 1, p. 43). Second, I will discuss which moral issues and strategies respondents disagreed least and most on, i.e., which have higher and lower standard deviations, which answers part of research question 5 (see p. 59); it gives a first indication of the dispersion of the data and of the issues and strategies respondents agree and disagree on in their experience.

## Participatory spaces

### Experiences at face value

The questionnaire investigated the experience of moral issues and the choices for strategies by asking respondents to indicate to what extent they had experienced specific moral issues as well as specific strategies, with reference to one participant of their choice in their most recently finished project at the time (October 2007-March 2008). The answers were measured on a 0-6 scale, with 0 indicating never/not at all and 6 indicating all the time/completely (See the previous chapter and its appendices for a discussion of the development of the questionnaire). A complete list of moral issues ordered by mean score is included in Appendix 3.4, Table A3.1 (p. 365). A complete list of strategies ordered by mean score is included in Appendix 3.4, Table A3.2 (p. 367). Here I will discuss the ones with the higher and lower means only. Table 3.1 shows these moral issues and strategies.

The highest mean score for moral issues was 4.96 and the lowest 0.17 on the 0-6 scale, and I included here the moral issues with a mean score over 4 and under 0.7, which are rather random criteria to limit the number of issues displayed here (another eight issues scored a mean score under 1). The moral issues of trust, equality, carefulness, privacy, interpretation and communication scored means between 4 and 5. Respondents reported experiencing these issues as stated in the questionnaire most. There is a moderate but significant correlation between gaining the participant's trust and getting in touch with her during and after making the film.<sup>35</sup> There is a somewhat smaller but still significant correlation between gaining the trust and the participant's agreement on the filmmaker's interpretation.<sup>36</sup> There are smaller correlations as well between some of the other issues mentioned.<sup>37</sup> This suggests that communication might be an important element in gaining a participant's trust. Trust and agreement on interpretation might go together, and trust might be both a prerequisite and a consequence of agreement on

---

<sup>35</sup>  $r_s = .500$ ,  $p < .001$

<sup>36</sup>  $r_s = .446$ ,  $p < .001$

<sup>37</sup> E.g., correlation between trust and carefulness  $r_s = .359$ ,  $p < .001$ , correlation between privacy and equality  $r_s = .297$ ,  $p < .001$ , correlation between interpretation and communication  $r_s = .293$ ,  $p < .001$ , correlation between carefulness and communication  $r_s = .272$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Table 3.1 Higher and lower mean scores for moral issues and strategies

Moral issues	Mean	SD
I have gained the trust of the participant.	4.96	1.31
I have approached the participant as an equal.	4.82	1.73
I've been very careful with the participant.	4.75	1.52
I respected the privacy of the participant.	4.65	1.99
The participant agreed with me about how I interpreted her/his story.	4.61	1.65
Higher mean scores		
I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.	4.59	1.63
I have been completely honest to the participant.	4.43	2.00
I have been completely open toward the participant about my agenda.	4.40	1.89
I informed the participant completely about what we were doing.	4.38	1.89
The participant got in touch with me during and after making the film.	4.06	1.98
Lower mean scores		
The participant has disgraced me.	0.17	0.50
I have disgraced the participant.	0.25	0.65
Being in my film damaged the participant.	0.34	0.82
I misrepresented the participant.	0.39	0.92
The participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.	0.57	1.05
The participant misrepresented her/himself to me.	0.63	1.18
The participant deliberately took the role of a victim.	0.64	1.22
I deliberately showed the participant as a victim	0.66	1.30
Strategies		
Higher mean scores		
I was aware that ethical problems could arise and I prevented this as much as possible.	3.42	2.10
I adapted easily to solve an ethical issue.	3.30	2.04
I searched for an alternative for a scene I couldn't film.	2.91	2.12
I did something in return for the participant.	2.81	2.17
I approached making this documentary as a joint enterprise I undertook with the participant.	2.70	2.25

Table 3.1 (continued)

Strategies	Mean	SD
An ethical problem arose, but I didn't know how to solve it and I just let it go.	0.58	1.20
Lower mean scores		
I didn't feel like solving an ethic issue, I pushed it away.	0.59	1.23
I lost control over a situation and decided to surrender.	0.72	1.32
I changed something when, after viewing a rough cut, the participant insisted.	0.73	1.49
I did something I know was morally suspicious.	0.85	1.33

interpretation.

The two moral issues with the lowest mean scores both investigated the moral issue of humiliation, which was thus experienced least often according to the respondents. Other low scoring issues are those of (mis)representation and victimization. This suggests respondents respected these concepts, which are often associated with basic individual rights (see Chapter 1, p. 37).

The highest mean score for strategies was 3.42 and the lowest 0.58 on the 0-6 scale, and I included here the strategies with a mean score over 2.5 and under 1. The strategies scoring the highest means were preventing problems, adapting, searching for alternatives, a reciprocal action, and a collaborative approach. These strategies indicate a filmmaker aimed at controlling the situation, solving problems, and aimed toward the participant, not turning away from her. There are only minor correlations between some of these strategies.<sup>38</sup> This indicates that they are not related strongly and are experienced rather independently of each other. So although it seems that respondents in general tried to solve problems and co-operate with the participant, they did so in different ways, combining different strategies to different extents.

The two lowest scoring strategies indicate a passive attitude toward solving moral issues: letting it go and pushing it away. Next is losing control, a

<sup>38</sup> Correlation between searching alternative and reciprocal action  $r_s=.246$ ,  $p<.001$ , correlation between collaborative approach and reciprocal action  $r_s=.198$ ,  $p<.05$ , correlation between adapting and reciprocal action  $r_s=.181$ ,  $p<.05$ .

form of giving in. Also, compromise, taking a risk, and triviality are represented among the lower scoring strategies. It turns out that very different kinds of strategy scored lower means.

Noteworthy is that the strategy to change something when the participant insisted scored a lower mean (0.78) and the strategy to adapt easily to solve a moral issue scored a relatively high mean (3.30), as did the collaborative approach (2.70).<sup>39</sup> These three strategies do not correlate. It seems tempting to suggest that changing something the participant disagrees to was not a way for respondents to solve a moral issue, or express a collaborative approach. But this would require a negative correlation. Since there is no such correlation, the occurrence of these strategies happens in different combinations to different extents.

The mean scores on strategies are generally quite low considering I used a scale that ran from 0 to 6. An explanation might be that filmmakers chose many different strategies, to very different extents. Also it is quite possible that filmmakers chose strategies not uncovered in my literature research and interviews earlier on (see Chapter 1, p. 40ff and p. 50ff respectively) and thus not covered in this questionnaire.

On the whole, these first results are not very surprising: respondents seem to try to treat their participant well, be open and honest, and try to somehow make it a positive experience for the participant. Of course there is a possibility that respondents gave socially desirable answers. However, it is much too early for such conclusions and I will dig further into these data to better understand what is going on. To get an idea about the extent to which respondents agreed in the experiences discussed above, I will discuss the standard deviations next.

(Dis)agreement at face value

As a measure of agreement and disagreement among respondents about their experiences of moral issues and strategies I will take the standard deviation. Low standard deviations indicate that respondents generally agreed on the

---

<sup>39</sup> The standard deviations are 1.49; 2.04; and 2.25 respectively.

## Participatory spaces

answers they gave and there is little variance in the scores. High standard deviations point to the opposite: there is much variance in scores and respondents disagree on their answers. A complete list of moral issues sorted by standard deviation is included in Appendix 3.4, Table A3.3 (p. 368). A similar list with strategies sorted by standard deviation is included in Appendix 3.4, Table A3.4 (p. 370). Again, here I will discuss the ones with higher and lower standard deviations only. Table 3.2 shows the moral issues and strategies involved. I included the moral issues with a standard deviation over 2 and under 1 and the strategies with a standard deviation over 2 and under 1.5 respectively (The lowest standard deviation for strategies was 1.203).

The statements about the filmmaker's rights and the audience's rights have the highest standard deviations. Although scholars not always make a distinction between filmmaking and journalism (see Chapter 1, p. 8) I do (see my discussion of author documentary filmmaking, p. 15) and I understand especially the audience's right to know to represent a journalistic perspective on the profession.<sup>40</sup> I have defined author documentary filmmaking as personal artistic expressions of the filmmaker (see Chapter 1, pp. 18-19) and I would expect both these concepts to be less relevant to author documentary filmmaking than to journalism.<sup>41</sup> There is a moderate but significant correlation between these moral issues,<sup>42</sup> which means that filmmakers who scored higher on the first, also scored higher on the second, and vice versa. Apparently, a number of respondents align themselves with journalists while other filmmakers do not.

Noteworthy here is that respondents also differ in the extent to which they informed the participant and used her for their own benefit. Informing the participant is considered an important moral obligation (see Chapter 1, p. 27), exploiting the participant a moral flaw (see Chapter 1, p. 34). In my data these two issues do not correlate, which means the experience of one is not related to the experience of the other. There are minor significant correlations between

---

<sup>40</sup> The filmmaker's rights are aligned with the freedom of collecting news and information; the audience's rights with the right to information.

<sup>41</sup> I included the statement about the audience's right to know because it surfaced in the literature study and in the interviews with Dutch documentary filmmakers. Although it relates to the filmmaker-audience relationship, it also relates to the filmmaker-film relationship, as it concerns ideas about her professional duty as a filmmaker.

<sup>42</sup>  $r_s = .418, p < .001$

Table 3.2 Higher and lower standard deviations for moral issues and strategies

Moral issues	SD	Mean
I have filmed something because I had a right to do so.	2,43	2,76
I have used certain scenes in my film because the audience had a right to know.	2,28	2,78
Higher standard deviations		
I have informed the participant about possible consequences of being in a documentary film.	2,17	3,71
I made sure the participant was looking good in the image I filmed.	2,05	3,20
I have used the presence of the camera to achieve something.	2,00	3,10
I have used the participant for my own benefit.	2,00	1,95
Lower standard deviations		
The participant has disgraced me.	0,50	0,17
I have disgraced the participant.	0,65	0,25
Being in my film damaged the participant.	0,82	0,34
I misrepresented the participant.	0,92	0,39
Strategies	SD	Mean
I approached making this documentary as a joint enterprise I undertook with the participant.	2,25	2,70
I did something in return for the participant.	2,17	2,81
I gave the participant some money or a gift.	2,15	1,79
To find a solution for an ethical problem, I asked the advice of a colleague or expert not included in the project.	2,14	2,36
Higher standard deviations		
I adapted my filming style to prevent problems.	2,13	2,34
I searched for an alternative for a scene I couldn't film.	2,12	2,91
I was aware that ethical problems could arise and I prevented this as much as possible.	2,10	3,42
I have protected the participant against her/himself.	2,06	2,29
I trusted that an ethical problem would solve itself in due time.	2,06	1,98
I adapted easily to solve an ethical issue.	2,04	3,30
I decided to exploit a situation for the film.	2,03	1,63

Table 3.2 (continued)

Strategies		SD	Mean
	An ethical problem arose, but I didn't know how to solve it and I just let it go.	1,20	0,58
Lower	I didn't feel like solving an ethic issue, I pushed it away.	1,23	0,59
standard	I lost control over a situation and decided to surrender.	1,32	0,72
deviations	I did something I know was morally suspicious.	1,33	0,85
	I changed something when, after viewing a rough cut, the participant insisted.	1,49	0,73

the use of the camera to achieve something, the filmmaker's rights, and the use of the participant for one's own benefit.<sup>43</sup> This might mean that the camera is used to benefit the filmmaker on the grounds of her rights as a filmmaker.

The moral issues representing humiliation, which scored the lowest mean score, also scored the lowest standard deviations, followed by the statements about damage and representation. This indicates respondents generally agreed on the moral issues they experienced least.

The strategies that indicate co-operation with and reciprocity toward the participant have the highest standard deviations. These also scored the higher means. This suggests respondents disagree most on collaboration with the participant and reciprocity toward her but at the same time collaborated and acted reciprocal to some extent as well. So in general they did this, but to different extents: some did it very much, some less so. There is a moderate but significant correlation between a collaborative approach and paying the participant, as well as with doing something in return.<sup>44</sup> A preliminary explanation could be that filmmakers to some extent translate their cooperative attitude in paying or giving gifts as well as in doing other things in return. Furthermore, respondents disagreed on being open to alternatives, which seems remarkable considering the aura of unmediated reality

<sup>43</sup> Correlation between abuse of power and filmmaker's right  $r_s=.330$ ,  $p<.001$ , correlation between abuse of power and exploitation  $r_s=.302$ ,  $p<.001$ , correlation between exploitation and filmmaker's right  $r_s=.177$ ,  $p<.05$ .

<sup>44</sup> Correlation between collaborative approach and paying  $r_s=.178$ ,  $p<.05$ , correlation between collaborative approach and reciprocal action  $r_s=.198$ ,  $p<.05$ , correlation between paying and reciprocal action  $r_s=.478$ ,  $p<.001$ .

documentary film still has (Nichols 1991; Winston 1995). However, respondents might have scored low here because they did not have any need for alternatives, so they did not experience this. Apart from the correlation between a collaborative approach and paying, there is a (somewhat smaller) significant correlation between searching for alternatives and adapting one's filming style (which can thus be interpreted as a way to search for alternatives) and between exploiting a situation for the film and trusting a moral issue will solve itself in due time.<sup>45</sup> This might indicate that respondents sometimes exploit a situation without caring for the consequences.

The five strategies with the lowest mean scores also have the lowest standard deviations, indicating the same pattern discussed with respect to the moral issues. Respondents agreed most on strategies that reflect passive attitudes, risk taking, and compromising.

### Summary of the results

I have investigated which moral issues and strategies respondents reportedly experienced most and least often (by looking at the mean scores) and on which respondents agreed most and least (by looking at the standard deviations) in their responses to my questionnaire. Respondents reported that the issues of humiliation, (mis)representation and victimization were experienced least often, and respondents generally agreed in this. Issues of trust, equality, care, privacy, interpretation, informing, and communication were experienced most, or most often.<sup>46</sup> Considering the correlations between these issues, I surmise that communication is an important element in gaining a participant's trust. Trust and agreement on interpretation seem to go hand in hand. Trust might both be a prerequisite and a consequence of agreement on the interpretation of a participant's story. And communication might be way to gain that trust.

The strategies respondents reportedly chose least often were those that indicate a passive or negative attitude toward solving issues: letting go, pushing off, surrendering, not making changes when the participant insisted,

---

<sup>45</sup> Correlation between searching alternatives and adapting one's style  $r_s=.379$ ,  $p<.001$ , correlation between playing off and resolve in due time  $r_s=.325$ ,  $p<.001$

<sup>46</sup> I used either of these two in the scale, depending on the statement involved, see p. 324).

## Participatory spaces

and trivializing. Respondents in general agreed here as well. The low score for changing something when the participant insisted reflects not so much a negative attitude as an unwilling attitude. However, the low score might be a result of respondents rarely experiencing such a situation. More popular strategies were preventing problems, adapting to solve an issue, searching for alternatives, doing something in return and taking a collaborative approach. These are all aimed at preventing or solving problems and indicate an attitude toward the participant.

Respondents reportedly disagree most on two journalistic moral issues: the filmmaker's rights and the audience's right to know. It might be the case that there is a split between respondents with a more journalistic approach to documentary filmmaking and a group with a less (if not non-)journalistic approach. Also, respondents disagreed on informing the participant and exploiting the participant, two recurrent issues in the debate on ethics and documentary filmmaking. One explanation might be that some regard exploitation as something to be avoided while others see it as an unavoidable aspect of making documentary films about people, which would reflect the scholarly discussion on exploitation (see p. 34). With respect to informing, some might feel they informed the participant completely while others might feel it is not even possible to provide complete information about the project from start to finish. Respondents also disagreed on making the participant look good in the image (a favourable representation) and using the presence of the camera to achieve something.

In terms of strategies, respondents disagreed most on a collaborative approach, paying, and reciprocal actions. Given the modest correlation between paying and doing something in return, apparently respondents also do other things in return, besides paying or giving gifts. Finally, respondents disagreed on getting a second opinion, adapting and searching for alternatives, preventing, and protecting the participant.

Above, I have summarized the findings of the first explorative analysis and voiced some preliminary ideas about relations between the experience of various moral issues and strategies. Now it is time to delve further into these relations. To better understand how the experiences relate, I will use a technique that helps uncover patterns in data on the basis of correlation in

those data, called factor analysis. Below I will first briefly discuss this technique. The results I discuss on page 82 onward.

### **Patterns in filmmakers' experiences**

In this section I will discuss the factor analysis I conducted in order to uncover patterns in the experiences of respondents, reported through the survey. There are no theories or models that resulted from previous surveys or other research on ethics in documentary filmmaking and that I can test with my data. I also do not have very concrete expectations about what I might find in my data. Therefore, I am exploring the data to see what it brings me. I will hence use a technique called Exploratory Factor Analysis (Field 2005). A detailed account of the method and the accompanying tests is included in Appendix 3.5 (p. 371). Here I will discuss the main points. Details about the execution of the analysis are included in Appendix 3.6 (p. 373). The discussion of the results of this analysis includes among others mean scores on each pattern. I will first discuss how these scores have been calculated.

#### Calculating scores

A pattern resulting from a factor analysis consists of a number of variables (in my case questionnaire statements). The patterns these variables form theoretically measure an underlying dimension. In my interpretation, a pattern indicates a certain experience that is more complex than the experience of a single moral issue or a single strategy, as it is made up of several of these. How respondents score on a pattern indicates to what extent they reportedly experienced the more complex phenomenon. Each respondent scored between 0 and 6 on each variable (remember that the statements were accompanied by a 0-6 scale). To calculate a respondent's score on a pattern, I took the mean of the respondent's scores on the statements that make up that pattern. I added these scores as new variables. With these new variables I can calculate the mean scores on the patterns, which is an indication for the extent to which respondents reportedly experienced the patterns. So the mean scores of the statements make up the respondent's score on a pattern; and the mean score

## Participatory spaces

of all respondents together make up the pattern's score. In my discussion of the results of this analysis below I will include each pattern, the variables included, and its mean score and standard deviation (rounded off to two decimals). In footnotes I will mention the number of cases included in the analysis (N) and Cronbach's alpha, which is a measure for the reliability of the variables included to together measure something and thus to function as a scale.

When calculating scores on patterns, I also had to consider missing values. If a respondent did not, or not correctly give an answer to a statement that contributes to a pattern, a missing value influences the calculation quite a lot, since each pattern is made up of a limited number of statements. Before, I have deleted respondents from my dataset when overall too many scores were missing (see p. 70; I set a limit of 20%, more or less representing one section of the questionnaire). So again I decided to delete participants with over 20% missing values on a pattern from the calculation of the mean score on that pattern.

Only in the case of three patterns can all respondents can be included in further calculations as none has over 20% missing values. In the other cases, for each pattern some respondents have too many missing values and therefore will be omitted from further calculations. This means that I will use slightly different datasets when calculating pattern scores.<sup>47</sup> In the discussion of the results of the factor analysis that follows, I will again focus on what the reader needs to know to understand the argument of this thesis. The order of the patterns discussed here is in line with the results provided by the analysis software. The first pattern is the most distinct one uncovered in the data, the last one the least distinct.

### Patterns at the shop-floor level

The first analysis resulted in seven patterns. Each pattern consists of a number of related variables in the form of statements from the survey. Below,

---

<sup>47</sup> Not all moral issues and strategies measured in the survey find a place in the patterns I found. The variables included in a pattern had between 0.00% and 3.80% missing values with one extreme variable that has 10.13% missing values. All these numbers are far below my limit of 20%, so there is no need to delete individual variables because of too many missing or incorrect answers.

for each pattern I will discuss the variables included in the pattern and how I interpret the pattern.<sup>48</sup> I will refer to variables as statements rather than variables, to stress the interpretative act of labelling the patterns: I used statements in the questionnaire to measure filmmakers' experiences and now I have to assign meaning to the statements that together make up a pattern.<sup>49</sup> The seven patterns discussed here represent experiences in the everyday interaction between filmmaker and participant; experiences at the shop-floor level.

### *Participant Opposition*

In the nine statements included in the first pattern and displayed in Table 3.3 the participant is the main actor: she misinforms, misrepresents, misleads, manipulates, and disgraces. The statement "I have had to press the participant into filming certain scenes or events" reflects filmmaker pressure on the participant to be able to film certain scenes or events. Although it reflects filmmaker behaviour instead of participant behaviour like the other statements do, this statement reflects unwillingness on the part of the participant, which the filmmaker tries to overcome. The pattern indicates a reluctant participant who does not co-operate with the filmmaker and who is even counterproductive. The participant is unwilling to co-operate with the filmmaker. Therefore I defined this pattern as Participant Opposition. The mean score for Participant Opposition is .87, the standard deviation is .84.<sup>50</sup> This indicates respondents reportedly did not experience much Participant Opposition. As the first pattern this is however the most salient pattern in respondents' experiences.

### *Communication for Cooperation*

The second pattern is made up of eight statements, included in Table 3.4, which reflect both participant and filmmaker behaviour. Communication, continuous and reciprocal, contributes most. Openness, trust and agreeing to

---

<sup>48</sup> I have included statements with an absolute factor loading of at least .4 (Field 2005), ordered according to factor loading (highest on top). The tables including factor loadings are included in Appendix 3.6.2 (p. 376).

<sup>49</sup> The order of the patterns discussed here is in accordance with analysis output.

<sup>50</sup> N=158; Cronbach's  $\alpha$  = .822.

## Participatory spaces

Table 3.3 Statements contributing to the first pattern

Statements
The participant didn't tell me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.
The participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.
While filming, the participant has deliberately told me less than during research conversations.
The participant misrepresented her/himself to me.
The participant manipulated me to get or avoid a certain scene.
The participant did not approach me as an equal.
The participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.
I have had to press the participant into filming certain scenes or events.
The participant wasn't completely honest with me.
The participant has disgraced me.

Table 3.4 Statements contributing to the second pattern

Statements
The participant got in touch with me during and after making the film.
I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.
I informed the participant completely about what we were doing.
I have been completely open toward the participant about my agenda.
I have gained the trust of the participant.
The participant agreed with me about how I interpreted her/his story.
I have informed the participant about possible consequences of being in a documentary film.
The participant benefited in some way from being in my film.

the filmmaker's interpretation are important contributors here as well. The statement "The participant benefited in some way from being in my film" reflects a positive experience by the participant. It reflects a participant's experience rather than a filmmaker's, but since filmmakers provided the survey data I understand this as the interpretation of the filmmaker and thus her perspective. I interpret this pattern as a situation of trust and understanding through ongoing mutual communication, communication aimed at the cooperation in the project. I defined this pattern Communication

for Cooperation. The mean score for this pattern is 4.23, the standard deviation is 1.19.<sup>51</sup> So Communication for Cooperation was experienced quite a bit, given that I used a 0-6 answering scale.

### *Filmmaker Opposition*

Seven statements make up the third pattern; they are included in Table 3.5 and they reflect filmmaker behaviour, with the exception of the third statement, about the legitimacy of the material, which reflects an opinion on the filmed material. It can however be understood as a reflection on material shot while it should not be shown and thus on the action of shooting it. I see here a filmmaker who misleads, disgraces, manipulates, and misrepresents. The statements “I didn't take an ethical issue seriously” and “I didn't feel like solving an ethic issue, I pushed it away” reflect an unwillingness to face and solve moral issues. The filmmaker's behaviour reflects a position opposite the participant, not alongside her, and not aimed at solutions. For the first pattern I have named such behaviour on the part of the participant 'oppositional'. I used the same notion here and I defined the third pattern Filmmaker Opposition. The mean score for Filmmaker Opposition is .69, the standard deviation is .77.<sup>52</sup>

### *Conflict on Representation*

The fourth pattern consists of six statements, which Table 3.6 shows, and these reflect participant as well as filmmaker behaviour, including a participant challenging the filmmaker with her own plans, deliberate victimization of the participant by both the participants and the filmmaker, disagreement on interpretation of the participant's story, and damage to the participant. The combination of disagreement on interpretation and deliberate victimization by the participant complicates the interpretation of this pattern. Damage in general might be understood as a consequence of the experience of participating. The victimization is mutual, in the sense that both the filmmaker and the participant victimize the latter. Therefore it might be understood as central in this factor. But there is also conflict: in the interpretation of the

---

<sup>51</sup> N=157; Cronbach's  $\alpha$  = .819.

<sup>52</sup> N=154; Cronbach's  $\alpha$  = .720.

## Participatory spaces

Table 3.5 Statements contributing to the third pattern

---

Statements
I misled the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.
I have disgraced the participant.
The legitimacy to show certain scenes was missing.
I have manipulated the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.
I misrepresented the participant.
I didn't take an ethical issue seriously.
I didn't feel like solving an ethic issue, I pushed it away.

---

Table 3.6 Statements contributing to the fourth pattern

---

Statements
The participant used me for her/his own benefit.
The participant had her/his own agenda, different from mine.
I deliberately showed the participant as a victim.
I have interpreted the story of the participant different from what s/he would have liked.
Being in my film damaged the participant.
The participant deliberately took the role of a victim.

---

story and in the participant having her own plans. So the conflict also relates to representation of the participant. I understand this factor as reflecting damage by differences in understanding the participant as victim and in representing her. The damage statement does not feel central to this factor because it might be understood as a consequence of the conflict. The conflict and the victimization do feel central. I therefore defined this pattern Conflict on Representation. The mean score for Conflict on Representation is 1.07, the standard deviation is .91.<sup>53</sup>

### *Passive Risk*

Table 3.7 shows the five statements that make up pattern number five. This pattern is difficult to interpret at face value. The first two statements reflect a moral offence and risk-taking. The other statements reflect a passive attitude

---

<sup>53</sup> N=158; Cronbach's  $\alpha$  = .673.

Table 3.7 Statements contributing to the fifth pattern

Statements
I did something I know was morally suspicious.
I took a risk although I realized it could result in an ethical problem.
An ethical problem arose, but I didn't know how to solve it and I just let it go.
I lost control over a situation and decided to surrender.
An ethical problem arose, and I didn't make a choice for a solution but waited till a later moment before deciding what to do.

versus this risk, as no action is taken by the filmmaker. An image of a filmmaker who encounters moral issues but who is not resolving them surfaces. She seeks confrontation but does not resolve it. I defined this pattern Passive Risk. The mean score for this pattern is 1.22, the standard deviation is 1.06.<sup>54</sup>

#### *Filmmaker Mastery*

The five statements that make up the sixth pattern are shown in Table 3.8 and show filmmaker behaviour aimed at using all means at her disposal as a filmmaker to achieve things. I see mastery, as the active and conscious use of one's position and abilities. I defined this pattern Filmmaker Mastery. The mean score for Filmmaker Mastery is 2.36, the standard deviation is 1.29.<sup>55</sup>

#### *Improper Reciprocity*

Six statements, shown in Table 3.9, make up pattern number seven and this pattern again is quite complex. Two statements reflect a filmmaker who has a reciprocal attitude toward the participant, one reflects an attitude of modesty in chasing what one wants, one reflects a protective attitude, and one a co-operative attitude. These five statements reflect a filmmaker who does not claim dominance in position or decisions. The sixth statement reflects the breaking of documentary filmmaking rules (though what those rules might be is not specified). Although the other variables do not necessarily refer to doing things one ought not to do as a documentary filmmaker, the combination of

<sup>54</sup> N=154; Cronbach's  $\alpha$  = .717.

<sup>55</sup> N=157; Cronbach's  $\alpha$  = .639.

## Participatory spaces

Table 3.8 Statements contributing to the sixth pattern

Statements
I have used my authority as a filmmaker to achieve something.
I have used the presence of the camera to achieve something.
I have used the participant for my own benefit.
I decided to exploit a situation for the film.
While filming, I have encouraged the participant into telling more than s/he intended.

Table 3.9 Statements contributing to the seventh pattern

Statements
I have broken documentary filmmaking rules.
I did something in return for the participant.
I gave the participant some money or a gift.
I decided to give up and not go after something that was hard to get.
I have protected the participant against her/himself.
The participant got involved in the decision what side and angle s/he would be filmed in.

breaking documentary rules and the other variables is interesting to interpret.

Not claiming dominance and a willingness for reciprocity might be translated into reciprocity itself: the filmmaker has an attitude toward the participant. The breaking of documentary filmmaking rules might indicate that this is regarded as improper behaviour by documentary filmmakers. Therefore I defined this pattern Improper Reciprocity. The mean score for Improper Reciprocity is 1.67, the standard deviation is 1.12.<sup>56,57</sup> To summarize the above, Table 3.10 shows the seven patterns and includes a brief description of each.

---

<sup>56</sup> N=154; Cronbach's  $\alpha$ =.608.

<sup>57</sup> Two variables in this scale do not meet the requirement of a corrected inter-item correlation of at least .3 (Field 2005). This means they correlate insufficiently with the total scale. If this pattern should feature in additional analyses, this should be addressed. However, as this research is exploratory in nature, I will not eliminate these variables at this point.

Table 3.10 Pattern definitions and descriptions

Pattern definition	Description
Participant Opposition	The participant is unwilling to co-operate with the filmmaker and at times counterproductive.
Communication for Cooperation	Filmmaker and participant experience trust and understanding through ongoing communication.
Filmmaker Opposition	The filmmaker behaves uncooperative toward the participant and is not aimed at solutions.
Conflict on Representation	Filmmaker and participant both cause damage by differences in understanding the participant as victim.
Passive Risk	The filmmaker is confronted with moral issues but is unable or unwilling to resolve them.
Filmmaker Mastery	The filmmaker uses all means at her/his disposal as a filmmaker to achieve things.
Improper Reciprocity	The filmmaker shows reciprocal behaviour and non-dominance but breaks documentary filmmaking rules in doing so.

### How patterns relate

The analysis described above comes with a correlation matrix for the patterns (see Appendix 3.6, Table A3.12, p. 383). However, I modified the patterns by deleting and adding variables. Therefore, I produced a new correlation matrix for these modified patterns (see Appendix 3.6, Table A3.13, p. 384).<sup>58</sup> It turns out that the second pattern, Communication for Cooperation, only correlates a little bit with the seventh pattern, Improper Reciprocity,<sup>59</sup> but not with any of the other patterns. This means that the experience of Communication for Cooperation is independent of the experience of other patterns. By contrast, all other patterns are correlated modestly but significantly with each other.<sup>60</sup> This suggests that filmmakers' experiences are split between harmonious relationships full of reciprocal communication with the participant on the one hand and more disturbed relationships with the participant on the other.

<sup>58</sup> To produce this correlation matrix I correlated the factor scores. The mean score of the variables that make up a pattern provides a new variable (see p. 81). So each respondent got seven new variables, her seven factor scores. I then correlated these scores.

<sup>59</sup>  $r = .177$ ,  $p < .05$

<sup>60</sup> Correlation coefficients range between .227 and .577,  $p < .01$  for all.

## Participatory spaces

Furthermore, disturbances in the filmmaker-participant relationship appear in different forms, reflected in the different patterns that represent more problematic relationships and cooperation: Participant Opposition, Filmmaker Opposition, Conflict on Representation, and Passive Risk. Apparently, disharmony appears in different forms and harmony does not appear in different forms.

This apparent dichotomy between harmonious and less harmonious experiences, and especially the multi-dimensionality of the latter, invites further investigation. Are these patterns related to each other in a specific way? To find out, I conducted a so called higher order factor analysis.<sup>61</sup> Here, factors from the previous analysis instead of single variables are used as input and the higher order patterns show how patterns from the previous analysis are related, like the first analysis showed how individual statements were related. These higher order patterns are more general patterns (Wolff and Preising 2005). The contribution of individual variables to these higher order patterns can also be calculated (see Appendix 3.7.3, p. 386 for details). Below I will discuss these more general patterns.

### Patterns from a distance

I will describe here the result of the second analysis using the patterns I found in the previous analysis as input.<sup>62</sup> This second analysis resulted in three additional patterns, which can be understood as more general patterns than the previous seven. Appendix 3.7 (p. 382) includes the details of the method and procedure. I will describe here the contributing patterns, the contributing statements, and my interpretation.

#### *Passive Conflict*

The two patterns contributing to the first more general pattern, Filmmaker Opposition and Conflict on Representation, and more specifically the

---

<sup>61</sup> See Evans (1999), Gray (1997), and Wolff and Preising (2005) for a theory of higher order factor analysis.

<sup>62</sup> More precisely, the correlation matrix serves as input. Since the contributions to second order patterns are always smaller and the data are somewhat problematic (see Appendix 3.6, p. 371), I will lower the minimal factor loading value from .4 to .3 (see note 48, p. 83).

statements involved, displayed in Table 3.11, reflect a situation in which the filmmaker misleads, manipulates and victimizes the participant, and does not deal with moral issues. The participant victimizes herself and has her own agenda. Conflict is more prominently present here than in the fourth pattern (Conflict on Representation). I also see passiveness on the side of the filmmaker, and damage to the participant. Therefore I defined this pattern Passive Conflict. The mean score for Passive Conflict is .99, the standard deviation is .78.<sup>63,64</sup>

#### *Opposition to Disclosure*

Only statements from the first pattern, Participant Opposition, contribute to this more general pattern, so Participant Opposition evolves into a second more general pattern.<sup>65</sup> Table 3.12 shows the statements involved. Participant behaviour of course is central to this pattern as well, as it is a kind of abstraction of Participant Opposition. However, now the focus seems to shift slightly and it seems the participant is particularly unwilling with respect to filming certain scenes or events and to the disclosure of information. Therefore I defined this more general pattern Opposition to Disclosure. The mean score for this pattern is .84, the standard deviation is .87.<sup>66</sup>

#### *Communication for the Film*

Statements from two patterns, Communication for Cooperation and Filmmaker Mastery, contribute to the third more general pattern and they are included in Table 3.13. Communication again is an important element in this pattern, as it was in Communication for Cooperation. However, it is related to an element of mastery. If I take the freedom to look a little bit beyond the limits I set, it turns out that other elements of mastery, such as using one's authority and using

---

<sup>63</sup> N=156; Cronbach's  $\alpha$ =.695.

<sup>64</sup> Two variables in this scale do not meet the requirement of a corrected inter-item correlation of at least .3 (Field 2005). Again, since this is an exploratory analysis, I will not eliminate these variables from the pattern at this point.

<sup>65</sup> Strictly speaking, Improper Reciprocity also contributed, but the statements making up Improper Reciprocity contributed insufficiently to the more general pattern, so I omitted them.

<sup>66</sup> N=158; Cronbach's  $\alpha$ =.778.

## Participatory spaces

Table 3.11 Statements contributing to the first more general pattern

---

Statements
I misled the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.
Being in my film damaged the participant.
I didn't take an ethical issue seriously.
The participant had her/his own agenda, different from mine.
An ethical problem arose, and I didn't make a choice for a solution but waited till a later moment before deciding what to do.
The participant deliberately took the role of a victim.
I deliberately showed the participant as a victim
The legitimacy to show certain scenes was missing.
I have manipulated the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.

---

Table 3.12 Statements contributing to the second more general pattern

---

Statements
The participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.
The participant didn't tell me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.
The participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.
I have had to press the participant into filming certain scenes or events.
While filming, the participant has deliberately told me less than during research conversations.
The participant manipulated me to get or avoid a certain scene.
The participant has disgraced me

---

Table 3.13 Statements contributing to the third more general pattern

---

Statements
The participant got in touch with me during and after making the film.
I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.
I have used the presence of the camera to achieve something.

---

the participant for one's own benefit<sup>67</sup> also play a role. So communication seems to be aimed at getting what you want as a filmmaker rather than at making the experience a positive one for the participant, as was the case with Communication for Cooperation. Communication is an element the filmmaker deploys to be able to do what she wants to do as a filmmaker. I therefore defined this pattern Communication for the Film. The mean score for Communication for the Film is 3.91, the standard deviation is 1.42.<sup>68</sup> Table 3.14 gives an overview of the three more general patterns and a short description of each.

How these patterns relate

The correlation matrix produced through the analysis (see Appendix 3.7, Table A3.21, p. 391) shows that patterns one and three, Passive Conflict and Communication for the Film, are correlated a little and negatively.<sup>69</sup> Patterns one and two, Passive Conflict and Opposition to Disclosure, are correlated a little more and positively<sup>70</sup> and patterns two and three, Opposition to Disclosure and Communication for the Film, are correlated most and positively as well.<sup>71</sup> This suggests that respondents who experienced Communication for the Film, experienced Passive Conflict to a lesser degree, and vice versa. It thus seems that filmmaker-participant communication is an element in solving moral issues. This communication is reciprocal in the sense that both parties contact the other throughout the process. It seems to be a dialogue rather than a monologue.

The 'opposition' of Communication for the Film and Passive Conflict seems to indicate another dichotomy. However, it is not clear what the role of Opposition to Disclosure is exactly, as it correlates moderately with both Communication for the Film and Passive Conflict, though less with the latter. Another analysis might reveal the role of Opposition to Disclosure and help understand which patterns are visible on an even more general level. The procedure for this analysis is the same as the previous one and below I will

---

<sup>67</sup> Factor loading .28 and 2.7 respectively

<sup>68</sup> N=153; Cronbach's  $\alpha$ =.605.

<sup>69</sup>  $r=-.209$

<sup>70</sup>  $r=.355$

<sup>71</sup>  $r=.541$

## Participatory spaces

Table 3.14 More general patterns and descriptions

Pattern Definition	Description
Passive Conflict	Passiveness and conflict dominate the filmmaker-participant relationship.
Opposition to Disclosure	The participant does not want certain scenes or events to be filmed.
Communication for the Film	Ongoing communication between filmmaker and participant is aimed at achieving the filmmaker's goals.

describe the results in what must now be a recognizable fashion.

### Patterns in general

The third analysis resulted in two patterns on an even more general level, reflecting the dichotomy that permeated the analyses in this chapter, a dichotomy between cooperation and conflict.

#### *Communication for Filming*

Two patterns from the second analysis, Opposition to Disclosure and Communication for the Film, contribute to the first most general pattern and Table 3.15 shows the statements involved. Communication remains an important element as both statements referring to it contribute to this pattern. So again, communication both ways, a dialogue rather than a monologue, is a central element. The other two statements refer to a participant who obstructs the filming of specific scenes or events. It appears that communication now happens not within a realm of cooperation and understanding (as was the case in the original pattern Communication for Cooperation), nor in the realm of the filmmaker getting what she wants (Communication for the Film), but in a realm of conflict and disagreement with the participant over filming. The communication might be aimed at solving this disagreement, rather than at establishing or confirming a smooth cooperation, or at the filmmaker using her position and abilities to achieve what she wants. Both parties might want to get their way and the outcome is not determined. Therefore I defined this pattern Communication for Filming. The mean score for Communication for

Table 3.15 Statements making up the first most general pattern

---

Statements
The participant got in touch with me during and after making the film.
The participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.
I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.
The participant didn't tell me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.

---

Filming is 2.65, the standard deviation is 1.08.<sup>72</sup>

### *Trivialized Harm*

The third pattern from the previous analysis, Passive Conflict, is the only one contributing to the second pattern at this most general level and Table 3.16 shows the statements involved. These statements can be interpreted as reflecting harm to the participant and a filmmaker who is unwilling to deal with this or even to consider what is going on, and thus trivializes the matter. Therefore I defined this pattern Trivialized Harm. The mean score for Trivialized Harm is .71, the standard deviation is .92.<sup>73</sup> The two patterns at this most general level and their descriptions are included in Table 3.17.

Having described all the patterns uncovered in my data I will summarize the findings below.

### Summary of the results

The analysis of the survey data resulted in a number of patterns, hierarchically ordered at three levels. The results of the analysis described above, patterns in filmmakers' experiences, can be visualized in a model.

---

<sup>72</sup> N=156; Cronbach's  $\alpha$ =.554. Although Cronbach's  $\alpha$  is low and it is questionable whether this pattern can be used as a scale, I have taken the liberty to include it in my study to forward the discussion and to forward theorizing about the filmmaker-participant relationship.

<sup>73</sup> N=149; Cronbach's  $\alpha$ =.379. Again the  $\alpha$ -value is low. Also, the three variables included all do not meet the requirement of a corrected inter-item correlation of at least .3. Yet, as I have done before, I will keep this pattern in my research. After all, I am exploring my data and my whole research project is quite exploratory. The correlation between these two most general patterns is .265.

## Participatory spaces

Table 3.16 Statements making up the second most general pattern

Statements
I misled the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.
Being in my film damaged the participant.
I didn't take an ethical issue seriously.

Table 3.17 Most general patterns and descriptions

Pattern Definition	Description
Communication for Filming	There is a participant opposition issue and the filmmaker tries to solve it.
Trivialized Harm	There is an issue and the filmmaker does not try to solve it.

Figure 3.1 (pp. 98-99) represents this model. The model includes the pattern definitions, the descriptions, the mean scores, and the standard deviations. The patterns at the top represent the most general level and the patterns at the bottom the most detailed level. This most detailed level I understand to represent the level of the everyday interaction of filmmaker and participant. The lines indicate which patterns contribute to which more general patterns. The dashed lines indicate that patterns to a minor degree also contributed to other patterns than the ones the lines point to, but to a lesser extent. This model hopefully offers an uncomplicated understanding of the results. The patterns that resulted from the analyses can be seen as a qualitative interpretation of the data collected by the survey: they express *what* respondents reportedly experienced, the 'fabric' of the experiences. In addition, the mean scores and standard deviations tell us something about the *extent* to which filmmakers experienced the patterns and the extent to which they differ in their experiences.

Contrary to the sequence of the three analyses, which went from pattern in detailed to patterns in general, I will go through the model from top to bottom, as the top level is represented by two more or less opposing patterns. At the most general level there is on the one hand a situation in

which there is a disclosure and information issue related to the participant and a situation of mutual communication, which might well have the goal to solve this issue (Communication for Filming); on the other hand there is a situation in which there is an issue and no effort to resolve it (Trivialized Harm). The former suggests filmmakers who are in dialogue with the participant to solve the participant's opposition and the latter points to filmmakers trivializing a conflict with the participant. These two are correlated modestly,<sup>74</sup> which indicates that both might be experienced simultaneously by respondents. They do not exclude each other. If filmmakers score higher on both, apparently, they try to solve issues through communication but they are also passively stuck with moral issues that remain unresolved. This might mean they fail to solve these issues with participants to some level. This also might mean that filmmakers experience various issues with participants and solve some while they fail to resolve others. Filmmakers who score low on both do not (need to) communicate with their participants to solve her opposition and are not passively stuck with moral issues.

The middle level shows the 'breeding ground' of these situations. Communication for Filming is partly grounded in participant behaviour: the participant is unwilling to co-operate in filming (Opposition to Disclosure). Communication plays a role in the efforts of the filmmaker to achieve what she wants as a filmmaker, for the project (Communication for the Film). Although the communication is mutual (both parties contact the other), the filmmaker's efforts to accomplish her wishes is explicit. She uses her means and position to achieve what she wants or needs for the project. The modest correlation between Opposition to Disclosure and Communication for the Film is in this case relatively high.<sup>75</sup> It indicates that in general, those who experience Opposition to Disclosure also experience Communication for the Film to some extent, and vice versa. Communication seems an important part of efforts to overcome participant opposition to filming.

Trivialized Harm is grounded in the other pattern at this middle level, Passive Conflict. Here, the filmmaker and the participant have conflicting interests and ideas about the participant as a victim and the filmmaker

---

<sup>74</sup>  $r = .265$

<sup>75</sup>  $r = .541$

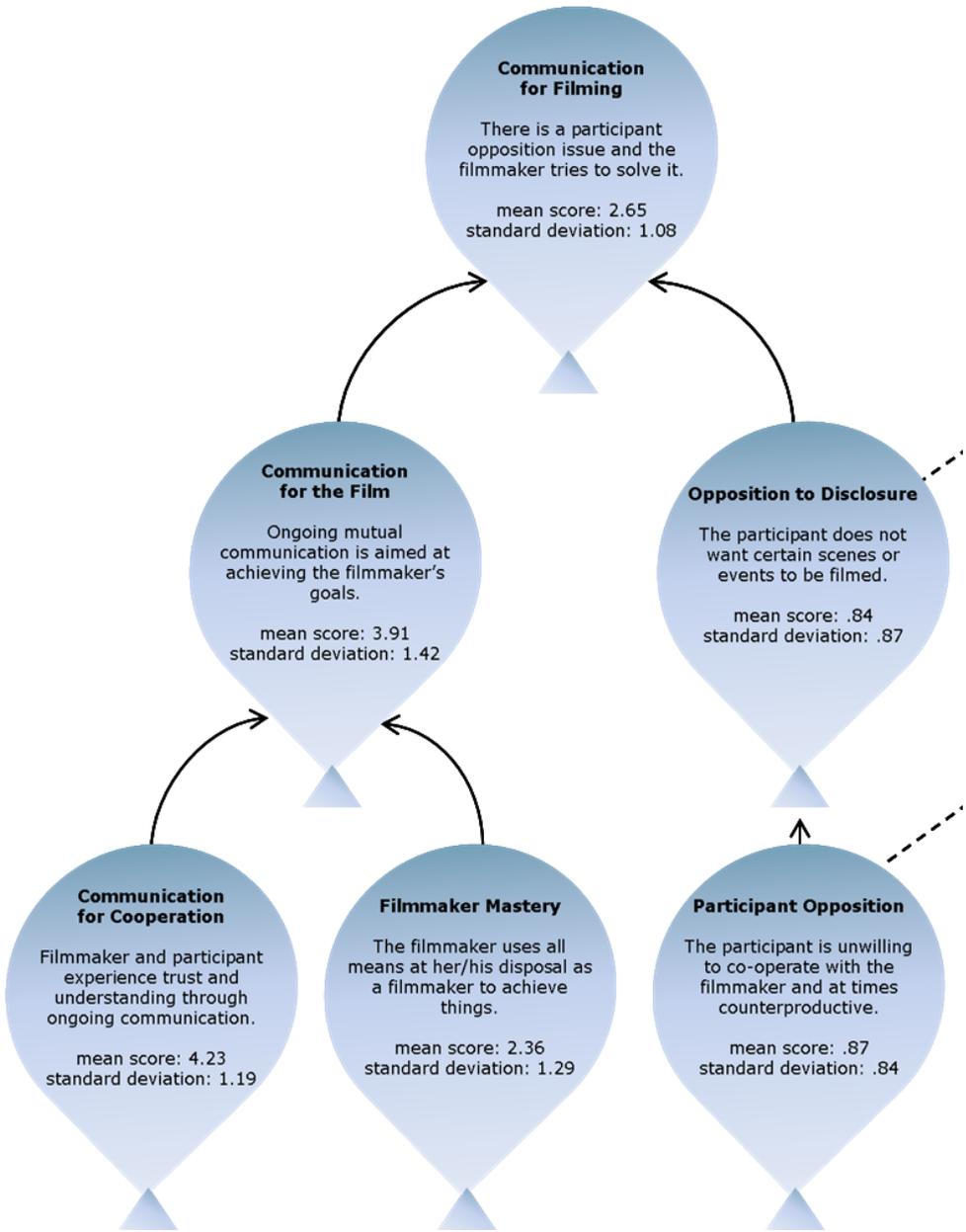
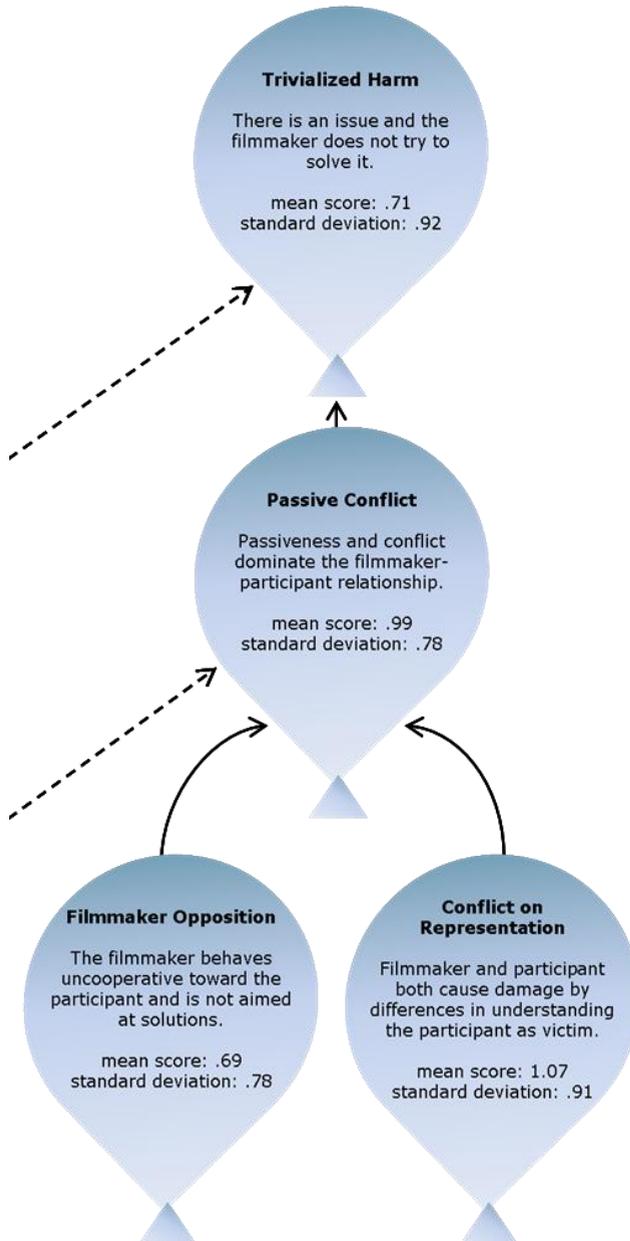


Figure 3.1 Model of the patterns in filmmakers' experiences with moral issues



and strategies

## Participatory spaces

behaves oppositional, misleading, manipulating, and misrepresenting the participant. Efforts to resolve this conflict are absent.

The lower level patterns reflect the 'seeds', the origin of the breeding ground. Communication for the Film is grounded in Communication for Cooperation and Filmmaker Mastery; Opposition to Disclosure is grounded in Participant Opposition; Passive Conflict is grounded in Filmmaker Opposition and Conflict on Representation. The patterns Passive Risk and Improper Reciprocity do not appear in the model. None of the variables from these patterns contributed sufficiently to any more general patterns and hence I omitted them from the model (see Appendix 3.7, p. 382 for further details on this analysis).

Communication gets another dimension as we move up or down the model. Where it suits the idea of smooth cooperation between filmmaker and participant at the lower level, it serves to solve problems between the two as we move to more general levels. Communication, both ways, seems central to problem solving. The model also shows that Participant Opposition is quite a strong, persistent factor, 'surviving' as it were from the first to the second level, where it concerns opposition against filming and telling, and joining forces with another pattern only at the highest level. Passive Conflict persists from the second level to the highest level much in the same way. This suggests that once filmmaker and participant are passively stuck in disagreement, this situation persists.

In addition to a vertical perspective on the model, going from top to bottom and vice versa, we can also take a horizontal perspective, 'reading' it from left to right. Going in this direction, I distinguish three general situations: there is a situation of communication and conflict solving (left side of the model), a situation of participant opposition (centre of the model), and a situation of passiveness and non-solving of conflict (right side of the model). Participant oppositional behaviour is somehow central to the model because it is related to both communicative solving and passive conflict: filmmakers might try and solve some issues involved, but refrain from or fail in dealing with others. Thus, the model in my view shows that issues related to participant opposition are central in respondents' experiences of moral issues as reported through the survey. (Remember that the Participant Opposition

pattern was the most distinct one in the initial analysis).

We now have an idea about the complex of experiences respondents reported through the survey, the kind of experiences they had, not as single moral issues or strategies but as more complex phenomena. The mean scores, included in the model, tell us that there is a clear distinction in the experience of communicative solving patterns (left side of the model) on the one hand and the participant opposition and passive conflict patterns (centre and right side of the model) on the other hand. Respondents experienced specifically Communication for Cooperation, Communication for the Film, Communication for Filming, and somewhat less Filmmaker Mastery. They experienced the patterns in the centre and on the right of the model much less. A closer look at the scores on these patterns however shows that a minority of the respondents scored 0.0 on these patterns (between 1.9 and 26.6% with one additional peak at 42.4%). This indicates that a majority of respondents experienced these patterns at least to some minor extent. So although these patterns reflecting conflict of some sort are experienced less, this experience is spread among the sample rather than limited to a few extreme cases. In other words: rather than some respondents experiencing a lot of opposition by the participant and unsolved conflict, a majority experienced some of it. Further explorations of the patterns, including box plots which display the dispersion of scores, are included in Appendix 3.8 (p. 393).

To sum up: The analyses show that respondents above all experienced mutual communication to explain and to inform the participant. They used their position and abilities to get what is needed for the project and to solve disclosure issues with the participant. In my view, they take a professional approach. Extensive conflict between filmmaker and participant is a rare yet significant element in the experience. What dominates is what is necessary for the film: explaining and informing the participant and solving disclosure issues.

Now that I have drawn a schematic image of various patterns in filmmakers' experiences, of how these relate and the extent to which respondents experienced them, it is time to investigate whether contextual aspects, which include participant characteristics, project characteristics, and filmmaker characteristics, play a role in the experience of these patterns.

### **Can context predict experiences?**

Respondents differed in their experiences of the various patterns, as the mean scores of the patterns indicate. These differences might be due to differences in circumstances. I measured circumstances or contextual variables by asking about participant characteristics, project characteristics, and filmmaker characteristics (see Chapter 1, p. 43ff and Appendix 1, Table A1.3, p. 259 for a discussion and overview of contextual variables included in the survey and Appendix 3.9.1, p. 397 for a brief discussion of the descriptive statistics). I investigated in what way such contextual variables are related to the patterns. In other words: what circumstances, what participant, project, and filmmaker variables, help predict the experience of the various patterns.

Again, an analysis like this comes with a number of methodological decisions and tests. Appendix 3.9 (p. 397) contains details about this analysis, which is called multiple regression. Appendix 3.9.2 (p. 402) includes a discussion of the method and the options and choices involved; and Appendix 3.9.3 (p. 404) includes the results for each pattern in detail; and Appendix 3.9.4 (p. 416) contains a discussion of restrictions to these results. Here I will only discuss the most relevant results.

Let me get straight to the point: the predictive power of contextual variables is small. Combinations of participant, project, and/or filmmaker variables predict between 15.7% and 25.3% of the differences between respondents in their scores on the various patterns. The discussion of the multiple regression analysis that yielded these results is quite technical. I will focus here on the predictive strength of individual contextual variables. The  $\beta$ -value is a standardized coefficient for the predictive strength of variables and makes it possible to compare different variables. This way it is possible to understand which contextual variables predict the scores on patterns best.<sup>76</sup> I

---

<sup>76</sup> The  $\beta$ -value indicates that if the value of a predictor variable, for instance, cultural similarity, increases with 1 standard deviation, the pattern score increases with  $\beta$  x the standard deviation of that pattern score. For example, the standard deviation among the respondents for cultural similarity is 2.13 (mean score 3.22), the  $\beta$ -value for Participant Opposition for this predictive variable is -.215, and the standard deviation for Participant Opposition is .837. So for every 2.13 that a respondent scores higher on cultural similarity on the scale from 0-6, the respondents is predicted to experience  $-.215 \times .837 = -.180$  times Participant Opposition. (The  $\beta$ -value is negative so there is a negative correlation.) Hence,

will therefore refer to  $\beta$ -values in footnotes. For other details I refer to the aforementioned Appendix 3.9.3. Below I will in turn discuss the various participant variables, project variables, and filmmaker variables that help predict scores on patterns. I will limit the discussion to variables that concern at least two patterns, as those that concern only one pattern play a minor role altogether.

### Participant variables

Two participant variables merit a discussion here: the position of the participant in the project, and cultural similarities between filmmaker and participant.<sup>77</sup> The position of the participant in the project predicts scores on a number of patterns: Communication for Cooperation, Communication for the Film, Communication for Filming, and, at the other side of the model, Trivialized Harm. Having no central participants predicts experiencing less Communication for Cooperation, Communication for the Film, and Communication for Filming and more Trivialized Harm than having one single central participant.<sup>78</sup> In addition, having a few central participants rather than a single one predicts experiencing less Communication for Cooperation and Filming Enabling Participation.<sup>79</sup> These modest results point to a distinction between the role of participants in a project with respect to continuous and mutual communication in order to inform and explain about the film and to make filming possible. The modest correlation between Communication for Filming and Trivialized Harm<sup>80</sup> might explain the effect of this variable on both: some of the issues are solved through communication, some are not.

Cultural similarity between filmmaker and participant predicts scores on Participant Opposition, Conflict on Representation, Opposition to Disclosure, and Passive Conflict and the relationship is negative for each: regarding the participant as being from the same culture rather than from a

---

the predictive strength of the contextual variables is small.

<sup>77</sup> Questions A14 and A17 of the questionnaire respectively, see Appendix 3.1, p. 331.

<sup>78</sup> Communication for Cooperation  $\beta = -.417$ , Communication for the Film  $\beta = -.189$ , Communication for Filming  $\beta = -.228$ , Trivialized Harm  $\beta = .220$

<sup>79</sup> Communication for Cooperation  $\beta = -.221$ , Communication for Filming  $\beta = -.180$

<sup>80</sup>  $r = .265$

## Participatory spaces

different culture predicts less opposition to the project and to filming specific events as well as less a perception of the participant as victim and less discordance in general.<sup>81</sup> In other words: cultural similarity is related to less conflictual co-operation.

So when it comes to participant characteristics, the position of the participant in the project predicts specifically the extent of mutual communication to inform and explain about the project and to film, and the degree of cultural difference predicts the level of opposition and conflict.

## Project variables

Five project variables predict scores on at least two patterns in the model: who did research for the film, filming time, editing time, budget, and the the controversy of the content.<sup>82</sup>

More filming time is associated positively with all four patterns involved in passive conflict: Filmmaker Opposition, Conflict on Representation, Passive Conflict, and Trivialized Harm. So, more filming time predicts more opposition, conflict, and passivity.<sup>83</sup> More editing time predicts more Opposition to Disclosure and Trivialized Harm.<sup>84</sup> The level of controversy of the film predicts the experience of Conflict on Representation and of Passive Conflict: the more controversial the content of the film, the more conflict over the representation of the participant as victim and conflict that remains unsolved.<sup>85</sup> So filming longer and a controversial content seems to have an effect on conflict in general, whereas editing is associated with issues of disclosure.

The budget of the project predicts scores on the other side of the model: on Communication for Cooperation, Communication for the Film, and Communication for Filming. The relationship is positive, which indicates that more money predicts more mutual communication to explain and inform and

---

<sup>81</sup> Participant Opposition  $\beta = -.253$ , Conflict on Representation  $\beta = -.234$ , Opposition to Disclosure  $\beta = -.156$ , Passive Conflict  $\beta = -.224$ .

<sup>82</sup> Questions A2, A7, A8, A9, and A12 in the questionnaire respectively.

<sup>83</sup> Filmmaker Opposition  $\beta = .224$ , Conflict on Representation  $\beta = .204$ , Passive Conflict  $\beta = .241$ , Trivialized Harm  $\beta = .207$ .

<sup>84</sup> Opposition to Disclosure  $\beta = .168$ , Trivialized Harm  $\beta = .175$ .

<sup>85</sup> Conflicting Victimization  $\beta = .224$ , Passive Conflict  $\beta = .170$ .

to get what is necessary for the project, and to overcome disclosure issues.<sup>86</sup>

So in terms of project variables the budget predicts the experience of mutual communication and mastery; and filming time, editing time and the controversy of the subject matter predict the experience of conflict and opposition.

#### Filmmaker variables

Five filmmaker variables predict scores on more than one pattern:

philosophy/ethics education, the willingness to compromise, a filmmaker's duty to make the best film possible, her willingness to meet the financiers' wishes, and whether she adheres to a religion.<sup>87</sup>

Whether the filmmakers followed any courses in philosophy and/or ethics is a recurrent predictor of scores on various patterns in the centre and on the right side of the model. Not having done so is associated negatively (so having done so is associated positively) with Participant Opposition as well as with Filmmaker Opposition and Passive Conflict.<sup>88</sup> This indicates that having gained some knowledge of philosophy and/or ethics predicts more opposition and conflict.

Whether or not the filmmaker considers herself to be religious predicts scores on two patterns: Communication for Cooperation and Filmmaker Opposition.<sup>89</sup> The relationship is positive for the former and negative for the latter, which indicates that filmmakers who consider themselves non-religious are predicted to experience more Communication for Cooperation and less Filmmaker Opposition.<sup>90</sup> A filmmaker's willingness to compromise depending on the interests at stake also predicts experiencing the opposition by the participant: a willingness to compromise predicts more Participant Opposition

---

<sup>86</sup> Communication for Cooperation  $\beta=.216$ , Communication for the Film  $\beta=.203$ , Communication for Filming  $\beta=.158$ .

<sup>87</sup> Questions D96, D100, D101, F126, and F129.

<sup>88</sup> Participant Opposition  $\beta=-.207$ , Filmmaker Opposition  $\beta=-.206$ , Passive Conflict  $\beta=-.229$ .

<sup>89</sup> The variable for religion I recoded, as 43.30% of the respondents had indicated adhering to a religion and 56.70 had indicated not adhering to any religion, so I decided to create a yes/no distinction rather than comparing four small subgroups (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, other) to one big alternative group (none).

<sup>90</sup> Communication for Cooperation  $\beta=.152$ , Filmmaker Opposition  $\beta=-.178$

## Participatory spaces

and more Opposition to Disclosure.<sup>91</sup>

Meeting the financiers' wishes depending on one's involvement in the project is associated positively with Conflict on Representation and Passive Conflict.<sup>92</sup> This indicates that filmmakers who meet their financiers' wishes depending on their involvement are predicted to experience more conflict about the participant as victim and unresolved discordant behaviour toward each other.

On the other side of the model, the duty to make the best film possible is associated positively with a professional attitude in which the film has the priority: it predicts scores on both Filmmaker Mastery and Communication for the Film.<sup>93</sup> So agreeing that making the best film possible is the filmmaker's duty predicts more mastery.

All in all, for the patterns representing communication and conflict solving, the position of the participant in the project, the budget, and to a lesser degree the duty to make the best film possible appear to be most relevant. For the other patterns, a number of contextual variables surface as most relevant: cultural similarity, filming and editing time, the controversy of the subject matter, philosophy/ethics education, and the willingness to compromise and take into account the financiers' wishes.

Since the communication and conflict solving patterns were reportedly experienced most, in my view the most relevant variable here is the position of the participant in the project. The participant opposition patterns in the centre of the model and the passive conflict patterns on the right side of the model were experienced less by the respondents. However, as I have noted in the beginning of this section, the effect of contextual variables is very small. The associations are limited, in absolute terms ranging from .146 to .417, and they are a bit scattered over the various patterns. The variance in my data, the differences in scores between respondents, must therefore be due to other effects as well, effects my questionnaire and/or analyses have not captured.

---

<sup>91</sup> Participant Opposition  $\beta=.184$ , Opposition to Disclosure  $\beta=.290$ .

<sup>92</sup> Conflict on Representation  $\beta=.243$ , Passive Conflict  $\beta=.206$ .

<sup>93</sup> Filmmaker Mastery  $\beta=.260$ , Communication for the Film  $\beta=.213$ .

## Concluding remarks

A descriptive analysis of the individual moral issues and strategies shows that trust, equality, care, privacy, agreement on interpretation, informing, and communication were experienced most or most often by respondents, as were the strategies preventing problems, adapting, searching for alternatives, reciprocal action, and collaborative strategy. This indicates concern for the wellbeing of the participant and for a good relationship. Respondents disagreed most on issues referring the filmmaker's rights and the audience's rights, and on informing the participant and using her for their own benefit. In addition, they disagreed on the strategies of a collaborative approach, reciprocal action, and paying the participant. This indicates that filmmakers relate to such issues and strategies in different ways.

To understand how the experience of individual moral issues and strategies relate I conducted an exploratory factor analysis. This resulted in seven patterns, which reflect two general patterns: harmony (Communication for Cooperation) and disharmony (Participant Opposition, Filmmaker Opposition, Conflict on Representation, and Passive Risk). An additional analysis resulted in three more general patterns, based on five of the seven initial patterns: Passive Conflict, Opposition to Disclosure and Communication for the Film. It showed that the distinction was more complex than just harmony versus disharmony. Communication, aligned with cooperation at the first level, now joined with mastery, with the filmmaker getting what she needs for the film. In addition, the middle ground was taken up by an opposing participant, and at the other end conflict evolved into passive conflict. A third analysis resulted in a final model and this showed at the most general level a split between an orientation toward problem solving (Communication for Filming) and an orientation contrary to that (Trivialized Harm). Communication now was aligned with overcoming participant opposition.

The patterns that respondents experienced most often are those that reflect communicative solving aimed at what is needed for the film: Communication for Cooperation, Communication for the Film, Communication for Filming, and Filmmaker Mastery. Mutual communication is aimed at making the project possible: informing and explaining to the participant,

## Participatory spaces

getting what the filmmaker wants for the project, and solving disclosure issues on the side of the participant. In this communication, the filmmaker operates as professional, from a professional perspective (instead of, for example, a personal, private perspective). Communication is not aimed at the more personal wellbeing of the participant, expressed in such notions as treating her as an equal, making sure she looks good in the image, being honest to her, respecting her privacy, and being careful with her. These notions are important given their individual mean score but they are not part of the patterns that emerge in my data. Rather, mutual communication is aimed at making the film possible, reflecting the idea that in most cases the film will be the reason for the communication, for the contact between filmmaker and participant. Making the film is what participant and filmmaker share, what binds them. So contact and communication happens with respect to the film. Filmmakers mostly take a professional attitude here, as filmmakers instead of private personae. In addition, conflict is a rare yet significant element and is present to some extent in most respondents' experiences.

Important predictors for the amount of the above mentioned patterns on communication are whether the participant is the single main or one of a few central character(s), the budget available, and whether her/his main loyalty is with making the best film possible. In terms of the position of the participant in the project this makes sense: it is understandable that there is more mutual communication with one or a few central participant(s) than with a number of non-central – and thus individually less important – ones. Filmmakers who identify more with the professional duty to make the best film possible will typically take a more professional attitude and put the film first. The effect of the budget in Communication for Cooperation is harder to explain and merits further investigation. Predictors for the experience of opposition by the participant and conflict are cultural similarity, education in philosophy and/or ethics, filming and editing time, a willingness to compromise, and adhering to a religion.

The concept of communication appears to be a central moral issue, as it permeates from the initial analysis to the final one, taking a slightly different shape on the way in the patterns that respondents experienced most. As a moral issue in documentary filmmaking it was offered by the filmmakers I

interviewed in my preliminary research (see Chapter 1, p. 50 and Appendix 1, Table A1.1, p. 253). In combination with other experiences it plays a central role here, as a tool for the filmmaker in a way, although the communication is mutual. The importance of this communication and the role it plays in the filmmaker-participant relationship has not yet been recognized academically and deserves further investigation. At the same time, conflict is a significant part of the experiences of filmmakers, albeit a small part.

The effect of participant, project, and filmmaker characteristics on the patterns however is negligible in this research effort. These contextual variables predict only very small differences in scores on the various patterns. I therefore argue that the patterns represent the core of respondents' experiences.

#### Discussion of the survey

In my survey, I have investigated the experiences of an international group of documentary filmmakers through a questionnaire investigating the extent to which they experienced certain moral issues, the strategies they chose to deal with them, and the circumstances in which this happened. My analysis focused on the way the experience of various moral issues and strategies is interrelated and the patterns these created. I also investigated the extent to which contextual variables could help predict this. There are a number of aspects of this study that are a cause for discussion and that limit the scope of this research.

I translated the many moral issues, strategies and most contextual aspects into one single statement for the questionnaire, mirroring it to represent the perspective of the participant where possible and relevant. But reality is of course more complex than single statements. Adding to this the fact that I have developed the questionnaire from scratch, there is undoubtedly a lot to be improved. The questionnaire could be tested more profoundly, reshaped and rephrased where necessary and adapted. It could be translated into several languages to accommodate respondents from different countries and continents. My research possibilities did not allow for this.

Only filmmakers completed the questionnaire, so the responses not

## Participatory spaces

only reflect their perception of their own experiences, but also their perception of their participants' experiences. Of course, the participants might view things quite differently, if asked... Also, the analysis included 158 respondents, which constitutes a rather small sample.

The distinction I made between moral issues and strategies is not reflected in the results. Strategies seem to play a minor role as less are included in the patterns and the mean scores for strategies are generally lower than those for moral issues. Also the patterns consisted of a mix of moral issues and strategies and a clear distinction is not visible. Maybe there are a lot more strategies filmmakers chose to deal with moral issues. Maybe the distinction is not always clear. This also deserves further investigation.

Another word of warning relates to the analysis in general. My sample consisted of a very heterogeneous group, including filmmakers from all over the world, with very different projects, made in very different circumstances. That might explain why my analysis only explains a limited amount of what is going on in the data. For example, the patterns resulting from the factor analysis explained only a limited amount of variance (43%) and predictive power of the contextual variables resulting from the multiple regression analysis was limited (see p. 102). This suggests that my data represent much more than these patterns clarify. The patterns do however in my mind represent the core of respondents' experiences. The limited predictive power of the contextual variables might be due to the heterogeneity of my sample. Possibly a more homogeneous sample, i.e., a sample with less variety in contextual variables, for instance, from two countries of production, or including short films and feature films, or including an equal number of project with and without a broadcaster involved, might yield more distinct results with respect to some other contextual variables. The subgroups in the sample should be of sufficient size to allow for significant distinctions between them. The filmmakers, participants, and projects included in my research were probably too diverse.

There is always the risk that respondents give socially desirable answers. Anonymity is one way to prevent this, but the way I collected my list of respondents made anonymity impossible: to maximize the probability of including independent and author documentary filmmakers, I took the

platform for screening films as a starting point and collected names of filmmakers who had their film screened at a documentary film festival (see p. 59). Instead of anonymity I offered complete confidentiality. But respondents might still have been hesitant to tell the whole truth. Let me return here to the question of how to approach survey data. Keeping in mind that respondents are not infallible when it comes to remembering (nobody is, after all) and that respondents may have – consciously or subconsciously – given socially desirable answers, it is also possible to understand the results not so much as reflecting reality, or the truth, but as reflecting an ideal, wishful thinking, or experiences affected by these. The point is not to take these results as representing real experiences per se, but as accounts of experiences, accounts that might have been affected by more recent experiences, by a filmmaker's self image, or by ideals about what the experience should have been like. They are filmmakers' ideas as much as experiences. They represent the perspective of filmmakers on their experiences with moral issues and strategies in various contexts.

In this chapter I have discussed the perspective of filmmakers in their practice, and on dealing with moral issues in that practice. In the next two chapters I will turn to the participant. In Chapter 5, starting on page 131, I discuss the results of four case studies, consisting of interviews with four Dutch documentary participants. But first, in the next chapter, I will discuss previous research on documentary participants as well as my methodological approach.



## 4

### **On designing case studies**

In one important respect the ethical problems of actuality-filmmakers are identical to those faced by research physicians, sociologists, psychologists, and so on: scientific experiments and direct cinema depend for their success on subjects who have little or nothing to gain from participation.<sup>94</sup>

In the discourse on documentary film and ethics, one voice is missing. And that is the voice of the participant. Of course there are the occasional participants who raise their voices when they decide not to agree with the choices the filmmaker has made (see a.o. Blair 2010; Bowler, Browne, and Herbert 2009; Gilbert 1988; Jalon 2011; Myers 2007a, 2007b, 2008). More often, participants are discussed from the filmmaker's point of view, based on an analysis of a documentary text (see, for instance, Myser and Clark 1998; Smail 2009; Wiseman 2001). Armstrong-Coster (2001) discussed an interview with a documentary participant about her experiences of making the film she was in, but focused on the question of how the film is constructed to persuade the audience to a specific reading and how media in general shape and reinforce cultural expectations, in this case of death and dying. But how participants themselves experience and talk about being in a documentary project has hardly been researched (see Nash 2009 for an exception).

Giving priority to the film, as my analysis in the previous chapter suggested documentary filmmakers as professionals might do (see p. 101), means that sometimes filmmakers might not (fully) meet the participant's wishes, or might value the interest of the film over the interest of the participant. For example, in the preliminary interviews I conducted with Dutch documentary filmmakers (see Chapter 1, p. 49), one filmmaker decided to

---

<sup>94</sup> Calvin Pryluck, *Ultimately we are all outsiders: The ethics of documentary filming* (In *New challenges for documentary*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1976), p. 260.

## Participatory spaces

include her brother in a film, not through interviewing or observing him, as he did not want to be included, but alternatively by using an old photograph.<sup>95</sup> Another filmmaker, in a project about homeless adolescents, decided to reward the participant and safeguard her participation by paying for some soft drugs after filming was over.<sup>96</sup> This invites the question what participants think of such 'treatment'. How do they experience participating in a documentary project? How do they experience the clashes between their interests and those of the film or filmmaker? How do they regard the choices filmmakers make in such cases? How do they evaluate the experience, their contribution, and their representation. And what were the consequences of their participation?

These questions I address in four case studies. In this chapter I will first discuss the theoretical framework of these case studies: how documentary participants have expressed themselves with reference to their experience; and the ensuing research question. Following that I will discuss my methodological approach to the interviews, which is grounded in qualitative participant research in other academic disciplines. I will also discuss the interview format, the sample, and the communication with the participants. In the third section I will address my analytical approach, which is informed by deconstruction and constructionism, focusing not just on *what* interviewees said, but also on *how* they said it. In the next chapter (see p. 131) I will present the results, with a focus on the experience as recounted by the participants, followed by a reflection on this research endeavour.

### **Theoretical framework**

Empirical research into the experiences of filmmakers and documentary participants is rare, even though what we do to the people we film and represent is central to the question of ethics (Nichols 1991, 2001). In Chapter 1 I have discussed scholarly perspectives on documentary participants (see p. 46). Below I will discuss the existing empirical research into participant experiences in documentary filmmaking and the ensuing research question.

The discussion below on participant experiences relies on Nash's

---

<sup>95</sup> Interview with filmmaker m08, 18 May 2005

<sup>96</sup> Interview with filmmaker m16, 6 July 2005

(2009) investigation of participant experiences in observational documentary films<sup>97</sup> and Armstrong-Coster's (2001) discussion of her case study of a documentary film on cancer.

