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Journey

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**AUDIO VISUAL RECORDINGS OF MEMORIES
FROM POLITICAL CONFLICT**

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The work presented in this thesis is the candidates own.

Cahal McLaughlin

ABSTRACT

The research journey which this practice-led project undertook describes and analyses the use of documentary filmmaking in the audio visual recording of memories from political conflict. Taking an interdisciplinary approach, three distinct, but related, research questions can be identified. The first and most consistent asks what is the significance of collaboration between the filmmaker and the participants. The second questions the effect of location on the performance and structure of memory-telling. The third asks to what use the edited material can be put in both personal and public spheres. The thesis is published in both written and audio visual interrelated texts, which can be read separately but benefit from being read in reference to each other. Four DVDs cover memories from the Troubles in the North of Ireland (1970-2000) and one DVD addresses the legacy of the Apartheid era in South Africa. The written text contextualises and reflects on the audio visual recording processes and productions.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my sister Marie, who is no longer with us, but who always encouraged an adventurous spirit.

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I do not wish to rename those who are already credited on the productions, but several names are worth mentioning for their central roles in enabling productions to proceed, namely Brendan Loughlin of the Victims and Survivors Trust, Shirley Gunn of the Human Rights Media Centre, Jackie McMullan and Lawrence McKeown of Coiste na n-Iarchimi and Mark McCaffrey of the Northern Ireland Office. For their help in screening the material, I wish to thank Brendan O'Neill of Catalyst Arts; Tony Haggith of the Imperial War Museum; Andrew Dewdney and Charlotte Croft of London South Bank University; Danielle Melville of Constitution Hill Gallery and Anriette Chorn of the British Council South Africa. The Arts and Humanities Research Council enabled me to travel to South Africa on a research trip, which led to the production of *We Never Give Up*.

To the many others who helped along the way, I offer you my gratitude.

The following chapters have been adopted from articles and chapters already published. I wish to thank the editors for their support and constructive criticism. In particular, I wish to thank Shirley Gunn for her contribution to the writing of Chapter 4 and Louise Purbrick for her contribution to Chapter 5. John Adams, as the editor of the *Journal of Media Practice*, was always supportive in the publication my work.

The published chapters and articles are –

McLaughlin, C. (2001) 'A Research Visit to Khulumani'. (2002) *Race and Class* 44(1), pp.81-86.

McLaughlin, C. (2003). 'Collaboration as Research: Testimonies from the Apartheid Era'. *Journal of Media Practice*, 3 (3), pp.171-177.

McLaughlin, C., (2004) 'Telling Our Story: Recording Audio-visual Testimonies from Political Conflict'. In Barton, R. and O'Brien, H. (Eds.) (2004), *Keeping It Real: Irish Film and Television*, pp.100-110. London: Wallflower Press.

McLaughlin, C. (2006). 'Inside Stories: Memories from The Maze and Long Kesh Prison'. *Journal of Media Practice*, 7 (4) pp.123-133.

McLaughlin, C. (2006) 'Touchstone and Tinderbox: Documenting Memories Inside the North of Ireland's Long Kesh and Maze Prison'. In Schofield, J., A. Klausmeier and L.

Purbrick (Eds.) (2006), *Re-Mapping the Past: New Approaches in Conflict Archaeology*, pp.81-86. Berlin: Westrauz-Verlag.

INTRODUCTION

A Tale of Two Texts

This dissertation is composed of two types of texts, one written and one audio-visual. The former is structured into chapters and the latter into DVDs. They complement each other and, although the audio-visual and written can be read independently of each other as stand-alone texts, they benefit from being read with reference to each other. After preliminary reading of a general nature in both texts, the research procedure usually involved the production of a documentary followed by the writing up of its context, process and analysis. However, during each phase, substantial reading and viewing of material relevant to the subject, along with proposal writing and correspondence, preceded each production. It is probably accurate to describe the process as a synthesis between reading and viewing, producing and writing. One of the principle aims of using both texts was to access perceptual as well as conceptual knowledge. While not wishing to delve into the many debates around the nature of practice research, I would like to quote David MacDougall on the contrasting and complementary natures of different forms of communication:

As writers, we articulate thoughts and experiences, but as photographers and filmmakers we articulate images of looking and being. What is thought is only implied, unless it is appended in writing or speech. Some would say that images, then, are not in any sense knowledge. They simply make knowledge possible, as data from observations. But in another sense they *are* what we know, or have known, prior to any comparison, judgement, or explanation (MacDougall 2006: 5)

I hope that the audio-visual material is not seen as merely illustrative of the written text, but as a form of knowledge in its own right.

The written text is composed of seven chapters. Chapter One concerns the research questions raised, the research's context, and methodologies applied; Chapters Two to Six deal with each production in turn - *Telling Our Story: the Springhill Massacre*; *A Prisoner's Journey*; *We Never Give Up*; *Inside Stories: Memories from the Maze and Long Kesh Prison*; and *Inside Stories: Insider and Outsider Perspectives*.

Chapter Seven offers conclusions to the research. These chapters are based primarily on the standard academic model. However, on occasion, and reflecting a process that combines analysis with creativity, I have chosen to contain the analysis within the narrative of the research, rather than separate it out.

The audio-visual journey is less easily identified. The five pieces reflect research that attempts to address issues of collaboration and location and the effects of these on the recording of memory-telling. I began with a desire to be as comprehensive as possible in relation to a specific geographical area and period of time, that is, the political violence in the North of Ireland between 1969 and 1997. Circumstances, however, nudged me to adapt these early framings to situations on the ground as I negotiated with participants and authorities. In one case, I had to rethink visual story-telling, when we were not allowed access to the prison to record memories (see Chapter Three) and, in another, I was offered the opportunity of directing a documentary in South Africa, specifically because of my collaborative experience in Ireland (see Chapter Four). I followed these directions out of research curiosity, each time incorporating my original themes. While each documentary has its own merits, both integral to its own constituency and to my research, the final documentaries that make up *Inside Stories: Memories from The Maze and Long Kesh Prison* (Chapters Five and Six) probably address the original research questions most comprehensively. I have written a separate chapter on the recording of Open University teachers visiting the prison, because of the separate contexts and themes that it contained. Material recorded on my first research trip to South Africa, although referred to in the written text, does not qualify for PhD submission because of restrictions placed by the funder of these trips, the Arts and Humanities Research Board.

Interdisciplinarity

Given the nature of the research project, which includes the terrain of memory studies, I have adopted an inter-disciplinary approach, drawing on the work of theorists and practitioners from film, cultural studies, anthropology and psychology. Equally importantly, this writing engages with the newer challenges of writing about practice-as-research, with its concerns about objectivity and autobiography. Given these crossovers, I

have inevitably opened up some areas that suggest further research, but which lie outside the remit of this dissertation.

Terminology

It is useful to refer to some of the terminology applied. There is some interchangeability in interviews and the written text between ‘testimony-giving’, ‘story-telling’ and ‘memory-telling’. This reflects political and cultural differences. In South Africa, the term ‘testimony’ is most often used, a legacy of the semi-judicial Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). In more therapeutic contexts, South Africans employ the term ‘story-telling’. The former also seemed appropriate when making *Telling Our Story*, because one of the aims of the project included a desire to hold an official public inquiry into the killings. I soon developed a preference for the term ‘memory-telling’, as I refined my research aims. This carries less legal weight but acknowledges more accurately the type of work I was doing, where there is less emphasis on ‘truth recovery’ as pursued by Truth Commissions (as in South Africa, Peru, etc.), which would also require resources beyond my means, and more emphasis on the responses of individuals to recording their memories at a site of trauma.

I prefer the term ‘survivor’ to ‘victim’ in my own work when referring to living people, although both terms are commonly used together by those campaigning for measures to compensate for, and acknowledge, the suffering that they have endured. The very terms ‘victim’ and ‘survivor’ are contested in the North of Ireland, where a hierarchy of victimhood has led one group to call itself Families Acting for Innocent Relatives (1). A more fluid approach is taken by Meena Wardle, of support group Shankill Stress, who explained that some of their ex-prisoner members were first ‘victims’ of republican violence, then became ‘perpetrators’ when they joined paramilitary groups, and then they returned to the status of ‘victims’ when imprisoned (2).

Although I have used digital video in my recordings, I resort to the traditional term ‘filmmaker’ to describe the general creative work of audio-visual recording that I carry out. I find ‘videographer’ too mechanistic and time specific. I have also come to rely on the term ‘participant’ in my research. ‘Interviewee’ was more appropriate in my

broadcasting days, when agendas were transparently set by producers who also owned the material; whereas one of the aims of this research was to develop relationships of collaboration in production.

Geographic terminology in the North of Ireland is laden with political overtones. The statelet is officially known as Northern Ireland. It is also referred to as Ulster by loyalists and the Province by some unionists (the terms 'loyalism' and 'unionism' have political undertones of class association). It is also referred to as the 'occupied six counties' by republicans in recognition of its partition from the rest of Ireland and its partition of the historic province of Ulster, which has nine counties. Revealing my own political subject position, I have chosen the North of Ireland because of its constitutional instability - recognising its role as part of Ireland (culturally, socially and increasingly economically) and at the same time acknowledging its separation by political institutions. Finally the prison officially known as The Maze HMP began life as Long Kesh. I have decided to refer to it sometimes as the Maze and Long Kesh, using both the official and original name that most people in the republican community and most ex-prisoners utilise, and occasionally the Maze for shorthand. This is also recognition that the prison is a complex site of physical, chronological and administrative differences.

The war of words, fought alongside the military war, involved definitions of violence that served political aims. I have decided to refer to the violence as political violence, reflecting its specifics and origins and to distinguish it from British government and media claims that the violence was, amongst other descriptions, 'terrorism' (Miller 196: 209) and 'gangsterism' (Curtis 1996: 324). I also use the term 'Troubles' which, although criticised as a euphemism, is at least accepted by almost all sides, maybe because of its looseness of definition. The British government and much of the national and international media referred to the prisoners as 'terrorists', while the prisoners referred to themselves as political prisoners (both republican and loyalist). I have adopted this latter term because of the reality of political status, which was granted by the British government to the prisoners at the beginning and end of the prison's existence. Its withdrawal during the intermediate period was the cause of much violence, both inside and outside the prison.

I have chosen not to develop the legal arguments around ownership of material, for this is beyond the scope of this work, but have established and agreed basic principles with participants. I have applied the term 'protocol' to the guidelines that I have developed for collaboration, which is the preferred term in *Issues Paper: Towards a Protocol for Filmmakers Working with Indigenous Content and Indigenous Communities* (2003), a useful discussion paper for the Australian Film Commission that deals with related issues such as intellectual copyright of Aboriginal stories and traditions.

CHAPTER 1

RAISING HEADS ABOVE THE PARAPET: RESEARCH QUESTIONS, CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGIES

Introduction

The key area that I set out to investigate was the recording of audio-visual memories from societies in political conflict. I was particularly interested in the North of Ireland, which after thirty years of political violence is undergoing a peace-process, however falteringly, although I was also aware of parallel situations internationally. The research questions have emerged out of personal and professional experiences. My living through much of the Troubles - experiencing and witnessing moments of violence - was undoubtedly one of the reasons that my professional work kept returning to this theme. It was central to the decision to make it the subject of my research. In this chapter, I will describe the overall research project and contextualise the key research questions.

Research Questions

The research journey which this project undertook has the aim of describing and analysing the use of documentary filmmaking in the recording of trauma memories from political conflict. Three distinct, but related, research questions can be identified, each of which has an affect on aesthetic strategies. The first and most consistent asks what is the significance of collaboration between the filmmaker and the participants. The second questions the effect of location on the performance and structure of memory-telling. The third asks to what use the edited material can be put in both personal and public spheres.

Collaboration with participants was one of the preconditions that made these recordings possible and also directly influenced how the documentaries were filmed and watched. These chapters describe the range of collaborations that were negotiated and their significance for each production. Returning to the site of the original event that is remembered offers not only a visual guide to the participant and the audience, but directly impacts on what is remembered and how it is articulated and performed. The post production and exhibition of the material reflects original intentions and addresses the relationship between private memory and public acknowledgement.

A thread that runs through the work asks questions about its therapeutic aspects, given the healing claims for public acknowledgement of past trauma. However, this is not a central theme of the research and lies outside of my expertise.

Context

I had worked in the North of Ireland as a researcher, camera operator and director for a community cooperative, Belfast Independent Video (BIV), which combined producing material for community groups with programmes for broadcast television. I left Belfast for London in 1989 and I began working as a freelance producer/director. While working on other UK and international material, I found myself drawn repeatedly to the subject of the 'Troubles'. I co-produced and co-directed, with Lin Solomon, *Pack Up the Troubles* (1991) and directed *Behind the Walls of Castlereagh* (1992). My professional experience operated within the context of a hierarchical commissioning structure, a legal framework of public broadcasting and a political climate of military conflict. I decided in the current research project to re-visit some of the themes that I had already covered, which also involved the re-negotiation of the conditions of collaboration with subjects as well as production relationships and the use of technologies. Inevitably, this led to a review of aesthetic strategies.

One area that had consistently cropped up in my professional work was the sensitivity of working with survivors of political conflict. Even those not directly affected expressed strong reservations about 'raising my above the parapet' in a society where violence was always under the surface, if not explicit. This quote came from a young professional show-jumper, whom I interviewed about contributing to a documentary on politics and sport, *Kicking With Both Feet* (1993), funded by the Community Relations Council and the Irish Film Board. She eventually declined to take part because of fears that others in her Ballymena neighbourhood might discover that her training schedule included Sundays. She lived in an area known as the Bible Belt, where disapproval of breaking the Sabbath was widespread. Another example concerned a young ex-prisoner, Jennifer Peoples, who was to give an interview for *Behind the Walls of Castlereagh*. She would only do so if a representative of the Progressive Unionist Party was also to be interviewed in the programme. This seemed less like political manipulation than the need

for a sense of security that comes from a neighbour in the programme, an issue that I will return to later in this chapter. These questions of negotiating conditions of participation, of collaboration and of ownership of the material formed a central theme of the research.

I also began to discover that the context of where the interview was recorded had a profound affect on the nature of the testimony and memory-telling. Interviews in *Behind the Walls of Castlereagh* were recorded in a reconstructed interrogation cell in a studio in Belfast. Unprompted, Jennifer stood up from her chair, freed herself from the sitting position, and re-enacted the abuse that she alleged had been perpetrated on her by the Royal Ulster Constabulary. I wanted my research to develop this question of location and its effect on narrative structure and performance in front of the camera. This strategy became noticeable by its very absence in a later production, *A Prisoner's Journey* (2001).

Because a collaborative imperative ran throughout the project, the sources of the productions stemmed from evolving relationships. This meant that on occasions I took the initiative to develop an idea and approached participants, while on other occasions I was approached by the participants' organisation to develop an idea with them.

Collaboration

Technical and artistic decisions about recording and editing take on an ethical dimension for they can deny or enable the ownership and control of the survivors' representations of their histories, memories and identities. The social sciences are already aware of this dilemma and Pryluck notes, in relation to documentary filmmaking, 'It is not unusual for this (collaborative) process to continue through to the final draft to permit subjects second thoughts about the propriety of disclosing certain private information' (Pryluck 2005: 202). Precedents for collaborative filmmaking include the films of Rouch, Kamerling and the MacDougalls, while one of the most successful occurred on the National Film Board of Canada's Challenge for Change series of films made with Togo Islanders. Barbash and Taylor write,

Fogo Islanders were asked their permission before they were filmed. They were the first to view footage of themselves, and were given the opportunity to edit out anything they were not comfortable with. They were also asked to approve the

final edit and were assured that nothing would be shown outside their community without their permission. This process encouraged an unusual spontaneity and self-confidence amongst its participants' (Barbash and Taylor 1997: 88).

When I began making films with BIV in the 1980s, we used the term 'community video' to reflect the constituency of subject and audience as well as technology. In a society that was then under the international media spotlight, but which had little independent filmmaking resources of its own, and in response to the dominant modes of representation, the publication *Fast Forward: Report on the Funding of Grant-Aided film and Video in the North of Ireland* asked the questions, 'Why have we been the objects of study but have never had the opportunity to become subjects in the film making process? Why are we at the wrong end of the camera?' (Independent Film and Video Association North of Ireland 1988: 33). BIV initially had no formal agreements with its participants, but we would consult them during production and editing and show the final material to them before proceeding to exhibition. BIV was later renamed Northern Visions (NV). Both were funded under the Workshop Agreement that existed between the broadcast union Association of Cinematograph and Television Technicians (ACTT) and several funders and broadcasters, including Channel Four Television (C4). Consequently, our relationships with our subjects became more formal. Although we maintained a model of consultation, which ensured that our relationship with the participants continued well after the recording, and although we were supported in this by the Commissioning Editors of the Department of Independent Film and Video at C4, we were legally required to have participants sign over their rights to the recorded material to C4. This Release Form was written by lawyers whose interest in copyright outstrips any interest in collaboration. Broadcasting is primarily carried out by commercial business, where ownership of the products allows it to be exploited within a profit-making economy. Organisations such as the publicly funded BBC operate within this dominant economy and are subject to the same ratings' pressures as the more commercial organisations are. In summary, the Release or Consent Form requires the participant to sign over their rights over how the material might be used in any media in any part of the world, a practice still in operation, although these rights are increasingly shared between the producers and the

broadcasters. Although I was later informed by a C4 lawyer that the form may not legally be worth the paper it was written on, it is reasonable to assume that its value was probably in its use as evidence of assent, if a case should go to court (1).

I worked in broadcast television for fifteen years before turning my attention to the possibilities of practice-led research. My legal accountability had always faced upwards - to the producer, the executive producer, the series editor, the commissioning editor, the lawyers, the finance department, the factual programme controller and ultimately the chief executive of the broadcasting company. Working within, but also against, this system and based on the workshop ethos, NV, along with most workshops, developed a collaborative approach to working with participants and production crew. This collaboration acknowledged the balance of power and skills and allowed for discussion and consensual decision-making, which guaranteed accountability for the participants. An example occurred during the production of *Moving Myths* (1989), which addressed the themes of atheism and sectarianism. One of the interviewees recalled her experience of having an abortion, which was, and remains, illegal in both the North and South of Ireland except under limited circumstances. She was feeling vulnerable about disclosing her story, both in terms of her family and her work. On looking at a draft edit, she commented that her contribution was placed in a section of the programme where she felt that the sequence isolated her. She considered withdrawing her piece. We discussed how it might be re-edited and moved it to a section of the programme where another female participant discussed sexual imagery. The interviewee felt less exposed here and agreed to leave her contribution in. This collaboration operated alongside, but overrode, the legal requirement in the release form that she had already signed and which removed her rights to the recorded material.

Some of the rare spaces where broadcast television required subjects to be consulted were in the BBC Community Programmes Unit, which produced a range of programmes from *Open Door* to *Video Nation*, and to a lesser extent Channel Four's three minute access programme, *The Slot* (2). When I directed *Behind the Walls of Castlereagh*, the presenter of the programme, Martin O'Brien from the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), was flown over from Belfast to London during post-production to be consulted at the rough edit stage. Although contributors had a final say,

and the CAJ agreed to the final cut, I became aware of how discussions in a small darkened edit room in the heart of the broadcasting station between a contributor, an editor, a director and a series editor were not the most conducive conditions in which to ensure transparent power relations.

While in some ways this research is a continuation of my professional filmmaking in terms of audio-visual production and themes, there has been a significant development in the area of collaborative arrangements with participants. Where necessary, arrangements are formalised so that participants own the material, either in total or in a shared arrangement. Two of the thesis documentaries, *Telling Our Story* (2000) and *We Never Give Up* (2002), were commissioned from organisations that represent survivors of political violence. Since these groups funded the projects, (my contribution taking place in research time paid by my research institution), we established early on that they owned the material and should act as producers. For the Victims and Survivors Trust in Belfast and the Human Rights Media Centre in Cape Town, this was an important legal claim to ownership of testimonies. They regarded such acknowledgement of authorship of their own stories as part of a healing process. This ownership issue was settled in a similar way by Coiste na n-Iarchimi, an organisation of Irish republican ex-prisoners, for whom I made an educational video, *A Prisoner's Journey*.

When I later developed documentary projects of my own, the question of collaboration became more complex. I was the originator of the idea and often the subjects did not know each other. This was the case in the project that eventually became *Inside Stories: Memories from The Maze and Long Kesh Prison* (2004). As I was aware from previous experience, the nature of this work involves sensitive negotiations over questions like who will record, under what conditions, how will it be edited, where will it be shown and who will watch? Pryluck warns, 'With the best intentions in the world, filmmakers can only guess how the scenes they use will affect the lives of the people they have photographed: even a seemingly innocuous image may have meaning for the people involved that is obscure to the filmmaker' (Pryluck 2005: 197). Underlying this concern is the question of ownership. Because I had approached the participants rather than they me, these were issues that I had already considered and decided that co-ownership would create conditions that allowed for the fullest collaboration. There was a practicality to this

approach as well as an ethical stance, in that it made the project more likely to succeed in an environment where political sensitivities remain raw.

