

CUTTING REAL

SELF-REFLEXIVE EDITING DEVICES IN A SELECTION OF CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN DOCUMENTARY FILMS



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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Since John Grierson first coined the term “documentary film” in the 1920s, there has been a debate about the objectivity or subjectivity of the filmmaker. Some theoreticians believe that a documentary filmmaker may not interact subjectively with her subject. Contemporary perspectives lean towards acknowledging the subjectivity of the filmmaker, and accept that subjectivity is intrinsic to the making of a documentary film. Some would even argue that it is precisely the subjectivity of the filmmaker – the meeting of an individual, subjective perspective with the pro-filmic world – that makes a particular film unique.

Brecht believed that the structure of a theatre piece could be used to counter the audience's uncritical emotional engagement and identification with the content of the work. This *Verfremdungseffekt* enables the audience to engage intellectually with the work. The audience does not get lost in the content of the piece, but rather views it from a critical distance. Brecht believed that this distantiation does not exclude entertainment, but that the audience would be able to enjoy the production while viewing it from a critical, intellectual distance.

The self-reflexive mode of representation is identified by Nichols as one of the primary ways for a filmmaker to engage with her subject. Self-reflexivity entails the inclusion of cues within the film reminding the viewer that it is, indeed, a film. The motivation for this is to make the audience aware of the constructed nature of the film, thereby acknowledging the subjectivity of the filmmaker.

The most overt form of self-reflexivity in documentary films is the inclusion of the director in the film. The focus of this study is, however, more specifically on how *editing* devices can be used to foreground the construction of a film. Structural analysis of a selection of recent South African documentary films is undertaken as part of this study. The result of this in-depth analysis is a list of twenty-eight conspicuous, self-reflexive editing devices used in these films.

To test the effect of self-reflexive editing devices, I purposely incorporated them into the construction of a documentary series, *Booza TV*, of which I was one of the editors. The goal of *Booza TV* is to change viewers' perceptions of alcohol and alcohol abuse. Both quantitative and qualitative research results pointed to the ability of the series to achieve this goal. The perception change, however, is not the focus of this study. Instead, findings specifically related to the viewer's experience of the editing of the production are analysed. These findings show that viewers do notice self-reflexive devices, that the devices can contribute to their enjoyment of the production and that self-reflexive devices are able to communicate subtext to the audience. The conclusion is drawn from the research conducted in this study that the potential of a documentary film to change viewers' perceptions is as dependent on the way the film has been constructed as it is on the content of the film.

OPSOMMING

Sedert John Grierson in die twintigerjare begin het om die term 'dokumentêre film' te gebruik, word daar gedebatteer oor die objektiwiteit al dan nie van die filmmaker. Party teoretici glo dat 'n dokumentêre filmmaker nie subjektief mag omgaan met haar onderwerp nie. Kontemporêre perspektiewe neig egter om te erken dat die dokumentêre filmmaker subjektief is, dat subjektiwiteit intrinsiek is aan die maak van 'n dokumentêre film, en boonop dat dit juis die subjektiwiteit van die filmmaker is wat 'n film uniek maak. Dit is die ontmoeting van 'n individuele, subjektiewe perspektief met die waarneembare wêreld.

Brecht het geglo dat die struktuur van 'n teaterstuk of film gebruik kan word om die gehoor se verbintenis met die inhoud daarvan te verbreek. Hierdie *Vervremdungseffekt* lei daartoe dat die gehoor in staat is om krities om te gaan met die produksie. Dit lei verder tot 'n kritiese interaksie met die materiaal. Die gehoor raak nie verlore in die inhoud van die stuk nie, maar slaag daarin om dit intellektueel te beskou. Brecht het geglo dat hierdie vervreemding nie vermaak uitsluit nie, maar wel die gehoor toelaat om die teaterstuk of film te geniet terwyl hulle dit krities en intellektueel beskou.

Die self-refleksiewe voorstellingsmodus word deur Nichols geïdentifiseer as een van die primêre maniere vir 'n filmmaker om met haar onderwerp om te gaan. Self-refleksiwiteit behels die insluit van tekens binne 'n film dat dit 'n film is. Die motivering hiervoor is om die gehoor bewus te maak van die konstruksie van die film, om sodoende die subjektiewe perspektief van die filmmaker te erken.

Die mees blatante vorm van self-refleksiwiteit in dokumentêre films, is die insluiting van die regisseur in die film. Die fokus van die studie is egter op die gebruik van *redigeringstegnieke* om die konstruksie van 'n film op die voorgrond te plaas. Daar word van strukturele analise gebruik gemaak in hierdie studie om 'n verskeidenheid hedendaagse Suid-Afrikaanse dokumentêre films in diepte te beskou. Die resultaat van hierdie analise is 'n lys van ag-en-twintig sigbare redigeringstegnieke wat in hierdie films gebruik is.