In the case of documentary participant Lyn Rule, both she and the filmmaker acted on the other to achieve their goals. Rule's motivation for participating was to contribute to a public debate. She sought to protect private moments from inclusion in the film (Nash 2009). Rule seemed aware that the filmmaker had specific goals and acknowledged the role of the filmmaker as such, separating this from the filmmaker as person: "... his agenda is to make a film and the filmmaker persona is a part of him and the part that is least to be trusted ... but Tom the person I believe is intrinsically good ... and that remains so" (Nash 2009, pp. 194-195).

Susan participated in two documentaries about herself as cancer patient. The analysis of the interview with Susan addressed her decision to participate and later stop participating and focus on her illness. It was Susan who took the initiative and rang an acquainted producer because she wanted to tell her story (Armstrong-Coster 2001). It seems Susan also had a goal, or a motive. In both cases, the participant's agenda is visible.

In the end, in the case of Rule, trust and respect served to overcome difficulties and left both the filmmaker and Rule with positive feelings (Nash 2009). From Susan's account, it seems she initially gained strength from the programme and the many supporting responses from strangers she received (Armstrong-Coster 2001).

Another participant, Anne Boyd, did not sign any consent or release form beforehand but only after seeing the completed film. She considered the filmmakers, Bob Connolly and Robin Anderson, autonomous artists and let them make their own decisions, although there was a shared commitment to create a work of art (Nash 2009). So how do questions of informed consent and

---

<sup>97</sup> Nash (2009) formulated quite a strict framework for her research on observational documentaries produced in Australia and a priori defined documentary ethics as a "sensitive engagement with the documentary participant" (p. 26). Nash conceptualized observational documentary "as reflecting a filmmaking commitment to showing that results in long-term engagement with the documentary participant" (p. 98). Observational documentary does refer to the 'fly on the wall' style often aligned with direct cinema, but refers to the duration of filming as well as a visualisation of the events portrayed. The idea is that by unobtrusive as well as prolonged "surveillance" the documentary filmmaker can get beyond the 'performance' and reach the "true individual"(p. 89).

## Participatory spaces

representation work here? In Boyd's situation, the participant felt empowered by the production of the documentary. The film had specific consequences: it magnified fractures in the relationships between Boyd and her participating colleagues (Nash 2009).

Nash (2009) acknowledged the competing interests of participants' privacy and filmmakers' need to tell compelling stories (and the audience's right to know). One of the filmmakers felt torn between empathy for the participant and a desire to capture moments of crisis. He indeed felt a sense of conflict between the duty to the film and to the participants. Nash concluded that in her cases the relationship between filmmaker and participant was one of interdependence. Both worked to have their goals met and both tried and influenced the project to this end. Power circulated between them as they did so. Also, the concept of trust was experienced differently by filmmaker and participant, which lead to the observation that a filmmaker fears the loss of access and a participant fears betrayal. In addition Nash concluded that informed consent is a problematic concept in observational documentary due to the unpredictability of such a mode of production.

The discussion above gives a first glimpse of what it might mean to participate in a documentary project. As there is so little research into documentary participation, my case studies will methodologically be informed by research into another kind of participation: participation in qualitative academic research. Below I will discuss this choice and the similarities as well as the dissimilarities between qualitative research and documentary filmmaking. In this part of the research it is my aim to tap into the experiences of participants: what was it like to participate in a documentary film? How did participants contemplate participating, what happened and how do they look back on the experience? Since the participant-filmmaker relationship is central to my research, I will focus on it in these case studies too. The main question for the case studies is: How do participants evaluate their participation in the documentary project and how do they evaluate the role of the filmmaker, especially in situation where their own interests clashed with those of the film? Questions will focus on positive and negative experiences. In the following chapter I will discuss participants' accounts of their participation, *what* they told me about it: what their story was; what was central to the experience as

they related it to me. However, I also analysed *how* they related it to me, relying on constructionism and deconstruction. In addition, I will use the concepts most salient in the patterns that resulted from the survey, discussed in Chapter 3, as sensitizing concepts to see if and how participants related to them. Let me now address the methodological framework for these participant interviews.

### **Methodological framework**

The observation by Pryluck (1988) that opened this chapter refers to actuality-filming, to the unmediated, unrehearsed, observational, fly-on-the-wall filming that characterizes this then relatively new style. It is a style that is still widely used, in author documentary filmmaking as well as in other types of filmmaking, often in combination with other styles and forms, such as interviews. Apart from Pryluck's observation, I believe there are additional reasons to compare documentary filmmaking with doing qualitative research. Both represent an inquiry into a person or a phenomenon. Below I will first discuss documentary film as qualitative research. I will also discuss the moral issues in qualitative research. I will also discuss results from investigations of research participants' experiences how this informs my research. I will finish this section with a discussion of my interview method, my sample, and my communication with the respondents.

#### The documentary project as qualitative research

With respect to issues such as respect and humiliation, Pryluck (1988) noticed they are not unique to documentary film, as also the medical and the social sciences "... all search for their version of truth" (p. 260). Other scholars also discussed similarities between documentary filmmaking and scientific research. Ruby (1988) observed: "...the production of documentary images and the production of anthropological knowledge are in fundamental ways parallel pursuits. The moral and ethical concerns of one can be applied to the other" (p. 310). Becker (1988) considered that for "truly informed" consent the participant should know "...at least as much about the process of making

## Participatory spaces

photographs and films (or doing social research)...” (p. xiii). Besides questions of ethics I see a broader similarity between the experience of participating in a documentary film and the experience of participating in qualitative academic research. Documentary filmmaking can be understood as an inquiry into a person or a phenomenon. Filmmakers use different techniques, such as observational filming (*direct cinema*), interviews, personal documents (photos, diaries), reflexive methods to ‘check’ the results (such as those used in *cinema vérité*), and many more. Of these, observational filming and interviews might well be the most widely used, separately or combined (people being interviewed and filmed while they continue their activities). Observational filming and interviewing are akin to the qualitative academic research methods of direct observation and interviewing. Similarly, the filmmaker will try and construct a strong, convincing narrative or argument out of all the material, as will the researcher. Both need good material to be able to do this. And in addition, as Pryluck (1988) suggested, the moral issues in qualitative academic research are very similar to the moral issues in documentary filmmaking.

Podlas (2009) argued that documentaries are *not* qualitative research because they are not academic undertakings based on academic methods; neither are they aimed at generalizing knowledge. She compared documentary filmmaking to research within the framework of Institutional Review Boards’ overextending authority with non-fiction filmmaking as research, focusing on the situation in the United States. In her view, a documentary does not equal human subject research (which IRB’s are to approve) because it is not aimed at collecting data or private information (i.e., information expected to remain in the realm of the private, not for disclosure) and it does not concern biomedical or behavioural research. A documentary is not a systematic investigation including testing and evaluation to develop generalizable knowledge. Making a documentary is a creative endeavour, underlined by its copyright protection (Podlas 2009). One could add to these arguments that a documentary film is not designed to be replicated; on the contrary, non-scientific aspects such as a filmmaker’s subjective own voice and perspective are specifically appreciated in author documentaries (see my discussion on author documentary film in Chapter 1, p. 15). In addition, and this goes specifically for author documentary films, they are not primarily aimed at a quest for truth.

Despite all these differences, I believe the production of documentary film and qualitative academic research are similar enough to take the latter as a reference for investigating the former when it comes to investigating the experience of participants. First of all, as mentioned above, because the moral issues researchers encounter in qualitative research are very similar to those encountered in documentary filmmaking. I will go into this in the next section. Second, because ethical dilemmas are part of the everyday practice of researchers (Guillemin and Gillam 2004), like they are for documentary filmmakers. Also, because the ultimate responsibility for dealing with moral issues, despite the existence of Ethical Review Boards and the like, rests with the researcher (Guillemin and Gillam 2004), as it does with the filmmaker. And, finally, because the core of making documentary films, the clash between the interests of the participant and of the film, is recognized in qualitative research as the clash between the interests of the participant and of the research project (Allmark et al. 2009; Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007). Armstrong-Coster (2001) referred to this similarity when she asked “How do these producers and editors deal with the raw data that they collate?” (p. 288). I will discuss these moral issues, the clash between interests of the project and the participant, and the experience of research participants next.

Moral issues, clash of interests and participant experiences in qualitative research

One of the reasons for taking qualitative academic research as a reference for participant research is that many of the moral issues in qualitative academic research are the same or very similar to the moral issues in documentary filmmaking. In qualitative academic research, issues at play include privacy/confidentiality; informing/preparing the participant; informed consent (and its problems) and decision making; voluntariness/commitment/pressure; harm/distress/consequences (potential therapeutic benefit included); power, control, and disclosure; protection; reciprocity/getting something in return/paying; altruism/helping others in the same boat; trust; the importance of the study; communication/sharing findings; professionalism; and the public interest (Allmark et al. 2009; Graham, Lewis, and Nicolaas

## Participatory spaces

2006; Guillemin and Gillam 2004). These issues are clearly related to issues in documentary filmmaking I discussed in Chapter 1 (see Appendix 1, Table A1.1, p. 253 for an overview of such issues).

In addition, a clash is acknowledged in qualitative research concerning the interests of the participant versus those of the researcher in need of robust data. Researchers have a dual role as both scientist and therapist: they have to protect the participant but also obtain good quality material (Allmark et al. 2009; Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007). This reflects the same potential clash in documentary filmmaking I discussed above between the interests of the participant and of the 'product', the film (see Chapter 2, p. 38). The tension between the interests of the participant and those of the research project might take several forms: informing participants completely might chase them away; repeating they are not obliged to answer might produce poor results; and preventing discomfort might result in boring and unchallenging questions and doubts about the necessity and value of the research (Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007). The Australian national statement on ethical conduct on research involving humans mentions integrity as a guiding value: a commitment to search for knowledge and to honest and ethical conduct (Guillemin and Gillam 2004). Although the wellbeing of participants comes first, research "...starts from a position of ethical tension" (Guillemin and Gillam, p. 271). Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2007) called for a pragmatic balance between ethics, data quality, and practical constraints of time and money. However, according to Graham, Grewal, and Lewis, participants consider the quality of the research an important aspect.

A number of central themes emerge in participants' experiences in qualitative research. Participants decide quickly whether they want to be part of the research (Allmark et al. 2009; Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007). Anticipated personal benefits, altruism, a lack of compulsion or pressure, the status of the study, decent procedures, and user-friendliness of the research affect the decision positively (Graham, Lewis, and Nicolaas 2006; Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007). Getting multiple moments to receive and process information is important for participants (Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007). Here, informed consent as a process rather than a single event emerges. The relevance of the study also is an important aspect for deciding to participate

(Allmark et al. 2009; Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007) as well as for refusing to answer specific questions (Graham, Grewal, and Lewis).

There is some concern among participants about confidentiality (Allmark et al. 2009; Graham, Lewis, and Nicolaas 2006), but also a limited understanding of the concept and little interest in what happens next with the data (Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007). Control, being able to decide which questions to answer, is an important consideration when anticipating the interview, but in many research projects it is not clear how control is used (Graham, Lewis, and Nicolaas). Participants are willing to discuss painful issues provided the study is worthwhile (Allmark et al.). Reasons for withholding information are the above mentioned lack of relevance as well as sensitivity of the information (Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007). Moreover, participants are competent people who mediate the risk they encounter and are thus capable of making their own decisions (McIntosh 2009). Emotional distress, often seen as one of the risky elements of interviews on personal and sensitive topics, is not necessarily caused by the interview itself but rather by the subject matter. Such distress is also paradoxical; it is not just a negative experience or emotion (McIntosh 2009). Telling your story your way can be beneficial and provides alleviation, a feeling of catharsis, and a feeling of self-esteem (Graham, Lewis, and Nicolaas 2006; McIntosh).

The relationship with the interviewer emerges as crucial to the experience. For participants it is important to feel valued and cared about and to get a chance to express themselves as they like and take the time they need to do so (Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007; McIntosh 2009). Participants appreciate feedback (Allmark et al. 2009; Graham, Grewal, and Lewis). In terms of evaluating the whole experience, the positive aspects are expressed in stronger terms and are longer lived than the negative ones. The evaluation of the experience rests on how enjoyable the interview itself was, the perceived value of the research, and concerns about confidentiality (Graham, Grewal, and Lewis).

Many of the results discussed above seem relevant for participation in a documentary project and therefore they will inform my case studies. Below I will now discuss my interview method.

## Participatory spaces

### Interview method

In order to provide participants with an opportunity to speak about their experience as they please and make sure certain questions I had were addressed, I decided to use semi-structured interviews. The purpose of semi-structured interviews is to ascertain participants' perspectives regarding an experience while at the same time addressing specific topics. Based on questions and probes, the interview also allows for diversion and gives space to the participant to go elsewhere, if she wants to. However, starting from a number of preconceived questions, answers are also comparable (McIntosh 2009).

The aim of the interviews is to reconstruct the experience as much as possible (Graham, Grewal, and Lewis 2007). This means there is a kind of logical sequence to the topics, although sometimes they will be experienced as more parallel than sequential in practice. An initial schedule describing the subject matter, questions, probes, and relevant literature for the case study interviews I enclosed in Appendix 4.1, Table A4.1 (see p. 431). These questions and probes I derived from the literature and the survey results discussed in the previous chapter.

The first interview started with a so called grand tour question: an open question that allows the participant to start the interview and respond the way she chooses (McIntosh 2009). By in this case asking about the film, I invited the participant to talk about anything that concerned her participation in the project. Probes allowed me to slowly start focusing on the interview questions. From then on, I followed the chronology of the participation, from initial involvement, decision making, and expectations, to being informed, being filmed and interviewed, being involved in the results, to an evaluation of the experience. Important issues from the relevant patterns derived from the survey discussed in Chapter 2 included communication, interpretation, openness about one's agenda, information and consequences, the professional attitude of the filmmaker, and exploitation. They were addressed without asking direct questions about these issues in order to not influence the interviewees and unduly guide the course of the interview.

The second interview focused on what had happened since the first

interview and, with the passage of time and events, on the evaluation of the experience and the extent to which this evaluation had evolved. Some of the questions and topics were the same as in the first interview, some were different.

Here let me briefly address my own position in these interviews. The analogy of documentary filmmaking and qualitative research that underlies my qualitative research methods and that I discussed above (see p. 117) entails that by investigating the experience of documentary participants through semi-structured interviews I put myself, as qualitative researcher, in a position that mirrors the position of a filmmaker in a documentary project. And in line with the qualitative research efforts described above, I also have a dual interest: treating the respondents with respect and expressing a genuine interest in their accounts while at the same time making sure to get valid and interesting research data. And indeed, the former partly serves the latter: apart from feeling a duty to treat any human being with respect, I made an effort to relate to the respondents in order to make them feel comfortable, gain their trust, and elicit genuine accounts of their experiences. How my role as researcher can mirror that of the filmmaker is expressed among others by two respondents who related the interview directly to the making of the film and their participation in it. I will address how I found the four respondents for my case studies in the next section.

### Sampling and communication

To create a space for development in the evaluation of their experience as documentary participant, I had planned to interview participants twice, at specific points as much as possible, i.e., before the premiere of the film and some four to six months later. Deliberations with a number of filmmakers and producers beforehand had taught me that filmmakers would not want to have the interviews interfere with filmmaking in any way. Within this framework I opted for a practical approach and used a form of convenience sampling. To find documentary participants willing to share their experiences, I contacted filmmakers and producers known to produce author documentary films and asked them about suitable projects in terms of production status: projects for

## Participatory spaces

which filming had ended but which had not yet premiered. I also asked them for suitable participants, i.e., willing and able to talk to me. I sent them key information they could share with a participant. This information is included in Appendix 4.2 (p. 434). The first participant, Alex<sup>98</sup>, was contacted by the filmmaker, who, after Alex had agreed to being contacted by me, passed me his phone number. Chris and Debby were contacted by the producer of the films they participated in and the producer passed me their contact information after they had agreed to be approached for the research project. Ben I approached myself at the premiere of the film he was in, which I attended at the invitation of the producer. We agreed I would call him and send him some information about the research project. After having obtained their contact details I got in touch with Alex, Chris, and Debby myself. I called to explain my wish to interview them and my intentions. I sent all four respondents a short document with additional information, which is included in Appendix 4.3 (p. 436). In this information document I told the interviewees I wanted to know about how they experienced being in a documentary project. All participants I interviewed twice. The first round of interviews took place between the end of August and the middle of October 2010, and the second during January and February 2011. Details of the interview arrangements I discuss as part of the case studies in the next chapter.

Although my project is about documentary filmmaking and ethics, I did not mention the word 'ethics' in the information in order not to influence or deter the respondents and because I wanted them to talk about their experience as freely as possible. I did say I was researching how filmmakers and people who are being filmed for a documentary treat each other. I also mentioned the topic my questions would address. This way, respondents could get an idea of the kind of information I would be interested in.

For these interviews I did not use any consent forms. I included consent as part of the conversation. At the beginning of each interview I asked the respondents if they had indeed received the information and if they had any additional questions, which at that point none of them had. Alex and Chris requested me to explain the purpose of the interview again at the end of

---

<sup>98</sup> Respondents' names are fictitious to safeguard confidentiality (see also p. 131).

the interview. I also informed the participants that they could stop at any time and I invited them to talk without restraint and mention or recount anything they felt was relevant or they wanted to share. I also mentioned that at the end of the interview I would ask them how they felt about the interview itself. The interviews took between 34 minutes and 112 minutes and were recorded with a digital voice recorder.

After the interview I informed them they could get in touch with me at any time and by any means if they had additional remarks, questions, or if they wanted additional information. I also offered to send them the analysis of their accounts prior to publishing. The participants did not express complaints about the interviews and to date have not contacted me with any questions or asked for additional information. Debby did comment on an earlier version of the analysis of her interview, which I will return to in the section concerning her account.

As I mentioned above, I decided to not only analyse what the four respondents recounted about their experiences as documentary participants but also how they talked about it. Below I discuss the method I used for the analysis of the participants' accounts.

### Method of analysis

To analyse the content of respondents' accounts, I used a grounded theory approach to let the topics salient to their experience surface, but I also used the concepts most salient in the patterns discussed in Chapter 2 as sensitizing concepts, to see how participants related to them. I started by thematically coding what respondents talked about and which issues or topics they addressed (and not, for example, which question they answered). I gradually categorized codes, trying to limit the growing list. I focused by considering the most salient codes: the ones mentioned most often and the ones that reflected the most salient aspects of the account. After that, I searched for comments that related to the concepts salient in filmmakers' perspectives, if not yet addressed.

However, listening to the interviews and reading the transcriptions I immediately noticed aspects of not just what participants were saying, but how

## Participatory spaces

they said it. For example, I noticed that both Ben and Debby put their own words in perspective as soon as they had used a judgemental term to address the filmmaker's behaviour. And they also mentioned they understood the filmmaker's perspective or decisions. In addition, Alex often stepped away from the subject matter of the interview and talked about other things, only indirectly related to his experience as a documentary participant, and sometimes not at all related to it. This prompted me to look for a way to combine analysing *what* the respondents were saying with *how* they were saying it.

The combination of what and how is central in Holstein and Gubrium's (1995) approach through the active interview. They regard both respondent and researcher as active partners in a meaning making process, the interview. Any answer given in an interview occasion they regard as situated and constructed by interviewee and interviewer. In their approach, the *what* takes precedence over the *how*, but the two are inextricably linked: there is no content without a way in which it is conveyed. For Holstein and Gubrium, the combination of what and how is not just expressed in the analysis, but in the whole approach to and activity of interviewing. Although I did not approach the interviews themselves as active interviews, I did engage in conversation with the participants as much as possible. I had my list with questions but I tried to allow the respondents to talk as they wished about what they wished, sometimes steering the conversation back to the research topic but pursuing the topics they mentioned as well. I sometimes asked questions outside the research topic and I sometimes contributed some experience or expertise to the conversation. In that sense, the interview talk is fully the product of local interaction (Rapley 2004) I tried to have with them.

Silverman (2006) distinguished three approaches to interview data: positivism, emotionalism, and constructionism. Positivists regard information relayed in an interview as displaying facts, reality, and true events. Emotionalists try to elicit authentic accounts of subjective experiences by obtaining a rapport with the respondent and by using open ended interviews. Constructionists see interviews as local and situated and therefore include in their analysis how respondents construct their account (Silverman 2006).

In my view, the *what*, the 'factual' parts of the accounts, is indeed

important, as I want to understand what the experience of the participants I interviewed was like and how they look back on it. It is however my aim to improve and deepen my understanding of *what* respondents said by analysing *how* they said it by deconstructing their accounts. Of course, there is no single way of recounting experiences. People all speak differently; they all speak in their own way. Mistakes are part of everyday human interaction (Cicourel 1964, quoted in Silverman 2006). The danger of deconstruction in my view is that you disqualify people's way of saying things by over-analysing and over-interpreting their words and way of speaking. I am aware of this threat. The analysis of the interviews should not be about the interview as such. Analysing the interaction and as a consequence including my own role would put too much emphasis on the how of the accounts. It would feel like disregarding their input and the experience they so generously shared. Therefore, disclosing and understanding their experience as a documentary participant has priority over, for example, their presentation of self in an interview situation. However, because the how of their accounts was so striking, I included a deconstructionist approach. So the focus is on what participants told me. I will use elements of deconstruction in addition, to help me to better understand their account, to get beneath the surface of it.

Rapley (2001) discussed how an awareness and an analysis of "interviewees' talk" (p. 304), the talk between what we commonly understand to be interviewer and interviewee, should be part and parcel of any research that uses interviews, irrespective of the analytical stance taken. Interviewees' answers are elicited and directed by interviewers' questions, remarks, and silences. This way, both are working to produce the interview. According to Rapley (2001), understanding interviewees' identity work is central to understanding interview data. Identity work refers to the way interviewer and interviewee construct their identity in their talk, by morally relating to the topic of the interview, for example. Accepting that language is performative and speech acts are performative, speech is used "...to 'present the self' in a morally adequate light" (Rapley 2001, p. 307). In addition, interviews place moral demands on interviewees, so interviewees will construct moral talk, which also serves to present themselves in specific ways, e.g., as rational and sensible (Rapley 2001, 2004). In my analysis I paid attention to the way

## Participatory spaces

respondents present themselves vis-à-vis the topic of the interview as well as vis-à-vis the interviewer.

Aligned with the kind of identity work discussed by Rapley (2001), Holstein and Gubrium (1995), Rapley (2004) and Silverman (2006) discussed how interviewees can take different roles in an interview. People in general, and as a consequence people who are interviewed, do not have a single static identity. Instead, they have several identities: as family members (mother, aunt, daughter), as professionals (manager, peer, employee), or as acquaintance (friend, partner, neighbour), to name but a few. Most people will have several of such roles in life. During an interview, or during their narrative, interviewees may talk as, for example, representative, professional, or member of a subgroup (Rapley 2004). They might shift narrative positions and talk from the perspective of a specific role they have in life or even from the perspective of someone else (Holstein and Gubrium 1995).

When talking from the perspective of oneself, an interviewee can also speak from a specific point of view as an ignorant or knowledgeable person, someone who was or was not prepared. Miller and Glassner (1997, 2004), cited in Silverman (2006) discussed how interviewees construct their identities by, for example, making their actions explainable and understandable for others. They both challenge and rely on public and popular ideas and views such as stereotypes. Silverman (2006) also discussed Baruch's (1982) use of membership categorizing devices. Respondents can position themselves culturally: as member of a certain profession, as members of a certain religion, political conviction, or a certain ethnic group (see also Rapley 2001).

Narrative reflexivity occurs when respondents show awareness that they are actively involved in creating a story, when they assign agency to themselves and are involved in the construction of the relevance of specific stories (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). This can also be understood as taking a moral position: that of a good interviewee. So both identity work in terms of roles, including the moral position as adequate interviewee, and identity work in terms of culture or membership can help to further understand the accounts of interview respondents.

Martin (1990) used a number of elements to deconstruct a narrative about what a company did for a pregnant employee. According to Martin,

“deconstruction is able to reveal ideological assumptions in a way that is particularly sensitive to the suppressed interests of members of disempowered, marginalized groups” (p. 340). Deconstruction focuses on suppressed conflicts and allows for multiple interpretations of a text. Although in my project ‘marginalized’ documentary participants are the ones speaking, they might hold inexplicit ideologies about, for example, documentary film, or about their own role or profession. Martin wrote with a gender agenda in mind and reconstructed an alternative narrative from a gender perspective to show the gender bias in the original narrative. Since I do not have an agenda like that and my aim is not to subvert participants’ accounts of their experiences, not all elements Martin mentioned are useful for me, and I will discuss here the ones that are useful.

Silences indicate something that is not said, which can be more telling than something that is said: “In the significant silences of a text, in its gaps and absences ... the presence of ideology can be most positively felt” (Eagleton 1988, pp. 34-35, quoted in Martin 1990, p. 340). Disruptions and contradictions are other elements to look out for, as they are signs of repressed conflict; they indicate asymmetries and hidden ideologies as well (Martin).

By dismantling an apparent dichotomy, categories assumed to be mutually exclusive opposites might turn out to be intertwined (Martin 1990). A good starting point, according to Martin (1990), is “a dichotomy that is so central to a text’s unstated fundamental assumptions that its deconstruction can serve as a fulcrum point for prying open deeply embedded alternate interpretations of the text” (p. 343). The most obvious dichotomy here is the one that underlies this project: the dichotomy between filmmaker and participant. This dichotomy is also central to the documentary ethics discourse (see Chapter 1, p. 21). In general, the filmmaker is taken to be the creative motor behind the project, the person with the input, with ideas and a vision, who works hard to realize that vision; and the one with knowledge of the production process as well as access to the means of production and distribution (see p. 33). The participant is taken to be an element in that project, a larger or smaller one, whom the filmmaker employs to create her vision; the one unfamiliar with broadcasting and its implications, yet desiring media-attention while at the same time having nothing to gain (see p. 46ff). It

## Participatory spaces

seems worth investigating how participants' accounts relate to this dichotomy.

The clues to deconstruction are by no means exhaustive; neither do they serve as a strict model for analysis. They serve instead as preliminary clues, ideas to start with, and as a basis for approaching the interview transcripts. In the next chapter I will present and discuss the results of the four case studies.

## 5

### **Joy, learning, and self-expression**

Four documentary participant experiences recounted

...some way or other I always seek that, indeed people who stand at the outside or who react against something or, and that story ... actually surfaced ... when we filmed and that was so beautiful ... I think it clever they have released something... And then I think 'the film didn't profit from that'... And, but for myself I profited a lot and that the documentary also brought about.<sup>99</sup>

To investigate participants' perspectives on moral issues in documentary filmmaking, I conducted four case studies. For these case studies, I interviewed four documentary participants: Alex, Ben, Chris, and Debby. They participated on the basis of confidentiality and therefore, these names are not their real names. These given names reflect the order in which I was first in touch with them. In addition, I chose names that were short and that would work both in English and in Dutch. I interviewed each of them twice, before or shortly after the premiere, and again four to six months later.

I will start each case study with a discussion of the most salient themes and topics discussed in the first account. I will include from the second account only those topics that I consider changes or additions to the first account. So I discuss the second account with a focus on how it differs from the first. I will also include issues based on the concepts included in the most salient patterns uncovered in the filmmakers' survey data discussed in Chapter 3. Following that I will deconstruct the accounts, to get beneath the surface of the content. So in this chapter I focus on the accounts of these four participants and on understanding what and how they told me about their experiences. This means that the topic of this thesis, ethics in documentary filmmaking, will move to the background in this chapter. I will discuss relevant

---

<sup>99</sup> Documentary participant Ben, interview 15 September 2010

## Participatory spaces

issues but moreover I will try and understand what the experience was like, regardless of the moral issues that did or did not occur according to these participants. This hopefully opens up to a broader understanding of the experiences. I will return to the discussion of ethics in the next chapter, in which I will tie together the various research efforts discussed in this thesis. Excerpts of the accounts of the four documentary participants are included in Appendix 5 (p. 437) and I will refer to these where relevant. These appendices as well as other quotations included in the text are translated as literally as possible, to give an idea of how participants talked about their experiences, including slips of the tongue, repetitions, and hesitations. As a consequence, phrases are often incomplete and sometimes do not readily make sense. However, it was important to me to change the transcript as little as possible, because my analysis is based on everyday situated talk and includes considerations of how people speak (see the previous chapter). The first to go was Alex.

### **Alex**

Alex is a sixty-year-old shopkeeper who also keeps animals. The documentary in which Alex participated was about one of these animals and highlighted various approaches to it. Alex was one of a number of participants, but a central one. I interviewed Alex at home, next to his shop. The first time there were no other people around, but two people called on the phone and one came by to tell Alex that his animals had broken loose, so the interview was interrupted. The second time one daughter was in a corner of the room working at a computer and another daughter came in and left shortly after we had started the interview. During the second interview, Alex asked his daughter to get some more coffee. About halfway, Alex's wife entered the room and asked some questions about the interview and the research it was part of. So there were short interruptions in the family setting of the interview.

The first interview with Alex took place at the end of August 2010, prior to the Dutch premiere of the film, which was scheduled about three weeks later. The broadcast in the Netherlands was planned a little over a month afterwards. However, the film had premiered at one and had been

screened at another festival abroad. Alex himself had watched the film at home. The second interview took place about four and a half months after the first interview, in January 2011.

Alex's account of his experience is characterized by him often straying off his experience as documentary participant and speaking about other things. This happened in both interviews. He predominantly spoke about his animals, his experiences with various media, and his profession. Because I used semi-structured interviews, which leave room to talk how the interviewee prefers and to address additional topics, I only guided Alex back to the subject matter of the interview after a while, first giving him an opportunity to go back to it himself. However, his digressions into domains other than his documentary participation are an important aspect of his account and therefore I will address these as well.

Below I will first discuss the main elements of Alex's accounts of his experience as documentary participant. I will then deconstruct Alex's account to investigate underlying ideologies and assumptions, as discussed in the previous chapter (see p. 125ff). Excerpts of Alex's account are included in Appendix 5.1 (p. 437).

Alex's initial account: about Alex, about the experience, and about the filmmaker

Alex about Alex

In his first account, Alex talked a lot about his experiences with and attitude to media but also about his attitude to life in general. With respect to his experience as documentary participant Alex recounted he did not have any expectations about his participation in the film and he countered this with expectations of other people:

... those mothers of those children, they are totally enthusiastic, they ask about ten times 'when will that film come', and I say 'just wait and see'. I don't talk about it anymore because then you drive yourself completely nuts. ... you just have to do your work and in between you walk along with [animal]. ... I never really worried about it very much.

## Participatory spaces

Later he added phrases like “...let’s see what happens” and “I thought ‘oh well, this story is also finished, on to the next’”. Alex said several times that you “just” have to stay true to yourself (see also Appendix 5.1, p. 439, line 78). He added that the film was not about very personal matters, not about “extravagant things”. He related being true to oneself to being honest:

If you just stay true to yourself, nothing’s the matter, you don’t have to remember anything too. ... But if you go about lying to, the other day you need to say exactly the same and then he may have forgotten.

Alex related to this attitude of being honest and it being the “normal course of events” also with reference to dealing with his customers and again when I asked him how he felt about the interview. So this surfaces as his general attitude.

Another element in Alex’s attitude concerns how he relates to media and media attention in general: at the time of the first interview Alex hoped the film would be discussed in a popular daily television talk show in his presence. Later on, when he discussed the role of money, he said:

I say ‘I really cannot ask lots of money from the guy’, I say ‘I like it if he does it that way’ and that they see your name once more, that you see yourself on television, well, that is splendid isn’t it. ... If you see a beautiful film later and they talk about you, you have to, you have to find that splendid.

Here Alex’s attitude suggests he is someone who likes the media attention he gets and the consecutive attention it provokes in his direct surroundings.

Alex recounted that the filmmaker had located him as a result of prior appearances in the media. He had appeared in newspapers and on television with his animals. Alex referred to this casually several times and included how people responded with enthusiasm to these stories: “Because everybody, I was called by someone from uhm, from [town] today, he says ‘Man, I’ve never laughed so much about a newspaper’.” Alex also talked about how the attention continued: a children’s book had been written about Alex some time ago and a photographer had visited and taken pictures recently.

In this first account, Alex has a relaxed attitude toward being in the film. He believes in staying true to yourself but he also enjoys the attention,

seeking it if possible. In the second interview he made similar remarks which reinforces this understanding of his attitude. Alex recounted past and recent media experiences, but he did not do so to evaluate or frame his documentary participation. His account is anecdotal in nature.

#### Alex's evaluation of the experience

In his first account, Alex at several points talked about his experience as documentary participant. Alex recounted that he gradually found out what making the documentary film entailed: "Well, gradually you found out better. At that moment you didn't know yet when it was to be broadcast..."

Alex discussed several criteria for evaluating the experience. For example, asked how he looked back at the experience Alex responded: "Fun. Yeah. I like it too because, well uhm, last week it was in the paper again, a piece was in there, in the [newspaper], that soon that film will be screened." In addition and referring to the filmmaker he mentioned: "But I myself found it, he himself is uhm, very happy with it himself." In order to evaluate the experience Alex here draws on the input and opinions of others. If it generates media attention and if the filmmaker is happy with it, apparently the experience is good for him.

Alex also recounted a lot of things that happened during filming, but these stories were factual and anecdotal rather than evaluative in nature. For example, he recounted how he and the crew went to locations to film.

#### Alex about the filmmaker

Apart from factual information about the filmmaker, such as where he came from and that he had visited his shop, Alex talked about how he collaborated with the filmmaker. Alex recounted that he mostly just did what the filmmaker asked of him: "I just did actually what he wanted. And if it wasn't possible then I said so. But other than that there was little communication about it." Later Alex contradicted this, saying he could discuss everything with the filmmaker and he adjusted to Alex, to continue with a story about his animals. With respect to the filmmaker's way of working Alex mentioned: "...but where he was going, where he was going he didn't know yet. That is, he let it happen as well I think."

## Participatory spaces

Alex in addition mentioned about the filmmaker: “He found it splendid here too. He felt completely at home when he came here. It was just a very decent guy, as honest as the day is long” and added the filmmaker was “a magnificent guy”. Alex also recalled that the filmmaker’s parents had visited and had enjoyed dinner with him; and that the filmmaker’s father kept the same animals.

Although in general Alex acted compliant toward the filmmaker, he also recounted asking the filmmaker why scenes he liked were omitted from the final film. He recounted that he himself preferred a funnier film but “... that is not his intention”.

Alex seems to have been quite compliant with the filmmaker, pointing out mainly practical or physical obstacles to filming. He took a relaxed approach, taking things as they came. Modestly, he asked the filmmaker to account for his decisions in an effort to address his own preferences. But for him, his documentary participation is one in a series of media experiences, preceded and followed by others, and which he enjoys.

Alex’s second account: after the film, screenings, evaluation of the film, and more about Alex

Alex repeated many of the anecdotes he had told in the first interview but he also addressed some additional ones.

### After the film

Alex talked about consequences of the film and responses to it mainly in the second interview, although he had mentioned some in the first interview as well. He addressed, for instance, the consequences of his exposure: “I’ve become such a well-known person all at once. ... If they start such a film again some time or you go somewhere to a forest one day, you’re again in the paper”; and later: “ ... that many a person still talk about it of course. You are still the man about whom a film has been made...”

Alex mentioned he never attracted much attention with special offers in his shop (to which I will return, see p. 148), but hoped his media exposures would generate more customers as well. So here Alex relates his media

attention to publicity for his shop. In the first interview he mentioned this more as a niche effect: "...is that it... is of some use for the shop it is quite nice to collaborate in something like that, if it is no use at all, eh then uhm, yeah, then there's no need to actually." In the second interview his media appearances are an alternative for other forms of publicity for his shop and merchandise. (However, the film had also cost him a customer. In the first interview Alex had recounted how one visitor to the shop refused to be filmed and interviewed and did not return to the shop again. Alex said he regretted he did not have the address of this customer and he could not contact her, but he also reproached her for not wanting to talk about the issue. The loss of this client was not a salient part of Alex's first account and he did not mention it in his second account. It seems he is not too bothered by it and he shrugged his shoulders.)

At various moments in the second interview Alex recounted how people responded to the film. He talked about the reception of the film in one foreign country, where according to Alex they had preferred a happy ending, and in another foreign country, where the film "...ended in second place". Alex said people came to his shop as a result of the film, from all over the country "...because they still want to see you one day."

Alex discussed his correspondence with two individuals specifically, who responded to the film. Their criticism according to Alex concerned the ending of the film and Alex keeping animals in general. He also talked about how one person mentioned he did not like the film because there was nothing to laugh about, which reinforces the importance of humour for Alex (I will come back to this below). But apart from these specifically negative responses Alex recounted the film was met with positive responses.

### Screening the film

At the time of the first interview the film had not premiered yet in the Netherlands, and Alex discussed the film's screenings abroad prior to the Dutch premiere, and the premiere of the film in the Netherlands. Alex did not really know what to expect as he had never experienced such a premiere before. During the second interview, Alex discussed the premiere and referred to the quality of the music in the theatre as opposed to its quality on

## Participatory spaces

television. Alex noticed the differences and thereby presents himself as someone who paid attention to various aspects of the film, as a keen observer. However, Alex mainly talked about the possibility of a screening in a town nearby. He discussed the possibility of inviting school children to come and watch and discussed the need for the producer to agree with such a screening. And although Alex mentioned that just taking his DVD there and screening it was not allowed, he said he would do it anyway:

Hm, but well if uhm, if [filmmaker] and [producer] don't do it, then I will maybe go and do it myself. Then I will bring it. If he doesn't want to, then I'll do it myself. Then he'll have to screen my DVD.

In addition he talked about the success of the film at the Dutch premiere and at other screenings he attended. Alex here, rather than evaluating the premiere, mostly discussed future opportunities for screening the film.

So what was Alex's experience like?

Alex's account centred on filming activities, his relaxed attitude toward media participation, and toward life in general. For him, being a participant in the documentary film was one event in a series of media experiences he enjoyed with his past and current animals. Alex spoke very few evaluative words and mostly recounted anecdotes. He did not recount any major issues with the filmmaker, the crew, or the production team of the film. Also, in the second interview Alex was more focused on the future, on future screenings and future media experiences, than on the past or present.

The interview with Alex is characterized by him wandering off in other directions. Although I sometimes encouraged this by asking additional questions, Alex's preoccupation with the present and his own daily activities permeates his account in various ways: he talked more about his animals and his daily activities than about the film. Filming had been over for a while at the time of the first interview and it was something of the past. His current animals occupy his mind now.

Although Alex's substantial digressions into other domains do not reflect his experiences as documentary participant they are meaningful within the context of the interview, as part of his account. Therefore, I have included

them in my analysis and I discuss them below.

### Alex's digressions

In his many digressions Alex talked extensively about various topics. He recounted how he obtained his animals; how his love for his animals sometimes interfered with the need to treat them as merchandise, which they were; about their characters and characteristics; about taking care of animals; and about taking the animals out walking. He talked about places he had visited with one specific animal and what had happened there and about his wish to visit one of these places with the animals he was keeping at the time. An example of how this occupied his mind more than his documentary participant experiences occurred when he related that he did not consider his participation very long and thought it was fun: "... 'well, then we'll go and make a film about [animal]', because I always have the hope of going to [shopping street] with [animal]...". Alex relates the possibility of making a film with his wish to go on an outing with his animal, regardless of whether that is suitable for the film, as if it were a logical consequence of participating.

Alex also dwelt on media. In the first interview Alex talked about the possibility that he would be invited to participate in a popular daily television talk show, as discussed above. Later on he talked about another television programme, one in which someone had refused to be filmed (something one of his customers in his shop had refused as well, see above). He talked about a famous Dutch actor with reference to non-documentary film and later on he dwelt on the absence and presence of another actor/presenter and the soap series he had played in. Aligned with this, Alex reminisced about locations nearby where he had gone with the film crew and where a popular children's programme had been recorded a few decades earlier. Also, Alex dwelt on a photography session that recently took place with his animals.

His family was another reason for digressions: his wife sometimes became involved in Alex's media adventures and his daughter expressed her pride of her father while travelling abroad, something that had surprised Alex because she was often critical of his media appearances. In addition Alex dwelt on his profession and talked about initiatives he had taken, and about how the shop was running.

## Participatory spaces

In the second interview many of these topics returned in Alex's digressions: his experiences with his animals, characteristics of his animals, his wish for future activities with his animals, the actor mentioned in the first interview, and his profession. He also talked about his other daughter's ventures in photography and how she enjoyed taking photos of the animals. At one point he dwelt on how to deal with phone calls about lotteries. There was a large variety in the topics Alex addressed.

What do Alex's digressions mean?

In his digressions Alex takes the freedom to discuss what keeps him occupied, what is on his mind. Mostly this concerned his adventures with his animals and the media. Asked whether there were any moments when he reconsidered his participation or when he was asked to do something he did not want to, Alex answered

No, that is, not especially. No... No, there has completely, been nothing that you say 'well, this uhm... this is the limit. It was never the limit for me. [laughs] ... Than it should really be very extreme something different because. Because he of course always likes, if you were at sea he also wants to walk along that boulevard.

Having nothing much to discuss in terms of reconsidering his participation, Alex returns to his experiences with his animals. This illustrates his preoccupation with his adventures with his animals. His family is also an important part of his daily life, though he talked about them with reference to his animals and media experiences.

Alex's digressions as well as his lack of evaluation of the experience suggest that his experience as documentary participant is only at the back of his mind and does not play an important role in his life today. Alex talks about his current thoughts and preoccupations, which include his animals and his experiences with them. These animals have on several occasions been his ticket to media exposure. His digressions can be understood as public relations work: in the interview Alex sees an additional opportunity be in the

limelight with his animals.<sup>100</sup> Having discussed Alex's account of his experiences as well as Alex's digressions, I will now deconstruct Alex's account.

### Deconstructing Alex's account

#### Alex's world view

When Alex talked about his animals he said: "Actually you should let your common [profession-] sense work" and "...but at that moment, when you think 'he should listen', then he doesn't, so than you have to chase that [animal]". Although he uses the second person singular, Alex is talking about himself here, referring to his own experiences and thoughts. Talking in terms of 'you' instead of 'I' makes what is said more generally valid. Alex rationalises his own ideas and experiences to a more general truth. In the excerpt below, he does this with reference to the interview he gave after the premiere of the film: " '...if I talk, I want them to hear me too.' And otherwise you shouldn't talk." (Appendix 5.1, p. 438, lines 45-46). It also happens when he said: "You shouldn't know everything in advance" and "It's your normal life and then there is little you need to remember".

Alex does the same thing when he says: "I miss the, you do miss your [animal]." The switch from 'I' to 'you' is obvious here. In this case, Alex might try to shield off his personal feelings. It might be a way to prevent accounts from becoming personal, as if he needs to account for himself. Also, he appeals here to a shared understanding of loss. Alex's observation that the film was not about something private or personal was a motivation for his participation. Speaking in the second person singular prevents an account from becoming strictly personal and provides an opportunity to create common ground, to which I will return below.

Talking about filming, Alex recounted: "No, we just went to the sea, for example. He made an appointment once with a couple of..." Alex switches from 'we' in an account of how he and the filmmaker agreed on filming days, to 'he', without further indicating who this 'he' is. Alex thereby creates a silence around the filmmaker. Also, Alex not always separated the filmmaker from the

---

<sup>100</sup> This to me is an example of how Alex mirrors the interview with his participation in a documentary film (see also the discussion of my position as interviewer, p. 123).

## Participatory spaces

cameraman or other crew members and jumped from the single to the plural without making explicit whom this concerned. For instance, he recounted: “And [filmmaker] he thought in the beginning ‘that [animal] will run, run after everything’ but that also is not the case. They especially made a little cart ... he had to mount that camera on his neck...”. Here, Alex ‘silences’ who made the cart but suggests it was made by at least two people. He then used ‘he’ but it is not clear whether ‘he’ refers to the filmmaker or to a cameraman. In his digressions Alex also does this several times, saying things like: “We went there once, he wasn’t there with that film...” and “And what I walked with was not the [animal] you saw being born there, it was not a [animal] but it was another [animal]. Because then he wasn’t around yet.” Alex seems to assume it is evident he is referring to the filmmaker. The identity of the ‘he’ is not important or relevant to mention because Alex knows who the ‘he’ is.

At one point in the first interview, Alex introduced someone but did not explain who she is. He just ‘drops’ her name and mentions she took over two of his animals. In the first quote included from Alex (see p. 133) it is not clear which mothers and children he is talking about. The source of the information shared here remains concealed (it might be Alex’s own observation of something he heard about). In the excerpt included in Appendix 5.1 (p. 437) Alex creates silences around specific individuals but I think for different reasons. First because he does not know exactly who they are, for example when he says: “... they put up a tent ...” (p. 437, lines 7-8); “...there was a woman who was to do the interview with you, but that woman wasn’t there...” (p. 437, lines 9-10); and “And do they follow you...” (p. 438, line 62).

Second because he refers to specific people but talked about them in general, for instance, when he talked about his fellow professionals: “... or they’re jealous” (p. 438, line 55) and “Then they want it themselves, but they don’t do it themselves.” (p. 438, lines 59-60).

When he recounted the possibility of participating in a popular daily TV talk show, Alex said:

But I would, one hand I would like to watch it again. He might appear with [TV host] ... Then you can tell the audience, which still, millions of people watch, watch that channel ... then you can go and say that it will be broadcast.

It is not clear whether Alex refers to the film or to the filmmaker when he says: “he might appear with”. (In Dutch, the word ‘film’ is masculine.) As a consequence, the ‘you’ in the next phrase might either refer to himself or the filmmaker.

Alex sometimes suddenly switches to other moments in his experiences with his animals. When Alex recounted an anecdote about a funny event with one of his animals, one that was recorded but not included in the film, he said: “That are such fragment exposures. Just like when we were walking by the sea...” to continue with that event, which was also funny, possibly recorded, but not included in the film. As discussed above, Alex linked his consideration for participating to the possibility to visit a specific shopping street with his animal. Alex here considers the possibility to make a film as a possibility to pursue his own wishes, a trip with one of his animals, without considering whether this is relevant for the film. With this switch he calls attention to his preoccupation with his animals.

By rationalizing his own ideas and experiences to general truths, by silencing specific individuals, omitting context and elucidation because the situation is clear to him so there is no need for further explanation; and by focusing on his own wishes and preoccupations with his animals, Alex places himself at the centre of his universe and speaks from this perspective: he has a clear idea about himself, about his own position in the world. Alex’s thoughts centre on his own perception of his environment. It makes sense to him, so there is no need to explain. His world is his reference.

#### Alex’s preoccupation with media

At one point, Alex suddenly switched from his filming experiences to a former Dutch children’s programme, apparently recorded in the same area: “Likewise we have looked up we have several of such images. Magnificent images. Also like, [children’s programme] was also filmed like that eh?” He then continued to talk about this programme and I engaged in it for a while. After talking about making appointments for filming, Alex again suddenly switched to a media-topic: “It never bothered me so much ... I was very fine with it ... It was... My daughters they say, it drove them crazy at times, that they ‘now I saw you father again on the telly’. If they were at their jobs. ‘Oh, didn’t you see

## Participatory spaces

anything else?’ ‘No just your father’.” It seems Alex did not have a lot to share about making arrangements to film and he switched to something he is more keen on sharing, which points to how he revels in his media experiences.

With respect to the attention he gets from the media, Alex at one point shifts from a passive attitude to an active attitude when he recounted

... but I don't avoid it. If someone wants to film, fine. I w-, and I will uhm, if I get the chance I will certainly invite [broadcaster], 'hey, I am going to the sea, do you feel like filming that?' (Appendix 5.1, p. 439, lines 63-65).

Here Alex initially mentions people are welcome if they want to follow and film him. But he soon mentions he will invite a specific channel to come and film him. Alex recounted that: "... soon we will have to go to the forest again, because we have been invited by [programme]...". Later in he said: "... you hope once again that you were called up..." (p. 439, line 82), which also indicates a sense of 'having to do something', of passive subjection to what someone else demands. Through these contradictions Alex suggests these events happen to him, but he is seeking the attention as well and enjoying it. So here Alex's preoccupation with media and with being on television also surfaces.

### Alex's confusion about media

Alex sometimes confuses filmed material with what is actually in the film. For example, about a specific scene with one of his animals he recounted: "...that he hadn't filmed those, that I felt was a shame..."; the scene concerned was included in a trailer of the film but not in the film itself. Also, Alex sometimes confuses events for the documentary film with other media experiences. Asked whether he was interviewed for the film, Alex answered:

No, I don't think so. Had interviews but that is for a daily, or for a, for [national newspaper A] or [national newspaper B]. ... Uhm, well my wife accidentally played along here, because she never wants to, she doesn't want to be on the screen ... she was on the front page of [local newspaper]."

Alex seems to conflate various media here. He does remember the interview but is confused about its platform.

Alex also confuses various aspects of media. For example, in the appended excerpts below, he mentioned: "... all those festivals, were there or those uhm documentaries were filmed there..." (Appendix 5.1, p. 437, lines 8-9). He later acknowledges: "Yes, I found that a fun broadcast" (Appendix 5.1, p. 438, line 35) and a "...clear broadcast" (p. 438, lines 50-51). The festival talk show Alex was in was filmed and streamed on-line. The host of the festival talk show also hosts the popular daily TV talk show mentioned above. Alex conceives of cameras and the presenter as being part of television and expresses himself in terms of television as well. Alex however is less familiar with the workings of new media and all the more focused on television.

With respect to specific scenes he liked Alex recounted: "Yes. But those things I ma...marked, that I said 'hey, pity that that wasn't in there'. Yeah whether he, yeah, could have done that but he hasn't done it" and "I said 'hey, we were filming weren't we. You are right on it with that camera. Just like that, that crowd exploded'. I said 'than they surely are ready to go and just film that'." Here Alex is unsure whether certain incidents he liked were intentionally left out of the film or were actually filmed at all. But almost disregarding the answer he contemplates about how he would have liked to have them included in the film.

Alex confuses screenings of the film with broadcasts: "... I also attended three of those broadcasts ... of those premières ... or uhm, documentaries, or how do they call them again? Premiere is the first one ... then what is it called afterwards?". With reference to receiving e-mails Alex recounted: "Look for such a telly, for such an uhm, if you get such a message in between..." With respect to screenings of his film in a town nearby, he recounted: "If we are going to broadcast in [town], if he gets in the, in the film..." Alex seems not very aware of the workings of various media, confuses screening with broadcasting, and seems to be focused on television. It seems he mostly seeks appearances in this medium.

Finally, Alex also struggles to describe his own contribution and describes it in terms of acting and non-acting. For example, he recounted that various shots had to be repeated and that it was exciting to see whether the animal would be willing to cooperate, but at the same time he mentioned that he was not playing: "He made it after all and I had to uhm, not play along, it

## Participatory spaces

was just recorded. It's also not a real film eh, you you don't play it, it's just the truth." (See also Alex's remark above about it being "your normal life", p. 141). Although Alex talked about aspects of constructedness of the documentary film such as going places to record, having to walk from A to B, relating this to how a popular children's series was filmed, and repeating the recording of shots, he regards his contribution as reflecting his everyday life and his everyday self.

Alex seems preoccupied with media and media experiences with his animals. But he seems unaware of how media work: he wonders whether excluding something was done on purpose<sup>101</sup> and confuses various media manifestations. To him, the front, being exposed himself, is more important than the back, the ins and outs of the media as technology, industry, and profession. To Alex, the media attention just happens to him but he is also actively seeking it. His documentary participation was just one in a series of media experiences.

### Alex's actual and potential identities

In Alex's account of his experience as documentary participant two identities surface: an actual one as animal- and shopkeeper and a potential one as media-star. Permeating these two is his identity as a joker.

In the very beginning of the first interview, Alex mentioned that the film he participated in was about one of his animals, and that this was his pet-animal. Here he immediately positions himself as someone doing something out of the ordinary, that is, keeping as a pet an animal that people usually do not keep as a pet. When he talked about keeping animals free-range, he said: "That I do that with my [animal], but if you have a hundred, you cannot go and do it this way." Here he again positions himself as a somewhat extraordinary animal-keeper. Asked whether he would participate in a documentary again, he said: "Yeah I don't know if they, what they are going to do then, if they start about a [animal] again of something else". He also identifies himself as member of a group of animal keepers: "... [the animals] have a very large, we call that a heap, an open haystack let's say."

---

<sup>101</sup> Making films entails conscious decisions about what scenes to include and hence what scenes to exclude; in that sense such decisions are always 'on purpose'.

Alex regularly refers to his identity as shopkeeper. For instance, he recounted with respect to participating in the film: “But you are just true to yourself, so everyone may know. It, that is quite easy, if you work in the shop too, if you are just honest to the customer, you don’t have to remember anything” (see also p. 134) Later on, when he mentioned that people’s responses to the film will determine whether he will be content with his participation, he said:

If everybody loves to see that movie and they talk about it, than you cannot be but satisfied. ... And if you don’t hear anything and it is swept under the carpet, yeah, what should you be satisfied then, yeah, I don’t know? That is the same as when here in the shop they say ‘I’ve been busy’, ‘it’s been busy’, my personnel says, I say ‘well, the cash register doesn’t show’.

He mentioned with respect to the filmmaker: “No, I don’t think him uhm too big for his boots. I think a lot of of those of that kind of people don’t do that, that are totally a different kind of audience. Look a [Alex’s trade] is also very different again.” Here he sets himself and his trade apart from that of the filmmaker.

His identity as animal-keeper and shopkeeper are part of his actual identity: this is what he is in everyday life as a professional. But in addition to this one a potential identity comes to the fore, as Alex makes repeated references to media appearances, celebrities, and making comic films. Through these, an identity as potential media star surfaces, as, for instance, he relates his own appearance to that of a late Dutch television personality who had been filmed for a longer period of time: “There he also all his life, he maybe for a year and a half, followed [TV-personality]. And likewise he followed me for a year and a half, with that [animal]”. Here, “all his life” might be a slip of the tongue as the TV-personality in question was filmed in the last stage of his life for a biographical documentary. This disruption reveals Alex’s preoccupation with media and stardom. Alex anticipated an appearance in the popular daily television talk show, using the host as reference and later saying: “There is a chance that it will be broadcast that same evening. At least, that we will be with [TV host] that same evening”, referring to the presenter rather than the programme. In both interviews he referred to a well known Dutch actor when

## Participatory spaces

discussing acting instead of ‘being yourself’ in a documentary. He finished the second interview with the remark: “On to the next film.” Alex here refers to other people rather than to films or programmes (the title of the children’s programme was the name of its main character); his preoccupation is with famous individuals rather than with films or programmes that made an impression on him. Thus he presents himself as a potential media star. At one point, Alex’s identities as shopkeeper and as potential media artist coincide:

Look, I’m never really such a seek the limelight with uhm special offers and such. I’m very bad at that, but something like this. If they yet again start with such a film or you one day go to the forest, you again are in the newspaper that you walk your [animals] in the forest.

Alex also identifies himself as a humorous person: “Yeah, with me you always have to laugh your socks off [laughs], that you really, have fun in such a film [laughs]...” Later he recounted a scene with his animal: “People were screaming with laughter.” In both interviews Alex discussed the possibility of making a second, comic film with all the funny scenes that had not made it into the final film. Asked whether he would participate in another documentary he said: “You know, it can also be something different ... maybe something funny, really walk through [shopping street] ... then you go and give it a comic touch. That everyone is holding their sides with laughter.” In the second interview Alex recounted how the filmmaker had included different aspects of the subject matter in the film: “Otherwise they would have only seen me and the of course they would only have funny things.” So Alex positions himself as someone to have fun with, someone who likes to joke around. When Alex recounted his expectations for the premiere of the film he said: “I wouldn’t have a clue what’s waiting for you there. I say ‘should I bring my red carpet myself or will you put one down?’.” Here his identity as potential media star coincides with his identity as joker.

In the interviews Alex’s identity work reflected both his actual and a potential identity, the former including his identity as animal-keeper and shopkeeper and the latter his identity as potential media star. Transcending the two is his identity as joker.

Alex as interviewee: creating common ground, honesty, and knowledge

Alex relates to the interviewer in several ways. He does that by asking for recognition of what he says: “You know”; “Look, isn’t that fantastic?”; “That is fun, isn’t it?”; and “That people find fun too don’t they?” (Appendix 5.1, p. 439, lines 66-67). He also checks whether I can follow him in his account: “... I don’t know, are you familiar or not at all?” referring to the area where he lives and works; “Did you ever watch [children’s programme] or not?”; and “You’ve been fifty?”, checking my age to see if I can relate to his memories. He referred to another TV programme to make his point: “Yesterday evening there was one, I don’t know if you’ve seen it?” In the second interview he asked: “Did you see it yourself?”, referring to the documentary he participated in. In these instances, Alex checks with me whether I understand what he is saying. He asks me to recognize what he is saying and thus wants to make sure his remarks are heard and understood. In doing so Alex tries to create common ground.

Alex also reflects on his own role in the interview: “Never really thought about it, only now I have to go and think”, and later “[long silence] Have I expected anything from it”. He sometimes posed questions, when he could not remember something: “... what is his name again?” and “On what channel was that?” Here Alex shows that he is capable of reflecting on his own account and willing to share his uncertainties. He presents himself as an honest guy who contemplates the questions posed to him and who negotiates the correct information with the interviewer. In doing so, he presents himself as a sincere interviewee.

Alex presents himself as knowledgeable about the subject matter of the film he participated in, making a lot of remarks about what is and is not good for the animals, sometimes encouraged by my questions. For example, he said: “...it can be cold, those animals can well stand the cold. ... Better the cold than the heat” and

The first time it was only a little stretch you know, because it was far too hot. ... So then you should go once with 15 degrees, now we went with 27 and that was heat wave for that animal so that uhm that did not go so well.

He mentioned how they approach you ‘barking’ and in both interviews he

## Participatory spaces

recounted how the filmmaker had tried to make the animal do something specific but had not succeeded: “And then he taught ‘well, we shall teach that [animal] something now’, but you can’t teach them anything. Not directly at least.” Alex shares his knowledge about the animals he keeps as part of the interview, not as part of his experience as documentary participant.

Finally, Alex presents himself as knowledgeable about acting and film production when he said, for instance: “But well, before you can such a film, that will take a while...” indicating that filmmaking does not happen overnight. Alex mentioned that selling DVD’s of the film might make him some money: “...this has just uhm, let’s say just, yeah, not cost money 100% but it cost money.” About acting Alex said, in addition to the above mentioned (see pp. 145-146): “I wouldn’t know where they otherwise, should make a documentary about something other, then it becomes a film. Than you play along, uhm just like [Dutch actor] or uhm...” and “... because here there is actually no, there is no acting in it, right? ... And if you take a film, otherwise, or a theatre play or something like that, there is really acting in there...”

So Alex works to establish common ground with me as interviewer and make sure he is heard and understood; he presents himself as honest and knowledgeable about the animals he is keeping and about film production and acting.

So how did Alex recount his experience?

Deconstruction of Alex’s account points to how Alex places himself and his daily activities at the centre of his universe. He does not always make explicit who he is talking about; he phrases his own ideas and thoughts as general truths; and he confuses other people’s roles.

Alex seems somewhat preoccupied with media. The preoccupation with the media concerns the ‘front stage’: media appearances. But Alex seems also confused about media’s workings, about the ‘back stage’: he conflates media and he is unsure how to describe his own contribution. He is also preoccupied with the animals he is keeping and with opportunities to seek media exposure with them.

Alex in his interviews works to establish common ground with me as interviewer, to be heard and understood. He shows his honesty but also

presents himself somewhat as knowledgeable about documentary, about filmmaking, and about his animals. His other experiences with his animals and his media experiences, in which many other people play a role, occupy his mind more than his experiences as documentary participant.

Concluding remarks on Alex's account

Alex's accounts about his documentary participant experience centred on the experience of the filming activities, his wish that some more funny scenes were included in the film, and his relaxed attitude toward media participation in general, but mostly on himself. For him being a participant in the documentary film was one event in a series of media experiences he enjoyed with his previous and current animals. Alex spoke very few evaluative words and mostly recounted anecdotes.

Alex's preoccupation with the present and his own daily activities permeated his accounts in various ways: he talked more about his animals and his daily activities than about the film he participated in. Alex's digressions as well as his lack of evaluation of the experience suggest that his experience as documentary participant is only at the back of his mind and does not play an important role in his life today. Alex is focused on the future. For him, being in the documentary was fun, but it is time for new things now. Alex did not recount any serious trouble with the filmmaker and that might be one reason why he has left the experience behind him. Also, Alex comes across as a talkative person who likes a good conversation and likes to have fun with people.

Deconstruction suggests Alex puts himself at the centre of his universe, seems preoccupied with being on television but confused about how media work; it points to Alex's actual identity as animal-keeper and shopkeeper and his potential identity as media star; and it suggests Alex in his interviews tried to establish common ground with the interviewer, to be heard and understood. He shows his honesty but also presents himself as somewhat knowledgeable about filmmaking and about his animals. His other experiences with his animals and his media experiences occupy his mind much more than his experiences as documentary participant.

In short, Alex's account of his experience as documentary participant

## Participatory spaces

shows that even though he would have preferred a funnier film he liked the experience and enjoyed it. However, it was one media experience among others. It also showed that Alex is preoccupied with the media and with being on television, while at the same time being confused about it.

The second person to agree to being interviewed about his experiences as documentary participant was Ben. I will discuss his case next.

### **Ben**

Ben works as a nurse visiting various clients at night. Ben participated in a documentary about a politician and his political movement. He was one of quite a number of participants. In my search for documentary participants, the producer of the film had invited me to attend a private premiere and contact any participant I deemed interesting for my research project. After the screening I approached Ben first because I felt his part in the film, compared to the parts of other participants present, was most distinct and simply because he was there. Ben agreed to participate in my study and the first interview took place less than a week afterwards, in mid-September 2010, at his home. Later that same month the film screened at a film festival and it was broadcast shortly after that as well. The second interview also took place at Ben's home, five months after the first interview, mid-February 2011.

At the beginning of the first interview, Ben immediately mentioned how he felt about the film and that it had not met his expectations. He gave a quick answer to my grand tour question ("Can you tell me about the film you participated in?" ... "What was it about?") and continued with his ideas about the film. Ben of course knew that I had attended the premiere and that I knew what the film was about, so he might have felt that this question was redundant. However, in my view it also indicates that to Ben this was an important topic. I will discuss the content of Ben's account first, including his overt identity work; following that I will deconstruct his account to see what assumptions and ideologies might underlie them. Excerpts of Ben's account, to which I will refer, are included in Appendix 5.2 (see p. 440).

Ben's initial account: about the film, the experience, the filmmaker, about Ben himself, and Ben's involvement

Ben's evaluation of the film

As I mentioned above, Ben immediately turned to his evaluation of the film at the beginning of the first interview. Ben began by mentioning the film was different than expected. The film discussed a certain political movement and according to Ben, the filmmaker had said it would be balanced in terms of sympathy for and criticism of this movement:

... the setup was indeed to eh, paint as objectively as possible a picture... and uhm, if I see the film now ... or you then really talk about fifty-fifty, yeah then I think indeed that that it uhm let's say thirty percent pro ... and seventy percent anti... ...that proportion ... I had expected it somewhat more even.

Ben said he was disappointed that the filmmaker turned out to be unable to let go of his own opinion about the movement. Ben recounted he understood a filmmaker has to make choices and "what angle do you choose" but added he would have preferred another angle. Later he mentioned: "Yeah, yeah, that I think could have been different, or should have maybe even yeah." So Ben explicitly expressed his disappointment about the lack of balance in the film.

With respect to his own contribution, Ben recounted he was mostly happy, save one scene, which Ben criticized and which I will discuss below. He discussed how within the whole film his contribution worked to create a balance in the story: "Look, there are certain things that of course, uhm, bring the film or the story in balance. That [filmmaker] has also, also mentioned eh, that [scene], look that, that pulls much of the story into balance" (see also Appendix 5.2, p. 441, line 63). Partly relying on the filmmaker's words, he expresses an understanding of the appeal this particular scene had for the film.

The one scene Ben was critical about concerned his admiration for a number of people. After remarking that his contribution in general was represented "as agreed", Ben talked about this scene: "There are cert- there is indeed a piece of which I think 'yeah, that's been placed slightly in a different context'. That is not, not the wrong but indeed a different context." In this

## Participatory spaces

scene, according to Ben, a link was suggested with the subject matter that was stronger and more direct than Ben experienced it. During filming, the scene was preceded by an interview about Ben's youth and his heroes, his words pertaining to a number of people; but edited into the film it was according to Ben too much connected to only one individual. In Ben's view this image is not completely truthful.

Ben also expressed praise for the film, first because it showed things he did not know: "But conversely he [the filmmaker] has ... that I should add, that too opened my eyes eh." Later he added: "... it shed another light ... that I really like too, but if I just look at the proportion..." Ben recounted that the film made him think: "Like wha-what is actually going on and that's why the film captivates me, yeah I eh, it makes you think."

Ben mentioned he thought the film was well-constructed. But he also mentioned he felt something was missing. He considered himself a right-thinking person, an 'average Joe', who nevertheless supports a movement often regarded as unreasonable. He would have liked there to be more emphasis on his support for the movement and for his motivation for that support: "It is of course wife and kids and terraced house ... there's no end to it actually. ... just, yeah, that someone like that can also think more radically, that could have been included as well..." (p. 442, lines 72-76).

Ben's evaluation of the film encompassed thoughts about the lack of balance; the way one scene that included him was taken out of context; his wish to express himself more strongly; and how the film informed him. So Ben evaluated various negative and positive aspects of the film.

## Ben's learning experience

Ben recounted that before participating in the documentary he tended to keep silent about his political ideas and preferences but now, afterwards, he is more inclined to speak his mind:

That was a choice back then and again, I have changed in that because now I also just say to people. Yeah, I sometimes hear people discuss... Yeah, then before I would uhm then I needed to know people a little better. Now I have something like 'hey, it's your opinion, but well...'

Ben recounted how the experience taught him to put things in perspective:

... I always want to be right. And that I think I also learned from it that a person is just not always right. ... Yeah, and it contributed to that as well. Yeah, ok hey, that also has to do with I intended it this way and someone else represents it that way.

Later he talked about what advice he would give to others:

Bear in mind that it has a lot of impact. ...it has so much impact it is not just your head on the telly, but you, you also bare part of your soul let's say and your thoughts, which never occurred to you yourself. ...I thought I really knew myself ... this is how I view life and this and that ... you can as a human being sometimes have things in your head ... then you have to explain it as well, eh? ... 'what do you mean by that?'

Ben learned to negotiate his own opinion among others'. In the second interview he also credited the filmmaker and his team for bringing a side of Ben to the surface, a side he was not too aware of himself:

...that is something I found out since that documentary it is not just about what [politician] says, but much more about who he is. ... some way or other I always seek that, indeed people who stand at the outside or who react against something or, and that story came very much, actually surfaced with me spontaneously as well here when we filmed and that was so beautiful...

He added: "... I think it clever they have released something... And then I think 'the film didn't profit from that'... And, but for myself I profited a lot and that the documentary also brought about."

During the first interview Ben recounted that now that he had watched the film, the subject matter and the new information it yielded made him think. Ben later also received responses to the film from other people, other parents at his children's school, and other people in his town. Ben regards the changes as positive changes:

Yeah, why? Yeah I uhm I think about it more deeply and I think it is also ... because it concerns the subject. ... then you

## Participatory spaces

say things then I think well yeah, people also have a different opinion eh?

So Ben not only learned about himself during the production process of the film, he also learned about himself when the film was finished, through conversations with other people.

Participating in the documentary film for Ben resulted in a learning experience, both nourished by his experience during filming, the ability of the filmmaker to extract something from Ben he didn't realise himself was there; and in terms of accounting for the film and for what he contributed and said, which made him think about himself fundamentally. It was a confrontation with himself that made him learn about himself.

Extending its scope, Ben related his learning experience to the interview itself as well, mentioning:

But later I though 'yeah', like what [wife] says now ... you're still stuck with it, you know, with an appointment and actually I should be sleeping and yeah, I notice you also get wiser from it ... you also learn a lot from is as human being. Like who am I, what do I think myself?

Ben made a connection between the film and this research project; the interview also might be a learning experience, as the film was. Ben is again confronted with the question how he feels about the film and its subject matter and he reflects once more on his own ideas and opinion.

### Ben's relationship with the filmmaker

Ben's contact and communication and hence his relationship with the filmmaker was a salient part of Ben's account as well. In the first interview he discussed this relationship with respect to the filming period, their future communication, and the nature of their relationship. At the beginning of the interview, after expressing his disappointment with the film, Ben mentioned he discussed "everything" with the filmmaker. Ben recounted when he decided to participate he intended to just say what he did and did not want, and he discussed this with the filmmaker:

... and 'what if there are things I say and which I regret' or this and that. Well that, that could discuss very well like if there

were things which said 'well, I'd better not done that' or, then I could just say that, yeah.

Ben recounted he discussed the doubts about his participation he sometimes felt during the filmmaking process: "And I could discuss that. So then I could call him and uhm, and then he would call back or e-mail or you name it, with an explanation. Which also gave satisfaction." Ben recounted with appreciation that the filmmaker answered his questions and concerns even when he was travelling:

And I sent it at night at 4:30, but I think I already had a mail back at 8:30 with uhm, with clarification and 'hey, Ben, how unpleasant and I uhm, I can explain everything.' And then he explained ... which reassured me and then he also said 'I'll be back this week and then I'll call you'. Well, then he called too. And uhm, yeah, then we discussed that too.

So according to Ben, during the filming period he was in touch with the filmmaker frequently, the filmmaker answered his questions and concerns, and they talked a lot. However, Ben also mentioned searching the Internet for news and information on the project. So in addition to asking questions to the filmmaker, he informed himself through searching information on the net.

In the first interview Ben recounted the storyline of the film had changed due to production circumstances: "And that during the film that hasn't at all, during making that hasn't come up. Not, not in this way, so I surely want to talk about that." He had just watched the whole movie for the first time at the premiere the week before and at the time of the first interview he had not had a chance yet to discuss the film extensively with the filmmaker. Ben said he wanted to discuss the final film with him later: "...I did have contact with [filmmaker] but not yet more extensively, we will however get back to it but at the moment he is busy." He confirmed he had spoken to the filmmaker about it "only casually". Ben anticipates future contact with the filmmaker at this point, because he seeks an explanation for how the film eventually turned out. In the interview he expressed an understanding for the change of circumstances but he still insisted on discussing the result with the filmmaker.

Ben also addressed the nature of his contact with the filmmaker. Ben

## Participatory spaces

recounted how he and the filmmaker had different opinions about the subject matter of the film from the start, and how there was a sense of trust:

No, but indeed that we thought differently indeed, so it always in any case has been confidential, like eh? And that to me was most important, that there was trust in, in what you could say and, we also laughed about it.

Answering a question about the possibility to discuss their different political opinions, Ben said: “Yes, correct. Yeah, we also sat here whole afternoons, without filming, then just talking and stuff and that just was fun. So there is trust in any case eh.” Ben relates trust here to their extensive conversations. He also expressed a trust in the filmmaker: “... I am also not the most difficult that I say ‘hey, [filmmaker] ... what are you putting in there now?’ I think ‘no, it’s up to him. He is a filmmaker...’.” (Appendix 5.2, p. 441, lines 32-34). Despite being on good terms, Ben observed that in the end, the filmmaker is there to make a film:

No matter how much fun it is and after the film you can always have a beer ... look, [filmmaker] mentioned that every now and then, then if I said something, ‘well’ he says ‘and if you relate that, hey, if you mention [politician]’. Yeah, because then I was in my story, about health care and this and that and that wasn’t at all about [politician]. ...to a friend you would never say that...

Ben here distinguishes between the filmmaker as filmmaker and the filmmaker as friend. He discusses two identities of the filmmaker: the professional one and the private one. During the production process, Ben observes, there is in the end only space for the professional one.

Ben recounted that there was reciprocity in the sense that the filmmaker asked about Ben’s daily pursuits and was willing to talk about his too: “...always asking ‘how are the children?’... He also talked about his own private things. If I asked something ... That was no problem. ...nothing was said to me like ‘what are you asking now?’ or whatever.” About the premiere, for which the filmmaker bringing the film was running late: “...he texted ... five to eight: ‘we’re just getting into the car, so we’re on our way’. ... well, I think that’s kind of funny because I wouldn’t even have done that myself ... maybe

... to the producer...”

The relationship Ben had with the filmmaker was based on trust and confidentiality, reciprocity, and the availability of the filmmaker for his questions and concerns. But it was also characterized by the filmmaker’s professional identity: in the end, he was the filmmaker and not a friend.

#### Ben in control

Ben recounted that when they had just started filming he was reluctant to disclose his opinion:

... I am not going to say, in front of the camera, ‘this is not right and that is not right’ and, I think ‘I can’t’, so there I immediately got stuck when we stood there. Then [filmmaker] also said immediately, he said ‘well, I don’t know if I can do anything with that’. I say ‘no, but hey’, I say ‘I can certain things I just cannot say’. ... that I also think is not respectful to then throw that information out in front of the camera.

He controlled his disclosure even though, according to Ben, the filmmaker was interested in including it:

Then [filmmaker] said indeed ‘yeah, it is of course interesting for the story’. I said ‘Be that as it may, I get that too’ and and I say ‘I’m not going to corrupt your film’. I say ‘but if you can do it at all different, yeah then uhm, please.

Another interview took place at Ben’s home. Ben’s wife initially only witnessed this interview but then the filmmaker decided to interview her as well. So here the filmmaker stepped away from his original plan, broke open the agreed strategy and exploited the occurring situation in which Ben’s wife could be included in the film. Ben refused to continue the interview and interrupted his cooperation when his wife’s level of disclosure exceeded what Ben thought appropriate: it became too personal. He shared his worries with the filmmaker and they stopped filming for the day.

When Ben watched a rough version of his material he noticed that scenes with him and his son were not included. He called the filmmaker to ask if it was possible to include the boy, for personal rather than artistic reasons. In addition Ben mentioned he had wanted his political preference included

## Participatory spaces

more specifically. A solution had been found but for Ben it could have been made even more explicit (p. 441, lines 54-55 and p. 442, lines 72-76 discussed above). In these instances Ben actively tries to control his disclosure by limiting it or by trying to extend it and have specific material included.

### Ben's involvement

Ben recounted he kept in touch with the filmmaker about suitable opportunities to film him at a concert he would attend, which in the end did not work out. Also, Ben searched for clients of his to include in the film. This points to how Ben is not just involved in filming as 'passive' represented but how he is actively involved in making arrangements for filming and how he contributes ideas for content as well.

Ben's second account: evaluation of the film, consequences of the film, a modified relationship, and Ben as primary participant

In the second interview, Ben returned to many of the issues he had discussed in the first interview. His account differs though on a number of points, which I shall discuss here.