Participation in audio-visual production contains, by its nature, an imbalance of power. In the case of *Inside Stories*, I recorded, directed and edited the material. I wanted this imbalance of power to be transparent and, given the lack of any relationship between each of the participants, co-ownership offered a way for all of us to own the material, but without any one owning it outright. Each participant and I co-own the material that he/she contributed. This sharing of ownership reflected the shared space that was to develop not only in the making of the documentary but also in its final form and content. The structure of this collaboration in the prison section of *Inside Stories* was a set of four relationships between the participants and me. There is one for each of the filmmaker and participant combinations and one for the overall relationship that includes the four of us. While this has led to a tripling of some negotiations, for example, three separate discussions prior to shooting, during post-production, and in agreeing each exhibition, the success of the project owes as much to such careful collaborations as to the influence of the location and the themes covered. The set of collaborative relationships were more complicated on *We Never Give Up* because of the management layers in the two relevant organisations, the Human Rights Media Centre and Khulumani Western Cape, which had membership, management and officer levels to deal with. I will return to these relationships later.

This research focuses mainly on the nationalist community in the North of Ireland, with both *Telling Our Story* and *A Prisoner's Journey* emanating from that community. *Inside Stories: Memories from The Maze and Long Kesh* compensates in some way with, of the three participants, one from the loyalist community and one from the larger Unionist community. In *Inside Stories: Insider and Outsider Perspectives*, the Open University teachers each come from a different political community. I had been in negotiations with a survivors' group in a West Belfast loyalist community, but these petered out with the group not offering a firm reason for lack of engagement. I was particularly disappointed, because the group showed imagination and endurance in exceptionally difficult circumstances, particularly in their work with children. I can only

guess that my own transparent religious and political background played a small part in the project not progressing, but I have no way of ascertaining this.

While I am aware of the iceberg analogy of programme production, which compares the programme to the visible area above water level and the research and production to the massive area underneath, these productions took even longer to negotiate than normal. I discovered, as the Ardoyne Commemorative Project reveal in consulting participants on the final draft of their interviews before publication, that it is easy to underestimate 'the length of time and sensitivity of discussions in the return phase, but this was central to the project of ownership, which makes the book distinct' (Ardoyne Commemorative Project 2002: 10). Such prolonged collaboration was central to my research project.

Location Performance

The way that location informs a participant's memory-telling, in its narrative structure and chronology, and the way that it informs his/her performance comprises the second main question addressed in this research. When I use the term performance, I do so in its current practice research mode, which suggests that we use gestures, movements and expressions in our communication and that articulation is rendered through performance. Bruzzi defines the performative as 'utterances that simultaneously both describe and perform an action' (Bruzzi 2000: 154). Referring to his oral interview with artist John Outterbridge, Candida Smith reflects:

Spoken expression is inseparable from emotion and gesture. A context of direct interaction with other people also suffused by emotions shapes what is said as well. Every interview occurs in a process of physical performance for an interlocutor. Body gestures provide wordless images that try to deepen a speaker's synthesis of a complex series of events into a readily comprehensible and expressible anecdote. Vocal gestures shape the delivery of words. Patterns of speaking, repetitions of words and phrases, variation in force, pitch, and tone contribute to an effort to convey meaning and not just information (Candida Smith 2002: 2)

I suggest that the participants' memories have become part of their physical as much as their psychological existence, that memories are stored in their bodies and that their bodies can remember and can contribute to the telling.

The presence of the camera also has the affect of influencing behaviour both for the director and the object who becomes subject. William Rothman quotes the filmmaker Jean Rouch on this change in both observer and observed:

he (the filmmaker) “ethno-looks”, he “ethno-observes”, he “ethno-thinks”, and once they are sure of this strange regular visitor, those who come in contact with him go through a parallel change, they “ethno-show”, they “ethno-speak”, and ultimately they “ethno-think”... Knowledge is no longer a stolen secret, which is later devoured in western temples of knowledge, (it) is the result of an endless quest in which ethnographers and others walk a path which some call “shared anthropology” (Rothman 1997: 95).

Rothman identifies one of the best circumstances for such a sharing, which I came late to in my research, when he notes, ‘no one knows better than Rouch that sometimes, perhaps always, filmmakers best provoke their subjects by doing nothing – nothing other than filming them’ (Rothman 1997: 87). Such a shared anthropological approach in memory-telling allows both participant and director to build up a relationship that informs what is to be remembered, how it is to be articulated, and when and where that might be recorded.

What I was looking for in this relationship between the site of trauma, the return of the survivor and memory recollection is what Graham Dawson calls, ‘a cultural landscape, referring to the “creative and imaginative” meanings and associations that are attached to a place through story-telling’ (Dawson 2005: 155). In Claude Lanzmann’s *Shoah* (1985), unlike most other documentaries on the Nazi period, archival footage is eschewed entirely in favour of contemporary location recording. Its international impact on film and trauma studies can be credited not only to the subject matter, the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, but also to the use of contemporary geographical and physical

traces, sometimes faint, of the industrial processes of mass killing. While the original location is the mainstay of the film's strategy, Lanzmann interviews one survivor in his present day barbers shop as a substitute location. Here, location and activity mirror the memory of shaving hair from detainees' heads before their death. At one point the barber asks Lanzmann to stop filming because he relives the memory to a degree that he can no longer tolerate. Lanzmann, somewhat forcefully, insists that he continue, realising the unrepeatability of this congruence between memory, location and activity.

Similarly, the documentary *S21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine* (2002), by Cambodian-French filmmaker Rithy Panh, displays one of the most effective uses of location that results in heightened performance in the recording of trauma-memory-telling. Survivors and ex-prison guards return to a police interrogation centre in Phnom Penh, recalling their experiences during the Pol Pot regime during which only a handful of the 17,000 prisoners survived the centre. The documentary does not provoke a confrontation nor seek apologies, but poses the question of how such atrocities could be perpetrated. The gently probing questions by an ex-detainee, Van Nath, seems to set at ease the ex-prison guards, who were young ideological recruits at the time, and they begin to re-enact their activities. As Poouv, who was twelve years of age when he first worked as a prison guard, re-enters a large holding cell, he describes the layout of the room and points to where the prisoners had previously sat on the floor. As his memory sharpens and he begins to find a narrative from a particular incident, he relives the moment and his testimony builds to a crescendo of physically beating with vigour an imaginary suspect as if the past and present were one.

When possible, the participants and I chose to return to the site of their traumatic experiences. In *Telling Our Story*, the Springhill estate's new houses, alleyways and roads were constructed over the old prefabricated single story houses of the earlier period. However, this did not prevent survivors from pointing in the remembered direction of the shooting nor to the imagined places where victims had fallen. In *Inside Stories*, traces of the past were more evident in the older compound section than in the recently cleaned cellular structure of the H-Blocks, but both provided, to varying degrees, landmarks and traces to stimulate the participant's memory.

One of the most interesting aspects of this location recording was its effect on the narrative structure. Memory is rarely recalled chronologically; it is brought back to consciousness and articulation by the stimulants of association, including sound, smell and sight. In The Maze and Long Kesh prison all of these senses acted on the participants and, as they moved around the location, their memories were brought to the surface in an archaeological dig of their past experiences inside these walls and fences. Their narratives then became structured around the part of the prison that they were in. At one point, a participant interrupts the flow of his talking to point out a particular cell that we have just arrived at and proceeds to describe what its function had been.

Irish Films in the Field

There was a significant increase after the ceasefires of 1994 in the number of publications and films dealing with the legacy of thirty years of political violence in the North of Ireland. This contrasts with the general tendency in the society not to speak out during the war, which has been summed up as, 'Because of trauma, grief, confusion and continuing violence, a surprising number of relatives (of victims) had not spoken about (their loss) to the rest of the community' (Ardoyne Commemoration Project 2002: 11).

Among these films were a number of documentaries which include Coiste na n-Iarchimi's *100,000 Years* (2000), on the self-help groups that the republican ex-prisoners' network has established in response to the release of political prisoners as part of the Belfast Agreement. This documentary, directed by Simon Woods, uses interviews and the recording of away-day workshop events to look at how the support network addresses the impact of criminalization and imprisonment on its members. Woods also directed *...and then there was silence: Personal Accounts of Northern Ireland's Troubles* (2000) a powerful documentary of testimonies that emerged out of research by The Cost of the Troubles Study. Released 'as an educational resource for training counsellors, teachers, GPs, police, journalists, psychologists, nurses and social workers'(4), the film is divided into themes dealing with the after-effects of traumatic events. The Study was scrupulous in its accountability to the participants by seeking agreement before publishing, establishing protocols that have been exemplary for others in such sensitive work. In this film, none of the participants were asked to return to the scene of their trauma but instead

appear to be interviewed in their homes. This was also the case in an earlier film made by the Derry Film and Video Workshop, *Strip Searching: Security or Subjugation* (1994), which was a campaign tape against the use of strip-searching of female remand prisoners in Armagh Prison. The ex-prisoners were interviewed inside their homes (in one case in a bedroom) or outside their houses, with commissioned drawings illustrating the procedure. Experts, including a law lecturer, psychiatrist, priest, journalist and trade unionist, are interviewed to support the campaign. As in the *Cost of the Troubles* film, an interviewer is placed in the film's diagetic space.

One of the rare films collaborative films that exploits the location of the original trauma in the North of Ireland came out of. An Crann/The Tree, a project set up to allow survivors to tell their stories using various art forms – short-story writing, art, poetry, etc. The filmmaker Harmen Brandsma was commissioned to direct *Night Rider* (1999), a documentary about a taxi driver, Phillip Curley, and his family, who tell us of their experiences and fears living with the legacy of violence. Brandsma placed a camera inside and on the outside bonnet of the taxi to record Phillip driving around Belfast's city streets, remembering incidents and feelings from the Troubles. Long takes of Phillip reminiscing are intercut with interviews by his daughter and wife.

More recently attempts have been made to bring together a 'perpetrator' and a 'victim' for a televisual encounter. BBC Northern Ireland (BBCNI) commissioned *Facing the Truth* (2006), a three part studio-based documentary where victims and perpetrators of the Troubles were brought together under the chairmanship of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who was the Chair of the South African TRC Hearings which dealt with the legacy of Apartheid. The TRC Hearings were broadcast on South African television and, because of the requirements of disclosure for amnesty and the TRC's adoption of the philosophy of 'ubuntu' (5), such encounters between perpetrator and victims' relatives occasionally occurred. One such poignant moment is captured in *Correspondent Special: Getting Away with Murder* (1997), a report by Michael Ignatieff. Dawi Ackermann, the husband of Marita, who was shot dead by the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), meets her killers, who have applied for amnesty. Dawi breaks down in tears as he forgives, as a Christian, the young militants who he had asked to turn around and face him. Significantly, this is less a televisual moment, since it is not constructed for

television, but is more an event that occurs because of the TRC Hearings, which is then recorded for broadcast. While *Facing the Truth* puts in place a supportive therapeutic structure for the participants, including employing staff from the TRC, the risks of such televisual encounters are revealed when Michael Stone, a convict loyalist killer, reaches out to shake the hand of the wife of a man he admitted murdering. It is a step too far and she flinches uncomfortably, before turning and walking away. Stone's subsequent charge for attempted murder of leading Sinn Fein members during his grenade and knife attack on Stormont Buildings in December 2006 undermines his earlier apology for his past deeds and asks questions of the motivation of producers for such televised moments. In contrast, BBC4's *Arena: Voices from the Island* (2005), has poignant interviews from both ex-prisoners and warders from the Apartheid-era Robben Island hard-labour prison, but they are intercut and no televised encounter is created. The participants are usually recorded in studio with a dark background and on only one occasion do two ex-prisoners return to the island accompanied by their wives. It appears from the extensive use of archive, including this return visit, that the director, Adam Low, was not give access to the prison site.

In this research I wished to explore the exemplary collaboration of the Cost of the Troubles Study film; develop more fully the use of location as used by Bransma; and avoid the televisual encounter. Towards the end of my research, I even begin to question the appropriate use of edited encounters (intercutting), which made up so much of my professional practice, for the collaborative and location-based work that I was undertaking. I did not include the use of experts, since the participants' contributions were required to be seen and heard directly and interpretation of the memories was to be left to audiences.

Production Process

In a political context where truth-telling has become an important, if contested, approach to negotiating our past, this research inevitably raises many issues about objectivity and impartiality, thought to be characteristic of the documentary genre. Before moving onto the specifics of documentary-making, it is worth pointing out that during the time of this research, the peace-process was frequently in political crisis. Uncertainty about the future

impeded the conditions necessary for work in the area of memory-telling and in the more contentious area of truth-telling. The Ardoyne Commemorative Project concluded, 'the lesson from elsewhere is that truth commissions are rarely effective if there has been no real and fundamental political change. Where the state has retained its power it can continue to manage the truth' (Ardoyne Commemorative Project 2002: 541). The Project went on to highlight the Saville Inquiry into Bloody Sunday, where guns used by the British Army to shoot dead thirteen civil rights demonstrators had subsequently been destroyed and state witnesses were allowed to give evidence anonymously. Although some of the participants in my research were seeking government responses to their demands in an attempt to find the truth behind their relatives' and friends' violent deaths, for example in *Telling Our Story*, the general direction of the research has been the uncovering of truths and memories from the perspectives of the participants and filmmaker. As Cutler and Klotman point out, when discussing African-American struggles for representation, 'while accepting the limits of authenticity some filmmakers argue that documentary offers a counter narrative of experience from within.' (Cutler and Klotman 1999: xvii). They continue that filmmakers accept 'the impossibility of objectivity but aim for a "truth" – the filmmakers' truth' (Cutler and Klotman 1999: xxix). In the case of this research's films, I share this 'truth' with the participants.

Returning to the specifics of documentary-making and its claim to authenticity or truth, Nichols makes a strong case for thinking of documentary as the representation of meaning rather than a literal presentation of reality:

Documentaries always were forms of re-presentation, never clear windows onto reality, the filmmaker was always a participant witness and an active fabricator of meaning, a producer of cinematic discourse rather than a neutral all-knowing reporter of the way things really are (Nichols 2005: 18).

Similarly, Bruzzi writes, 'documentary film can never simply represent the real, that instead it is a dialectical conjunction of a real space and the filmmakers that invade it' (Bruzzi (2000: 125). So it was important that my productions signposted their origins, aims and conditions in this re-presenting. I did not take this transparency to the stage of

self-reflexivity with which Jean Rouch concludes his *Chronicle of a Summer* (1961), where he and the interviewer, Edgar Morin, screened a cut of the film to the participants and then recorded their reactions. For my research the primary audience for such transparency were the participants and not future viewers. My insider/outsider dichotomy allowed an insight into the stories, but also coloured my responses. As the director, I was the 'other' for each of them. I had a powerful position based on control of the means of production and I attempted to level the relationship by making my position of 'other' as transparent as possible in pre-production discussions.

My 'otherness' also had a significance equal to the production relationship in most of these films. As well as a collaborator in the 'creation of evidence in narrative form between interviewer and narrator' (Sipe 1998: 383), I am also both an insider and outsider in these recordings. My name and accent were useful signifiers to the participants. The first suggests a nationalist or Catholic background and the latter declares a Northern Irish upbringing. This binary also has other interpretations. These stories are primarily theirs but I also feel part of the story. 'I was one of them and I was not', wrote Courtney Brkic in her recollections of her work excavating war graves in Bosnia, referring to her father's and extended family's Croatian roots (Brkic 2004: 100). In terms of the period that most of the participants in these documentaries refer to, I had a presence as a minor participant, if only as an observer, during the Troubles. I was in a pub in Belfast when a small bomb was exploded by loyalists. A work colleague was shot dead by an off-duty serving member of the British Army in a random sectarian attack. I was arrested and brought to military and police cells for questioning as part of widespread low-key security intelligence gathering. I went on protest marches over prison conditions. While I remained relatively unscathed, given the prevailing conditions, I connected with the stories in my research and felt a kinship with them. If I did not identify with all of the participants, I was at least curious about the 'other'.

The binary of insider and outsider applied more obviously to South Africa in both content and ownership. My initial concerns about reinforcing outsider perspectives were assuaged by the producers' understanding of the links between story-telling in societies coming out of violence. On the issue of ownership of *We Never Give Up*, it is acknowledged as my documentary in terms of its aesthetic production and evidenced in

my being credited as the director in the various film festivals that it has been screened at. Yet, the HRMC is the legitimate owner and the participants are the moral owners. It is both 'their' and 'my' film.

Collaboration extended from those in front of the camera to those behind it. Although the highest standards were sought in technical terms, the various contexts in which these productions took place lead to unevenness in production values. However, as Michael Renov has pointed out:

In the ethical context, greater value may be attached to the circumstances surrounding the creative process (the status and conditions of the social interaction, encounter and exchange) than to the final product, understood in the commercial arena to be the "bottom line" (Renov 2004:130).

In three of the documentaries I operated with a crew. With the Victims and Survivors Trust (VAST), I directed and operated the group's own camcorder camera, while one of their members operated the boom. Another member shadowed us to learn filmmaking skills. One of this production's outcomes was to help the group learn to make its own documentaries. While editing in London, I sent rough cuts back for discussion. A technician from Royal Holloway University of London (RHUL) on-lined this documentary for quality assurance. In South Africa, a professional camera operator and camera were hired, I held the boom and directed, and the HRMC's Director was the producer and interviewer. This division of labour was to accommodate the group's desire, having been partially funded from the Ford Foundation, to make as high a quality documentary as possible. A RHUL Masters student off-line edited the South African film, which allowed more time for me to coordinate with the participants and their representative groups in South Africa. With *A Prisoner's Journey*, I worked with two different RHUL Masters' students who operated the camera and sound. In this case I wanted to be freed up to be the interviewer and to direct a relatively complex documentary in terms of its participants and historical scope.

With *Inside Stories*, I worked with an assistant on two of the three recording sessions, whose main tasks were to carry equipment. Utilising a radio microphone and

hand-holding the camera allowed the participant and I to move relatively freely in relation to each other in the confined spaces that we navigated. Equally importantly, I wanted the relationship to be as intimate as possible, given the sensitive nature of the material and to minimise the introduction of new elements. The stories often contained emotional charges that required trust to negotiate. On a few occasions, the stories had never been told before in such a publicly recorded way. I chose to edit the material by myself since I was curious about how I might approach this material in a way that would reflect the specific recording conditions.

The dominance of cinema and television in the construction of documentary stories is such that the conventions of linear, intercut, three-act structured narratives seem unproblematic. Film language encourages the adoption of certain codes for audiences to interpret. These include overall 'types' of documentary that raise expectations for what is to come; for example, an investigative film creates expectations about form and content different to those created by a more observational film. Some film conventions traverse these types and allow the editor to suggest mood and tone. Examples of such conventions include the intercutting of two interviews or images that contradict or challenge one another. Such 'montage' effect is to suggest a third meaning arising from this clash and has been refined to become a staple part of editing. Another common convention is the use of narrator, where a disembodied voice can set the context and give guidance to the audience on to how to read the film. Like this 'voice of god', a non-diegetic soundtrack can be applied to guide the mood and expectations of the audience. A further convention is the use of the visual cutaway over an edited speaking contributor, which can function to cover up any jump-cuts in the visuals, and also be used to illustrate the immediate storyline or interview, either as complement or as contrast, as well as offering the audience breathing time to move from one theme to another. I utilized many of these strategies when recording and editing, each one negotiated with the participants, but I choose a different approach to linear narrative and screen exhibition when it came to resolving the problems posed by *Inside Stories*.

Renov extends the implications of collaboration from subject to audience when he writes:

In the instance of some ethically charged works, the openness and mutual receptivity between filmmaker and subject may be said to extend to the relationship between the audience and the film. Open exchange may begin to replace the one-way delivery of ideas. This ethical challenge in the field of documentary practice echoes those in contemporary art and philosophy that question models of mastery or absolute certainty, placing greater emphasis on open-endedness, empathy and receptivity (Renov 2004: 130).

Several of the documentaries were exhibited as linear and intercut and so may appear to be 'one-way delivery of ideas', but the contexts of others screenings, for example *Inside Stories*, point towards possibilities for the more open-ended receptiveness that Renov advocates. We attempted to exhibit all the films in situations that encouraged responses.