Om die effek daarvan te toets, het ek doelbewus self-refleksiewe tegnieke gebruik in die konstruksie van 'n dokumentêre reeks genaamd *Booza TV*, waarvan ek een van die redigeerders was. Die doel van *Booza TV* is om gehore se persepsie aangaande drank en drankmisbruik te verander. Beide kwantitatiewe en kwalitatiewe navorsingsresultate het aangedui dat die reeks dié doel wel bereik. Persepsieverandering is egter nie die fokus van hierdie studie nie. In stede daarvan word daar in diepte gekyk na gehore se ervaring van die self-refleksiewe redigeringstegnieke in die produksie. Daar is gevind dat gehore self-refleksiewe redigeringstegnieke raaksien, dat die tegnieke kan bydra tot gehore se genot van die produksie, en dat die tegnieke gebruik kan word om subteks in die film te kommunikeer.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Non-fiction filmmaking is as old as motion pictures themselves. The debate around the authenticity of the non-fiction film and the objectivity of the filmmaker is almost as old. The first motion pictures made in the late 1890s were of actuality, documentations of events in the real world. Since Grierson coined the term 'documentary film' in the 1920s (Rabiger, 1987: 11), filmmakers and scholars have debated what constitutes a documentary film and what the perspective of the non-fiction filmmaker towards her subject should and should not be.

Different perspectives on what documentary is, are discussed in Chapter Two. The definition that seems most inclusive is Grierson's, namely that documentary is a "creative treatment of reality" (Rabiger, 1987: 13). The films selected for this study all conform to this definition. Furthermore, most of them have formed part of the official documentary selections of South African and international film festivals.

Documentary film practice is concerned with representations of actuality and a large part of documentary discourse has historically been aimed at ensuring "truth" in documentary films. Because documentary films present their audiences with images of the real world and perspectives from real people, this creates the expectation that what is presented is in fact reality or truth. The emphasis that has been placed on preserving the integrity of pro-filmic¹ events leads to pressure on the documentary filmmaker to remain objective. This pressure is completely absent from fictional filmmaking practice, where imagination and fabrication are encouraged. As will be shown in Chapter Two, however, subjectivity is inevitable and inescapable in any form of film practice, even documentary filmmaking. The key question, then, is how a filmmaker can be part of the

¹ The term pro-filmic refers to everything that happens in front of the camera. In the case of non-fiction film, there is an expectation that the pro-filmic is "reality".

process of capturing the pro-filmic world in the form of a documentary film, yet somehow ensure that the expectation of total objectivity is reduced.

The film form used by mainstream Hollywood fiction films and television documentaries has been established through years of filmmaking practice. The conventions of mainstream modes of filmmaking have become so widely used that they have become virtually invisible to audiences. Continuity editing is the editing form predominant in mainstream fiction and non-fiction films. Continuity editing is intended to be 'invisible' to the audience and, I postulate, it therefore leads to less active decoding² of the text³ and less critical engagement with the message.

Self-reflexivity can be effected through breaking the conventions of established, mainstream film forms. Such denials and subversions can be used to signal the presence and subjectivity of the filmmaker to the audience. My hypothesis is that self-reflexive⁴ devices – in particular self-reflexive editing devices⁵ – can be useful in distancing viewers from the material presented. This encourages them to engage with the material intellectually. This allows viewers to decode the text critically, questioning the content presented, the integrity of the structuring process and the intentions or bias of the filmmaker. This counters audience passivity or unconscious emotional identification and encourages the viewer to decode the material in a more critical and engaged way. This in turn obviates the filmmaker having to achieve a supposed objectivity in the *encoding* process, since the *decoding* of the text becomes a self-aware, engaged and critical process.

In social studies the term "reflexivity" is used to refer to researchers' examination of themselves or their theories in the context of their research, for example to ascertain to

² Active decoding of the text implies that the audience must engage intellectually with the material to draw meaning from it. Passive decoding implies that the text has been constructed in a way that allows the audience to draw meaning from it easily. Decoding is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

³ In this study the term 'text' is taken to refer not only to a written text, but to any cohesive social product, in this case documentary film.