### Ben's evaluation of the film

In the first interview Ben mentioned he thought the film was well-constructed, despite some criticism he also had (see p. 154), but in the second interview he called it "messy":

I thought it messy in the sense that uhm, in my view [filmmaker] had better made a choice between either I will follow [politician] or his supporters. ...he could have so to speak made two parts ... now it's a bit disintegrated.

Ben later reflected on this again: "...how could you have solved that eh? Yeah, then I think that is comparing one thing to the other. And no-not mixed up like this." So a few months after his initial evaluation, Ben changed his view on the film and expressed ideas about how a better film might be made about the subject matter. His view of course might have been affected by the public response to the film as well as by criticism shared with him directly (see also p.

162).

### Consequences of the film

During the second interview it turned out the film had quite serious consequences for Ben, after it had been broadcast: “It did create quite a stir, especially at work it is much uhm. ...so really content-wise at work I have been called to account.” Ben was filmed during one of his nightly calls and his supervisor told him he was not satisfied with how Ben performed his work in this scene: “Well, it was said uhm, content-wise at work. And yeah, I said myself that I think myself it is more about the documentary as such. So that we didn’t quite work that out too.” A conflict with a colleague was also part of the discussion with his supervisor. Ben recounted he had even been on sick leave for about two months. In the end, according to Ben, the issue was not resolved: “At a certain moment I said ‘let’s leave it at that because uhm, it’s ok’, or not, but we don’t agree on that.” So it seems that the film might have worked as a catalyst for a latent conflict at Ben’s work.

Ben said he received less response to the film than he had expected, or hoped for. With respect to his learning experience Ben concluded that in the end the effect his experience had on his personal life was larger than anticipated because the film was not such a big success: “It had more impact on my personal life I think. Initially I was like ‘yeah, documentary, fun and I’ll be on television and uhm and people recognize and and deal’ well so that part actually fell away...” So Ben’s experience as a documentary participant did not result in recognition of his contribution, nor of the film as a whole, possibly because of the critical reception or because not many people watched it. Also, he read responses of people on the Internet who wondered why he was included in the film. This also made him think about his participation: “... then it is all over and then you start thinking ‘hey, why did I actually participate, why do I vote for [politician] ... through that documentary I buried myself more deeply in it than I did before.” For Ben, his participation also encouraged his political engagement: “... I feel more enthusiastic toward the elections and all that...” The response to the film made him think further about his actions and convictions and expanded his learning experience. The consequences his participation had included both a conflict at work, for which

## Participatory spaces

the film might have served as a catalyst, and a further learning experience, also prompted by a lack of recognition. Because of this lack of recognition, the gain for Ben is in his learning experience, which taught him about himself.

### Ben's relationship with the filmmaker

Ben's relationship with the filmmaker, their contact and communication, was an important part of Ben's account. During the second interview Ben discussed his 'current' contact with the filmmaker. Shortly after the film was broadcast in the Netherlands, when Ben ran into some trouble at work (see above) the filmmaker offered to help:

Then [filmmaker] immediately said 'hey, if there is anything I can do for you' and he immediately looked up the papers of the approval they uhm, they had given and, uhm, so he also offered to ring the wife of that gentleman. And my manager ... didn't think that was necessary ... But he would have been willing to do that.

Ben recounted that the relationship had changed after filming because they saw each other less often. But he said he was happy his contact with the filmmaker continued:

... what I feared a little bit ... and then it is finished and then you never talk to each other again. Because yeah, that's not possible with everybody. ... But uhm, that that still exists. ... And regularly and e-mail or we don't call so much nowadays ... The contact is still there and I myself am very happy with that.

According to Ben the talks are useful for both him and the filmmaker:

The film was not well received and all that in the Netherlands in general. Yeah, lots of criticism, which troubled [filmmaker] as well. So in fact we, in the talks we were helpful to each other I think. ... Yeah, yeah, there is a click as well. That he also said and I also feel that myself.

For Ben, the negative reception of the film by critics was a reason to abandon the discussion of issues he had wanted to bring to the table:

... look I think that if such a film becomes a resounding success, yeah, you don't stop talking about it. ... Those really

aren't nice things written of course... ...and I think then it becomes a painful story, that film. ...yeah, it happened and maybe you both are not so satisfied. Yeah, and each in his own.

In addition, Ben recounted that they also shared experiences in life they could talk about, such as their families (see also above, p. 158).

Ben said he did not feel bad toward the filmmaker at all because of the lack of success or his criticism; he would always be able to discuss any issues. He still felt he could call anytime to have a drink:

... I happen to have sent him an e-mail this week: 'hey, come and have a beer in [town].' 'Well, is lots of fun, will do soon, but I'm abroad for two weeks now' but after that I am certain that I can just call.

Ben's feeling that the contact always served a goal, expressed in the first interview, was now gone. From someone he could contact for questions and concerns the filmmaker becomes a kind of friend. So after the film a space for friendship opens up. Also, Ben changed his intention to discuss some issues and decided to leave them at peace, due to the negative response to the film. Ben focuses on the friendship he wants to continue and not on the past, as a participant with lingering questions.

#### Ben as primary participant

Ben recounted he had not informed his supervisor about the exact subject matter of the film and he took responsibility himself for it: "... I think yeah I should have said that it was about [subject matter] eh." He had informed the spouse of the client who appeared in the film he was being filmed because of his work and according to Ben she expected something else than what the film was really about. After he was confronted by his supervisor Ben contacted her: "... I brought her flowers uhm to get over the shock". Such 'secondary' participants, who are not the focus of the film but play a role on the periphery of the project, thus seem to have been the responsibility of Ben, rather than the responsibility of the filmmaker. Although the filmmaker offered to help out, Ben is the one dealing with them and accounting for the film. He seems to function as a kind of intermediary. This augments his involvement in the

## Participatory spaces

project.

So what was Ben's experience like?

Ben's account of his experience as documentary participant focused on his evaluation of the film, his learning experience, his relationship with the filmmaker, and consequences of his participation. In addition his role as intermediary and primary participant surfaced. Ben's evaluation of the film encompassed thoughts about the lack of balance; the way one scene that included him was taken out of context; his wish to express himself more strongly; that the film informed him; and how a better film might have looked like. So Ben evaluated various positive and negative aspects of the film. He is critical on specific aspects of it but distinguishes these from aspects he appreciates.

Ben's experience as a documentary participant did not result in a recognition of his contribution or of the film as a whole, possibly because of the critical reception or lack of viewership. Instead it was a learning experience that taught him about himself. The experience taught him to express himself, to give his opinion and to respect others'. In addition, the film taught him about the subject matter itself.

The third central point in Ben's account is his relationship with the filmmaker. This relationship is twofold: the filmmaker was a source of information and answers during the production process but became a friend afterwards, with whom Ben sometimes socialises now that the film is finished. In addition, Ben recounted instances in which he tried to control the content of the film, either by denying disclosure or by refusing consent, or by asking or the inclusion of specific material. He also recounted he was included in the production process and took responsibility for dealing with secondary participants.

Ben experienced trouble at work as a consequence of his participation in the film, but analysing Ben's account it seems his participation was more a catalyst for a slumbering matter that now came to the surface than a source for conflict itself. Although Ben's experience as documentary participant was not uncomplicated, what persists is what he gained: a renewed understanding of himself, of the subject matter, and a potential new friend.

## Deconstructing Ben's account

## Ben's protection of the filmmaker and of their relationship

In Ben's evaluation of the film, the filmmaker is almost completely absent. At the beginning of the first interview, Ben talked about "how the film turned out". About the contested scene in which he felt misrepresented he said: "... that of course you put together..." and "... that's been placed slightly in a different context" (see p. 153, see also Ben's remark about the setup, p. 153). In the first excerpt below, Ben anticipates his account of the interruption of the interview at his house (see p. 159) but refers to the filmmaker as 'it': "You get into a conversation and then you can also deviate from that, so therefore it has also shot too much at a point..." (Appendix 5.2, p. 440, lines 19-20). He does not mention anyone who is responsible for this. In the second interview Ben discussed how he felt about the film: "...the documentary is a bit messy..." and "There's yeah it's a bit mixed up..." Also, he refers to others when it comes to making decisions. Asked whether he had discussed the contested scene with the filmmaker, Ben recounted:

... at a certain point ... you have to make choices ... and there are also other people who make decisions here eh? Like uhm yeah, look, he makes, he is not editing that film on his own. And tha-there are of course also always people who also uhm contribution there eh...

By silencing the filmmaker like this, Ben does not keep the filmmaker accountable for this result and he protects the filmmaker by referring to the contribution of others to the film.

Ben further smoothes out the filmmaker's responsibility by referring to him in the second person singular, generalizing the filmmaker's situation and decisions and thus elevating these to a more general level. He did this in the quote included above (Appendix 5.2, p. 440, line 19), and in the same excerpt, Ben continues: "...if you had walked me outside as well and, and a camera on your neck and uhm 'now tell me how you think about this, or that'..." (p. 440, lines 21-22). In the quote above Ben said, for instance, that 'you' have to make choices; later he said: "... you can also depict that in five minutes" (Appendix 5.2, p. 441, line 58), and "... you shouldn't have depicted me differently".

In addition, Ben ‘silences’ the content of his contact with the filmmaker. He mentioned several times that he discussed his worries and thought with the filmmaker, but he often does not include what the content of those talks was. After finding some unfavourable information on the film on the Internet Ben recounted: “And uhm yeah, then we discussed that too.” In his account of his relationship with the filmmaker he indicated that he discussed matters with the filmmaker, but not what he discussed, what the content of the talks was (see p. 159 as well as p. 162). Considering what would happen when he said something he might regret Ben said: “If I said hey, eh, ‘this is going wrong’ or ‘this is going in going in the wrong’ ... ok, done” (Appendix 5.2, p. 441, lines 36-37). Ben remarked that he noticed the filmmaker found it difficult to talk about the lack of success of the film. Asked how he noticed Ben said: “Well and that we expressed I think to each other. I’m sure we did.” So Ben was disinclined and reluctant to share the content of his talks with the filmmaker over issues between them.

On the other hand, as discussed above, Ben at times emphasized the connection he had with the filmmaker. In these instances, Ben quotes as it were but it is not clear whom he quotes: “...then you see each other as friends, like well, just chatting. ‘What’s up? With the kids and this and that’...” Discussing the filmmaker’s professional identity (see p. 158) he recounted: “In that you notice, you are yet somewhat clinically uhm you are engaged...”. With respect to the film’s lack of success he recalled: “...look, I think that if such a film becomes a resounding success, yeah, then you can’t stop talking about it.” Here Ben conflates himself and the filmmaker: it could be both or either Ben or the filmmaker who sees the other as friend, who is clinically engaged, or who cannot stop talking. This reflects their connection and emphasizes their ‘equality’ as friends rather than their filmmaker-participant relationship.

So underlying Ben’s account is his awareness of his relationship with the filmmaker. He protects the filmmaker from scrutiny and shields off the content of their relationship during filming. Now, after the film has been finished, this has changed. For Ben the relationship is important. It is part of the gains of the experience for Ben and something to cherish.

### Ben's political and private identity

In his account Ben often reflected on the kind of person he is. Recounting how he agreed with the filmmaker on when and where to film Ben described himself as someone with an unexciting life:

...I am happy with my life, but really an exciting life I don't have ... I work, I have my children and I-I have my music as hobby. And uhm I don't do sports or or uhm yeah, I don't do anything voluntary you know, you need of course topics that, how you can depict someone.

Ben also used expressions like "in for a penny, in for a pound" (Appendix 5.2, p. 440, line 28) and "suburban bliss" to describe his attitude to filming and to his everyday life respectively. Ben also described himself as a sensitive guy: "...neighbours were upset [Ben] was crying' ... I don't mind at all. I blubber as much as is necessary..." (p. 442, lines 80-82).

Ben often described himself vis-à-vis the filmmaker. He mentioned he had another political conviction, he thought more directly, the filmmaker's scope of thought was larger, and Ben mentioned "that world" would not suit him, referring to the media world the filmmaker works in. Ben made a connection between the film and this research project: "Yeah there you are in certain corners you also are I think, or? I don't know." (I had not noticed that Ben referred to me and omitted a response.) Ben here positions me as interviewer in the same 'corner' as the filmmaker, a corner he is not in.

In addition Ben identified himself versus the subject matter: "... like I am completely infatuated with [person], well I am... ...I think he is really great...". So Ben's account is full of overt identity work touching on his background, his character, how he differs from the filmmaker, and how he relates to the subject matter of the film. He firmly positions himself in society, showing awareness of his position vis-à-vis the filmmaker's position (and vis-à-vis my position as researcher).

In his account of his relationship with the filmmaker and in his overt identity work Ben mainly discussed his identity 'negatively', in terms of differences or of non-memberships. For example, Ben said: "... look [filmmaker] and I both have of course a very different life. He's busy and media and filming and you name it, often abroad and I yeah, just suburban bliss...".

## Participatory spaces

The filmmaker was travelling in India: “Then I felt like India, that to me is, I will never go there probably...”. In the course of the second interview Ben also reflected on their relationship and recounted: “... yeah and I think in that world I have something like yeah in the end he comes with a goal...” Ben here separated ‘that’ world of the filmmaker from his own. As I have argued above, it is within the realm of his private identity that Ben finds common ground with the filmmaker: “... I have a child from a previous marriage, so has he. So then you already connect there. ... And he lives in [city] and I love to go there and that we understand from each other.” With respect to the film, his political identity is important and he would have preferred it included more specifically in the film (see pp. 159-160); it differs from the filmmaker’s political identity, like their professional worlds differ. But in their private lives there are similarities. Where Ben’s political identity is important with respect to the film, his private identity is important with respect to his relationship with the filmmaker. It is also in this private realm that Ben hopes the relationship will continue.

### Ben’s contribution: to play or not to play

In his account and reflecting on his contribution, Ben challenges the traditional dichotomy between documentary and fiction film in terms of display and non-acting versus construction and acting. In the beginning of the first interview, Ben addressed his contribution as ‘playing’, mentioning at the same time it was “as agreed ... represented” (see p. 153). In his account, Ben alternated between descriptions of his contribution as instances where he was “followed” or ‘did his thing’ and as instances where he had to repeat shots, decided what he did and did not want to say (see p. 159), was invited to participate for a reason, and filming ended in a deadlock. For example, discussing his wish to have his support for a politician disclosed more explicitly (see p. 159) he said: “It’s not acted eh...” (p. 442, line 79). About the contested scene he said: “Well, this is of course directed eh, ‘cause I don’t own a [device]. ...so that you construct of course... ...and I get, that was the suggestion of [cameraman]...” So on the one hand Ben seems to understand his contribution in hegemonic terms of non-intervention and documentary display, and on the other hand he seems aware of the constructedness of the

film in terms of decisions on the content, selection of participants, repetition of failed shots, and the reconstruction of entire scenes. This challenges the dichotomy between 'documentary' display and 'fictional' acting and invites a consideration of how to understand participants' contribution to documentary film projects.

Ben as interviewee: right-thinking and knowledgeable

Evaluating the film, Ben puts his own words in perspective when he used a judgemental term, for instance, when he said that a scene was placed "... not the wrong but indeed a different ..." (see p. 153). Later he summarized: "... that I still find uhm, yeah that, yeah, disappointing maybe is a big word...". Ben is careful in his judgements and seems aware of the impact some of his words might have. He thereby protects the filmmaker again as well.

In his account of his relationship with the filmmaker Ben also presents himself as understanding person, for instance, when recounting their different opinions he added: "... that doesn't matter though..."; and when recounting that they are still in touch, which is not possible with all participants, he added: "And I would be able to understand that..."

In addition to positioning himself as a reasonable person, Ben presents himself as a reasonable interviewee, conscious of what he is saying and reflecting on it. For instance, he said things like "... or how do you put that?"; "... how should I put that in a balanced way?"; and "... I think hard about it...". At the time of the first interview Ben had watched the film two or three times. He mentioned that for a true evaluation he would have to watch the film another ten times "...because I actually also doubt myself, in that sense...".

Ben created a silence around the filmmaker by speaking in a passive tense and in the second person singular (see p. 165) but at other points explicitly refers to the filmmaker as a source for information:

That also, [filmmaker] has also said eh, that piece with that I am... look that, that of course pulls the story in balance. So he also said that 'well, if you see that, then, then', but yeah the, the real balance that [filmmaker] mentioned, that uhm, that, yeah, that I find insufficient (see also p. 153).

Here Ben acknowledges the source of his information and of his evaluation. By

## Participatory spaces

doing this he presents himself as a fair and sincere interviewee who gives credit where credit is due. But it is also a way of connecting to the filmmaker, of expressing shared thoughts and ideas and thus reinforcing their relationship. So Ben presents himself as someone who is right-thinking, who reflects on his words, tries to be moderate and understanding, and gives credit where credit is due.

Recounting a discussion on their contribution with other participants at the premiere, Ben also presents himself as someone who is knowledgeable about documentary filmmaking. He acknowledges there is a limit to the size of their contribution: "... 'course I want to be included for a quarter, or twenty minutes'. But hey, a film of eighty minutes. That just won't work." Also with respect to his own contribution and the scene that was placed in a different context he said: "Well look, what you see I said, it's just you can do very much with putting things in another context, eh." So Ben claims to be aware of the limits and possibilities of filmmaking.

So how did Ben recount his experience?

Deconstructing Ben's account showed how Ben shielded off the content of his relationship with the filmmaker. He cherishes the friendship, possibly because he finds a recognition here the film did not bring. He also worked to come across as a right-thinking and knowledgeable interviewee. In addition, it showed that with respect to the film Ben emphasised his political identity and with respect to the filmmaker he emphasised his private identity. In addition Ben struggled to describe his contribution in terms of acting and non-acting.

Concluding remarks on Ben's account

Ben's accounts centred around his evaluation of the film, his evaluation of the experience, the filmmaker, and himself. For Ben the experience was a learning experience. Ben recounted he worked well with the filmmaker, there was a basis of trust and anything could be discussed despite their different opinions. Ben was critical about the film but not about the filmmaker. He controlled his contribution both by refusing consent and trying to extend his disclosure, he was involved in making arrangements for filming, and contributed content.

His participation had some consequences for Ben but seems to have

served as a catalyst rather than a problem in itself. Ben's relationship with the filmmaker changed after the film was finished: rather than filmmaker and participant they became friends and according to Ben they both benefited from this friendship. Ben disregarded lingering issues he initially planned to discuss with the filmmaker, prioritizing their friendship over unresolved issues concerning the film.

Deconstructing Ben's account shows how he protected the filmmaker and their relationship and how during making of the film his political identity was prominent but after it was finished his private identity was prominent. Ben alternates between discussing his contribution in terms of documentary display and fictional acting. He presented himself as a right-thinking and knowledgeable interviewee.

## **Chris**

Chris is a scientist and writer in his early seventies. The documentary Chris participated in is about a decision the filmmaker had to make and the philosophical questions underlying it. Chris is one of many people appearing in the film. The first time I interviewed Chris, in the fourth week of September 2010, he had watched the film with the filmmaker a few days earlier, at a moment when last minute changes were still possible. The second time I interviewed him, mid-March 2011, the film had premiered in a small theatre but had not yet been broadcast. Both interviews took place at Chris' home. Excerpts of Chris' account are included in Appendix 5.3 (see p. 443).

Chris' initial account: about the film, about the filmmaker, and about Chris

Chris' evaluation of the film

How Chris felt about the film, which he had just watched a few days earlier, was an important part of his account. And he did nothing to hide his praise: "It's an excellent film. ... with all kinds of layers in it that I could not have suspected she would include...". Later he added: "...with splendid images and very nice points of view added and brilliant music to match..." (Appendix 5.3, p. 443, lines 2-3). He concluded it was "true uhm craftsmanship uhm.

## Participatory spaces

Exceptionally clever” (p. 443, line 9). So Chris discerned several aspects he liked about the film and praised it extensively. There was nothing he felt was missing or redundant.

Chris was at this moment somewhat more critical about his own contribution to the film. There were two scenes that he scrutinized: one in which he said something about a scientific object and another in which he and the filmmaker walked away from the camera. Concerning the first one, Chris felt he should have prepared better:

...I have, for instance, been messing about with that [object] that that is in the [institute]. ... you can take that apart ... I had never done that before ... so that didn't go very... ... in hindsight I thought 'I should have gone to [institute] first, first practice'...

However, according to Chris the filmmaker did not agree:

But [filmmaker] herself 'no certainly not, fine, nothing wrong. It uhm is going, it went very well.' And it showed in the film itself you don't see at all that I don't know how that thing is. It's a beautiful film.

With respect to the second scene, Chris mentioned that it was cut short, and too short for him. This concerned a scene of Chris with the filmmaker:

Well, we we come out of [cafe], walk onto [square] and by chance it was very pretty ... the square was full of all trees were hung with lights, it was a fairy-like view... Then we crossed the [square] ... then into [street] and so disappear in the crowd ... the voices dying away ... which I would have found a beautiful ending to the film. (Appendix 5.3, p. 443, lines 11-19)

However, the filmmaker at that point decided to use a different ending (p. 443, lines 21-22).

## About the filmmaker

Chris was also full of praise for the filmmaker and her work:

She is an extraordinarily famous documentary filmmaker and always made beautiful things, so I have no doubt, didn't doubt for a moment her uhm, her uhm, possibilities and her uhm

talent and professional knowledge ... [documentary] of her, laurelled left and right. ...so she just is an excellent documentary filmmaker...

Chris was also full of praise about the subject matter the filmmaker discussed in her films: "...she only occupies herself with extraordinarily interesting social problems ... And she is the only one who uhm, the only one who contributed constructively to the multicultural society." So Chris seems familiar with the filmmaker's work and has nothing but praise.

However, Chris also mentioned an apparent lack of a plan of the filmmaker during filming. He referred to 'his' filmmaker's intuitive approach as "... that she acted out very well". The filmmaker's apparent lack of plan surfaces here as a conscious strategy.

Chris mentioned he and the filmmaker had been friends for a long time and every now and then they met and discussed philosophical questions and 'questions of life and death' together: "...when she decided to make that documentary, the step to get me involved spoke for itself." Asked whether he at any point doubted his participation, Chris recounted: "... no ... and if I would have doubts, we would talk about it and we would take them away or we would say then 'no, then I'd better not, should I, had I better not participate.'" According to Chris, their relationship did not change after Chris participated in the film:

No, we were of cour- yeah we are really good friends and we still are. ... she of course is a documentary filmmaker and it is fun to make documentaries and then we'll go and do that as well and then one of- one these times, weeks, months, years maybe and then she will come with a new plan... We complement each other well.

Chris here expresses a hope to have another opportunity to participate in the future project with the filmmaker.

Chris' professional and private identity

Chris' account contains some overt identity work, in which he gives information about himself with respect to his attitude toward the film and with respect to the kind of person he is apart from film. For example, he mentioned

## Participatory spaces

the filmmaker came to him for answers because he is a philosopher. Chris mentioned he was inspired by the film, and asked whether he was going to use that inspiration, for example, by writing about it he answered: “Well uhm I am an author eh? I have uhm I’ll uhm I am I am writing books continuously eh.” Here he shares his professional identity as philosopher and author. At one point he made a comparison between himself and the filmmaker: “... as inspired and incredible amount of energy as she manages to fix things, as uhm reflective and uhm and modest am I...” He also constructs his identity vis-à-vis the filmmaker.

Although in the film he takes a neutral position toward its subject matter and the film’s central question, in the interview his personal opinion surfaced: “So I get angry about that. ... Although that story didn’t transpire. But I don’t want it to eh. I thought what she has done much better, really talk to everybody and all those opinions...” In addition, Chris took a stand against one aspect in the film: “... I am very opposed to excessive use of [goods] because I see it as a kind of action of the [goods] industry.” Later on, Chris discussed his personal aversion of people who are unwilling to accept reasonable arguments and who sweep them under the table even though they know these arguments make sense. He suggested in such cases there must be other interests involved. Chris’s position in the film is neutral in this respect, but in the interviews he strongly voiced his personal opinion, thus sharing his private opinion and part of his private identity not included in the film.

So Chris positions himself explicitly both with respect to the film, showing his professional identity, sharing his professional knowledge; and with respect to his extra-filmic identity, his private identity, sharing his private opinion on the subject matter.

Chris’s second account: more about the film, more about Chris and more about the filmmaker

Chris’s second account did not differ from the first very much. Nothing had really changed and there were no new relevant developments. He repeated many of the things he had said in the first interview, both about the filmmaker and about himself. Only with respect to the film he recounted that the scene

that was cut short in his eyes was longer in the final version of the film:

...and now it was included again, after all. ... was somewhat longer. ... So that was in uhm the first version that was cut short, so the [square] and then wham! it was cut short. I said 'gee pitty that that scene is not included.' 'yeah...' But now it was included again.

So the few months between the first and the second interview did not explicitly change Chris' perspective on the experience. He was still positive about both the film and the filmmaker and the experience itself. He repeated his private opinion as well as his professional identity as philosopher and author.

So what was Chris' experience like?

Chris enjoyed participating in the documentary which for him was in a sense a friendly turn. He appreciated the film very much, like he appreciated the filmmaker-friend who made it, and like he appreciated her work in general. Although he doubted one scene he was in, the filmmaker convinced him it was ok and there was no need to record it again. A scene initially cut short to Chris' disappointment, turned out to be longer in the final version, to Chris' joy.

Deconstructing Chris' account

Quality is paramount

Asked whether he was content about the information he received about the documentary project he was to participate in and whether he knew enough about what was to happen, Chris answered: "Well yeah in general yes, I found it, I have seen the end result, so the the documentary is finished... Turned out splendid, extraordinary achievement." Here, to a question about the process of filmmaking Chris jumps to an answer about the quality of the film itself. For Chris, this quality is not only important but also an answer to his initial doubts about part of his participation, which he addressed next. So the quality of the film seems to overrule any doubts and grounds for criticism.

## Participatory spaces

### Friendship exceeds the experience

Chris' presents himself as a friend of the filmmaker and throughout his account, Chris explicitly and implicitly aligns himself with the filmmaker. He does this explicitly by talking about their friendship and about how he discussed the film with the filmmaker during one of their meetings, before he was asked to participate in it (see above). But he also did it more implicitly, which I address here.

Discussing the information he received about the film from the filmmaker, Chris praised the filmmaker's professional qualities and said he never doubted it but he never thought the film would become this beautiful (Appendix 5.3, p. 443, line 7). So on the one hand he said he thinks the filmmaker is very good and he never doubted his participation and on the other hand he said he never knew the film would become this beautiful. He expresses his praise quite extensively, mentioning the quality of the images, the different perspectives, and the music; he ends this evaluation of the film with the remarks about craftsmanship and "extraordinarily clever" (see above). Craftsmanship however refers to certain skills. It does not necessarily refer to artistic or creative features of an artefact. To me it seems that 'extraordinarily clever' would refer to something that exceeds craftsmanship. Chris' praise in my view here is aimed more at the filmmaker than at the film itself, in support of the ongoing friendship.

His assurance that he has no objections against any scenes included or excluded from the film is absolute to the extent that it seems to exceed the simple denial (p. 444, lines 50-51, line 56, and lines 58-59). Chris seems to take an almost defensive stand, exuberantly denying any criticism of the filmmaker's decisions. To me it seems here that the focus of Chris's account is on the praise for the filmmaker. His friendship with her exceeds the experience and a critical assessment thereof.

### Cultural membership and acceptance of a practice

Chris presents himself as a member of a cultural group; above I discussed how he talked about his identity as philosopher and author. In addition, he referred to specific works of art and art practises in relation to the film and to his own authorship. In the very beginning he mentioned the film is a piece of art

(Appendix 5.3, p. 443, line 1), but he does not really bring any arguments to justify this observation. So it literally is art for art's sake; as if a piece being art needs no further explanation.

Chris said: "Because that had to be included too and that that could not before, that really had to be after ..." (p. 443, lines 24-25) taking the role of the filmmaker in explaining the logic of an edit. He then mentioned how he witnessed the whole process of the filmmaker doubting about in- or excluding a specific scene (p. 443, lines 25-28). So he aligns himself with the filmmaker in her creative process. Also, he discussed the filmmaker's authorial position with respect to the work: "And after all it is her film so uhm. And if you participate in it, then anyway you sort of hand yourself over" (p. 443, lines 28-29). He then compared participating in a documentary film to commissioning a painter to paint a portrait (p. 443, line 31-p. 444, line 33). (Upon arrival at his house, Chris and I discussed a huge poster on a painting exhibition, the poster including a portrait of a local governor and writer by a famous painter. This might have prompted the comparison.) But Chris also compared responsibilities of the artist with those of editors and designers at publishing companies (p. 444, lines 41-44). Both examples differ from documentary filmmaking in terms of authority and authorship (to stick to Chris' case: he did not commission the filmmaker to make a documentary about him, and the designer and editor that take care of book covers and titles do something additional to his work as author but do not themselves interfere with the text); Chris however uses both examples to justify the filmmaker's authority over the work with a reference to other artistic and creative practices, based on his presumed knowledge of them, in part as practitioner himself. So he positions himself as a member of a cultural group, aligned with the filmmaker, informed about creative practices; and he presents himself as a creative practitioner as well. Chris also recounted the use of specific classical music in the film and how this related to the film's subject matter. Here, Chris presents himself as a member of what might be seen as a cultural elite.

Chris' contribution: construction rather than display

In his account, Chris referred to his participation as a repetition of what he and the filmmaker had done before and so, like Ben, he challenges the

## Participatory spaces

dichotomy between documentary and fiction film. Chris recalled the filmmaker had asked him to talk about philosophical questions and to repeat his arguments:

...she says God yeah, I am going to make a documentary about it and do you want to be in, do you want to come and tell this story in it? ...it had to be spontaneous actually...it wasn't actually of different than we normally did eh? Just go to the cafe or go somewhere and then and then exchange ideas about a problem. ... I was sitting there, she enters and then 'hey, coincidence girl' and then uhm we begin this discussion...

Chris also made practical arrangements for filming at two locations, one he frequented with the filmmaker and another that was related to his former employer. Chris reflected on his lack of preparation in dealing with the model: "Yeah uhm, that you can't, that you can in such a documentary you can't say 'how did that go? Just uhm...' no, that's not possible, have to, that has to, so I prepared that yeah." Chris however also related a need for spontaneity: "Yeah, there of course should be a kind of liveliness and spontanei-..."

Chris mentioned that in the film, the filmmaker "played the leading part". At the end of the second interview he contemplated the need to reconcile with a filmmaker's wishes:

You think 'ah, I play along in a documentary' and then uhm, and that the result in hindsight exceeds uhm disappoints because you, well see yourself in some kind of magnificent leading part and then you turn up in the image twice...

Apart from such indirect references to the construction of documentary film and mediation in documentary filmmaking, Chris mentioned that he did not share his personal opinion or point of view on the subject matter of the film but specifically addressed the philosophical question related to the film. This choice, at the filmmaker's request, reflects taking on a specific role, limiting his contribution to specific utterances in line with that role (see also p. 174).

Chris relates to his contribution more in terms of fiction or construction than in terms of unmediated display of himself. In addition, he made practical arrangements for the film himself. This challenges the traditional dichotomy between fiction and documentary film and encourages

an understanding of documentary film as film rather than as document.

So how did Chris recount his experience?

Deconstructing Chris' account shows how quality is paramount but also a feature of his appreciation of the filmmaker; and how he presented himself as a friend and ally of the filmmaker and as a member of a specific cultural group, i.e., of creative practitioners and of a cultural elite. His exuberant praise of the filmmaker and of the film, and his explicit denial of criticism of decision made by the filmmaker about the in- and exclusion of material give rise to the observation that his relationship with the filmmaker exceeds the experience as documentary participant. In addition, Chris understands his contribution as construction rather than display, referring to playing the lead role and repeating discussions for the film, which challenges traditional notions of documentary authenticity.

Concluding remarks on Chris' account

Chris enjoyed participating in the documentary which for him was in a sense a friendly turn. He appreciated the film very much, like he appreciated the filmmaker–friend who made it and her work in general. Despite his positive evaluation of the experience, there was still one scene he initially, after watching a rough cut, preferred to have changed, which eventually happened. Although he doubted another scene he was in, the filmmaker convinced him there was no need to record it again.

Deconstruction suggests that Chris presented himself as friend and ally of the filmmaker, praising both the filmmaker and the film extensively; the quality overruled any doubts or criticism about his part in the film. He defended the filmmaker's practice by aligning it with other creative practices, including his own. He values this friendship and alliance over the experience itself.

## **Debby**

Debby is a young academic who, at the time of the first interview, had recently written her PhD thesis, which she was to defend shortly afterwards. Her thesis

## Participatory spaces

is about a specific person and the documentary she participated in is about the same person, whom I name Emma. The first interview took place mid-October 2010, prior to the premiere of the film, at a location where she did a lot of work for her PhD thesis. The film was to be shown at a private gathering at the same location shortly afterwards. The broadcast of the film would take place two months later. At the time of this interview, Debby had only seen part of the material that was shot with her but nothing of the other material filmed for the documentary. The second interview took place about six months after the broadcast of the documentary Debby was in, in the third week of February 2011, in Debby's office. An excerpt of Debby's account is included in Appendix 5.4 (p. 445).

Debby's initial account: about the experience, about the filmmaker, and about trouble

Debby's experience: fun, but...

Early on in the first interview Debby mentioned how she and the filmmaker had different opinions, specifically about the level of detail:

...I of course wanted always to tell things in more detail than he wanted to show them and I get that, but there were also moments that at which I thought 'yeah, this I cannot say in one sentence. That-that-that then you just ju-bend the truth and tha-that I just won't do.

Debby here refers to an incident that constituted the climax of the trouble in the co-operation between herself and the filmmaker, though she presents it in more general terms here. She continued in more general terms as well, qualifying their co-operation as

... constantly really a a uhm search for uhm yeah let's say my academic uhm responsibility and his uhm beautiful story...  
...but it indeed was a a yeah constant uhm yeah sometimes a struggle and sometimes just a-a-a yeah uhm keeping a balance...

So quite early in the interview Debby paints a picture of a participation characterized by differences of opinion and differences in approach. Below I

will address this in more detail.

At the same time, Debby recounted that the filmmaker had said with respect to their different opinions about what was important for the story: "... 'exactly because of that comes, you make a more interesting documentary and you can also uhm, yeah, become appealing or rather more insightful because you', so that I found a beautiful, or yeah a confidence-building attitude". By explicitly acknowledging their disagreements and linking this to the quality of the documentary, the filmmaker gained a sense of trust from Debby.

Debby initially got involved in the project as consultant because of her expertise and eventually became the central participant. Despite extensive preliminary talks Debby experienced that it was not possible to cover all potential obstacles in advance:

... I am also maybe so used to uhm to uhm to to think academically and with that distance and he is so used to think from images and from a kind of emotion and tha-that both are things I that are completely self-evident for us and you only I think find out when you really work with each other...

Her experience taught Debby about filmmaking. Debby found that: "... you only know when you are shooting then you know what the questions are, then you know what uh, yeah, which questions are being pursued and which not, how things are visualized." With respect to filming itself, Debby mentioned she found it awkward to be confronted repeatedly with the same kinds of questions about a specific person, something that constituted another source of trouble for Debby and the filmmaker and that made her stiffen up a little, becoming unwilling to answer further. I will come back to this when I discuss the trouble in their cooperation in more detail. However, after mentioning this to the filmmaker he gave an explanation and she understood better why he did this and the matter was settled for Debby. She also found it awkward to answer in a single sentence and move on to the next question:

Indeed awkward because you uhm, I am very used to that I can polish all my sentences until I find them totally perfect ... writing and deleting and rewriting... I noticed I found it awkward that uhm [filmmaker] asked a question, I gave an answer and then we went to the next question while I

## Participatory spaces

sometimes thought ‘well, I would have wanted to do it again’ just to give it a bit more verve, or to say it a bit more dense... And it is fixed, it is registered on camera and in sound and yeah you can just you cannot rewind it. You said it.

Debby recounted the filmmaker mostly assured her she did well, and if not a take was redone.

Debby discussed how she had asked the filmmaker to send her the subject matter he wanted to address a day in advance, so that she could prepare, but she did not receive it much in advance. Debby mentioned she felt this was because the filmmaker wanted her to remain spontaneous in her answers and not reproduce a rehearsed response. However, Debby also used the information to evaluate the content and see if anything was missing:

I sometimes really had to keep him up to scratch that he sent the material, but that I knew a little bit where the story went and uhm I did get ever- and also just to see like yeah, this is not yet, this is not addressed in the theme or but I deem important, so then I knew well that I should, if we are recording, then make sure that that topic is discussed as well.

Debby actively tried to incorporate information she had and the filmmaker did not consider or did not have. Her experience of receiving requested information, such as topics for filming, quite late she attributed to production circumstances but she stressed she did not really know why it arrived late. The production team also communicated filming times and locations to Debby, but also quite late in her view. In the end, she decided to just keep asking.

The contract Debby was asked to sign arrived after filming had started. So by then Debby had had her first experience as documentary participant being filmed and interviewed. The delay in receiving information and the delay in receiving the contract gave Debby an opportunity to find out what filming really was about:

... you asked just now uhm, ‘did you know what you were getting into?’ I knew as far as I could know. ... but something like that you only really know when you are at it. ... And in that sense, I think, I am actually glad that they only sent the contract later on, because I uhm, yeah, maybe would have

somewhat too rosy or naive uhm beforehand would have boarded.

As a result, Debby asked for an opportunity to view the film before the picture was irreversibly locked and she asked for a veto (which she did not get).

Debby recalled that in the course of the process she found the solution to their different approaches and the tensions and interruptions this eventually caused might have been for her to have been involved in writing the script:

...only in the course of time I realized 'yeah, I would like to'. I don't know at all, whether he would have been open to that...  
... 'gee, let's work on the script together and let's' then maybe a couple of things wouldn't have uhm clashed so much.

In addition to learning about the process of filmmaking, Debby learned about herself: "...about how you talk about your topic and and how I feel about research...". Debby mentioned that to her, many things were self-evident

...that outside academia maybe are not at all that self-evident and of which I think 'oh, I really attach great importance to that you can verify things, that you keep a distance... ...those were really things where I all of a sudden really had to take a position.

She also learned about her own attitude:

Maybe indeed that I joined in too unrestrained and with too large a confidence and uhm thought 'it will be OK' ... that I am also so happy that the contract only arrived after the first filming days. I thought 'yeah, I really need to become somewhat uhm yeah, somewhat more businesslike in that'.

Debby addressed how she enjoyed the experience on the one hand. She enjoyed going out and filming and she noticed not only the filmmaker but also the crew were knowledgeable and involved. And they had a lot of fun together. On the other hand she felt insecure about the result. She had some kind of reservation and was looking for a kind of reassurance, which she hoped to find in the final film. It was not yet possible for her to say whether she was content with her participation because she had only seen some rough material of scenes shot with her. Later on in the interview Debby mentioned she had

## Participatory spaces

mixed feelings about her participation: she would do it again but in a different way and she still had an indefinable feeling about her participation. The end result would be decisive in her evaluation: “And if I can agree to that then I will probably feel very good about it. And if I can’t agree to it ... then I think it somewhat more troublesome ... I notice it depends on that.” Evaluating an instance where the filmmaker took a long time to convey his wish to take over an interview from Debby, to which I will return later, Debby mentioned that this was not something they had anticipated: “... I found it OK that he uhm, that it went this way and uhm. Or that it, well ok, given the end result let’s say.” Here the end result also is an argument for Debby to evaluate the experience, apart from what happened.

Debby ventured to consider the effect of this experience on possible future experiences, returning to the possibility of collaborating more closely:

And I think I would say from the beginning ‘well, how uhm, how are we going to define this collaboration?’ or ‘how are we going to do that’ and uhm, ‘should we maybe work on the script together?’ That, for example.

In summary, Debby’s evaluation of the experience of being a documentary participant is characterized at this point by a difference of opinion with the filmmaker as well as a difference in approach, learning about filmmaking and about herself, enjoyment in terms of going out and filming, but insecurity about the end result.

### Debby about the filmmaker

As discussed above, Debby several times contrasted her academic approach to the filmmaker’s artistic approach. Also, she contrasted her extensive knowledge of the subject matter with his more limited knowledge, thereby challenging his authority over the content of the film.

Debby discussed the way the filmmaker worked: “...that uhm [filmmaker] himself also entered it a bit ad hoc or a bit uhm yeah ... He prepared it alright, but he also let it happen a bit let’s say.” She observed that they spent quite some time on some topics, causing a lack of time at the end of the filming period: “...of which I thought ‘yeah, if you had made somewhat more strict planning, or content planning for yourself, then it all would have

been somewhat more uhm would have been distributed better”. Despite Debby’s critical notes on the filmmaker’s methods, she praised his enthusiasm and considered his actions were well intended. She also mentioned she respected his authority as filmmaker: “...I’ve ... most of the time thought ‘this is his film and I am not going to interfere with how he visualizes things or whatever...”.

In addition, Debby observed a difference in character. Debby talked about the filmmaker’s efforts to treat her with care, approaching her cautiously:

... he sometimes was inclined to handle me with velvet gloves  
... while I think ‘just act normally and if I don’t like it I’ll tell you’. ... That was maybe the reason why we sometimes really communicated at cross-purposes because he so approached me so carefully that I also really apparently did not understand very well what he meant.

Possibly the filmmaker treated her as he did in order to show respect and care, feeling obliged as a filmmaker to do so. Nonetheless, Debby preferred a more direct approach.

For Debby, the difference in approach between filmmaking and academic writing is what most constitutes the relationship she had with the filmmaker. Also she observed that the filmmaker was not a very strict planner. But she did appreciate his enthusiasm and respected his decisions as filmmaker.

Debby’s disagreements and interruptions

In the interview, Debby recounted how she and the filmmaker had had a difference of opinion from the start of the project. They disagreed on the role of a man in Emma’s life, whom I name Frank, and consequently about the importance of Frank for the film. This disagreement on Frank’s role surfaced early on in the preliminary talks Debby had with the filmmaker and the film’s researcher (see p. 181).

An interruption in the cooperation between Debby and the filmmaker occurred when, after the first day of filming and answering questions about Frank, on the second day the filmmaker started asking about him again.

## Participatory spaces

Debby said that after some time she began to show resistance in answering the filmmaker's questions because she felt there was more to Emma than just Frank and because Debby felt she had already answered the same questions the day before. However, according to Debby, after an explanation by the filmmaker she understood why the filmmaker chose this sequence of interview questions.

Another thing Debby and the filmmaker disagreed about was the initial set-up of the documentary. Debby related that it was the filmmaker's idea to include three 'versions' of Emma in the film: an actress playing her, a voice over impersonating her, and Debby as the researcher identifying with her. Debby disagreed with this approach for several reasons. First she felt it was un-academic: "... if there is anything drummed into you ... it is that you should keep a distance and that you should look at your subject as objectively as possible". In line with that, Debby said it was not the way she conducted her research. Third, according to Debby Emma did not behave as she was asked to 'imitate'. And Debby felt the set-up did not add to the credibility of the film. Debby shared her point of view with the filmmaker during one of their talks, and in the end he decided to give this idea up.

Debby also recounted a disagreement with the production office over the contract she was to sign. According to Debby it stated that all filmed material would become property of the production company and could be used for the documentary film. Debby said this made her think because in the end "... it is still my uhm my head and my words let's say they are using...". Debby said she had included in the contract that she wanted to see the rough cut as well as the final version of the film and that she could comment if she did not agree or if it included mistakes, because "... the image that especially arises from me as researcher and that should tally with uhm how I am and with my integrity and with my way of doing research...".

Debby recalled that a second interruption occurred during an interview with a family member of Emma, whom I name Gerry. Debby had interviewed Gerry before and had noticed how she had clammed up after certain questions. For Debby's research these interview questions were not vital as she had many other sources that could inform her. Also she did not feel comfortable asking these questions. But the filmmaker, standing behind her

during the interview for the film, started to whisper to ask these questions anyway. Debby recounted it took him twenty minutes to make clear what he wanted: to take over and ask these questions himself. Debby said she had preferred him to just be frank and tell her straight away he wanted to take over. At this point, as discussed above, the filmmaker treated Debby with velvet gloves. Debby said she found it no problem to let the filmmaker take over. In the end, the filmmaker got the answer he wanted and Debby complimented him with this result.

A third interruption occurred around a reliance on facts (Debby's account of this interruption is included as Appendix 5.4, see p. 445). In the story about Emma there was a technical detail and the filmmaker had, according to Debby, indicated before that the facts of such details were not too important to him. Debby however felt that if she had to mention it for the film, at least what she said should be correct. In order to come up with an appropriate sentence to convey the information, Debby had asked the filmmaker to give her some time to think. Earlier than agreed though and before Debby had conceived of a proper sentence, the filmmaker asked her about this fact. He began pushing Debby to say it his 'incorrect' way, which Debby refused. The filmmaker then tried to convince her it was not that important and no one would notice the 'fault'. Debby became irritated and at one point told him to keep silent and give her a few minutes to conceive of a proper sentence. This the filmmaker did and in the end it worked out.

In addition, Debby recounted two interruptions in the cooperation that occurred around publicity. The first issue revolved around how the filmmaker had given some set photos to a journalist without checking with Debby. Debby consequently had included in the contract, which she had not yet signed at that point, that the use of photos with her in them should be put to her for approval. The second interruption concerning publicity revolved around the issue of exclusivity: the contract stated in quite general terms that Debby was not to appear in similar reportages for television before the film was broadcast and had to ask permission if she wanted to. This made Debby feel limited in her freedom to publicize her book, her PhD thesis, which she considered a separate project the production company and filmmaker had nothing to do with. Debby recounted that the contract was consequently adapted and the

## Participatory spaces

conditions specified; also she no longer had to ask for permission to appear in television programmes.

Debby experienced disagreement and interruptions in her collaboration with the filmmaker, both over matters that concerned the film and over matters that concerned herself. In these instances, Debby was aware of her own interests as academic and tried to safeguard them.

Debby's second account: all's well that ends well

Debby's evaluation of the film

Debby started the account by a summary of events such as the viewing and the broadcast that had occurred, and then continued first with her own response to the film. She addressed a number of points. Debby said she was specifically surprised about the amount of material with her included in the film: "... so I thought at a certain point 'well, is that film about me or about [Emma]?' That I already found, that I found uhm, yeah what v-, not so much strange but I just had not expected that." Debby recounted she had mixed feelings about it: "Although I also heard it from other people who also uhm said it that way. It appeared no longer to be about [Emma] but about her researcher ..." Responses to the film reflected her feelings. Apart from that, Debby recounted she had to get used to seeing herself on film:

And in any case the first ten minutes you are only thinking uhm 'don't move your face like that' and uhm, you know ... Horrible. But in hindsight, yeah, I yeah, I enjoyed it very much too and I also thought like yeah, I also think uhm beautiful that they uhm. They really show that it is an investigation and that it uhm and that it, what a job it is to write [a book] and that I actually liked very much.

Debby mentioned she was critical of the scenes with the actress:

A number of dramatised scenes were included, that I felt did not work very well, but well, tha-it wasn't annoying, but I myself would not have done that. ... those uhm, dramatized scenes that was like, that was another form, another yeah, type of image that yeah, actually was too much... ... I find it a mix

that uhm yeah can cause confusion and maybe indeed lower the documentary fragments in credibility let's say.

Debby compared this to writing a thesis and adding fictional elements. In the first interview Debby had already expressed that she did not agree with the re-enactments and the final film did not make her change her mind. It did not work for her: "But well, maybe I am just too much of an academic, that I think 'yeah, real or not'. If it is a documentary then it is real, in inverted commas..." With respect to the 'amount of Frank' in the film, Debby recounted

And when I was watching the viewing, I was at a certain point looking at my watch like 'well, now I feel something else might be addressed' and then that happened ... It was just in time. For me it should not have lasted another five minutes.

But Debby expressed an understanding for the filmmaker's choice here: ... I myself would have put that balance differently, but that was also a choice of the filmmaker and I understand it too that that is something you just captivate the audience with and that attracts and the responses showed that.

Debby recounted an error in the film, a number that did not align with the number she mentioned in her book:

I would have liked it if it would have been the same number that is on the back of my book let's say, but well. That is, there is of course no one who notices that but eh, yeah well, that was just one thing. I think that if I would have really made an issue about it then uhm they uhm, maybe, would have dubbed it maybe, but at that point I felt like 'oh well, you know, it i- it is really about the story.'

In addition Debby recounted there were two moments in the film that could cause confusion because some relevant information and scenes were missing:

... so I was told by people 'yeah, what was that about? What, what did that refer to?' ... there something uhm something more about that theme should have been treated in there ... But that was not part of the film at all so that will have been incomprehensible for a lot of people.

Debby mentioned that she could agree with the way she was represented:

## Participatory spaces

... what I uhm feared very much was, was that a whole distortion of my words would take place ... or would be so much emphasis on one theme that it uhm, yeah that I would not have recognized myself in that. ... And that now just was not the case. ... I could just recognize myself in it that was very uhm, what was important.

The version screened at the viewing, Debby recounted, did not include the final music score yet and was to be adapted anyway. Debby felt the final version was an improvement.

Debby recounted she observed a lot of positive responses to the film. The people involved with the institute where she conducted much of her research were very happy with the film and found it beautiful. With respect to Emma and Frank, Debby remarked that the institute:

... just was very happy with that, because they felt like ‘yeah, that is always what people ask about and that is always what surfaces. ... well, now we can just refer people to the film and just say “if you have any questions about that uhm yeah, you can, you, watch the film, there it is addressed extensively”.’

The institute according to Debby also had its doubt about the actress in the re-enactments: “...they felt yeah, they had a completely different reason, they said: ‘yeah, she doesn’t look at all like Emma.’” At the preview, at the opening of the exposition, Debby recounted everyone was “...wildly enthusiastic, so that was also very positive”.

Although Debby is critical of some parts of the film, she in general is happy with the result. She expresses an understanding of the choices the filmmaker made and feels well represented. In addition, she seems more relaxed than at the time of the first interview when it comes to factual mistakes and incongruities: she does not problematise the difference between a number mentioned in the film and the one in her book, and neither does she problematise the incongruities in the film due to some missing information. She merely mentioned people will not understand. It seems that her satisfaction with the film in general makes her more relaxed about such

details.<sup>102</sup>

### Consequences of the film

At the very beginning of the second interview, Debby recounted viewers' response to the film:

That I opened my mail the next day and that there were a hundred and fifty mails from complete strangers in there who who watched the documentary and responded to it ... some even during the broadcast ... 'well, I am enjoying this documentary tremendously'.

Almost all responses were positive according to Debby, save some comments on the re-enactments, as people felt it lowered the documentary level and did not have added value, the same criticism Debby had expressed. Debby also recounted people approached her as if she had made the film:

Because I was included so much. ...then I did think 'yeah, that...' I can happily see it distinct from each other, but indeed that is something people don't see. ...during the recordings I sometimes feared that ... exactly this:... I am the one telling things and then uhm, people maybe think as they watch the film 'well this is, everything that is being told in the film is the way she sees it, or the way she researched it.' ... Then [filmmaker] also said 'no, you know, you are just a narrator...' So I at a certain point also had that idea that people would indeed understand that ... but then in the end with the responses it turned out that that really wasn't the case.

In addition, despite the presence of the actress, Debby observed: "... I also have the idea that people identify rather with me as a researcher who herself [undertakes] the search for Emma instead of identifying with Emma as, as, as subject." The effect of the film is different than anticipated by the filmmaker, according to Debby, as she is regarded as the person behind the film rather than the filmmaker.

---

<sup>102</sup> After having read this analysis, Debby commented that she did not problematise these incongruities because these were choices the filmmaker had made while editing; it did not relate to Debby's research and she did not feel responsible (personal communication, 11 June 2012).

## Participatory spaces

Debby recounted that as a consequence of her participation, people in her discipline now know her: "...it's a very convenient business card". Also, she received a lot of invitations to give lectures, sometimes in combination with a screening of the film. So for Debby the film worked as a PR-tool to a certain extent.

Debby recounted positive consequences of the film, receiving many positive responses and it working as a business card for her and her work. The criticism Debby recounted that viewers had was mostly in line with the criticism she mentioned she had expressed and anticipated herself. The positive reception and the criticism confirmed her own experience and assessment and reassured her.

## Re-evaluating the experience

Looking back at the experience of participating in a documentary film as a whole, Debby is now much more positive than during the first interview: "... I look back at it with much more pleasure in any case ... am I also very proud of." According to Debby this is due to the end result and the reception of the film:

...but that I find funny indeed to notice that it would all have been very different if it uhm, yeah, if it wouldn't have been received as well or if I wouldn't have been able to agree to it. So that is indeed in that sense a little dependent on the end result.

Debby recalled her conditional faith in the filmmaker:

...I was indeed a little suspicious at first uhm about how uhm the director would use my words, how he would use the visual material. ... I trusted him but yeah, you just don't know. ... I made quite an issue of things I think with [production company] to really completely board up everything in the contract and that turned out to be just unnecessary. ...if I would work with [production company] again then I would really make less of an issue. ... On the other hand with another production company ... I would indeed still be on my toes.

So although she has learned to trust this team, with a different team for Debby

it would start all over again.

Debby recounted she learned that people do not clearly make a distinction between who they see on screen and the maker of the film, as discussed above. Debby reflected again on the different approach she and the filmmaker had had, and admitted: "...there were a few moments that I thought 'yeah, [filmmaker], you were just right indeed. You know, there are a couple of things that just work very well on film and which in a book you do differently... In the film you just need to be very clear, you need to work with gripping images, you can do very much with suggestion... Surely if I also see the responses of people, that made a deep impression on them. That they really thought wonderful ... for the audience, for which he made his film, that worked very well.'" Debby learned more about filmmaking, about the differences between filmmaking and writing, and she learned to accept the filmmaker's expertise in the former.

Debby recounted that the publicity for the film met some problems, due to the timing of the broadcast during a holiday season. She concluded: "... if I had to do it all over again ... I think I would have pursued it more ... then I would have really handled that differently, handled that smarter. Yeah." Debby suggests the next time she would get more involved.

Remarkably, the scene that caused the most trouble in the cooperation between Debby and the filmmaker now played a minor role and was even forgotten about. In the first interview, Debby recounted the filming of this scene, which addressed a small technical detail in Emma's life (see p. 187). In the second interview Debby recounted that during the viewing people from the institute where she had done a lot of her research had noted that this technical detail was missing:

...then [filmmaker] started somewhat like ... 'should I go and film that again?' and uhm, but then I knew 'yeah, we once filmed something at [location] and it was, I know, I knew still because we had an enormous collision about it then like uhm, in which I explain in two sentences how it all came into being... And I think [filmmaker] had just forgotten about that scene.

Debby mentions the filmmaker forgot about this scene, but she also refers to it as 'something'. The disagreement and interruption are not part of Debby's

## Participatory spaces

second account so it seems it does not play a major role in her evaluation any longer, while it was central in her first account.

Debby in the end is happy with the film, due to the positive reception as well as her proper representation as academic. Her criticism concerns the observation that viewers regard her as the maker of - or the person behind - the film, and it concerns the publicity campaign. She admits to some of the filmmaker's choices she was critical about initially, observing they work well in a documentary film.

So what was Debby's experience like?

Debby's account of her participation shows that it was not uncomplicated for her. Initially her evaluation of the experience of being a documentary participant is characterized by a difference of opinion with the filmmaker as well as a difference in approach, learning about filmmaking and about herself, enjoyment in terms of going out and filming but insecurity about the end result.

The difference in approach between filmmaking and academic writing is what most constitutes the relationship she had with the filmmaker. Also she observed that the filmmaker was not a very strict planner. But she did appreciate his enthusiasm and respected his decisions as filmmaker. The disagreement they had could not be resolved and Debby experienced interruptions in her collaboration with the filmmaker, not only over matters that concerned the film but also over matters that concerned herself. In these instances, Debby was aware of her own interests as academic and tried to safeguard them.

Although Debby is still critical of some parts of the film, she in the end is happy with the result and feels well represented. She recounted receiving many positive responses and it also worked as a business card for her and her work. The criticism Debby recounted viewers had was mostly in line with the criticism she had expressed herself: viewers regard her as the maker of - or the person behind - the film. The positive reception and the criticism confirmed her own experience and assessment and reassured her. Debby admits to some of the filmmaker's choices she was critical about initially, observing they work well in a documentary film. In addition, she seems more relaxed than at the

time of the first interview when it comes to factual mistakes and incongruities. So she also learned more about filmmaking and what it demands.

#### Deconstructing Debby's account

For the deconstruction of Debby's first account I will focus on the excerpt included in Appendix 5.4 (p. 445). I chose this excerpt because it summarizes the first account. Debby talked about the conflict about a detail in Emma's life and the interruption in the collaboration with the filmmaker. I will argue that the way Debby talked about the conflict with the filmmaker reflects their differences in approach and their different professions. In the second account, this conflict is almost absent; Debby only refers to it briefly (see below). However, other aspects that surface through deconstruction resurface in the second interview.

#### Debby as academic

Throughout the first interview, Debby in various ways pointed to her identity as academic, at times contrasting it with the filmmaker's identity as filmmaker or artist. For example, Debby said: "... I of course wanted always to tell things more detailed than he wanted to show them..." (see also p. 180). The contradiction between telling and showing reveals Debby's distinction between her academic textual work and the filmmaker's creative, visual work. As an academic, Debby is used to telling things, either orally in classrooms or in writing, in her book or in other publications. She regards the filmmaker as someone who wants to show, rather than tell. His reference point is the image, not the words Debby usually deploys to get her message across. After this, she mentioned how her "academic accountability" and the filmmaker's "beautiful story" caused struggle (see p. 180), although they do not have to be mutually exclusive according to Debby. By expressing herself this way, she makes the distinction between herself and the filmmaker as professionals explicit and she stresses both their individual professions. Debby later recounted:

And so there just were a few moments of which I thought 'well, if it has to go that way, then I just don't want it, because I yeah then uhm yeah then you just mar what you stand for yourself let's say... (Appendix 5.4, p. 447, line 95-p. 448, line 98).

## Participatory spaces

Debby understands her role in the film as professional, as academic, and she has to be able to uphold her academic standards.

Another way Debby worked on her identity was by taking roles. In her account, and most strikingly in recounting the third interruption, Debby frequently re-enacted her own part by quoting herself and thus taking her own role. In addition, she took other people's roles by quoting them. For example, Debby re-enacted dialogues with the filmmaker (Appendix 5.4, p. 445, lines 15-19, and again throughout lines 35-59, p. 446). This excerpt represents the climax of the interruption in the cooperation between Debby and the filmmaker.

By taking these roles this way Debby and the filmmaker engage in a dialogue as it were and this stresses their difference of opinion, or their different perspectives. But it also places the people involved here in opposition and thus makes them opponents. Debby puts herself in opposition to the filmmaker and, in line with that, with the camera and sound crew, by also enacting the crew members' response (Appendix 5.4, p. 446, line 60). This way Debby detaches herself from the filmmaking team and reinforces her position as someone outside of the team.<sup>103</sup> The interruption concerned a reliance on facts, which Debby previously aligned with her academic standards. Debby here reinforces her identity as academic by taking these roles.

In her account of the interruption about the promotion of the documentary film and her book, Debby also takes the role of the production company, apart from her own: "...they had included explicitly in their e-mail like 'it is of course uhm, only to our advantage if you do that and certainly if you mention the documentary so we will really not say "no" to that'...". As with her re-enactment of the dialogue with the filmmaker and the crew, the role-taking here reinforces the distinction between Debby and in this case the production company, alienating them from each other and reinforcing Debby's identity as academic, wishing to be free to chose her own path and control her academic career.

In the second interview, Debby manifested herself less as academic

---

<sup>103</sup> After having read this analysis, Debby commented that in her perception she created a distance between herself and the director, but not between herself and the crew, who withdrew themselves as they felt the situation was between the filmmaker and Debby (personal communication, 19 May 2011).

than in the first interview, only comparing the inclusion of the dramatized scenes with including fictional work in her thesis. In both accounts though she also talked about herself as researcher on Emma. However, there is a contradiction in Debby's accounts. In the first one she stresses her representation as academic: the documentary should align with her academic work as researcher on Emma. In the second interview she expresses contentment about the resulting film. At the same time, she recounts that what she feared would happen, did happen: that viewers would hold her accountable for the film (see p. 191). She also confirmed the re-enacted scene did not work (see p. 188). It seems that Debby does not want to take responsibility for the whole film. So although she is happy with the film, it seems to me she is mainly happy with her own contribution and with the positive responses, but not with the whole film itself.

In the second account, Debby again takes roles, but this time she mostly takes her own role. She does not oppose it to the filmmaker, as she did in her first account, but she rather emphasizes her own perspective. For example, she said that during a viewing, she was looking at her watch "...like 'well, now I feel something else might be addressed'..." (see p. 189). Discussing the extent to which she was included in the film, Debby recounted: "... at first I thought 'gosh', that uhm yeah, really that you think like 'gee, it wasn't about me'..." (see also p. 188). As discussed above, she is more relaxed about the discrepancies between her thesis and the film. Now that she is assured the film reflects her academic approach and represents her work as researcher she no longer needs to uphold a profile of herself as such.

#### Debby as co-creator

In her first account, Debby talked about how she got involved in the project, first as consultant and eventually as central participant. She presents herself as co-creator explicitly. Another explicit example of Debby's involvement in the project and thus of Debby as co-creator occurs when Debby discussed the disagreement on the relevance of Frank (see p. 185). In both accounts, Debby talked explicitly about how she would handle a future project, how she would try and become a proper co-maker in a future project (see p. 184). But there are also more implicit references to co-creatorship. When she started her

## Participatory spaces

account of the third interruption she mentioned it would be fun if that would be included in the film (Appendix 5.4, p. 445, lines 25-26). Debby mentioned that shots filmed near a ruin represent Emma's broken illusions and how that made a beautiful image (p. 445, lines 27-30). About the details that caused the third interruption, Debby said: "... which I really is not that important..." (p. 446, lines 32-33). Debby here started the sentence with "I" and continued with "is"; she switched from the specific first person singular to the general third person singular. She rephrased her personal opinion into a general observation. In these instances, Debby negotiates her role as co-creator who has explicit ideas about what is fun, beautiful, and important with respect to the film, and thus challenges the dichotomy between 'omniscient' filmmaker and 'ignorant' participant. In her account of the interruption over the promotion of her book, Debby recounted:

'... Because you do not have anything to do with the promotion of my book so', so, there we, it is uhm, in the end we quite uhm, made much more specific so that it really explicitly had included in the contract that I uhm... (see also p. 187).

Debby started by positioning the production team ("you") opposite herself ("my") and later mentioned that together they made the adaptations to the contract, or had them made ("we"). Debby seems to be in between positioning herself opposite the production team and as part of the production team here.

Debby also formulated an idea about what will and will not be in the final film (p. 447, lines 78-79). She started with "He" and continued with "I know...". Instead of expressing the filmmaker's point of view, Debby resorts to her own point of view and her own assumption that the quote that caused the third interruption will not make it into the film. Through this disruption, or rephrasing, rather than placing the authority with the filmmaker, she places it with herself, establishing herself as co-creator.

Given that Debby said she did not yet dare to take a position as co-maker of the film (see p. 183), given Debby's hesitant alignment with the production team, and given that Debby reinforces her identity as academic awaiting her final evaluation of her experience, I understand her identity as co-creator to be provisional, pending her evaluation of the final film. She wants to be a co-creator but cannot yet fully be one at this point. In the second

interview this search for co-creatorship is absent. Therefore it seems aligned with Debby's insecurity about the end result.

In her account Debby 'silences' the identity of everyone except the filmmaker, whose name she mentioned frequently. She recounted, for instance: "...production immediately apologized...". Debby used an impersonal entity instead of a person as actor. She continued this when she talked about the person(s) she was communicating with about the contract: Debby talked about "they" and mentioned the name of the production company as actor. Debby refers to the crew members as "cameraman", "crew" and "people". They do not have a name and thus do not really have an identity. I initially interpreted this as Debby expressing a distance between herself and the crew that is larger than the distance between herself and the filmmaker, the silences revealing that Debby feels closer to the filmmaker and identifies more with him and his position in the process than with others involved. In her comments on this analysis Debby mentioned she felt closest to the sound man and the production assistant, whom she confided in every now and then. She mentioned she probably did not express this in the interview because she felt it was irrelevant; she did not mention their names because she felt mentioning their function instead would make more evident who she was speaking about.<sup>104</sup> With this comment in mind, a better interpretation might be that Debby feels the conflict with the filmmaker was more relevant, important, or fundamental, to her experience than whatever issues she had with the production team. She did not recall conflict with crew members, and hence their identity is less important too.

Debby's contribution: a professional's performance

In her first account Debby reflects extensively on how she behaved in the filmmaking process, while being recorded; she reflects on the experience of appearing for a camera and discussing specific topics and/or behaving in a particular way. In doing so, like Ben and Chris, Debby also challenges the dichotomy between documentary and fiction film in terms of non-acting and acting. She did this in the second account as well, admitting it was "all"

---

<sup>104</sup> Debby, personal communication, 19 May 2011

## Participatory spaces

directed and staged.

Above I have already pointed to how Debby tried to control the content of the film by refusing to convey incorrect information and insisting on conveying the correct information (see p. 187 and Appendix 5.4, p. 446, lines 49-52). Through this exercise of control, Debby sought to secure her image as a proper scholar and researcher. Debby commented that the filmmaker's view on facts is different from hers (p. 445 lines 18-20), insisted that it is important that facts are conveyed correctly (p. 446, lines 37-38, and demanded an opportunity to come up with a phrase she could agree to herself (p. 446, lines 49-52), that did not mar what she stands for (p. 447, line 96-p. 448, line 98) and provided an opportunity to say it her way (p. 448, lines 110-111). Debby also considered that the phrase about the fact should be "fun to listen to" (p. 446, line 43), it should be phrased properly (p. 446, line 48) and it should be "a little appealing" (p. 447, line 65). Apart from refusing whatever the filmmaker wants to put into her mouth, Debby refrained from a spontaneous utterance and consciously conceived of a proper sentence that met her and the film's demands. Here Debby challenges the dichotomy between documentary film as unmediated and spontaneous display, and fiction as mediated and scripted construction.

Debby presented herself as an active actor. Her challenging of the traditional dichotomy between documentary and fiction film invite a consideration of the social actor as contributor to the process of filmmaking and a consideration of what might then be expected of this contributor. It opens up a space for negotiations between the filmmaker and the participants about the contribution of the latter.

### Debby as interviewee

Debby mentioned in her first account she had experience in the production of short films. Debby stated about the second part of the shooting: "...about which I didn't feel so good maybe also because time began to press a bit uhm..." (p. 445, lines 7-8). Earlier on in the interview, Debby had said: "...I would have found it let's say psychologically smarter from him to just...". Debby here expresses an understanding of the process of filmmaking and identifies herself as a person knowledgeable about the process of making films.

Debby also mentioned: “I also just personally find it does not match the idea of a documentary. I think a documentary I think is an investigation and of course you have some poetic licence...” (p. 447, lines 67-69), by which she identifies herself as a person knowledgeable about documentary film as genre. But Debby also positions herself as knowledgeable about documentary film in more subtle ways. Silences reveal Debby’s identity as a knowledgeable interviewee. Debby talked about “you” and “someone” (p. 447, lines 72-74) when she was actually talking about her own experience in which the ‘you’ is the filmmaker and the ‘someone’ is Debby herself. By using these terms she tries to give her opinion that the filmmaker should listen to her general value and worth. Moreover, she is not speaking to the filmmaker here, she is not re-enacting their dialogue. Instead, she is speaking to me as interviewer, trying to convince me of her opinion as a valid one. Debby thus presents herself to the interviewer as a knowledgeable person with respect to documentary film.

In her second account Debby discussed her response to the film extensively. In doing so she again presented herself as knowledgeable about documentary filmmaking. For example, she repeated her objections to the use of an actress, relying on her understanding of film and storytelling (see the quote on p. 188). She also used some filmmaking jargon, like when she mentioned the inclusion of “talking heads”.

Discussing the result, Debby creates a silence around the filmmaker. She used three forms to do that: she spoke in a passive tense, in the second person singular, and in the third person plural. She recounted with reference to viewing rough material: “... you totally have no idea how in ed- what will be used in editing.” Here, the passive tense expresses Debby’s inconclusiveness about the process. She does not know how the editing process went and who was involved in whatever decisions were taken. By using a passive tense, an actor can be omitted. About her contribution she said: “... they included me very much” and about the film as a whole: “... that came into being during editing...” and “They really show it is an investigation...” This suggests, like in Ben’s case, that it wasn’t just the filmmaker working on the editing and post production. However, I think it rather points to Debby’s inconclusiveness about who worked on the film after filming was over. Again, she is unfamiliar with the process and cannot indicate actors.

## Participatory spaces

So Debby presents herself as knowledgeable about filmmaking in her first account, but in her second account it seems to me that this knowledge relates to those processes she has witnessed and has been part of. Her knowledge is therefore restricted, at least with respect to this project.

In addition to being knowledgeable about filmmaking, Debby presents herself as a knowledgeable interviewee on the subject matter of the film. In her evaluation, Debby recounted how one of the crew members asked an additional question: "... really a good question, that you really think 'well, and he not only listened, but he also uhm, really thought about it very well'...". Here, Debby presents herself as a good judge of the value of the question and thus as someone knowledgeable about the subject matter of the film.

As discussed above, Debby took roles and re-enacted a dialogue with the filmmaker in her first account. Quoting can serve to make the information conveyed through the quotes seem more reliable. The credibility of what Debby said should increase through direct quotes because these quotes directly refer to a source. This way, Debby can present herself as a reliable and credible interviewee. In addition Debby actively reflected on her own words as well, saying thing such as "...to put it very seriously..." (p. 448, line 100), "...no, that is not true as we had of course Monday..." (p. 448, line 109) and elsewhere "... uhm, no, uhm, am I saying it correctly? Oh yeah..." and "that, like I said". This also shows how Debby worked to come across as reliable interviewee. As in the second interview, Debby included phrases like "Because I am thinking...", "How shall I put it?", and "Yeah, something came to my head". She again presents herself as a reliable interviewee, showing consciousness of her account.

Finally, Debby worked to come across as a reasonable interviewee. She recounted how "it" had built up (p. 447, line 91). She continued that the filmmaker was "a little uhm, imperative" (lines 93-94), it "didn't work out" (line 94) and you get "something like that" (line 95). Debby 'silences' the character and the severity of the interruption by naming the cause "it", by judging the filmmaker's behaviour that led to the interruption "a little" imperative, by stating "it didn't work out" and referring to the interruption as "something". In doing so, she smoothes out the interruption, she irons out the confrontation. She does this vis-à-vis the interviewer and thereby she presents herself as a

reasonable person, someone who is not judgemental even if she has been ill-treated in her own view.

The same thing happens when Debby omitted to mention the filmmaker as actor and instead said: “..... and then it started again, it went again, with the same questions...” and “... the only thing asked about was...”. By omitting to mention the filmmaker as the one starting again asking the same questions, and asking about..., in other words as actor, Debby shows a disinclination to keep him responsible for certain actions. She tries to keep him sheltered as it were, avoiding a confrontation.

Debby also rephrased her judgements: “...already a little bit uhm, well, irritated is a big word, but...” and “...this is so irrele- or not irrelevant, but...”. By correcting herself the way she did, Debby conveys she was consciously trying to make herself come across as more moderate than her initial words would do.

Debby’s account contains a number of instances where she expresses an understanding of the perspective of the filmmaker: “I corrected him very often, which is indeed very irritating, I get that...” (p. 445, lines 12-13); “...I also understand that you don’t uhm have the luxury like me to nuance everything...” (p. 447, lines 69-71); “So I do get his argument that ‘well, just say it this way...’” (lines 82-83); and “...I just noticed that he, justly, but wanted to tell his story...” (lines 92-93). However, these words do not so much convey she really understands; rather they convey she has sympathy for the idea that he has a different point of view. They thus serve to make Debby come across as a reasonable person, involving both parties, both herself and the filmmaker, in her evaluation. The point is not that she really understands; the point is that she is reasonable enough to understand the filmmaker has a different position, a different perspective. Rather than aligning them, it confirms their different approaches.

Debby again presented herself as a reasonable interviewee in her second account. She expressed an understanding of choices the filmmaker had made, saying: “... I myself would not have done that.” About other decisions she said: “...I do understand...”, “...so in that sense I understand very well...”, and “I did understand that choice...”. Debby here again makes clear that she is reasonable enough to understand that the filmmaker made choices she would

## Participatory spaces

not have made. However, understanding is not the same as agreeing and Debby still does not agree with the some of the filmmaker's choices.

Debby's identity as knowledgeable, reliable, and reasonable interviewee discussed above is in line with her identity as academic. Specifically in her first account she not only works to present herself as an academic within the realm of the production process, vis-à-vis the filmmaker, but also in the interview process, vis-à-vis the interviewer. (The fact that the interviewer is also an academic might have reinforced this.)

So how did Debby talk about her experience?

Identity work is central to Debby's account of her experience as documentary participant. In her first account, Debby presented herself most prominently as academic. She reinforced her own position by re-enacting dialogues between herself and the filmmaker and between herself and other crew members. She discussed the difference between 'her' telling and the filmmaker's 'showing'. And she also distanced herself from the production team.

In addition, Debby identified herself as co-creator by expressing her own ideas about what should be included in the film, by presenting herself as future co-creator, and by identifying more with the filmmaker than with the production company and team. Her identity as co-creator is provisional though, pending her evaluation of the final film.

Debby reflected on her contribution in terms of a play rather than display, which invites a further consideration of documentary film as constructed and mediated expression by the participant. Debby also identified herself as a knowledgeable, reliable, and reasonable interviewee, characteristics in line with proper scholarship.

Concluding remarks on Debby's account

Debby's account of her experience as documentary participant shows that for her, the experience was not uncomplicated. She was involved in the project as researcher of and thus expert on Emma, which is also how she understands her role in the film. In the first account she recounted differences of opinion with the filmmaker as well as several interruptions in her cooperation with the filmmaker and the production team. In this account, the relevance of her

position as expert and as academic is immediately visible. Debby's second account focused on the reception of the film and Debby's evaluation of it: she was positive about her representation yet remained critical about some of the filmmaker's choices. The conflict and interruption central to the first account have disappeared into the background.