Memory-telling

While most of the interviews in this research deal with recent historical periods, it is important not to consider them as historical documents but as interpretative documents of that past. Because of this transparency of construction, memory offers us many opportunities to engage with our contested past. Jelin writes, 'It is in the cracks between one and the other (memory and history) where the most creative, provocative, and productive questions for inquiry and critical reflection emerge' (Jelin 2003: 59). Memory is subject to forces, conscious and unconscious, that make us wary of its reliability. What is remembered and what is forgotten? How much of that which is remembered is articulated and how much is held back? Despite these questions, memory's usefulness lies in its being, anthropologically speaking, evidence of how people interpret their past at a personal level, which is an invaluable contribution to other documentary evidence and gives a richer texture to our understanding of historical developments. Marlin-Curiel, commenting on artistic responses to South Africa's TRC, writes, 'Memory, though unreliable, nonetheless enables a witness to communicate an embodied reality and solicit an empathetic response to victims of violence' (Marlin-Curiel 2002: 49). The clinical

psychologist, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, who has researched the role of the TRC, addresses the relationship between memory and reality:

When the rupture of one's senses is a daily occurrence – as was the case in South Africa's violent political past – old memories fuse with new ones and the accounts given by victims and survivors are not simply about facts. They are primarily about the impact of facts on their lives and the continuing trauma in their lives created by past violence (Gododo-Madikizela 2001: 26).

A methodological approach that allows for the development of these ideas around embodiment and performance, as well as avoiding a more historical approach with its claims to factual information, is the life-story methodology. Lacey points out the advantages of a 'life-story approach (that) allows room for contradiction, a holistic richness, and complexity. It gives the opportunity to explore the relation between personal and collective experience, by focusing on remembering and forgetting as cultural processes' (Lacey et al 2004: 12). In the context of a past that involved violence and which is still subject to contested interpretations this approach acknowledges the inherent discontinuities and fragmentation of trauma memories.

The occasions when memory-telling is pulled towards truth-telling occurs in those documentaries where the participants are campaigning for legislative or judicial intervention. In *Telling Our Story* (2002), Brian announces his hope for an independent inquiry into the British Army shootings of 1974. In *We Never Give Up* the participants were giving testimonies which they hoped would influence the South African Minister of Justice in his deliberations on Apartheid reparations. Since I had not sought to make an investigative documentary, for example by interviewing the British Army for *Inside Stories*, I have no claim to uncovering the facts, but the memories are no less important for that, even in a future judicial context.

There appears to be a consensus that the public telling of stories about past traumatic events has the potential to contribute to the healing of survivors' psychic wounds. Lundy and McGovern write, 'Evidence from other countries emerging from political violence shows that public recognition is cathartic' (Ardoyne Commemorative

Project 2002: 1). The psychoanalyst Dori Laub, who has recorded testimonies from Holocaust survivors for the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University, suggests that when some survivors told their stories to him they began to find a narrative and uncover connections that were lost, important processes in the healing of wounds caused by trauma that threatens to overcome the present. His summary is clear, 'Survivors need to tell their story in order to survive' (Laub 1992: 78). This sense of compulsion is taken up by Cathy Caruth, who claims, 'trauma seems to be more than a pathology or simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in an attempt to tell us a truth or reality that is otherwise not available (quoted in Leydesdorff 1996: 14). Renos Papadopoulos, a psychologist who has worked with Bosnian ex-camp prisoners, acknowledges, 'there were times when our shared silence was honouring the unutterable', but he concludes:

Thus, ultimately, the healing of these painful experiences due to atrocities may not lie in devising sophisticated therapeutic techniques but in returning to more "traditional" forms of healing based on assisting people to develop appropriate narratives. The healing effect of story-telling, in its multiple variations, has always been a well-known phenomenon (Papadopoulos 1998: 472).

Similarly, the report *Guatemala: Never Again!*, which collected and analysed oral testimonies from thirty years of political violence in Guatemala, notes that, 'Compiling testimonies is a key component of developing a collective memory that enables people to find meaning in what happened and affirm their dignity' (Recovery of Historical Memory Project 1999: 89). But caution needs to be attached to this potential, especially in the context of the fragmented peace-process in Ireland, where no long term political settlement has yet been established at the time of writing. The documentaries in this research project, while hesitant to claim any healing potential as suggested above, were produced within ethical principles of accountability that, at the very least, should not impede such healing.

Story-telling requires listeners. While *Inside Stories* was produced with little sense of who the audience might be, the other documentaries were produced with specific, if various, audiences in mind. The literary critic Felman develops the issue of

the relationship of the testimony-giver to the audience in considering *Shoah*. She claims that, 'To testify is not just to record a fact, but to address another, to appeal to a community. To testify is not only to narrate, but to commit oneself, and the narrative to others...to take responsibility for the truth, which goes beyond the personal, in having general validity' (Felman 1992: 204). Not only are participants communicating with the director, but also with future audiences. Another interpretation of this issue of responsibility is given by Stanley Cohen, who highlights the distinction and development between knowledge and acknowledgement when he writes, 'Acknowledgement is what happens to knowledge when it becomes officially sanctioned and enters the public discourse.' (Cohen 2001: 225). This awareness of public discourse and understanding of what is acceptable is historically dependent. The ending of significant violence in the North of Ireland, beginning with the ceasefires of 1994, has seen the emergence of survivors' and victims' groups which regard the telling of stories as an important part of their work. The 'Healing Through Remembering' Project produced a 'Story-telling Audit' of thirty one such groups and recommended that:

One way of dealing with what has happened is to seek understanding of our separate psychological, emotional and spiritual wounds through their disclosure to each other. It is our belief that we need to share our stories, tell our truths, actively listen to each other and document what has taken place (Kelly 2005:5).

The documentaries in this research project, already available in the public sphere apart from the *Inside Stories* interviews with the Open University lecturers, are a modest attempt to contribute to such disclosure, listening and documentation.

Conclusions

As a filmmaker in community and broadcast environments, I have been able to develop collaborative relationships with participants that draw on my experience as both insider and outsider. Such accountability may prolong the production process but makes access more likely to those individuals and communities. The importance of the site of the traumatic memory to the structure of story-telling, to the performance of the participant,

and to a contribution to visual story-telling, evolved over the duration of the project, culminating in the production of *Inside Stories*.

These documentaries were made possible by societies' emergence out of political violence, which opened up opportunities for those who had suppressed their stories to bring them into the open and to be more amenable to the approaches of filmmakers. The range of production styles reflects the different production processes that emerged out of the negotiations with the groups and individuals collaborated with - from the low quality *Telling Our Story*, to the semi-professional *We Never Give Up*, to the installation *Inside Stories*.

Finally, the role of memory-telling in the context of a contested past offers opportunities to engage with conflicting interpretations of that past that inevitably continue in present narratives. While caution needs to be exercised in claims for the healing properties of story-telling, these documentaries address the imperative to story-tell that provides the potential for healing. Their exhibition offers society an opportunity to share the stories of others.

CHAPTER 2

TELLING OUR STORY

Introduction

This chapter looks at the first documentary made for the dissertation and reflects on some of the early questions, such as collaboration with participants and the use of location in memory recording. A local survivors' group in West Belfast invited me to help them make a documentary on a traumatic event, which would work as a template for further audio-visual projects that they planned to organise.

The Springhill Massacre

One summer in the early evening, shortly after the breakdown of a ceasefire between the IRA and the British Army in July 1972, British soldiers opened fire on the Springhill housing estate in west Belfast from a neighbouring fortified timber yard. During a ten-minute period, five unarmed civilians, two of them children and one the local priest, were shot dead. A number of other people were injured. It was a mini 'Bloody Sunday', but without any political cost to the perpetrators. No official investigation and little media coverage, other than at the time, have taken up the incident. A notable exception was the report 'Belfast's Bloody Sunday', in *Andersonstown News*, 3 June 2000. This was just one of the thousands of incidents that made up the Troubles, most of them remembered by the immediate community but forgotten by the larger society.

Following the 1994 ceasefires by republican and loyalist military groups, which followed the Downing Street Declaration of the previous year, a number of victims' and survivors' organisations emerged in the north in attempts to address the hidden traumas of violence. The June 2002 the *Newsletter of the Northern Ireland Office's Victims Liaison Unit (Issue 7)* identified thirty such groups. One of the survivors' organisations that revealed an early interest in audio-visual media was the west Belfast based Victims and Survivors Trust (VAST), which had established a web site and had video-recorded many of their commemorative events. Politically non-aligned, VAST campaigns on issues of justice as well as running workshops and classes for personal and social therapeutic purposes. Because of my previous work with the community production group, Belfast Independent Video, VAST invited me to work with them in the spring of

2000. They wanted to produce a short documentary that would both offer survivors an opportunity to 'tell their story' and to encourage others to come forward to add their stories to the archive that VAST was hoping to build. The documentary was intended to be brief for 'promotional' purposes and with an accessible narrative. We choose the story of the Springhill shootings among the many violent incidents that had occurred in West Belfast during the 'Troubles'. De Baroid gives an insight into the effects of war at this time on the Greater Ballymurphy area, which borders Springhill:

By the spring of 1972, Ballymurphy was for all practical purposes a No-go area. The RUC [police] never ventured in except to hastily deliver the odd summons under British army protection. The military, on the other hand, made occasional sorties from the Taggart [barracks] during daylight hours; night adventures were less frequent. Sometimes people were arrested and taken off for interrogation. Other times, people were simply lifted and beaten up. But on most occasions military moves against the area were short-lived and ended in retreat under the encouragement of IRA gunfire (De Baroid 1989: 140).

Some research had already been carried out on the Springhill case with the production of an anonymous pamphlet, *The Springhill Massacre: 9th July 1972*, and a locally organised public inquiry had taken place the year before VAST's invitation. Other circumstances also aided the recording of this story despite the twenty-eight year gap: some witnesses were still alive, including those who were injured; the incident occurred during daylight so witnesses had a clear view; there had been little media response to early media claims that the victims were armed and that the shootings had been carried out by loyalists; and no prosecutions had ever been brought, which gave it a direct relationship to the emerging trend of demands for redressing injustices.

Creative Collaboration

Most audio-visual productions involve some degree of collaboration and we wished to push this notion as far as possible. *Telling Our Story* was a collaboration between three sets of people - VAST, the survivors who used the Springhill Community House as their focal point and myself. We all met prior to filming to discuss the project. Each explained

their motivations and hopes for the project. I was also thoroughly interrogated - 'Who are you and what do you want to get out of it?' - reflecting a mistrust of the media resulting from decades of stereotyping of the conflict in the North (Holland 1996: 378-380). Broadcast television also has a tendency to rely on survivors merely to authenticate the current affair reports as told by journalists and experts. One example is the *Newsnight* BBC2 6.8.98 report, where the spine of the story has a reporter interview Dr. Marie Smyth, as they walk along the streets of north Belfast, using only brief interviews with survivors to back up their shared thesis.

The decision to record the interviews at the site of the original shooting was to encourage a recreation of the atmosphere and to offer stimulation to the storytellers. We hoped that the location would become a 'character' in itself and contribute its story to the audience. We planned to use as few cutaways as possible and allow the survivors and the environment to tell the story. Similar to our wish to minimise cutaway images in post-production, we also planned to make minimum intervention as 'interviewers' because we wanted to encourage the survivors to tell the story in their own way as much as possible. We, the documentary makers, were aware that we were making decisions which could control the direction and shape of the final story, but we strove for a collaboration where the survivors would achieve the space to decide what they wanted to include and what not, a relationship that we hoped was reflected in the title, *Telling Our Story*. The interviews were edited to create a sense of the witnesses describing an event as it happened. Rosemary, who saw her friend Margaret shot dead, found it difficult to be interviewed. Both girls were aged thirteen at the time. Her responses were brief and hesitant. But we decided to use her material as this very inarticulateness conveys some of the strains of conjuring up traumatic memory.

The choice of location and the use of a hand-held camera were to play a significant part in the overall aesthetic of the documentary. In a scene one of the survivors, Brian, relates what happened when he arrived at the site of the shooting. He was sixteen years old at the time and was returning home from another part of the city. His revisiting of the physical space enables him to more easily revisit it emotionally. He retraces his steps, figuratively and literally, he refers to the street layout, points to the timber yard where the shots came from and to the community centre where two of the

fatally injured emerged from. He takes us, the audience, on a narrative and a physical journey. The hand-held camera accompanies him on this journey. We are usually looking at him, but sometimes see his point of view as he points to a building and the camera pans around to see it also. We, the audience, are encouraged to visit with him another space and well as another time.

Because there was a minimal crew, with me operating the camera and asking occasional questions and a sound-recordist standing behind the camera, Brian addresses me, his eye line towards the camera and so directly to the audience. While the recording of reality can only ever minimise mediation, never remove it, the address to camera encourages this minimising and engages the audience more closely with the storyteller. The sound-recordist operated a boom and allowed independent use of the camera to pan away from Brian, to follow his pointing, and to see what he sees but still allowing us to hear him.

Brian's performance is enhanced by the location, so much so that on occasions he ignores the hierarchy of the camera and director and takes charge himself. When he describes the shooting by a single bullet of the two men on either side of him, he moves around the camera forcing it to follow him (we see the shadow of the boom in this motion). He also presses up against an imaginary wall and leans out to look to his left. As he demonstrates the bullet flying over his head and the body slumping back against him there is almost a tangible connection with the past. Later, when Brian is discussing the effects on him and his community, he looks down averting the camera's gaze, subverting the normal convention of matching eye line with the interviewer/camera. Although we, the audience, no longer have his look he invites us to a painful place in his thoughts.

Post-production

We allowed for some additional material to be added to the recorded testimonies at post-production. A memorial had been created by local people which included a mural on white tiles. Within this composition were portraits of the dead, a landscape of the temporary single-story houses, which have since been replaced by brick two-story

houses, and images of newspaper coverage at the time, which labelled the dead as gunmen or having been shot by loyalists. Close-up recordings of these were used to illustrate some points made by the survivors. The strategy was to limit images to those found in the vicinity. The decision not to use television archival footage was based partly on costs, but also to encourage viewers to hear and see what the storyteller tells and shows us, not what black and white footage edited for television news might suggest.

The other non-story-telling images which were employed involved a degree of re-creation, but fell short of reconstruction. When the edited narrative came to the point of a fatal shooting, the camera zoomed in quickly to the physical position where we imagined the shot came from. This could not be achieved easily during the recording of the interview so it was recorded it afterwards. In post-production we added the sound of a single shot or series of shots to the quick zoom image to exaggerate the impact. We wanted this to mirror the suddenness of the original shootings that occurred without warning and to interrupt the narrative. These images and sounds were then followed by an image of a painted tile portrait of the person shot with a contrasting silent soundtrack.

At an early rough cut stage, these particular post-production additions caused concern within the VAST Board. Some members thought that the impact of this quick zoom and sudden noise might re-stimulate pain for the viewing survivors, or other survivors of violence, and be too traumatic. While accepting this possibility, the Board balanced it with the need to reflect in some way the original trauma and agreed to keep the effects as they occurred in a context which justified them, that is, they had an impact but weren't sensationalist, and were followed by a moment's silence and a portrait.

The other non-testimony material added at the post-production stage included two pages of text at the very beginning to establish context. Since the documentary was not an investigation into the incident, but was made up of the stories of the survivors, the text restricted itself to giving factual information about the date, time, location and numbers involved. It also reported that compensation had been paid by the government and that no one had ever been prosecuted for the attack. We choose to use text in order to avoid the disembodied and authoritative narrative 'voice', which would have extended the narrative space between the participants and the audience.

The documentary was book-ended with impressionistic sounds. A foreboding rhythm was employed at the beginning over street shots of Springhill, with its imposing 'peace' wall, accompanied by children, who were playing on the day we filmed, posing for the camera. The sound does not match the images of orderly houses and children at play, suggesting discordance. A bass heart-beat sound ended the documentary over images of the garden and mural, the credits and Martin walking off screen, visibly severely injured.

We organised a discussion after the final screening for participants and their families, the VAST Board and staff, and invited members of the community. A particularly long exchange concerned the fears of one of the participants, raising issues that reflect wider tensions in the north. He had moved out of the area and was working in a mixed political environment. Sectarian tensions were increasing in that area and he felt vulnerable for his family. He was concerned that if the documentary was seen publicly, he could be identified as someone who was critical of the British Army and conclusions might be drawn that he was a republican sympathiser and so a legitimate target for loyalist paramilitaries. The debate centred on the contradiction between having the documentary distributed so that the issues addressed would enter public discourse but countered by the understandable fear of retaliation. The decision was taken to restrict the screening of the tape to controlled environments, such as community centres and festivals, but not to distribute the tape more widely.

This reflected a tension generally in the north that has persisted since the ceasefires. At the time of the recordings the second IRA ceasefire of 1998 (the 1994 ceasefire had broken down temporarily) was only two years old. While there was no declared war, there was low-level political violence, particularly in Belfast, which acted as a break on developments at attempting to tell stories from the recent past. That past had witnessed much violence but had also suppressed the public display of witnessing. A study of the small nationalist community of Ardoyne noted, 'A surprising number of relatives had not spoken to eye-witnesses. Because of trauma, grief, confusion and continuing violence, they had often not spoken to the rest of the community - despite the close nature of that community' (Ardoyne Commemorative Project 2002: 11).

Acknowledgement and Narrative Closure

The clearest example of any therapeutic value in the documentary process of this film lay in the testimony-giving of Martin, who was severely physically injured. Before recording, we met in the local Springhill Community House with Martin, his wife, Bernie, and other survivors. Martin appeared to have a voice stutter and also asked Bernie to accompany him to the recording location. Bernie explained that she was too busy and he should do it by himself. Reluctantly he agreed. But a transformation occurred when we went to the site of the shooting, the camera was turned on and he began to tell his story. He had told his story many times before, but this was the first time in front of a camera. He grew in confidence and articulacy as the story unfolded. Laub, referring to the recording of a testimony for the Fortunoff Archive, writes, 'What ultimately matters is the experience itself of giving testimony, of living through testimony, of reclaiming his position as a witness (Laub, D. 1992: 85). This reclaiming of public status by the witness raises the issue of public acknowledgement that Cohen suggests moves the subject from a passive to an active position. Towards the end of the film, Brian states that the first time he had told his story publicly was twenty-seven years after the event at the locally organised public enquiry, 'I was never asked once about what happened. I was never counselled about what happened'. This is something that VAST is conscious of. They, and the participants in *Telling Our Story*, want to tell their stories to the public, to be listened to and to be acknowledged.

While accepting the impossibility of complete closure for trauma narratives, nonetheless we can accept degrees of closure, stages that people can work towards where experiences can be integrated into their lives, rather than be allowed to dominate and distort them. There had been no police investigation into the Springhill shootings, certainly none that interviewed any civilian witnesses or survivors. There has never been a closure in the sense of either all of the facts being interrogated or legal justice being applied. The survivors reflect a sense of frustration and anger at this public lack of closure, but in different ways. The differences between Brian and Martin are reflected in the difference of their social status as well as the difference of their wounds. Martin is physically injured, with a metal plate in his head. He has a limp and is visually disabled. His past is embodied in the present. He cannot forget or be allowed to forget the past and

must live it daily. This is illustrated by his anecdote on his sister-in-law's appeal to him to stop living in the past and his reply that his past is also his present. Brian, on the other hand, has no physical wounds but displays emotional and social scars. He talks about the sense of humiliation that he and his community suffered, both because of the attack and because of the lack of action by the authorities in response to the incident. Anger in both men is evident as they reflect on the injuries inflicted unjustly on them and their community. While Martin looks directly, challengingly, at the camera, his look exaggerated by the wide-angle close-up, Brian casts his eyes down, apparently trying to control his rage, the better to articulate his thoughts as clearly as possible.

Their differences also mirror social and economic differences in the wider society of the north that need to be taken into account when considering healing processes. Martin has a dependency because of his injuries. He is dependent on physical and economic support. He is unemployed and his disability makes isolation more difficult to overcome. Brian, on the other hand, has a professional job and the social mobility which comes with that. His injuries are easier to hide and less obstructive in seeking work and relationships. In both cases their memories are vivid and powerful. But while Martin's past dominates his present, and prevents him from seeing a future that offers hope, Brian can separate the past from the present and can imagine a future that is different from, and more just than, the present. Martin's future is not only physically the same as his present but he carries the guilt of knowing that neighbours died trying to save him. He carries the survivor guilt that makes closure more difficult, even if an investigation were to uncover the perpetrators and justice redeemed. While Martin carries a personal burden, Brian envisages a closure for the community. He believes that a public inquiry will lay the ghosts to rest for a community that has been criminalised, where the victims have been blamed. That such a narrative development will help heal Brian is probable. Whether it will be a closure for him personally, given the intensity of the experience and the lack of personal counselling that he refers to, is less certain.