⁴ A text is self-reflexive when its construction alerts the decoder that it is in fact a text. The self-reflexive mode of representation in documentary film is discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

⁵ Editing devices are techniques or strategies employed in the editing of a film. They include many aspects of the editing process, for example selecting shots for inclusion in the film, ordering those shots and adjusting their pace.

what extent their observations influence their test subjects' reactions. In a literary context the term "self-reflexivity" is used predominantly to denote a form of self-reference by the author. This latter use is what is of primary concern in this study.

In Chapter Three a background to the self-reflexive mode of representation is provided. In this chapter reference is made to the intention of the filmmaker to signal her presence to the viewer through conspicuous structuring of the text. Chapter Four contains a structural analysis of a selection of South African documentary films that focusses on the characteristics of each text in order to identify conspicuous editing devices. In Chapter Five a documentary series that makes use of such self-reflexive editing devices is tested with audiences to ascertain whether a documentary edited using self-reflexive devices can encourage awareness of the filmmaking and the bias of the filmmaker, while remaining entertaining to the audience.

For Brecht, working in theatre and film from the 1930s, the purpose of distancing the audience through his Epic Theatre's *Verfremdungseffekt* was not mere experimentation for the sake of focussing attention on the art form itself, but was instead to "demonstrate the workings of society, a reality obscured by habitual norms of perception" (Nicholson, 1991: 63). Brecht's theories have been applied to different film forms, including fictional feature film, television series and animation (Polan, 1974: np). In this study, the use of Brecht's theory is expanded through its application to the documentary film, especially since the focus is specifically on documentary *editing*.

The argument in this dissertation is that the use of self-reflexive editing devices by the filmmaker enables her to share the activities of meaning-making and truth-seeking with the viewer through actively alerting the viewer to the means of representation of the film. This is an acknowledgement and a celebration of subjectivity. While such an approach exposes both the text and the filmmaker to possible criticism and interrogation, it also shifts the focus away from the filmmaker's attempts to attain veracity, truth and objectivity in the film. No longer is the encoder required to be objective. Instead the filmmaker's subjectivity is acknowledged within the text. And

because the viewer is alerted to the subjectivity of the filmmaker, the viewer can become more critical of the text, decoding it in an intellectually engaged way. The activity of meaning-making is then jointly vested in the encoder, the text and the active decoder.

Eisenstein favoured editing that is noticeable, resulting from clashes and juxtapositions between concepts and images (1949: 82-83). Eisenstein's montage theory can therefore be used as a reaction against the dominant mode of representation and to create self-reflexivity through making editing conspicuous. Opening up codes to oppositional interpretation as Hall suggests (1993: 516-517) allows documentary film not merely to function as audio-visual communication, but to shift viewer perception. While Brecht saw mainstream theatre as aiming to "show the world as it is", he saw his own work through the *Lehrstück* (learning-play) as aiming to "show the world as it changes (and also how it may be changed)" (Willett, 1984: 79). This same principle can be applied to the documentary film today.

The essential difference between the conventional mode of representation and the self-reflexive mode in documentary film is that the former tends to be more static and the latter more dynamic. If Brecht's view is applied in this instance, the latter is preferable, because a "critical attitude of this type is an operative factor of productivity" (Brecht in Willett, 1984: 146). As will be shown in this study, documentary content is best internalised by the viewer if she is dynamically involved in producing meaning (Weintraub Austin, 1995: 114). It is self-reflexive filmmaking that allows the viewer space to come to her own conclusion about the views presented in the film.

The purpose of this study is to explore the self-reflexive mode of representation in documentary film; to analyse its potential as a means of acknowledging the position of the filmmaker within the text; to identify, list and describe instances of the use of self-reflexive editing devices in contemporary South African documentary film; and to motivate the use of such devices as a viable strategy for metacommunication with the audience.

1.2 DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

A three-tiered approach is followed in order to examine the use of self-reflexive editing devices in recent documentary practice in South Africa. Background for the study is provided through a literature review investigating key concepts such as the debate around the objectivity or subjectivity of the documentary filmmaker, the self-reflexive mode of representation and Brecht's *Verfremdungseffekt*. A structural analysis of a selection of contemporary South African documentary films is then undertaken to identify, list and describe self-reflexive editing devices. Finally the effect of using self-reflexive editing devices in a documentary created with the goal of perception change is tested. This is done through quantitative and qualitative research undertaken as part of a larger, medical research project and behaviour-change intervention in the Western Cape, a full description of which falls outside the scope of this study.

The chapter layout of the dissertation reflects the three phases of research conducted as part of this study, namely the literature review, the structural analysis of the editing devices and the field research I draw on for the investigation of self-reflexive editing devices.