By deconstructing Debby's account, and specifically the first account, it becomes evident that for Debby, her role and position as academic, adhering to the standards and values of academia, is paramount. Her identity as a co-creator is provisional as long as she cannot assess the end result. Debby sought control over her representation as academic and when she risked losing that control, she created moments of power play by refusing to do what the filmmaker requested, by postponing her cooperation and by taking control over the content of the film. In addition, she sought control over her work: she tried to control the image she created of Emma in her PhD thesis, preventing the filmmaker from presenting an alternative image. In a way, she sees the documentary film as an extension of her PhD thesis. In line with this she created moments of power play to control her career as academic and to obtain freedom in publicizing her book.

In addition to her role as academic, Debby negotiated her identity as co-creator. She was actively involved in negotiating the content of the film and expressed her ideas about it as well, challenging the dichotomy between filmmaker and participant that underlies this research project and the documentary discourse in general. But as long as it is not clear that the film adheres to her standards, Debby maintains a distance between herself and the filmmaker and crew and her identity as co-creator remains provisional, as her evaluation will ultimately depend on the resulting film. The first account serves to underline her identity as academic, to reinforce it, distinguishing it from others involved in the project; she presents herself as a proper co-creator in a future project. She does this again in the second account.

Debby also recounted her involvement and participation in terms of scripted construction rather than spontaneous display. Debby also presented herself as a knowledgeable, reliable, and reasonable interviewee. In doing this, she confirmed her identity as academic vis-à-vis the interviewer.

### Concluding remarks on the case studies

In this chapter the perspective of the participants on documentary filmmaking and ethics is represented by four Dutch case studies. I analysed their oral accounts about their experiences in a documentary project by not just investigating what respondents said but also how they said it, with a focus in what was most salient in their accounts rather than on the answers to my questions; in addition I used the concepts salient in the results of the survey analysis as sensitizing concepts.

Alex's account centred on the experience of the filming activities, his wish that some more funny scenes were included in the film, and his relaxed attitude toward media participation in general; but it centred most on himself. Alex talked more about his animals and his daily activities than about the film he participated in. Alex apparently feels a need to talk about his current thoughts and preoccupations rather than his past experiences. He did not recount any serious trouble with the filmmaker. For him, being in the documentary was fun, but it is time for new things now. His other experiences with his animals and his media experiences occupy his mind much more than his experiences as documentary participant. Deconstruction suggested Alex in his interviews tried to establish common ground with the interviewer, to be heard and understood. The documentary project was one media experience among others, as Alex is preoccupied with the media and with being on television. At the same time he is confused about their workings and is preoccupied with the 'front stage' rather than the 'back stage', with being in the image rather than making it.

Ben's account centred on his evaluation of the film, his evaluation of the experience, the filmmaker, and himself. For Ben there was a basis of trust and anything could be discussed with the filmmaker, despite their different opinions on the subject matter of the film. Making these differences explicit fostered a sense of trust for Ben, which helped negotiate an interruption in filming. Ben was critical about the film but not about the filmmaker. For Ben the experience was a learning experience. His participation seems to have served as a catalyst for a latent problem at work. Ben and the filmmaker became friends after filming was over and Ben prioritized their friendship over

unresolved issues concerning the film. Deconstructing Ben's account showed how he protected the filmmaker and their relationship and how during filming his political identity was prominent but afterwards his private identity was prominent. Ben discussed his contribution in terms of documentary display and fictional acting. He presented himself as a right-thinking and knowledgeable interviewee.

Chris enjoyed participating in the documentary which for him was in a sense a friendly turn. He appreciated the film very much, like he appreciated the filmmaker–friend who made it and her work in general. There was one scene he initially preferred to have changed, which happened. He doubted another scene he was in but the filmmaker convinced him it was fine. Deconstruction shows that Chris presented himself as friend and ally of the filmmaker, defending the filmmaker's practice by aligning it with other creative practices, including his own. He values this friendship and alliance over the experience itself.

Debby recounted differences of opinion with the filmmaker as well as several interruptions in her cooperation with the filmmaker and the production team, mainly revolving around matters of representation of the subject of the film and, as a consequence, of Debby herself, as researcher on the subject. She used power play to guard her own interests. After watching the film she found she could agree to her representation. Deconstruction of Debby's accounts showed she presented herself as academic and as provisional co-creator; she understands her contribution in terms of scripted construction; and she presented herself as a knowledgeable, reliable, and reasonable interviewee, confirming her identity as academic.

In the accounts of these four participants, joy, learning, and self-representation are central to the experiences as documentary participant. All enjoyed participating in filming and for Alex and Chris this joy was most prominent, either because of the attention or as a friendly turn. Ben and Debby explicitly mentioned having learned from the experience, particularly about themselves. And for Debby it also served as a vehicle for self-expression.

At the same time, with respect to the experience of the various concepts relevant to documentary filmmaking and ethics, these case studies suggest a similar result as the survey discussed in Chapter 3: cooperation and

## Participatory spaces

communication dominate the experience, and conflict is present but it does not play a decisive role in the end. Despite their positive evaluations all four respondents discussed disagreement with the filmmaker as some point, be it over a single scene or the general approach. Conflict in the broad sense, ranging from disagreement to conflict proper, is visible in each project, but localized as well as general. Alex was disappointed some scenes were not included on the film but he accepted the filmmaker's choices. Ben did not agree with his representation in one specific scene though he expressed an understanding of its appeal. Nor did he agree with the balance of the film, but for him his relationship is more important than his dissatisfaction, and the film also brought him new information. Chris had preferred the film to end with a scene he was in but the filmmaker decided differently. Based on his understanding of creative practises, in which he himself is involved as well, he accepted the decisions of the filmmaker as an ally. Debby's first account was characterized by conflict during filming and anxiety over her representation, which concerned the filmmaker's general approach as well as specific instances, specific phrases; in her second account this had disappeared into the background.

The accounts of these documentary participants challenge the documentary discourse that served as the starting point of this thesis at several points. The next chapter is dedicated to a discussion of what this as well as the previous empirical research effort has to offer to the discourse. In Chapter 6 I will discuss how the empirical findings from both the survey and the case studies support, contradict, add to, or provide an interpretation of the scholarly concerns discussed in Chapter 1. I will focus on three main themes: cooperation, conflict, and the consequences of participating in a documentary project.

## Discussion of the case studies

In my case studies, I have investigated the experiences of four Dutch documentary participants by conducting semi-structured interviews before or just after the premiere of the film, and again four to six months later. I have analysed both what the respondents told me about their experiences and how

they told me about them.

The sample for the case studies was informed by practical considerations as well as considerations of authorship. I found these cases through production companies known for their individual, author-driven output. These companies have a long standing tradition and are known for such output. The projects included in the cases all involve author documentary filmmakers. Only two of the four films have been released in cinemas, the other two have only been screened on television as far as I am aware. These have the traditional length for television casts of about 50 minutes. However, as far as I know they were made not according to some format but the way the filmmakers saw fit, based on her creative input and ideas. I consider them 'author' enough to validate inclusion in my research project.

In my search for projects, I depended on the production companies to help me. In that respect they exercised control over the projects I could access. They might have used that control to prevent me from researching projects in which someone had been filmed secretly, in which high profile officials or authorities were questioned or put to the test, or in which corrupt businesses or public agencies were exposed. They might have avoided suggesting controversial projects or projects in which they knew more serious issues between the filmmaker and the participant had occurred. In that respect, they might have proposed relatively 'safe' projects to me. At the same time, four cases cannot be representative of any practice, so the results of these case studies can only serve as examples of what might happen.

I have avoided dealing with cases that made the news; I did not want to investigate high profile cases in which a conflict between the filmmaker and the participant became publicised or a filmmaker was taken to court on charges of misrepresentation. I feared that in such cases those involved might already have been affected by the public attention for their case and that it would be hard to reflect on the whole experience from a more neutral point of view, reconstructing the experience and recounting how it developed. In my cases there was some conflict as well but it was not public; it was limited to those involved, at least at the time. (It was of course not clear how the projects included in the case studies would develop in terms of reception and

## Participatory spaces

response.) I wanted to focus on everyday cases of everyday documentary filmmaking. In limiting the research to everyday projects that did not cause a public stir I think I did justice to the everyday practice of documentary filmmaking. The majority of films after all do not cause much concern or public outcry. As a result, this thesis does not discuss cases in which the filmmaker purposefully misled or deceived the participant, filmed her secretly, lied about her intentions, interviewed her under false pretences, or slandered her. Going by the number of such cases that make it to the media, a road more and more participants can find, I hypothesize this to represent a minority of documentary projects. At the same time, I think the projects included in this research effort yielded enough material to take the debate on documentary filmmaking and ethics a step further.

I relied on semi-structured interviews at the end of the production process because it was the most feasible method at that moment. Originally I had included the use of diaries or logs, and additional interviews with participants during the production process. However, conversations with filmmakers and producers taught me that filmmakers would likely be unwilling to let an outsider get involved in the project, for fear of interference with the production process. They were afraid asking participants to reflect on their experiences during rather than after the project would affect their involvement and change their attitude. Interviews at the end seemed the most I could get out of it. In the discussion at the end of this thesis I will reflect on alternative research ideas though.

The methods I used to analyse the interviews, and specifically the use of deconstruction, might not appeal or convince everybody. I tried to use it to better understand the experience of the four documentary participants and the way they look back on it, to elicit their attitude toward the project and the interview, by discussing how they talk about it. At the same time, what they said took precedence over how they said it. My deconstruction has its limitations because I did not aim at subverting what interviewees told me. I approached their accounts as genuine accounts of their experiences. I interviewed them on the basis of confidentiality and I offered them the text of the analysis of their account before finalizing it. I have no immediate reason to doubt their accounts. However, their accounts are constructed, as any account

is, and I wanted to understand some of the ideas that underlie this construction.

Since the case studies include only Dutch participants, the experiences are limited to a Dutch production context. I tried to find participants in the United States but I did not manage to do this within the time I had taken to arrange it. This Dutch context might also limit the scope of the results. The production context as well as culture in other countries might be quite different. Similar case studies with participants from other countries might yield very different accounts. For example, in countries where documentary filmmakers are regarded more as journalists, or where the legal position of participants is different (for instance, because there is no culture of working with contracts), filmmakers and participants might cooperate in different ways. Also, projects with filmmakers and participants from different cultures might make interesting cases to study, given the possible effect of cultural difference on the experience of conflict, as the survey results suggest (see Chapter 3, p. 103-104). It goes without saying that there is a lot to be discovered here.

I left a period of four to six months between the first and second interview with the documentary participants. In the case of Debby the difference between her first and second account is most evident. In the case of Ben there is also a shift in focus, from the film to the filmmaker. For Alex and Chris this is less the case. Although it is hard to say whether leaving more time between the first and second interview would make a difference in these cases, I think it would be interesting to indeed leave more time between them or to conduct additional follow-up interviews. The impact of participating in a documentary project might evolve over time. Impact might be contingent rather than fixed.

As mentioned above, the following chapter is dedicated to a confrontation of my empirical findings with the documentary discourse, to see in which ways the empirical results support, contradict, add to, or provide an interpretation of the various concerns and normative points of view in that discourse.



## 6

### **The documentary discourse revisited**

Participants, filmmakers, and scholars face to face

[filmmaker] asked me beforehand, whether I wanted to see it and 'do you want to see the whole film or parts or uhm'. I said 'the whole film I don't need to see' I say 'it must remain a nice film night'. Yeah, I want to see at that moment like 'wow, this is it'.<sup>105</sup>

In this thesis I have discussed both the perspective of documentary filmmakers on the experience of various moral issues and ways to deal with them in their practice, represented by the various patterns in their experiences developed in Chapter 3; and the perspective of documentary participants, represented by the analysis of the accounts of four participants discussed in Chapter 5. Now it is time to tie the two together and discuss how these empirical findings might foster a further understanding of a contemporary documentary filmmaking practice and how this practice relates to the practice presupposed in the documentary discourse discussed in Chapter 1. To do this, in this chapter I will retrace my steps and relate my empirical findings yielded from the participant case studies and the filmmaker survey to the documentary discourse. Focusing on the most salient concepts included in the patterns as well as additional concepts salient in the accounts of the documentary participants, I will discuss to what extent these empirical findings support, contradict, add to, or provide an interpretation of the practice presupposed and evaluated by scholars. I will thus confront the academic assertions about the documentary practice with my empirical findings, referring to relevant examples and discussions in previous chapters throughout.

The distinction between conflict and cooperation that emerged in the

---

<sup>105</sup> Ben commenting on the premiere of the film he participated in, interview 15 September 2010.

## Participatory spaces

survey data is also visible in the experiences the four participants described: The accounts of the participants centred on carefree cooperation (Alex) and cooperation as a friendly turn (Chris) on the one hand, and on participation as a learning experience (Ben) and as hard-won self-presentation (Debby), both involving some sort of conflict, on the other. Conflict, I argued in the previous chapter, here includes disagreement, different points of view, as well as conflict proper (in the form of interruptions in the cooperation between filmmaker and participant; see Chapter 5, p. 208).

Apart from cooperation and conflict, in participants' accounts a third theme emerged that deserves attention: the consequences of participating in a documentary project. Although consequences were included as a concept in the survey, they did not play an important role in the results; the multitude and diversity of consequences discussed by the four participants however in my view justifies a more elaborate discussion here. The different consequences, both negative and positive, contribute to the evaluation of their experience as participants and thus to their evaluation of the documentary practice. Below I will first address cooperation between filmmaker and participant, followed by conflict between them, and the consequences of participating for the participant.

### **Cooperation between filmmaker and participant**

A prominent concept in the survey results reflecting cooperation between filmmaker and participant was communication; it contributed to patterns at all levels (Chapter 3, p. 108). It reflected filmmakers' ongoing efforts to inform and explain to the participant but it also surfaced as reciprocal in nature (Chapter 3, p. 83). This kind of mutual and ongoing communication salient in the perspective of filmmakers is most apparent in Ben's account, as he is most explicit about his communication with the filmmaker: they were in touch by phone and e-mail and the filmmaker informed Ben about events related to the film, such as trips abroad and meetings with other participants. The filmmaker responded even when he was travelling (Chapter 5, p. 157). Their talks went beyond what was necessary for the film: Ben and the filmmaker shared private information, for instance, about their families (Chapter 5, p. 158). Ben

appreciated this and after filming was finished, a kind of friendship evolved. Ben's communication with the filmmaker is characterised by accessibility of the latter: he is available for questions, he responds, and while Ben might not always have received the answer he hoped for, he feels acknowledged in his desire for information and explanation. Although the filmmaker did not address what became the major obstacle in Ben's view, i.e., the balance of the film, he gave Ben the feeling he was there for him.

In the accounts of the other three participants this kind of communication is present in different forms. Alex did not recount extensive communication about filming activities, but he did mention that the contact continued outside and after filming was over: the filmmaker and his parents had visited and enjoyed dinner with Alex and his wife (Chapter 5, p. 136) and they planned on paying a return visit. Chris had been a long time friend of the filmmaker and so they had been in touch for some time. They had discussed the subject matter of the film Chris participated in before his contribution was solicited (Chapter 5, p. 173). According to Chris, the friendship continued unchanged after the film was finished. Debby was initially recruited as consultant for the film and had extensive talks with the filmmaker and the film's researcher about the project, during which the filmmaker informed Debby of his plans and his artistic ideas for the film; Debby in return informed him of her ideas as well as her reservations, and they decided Debby would become a participant in the film. Debby is the only one who did not mention continued communication with the filmmaker after the project, or communication that somehow exceeded the project.

The cases discussed above testify to the continuous and reciprocal character of the communication between filmmaker and participant that surfaced through the survey, to different extents though. In the scholarly documentary discourse such communication and interaction that goes beyond the immediate needs of the project is advocated (Chapter 1, p. 32) but how it manifests itself in the everyday practice of making documentary films has not been addressed. The results from the empirical studies in this research project provide examples of how the social interaction between filmmaker and participant might materialise. In these cases, apart from information relevant to the participant with respect to the project at hand, the content of the

## Participatory spaces

communication also concerned project-related information that did not immediately concern the participant and her contribution, as well as private information. Hence, a contemporary practice might include a filmmaker and participant who share and exchange information about the project as well as information exceeding the project.

The survey statement reflecting the filmmaker straightforwardly informing the participant about what was going on contributed to just one pattern, at the level of everyday interaction between filmmaker and participant (Chapter 3, p. 83). The participants-respondents did not explicitly address how they were informed, apart from Debby who recalled extensive talks prior to filming (see above). The accounts however include examples of alternatives to this straightforward manner of informing. Both Ben and Debby took initiatives themselves to get information they desired. Ben confronted the filmmaker with the question how to balance his aim of 'objectivity' with his own political convictions, apparently foreseeing the challenge ahead. He also discussed his worries about things he might say (Chapter 5, p. 156). Most notably, he mentioned searching the Internet for news and information on the project (Chapter 5, p. 157). Debby recounted having to ask the filmmaker for information about the themes and topic that would be addressed during filming (Chapter 5, p. 182). Since she did not receive this information at her convenience, she solicited it herself. Alex asked why scenes he liked were omitted from the film. The initiatives taken by participants, however modest, attest to the reciprocity of the communication and the information shared through it. Asking questions is after all a way to inform oneself. In addition, although it was not a prominent part of their accounts, Alex and Ben mentioned watching previous work by the filmmaker and Ben mentioned his appreciation for it; Chris already was familiar with his filmmaker-friend's previous work. Watching previous work can be an additional and alternative way for the participant to get informed about the filmmaker and the style or different styles she used. It can help the participant to develop a sense of preference and to articulate this.

At the same time, Alex chose to remain possibly under-informed, refraining from asking questions and soliciting further information. He not only had difficulty remembering what the filmmaker told him about the project

and his plans, but also recounted not giving it too much consideration (Chapter 5, p. 139). They started filming and he acted obligingly and subserviently. Ben recounted he did not want to watch the whole film before the premiere, he just wanted to watch his own material in advance, because he wanted the premiere to be something special (see quote above). He also chose to remain under-informed, in this case with respect to the final film. Debby recounted she received the contract she was to sign only after filming had started (Chapter 5, p. 182). This helped Debby to find out what mattered to her and what she was getting into. It entailed a form of information in an alternative way, i.e., by experience. As a consequence, she initiated modifications to the contract (Chapter 5, p. 186).

In addition, there are instances that suggest the information participants received about the production process and the screening of the film was incomplete. Alex recounted he did not know what to expect from the premiere. Ben did not mention any anticipation of a possibly negative reception of the film he participated in, nor of the contrary. Debby watched a version of the film at the viewing which did not contain the final music (Chapter 5, p. 190). She was surprised at the amount of footage showing herself that was included and she had to get used to watching herself on film (Chapter 5, p. 188). This raises the question to what extent participants should and can be informed about all kinds of details, and at what point this should happen. The empirical research results thus point to a practice in which information is exchanged not just at the instigation of the filmmaker and his production team, but also at the instigation of participants, through quests and questions. In addition, participants consider their needs and weigh and select information. At the same time, they are subject to incomplete information.

In the documentary discourse informing the participant is discussed primarily as part of the concept of informed consent. In Chapter 1 I discussed informed consent in terms of its three main constituent parts: information, consent, and voluntariness (see Chapter 1, p. 26). Although the difficulty as well as the impossibility of fully informing the participant beforehand about the content and the possible consequences of their participation is acknowledged, providing information as much as possible, specifically in

## Participatory spaces

relation to their decisions about participating, is advocated (Chapter 1, p. 27). Generally it is considered the obligation of the filmmaker, as the one possessing knowledge about the process of filmmaking and the details of the project. With respect to the film, both the possibilities to have participants watch a rough cut and to present them with a finished film and thereby inform them about the result of their contribution are discussed, and the former is generally appreciated more (Chapter 1, p. 41). In the survey the statement reflecting the filmmaker showing rough material or rushes to the participant did not contribute to any of the patterns and is thus not part of the most salient results, which I have argued represent the core of the documentary practice in the perspective of filmmakers (Chapter 3, p. 110; it also scored a low mean score, see Appendix 3.4, Table A3.1, p. 365). However, this is what the participants in the case studies recounted: Ben watched material shot with him and Chris and Debby both watched a nearly finished cut.

In line with the practice presupposed by scholars, the appliance of informed consent in documentary filmmaking is not straightforward. The exchange of information seems to happen more dynamically, at the initiative of both the filmmaker and the participant and in relation to the needs of the latter. The findings also suggest that the exchange of information occurs dispersed rather than as a once-and-for-all event. So with respect to informing two aspects surface through the empirical findings: reciprocity and dispersion. Also, the case studies provide an additional characteristic of the documentary filmmaking practice: not only the frequency and direction of communication surfaces as relevant but also the accessibility and availability of the filmmaker. In the case of Ben communication not only served to exchange information or to provide the desired answers, but it also served the acknowledgement of his questions, uncertainties, and concerns by the filmmaker, regardless of answers.

In this research project, informing relates to the cooperation between filmmaker and participant. However, the other element of informed consent, consent or permission, relates to conflict between the filmmaker and participant, as I shall discuss below. Before I turn to this, a few more notions relevant to the discussion of cooperation between filmmaker and participant deserve attention.

In the survey results, the issue of trust contributed to a pattern at the most detailed level, reflecting its role in the everyday and immediate relationship between filmmaker and participant. It served there, as I have argued in the third chapter, as an element in the efforts of the filmmaker to communicate and cooperate with the participant, and communication served to gain such trust (Chapter 3, p. 72). In the case of Ben there was a situation of trust in the filmmaking process (Chapter 5, p. 158) which he related to communication with the filmmaker and the possibility to discuss their different political opinions and accept these, as well as to the possibility to discuss their private lives, apart from the documentary project (Chapter 5, p. 158). Trust in his case is grounded in a situation in which anything could be said; in which the difference of political opinion between Ben and the filmmaker was made explicit and was accepted; and in which they were interested in each other beyond the project itself. This sense of trust also caused Ben to stick to the project, even after the interruption that occurred during an interview. It founded his commitment to the project. For Debby it was also the observation that the filmmaker explicitly acknowledged their difference of opinion that gave her a sense of trust in their cooperation, in this case concerning artistic considerations (Chapter 5, p. 181). Another thing that created a sense of trust for Debby was the filmmaker's willingness to listen to her objections, suggestions, and corrections, which also made her feel she could tell her story. It thus gave her a sense of acknowledgement.

Trust is not conceptualised explicitly in the documentary discourse. It is mentioned with respect to the filmmaker's ability to make proper decisions about filmmaking and with respect to matters exceeding the contract participants might sign (Chapter 1, p. 36). The survey and case studies help to put flesh on how trust can function in a documentary project. Trust here is grounded in mutual and continuous communication and in an acknowledgement of differences. It is not necessarily sameness, agreeing on ideas and approaches or on convictions and points of view that underlies trust, but rather the explicit acknowledgement of differences and the possibility to voice it. In addition to helping gain trust, communication works to sustain it.

As I argued in the first chapter, the relationship between documentary filmmaker and participant is considered unequal and hierarchical: The

## Participatory spaces

filmmaker has the advantage of institutional and technological access to the production and dissemination of images and sounds as well as procedural knowledge about making films (Chapter 1, p. 33); the filmmaker in this respect is considered the professional, an authority with experience, and the participant is considered the layman who lacks such experience and access. At the same time, this relationship is considered key to ethical filmmaking; but the inequality is regarded as an impediment to ethical filmmaking in the presupposed practice scholars evaluated (Chapter 1, p. 33). However, considering the findings from in this research project, continuous and mutual communication and trust help to level this inequality in the filmmaker-participant relationship. By exchanging information, questions, and concerns, and fostering a mutual sense of trust, the inequality can be addressed and an opportunity to focus on shared experience, involvement, and a shared goal can be created. Rather than positioning the filmmaker and participant opposite each other, as scholars seemed to do, the practice that surfaces here includes cooperation in terms of shared interests and communality.

The issue of care surfaced as salient in Debby's account specifically but it also relates to Ben's account. Although the issue of care did not contribute to any of the patterns and hence is not a salient part of the survey results, it scored a high mean score (Chapter 3, p. 72). In the cases of Ben and Debby, despite the interruptions, and in the case of Ben, despite the consequences the film had for him, neither of them complained about a lack of care or the affliction of harm. On the contrary: for Debby it was more important that the filmmaker was clear about what he wanted than that he was overtly careful in the way he addressed her during the interview with Emma's relative Gerry (Chapter 5, pp. 186-187). In addition, the interruption both Ben and Debby experienced did not seem to have a lasting effect. They recounted it happened but rather as something relevant to their experience than as something with a lasting negative effect or as something having caused harm. In the second interview, Debby seemed to be rather indifferent to the scene and to the interruption associated with it until the scene became relevant again (Chapter 5, p. 193).

Given the inequality of the relationship between filmmaker and participant with respect to access and knowledge, the authority of the

filmmaker brings along a responsibility to take proper care of the participant. Because the filmmaker is the one with access and knowledge, she is also considered the one who should make sure this access and knowledge is not used to harm, disadvantage, or exploit the participant; she should take proper care of the participant in relation to the project (Chapter 1, p. 34). The prevention of harm is considered a central concern for documentary filmmakers (Chapter 1, p. 37). At the same time, a voluntary employment of compassion, sensibility, and protection, is relied on, the levels depending on whether the participant is a public, educated, or famous person, or not (Chapter 1, p. 43). The case studies suggest that harm might not be afflicted easily and what might be considered a negative experience need not have a lasting effect. Participants in my case studies found ways to deal with the negative elements that were part of their experience. Thus, the practice that surfaces through my research includes instances which at face value might seem to be harmful or to have a negative effect, but if they did, it did not last. This not only invites the question of when harm is inflicted but also of how participants overcome possibly negative experiences.

In addition to these concepts addressed by respondents and discussed by scholars, a number of phenomena surfaced in the empirical research that have to far been overlooked in the documentary discourse. These are relevant in relation to the inequality of the relationship between filmmaker and participant discussed above and in relation to the exchange of information; they include the participant's involvement in the project, a hierarchy between participants, and the participant's considerations of the quality of the film.

The extent to which participants can be involved in the production process is largely neglected in the documentary discourse and as a result I did not include it in the survey. However, Ben, and Chris recounted being involved in making practical arrangements for the film: Ben searched for a client to film (Chapter 5, p. 160) and Chris arranged for locations to film at (Chapter 5, p. 178). Debby, reflecting on the topic and themes to be discussed during filming, considered what extra information she deemed relevant and included this (see Chapter 5, p. 182). Ben, Chris, and Debby thus contributed ideas about what to film and where to film, and contributed unsolicited information to include in the film. Their accounts illustrate how participants can become active

## Participatory spaces

contributors to the production process of the film they participate in through their practical contribution; and through their ideas and information they can contribute to the content of the film.<sup>106</sup> While the filmmaker might be considered an authority in terms of technology and procedure, the participant might be considered an authority or expert on the content of her contribution, be it about personal views or about professional arguments. She can be considered to know more than the filmmaker about the topic for which she was invited to participate, be that topic her own life, something she has professional expertise on, or something in between. As such she has some authority with respect to the content of the film as well. The active contribution of participants to some extent levels the playing field; the participant brings in a form of expertise generally attributed to filmmaker, on which the filmmaker depends.

In the case studies a hierarchy between main and secondary participants in the project surfaced, which is also overlooked in the discourse. Dutch filmmakers I interviewed (see Chapter 1) did make a similar distinction, which I translated for the survey into different positions in the project and which I included as a contextual aspect (see Appendix 3.1, question A14, p. 7 of the questionnaire, p. 337). In the survey results, it surfaced as a significant predictor of pattern scores, but the effect was small (Chapter 4, p. 103). In the case studies the position of the participants versus other participants is not discussed explicitly, but the participant accounts attest to differences between participants who are central to the film and its argument and those that seem to function on the periphery, both with respect to participation and production. As mentioned above, Ben searched for a client to film, and with reference to the conflict at work that erupted after the screening of the film he recalled ‘making up’ with the wife of a client (Chapter 5, p. 163). These secondary participants, who were not the focus of the film but played a role on the periphery, thus seem to have been the responsibility of Ben, rather than the responsibility of the filmmaker. Ben also contemplated that he should have informed his supervisor about the subject matter of the film more accurately

---

<sup>106</sup> Summerhayes (2001) discussed the contribution of documentary participants within the framework of performance extensively. However, she did not relate this to questions of ethics.

(Chapter 5, p. 163). Although not a participant in the film, Ben's supervisor was indirectly involved in the project as someone needing to grant permission for filming Ben at work, and in that respect he also seems to have been Ben's responsibility. Although the filmmaker offered to help out when the conflict erupted, Ben was the one dealing with these individuals and accounting for the film (see p. 163). It seems he took on this responsibility. Debby recounted conducting the interview with Gerry (see above), which aligns her with the filmmaker as interviewer and positions her in between the filmmaker and the conventional participant. Considering her wish for the filmmaker to be straightforward with her, it seems she wanted to be treated as an equal. The empirical research thus suggests that it matters whether a participant is a main participant or one of a number of participants (survey) and whether she contributes directly or contributes on the periphery of either the film or the project (case studies). The results suggest such differences in position affect the relationship with the filmmaker, the exchange of information, the treatment by the filmmaker, and the participant's involvement: the relationship with the filmmaker seems to be more direct for central participants than for peripheral participants, and their contribution to the project larger.

Hence, contrary to the practice presupposed in the documentary discourse, which points to a participant as subject, merely recorded and included in the film, a practice surfaces in which the participant is actively involved in the project, by contributing both in terms of production and in terms of expertise. Participants central to the film in addition function on another level than participants on the periphery, taking on additional responsibilities, which increases their involvement in the project and further levels the inequality discussed in the discourse.

Alex, Chris, and Debby all related their positive evaluation of the experience to the quality of the resulting film. (For Ben the film was not as good as he had hoped for and in his account he subsequently focused on his relationship with the filmmaker.) Chris answered a question about his evaluation of the experience with a reference to the quality of the film (Chapter 5, p. 175); and Debby explicitly mentioned her evaluation depended on her assessment of the film (Chapter 5, p. 184) and postponed it until she had

## Participatory spaces

viewed the film. She also related trust to the quality of the film, referring to the filmmaker's suggestion that their difference of opinion could result in a more insightful film, and to the confidence this gave her (Chapter 5, p. 181). Alex mentioned the film was well received and the filmmaker was happy with it, so he should be happy too (Chapter 5, p. 135). The positive evaluation of the film by others also affected Debby's judgement and made her happy with it (Chapter 5, p. 192). This suggests participants can be concerned about the quality of the result of their participation. Their commitment entails an interest in the end result: a good film matters to them. The quality of the film bears upon their evaluation of the experience.<sup>107</sup>

Participants held quite complex views on the films they contributed to. In addition to their praise, all four respondents were also critical about 'their' film. Alex praised the quality of the music during the premiere and Alex and Chris agreed with the interpretation of 'their' filmmaker and the stories told, but both expressed a different preference with respect to specific scenes (Chapter 5, p. 136 and p. 172). Ben was critical about the unbalanced story of the film, but appreciative of the new information it contained for him (Chapter 5, p. 154). He was disappointed by his representation and critical about the contested scene (Chapter 5, p. 153); on the other hand he refers to a post hoc explanation by the filmmaker to defend the inclusion of this scene (or more specifically its montage) in the film (Chapter 5, p. 153). Debby was primarily critical of the filmmaker's interpretation of Emma, although afterwards she admitted he had been right in some respects, such as his focus on the role of Frank. She agreed with her representation and with the story but she did not agree with all the means the filmmaker had used to tell his story, such as including the actress. By expressing criticism, participants challenge their supposed laymanship and negotiate the inequality of the documentary filmmaker-participant relationship. Although participants are not filmmakers themselves, they can have ideas about the film, about what they like and agree to and what they do not. In other words: the results of the empirical investigation point to a practice in which the participant not only is actively

---

<sup>107</sup> The quality of a film is of course an open criterion: there are no set rules that determine what makes a film a good film; artistic and topical preferences play a role as well. The respondents in these case studies rely on the evaluation by the filmmakers as well as the audience's response and the response of critics.

involved in the project, but also desires to make a good film and thus is committed to the film. This commitment also helps to negotiate and level the inequality between filmmaker and participant. In addition, they challenge their presupposed laymanship.

These empirical results point to the complexity of the filmmaker-participant relationship and in addition draw attention to the participant-film relationship. In general, issues pertaining to the cooperation between filmmaker and participant also pertain to the involvement of the participant in the project as a whole, at various levels. This challenges the presupposed inequality of the filmmaker and the participant and points to a practice in which participants can relate to the project at large and which addresses their own needs and preferences, which include contributing to a compelling film. As mentioned above, conflict in a broad sense is also part of the survey results as well as the accounts of participants in my case studies. I will address this next.

### **Conflict between filmmaker and participant**

Conflict is rare but significantly present in the perspective of filmmakers on the practice of making documentary films with participants, according to the survey results. It is a salient part of their experience as represented by the patterns uncovered from the survey data, but filmmakers experienced it to a limited extent. This conflict surfaced in two guises: as issues of disclosure and consent on the part of the participant, and as unsolved issues of representation (or rather misrepresentation) on the side of the filmmaker (see p. 98, in the middle and on the right side of the model respectively). In the case studies, conflict is most apparent in the cases of Ben and Debby. Both accounts centre on issues of disclosure, consent, and representation. In addition, in the case studies the authority of the filmmaker surfaces as prominent. I will discuss these four concepts in their relation to conflict below.

In the survey results, consent is related to the participant opposing filming and denying consent, not authorising the filmmaker to film; it contributes to all levels of the model (Chapter 3, p. 83, p. 91, and p. 94), which means it is persistent in the experience of respondents. In the documentary

discourse, consent is mainly discussed as part of the concept of informed consent (Chapter 1, p. 25ff) and considered as something generic, valid for the whole project and for both filming and including the filmed material in the end product. Provisional consent for the film is discussed as an intermediate stage (Chapter 1, p. 41). Like informing the participant, consent is generally considered mandatory and filmmakers should get it explicitly (Chapter 1, pp. 28-29), save some exceptions (Chapter 1, pp. 43-44).<sup>108</sup> Also, participants' refusal to consent is discussed as an abridgement of the filmmaker's freedom to speak (Chapter 1, p. 31) and thus as problematic. In the case studies, it seems that after presumed initial consent, authorisation to film (and to include the filmed material in the film) is assumed for each scene but contested and reconsidered in specific cases, at the level of individual scenes and utterances, and concerning filming and using filmed material in the final film. Both Ben and Debby, like Alex and Chris, presumably consented to participate in general at some point, to get the project off the ground. However, Ben did not agree to the inclusion of what his wife had said and which he deemed inappropriately outspoken (Chapter 5, p. 159); Debby did not agree to cooperate in the narrative the filmmaker had initially chosen, which entailed her representing one version of Emma. Consent in these instances did not surface as being related to the filmmaker's freedom of speech; rather, the filmmakers in these case studies accepted the limitations these participants proposed. As such, consent given at a general level was negotiable and could be reconsidered in specific cases. These empirical findings suggest consent, like informing, is dispersed rather than a one-off event. Although consent for inclusion of the material in the film is legally in the hands of the filmmaker after recording, and specifically so if participants signed a contract to that end, the so called quit claim (see also Chapter 1, p. 26), in these cases consent given at a general level could be reconsidered with respect to individual scenes and utterances. Filmmakers' reliance on their legal right was not a matter of course in these documentary co-operations; it was not something these filmmakers wished to fall back on according to the participants' accounts.

Scholars presupposed a practice in which consent is dealt with at a

---

<sup>108</sup> As discussed in Chapter 1, I decided to include its component parts in my study rather than this complex concept itself.

single instance, covering permission for filming and for including the material in the resulting film. The practice that surfaces through my case studies points to general-provisional-consent somewhere in the beginning of the project, and a reconsideration of that consent with respect to individual scenes and utterances.

Related to consent is the issue of disclosure, which contributed to both patterns reflecting an uncooperative participant (Chapter 3, p. 83, p. 91). The unwillingness to disclose certain aspects of her story is central to the participant's resistance to what the filmmaker has in mind, even though such resistance occupies a minor place in the filmmakers' perspective on their experiences (Chapter 3, p. 101). It illustrates that participants can limit their contribution, control it, and in doing so safeguard their interests. In the case studies Ben recounted that when he had just started filming he was reluctant to disclose specific information he had because he thought it inappropriate with respect to his children and the community he is part of (Chapter 5, p. 159). Debby recounted how she refused to convey a technical detail in Emma's story the way the filmmaker preferred. She in her response resisted, interrupting her co-operation, and insisted on phrasing her own sentences (Chapter 5, p. 187) demanding control over her disclosure. She thus adhered to her own ideas and controlled her representation, in order to safeguard her credentials as academic (Chapter 5, pp. 195-197).<sup>109</sup>

The participant's right to decide on the limits of what she wants to share with the filmmaker and, through her, with an audience, is discussed in the documentary discourse as well; the participant should be in control of her disclosure (Chapter 1, p. 35). Also, issues of disclosure are considered to be present in many if not all documentary projects (Chapter 1, p. 35). Issues of disclosure are not dominant but significantly present in the perspective of filmmakers, and in the cases of Ben and Debby such issues play a role in the conflict they experienced with 'their' filmmakers: their need to control their disclosure and safeguard their interests caused interruptions in filming and thus a reconsideration of their consent.

---

<sup>109</sup> Debby also discussed the disagreements she experienced with the production company (p. 186); however, here I focus on her relation with the filmmaker. Debby's preoccupation with her image as academic exceeded the experience as participant and permeated the interview as well (Chapter 5, p. 195).

## Participatory spaces

In an effort to further influence what is incorporated in the film, Ben and Debby also actively worked to have specific scenes and information included and thereby disclosed more explicitly. Ben had his choice to support a specific political movement that was the subject of the film made more explicit in the film (Chapter 5, pp. 159-160) and he had scenes with his son included (Chapter 5, p. 159). In interviews with her for the film, Debby included information she had as an expert but which the filmmaker did not, information she deemed important and relevant. Thus, Ben and Debby did not limit their disclosure to what the filmmaker asked.

In the documentary discourse, a practice is presumed in which disclosure is associated with a threat rather than opportunity: it is regarded as something participants might, and often will, extend under the pressure of being filmed or interviewed, rather than as something the participant can control and extend voluntarily, based on, for instance, considerations of self-presentation and allegiance to another party, as was the case for Debby and Ben.

In the survey results, the issue of representation contributed to the pattern reflecting filmmaker opposition, which suggests it is located in the filmmaker's unwillingness to represent the participant properly. At the same time, it surfaced as part of the disagreement on the representation of the participant (Chapter 3, p. 85). In both cases filmmakers experienced it to a limited extent but it is a significant element in their perspective, at the level of everyday interaction between filmmaker and participant. In the case studies Ben and Debby discussed their representation. Ben, after a quick answer to the opening question of the first interview, immediately addressed the contested scene, which according to him was taken out of context and now does not represent him properly, though it was not 'untrue' (Chapter 5, pp. 153-154). For Debby, her representation as a proper academic is key to the evaluation of her experience: all conflict centred on her desired representation of self and the filmmaker's desired representation of Emma (Chapter 5, p. 205). Although Debby was anxious about her representation in the film as a whole, the issue revolved around a few scenes as well as the approach to the film in general.

The question of proper representation is at the core of the discourse on

documentary ethics (Chapter 1, p. 21), as documentary filmmaking entails that a filmmaker represents the people filmed in a narrative that is not theirs but hers to construct. The need to let participants be themselves and speak for themselves, to do justice to their personalities in their representation, is emphasized, and a reflexive mode that undermines the 'objectifying' absence of the filmmaker and the filmmaking process in order to address the construction of the representation is advocated by some (Chapter 1, p. 41); others put it in the hands of participants and advocate a collaborative approach (Chapter 1, p. 40). Scholars aligned representation with the film as a whole; they discussed representing the participant with reference to the entire film. The projects in my case studies neither were reflexive in nature nor included a collaborative approach. They illustrate however that a sense of misrepresentation can occur in a single scene or can relate to a single piece of information rather than at the level of the entire film; in such cases the representation need not be completely false; rather it might be too narrow. Conflict over representation here played at a local level of single scenes. This suggests a practice in which issues of representation are aligned with individual instances, the individual instances that in the end make up the film and the representation of the participant. Negotiation of such potential misrepresentation points again to the involvement of the participant in the project.

The issue of filmmaker authority contributed to just one pattern, which I understood as reflecting the filmmaker's professional stance, and which contributed to the patterns at more general levels reflecting communication with the interest of the film and filming in mind (Chapter 3, p. 91, p. 94). However, I discuss it here under the heading of conflict, for several reasons. Above I have used the term 'authority' with reference to the inequality in the relationship between filmmaker and participant and to describe the position of the filmmaker as knowledgeable with respect to the filmmaking process and as having access to the institutional and technological means of production and dissemination of images and sounds (Chapter 1, p. 33). In the survey this professional position is represented primarily by the filmmaker's use of her powerful position, symbolized by the use of the camera to achieve things (Chapter 3, p. 87). In the case studies this authority, and the challenge thereof, is aligned with issues of consent and disclosure, as discussed above.

## Participatory spaces

The authority of the filmmaker is challenged not with respect to her position as filmmaker, as participants mentioned respecting the filmmaker's decisions (see also below), nor with respect to her access and knowledge, but with respect to her authority over the content of the film-to-be. The authority of the filmmaker manifests itself primarily in the editing phase, where the filmmaker makes final decisions about the content and style of the film. However, the material at her disposal is co-determined by the participant, who thus also has authority, albeit over the potential content of the film and limited to her contribution. The challenging of the filmmaker's authority in the case studies concerns instances where the interests of the filmmaker and of the participant clash and where the filmmaker focuses on the film rather than on the participant. In turn, the participant tries to safeguard her interests with respect to telling or not telling and filming specific scenes. This justifies a discussion here rather than under the heading of cooperation.

All case study participants accepted the filmmaker's authoritative position as filmmaker and hence her decisions and last word with respect to the film. At the same time however, Ben challenged the filmmaker's authority over the film when he denied permission for the inclusion of specific scenes and utterances and requested the inclusion of other material (see above). Debby accepted the filmmaker's decisions, both in terms of the film in general (except her role in it; Chapter 5, p. 186) as well as in terms of his explanation for specific ways of working, for instance, when he explained why he kept asking questions about Frank (Chapter 5, pp. 185-186).<sup>110</sup> At the same time, Debby challenged this authority at various points and in different ways, presenting herself as a provisional co-creator based on her extensive knowledge of the subject matter of the film as well as her ideas about documentary film, as I have argued above (Chapter 5, pp. 197-199). In addition, having watched the final film and having received many responses, she observed that viewers do not understand certain details due to a lack of context (Chapter 5, p. 189); viewers also challenge the authority of the filmmaker as, according to Debby, they keep Debby 'accountable' for the film, as if she made it (Chapter 5, p. 191). (In the second interview she admitted the

---

<sup>110</sup> As I have argued, this explanation could be professional strategy of the filmmaker, but Debby accepted it.

filmmaker had made the right decision in his focus on Frank (Chapter 5, p. 190), even though Debby initially did not agree with it, thus restoring and confirming his authorial knowledge and understanding as filmmaker.) In addition, Alex, Ben, and Debby also commented on the filmmaker's lack of organization; Chris referred to it as a conscious play. In such instances, these participants challenge the filmmaker's professionalism, her ability to make proper organizational arrangements for filming to take place, be it with a production staff or on her own. Debby also explicitly mentioned her evaluation depended partly on the quality of the film. Here Debby, sharing her doubts about the filmmaker's ability to make the film meet her standards of excellence, challenges his professionalism as well.

The technological advantage of the filmmaker is considered a threat to participants' ability to express themselves and her position as artist a threat to morality in general (Chapter 1, p. 33). The presupposed authoritative, hierarchically more powerful position of the filmmaker both in terms of her technological advantage as well as her editorial control over the film has been met with criticism in the documentary discourse. The case studies suggest that again there is a difference between the general and the specific: in the practice surfacing here the filmmaker's authority is accepted in general, challenged in specific instances, and confirmed if appropriate. Participants accept that the filmmaker is the one to decide in the end and that she is the one creating the film, but they interfere when they do not agree, when they have alternative views and ideas, and they try and change the filmmaker's decision if necessary.

In addition to cooperation and conflict, which surfaced through the survey and characterized the participant accounts as well, the consequences of participating in a documentary project surfaced as a salient aspect of participants' accounts. I will discuss this in the next section.

### **Consequences of participating**

In the accounts of their experiences as documentary participants, Alex, Ben, and Debby specifically addressed a variety of consequences of their participation in a documentary project. These centred on responses to the film

## Participatory spaces

as well as personal after-effects. Because of their variety and their salience in the accounts, I address consequences of participating in a documentary project explicitly.

In the survey I included consequences of participating in a documentary film in two ways: as 'damage' and as 'benefit' (Appendix 3.1, statements B62 and B66, both on page 12 of the questionnaire, p. 342). The former contributed to the patterns reflecting disagreement over the participant's representation and unsolved conflict between filmmaker and participant; the latter contributed to one pattern at the shop-floor level representing communication and collaboration in the everyday interaction. As such, both negative and positive results feature in the perspective of filmmakers.

The participants in the case studies also recounted both negative and positive consequences. Alex lost a client during filming (Chapter 5, p. 137) and although he regretted it, he also shrugged his shoulders. Alex, Ben, and Debby received some negative responses to the film. Alex received word of a viewer who did not agree with the ending of the film. He recounted explaining the ending and he again shrugged his shoulders. In the case of Ben the film was not well received. Ben was also critical about it and according to him, the filmmaker was not too happy with it either (Chapter 5, p. 162). As a result, he focused on their friendship. After the broadcast of the film, Ben was confronted at his work, but as I have argued, the film might have functioned as a catalyst for a latent personal conflict (Chapter 5, p. 164). The criticism on the film addressed to Debby was in line with her own criticism and she could only agree with it (Chapter 5, p. 192).

On the positive side, all four participants enjoyed the experience of filming; and Alex, Ben, and Debby explicitly mentioned additional positive consequences of their participation in the documentary projects they were involved in. For Alex these related to the enjoyment of appearing on television, the opportunity to promote himself and his animals, and the attention he received for his animals and his shop through the film. Ben mainly learned from the experience, first and foremost about himself. He feels freer than before to express his opinion and discuss it with people (Chapter 5, p. 154), and he learned to put his convictions into perspective (p. 155). He regarded

these as a gains and something not the film but he himself profited from (Chapter 5, p. 155). These effects continued after the screening of the film. In the case of Debby, at the time of the first interview her anxieties about the resulting film dominated and she postponed her final evaluation of the experience. After having watched the film and after agreeing to her representation and having received many positive responses, her attitude changed and she was very positive about the experience and the result. Debby recalled she also learned from the experience, about herself, how she valued her work, and about her attitude toward filmmaking (Chapter 5, p. 183). In addition, Debby appreciated the film as a representation of an important period in her life; and it also worked as a 'business card' (Chapter 5, p. 192).

It is assumed that participants have nothing to gain with their contribution to a documentary film and that making the contribution public, i.e., screening the film, might be life-changing (Chapter 1, pp. 48-48), with a focus on change in a negative way. Although it is too early to assess whether or not their experiences have been life-changing, the accounts of the participants in my case studies suggest that such experiences can also be positive. The gain is not material,<sup>111</sup> but at an immaterial level participants appreciated the experiences of filming, learning about themselves, gaining a new friend, and learning what really matters to one's identity. These positive consequences however do not relate just to the screening of the film but rather to the project, to their contribution to the project as a whole. The screening is a part of that but not necessarily the main or decisive part. The empirical findings thus indicate that positive and negative consequences do not exclude each other. While in the documentary discourse the focus is on the negative consequences of screening the film, survey respondents and case study participants related both negative and positive consequences of participants' involvement in the project, including to the screening of its results. The presupposed practice in the documentary discourse omits that participants

---

<sup>111</sup> In general it is the case that participants contribute to specific scenes without material gains, without being paid or sharing in profits, assuming those are made. Filmmakers in general might make a living out of documentary filmmaking, but often will engage in additional money-making activities as well, as I have argued in Chapter 1. The case of *Être et avoir* (*To be and to have*, director Nicolas Philibert, 2002) illustrates what might happen if participants demand a share in unexpected profits; see Bakker (2005); BBC (2003); Gentleman (2004).

## Participatory spaces

can enjoy the experience, learn from it, and use it for self-presentation.

Above I have put the filmmaker and participant perspectives on the practice of making documentary films against the practice which documentary film scholars presupposed and evaluated ethically in the discourse on documentary film, in an effort to address in which ways the results of the empirical research confirm, contradict, supplement, or add to the scholarly discourse and how they contribute to an understanding of the filmmaker-participant relationship. The survey pointed to the recurrent presence of conflict in documentary projects, next to the central role of communication with the interest of the film in mind. The four case studies further point to the involvement of the participant in and her contribution to the project, including her challenging the authority of the filmmaker; to the dynamics of the exchange of information, disclosure and consent; to the relationship between trust and differences of opinion; to the relevance of the quality of the film itself for the evaluation of the experience of participating; and to the positive consequences of participation. What surfaces in these results is a different practice from the one scholars evaluated. The practice on which documentary scholars based their questions and considerations seems to have evolved to include the one these results point to. Because the described practice here is based on a small number of cases, it can be understood as one kind of practice of author documentary filmmaking. However, because the practice has evolved, the one scholars presupposed no longer seems accurate, and hence the discussion of ethics in the documentary discourse, with its focus on the well-being of an ignorant and vulnerable participant has become inefficacious.

In my concluding section and based on these findings, I will discuss an alternative understanding of the documentary filmmaking practice and more specifically of documentary participation and the filmmaker-participant relationship. This discussion will be based on the participant as an actively involved and committed participant; on conflict in a broad sense as a recurrent element in the documentary relationship; on the dispersed and local character of conflict as well as of the exchange of information and of consent; and on communication, trust, and commitment as a safety-net for conflict. Based on a practice as it surfaces through my study, I will argue for a paradigm-shift in the discussion of ethics of documentary filmmaking and I will discuss the

implications of such a shift for this discussion.



## Conclusion

...because he didn't want a documentary ... and he said ... 'I want to make a fiction film'. ...then you can make your fiction film, but in my documentary ... that was the deal we made.<sup>112</sup>

In an effort to evaluate the efficaciousness of the scholarly discussion of the ethics of documentary filmmaking, which presupposed and ethically evaluated a documentary practice, this thesis aimed to assess a contemporary author documentary filmmaking practice. Does the interpretation of the practice as it is presupposed in the discourse reflect contemporary practice as well when it comes to issues that demand ethical consideration or that have a moral dimension? And if not, what might a contemporary practice look like and what consequences would the differences have for the ethical evaluation of documentary filmmaking?

With a focus on the filmmaker-participant relationship, the project started with the research question of which moral issues filmmakers and participants encounter in the everyday practice of making documentary films and how they deal with such issues. The scholarly documentary discourse includes a discussion of moral issues deemed relevant to documentary filmmaking as well as a few initial strategies considered appropriate for dealing with such issues, or for preventing them. In addition, scholars discussed a number of contextual aspects of influence on the experience of, and on dealing with such issues. After distilling these moral issues, strategies, and contexts from the discourse, I supplemented this list by interviewing Dutch documentary filmmakers and asking them for examples from their practice. They most notably mentioned additional strategies, and this painted a more dynamic picture of the documentary practice in this respect than did the scholarly discourse.

To investigate the perspective of filmmakers on their practice, I used

---

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Dutch documentary filmmaker m16, 6 July 2005

## Participatory spaces

the moral issues, strategies, and contexts to design a survey in order to measure the extent to which filmmakers had experienced such moral issues and strategies and in which production and personal contexts this had happened. The results of the survey, described in Chapter 3 in the form of patterns in filmmakers' experiences, indicated a general division between communicative cooperation on the one hand and unsolved misrepresentation on the other, with an uncooperative participant somewhere in between. Taking into account the extent to which filmmakers reported experiencing such patterns of cooperation and conflict, dominating were filmmakers' efforts to cooperate with the participant with the interests of the film in mind, relying on their professional position and abilities to get what they needed. Conflict surfaced in various patterns and can be regarded as a relevant part of the experience, as a majority of filmmakers indicated experiencing such conflict, though to limited extents.

I used variables about the participant, the filmmaker, and the project to investigate the extent to which such contextual variables could predict the experience of various patterns. For the patterns related to communication and cooperation the position of the participant in the project (as a single or one of a number of central participants), the budget of the project, and the duty to make the best film possible were the most important predicting variables; for the patterns related to conflict these were cultural similarity, filming and editing time, the controversy of the content of the film, the willingness to meet financiers' wishes, the willingness to compromise depending on the interests at stake, and whether or not the filmmaker had had some philosophy and/or ethics education. However, it turned out that such variables in general had very limited predictive strength.

To include the perspective of documentary participants on the practice of making documentary film, I interviewed four Dutch documentary participants. I analysed their accounts by investigating what respondents said about their experiences, with a focus on what was most salient in their accounts rather than on answers to my questions. I also used concepts salient in the survey results as sensitizing concepts. In addition I considered how participants talked about their experiences. The analyses provided an understanding of the various experiences, which I characterised as joy,

learning, and self-representation, as well as of participants' attitude toward the project and toward the interview. In respect of the various concepts relevant to documentary filmmaking and ethics, these case studies suggested a similar result to the survey: cooperation, communication, and trust dominate the experience, and conflict, including disagreement, different points of view, and conflict proper in the form of interruptions to the cooperation between filmmaker and participant, plays an important supporting role. In addition, the participants' accounts pointed to a variety of consequences of participating in a documentary project, both positive and negative.

These empirical results provide an insight into the documentary filmmaking practice that challenges the interpretation of the practice presupposed in the documentary discourse at several points. They invite an alternative understanding of the documentary practice and the role of the participant in it. Based on the empirical findings, a practice surfaces in which the participant is actively involved in and committed to the project; in which conflict in a broad sense is a recurrent but non-decisive element of the filmmaker-participant relationship; in which conflict is dispersed and local, as is the exchange of information and giving consent; and in which communication, trust, and commitment act as a safety-net for conflict. Given the limited number of cases in this research, this alternative practice can be understood as a specific manifestation of the practice of author documentary filmmaking, where others might exist in addition. Let me describe this practice and its consequences for the filmmaker-participant relationship further.

### **An alternative affair: the filmmaker-participant relationship revisited**

Based on my empirical findings, an alternative understanding of the documentary practice and specifically an alternative understanding of the filmmaker-participant relationship can be described as follows. Participants are invited to participate because they are expected to bring a specific expertise to the project, either in terms of personal knowledge or experience, or at the level of professional knowledge or experience, or both. They negotiate their contribution to the film at various levels and in various ways. They exert control over their level of disclosure by focusing on specific topics for which

## Participatory spaces

they are recruited or by approaching the project in a specific role, either of their own or the filmmaker's design. They also control their contribution by refusing to say certain things or phrase them in specific ways; by refusing to continue an interview; or by refusing to say things the way the filmmaker wishes. In addition, they control their contribution by reconsidering their consent: by asking the filmmaker not to film certain scenes or events or not to include certain filmed material. In doing so, they safeguard their own interests with respect to their representation, and with respect to their personal or professional environment.

Participants receive information from the filmmaker about the project, but they also seek it themselves, by asking questions and searching for it, and by watching previous work. Participants consider their needs and weigh and select information, though they are also subject to incomplete information. The exchange of information happens dynamically, dispersed throughout the project. Communication serves this exchange, in order to provide answers, and in order to acknowledge questions, uncertainties, and concerns.

Participants agree to participate in general, authorizing the filmmaker to film them and to use the material for the film in production; but they reconsider their consent at specific instances. Consent is related to saying 'no' to specific scenes and utterances rather than saying 'yes' to the film or the project in general. Like the exchange of information, consent is not a one-off event but dispersed, aligned with the dispersed and local conflict that elicits a reconsideration of consent. By controlling their disclosure and reconsidering their consent, they are not just passive subjects but they become actively involved participants.

Participants care about the quality of the film they co-work on. This they share with the filmmaker. It is important that the resulting film is worth watching; it relates to their commitment to the project. Participants rely on the evaluation of the filmmaker and the response of viewers and of critics to assess this. Apart from being actively involved in the project, participants are also committed.

In addition to controlling their disclosure and reconsidering their consent, participants contribute unsolicited content, both in the form of surplus expertise and of ideas, through proposing scenes to film or locations to

film at. They are actively involved in making practical arrangements for filming, taking on responsibilities traditionally assigned to the filmmaker and the production staff. In addition to bringing expertise to the project, they actively solicit the inclusion of specific footage in the film, thus further exerting control over their contribution to the film. Participants thus become participants in the project rather than just in the film.

Participants are aware that they make a specific contribution to the filmmaker's narrative; they accept the filmmaker's authorial control with respect to the final film. However, by negotiating their contribution, they control the material the filmmaker will have at her disposal to construct her film with. Through their control, their commitment, and their contribution to the project discussed above, they become co-creators, albeit limited to their contribution. Filmmakers and participants thus become partial co-creators.

It is within this relationship of partial co-creatorship that cooperation, conflict, and trust function in specific ways. The foundation of the relationship between filmmaker and participant can only be one of cooperation: the filmmaker solicits the cooperation of the participant, who will agree when she finds she has something to contribute or when she finds the filmmaker or film can do something for her in return, in whatever way. In the process, the filmmaker will have legal rights to the material filmed, possibly endorsed by a contract, and she will be in charge of the creative process. Communication functions to exchange information, questions, and concerns. It becomes a vehicle for exchanging and evaluating priorities, preferences, and interests.

Trust between filmmaker and participant is fostered through communication, through the exchange of information, questions, and concerns. It also fostered through an acknowledgement of such questions and concerns, regardless of definitive answers. In addition filmmakers and participants discuss their different opinions and convictions. Communication thus serves to gain the trust of the participant and to sustain it. Trust is grounded in the exchange of information. Such information includes differences of opinion and disagreements. Hence, trust is also grounded in making conflict explicit, by openly speaking about it.

Conflict between filmmaker and participant is a recurrent element in the documentary project. Conflict exists in small details as well as in general

## Participatory spaces

approaches. It relates to disagreement on how to artistically approach the subject matter, and on a difference of opinion and how this might affect the film; on a more detailed level it concerns disagreement on the importance of specific content, the shooting of individual scenes and utterances, the inclusion of specific scenes, and the approach and treatment of the participant by the filmmaker at specific instances. At such a local level conflict causes interruptions in the cooperation between filmmaker and participant. However, because of her involvement and commitment, for the participant conflict becomes a way to address her priorities and to exert influence on the project. Conflict serves to challenge the authority of the filmmaker and provides an opportunity for the participant to affect the content of the project, serve her needs, and safeguard her interests. Conflict is a consequence of an evaluation of perspectives, ideas, preferences, and priorities, and a means to come to a decision when these differ. Therefore, such conflict is fruitful for rather than detrimental to the project. It signifies a participant involved in the project and safeguarding her interests against those of the filmmaker.

Participants' commitment ensures their continued involvement in the project despite instances of conflict. This commitment is supported by continuous and reciprocal communication with the filmmaker during the production process and in most cases before and afterwards as well. In such an environment of communication, trust and commitment the local conflict that occurs can safely be played out.

In short, an alternative participation might be described as follows. Filmmaker and participant cooperate in a project in which both are committed to make a compelling film and both weigh their interests against the interests of the other and of the film. Although the filmmaker is in charge of the creative process, the participant controls her contribution by controlling her disclosure and reconsidering her consent in situations of conflict. Mutual and continuous exchange of information, questions, and concerns, making conflict explicit, helps create an environment of trust in which such conflict can be negotiated safely, without detrimental consequences for the project.

The actively involved and committed participant who weights the gains and losses of her involvement in a documentary project differs from the passive and ignorant subject-participant presupposed in the documentary discourse

(see Chapter 1, p. 46ff). The participant contributes solicited and unsolicited content, takes on production responsibilities, critically assesses the filmmaker's ideas, and challenges these if necessary. This places her in a fundamentally different relationship with the filmmaker. She becomes a partner rather than a subject; an embodied contributor of expertise, ideas, and experiences she brings to the project, rather than a material deliverer of quotes the filmmaker extracts from and records of her. She indeed becomes a co-creator with respect to her contribution.

The participant as co-creator relates to the filmmaker in a different way than the subject-participant. The participant as co-creator is less unequal to the filmmaker than the subject-participant, albeit with respect to her contribution to the film, her storyline or expertise, rather than the film as a whole. The practice which scholars have so far ethically evaluated, has changed and therefore their conception of it no longer suffices. The development of everyday media-making, social media, self-tubing, et cetera, might have facilitated this change, although such experiences did not feature in the cases in this thesis. However, all four participants had experiences with media and media-making to some extent. Media-participation has become less foreign to many people in the past decades. A practice in which a participant is a partial co-creator, such as the one discussed above, demands a reconsideration of ethics. The current scholarly debate is no longer efficacious. In order to make it efficacious again, the practice described above needs to be taken into account and evaluated ethically. What consequences does this update of the documentary practice have for the discussion of ethics of documentary filmmaking, specifically with respect to the filmmaker-participant relationship?

### **A paradigm-shift for documentary filmmaking ethics**

The results of the empirical research projects discussed in this thesis and the discussion above merit a revision of the scholarly discussion of documentary filmmaking ethics. More specifically, it merits a paradigm-shift. The discussion about an ethics of documentary filmmaking must first of all include, with reference to Brian Winston's observation at the beginning of this thesis, an

## Participatory spaces

acknowledgement of the *contemporary* complexities of filmmaking. Those complexities include a participant as partial co-creator, committed and involved in the project; communication as a vehicle to carry filmmaker and participant co-creatorship, including facilitating the exchange of information, questions, and concerns, and the building and fostering of trust; and conflict as a means to negotiate and safeguard their respective interests. Within the documentary project, for which cooperation is the point of departure, conflict exists in instances in which the participant challenges the authority of the filmmaker and exerts influence on the content of the film by refusing or promoting specific content.

In this practice, different ethical questions surface. These questions concern not in the first place the need for the filmmaker to protect the participant from harm ensuing from her representation in a documentary film, but rather the negotiation of co-creatorship and of the respective interests of filmmaker and participant in the process of making the mutually desired compelling film. For the filmmaker, the participant as co-creator entails different responsibilities with regard to the participant than the participant as subject demands. Rather than generically informing the participant and treating her with caution, it invites a consideration of how she relates to the project and of the specific and individual needs of the participant with respect to the project. For the participant, co-creatorship entails a responsibility for the project, which differs from responsibilities as mere subject in the film. Taking up co-creatorship entails accepting responsibility for the consequences of the active involvement in the project, including its ups and downs. The question of what is the right thing to do in such a project is not answered by the filmmaker with respect to the vulnerability of the participant she records and represents in her narrative; it is answered by the filmmaker and the participant with respect to the needs of the film and with respect to their mutual interests. In the case of the filmmaker this will be the film, including one or more participants who come to function in a specific narrative; in the case of the participant this will be the film, her own representation, and her personal and professional environment, which go beyond the film.

## To conclude

My focus in this research project has been on author documentary filmmaking. Above I have argued that a contemporary practice includes the participant as partial co-creator. Does the involvement of the participant as co-creator signal the end of the author documentary filmmaking? Not necessarily I argue. First of all, because the participant is considered a *co-creator* in this practice, and this does not take away the creatorship of the filmmaker, but rather puts it in perspective. Second, the involvement of the participant is partial and limited to her contribution, to her role in the film and what it entails in terms of content and production. The filmmaker's creatorship concerns the whole film. Third, the filmmaker remains artistically responsible. She has authorial control over the film itself, which includes control over the use of a variety of means at her disposal to create the film. This authorship exceeds questions of content and production the filmmakers addresses with the participant.

I have argued in the first chapter that in author documentary projects a filmmaker tells her story in a personal style, using the medium of film or video as a means of expression in a well considered way. A filmmaker makes an informed decision about which means at her disposal she will use for a project. In the survey addressed to the international sample of documentary filmmakers, I asked respondents to answer the questions with respect to their last completed independent documentary film. Although 'independent' and 'author' are not synonyms, it is my experience that many independently made films are author-driven in nature. I expected 'independent' to find more resonance with filmmakers; I expected that filmmakers would be more familiar and comfortable with it and could relate to it better than to the term 'author'. Within the film industry 'independent' reflects author-driven projects as opposed to studio- or media-conglomerate-driven films. Having said that, one can doubt whether any documentary film can be made fully independently. What constitutes 'independence'? And independence of what or whom?

In this research project, I tried to provide an insight into the practice that exceeds individual filmmaker experiences and might help filmmakers consider their own practice. At the same time it is difficult to say to what

## Participatory spaces

extent results are indeed specific to author documentary filmmaking. As discussed at the end of the third chapter, the sample used for the survey was very heterogeneous and possibly that is why the effect of contextual variables, which included amongst others production circumstances, was more or less nullified. There were simply too many and too diverse circumstances involved. I argued that, within this sample of very diverse projects, my results represent the core of the author documentary practice. It takes research on other non-fiction practices to understand to what extent these findings might indeed be unique to author documentary filmmaking. Also, replicating the research with a less heterogeneous sample might show a larger predictive strength of certain contextual aspects.

The choice to focus in this research project on the whole process of filmmaking, rather than on the film itself, I regard here as a relevant choice. I argued that the film text cannot properly serve as a benchmark for the ethics of its making. Specifically the accounts of participants suggest their experience to be very diverse and encompass so much more than just their inclusion in the film or their appearance on the screen. What was relevant to them surpassed the scenes included in the film. Investigating the ethics of a film, or of the filmmaker as present in the axiographics of the film (Nichols 1991) is altogether another project. For the participants in my project, the inclusion in the film and the appearance on the screen constituted a part of their experience, and not necessarily the most salient part; their experiences in these projects as a whole modulated their evaluations of their contributions to the films they were in. Therefore, to understand the participant's point of view, the whole project needs to be taken into account.

I focused on the filmmaker-participant relationship, which I disentangled from a web of other, related relationships. This does not do justice to the collaborative process filmmaking is, involving different people with various skills and different interests at different levels, including crew members, financiers, producers, distributors, broadcasters, and others. At the same time, in nearly all projects a participant will have to deal with the filmmaker, while 'others', like the ones mentioned above, might remain in the background and be less visible; alternatively, the others might be personified in the filmmaker wearing several 'hats'. Also, the filmmaker is generally kept

accountable for the participant and how she is treated, as the filmmaker is kept accountable for the film, be it a success or a failure. So if one wishes to research the filmmaker-participant relationship within the complex situation of documentary filmmaking, it makes sense to disentangle this relationship from its network. At the same time, it could be valuable to research such networks, i.e., documentary projects and the way those involved cooperate. I will come back to this below.

My empirical research included both a survey and case studies. As I argued in Chapter 2, I decided to use a survey to be able to include a large sample of documentary filmmakers dispersed over the globe in my research project. Regularly filmmakers are invited to share their experiences, for instance, in articles and books about their work, or in interviews and talk shows at festivals. Rather than getting to the core of the experience of a few filmmakers, I wanted to investigate to what extent practitioners shared experiences and opinions. Questionnaires are an appropriate way to collect data from many respondents and hence it was the most suitable method for me. I chose case studies for my participant-research because participants' accounts of and reflection on their experiences are not readily available, and I wanted to try and understand what the experience meant to them and what it had brought them. Case studies seemed the best method. I reflected on both empirical projects in Chapters 3 and 5; here I will discuss what the two empirical projects and the literature study and interviews that preceded them have brought me. In other words: how has this triangulation benefited the project?

First of all, the survey has pointed to the role communication can play in fostering cooperation and dealing with conflict and to the central place conflict occupies in the documentary project. This I consider the core of the documentary experience in the perspective of filmmakers. The case studies in essence point to the same phenomenon as the survey did. In that sense the case studies and the survey reinforce each other. The case studies provided an interpretation or put flesh on some of the concepts salient in the survey results. Also, through the case studies the dynamics of the filmmaker-participant relationship surfaced, as a sequence of co-operations, each requiring its own negotiations, for instance, in terms of information and

## Participatory spaces

consent, rather than a single overall cooperation for which generic information and consent suffices. The case studies took this research endeavour further by pointing to the commitment of participants and by making visible their true contribution to the documentary project, which exceeded their contribution to the film text and included contributions with respect to production and content. Altogether, the survey provided the first outline of a contemporary and more dynamic practice; and the case studies helped fill in these contours.

I hope his thesis shows how quantitative and qualitative methods can be a fruitful combination and that it might encourage future researchers, especially in the humanities, to consider using both. I hope to have shown that in both research efforts traces of its counterpart are visible: the survey analysis included qualitative considerations in terms of numerous interpretative steps and argued decisions, and the case studies analysis included quantitative considerations in terms of the salience of concepts in participants' accounts. The distinction between the two research methodologies is less strict than sometimes assumed and reflected in many handbooks on research methods. In this case, both approaches contributed to the development of my argument.

The scholarly documentary discourse I approached with the specific question how ethics and morality were related to documentary film and filmmaking (see Chapter 2, p. 22). In focusing on these concepts, I have not approached the discourse as a set of coherent narratives about documentary film. That might not do justice to the nature of some landmark texts about documentary film. At the same time it points to the somewhat fragmentary way the topic has been addressed in the scholarly discourse. I hope this thesis helps to unite the various contributions and take the discourse a step further.

I also hope my research serves as an invitation to further explore the network of individuals cooperating in documentary film projects, as mentioned above. Case studies investigating how such collaborative networks function could provide further insight into the everyday practice of documentary filmmaking. Investigating everyday documentary filmmaking activities could yield complex data and provide detailed findings on the value of documentary representations. The filmmakers and producers I consulted in my project were not keen on letting a researcher get involved during the making of a film for

fear of interference with their own projects. I would consider it a challenge to develop a project in which an investigation of the practice is an integral part of that practice. Both Donovan (2006) and Thomas (2010) have shown the potential of such an approach. Both used their own practice as a case study and critically assessed their own ethical position and the approach that ensued, and evaluated the consequences for their project. I am not a filmmaker and I could only be included as a researcher in a documentary project; this could be a project aimed at a 'traditional' linear film or an interactive project developed for the Internet. As a researcher I could then be included from the beginning to document the experience and the ongoing evaluation of it as the project unfolds. The fear that such a process would 'change reality' and affect the project is not out of place completely, but then what is reality? Making a film alters reality in itself; or rather it steers reality in a certain direction, as reality is not static but contingent. If research is part of the project, it would not change reality any more than any other new documentary project would. It would constitute reality.

Alternatively, future research might focus specifically on communication within the documentary relationships and on how filmmakers, participants, and others involved employ it to negotiate their cooperation and their conflict. What kind of communication takes place, what is exchanged, what kind of 'deals', if any, are made, and how do filmmakers and participants consider their interests, share their concerns, and come to solutions?

This research project also points to ways in which documentary participants use their involvement in the project for self-presentation. Participants in this study negotiated their contribution and in doing so safeguarded their own interests, which included their representation. Further research into how participants negotiate their contribution and how this relates to their self-presentation could also further understanding of the meaning and value of documentary participation. All these efforts could contribute to further developing documentary theory.

To conclude, the challenge I see for documentary scholars is to try and further understand how filmmakers and participants negotiate creatorship; how they negotiate cooperation and conflict in documentary projects and how this practice can be evaluated ethically. My research points to continuous

## Participatory spaces

communication as the basis for cooperation and as a way to sustain trust and commitment, which in turn can serve as a safety net for the conflict by which participants and filmmakers safeguard their interests. Rather than promoting the curtailment of artistic expression based on a feebly founded concern for the participant's wellbeing, which would confirm her very position as ignorant and powerless subject, with respect to projects with a participant as partial co-creator, the discussion of ethics needs to focus on facilitating participatory spaces in which filmmaker and participant co-create, taking into account their mutual responsibilities and interests as well as their shared wish to make a compelling film, which, in the end, is the point of the endeavour.

## **Appendices**



## Appendix 1

Please note: Tables A1.1, A1.2, and A1.3 include concepts derived from the literature as well as those derived from interviews with Dutch documentary filmmaker.