These issues of personal and public narratives recur throughout the testimonies. Although the interviews were conducted individually, they each refer to the experiences of others and this is reinforced by editing that tells the same story from different viewpoints. The chronology is linear, but the witnesses are multiple. They display an

awareness of community that needs to be addressed in any healing process. This reflects a strong sense of the collective in Belfast's working-class districts. This has been heightened during the 'Troubles' where whole communities felt under attack either from the paramilitaries or from the state security forces. Brian states, 'It has given me an insight into how fragile we were living in this area, how expendable we were living in this area that our lives counted for very little'. From Brian's concern for the criminalisation of the community to Martin's concern for his neighbours who tried to help, they both illustrate Jelin's reflections on Halbwachs' notion of how individual memory becomes enmeshed with collective or social memory, 'one does not remember alone but with the help of the memories of others and of shared cultural codes, even when personal memories are unique and distinct' (Jelin 2003: 11). Many psychoanalytic approaches underestimate this duality and attempts at narrative closure might address it productively. One value of recording and making accessible audio-visual testimonies may be as a contribution to this process.

The documentary has been seen by local community groups in Belfast, at film festivals in Britain, and by survivors' groups in other countries. It has also been used as a lobbying tool in meetings with government officials to raise the issue of a public enquiry and with funders to campaign for more resources for similar work. The aims of the documentary for both the survivors and the Victims and Survivors Trust have been modestly met. It was a small production which has had most effect on those who participated in it. VAST itself now records and edits its own video productions. Any wider impact will be judged by how many other testimonies are recorded and acknowledged by that immediate community and by the wider society, implicated by our silence. The potential of audio-visual recording of testimonies, with its unique contributions of location as character and of performance in story-telling, has yet to be fully tested in both the personal and public processes of healing in the North of Ireland.

Conclusion

The documentary *Telling Our Story: the Springhill Massacre* offers the participants an opportunity to put on record their witnessing of the shooting to death of five of their neighbours and relatives by the British army; to redress an imbalance by asking questions

of the authorities about their handling of these murders, and of the media about its coverage. The film also offers the survivors an opportunity to communicate their sense of loss and endurance, to be publicly acknowledged. It also opens up questions around collaboration, location and performance that are addressed more rigorously, if unevenly, in future research productions.

CHAPTER 3

A PRISONER'S JOURNEY: EDUCATIONAL FILMMAKING

Introduction

My next collaborative production for this research project involved working with a group of republican ex-prisoners, who commissioned me to direct a documentary that would be of educational value to their members. This offered me the opportunity to collaborate on a longer production, in terms of production and historical sweep. Access to appropriate locations proved an insurmountable obstacle with aesthetic consequences.

The Brief

In 2000, I was invited to direct an educational documentary by Coiste na n-Iarchimi (Coiste), an organisation of Irish republican ex-prisoners. An Coiste wished to tell the story of the thousands of prisoners who had served sentences in England and in the North of Ireland and who had since been released under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement of 1998.

Coiste is one of a network of groups run by and for republican ex-prisoners, with offices in Belfast and Dublin, and funded by the European Union Programme for Peace and Reconciliation as well as a number of Charity Foundations. It operates on the principle of self-help and focuses on issues of full citizenship for its members (who had been criminalised and therefore barred from specific occupations); dialogue with those opposed to its political views; and efforts to preserve some structures of the Long Kesh and Maze Prison as a museum (Ritchie 2003: 27-31) (1).

Because this was a commissioned project, Coiste retained the Executive Producer role. We drew up a list of priorities for the documentary - to re-tell the stories of prisoners in various locations over the thirty years of the 'Troubles'; to bring the ex-prisoner community up to date on experiences of adapting to civilian life again; and to highlight the work of ex-prisoner groups. The participants were to reflect the range of experience – gender, period of imprisonment, length of sentence, frequency of imprisonment and place of imprisonment. The documentary's audience was to be the immediate ex-prisoner

community, with an emphasis on sharing past experiences and coming to terms with the new challenges of the post-ceasefire reality.

I liaised with Jackie McMullan, the temporary and funding-dependent post holder for educational work in Coiste. I had known Jackie through his brother, Michael, whom I had visited when he was a prisoner in Long Kesh, but had not met Jackie for almost fifteen years. In such a situation, a balance needed to be struck between professionalism and friendship. The former is required for a critical engagement with the themes and subjects, where the director becomes a story-teller for an outside audience. The latter allowed for trust and access to a story that contains political and psychological sensitivities. I saw my role as an enabler and took my lead from Jackie, who provided a list of issues that the documentary was to cover and suggested a number of ex-prisoners whose experiences ranged from internment in the early 1970s, through the no-wash protest of the late 1970s, the hunger strikes of the early 1980s, and to the releases of the early 1990s. The prisoners also included those who had spent long periods in English prisons and in Armagh Gaol, the latter being used mostly to hold women prisoners.

Production

After my combined production roles of directing, camera operating and editing on *Telling Our Story*, I now wished to concentrate on directing, because of the productions larger scale, including the use of higher-end equipment. I engaged a production crew from the Masters in Documentary by Practice programme at Royal Holloway University of London. Two North American students, Joanna Raczynska and Craig Taylor, were keen to work on an outside production that offered such historical and political resonance.

My main concern was to represent these stories as richly as possible and the previous use of location in *Telling Our Story* was an approach that I wished to develop. The most obvious solution was to use the prison sites themselves. Although I was aware that it might be impossible to gain access to the prisons still in operation, I was naively hopeful about getting access to the unoccupied Maze and Long Kesh Prison. However, the Northern Ireland Office refused permission. As I discovered later, the NIO still had one of the H-Blocks in working order as a precaution in the event of the ceasefires

collapsing. Part of the prison was on a 'war footing'. The second ceasefire had been declared only three years before.

I considered more abstract representations and I drew up a list of visual metaphors that were to be found around Belfast that might act as both illustrative of the narratives and offer a texture of what contemporary life in Belfast was like for newly released prisoners. Another linked function of the visuals was to act as a reminder of the absent prisons, so I considered barbed wire, fences and gates, but was reluctant to make these parallels too literal, to force them to substitute for the real architecture of imprisonment. This tension between the real and the symbolic was never finally resolved, nor creatively exploited to the full in the final documentary.

The crew and I were based in London and organised a two-week production in Belfast. An ex-prisoner acted as our production assistant and driver, but remained in the background, leaving us to record and ask the arranged questions, which I elaborated on as the conversations progressed. We took each participant separately and recorded in locations that attempted to reflect a part of their story. Tommy Quigley was recorded close to his offices and in front of a wall mural that represented scenes from the prison experience - from the Nissan huts of Long Kesh to the street protests at the time of the hunger strikes; Mary Doyle was recorded with the terraced housing of Ardoyne in the background, where she lived; Seamus Finucane was positioned outside a Social Club where a sculpture of Cuchulainn had been erected, dedicated to dead republican volunteers; Alex Maskey was recorded sitting on the steps of Stormont Parliament Buildings, where he was an elected Member of the Local Assembly (MLA); and Jackie McMullan was recorded inside Coiste's offices.

After the recordings, we travelled throughout Belfast looking for images that offered symbolic significance but without too literal a translation. Craig and Joanna were a useful source of inspiration, since this landscape was so familiar to me that I often felt too close to see it afresh, while they found a novelty in each street corner, housing terrace, children's game and army fortress. We recorded the British Army watchtowers, high-wire fences around police stations, wall murals and so-called peace lines. We also recorded images of people going about their lives, for example adults waiting for the Black Taxis on the Falls Road and children playing on scooters in a narrow street full of

parked cars. From the vantage point of high-rise flats in the New Lodge area of inner city Belfast, we recorded pans along the city's skyline and close-ups of individual locations.

Post-production

I declined an early offer to use An Coiste's video archive for two reasons. Firstly, much of it was off-air and I anticipated copyright problems. Secondly, the archive material of prisons and prison protests is limited and so often used that I did not wish this low-budget documentary to compete on the same production grounds as the large number of high-budget broadcast programmes that have been made throughout the Troubles. Thirdly, the remit included a move away from the prison experience to civilian life, and I wanted the documentary itself to move away from the body of work already available.

The task of assembling an edit was relatively simple, given the clarity of purpose, the detailed research gained from An Coiste's insider knowledge, and the relatively straightforward recording schedule. The participants had been chosen for their articulacy and each represented a particular period and aspect of the prison experience. The camera and sound operators had recorded material of high quality. However, my initial concerns over the limited visual texture of the material were resurfacing. The participants' stories are poignantly told, and continue to move me each time I watch the documentary, but the images that accompany them seemed thin by comparison. Tommy Quigley recounts his wife's arrest and brutalisation in London's Paddington Green Police station to deter her from visiting him in an English prison. Seamus Finucane was offered parole to attend his brother's funeral on condition that he came off the 'blanket protest', but he choose not to let his comrades down. Jackie McMullan describes the initial despondency at the hunger strikers' deaths and the subsequent strategy of coming off protest to renew it later, leading to an escape. Mary Doyle describes her father's support for her decision to go on hunger strike. These interviews called out for evocative audio and visual material as accompaniment. Our recordings of everyday life in Belfast, while well shot and representative of the way Belfast had both changed and retained familiar war images, did not seem to be adequate to the task of working alongside the prisoners' stories.

The editing strategy was to create sections around the agreed themes with a chronological timeline. An opening section introduces us to the interviewees and their

brief quotes suggest the themes to be covered later. These include how the early troubles were experienced and motivations for becoming involved in resistance. A second section includes circumstances when first arrested and the various conditions in the different gaols, from an internment camp to a Victorian prison. A third section includes release and re-arrests and takes us up to the removal of political status in 1976. A fourth section deals with the no-wash and hunger strike protests of 1981, as well as conditions in English prisons. A fifth short section allows reflection on the value of the prison experience to personal development. The final sixth section discusses the difficulties that prisoners have in re-adjusting to civilian life again, from the limited employment opportunities to relationship difficulties.

In an extended dialogue with An Coiste, which was sent draft edits from the edit suite in London, we cut down the length of the edited interviews by removing repetitions and tightening up narratives, leaving the overall structure intact. A final sequence was agreed and additional visual elements were introduced in the edit to create more texture and to 'hide' the jump-cuts of the interviews. Interludes are used to break up these sections, with images of Belfast and its population - wall murals, black taxis in West Belfast, panoramic shots of the shipyards and Cavehill Mountain - accompanied by a soundtrack made up of songs by solo singers who had been prisoners. The songs were selected from a list that had been used inside prison to sustain cultural resistance. The interludes were intended to create spaces to provide the audience with opportunities to reflect on what had just passed and on what their own experiences and feelings might be. It is worth noting that no voice-over was used, because we wanted the ex-prisoners to speak for themselves throughout. Coiste felt that the documentary required some contextualisation at the beginning, so a text was prepared outlining the dates covered and the aggregate number of years that were spent in prison by the republican community. It was important to provide a lot of information in as concise a way as possible. Over two pages it read –

Between 1970 and 2000 at least 15,000 Irish republicans were imprisoned serving in excess of 100,000 years.

These stories are just some of the journeys made by these prisoners.

Since I was not present for any of the Irish screenings (it was shown at various events that Coiste organised for its members), it is difficult to gauge the reception of the documentary. From conversations with Coiste, I believe that the documentary was mostly used to stimulate discussions about the themes it raised and no feedback on the form of the documentary was forthcoming. This contrasted with *Telling Our Story* where a meeting to discuss the final edit was attended by participants and invited non-participants, who contributed to not only a critique of the content, but also the strategies of filming and distribution.

On reflection, the creative problem not successfully addressed in this documentary is the visual story of how incarceration was experienced and overcome. The prisoners give us their stories, which reflect individual suffering and collective resistance, but as a filmmaker I do not think that sufficient attention was given to the aesthetic issue of representation. While I have the excuse of not being allowed access to the prisons, something I was later to overcome, I think that my failure to find a richer texture for *A Prisoner's Journey* can be traced to a lack of submerging myself in what was being said. I recorded the visual material on the last days of the schedule and did not take enough time to watch and listen to the interviews before recording again. This meant that I did not put enough creative thought into developing strategies for overcoming the absence of prison locations.

The ambition of working to the remit of an organisation that wanted many themes dealt with, and by a range of their members, equally precluded my instinct to make a documentary around the experiences of one or two ex-prisoners, allowing time to follow them in their daily lives and in their relationships. Another strategy would have been to make a film about the community of ex-prisoners as they worked and socialised together, or to take just one aspect of this, such as tourism, counselling, or campaigning against 'criminalisation'. This may have revealed some of the binaries discussed above, but with a different process and structure, entailing a larger production crew and location support for lighting and sound set-ups. Yet another approach would have been to consider using archival footage in a more dynamic way than merely to illustrate interviews and voice-

over. Patricio Guzman constructed his *Obstinate Memory* (1997) by interviewing the original and surviving participants of his *Battle of Chile* (1976) in a post-Pinochet Chile in order to excavate the memories that had been buried during the dictatorship. I could have recorded the reactions and reflections of the ex-prisoners as they watched and listened to other documentaries that had been made about their situation. This would have covered copyright as well as allowing the issue of representation to be addressed.

The balance between aesthetics and information required careful handling and I am not sure that we were successful on *A Prisoner's Journey*. This is not to say that the documentary does not remain a valuable audio-visual record of the breadth of experience and resilience of the republican ex-prisoner community in the North of Ireland. When I came to work with the Human Rights Media Centre in Cape Town, I once again faced the issue of screen democracy through numbers, but was able to apply some of the lessons learned in Belfast.

Conclusion

Employing the strategy of an intercut, linear documentary, organised around themes, *A Prisoner's Journey* covers thirty years of traumatic experiences by political prisoners, who told their stories with poignancy. Produced primarily to address the republican ex-prisoner community, its educational value lies in its addressing that community's move from violence through imprisonment to reintegration to civilian life. It was made possible by careful collaboration between the filmmakers, the participants and their organisation. The lack of access to any of the relevant prisons meant that the effect of location on narrative structure and performance was limited, but I resolved not to give up hope of accessing some of these prisons, despite political opposition. More creative thought than I applied is required to address this lack.

CHAPTER 4

WE NEVER GIVE UP: REPARATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction

My research to date had focused on the North of Ireland. In seeking a comparative analysis, this chapter deals with the making of *We Never Give Up*, a film produced by the Human Rights Media Centre in collaboration with Khulumani Western Cape. Recorded in Cape Town and edited in London, the documentary looks at the legacy of Apartheid and the survivors' lobbying of government for reparations. The chapter offers a description and an analysis of the collaboration between the producers, the participants and the filmmakers, as well as the role of filmmaking in survivors' attempts to reclaim their voices.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Khulumani (Xhosi for 'speak out') was a national organization set up during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Hearings as a support group for those who were giving evidence and was later to develop lobbying strategies to campaign for reparations from the government, as recommended by the TRC. Khulumani Western Cape, which had its origins in a local political ex-prisoners group, has two main constituencies. One was made up of those who had been identified by the TRC as victims of Gross Human Rights Violations (GHRV) and who had been waiting, to date, for four years to receive their final reparations. The other was made up those who were not invited to give testimony to the TRC and felt ignored by the country's political progress. The TRC had offered a symbolic transformation from Apartheid to full-franchise democracy, but at the risk of leaving millions untouched. Coombes offers a useful summary of the tension between the symbolic and the truth-telling aspects of the TRC's functions:

The declared emphasis of the commission was to enable the 'truth' of events under Apartheid to be spoken in order to heal the wounds of the divided society that had been so violently created. Its larger objective was to facilitate a national

reconciliation between victim and perpetrator. The TRC has been heavily criticized in South Africa for the compromise made in the name of 'national unity' and reconciliation that allowed many to walk free while the conditions they had perpetrated under Apartheid and that had reduced so many to poverty and powerlessness remained intact. Nonetheless, the TRC has also grudgingly been acknowledged as serving a positive function (Coombes 2003: 8).

The focus of the Khulumani's activity was to lobby for reparations, an issue which the TRC, although part of its remit, was unable to deliver and which the new government had failed to act on, seven years after the elections had brought the ANC to power.

Research Trip

The Human Rights Media Centre (HMRC) in Cape Town, in association with Khulumani Western Cape, had been planning a documentary for two years before I met them. They recounted that many researchers - psychologists, anthropologists, historians and theologians - as well as print, radio and television journalists, and independent filmmakers from all over the world had sought out Khulumani for stories of survivors. Three years after the TRC's hearings, survivors and members of Khulumani felt exploited by having to continually repeat the experiences they had been through during Apartheid. In most cases the survivors had no further contact with the interviewers and had no way of evaluating what contribution their stories had made. They had been motivated to give interviews so that public opinion would be shaped by the discourse. Instead, scholars got their doctorates and became the experts; media workers got paid for their stories while the survivors' situation had not improved. Khulumani were determined that the making of their documentary would be different.

The previous year, I had visited Khulumani and was allowed to record on a digital camcorder one of their mass meetings, which was divided into two sections - mobilisation to lobby the government and the story-telling of experiences from the Apartheid era, this latter under the supervision of the Cape Town Trauma Centre. This dual purpose was later to provide the strategy for their documentary. The following day, in an experiment that I later discovered was a test of my own ability to collaborate, I was

invited to accompany one of the members, Maureen Malibu, in search of details about her husband, Lucky, who had been shot dead by police in 1982. Then, the police had released a press statement, duly published as the official version of the story, that Lucky had been a burglar and resisted arrest. Maureen wondered if he had been in the underground resistance, which at the time was mass-based and fragmented, and that he might have been assassinated by the police. Our research in the local library (Lucky had also been a male model in advertising) and phone calls to the police produced no leads. Police files of the period had been destroyed. I suggested that we did a piece to camera outside the house where Lucky had been employed as a gardener and where he was shot. After recording, we decided to knock on the door and surprisingly found that the current occupier was the original owner and employer. Her maid invited us in for tea and Maureen enquired about the incident. The old English woman, who was bed-ridden but feisty, did not witness the incident and was only aware of the police information, which she accepted as most likely true. On the return journey, Maureen was disappointed that she had not been able to get more information. However, she declared that she had benefited more from this search than the TRC had been able to offer her, by being able to visit the scene of the shooting and talk to someone who knew Lucky.

The South African research trip allowed me to witness the combination of political organisation and psychological healing in a public forum. I also became aware of the importance of self-organisation in survivors' attempts at gaining confidence, finding their voices again and affecting change. This trip created the foundations for a more sustained collaboration between with Khulumani and the HRMC.

Insider and Outsider

The HRMC had raised half of the budget from the Ford Foundation Southern African Office, and were seeking ways to proceed. Discussions between the HRMC and a local documentary director caused them concern because of differences over political agendas and final cut. The director was also very busy at the time, so discussions ceased. Maureen Malibu, whom I had filmed and who was seconded onto the board of the HRMC for the duration of the making of the documentary, and Shirley Gunn, the Chair of Khulumani

Western Cape and the Director of the HRMC, discussed the project with me. I told them about my experiences in recording trauma narratives in the Irish context. They spoke about their previous experiences with filmmakers and the importance for storytellers to own their stories and how they saw the process as a collaborative relationship. On condition that I accepted these conditions, I was invited to direct their documentary. Initially I was hesitant because of my outsider status and expressed a preference for a local director to be appointed. They described the difficulties of collaboration and limited funding and they drew parallels with the stories that I had been producing in Ireland. They regarded my experience as that of an insider to issues they wished to engage with. I was curious about the parallels and differences and accepted. I was invited to meet the HRMC board, who had been given the grant by the Ford Foundation and they approved my appointment. Back home I sent copies of my work for the group to view and comment on. Although the scale and scope of the political violence in South Africa was vaster than in Ireland, the testimonies contained familiar narratives - similar patterns of trauma and grief, interplay between individual and collective narratives, as well as demands for disclosure, justice and truth. There was also a similar sense of battling for acknowledgement from the state, whose remit is to defend but whose actions pointed towards neglect.

Authorship

The first principle of the production was collaboration at all stages - from the remaining research required, identifying potential audiences, and selecting themes, a structure, participants, imagery and soundtracks, including the length and pace of the final edit. The collaboration was to operate at several levels, involving the production crew, the selected participants from Khulumani, the Khulumani executive, the Khulumani general membership of 2000 people, the HRMC workers and the HRMC Board of Management. At one point in the edit suite in London we had the transcripts of an audience discussion after a large public screening in response to an early rough cut. The HRMC was the production company, in association with Khulumani, and Shirley Gunn, who also acted as interviewer, was the producer, I directed and was boom operator; Shahied Sallies, who was trained at Cape Town's Community Video Education Trust and who freelanced for the South African Broadcast Corporation, was the camera operator. The principle editor

was Souraya El Far, a Master's student from RHUL. Only Shahied was paid for his work out of the budget. In effect, the decisions were taken by small groups that reflected the larger already-agreed decisions taken during the research period. During shooting, the crew took those decisions along with the participants. During editing, the director and editor took decisions as they progressed and at stages throughout the editing sent rough cuts to Cape Town for consideration and responses. Because of her overlapping responsibilities, Shirley was the hub of the decision-making network.