1.2.1 PART I: BACKGROUND AND PRELIMINARY STUDY

Chapters Two and Three provide a literature review as background to the two subsequent phases of research. Chapter Two focuses on the changing discourse around the notions of objectivity and subjectivity in documentary filmmaking over the last decade and highlights key moments in documentary film history that are pertinent to this discussion. Bordwell's (1986) work on classic Hollywood cinema and his and Thompson's (2004) overview of the history of continuity editing are helpful in coming to an understanding of the dominant modes of representation in mainstream fiction and documentary film. Dancyger's (2002) review of editing history is concise and focuses on key moments that have shaped the way films are edited today. Rabiger (2004) provides a useful overview of key moments of documentary history and the debate around the subjectivity of the documentary filmmaker.

Chapter Three explores self-reflexivity in general and the self-reflexive mode of representation in documentary films in particular. This overview is provided as a background to the structural analysis of documentary films that follows, and to motivate the use of self-reflexive editing devices as a strategy for signalling the subjectivity of the filmmaker to the audience. Brecht's general theory of *Verfremdung*, though formulated with respect to his theatre practice as a Marxist social commentator, is useful in understanding the effect that conspicuous and unconventional structuring devices in filmmaking can have on the reception of visual representations by an audience. Hall's (1993) description of different encoding and decoding positions aids in identifying how the self-reflexive mode operates in relation to dominant codes.

1.2.2 PART II: SELF-REFLEXIVE EDITING DEVICES IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH AFRICAN DOCUMENTARY FILMS

In Chapter Four a structural analysis is undertaken to identify, list and describe self-reflexive editing devices in a selection of contemporary South African documentary films. These devices are examined for their potential to signal the subjectivity of the filmmaker as well as their ability to signify connotative meaning to the viewer. Editing theories, including those of Eisenstein, Vertov, Dancyger and Murch, are used to identify editing devices and their effects.

1.2.3 PART III: CASE STUDY

The use of self-reflexive editing devices in the construction of a behaviour-change programme is tested in Chapter Five. Self-reflexive devices were used in the editing of a documentary series, *Booza TV*, of which I was one of the editors. My own experience editing documentary films for more than ten years was drawn on extensively during the post-production of this series. *Booza TV* was commissioned by the Western Cape Departments of Health, Social Development and Community Safety to form part of a broader behaviour-change programme intended to address alcohol-related harms in the Western Cape. Viewers' perceptions change after watching *Booza TV*; their reactions to the series and to the use of self-reflexive devices were measured using quantitative and qualitative research methods. The data gathered regarding viewers' reactions to the use of self-reflexive editing devices in *Booza TV* are described and analysed in this

dissertation.

1.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

My hypothesis is that the self-reflexive mode of representation allows for an acknowledgement within the text of the position and bias of the filmmaker. This in turn facilitates self-aware and active decoding by the viewer. I propose that this is a desirable mode of representation for documentary filmmakers to use. The hypothesis is tested in each of the three parts of the study.

1.3.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

Information is gathered through a survey of existing publications on subjects including:

- a) documentary film discourse;
- b) views on objectivity and subjectivity in documentary film practice;
- c) implications of representing actuality (the pro-filmic) in documentary form;
- d) self-reflexivity.

The information thus gathered is synthesised and interpreted in order to establish a theoretical grounding for the use and value of self-reflexive editing devices.

1.3.2 STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

A structural analysis of a selection of contemporary South African documentary films is undertaken in order to identify, evaluate and classify the editing devices used in these films. Twenty-eight conspicuous, self-reflexive editing devices are described as part of this study. This list is not exhaustive and it is acknowledged that there are other editing devices that can be described as self-reflexive. The devices listed in this study are the ones identified through structural analysis of the films selected. It should also be noted that self-reflexive editing devices can be seen as occupying positions on a continuum, some devices being more self-reflexive than others.

There are many different types and forms of documentary and different sources vary in the exact number and variety they identify. Types are differentiated by their themes, structures and the elements included in their construction. Among them are compilation, interview, biographical, historical, nature, political, propaganda, profile, event-centred and personal or first person documentary (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004; Snyman, 2008). The films selected for this study represent most of these types, many films being representative of more than one type. Docudrama, mockumentary and reality television fall outside the scope of this study.