Table A1.1 Moral concepts from the literature and interviews

Reference	Initial code	Moral issue
Rosenthal (1988b); ; m07, m08, m14	abuse of power	abuse of power
Aibel (1988); Becker (1988); Gross (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Rosenthal (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988b, 1995, 2000); all interviewees	(own) agenda	agenda
Minh-ha (1991); Nichols (1991); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (1995); m01, m08	authority	authority
Becker (1988); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (1988a, 1988b, 1995, 2000)	care	care
interviewees m01, m03, m04, m06, m07, m08, m09, m10, m11, m12, m13, m14	carefulness	care
interviewees m01, m04, m06, m07, m08, m10, m11, m12, m13, m14, m15, m16, m17	communi- cation	communi- cation
Aibel (1988); Gilbert (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (1988b, 1995, 2000); all interviewees except m09	conse- quences	conse- quences
m01, m14	conse- quences of participa- tion	conse- quences
Bruzzi (2000); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Nichols (1991); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (2000); m01, m04, m06, m07, m14, m16	damaging	damage
Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); all interviewees except m08 and m12	disclosure	disclosure

## Participatory spaces

Table A1.1 (continued)

Reference	Initial code	Moral issue
Nichols (1991); Winston (2000); interviewees m01, m02, m03, m04, m06, m07, m08, m10, m11, m13, m14, m16	(in)equality	equality
Gilbert (1988); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988b, 1995, 2000); interviewees m01, m02, m04, m06, m11, m13, m14	exploitation	exploitation
Becker (1988); Gross (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991, 1993); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988a, 1988b, 1995, 2000); all interviewees except m17	filmmaker's rights	filmmaker's rights
Winston (1995, 2000); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Pryluck (1988)	force	force
interviewees m01, m04, m05, m13, m14	voluntarism	force
Bruzzi (2000); Gilbert (1988); m01, m03, m10, m14, m15, m16	honesty	honesty
Becker (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (1988b, 2000); interviewee m15	individual's rights	individual's rights
Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (1995); m06	humiliation	humiliation
Aibel (1988); Becker (1988); Gilbert (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988b, 1995, 2000); all interviewees	informed consent	3a informing 3b consent 3c voluntarism
interviewee m05	difference in information	informing
Bruzzi (2000); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Ruby (1988); Winston (2000); all interviewees	intention	intention (exit)
Bruzzi (2000); Gilbert (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991, 1993); Pryluck (1988); Ruby (1988); m06	interpretation	interpretation

Table A1.1 (continued)

Reference	Initial code	Moral issue
Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Miller (1998); Nichols (1991, 1993); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988a, 1988b, 1995); interviewees m01, m07, m08, m09, m10, m13, m14, m16, m17	legitimiza- tion	legitimiza- tion
m13	legitimizing film	legitimiza- tion
Bruzzi (2000); m12	linking	linking
Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Winston (1995, 2000); interviewees m01, m04, m07, m09, m11, m15, m17	manipula- tion	manipula- tion
Bruzzi (2000); Gilbert (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Pryluck (1988); Ruby (1988); Winston (2000); m03, m04	misleading	misleading
Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991, 1993); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988a, 1988b, 1995, 2000); interviewees m01, m03, m04, m05, m06, m07, m08, m14	privacy	privacy
Gross (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Ruby (1988)	(mis)rep- resentation	represen- tation
Miller (1998); Nichols (1991, 1993); Pryluck (1988); Renov (1993a); Winston (1988a, 1988b, 1995, 2000); all interviewees	representa- tion	representa- tion
Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); interviewees m06, m11, m14, m15, m16, m17	respect	respect
interviewees m01, m02, m04	respecting	respect
Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988a, 1988b, 1995, 2000); interviewees m01, m03	right to know	right to know
Bruzzi (2000); m01, m02, m03, m04, m05, m08, m09	rules	rules
Nichols (1991); Winston (2000); m08	space	space
Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); interviewees m01, m07, m08, m11, m13, m14, m15, m16	trust	trust

## Participatory spaces

Table A1.1 (continued)

Reference	Initial code	Moral issue
Gross (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Rosenthal (1988b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988a, 1988b, 1995, 2000); m04, m07, m08	victim	victimization

Table A1.2 Strategies from the literature and interviews

Reference	Initial code	Strategy
m08	adapting	adapting
m16, m17	taken by surprise	adapting
m07	shoot extra	admitting
m10, m16	admitting	admitting
m04, m08, m11, m12, m14, m15 Becker (1988); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Winston (1988b); m11, m12, m13	anonymity collaborative approach	anonymity collaborative approach
m04, m06, m13, m16	compromise	compromise
m05, m06	giving up	giving up
m06, m07, m16	letting go	unresolved
m04, m12, m15	unresolved	unresolved
m01	no moral issue	no moral issue
m01, m03, m04, m06, m11, m12, m13, m16	taken a risk	offence
m04, m07, m09, m11, m13, m16	pay	paying
m05	playing off	playing off
m03, m04, m07, m10, m11, m14, m16	postponing decision	postponing
m01	out	preventing problems
m01	mobilize other	preventing problems
m14	not using	preventing problems
m01, m09 m17	preventing problems	preventing problems
m06, m12	postponing broadcast	preventing problems
m01, m02, m03, m04, m14, m15	protect	protecting participant
m04, m10, m3	not dealt with	pushing off
m04, m05, m06, m07, m08, m11, m13, m14, m15, m16	reciprocal action	reciprocal action

## Participatory spaces

Table A1.2 (continued)

Reference	Initial code	Strategy
Bruzzi (2000); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Ruby (1988); Winston (1995); m01, m05, m11, m15	reflexivity	reflexivity
m10, m11, m13, m14	reserve	reserve (exit)
m01, m04, m08	will be ok	resolve in due time
m05, m06, m07, m14	alternative	searching alternatives
m04, m08, m10, m11, m12, m14	second opinion	second opinion
m04, m06, m09, m11, m13, m14, m15, m16 m17	stop surrender	stop surrender
m01, m04, m11, m13, m16, m17	taking a risk	taking a risk
m08, m11, m13	trivialize	trivialize
Gilbert (1988); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (1988b); m01, m03, m04, m05, m06, m07, m08, m09, m10, m11, m12, m13, m14, m15	viewing	viewing
Gilbert (1988); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (1988b)	provisional consent	viewing

Table A1.3 Contextual aspects from the literature and interviews

Reference	Initial code	Context
Becker (1988); Bruzzi (2000); Gilbert (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Miller (1998); Minh-ha (1991); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Renov (1993b); Winston (2000); m01, m05, m08, m09, m10, m11, m12, m13, m14, m15, m17	aesthetics	aesthetics
Pryluck (1988); Winston (2000); m01, m03, m07, m12, m14, m16, m17	children	age
m07	age	age
Winston (1988b, 2000); m01, m11	deviant	content
m10, m15, m16	behaviour	behaviour
m06	behaviour	content
m10	participant	content
Miller (1998); Minh-ha (1991); Winston (2000); m14	guilt	content
m08, m09, m10	financing	budget
m01, m10	changes	changes
m09, m11, m15	situation	after
Aibel (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Miller (1998); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Renov (1993a, 1993b); Rosenthal (1988b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988a); m01, m04, m05, m13, m15, m16, m17	cinematic	cinematic
m06, m10, m13	laws	laws
Kuehl (1988); Minh-ha (1991); Nichols (1991, 1993); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (1988a, 1995); m09, m11, m12	team	crew
m01, m03, m10, m14, m16	culture	culture
Miller (1998); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); m01, m03, m04, m10, m14, m17	dramatisa- tion	dramatisa- tion
m05, m06, m07, m14, m15, m16, m17	bad	epoch
Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); m01, m07, m08	examples	epoch
	epoch	epoch
	experience	experience
	family	family

## Participatory spaces

Table A1.3 (continued)

Reference	Initial code	Context
m11	own situation	own situation
m13	own safety	danger
Becker (1988); Gross (1988); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991, 2001); Pryluck (1988); Renov (1993b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988a, 1988b); m03, m04, m05, m07, m08, m09, m11, m12, m13, m15, m16, m17	goal	goal
m14	interests third party	interests third party
Nichols (1991, 1993); Winston (1995, 2000); m01, m02, m03, m10, m13	interview	interview
Nichols (1991); Winston (1995)	narrative	narration
Gross (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Minh-ha (1991); Nichols (1991); Ruby (1988); Winston (1993, 1995, 2000); m03, m04, m09, m14	objectivity	objectivity
Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Miller (1998); Minh-ha (1991); Pryluck (1988); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988b, 1993, 1995, 2000)	art	opinions about the profession
Nichols (1991, 1993); Rosenthal (1988b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1995, 2000)	journalist	opinions about profession
Gross (1988); Nichols (1991); Ruby (1988); Winston (1995, 2000)	ideology	own opinion
m10, m15, m16	own opinion	own opinion
m08	own conviction	own opinion
m01, m05, m06, m08, m10, m12, m13, m14, m15, m16, m17	person	participant's personality
Aibel (1988); Becker (1988); Bruzzi (2000); Gross (1988); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Miller (1998); Nichols (1991, 1993); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988b, 1995, 2000)	community	production circum- stances
Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Katz and Milstein Katz (1988); Nichols (1991); Pryluck (1988); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (1988a, 1988b, 1995, 2000); m01, m02, m03, m04, m05, m07, m08, m10, m14, m15, m16, m17	public/ private	public office

Table A1.3 (continued)

Reference	Initial code	Context
Bruzzi (2000); Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Kuehl (1988); Nichols (1991, 1993); Winston (1995, 2000); m01, m03, m12, m14, m17	recon- struction	recon- struction
m01, m03, m07, m08, m09, m11	relationship	relationship
Gross, Katz, and Ruby (1988b); Ruby (1988); Winston (1988b, 2000); m01, m04, m13, m16	distinction between media	screen
m02, m03, m05, m10, m11, m12, m13, m14, m15	tackling	tackling
Miller (1998); Rosenthal (1988b); Winston (2000)	television	screen
m01	slot	slot
Miller (1998); Winston (1995)	technique	technique
Winston (2000); m01, m06, m08, m09, m10, m11, m12, m13, m14, m15, m16	time	time



## Appendix 2

### Appendix 2.1 Creating and testing the questionnaire

#### Appendix 2.1.1 Creating a first draft

Because I made a distinction between moral issues, strategies (to deal with moral issues), and contexts (in which they occur), I devised a questionnaire based on the different concepts and developed different sections for each.

As the questionnaire was intended for international distribution, I designed it in English. The expected group of author documentary filmmakers to complete the questionnaire would contain non-native speakers, so my intention was to phrase simple, straight-forward questions, using basic vocabulary. The initial questionnaire contained the following sections:

*Cover page: introduction and information.* The cover page introduced the project and the questionnaire and contained information about the goal, how to complete the questionnaire, the time it would take to complete it, and my name and contact details. It also contained a respondent number.

*Section A: the recognition of moral issues.* In this section, respondents were asked to indicate on a bipolar semantic 0 (not at all) – 6 (very much) scale to what extent they considered the moral issues included to be part of documentary filmmaking ethics. I chose to use zero as the lowest score because I wanted to give respondents the opportunity to indicate literally nil of they felt the issue had nothing to do with documentary filmmaking ethics.

*Section B: details on the current or last project.* I operationalised some of the contexts found in the analysis of the scholarly discourse discussed in Chapter 1, including the interviews, by asking details about the project respondents were working on or which they had just finished. The variables in this section made up the project variables. The reason to focus on their latest or current project was that I assumed their memory of recent events to be more accurate, reliable, and complete than their memory of projects in the past. In addition, it would prevent them from referring to their most 'extreme' project with respect to ethics, about which they might have a lot to say, but which would cause

## Participatory spaces

bias in the results. By asking about their current or last project, the projects reflected on would represent a more random sample of projects rather than be biased toward problematic ones.

*Section C: the experience of moral issues.* Here I asked respondents to indicate for each moral issue included to what extent they had experienced it in their project described in section B, on the same 0 (never) – 6 (very often) scale. I hoped the combination of experience and recognition as investigated in section A might indicate which moral issues filmmakers valued as most prominent.

*Section D: the choice of strategies.* This section I designed to measure to what extent filmmakers had chosen certain strategies in their project described in section B. I asked respondents again to indicate to what extent they had experienced various strategies, on the same 0–6 scale.

*Section E: recognition, action and argument.* In section E I wanted to measure how filmmakers reason about moral issues in their everyday practice. First I presented respondents with scenarios representing a moral issue and asked them to indicate to what extent they recognised the issue as a moral one. Then I asked respondents whether they would choose a certain solution (yes/no) and I gave them ample space to write down why. Following their initial choice, I presented two reasons for that choice, one idealistic and one relativistic, to measure – again on a 0-6 disagree-agree scale - their moral reasoning (in line with the distinction between idealism and relativism in the EPQ, see below). I then presented them with additional information and events concerning the moral issue, and asked them to what extent they agreed that they would stick to their choice even though they had this additional information. This way, I hoped to also measure the influence of additional contextual aspects. I drafted four scenarios, each referring to events in different phases: research, filming, editing and post-production, and the premiere and afterwards.

*Section F: Ethical Position Questionnaire* (Forsyth 1980). As this is an existing test, I did not change or adapt the questions. However, I did adapt the scale, which originally was a 1-9 Likert scale, and made it identical to the scales of the other sections.

*Section G: demographic details.* Here I operationalised more contextual aspects by asking filmmakers about, among other things, their religion, education, and experience.

Table A2.1 gives an overview of the various sections discussed above, excluding the cover page.

### Appendix 2.1.2 Tools for empirical research

Considering that empirical research into ethics through surveys in the field of author documentary filmmaking is a new phenomenon, I sought something to hold on to and I considered various tools and instruments regularly and/or recently used in other disciplines. Two tools are not specific to a discipline or practice and five are. I address these in more detail below.

The author documentary filmmakers included in the sample for this study I regard as professionals. According to Forsyth (1980) there is no difference between how people judge specific practice-related moral issues (is his case in the field of business) and how they judge moral issues in general. He considered evaluating business practices “only a special case of general moral decision making” (Forsyth 1992, p. 461). With this in mind I considered the following two tools.

#### Defining Issue Test

The Defining Issue Test (DIT, see Rest et al. 1999) is an instrument to measure the moral development of individuals. Rest (1979) based the DIT on Lawrence Kohlberg’s theory on moral development, which covers 6 stages, from conventional to post-conventional. Rest et al. (1999) preferred to use elements of schema theory and viewed moral development as a more gradual process. Rest et al. (1999) concluded that the original Kohlbergian theory could be adapted sufficiently to meet their goals. The focus, like in the original theory, is on cognition and the personal construction of categories such as rights, duties, justice, and reciprocity. The DIT has been used and discussed extensively (e.g., Puka 2002; Rest et al. 1999; Thoma et al. 1999). It correlates with political ideologies and other ideological measures (Puka 2002).

#### Ethical Position Questionnaire

Forsyth (1980) developed a method to assess the moral ideology of individuals. He assessed moral ideologies by taking into account on the one hand the

Table A2.1 Questionnaire sections and what they operationalise

Section	Operationalises
A	Recognition of moral issues
B	Contextual aspects: project variables
C	Experience of moral issues
D	Experience of strategies
E	Recognition of moral issues, anticipated strategies, reasoning about moral issues
F	EPQ
G	Contextual aspects: filmmaker variables

extent to which respondents reject or accept universal moral rules (idealism) and on the other hand the extent to which respondents assume that by taking the right action, a good outcome is always possible (relativism). In other words: idealism focuses on principles, relativism focuses on consequences.

The EPQ consists of a questionnaire measuring the two ideologies in the form of 20 statements (10 for each) and a bipolar disagreement-agreement scale. The respondent is classified by taking the mean scores for both scales. Those who score high on both are deemed situationists, those that score low on both exceptionists, those who score high on idealism and low on relativism are deemed absolutists, and those who score low on idealism and high on relativism are deemed subjectivists.

These four types are, according to Forsyth (1980), comparable to specific schools of thought in philosophical ethics. Absolutism matches the ethical ideology of deontology. Absolutists don't take the consequences of an action as a criterion but emphasise maintaining and following general rules and laws. Forsyth (1980) matched exceptionism with teleological ethical philosophy and utilitarianism. Exceptionists do look at the consequences of an action and, though considering absolute moral principles important, it is a good outcome that will value the action as morally good. Situationists are related to ethical scepticism. For them, there are no general or absolute moral principles to follow but each situation is different and should be valued separately. Subjectivists are also related to scepticism, but here egoism dominates: because there are no rules to follow, one can only evaluate

situations from one's own perspective. Forsyth (1980)'s EPQ has been used and validated in a number of research projects (see a.o. Davis, Andersen, and Curtis 2001).

In addition, I considered five field specific tools: the Ethical Reasoning Tool (ERT, see McAlpine, Kristjanson, and Poroch 1997), the Dilemma Attitude Test (DAT, see Dierckx de Casterlé 1993), the Ethical Behavior Test (EBT, see Dierckx de Casterlé et al. 2004a, 2004b), the Multidimensional Ethics Scale (MES, see Reidenbach and Robin 1988, 1990, 1993), and the Muncy-Vitell Questionnaire (MVQ, see Kenhove, Vermeir, and Verniers 2001). The ERT, the DAT, and the ETB were developed within the field of nursing ethics, the MES in the field of business ethics, and the MVQ in the field of consumer ethics. Because empirical research in documentary filmmaking is such a new endeavour, I decided to include a test that was more general and not specific to a practice, as such a test would have needed adapting to the practice under investigation. The EPQ seemed the most suitable instrument to include as it is straightforward and short and has proved valid; in addition, the results are not based on an individual's development in moral reasoning, as is the case with the DIT and Kohlberg's theory it is based on. The results of the EPQ are less open to a hierarchical interpretation.

Appendix 2.1.3 First draft of the questionnaire

**Questionnaire on author documentary filmmaking and ethics.** resp. m8888  
:

**Introduction**

This questionnaire is part of a research project on the morality of author documentary filmmaking. This research project is sponsored by Utrecht University in the Netherlands.

By this questionnaire, I want to find out how you think about the everyday practice of your work as a documentary filmmaker. I will ask you about your opinion as well as about experiences with certain situations in a recent or current project. At the end, I will ask you about your personal situation.

**How to participate?**

You can print this pdf-file and write your answers using a pen. After each question, boxes mark the place where you can write your answer. You can return the completed questionnaire to the address below by regular mail or fax it.

**Please answer all questions.**

This questionnaire contains seven sections (A-G). It is very important that you complete the whole questionnaire. The group of filmmakers selected to co-operate in this study is limited and therefore every answer is very valuable to me. The more completed questionnaires we receive, the better we can understand how author documentary filmmakers from different part of the world, with different backgrounds and experiences, think about their job.

Completing the questionnaire will take about 40 minutes. I am aware that this is quite an effort I am asking you. Yet I want to acknowledge the complexity of the subject of this research and study its many different sides. Your input is vital for this study.

**Additional information**

If you have any questions about the research project, its aims and / or this questionnaire, please get in touch with me. Details are below.

If you wish, you can receive a summary of the results by marking a box at the end.

Thank you in advance for your kind co-operation.

**Willemien Sanders**  
**Antwoordnummer ##**  
**#### XX Utrecht**  
**The Netherlands**  
**Tel.: +31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254**  
**Fax.: +31 30 XXX**  
**@: willsan@zonnet.nl**

**To start, please go to section A (next page).**



# Participatory spaces

## Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

	not at all			very much			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
19 Informing a participant about possible consequences of being in the film.							
20 Your intentions regarding the film.							
21 Your legitimacy as a filmmaker.							
22 The public's right to know.							
23 Using the power of the presence of a camera.							
24 Using your authority as a filmmaker.							
25 Being careful with each other.							
26 Your rights as a filmmaker.							
27 Protecting a participant against her/himself.							
28 Being respectful toward each other.							
29 Keeping to documentary filmmaking rules.							
30 Gaining each other's trust.							
31 Getting consent from the participant.							
32 Using some kind of force to convince a participant.							

**To continue, please go to section B (next page).**

## Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

**Section B****Your current or last project.**

In this section, I will ask you for information on your current or last author documentary film project. Please refer to your current project if you are working on such a project right now. Please refer to your last project if you are not working on such a project at the moment or if you have just started research on a new project and have not yet developed the film, so if you can't really say anything about it yet.

Please mark your answer by putting an X in the box indicating your answer. Please write additional information on the paper sheet if requested.

33 Are you working on a documentary film project at this moment?

1. yes → title of the project:

→ go to question 34

2. no → title of last project:

→ go to question 35

34 What stage are you in?  
(circle two if in between or overlap)

1. research  
2. filming  
3. editing and  
postproduction


35 Is / was a producer involved in this project?

1. yes  
2. no, I produced it  
myself


36 Do / did you have one or more broadcasting company/-ies involved in this project?

1. yes → name(s) of the broadcasting company/-ies:

2. no

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

37 Do you work with the same crew, such as cameraman, sound recordist, editor, on independent documentary projects most of the time?

1. yes, most of the time I   
have the same crew

→ go to question 38

2. no, my crew is different from film to film

→ go to question 39

3. I work alone, without a crew

→ go to question 39

38 Do / did you work with your usual crew members on this project?

1. yes   
2. part was the same   
3. no

39 Do / did you work with a co-director on this project?

1. yes   
2. no

40 Please indicate the amount of time allowed for this project for the 3 stages mentioned.  
(please mark days or weeks)

1. research:	<input type="text"/>	days/weeks
2. filming:	<input type="text"/>	days/weeks
3. editing and postproduction:	<input type="text"/>	days/weeks

41 What is / was the budget of this project?  
(please select a currency)

1. €   
2. \$   
3. £

**To continue, please go to section C (next page).**

Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

**Section C**

**About your author documentary film experience:**

The following section focuses on situations that can arise during the making of a documentary film. Below you will find several short statements. Please try to remember as much as possible about your project described in section B, throughout the different stages (research, filming, editing and post production and the premiere and after). Please indicate to what extent you have experienced this in your current or last project (the one described in section B).

Please mark your answer by putting an X in the box indicating your answer.

	In your current or last project						
	never						very often
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
42 I have protected a participant against her/himself.							
43 I have used my authority as a filmmaker to get things done.							
44 I have not told the whole truth about the purpose of a scene.							
45 I have had to deal with a participant with her/his own agenda, different from mine.							
46 I have interpreted the story of a participant different than s/he did.							
47 I have humiliated a participant.							
48 A participant refrained from telling me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.							
49 A participant profited in some way from being in my film.							
50 I have questioned my right to film certain scenes.							
51 A participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.							
52 I have used a participant as an easy target.							
53 I have filmed a participant from an angle that did not make her/him look good.							
54 I have felt a participant intruded my privacy.							
55 I have used the presence of the camera to get things done.							
56 While filming, a participant has told me less than we agreed to.							

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

	never			very often			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
57 I have stuck to my original intentions regarding the film, no matter what.							
58 I have failed to gain the trust of a participant.							
59 A participant misrepresented her/himself to me.							
60 I have not been honest to a participant.							
61 A participant got in touch with me many times throughout and after making the film.							
62 I have informed a participant about possible consequences of being in a documentary film.							
63 A participant presented her/himself in a situation that did not, or no longer apply to her/him.							
64 I haven't been as respectful toward a participant as I should have.							
65 A participant manipulated me to get or avoid a certain scene.							
66 I have made a participant look like a victim.							
67 I have filmed something because I felt I had a right to do so.							
68 A participant did not approach me as an equal.							
69 I have felt I intruded the privacy of a participant.							
70 A participant took the role of a victim.							
71 I have done something I considered a breaking of documentary filmmaking rules.							
72 A participant got involved in the decision what side and angle s/he would be filmed in.							
73 I have filmed scenes because I felt a need to inform the audience.							
74 A participant used me to get things done.							
75 I have depicted a participant in circumstances that did not, or no longer reflect her/his situation.							
76 Being I my film damaged a participant in some way.							
77 A participant disagreed with me about the interpretation of her/his story and what should be told.							
78 A participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.							

Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

	never						very often	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
79 I have gotten in touch with a participant many times throughout and after making the film.								
80 I have been careless with a participant.								
81 A participant humiliated me.								
82 I have misrepresented a participant in some way.								
83 A participant damaged my career in some way.								
84 I didn't inform a participant completely and all the time about what we were doing.								
85 I have had to talk a participant into filming certain scenes or events.								
86 A participant wasn't completely honest with me.								
87 I have encouraged a participant into telling more than s/he intended.								
88 I have not been completely open toward a participant about my agenda.								
89 I have used a participant to get things done.								
90 I have manipulated a participant to get or avoid a certain scene.								

**To continue, please go to section D (next page).**

# Participatory spaces

## Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

### Section D

#### About decisions you have taken.

The following section focuses on your decisions. Again, please try to remember as much as possible about issues that arose during your project described in section B. I ask you to indicate to what extent you have taken certain actions or decisions during this project.

Please mark your answer by putting an X in the box indicating your answer.

	In your current or last project						
	never						all the time
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
91 I invited participants to come and watch a rough cut, so see if they had any comments.							
92 I thought an ethical problem existed, but it turned out not to be a problem at all.							
93 I adapted easily to a new situations.							
94 I thought a moral issue should not be taken too seriously because not many people watch documentary films anyway.							
95 I did something in return for participants, to thank them.							
96 I decided to stop when I didn't get what I wanted.							
97 I decided to surrender to a situation I could not control.							
98 To find a solution for an ethical problem, I asked the advise of a colleague or expert, someone not included in the project.							
99 I tried to compromise between what I wanted and what a participants wanted.							
100 I trusted that an ethical problem would solve itself in due time.							
101 I was aware that moral problems could arise and I prevented this as much as possible.							
102 I took a risk although I realized it could hurt or damage a participant.							
103 After viewing a rough cut, I found it no problem to change the film when the participants insisted.							
104 A moral problem arose, but I didn't know how to solve it and I just let it go.							
105 I decided to take advantage of a situation for the film.							

Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

	never			all the time			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
106 I didn't feel like solving a moral issue, I pushed it away.							
107 I gave a participant some money or a gift.							
108 I decided to give up and not push something that was hard to get.							
109 I saw the making of the documentary as a joint enterprise I undertook with the participants.							
110 A moral problem arose, and I decided not to make a choice for a solution but to wait till a later moment before deciding what to do.							
111 I filmed people unrecognizable to prevent problems.							
112 I decided to do something I know was morally wrong.							
113 I decided to step back and film low profile to prevent problems.							
114 I found an alternative for a scene I couldn't film.							

**To continue, please go to section E (next page).**

# Participatory spaces

## Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

### Section E

#### About influences on your decisions

This section will investigate how you feel about certain decisions and what circumstance may influence your decisions. I will present four short descriptions of situations in making a documentary film. Please indicate to what extent this situation reflects a moral issue in documentary filmmaking and please give your first response. Then I ask you to respond to certain decisions as well as to changes to the situation presented.

Situations may seem oversimplified to you. However, this is necessary in order to get a clear idea of what you would agree and disagree to.

Please note that there is no right or wrong decision. I only ask you to what extent you would agree with the decisions presented.

Please mark your answer by putting an X in the box indicating your answer.

If you have any additional comments, please write them in the margins or on the back (please refer to the question you are writing about).

#### Situation 1

You are researching your new film and have come across the story that fascinates you. You are very keen to make a film about it. However, the main character you have in mind is reluctant to participate. You have talked to her on the phone several times and visited her, but she hasn't made up her mind yet. You have been in touch with a broadcaster who expressed interest in the film. The broadcaster is keen on getting assurance about participation and the go-ahead for the film within two weeks because of programme scheduling. The broadcaster wants you to push her into participating. You have to decide about putting pressure on her. Please remember you are very keen on making the film and a participant would make an excellent main character.

Please answer the following questions referring to situation 1

115 Do you consider the situation described to be a moral issue?

not at all							very much
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
<input type="checkbox"/>							

116 Would you put pressure on this participant?  
(please choose one and give your first spontaneous response)

No, because ...

→ go to S1A

Yes, because ...

→ go to S1B

Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

**S1A** Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about situation 1:

No, I would not put pressure on her because ...

117 ... nobody has the right to pressure people for her/his own benefits.

118 ... if this broadcaster drops the project, I will probably find another one.

totally disagree			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Your producer calls you and tells you s/he wants you to convince your intended main character to participate, otherwise it might harm both the company's name and business.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement about this new situation:

119 No, I would not put pressure on her although this may harm my producer's company.

totally disagree			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

You accidentally find out that your intended main character is a close friend of your neighbour. You think your neighbour might be able to help you and convince your intended main character to participate.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement about this new situation:

120 No, I would not put pressure on my intended main character although I know my neighbour might be able to convince her.

totally disagree			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

→ go to situation 2

**S1B** Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about situation 1:

Yes, I would put pressure on her because ...

121 ... you don't reject the hand that feeds you.

122 ... this participant is best for the film so I need her.

totally disagree			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6





# Participatory spaces

## Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

You are not sure what to do. Your crew members, who have worked on many documentaries and have a lot of experience, signal that you should not stop filming.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement about this new situation:

133 Yes, I would stop filming even though my crew members advise against it.

totally disagree				totally agree		
0	1	2	3	4	5	7
<input type="checkbox"/>						

You realize that suddenly you are seeing a different side of the participant, which you hadn't seen before. Though not part of the subject of the film, his sentimental side might be an attractive addition.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement about this new situation:

134 Yes, I would stop filming, even though this scene might be an attractive addition, although besides the subject of my film.

totally disagree				totally agree		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
<input type="checkbox"/>						

### Situation 3

You are editing your film. Suddenly you realize the sequence you are working on can get a huge impact, if edited in a certain way. Although this may make your film more attractive and may cause more publicity for the film and thus a larger audience, telling the story this way is not what you planned and agreed to with the main participant. The story would become somewhat unbalanced toward this person. You have to decide whether to change your plan or not.

Please answer the following questions referring to situation 3

135 Do you consider the situation described to be a moral issue?

not at all				very much		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6
<input type="checkbox"/>						

136 Would you change your plan?  
(please give your first spontaneous response)

No, because ...
→ go to S3A
Yes, because ...
→ go to S3B

Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

**S3A** Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about situation 3:

No, I would not change my plan, because ...

- 137 ... you have to stick to agreements with participants.
- 138 ... I am not searching for the largest audience.

totally disagree			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Your editor is in favour of changing the story and he has made a rough cut of a few minutes to illustrate the strength of the material. He tries to convince you, elaborates on his views and you can actually see his point.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement about this new situation:

- 139 No, I would not change my plan even though I see my editor's point.

totally disagree			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The film was intended to be shown only on television, which is more suitable for medium shots and close ups. You are editing with this in mind. However you have just heard that your producer might want to offer it to festivals as well. This means projection on the big screen.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement about this new situation:

- 140 No, I would not change my plan even though the film might be screened at festivals.

totally disagree			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

→ go to situation 4

**S3B** Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about situation 3:

Yes, I would change my plan, because ...

- 141 ... every film deserves the largest audience possible.
- 142 ... I am the director and it's my material so I can use it as I see fit.

totally disagree			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6



Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

**S4A** Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about situation 4:

No, I would not take any action, because ...

147 ... everyone, including critics, has a right to his/his own opinion.

148 ... I didn't do anything wrong.

totally disagr			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

The film will air soon and you will be a guest in a TV talk show to tell about it. The broadcaster who will air the film, asks you to focus on responding to the critics and defend yourself in this short interview.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement about this new situation:

149 No, I would not take any action even though this will be an opportunity to defend myself.

You have known the participant for years and you know she is hurt by what happens. You think that if you don't do anything, his might harm your relationship.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statement about this new situation:

150 No, I would not take any action even though this may harm my relationship with the participant.

totally disagr			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

totally disagree			totally agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

→ go to section E

**S4B** Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements about situation 4:

Yes, I would take action, because ...

151 ... the obligations to the participant always comes first.

152 ... I have to defend my film.

totally disagree			totallyt agree			
0	1	2	3	4	5	6



Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

**Section F**

**About ethics in general**

In this section we will ask you questions about morality in general. You will find 20 statements. Please indicate for each statement, to what extent you agree with it.

Please mark your answer by putting an X in the box indicating your answer.

	totally disagree			totally agree			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
155 A person should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.							
156 Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.							
157 The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.							
158 One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.							
159 One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.							
160 If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.							
161 Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.							
162 The dignity and welfare of people should be the most important concern in any society.							
163 It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.							
164 Moral actions are those which closely match ideals of the most "perfect" action.							
165 There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.							
166 What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.							

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

	totally disagree			totally agree			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
167 Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.							
168 Different types of morality cannot be compared as to "rightness."							
169 Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.							
170 Moral standards are simply <i>personal</i> rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgements of others.							
171 Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.							
172 Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.							
173 No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.							
174 Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends on the circumstances surrounding the action.							

**To continue, please go to section G (next page).**

## Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

**Section G****About your personal situation**

In this final section, we ask you to give us some personal information. Where necessary, please give the information as it was at the time of the project you have been answering for (as described in section B).

175 What is your age?

[in years, at the time of the project described in section B]

176 Country of birth

177 Country of residence

[at the time of the project described in section B]

178 Gender

1. female

2. male

179 Religion

1. christian

2. jewish

3. muslim

4. other:

5. non

180 Have you finished film school?

[at the time of the project described in section B]

1. yes

2. no

181 Have you followed (additional) professional courses? (workshops, seminars etc.)

[at the time of the project described in section B]

1. yes

2. no

182 Number of years working as a documentary filmmaker

[at the time of the project described in section B]

183 Number of independent documentaries

[at the time of the project described in section B]

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 2.1.3 (continued)

184 Do you have additional experience in film / television  
[at the time of the project described  
in section B]

1. yes  
2. no

185 I include a filmography.

1. yes  
2. no

186 If you have any additional remarks or comments,  
please add them here.

**Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.**

Please return it to

**Willemien Sanders**

**Antwoordnummer XXX**

**0000 XX Utrecht**

**The Netherlands**

Or fax it to:

**+31 30 XXX**

Mark this box if you would like to receive a summary of the  
results of this questionnaire.

## Appendix 2.1.4 Testing and developing the questionnaire

## Testing draft 1

Since I expected the group of author documentary filmmakers I could invite to complete the questionnaire to be limited and I did not want to break into my sample right away, I decided to first test the questionnaire on students. I asked students of the Faculty of Arts of Utrecht University (now part of the Faculty of Humanities) who had recently completed a course in documentary filmmaking to complete and comment on the questionnaire (Were the questions understandable; Did they make sense?). Their teacher contacted them on my behalf and invited them to participate in the test. He forwarded the e-mail addresses of those willing to participate. Five students received the questionnaire as an e-mail attachment (Excel file). They all completed and returned it and four students included comments and remarks.

The students' comments first of all concerned individual questions. One student suggested that many questions were quite similar, such as the one about victimizing the participant and the one about humiliating the participant. She also found the question about interpreting a story difficult to understand. Another student wondered whether the question about the participant invading the filmmaker's privacy was useful at all. Yet another suggested an additional question about having lied to the participant about your intentions as filmmaker. This student also suggested to include more space for additional comments and remarks. Students suggested different and additional answering options: for questions such as the one about inviting participants to come and see a rough cut, a 'yes/no' option would be more suitable than a bipolar never – all the time scale.

Apart from the phrasing of specific questions, some students found the use of certain terms, such as 'moral issues', 'the morality of documentary filmmaking', and 'legitimacy', confusing or difficult to understand. One student mentioned that the directions guiding respondents through section E, the section with the vignettes, were insufficient. And students also pointed to grammatical and spelling errors. In addition, they mentioned the length of the questionnaire was problematic (the first draft contained no less than 186 items). Based on these comments and remarks, I made the first revisions to

## Participatory spaces

the questionnaire.

### Revisions draft 1

At this point, the comments of the students were more important than their results, as the aim was to see if the questions as well as the information in the questionnaire made sense. I incorporated many of the comments and criticisms of the four students who had responded, but I did not agree with all of the criticism. For example, the suggestion to use a yes/no option for the question about showing the rough cut I did not follow, as filmmaker can show participants rough material on more than one occasion. In addition to the students' suggestions I used my own common sense to revise the questionnaire, having had some time to reflect on it. I made the following changes in the various sections:

*Cover page: Introduction and information.* I eliminated the option to return the questionnaire by fax because faxing documents of several pages entails the risk of receiving incomplete questionnaires due to technical problems.

*Section A: The recognition of moral issues.* In section A I rephrased six of the 32 statements in order to make them clearer and more understandable. For instance, I changed "Victimizing a participant" into "Showing someone as a victim".

*Section B: Details on the current or last project.* Here I eliminated the question asking for the title of the project to meet confidentiality and anonymity concerns.

*Section C: The experience of moral issues.* In this section I rephrased two statements, again to make them easier to understand. For example, I changed "I have humiliated a participant" into "I have treated a participant without dignity".

*Section D: The choice of strategies.* I made no changes in section D at this point.

*Section E: Recognition, action and argument.* Based on the comments, I made the situations in the vignettes in section E more explicit and I added further instructions to help the respondent focus. I changed some situations to make them more relevant to documentary filmmaking and to make them better express professional and project variables. For example, I referred to the

situation respondents were in in the vignettes in order to invite them to return to and focus on that original situation before introducing additional contextual information. And in the situation which included that “critics are not always positive about the film” I changed this into “Some critics however are negative about the participants on a personal level...” in order to make the situation more relevant to the filmmaker-participant relationship.

*Section F: Ethical Position Questionnaire* and *Section G: Demographic details*. I did not make any changes to sections F and G at this point.

In general I addressed the grammatical and spelling errors. All these changes resulted in the second draft of the questionnaire.

### Testing draft 2

To test the resulting second draft, it seemed a good idea to ask students who had slightly more experience in documentary filmmaking. So I contacted the Netherlands Film and Television Academy (NFTA) in Amsterdam. At the time six students graduated in documentary film directing at this academy each year. At my request, the documentary course co-ordinator contacted all students who were in either the third or fourth year and distributed the questionnaire, as this seemed the most feasible way of getting their response. I organised a focus group in order to directly and openly communicate about the questionnaire. Unfortunately however, very few students turned up. Two students returned a completed questionnaire, as did the co-ordinator himself, but they did not include any comments. Two other students showed up at the meeting, but they had not completed the questionnaire. The co-ordinator and one of the main teachers also attended the meeting, so mostly I discussed the questionnaire with them. However, they mainly shared comments about the research project itself, not about the questionnaire. They mentioned the fact that it was tough on their students to answer questions about ethics and about moral issues, because the students did not have a lot of experience yet. They concluded a questionnaire like this might be more relevant for more experienced filmmakers. (They also mentioned that their policy as teachers was to have the students take decisions as late in the process as possible, usually during editing.) The consultation with the academy gave little input for changing the questionnaire so I relied on my own common sense to make some

## Participatory spaces

further changes.

### Revisions draft 2

*Cover page: Introduction and information.* Instead of describing the project as being about the morality of author documentary filmmaking, I described it as being about the ethics of documentary filmmaking, hoping this would be more appealing. The information about the seven sections of the questionnaire I put under the 'How to participate' heading instead of the 'Please answer all questions' heading. And I changed the time it would take to complete the questionnaire from 40 minutes to 30 minutes, as I shortened the questionnaire (see below). I added the name of the research institute to my contact details as well.

*Section A: The recognition of moral issues.* In an effort to shorten the questionnaire (draft 2 contained 185 items) I abbreviated the first section, which included questions about moral issues in general. Instead of asking 32 questions about all moral issues, I asked 10 questions about more general concepts. For example, instead of asking first to what extent the respondent considered informing each other to be a moral issue in documentary filmmaking, and second to what extent the respondent considered staying in touch with each other to be a moral issue in documentary filmmaking, I asked to what extent the respondent considered communication to be a moral issue in documentary filmmaking. I also made the directions at the beginning of the section more explicit by repeating that I was asking about the extent to which the issues play a role in documentary filmmaking ethics. I repeated this above the answering scale.

*Section B: Details on the current or last project.* I separated the single question about the amount of research, filming, and editing and post production time into three separate questions.

*Section C: The experience of moral issues.* In the directions in the beginning of this section I repeated the request to answer with reference to her most recent or current project, described in section B, and I emphasized this by using a bold font. At the top of the answering scale I repeated this by adding: "In your project described in section B".

*Section D: The choice of strategies.* In the directions in Section D I made the

same changes as in Section C.

*Section E: Recognition, action and argument.* In the directions in this section I changed the words “short descriptions of situations” into “situations” to make the phrasing more compact and direct.

*Section F: Ethical Position Questionnaire.* I made no changes in section F at this point.

*Section G: Demographic details.* In the directions for this section I again emphasized the request to answer for their project described in section B by using a bold font. I moved the box for receiving a summary upward and added the name of the research institute to my directions here as well.

At the beginning of each section of the questionnaire I included the question numbers (e.g., Section A: questions 1-10) and at the end of each section I included space for additional remarks. To accommodate respondents who were not comfortable with an electronic version of the questionnaire I designed a version respondents could print and return by regular mail as well (a Portable Document Format (PDF) version). The version created as Excel file therefore contained slightly different directions than the one created as PDF file. In the Excel version, I created each section in a different worksheet and I used colours to make them more distinct from each other. Here I will focus on the version in PDF as this is the one included in this appendix.

### Testing draft 3

The changes to the questionnaire described above resulted in a third draft. To test this third draft, I contacted four film academies abroad as well as six Dutch documentary filmmakers. A foreign filmmaker also offered to help and I gladly accepted. The foreign academies were the Hochschule für Film und Fernsehen (HFF) Konrad Wolf in Potsdam-Babelsberg; the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg; the Australian Film Television and Radio School; and the National Film and Television School in Beaconsfield, United Kingdom. I chose these academies because they have a good reputation. Unfortunately, only two students returned a completed questionnaire and only one included additional comments.

The six Dutch documentary filmmakers, including three women and three men, I selected because they were familiar with the subject and I knew

## Participatory spaces

them personally, and so I expected they would be interested as well as critical and honest about their findings. Two of them I had interviewed for the preliminary research, the other four knew about the research but had not read anything about it yet. I asked them as well as the foreign filmmaker to complete and extensively comment on the third draft of the questionnaire.

Three of the filmmakers responded quickly and gave so much feedback that I asked the other three to wait for the fourth draft. I then had extensive conversations with them, either on the phone or over coffee, discussing the questions, the answering options, the different sections, phrasing, the tone of the questions, and anything the filmmakers came up with.

With respect to the general information, one filmmaker commented that it was not immediately clear what was expected of respondents. In addition respondents felt I should explain better that I only wanted to measure certain aspects. I should also include the information that answers to all question were necessary to create the profile of the respondent I offered to send in return. And they suggested I repeat the information about confidentiality at the end of the questionnaire and include information about where those interested could find the results. The filmmakers also commented on the tone of the questions: many were formulated negatively in their eyes. Also, some felt putting the questions in the form of statements seemed too accusatory and they preferred the form of genuine questions. Others however found the statements no problem.

One filmmaker felt some questions were too narrow, such as the question in section A: "An individual's rights: Rights people have in every situation or circumstance, such as rights to privacy and respect". He questioned whether public figures and people with power have the same rights to privacy as people without power. Others mentioned that the questions in section A should be clearer and express the underlying question. For example, the concept of free will was not explained sufficiently. In addition, concepts such as consequences of participating and the public's right to know were abstract and unclear. In this section's statements, the word participant came falling from the sky and should be explained as well. Others mentioned they worked on several projects with several participants and so different answers were possible and relevant. One filmmaker commented that the questions

referred too much to the traditional situation of filming with a crew rather than filming alone, something he felt was more contemporary.

One respondent suggested including a question about the length of film in section B, another suggested a correlation between the length, the budget, and the complexity of the film. He suggested also including a question about what kind of film respondents were answering for. A respondent commented she had difficulty answering the questions about research, filming, and editing and post production time in days, weeks, or months. She wondered whether this was sensitive information and indicated there might well be a difference between time allowed (and paid for) and time actually spent on these phases.

One respondent commented that the questions in section C were rather over-simplified and were not 'yes' or 'no' questions. He found the question about disclosure, "While filming, a participant has told me less than we agreed to" impossible to answer because according to him, you are trying to make the participant tell more than agreed to or anticipated but this can always happen. Another filmmaker said the answers would be different from film to film. Filmmakers wondered what the rules in the question about breaking documentary filmmaking rules were and commented they had referred to their own personal rules. One filmmaker commented that he had difficulty understanding some expressions, such as "get things done", "film low profile" and filming people "from an angle that make her/him look good". A respondent also said that the question about a participant treating the filmmaker without dignity might yield socially desirable answers.

Several filmmakers commented that the statements in section D were too general to answer. In addition, one filmmaker commented that she did not understand the meaning of the question about adapting to a situation and that the question about doing something that was morally wrong was too complicated. In addition, one filmmaker said she made a difference between the main character and other participants, feeling she had to protect the main character more than others. One filmmaker remarked that the question about showing a rough cut was irrelevant if you are in the middle of a project and another mentioned that she showed rough material instead of a rough cut, as a rough cut might give an unfavourable presentation of the film.

## Participatory spaces

In general, the comments on section E concerned the feeling that the situations described in section E had little resemblance to respondents' own experiences and were difficult to relate to, and sometimes not realistic enough. Also respondents said it was difficult to make general statements about such situations. Some in this case referred to specific situations; others said this about the whole section. According to one respondent it was pleasant to have a different format to work with but she also felt the situations were not always relevant. In addition she felt it was unpleasant to have to go back and forth all the time. One filmmaker agreed that it would be easier to answer questions related to one's own experience.

With respect to section F (the EPQ) the filmmakers suggested including additional information, as it was very general. Also, they found it hard to respond to such general statements. Some statements they found difficult to understand. One filmmaker commented that in specific situations, like war and with corrupt regimes, moral questions and answers are different: she would lie and had lied to authorities in such situations.

With reference to section G, filmmakers questioned the meaning of "additional experience": did this mean as director? One suggested to include a question about courses in ethics and journalism.

The filmmakers mentioned several things they felt were missing and suggested additional topics and questions. One felt the tension between morals and aesthetics was missing: what has been filmed and how is someone represented? Filmmakers suggested to pay more attention to events in both the editing phase and the research phase. One filmmaker commented that things were different if you do the research yourself. Also relevant was whether you watch the film together with the participants first. Additional topics they suggested included the goal of the filmmaker and the intention of the filmmaker. They also commented that completing the questions for another project would yield very different answers, for instance, because more ethical issues might be involved.

Some respondents included additional information and remarks about a project or shared their thought on ethics in general. This brought up additional considerations with respect to ethics, such as how consent works with children and disabled people, and many questions I was trying to test in

my questionnaire, such as how much of people's pain to show, when to stop filming, the purpose of including people in a film, and questions about the filmmaker's rights to, for instance, record and edit. One filmmaker added that sometimes ethics are less important, for example, in the case of a politician making a routine statement.

When asked, these filmmakers said they felt little inclination to give socially desirable answers. Again respondents pointed to grammatical and spelling errors.

Revisions draft 3

*Cover page: Introduction and information.* I added that respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire individually and that the questionnaire focused on filmmakers and participants, and I used a bold font to emphasize this; I also added that respondents should answer for a recent or current project. I moved the information about the number of sections upward to make it more prominent. And I offered a personal profile based on the answers given and mentioned all answers were needed for this to encourage respondents to fully complete the questionnaire. I included a separate heading for information about confidentiality and I referred to a Frequently Asked Questions section, which I added at the end of the questionnaire (see below).

*Section A: The recognition of moral issues.* I deleted this section altogether in order to shorten the questionnaire and because I felt it had become too detached from what I wanted to measure, as these statements were abstractions of the moral issues I planned to investigate.

*Section B: Details on the current or last project.* For the length of research, filming, and editing and post production, I decided to ask respondents to answer in weeks rather than days or weeks, to make it easier to answer. I deleted the option to give a budget in British pounds as I considered not many would use it (American Dollars and Euros seem the most common denomination). I added questions about the length of the film, where it would be screened, and whether the filmmaker had researched it herself. I also asked about the goal of the film, whether the content was controversial, and whether the filmmaker had filmed in any dangerous situations. And I added questions about the amount of moral issues experienced during the four phases of

## Participatory spaces

production I distinguished (research, filming, editing and post production, and the premiere and afterwards; with a 0-6, not at all–very much scale). In addition I asked some specific questions about the participants and I asked them to answer all questions for the main participant or, if not applicable, for a participant of their choice. About this participant I asked where she lived; whether she belonged to the same culture (three answering options: yes, somewhat, no); whether this was a child; whether she was filmed while in public office; whether the filmmaker knew her beforehand; and whether her situation had changed to the extent that filming could not take place as planned.<sup>113</sup> Because I deleted section A, this section became section A in draft 4 of the questionnaire.

*Section C: The experience of moral issues.* In the directions I repeated to answer for the (main) participant(s). I changed the bipolar semantic scale from “not once – very often” into “not once – all the time” to make the scale properly bipolar. I moved the question about protecting the participant to the strategies section (the next section) and rephrased some of the questions for clarification. For example, I changed the statement “I have not told the whole truth about the purpose of a scene” into “I chose to propose the purpose of a scene differently from my real intentions”. For other questions I changed the negative statement into a positive one, to create more diversity and avoid presenting only negative approaches. For instance, I changed the statement “I have failed to gain the trust of a participant” into “I have managed to completely gain the trust of a participant”. I changed the sequence of some of the questions to prevent positive and negative statements from becoming clustered. As a consequence of deleting section A, this section became section B in the fourth draft of the questionnaire.

*Section D: The choice of strategies.* I added the statement about protecting the participant to this section (see above) as I understood protecting more as a strategy than a moral concept. Again I rephrased some questions for clarity. For example, the statement “I decided to step back and film low profile to prevent problems” I changed into “I decided to stay as invisible as possible

---

<sup>113</sup> It was only after I had carried out the survey that I realized I had omitted to ask about the gender of the participant. Somehow, I was not directed to this question and I also had not come up with it myself.

while filming, to prevent problems”. I also asked the respondent to choose three of the questions in this section to which they had given a response of 0/1 or 5/6 and to clarify what happened and why they had taken this decision or position, hoping to tap some of the arguments of filmmakers for their decisions. I numbered these as three additional questions. Because I deleted section A, this section became section C in the fourth draft of the questionnaire.

*Section E: Recognition, action and argument.* As a result of the feedback to this section, I deleted section E altogether and tried to incorporate arguments for specific actions in different ways, such as the three additional questions in the previous section discussed above and in a new section I added. In this new section, I included ten statements which included a strategy and a reason for it. For example, I included the statement “Because it didn’t work out in the final film, I broke an agreement with the participant.” I used the same bipolar semantic scale ranging from “not once” to “all the time” and included directions in line with the directions in other sections. This section became section D in the fourth draft of the questionnaire.

*Added section: Statements about the profession.* To tap the respondents’ ideas not just about ethics in general (through the EPQ) but also in their profession and to make the step to the EPQ somewhat easier, I included a new section with statements about the profession of author documentary filmmaking. Five were intended to reflect an idealist point of view, the other five to reflect a relativist point of view. An example of the former is “Participants should always tell directors why they want to participate.” An example of the latter is “How I treat a participant depends on how s/he treats me.” The five questions for each section reflected the various relationships and responsibilities between filmmaker and participant and vice versa; between filmmaker and financier; of the filmmaker toward herself/her profession; and of the participant toward herself. This section became section E in the fourth draft of the questionnaire.

*Section F: Ethical Position Questionnaire.* I added the information that this section consisted of an existing test and asked respondents to answer not with respect to their project but with respect to life in general.

*Section G: Demographic details.* In section G I deleted the request to give information with reference to the time of the project discussed in section B as

## Participatory spaces

this seemed irrelevant now. Based on the comments I added questions about whether the respondent had followed any courses in philosophy or ethics. The questions about the number of documentaries made and the number of years in the business I rephrased as proper questions. At the end I added options for receiving a profile and receiving updates on the project.

*Added section: FAQ.* I added a Frequently Asked Questions section to address recurrent questions and concerns expressed by testing respondents. It contained information about why respondents should not answer for another project with more ethical dilemmas; about confidentiality; about a profile they could receive in return; about the reason for this research project; about why respondents should participate; about why the addressee was invited to participate; and about the availability of the results of the research project. In addition, in the directions in the beginning of each section I invited filmmakers to write their additional comments in the designated box at the end of the section. Finally, I included page numbers in the PDF-version of the questionnaire.

Due to the major changes to the questionnaire, the fourth draft consisted of the sections displayed in Table A2.2.

### Testing draft 4

The three remaining filmmakers whom I had asked to dismiss the third draft commented on the fourth draft of the questionnaire, much in the same way as the other three had to the third draft who also reviewed the fourth draft. This did not yield many new comments. One of the filmmakers commented however that some questions were impossible to answer for him because he was in the middle of a project. In addition I discussed the fourth draft with one of my supervisors.

### Revisions draft 4

*Cover page.* I changed the focus of the questionnaire from a recent or current project to the most recently finished project. This way, I hoped to collect information only about finished projects. As filmmakers involved in a project might be unable to answer all questions (see feedback above), not focusing like this would probably result in less data and more missing values. I deleted a

Table A2.2. Questionnaire sections in the fourth draft of the questionnaire

Section	Operationalises / contains
--	Cover page
A	Details on the current or last project
B	The experience of moral issues
C	The choice of strategies
D	Influences on respondents' decisions
E	Opinions about the profession
F	EPQ
G	Demographic details
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions

sentence about collecting as many questionnaires as possible to save space and make the information more to the point, focusing on what I wanted and what I had to offer. I stressed complete confidentiality by using a bold font. I added information about returning the questionnaire free of charge (this was only applicable if respondents chose to complete a print of the PDF-version). I deleted my address from the cover page because I had also included the details at the end and wanted to prevent confusion.

*Section A: Details on the current or last project.* I adapted the directions for this section and included the focus on the most recently finished project in a bold font. I asked respondents to pick one project if they were involved in more than one project at the time. I adapted the sequence of questions and started with the ones about the crew (co-director, researcher, producer, et cetera). I deleted the questions about whether filmmakers were involved in a project and what stage they were in because they no longer were applicable. I added the option that the filmmaker was also one of the producers and I added the option that a broadcaster got involved later on. I specifically asked respondents to choose one participant to answer the questionnaire for and instead of asking whether the participant was a child I asked for the age of the participant they had chosen to answer for. I moved these question upward to create a more logical sequence, starting with questions about the crew, followed by questions about production circumstances (time, budget, et cetera), about the participant, and at the end the general questions about the experience of moral issues in the

## Participatory spaces

various phases of production.

*Section B: The experience of moral issues.* I added one question which had up till now only existed as a statement from the filmmaker's point of view, but which could be phrased from the participant's point of view as well: "The participant manipulated me to get or avoid a certain scene."

*Section C: The choice of strategies.* To the statement about viewing a rough cut I included "rough material" because sometimes filmmakers show their participant rushes as well. (One of the Dutch filmmakers interviewed at the beginning of this research project had mentioned this.) I rephrased the statement about not taking an ethical issue seriously to make it refer more directly to the project rather than to documentary in general. And I rephrased the statement about filming unrecognizable and changed "people" into "the participant", to align it with the instructions to answer for one participant.

*Section D: Influences on respondents' decisions.* I adapted two statements to make them refer to the filmmaker-participant relationship more specifically.

*Section E: Opinions about the profession.* Here I stressed that this section was about how respondents think about their profession by using a bold font.

*Section F: Ethical Position Questionnaire.* I stressed that this section was about how respondents think about morality in general by using a bold font.

*Section G: Demographic details.* As I had done before with other questions, I changed some into 'proper' questions. So instead of asking "Country of residence" I asked "What is your country of residence?".

*FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions.* I changed the order of the FAQ and it now contained the following topics:

1. Why this research project?
2. Why should I participate?
3. Why is this invitation personal?
4. Why was I invited to participate?
5. What can I expect in return?
6. Where can I find the results of this research project?
7. How do you guarantee confidentiality?
8. Another project caused more ethical dilemmas. Shouldn't I answer the questions for that project?
9. How do I choose the participant?

In general in the directions at the beginning of each section I added the request to elaborate on their situation if they felt it was different and the questions did not apply. In the statements, whenever it said “a participant” I changed it to “the participant”, referring to the participant the filmmaker had chosen to answer for.

*New section: Returning the questionnaire.* In the PDF-version I included a page with specific directions on how to return the questionnaire free of charge, both from within the Netherlands and from abroad. I included a specimen as well.<sup>114</sup>

#### Testing draft 5

All these adaptations resulted in the fifth draft of the questionnaire. I now took the questionnaire to the Methodology and Statistics department at the Faculty of Social Sciences for a critical assessment by an expert. Based on her comments and recommendations I made additional changes.

#### Revisions draft 5

*Cover page.* I included a proper cover page with just the title of the project and what it was about, and the name of my university and research institute.

The information sheet I shortened to a single page and I focused on practical matters: how to complete the questionnaire, how to return it, and what I offered in return, followed by a request to answer all questions, and information about confidentiality and how I would achieve this.

*Section A: Details on the current or last project.* I added some additional remarks about what I understand ‘the crew’ to be; I added directions how to answer the more general questions with the 0-6 scale; and I invited the respondents more specifically to write down additional remarks at the end.

*Section B: The experience of moral issues.* I did not make changes to this section at this point apart from the more general ones discussed below.

*Section C: The choice of strategies.* I rephrased the question about making changes after viewing a rough cut, to clarify it. I more specifically invited the respondents to elaborate on three questions, and I added separate boxes for

---

<sup>114</sup> As it turned out, some respondents cut this specimen out and stuck it to the envelop as address label.

## Participatory spaces

explaining the situation and for the reason for the respondent's decision or position. This way, it hopefully was clearer what I expected of the respondents.

*Section D: Influences on respondents' decisions.* Here I changed the bipolar semantic scale from "not once – all the time" to "not at all – very much" as I thought it better suited the statements.

*Section E: Opinions about the profession.* I did not make any changes apart from more general ones discussed below.

*Section F: Ethical Position Questionnaire.* I made the focus on everyday ethics in this section even more prominent by using the bold font for a larger part of the relevant sentence.

*Section G: Demographic details.* I changed the question about the country of residence to "In which country do you live?" to make it easier to understand for non-native speakers. I added information about what I considered to be professional courses. I included the 'scale' for the filmmaker's age ("years") and number of independent documentaries ("documentaries"). At the end I referred to the pages where respondents could find information about what they could get in return and how to return the questionnaire free of charge.

*New section: In return.* On a separate page, including the respondent's number, I offered a personal profile, summary, and updates in return. This way, this information could easily be separated from the rest of their answers and confidentiality could be better secured.

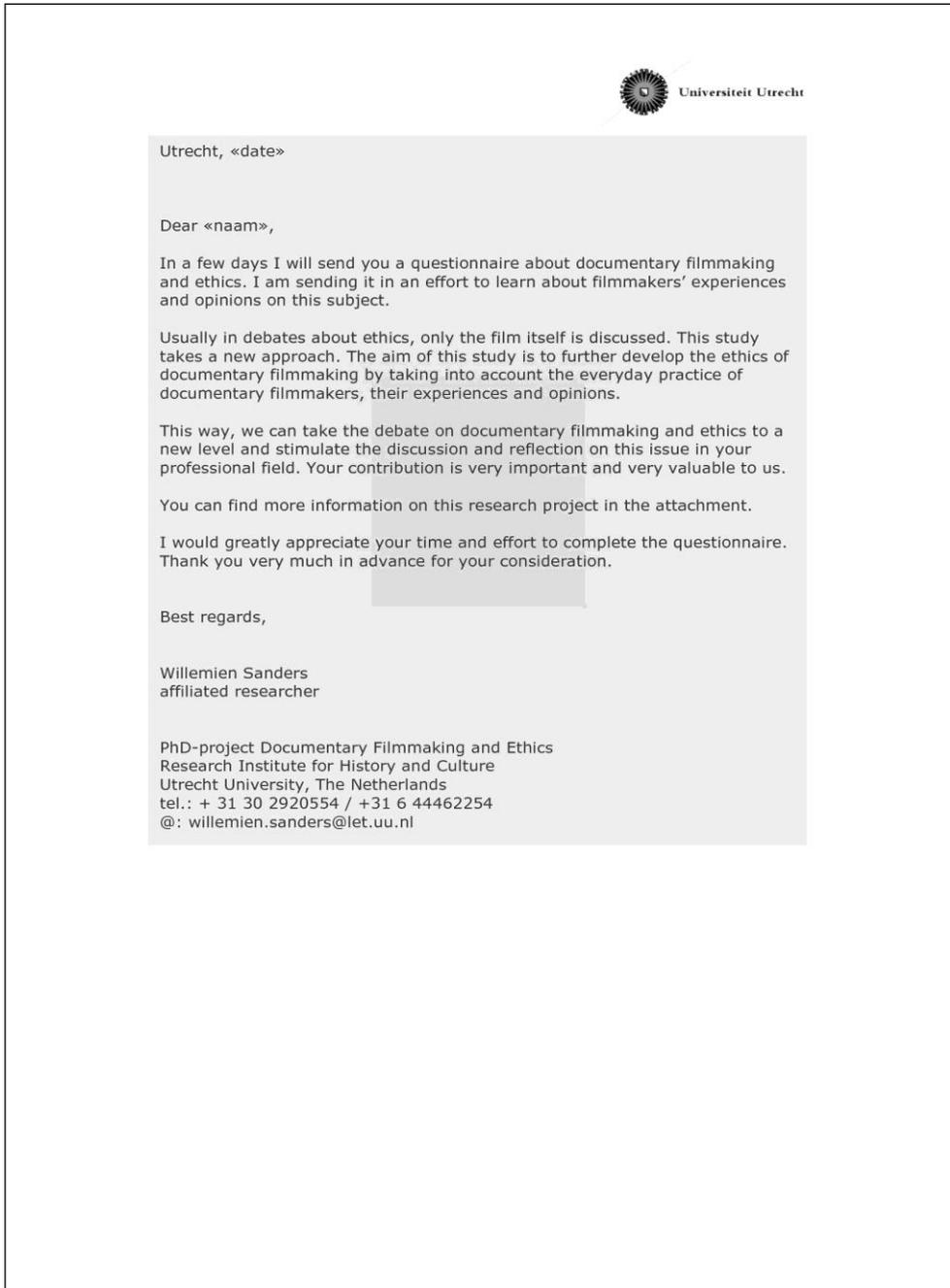
*FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions.* I shortened the FAQ section to a single page. The information about the relevance of the project and of participating, about the invitation and what to expect in return, and about the results, I transferred to an information sheet that would accompany the announcement of the questionnaire. I moved the remaining information and started with what I expected respondents to have most questions about.

In general I rephrased the directions for including additional remarks at the end of each section and made it more inviting, starting with "We are interested in..." or including "we would like to hear about...". I changed the fonts as well and chose the standard one the university uses for the information at the beginning; I chose a larger font for the questions and chose a more distinct one for the answers in the Excel sheet, one that differed from the one used for the questions. In the directions at the beginning of section B,

C, D, and E, I included some information about how to understand the 0-6 scale. Also I decided to create more 'space' in the questionnaire by leaving void space between the rows of questions. I used the resulting sixth draft for a pilot.

## Appendix 2.2 The pilot

### Appendix 2.2.1 Standard communication accompanying the pilot version



## Appendix 2.2.1 (continued)



Universiteit Utrecht

### Research project on documentary filmmaking and ethics

What is the aim of this research project?

Ethics and documentary film are debated regularly, like in the case of *TITICUT FOLLIES* (filming those unable to consent), and *FAHRENHEIT 911* (is it documentary or propaganda?). Usually, professionals and academics discuss single films with reference to what's on the screen: the film. But the question of ethics is relevant throughout the production process. And since the production circumstances of documentary filmmakers are changing (with new technologies, making media participation available and affordable for more and more self-taught filmmakers), we think it is time to elevate the debate and discuss what's off the screen: the production process of documentary films.

We are investigating the ethics of making documentary films, focussing on the relationship between filmmaker and the person filmed (the participant).

Therefore, we need to find out what moral issues arise in the everyday practice of documentary filmmaking, how filmmakers reason about such issues, and how they deal with them. We are including filmmakers from around the world in this study.

Why is it important?

This study is important because it takes a new approach to documentary filmmaking ethics. Instead of just looking at the film, this study looks at the production process. And instead of philosophizing behind a desk, this study is incorporating filmmakers' own experiences and opinions, studying patterns in professional practices worldwide.

Through this study, we can further develop theories on documentary filmmaking as well as theories on ethics. Moreover, it will give a new impulse to the debate on documentary filmmaking ethics and stimulate documentary filmmakers (as well as other documentary professionals) to reflect on their work. That's why it is important from both a scholarly and a professional perspective.

Why you?

The research focuses on filmmakers, who in their films express their own ideas and give their personal perspective on a subject. For such films, platforms par excellence are documentary film festivals. Therefore documentary filmmakers were selected who have had their film shown at one or more of the following documentary film festivals: IDFA, Shadow Festival (Amsterdam), Encounters (Cape Town), Silverdocs (Silver Spring), DokFestival (Leipzig), Visions du Réel (Nyon), Cinéma du Réel (Paris), É Tudo Verdade (São Paulo/Rio de Janeiro), Docfest (Sheffield), TIDF (Taipei), Docaviv (Tel Aviv), and Hot Docs (Toronto), in 2006.

For more information, please contact:

Willemien Sanders  
affiliated researcher

PhD-project Documentary Filmmaking and Ethics  
Research Institute for History and Culture  
Utrecht University, The Netherlands  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl



Utrecht, «date»

Dear «naam»,

Herewith I kindly seek your co-operation in a research project on documentary filmmaking and ethics.

Usually, people discuss ethics only with reference to the film itself. This study takes a new approach by investigating the whole production process. Its aim is to further develop the ethics of documentary filmmaking, by taking into account the everyday practice of documentary filmmakers. By increasing our knowledge about documentary filmmaking ethics, we can give the debate a new impulse and stimulate reflection on this issue in your professional field.

We want to incorporate your own experiences and opinions in this study. To do this, we are asking you to share your experiences and opinions with us. You were selected because you had your film at a documentary film festival in 2006. Your contribution is very important and very valuable to us.

In return, we will send you a personal profile, general research results, and updates, if you wish. The results of this study will be published in a dissertation, in articles in journals, and will hopefully be presented at festivals.

This study contains some sensitive aspects and questions. Your answers however will be treated with complete confidentiality. Your name will be separated from the questionnaire upon receipt and your name will never be connected to any publication on results of this research.

Attached you find two files. You can choose which one is more convenient for you to use.

1. **questionnaire «jr»«nr».xls** is a Windows Excel file, which you can complete electronically by writing in the file, and return as an e-mail attachment.
2. **questionnaire «jr»«nr».pdf** is an Acrobat Reader file, which you can print, complete with a pen and return by regular mail free of charge (details at the end of the questionnaire).

In case you have any trouble working with these files, please let me know so that I can send you a paper copy by regular mail.

This questionnaire is personal. You are kindly requested not to pass it on to others.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I will be happy to answer them and provide you with further information.

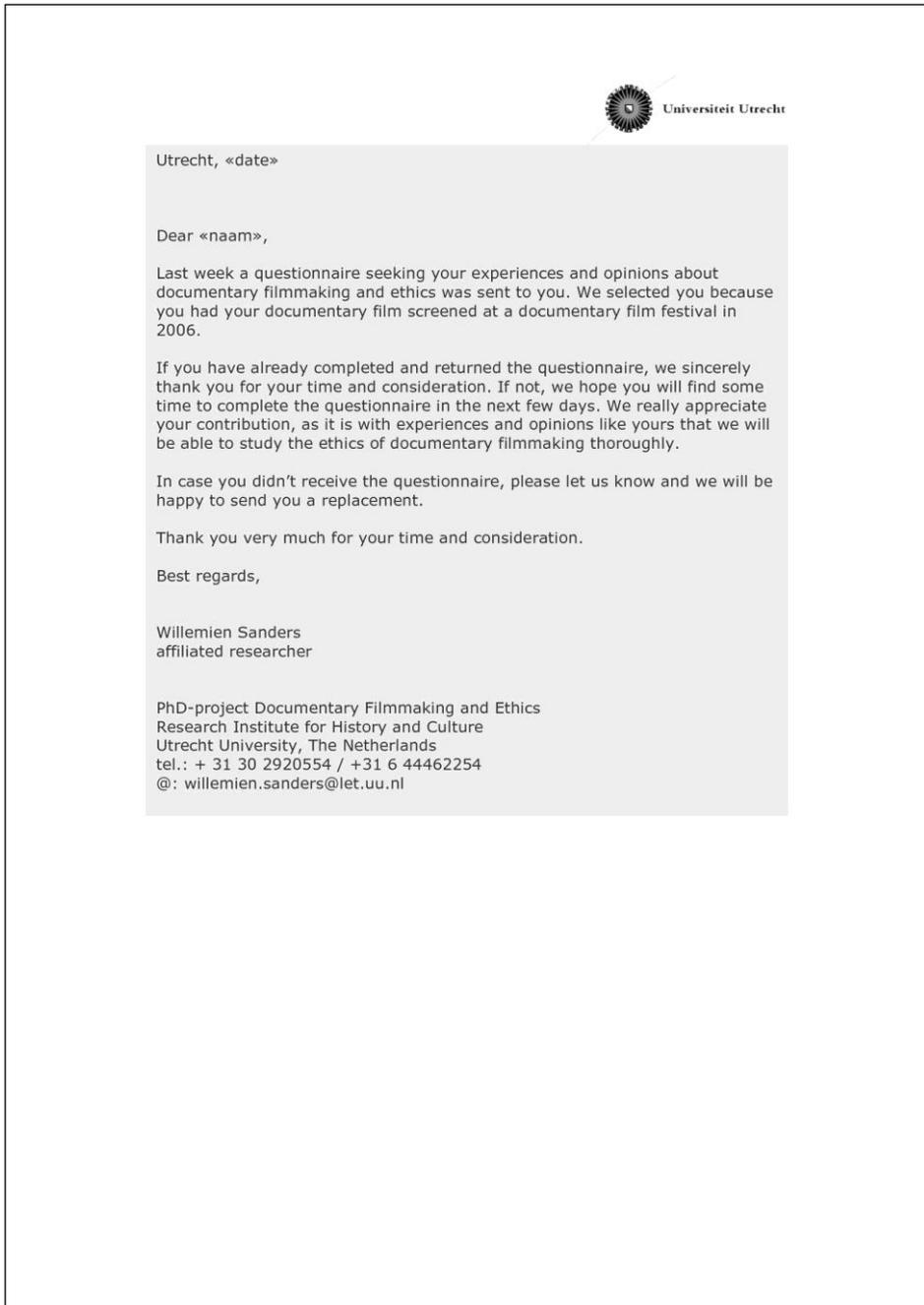
Thank you very much in advance for your time and consideration. We appreciate your contribution very much.

Best regards,

Willemien Sanders  
affiliated researcher

PhD-project Documentary Filmmaking and Ethics  
Research Institute for History and Culture  
Utrecht University, The Netherlands  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

## Appendix 2.2.1 (continued)





Utrecht, «date»

Dear «naam»,

About three weeks ago I sent you a questionnaire seeking your experiences and opinions about documentary filmmaking and ethics. Unfortunately, we haven't received the completed questionnaire from you yet.

We would like to emphasize the importance of your contribution to our study. The more information we have, the more representative and the better our study results will be. It is for this reason that I am kindly asking you to complete the questionnaire and return it to us.

Please remember that your answers are completely confidential. Although your questionnaire is numbered, your name will be separated from the questionnaire and will never be connected to the results in any publication on this research project. Only in case you wish to receive a personal profile, will we connect your name to your answers. However, this profile will of course only be sent to you personally.

We sincerely hope you will complete the questionnaire. For your convenience, you will find the two questionnaire files attached. You can choose which one is more convenient for you to use.

1. **questionnaire «jr»«nr».xls** is an Windows Excel file, which you can complete electronically by writing in the file, and return as an e-mail attachment.
2. **questionnaire «jr»«nr».pdf** is an Acrobat Reader file, which you can print, complete with a pen and return by regular mail free of charge (details at the end of the questionnaire).

In case you have any trouble working with these files, please let me know, so that I can send you a paper copy by regular mail.

Also for your convenience we are attaching some additional information on this research project.

Please remember that this questionnaire is personal. You are kindly requested not to pass it on to others.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I will be happy to answer them and provide you with further information.

Thank you very much in advance for your time and consideration. We appreciate your contribution very much.

Best regards,

Willemien Sanders  
affiliated researcher

Research Institute for History and Culture  
Utrecht University, The Netherlands  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

## Appendix 2.2.1 (continued)



## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 2.2.1 (continued)



Utrecht, «date»

Dear «naam»,

Recently we received your completed questionnaire on documentary filmmaking and ethics.

Thank you very much for the time and effort you took to share your experiences and opinions with us.

Best regards,

Willemien Sanders  
Research Institute for History and Culture  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

## Appendix 2.2.2 Sample, logistics, response, and missing values

For the pilot study I took a subsample of 100 respondents from the overall sample, which consisted of 1033 documentary filmmakers who had their film screened at one of 12 international documentary film festivals worldwide. The complete sample of 1033 filmmakers I divided into 9 groups, according to the country of production of their films (Africa, Australia and New Zealand, Asia, Europe, Central America, the Middle East, North America, Russia, and South America). From each group, I selected a random 10%.<sup>115</sup> For smaller groups the number was rounded down, for larger ones it was rounded up. This resulted in a pilot group of 100 respondents. For one director I could not find any contact details, so I deleted him from the sample, leaving 99 respondents in the pilot group.

I collected e-mail addresses from these filmmakers and in case I could not find any I searched for the address of a 'secondary' contact, such as a co-director, producer, distributor and/or sales agent. I searched on the Internet, through festivals' websites as well as festival catalogues. In the end I contacted a little over half of the respondents directly; the remaining ones I contacted through such secondary contacts.

Of the 99 respondents in the pilot group, 21 completed and returned the pilot questionnaire (21.21%). Another 34 responded in some way but did not return the completed questionnaire and an additional 7 explicitly refused to complete the questionnaire because of a lack of time, because they considered themselves fiction filmmakers, or because of a language barrier. Another 10 respondents or their 'representatives' answered but ultimately did not return the questionnaire. The total response rate including these responses was 62.00%.

Of the 21 completed and returned questionnaires, 15 had been returned by filmmakers who I had contacted directly and 6 had been returned through secondary contacts. Of the 41 filmmakers who had responded but not completed the questionnaire, 26 I had contacted directly and 15 I had contacted indirectly. Based on these results and given the amount of work

---

<sup>115</sup> I used a function in Excel to randomly select respondents from each group.

## Participatory spaces

involved in following up and monitoring communication via secondary contacts, I decided to only retain in the sample those filmmakers I could contact directly myself.

I used SPSS 14.0 for Windows for the analyses of the pilot data. Given the small number of questionnaires returned, the analyses served to improve and possibly further shorten it rather than to present results.

I specified missing values in the data file in three ways: 999 for a non-answer (empty), 888 for a 'not applicable' response, and 777 for an answer that was not clear, for example, if two boxes were ticked or if an amount was written in a way that made it impossible to understand what the respondent meant exactly. These numbers were unlikely to be given as an answer to any of the questions so there was little risk for confusion or overlap. They provided a possibility to investigate missing values further if desired.

### Appendix 2.2.3 Descriptive statistics

The aim of the pilot study was mainly to improve the questionnaire and, if possible, shorten it. To this end, I explored the responses to see if any useful improvements could be made. I investigated the number of responses to each question and the range of the answers to see if any questions should be adapted. Some questions turned out to be redundant or did not work. Some that did not seem to work as expected I nevertheless retained because I deemed them relevant. And some I adapted and hopefully improved regardless of the responses. Below, for each section of the questionnaire I will first discuss the responses followed by the adaptations I made.

*Section A: participant and project characteristics.* Table A2.3 shows the number of responses for each answering category for statements A1 to A6 and A13, A16, A18, A20, and A22, which were all measured on a nominal level. Table A2.4 shows the number of responses, mean score, and standard deviation of questions A7 to A11, A14, A15, A19, and A22 to A26, all measured on a ratio level.

Not included in these tables are questions A12 and A17. Respondents could tick more than one box for question A12 (Where was the film intended to

Table A2.3 Responses per answering category for questions A1 to A6, A13, A16, A18, A20, A21

Variable number	Variable	Answer option*			
		1	2	3	4
A1	Did you work with a co-director on this project?	8	13		
A2	Did you research the project yourself?	0	10	11	
A3	Was a producer involved in this project?	8	7	6	
A4	Did you have one or more broadcasting company/-ies involved in this project?	12	4	5	
A5	Do you work with the same crew on independent documentary projects most of the time?	10	5	5	1
A6	If yes: Do / did you work with the same crew members on this project?	2	9	10	
A13	Did you have a specific goal with this film?	19	2		
A16	Did you have <b>one main participant</b> in your film?	1	17	3	
A18	Do you consider this (main) participant to belong to the same culture as you?	4	4	6	
A20	Was this (main) participant filmed working in (public) office?	3	10		
A21	Did you know this (main) participant before making the film?	9	6		

\* Empty cells indicate a not applicable category

be screened?). Seventeen respondents ticked “at festivals”, fourteen ticked “on television”, none ticked “both” and eight ticked “other” and mentioned additional venues. Question A17 was an open questions asking for the country of residence of the participant. Fourteen respondents gave a valid answer to this question.