One of the restrictions in choosing a director living in London was that the shooting time available was at a premium and we tended to reproduce the commercial pressures of working within a limited schedule - in this case only eight days to shoot, which meant limited time to get to know the participants and the location. Given my experience with *A Prisoner's Journey*, I was wary of this pressure of time and my 'outsider' status. However, in Cape Town, these restrictions were balanced by the fact that the producers were also the participants who met regularly and whose stories were being told as a group. They were their own collective authors. I was the enabler. The five months between the first meeting and the shoot itself were spent in intensive e-mail and telephone discussions. Most importantly, the first day of production in Cape Town involved a day-long workshop with flip charts when all participants and crew discussed the overall strategy, considered audiences, refined the themes to be covered, prepared a narrative structure and agreed the production details. This meeting was the crucial foundation stone in establishing a complex set of relationships and arrangements for a creative output.

Creative Tensions

Although we were a low-budget outfit with a semi-professional production crew, tensions and obstacles were minimised because everyone signed up to the conditions at the beginning and agreed to the relationships. Communication was central and both camera operator and I, the only professionals on the crew, had strong sympathies to the project. He and I contrasted these conditions to the more mundane tasks and cynical attitudes that the pressures and labour division of commercial productions often produce. The high quality equipment could also have posed problems, because of inaccessibility and bulk,

but such disturbance was reduced by keeping the crew small and using artificial light only when necessary. On several occasions the equipment was demythologised when participants checked the picture through the camera's viewfinder and tested the aperture and focus rings. A key element in establishing trust and minimising technical mediation was Shirley's role as interviewer. She was respected for her role in the earlier anti-Apartheid struggle (1) as well as her current leadership in Khulumani and the HRMC.

One of the earliest considerations was the requirement to inform and the desire to engage audiences emotionally. Shirley's questions not only helped to structure the answers in line with the overall vision, but also encouraged people to tell their stories in their own way as much as possible. She frequently only had to suggest, 'Tell us about the time when...' in order to elicit a detailed and personal testimony. Follow up questions were used to fill in uncertain areas or tease out more detail. On one occasion, it became clear that a participant had a tendency to get lost in her story and wander off on tangents, which we put down to nervousness in front of the camera and a restimulation of the trauma. We offered her the opportunity, which she took, to re-record the story at a later date. Although each story was unique, we always sought to identify how a specific character's testimony could have resonance for a wider audience.

From the beginning we were aware of the possibility of several audiences and the difficulties that this might impose on the narrative. One of the primary motives for participants was the desire to inform others in the community of their situation. Just as strongly, the older people wanted their children and grandchildren to know what they had been through. Because of the South African government's macro-economic, or structural adjustment, policies, as well as its bias towards economic investment rather than social investment and expenditure, of which reparations is a part, the government appeared to be in a rush to bury the past. It is also important to note that many children born at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s had no experience of Apartheid. A third audience included decision-makers and the documentary was expected to act as a lobbying tool within the Non-Governmental Organisation community and to influence the Justice Ministry's policies on reparations.

Participants were chosen by the HRMC because of their ability to reflect the spectrum of human rights abuses under Apartheid. Some overlapping occurred, for

example the story of the burning down of the townships in 1986 has five witnesses (almost half the total of story tellers), but it was felt necessary to emphasise this incident and its implications, because of its lasting legacy on social structures and persistence in popular memory in the Western Cape.

We decided on a strategy of classic aesthetics for recording - eye-level camera and standard framing of three thirds (2) - to create accessibility by using conventions familiar to most of the intended audiences through their acquaintance with mainstream television and cinema (3). Using such common codes may reflect a certain aesthetic conformity, but this was understandable given the circumstances of such elaborate collaboration and the HRC's aims for wide distribution. We mostly relied on stationary tripod recording and occasionally used some hand-held walking shots to create a stronger sense of liveness to the overall aesthetic. On one occasion we spontaneously followed one of the participants, Brian, into the Special Pensions Office for an engagement with a civil servant and, on another occasion, we followed Maureen on a pre-planned visit to her health clinic.

We selected visuals to reflect aspects of each character or to show a flavour of their lives, for example Maureen in her shack and weeding her tiny plot of land; Brian in his shack, attending a computer literacy class, and going to Groote Schuur Hospital Outpatients Department; Monica selling second-hand clothes at an impromptu stall; Karl walking along the beach; and Rebecca with her family arranging flowers at the grave of her sixteen year old son, shot dead in 1976. We also recorded stand-alone images which would open up the story by showing something of Cape Town and the neighbouring townships, their contrasts and connections, and the people who live and work there.

Post-production

The post-production was done with students from the Masters in Documentary by Practice programme at RHUL. The primary editor, Souraya El Far, was from Beirut and had previously worked as a professional. Despite her efficiency, the edit period was inevitably lengthy because of the need to send rough cuts to Cape Town for consideration and feedback.

Based on the agreed narrative structure, I took the decisions that reduced ten hours of transcribed interviews down to two hours. At this stage there were no images other than the participants. We created an overall storyline that represented the essence of what each person was saying as well as contributed to the overall thread, a narrative moving from Apartheid through individual survival stories to more generalised hopes and demands for the future. One observation from a subsequent screening of the final documentary was that the documentary begins with a sense of the individual and concludes with a sense of the community, not only by sheer numbers, but by accumulation of evidence. We later included the stand-alone images, as well as the archival material that Shirley had accessed from numerous sources in Cape Town to illustrate and update the stories and the organisation's struggle for reparations.

The decision-making at this stage was prolonged and complex. We had five groups of people looking at the rough cuts in four stages as we added more layers of sound and images and took out more sections in order to reduce the overall time to the desired sixty to seventy minutes. There were disagreements within and between groups, but at all times the discussions were constructive and progressive. Shirley was the centre of the negotiating web as we, the editors in London, argued for particular inclusions while the participants or committee members wanted others. Ultimately, though, we in London did not include anything that the participants disagreed with and did include most of their suggestions. Equally, they showed a mutual trust in our judgement when we argued strongly.

I would like to refer to four edit negotiations that reflect this process. Firstly, we agreed to avoid a 'brief history of Apartheid', but we wanted a limited amount of archive to set the scene, particularly the early stories of the Western Cape township burnings of 1986 and police shootings in the coloured townships. Some of the HRMC Board members felt that the police shooting material was already widely used and might undermine the documentary's originality. Others, particularly the participants, and reflecting degrees of access to television, were not aware of its previous uses and felt that the material was central to their stories. The testimonies of three women sitting together appear to repeat what is already said by two other individual participants about the burnings. The editor and I wanted these stories taken out to avoid repetition, but the

Khulumani executive requested that they be retained because they reinforce the impact of the legacy of this event, as well as reflecting the wide range of participation in the movement. The composition also lends an important sense of collective story-telling as they sit together and are not singled out as most other story tellers are. The use of images of contemporary school children over the testimonies of school boycotts of the 1980s confused some of the participants. On the other hand, some participants wanted to portray today's children as their equivalents because they saw these young people as a key audience. We compromised by retaining only some of these images. This was one of the moments in the film when the aesthetic strategy to include metaphoric use of images unsettled some participants. Another example of the tension between the filmmakers' aesthetic vision and the participants' understandable demand for concise and precise illustration occurred with the use of birds on a beach. Again a compromise was reached that restrained the use of such strategies.

The translations of Xhosa speakers proved difficult for us in the edit suite. We could not match many of the key words to what was being said. After consultations with other groups in Cape Town, the HRMC explained that this is a common problem as the languages are so different and they concluded that the translations could not be changed. An example might be that the phrase 'KTC township' appeared in the spoken Xhosa at the beginning of a sentence but at the end in an English translation. So we do not hear this phrase even close to synch with the subtitles.

The narrator and some of the participants have strong accents when they spoke in English and audiences outside South Africa might find it difficult to understand what was being said. However, as the primary audience is inside South Africa this did not appear a major problem and international audiences would have to work harder. Significantly only one of the storytellers in the documentary speaks English as her first language. The other two first languages are Xhosa and Afrikaans.

The documentary has been shown to large and sympathetic audiences in community centres in Cape Town and Johannesburg and to smaller numbers in universities in the USA and the UK. International Film Festivals that have screened it include Durban, Zanzibar and Belfast. I was able to attend the latter, where the discussion

centred on the issues raised to the exclusion of any reflection on the form of the film. This is almost inevitable in the context of the audience's comparative experiences and its desire to discuss lessons that might be learned from the TRC process. Given the lack of political progress in the North of Ireland and indeed the lack of any major shift in power, the audience concluded that the most likely developments would be seen from the community and not from government initiatives. While I regretted the lack of observations on the filmmaking and collaborative aspects of the documentary, I took consolation in producing work that led to animated and informed discussion on its content. Subsequently, a representative from Belfast's Relatives for Justice, after viewing the film, raised funds to erect a permanent headstone for Rebecca's son.

Textual Analysis

I want to look briefly at one of the participants' performances in these audio-visual recordings and also to refer to the question of narrative closure. Firstly, if we take Brian as an example, we see that he has three personas in the documentary. In the beginning, he carefully, but nervously, selects the words to describe the experience of living with, and resisting, Apartheid. He appears to have a stammer, maybe reflecting the difficulty of articulating the horrors of that period. When he visits the prison in which he was incarcerated, he settles into an eloquent and proud recounting of his struggles there, at one point in the open doorway of a prison cell declaring, 'I never gave in'. Later when he enters the Special Pensions Office, his frustration at not having his case processed turns to anger and assertiveness when he is faced with bureaucracy's prevarication and he remembers his brother's recent death and pauper's burial and his own feeling of helplessness due to poverty. This journey from nervousness to confidence to assertiveness seems to mirror the journey of the documentary's narrative as it moves from trauma, to its effects, to campaigning for rights, and finally to healing processes. This apparent progress has to be balanced by the reality of the survivors' ongoing individual journeys, including Brian's, which highlight setbacks, obstacles and frustration.

Narrative closure is an aim of many healing projects. The participants in this project desperately want closure, in some cases dis-closure. It will come more easily for

some and not at all for others. Maureen has said that she has already achieved more by her participation in the documentary process than was offered by the TRC. Karl's physical condition will deteriorate and his need for medical and counselling support will increase over the years. Monica wants to know the whereabouts of her disappeared mother and sister. Rebecca wants a grave stone, 'not just that sand', for her son. Cleo wants his education back. All of them are engaged in a political and legal battle to have the government honour the TRC's recommendations for final reparations. In many ways, what hurts most is the distance of the government, a government that would not be in power but for the sacrifice of these people. They want to be included, consulted, heard and answered. The fact that they have to resort to the Access to Information Act in order to have the government disclose their policy discussions on reparations shows how far they have been excluded.

We Never Give Up is unusual in this body of practice research because of its applications of voice-over, archive and extensive visual inserts. These resulted from the specificity of the collaboration with the HRMC and Kulumani. Their intention to deal with particular themes and to address several audiences required a layering of material and narrative contextualisation that voice-over offers. The voice-over was recorded in South Africa towards the end of the post production period and although it has sound quality issues (the recording room had little absorption and produced an echo effect) the main concern for the producers was to have a black woman's voice. I had previously recorded in England a South African white woman's voice as guide track, but this was felt not to represent the experience of those most affected by Apartheid. Interestingly, the effect of the included narration is to reduce the distance between the ambience and some of the story-telling voices on the one hand and the narrator on the other. So although the content of the voice-over is authoritative in that it establishes historical and political facts and conditions, the speaker uses intonations, rhythm and pitch similar to those of the other participants. Because of the use of inserts, resulting in many places where participant voices are heard over images, there are occasions when the narrator seems indistinguishable from the storytellers. While this is acceptable to the producers, and in principle I accept this subversion of the narrator's authority, I now wonder if the narrative voice-over should have been less objective and more reflective in its observations. It

seems that we are asking audiences to accept contradictory concepts, one is the authority of the narrator and the other is the voice of the participants, whose views are no more or less personal than anyone else's in the documentary.

Visual material is not used so extensively in my other documentaries as in this film. In fact, archive was rejected and inserts were used sparingly in *A Prisoner's Journey*, the only other comparable work. Again, this can be credited to the aims of the producers to reach diverse audiences and the need to visually set context and to address audiences' audio-visual literacy. It was felt that more visual story-telling was required to enhance and break up the participants' material. My own collusion with this perspective was the result of having worked in television where anxiety about capturing and retaining audiences' attention in a multi-channel environment results in quick cuts and layered visual story-telling. My assumptions were as central to these strategies as the producers' and participants'.

The structure of the documentary reflects its educational and lobbying functions. While a more experimental structure, or a televisual demand for liveness, would have pushed us either to play with form, or to conform to the organisation of events unfolding, the producers and participants required a steady chronological development that began with Apartheid, the establishing of specific repressive periods, their aftermath and legacy, hope for a new future with the setting up of the TRC, a gradual awareness of its limitations, later disappointments over the government's handling of reparations, and concluding with Khulumani's role in the community. There is an overall sense of a collective experience, where each participant contributes to each section and an accumulation of experiences and opinions is expressed as a coherent viewpoint. This is visually referenced in the final scene where the public meeting ends in collective singing and dancing, in a surge of celebration and defiance.

Conclusion

We Never Give Up was made by people who contributed to the defeat of one of the most brutal regimes in the world but feel that they have now been left behind. They made it to change their circumstances, to regain their voices. They made it to become authors of

their own stories and not just the subjects of others' stories. Along with the producers, I was able to use my professional and research skills in enabling the process to succeed. Collaboration, where relationships and decisions were transparent and agreed upon, lay at the heart of the production. The aesthetics of the final piece resemble more closely than any other film in this research project a style that conforms to classic televisual strategies that reflects the participants' desire to distribute it as widely as possible. The comparative aspects of the participants stories allowed me, an outsider, to temporarily become more of an insider as my experiences, political and technical, offered a counter-balance to the differences of nationality and race.

CHAPTER 5

INSIDE STORIES: MEMORIES FROM THE MAZE AND LONG KESH PRISON

Introduction

This chapter describes the processes of recording memory-telling at The Maze and Long Kesh Prison, which, as a microcosm of the Troubles, was both touchstone and tinderbox for the larger political conflict in and about the North of Ireland. As the participants, who were ex-occupants of the prison, negotiated their way around the site, through its the cells and corridors, control rooms and exercise yards, they were stimulated by the materiality of the site, remembered 'things they had forgotten', and used their bodies to 'relive' and retell some of their experiences. While I had assistance in carrying equipment, only I accompanied each of the three participants on the recording of their return to the prison, using a hand-held camera and radio microphone, in order to reduce the intervention of the film-making process, creating an intimacy and trust that I hoped would address the political sensitivities which persisted ten years after the first cease-fires of 1994 and also offer a safer space for personal recollection. In contrast to the production relationships involved in *We Never Give Up*, negotiations with the participants' representative organisations, although no less prolonged, mostly ceased once recording began. Also, instead of layers of management, I was dealt with separate organisations that took various and often conflicting positions within the political landscape.

A Political Prison

Since the making of *A Prisoner's Journey*, I had not given up on gaining access to The Maze Prison and persistence paid off when the Northern Ireland Office finally agreed to a research visit. It was made clear that recordings would be permitted on condition that the material was not used for commercial purposes. Because of the sensitive nature of the prison's disputed iconic status - for some a site of political struggle and for others a place of punishment for 'terrorist crimes' - recorded interviews at the prison site have been rarely permitted, both when the prison was operational and since its closure (1).

Ownership of the site has since passed over to the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM), which faces political pressure to prevent the prison being visited by ex-prisoners. An example of this kind of political reaction followed a private commemoration inside the prison's hospital block by family and friends on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of ten republican hunger striking prisoners in 1981. Under the heading, 'Unionist anger at use of jail for event', an *Irish News* article quoted Democratic Unionist Party MP, Nigel Dodds, 'To say that I am furious at the government for permitting the former Maze prison to be used for this republican jamboree would not be an exaggeration' (Anon 2006: 86).

The Long Kesh and Maze Prison complex stands about twenty miles south of Belfast. An old RAF base, it was converted in 1970 to a prison when internment was introduced by the ruling Unionist Party, with the backing of the British government, in order to contain the armed insurgency that had emerged out of the civil rights protests. The original Long Kesh layout and conditions resembled a Second World War prisoner of war camp, with Nissan Huts and relatively free association within each compound. Political status was granted in 1972 after a hunger strike and prisoners organised their own social, political and educational activities, prompting Sir David Ramsbottom, Inspector of Prisons, to report, 'The Maze is unique within the prison system in the UK, and probably the world' (Ryder 2000: 106). The title Long Kesh was replaced by HMP The Maze by the British Government in 1972 after Direct Rule was introduced, following the fall of the local Stormont Parliament due to increasing violence. However, violent protests and several escapes, with some estimates putting it at fifty-three successful escapes from Long Kesh between 1971 and 1975 (Purbrick 2004: 92), led the government to build a cellular structure between 1976 and 1978 next to the compounds. This was an attempt to regain the initiative by the British Government by individualising the prison experience and reasserting control. Purbrick underlines the high priority of rebuilding for the British government when she cites the Gardiner Report of 1975, which recommended, 'The present situation...is so serious that...priority be given...in terms of money, materials and skilled labour such as has been accorded to no public project since the second world war' (Purbrick 2004: 99). Intense conflict between prisoners and the authorities was to mark the thirty-year life of the prison complex. This was the site of the

first internment camp in the UK since the Second World War; where the no-wash protests began against the policy of criminalisation in 1976; where ten hunger strikers died in 1981, including an elected Westminster MP; and from where the largest escape in British penal history took place in 1983. As a result of the ceasefires of 1994 and the Belfast Agreement of 1998, political prisoners were released and the Maze was finally emptied of its occupants in 2000 and closed in 2004. A small number of political prisoners from dissident paramilitary groups are now held, along with the rest of the long-term prison population, in the nearby Maghaberry Prison.

The contest over ideology, territory and narrative persists and is evident in the construction and direction of historical narratives. The official name of the prison was Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) The Maze, while the republicans and many ex-prisoners refer to it by its original name, Long Kesh. The different names reflect some but not all of the different meanings that the prison holds for those who were held there, who worked there, who visited it or only knew the place through its media representations. These meanings changed over time. Prisoners were subject to different penal regimes at different historical periods: internment, criminalisation, and then acceptance of their political status in the prison's later years. Republican and loyalist prisoners (2) occupied separated spaces within the Maze and Long Kesh and there were only brief periods when their integration was attempted. Prisoners' collective control of their own space structured the changing, but always opposing, relationship between prisoners and prison officers. For example, during the Republican prison protests prison officers patrolled the wings with extensive lock-up periods, for twenty-four hours at times of intense conflict. Then, as their demands for political status, including free association, were won, prisoners' movement along their wings increased and that of prison officers correspondingly decreased, with their access to both wings and cells restricted or prohibited altogether. Put simply, as prisoners gained control over the spaces of the prison, prisoner officers lost it.

While the Maze and Long Kesh prison was shutting down and since its closure, it has remained a relatively secret place, with entry for visitors restricted and controlled. Despite, or perhaps because of this, the Maze and Long Kesh has become a site of investigation for artists, photographers and filmmakers. Because I wanted those recorded

to reflect a range of experiences inside this prison, I separately recorded the stories of a loyalist prisoner, a republican prisoner and a prison officer. But since up to 25,000 prisoners went through this prison and up to 15,000 prison officers (Coiste na n-Iarchimi 2003: 27) were employed during its thirty years of operation, my sample does not claim to be representative.

Protocols

A particular sensitivity is required in dealing with people who have experienced political violence. In 2003 the OFMDFM published a report, *Ethical Principles for Researching Vulnerable Groups*. It contained no recommendations for ex-prisoners, itself an interesting contribution, albeit of a negative nature, to the debate on definitions of ‘survivor’ and ‘vulnerable’. However, I have developed protocols that I agree with participants before recording in such scenarios and adapted these to the prison officer and ex-prisoners. The most important protocol, and from which most others flow, is that the participants are my collaborators and they retain a veto over the material and its exhibition. They contribute to how the material is recorded, edited and where it is shown. Each documentary in this research project has a different emphasis on ownership. In the case of *Inside Stories*, I retain copyright, but they have veto over its use. Another protocol includes participants choosing the context to record in. In the prison setting, the agreement was that the participants were recorded separately. This mirrors a concern of most ex-prisoner groups who are wary of the forced confrontation between victims and perpetrators, or between combatants, so that journalists get the dramatic story for their agenda. Such was my televisual instinct in the early part of my research that I considered a meeting between a perpetrator and a victim. This bringing together was one of the prerequisites for amnesty for the perpetrators in the TRC Victims Hearings, which were broadcast live on television. BBC2’s *Facing the Truth* employed the TRC Chair, Desmond Tutu, to mediate between ‘perpetrators’ and ‘victims’ in a studio production. As mentioned earlier, the results of these latter arranged televisual exchanges could prove hurtful to the victims. The decision to record inside the prison separately also reflected the reality of segregation, the aim of many of the prison protests.