The films used in this study represent a variety of types, themes and approaches. As far as documentary type is concerned, *Afrikaaps* and *Uprising at Hangberg* are event-centred; *Imam and I*, *Afrikaaps* and *Porselynnkas* historical; *Imam and I* personal; and *Tribes & Clans* topical. Themes covered include identity (*Imam and I*, *Forerunners*), place (*Sea Point Days*), culture (*Forerunners*, *Afrikaaps*, *King Naki*), the media (*Uprising at Hangberg*), music (*Fokofpolisiekar: Forgive them for they know not what they do*, *Afrikaaps*), theatre (*Porselynnkas*, *Afrikaaps*), social, economic and political situations (*Uprising at Hangberg*, *Dear Mandela*, *King Naki*) and sport (*King Naki*). Approaches to filmmaking are varied and some of the films selected for this study include more than one approach. *Sea Point Days* exhibits characteristics of *cinéma vérité*. *Imam and I* is at times polished and at other times gritty. *Tribes & Clans* remains serious and remote while *Porselynnkas* is consistently tongue in cheek and *Imam and I* introspective. Some of these films are ostensibly observational (*Sea Point Days*, *King Naki*), while others are clearly aimed at changing the perception of the viewer (*Dear Mandela*, *Uprising at Hangberg*).

1.3.3 CASE STUDY

I used self-reflexive editing devices in the editing of a documentary series commissioned by the Western Cape Departments of Health, Social Development and Community Safety with the aim of challenging prevailing attitudes and beliefs regarding alcohol consumption. *Booza TV* (Corrigal, 2011) is a documentary series consisting of six 24-minute episodes directed and produced by Dr Joanne Corrigal, who has a dual

specialisation in mental health and public health.

Thanks to my role as one of the editors of *Booza TV*, I was able to take part in many aspects of its post-production. This includes being involved in the decision to edit a series of short episodes rather than one feature length film. I contributed to the structuring of the episodes, the selection of interview content and visual evidence for each episode and the refining and restructuring of episodes at an advanced stage of the editing process. I researched and included editing styles used in entertainment programming and made use of self-reflexive editing devices in the construction of the series.

Data about viewers' perception changes and responses to the editing of *Booza TV* were gathered during two rounds of testing conducted with samples drawn from the target audience of the production. First, I collaborated with Dr Corrigan and her research team in conducting empirical, non-experimental research to gather quantitative data about viewers' perception changes after watching the episodes. To this purpose appropriate samples were selected, questionnaires were prepared and screenings of the series were arranged. At each episode's screening, respondents completed both a pre-screening and post-screening questionnaire about their habits and perceptions regarding alcohol as well as their perceptions about documentary films and their enjoyment of *Booza TV*. This allowed researchers to perform comparative analysis of the data gathered from respondents' responses before and after watching each episode.

The data gathered in this way show that *Booza TV* is effective at changing viewer perception. A description of the perception change findings is outside the scope of this study. The focus in this dissertation is instead on analysing data on whether viewers notice the conspicuous editing devices used, whether they are aware of the presence of the filmmaker while watching *Booza TV* and whether they find the series enjoyable to watch. Summaries of the perception changes measured during the quantitative research can be found in Addenda Three, Four and Five.

Following this quantitative research, I conducted qualitative research in order to further probe viewers' experiences of the self-reflexive editing devices used in constructing *Booza TV*. This research was conducted with a sample drawn from Cape Peninsula University of Technology Film and Video Programme students, who have a varying degree of familiarity with editing devices. Episode One was screened to the sample of twenty-six first-year students and they were asked to complete a pre-screening and post-screening questionnaire. Their perceptions of and responses to the episode were probed during a focus group interview. Open-ended questions were used in an attempt to elicit authentic responses.

I considered it necessary to conduct this second, qualitative, round of research for two reasons. Firstly, after concluding the quantitative research with Dr Corrigan, the data gathered clearly showed that *Booza TV* was capable of changing viewers' perceptions about alcohol. Their reception of and reaction to the use of the editing devices in the production, though tested, had however not been adequately probed. Secondly, triangulation is critical to ensuring the validity of data gathered, and comparing the quantitative and qualitative data collected allowed me to do so. A further benefit of the second round of research is that it allowed for inclusion of a more diverse set of respondents (Maree & van der Westhuizen, 2007: 39).

1.3.3.1 Quantitative Research Design

1.3.3.1.1 Questionnaire Design

Easy, non-threatening biographical questions such as “What is your age?” and “How long have you lived in Cape Town?” were followed by questions aimed at probing respondents' beliefs and attitudes around alcohol. They were as far as possible worded in a neutral, non-threatening way, for example “Do you think South Africans drink more than people in other countries? Yes/No/Not Sure”, in an attempt to elicit honest, non-defensive answers. In the Episode Six post-screening questionnaire control questions were included in certain cases, such as asking both “Which episodes of *Booza TV* did you like most?” and “Which episodes of *Booza TV* did you like the least?”.