I adapted questions A2, A3, and A4 to prevent two out of three answering options starting with ‘yes’. Now, the first answering option started with ‘yes’, the second was neutral (e.g., “I researched the project with one or more other(s)”), and the third option started with ‘no’. This I felt made the differences between answering categories more balanced. For question A2 none of the respondents ticked the first answering option. However, since I felt it remained relevant, I decided to retain it.

Table A2.4 Number of responses for questions A7 to A11, A14, A15, A19, A22 to A26

Variable number	Variable	Number of responses		
		N	Mean	SD
A7	Please indicate the amount of time allowed for research for this project.*	20	31.05	89.42
A8	Please indicate the amount of time allowed for filming for this project.*	21	27.05	45.23
A9	Please indicate the amount of time allowed for editing and post production for this project.*	21	28.95	39.49
A10	What was the budget of this project?***	17	140147.06	158161.88
A11	What is the length of the film?***	21	67.43	28.28
A14	Do you consider the content to be controversial?	21	2.76	2.19
A15	Did you film any scenes in dangerous circumstances?	21	1.90	1.79
A19	What was the age of this (main) participant?	12	46.50	17.42
A22	Has the situation of the (main) participant changed between research and filming, to the extent that you couldn't film as planned?	20	2.25	2.29
A23	Did any moral issues arise during research?	20	3.00	2.05
A24	Did any moral issues arise during filming?	20	3.75	1.80
A25	Did any moral issues arise during editing and post-production?	20	3.45	1.96
A26	Did any moral issues arise after the première of the film?	18	2.44	1.92

\* In weeks

\*\* Respondents could give an amount in US dollars and/or Euros. Fourteen respondents gave an amount in Euros; five gave one in both currencies; one gave an amount in dollars only; and one respondent did not give answer at all. I included the amount in Euros in the data file. In the cases in which an amount in US dollars was stated, I included the equivalent amount in Euros. In one case there was clearly no correspondence between the amount in Euros and dollars mentioned, so in that case I defined a missing value (777).

\*\*\* In minutes

In the final questionnaire, to improve and further increase the focus, I asked respondents to answer for a single project. As a result, question A5 (about usually working with the same crew), and question A6 (about the crew on the current project) I combined to make one relevant question about the crew: Did you work with crew members you always work with on this project? I included four answering options: 1. Yes, I worked with my usual crew members; 2. Some of the crew members were the same as always, some were different; 3. No, my crew is different from film to film; 4. I always work alone, without a crew. This way, the two questions about crew I incorporated into a single question about the crew on this project.

For question A12, five respondents mentioned an additional venue for the screening of their documentary film: a (commercial) cinema or theatre, or independent screenings in specific cities. Based on these answers, I included an additional answering option: in theatres/cinemas.

A majority of pilot respondents, 19 out of 21, answered 'yes' to question A13, about a filmmaker's goal with the film. This made it difficult to compare those who had and those who had no specific goal with their film. Also, most elaborations on affirmative answers were very general: the goals mentioned most were to reveal, show, discuss and create awareness. This might be due to the examples provided in the questionnaire, which resemble these goals. However, I felt that eliminating the examples from the questionnaire text might make the question unclear. Furthermore, most answers indicated a goal with respect to an audience. Only four answers were not directed at an audience but at the question itself, at another project, or just at recording and/or exploring. Since the relationship with the audience is not part of this research and since I doubted whether there was a good way to investigate the goal of a filmmaker in a single question, I decided to eliminate this question.

In order to have respondents answer the subsequent questions for one single participant, whether she was a sole main participant or one of a group, I adapted question A16 and took out a redirection to the next section following answering option 3. If all answers pertained to this one participant, I would be able to compare the results in a more meaningful way.

Question A17, asking about the country of residence of the participant

## Participatory spaces

I intended to use in combination with other questions for an analysis of cultural differences between respondent and participant. But a concept like culture is much too complex to catch in a few variables. People living in the same street, born in the same area, and equal in such aspects as age, religion, or education can feel they belong to very different cultures. I felt it made more sense to ask for perceived difference in culture rather than using some 'objective' measure. Therefore I decided to adapt question A17 by using a scale from 0-6 for answering the question "Do you consider this (main) participant to belong to the same culture as you?" (instead of the 3 answering options in the pilot). This way, respondents could give a more nuanced answer.

Question A21, about the extent to which the respondent/filmmaker knew the participant beforehand, I also adapted this way: answers could be given on a 0-6 scale, to make more nuanced answers possible as well as create more unity in answering categories. Due to the use of a scale I reordered the sequence of questionnaires and clustered the ones measuring contextual aspects on a scale. This question thus became question A18. Reconsidering question A22 ("Has the situation of the (main) participant changed between research and filming, to the extent that you couldn't film as planned?") I felt at this point it was too general for the questionnaire. Also it was not really clear to what extent this question related to ethics. In addition, dealing with changes is covered in the section on strategies and it did not seem useful to pay extra attention to one specific concept. All in all, I did not feel there was enough reason to keep it, so I deleted it.

*Section B: the experience of moral issues.* Section B of the questionnaire I designed to measure the extent to which filmmakers experienced moral issues during the development and production of a documentary project. Table A2.5 gives an overview of the statements, the number of valid answers, the range of the scores, the mean scores and standard deviations.

Statement B28 I adapted to make the sentence easier to understand and to make sure the concept it addressed was mentioned in the statement. Statement B41 ("I have stuck to my original intentions regarding the film, no matter what.") I felt did not really address moral issues after all. It might be seen as more of a strategy. Dealing with changes is covered in section C by

Table A2.5 Number of valid answers, range, mean scores, and standard deviations for section B

Variable number	Statement	N	min	max	M	SD
B27	I have used my authority as a filmmaker to achieve something.	21	0	6	2.81	2.02
B28	I chose to propose the purpose of a scene different from my real intentions.	21	0	3	.95	1.24
B29	The participant had her/his own agenda, different from mine.	21	0	6	1.86	1.43
B30	I have interpreted the story of the participant different from what s/he would have liked.	21	0	4	1.98	1.40
B31	I have disgraced the participant.	21	0	3	0.43	0.81
B32	The participant refrained from telling me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.	21	0	4	1.05	1.24
B33	The participant benefited in some way from being in my film.	20	0	6	2.65	2.28
B34	The legitimacy to show certain scenes was missing.	21	0	4	.86	1.24
B35	The participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.	21	0	5	1.24	1.61
B36	I have approached the participant as an equal.	21	2	6	5.29	1.27
B37	I made sure the participant was looking good in the image I filmed.	20	0	6	2.50	1.88
B38	I have felt the participant intruded my privacy.	21	0	3	1.05	1.24
B39	I have used the presence of the camera to achieve something.	21	0	6	2.33	1.98
B40	While filming, the participant has deliberately told me less than during research conversations.	21	0	4	1.00	1.45
B41	I have stuck to my original intentions regarding the film, no matter what.	21	0	6	2.57	1.81
B42	I have managed to completely gain the trust of the participant.	21	0	6	4.57	1.69

## Participatory spaces

Table A2.5 (continued)

Variable number	Statement	N	min	max	M	SD
B43	The participant misrepresented her/himself to me.	21	0	4	0.57	1.17
B44	I have been completely honest to the participant.	21	2	6	4.81	1.44
B45	The participant got in touch with me many times throughout and after making the film.	21	0	6	3.57	2.34
B46	I have informed the participant about possible consequences of being in a documentary film.	21	0	6	4.48	1.72
B47	The participant presented her/himself in a situation that did not, or no longer apply to her/him.	20	0	5	1.10	1.41
B48	I haven't been as respectful toward the participant as I should have.	21	0	3	0.52	0.75
B49	The participant manipulated me to get or avoid a certain scene.	21	0	4	1.14	1.34
B50	I have deliberately made the participant look like a victim.	21	0	4	0.33	0.91
B51	I have filmed something because I felt I had a right to do so.	20	0	6	3.75	2.12
B52	The participant did not approach me as an equal.	21	0	4	1.00	1.45
B53	I completely respected the privacy of the participant.	21	0	6	3.90	1.95
B54	The participant deliberately took the role of a victim.	21	0	4	0.48	1.08
B55	I have done something I considered a breaking of documentary filmmaking rules.	21	0	5	1.19	1.81
B56	The participant got involved in the decision what side and angle s/he would be filmed in.	20	0	3	1.10	1.17
B57	I have filmed scenes because I felt the audience had a right to know.	20	0	6	3.40	2.16
B58	The participant used me for her/his own benefit.	21	0	4	1.43	1.47

Table A2.5 (continued)

Variable number	Statement	N	min	max	M	SD
B59	I have depicted the participant in circumstances that did not, or no longer reflect her/his situation.	20	0	3	.80	1.06
B60	Being in my film damaged the participant in some way.	19	0	2	.21	.63
B61	The participant completely agreed with me about how I interpreted her/his story.	19	1	6	4.32	1.46
B62	The participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.	21	0	4	.81	1.12
B63	I have gotten in touch with the participant many times throughout and after making the film.	21	0	6	3.86	2.06
B64	I've been very careful with the participant.	21	2	6	4.52	1.57
B65	The participant has disgraced me.	20	0	3	.45	.89
B66	I misrepresented the participant.	20	0	3	.35	.81
B67	The participant damaged my career in some way.	21	0	0	.00	.00
B68	I didn't inform the participant completely and all the time about what we were doing.	21	0	3	1.05	1.20
B69	I have had to talk the participant into filming certain scenes or events.	21	0	6	1.76	1.70
B70	The participant wasn't completely honest with me.	20	0	5	1.00	1.52
B71	I have encouraged the participant into telling more than s/he intended.	21	0	6	2.43	2.01
B72	I have been completely open toward the participant about my agenda.	20	0	6	4.45	1.88
B73	I have used the participant for my own benefit.	19	0	6	1.84	1.92
B74	I have manipulated the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	20	0	3	.75	1.02

## Participatory spaces

other statements, such as “I adapted easily to an unexpected situation”; “I decided to stop when I didn’t get what I wanted”; “I tried to compromise between what I wanted and what the participants wanted”; and “I found it no problem to change the film when, after viewing rough material or a rough cut, the participant insisted”. Such statements investigate different forms and levels of sticking to one’s original intention and the willingness to change and adapt if necessary. Therefore I deleted statement B41. Statement B47 (“The participant presented her/himself in a situation that did not, or no longer apply to her/him.”) addressed the concept ‘linking’: linking a participant to a situation from the past. In the preliminary research, a filmmaker mentioned it as an act by the filmmaker, not by the participant. Though it can be turned around into a participant-act, the pilot results indicated this does not happen often. The act of representing oneself different from the current/real situation is covered by the more general statement B43 (“The participant misrepresented her/himself to me”). This was reason for me to eliminate statement B47. Statement B67 (“The participant damaged my career in some way.”) I deleted because all pilot respondents answered ‘0’ on the 0-6 scale. This suggested to me that the statement was too far-fetched.

Section B suffered from unsuitable answering categories for a number of statements. Therefore, I adapted the semantic differential scale to better suit the statements. E.g., for statement B29 (“The participant had her/his own agenda, different from mine”) the bipolar scale “not once – all the time” did not seem very useful. I changed it into “not at all – completely”. This I also did for statements B30, B33, B42, B46, B50, B54, B60, B61, and B66 of the pilot. The same rephrasing for more clarity as well as a better fit to the answering scale was done for statement B32, B38, B42, B45, B50, B51, B53, B55, B57, B60, B63, B68, B69, B71, and B73. Because I included the term ‘completely’ in statements B42 and B61 as well as in the answering scale, I reformulated these statements. The statements with the new “not at all – completely” scale I clustered to accommodate an orderly layout, and I changed the sequence of the remaining statements to try and minimize sequence effects.

*Section C: The choice of strategies.* Section C was aimed at an inventory of the strategies to deal with moral issues respondents in the pilot study experienced

in their projects. Table A2.6 gives an overview of the statements, the number of valid answers, the range of the scores, the mean scores, and standard deviations for this section.

In section C again some statements were rephrased to improve their clarity. E.g., statement C77 I rephrased into “I adapted easily to solve an ethical issue” to stress the goal of the strategy. In statement C78, the subordinate sentence starting with ‘because’ I eliminated because it would make interpretation of the answers difficult and because it excluded other reasons for the same strategy. Furthermore I eliminated confusing formulation such as “I felt...” and “I tried”. Similar adaptations were made to statements C75, C79, C81-C83, C86, C87, C89, C93, and C96. Statement C76, “I thought an ethical problem existed, but it turned out not to be a problem at all”, in the end seemed not very meaningful; I considered it too irrelevant because it spoke of something that is not present. Therefore I deleted it. Statements C95 and C97 were very similar. Two respondents identified statement C97 with their general way of making this film or their films. The ‘to prevent problems’ part of these statements suffers from the same problem as the statements in section D: a low score could indicate either that the respondent has experienced this to a limited extent or it could point to other reasons being associated with the experience. The comments of one respondent to statement C95 illustrate this: “It wasn't necessary”. Because I wanted to retain a statement investigating adaptation of filming style to prevent moral issues, I decided to combine these two statements into a more general one: “I adapted my filming style to prevent problems”.

*Section D: Influences on respondents' decisions.* Section D included statements which aimed to investigate the influence of certain contextual aspects. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed. Table A2.7 gives an overview of the statements, the number of valid answers, the range of the scores, the mean scores, and standard deviations.

Section D was problematic because the answers were interpretable in more than one way, as discussed with reference to questions C78, C95, and C97 above. The statements in this section started with “Because...” Answers were to be given on a 0-6 scale (not at all – very much). The statements were

## Participatory spaces

Table A2.6 Number of valid answers, range, mean scores, and standard deviations for section C

Variable number	Statement	N	min	max	M	SD
C75	I invited the participant to come and watch rough material or a rough cut, to see if s/he had any comments.	20	0	6	2.55	2.63
C76	I thought an ethical problem existed, but it turned out not to be a problem at all.	20	0	6	1.55	1.96
C77	I adapted easily to an unexpected situation.	20	3	6	4.15	1.04
C78	I didn't take an ethical issue seriously because not many people would watch the film anyway.	20	0	3	.25	0.77 *
C79	I did something in return for the participant, to thank her/him.	19	0	6	3.21	2.23
C80	I decided to stop when I didn't get what I wanted.	20	0	5	1.45	1.73
C81	I decided to do something I know was morally wrong.	21	0	3	0.29	0.72 *
C82	To find a solution for an ethical problem, I asked the advise of a colleague or expert, someone not included in the project.	21	0	6	2.67	2.18
C83	I tried to compromise between what I wanted and what the participants wanted.	20	0	6	2.95	2.04
C84	I trusted that an ethical problem would solve itself in due time.	21	0	6	2.05	2.27
C85	I was aware that moral problems could arise and I prevented this as much as possible.	21	0	6	3.81	2.04
C86	I took a risk although I realized it could hurt or damage the participant.	20	0	6	1.35	1.60
C87	I found it no problem to change the film when, after viewing rough material or a rough cut, the participant insisted.	15	0	6	1.80	2.24
C88	A moral problem arose, but I didn't know how to solve it and I just let it go.	21	0	6	.95	1.91

Table A2.6 (continued)

Variable number	Statement	N	min	max	M	SD
C89	I decided to take advantage of a situation for the film.	21	0	6	1.76	2.02
C90	I didn't feel like solving a moral issue, I pushed it away.	20	0	6	.90	1.97
C91	I gave the participant some money or a gift.	21	0	6	2.38	2.36
C92	I decided to give up and not push something that was hard to get.	20	0	5	2.05	1.61
C93	I saw the making of the documentary as a joint enterprise I undertook with the participant.	21	0	6	3.71	2.15
C94	A moral problem arose, and I didn't make a choice for a solution but waited till a later moment before deciding what to do.	21	0	6	2.48	2.04
C95	I filmed the participant unrecognizable to prevent problems.	21	0	5	.62	1.47
C96	I decided to surrender to a situation I could not control.	21	0	5	1.48	1.75
C97	I decided to stay as invisible as possible while filming, to prevent problems.	21	0	6	2.29	1.98
C98	I searched for an alternative for a scene I couldn't film.	21	0	6	2.95	2.09
C99	I have protected the participant against her/himself.	20	0	6	2.30	1.92

\* Only one respondent gave a score of 3

phrased in a way that made it unclear whether low scores meant “not at all” or that the situation was not applicable in the respondents’ experiences. In the end it was impossible to interpret the results properly. So I decided to delete the whole section.

## Participatory spaces

Table A2.7 Number of valid answers, range, mean scores, and standard deviations for section D

Variable number	Statement	N	min	max	M	SD
D103	Because it was better for the final film, I broke an agreement with the participant.	20	0	3	0.30	0.73
D104	Because I had a certain goal with a film, I was justified in treating the participant different from how I would usually treat a participant.	20	0	2	0.30	0.57
D105	Because I chose a certain form to tell the story, specific ethical issues arose.	20	0	2	1.75	2.31
D106	Because I disagreed with the participant's view, it was hard to solve an ethical issue with her/him.	21	0	3	.71	1.06
D107	Because I was filming in exceptional circumstances, I was more concerned with myself than with the participant.	21	0	6	.81	1.47
D108	Because of the subject and content of my film, specific ethical issues arose.	21	0	3	2.81	2.48
D109	Because I felt the participant wouldn't understand the effect of her/his behaviour, I protected her/him.	21	0	1	1.81	2.09
D110	Because the participant had a different cultural background, I couldn't really explain what my intentions were.	20	0	5	1.50	1.91
D111	Because my film was not intended to screen at festivals but did, the participant was exposed more widely than agreed to.	20	0	1	0.20	0.41
D112	Because s/he lives far away and is difficult to reach, I didn't show the film to the participant before the première.	20	0	6	1.60	2.62
D113	Because I knew the participant before we made the film, I was more careful with what I asked of her/him.	20	0	6	1.25	1.97
D114	Because nowadays everybody is so used to cameras and to being filmed, there was less need to protect the participant.	21	0	5	1.38	1.66

*Section E: Opinions about the profession.* Section E aimed at investigating how documentary filmmakers think about their profession in more general terms. The statements touch upon the various relationships in a documentary project and for each relationship there is a more relativistic and a more absolutistic statement. Table A2.8 gives an overview of the statements, the number of valid answers, the range of the scores, the mean scores, and standard deviations. I did not make any changes to section E.

*Section F: Ethical Position Questionnaire.* Section F contained the EPQ (Forsyth 1980) and I did not make any changes or adaptations to it.

*Section G: Demographic details.* The final section, section G, investigated filmmaker characteristics such as age, education, and experience. Table A2.9 below shows the number of valid cases, mean score, and standard deviation of questions G145, G153, and G154, all measured at a ratio level. Table A2.10 shows the number of valid responses for each answering category for questions G148-G152 and G155, which were all measured at a nominal level. Question G146 and G147, about the country of birth and the country of residence of the respondents, I deleted for the same reason as question A17: I decided to measure perceived cultural differences on a scale rather than establish them through various questions (see p. 319).

As a result of the adaptations mentioned above, draft seven of the questionnaire contained 22 questions less than draft 6. This seventh draft I used for the survey.

## Participatory spaces

Table A2.8 Number of valid answers, range, mean scores, and standard deviations for section E

Variable number	Statement	N	min	max	M	SD
E115	As a filmmaker, you never have the right to use people for your own benefit.	21	0	6	4.52	1.75
E116	As a filmmaker, you should always try to meet the wishes of the financiers of your project.	21	0	6	2.38	2.01
E117	The most important thing for a filmmaker is to make the best film possible.	21	0	6	4.52	2.02
E118	Participants should always tell directors why they want to participate.	21	1	6	3.48	1.66
E119	A participant should always be 100% sure s/he is participating out of free will.	21	0	6	4.81	1.66
E120	How I treat a participant depends on how s/he treats me.	21	0	5	1.86	1.74
E121	Whether I meet the wishes of my financier(s) depends on my commitment to the project I am working on.	21	0	6	2.38	1.96
E122	Depending on the different interests at stake, I will compromise to make others happy.	21	0	5	1.86	1.68
E123	Whether a participant should inform me about her/his motivations, depends on her/his role in the film.	20	0	6	2.55	1.96
E124	Whether someone participates depends on whether a filmmaker can convince her/him.	21	1	6	3.52	1.66

Table A2.9 Number of valid answers, range, mean scores, and standard deviations for questions G145, G153, and G154

Variable number	Question	N	min	max	M	SD
G145	What is your age?	19	28	55	39.21	7.96
G153	How many years have you worked as a documentary filmmaker?	21	2	25	11.24	7.00
G154	How many independent documentaries have you made as a director?	21	1	20	5.90	5.21

Table A2.10 Responses per answering category for questions G148-G152 and G155

Variable number	Variable	Answer option*				
		1	2	3	4	5
G148	What is your gender?	9	12			
G149	What religion do you consider yourself to be?	5	2	0	0	13
G150	Have you finished film school?	6	15			
G151	Have you followed (additional) professional courses?	10	11			
G152	Have you followed any courses in philosophy or ethics?	7	14			
G155	Do you have additional experience in film and/or television, apart from directing documentaries?	19	2			

\* Empty cells indicate a not applicable answering category.



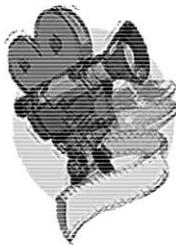
## Appendix 3

### Appendix 3.1 Survey questionnaire



#### **Documentary Filmmaking Ethics**

**A worldwide survey on filmmakers' experiences and opinions**



Universiteit Utrecht - The Netherlands  
Research Institute for History and Culture

respondent:

**Questionnaire on documentary filmmaking and ethics.**

**Introduction**

This questionnaire is part of a research project on the ethics of documentary filmmaking.

You are requested to complete this questionnaire individually. Through this questionnaire, I want to find out how you think about moral issues in the everyday practice of your work as a documentary filmmaker. The research focuses on the filmmaker and the person filmed, called **the participant**. I will ask you about **your most recently finished project**. At the end, I will also ask you about your personal situation.

**How to complete this questionnaire**

When you **print this pdf-file** (which is designed to be printed 2-sided) you can write your answers with a pen. There are **six sections** (A-F). At the end of each section, we welcome your additional remarks and comments.

**How to return this questionnaire**

You can return the completed questionnaire **free of charge** (directions on page 26).

**In return**

On page 24 you can indicate whether you would like to receive a personal profile, a summary and/or updates on this research project.

**Please answer all questions**

It is very important that you complete all questions. The group of filmmakers selected to co-operate in this study is limited and therefore every answer is very valuable. Also all answers are requested to construct a profile of your project.

Completing the questionnaire will take about 25 minutes. I am aware that this is quite an effort I am asking you. Yet I want to acknowledge the complexity of the subject of this research, and study its many different sides. Your input is vital for this study.

**Confidentiality**

Please remember that your answers will be treated with **complete confidentiality**. Your name will be separated from your respondent number and answers upon return of the questionnaire. It will not be related to any results in publications on this research project.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

If you have any questions about this questionnaire, please check the **FAQ** on page 25.

Thank you in advance for your kind co-operation.

Willemien Sanders  
Universiteit Utrecht - OGC  
tel.: +31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
e-mail: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

**To start, please go to Section A on page 5.**

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

**Section A****Your latest project**

In this section, I will ask you for information on your **most recently finished documentary film project**. In case you have been working on several projects simultaneously, please select one project to focus on.

For some questions you can just put an X in the appropriate box indicating your answer. For other questions please write your answer in the box.

We are interested in any additional comments and remarks you may have. Also, other information you feel is relevant for this study, is very welcome. Please write this at the end of this section in the designated box.

**Section A: questions 1-22****About your most recently finished documentary film**

- |   |   |                          |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Did you work with a co-director on this project? | 1. yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | 2. no   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Did you research the project yourself?           | 1. yes, I researched it on my own                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | 2. I researched the project with one or more other(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | 3. no, one or more other(s) did the research          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Was a producer involved in this project?         | 1. yes, someone else was the producer                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | 2. I produced the project with one or more other(s)   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   | 3. no, I produced it myself                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.1 (continued)

4. Did you have one or more broadcasting company/-ies involved in this project?
1. yes, from the start
2. (a) broadcaster(s) joined the project later on
3. no
5. On this project, did you work with crew members you always work with?
- With 'crew members' we mean cameraman, sound recordist, editor, etc.
1. yes, I worked with my usual crew members
2. some of the crew members were the same as always, some were different
3. no, my crew is different from film to film
4. I always work alone, without a crew
6. Please indicate the amount of time allowed for **research** for this project.  weeks
7. Please indicate the amount of time allowed for **filming** for this project.  weeks
8. Please indicate the amount of time allowed for **editing and post production** for this project.  weeks
9. What was the budget of this project?
- Please estimate the total amount of the whole project, including costs for research, filming and post-production.
1. €
2. \$
10. What is the length of the film?  minutes

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

11. Where was the film intended to be screened? 1. at festivals   
 Please indicate more than one option if applicable. 2. on television   
3. in theatres /   
cinemas  
 4. other:

**About the content**

For the following two questions, you are asked to mark your answer on a scale from 0 to 6. With 0 we mean "not at all"/"not one", with 6 we mean "very much"/"very many", and 3 means "quite a bit"/"quite a number". Please choose the number that matches your position and mark the box.

12. Do you consider the content of your film to be controversial? not at all very much  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
13. Did you film any scenes in dangerous circumstances? not one very many  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

**About the participant(s)**

14. Did you have **one main participant** in your film? 1. yes, there was one   
main participant  
 → please answer this questionnaire with reference to this main participant
2. there were a   
few central participants  
 → please choose one of these participants and answer this questionnaire with reference to her/him
3. no, there were no   
central participants  
 → please choose any one of the participants and answer this questionnaire with reference to her/him
15. What was the age of this (main) participant?  years old

# Participatory spaces

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

16. Was this (main) participant filmed as employee in (public) office? 1. yes   
2. no

For the following questions you are again asked to answer on a 0-6 scale (0 means "not at all"/"not one", 6 means "completely"/"very well"/"very many").

17. Do you consider this (main) participant to belong to the same culture as you? not at all completely  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

18. Did you know this (main) participant before making the film? not at all very well  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6

### In general

- not one very many  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
19. Did any moral issues arise during research?
20. Did any moral issues arise during filming?
21. Did any moral issues arise during editing and post-production?
22. Did any moral issues arise after the premiere of the film?

Any additional information you feel is relevant for this research project is welcome. Please write your additional comments and remarks about Section A in the box below. Your notes are much appreciated. (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary.)

**To continue, please go to section B (next page).**





Appendix 3.1 (continued)

	not once								all the time	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
47. The participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
48. I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
49. I've been very careful with the participant.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
50. I have manipulated the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
51. I informed the participant completely about what we were doing.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
52. I have had to press the participant into filming certain scenes or events.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
53. The participant wasn't completely honest with me.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
54. While filming, I have encouraged the participant into telling more than s/he intended.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
55. I have been completely open toward the participant about my agenda.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
56. I have used the participant for my own benefit.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
57. The participant has disgraced me.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
<p>For the following questions, on the 0-6 scale, 0 means "not at all" and 6 means "completely"; 3 means "moderately". Please put an X in the box indicating your answer.</p>										
	not at all								completely	
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
58. The participant had her/his own agenda, different from mine.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
59. I deliberately showed the participant as a victim	<input type="checkbox"/>									

# Participatory spaces

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

	not at all							completely
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
60. I have gained the trust of the participant.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
61. I have interpreted the story of the participant different from what s/he would have liked.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
62. The participant benefited in some way from being in my film.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
63. The participant agreed with me about how I interpreted her/his story.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
64. I misrepresented the participant.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
65. I have informed the participant about possible consequences of being in a documentary film.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
66. Being in my film damaged the participant.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
67. The participant deliberately took the role of a victim.	<input type="checkbox"/>							

Any additional comments and remarks you may have on Section B you are welcome to write in the box below. Your notes are much appreciated. (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary.)

**To continue, please go to section C (next page).**



# Participatory spaces

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

	not once							all the time
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
79. I changed something when, after viewing rough material or a rough cut, the participant insisted.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
80. An ethical problem arose, but I didn't know how to solve it and I just let it go.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
81. I decided to exploit a situation for the film.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
82. I didn't feel like solving an ethical issue, I pushed it away.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
83. I gave the participant some money or a gift.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
84. I decided to give up and not go after something that was hard to get.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
85. I approached making this documentary as a joint enterprise I undertook with the participant.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
86. An ethical problem arose, and I didn't make a choice for a solution but waited till a later moment before deciding what to do.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
87. I adapted my filming style to prevent problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
88. I lost control over a situation and decided to surrender.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
89. I searched for an alternative for a scene I couldn't film.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
90. I have protected the participant against her/himself.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	not once							all the time

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

We would like to you elaborate on some of the answers you have given above. We ask you to choose three questions to which you gave a 0/1 or 5/6 answer. Please explain the situation you are referring to: What happened in this **situation** and why did you take this **decision or position**? (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary.)

91.

question I elaborate on:

situation:

reason for my decision/position:

92.

question I elaborate on:

situation:

reason for my decision/position:

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.1 (continued)

93.

question I elaborate on:

situation:

reason for my decision/position:

You are welcome to write your additional comments and remarks on Section C in the box below. Your notes are much appreciated. (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary.)

**To continue, please go to section D (next page).**

Appendix 3.1 (continued)

**Section D**

**About your profession**

This section will investigate **how you think about your profession** as a documentary filmmaker. A number of statements will be presented and you will be asked to indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with them.

You are requested to mark your answer on a 0-6 scale (0 means "totally disagree" and 6 means "totally agree"; 3 means "agree nor disagree"). Please put an X in the box indicating your answer.

If you have any additional comments, please write them at the end of this section in the designated box.

	totally disagree			totally agree			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
94. As a filmmaker, you never have the right to use people for your own benefit.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
95. As a filmmaker, you should always try to meet the wishes of the financiers of your project.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
96. The most important thing for a filmmaker is to make the best film possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
97. Participants should always tell directors why they want to participate.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
98. A participant should always be 100% sure s/he is participating out of free will.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
99. How I treat a participant depends on how s/he treats me.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
100. Whether I meet the wishes of my financier(s) depends on my commitment to the project I am working on.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
101. Depending on the different interests at stake, I will compromise to make others happy.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
102. Whether a participant should inform me about her/his motivations, depends on her/his role in the film.	<input type="checkbox"/>						
103. Whether someone participates depends on whether a filmmaker can convince her/him.	<input type="checkbox"/>						

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.1 (continued)

Please write your additional comments or remarks on Section D in the box below. They are very valuable to us. (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary.)



**To continue, please go to section E (next page).**

Appendix 3.1 (continued)

**Section E**

**About ethics in general**

In this section we will ask you questions about **ethics in general**. Please complete these questions **not referring to filmmaking but to your general opinions in everyday life**.

You will find 20 statements. Please indicate for each statement, to what extent you agree or disagree.

Please mark your answer by putting an X in the box indicating your answer on the 0-6 scale.

You are welcome to write any additional comments and remarks in the designated box at the end of this section.

**Section E: questions 104-123**

totally disagree totally agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6

- |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 104. A person should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.   | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;"></td> </tr> </table> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 105. Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.  | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;"></td> </tr> </table> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 106. The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.  | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;"></td> </tr> </table> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 107. One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.  | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;"></td> </tr> </table> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 108. One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.                                      | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;"></td> </tr> </table> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 109. If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.   | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;"></td> </tr> </table> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 110. Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral. | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;"></td> </tr> </table> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 111. The dignity and welfare of people should be the most important concern in any society.   | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;"></td> </tr> </table> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 112. It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.  | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%;"></td> </tr> </table> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Participatory spaces

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

	totally disagree									totally agree
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
113. Moral actions are those which closely match ideals of the most "perfect" action.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
114. There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
115. What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
116. Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
117. Different types of morality cannot be compared as to "rightness."	<input type="checkbox"/>									
118. Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
119. Moral standards are simply personal rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgements of others.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
120. Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
121. Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
122. No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
123. Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends on the circumstances surrounding the action.	<input type="checkbox"/>									
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6			
	totally disagree									totally agree

Appendix 3.1 (continued)

Your comments and remarks on Section E are welcome here.  
(Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary.)



**To continue, please go to section F (next page).**

# Participatory spaces

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

### Section F

#### About your personal situation

In this final section, we ask you to give us some personal information.

For some questions you are asked to mark the box indicating your answer. For other questions you are asked to write your answer in the box.

We are very interested in any additional information you feel might be important for this study. You are welcome to write this down in the designated box at the end of this section.

#### Section F: questions 124-132

124. What is your age?  years old

125. What is your gender? 1. female

2. male

126. What religion do you consider yourself to be? 1. christian

2. jewish

3. muslim

4. other

5. none

127. Have you finished film school? 1. yes

2. no

128. Have you followed (additional) professional courses? 1. yes

2. no

By professional courses we mean workshops, seminars etc. for documentary filmmakers.

129. Have you followed any courses in philosophy or ethics? 1. yes

2. no

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

130. How many years have you worked as a documentary filmmaker?  years

131. How many independent documentaries have you made as a director?  documentaries

132. Do you have additional experience in film and/or television, apart from directing documentaries? 1. yes   
2. no

Any additional information you feel may be important for this study you are welcome to share with us. You also are welcome to leave any additional comments or remarks about Section F here. (Please continue on a separate piece of paper if necessary.)

**Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.**

To receive a profile, a summary, and/or updates, please turn to page 24.

For directions how to return this questionnaire **free of charge**, please turn to p. 26.

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.1 (continued)

**In return**

respondent: 0

Below we offer you a couple of ways to receive results of this study. You are welcome to indicate you preferences.

Mark this box if you would like to receive a personal profile based on this questionnaire.

Mark this box if you would like to receive a summary of the results of this questionnaire.

Mark this box if you would like to get updates on this research project.

## Appendix 3.1 (continued)

**FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions**

## 1. Why is this questionnaire personal?

A specific group of filmmakers is invited to participate. This selection makes it possible to research this specific group and ultimately say something about it. Adding information from filmmakers who are not part of this group would make the results invalid and would damage the research project.

## 2. How do you guarantee confidentiality?

Your answers will be treated with complete confidentiality. You have been given a respondent number, which has been printed on your questionnaire as well. I am and will be the only person who has these details. This way, I can mark the receipt of your answers and prevent sending unnecessary reminders to you. Upon return of the questionnaire, your name will be separated from the respondent number and your answers. It will only be connected again in case you would like to receive a personal profile. In any case, your name will never be connected to any research results in any publication on this research project.

## 3. Another project caused more ethical dilemma's. Shouldn't I answer the questions for that project?

This questionnaire is an instrument in quantitative research. In quantitative research, information will be analysed to look at the average answer as well as variation and patterns in answers. The more respondents answer the questions, the less influence 'extreme answers' have, so the less influence extreme situations have. Also, we have decided to investigate recent productions. This will make it easier for filmmakers to remember what happened and will thus generate more reliable answers. So you should answer the questions for your most recently finished project.

## 4. How do I choose the participant?

In case your documentary project has one central character, please answer this questionnaire with reference to this central character. In case there are either a few central characters or no central characters in your documentary project, you may choose any of the participants in your film. Please make sure you answer the questionnaire only with reference to this participant.

## 5. How do I answer on a 0-6 scale?

The 7-points scales in this research have different 'extremes'. In Sections A-C, '0' means 'not at all' or 'not one' and '6' means 'very much', 'very many', 'completely', 'very well', or 'all the time', depending on the question. This means '3' is in the middle, meaning 'quite a bit', 'quite a number', 'moderately', or 'averagely'. In sections D and E, '0' means 'totally disagree', '6' means 'totally agree', and again '3' is in the middle, meaning 'agree nor disagree'. Please choose the number that matches your position and mark the box.

For any further questions or details, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Willemien Sanders (willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl).

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.1 (continued)

#### **Returning the questionnaire free of charge**

Please follow these directions carefully.

#### **1. Within the Netherlands**

Please address the envelop as follows:

Willemien Sanders  
p/a Universiteit Utrecht, IVLOS  
Antwoordnummer 9885  
3500 ZJ Utrecht

#### **2. From outside the Netherlands**

Please address the envelop as follows (see also example below):

Willemien Sanders  
p/a Universiteit Utrecht, IVLOS  
Int. Business Reply Service  
I.B.R.S. / C.C.R.I. N.° 9885  
3500 ZJ Utrecht  
The Netherlands

Please send it priority and write the following code in the upper left corner:

**I.B.R.S. / C.C.R.I. N.° 9885**

Please mark the upper right corner with the text:

**No stamp required**

Example:



### Appendix 3.2 Standard communication accompanying the questionnaire



Utrecht, «date»

Dear «naam»,

In a few days I will send you a questionnaire about documentary filmmaking and ethics. I am sending it in an effort to learn about filmmakers' experiences and opinions on this subject.

Usually in debates about ethics, only the film itself is discussed. This study takes a new approach. The aim of this study is to further develop the ethics of documentary filmmaking by taking into account the everyday practice of documentary filmmakers, their experiences and opinions.

This way, we can take the debate on documentary filmmaking and ethics to a new level and stimulate the discussion and reflection on this issue in your professional field. Your contribution is very important and very valuable to us.

You can find more information on this research project in the attachment.

I would greatly appreciate your time and effort to complete the questionnaire. Thank you very much in advance for your consideration.

Best regards,

Willemien Sanders  
affiliated researcher

PhD-project Documentary Filmmaking and Ethics  
Research Institute for History and Culture  
Utrecht University, The Netherlands  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl



**Research project on documentary filmmaking and ethics**

What is the aim of this research project?

Ethics and documentary film are debated regularly, like in the case of TITICUT FOLLIES (filming those unable to consent), and FAHRENHEIT 911 (is it documentary or propaganda?). Usually, professionals and academics discuss single films with reference to what's on the screen: the film. But the question of ethics is relevant throughout the production process. And since the production circumstances of documentary filmmakers are changing (with new technologies, making media participation available and affordable for more and more self-taught filmmakers), we think it is time to elevate the debate and discuss what's off the screen: the production process of documentary films.

We are investigating the ethics of making documentary films, focussing on the relationship between filmmaker and the person filmed (the participant).

Therefore, we need to find out what moral issues arise in the everyday practice of documentary filmmaking, how filmmakers reason about such issues, and how they deal with them. We are including filmmakers from around the world in this study.

Why is it important?

This study is important because it takes a new approach to documentary filmmaking ethics. Instead of just looking at the film, this study looks at the production process. And instead of philosophizing behind a desk, this study is incorporating filmmakers' own experiences and opinions, studying patterns in professional practices worldwide.

Through this study, we can further develop theories on documentary filmmaking as well as theories on ethics. Moreover, it will give a new impulse to the debate on documentary filmmaking ethics and stimulate documentary filmmakers (as well as other documentary professionals) to reflect on their work. That's why it is important from both a scholarly and a professional perspective.

Why you?

The research focuses on filmmakers, who in their films express their own ideas and give their personal perspective on a subject. For such films, platforms par excellence are documentary film festivals. Therefore documentary filmmakers were selected who have had their film shown at one or more of the following documentary film festivals: IDFA, Shadow Festival (Amsterdam), Encounters (Cape Town), Silverdocs (Silver Spring), DokFestival (Leipzig), Visions du Réel (Nyon), Cinéma du Réel (Paris), É Tudo Verdade (São Paulo/Rio de Janeiro), Docfest (Sheffield), TIDF (Taipei), Docaviv (Tel Aviv), and Hot Docs (Toronto), in 2006.

For more information, please contact:

Willemien Sanders  
affiliated researcher

PhD-project Documentary Filmmaking and Ethics  
Research Institute for History and Culture  
Utrecht University, The Netherlands  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

## Appendix 3.2 (continued)



Utrecht, «date»

Dear «naam»,

Herewith I kindly seek your co-operation in a research project on documentary filmmaking and ethics.

Usually, people discuss ethics only with reference to the film itself. This study takes a new approach by investigating the whole production process. Its aim is to further develop the ethics of documentary filmmaking, by taking into account the everyday practice of documentary filmmakers. By increasing our knowledge about documentary filmmaking ethics, we can give the debate a new impulse and stimulate reflection on this issue in your professional field.

We want to incorporate your own experiences and opinions in this study. To do this, we are asking you to share your experiences and opinions with us. You were selected because you had your film at a documentary film festival in 2006. Your contribution is very important and very valuable to us.

In return, we will send you a personal profile, general research results, and updates, if you wish. The results of this study will be published in a dissertation, in articles in journals, and will hopefully be presented at festivals.

This study contains some sensitive aspects and questions. Your answers however will be treated with complete confidentiality. Your name will be separated from the questionnaire upon receipt and your name will never be connected to any publication on results of this research.

Attached you find two files. You can choose which one is more convenient for you to use.

1. **questionnaire «jr» «nr».xls** is a Windows Excel file, which you can complete electronically by writing in the file, and return as an e-mail attachment.
2. **questionnaire «jr» «nr».pdf** is an Acrobat Reader file, which you can print (lay-out for 2-sided printing), complete with a pen and return by regular mail free of charge (details at the end of the questionnaire).

In case you have any trouble working with these files, please let me know so that I can send you a paper copy by regular mail.

This questionnaire is personal. You are kindly requested not to pass it on to others.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I will be happy to answer them and provide you with further information.

Thank you very much in advance for your time and consideration. We appreciate your contribution very much.

Best regards,

Willemien Sanders  
affiliated researcher

PhD-project Documentary Filmmaking and Ethics  
Research Institute for History and Culture  
Utrecht University, The Netherlands  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.2 (continued)



Utrecht, «date»

Dear «naam»,

Last week a questionnaire seeking your experiences and opinions about documentary filmmaking and ethics was sent to you. We selected you because you had your documentary film screened at a documentary film festival in 2006.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, we sincerely thank you for your time and consideration. If not, we hope you will find some time to complete the questionnaire in the next few days. We really appreciate your contribution, as it is with experiences and opinions like yours that we will be able to study the ethics of documentary filmmaking thoroughly.

In case you didn't receive the questionnaire, please let us know and we will be happy to send you a replacement.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Willemien Sanders  
affiliated researcher

PhD-project Documentary Filmmaking and Ethics  
Research Institute for History and Culture  
Utrecht University, The Netherlands  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

## Appendix 3.2 (continued)



Utrecht, «date»

Dear «naam»,

About three weeks ago I sent you a questionnaire seeking your experiences and opinions about documentary filmmaking and ethics. Unfortunately, we haven't received the completed questionnaire from you yet.

We would like to emphasize the importance of your contribution to our study. The more information we have, the more representative and the better our study results will be. It is for this reason that I am kindly asking you to complete the questionnaire and return it to us.

Please remember that your answers are completely confidential. Although your questionnaire is numbered, your name will be separated from the questionnaire and will never be connected to the results in any publication on this research project. Only in case you wish to receive a personal profile, will we connect your name to your answers. However, this profile will of course only be sent to you personally.

We sincerely hope you will complete the questionnaire. For your convenience, you will find the two questionnaire files attached. You can choose which one is more convenient for you to use.

1. **questionnaire «jr»«nr».xls** is an Windows Excel file, which you can complete electronically by writing in the file, and return as an e-mail attachment.
2. **questionnaire «jr»«nr».pdf** is an Acrobat Reader file, which you can print, complete with a pen and return by regular mail free of charge (details at the end of the questionnaire).

In case you have any trouble working with these files, please let me know, so that I can send you a paper copy by regular mail.

Also for your convenience we are attaching some additional information on this research project.

Please remember that this questionnaire is personal. You are kindly requested not to pass it on to others.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I will be happy to answer them and provide you with further information.

Thank you very much in advance for your time and consideration. We appreciate your contribution very much.

Best regards,

Willemien Sanders  
affiliated researcher

Research Institute for History and Culture  
Utrecht University, The Netherlands  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.2 (continued)



Utrecht, «date»

Dear «naam»,

During the past two months I sent you several mails about a research study on documentary filmmaking ethics.

Our aim is to develop an ethics that incorporates the actual experiences and opinions of documentary filmmakers. Therefore we are collecting their personal contributions.

We are about to finish this part of the study. To our knowledge we haven't received your completed questionnaire yet. Maybe you were away filming, or maybe you have been busy editing. However, it is important for us to be able to include your contribution. Therefore, we are asking you one last time to participate in this study and share your experiences and opinions by filling out the questionnaire.

You will find the questionnaire attached: a Windows Excel file, which you can complete electronically by writing in the file and return as an e-mail attachment; and an Acrobat Reader file, which you can print, complete with a pen and return by regular mail free of charge (details at the end of the questionnaire). If you prefer, we'd be happy to post a hard copy to you.

Your experiences and opinions might be different from the ones we have received so far. Including your contribution will make sure the results are more representative and do justice to the in diversity of the documentary filmmaking field.

Again we assure you your responses are absolutely confidential. No names of participants will ever be mentioned in any publication on the results of this study.

We appreciate your willingness to reconsider our request and we welcome your contribution very much.

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I will be happy to provide you with further information.

Thank you very much in advance for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

Willemien Sanders  
affiliated researcher

PhD-project Documentary Filmmaking and Ethics  
Research Institute for History and Culture  
Utrecht University, The Netherlands  
tel.: +31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

Appendix 3.2 (continued)



Utrecht, «date»

Dear «naam»,

Recently we received your completed questionnaire on documentary filmmaking and ethics.

Thank you very much for the time and effort you took to share your experiences and opinions with us.

Best regards,

Willemien Sanders  
Research Institute for History and Culture  
tel.: + 31 30 2920554 / +31 6 44462254  
@: willemien.sanders@let.uu.nl

### **Appendix 3.3 Data preparation**

I received completed questionnaires both as excel files and in the form of printed copies. From each printed version of the questionnaire returned, I added the data in an empty Excel version of the questionnaire, to make it digitally available for checking and for processing.

I coded missing values as I had done for the pilot version: if there was a truly missing value, I coded it '999'; if the answering options were not applicable, I coded it '888'; and if the answer was written in a way that made it impossible to understand what the respondent meant, I coded it '777'. For instance, to the question about the age of the participant one respondent answered that her participant had deceased. Because there was an answer but I could not use it, I marked it '888'. Another respondent answered to question A2 that she had both researched the project on her own and with one or more others; she had ticked both boxes. This did not make sense to me and I coded it '777'.

If respondents had ticked two connected values on a scale, I coded the most extreme one, to avoid clustering of such answers around the middle score. So if a respondent had ticked both 2 and 3 on the 0-6 scale, I ticked the value 2. If someone had ticked two separated values on a scale I took the mean of those to values, rounding .5 up or down away from the middle value. A complete list of such revisions is available from the author.

**Appendix 3.4 Descriptive statistics**

Table A3.1 Moral issues ordered by mean score (ascending)

Moral issue	Mean	SD
The participant has disgraced me.	0.17	0.50
I have disgraced the participant.	0.25	0.65
Being in my film damaged the participant.	0.34	0.82
I misrepresented the participant.	0.39	0.92
The participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.	0.57	1.05
The participant misrepresented her/himself to me.	0.63	1.18
The participant deliberately took the role of a victim.	0.64	1.22
I deliberately showed the participant as a victim	0.66	1.30
The legitimacy to show certain scenes was missing.	0.74	1.25
The participant manipulated me to get or avoid a certain scene.	0.78	1.39
I misled the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	0.79	1.40
The participant got involved in the decision what side and angle s/he would be filmed in.	0.80	1.47
I have depicted the participant in circumstances that did not, or no longer reflect her/his situation.	0.82	1.44
The participant didn't tell me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.	0.89	1.42
I have broken documentary filmmaking rules.	0.89	1.46
The participant intruded my privacy.	0.97	1.66
The participant wasn't completely honest with me.	1.02	1.42
I have manipulated the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	1.04	1.42
The participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.	1.06	1.53
I haven't been as respectful toward the participant as I should have.	1.13	2.00
While filming, the participant has deliberately told me less than during research conversations.	1.15	1.47
The participant did not approach me as an equal.	1.15	1.58
I have interpreted the story of the participant different from what s/he would have liked.	1.20	1.47
I have had to press the participant into filming certain scenes or events.	1.27	1.51
The participant used me for her/his own benefit.	1.57	1.78
I have used the participant for my own benefit.	1.95	2.00
The participant had her/his own agenda, different from mine.	1.96	1.87

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.1 (continued)

Moral issue	Mean	SD
While filming, I have encouraged the participant into telling more than s/he intended.	2.04	1.91
I have filmed something because I had a right to do so.	2.76	2.43
I have used certain scenes in my film because the audience had a right to know.	2.78	2.28
I have used my authority as a filmmaker to achieve something.	3.01	1.95
I have used the presence of the camera to achieve something.	3.10	2.00
I made sure the participant was looking good in the image I filmed.	3.20	2.05
The participant benefited in some way from being in my film.	3.70	1.94
I have informed the participant about possible consequences of being in a documentary film.	3.71	2.17
The participant got in touch with me during and after making the film.	4.06	1.98
I informed the participant completely about what we were doing.	4.38	1.89
I have been completely open toward the participant about my agenda.	4.40	1.90
I have been completely honest to the participant.	4.43	2.00
I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.	4.59	1.63
The participant agreed with me about how I interpreted her/his story.	4.61	1.65
I respected the privacy of the participant.	4.65	1.99
I've been very careful with the participant.	4.75	1.52
I have approached the participant as an equal.	4.82	1.73
I have gained the trust of the participant.	4.96	1.31

Table A3.2 Strategies ordered by mean score (ascending)

Strategy	Mean	SD
An ethical problem arose, but I didn't know how to solve it and I just let it go.	0.58	1.20
I didn't feel like solving an ethical issue, I pushed it away.	0.59	1.23
I lost control over a situation and decided to surrender.	0.72	1.32
I changed something when, after viewing rough material or a rough cut, the participant insisted.	0.73	1.49
I did something I know was morally suspicious.	0.85	1.33
I didn't take an ethical issue seriously.	1.00	1.75
I showed the participant the rushes of her/his scenes, to see if s/he had any comments.	1.27	1.82
I decided to give up and not go after something that was hard to get.	1.31	1.70
I decided to exploit a situation for the film.	1.63	2.03
An ethical problem arose, and I didn't make a choice for a solution but waited till a later moment before deciding what to do.	1.66	1.79
I gave the participant some money or a gift.	1.79	2.15
I decided to stop when I didn't get what I wanted.	1.84	1.89
I compromised between what I wanted and what the participants wanted.	1.86	1.85
I trusted that an ethical problem would solve itself in due time.	1.98	2.06
I have protected the participant against her/himself.	2.29	2.06
I took a risk although I realized it could result in an ethical problem.	2.32	1.93
I adapted my filming style to prevent problems.	2.34	2.13
To find a solution for an ethical problem, I asked the advise of a colleague or expert not included in the project.	2.36	2.14
I approached making this documentary as a joint enterprise I undertook with the participant.	2.70	2.25
I did something in return for the participant.	2.81	2.17
I searched for an alternative for a scene I couldn't film.	2.91	2.12
I adapted easily to solve an ethical issue.	3.30	2.04
I was aware that ethical problems could arise and I prevented this as much as possible.	3.42	2.10

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.3 Moral issues ordered by standard deviation (ascending)

Moral issue	Mean	SD
The participant has disgraced me.	0.50	0.17
I have disgraced the participant.	0.65	0.25
Being in my film damaged the participant.	0.82	0.34
I misrepresented the participant.	0.92	0.39
The participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.	1.05	0.57
The participant misrepresented her/himself to me.	1.18	0.63
The participant deliberately took the role of a victim.	1.22	0.64
The legitimacy to show certain scenes was missing.	1.25	0.74
I deliberately showed the participant as a victim	1.30	0.66
I have gained the trust of the participant.	1.31	4.96
The participant manipulated me to get or avoid a certain scene.	1.39	0.78
I misled the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	1.40	0.79
The participant didn't tell me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.	1.42	0.89
The participant wasn't completely honest with me.	1.42	1.02
I have manipulated the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	1.42	1.04
I have depicted the participant in circumstances that did not, or no longer reflect her/his situation.	1.44	0.82
I have broken documentary filmmaking rules.	1.46	0.89
I have interpreted the story of the participant different from what s/he would have liked.	1.47	1.20
While filming, the participant has deliberately told me less than during research conversations.	1.47	1.15
The participant got involved in the decision what side and angle s/he would be filmed in.	1.47	0.80
I have had to press the participant into filming certain scenes or events.	1.51	1.27
I've been very careful with the participant.	1.52	4.75
The participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.	1.53	1.06
The participant did not approach me as an equal.	1.58	1.15
I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.	1.63	4.59
The participant agreed with me about how I interpreted her/his story.	1.65	4.61
The participant intruded my privacy.	1.66	0.97
I have approached the participant as an equal.	1.73	4.82

Table A3.3 (continued)

Moral issue	Mean	SD
The participant used me for her/his own benefit.	1.78	1.57
The participant had her/his own agenda, different from mine.	1.87	1.96
I informed the participant completely about what we were doing.	1.89	4.38
I have been completely open toward the participant about my agenda.	1.90	4.40
While filming, I have encouraged the participant into telling more than s/he intended.	1.91	2.04
The participant benefited in some way from being in my film.	1.94	3.70
I have used my authority as a filmmaker to achieve something.	1.95	3.01
The participant got in touch with me during and after making the film.	1.98	4.06
I respected the privacy of the participant.	1.99	4.65
I have been completely honest to the participant.	2.00	4.43
I haven't been as respectful toward the participant as I should have.	2.00	1.13
I have used the participant for my own benefit.	2.00	1.95
I have used the presence of the camera to achieve something.	2.00	3.10
I made sure the participant was looking good in the image I filmed.	2.05	3.20
I have informed the participant about possible consequences of being in a documentary film.	2.17	3.71
I have used certain scenes in my film because the audience had a right to know.	2.28	2.78
I have filmed something because I had a right to do so.	2.43	2.76

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.4 Strategies ordered by standard deviation (ascending)

Strategy	SD	Mean
An ethical problem arose, but I didn't know how to solve it and I just let it go.	1.20	0.58
I didn't feel like solving an ethical issue, I pushed it away.	1.23	0.59
I lost control over a situation and decided to surrender.	1.32	0.72
I did something I know was morally suspicious.	1.33	0.85
I changed something when, after viewing rough material or a rough cut, the participant insisted.	1.49	0.73
I decided to give up and not go after something that was hard to get.	1.70	1.31
I didn't take an ethical issue seriously.	1.75	1.00
An ethical problem arose, and I didn't make a choice for a solution but waited till a later moment before deciding what to do.	1.79	1.66
I showed the participant the rushes of her/his scenes, to see if s/he had any comments.	1.82	1.27
I compromised between what I wanted and what the participants wanted.	1.85	1.86
I decided to stop when I didn't get what I wanted.	1.89	1.84
I took a risk although I realized it could result in an ethical problem.	1.93	2.32
I decided to exploit a situation for the film.	2.03	1.63
I adapted easily to solve an ethical issue.	2.04	3.30
I trusted that an ethical problem would solve itself in due time.	2.06	1.98
I have protected the participant against her/himself.	2.06	2.29
I was aware that ethical problems could arise and I prevented this as much as possible.	2.10	3.42
I searched for an alternative for a scene I couldn't film.	2.12	2.91
I adapted my filming style to prevent problems.	2.13	2.34
To find a solution for an ethical problem, I asked the advise of a colleague or expert not included in the project.	2.14	2.36
I gave the participant some money or a gift.	2.15	1.79
I did something in return for the participant.	2.17	2.81
I approached making this documentary as a joint enterprise I undertook with the participant.	2.25	2.70

## **Appendix 3.5 Factor analysis method and data tests**

### Appendix 3.5.1 Method

There are different methods for factor analysis. For exploratory factor analysis, Tinsley and Tinsley (1987) recommended using principal factor analysis, also named principal axis factoring (Field 2005, p. 629), which I did.

Factor rotation is used to maximize the factor loadings on the factors. This makes the factors more distinct and should facilitate interpreting them. Important to consider when deciding on a rotation method is whether the factors may be correlated (Field 2005; Tinsley and Tinsley 1987). Since I expected they might be correlated (the questions about moral issues and strategies refer to the same project and participant and are related to each other; moreover, I had no reason to assume they would not be related), I chose a rotation method which allows for such correlations, which is Promax.

### Appendix 3.5.2 Tests

Before actually conducting the factor analysis, I investigated whether the data have factorability, i.e., whether it is likely that any patterns or factors exist in these data (Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar 2003). Several tests and outputs thereof help decide: correlation coefficients between the variables, partial correlations and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test, and reproduced correlations. SPSS produces the results of these tests as part of a factor analysis output itself.

#### Correlations coefficients

Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar (2003) suggested that if correlation coefficients between variables are mostly small (less than .3), there is little chance that one or more factors can be found in the data. The correlation matrix of my data gives Pearson's correlation coefficients, assuming the data have a normal

## Participatory spaces

distribution. According to this matrix, only 6.58% (150 out of the 2278<sup>116</sup>) of the correlations are larger than  $\pm.3$  (Negative correlations are also possible of course). The data do not have a normal distribution. The correlation matrix including Spearman's correlation coefficients shows that slightly more correlations are larger than  $\pm.3$ : 10.84% (247 out of the 2278). In either case, most correlations in my data are smaller. This suggests there could be a problem finding factors in these data.

## Partial correlations

Partial correlations are correlations between two variables when the effect of other variables is excluded. A correlation between two variables might be affected by being correlated to a third variable. Leaving the influence of this third variable out results in the partial correlation. Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar (2003) suggested that if partial correlations between variables are mostly large, the variables probably do not have factorability. The anti-image matrices provided with the factor analysis output contain the partial correlations. It shows that there is one correlation over .5, one over .4 and there are seventeen correlations over .3 (out of the total of 2278). From these results I infer that the partial correlations in my data are mostly low.

## KMO and Bartlett's test

A KMO test measures sampling adequacy. It shows the amount of variance within the data that could be explained by factors. According to Field (2005) a KMO value between .5 and .7 is mediocre, while Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar (2003) stated that a value of .6 is acceptable. The KMO value of my data is .661, which seems just acceptable. Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar (2003) also suggested dropping individual variables if their KMO values are less than .5. In my case, nine variables have such a low KMO value and so I decided to exclude these from the analysis.

Bartlett's test examines whether variables are independent or not. If variables are completely independent, if they are not correlated at all, there will

---

<sup>116</sup> Section B and C contained 68 statements; the number of correlations is this number squared minus the correlations between each statement with the same statement and halved because variable A correlates with variable B and vice versa. The calculation then is  $(68^2 - 68) / 2 = 2278$

not be any patterns in the data. A significant value of this test indicates the data are not independent. The significance level in my case is less than .01. According to the results from the KMO test and Bartlett's test, my data seem to be factorable.

#### Reproduced correlations

Reproduced correlations between variables are predicted values, assuming that the factor analysis is correct. Comparing these values with the observed (i.e., measured) correlations results in a residual value: the difference between the two. According to Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar (2003) the smaller the residue, the more likely that the factors give a good explanation of the data and represent the data adequately. According to Field (2005) the residual values should be under .05, and if over 50% of the residuals are larger than .05 there is reason for concern. In my data, 38% of the residuals are larger than .05, so there seems no need for immediate worry.

Based on the results described above I conducted the initial solution and the factorability tests again, excluding the nine variables with a KMO value under .5 (see above). As a result, 8.30% (142 out of the 1711<sup>117</sup>) of the correlations are over  $\pm .3$ . Partial correlations are still mostly low: there are 113 correlations over .3 (6.60%). The KMO value now is .719 and the significance level of Bartlett's test is under .001. Only 4% of the residuals are larger than .05. It seems that by eliminating the nine variables with a KMO value under .5, the factorability of the data has indeed improved somewhat.

### **Appendix 3.6 Steps in the factor analysis**

#### Appendix 3.6.1 Initial solution and number of factors

Tinsley and Tinsley (1987) recommend four criteria to determine the number of factors to retain, and to rotate in order to maximize the factor loadings (see p. 371). These four methods are complementary to each other and should all be considered before taking a decision. The first one is to retain those factors with

---

<sup>117</sup> I excluded five variables so the calculation now is, with reference to note 121, p. 369,  $(59^2 - 59)/2 = 1711$ .

## Participatory spaces

an eigenvalue over 1. An eigenvalue explains the amount of variance in the data (average spread of a data set) explained by a single factor (Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar 2003); eigenvalues show how evenly the variance is distributed (Field 2005). So eigenvalues are an indication of the relevance of a factor in explaining variance in the data: factors with relatively high eigenvalues are more relevant than factors with low eigenvalues, because the former explain more of the variance in the data than the latter. The second method is to look at the scree plot and retain those factors that are still on a more or less vertical part of the curve, before it turns horizontal. The third one is to retain the factors up to and including the last one with a variance over 1%. The fourth and last one looks at the variance of the factor solution and suggests retaining those that account for 100% of the estimated common variance (estimated variance of all variables).

The initial solution resulted in 19 factors with an eigenvalue over 1, which obviously is quite a lot. Together, these factors account for 69,53% of the variance in the data. This indicates that, apart from the variance explained by these 19 factors, a lot more is going on that these factors do not explain. (No less than 30 factors in my data have a variance over 1%; 59 factors together explain 100% of the variance.) Figure A3.1 represents the scree plot of the initial factor solution. I added a horizontal line indicating the eigenvalue of 1 for clarification. The scree plot shows that the first three factors are quite distinct and that factors 4 to 6 are somewhat less distinct. After factor 7 the curve turns mainly horizontal. I added a vertical line through the 7<sup>th</sup> factor for clarification.

The results show that the factor analysis is indeed a little problematic, as discussed in the previous section. There are a lot of factors and they explain a moderate amount of the variance in my data. However, I think it makes sense to look at the most distinctive factors. I am after all exploring my data. Since only the first seven factors seem sufficiently distinct I decided to rotate seven factors.

The output of the factor rotation consists of two rotated matrices: a pattern matrix, displaying the regression coefficients for each variable on each factor, and a structure matrix, displaying the correlation coefficients between each variable and each factor. Both should be studied, but the structure

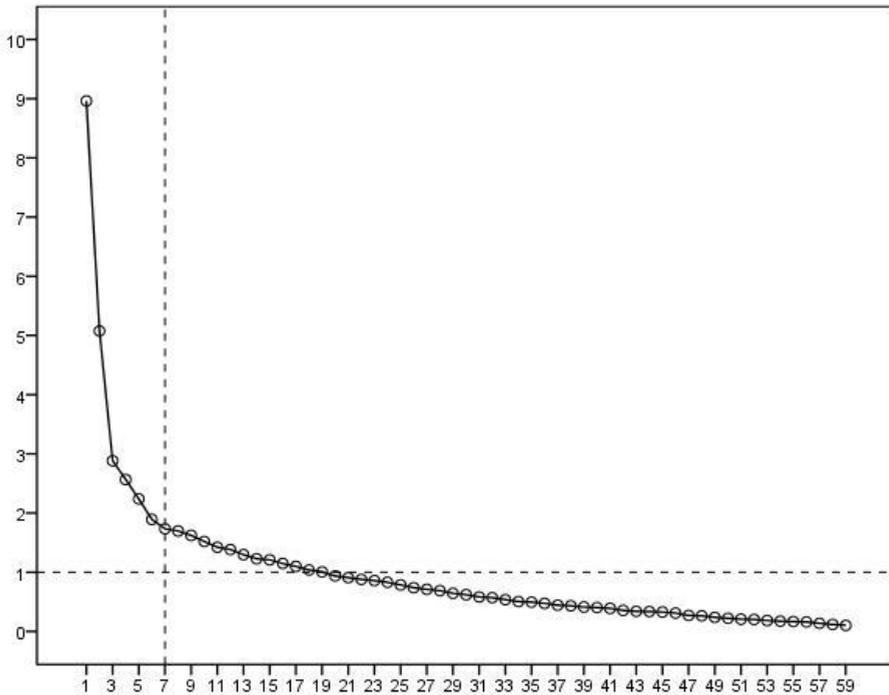


Figure A3.1: Scree plot of the initial factor solution

matrix is the one that takes into account the relationship between factors (Field 2005) and therefore I put a little more emphasis on the structure matrix results.

Since I did not transform any questions in order to make all questions directed either positively or negatively, I have to consider both positive and negative factor loadings. Both Field (2005) and Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar (2003) suggested looking at the highest loading of variables on a factor. Field added looking at loadings over  $\pm.4$ ; I did both.

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.6.2 Retained, deleted, and added variables per factor

Table A3.5: Retained and deleted variables and loadings for Factor 1

Variable	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
<b>Retained</b>		
The participant didn't tell me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.	0.736	0.655
The participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.	0.756	0.642
While filming, the participant has deliberately told me less than during research conversations.	0.550	0.569
The participant misrepresented her/himself to me.	0.380	0.536
The participant manipulated me to get or avoid a certain scene.	0.527	0.566
The participant did not approach me as an equal.	0.348	0.446
The participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.	0.621	0.647
I have had to press the participant into filming certain scenes or events.	0.611	0.615
The participant wasn't completely honest with me.	0.425	0.598
The participant has disgraced me.	0.493	0.501
<b>Deleted</b>		
While filming, I have encouraged the participant into telling more than s/he intended.	0.334	0.415*
I compromised between what I wanted and what the participants wanted.	0.473	0.473
I trusted that an ethical problem would solve itself in due time.	0.210	0.260*

\* variable scores higher on another factor in this matrix

Table A3.6: Retained and deleted variables and loadings for Factor 2

Variable	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Retained		
The participant got in touch with me during and after making the film.	0.845	0.709
I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.	0.803	0.714
I informed the participant completely about what we were doing.	0.470	0.583
I have been completely open toward the participant about my agenda.	0.599	0.649
I have gained the trust of the participant.	0.639	0.626
The participant agreed with me about how I interpreted her/his story.	0.531	0.575
I have informed the participant about possible consequences of being in a documentary film.	0.431	0.468
Added		
The participant benefited in some way from being in my film.	0.438*	0.512*
Deleted		
I've been very careful with the participant.	0.239	0.346
I showed the participant the rushes of her/his scenes, to see if s/he had any comments.	0.265	0.337

\* variable scores higher on another factor in this matrix

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.7: Retained and deleted variables and loadings for Factor 3

Variable	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Retained		
I misled the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	0.623	0.590
I have disgraced the participant.	0.387	0.551
The legitimacy to show certain scenes was missing.	0.431	0.494
I have manipulated the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	0.426	0.528
I misrepresented the participant.	0.369*	0.501
	*	
I didn't take an ethical issue seriously.	0.586	0.471
I didn't feel like solving an ethic issue, I pushed it away.	0.290*	0.469
Deleted		
I have been completely honest to the participant.	-0.314	-0.366
I respected the privacy of the participant.	-0.323	-0.352
An ethical problem arose, and I didn't make a choice for a solution but waited till a later moment before deciding what to do.	0.475	0.570

\* variable scores higher on another factor in this matrix

\*\* variable loaded equally on factor 4 in this matrix but highest in this structure matrix

Table A3.8: Retained and deleted variables and loadings for Factor 4

Variable	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Retained		
The participant used me for her/his own benefit.	0.356	0.440
The participant had her/his own agenda, different from mine.	0.522	0.542
I deliberately showed the participant as a victim.	0.478	0.469
I have interpreted the story of the participant different from what s/he would have liked.	0.423	0.535
Being in my film damaged the participant.	0.655	0.606
The participant deliberately took the role of a victim.	0.514	0.486
Deleted		
The participant intruded my privacy.	0.293	0.319
I misrepresented the participant.	0.369*	0.494*
	*	

\* variable scores higher on another factor in this matrix

\*\* variable loaded equally on factor 3 in this matrix but lower in the structure matrix

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.9: Retained and deleted variables and loadings for Factor 5

Variable	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Retained		
I did something I know was morally suspicious.	0.355	0.467
I took a risk although I realized it could result in an ethical problem.	0.360	0.498
An ethical problem arose, but I didn't know how to solve it and I just let it go.	0.623	0.661
I lost control over a situation and decided to surrender.	0.547	0.523
Added		
An ethical problem arose, and I didn't make a choice for a solution but waited till a later moment before deciding what to do.	0.355*	0.519*
Deleted		
To find a solution for an ethical problem, I asked the advice of a colleague or expert not included in the project.	0.237	0.307
I trusted that an ethical problem would solve itself in due time.	0.204*	0.297
I didn't feel like solving an ethic issue, I pushed it away.	0.314	0.443*
I adapted my filming style to prevent problems.	0.539	0.508
I searched for an alternative for a scene I couldn't film.	0.455	0.418

\* variable scores higher on another factor in this matrix

Table A3.10: Retained and deleted variables and loadings for Factor 6

Variable	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Retained		
I have used my authority as a filmmaker to achieve something.	0.472	0.484
I have used the presence of the camera to achieve something.	0.534	0.548
I have used the participant for my own benefit.	0.454	0.464
I decided to exploit a situation for the film.	0.395	0.385
While filming, I have encouraged the participant into telling more than s/he intended.	0.298*	0.418
Deleted		
I have depicted the participant in circumstances that did not, or no longer reflect her/his situation.	-0.293	-0.244
The participant benefited in some way from being in my film.	0.442	0.519
I adapted easily to solve an ethical issue.	0.335	0.370

Table A3.11: Retained and deleted variables and loadings for Factor 7

Variable	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Retained		
I have broken documentary filmmaking rules.	0.428	0.451
I did something in return for the participant.	0.393	0.435
I gave the participant some money or a gift.	0.451	0.455
I decided to give up and not go after something that was hard to get.	0.424	0.436
I have protected the participant against her/himself.	0.433	0.467
The participant got involved in the decision what side and angle s/he would be filmed in.	0.290	0.343

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.6.3 Correlations between factors

The factor analysis provides a correlation matrix for the rotated factors. This matrix is displayed in Table A3.12. However, I modified the factors by deleting and adding variables. Therefore, I produced a new factor correlation matrix by correlating the factor scores of the respondents. Table A3.13 shows the factor correlations for the modified factors.

To see if the factors I created by retaining, adding, and deleting variables still sufficiently represent the original factors generated by SPSS, I simply correlated these as well. Table A3.14 shows the correlations between the original factors and the modified factors. It turns out that the factor scores are not normally distributed so I looked at Spearman's rho. As this table shows, the correlations between the original factors and the modified factors varies between .787 and .956, all at  $p < .001$ . This suggests the modified factors represent the original ones sufficiently.

## **Appendix 3.7 Second order factor analysis**

### Appendix 3.7.1 Method

For a higher order factor analysis, I used the correlation matrix of the first order factor analysis as input. I used the example of a factor analysis based on a matrix input provided by Loehlin (2004), and I used this syntax with the values from the initial analysis as input for the second order factor analysis. This results in a new matrix in which the seven factors of the first order factor analysis take the place of the variables, and these factors load on new (and fewer) higher order factors. The procedure is the same, and so are the criteria for deciding on the number of factors to retain (eigenvalue over 1, scree plot, variance over 1%, and percentage of estimated common variance, see Appendix 3.6.1, p. 373 for a discussion of these criteria). I used the same methods as before: principal axis factoring with Promax rotation, because the factors might be correlated.

Table A3.12 Correlation matrix for the seven original factors

Factor	Participant Opposition	Communication for Cooperation	Filmmaker Opposition	Conflict on Representation	Unresolved Conflict	Filmmaker Mastery
Participant Opposition						
Communication for Cooperation	-.043					
Filmmaker Opposition	.304	-.313				
Conflict on Representation	.450	-.156	.449			
Unresolved Conflict	.386	-.031	.271	.206		
Filmmaker Mastery	.243	.176	.114	.168	.110	
Improper Reciprocity	.242	.203	.019	.039	.087	.038

Participatory spaces

Table A3.13 Correlation matrix for the seven modified factors

Factor	Participant Opposition	Communication for Cooperation	Filmmaker Opposition	Conflict on Representation	Uncontrolled Confronting	Filmmaker Mastery
Participant Opposition						
Communication for Cooperation	-.110					
Filmmaker Opposition	.449**)	-.155)				
Conflict on Representation	.569**	-.069	.399**			
Uncontrolled Confronting	.429**	-.125	.577**	.382**		
Filmmaker Mastery	.354**	-.004	.370**	.376**	.347**	
Improper Reciprocity	.350**	.177*	.350**	.227**	.309**	.270**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table A3.14 Correlations between the original and the modified factors

Factors	Correlation coefficient	Sig.	N
Participant Opposition	.941	.000	158
Communication for Cooperation	.956	.000	158
Filmmaker Opposition	.794	.000	158
Conflict on Representation	.833	.000	158
Passive Risk	.804	.000	156
Filmmaker Mastery	.787	.000	158
Improper Reciprocity	.847	.000	158

### Appendix 3.7.2 Initial solution and number of factors

The initial solution of the second order factor analysis resulted in another 7 factors. However, only two have an eigenvalue over 1. The scree plot is depicted in Figure A3.2. Again, I added a horizontal line indicating an eigenvalue of 1. The scree plot shows that the first and second factors are most distinct. After the third factor (which has an eigenvalue of 0.967) the curve turns more horizontal. The first two factors together explain 51.33% of the variance, the third one adds another 14%.

If I stick to the eigenvalue-over-1-rule, I should retain and rotate two factors. However, there are some arguments to include the third factor in the rotation as well. First, the curve turns more horizontal after the third factor. Second, the eigenvalue of the third factor is just below 1. And third, as I established earlier on, my factor analysis is somewhat problematic in the sense that the factors explain a limited percentage of the variance; this third factor explains 14% of the variance, which seems a percentage worth considering. Since I am exploring the data I took the freedom to include the third factor in the analysis and rotate it as well.