Another protocol was that I would only use questions only to tease out the stories and reach clarification. There was to be no persistent interrogation and challenging of motives. This is unlike broadcast journalism where you are required to challenge subjects who are talking about their 'criminal' past. The risk of such non-challenging is to allow those who practised violence the opportunity to justify their actions without questioning. This did not become an issue in the research, because I chose to record their memories from the perspective of their incarceration and not their involvement in armed groups beforehand. The participants were to guide the recording by speaking only when they wanted to. In *Inside Stories* the agreement beforehand was that the primary stimulant for their memories was to be the materiality of the landscape. Because I worked alone with a handheld camera, radio microphone and without lights, the participants were free to move around the spaces, knowing that I could accompany them without difficulty.

The Other

I had previously worked with Billy Hutchinson, a former Ulster Volunteer Force Commander and now a member of the Progressive Unionist Party, on a broadcast programme for C4, *Belfast Lessons: Inside the Peace-process* (1994). I had also worked with An Coiste ni Iarchimi on *A Prisoner's Journey* and they suggested that I approach former IRA volunteer and Sinn Fein MP Gerry Kelly. The search for a prison officer proved more difficult. The Northern Ireland Prison Officers Association (NIPOA) took a position of wanting to 'move forward' and not to 'look to the past'. Given the attacks on their members, this was a viewpoint shared by many who were caught between hope that the ceasefires would hold and fear that they would break down. A return to violence would threaten those who spoke out. After lengthy negotiation with the NIPOA, Desi Waterworth, one of their members who had previously taken part in television interviews on conditions in the prisons, agreed to participate.

I was striving for the personal perspective of the experience, not the political history, in which most political ex-prisoners wrap their own experience and are keen to relate. There is also a very strong, and understandable, tendency to tell stories from the collective perspective, since this reflects the solidarity of the political organisation and of the prison community that helped prisoners through their incarceration. When I was

recording *We Never Give Up* one of the participants responded to the question of his torture by referring to another's experience. While witnessing torture can be more difficult to tolerate than experiencing it yourself, this reference to others is also an acknowledgement of the plurality of the experience. Although subsequent developments have acknowledged that this was a political conflict, for example negotiations in the 1990s with representatives of the republican and loyalist groups (Kennedy-Pipe 2000: 35), at the time the British government attempted to win this discursive conflict by criminalising it, including the introduction of the individuating cellular structure at The Maze. My purpose was not to replicate this challenge to political and collective experience, but to render it recordable. Working on my own, it was difficult to record more than one person at a time and I had learned from previous research that an intimate atmosphere is more conducive to trust, so setting subjects at relative ease in this sensitive work. The history of story-telling, in all its guises, includes the use of individual experience to draw out the larger picture and pattern. I wanted the depth of the personal memory to give a rich texture to the collective story.

In the establishment of identity through the plural 'we', there is a necessity to define what you are not, in other words who is the other. Representation of otherness is central to this project, because everyone is the other in this story. I wished to explore how we hear and see the other - the republican who was at war with the British government, the loyalist commander who was fighting, to some extent, on the same side as the British government, the prison officer who regarded both as enemies. To the loyalist, I, living in a nationalist area of Belfast, may have been a target during his paramilitary days. I wanted to investigate how I, the participants and audiences read the other in each of these stories.

The Maze and Long Kesh: the Return

One characteristic of the Troubles was the high percentage of the population affected by imprisonment policies. I had worked in a community bookshop that supplied prisoners' families with books to be delivered on visits. As an occasional visitor to the compounds area, I had little sense of the size or shape of the prison, laid out as a one-story complex behind twenty foot walls on flat land. After a name check by prison officers, a long wait

with families in a room with no facilities other than plastic chairs, followed by a search in a cubicle and another wait, we were eventually transported in a mini-van with painted out windows to the visiting area, a low-ceilinged and prefabricated hut with wooden and plastic furniture in cubicles.

By contrast, my research visit was by way of the prison officers' entrance. A large sign on the automatically controlled gates read, 'Maze Regeneration Site: Reform and Reinvestment Initiative', an indication of the OFMDFM's attempts to re-brand the site and its functions. A small lodge housed several staff. We were granted access on the basis that political representatives could not be excluded from the prison. Billy Hutchinson, who served sixteen years in the prison on a murder conviction, had become an elected representative of the Progressive Unionist Party in the Northern Ireland Assembly. Billy and I met the Northern Ireland Office Press Officer, signed in and were taken to the former Long Kesh internment centre, where Billy had spent sixteen years as a sentenced 'special category' prisoner in a loyalist compound on a murder conviction. The gates in the imposing wall were already opened. Passing through a short no-man's land, we were quickly upon the architecture of a prisoner-of-war camp.

Billy was emotionally affected. He smiled, paused, looked around in silence and enthused about his return after fifteen years. 'Amazing', was a word he repeated several times. I was impressed for him. This was a ghost town, with rows of low rounded Nissan Huts behind wire mesh fencing, topped with barbed wire. Some of the huts' roofs were caving in, squat monsters sinking under their own weight. In other scenes, the wire fencing was leaning at dangerous angles. This part of the prison was abandoned, leaving behind buildings and artefacts that had apparently not been touched for fifteen years. Billy walked in a circle just outside his compound as he remembered running round the exercise yard. He smiled with memories. At one point, I moved the camera away from Billy and tilted up to the barbed wire as I became seduced by the revelations of a secret site, moved it along the wire and returned to eye level 180% from where I had left him. Billy was aware of where the camera might end up pointing, so he continued talking as he moved around the back of me and met the camera as it tilted back down. This collaboration, this dance of direction, enabled by our discussions beforehand, was one of the most telling moments in my research.

A pattern emerged of Billy's story being structured around the physicality of the site, as we came upon in turn the study hut, residential huts, an improvised gym and the ablutions. Billy moved and the camera followed. Billy pointed and the camera took the cue. I wanted to stop and take in the place, but I was linked umbilically by a metaphorical cable to Billy. The tension of being always alert to his emotions eased when I delayed to record something that he had referred to, the wallpapered cubicles for example, and he paused to give me time, but he was soon on his way again. His expectations were driving him. He was already talking about the gym before we entered. He proudly remembered how the exercise bars had been constructed from metal bed frames and he clapped the dust away. When we were in the small kitchen he lifted a chip pan that had not been touched since he had left, revealing congealed fat on its bottom. In the ablutions he made it clear that the sinks, toilets and showers were thoroughly, and voluntarily, cleaned every day when the prison was occupied. In the film, Billy points, lifts, touches, wheels around and even smells his memory back into life again. At one point he says, 'It's amazing what you remember when you come back in here'.

In terms of Billy being my 'other', I could have been a UVF target, during the period that Billy was operating on the outside, but I had previously worked with him for a broadcast documentary a decade before (although he could not recall this) and I was intrigued with his struggle to combine his politics of being both a loyalist and a socialist - ideological positions not easily compatible. I also was aware of his journey out of violence. He was a strong advocate of the loyalist ceasefires and the peace-process.

Fighting on All Fronts

I had no previous relationship with either of the other two participants. Their experiences as prison officer and prisoner took place in the H blocks of the Maze, the individual cellular structures constructed between 1976 and 1978 adjacent to the compounds where Billy and other 'special category' prisoners served their sentences with the rights and privileges associated with political status, such as wearing their own clothes. Special category was abolished for those convicted of conflict-related offences after 1 March 1976 and the H blocks built in an attempt to de-politicise those imprisoned.

There were important differences filming in the blocks and the compounds that I should indicate here. The most notable difference in architecture was the constrained spatial environment. Whereas prisoners (and filmmakers returning with former prisoners) could move about the Long Kesh compounds freely over a relatively large piece of ground (from bunks to library and from gym to exercise yard), the H Blocks had low ceilings, small cells and each arm of the 'H' had double gates, called airlocks, that staggered movement around the Block. Indeed the prisoners usually could not leave one of these wings without permission and a Prison Officer escort. Most amenities were in one wing, with the laundry and health room based in the central arm, called 'the circle', after the original Victorian design. Also, the block in which we were given permission to film was one of three in part of the prison known as Phase Two that had been redecorated following the Good Friday Agreement prison releases and was in good order. The electricity functioned, the monitors in the control room were working and the corridors and cells were clean and maintained. The other H blocks were in disrepair, with the flat roofs leaking water and the plaster crumbling in damp and dark conditions. There was, therefore, little trace of the previous occupants in the preserved block to which we were given access.

In some ways, the Prison Officer Desi Waterworth is the 'other' to most people in the North of Ireland, since his story is rarely heard. His was the most difficult recording for me. While the two ex-prisoners had, in prison parlance, 'done their time', Desi was still a serving officer and had gained no such 'release'. He had served at the Maze, including a period during the no-wash and hunger strike protests in the late 1970s and 1980s. Within two months of our recording he faced prison protests over the issue of segregation at Maghaberry Prison, which currently houses members of dissident armed groups, that is those who have not signed up the peace-process.

Desi's body language mirrored this tension. He seemed less comfortable in front of the camera and required questions to be able to engage. It seemed appropriate then to ask him to introduce us (the camera's future audience) to his work. He adopted the role of tour guide and brought us to the control room where he explained the layout and the function of switch tables, banks of monitors and rows of keys. In the film, Desi reveals a professional pride in the operations of the prison, from its double locking mechanisms to

the quality of the doors and gates. He is disappointed that the ablutions available were not in as good decorative an order as when they had been in operation. He describes in spatial terms the loosening of control by prison officers, as the authorities negotiated with prisoners over conditions. During the protests for the re-instatement of political status, from the origins of the H blocks in 1976 through the no-wash protests which escalated into the 1981 republican hunger strike, the prison officers patrolled the wings at will with extensive lock-up periods and escalating violence (McKeown 2006: 51-72). The later easing of conditions after the prisoners agreed to conform included more association and wing movement for prisoners, with prison officers being restricted as to when they could patrol the wings. At one point the two wings of one side of the H were opened to prisoners, with officers' movement further restricted.

Desi tends to stand with his back against the wall, a position that is learned by officers when facing prisoners in the corridors. On one of the few occasions that he ventured into a cell, he recalls how, during the no-wash protest, the cell would have only two mattresses for furniture and the walls were covered in excrement. He re-enacts searching the urine-soaked food and scraping the excrement-smearred walls in search of contraband, for example, tobacco, pen and paper (the prisoners were forbidden the use of reading and writing materials during the blanket and no-wash protests). Desi's performance is a deliberate underplaying of the seriousness of the situation as he refers to 'petty games' that the officers and prisoners played in this hide-and-seek world of deprivation. A 'no-problem' mentality may be one of his coping mechanisms in a profession that suffered one of the highest suicide rates in Northern Ireland. It is estimated that between 1974 and 1993, twenty nine people who worked for the Northern Ireland Prison Service were killed by republican and loyalist groups (Purbrick 2004: 92).

Desi's contribution is a challenge to anyone who is aware of the allegations of brutality and ill treatment of prisoners. While there have been film and literary accounts from the prisoners' perspective, it is unusual to have an officer's account (3). The prisoners took the brunt of prison violence in all of its definitions, but in the tension of Desi's 'fighting on all fronts' that he described later, he revealed his own vulnerability through his frustration and anger at his employers. He was caught not only between the two factions inside but also between his employers, who he felt betrayed him by their

negotiations, or what he sees as vacillations, and the prisoners. His experience and his story are important elements in the tapestry of memories from The Maze.

Collective Experience

Gerry Kelly has been the media's stereotypical 'other'. He is a leading republican, who endured a hunger strike and forced feeding for 200 days in Brixton Prison in the mid-1970s and took part in the largest escape in British penal history, when thirty eight prisoners got out through the gates of the Maze in 1983. He has served periods of imprisonment in England, Holland and Ireland and is also a Sinn Fein MP at Westminster. He was transferred to the H blocks of the Maze when conditions improved after the 1981 hunger strike. As someone who had previously revisited the empty Maze site on a couple of occasions, he did not have the freshness of encounter that Billy had. Also, as stated earlier, the block that we were allowed into had been cleaned up and was therefore more anonymous. Gerry's and Desi's remembering-by-association was less productive than that of Billy's, who had 15 years of material leftovers to connect with. At one point, Gerry seemed confused by where he was in the wing, because renovations had changed the workshop into a gym. However, enough of the original layout and furniture was intact to offer memory sign-posts.

Gerry walked freely round the H block, part tour-guiding and part memory-recalling. As he entered various spaces he remembered related incidents and feelings - the canteen had a television shelf which provoked a recollection of each Saturday night's voting on whether to watch *Match of the Day* or *The Old Grey Whistle Test* television programmes; the education room brought back memories of attendance at Open University classes with their discussions on feminism and civil rights; and the workshop aided the recalling of how the prisoners wore down the officers' control of space by moving through the doorway so often that the officers eventually kept the door unlocked. Arriving at the end of one of the wings, he raised his hand to the sign above the door, 'Cell 27', immediately changing the subject as memories flooded back. This was the largest cell and prisoners used it as social space for keeping a library of books and records and for general discussions, which included current affairs and politics. Gerry illustrated the persistence of an 'imagined community' (Dawson 2005: 155) beyond

incarceration, by referring to ex-prisoners use of the term in current conversations, so that if someone is talking for too long, the riposte could be, 'You're not in Cell 27 now'.

In another scene, Gerry describes what it was like to be forcibly removed from a cell after prisoners decided to resist their Red Book security classification that ensured high risk prisoners were constantly moved around prison. Gerry used an amused, and almost amusing, delivery to tell this anecdote of an attack on his body. This is a good illustration of performative memory-telling, where he is able to reconstruct the pretence of reading a book to hide his fears, the ensuing struggle in a confined space, his being pinned to the ground and then frog-marched out of the cell to the sound of the wing 'erupting'.

One of the striking aspects of the republican prison experience was the collective spirit, which Gerry describes as being central to their survival and to gains over the authorities. McKeown, himself an ex-prisoner and hunger-striker, writes, 'Like most political prisoners, Irish republicans imprisoned at any time, anywhere, have always organised themselves in a collective manner.' (McKeown 2001: xii). This was similar to the Robben Island prison experience in South Africa, where attempts to break the collective and political nature of the resistance were similarly employed and similarly unsuccessful. Coetzee and Otakar interviewed political ex-prisoners and concluded:

Any prison term carries with it a strong element of condemnation, censorship and punishment – emphasised by the phenomena of iron-bound captivity, exposure to humiliation by warders, and extreme isolation. It was therefore essential to build group solidarity, to demonstrate approval for the cause and to ensure that each individual experienced acceptance by the group (Coetzee and Otakar 2004: 86).

Like Billy, Gerry emphasises the importance of education, both formal and informal, to the prisoners' ability to move beyond mere survival to enhancing their prison experience and to continue their resistance to the British government 'criminalisation' policy by developing intellectually and politically.

However, unlike Billy's general demeanour which appeared spontaneous and fresh, and Desi's which appeared constrained, there is a rehearsed feeling about Gerry's

story-telling, which may in part be explained by his previous visits and the lack of material traces. Gerry's position as Sinn Fein Spokesperson on police and justice (two of the current issues that are causing difficulties for progress towards a devolved Assembly) has meant that he had appeared regularly in the mainstream media, often under robust questioning. To deal with this he has developed and maintains a public image of the smartly-dressed tough-talking politician.

Looking Back

How one remembers is strongly influenced by present circumstances. In contrasting political prisoners in South Africa and Czechoslovakia in the 1960s and 1970s, Coetzee and Hulec conclude, 'There is undoubtedly a tendency to incorporate current conditions when evaluating past experiences. People's interpretations of past experiences of long-term imprisonment are tinted by their current political and material conditions' (Coetzee and Hulec 2004: 92). Both Billy and Gerry were elected representatives of political parties on the Northern Ireland Assembly at the time of recording. While there was little evidence of political progress at a parliamentary level, both men felt that the prison experience had been of great benefit in teaching skills of negotiation and empathy. They had both also benefited from formal education classes, Billy achieving a degree and a diploma. They shared optimism for the future of their own careers and communities. Contrasting the fortunes of those involved in resistance to totalitarian regimes in South Africa and Czechoslovakia, Coetzee and Hulec observe, 'Success in the struggle created an ability to integrate into a coherent life-story the hardship and humiliation of their incarceration with the accomplishment of the victory.' (Coetzee and Hulec 2004: 92). Desi, on the other hand, was less optimistic. He regarded it as a mistake to release the prisoners and to close the Maze. He felt that too many concessions had been made and that lessons had not been learnt. His physical demeanour reflected this 'back against the wall' attitude, yet he maintained a strong sense of humour, if dry and deadpan.

Site Recording

My first three visits to the prison had been preoccupied with recording the individuals' memories. With the participants, I had been the mediator and the enabler, allowing them

to share control of the directing. My antenna was directed at their discoveries. I had spent little time reflecting on the spaces and buildings, which I had used as props, both as visual background material and as stimulant to the memory recalling. I decided to return without the mediation of participants to record the spaces and buildings. As an audio-visual artist, I wished to get a feel for, and to represent, the atmosphere of the site itself, especially those places that were referred to in previous conversations. In this I allowed myself to be guided by the participants' priorities as I attempted to evoke 'meanings' from the spaces.

I spent most of this time up watchtowers, near perimeter walls, in exercise yards, taking panning shots, close-ups and some ground level wide shots. I was seeking a privileged view that viewers would benefit from, although not necessarily one available to prisoners or most visitors. (Interestingly, the civil servant guide who accompanied us talked continually over the sound track, displaying her knowledge of the prison's history and layout - a remote audio track that I would later edit out). My intention was to make visual material available for the post-production stage. I wanted to contextualise the memory recall, not to cover, nor impose on, it. The earlier recordings were hand-held, allowing a degree of independent movement between participant and recorder. When alone, I privileged my aesthetic eye and sought out more abstract shapes, identifying patterns and contrasts in composition and framing, as I recorded gates and windows, bars and corrugated iron, and barbed wire, often using a tripod to record detail.

Post-production

The notice from the NIO was so short when I was first given access to the prison that I had developed little vision of how I might edit or where I might show this material. My professional working practices informed early editing attempts at producing an intercut linear narrative, but with the Maze material this strategy soon became a frustrating experience. However, this is not an uncommon phenomenon for editors. The film editor Walter Murch, describing the transition from recording to editing, writes, 'The director, of course, is the person most familiar with all the things that went on during the shoot, so he is the most burdened with this surplus, beyond the frame information' (Murch 2001: 24). Since the edit suite provides the opportunity to retell the story, the editor is to some

extent starting afresh. Having arrived at a certain point as researcher, director and camera operator, it can be daunting and difficult to regain the momentum, at a point when new possibilities are wide open and you can begin the journey once more. It is the equivalent of the writer's blank sheet, but in reverse, that is, the page is full of random letters and commas from which you are now required to make a story. But whatever strategy I applied, whether to construct a narrative chronologically, thematically, or aesthetically, it proved unconvincing. One belief of the editor is that the material should begin to edit itself. Murch elaborates when referring to a particular editing process:

Whereas the advantage of the KEMs (editing) linear system is that I do not have to be speaking to it - there are times when *it* speaks to *me*. The system is constantly presenting information for consideration, and a sort of dialogue takes place (Murch 2001: 46).

Once a structure is found, if you 'listen' to the material, pieces will start falling into place and the end product will be greater than the sum of the parts. So the theory goes. In whatever way I tried either to work with an overall structure or to cut together small sections, the reverse process seemed to occur. The material was being diminished, not enhanced, by the editing. Any integrity that the participants possessed was being undermined by attempts at intercutting them, which took the form of fragmenting their contributions and forcing them together. One of the reasons dated back to the rationale behind the recordings. No clear line of inquiry was established other than the site's influence on the memory-telling. No set of questions were prepared and each was encouraged to respond to their rediscovery of the site, with occasional questions posed for clarification only. In this, the methodology corresponds to the oral history tradition of life-story-telling, where the significance of developments can be interpreted through episodic moments. Also, although the choice of participants was intended to represent different experiences, this was limited by who was given access by the site owners. The three participants spent different historical periods at the prison, so their stories rarely overlapped and did not inform nor directly challenge each other.

The sustained nature of the listening advocated by Murch is taken up by anthropologist filmmaker David MacDougall's appeal to overcome inhibitions in looking. He is unforgiving of those who do not:

Many filmmakers have little respect for images or their audiences. One sign of this is that the images they use are wholly imitative, not valued in themselves but used as cheap coinage. Another is that the images are changed as quickly as possible, out of a constant fear that we, the audience, will lose interest in the film (MacDougall 2006: 8)

I needed to listen and watch, carrying less baggage. The negotiations to arrive at the recordings were jokingly referred to by a research colleague as 'a mini peace-process'. I now felt like the editor as colonial governor, attempting to bang heads together. Forcing a linear intercut formula onto this material was inappropriate and I began to look for alternatives. The inspiration came from cinematographer, Humphry Trevelyan, who had used a gallery to exhibit multi-screen 'unedited' work from his documentary on an Iranian coach driver. The opportunity to minimise the editing and to screen separately in a non-theatrical space seemed worth pursuing (4).