Closed questions were favoured in preparing the *Booza TV* quantitative questionnaires. Closed questions allow for the selection of one or more response(s) from a list provided

on the questionnaire. In most cases respondents were asked to mark their selection(s) with a cross or tick in an empty box next to the option. The reason why closed questions were favoured is because their responses are easier to analyse and compare than data gathered through responses to open questions (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 161).

1.3.3.1.2 Quantitative Sample Selection

For the first, quantitative, round of testing, two samples were drawn from segments of the target audience, namely (1) youth drinkers aged 18 to 35, and (2) stakeholders aged 18 and older working with alcohol-related harms in the youth drinkers' community. Both samples were selected to include respondents from a variety of ages, languages, cultural groups and both sexes. The youth drinker sample findings were used in this study because the ages of respondents correspond to those of the respondents selected for the qualitative round of research.

The youth drinker sample consisted of nineteen respondents, ranging between 18 and 35 years, predominantly Coloured⁶ and living in Parkwood in Elsiesrivier in the Western Cape. Nine were female and ten male. All were born in the Western Cape. Five were employed full time, three part time and five were students. A further four worked as volunteers and two did not specify their current employment. All were (1) acknowledged binge drinkers (2) between 18 and 35, and (3) Western Cape residents.

1.3.3.1.3 Quantitative Research Screenings

All six the *Booza TV* episodes were screened during the quantitative research. Respondents completed a pre-screening and post-screening questionnaire for each episode screened.

The quantitative research was predominantly aimed at measuring respondents' perception change (a) from before to after each episode and (b) over the course of the whole series. Another study, conducted over a longer period, is being undertaken by Dr Corrigan and her medical research team to measure behaviour change for a larger population in the Western Cape.

⁶ In the South African context "coloured" is an acceptable term for one of the five racial categories used to describe South African demographics. It is not seen as derogatory, as it is in other parts of the world.

1.3.3.2 Qualitative Research Design

Further to the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires administered during the first round of field research, a focus group interview was conducted to gather qualitative data. The focus group interview was conducted by me with a group of first year students enrolled in the Film and Video Programme of Cape Peninsula University of Technology, where I taught part time. The aim of this focus group interview was a deeper understanding of the target audience's reaction to the construction of *Booza TV*. I hoped in particular to probe their awareness of and responses to the self-reflexive editing devices I used in the editing of the series.

1.3.3.2.1 Focus group questions & questionnaires

A list of open-ended questions was compiled as a basis for leading the focus group discussion. A “funnel structure” was used and questions started out general but became more specific and pointed as the discussion progressed (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 91). The questions were used as a starting point for the conversation, but I allowed the conversation to develop and respondents to react to each others' responses, sometimes probing respondents where necessary to clarify answers or gather more information about a certain statement. This was done in an attempt to ensure that responses were more spontaneous and varied. See Addendum Six for a list of focus group questions and Addendum Seven for a transcription of the interview.

In addition to the focus group interview, respondents were also asked to complete short questionnaires before and after the screening. The pre-screening questionnaire was designed to collect biographical data about the sample as well as setting a baseline for their viewing habits and perceptions about documentary. The post-screening questionnaires collected data about their reactions to *Booza TV* Episode One, including how their reception of the episode compared to their baseline perceptions about documentary film.

1.3.3.2.2 Qualitative sample selection

The qualitative sample was selected from the first year students in the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) Film and Video Programme. As was the case with the quantitative samples, all of the respondents fell within the target market (see Addendum One). Stratified purposive sampling was used to select the sample for the focus group

interview. This sampling method entails “selecting participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 79). Film students were selected in the hope that they would be able to provide articulate opinions about the construction of *Booza TV*, particularly the editing devices used. First-year students were used since they have had some introduction to the film medium, but their knowledge is limited and they had not received any instruction on self-reflexivity in filmmaking. Of the twenty-six respondents in the qualitative sample, sixteen were male and ten female. The youngest member of the sample was 18 and the oldest 31. The mean age was twenty. All respondents currently reside in or around Cape Town.

1.3.3.2.3 Qualitative research screenings

For the qualitative round of testing, only Episode One was screened to respondents. It had been designed to function as a stand-alone product in cases where time or access to a particular audience is limited. The data collected during the quantitative research confirmed that it was indeed able to do so. A large number of self-reflexive editing devices were included in Episode One, and it is therefore ideal for testing viewers' responses to these devices.

1.3.3.3 Data Analysis

1.3.3.3.1 Quantitative Data: Descriptive Statistics

After completion of all quantitative test screenings, the data gathered was analysed. A statistician prepared a report of each episode's results. These reports contain data and descriptive statistics for the questions contained in the questionnaires.