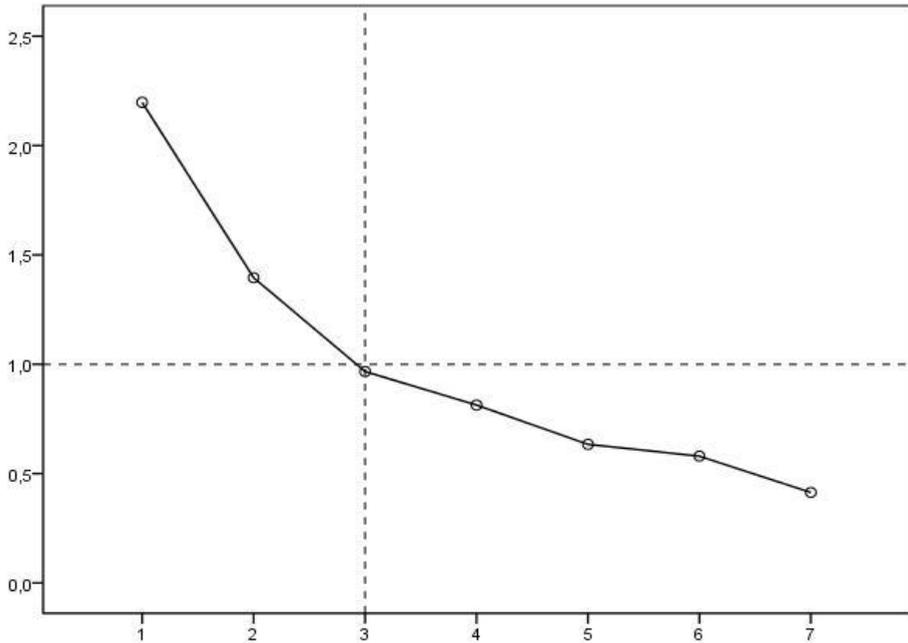


Figure A3.2 Scree plot for the second order factor analysis

### Appendix 3.7.3 Interpreting higher order factors

To interpret the higher order factor, it is useful to express the direct relationship between individual variables and the higher order factors (Loehlin 2004; Wolff and Preising 2005). The first order factor definitions are already interpretations of the first order factor variables (and their loadings). Using only these would amount to interpreting interpretations. By calculating the contribution of individual variables to higher order factors, it is possible to interpret them based on these individual variables. This makes sense since variables from different first order factors will weight differently and I do not know from the first order factor descriptions what the contribution of individual variables is.

To calculate direct relationship between higher order factors and variables, I used the pattern matrices of both factor analyses. If, for example, in the first order factor analysis variable X loads highest on Factor A (e.g., .813), and in the second order factor analysis Factor A loads highest on Factor F (e.g., .736), I multiplied the factor loading of variable X on Factor A (.813) with that of Factor A on second order Factor F (.736). The contribution of variable X to second order Factor F is  $.813 \times .736 = .598$ . This way, I calculated the contribution of each variable to the second order factor.

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.7.4 Retained, deleted, and added variables per second order factor

Table A3.15 First order factor loadings for second order factor 1

Factor	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Filmmaker Opposition	.749	.670
Conflict on Representation	.688	.626

Table A3.16 Variable contribution over .3 on second order factor 1

Variable	Contribution
I misled the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	.467
Being in my film damaged the participant.	.451
I didn't take an ethical issue seriously.	.439
The participant had her/his own agenda, different from mine.	.359
An ethical problem arose, and I didn't make a choice for a solution but waited till a later moment before deciding what to do.	.356
The participant deliberately took the role of a victim.	.354
I deliberately showed the participant as a victim	.329
The legitimacy to show certain scenes was missing.	.323
I have manipulated the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	.319

Table A3.17 First order factor loadings for second order factor 2

Factor	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Participant Opposition	.610	.728
Improper Reciprocity	.499	.394

Table A3.18 Variable contribution over .3 on second order factor 2

Variable	Contribution
The participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.	.461
The participant didn't tell me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.	.449
The participant misled me in order to get or avoid the filming of certain scenes.	.379
I have had to press the participant into filming certain scenes or events.	.372
While filming, the participant has deliberately told me less than during research conversations.	.335
The participant manipulated me to get or avoid a certain scene.	.322
The participant has disgraced me	.300

Table A3.19 First order factor loadings for second order factor 3.

Factor	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Communication for Cooperation	.456	.647
Filmmaker Mastery	.587	.419

Table A3.20 Variable contribution to over .3 on second order factor 3

Variable	Contribution
The participant got in touch with me during and after making the film.	.386
I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.	.366
I have used the presence of the camera to achieve something.	.313

## Participatory spaces

### Correlations between the second order factors

The correlations between the three second order factors are shown in Table A3.21.

### Appendix 3.7.6 Third order factor analysis

For this third order factor analysis, I used the correlation matrix of the second order factor analysis as input. The resulting matrix shows how the second order factors load on the third order factors. Again I used principal axis factoring with Promax rotation.

### Appendix 3.7.7 Initial solution and number of factors

The initial solution resulted in three third order factors, of which two have an eigenvalue over 1. The scree plot is depicted in Figure A3.3. Because the initial solution only resulted in three factors, the scree plot is of little help in determining the number of factors. The first and second are on a more horizontal line than the third, but this is mainly because the eigenvalue of the third is very low. So the first and second factors are very distinct from the third. The first two factors together explain 91.81% of the variance. Given the low eigenvalue of the third factor, I rotated and interpreted only the two factors with an eigenvalue over 1. I again calculated the contribution of individual variables, this time by multiplying their loadings on the second order factor with the second order factor's contribution to the third order factor.

Table A3.21. Correlations between the second order factors

Second order factors	Passive Conflict	Participant Opposition
Participant Opposition	.355	
Communication for the Film	-.209	.541

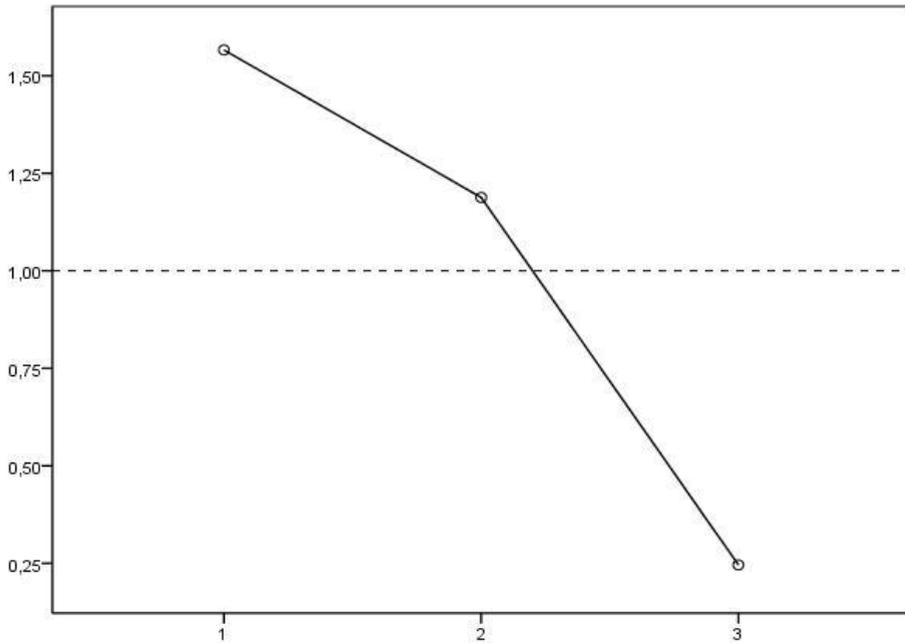


Figure A3.3 Scree plot for the third order factor analysis

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.7.8 Retained, deleted, and added variables per third order factor

Table A3.22 First order factor loadings for third order factor 1.

Factor	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Participant Opposition	.722	.830
Communication for the Film	.900	.808

Table A3.23 Variable contribution over .3 to third order factor 1

Variable	Contribution
The participant got in touch with me during and after making the film.	.347
The participant refused to have certain scenes or events filmed.	.333
I have gotten in touch with the participant during and after making the film.	.330
The participant didn't tell me about relevant things about to happen, and I couldn't film them.	.324

Table A3.24. First order factor loadings for third order factor 2.

Factor	factor loading	
	pattern matrix	structure matrix
Passive Conflict	.803	.763

Table A3.25: Variable contribution over .3 to third order factor 2

Variable	Contribution
I misled the participant to get or avoid a certain scene.	.375
Being in my film damaged the participant.	.362
I didn't take an ethical issue seriously.	.352

### Appendix 3.8 Exploring the patterns

Table A3.26 shows the mean scores and standard deviations for all patterns yielded from the survey data. To further understand the distribution of scores I included the box plots of the patterns in Figures A3.4 to A3.15.<sup>118</sup>

These plots show that in most cases a majority of scores is grouped either at the bottom or the top: a majority either scored between 0 and 3 or between 3 and 6. Only in the cases of Filmmaker Mastery, Communication for the Film, and Communication for Filming are scores more or less dispersed along the 0-6 scale. This indicates that in general the data are somewhat skewed rather than normally distributed. The box plots also show that the scores on patterns revolving around conflict are generally grouped at the lower end, although only in the case of Filmmaker Opposition and Trivialized Harm the bottom 25% at least scored a 0 (indicated by the visual absence of the bottom quartile). Hence, while respondents reportedly experienced the patterns evolving around communication and co-operation most, a majority also experienced the patterns evolving around conflict and opposition to some extent.

---

<sup>118</sup> For those not familiar with such plots: the first quartile, or the bottom 25% of the scores, is represented by the area between the lower horizontal line and the grey box, the second quartile by the bottom half of the grey box, the third quartile by the upper part of the grey box, and the fourth quartile by the area between the grey box and the upper horizontal line; the thick line in the middle of the grey box is the median, the middle score of all the scores; the numbered circles represent extreme values (Field 2005).

Participatory spaces

Table A3.26 Mean scores and standard deviation for the factors

Factor	N	Mean	SD
First order factors			
Participant Opposition	158	.87	.84
Communication for Cooperation	157	4.30	1.19
Filmmaker Opposition	154	.69	.78
Conflict on Representation	158	1.07	.91
Passive Risk	154	1.22	1.06
Filmmaker Mastery	157	2.36	1.29
Improper Reciprocity	154	1.67	1.12
Second order factors			
Unresolved Conflict	156	.99	.78
Opposition to Disclosure	158	.84	.87
Communication for the Film	153	3.91	1.42
Third order factors			
Communication for Filming	156	2.65	1.08
Trivialized Harm	149	.71	.92

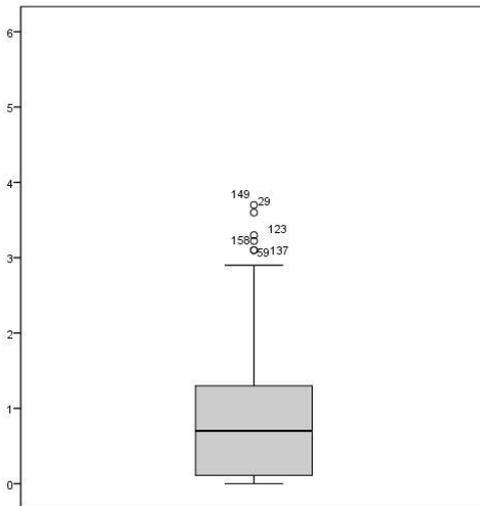


Figure A3.4 Box plot Participant Opposition

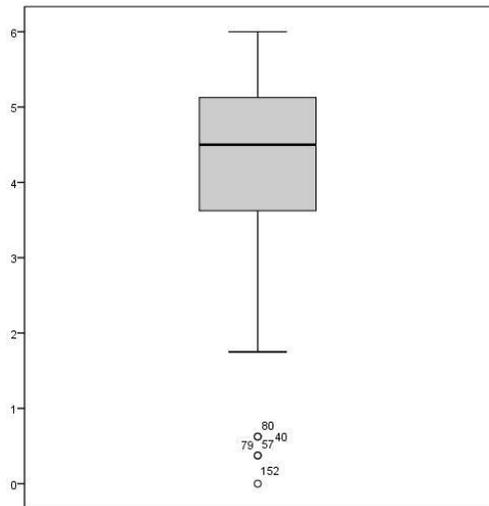


Figure A3.5 Box plot Communication for Cooperation

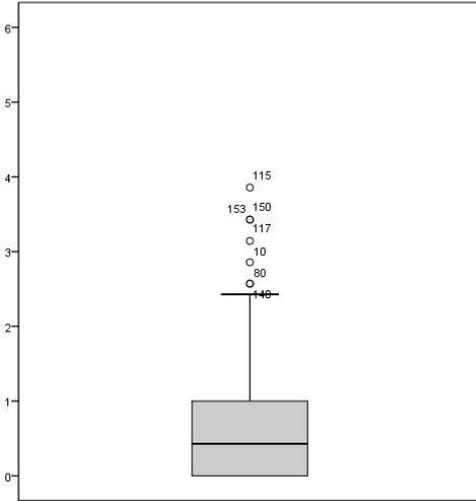


Figure A3.6 Box plot Filmmaker Opposition

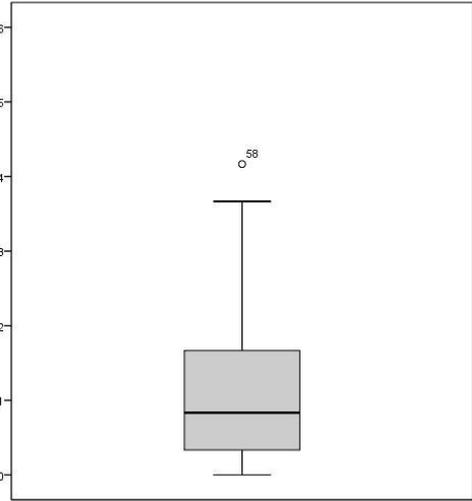


Figure A3.7 Box plot Conflict on Representation

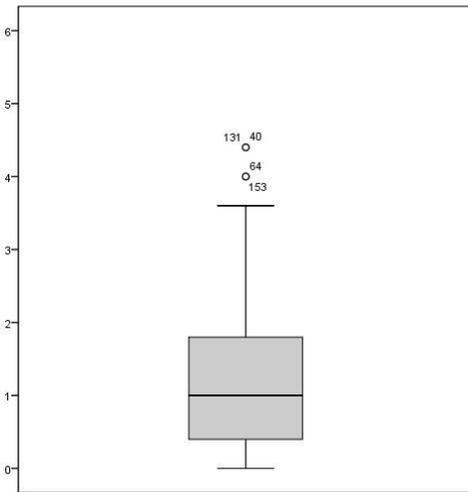


Figure A3.8 Box plot Passive Risk

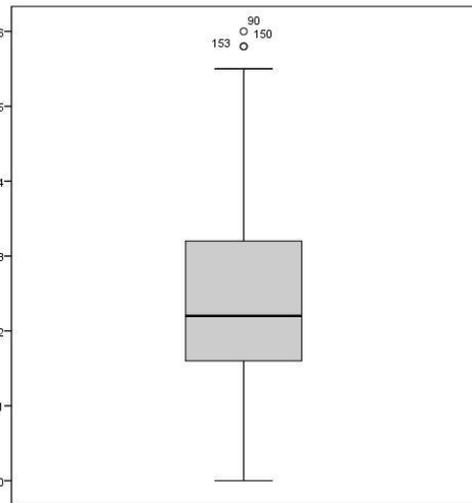


Figure A3.9 Box plot Filmmaker Mastery

## Participatory spaces

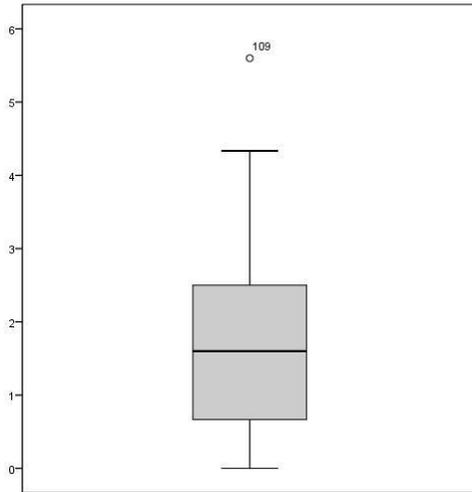


Figure A3.10 Box plot Improper Reciprocity

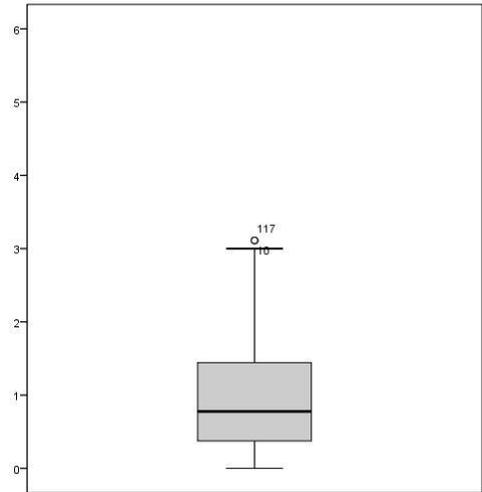


Figure A3.11 Box plot Passive Conflict

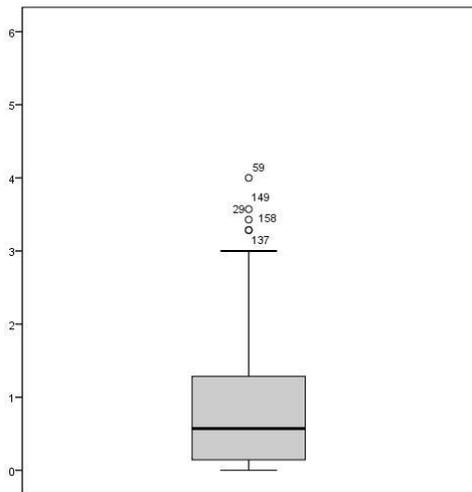


Figure A3.12 Box plot Opposition to Disclosure

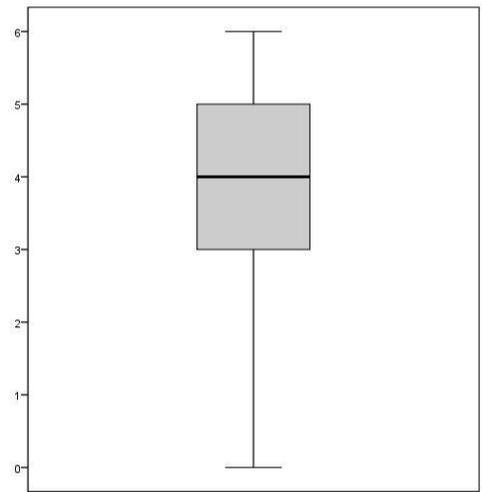


Figure A3.13 Box plot Communication for the Film

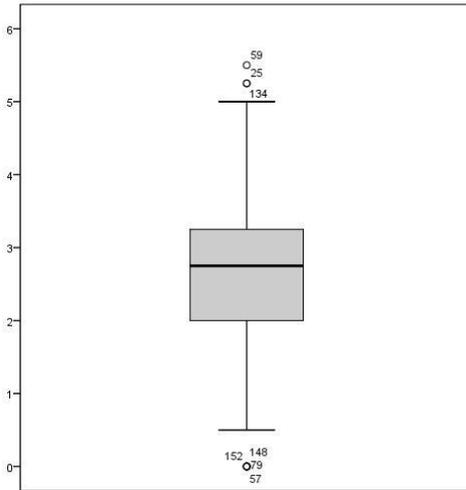


Figure A3.14 Box plot Communication for Filming

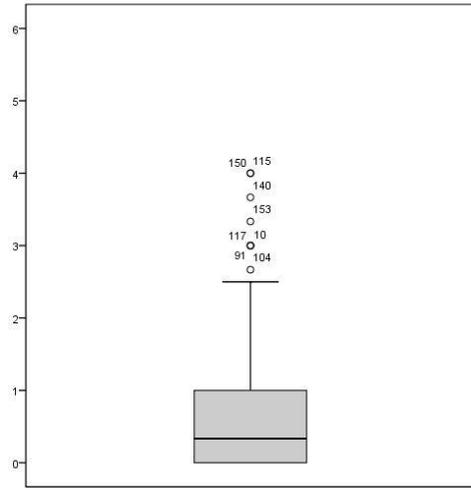


Figure A3.15 Box plot Trivialized Harm

## Appendix 3.9 Multiple regression

### Appendix 3.9.1 Exploring contextual variables

Before conducting the multiple regression analysis, I also explored my contextual variables to see if anything unusual was visible. Details about the number of responses included, the number of responses for each categorical answering option as well as the mean scores and standard deviations for the scale variables I included in Tables A3.27 and A3.28 respectively. In the case of question A2, about who did the research for the film, I decided to eliminate the third answering option from further analysis, as just three respondents had ticked this option, while 69 and 85 respondents respectively had ticked the first and second answering option. In the case of question F126, about the respondent's religion, I decided to recode the answers into a variable for either religious or not religious, as a small majority of respondents had indicated to regard themselves as not religious. It would not make sense to compare small subgroups for various religions to this large other group.

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.27 Number of answers per option and missing values for categorical questions

Variable number	Variable	Answer option*					
		1	2	3	4	5	missing
A1	Did you work with a co-director on this project?	44	114				
A2	Did you research the project yourself?	69	85	3			1
A3	Was a producer involved in this project?	50	57	49			
A4	Did you have one or more broadcasting company/-ies involved in this project?	51	38	68			1
A5	On this project, did you work with crew members you always work with?	36	74	29	13		6
A11	Where was the film intended to be screened?**	139	123	75	55		
A14	Did you have <b>one main participant</b> in your film?	55	87	15			1
A16	Was this (main) participant filmed as employee in (public) office?	16	130				12
E	Ethical Position Questionnaire	66	8	73	10		
F125	What is your gender?	59	99				
F126	What religion do you consider yourself to be?	35	14	3	15	88	
F127	Have you finished film school?	79	79				
F128	Have you followed (additional) professional courses?	92	61				5
F129	Have you followed any courses in philosophy or ethics?	79	77				2
F132	Do you have additional experience in film and/or television, apart from directing documentaries?	143	15				

\* Empty cells indicate a not applicable category.

\*\* More than one option possible

Table A3.28 Number of valid cases, mean scores and standard deviations for scale variables

Variable number	Statement	N	M	SD
A6	Please indicate the amount of time allowed for research for this project.	152	19.44	29.52
A7	Please indicate the amount of time allowed for filming for this project.	153	275.36	3166.04
A8	Please indicate the amount of time allowed for editing and post production for this project.	154	23.63	32.07
A9	What was the budget of this project?	151	177585.34	278732.59
A10	What is the length of the film?	156	64.29	32.49
A12	Do you consider the content of you film to be controversial?	156	3.23	1.72
A13	"Did you film any scenes in dangerous circumstances?"	158	2.01	1.91
A15	What was the age of this (main) participant?	143	44.10	20.58
A17	Do you consider this (main) participant to belong to the same culture as you?	153	3.22	2.13
A18	Did you know this (main) participant before making the film?	154	1.73	2.29
A20	Did any moral issues arise during filming?	156	3.46	1.90
A21	Did any moral issues arise during editing and post-production?	157	3.39	1.89
A22	Did any moral issues arise after the première of the film?	146	2.42	2.19
D94	As a filmmaker, you never have the right to use people for your own benefit.	157	3.82	2.10
D95	As a filmmaker, you should always try to meet the wishes of the financiers of your project.	157	1.97	1.70
D96	The most important thing for a filmmaker is to make the best film possible.	157	4.92	1.58
D97	Participants should always tell directors why they want to participate.	156	3.20	1.74
D98	A participant should always be 100% sure s/he is participating out of free will.	155	4.70	1.68

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.28 (continued)

Variable number	Statement	N	M	SD
D99	How I treat a participant depends on how s/he treats me.	157	1.68	1.77
D100	Whether I meet the wishes of my financier(s) depends on my commitment to the project I am working on.	154	2.47	2.07
D101	Depending on the different interests at stake, I will compromise to make others happy.	154	2.04	1.72
D102	Whether a participant should inform me about her/his motivations, depends on her/his role in the film.	156	2.71	1.93
D103	Whether someone participates depends on whether a filmmaker can convince her/him.	157	3.41	1.78
E104	A person should make certain that their actions never intentionally harm another even to a small degree.	158	5.03	1.47
E105	Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.	158	4.49	1.64
E106	The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.	158	4.48	1.75
E107	One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.	157	5.46	0.98
E108	One should not perform an action which might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.	158	5.04	1.47
E109	If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.	156	5.26	1.38
E110	Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of the act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.	154	2.69	2.06
E111	The dignity and welfare of people should be the most important concern in any society.	155	5.20	1.35
E112	It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.	154	4.13	1.87

Table A3.28 (continued)

Variable number	Statement	N	M	SD
E113	Moral actions are those which closely match ideals of the most "perfect" action.	144	3.57	1.98
E114	There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be a part of any code of ethics.	150	1.56	1.88
E115	What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.	155	3.71	1.82
E116	Moral standards should be seen as being individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged to be immoral by another person.	155	3.18	2.01
E117	Different types of morality cannot be compared as to "rightness."	141	3.62	1.88
E118	Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.	151	2.89	1.99
E119	Moral standards are simply personal rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgements of others.	150	2.71	2.03
E120	Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.	150	3.03	1.75
E121	Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.	146	3.62	1.67
E122	No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends upon the situation.	153	3.48	1.91
E123	Whether a lie is judged to be moral or immoral depends on the circumstances surrounding the action.	155	3.81	1.80
F124	What is your age?	157	40.43	10.59

Table A3.28 (continued)

Variable number	Statement	N	M	SD
F130	How many years have you worked as a documentary filmmaker?	157	11.14	9.25
F131	How many independent documentaries have you made as a director?	157	9.17	14.88

### Appendix 3.9.2 Method

There are several methods for multiple regression and in this paragraph I discuss my choice for a method and some more specific options. Multiple regression is a statistical method that helps find out which contextual variables predict the scores on patterns, and to what extent. The contextual variables are so called predictor variables, which help predict the scores, and the factor scores (the scores on the various patterns) are the outcome variables. Multiple regression tests the predictive power of the contextual variables and computes which variables contribute significantly to predict the outcome of a pattern score. This results in a model which not only includes filmmaker and participant experiences but also circumstances that help predict such experiences.

In choosing a multiple regression method I kept in mind that I am still exploring my data. I do not have a sound theoretical model to test. Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar (2003) argued that if you have no theoretical model and/or a relatively low number of cases, it is probably safest to use the simultaneous method, in which the researcher decides which predictor variables will be included in the model and the computer calculates their predictive strength. However, I have many predictor variables and I am interested in knowing which one(s) actually have an effect. I have no reasons or arguments to favour one over the other. Field (2005) argued that statistical methods in which variables are added or removed based on computer calculations (as opposed to researchers' decisions) are best avoided, unless you are doing exploratory model building. And that is what I am doing: I have no idea which contextual

variables are most important or influential. So I will use a statistical method. Field (2005) recommended using the so called backward method in that case. In this method, all predictor variables are included in the calculation and the ones that do not contribute significantly are removed. He argued that this method is preferred because its opposite, the forward method, is more likely to exclude variables that do have an effect (p. 161). Another alternative is the stepwise method, in which, as in the forward method, variables are added one by one, but also the included variables are re-evaluated to see if their contribution is still significant. If not, they are removed. According to Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar (2003), the advantage is that you end up with the most parsimonious model, i.e., a model with the smallest number of variables added.

Given that I have many contextual variables, using the backward method seems a good option as all variables are initially included and 'get a chance' to be tested. However, to end up with a model with only a limited number of variables (which is easier to understand), a lot of calculations are needed with the backward model and a lot of variables need to be removed on the way. The stepwise method immediately looks at the variable that correlates highest with the factor and contributes most to the model, adds the variable with the next highest correlation while controlling for the effect of the first variable added. It also recalculates the contribution of previously added variables and removes them if the contribution is no longer significant. It seems this is a more suitable method for my data and therefore I decided to use the stepwise method. As a result, all contextual variables in the resulting model contribute significantly (even if it is just a little bit). Variables are included in the model when the significance level of their contribution to the model (F-value) is smaller than .05; they are removed when this significance level becomes larger than .10.

Field (2005) recommended changing the criterion for outliers, which might unduly influence the results, from the default 3 times standard deviation to 2 times the standard deviation. This is because in a normally distributed sample, in 95% of the cases these values should be between -1.96 and +1.96 times the standard deviation. However, the scores in my sample are not normally distributed. There are some outliers in the data and I decided to

## Participatory spaces

retain them because these values might very well be correct.

All predictor variables have to be either quantitative (scale) or categorical with two categories (Brace, Kemp, and Snelgar 2003; Field 2005). To achieve this I recoded some variables into new, so called dummy variables. For example, I recoded a question with 3 answering categories so that respondents would get a value of either 1 or 0 for each answering category (so it was recoded into 3 new variables, with each respondent scoring 0 or 1 on each of the three dummy variables, Field 2005). For all categorical variables, I took the first category as baseline: those who answered 1 to the original question got a 0 for the first new variable and a 0 for the second and third new variable. The first dummy variable is called the constant. The scores on the second and third dummy variable then indicate whether the respondent's score differs from the first dummy variable. I used the dummy variables in the multiple regression.

I excluded specific cases from the analyses with the patterns because of too many missing values on the patterns. Many of the respondents have a missing value on one of the many contextual variables as well. This has consequences for the multiple regression analysis. Choosing a listwise exclusion, in which all cases with a missing value are excluded from all analyses, would cost many cases and thus a lot of information. I don't want to exclude cases from the whole analysis because they have one missing value. The pairwise exclusion (cases excluded only for the analysis for which they miss a value) is not a good option because many of the variables would not longer make sense and it can result in absurd results (Field 2005). The third option, which is to replace the missing value with the mean score of the variable (as I did with the factor analysis itself) seems the best one. This suppresses the true value of the standard deviation and might lead to significant results that are not a genuine effect. However, in my data the number of missing values per variable is limited. The effect of replacing them with the mean score will therefore be limited too.

### Appendix 3.9.3 Results

A multiple regression analysis comes with details about the various steps in

the analysis, in which variables are included and excluded to come to a model; and with details about the resulting model and the different variables included. I present the relevant information in a single table for each pattern. Let me explain how to read these tables.

The left part concerns the various steps in building the model. It includes the multiple correlation coefficient between predictors and outcome variable ( $R$ ); the variability of the outcome predicted by the variables ( $R^2$ ); the variability of the outcome predicted by the variables for the population (adjusted  $R^2$ ); the change in  $F$  ratio due to the adding or removal of predictor variables ( $F$  change), where  $F$  is a ratio for the amount of variability explained and unexplained by the model; and the significance of the change in  $F$  ratio (Sig.  $F$  change), which should be under .05.

The right part of the table includes information about the extent to which the variables included predict scores on the pattern involved. It includes the following values: the individual contribution of each variable to the model ( $B$ ); the standardized  $B$  value ( $\beta$ ), which makes it possible to compare variables; the test result for the contribution of the variable to the model ( $t$ ); and its significance (Sig). It starts with a variable called the Constant, which represents the model before it was affected by the first variable added.

The relationship between the left and the right side is as follows: on a single row are at the left the step in the analysis and on the right the variable which was added in that step and how it affected the model. The left represents the development of the model as a whole, the right the effect of the contextual variables consecutively added to the model.

My discussion here will focus on two elements. First I will discuss the percentage of variance in my data explained by the successive variables,  $R^2$ . The value of  $R^2$  can be read as a percentage: if, for instance, the value is .250 it means that 25.0% of the differences between respondents can be explained by the variables included in the model (Field 2005). This value is given for each step, but I will focus on the last step. The second element I discuss consists of the different variables included in the model and whether they predict experiencing more or less the pattern involved (the direction of  $\beta$ ). Following this, there are some restrictions to the model to discuss.

In the model that resulted from the factor analysis, there are

## Participatory spaces

hierarchical relations between patterns at the first, second, and third level. I will take these hierarchical relations into account and discuss the patterns that are related, starting at the most detailed level and going up. I will start with the patterns that were most salient in the results, the ones with the higher mean scores: Communication for Cooperation, Filmmaker Mastery, Communication for the Film, and Communication for Filming. They are at the left side of the model (see Figure 3.1, p. 98). These patterns all relate to experiences characterized by communication and the intention to do what is necessary for the film, and to solve issues around consent to record.

### Communication for Cooperation

Table A3.29 includes the information for the multiple regression analysis for Communication for Cooperation. The contextual variables included in the model for this pattern explain 20.8% of the variance in Communication for Cooperation scores in the sample used for this research. The most important variable is the position of the participant in the project. The position of the participant in a project with no central participants (as opposed to a project in which the participant is the single main participant) explains 9.5% of the variance in scores. This means that 9.5% of the differences between filmmakers in Communication for Cooperation is explained by the fact that their participant was in a project with no central characters. The position of the participant as one of a few central participants (as opposed to as single main character) adds 3.1%. So the one question in the questionnaire about the position of the participant in the project here explains 12.6% of the differences between filmmakers in Communication for Cooperation. The association is negative: both having a few central participants or no central participants (as opposed to having a single main participant) predicts less Communication for Cooperation.

The budget of the project explains an additional 3.5% of the variance. The project's budget is associated positively with this pattern: more money predicts experiencing more Communication for Cooperation. Subjectivists, i.e., respondents who scored high on idealism and high on relativism on the EPQ (see Chapter 2, p. 265) are predicted to experience less Communication for Cooperation than their 'counterparts', absolutists (who score high on idealism

Table A3.29 Model building and predictor variables for Communication for Cooperation

Model building	values for the model				
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.309	.095	.090	16.350	.000
Step 2	.361	.130	.119	6.139	.014
Step 3	.402	.161	.145	5.691	.018
Step 4	.432	.187	.165	4.731	.031
Step 5	.456	.208	.182	4.097	.045
Contributing variables	values for variables				
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig. t	
Constant	4.430		25.585	.000	
No central participants	-1.690	-.417	-5.291	.000	
Budget	.000	.216	2.959	.004	
A few central participants	-.530	-.221	-2.753	.007	
Subjectivist	-.838	-.172	-2.341	.021	
Religious	-.369	-.152	-2.024	.045	

and low on relativism). And respondents who adhere to a religion are predicted to experience more Communication for Cooperation than their non-religious colleagues. This variable explains only 2.1% of the variance though. These percentages are low and explain but a limited percentage of the differences between respondents in their experience of continuous communication between filmmaker and participant and explanation and information from the side of the filmmaker.

#### Filmmaker Mastery

As Table A3.30 illustrates, two contextual variables significantly help predict scores on Filmmaker Mastery: whether a filmmaker should always make the best film possible and whether a filmmaker is never allowed to use people for her own benefit. Together these two explain 9.6% of the differences between filmmakers in Filmmaker Mastery. Whether a filmmaker should always make the best film possible explains 6.4% of the differences, and agreeing to this

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.30 Model building and predictor variables for Filmmaker Mastery

Model building	values for the model				
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.252	.064	.058	10.530	.001
Step 2	.309	.096	.084	5.461	.021
Contributing variables	values for variables				
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig. t	
Constant	1.733		4.750	.000	
Make the best film possible	.213	.260	3.387	.001	
Never use people	-.111	-.179	-2.337	.021	

duty predicts more Filmmaker Mastery. Whether a filmmaker is never allowed to use people for her own benefit adds 3.2% and agreeing is a predictor for less Filmmaker Mastery.

### Communication for the Film

The details of the analysis for Communication for the Film are included in Table A3.31. Five contextual variables significantly help predict scores on Communication for the Film and together they explain 21.1% of the differences between filmmakers in experiencing this. The most important contributor is whether the filmmaker knew the participant before the project. This variable accounts for 7.6% of the total percentage. Next are whether a filmmaker should always make the best film possible (4.8%); whether the participant was one among a number without anyone being the central participant (3.5%); the budget of the project (2.8%); and the research team (2.5%). Having no central participants in the project (as opposed to one single main character) as well as researching the film with others (as opposed to on one's own) predicts less Communication for the Film. Knowing the participant beforehand, agreeing that a filmmaker has the duty to make the best film possible and having a larger budget all predict more Communication for the Film. Communication for the Film is a 'combination' of Communication for Cooperation and Filmmaker Mastery and several of the predictor variables discussed here also helped

Table A3.31 Model building and predictor variables for Communication for the Film

Model building	values for the model				
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.276	.076	.070	12.468	.001
Step 2	.352	.124	.112	8.149	.005
Step 3	.398	.159	.142	6.136	.014
Step 4	.431	.186	.164	5.018	.027
Step 5	.459	.211	.184	4.603	.034
Contributing variables	values for variables				
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig. t	
Constant	2.827		7.771	.000	
Know participant	.178	.283	3.766	.000	
Make the best film possible	.190	.213	2.880	.005	
No central participants	-.895	-.189	-2.546	.012	
Budget	.000	.203	2.661	.009	
Research with other	-.461	-.162	-2.145	.034	

predict scores on these two lower order patterns.

#### Communication for Filming

Four contextual variables explain 13.3% of the differences between respondents in Communication for Filming, as Table A3.32 illustrates. The variables that significantly help predict scores on Communication for Filming are the position of the participant in the project (5.9%), the willingness to compromise depending on the interests at stake (2.6%), who did research (2.5%), and the budget (2.4%). Having no central participants rather than one central participant predicts less Communication for Filming, as does researching the project with others rather than alone. A willingness to compromise and a larger budget both predict more Communication for Filming.

I will continue with the other patterns that hierarchically 'feed' Communication for Filming: Participant Opposition and Opposition to Disclosure.

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.32 Model building and predictor variables for Communication for Filming

Model building	values for the model				
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.243	.059	.053	9.649	.002
Step 2	.313	.098	.086	6.598	.011
Step 3	.352	.124	.106	4.477	.036
Step 4	.419	.175	.153	9.438	.003
Step 5	.450	.203	.176	5.193	.024
Contributing variables	values for variables				
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig. t	
Constant	4.276		10.862	.000	
No central participants	-1.064	-.291	-3.706	.000	
Religious	.001	.162	2.190	.030	
Age	-.045	-.443	-3.887	.000	
Experience in years	.045	.383	3.322	.001	
A few central participants	-.391	-.180	-2.279	.024	

### Participant Opposition

As Table A3.33 illustrates, four contextual variables significantly help predict Participant Opposition. Cultural similarity accounts for 5.8%; the willingness to compromise for an additional 5.2%; philosophy/ethics education adds 3.7%; the crew 2.6%, amounting to 17.3% of variance explained in Participant Opposition scores. Agreeing to compromise depending on the different interests at stake predicts experiencing more Participant Opposition, as does researching the project with someone else and having had some education in philosophy and/or ethics. Greater cultural similarity predicts less Participant Opposition.

### Opposition to Disclosure

Six contextual variables significantly help predict Opposition to Disclosure and together they explain 21.2% of the differences between filmmakers in

Table A3.33 Model building and predictor variables for Participant Opposition

Model building		values for the model			
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj.R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.241	.058	.052	9.581	.002
Step 2	.331	.110	.098	8.999	.003
Step 3	.382	.146	.130	6.610	.011
Step 4	.415	.172	.151	4.816	.030
Contributing variables		values for variables			
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig. t	
Constant	1.043		7.080	.000	
Culture	-.101	-.253	-3.379	.001	
Compromise	.091	.184	2.393	.018	
Philosophy/ ethics	-.347	-.207	-2.795	.006	
Crew	.285	.168	2.194	.030	

Opposition to Disclosure scores in my sample. The details are included in Table A3.34. A willingness to compromise depending on the interests at stake predicts 5.3%; editing time explains 2.7% and in both cases the association is positive. Philosophy and/or ethics courses account for 3.7%; having followed such courses also predicts more Opposition to Disclosure. Having a broadcaster involved later rather than from the start of the project explains 2.7% of the differences in scores and not having a broadcaster involved at all explains another 2.6%; in both cases the prediction is less Opposition to Disclosure. Editing time contributes 2.7%, and more editing time predicts more Opposition to Disclosure.

The last part of the model concerns the patterns that represent unsolved problematic filmmaker and participant experiences. It consists of the patterns Filmmaker Opposition, Conflict on Representation, Passive Conflict, and Trivialized Harm.

#### Filmmaker Opposition

Three contextual variables help predict the scores on Filmmaker Opposition. Philosophy/ethics education accounts for 7.3%; filming time adds 5.6%; and adhering to a religion adds 2.9%. Together these variables explain 15.8% of the

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.34 Model building and predictor variables for Opposition to Disclosure

Model building	values for the model				
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.262	.069	.063	11.515	.000
Step 2	.335	.112	.101	7.635	.000
Step 3	.392	.153	.137	7.428	.000
Step 4	.431	.186	.165	6.131	.000
Step 5	.454	.206	.180	3.928	.049
Step 6	.477	.228	.197	4.190	.042
Step 7	.501	.251	.216	4.680	.032
Contributing variables	values for variables				
	B	β	t	Sig. T	
Constant	1.032		6.548	.000	
Religious	.001	.214	2.996	.003	
Compromise	.123	.239	3.330	.001	
Philosophy/ ethics	-.404	-.232	-3.175	.002	
Knowing the participant	-.054	-.140	-1.903	.059	
Broadcaster later on	-.542	-.267	-3.138	.002	
No broadcaster	-.332	-.189	-2.271	.025	
Editing time	.004	.157	2.163	.032	

variance, as Table A3.35 illustrates. Having followed courses in philosophy and/or ethics predicts more Filmmaker Opposition, as having more filming time. Adhering to a religion predicts less Filmmaker Opposition.

### Conflict on Representation

Five contextual variables significantly help predict Conflict on Representation and cumulative explain 22.0% of the differences between filmmakers in their experiences. The details are included in Table A3.36. The most important contributor is the level of controversy of the content, which accounts for 6.1% of the differences. Cultural similarity accounts for 4.0%; whether to meet the wishes of the financier depending on one's involvement in the project adds 4.7%; filming time 4.1%; and the length of the film 3.0%. Cultural similarity is associated negatively with Conflict on Representation, so greater cultural similarity predicts less Conflict on Representation. A more controversial

Table A3.35 Model building and predictor variables for Filmmaker Opposition

Model building		values for the model			
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.270	.073	.067	11.948	.001
Step 2	.359	.129	.117	9.684	.002
Step 3	.398	.158	.141	5.228	.024
Contributing variables		values for variables			
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig. t	
Constant	.986		10.003	.000	
Philosophy/ ethics	-.321	-.206	-2.660	.009	
Filming time	.000	.224	2.972	.003	
Religious	-.279	-.178	-2.286	.024	

Table A3.36 Model building and predictor variables for Conflict on Representation

Model building		values for the model			
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.248	.061	.055	10.218	.002
Step 2	.318	.101	.089	6.813	.010
Step 3	.385	.148	.132	8.535	.004
Step 4	.435	.190	.168	7.815	.006
Step 5	.469	.220	.194	5.830	.017
Contributing variables		values for variables			
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig. t	
Constant	.408		1.704	.090	
Controversy	.119	.224	3.079	.002	
Cultural similarity	-.101	-.234	-3.191	.002	
Commitment	.108	.243	3.332	.001	
Filming time	.000	.204	2.832	.005	
Length	.005	.175	2.415	.017	

content, agreeing that meeting the financier's wishes depends on the filmmaker's involvement, more filming time, and a longer film predict more Conflict on Representation.

## Participatory spaces

### Passive Conflict

As Table A3.37 illustrates, six contextual variables significantly help predict Passive Conflict and combined they explain 24.2% of the differences between filmmakers in experiencing this. Philosophy/ethics education accounts for 8.1% of the differences. Filming time adds 4.0%; cultural similarity 4.4%; willingness to meet the financier's wishes 2.9%; the controversy of the content of the film 2.8%; and producing the film with others rather than someone else producing it adds 2.1%. Having followed courses in philosophy and/or ethics predicts more Passive Conflict, as does having more filming time, agreeing that meeting the financier's wishes depends on one's commitment, a more controversial content, and becoming involved in production as filmmaker. Cultural similarity predicts less Passive Conflict.

### Trivialized Harm

Five contextual variables significantly help predict Trivialized Harm and combined they explain 15.7% of the differences between filmmakers in their experiences. The details are included in Table A3.38. Filming time accounts for 4.2% of the differences between filmmakers, the position of the participant adds another 3.1%. The age of the filmmaker adds 2.7%, whether participation depends on convincing the participant 2.8%, and editing time 3.0%. Having no central participants in the project predicts more Trivialized Harm. The association of the filmmaker's age is negative: older filmmakers are predicted to experience less Trivialized Harm. Filming time, editing time, and whether participation depends on convincing the participant are all associated positively, so a higher score on these variables predicts more Trivialized Harm.

Table A3.37 Model building and predictor variables for Passive Conflict

Model building	values for the model				
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.284	.081	.075	13.511	.000
Step 2	.347	.120	.109	6.923	.009
Step 3	.406	.165	.148	8.074	.005
Step 4	.440	.193	.172	5.336	.010
Step 5	.471	.222	.196	5.484	.009
Step 6	.492	.242	.212	4.041	
Contributing variables	values for variables				
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig. t	
Constant	.881		4.741	.000	
Philosophy/ ethics courses	-.356	-.229	-3.173	.002	
Filming time	.000	.241	3.335	.001	
Cultural similarity	-.083	-.224	-3.049	.003	
Meet financier's wishes	.078	.206	2.814	.006	
Controversial	.077	.170	2.341	.021	
Produce with others	.235	.146	2.010	.046	

Table A3.38 Model building and predictor variables for Trivialized Harm

Model building	values for the model				
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F change	Sig. F change
Step 1	.205	.042	.035	6.421	.012
Step 2	.269	.072	.060	4.813	.030
Step 3	.315	.100	.081	4.360	.039
Step 4	.356	.127	.103	4.540	.035
Step 5	.397	.157	.128	5.127	.025
Contributing variables	values for variables				
	B	$\beta$	t	Sig. t	
Constant	.960		3.011	.003	
Filming time	.000	.207	2.674	.008	
No central participants	.672	.220	2.822	.005	
Age	-.020	-.208	-2.642	.009	
Convincing	.097	.185	2.343	.021	
Editing time	.005	.175	2.264	.025	

## Participatory spaces

### Appendix 3.9.4 Restrictions to the model

There are a number of tests and checks that give an idea about the accuracy of the model to predict scores on the various patterns and about the extent to which it might be generalized beyond the sample in this study. I will discuss both in turn.

#### Accuracy

To assess the accuracy of the model, I will discuss outliers (which might unduly influence the model) and other influential cases (Field 2005). The multiple regression analysis also provides information about such potentially problematic cases.

*Standardized residuals.* The first measure for outliers is the residual: the difference between the value of the outcome predicted and the value observed (i.e., the score on the pattern predicted by the model and measured in the data). Field (2005) points out that cases with a standardized residual over 3 are problematic; if in the sample over 1% has a standardized residual over 2.5 the level of error is considered unacceptably high and the model does not fit the data well; the same can be said if more than 5% of the cases have a standardized residual over 2.

Table A3.39 lists the number of cases in each analysis as well as the cases with standardized residuals over 3, over 2.5, and over 2 respectively and the percentages this constitutes for each pattern. A number of cases have standardized residuals over 3 and these cases therefore form a problem with respect to the model. Only three of the ten patterns do not encounter this problem. Also, just two patterns have less than 1% cases with standardized residuals over 2.5. At the same time, there is one pattern with over 5% cases with standardized residuals over 2. It looks like there are a number of fairly problematical cases rather than many cases causing a small problem each.

*Cook's distance.* A second parameter for the influence of individual cases on the model is Cook's distance, which is a measure for the overall influence of cases on the model; it should be under 1. In my data three different cases have a value over 1 on three different patterns.

*Average leverage.* This measure indicates the influence of the observed

Table A3.39. Standardized residuals, cases, and percentages

Factors	N	>3.0	>2.5	>2.0
Participant	158	029, 149	014, 059,	025, 109, 158
Opposition		(1.27%)	123, 137	(1.90%)
			(2.53%)	
Communication for	157	057, 079	040, 152	006, 080
Cooperation		(1.27%)	(1.27%)	(1.27%)
Filmmaker	154	080, 115,	010, 140	123
Opposition		150, 153	(1.30%)	(0.65%)
		(2.60%)		
Conflict on	158	025	058	010, 029, 064,
Representation		(0.63%)	(0.63%)	083, 131, 135
				(3.80%)
Filmmaker Mastery	157	--	153	051, 090, 104,
			(0.64%)	123, 124, 150
				(3.82%)
Passive Conflict	156	--	115, 140, 153	010, 072, 145, 150
			(1.92%)	(2.56%)
Opposition to	158	059, 137	025, 029, 149	014, 109
Disclosure		(1.27%)	(1.90%)	(1.27%)
Communication for	153	057	033, 067	023, 079, 080, 114
the Film		(0.65%)	(1.31%)	(2.61%)
Communication for	156	--	025, 057	014, 023, 029, 033,
Filming			(1.28%)	040, 059, 079, 097,
				126, 134
				(6.41%)
Trivialized Harm	149	115, 140, 150	010, 153	024, 091, 104
		(2.01%)	(1.34%)	(2.01%)

outcome value over the predicted value. The value depends on the number of predictors and the number of cases (Field 2005) and there are different ideas about whether twice (Field 2005) or three (Stevens 2002) times the average leverage should be taken as a criterion. To allow some lenience I chose to stick to three times.

Table A3.40 shows the number of cases for each analysis, the value of

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.40 Average leverage values and problematic cases

Patterns	N	3 x average leverage	cases outside 3 x average leverage
Participant Opposition	158	0.09	--
Communication for Cooperation	157	0.11	106, 123, 142, 144, 151
Filmmaker Opposition	154	0.08	115
Conflict on Representation	158	0.11	117, 123
Filmmaker Mastery	157	0.06	016, 027, 084, 133, 138, 151
Passive Conflict	156	0.12	116
Opposition to Disclosure	158	0.13	040, 123
Communication for the Film	153	0.12	138, 147
Communication for Filming	156	0.10	032, 114
Trivialized Harm	149	0.12	111, 116, 117

three times the average leverage for each pattern, and the cases which fall outside this value. In my data quite a number of cases cause concern.

*Mahalanobis distance.* This is a measure for the distances of cases from the mean score of the predictor variable. Critical values also depend on the sample size and number of predictor variables (see Stevens 2002, p. 133).

Table A3.41 lists the number of cases for each analysis, the critical value of the Mahalanobis distance for each pattern (based on Stevens 2002), and the cases which fall outside this value. Again, quite a few cases cause concern.

*DFBeta.* The DFBeta measures the difference between an analysis with all cases and with a case excluded; DFBeta values are provided for each variable in the model and its value should be under  $\pm 1$  (Field 2005). In my sample, a few cases have a DFBeta value over  $\pm 1$  for a contextual variable, as Table A3.42 shows. Specifically the variables for filming time (A7), editing time (A8), and budget (A9) caused problems. It is likely that for the first three the respondents involved gave extreme answers and their scores are outliers.

*Covariance ratio.* The last measurement that will help assess the accuracy of the model versus the data is the covariance ratio, the extent to which cases

Table A3.41 Critical values for Mahalanobis distance and problematic cases

Patterns	N	Mahalanobis distance critical value	cases outside Mahalanobis distance critical value
Participant Opposition	158	22	--
Communication for Cooperation	157	24	142
Filmmaker Opposition	154	21	115
Conflict on Representation	158	24	117, 123
Filmmaker Mastery	157	18	--
Passive Conflict	156	24	116
Opposition to Disclosure	158	23	123
Communication for the Film	153	24	138
Communication for Filming	156	23	141
Trivialized Harm	149	24	111, 117

Table A3.42 DFBeta values over  $\pm 1$ , problematic cases and variables

Patterns	case	variable
Participant Opposition	--	--
Communication for Cooperation	142	A9
Filmmaker Opposition	115	A7
Conflict on Representation	--	--
Filmmaker Mastery	--	--
Passive Conflict	116	A7
Opposition to Disclosure	123	A8
Communication for the Film	138	A9
Communication for Filming	--	--
Trivialized Harm	111	A7

influence the regression of the model parameters (the limits of this covariance ratio are 1 minus 3 times the average leverage and 1 plus 3 times the average leverage, Field 2005). This range of values for the covariance ratio depends on the number of predictor variables and the sample size. Table A3.43 gives the number of cases for each analysis, range of the values allowed for each pattern, and the cases which fall outside this range. Again for each pattern quite some cases, ranging from eight to nineteen, have covariance ratios

## Participatory spaces

Table A3.43 Range for the covariance ratio and problematic cases

Patterns	N	Range covariance ratio	cases outside Range covariance ratio
Participant Opposition	158	0.91-1.09	014, 025, 029, 038, 059, 066, 109, 123, 127, 137, 149
Communication for Cooperation	157	0.89-1.11	003, 009, 012, 015, 038, 040, 057, 062, 079, 080, 084, 096, 106, 123, 130, 132, 142, 144, 152
Filmmaker Opposition	154	0.92-1.08	010, 078, 113, 115, 121, 136, 146, 149
Conflict on Representation	158	0.89-1.11	010, 025, 029, 058, 083, 117, 123, 131
Filmmaker Mastery	157	0.94-1.06	016, 027, 051, 082, 085, 090, 124, 134, 139, 150, 152, 153
Passive Conflict	156	0.88-1.12	010, 084, 115, 117, 140, 147, 150, 153
Opposition to Disclosure	158	0.87-1.13	014, 025, 029, 040, 059, 109, 123, 131, 137, 149
Communication for the Film	153	0.88-1.12	003, 012, 023, 027, 032, 033, 057, 067, 079, 085, 130, 142
Communication for Filming	156	0.90-1.10	014, 015, 023, 025, 029, 033, 041, 057, 059, 078, 080, 125, 129, 133, 139, 141, 155
Trivialized Harm	149	0.88-1.12	003, 010, 011, 024, 032, 040, 091, 096, 099, 115, 117, 122, 123, 130, 131, 140, 150, 153

outside the range suggested.

The various measures discussed above point to a number of outliers and cases that influence the model. There is no reason in itself to exclude problematic cases from the analysis but they might deserve further investigation (Field 2005). Given the limited predictive strength of the contextual variables, I decided to not pursue this further.

### Generalization of the model

To be able to generalize the model from the sample to the population, several assumptions must be met and I will discuss a number of them below.

*Multicollinearity.* This occurs when predictor variables are correlated, which makes it difficult to understand how much each contributes to the model, or how much each helps predict the outcome variable independent from the other. There are several tests for assessing multicollinearity. First there is the correlation between the variables, which should not exceed .8 (Field 2005). In my data, no correlations over .8 exist between predictor variables, the highest correlation being .765. Second, there is the so called variance inflation factor (VIF) to consider, a measure for strong linear relationships between predictor variables. This should be under 10 and the average should not be much more than 1 (Field 2005). In my analyses, the VIF varies between 1.002 and 1.430 for all predictor variables on all patterns. The tolerance statistic is the reciprocal ( $1/VIF$ ) and should be over .2 ideally (Field 2005). In my analyses, this value varies between .699 and .998 (in most cases it lies between .9 and 1). Given the results discussed above, multicollinearity does not seem to pose a problem in my data. There are some additional, and more complex statistical outcomes to check, but any serious problems should occur from the above tests, so I will stick to these for the moment.

*Homoscedasticity.* If the variance of the residuals is constant, there is homoscedasticity (Field 2005). To assess this, I looked at the plot of the standardized predicted values versus the standard residuals; this plot should look like randomly scattered dots. Figures A3.16 to A3.25 include these plots for the 10 patterns in the model. In most cases, the dots take the shape of a cone, which points to heteroscedasticity rather than homoscedasticity. This means the variance of the residuals is somewhat unequal. *Independent errors.* The Durbin-Watson test helps to investigate whether the residuals are uncorrelated and thus independent. A value of 2 indicates uncorrelated errors and values under 1 and over 3 are causes for concern, although the size depends on the number of predictor variables and the sample size (Field 2005). In my analyses, as Table A3.44 shows, values for this test ranged between 1.785 and 2.335.

*Normality of residuals.* Another assumption says that the distribution of

Table A3.44 Values for the Durbin-Watson test

Patterns	Durbin-Watson
Participant Opposition	1.984
Communication for Cooperation	2.141
Filmmaker Opposition	2.019
Conflict on Representation	2.089
Filmmaker Mastery	2.335
Passive Conflict	2.045
Opposition to Disclosure	2.022
Communication for the Film	1.963
Communication for Filming	1.785
Trivialized Harm	2.120

residuals should be normal. To test this I looked at the histograms displaying the distribution of the standardized residuals, included in figures A3.26 to A3.35, and the so-called P-P plots, displayed in figures A3.36 to A3.45, which show the expected normal distribution as a straight line and the observed distribution as the series of dots (Field 2005). In the histograms, in most cases, there is a peak in the distribution and in some cases it is a little skewed. Also, in the P-P plots the observed residuals divert from the expected residuals, in some cases a little, on others considerably.

*Linearity.* The last assumption I discuss here is linearity, in other words: the relationship between predictor variables and outcome variables, which should be linear (Field 2005). To test this I again looked at the plots displayed in figures A3.1 to A3.10. If there is some curve in the graph, the assumption of linearity is broken. Although in some of the graphs the points are clustered somewhat, I do not distinguish a clear curve in any of them.

The multiple regression also provides information on cross-validation, i.e., validation across samples. This is another indication for generalizability from a sample to a population (Field 2005). Below I will discuss two methods.

*Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>.* This measure indicates the loss of predictive strength of the model if the data were taken from the population rather than a sample of the population. Table A3.45 includes the values for R<sup>2</sup>, which indicates the percentage of the variance explained by the model for the sample (see p. 405),

Table A3.45  $R^2$ , adjusted  $R^2$ , and the loss of predictive strength

Patterns	$R^2$	adjusted $R^2$	$R^2$ - adjusted $R^2$ (%)
Participant Opposition	.172	.151	.021 (12.21%)
Communication for Cooperation	.208	.182	.026 (12.50%)
Filmmaker Opposition	.158	.141	.017 (11.00%)
Conflict on Representation	.220	.194	.026 (11.82%)
Filmmaker Mastery	.096	.084	.012 (12.50%)
Passive Conflict	.242	.212	.030 (12.40%)
Opposition to Disclosure	.212	.0181	.031 (14.62%)
Communication for the Film	.211	.184	.027 (12.80%)
Communication for Filming	.133	.110	.023 (17.29%)
Trivialized Harm	.157	.128	.029 (18.47%)

and the value of the adjusted  $R^2$  for each pattern. The last column also includes the percentages of the change. The model loses between 11.00% and 18.47% of its predictive strength if generalized to the population, which is considerable.

Given the results discussed here, most assumptions seem to be met sufficiently to be able to generalise the model beyond the sample included in this research effort. However, the model loses considerable predictive power when generalised to cover the population.

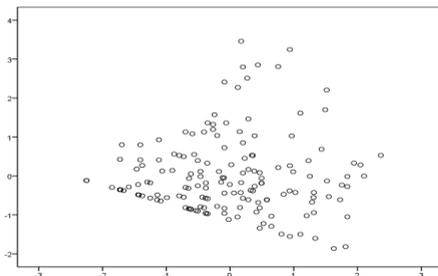


Figure A3.16 Residuals plot  
Participant Opposition

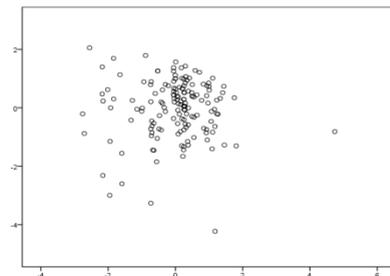


Figure A3.17 Residuals plot  
Communication for  
Cooperation

Participatory spaces

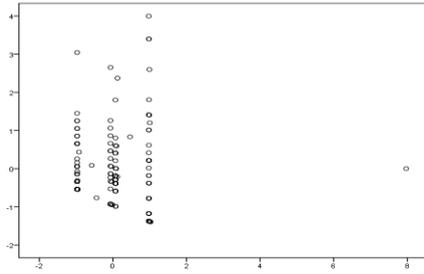


Figure A3.18 Residuals plot  
Filmmaker Opposition

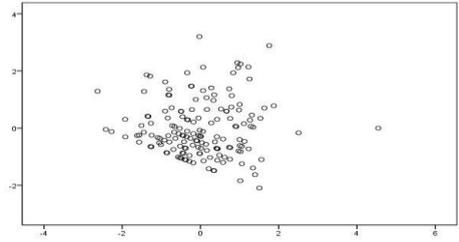


Figure A3.19 Residuals plot  
Conflict on Representation

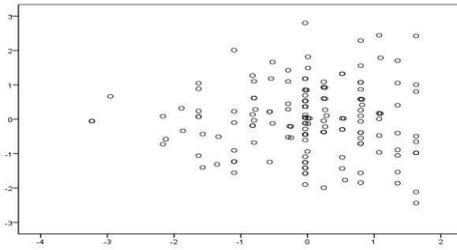


Figure A3.20 Residuals plot  
Filmmaker Mastery

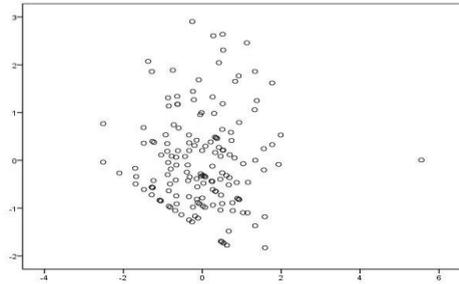


Figure A3.21 Residuals plot  
Passive Conflict

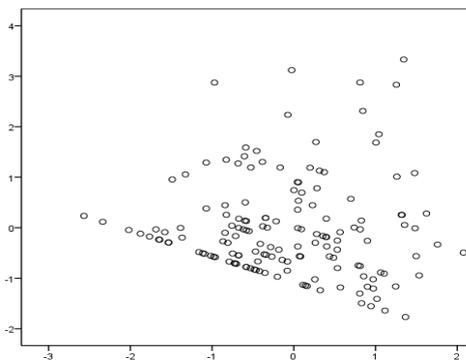


Figure A3.22 Residuals plot  
Opposition to Disclosure

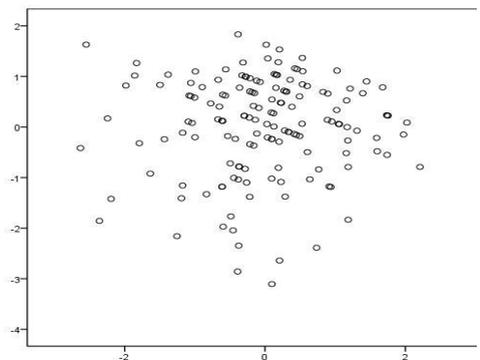


Figure A3.23 Residuals plot  
Communication for the Film

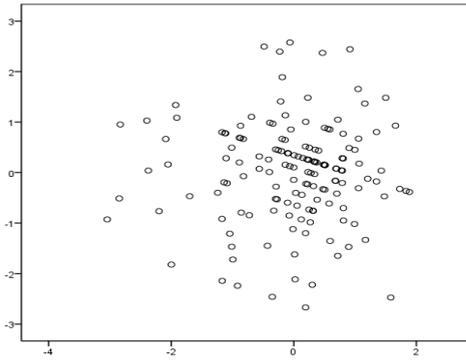


Figure A3.24 Residuals plot  
Communication for Filming

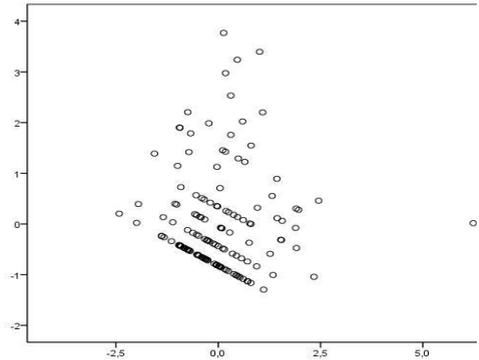


Figure A3.25 Residuals plot  
Trivialized Harm

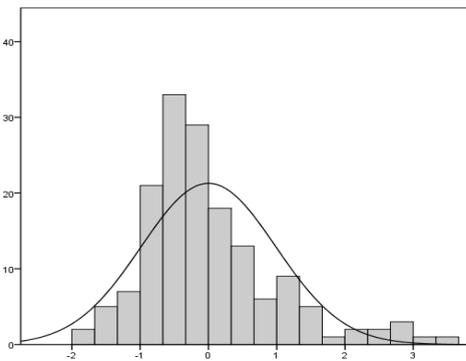


Figure A3.26 Histogram  
residuals Participant Opposition

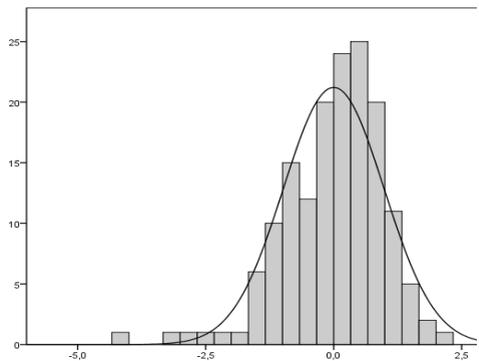


Figure A3.27 Histogram  
residuals Communication for  
Cooperation

## Participatory spaces

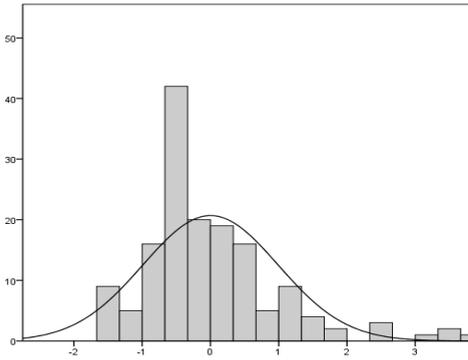


Figure A3.28 Histogram  
residuals Filmmaker  
Opposition

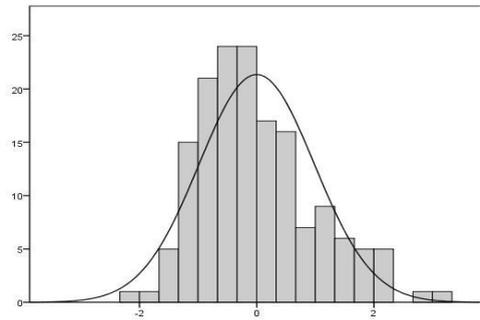


Figure A3.29 Histogram  
residuals Conflict on  
Representation

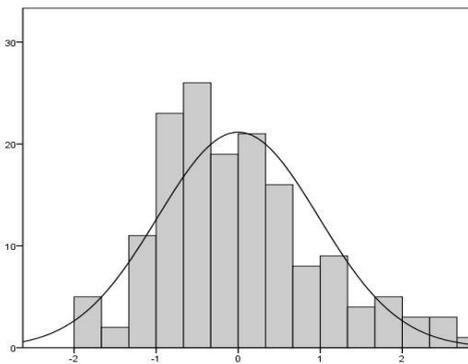


Figure A3.30 Histogram  
residuals Filmmaker Mastery

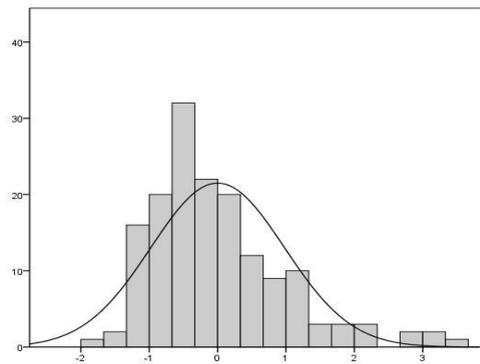


Figure A3.31 Histogram  
residuals Passive Conflict

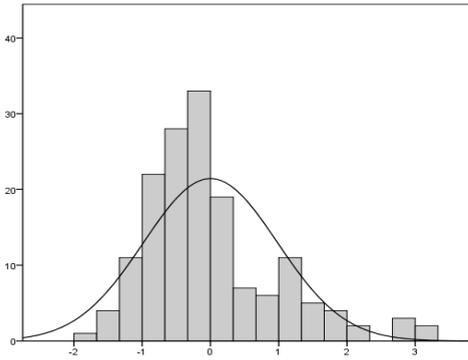


Figure A3.32 Histogram residuals Opposition to Disclosure

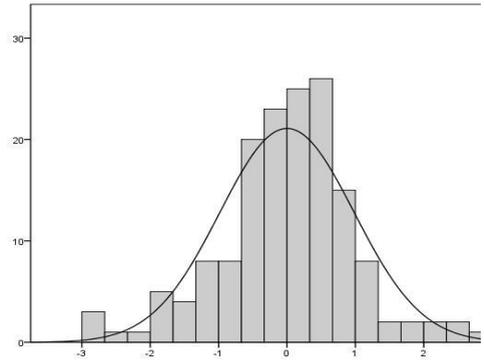


Figure A3.33 Histogram residuals Communication for the Film

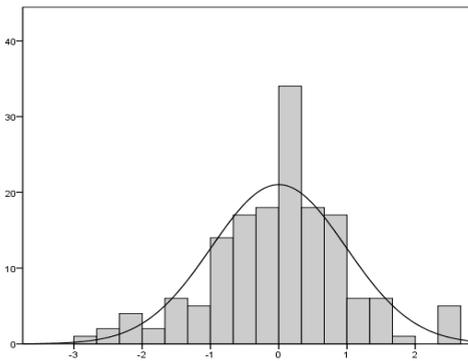


Figure A3.34 Histogram residuals Communication for Filming

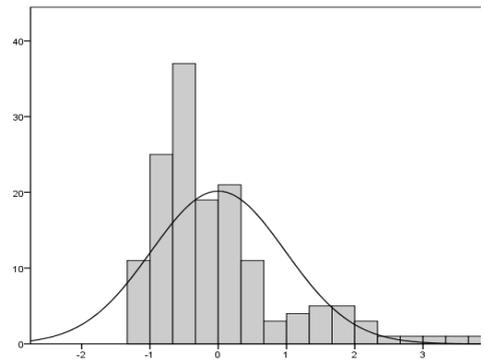


Figure A3.35 Histogram residuals Trivialized Harm

## Participatory spaces

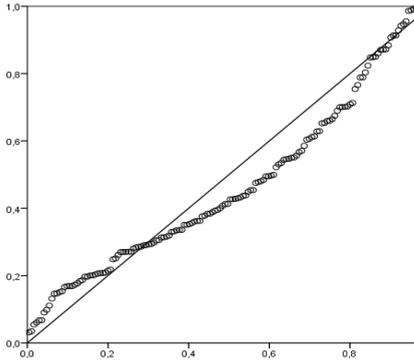


Figure A3.36 P-P plots residuals  
Participant Opposition

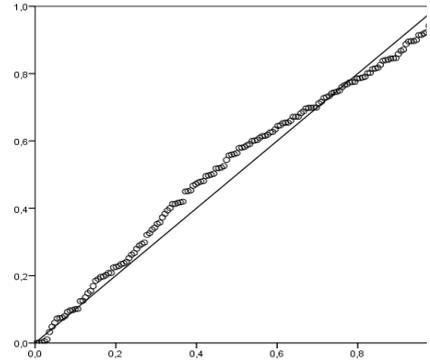


Figure A3.37 P-P plots residuals  
Communication for  
Cooperation

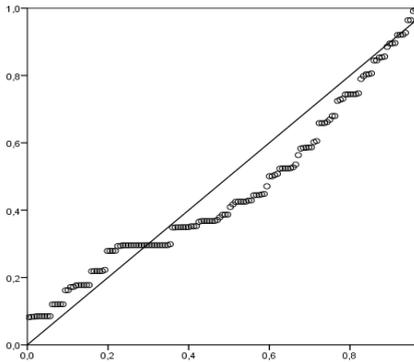


Figure A3.38 P-P plots residuals  
Filmmaker  
Opposition

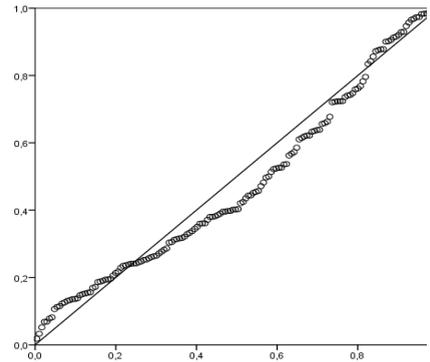


Figure A3.39 P-P plots residuals  
Conflict on  
Representation

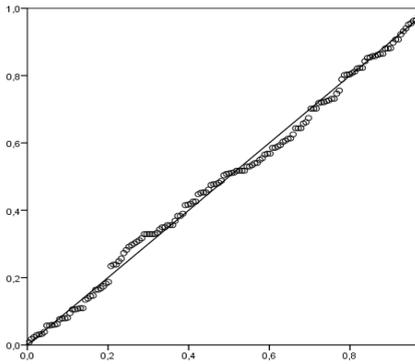


Figure A3.40 P-P plots residuals Filmmaker Mastery

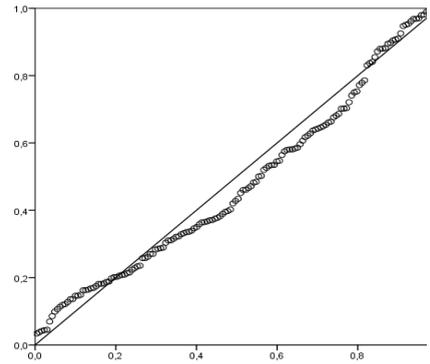


Figure A3.41 P-P plots residuals Passive Conflict

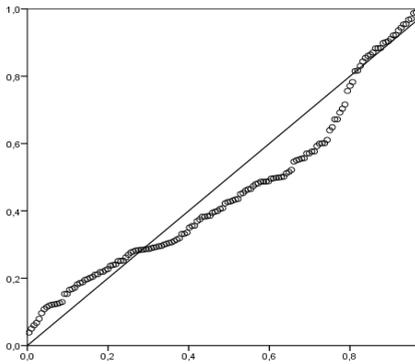


Figure A3.42 P-P plots residuals Opposition to Disclosure

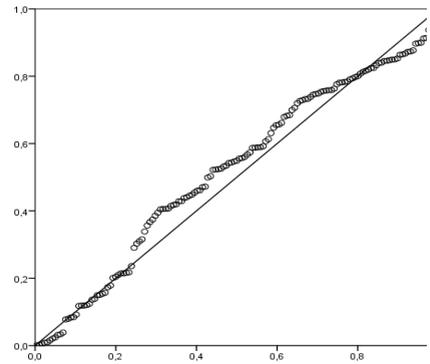


Figure A3.43 P-P plots residuals Communication for the Film

Participatory spaces

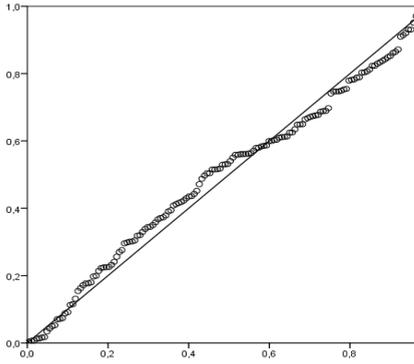


Figure A3.44 P-P plots residuals  
Communication for Filming

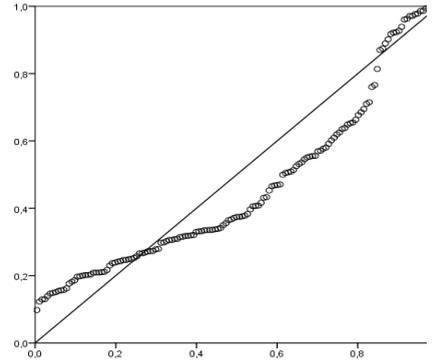


Figure A3.45 P-P plots  
residuals Trivialized Harm

## Appendix 4

### Appendix 4.1

Table A4.1. Interview schedule participants' experiences

#	Category	Question Probe	Reference
1	subject matter (grand tour question)	Can you tell me about the film you participated in? What was it about?	McIntosh (2009); Nash (2009)
2	involvement; voluntariness	Can you tell me how you got involved in this project? Did you talk to the filmmaker at this stage?	Carter et al. (2008); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); McIntosh (2009)
3	motivation	Can you tell me how you decided to participate? Did you talk to the filmmaker about this?	Allmark et al. (2009); Carter et al. (2008); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); MacIntosh (2009); Nash (2009)
4	expectations	Can you talk about your expectations? Did you prepare for your participation?	Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); McIntosh (2009)
5	information; communication	When you agreed to participate, can you tell me what you had agreed to? When did you and the filmmaker talk about this? Did s/he stick to this? Looking back, are you happy with how and when you were informed?	Allmark et al. (2009); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); McIntosh (2009)

## Participatory spaces

Table A4.1. (continued)

#	Category	Question Probe	Reference
6	filming	What was it like for you to be filmed and interviewed? What did you think about the questions you were asked? How did you and the filmmaker decide about where and when to film?	Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2007); McIntosh (2009)
7	confidentiality; trust; communication	Did you ever worry about what would happen to 'your' material? Did you talk to the filmmaker about including or excluding certain material?	Allmark et al. (2009); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); McIntosh (2009); Nash (2009)
8	disclosure; control	Where you happy with what you told and showed of yourself? Do you feel you could tell your whole story? Is there something you didn't want to tell or talk about?	Allmark et al. (2009); Carter et al. (2008); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); McIntosh (2009); Nash (2009)
9	harm; distress	How did you feel during the interviews? Where there moments you felt embarrassed, uncomfortable or insecure? What did the filmmaker do?	Allmark et al. (2009); Carter et al. (2008); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); McIntosh (2009)
10	commitment; communication	Have you ever considered stopping participating? Did you talk to the filmmaker about this? What made you continue?	Carter et al. (2008); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007)
11	filmmaker	Tell me about the filmmaker. What was your relationship like? What did you (not) like about her/him?	Allmark et al. (2009); Carter et al. (2008); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); McIntosh (2009); Nash (2009)

Table A4.1. (continued)

#	Category	Question Probe	Reference
12	immediate evaluation	How did you feel after filming was over?  Were you happy with your part in the film?  Did you talk to the filmmaker about this?	Carter et al. (2008); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); McIntosh (2009)
13	feedback	Did you see anything of the film before the premiere?  Was there anything you wanted to change?	Allmark et al. (2009); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2007); McIntosh (2009)
14	distanced evaluation; consequences	How do you look back on your experience now?  Does the film still play a role in your life today?  Did you learn anything or gained any insights?	Carter et al. (2008); Graham, Grewal, and Lewis (2006, 2007); McIntosh (2009); Nash (2009)

## Appendix 4.2 Information for producers

### **Participants' experiences in a documentary project – some case studies**

Willemien Sanders, July 2010

The debate on ethics and documentary filmmaking tends to focus on experiences of filmmakers. The first part of my research was also directed at understanding filmmakers' experiences. However, the research would be incomplete without the experiences of the other major party, documentary participants. After all, what we do to people we film and represent is central to the question of ethics in documentary filmmaking. But their experiences have so far been missing from the documentary ethics debate. I want to include their experience of being in a documentary project in my research on documentary filmmaking and ethics by interviewing them.