I began to edit the three participants' contributions separately, each section lasting approximately half an hour. This length was determined by the first edit of Billy and involved removing a minimum of material that was visually awkward, such as messy focus changes and camera shake. There still remain such moments which were kept because of the importance of the accompanying synchronous soundtrack. There were also moments in Billy's contribution when I had to fight my professional editing instincts to cut early when he stopped talking and gazed into the distance. This was slowing the story down, and my urge to keep it moving was proving hard to resist. But this project was not for a television audience and therefore little concern was needed for the income-disposable viewer channel hopping. I cut the other contributions down to thirty minutes to allow a balance of screen presence and prioritized memories that were triggered by the return to the site. Importantly, it was then that the participants decided which memories remained. I changed one edit minimally and another substantially, in both cases because

the participants referred to events that were considered by them to be too difficult to deal with at this fragile stage of the peace-process. McKeown describes the difficulties some ex-prisoners have in responding to researchers' questions, 'In some cases legal prosecution could be brought against them if they consciously or otherwise revealed the part they played in various activities such as involvement in the planning or execution of escapes' (McKeown 2001: 3). This management of memory, or at least of making memories public, which has presided over the recent hesitant attempts at conflict resolution, was one necessary effect of allowing those whom I filmed editorial and copyright control.

This strategy of editing each piece to the same length with minimal intervention upon substantial content and handing over the final say to participants created three coherent but separate narratives and almost immediately offered interpretations of the whole recordings that were lying just under the surface. Segregation, the separation of prisoners according to political allegiance, was a defining feature of the Maze and Long Kesh regime and was regarded by both republicans and loyalists as a victory over the prison authorities, since it demonstrated acceptance of the continued existence of their organisations and allowed them increasing amounts of space free from prison officer control. Not only were these spaces contested on a regular basis, often violently, and involved all those who spent time in the prison, but the narratives on the outside were contested through the mass media. The British government referred to the armed movements and their prisoners as 'terrorists' and 'criminals', while they referred to themselves as 'volunteers' and as 'political'. These disputes persist in the public discourse, most recently around plans for the future of the prison site. Although a panel representing most political parties has agreed to preserve a symbolic number of buildings under the umbrella of an International Centre for Conflict Transformation, there are calls by one victims group, Families Acting for Innocent Relatives, for the prison to be completely demolished. Their website states, 'We fully intend to bulldoze it no matter what the consequences may be. The Maze will not be set-up as a shrine to Republican terrorists.' (Families Acting for Innocent Relatives 2006)

I edited a section for each participant, relying on the chronology of the journey through the spaces rather than a chronology of their time spent inside. I used jump cuts

consistently, removing material that was repetitive and selecting that which added new insight to the experiences. I privileged movement, engagement with the materiality of the site and removed as many anecdotes as possible. Landscape images were employed to bookend each section and they were edited according to the logic of opening up the space being dealt with or reflecting on what had just passed. Later I was to edit a separate ten minute loop of these landscape images to make up a fourth screen for exhibition.

Screening Spaces

The next question was how to screen this material and a number of possibilities suggested themselves, resulting in different forms in different situations. During April, 2004, it was shown at Catalyst Arts in Belfast on three screens in three constructed rooms, along with a screen in the foyer for visual shots of the empty prison. In October 2005, it was screened at the Imperial War Museum, London, as part of its *War, Memory and Place* film season, and in February 2006 at Constitution Hill gallery, Johannesburg, both in the form of a linear 100 minute documentary, with the three stories running consecutively. Northern Visions Television, a community channel in Belfast, screened each story on consecutive nights in September 2005. At the Practice As Research in Performance International Conference at the University of Leeds in 2005 and at the London South Bank University Digital Gallery in 2006, it was again shown on three separate screens, but without walls, with the former using distance to prevent sound bleeding and the latter using directional speakers (5).

Responses took different forms, for example, written notes in comment books, informal spoken comments, and organised public debates. The question of editing as an ethical and political practice, including the rights of editorial control, was a recurrent theme. A panel discussion held in Catalyst Arts, organised by the post-conflict initiative Healing Through Remembering, elicited comments about the effect of resisting conventional mainstream media intercutting techniques (6). Because *Inside Stories* eschewed this method in favour of continuous thirty-minute accounts from each former occupant of the prison, the editing of their movement around the prison and the words that were evoked by this return journey became visible. The process of constructing the film was transparent as it was viewed, giving its viewers an opportunity to reflect on its

making as well as documentary practices more generally. Intercutting has lent itself to the mechanistic analysis of the conflict as a matter of two sides fighting each other, the juxtaposition of opposites driving the story. Billy's, Desi's and Gerry's narratives were screened separately, were not placed in direct opposition, but rather as complementary, if contrasting, versions of the story of the prison.

In a discussion that followed the showing at London South Bank University Digital Gallery, another three-screen installation, the presentation of each narrative following its own internal logic determining the interaction of person with place as opposed to attempting to impose a story line was considered again. The importance of allowing 'each one to speak in their own right' and 'to see people talking more openly' was noted in the comments book(7). The Imperial War Museum curator, Toby Haggith, also argued that this was a relatively 'untampered' viewing experience because of the 'time given to each contributor' and 'the insight that each offers in a way rarely seen before and unmediated by other images'(8). What kind of space was required for the telling of multiple and conflict stories was another key issue of debate. Brendan O'Neill of Catalyst Arts explained that one purpose of exhibiting *Inside Stories* was to offer a 'neutral space where memories could be explored and opportunities offered to listen to other stories.' During the Belfast exhibition, the BBC2's *The Culture Show* reporter, Shelly Jofre, suggested that this arrangement of screened narratives in *Inside Stories* offers a model for conflict resolution: 'Perhaps this is the best way forward, telling everyone's story, separately, but under the same roof'(9).

The creation of space and subject position from which it is possible to listen to other narratives is identified as a crucial element in the peace-process itself. As Kevin Whelan points out in a 2005 conference report entitled *Story-telling as the Vehicle?:*

As well as having the right to tell stories, we also have an ethical duty to hear other people's stories. In a post-conflict situation, this becomes a very pressing issue. This ... may be the most the most difficult one because in some respects it is what makes possible a shared version of the past, and therefore a possible future (Whelan 2005: 19).

The notion that a particular kind of film practice and exhibition, an art gallery or a museum, can create a space for such listening because of a generated or inherent neutrality did not go unchallenged. Martin Snodden, a former prisoner who had shared a Long Kesh loyalist compound with Billy Hutchinson and who is now Director of the Conflict Trauma Research Centre, reminded us at the Catalyst Arts panel discussion of the variety of forms that the same story can take, 'I have told my story many times, but not the full story, always a version of it, depending on the context.' The filmed return to an empty jail, the editing suite, the art gallery or museum are, of course, specific kinds of contexts. Martin Snodden pointed out how telling stories is an act of negotiation between speaking and listening, between speaker and listener at a particular time and place. It is not an absolute truth that characterizes memory-telling; like all forms of communication, it is contingent. For Whelan, this has a positive effect:

Testimony means that it is always possible to tell it another way. It means that it is also possible to hear it another way. Testimony in that sense always has the possibility of opening a space for dialogue and negotiation with the other. (Whelan 2005: 20).

I did detect an interest, a curiosity if not sympathy, for the 'other' stories that *Inside Stories* presented. A community arts worker, someone from a world quite removed from that of the prison officer, stated that it was this story that was most 'intriguing', while a member of a community group from a loyalist area in north Belfast suggested it was only seeing (and, therefore, listening) to all three narratives, rather than isolating one to identify with, that made 'sense.' A comment from an Irish émigré in London developed this idea of the exhibition's interlinking nature, referring to the individual and political contexts of memory-telling, 'The juxtapositions and points of connections working across these pieces ... enhances our awareness of the pragmatic realities that are inseparable from the bigger ideological and political questions'(10).

When I was invited to show the work in South Africa, the appeal was in the opportunity to place it in a comparative environment. Constitution Hill was an Apartheid prison and has since been converted into a gallery, where the linear version of *Inside*

Stories was screened in February 2006 alongside a photographic exhibition of ex-inmates of the Apartheid prison system. Seeing and hearing ex-occupants of a prison inside another prison (albeit now a gallery) and alongside the images of its past inhabitants suggests possibilities when considering uses for the proposed International Centre for Conflict Transformation at the Long Kesh and Maze site. The parallels and differences in scale and political solutions between South Africa and Ireland were referred to in the comments book and once again the decision to give over uninterrupted and separate time to the participants was highlighted.

As a documentary filmmaker, with experience of providing ‘packages’ for televisual output – linear, intercut and driven by a narrative impulse – this decision to produce material that allows prolonged presence on the screen, with little visual or audio interference, has been a challenge and a discovery. Although the surface of the work appears uncluttered, the performances of the participants are compelling and allow for a rich audience engagement precisely because it allows time to contemplate both the content and the architecture of the production.

As an audience, we are conscious of the privilege of access to a site that was built as much to keep us out as to keep its occupants in, and to the feelings and memories of men who survived violence and incarceration. The structure of separate screen time for each participant suggests that efforts to engage with our violent past may benefit from allowing memories of that contested past to be heard and seen in a way that acknowledges an audiences’ ability to become their own editor of the material. This makes transparent the triangular structure of story-telling - the subject/participant, the filmmaker and the audience - where the audiences generate the meanings. In a society that has not yet passed the ‘post’ of ‘post-conflict’, the act of seeing and hearing ‘the other’ is a step we recognise as necessary, but that many of us still find it difficult to take.

Conclusion

One of the most important research outcomes of these recordings concerned the effect of location on the nature of memory recollection, articulation and recording. This disused site of contested political space influenced the participants’ structuring of remembering, occasionally interrupting a more chronological narrative with the impulse to remember

triggered by a space or an artefact. On occasions the return provoked a poignant silence as the participant remembered intensely an emotion, an event, or a smell even, which was re-experienced before sharing, if at all, with the camera. It also shows how the physicality of the place, its layout, its architecture, its spatial relationships trigger recognition and memory, in a way that would not occur if the participant was in another setting. This interpretation of the site through recording allowed it to be peopled again, to come alive again. The cells become occupied; the corridors hear footsteps; and the gates clang open. The camera moves around corners, enters cells, and peers out of windows. The site is also brought to life as one participant remembers the ‘hustle and bustle’, another describes the excrement-decorated cell walls and a third refers to one cell as the place where all issues were brought for discussion.

As a filmmaker, I felt that I was freer to move in tandem with the participants, rather than direct them. I also relied less on my own preconceptions of what I wanted and more on my intuition of trusting the relationship with the participant to deliver. In other words, the pre-production research that normally guides the director was replaced with spontaneous responses, my own and the participants, to what unfolded in the interaction between the person remembering and what the site revealed and provoked.

The editing of separate stories allows more experimental screening options that both tested and rewarded audiences’ reception of the material. The linking of the architecture of exhibition screens to the segregation of the prison space opens up questions of the transparency of the filmmaking process and of the nature of engagement with the other in contested narratives. The long takes were edited and jump cuts were used in order to display editing decisions – a pace and transparency that I hoped reflected the project’s aims of memory performance and accountability.

CHAPTER 6

INSIDE STORIES: INSIDER AND OUTSIDER PERSPECTIVES

Introduction

After the screening of *Inside Stories* I was offered the opportunity to record others who had worked inside The Maze and Long Kesh Prison, despite being denied access to the prison itself. The recording was made with two women, Fiona Barber and Joanna McMinn, who had taught Open University (OU) classes in the middle to late 1980s, when the prison regime had become more relaxed. The recording took place during a car journey to the prison. The contrasts and comparisons with the previous recordings of men inside the prison allow insights at several levels. The first of these can be described as aesthetic - the stationary and moving frame, as well as the female and male voices – while the second can be described as thematic - the insider and outsider prison experience, as well as gender differences in experience and interpretation.

Triangular discussion

During a screening of *Inside Stories* at the Politics of Memory Conference at Manchester Metropolitan University in November 2004, Fiona Barber approached me explaining that she was once an OU lecturer in the Maze prison and that she would welcome the opportunity to contribute to recordings if access was granted to the Prison in the future. She had developed a pattern of driving to south Belfast in her car, picking up Joanna, and proceeding to the Maze. She described how they would reflect on their expectations and experiences during these return journeys, which was the main contact the two lecturers had with each other. The attraction of recreating this journey offered three opportunities: we could proceed while access was being denied; it would provide a contrasting setting to the interior prison scenes already acquired; and would introduce female and outsider perspectives to the recordings.

The first recording plan was to use miniature digital cameras on the car's dashboard and attach individual personal radio microphones, with the participants being monitored in audio and video from a following a car. This would have allowed both participants to sit in their previously usual positions in the driver and passenger seats next to each other and would have allowed conversation between them mediated only by radio

contact. However, unexpectedly the professional camera operator and the equipment were unavailable on the day of the recording and so a more limited arrangement was resorted to which transformed the originally planned aesthetic. I had already brought over a camera to record the car's exterior, so I once again became the operator. In order to see both faces, I sat in the passenger seat, while Joanna sat in the driver's seat and Barbara took up position immediately behind her on the back seat. Although this allowed me to pan between them, I was concerned that this might negatively affect the flow of conversation between the participants as one spoke to the back of the other's head, as if in a taxi. The journey took about thirty minutes and the conversation continued for another twenty minutes after the participants got out of the car and walked up to the fence, peering through its chinks and leaning against the high corrugated tin walls. Inside the car, and aware of *Inside Stories* editing strategy of refusing cutaways and limiting the number of cuts, I panned the camera gently back and forth between the Joanna and Fiona. Technically, my main concerns were to keep a balance in the aperture between the bright outside and dark interior of the car, to hold the camera steady as the car negotiated corners and to pan smoothly to prevent sudden camera movements. I developed a technique of mostly holding the shot on the speaker, but also causing a rhythmic movement back and forth when the conversation grew quicker. To prevent sharp movement, I was experienced enough to hold the camera on one of the speakers even as the other took over, waiting for a break in the conversation's content or the rhythm of the conversation to pan to the speaker who had taken over. This sometimes leads to a failure to 'catch up' since the person speaking may always be one step ahead of the camera movement, but rarely does this phenomenon persist in practice. As well as offering a consistent pace to the camera movement, this technique also allows us to occasionally see the previous speaker's reaction to the new speaker, which can be an instructive observation in conversation exchanges.

First Impressions

The women were not only outsiders in terms of their status as professional teachers who volunteered to go into the prison. Nor was their gender the only important aspect of that status. Neither came from the communities which were represented in such high

proportions inside the prison, namely the nationalist and loyalist working classes. Joanna came from an English background and her voice retains traces of that upbringing, while Fiona was brought up a Protestant in a middle class area just north of Belfast. Her association with the prison was particularly challenging for her social milieu. Both participants have vivid memories of their first visit to the prison, which varies from the psychologically 'absolutely terrified' to the physical sensation of 'metal closing around you'. Expectations played a large role in these first impressions, with one prison officer attempting to frighten Joanna by describing the prisoner she was to visit as 'an animal who killed a woman security officer'. This contrasted with the OU's, and indeed the prisoners' own, policy of not informing the teachers of the nature of the prisoners' convictions. Although Fiona describes prison officers as 'a mixed bag' with some interested in her work, others are referred to as 'intimidating', and she suggests that this may have resulted from their being 'jealous because prisoners were getting free education'. They both refer to the media's role in creating the atmosphere of what they expected. Fiona stated, 'I considered myself reasonably well aware, (but) when in(side the prison) I realized how much I had been influenced by what I read about these men.' The memories also address the general discourse that the participants were exposed to when dealing with their families' and friends' attitudes to their work. Joanna states that 'some thought (I was) naïve, taken in and manipulated. Over time, friends became more distant'. Fiona is more direct, 'They thought I was mad', contextualising it during the time of the 'height of Thatcherism and Gibraltar', which refers to the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's public refusal to negotiate with the republican movement and the shooting dead of three unarmed republican volunteers by the British Army in Gibraltar in March 1988. These first impressions are an important introduction to how the women remember the development of their understanding of the function of the prison, the experience of the prisoners and their own role within these relationships.

Education

Joanna taught Women's Studies to a group of republican prisoners in the H-Blocks and Fiona taught Art History to individuals in the older compounds. They were both assigned to the prison because of requests for specific subjects that they taught on the Open

University curriculum. In *Inside Stories* it was apparent that there was a hunger for education from prisoners, who wished to use the opportunity to spend their time more productively and to prepare for life outside on their release. There has been anecdotal evidence that republicans used education in this way more than loyalists, who have been portrayed as more interested in physical than intellectual education. Republican prisoner interest in classes can be gauged from Gerry Kelly's assertion that republican prisoners had two priorities – escape and education, albeit in his case, in that order. Both Joanna and Fiona confirmed this anecdotal information, with Joanna stating, 'On the republican side, education was part of the struggle', and Fiona expressing surprise 'to see the earlier film you made about loyalists doing the Open University'. Fiona's experience had been with three prisoners, one per year. Unfortunately, the loyalist had not completed the course. This pattern may indeed have been the case in the cellular blocks in the 1980s and 1990s, but Billy Hutchinson's memory challenges this distinction for the earlier 1970s period of the compounds. Another observation from both teachers was that republicans tended to want to be educated in groups. In response to my question about the value for prisoners, who were living communally, to have one-to-one tutorials, Joanna thought that republicans 'expected to share learning with other men. Loyalists saw education as individual advancement'. The demand on the teachers from the prisoners, who, according to Barbara, 'would pull you up and make you think again', led to a stimulating atmosphere which was for Joanna 'the best teaching I ever did'. One interpretation of this apparent nostalgia for the prison days that seems to afflict both prisoners and teachers is that the participants are re-appraising the challenging and intense atmosphere which produced in the words of Joanna, 'at a human level debate and intellectual stimulation'. This intensity is rarely reproduced outside of the prison experience and can be re-evaluated when viewed from the perspective of the prisonless present.

Negotiating Spaces

Joanna addressed the way that the prisoners' negotiated spaces for themselves, both physical and psychological, within the prison system and this included the use of education. In *Inside Stories*, Gerry Kelly elaborated on this process which was at the centre of the ceaseless conflict between the prisoners, who attempted to open up and

maintain space, and the authorities, who attempted to close it down. Joanna had never taught her Women's Studies course to men on the outside and she discovered one of the reasons why prisoners wished to take it on in her first visit. Although she was 'scared and anxious' as she entered, she was offered tea by the prisoner 'with a gentle face', who explained the prison experience that included being 'treated psychologically badly... humiliated ... made to walk naked across the square...the screws' abusive comments about my body.' The prisoner concluded that this 'gave me an insight into what women must experience'. This linking of patriarchy to prison conditions opened up fertile ground for Joanna to consider, including the way that she 'gained insights into the way men think'.

Gerry's earlier description of the gradual easing of restrictions as prison officers became used to patterns that allowed doors to remain open, instead of constantly being locked and unlocked, is mirrored in Joanna's ability to negotiate more space for herself, eventually being 'able to wander around the prison at will and pay a social visit for two hours'. Fiona, too, was aware of the privilege that came with the status of being an OU lecturer, of being able to access 'an aspect of their (the prisoners') lives their family never sees'. Joanne confirmed this when she said, 'We spent more time with them than family members and weren't watched as much', which acknowledges a balance between negotiated space and the boundaries of surveillance. Joanna later understood that one of the reasons for the request for evening classes was to facilitate the prisoners' demands for more association in the evenings. She stated, 'Classes allowed them to cross wings to come together and to talk'. The ability to break down barriers even with the outside world is commented on by Joanna, who remarked, 'They used to tell me what was going on outside. They had good social connections. They shared everything and were still part of their (outside) community'. In a recorded section which was not included in the edit, because it took part after the teachers had left the car, Joanna describes how information was communicated from the prison to the community on the outside before she had physically travelled to the same community, citing examples from her own conversations being fed back to her.

The legacy of the teachers' prison visits was to overturn preconceptions that had been shaped by being on the outside of the prisoners' experiences. Despite the 'security

briefings...and media reputations' faced by Fiona, she discovered the 'humanity of people...encountering it at a different level to those who you share the same views with'. Joanna commented, '(I) used to think they were so like my brothers...exactly the same working class men. I know if my brothers were caught up in this situation, they could have been involved'. She eloquently sums up her memory of these encounters, 'I learned that you cannot imprison the imagination. It was extraordinary to realise that some experiences of talking were beautiful in terms of contact'. It is possible that these encounters brought about a reversal of roles in that the teachers were to learn as much, if not more, than their students from the relationships.