1.3.3.3.2 Qualitative Data: Interview Recordings and Transcriptions

The focus group interview was recorded using a digital audio recorder. The recording was transcribed (Addendum Seven). The recording and transcript were reviewed and interpreted in order to identify common themes and patterns. Conclusions were drawn from these interpretations.

1.4 CONCLUSION

Judging by the number of self-reflexive devices I have encountered in South African films screened at film festivals such as the Encounters Documentary Film Festival, the Durban International Film Festival, the Tri-Continental Film Festival and the Cape Winelands Film Festival over the last five years, I believe that there is already a trend towards using the self-reflexive mode of representation in documentary film practice in South Africa. In this dissertation I will set out to show the relevance and benefit of the use of self-reflexive editing devices in documentary films and to examine some of the ways in which this is already evident in contemporary film practice in South Africa.

PART I

Background and Preliminary Study

CHAPTER 2

DOCUMENTARY PRACTICE AND THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter does not aim at providing a comprehensive history of documentary filmmaking or the craft of editing. It aims, rather, to list important moments in documentary practice that pertain to notions of capturing reality or truth; to compare a selection of opposing perspectives in the debate around the objectivity or subjectivity of the documentary filmmaker; to provide an overview of the development of the dominant editing style in film today, continuity editing; and to introduce perspectives about the role that editing plays in the perceived veracity of a film. This is offered as a background to the following three chapters. In Chapter Three an argument is made for the need for self-reflexivity in documentary filmmaking. In Chapter Four self-reflexive editing devices are identified and discussed through a structural analysis of a selection of South African documentary films. And the effectiveness of using self-reflexive editing devices in structuring a perception-change documentary programme is tested in Chapter Five.

2.2 THE BIRTH OF DOCUMENTARY AND THE IMPULSE TO CAPTURE THE TRUTH

Motion picture cameras became available in 1895. The first films made were under a minute in duration and they were "actualities" (Roberts, 1987: 191). Internationally and in South Africa, "the very first films in the ... history of motion pictures are nonfiction films" (Barsam, 1976: 13). So, the first filmic impulses were to capture reality.

The bulk of films made in South Africa between 1899 and 1900 were documentations of the Anglo-Boer War (Roberts, 1987: 191). The relatively early filmmaking activity in South Africa was thus due to a newsworthy imperial event, war, coinciding with the birth of motion picture as a tool for documentation. Of great importance to the topic of this dissertation is that, though filmmakers like Edgar Hyman, Joseph Rosenthal and W.K.L. Dickson, embedded themselves with the soldiers and filmed real events, some other early 'documentations' of the Boer War were in fact faked (Roberts, 1987: 192). So, even though the first filmic impulses were to document the world, the urge to mislead audiences and misrepresent actuality was also present from the start.

It was John Grierson who first used the term 'documentary film'. He was referring to a film by Robert Flaherty, *Moana*, made in 1926 (Rabiger, 1987: 11). Flaherty is best known for an earlier film, *Nanook of the North* (1922). This was the first film to depict real life in a structured and cohesive way, as opposed to the fragmented newsreels that dominated non-fiction filmmaking at that time. It presented instead, as Grierson was to define documentary, a "creative treatment of actuality" (Rabiger, 1987: 13). In his last interview before his death Grierson described *Nanook of the North* as significant because it was made "on the spot with living people" and has "a dramatic pattern" (Sussex, 1972: 30), thus acknowledging that it was not an unmediated reflection of the pro-filmic world. I would argue that the dramatic structure that differentiates it was achieved thanks to editing.

Though extremely popular at the time of its release, *Nanook of the North* has been criticized over the years because of the interventions made by the filmmaker, making use of staged and even acted scenes (Rabiger, 1987: 13). Rather than document what he found as he found it, Flaherty preferred to instruct the Inuit he was filming on what to do. He did this in an attempt to recreate their vanishing lifestyle, which he had seen during an earlier visit to the area. Grierson uses "represent" and "present" to differentiate between filming one's own story and filming the other's story respectively (Sussex, 1972: 27). Though his statement was made in reference to another film, these terms are useful to describe Flaherty's filming strategy, since he *presents* his view of the Eskimo in *Nanook of the North*, instead of having them *representing* themselves.

And, according to Grierson, Flaherty was in fact too distant from Nanook and his people to present them accurately (Sussex, 1972: 30). So, the debate about truth and the subjectivity of the filmmaker can be traced back to the very first documentary films made.