### **Research question**

My main question for participants is how they experienced the documentary project they were in, with a focus on how they experienced collaborating with the filmmaker, on their motivation and on their evaluation. Previous research has shown that interests of the film sometimes 'clash' with those of the participant and that mutual communication plays an important role in dealing with for example, issues of disclosure. By asking participants to share their experiences I want to find out if participants also experienced such clashes and what they thought of the decision taken. Also, I want to know more about their communication with the filmmaker and their motivation to take part. Finally, I want to know how they evaluate their experience as documentary participant and what role specific negative or positive events play in the evaluation, immediately but also some time after the experience.

### **Method**

To evaluate their experiences I would like to interview the participants. The starting point will be to let the participants share their experience in their own words, the way they want to. I will use semi-structured interviews, in which participants will get the opportunity to tell their story. Questions will be based on earlier studies but I will also give the participant the opportunity to explore other topics if s/he desires.

The questions will focus on the relationship with the filmmaker as well as the motivation for and the evaluation of the experience of being in a documentary project.

## Appendix 4.2 (continued)

In order to be able to investigate an immediate evaluation as well as a more reflective evaluation, I would like to interview the participants twice: once as soon as filming is over and once 4-6 months after.

The interviews will be recorded. The interviews will take place at a location preferred by the participant.

**Analysis**

Semi-structured interviews will give an opportunity to compare responses to a certain extent. The analysis will focus on how participants' experiences may be understood, with a focus on whether they are in line with filmmakers' experiences I found earlier. Also, since the academic discourse on documentary ethics focuses on the wellbeing of the participant, my analysis will include an evaluation of negative and positive experiences over time.

**Confidentiality**

Interviews make complete anonymity impossible. Therefore, participation in this research project will be on the basis of confidentiality. It will not be possible to track respondents based on the analysis or quotes in the resulting publication(s).

### Appendix 4.3 Information for participants (in Dutch)

#### **Informatie voor de onderzoeksdeelnemer**

Mijn promotieonderzoek gaat over hoe filmmakers en mensen die voor een documentaire worden gefilmd (participanten) met elkaar omgaan. U bent onlangs voor langere of kortere tijd gefilmd voor een documentaire. Ik ben benieuwd naar uw ervaringen. Vandaar dat ik u benaderd heb voor interviews. Hieronder geef ik kort wat meer uitleg.

#### **De interviews**

Indien u besluit mee te werken aan mijn onderzoek, zal ik u interviewen over uw ervaringen met het deelnemen aan een documentaire. Omdat mensen soms na een tijdje anders gaan denken over hun ervaringen, wil ik u graag 2 keer interviewen: één keer zo kort mogelijk nadat de opnamen zijn voltooid en een paar maanden later nog eens.

Voor beide interviews maak ik een afspraak met u. De interviews vinden plaats op een plek waar u zich prettig voelt en op een moment dat het u schikt. Ik neem een lijstje vragen mee, maar ik zal u vragen vooral te vertellen wat u belangrijk vindt. Het gaat echt om uw verhaal, om uw relaas. Hoe lang het interview duurt, hangt dus mede af van hoeveel u vertelt. U bent daarin volkomen vrij.

Het tweede interview betreft maar een deel van de vragen, dus dat zal waarschijnlijk korter duren. Maar ook daarin bent u vrij om te vertellen over uw ervaringen.

#### **Interviewvragen**

De vragen gaan grofweg over de volgende onderwerpen:

- de manier waarop u bij de film betrokken bent geraakt;
- uw redenen om mee te werken;
- uw samenwerking met de filmmaker;
- positieve en negatieve ervaringen;
- hoe u op de ervaring terugkijkt.

#### **Wat er gebeurt met uw verhaal**

Uw bijdrage zal volledig geanonimiseerd worden en vertrouwelijk worden behandeld. Dit betekent dat wat u zegt niet kan worden herleid tot uw persoon. U krijgt voor publicatie inzage in de rapportage over uw bijdrage.

#### **Heeft u nog vragen?**

U kunt op elk moment contact opnemen als u vragen heeft of meer informatie wilt. Ik sta u graag te woord.

Willemien Sanders  
geaffilieerd onderzoeker

Onderzoeksinstituut voor Geschiedenis en Cultuur (OGC)  
Universiteit Utrecht  
tel.: + 31 30 292 0554 / +31 6 444 622 54  
@: w.sanders@uu.nl

## Appendix 5

### Appendix 5.1 Alex's account (excerpts)

1 **Int.:** Yes. Yes. Uhm, and how did that go then with uhm, publicity  
2 around the film. Uhm did you, for example, give an interview about the  
3 film or to a newspaper or, last time you talked about [talk show host],  
4 that sort of thing, did that happen?

5 **Alex:** [mumbling] beforehand we went there, but it isn't, it wasn't in  
6 [television programme ] but [talk show host] was also at [square] I think,  
7 I thought, that you have in [city] there you have a square, there they put  
8 up a tent and there you have all those festivals were there or those uhm  
9 documentaries were filmed there and then there was a woman who was  
10 to do the interview with you, but that woman wasn't there because she  
11 had something going on herself that she could, instead came [talk show  
12 host].

13 **Int.:** OK

14 **Alex:** And maybe that he came there and that he didn't want to have us  
15 anymore in [television programme]. That would have been much more  
16 fun, that would have been ten times better. In [television programme]  
17 could come, look, then the whole of the Netherlands would have seen  
18 you. Now he came at such a festival on the [square].

19 **Int.:** Yes.

20 **Alex:** And then there are sitting a few – you may look it up on the  
21 computer [mumbles] don't come. That is a handful that saw that.

22 **Int.:** Yes.

23 **Alex:** It is quite an experience to really start talking there with that [talk  
24 show host]. That was awfully nice. And that uhm, because then he also  
25 said uhm, 'and will [animal] be killed after all?'. I say: 'that you will only  
26 see [date of broadcast]'. He says: 'don't you dare, that he will be killed,  
27 because you are so sweet handling that animal and if he will be killed  
28 then' he says 'then I will never look at you again'. I say: 'well, just look  
29 closely now then.'

## Participatory spaces

30 **Int.:** Yeah [laughs]

31 **Alex:** So then he already half knew.

32 **Int.:** Well, then you shouldn't watch the film as well, I mean...

33 **Alex:** Mm

34 **Int.:** But that you found, did you find it fun to do that?

35 **Alex:** Yes, I found that a fun broadcast. Although he wasn't as fanatical

36 as in [television programme], I think that he adapted himself a little.

37 Then he can be fanatical, mind you,

38 **Int.:** Yeah, yeah

39 **Alex:** because then uhm, then he is poised on the edge of his seat. Then

40 he is very swift. Now he was somewhat moderate he was.

41 **Int.:** And did you prepare yourself in any way for that conversation?

42 **Alex:** No, no, I've just. The only thing I prepared for. I've seen a couple of

43 guests there before me, they sat a fair distance away from that

44 microphone and you actually couldn't hear them. I say: that I won't

45 have, if I talk I want them to be hear me too. And otherwise you

46 shouldn't talk. Because if you sit and talk very softly in front of a sponge

47 [mumbles]: 'well, I actually prefer they don't hear it', then you shouldn't

48 go and talk, so

49 **Int.:** No

50 **Alex:** I wanted them to be able to hear me so. It was quite a clear

51 broadcast.

52 ...

53 **Int.:** But if someone says that eh: 'you are seeking publicity', is that then

54 a little bit of a reproach?

55 **Alex:** Well sometimes it does seem negative because, or they're jealous. A

56 good deal a good deal of [professionals] are of course jealous eh? Because

57 they say: 'well how do you get that. Every time again in the centre of

58 attention.' And one thinks it positive [mumbles] if you ask me they are

59 jealous as hell. Then they want it themselves, but they don't do it

60 themselves.

61 **Int.:** Mm

62 **Alex:** And do they follow you, than that's all right. And do they not follow

63 me then it is all right too, but I don't avoid it. If someone wants to film,  
64 fine. I w-, and I will uhm, if I get the chance I will certainly invite  
65 [broadcaster], 'hey I am going to the sea, do you feel like filming that?'.  
66 That's great if you see that yourself for television isn't it? That people  
67 find fun too don't they?

68 **Int.:** Mm

69 **Alex:** And [mumbles] one says: 'that you all do for yourself'. Well, if I get  
70 the chance then I want to let everybody enjoy it.

71 **Int.:** Yes, if people enjoy themselves.

72 **Alex:** Well and if you don't enjoy it, then you just don't watch. Then  
73 there are plenty of other channels if you don't want to watch that.

74 **Int.:** Yes, you have that freedom yeah.

75 **Alex:** Yes.

76 **Int.:** Uhm, did you learn anything let's say from participating in that  
77 film?

78 **Alex:** Well, the only thing you have to do is stay true to yourself. Other  
79 than that nothing special and, no

80 **Int.:** Become wiser about something?

81 **Alex:** No, I learned little from it I think. I don't know what you should  
82 learn from it, but you hope once again that you were called up. 'I have a  
83 good spot for you in a uhm, in just a film or so, that you may play the  
84 leading part. Just as well that nobody approaches you then, then I can  
85 immediately quite the [business]. Then I can the final past as a hobby I  
86 can still go and work in film.

## Appendix 5.2 Ben's account (excerpts)

1 **Ben:** So there it went somewhat a little bit like yeah, then I stood their  
2 stammering a bit and all. Then we started over here. Well that was uhm,  
3 well that was just fun. Just uhm. I also said to [filmmaker], I say  
4 [mumbles] 'what I, for example, would have liked', but that of course is,  
5 look I, I am not part of the film world myself. But indeed, uhm, what I  
6 gave as an example, what you see on TV you also have such a  
7 programme, [programme].

8 **Int.:** Mm

9 **Ben:** You know, that you go for a walk with someone. I say i- I think if I  
10 had done something like that, that that, if that could have been possible,  
11 in the forest and just talk and what do you think, well then I could have  
12 said much more too. Than, than now like well, ok, question, answer,  
13 question, answer.

14 **Int.:** Was it more like a real interview?

15 **Ben:** We did a very long interview here, yeah.

16 **Int.:** Mm

17 **Ben:** But in itself quite spontaneous, so not not really a, a list of  
18 questions or so. Just, yeah, you are purely sitting there like question,  
19 answer. You get into a conversation and then you can also deviate from  
20 that, so therefore it has also shot too much at a point, just I think i- if  
21 you, if you had walked me outside as well and, and a camera on your  
22 neck and uhm 'now tell me how you think about this, or that', I think  
23 that that much more information would have come out then, yeah.

24 ...

25 **Int.:** Uhm did you uhm at that moment, or maybe at another moment  
26 also, consider to uhm just stop completely with with your participation  
27 or?

28 **Ben:** No, no. No I am always in for a penny, in for a pound.

29 **Int.:** Yes?

30 **Ben:** Yes. I, think then I just honestly say how and what and for me  
31 indeed the most important thing has been trust, that really is the most

32 important. If I would say 'hey', really not, I am not the most difficult one  
 33 that I say 'hey, [filmmaker] and now this has to and what are you putting  
 34 in there now?' I think 'no, it's up to him'. He is a filmmaker I say things  
 35 myself I say, so yeah even if you say things wrong, you can still, you can  
 36 still say it, but that just went alright. If I said hey, eh, 'this is going  
 37 wrong' or 'this is the wrong' ... OK, done.

38 **Int.:** Yeah

39 **Ben:** Yeah

40 **Int.:** Yes, that just functioned well?

41 **Ben:** That just functioned well, yeah.

42 ...

43 **Int.:** Yes. You preferred to have some more background of your  
 44 motivation and uhm

45 **Ben:** Yeah. Well I think that if I then such an [other participant 1] in that  
 46 film and that [other participant 2]. I think 'yeah, they would have liked to  
 47 be included more.' I think everyone will want that eh, so I said to them as  
 48 well: 'yeah see, you can't say ' 'course I want to be included for a quarter,  
 49 or twenty minutes'. But hey, a film of eighty minutes. That just won't  
 50 work.

51 **Int.:** Mm

52 **Ben:** Eh, because then of course you are looking at another film, fiction  
 53 films, then an actor is not included that much either. While a good story,  
 54 but that, that, that I find a missed opportunity like eh. 'I am [Ben], I vote  
 55 for [politician] because'.

56 **Int.:** Yes

57 **Ben:** 'And this I do for a job and now I will go and vote and I am happy  
 58 that I voted.' I think you can also depict that in five minutes. So for me  
 59 that could have been included yeah.

60 **Int.:** Do you feel like that with uhm other uhm [political movement]-  
 61 voters, let's say uhm has been done better let's say?

62 **Ben:** Yeah, yeah. Well and and therefore I also think a lot about that  
 63 week like uhm, look I I bring the film like [filmmaker] said it in balance  
 64 eh. You have a prejudice about people and uhm a number of those are

## Participatory spaces

65 included. And if you see that you think 'yeah, those are [political  
66 movement]-voters'. As a layman I would think that myself. That I already  
67 saw in the newspaper back then, those were interviewed as well. But I  
68 am not I am myself, that is me eh, but it is also I am also a [political  
69 movement]-voter and uhm, yeah, how should I put that in a balanced  
70 way?

71 ...

72 **Ben:** it is of course wife and kids and terraced house, house with a  
73 through lounge and in health care, well there's no, there's no end to it  
74 actually. A feeling for music, I shed a tear too, so that is me, just, yeah,  
75 that someone like that can also think more radically, that could have  
76 been included as well..

77 ...

78 **Ben:** ...and if I look at myself, then I think then I myself would have liked  
79 it like also the one with his children and who is crying. It's not acted eh,  
80 neighbours were upset '[Ben] was crying' and we talked about it for  
81 hours on end. Then you think 'Yeah, I don't mind at all. I blubber as  
82 much as is necessary, but then yeah. But I think also the one in health  
83 care who cries, he runs into it.

**Appendix 5.3 Chris' account (excerpts)**

- 1 **Chris:** But that it uhm, th-th-it is art eh? So uhm, uhm,that it would  
 2 turn out this beautiful with splendid images and very nice points of view  
 3 added and brilliant music to match, well yeah, well, you don't know that.
- 4 **Int.:** No
- 5 **Chris:** That you have to wait and see. But I already said that, she is an  
 6 extraordinary good documentary filmmaker, so I don't have, haven't  
 7 doubted that, but I did not know it would become so beautiful.
- 8 **Int.:** Mm
- 9 **Chris:** Is it true uhm craftsmanship uhm. Extraordinarily clever.  
 10 ...
- 11 **Chris:** Well, we we come out of [cafe], walk onto [square] and by chance it  
 12 was very pretty, it was around Christmas so uhm, the square was full of  
 13 all trees were hung with lights, it was a fairy-like view, as the phrase  
 14 goes.
- 15 **Int.:** Mm
- 16 **Chris:** Then we crossed the [square] and then into [street] and so  
 17 disappear in the crowd eh, quite a hassle, so we walk like that, the voices  
 18 dying away and the image disappearing into that [street] which I would  
 19 have found a beautiful ending to the film.
- 20 **Int.:** Mm
- 21 **Chris:** And what s--th-it-t until we walk into [street] and that moment it  
 22 stops and something else begins.
- 23 **Int.:** Ok
- 24 **Chris:** Because that had to be included too and that that could not  
 25 before, that really had to be after, well, in brief, well but yeah I have  
 26 witnesses the whole despairing process of [filmmaker]. She said 'yeah  
 27 [mumbles] whether something in or [mumbles]', 'I inclu – no, after all I  
 28 took it' well yeah [laughs]. And after all it is her film so uhm. And if you  
 29 participate in it, then anyway you sort of hand yourself over.
- 30 **Int.:** Then you sort of hand yourself over?
- 31 **Chris:** Yes, yeahyeahyeahyeah, 'course. If I commission a painter to

## Participatory spaces

32 make a portrait then uhm, then I hand that over and then I will see how  
33 it turns out. And that if uhm, so you ask someone you trust and whom  
34 you think 'well, him I can', then in hindsight you don't go and n-  
35 [mumbles] the eye. No.

36 **Int.:** That is to some extent part of the deal that you

37 **Chris:** Yeah

38 **Int.:** hand

39 **Chris:** Yeah

40 **Int.:** that over let's say.

41 **Chris:** Yeah, what what I always do, so also with publisher. I hand in the  
42 manuscript and a cover is devised and a title is devised, so that is,  
43 everything is devised and I think them skilled and I don't interfere in  
44 that.

45 **Int.:** Mm

46 **Chris:** That is their job.

47 **Int.:** Mm, ok. Uhm, were there in addition uhm f-fragments or parts that  
48 uhm, that you apart from that one fragment had wanted included maybe  
49 [mumbles]

50 **Chris:** No, no-no-no. No, there were no additional things of which I say  
51 'those should have been'. No, missed no-nothing in that film.

52 **Int.:** Were there things uhm you absolutely did not want to have  
53 included?

54 **Chris:** Regarding myself or the whole film?

55 **Int.:** No, regarding yourself.

56 **Chris:** Oh no, no, no no, certainly not no.

57 **Int.:** And regarding the whole film?

58 **Chris:** No, no, no, no I have uhm, I was really uhm touched, moved by  
59 the film, it is a beautiful film really, so I really have no no no objection  
60 against or.

**Appendix 5.4 Debby's account (excerpt)**

1 **Int.:** Mm OK. Uhm uhm has there, has there uhm been any moment at  
2 which you uhm started doubting about your participation or maybe  
3 thought well, maybe it was not such a good idea after all?

4 **Debby:** Uhm yes, yes, there was. When uhm, it was let's say the second  
5 part of the uhm let's say in August the second part of the shooting days  
6 when uhm, yeah, there were a couple of shooting days then, two or three  
7 of which I, yeah, about which I didn't feel so good maybe also because  
8 time began to press a bit uhm because I also noticed , but that is my  
9 interpretation, that uhm [filmmaker] found it a little hard to let go of the  
10 idea in my view that he would let's say those three ladies let's say not let  
11 them converge any more and he found that quite difficult that I kept my  
12 distance let's say to the subject and that every time I... I corrected him  
13 very often, which is indeed very irritating, I get that, but then had uhm  
14 an idea about how something had been or about a sequence of uhm  
15 events in the history of Emma and then I say 'no that isn't right, because  
16 first this happened and after that that happened'. And that at a certain  
17 point happened quite often and he, in my view he became a little  
18 impatient, like 'yeah, but I just want to tell this story and those facts,  
19 they actually don't matter'. And yeah I yeah but I think that just I can  
20 yes, that is really another line of approach uh, so I did not go along with  
21 that, that, that, I think he had to get used to that and th-that did not  
22 make it any easier to communicate because he then uhm. I became very  
23 obstinate because of it so I I really piped down a little and then I thought  
24 'well then, not', you know, but I am, I am just not going to say it that  
25 way. Once we really had a clash that uhm, around here, at the, it would  
26 actually be fun to if that did make it into the documentary but that at the  
27 uhm, we are around here are ruins from the [building] she actually had  
28 wanted to build, a very large [building], but that is in fact yes, the  
29 imagination of her uhm, the illusion that broke down, so that is a  
30 beautiful image and that for him was very important to picture that  
31 properly and do an important interview there. Uhm, and a topic would be

## Participatory spaces

32 addressed there that is very technical uhm which I really is not that  
33 important, about how it was [transferred]. And what not. Uhm and we  
34 had discussed that a few days earlier, because he said uhm, in the car  
35 once casually 'well, and then [entity 1] buys it'. And I said 'no, [entity 1]  
36 didn't buy it it is a [entity 2]' and what not. 'Yeah, yeah, yeah, but that  
37 doesn't matter' and then I said 'no, that is really very important and that  
38 is uhm, you'd better leave it than that I say it incorrectly because that,  
39 yeah I mean, apart from the fact that [entity 3] will be on my back, it just  
40 isn't correct' and uhm then I said 'it's fine with me to address that, but it  
41 is a very technical and a very boring, boring story actually, so I want to  
42 think about that during the weekend, about how I can tell that in one or  
43 two phrases, that it is correct but that it is also fun to listen to.' Uhm,  
44 and so we had agreed to that and then on Friday, so we would there, so  
45 the following Monday we were going to address that. Friday we had the  
46 shooting here at the ruins and then it came up and then I said to him  
47 'yeah, so I haven't thought about that yet. I haven't had the opportunity  
48 yet to phrase that properly and then he pushed me a little to nevertheless  
49 say it his way and uhm, well that was I it uhm, I didn't want that and  
50 uhm I tried to say 'well, I now want, I just want to think about it for a  
51 while now, just give me five minutes and then I will come up with  
52 something that, which I can agree to'. But he kept talking into me a little,  
53 like 'yeah, you can just this?' or uhm, 'you know, nobody will notice and  
54 you can just do it and it all isn't that important anyway and maybe it  
55 won't even make it into the film' and uhm well, what do I know what all.  
56 So I got very irritated by that. I had, if only because he continued talking  
57 while I asked if he just wanted to keep silent for a while. So then I went a  
58 little off the deep end and then I indeed said 'you really have to keep  
59 silent now' and then, then I saw the cameraman and his soundman both  
60 take a few steps back like 'well, we'll just wait till this uhm is sorted out'.  
61 And uhm, but well, then I uhm, slightly, I banged the table and I said  
62 'well, it's fine with me if you want to record it now at all costs, but then I  
63 really want to think about it for a while' and uhm, that worked out in the  
64 end, in the end it was done in a jiffy and I could uhm, pretty quickly give

65 a turn to it that was correct and that was yet a little appealing. But for  
 66 the underlying liaison that was. Then I really thought ‘well, sit on it,  
 67 really, if it needs to go this way’. I also just personally find it does not  
 68 match the idea of a documentary. I think a documentary I think is an  
 69 investigation and of course you have some poetic license, but I also  
 70 understand that you don’t uhm have the luxury like me to nuance  
 71 everything in notes and well, but alright, I think you really [can]not  
 72 things, that not if you know it isn’t correct. Look, that you make a  
 73 mistake that is one thing, but if if someone tells you ‘this is incorrect’ I  
 74 just really don’t think you can continue uhm.

75 **Int.:** Yes

76 **Debby:** But alright that uhm, in the end he was uhm. He understood it  
 77 and he completely went along with it, but that was just a bit of a struggle  
 78 and I think for him too it uhm. He will also, I know ninety-nine percent  
 79 certain it is not included in the film, because it’s just not such an  
 80 interesting or important thing and he just took that step already much  
 81 sooner like it ‘I want to have the whole story in uhm, in any case on film  
 82 and then I will cut out’. So I do get his argument that ‘well, just say it  
 83 this way, it will probably go out and, but well that uhm, so there we  
 84 differed in opinion a little.

85 **Int.:** Yes

86 **Debby:** yes

87 **Int.:** Did he give you time then to think about it for a while

88 **Debby:** Absolutely, yeah yeah yeah

89 **Int.:** to come to an acceptable phrase?

90 **Debby:** Yeah yeah, but I really had to extort it from him and so that was,  
 91 because it had already built up a little uhm and uhm, yeah, because that  
 92 was just a number, it was just a number of times that that I just noticed  
 93 that he, justly, but wanted to tell his story and so just was a little uhm,  
 94 imperative in that, so that yeah that that didn’t work out and then yeah  
 95 then at a certain point you get something like that. And so there just  
 96 were a few moments of which I thought ‘well, if it has to go that way,  
 97 then I just don’t want it, because I yeah then uhm yeah then you just

## Participatory spaces

98 mar what you stand for yourself let's say,

99 **Int.:** yes

100 **Debby:** to put it very seriously, but uhm

101 **Int.:** yes

102 **Debby:** Yeah, that uhm, well really quit with it I wouldn't have done of

103 course, not so quickly, but that experience was. Then I did think 'yeah

104 now I am not going to be all sweet and kind any longer because I am, this

105 I really don't want'. So uhm yeah,

106 **Int.:** Has that uhm, was that solved that day or has it uhm been an issue

107 after that as well, that, that clash?

108 **Debby:** Uhm, well is has well it was the last filming- as good as the last,

109 no, that is not true as we had of course Monday at [location]. Uhm, no, it

110 was sorted out, but uhm also because I could at that moment in my way

111 that I got the time to phrase it properly, we also filmed it like that. After

112 that we have uhm uhm by accident or uhm just by circumstance been

113 able to take beautiful shots of the setting sun so then everyone was fully

114 cheerful and happy so the mood was also good again, but it just turned

115 very chilly indeed.

## References

- Aibel, Robert. 1988. Ethics and Professionalism in Documentary Film-making. In *Image Ethics. The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film, and Television*, edited by Larry Gross, John S. Katz, and Jay Ruby, 108–118. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Allmark, Peter, Jonathan Boote, Eleni Chambers, Amanda Clarke, Ann McDonnell, Andrew Thompson, and Angela Mary Tod. 2009. Ethical Issues in the Use of In-depth Interviews: Literature Review and Discussion. *Research Ethics Review* 5, no. 2: 48–54.
- An American Family*. Directed by Alan Raymond and Susan Raymond. PBS, 1973.
- Anderson, Carolyn, and Thomas W. Benson. 1988. Direct Cinema and the Myth of Informed Consent: The Case of Titicut Follies. In *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film, and Television*, edited by Larry Gross, John S. Katz, and Jay Ruby, 58–90. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Anderson, Carolyn, and Thomas W. Benson. 1991. *Documentary Dilemmas. Frederick Wiseman's Titicut Follies*. Carbondale/Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Armstrong-Coster, Angela. 2001. In Morte Media Jubilate [1]: An Empirical Study of Cancer-related Documentary Film. *Mortality* 6: no. 3: 287–305.
- Arriens, Klaus. 1999. *Wahrheit Und Wirklichkeit Im Film. Philosophie Des Dokumentarfilms*, Vol. 10. Würzburg, Germany: Königshausen & Neumann.
- Arthur, Paul. 2005. Extreme Makeover: The Changing Face of Documentary. *Cineaste*, Summer 2005: 18–23.
- Aufderheide, Patricia, Peter Jaszi, and Mridu Chandra. 2009. *Honest Truths: Documentary Filmmakers on Ethical Challenges in Their Work*. Washington, DC: Center for Social Media, American University.
- Bakker, Kees. 2005. The Good, the Bad, and the Documentary. *Documentary*

## Participatory spaces

- Box*, 24. <http://www.yidff.jp/docbox/24/box24-3-e.html> (accessed February 21, 2007).
- Baruch, G. F. 1982. *Moral Tales. Interviewing Parents of Congenitally Ill Children*. Doctoral thesis, London University.
- Bazin, André. 1957. De la politique des auteurs. In *Auteurs and Authorship*, edited by Barry K. Grant, 19–28. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- BBC. 2003. French Film Star Teacher Sues. *BBC News*, October 13, 2003, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3187656.stm> (accessed February 13, 2012).
- Becker, Howard S. 1988. Foreword: Images, Ethics and Organizations. In *Image Ethics. The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film, and Television*, edited by Larry Gross, John S. Katz, and Jay Ruby, xi–xvii. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Blair, Gavin J. 2010. Japanese Professor Sues Local Distributor of ‘The Cove’: Claims Misrepresentation. *The Hollywood Reporter*, December 3, 2010, <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/japanese-professor-sues-local-distributor-55996> (accessed September 12, 2011).
- Borden, Sandra. 2008. Documentary Tradition and the Ethics of Michael Moore’s *Sicko*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Chicago, IL.
- Bowler, Peter, Janet Browne, and Sandra Herbert. 2009. The Perils of Publicity. *History of Science Society Newsletter* 38, no. 3: 24. [http://www.hssonline.org/publications/Newsletter2009/July\\_Perils\\_Publicity.html](http://www.hssonline.org/publications/Newsletter2009/July_Perils_Publicity.html) (accessed September 12, 2011).
- Bowling for Columbine*. Directed by Michael Moore. New York: Dog Eat Dog Films. 2002.
- Brace, Nicola, Richard Kemp, and Rosemary Snelgar. 2003. *SPSS for Psychologists. A Guide to Data Analysis Using SPSS for Windows*, 2<sup>nd</sup>. rev. ed. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Bradford, David, and John Hull. 2011. Another Blinding Documentary on Channel 4? *Journal of Visual Culture* 10, no. 1: 125–133.
- Brener, Nancy D., Laura Kann, Tim McManus, Steven A. Kinchen, Elizabeth C. Sundberg, and James G. Ross. 2002. Reliability of the 1999 Youth

- Risk Behavior Survey Questionnaire. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 31, no. 4: 336–342.
- Bruzzi, Stella. 2000. *New Documentary: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Butchart, Garnet C. 2006. On Ethics and Documentary: A Real and Actual Truth. *Communication Theory* 16: 427–452.
- Cameron, Ian. 1962. Films, Directors and Critics. In *Auteurs and Authorship*, edited by Barry K. Grant, 29–34. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Carroll, Noël, and Jinhee Choi. 2006. *Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures: An Anthology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Carter, Stacey M., Christopher F. C. Jordens, Catherine McGrath, and Miles Little. 2008. You Have to Make Something of All That Rubbish, Do You? An Empirical Investigation of the Social Process of Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Health Research* 18, no. 9: 1264–1276.
- China Villagers Documentary Project*. Directed by Cengjia, Zhou et al. Beijing: Caochangdi Workstation, 2006.
- Cicourel, Aaron V. 1964. *Method and Measurement in Sociology*. London: Free Press.
- The Cove*. Directed by Louie Psihoyos. Boulder, CO: The Oceanic Preservation Society, 2009.
- Davis, Mark A., Mark G. Andersen, and Mary B. Curtis. 2001. Measuring Ethical Ideology in Business Ethics: A Critical Analysis of the Ethics Position Questionnaire. *Journal of Business Ethics* 32: 35–53.
- Deacon, David, Michael Pickering, Peter Golding, and Graham Murdock. 1999. *Researching Communications. A Practical Guide to Methods in Media and Cultural Analysis*. London: Arnold Publishers.
- Devereaux, Mary. 2006. Beauty and Evil: The Case of Leni Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will. In *Philosophy of Film and Motion Pictures: An Anthology*, edited by Noël Carroll and Jinhee Choi, 347–361. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Dierckx de Casterlé, Bernadette, Mieke Grypdonck, Nancy Cannaerts, and Els Steeman. 2004. Empirical ethics in action: Lessons from two empirical studies in nursing ethics. *Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy* 7, 31–39.

## Participatory spaces

- Dierckx de Casterlé, Bernadette, Mieke Grypdonck, Nancy Cannaerts, and Els Steeman. 2004. Empirisch onderzoek en ethiek. Voorbeelden uit de verpleegkundige praktijk. [Empirical research and ethics. Examples from nursing practice] *Ethische Perspectieven* 14, no 1: 15–26.
- Donovan, Kay. 2006. *Tagged, a Case Study in Documentary Ethics*. Doctoral thesis, University of Technology Sydney.
- Düwell, Marcus, Christoph Hübenenthal, and Micha H. Werner. 2002. Einleitung. In *Handbuch Ethik*, edited by Marcus Düwell, Christoph Hübenenthal, and Micha H. Werner, 1–23. Stuttgart, Germany: Verlag J.B. Metzler.
- Dunn, Michael S., Varaprasad Ilapogu, LaShan Taylor, C. Naney, Roger Blackwell, Regina Wilder, and C. Givens. 2008. Self-reported Substance Use and Sexual Behaviors Among Adolescents in a Rural State. *Journal of School Health* 78, no. 11, 587–593.
- Eagleton, Terence. 1976. *Marxism and Literary Criticism*. London: Methuen.
- Être Et Avoir (To Be and to Have)* Directed by Nicolas Philibert. Paris: Maïa Films. 2002.
- Evans, Victoria P. 1999. Higher Order Factor Analysis: An Introductory Primer. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, San Antonio, TX.
- Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed*. Directed by Nathan Frankowski. Salt Lake City, UT: Rocky Mountain Pictures, 2008
- Faden, Ruth R., and Tom L. Beauchamp. 1986. *A History and Theory of Informed Consent*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fahrenheit 9/11*. Directed by Michael Moore. New York: Dog Eat Dog Films. 2004.
- Field, Andy. 2005. *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*, 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications.
- Ford Transit*. Directed by Hany Abu-Assad. Amsterdam: Augustus Film, 2002.
- Forsyth, Donelson R. 1980. A Taxonomy of Ethical Ideologies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 39, no. 1: 175–184.
- Forsyth, Donelson R. 1992. Judging the Morality of Business Practices: The Influence of Personal Moral Philosophies. *Journal of Business Ethics* 11: 461–470.

- Forsyth, Donelson R., Ernest H. O'Boyle, Jr., and Michael A. McDaniel. 2008. East Meets West: a Meta-analytic Investigation of Cultural Variations in Idealism and Relativism. *Journal of Business Ethics* 83: 813–833.
- Frank, Arthur W. 1998. First-person Micro-ethics. Deriving Principles from Below. *Hastings Center Report* 28, no. 4: 37–42.
- Gentleman, Amelia. 2004. Defeat for teacher who sued over film profits. *The Guardian*, September 29, 2004. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2004/sep/29/france.film> (accessed March 13, 2012).
- Gilbert, Craig. 1988. Reflections on an American Family, II. In *New Challenges for Documentary*, edited by Alan Rosenthal, 288–307. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Previously published in *Studies in Visual Communication* 8, no. 1 (1982).
- Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm Leonard Strauss. 2006. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory Strategies for Qualitative Research*, repr. New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transaction.
- Goldstein, Patrick. 2008. Bill Maher hates your (fill in the blank) religion. *Los Angeles Times*, June 24, 2009, [http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/the\\_big\\_picture/2008/08/bill-maher-hate.html](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/the_big_picture/2008/08/bill-maher-hate.html) (accessed October 10, 2011).
- Graham, Jenny, Ini Grewal, and Jane Lewis. 2007. *Ethics in Social Research: The Views of Research Participants*. London: National Centre for Social Research.
- Graham, Jenny, Jane Lewis, and Gerry Nicolaas. 2006. *Ethical Relations. A Review of Literature on Empirical Studies of Ethical Requirements and Research Participation*. London: National Centre for Social Research.
- Gray, B. Thomas. 1997. Higher Order Factor Analysis. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, San Antonio, TX.
- Gross, Larry. 1988. The Ethics of (mis)representation. In *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film, and Television*, edited by Larry Gross, John S. Katz, and Jay Ruby, 188–202. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gross, Larry, John Stuart Katz, and Jay Ruby, editors. 1988a. *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film, and Television*. New

## Participatory spaces

York: Oxford University Press.

Gross, Larry, John Stuart Katz, and Jay Ruby. 1988b. Introduction: A moral pause. In *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film, and Television*, edited by Larry Gross, John S. Katz, and Jay Ruby, 3-33. New York: Oxford University Press.

Guillemin, Marilys, and Lynn Gillam. 2004. Ethics, Reflexivity, and 'Ethically Important Moments' in Research. *Qualitative Inquiry* 10, no. 2: 261-280.

*High School*. Directed by Frederick Wiseman. 1968.

Holstein, James A., and Jaber F. Gubrium. 1995. *The Active Interview*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

*Hospital*. Directed by Frederick Wiseman. 1970.

Jalon, Allan M. 2011. Nonfiction Film: Feud over 'Project Nim'. *Los Angeles Times*, July 10, 2011, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jul/10/entertainment/la-ca-project-nim-20110710> (accessed September 12, 2011).

Jarvie, Ian. 1987. *Philosophy of the Film: Epistemology, Ontology, Aesthetics*. New York: Routledge, Kegan Paul.

De Jong, Wilma, Jerry Rothwell, and Erik Knudsen. 2012. *Creative Documentary. Theory and Practice*. Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Education.

Katz, John Stuart, and Judith Milstein Katz. 1988. Ethics and the Perception of Ethics in Autobiographical Film. In *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film, and Television*, edited by Larry Gross, John S. Katz, and Jay Ruby, 119-134. New York: Oxford University Press.

Keller, David R., and Allen Hill, eds. 2004. *Ethics Across the Curriculum*. Fall 2004. Orem, UT: Utah Valley State College.

Kenhove, Patrick Van, Iris Vermeir, and Steven Verniers. 2001. An Empirical Investigation of the Relationships Between Ethical Beliefs, Ethical Ideology, Political Preference and Need for Closure. *Journal of Business Ethics* 32: 347-361.

Kerrigan, Susan, and Phillip McIntyre. 2010. The 'Creative Treatment of Actuality': Rationalizing and Reconceptualizing the Notion of Creativity

- for Documentary Practice. *Journal of Media Practice* 11, no. 3: 111–130.
- Kettner, Matthias. 2002. Moral. In *Handbuch Ethik*, edited by Marcus Düwell, Christoph Hübenal, and Micha H. Werner, 410–414. Stuttgart, Germany: Verlag J.B. Metzler.
- King, John D., and Brian Kowalchuk. 1994. *ISO 30 Adolescent: Inventory of Suicide Orientation - 30*. Minneapolis, MN: NCS Pearson.
- Komesaroff, Paul A. 1995. From Bioethics to Microethics: Ethical Debate and Clinical Medicine. In *Troubled Bodies: Critical Perspectives on Postmodernism, Medical Ethics, and the Body*, edited by Paul A. Komesaroff, 62–86. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Koughan, Martin. 2000. Reality-based Filmmaking Versus Reality. In *More Than a Movie. Ethics in Entertainment*, edited by Miguel Valenti, Les Brown, and Laurie Trotta, 209–218. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Kuehl, Jerry. 1988. Truth Claims. In *New Challenges for Documentary*, edited by Alan Rosenthal, 103–109. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Previously published in *Sight and Sound* 50, no. 4 (1981): 272–274.
- Kupfer, Joseph H. 2006. Film Criticism and Virtue Theory. In *Philosophy of Film and the Motion Pictures*, edited by Noël Carroll and Jinhee Choi, 335–346. Malden, CA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Light, Andrew. 2003. *Reel Arguments: Film, Philosophy, and Social Criticism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Linton, James M. 1976. The Moral Dimension in Documentary. *Journal of the University Film Association* 28, no. 2: 17–22.
- Loehlin, John C. 2004. *Latent Variable Models. An Introduction to Factor, Path, and Structural Equation Analysis*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Maccarone, Ellen M. 2010. Ethical Responsibilities to Subjects and Documentary Filmmaking. *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 25, no. 3: 192–206.
- Mackenzie, Michael. 2003. From Athens to Berlin: The 1936 Olympics and Leni Riefenstahl's Olympia. *Critical Inquiry* 29, no. 2: 302–336.
- Malkowski, Jennifer. 2007. Reel Paradise / Sisters in Law. *Film Quarterly* 60,

## Participatory spaces

no. 4: 30–34.

*Man of Aran*. Directed by Robert Flaherty. 1934.

de Mare, Heidi. 2005. Welsprekende Waarschijnlijkheden. Het Misplaatste Moralisme in het Nederlandse Documentaire-debat naar Aanleiding van Ford Transit (2002). [Documentary in dispute: A reconsideration of premises] *E-View* 2005, no. 1: 1–82. <http://comcom.uvt.nl/e-view/05-1/mare.PDF>

Marshall, Jack. 2004. Fahrenheit 911. *Ethics Scoreboard*, June 30, 2004, sec. Sports and Entertainment. <http://www.ethicsscoreboard.com/list/fahrenheit911.html> (accessed February 26, 2007).

Martin, Joanne. 1990. Deconstructing Organizational Taboos: The Suppression of Gender Conflict in Organizations. *Organization Science* 1, no. 4: 339–359.

May, Alexis, and E. David Klonsky. 2010. Validity of Suicidality Items from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey in a High School Sample. *Assessment* 20, no. 10: 1–3

McAlpine, Heather, Linda Kristjanson, and Davina Poroch. 1997. Development and Testing of the Ethical Reasoning Tool (ERT): An Instrument to Measure the Ethical Reasoning of Nurses. *Journal of Advances Nursing* 25: 1151–1161.

McIntosh, Michele Janet. 2009. *Participants' Perspectives of Risk Inherent in Unstructured Qualitative Interviews*. Doctoral thesis, University of Alberta Edmonton.

Miller, Jody, and Barry Glassner. 1997. The 'Inside' and the 'Outside': Finding Realities in Interviews. In *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, edited by David Silverman, 99–112. London: Sage Publications.

Miller, Jody, and Barry Glassner. 2004. The 'Inside' and the 'Outside': Finding Realities in Interviews. In *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, 2nd ed., edited by David Silverman, 125–139. London: Sage Publications.

Miller, Toby. 1998. *Technologies of Truth. Cultural Citizenship and the Popular Media*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Minh-ha, Trinh T. 1991. The Totalizing Quest of Meaning. In *Theorizing*

- Documentary*, edited by Michael Renov, 90–107. London: Routledge.
- Muehlenkamp, Jennifer J., Peter M. Gutierrez, Augustine Osman, and Francisco X. Barrios. 2005. Validation of the Positive And Negative Suicide Ideation (PANSI) Inventory in a Diverse Sample of Young Adults. *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 61, no. 4: 431–445.
- Myers, P. Z. 2007a. I'm Gonna Be a Movie Star. *Pharyngula*, 22 August 2007, [http://scienceblogs.com/pharyngula/2007/08/im\\_gonna\\_be\\_a\\_movie\\_star.php](http://scienceblogs.com/pharyngula/2007/08/im_gonna_be_a_movie_star.php) (accessed June 26, 2009).
- Myers, P. Z. 2007b. Expelled Producer Seems to Be Embarrassed About His Sneaky Tactics. *Pharyngula*, 28 August 2007, [http://scienceblogs.com/pharyngula/2007/08/expelled\\_producer\\_seems\\_to\\_be.php](http://scienceblogs.com/pharyngula/2007/08/expelled_producer_seems_to_be.php) (accessed June 24, 2009).
- Myers, P. Z.. 2008. Expelled! *Pharyngula*, 20 March 2008, <http://scienceblogs.com/pharyngula/2008/03/expelled.php> (accessed July 6, 2009).
- Myser, Catherine, and David L. Clark. 1998. 'Fixing' Katie and Eilish: Medical Documentaries and the Subjection of Conjoined Twins. *Literature and Medicine* 17, no 1: 45–67.
- Nanook of the North*. Directed by Robert Flaherty. 1922.
- Nash, Katherine. 2009. *Beyond the Frame: A Study in Observational Documentary Ethics*. Doctoral thesis, University of New England, Armidale New South Wales.
- The New York Times. 2005. *The New York Times Company Policy on Ethics in Journalism*. <http://www.nytc.com/press/ethics.html> (accessed May 29, 2012).
- Nichols, Bill. 1991. *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Nichols, Bill. 1993. 'Getting to Know You ...': Knowledge, Power, and the Body. In *Theorizing Documentary*, edited by Michael Renov, 174–191. London: Routledge.
- Nichols, Bill. 2001. *Introduction to Documentary*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Nichols, Bill. 2010. *Introduction to Documentary*. 2nd ed. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Nijsingh, Niels, and Marcus Düwell. 2009. Interdisciplinarity, Applied Ethics

## Participatory spaces

- and Social Science. In *Evaluating New Technologies. Methodological Problems for the Ethical Assessment of Technology Developments*, edited by Paul Sollie and Marcus Düwell, 79–92. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Nikku, Nina, and Brengt Erik Eriksson. 2006. Microethics in Action. *Bioethics* 20, no. 4: 169–179.
- Obedience*. Directed by Stanley Milgram. 1965.
- Osman, Augustine, Peter M. Gutierrez, Francisco X. Barrios, Courtney L. Bagge, Beverly A. Kopper, and Sena Linden. 2005. The Inventory of Suicide Orientation-30: Further Validation with Adolescent Psychiatric Inpatient. *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 61, no. 4: 481–497.
- Osman, Augustine, Peter M. Gutierrez, Beverly A. Kopper, Francisco X. Barrios, and Christine E. Chiros. 1998. The Positive and Negative Suicide Ideation Inventory: Development and Validation. *Psychological Reports* 82, no. 3: 783–793.
- Petrie, Duncan J. 1991. *Creativity and Constraint in the British Film Industry*. London: Macmillan.
- Podlas, Kimberlianne. 2009. This Film Has Been Rated ‘Approved’: Are Documentary Films Subject to Institutional Review Board Approval and Federal ‘Human Subjects Research’ Rules? [http://works.bepress.com/kimberlianne\\_podlas/2](http://works.bepress.com/kimberlianne_podlas/2) (accessed March 17, 2010).
- Press Complaints Commission. 2011. Editors' Code of Practice, 2011. <http://www.pcc.org.uk/cop/practice.html> (accessed May 29, 2012).
- Priebe, Gisela, Martin Bäckström, and Mare Ainsaar. 2010. Vulnerable Adolescent Participants’ Experience in Surveys on Sexuality and Sexual Abuse: Ethical Aspects. *Child Abuse and Neglect* 34, no. 6: 438–447.
- Project Nim*. Directed by James Marsh. London: Red Box Films. 2011.
- Pryluck, Calvin. 1988. Ultimately We Are All Outsiders: The Ethics of Documentary Filming. In *New Challenges for Documentary*, edited by Alan Rosenthal, 255–268. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Previously published in *Journal of the University Film Association* 28, no.1 (1976): 21–29.
- Puka, Bill. 2002. The DIT and the ‘Dark Side’ of Development. *Journal of Moral Education* 31, no. 3: 339–352.

- Rapley, Tim. 2004. Interviews. In *Qualitative Research Practice*, edited by Clive Seale, Giampietro Gobo, Jaber F. Gubrium, and David Silverman, 15–33. London: Sage Publications.
- Rapley, Timothy John. 2001. The Art(fulness) of Open-ended Interviewin: Some Considerations in Analysing Interviews. *Qualitative Research* 1, no. 3: 303–323.
- Reidenbach, R. Eric, and Donald P. Robin. 1988. Some Initial Steps Toward Improving the Measurement of Ethical Evaluations of Marketing Activities. *Journal of Business Ethics* 7: 871–879.
- Reidenbach, R. Eric, and Donald P. Robin. 1990. Toward the Development of a Multidimensional Scale for Improving Evaluations of Business Ethics. *Journal of Business Ethics* 9: 639–653.
- Reidenbach, R. Eric, and Donald P. Robin. 1993. A Comment on ‘A Multidimensional Scale for Measuring Business Ethics: A Purification and Refinement’. *Journal of Business Ethics* 12: 663–664.
- Religulous*. Directed by Larry Charles. Santa Monica, CA: Lions Gate Entertainment. 2008.
- Renov, Michael, ed. 1993a. *Theorizing Documentary*. London: Routledge.
- Renov, Michael. 1993b. “Towards a poetics of documentary.” In *Theorizing documentary*, edited by Michael Renov, 12–36. London: Routledge.
- Rest, James. 1979. *Development in Judging Moral Issues*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Rest, James, Darcia Narvaez, Muriel Bebeau, and Stephen Thoma. 1999. A Neo-kohlbergian Approach: The DIT and Schema Theory. *Educational Psychology* 11, no. 4: 291–324.
- Rosenthal, Alan, ed. 1988a. *New Challenges for Documentary*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Rosenthal, Alan. 1988b. Introduction. In *New Challenges for Documentary*, edited by Alan Rosenthal, 245–253. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Rosenthal, Alan, and John Corner, eds. 2005. *New Challenges for Documentary*. 2nd ed. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Ruby, Jay. 1988. The Ethics of Imagemaking; or, ‘They’re Going to Put Me in the Movies. They’re Going to Make a Big Star Out of Me...’. In *New*

## Participatory spaces

- Challenges for Documentary*, edited by Alan Rosenthal, 307–318. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Schleiden, Sebastian, Michael Jungert, and Robert Bauer. 2010. Mission: Impossible? On Empirical-Normative Collaboration in Ethical Reasoning. *Ethical Theory & Moral Practice* 13, no. 1: 59–71.
- Shoah*. Directed by Claude Lanzmann. 1985.
- Sicko*. Directed by Michael Moore. New York: Dog Eat Dog Films. 2007.
- Silverman, David. 2006. *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Sage Publications.
- Smaill, Belinda. 2009. The Documentaries of Kim Longinotto: Women, Change, and Painful Modernity. *Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies* 24, no. 2: 43–75.
- Sontag, Susan. 1975. Fascinating Fascism. *New York Review of Books*, February 6, 1975, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1975/feb/06/fascinating-fascism> (accessed February 14, 2007).
- Stevens, James P. 2002. *Applied Multivariate Statistics for the Social Sciences*. 4th ed. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum Associates.
- Summerhayes, Catherine. 2001. Film as Cultural Performance. Doctoral Thesis, Australian National University, Canberra.
- Tanner, Paul. 2004. Michael Moore, Ethics, and UVSC: Liberal/conservative Is the Wrong Argument. *Ethics Across the Curriculum* Fall 2004: 7.
- Thoma, Stephen, Robert Barnett, James Rest, and Darcia Narvaez. 1999. What Does the DIT Measure? *British Journal of Social Psychology* 38: 103–111.
- Thomas, Stephen. 2010. *Hope - Towards an Ethical Framework of Collaborative Practice in Documentary Filmmaking*. Master's thesis, The University of Melbourne.
- Tinsley, Howard E. A., and Diane J. Tinsley. 1987. Uses of Factor Analysis in Counseling Psychology Research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 34, no. 4: 414–424.
- Titicut Follies*. Directed by Frederick Wiseman. 1967.
- Triumph des Willens*. Directed by Leni Riefenstahl. 1935.
- Truffaut, François. 1954. A Certain Tendency of the French Cinema. In *Auteurs and Authorship*, edited by Barry K. Grant, 9–18. Malden, MA:

- Blackwell Publishing.
- Union Docs. 2012. Master Class: Kim Longinotto on Documentary Filmmaking. <http://www.uniondocs.org/2012-03-30-kim-longinotto-on-documentary-filmmaking> (accessed April 4, 2012).
- Vadas, Melinda. 2006. A First Look at the Pornography/civil Rights Ordinance: Could Pornography Be the Subordination of Women? In *Philosophy of Film and the Motion Pictures*, edited by Noël Carroll and Jinhee Choi, 362–378. Malden, CA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Valenti, F. Miguel. 2000. Hollywood Recasts History? ‘Ain’t Nothing Like the Real Thing’. In *More Than a Movie. Ethics in Entertainment*, 193–205. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- The Voyage That Shook the World*. Directed by Steve Murray. Eight Mile Plains, Queensland: Fathom Media. 2009.
- Walsh, Jeffrey A., and Jeremy Braithwaite. 2008. Self-reported Alcohol Consumption and Sexual Behavior in Males and Females: Using the Unmatched-count Technique to Examine Reporting Practices of Socially Sensitive Subjects in a Sample of University Students. *Journal of Alcohol and Drug Education* 52, no. 2: 49–72.
- Winston, Brian. 1988a. Documentary: I Think We Are in Trouble. In *New Challenges for Documentary*, edited by Alan Rosenthal, 21–33. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Previously published in *Sight and Sound* 48, no. 1 (1978/1979): 2-7.
- Winston, Brian. 1988b. The Tradition of the Victim in Griersonian Documentary. In *Image Ethics: The Moral Rights of Subjects in Photographs, Film, and Television*, edited by Larry Gross, John S. Katz, and Jay Ruby, 34-57 New York: Oxford University Press.
- Winston, Brian. 1993. The Documentary as Scientific Inscription. In *Theorizing Documentary*, edited by Michael Renov, 37–57. London: Routledge.
- Winston, Brian. 1995. *Claiming the Real: The Documentary Film Revisited*. London: The British Film Institute.
- Winston, Brian. 2000. *Lies, Damn Lies and Documentaries*. London: The British Film Institute.
- Wiseman, Frederick. 2001. Privacy and Documentary Filmmaking. *Social Research* 68. no. 1: 41–47.

## Participatory spaces

- Wolff, Hans-Georg, and Katja Preising. 2005. Exploring Item and Higher Order Factor Structure with the Schmid-Leiman Solution: Syntax Codes for SPSS and SAS. *Behavior Research Methods* 37, no. 1: 48–58.
- Yarhouse, Mark A., and Helen M. de DeVries. 2000. When Psychologists Work with Older Adults: a Survey of Ethical Beliefs and Practices. *Journal of Clinical Geropsychology* 6, no. 3: 149–163.

## Summary

### Introduction

In this thesis I evaluate the efficaciousness of the academic discussion on the ethics of documentary filmmaking. In the discourse, scholars have presupposed and ethically evaluated a certain documentary practice. I aim to assess a specific contemporary practice: author documentary filmmaking, a practice that allows for a filmmaker's personal artistic expression. Does the interpretation of the practice as it is presupposed in the discourse reflect such a practice as well when it comes to issues that demand ethical consideration or that have a moral dimension? And if not, what might such a contemporary practice look like and what consequences would the differences have for the ethical evaluation of documentary filmmaking?

### Scholarly discourse

With a focus on the filmmaker-participant relationship, the research question focused on which moral issues filmmakers and participants encounter in the everyday practice of making documentary films and how they deal with such issues. The scholarly documentary discourse includes a discussion of moral issues deemed relevant to documentary filmmaking as well as a few initial strategies considered appropriate for dealing with such issues, or for preventing them. In addition, scholars discussed a number of contextual aspects of influence on the experience of, and on dealing with such issues. In discussing the ethics of documentary film and filmmaking, scholars also considered the documentary participant, and characterized her as vulnerable with respect to the consequences of documentary representation, ignorant about the documentary practice, and as having nothing to gain from her participation.

After distilling the moral issues, strategies, and contexts from the discourse, I supplemented this list by interviewing seventeen Dutch author documentary filmmakers and asking them for examples from their own experiences. These respondents most notably mentioned additional strategies, and this painted a more dynamic picture of the documentary practice in this

## Participatory spaces

respect than did the scholarly discourse.

I investigated the contemporary practice of author documentary filmmaking by means of two subprojects. The perspective of filmmakers on their profession I investigated through a survey and the perspective of participants I investigated through interviews.

### Filmmakers' perspective

To measure the extent to which filmmakers had experienced the moral issues and strategies derived from the literature and the initial interviews, and in which production and personal contexts this had happened, I designed a survey. My sample consisted of filmmaker who had had a film screened at one or more of twelve international documentary film festivals worldwide. After a pilot study, I invited 659 filmmakers to complete the questionnaire; in the end, the data of 158 respondents were included in the analysis.

For the analysis I relied on an Exploratory Factor Analysis, which uncovers patterns in a dataset. The results of the survey indicated a general division between communicative cooperation on the one hand and unsolved conflict on the other, with an uncooperative participant somewhere in between. Taking into account the extent to which filmmakers reported experiencing patterns of cooperation and conflict, dominating were filmmakers' efforts to cooperate with the participant with the interests of the film in mind, while relying on their professional position and abilities to get what they needed for the film. Conflict surfaced in various patterns and can be regarded as a relevant part of the experience, as a majority of filmmakers indicated experiencing such conflict, though to limited extents. I used variables about the participant, the filmmaker, and the project to investigate the extent to which such contextual variables could predict the experience of cooperation and conflict. For the patterns related to communication and cooperation, the most important predicting variables were the position of the participant in the project (as a single or one of a number of central participants), the budget of the project, and the duty to make the best film possible; for the patterns related to conflict these were cultural similarity, filming and editing time, the controversy of the content of the film, the willingness to meet financiers' wishes, the willingness to compromise depending on the interests at stake,

and whether or not the filmmaker had had some philosophy and/or ethics education. However, the statistical calculations indicated that the predictive strength of such variables in general was very limited: they could only predict small differences between filmmakers and their relevance was therefore limited.

#### Participants' perspective

To include the perspective of documentary participants on the practice of making documentary film, I interviewed four Dutch documentary participants: Alex, Ben, Chris, and Debby. These respondents I found after consulting a number of Dutch documentary producers about suitable projects and participants.

I analysed their interview accounts by investigating what these respondents said about their experiences, with a focus on what was most salient in their accounts rather than on answers to my questions. I also used concepts salient in the survey results as sensitizing concepts. In addition I considered how these four talked about their experiences. The analyses provided an understanding of the various experiences, which I characterised as joy, learning, and self-representation, as well as of participants' attitude toward the project and toward the interview. In respect of the various concepts relevant to documentary filmmaking and ethics, these case studies indicated a similar result to the survey: cooperation, communication, and trust dominate the experience, and conflict, including disagreement, different points of view, and conflict proper in the form of interruptions to the cooperation between filmmaker and participant, plays an important supporting role. All respondents disagreed with the filmmaker at some point and all tried to affect the project and safeguard their interests. In addition, the participants' accounts pointed to a variety of consequences of participating in a documentary project, both positive and negative.

#### An alternative practice

These empirical results provide an insight into the documentary filmmaking practice that challenges the interpretation of the practice presupposed in the documentary discourse at several points. They invite an alternative

## Participatory spaces

understanding of the documentary practice and the role of the participant in it. Based on the empirical findings, a practice surfaces in which the participant is actively involved in and committed to the project; in which conflict in a broad sense is a recurrent but non-decisive element of the filmmaker-participant relationship; in which conflict is dispersed and local, as is the exchange of information and giving consent; and in which communication, trust, and commitment act as a safety-net for conflict. Given the limited number of cases in this research, this alternative practice can be understood as a specific manifestation of the practice of author documentary filmmaking, where others might exist in addition.

In short, this alternative practice might be described as follows. Filmmaker and participant cooperate in a project in which both are committed to make a compelling film and both weigh their interests against the interests of the other and of the film. Although the filmmaker is in charge of the creative process, the participant controls her contribution by controlling her disclosure and reconsidering her consent in situations of conflict. Mutual and continuous exchange of information, questions, and concerns, making conflict explicit, helps create an environment of trust in which such conflict can be negotiated safely, without detrimental consequences for the project.

## Conclusion

The results of the empirical research projects discussed in this thesis merit a revision of the scholarly discussion of documentary filmmaking ethics. More specifically, they merit a paradigm-shift. The discussion about an ethics of documentary filmmaking must first of all include a participant as partial co-creator, committed and involved in the project; communication as a vehicle to carry filmmaker and participant co-creatorship, including facilitating the exchange of information, questions, and concerns, and the building and fostering of trust; and conflict as a means to negotiate and safeguard their respective interests. Within the documentary project, for which cooperation is the point of departure, conflict exists in instances in which the participant challenges the authority of the filmmaker and exerts influence on the content of the film by refusing or promoting specific content.

In this practice, different ethical questions surface. These questions do

not primarily concern the need for the filmmaker to protect the participant from harm ensuing from her representation in a documentary film, but rather the negotiation of partial co-creatorship and of the respective interests of filmmaker and participant in the process of making the mutually desired compelling film.



## **Samenvatting (Summary in Dutch)**

### Introductie

In dit proefschrift evalueer ik de effectiviteit van de academische discussie over de ethiek van documentaire maken. In hoeverre stellen wetenschappers de juiste vragen over de juiste praktijk? In het academisch discours veronderstellen wetenschappers een praktijk van documentaire maken en deze praktijk wordt ethisch geëvalueerd. Mijn doel was een specifieke hedendaagse praktijk te onderzoeken: het maken van auteursdocumentaires, een praktijk waarin ruimte is voor documentaire als persoonlijke artistieke uiting. Reflecteert de praktijk zoals verondersteld in het discours ook een dergelijke praktijk als het gaat om kwesties die een ethische afweging vragen? Hoe ziet zo'n hedendaagse auteurspraktijk eruit en welke vragen roept zij op in relatie tot de ethische evaluatie van documentaire maken?

### Wetenschappelijk discours

Ethiek betreft de vraag wat het goede is om te doen, specifiek in relatie tot andere mensen. Mijn onderzoek richtte zich op de relatie tussen documentaire filmmaker en participant. De onderzoeksvraag was welke morele kwesties filmmakers en participanten tegenkomen in de dagelijkse praktijk van het maken van documentaires en hoe ze met dergelijke kwesties omgaan. Het wetenschappelijk documentaire discours bevat een discussie van morele kwesties die relevant worden geacht voor het maken van documentaires, evenals een aantal strategieën dat gepast wordt geacht om met dergelijke kwesties om te gaan, of om ze te voorkomen. Daarnaast bespreken wetenschappers een aantal contextuele aspecten die van invloed zijn op de ervaring van en het omgaan met dergelijke kwesties, zoals cultuurverschillen, beschikbare tijd, en of de participant een bekend of hoog opgeleid persoon is. Hoe verhoudt deze theoretische discussie zich tot de praktijk, tot de ervaringen van filmmakers en van participanten? Ook karakteriseren wetenschappers de documentaire participant als iemand zonder kennis over documentaire maken, kwetsbaar voor de gevolgen van documentaire representatie, en als iemand die

## Participatory spaces

niets te winnen heeft bij deelname aan een documentaire. In hoeverre klopt dit beeld?

Na het destilleren van de morele kwesties, strategieën en contexten uit het discours, heb ik deze lijst aangevuld door Nederlandse documentairemakers te interviewen en hen voorbeelden te vragen uit hun eigen ervaring. Zij noemden vooral aanvullende strategieën, en schetsten daarmee een dynamischer beeld van de documentaire praktijk wat dit betreft dan het wetenschappelijk discours deed.

Vervolgens heb ik de praktijk onderzocht middels twee deelonderzoeken. Het perspectief van filmmakers heb ik onderzocht met behulp van een vragenlijst en het perspectief van participanten heb ik onderzocht door middel van interviews.

### Het perspectief van filmmakers

Om te meten in welke mate filmmakers de morele kwesties en strategieën uit de literatuur en de interviews met Nederlandse filmmakers hebben ervaren en in welke context dat gebeurde, heb ik een vragenlijst ontwikkeld. Mijn steekproef bestond uit filmmakers waarvan in 2006 een film werd vertoond op tenminste één van twaalf internationale documentaire film festivals wereldwijd. Na een voorstudie nodigde ik 659 filmmakers uit de vragenlijst in te vullen; uiteindelijk zijn de gegevens van 158 respondenten in de analyse gebruikt. Voor de analyse heb ik een zogenaamde exploratieve factoranalyse gebruikt; hiermee kunnen patronen in een dataset gevonden worden. De resultaten van de survey lieten een verdeling zien tussen communicatieve samenwerking aan de ene kant en niet opgelost conflict aan de andere, met een oncoöperatieve participant daar tussenin. Rekening houdend met de mate waarin filmmakers aangaven patronen van samenwerking en conflict te hebben ervaren, domineerden hun pogingen om samen te werken met de participant met de belangen van de film in gedachten, ondertussen vertrouwend op hun professionele positie en vaardigheden om te krijgen wat ze nodig hadden voor de film. Conflict kwam in diverse vormen naar voren en kan worden gezien als een relevant deel van de ervaring, daar een meerderheid van de filmmakers aangaf dergelijk conflict ervaren te hebben, zij het in beperkte mate.

Met variabelen over de participant, de filmmaker, en het project (zoals

de mate van culturele gelijkheid tussen maker en participant, budget voor het project en ervaring van de maker) heb ik vervolgens onderzocht in hoeverre dergelijke contextuele variabelen de ervaring van samenwerking en conflict kunnen voorspellen. Voor de patronen betreffende communicatie en samenwerking waren de positie van de participant in het project (als een enkele of een van een aantal centrale participanten), het budget van het project, and de plicht om de best mogelijke film te maken, de belangrijkste voorspellende variabelen; voor de patronen betreffende conflict waren dat culturele gelijkheid, film- en montagetijd, de mate van controversie van de inhoud van de film, de bereidheid aan wensen van de financiers van het project tegemoet te komen, de bereidheid compromissen te sluiten afhankelijk van diverse belangen, en of de filmmaker enige opleiding in filosofie en/of ethiek had genoten. Echter, dergelijke variabelen bleken slechts kleine verschillen tussen de filmmakers te kunnen verklaren en bleken daarmee maar zeer beperkt relevant.

#### Het perspectief van participanten

Om het perspectief op de praktijk van documentaire maken van de participant te onderzoeken heb ik vier Nederlandse documentaire participanten geïnterviewd: Alex, Ben, Chris, en Debby. Deze vier heb ik gevonden na overleg met een aantal Nederlandse documentaire producenten over geschikte projecten and participanten. Het relaas van elk van hen was het resultaat van interviews met veel ruimte om te vertellen wat zij wilden op een manier die zij prettig vonden. Ik heb ze geanalyseerd door te bekijken wat het meest opvallend was in wat deze participanten vertelden over hun ervaringen (in plaats van wat ze precies antwoordden op mijn vragen). Daarnaast heb ik gekeken naar wat de participanten zeiden over zaken die relateerden aan de resultaten van de survey. Daarbij heb ik ook bekeken hoe deze vier spraken over hun ervaringen. De analyse biedt een beeld van de verschillende ervaringen die gekenmerkt worden door plezier, leren en de mogelijkheid tot zelfrepresentatie. Daarnaast wordt duidelijk hoe de participanten zich verhouden tot het project en tot het interview. Met betrekking tot documentaire maken en ethiek geven deze case studies eenzelfde resultaat als de survey: samenwerking, communicatie en vertrouwen zijn dominant en

## Participatory spaces

conflict (inclusief onenigheid, verschillende denkbeelden, en echt conflict in de vorm van onderbreking van de samenwerking tussen filmmaker en participant) speelt een belangrijke bijrol. Alle vier respondenten waren het op enig moment oneens met de filmmaker en probeerden het project te beïnvloeden en hun eigen belangen te verdedigen. Daarnaast wijzen de verhalen van de participanten op diverse, positieve zowel als negatieve, gevolgen van het deelnemen aan een documentaire project.

### Een alternatieve praktijk

De resultaten van het empirisch onderzoek geven een inzicht in de documentaire praktijk die de praktijk zoals die wordt verondersteld in het wetenschappelijk documentaire discours op meerdere punten betwist. Ze nodigen uit tot een alternatief begrip van de documentaire praktijk en de rol van de participant daarin. Gebaseerd op de bevindingen komt een praktijk naar voren waarin de participant een actief betrokken participant is, die toegewijd is aan het project; waarin conflict in brede zin een terugkerend maar niet beslissend element is in de relatie tussen filmmaker en participant; waarin conflict niet allesoverheersend maar verspreid en lokaal is, net zoals de uitwisseling van informatie en het geven van toestemming voor het filmen en voor het gebruik van gefilmd materiaal; en waarin communicatie, vertrouwen en toewijding als een vangnet voor conflict functioneren. Deze alternatieve praktijk kan als volgt worden omschreven. Filmmaker en participant werken samen in een project waarin beiden erop gericht zijn een goede film te maken; beiden wegen eveneens hun belangen tegen de belangen van de ander en van de film. Hoewel de filmmaker de leiding heeft over het creatieve proces, houdt de participant controle over haar bijdrage door te bepalen wat ze wel en niet vertelt en heroverweegt ze haar toestemming om te filmen in situaties van conflict. Wederzijdse en continue uitwisseling van informatie, vragen en zorgen, waardoor conflict expliciet wordt benoemd, helpt een omgeving van vertrouwen te creëren waarin met dergelijk conflict veilig kan worden omgegaan, zonder nadelige gevolgen voor het project.

Gegeven het beperkte aantal cases in dit onderzoek, kan deze alternatieve praktijk begrepen worden als een specifieke manifestatie van de praktijk van het maken van auteursdocumentaires, waar daarnaast nog

anderen kunnen bestaan.

### Conclusie

De resultaten van deze studie nodigen uit tot een herziening van de academische discussie over documentaire maken en ethiek. Specifieker nodigen ze uit tot een paradigmawijziging. In de discussie over een ethiek van documentaire maken zou allereerst de participant moeten worden gezien als een gedeeltelijke mede-maker, betrokken in en toegewijd aan het project; communicatie functioneert als een vehikel voor het gedeeltelijk gezamenlijk makerschap van filmmaker en participant, inclusief het faciliteren van de uitwisseling van informatie, vragen en zorgen en het ontwikkelen en koesteren van vertrouwen; en conflict is een manier om met hun respectievelijke belangen om te gaan en deze te verdedigen. In het documentaireproject is samenwerking het uitgangspunt, maar conflict manifesteert zich op momenten waarop de participant de autoriteit van de maker betwist en invloed uitoefent op de inhoud van de film door specifieke opnamen te weigeren of het gebruik ervan te vragen.

Bij deze praktijk rijzen andere ethische vragen. Deze vragen betreffen niet zozeer de noodzaak tot bescherming van de participant tegen schade als gevolg van haar verschijnen in een documentaire film, maar ze betreffen het omgaan met het gedeeltelijke mede-makerschap van de participant en met de respectievelijke belangen van de maker en de participant in het proces van het maken van een door beide gewenste goede documentaire film.



## Biography

Willemien Sanders was born on 28 October 1967 in Zutphen, the Netherlands. She graduated from the Stedelijk Gymnasium in 's-Hertogenbosch and studied Film and Television at University Utrecht from 1987 to 1993. Her thesis *Heimat. Analyse van een tijdperk* (*Heimat. Analysis of an era*) is a twofold analysis of Edgar Reitz' epic series.

After graduation, Willemien combined working at the programme department of the International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam with extensive travels around the globe. Prior to her PhD project, between 2002 and 2004, she worked for various cultural organizations. She conducted her PhD research as an affiliated researcher at the Research Institute for History and Culture (OGC) at Utrecht University, the Netherlands. She is a member of TViT, the University Utrecht's Centre for Television in Transition.

Willemien combined working on her PhD project with other university jobs, which included supporting staff at Institute of Education, and researcher for University Utrecht's *Catalogus Professorum Academiae Rheno-Traiectinae*, launched 25 March 2011 on the occasion of the university's 375th *Dies Natalis*. In Utrecht Willemien taught seminars in research methods, and at the University Groningen she taught seminars in TV Studies. She contributed to the *Dox Box* campus 2011 and gave a workshop on creative documentary film at the Royal Film Commission Jordan. She was the guest editor of a special issue of the *New Review of Film and Television Studies* on documentary ethics. As a freelance author, Willemien regularly contributes to *DOX*, the documentary magazine published by the European Documentary Network (EDN).

## Participatory spaces

### Publications and presentations (research related)

- Sanders, W. (2012). The aggie will come first indeed. A survey on documentary filmmakers dealing with participants. *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 10, no. 3, 387-408.
- Sanders, W. (2012). The ethics of documentary filmmaking: an empirical turn. *New Review of Film and Television Studies* 10, no. 3, 315-317.
- Sanders, W. (2011, September 16). Woman at work... A documentary participant's extended performance of her professional self. Guildford, Symposium Documentary and Performance.
- Sanders, W. (2011, July 14). Woman at work: experience, identity, and creatorship of a documentary participant. Istanbul, International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) 2011.
- Sanders, W. (2010). Documentary filmmaking and ethics. Concepts, responsibilities and the need for empirical research. *Mass Communication and Society* 13, no. 5, 528-553.
- Sanders, W. (2010). Documentary filmmaking and ethics: the filmed vs. the film. Braga, International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR).
- Sanders, W. (2010). Documentary filmmaking and ethics: understanding filmmakers' experiences. Utrecht, International Society for the Empirical Study of Literature and Media (IGEL).
- Sanders, W. (2007). Informed consent: must or myth? *DOX. Documentary Film Quarterly*, 73, 10-13.

[willemiens.wordpress.com](http://willemiens.wordpress.com)