Post-production

In adopting Jean Rouch's One take/ One Sequence strategy I edited a twenty five minute section of the interview with no cuts. This is a development from the long takes of *Inside Stories* and a continuation of the experimentation that I first encountered with Humphry Trevelyan's gallery exhibition. While the recorded conversation had continued after Joanna and Fiona left the car, with me accompanying them, most of this later material either refers to being on the outside looking in, not a position they took up during their employment in the prison, or repeats what has already been said in the car. The aesthetic of being inside the closed environment of the car, having a stationary camera with limited movement between the teachers, seeing movement primarily outside of, and behind, the profiles of the speakers, all these characteristics offer contrast with the previous prison recordings. In *The Drums of Yore: Turu and Bitti* (1971) Rouch produced a ten minute film, a single continuous take by him walking with a hand-held camera into a Songhay village to record a possession ritual. Rothman notes, 'Everything is viewed from the perspective of a fixed focal length lens; there are no zooms that create an illusion of movement through space. As fully as possible, the camera becomes an extension of Rouch's own body...' (Rothman 1997: 90). This feeling of an extension of my own body, indeed of the recording itself being an extension of my own presence in the car, encouraged me to not to create any edits, but to leave the piece as real time. The edited time equates to the earlier half-hour pieces and is also the length of the real-time journey to the prison.

Conclusion

The limited recording scenario of a camera inside the car as it was driven by one of the participants did not appear to impede either her contribution nor my camera operating, despite initial preference for a more sophisticated technical arrangement. In fact, my presence may benefit audience reception, making my contribution more transparent through the occasional questions that I intervened with, through my camera movements back and forth and through Fiona's occasional look in my direction. Thus the filmmaker's presence is not removed but acknowledged, which is consistent with the other prison recordings. The triangular nature of the discussion differs from previous recordings, with the primary exchange between the two teachers, but including my physical and conversational presence. Joanna takes up the majority of screen time, with Barbara contributing not only her own thoughts, but occasionally acting as interviewer as she asks Joanna questions. One possible explanation for this may be that she had taught a less number of students for a shorter period of time, or maybe, having seen *Inside Stories*, was more conscious of the process and motivated to contribute to it more actively. Her initial approach to me may have allowed her to feel more the instigator and author than many of the other participants who were approached by me in the first instant.

The working conditions of the two female teachers differed considerably from those of Desi Waterworth, the Prison Officer in *Inside Stories*. His function was to contain the prisoners and this involved daily conflict with both prisoners and those in prison management. The two teachers' function was to educate and since this activity was voluntary their contribution was highly valued by the prisoners. Their gender and their being outside of the prison experience brought novelty to the men, but within a relationship of respect and consideration. Both women remember their experiences with affection and are still moved by the relationships that they formed and the work they achieved during this time.

I have not had the opportunity to show this work publicly, but my intention is to show it along with the other three participants' screens and the one location screen in order to reveal the formal contrasts and to offer a juxtaposition of space, movement and gender, as well as insider and outsider perspectives.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This practice-led research project set out to investigate the processes and outcomes of collaboration with survivors from political violence in recording audio-visual testimonies and memory-telling. A second question addressed the nature of location recording on the performance and structure of memory-telling. A third question looks at the potential uses of these productions for the individual and for the societies they come from. The audio-visual recordings - four from the North of Ireland and one from South Africa - range from collaboration with organisations representing survivors of political conflict to individual recordings organised specifically for the location research questions. The evidence and the conclusions of the research are to be found in both the audio-visual recordings and in the written text.

Ethics

In societies emerging out of political violence, where the conflicts of the past persist in contested narratives from the present, there remains a contradictory view of media representations of recent conflict. Many people have felt misrepresented and censored and show a reserve, if not hostility, to being approached for interview, while simultaneously displaying an urge to tell their story and to be listened to. While reflecting on the writings of Primo Levi, Jelin describes the fallout from a lack of empathy, 'The need to narrate can also fall into silence, into an impossibility of telling the story, due to the lack of open ears and hearts of people willing to listen. Those who opt for that silence, however, do not necessarily find peace and calm in their life' (Jelin 2003: 63). By providing such empathy, my intention was not to judge or take sides in these contested memories, although I have a subject position, which inevitably spills over into the filming encounter. My aim was to provide a process and framework offering all sides the opportunity to articulate their memories. The culmination of this research project has been the development of a collaborative approach that at its most responsive offers a veto

to participants. Although this generates demands that continue into future exhibition opportunities, it provides an ethical and pragmatic basis for protocols that encourage those with traumatic or politically sensitive subject positions to have their memories recorded. This approach may be criticised for the universalising of ‘victimhood’ and the normalising of violence, where even perpetrators claim to have been the victims of circumstance. Such removal of blame can counter attempts at ‘truth-telling’, which in post-conflict societies is central to settlements based on justice. Jelin elaborates this point in relation to post-dictatorship South America. She comments on the need for multiple story-telling but, referring to Osiel, cautions us on the need for a just solution:

The desired path seems not to entail attempting to impose one interpretation of the past or trying to build a (minimum) consensus among social and political actors. Rather, what seems clear is the necessity of legitimate spaces for the expression and controversy about different memories. A democratic order would imply, therefore, the recognition of plurality and conflict more than the hope for reconciliations, silences, or erasures by fiat. This recognition of conflict, however, has to be anchored strongly in the rule of law’ (Jelin 2003: 105)

Papadopoloulos is aware of the polarisation of descriptions of violence as being either normalised or pathologised, both of which prevent understanding, and he offers us a new perspective which sees violence as ordinary, allowing us ‘to avoid pathologising destructiveness without “normalising” it, which would imply condoning it. The way out is to create a new narrative within which the emphasis on the “ordinariness” of destructiveness rather than its evaluation as either “normal” or “pathological”’ (Papadopoloulos 1998: 462). By positioning the prison officer alongside the prisoner, the intention is to ‘recognise plurality’ rather than to suggest equality of blame. This does not work against truth-telling initiatives, but can accompany such ventures by emphasising the need to look at our contested history from all sides before making judgement calls.

The delicacy of the relationship between filmmaker and subject has parallels with psychoanalysis and leaves the filmmaker with a specific responsibility. ‘It is the encounter and the coming together between the survivor and listener, which makes

possible something like repossession of the act of witnessing. This joint responsibility is the source of the re-emerging truth' (Laub 1992: 85). The use of veto is crucial in allowing participants control over their own stories and in countering voyeurism. There is a paradox, identified by Jelin (2003: 87), about the intimacy of the recorded moment entering the public sphere. The veto acknowledges this possibility, shares responsibility for it, and lessens opportunities for exploitation and restimulation of the trauma. Furthermore, it forces the filmmaker to accept responsibility, because if negotiations are not transparent and do not recognise participants' sensitivities, the use of the veto has the power to render the research redundant.

Collaboration and Location

The productions contain themes that range from truth-telling, where participants make demands on authorities to remedy past injustices, for example in *Telling Our Story*, through to memory-telling, where participants recall their past experiences and feelings, for example in *Inside Stories*. The production process for each documentary reflects the conditions of collaboration, the constitution of the organisation and the themes of the story-telling. *We Never Give Up* required the most elaborate web of communications to both arrange and supervise the production. Although the period of production was therefore extended considerably because of this, the ensuing film, owned by the producers, successfully reflects the combined, and often diverse, conditions set by all the contributors. *Inside Stories*, after initial organisational discussions, became a project between individuals who met with the filmmaker and not with each other. We share ownership, with the participants retaining a veto. These productions adopted the approach of 'shared anthropology' as espoused by Rouch and, as a development from the community video movement of the 1980s, extended this to co-ownership and co-authorship of the material.

It could be said that the research reached a climax with *Inside Stories*, where the research questions of collaboration and location were combined in the recordings. The production process itself also became more transparent, heightened by the hand-held camera and occasional director's questions, even as the mediation was minimised through

limiting the technical intervention. The aesthetic and political outcomes of this work, where memory is not just recalled but is reconstructed, correlate to Sipe's observation:

Oral history should document not only the explicit information but the process itself. The dialogic relationship between interviewer and narrator, the role of memory and the function of narrativity are central to how interviews illustrate the construction of history as a process. These are clearly revealed when moving images are used (Sipe 1998: 383).

The importance of collaboration in allowing the participants to contribute was matched by the use of location in aiding the films to work as audio-visual records of memory-telling. This utilisation of location began as a secondary concern, but by the time of *Inside Stories* had become central to the research project. *Telling Our Story* was an early indication of its potential, although this approach became sidelined because of the conditions under which *A Prisoner's Journey* and *We never Give Up* were produced. Access to the Maze and Long Kesh Prison allowed the research to combine several questions and produce findings, which are now unique since demolition of the Nissan Huts in the compounds of the old Long Kesh began in December 2006. The participants were able to perform their memories in the context of the location where they were first experienced as lived realities. The location not only stimulated memories and the way that the narratives were structured, but also encouraged performativity of the memory-telling, heightening the performance inherent in story-telling remarked on by Candida Smith, as participants gesticulated, moved around and responded to the materiality of the sites that they revisited. The camera also performed within the location as the site's dilapidation and desolation, heavy with ghostly presences of historical significance, seduced me, the operator, to follow lines of barbed wire, turn corners into open doorways and tilt up the vertical lines of watchtowers and walls.

Aesthetic Strategies

The films range in style from linear intercut narratives that use classic conventions in order to reach wide audiences to individual screens that complement and contrast with

each other and are more suitable for gallery exhibition. The instigation of the collaboration plays a crucial role in how the documentaries were recorded and edited. If the opportunity arose because the participants were already considering a production and we met half way in our mutual searching, the tendency was to make a film that conformed to perceived audiences' expectations. Participants in the films were chosen to reflect the membership base and interviews were generally conducted to cover the range of experiences and to accommodate the pre-planned structure of the overall narrative. As well as helping the story develop, intercutting between participants suggests a sense of collective experience and allows audiences to associate individual memory with social memory. Accompanying visuals were generally employed to reinforce the interview content and rarely to suggest ambiguity or contradiction. These films tend towards counter-narratives, counter to official versions of their past, which they are in dialectic opposition to. Contradiction and ambiguity lie in the gap between these two forms.

The format of the installation allowed the editor to hold the image, and the audience to hold the gaze, 'to look', as MacDougall advocates. Contradictions and ambiguities, widening the spaces for interpretation, remain in the gaps between the screens. The editor was required to resist an inclination to intercut, which would increase the pace of the film and suggest interconnectivity and create a whole out of the parts. This task is left to the audience, who may find such responsibility more of a relief than a burden in a society where forces compete fiercely with each other for their version of history.

Reception

In the process of a society's transformation out of a divided and violent past, different versions of that past need to be heard. One previous cause of the violence was the silencing - political, social and economic - of the voices of a minority of the population. In any new dispensation all sides need to be heard, even if we find these unpalatable and indeed questionable, given known evidence and conditions. Such shared anthropology, as

alluded to by Rothman in describing Rouch's working methods, lies behind any success that these research documentaries have achieved.

In most 'post'-conflict situations, while there have been, and still are, many attempts to record, remember and memorialize the events which different communities consider significant, fears about the past and its opposing interpretations continue unabated, for example there is much sensitivity about the proposed building of the International Centre for Conflict Transformation at the Maze and Long Kesh Prison site. The name itself reflects the difficult attempts to find a name other than 'museum' because of the latter's connotations of preserving, reflecting and possibly commemorating the past. While the North of Ireland edges slowly towards a power sharing administration, initiatives from survivors groups to record and exhibit their stories are hesitantly growing, as evidenced in the Healing Through Remembering network that tolerates such differences, but in a society that remains defensive and separated. The use of multi-screen exhibition is a formal response to the issues of multi-narrative engagement with a contested history. The Prison Memory Archive, referred to in the Postscript, will develop this non-linear solution further and reflects Renov's encouragement of open-ended receptivity. In an espousal of a life history approach to memory and audience reception, Leydesdorff et al link the conditions of representation back to the traumatic causes:

A crucial part of the contribution which the life history approach can make to the study of trauma lies in its interest in – and its ability to analyse – how different cultural contexts affect the production and reception of trauma narratives. Any particular culture may make available, or may lack, suitable narrative codes or other forms of representation and well as publics prepared to believe - or not. These variable cultural conditions are themselves part of the experience of trauma, and may contribute to either the perpetuation of traumatic silence or to the viable expression and representation of the traumatic experience (Leydesdorff et al 2004: 16).

The success of these memory recordings counter and even override any political imperatives to forget, as evidenced by the OFMDFM's reluctance to allow recordings of

people inside the empty Maze Prison, which is destined to be demolished in 2007 for the construction of a sports stadium. The compulsion to tell, as identified by Papadopoulos, Laub and Caruth, persists and the question becomes not if these stories are to be told but under what conditions are they told in order to be of most benefit to both participants and the society that is emerging out of violence. In the context of South Africa, Godobo-Madikizela affirms this, 'The question is not whether victims will tell their stories, but whether there is an appropriate form to express their pain.' (Godobo-Madikizela, 2001: 27). This research offers insights into and conclusions for the role of collaboration and location in audio-visual recordings from political conflict and can be read not as a template for future work, but as early steps to be questioned, developed, or discarded, according to the changing conditions of the present which informs the way that we look on the past.

The multi-screen exhibition of *Inside Stories* contrasts with the linear intercut narrative of *We Never Give Up* by allowing audiences to become more active agents in the construction of meaning. In commenting on the increasing attraction of installations, which she describes as 'a spatial development of images and sounds on several screens', van Assche observes, 'installation responds to a psychosocial demand; it gives the spectator an active role to play in a work in which he or she becomes one of the parameters' (van Assche 2003: 94). While not eschewing the advantages of linear narrative for specific purposes, for example in community-telling and the ease of distribution and exhibition, multi-screen exhibition seems to address Jelin's observation:

We live in a time when traditions are subject to multiple forms of critical scrutiny, when hierarchical paradigms based on canonical knowledge are undergoing profound transformations, and in which a plurality of new subjects are demanding their place within the public sphere. In this context, the transmission of the knowledge and meanings of the past becomes an open and public issue, subject to strategic struggles and controversies about the "politics of memory" (Jelin 2003: 95).

Although Barbash and Taylor write about collaboration in linear intercut films, their point also applies to, indeed makes an argument for, multi-screen installation –

The answer surely is to recognise the process of collaboration, not as a project by some imaginary univocal cooperative, but as a hybrid effort at polyvocal authorship, in which distinctions between the participants maybe visibly (or aurally) retained in the finished film (Barbash and Taylor 1997: 89).

Arising out of this research project's research findings and developing the collaborative protocols, the use of location, and the development of multi-screen exhibition, is the Prisons' Memory Archive, which is detailed in the Postscript.

Conclusion

The effects of collaboration on the aesthetics of filmmaking were conditional on the outcome of negotiations with the individuals and groups concerned. Group projects favoured an interpretation of the linear intercut narrative for popular consumption and the films have been exhibited at film festivals and community venues. While developing the strategies that emerged out of my own initiatives, I moved towards recording at the traumatic site, where 'forgotten' memories get remembered and performed. I edited this material into long uninterrupted takes and exhibited the final material as multi-screen installations. My consequent recording of thirty participants for the Prisons Memory Archive has led me towards multi-display on a single screen.

The dissertation's conclusions suggest that collaboration, particularly to the extent of shared ownership, forms an ethical relationship of trust and accountability that allows the participants to remember, consider and articulate memories from a traumatic past, occasionally for the first time in their lives. When such records are made public, they constitute society's acknowledgement of the trauma, which, although not sufficient in itself, creates conditions of being listened to, of being a social subject, and for the participants to reintegrate the traumas of the past into their lived present. The degree of public acknowledgement reflects a society's ability to incorporate and integrate difference and conflict.

POSTSCRIPT

Inside Stories has developed into a wider project, the Prisons Memory Archive, initially funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. To date thirty ex-occupants (prisoners, prison officers, visitors, teachers, chaplains, welfare workers) were recorded in June 2006 inside Armagh Gaol, which was used during the 'Troubles' to imprison primarily women. Two single camera operators (with radio microphones) each recorded a participant in a discreet part of the prison. The same collaborative principles apply as in *Inside Stories*, with the participants owning the material and leasing copyright to the Prisons Memory Archive.

Thirty separate stories are currently in post-production, after which negotiations will decide if intercut documentaries from the material, for example on a specific period or occupation, will have permission to be edited. Several participants have stated that they only contributed because of the conditions of collaboration and ownership. The archive will be hosted at an institution, such as a museum, that regulates public access, and is not for broadcast, a request of several of the participants. The Imperial War Museum, London, the Ulster Museum, Belfast, the Linenhall Library, Belfast, and the Northern Ireland Film and Television Commission have expressed an interest in hosting this archive.

At the time of writing, I am awaiting a response from the Office of First Minister Deputy First Minister to the request, made most recently at a presentation to the Maze Monitoring Group in Lisburn City Hall, to record interviews inside the Maze and Long Kesh prison.

FOOTNOTES

Introduction

1. Families Acting for Innocent Relatives website can be found at www.victims.org.uk.
2. Interview with author, December 2003.

Chapter 1

1. An example is the consent release form for the BBC, found at www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/forms.
2. Recent developments include Channel Four's *fourdocs* internet information and exhibition site, which suggests a less intimidating way of getting permission from an interviewee, 'With the camera pointing at the subject of the filming you should ask them whether they agree to be filmed, whilst stating what the film is about and how their contribution is likely to be used in the film and explaining that the film is likely to be broadcast on the internet and possibly be shown on television'. www.channel4.com/fourdocs/guides/pdf/legal_guidelines/pdf.
3. I was a director on *The Slot* for one and a half years between 1993 and 1995. Although contributors were offered access, and allowed to write their own scripts (which were still subject to editorial pressure) they had limited control over the editing, since most recording took place on location throughout the UK and was edited in London, usually to a tight schedule.
4. Quoted from the VHS sleeve-notes.
5. The term 'ubuntu' was adapted by the Chair of the TRC, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, to reflect the combination of forgiveness and redemption that he was hoping to achieve.

Chapter 3

1. The site of the prison is the subject of a proposal to build a sports stadium at the centre of a multi-use occupancy. The museum part of the proposal has been named as the International Centre for Conflict Transformation and Deloitte Consultants have been commissioned by the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister to research the feasibility of the ICCT. See www.newfuturemazelongkesh.com

Chapter 4

1. Shirley had been a commander in Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the African National Congress, and had spent a period of time inside an Apartheid prison.
2. Three-thirds refers to the Renaissance strategy, which in landscape painting presents a foreground, middle ground and background, and in portrait painting positions the eyes in the top third of the frame. In film and video framing of an individual, the vertical equivalent would be to have the interviewer's face to one side (two thirds of the frame) looking into an empty space (one third of the frame), suggesting a listener just off-screen. For more detail, see Barbash, I. and Taylor, L (1997). *Cross Cultural Filmmaking: A handbook for making documentary and ethnographic films and videos*, p.96.
3. Radio was the dominant form of mass communication throughout South Africa, particularly in the townships and rural areas, at the time of the production, although television was becoming more affordable.

Chapter 6

1. *The Hunger Strikes*, directed by Margot Harkin (BBC Northern Ireland, 27.7.96), is one of these exceptions.
2. Republican prisoners belonged to either the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), The Official Irish Republican Army (OIRA) or the Irish National

- Liberation Army (INLA) and Loyalist prisoners were members of Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), Ulster Defence Association (UDA), Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) or Loyalist Volunteer Force (LVF).
3. A recent welcome addition to the prison officer's story is Louise Dean's novel *This Human Season* (2005). The best known examples of the hunger strike's representation from the prisoners' point of view are Les Blair's feature, *H3* (2002), and David Beresford's *Ten Men Dead; the Story of the Irish Hunger Strike* (1987). The best known examples of the hunger strike's representation from the prisoners' point of view are Les Blair's feature, *H3* (2002), and David Beresford's *Ten Men Dead; the Story of the Irish Hunger Strike* (1987).
 4. Exhibited and discussed under the title 'Film in Gallery: the Space Within' at the Practice As Research in Performance conference, Bristol University, 2003, www.bristol.ac.uk/parip/trevelyan.htm
 5. For the Parip screenings see www.bristol.ac.uk/parip/2005 and for the NVTV screenings see www.nvtv.co.uk/allsschedules
 6. A panel discussion, lead by Healing Through Remembering, took place on 20th April 2005 during the *Inside Stories* exhibition at Catalyst Arts, Belfast.
 7. *Inside Stories* Comments Book, London South Bank University Exhibition, 2006.
 8. Questions and Answers after an *Inside Stories* screening at the Imperial War Museum after a screening on 25th September, 2005.
 9. *The Culture Show* was broadcast on ?
 10. *Inside Stories* Comments Book, London South Bank University Exhibition, 2006.

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