The release of Dziga Vertov's *The Man with a Movie Camera* in 1929 marks an important moment in the development of approaches to documenting the pro-filmic world. At the beginning of the film titles state:

The Man with a Movie Camera is a record in celluloid ... an experiment in the cinematic communication of visible events. A film without inter-titles, a scenario, theatre (sets, actors etc.).

Vertov's aim was to establish a cinema of real people, filmed in their own environments going about their daily lives. He valued "real life captured by the camera" above all (Rabiger, 1987:11). This is the first overt and documented attempt by a filmmaker to move away from artifice in striving to capture truth on celluloid. Vertov called his film movement *Kino-Pravda* – "cinema truth". As a silent film, *Man with a Movie Camera* is devoid of didactic interjections by the filmmaker that tell the audience what the images signify or how they should be decoded. Editing, specifically association and juxtaposition (discussed in more detail in Chapter Four), however, is used to communicate complex subtext to the audience about the living conditions in Russia at the time the film was made.

Almost thirty years after the release of *Man with a Movie Camera*, a new documentary movement was inspired by Vertov's *Kino-Pravda* and named *cinéma vérité* ("truth cinema"). It emerged during the late 1950s and early 1960s and was a reaction against the repressive studio system and its perceived 'artificial' mode of filmmaking. *Cinéma vérité* filmmakers reacted against "the moralizing quality of [the] expository documentary" that characterised the studio-bound documentaries that preceded them and instead wanted to go out to real locations and record people going about their lives (Nichols, 1991: 33). *Cinéma vérité* was an endeavour to achieve authenticity in the capturing of the pro-filmic world, a "cinema that records life without imposing upon it"

(Rabiger 1987, 15).

Various movements arose during the same period, after World War II, and broke the rules of conventional fiction and non-fiction film of the time. Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin (*Chronique d'un Ete/Chronicles of a Summer*, 1960), Robert Drew (*Primary*, 1960), D.A. Pennebaker (*Don't Look Back*, 1967) and the Maysles brothers (*Showman*, 1963) were some of the filmmakers who contributed to establishing a new documentary form, loosely known today collectively as *cinéma vérité*. They used different methods, the American Direct Cinema practitioners shunning interaction with their subjects at all cost and the French filmmakers tending to interact with their subjects on camera. But the various streams all had one aim that underscored their activities and that is what is significant for this study. They were motivated by a desire to present the pro-filmic world with as little mediation as possible.

The lasting influence *Kino Pravda* and *cinéma vérité* have had on documentary practice and discourse is (a) the idea that authenticity, even objectivity, is to be aspired to in documentary film; and (b) the belief that it is possible, *through the filmmaker's technique or approach* to increase the film's potential to be authentic or truthful. For Vertov and the *cinéma vérité* filmmakers this approach entailed filming "real people in their actual surroundings, living their lives unadulterated by directorial interference" (Stubbs, 2002: 1). As will be seen later in this study, using self-reflexive editing devices in the construction of a documentary film acknowledges subjectivity to the audience, lessening the pressure on the filmmaker to strive for objectivity.

2.3 EDITING: A LIE IN ORDER TO TELL THE TRUTH

Since the birth of film more than a hundred years ago, various filmmakers and film movements have contributed to developing the conventions and devices that are used in documentary film editing today. Editing can be used to construct narratives, enhance the expressive value of visuals and selectively include or exclude material. It can remain largely invisible, or it can disrupt the flow of a film, shock the audience, or

juxtapose shots in novel and challenging ways.



Illustration 2.1



Illustration 2.2

Exterior and interior shots are alternated in *Life of an American Fireman*.

The very first films were unedited. Under a minute in length, they consisted of a single shot (Roberts, 1987: 191). Edwin S. Porter is remembered as the filmmaker who pioneered the combination of different shots to construct a film (Dancyger, 2002: 4). In the short film *Life of an American Fireman* (1904) Porter combines exterior newsreel footage of firemen battling an actual fire with a dramatised scene, filmed on a set, of the supposed interior of the burning building (see illustrations 2.1 and 2.2 above).



Illustration 2.3



Illustration 2.4



Illustration 2.5

A wide establishing shot of Elsie and the injured soldier is followed by close-ups of the two characters in a scene from *Birth of a Nation*.

D.W. Griffith is best known as a fictional filmmaker, but his influence extends to non-fiction filmmaking as well since documentary filmmaking adopted many of the conventions used in his fiction films. He moved the camera closer to the actors to capture nuances of performance and he fragmented scenes into separate shots, tailoring each shot to fulfil the needs of the narrative or performance at that point in the

film (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 447). During the edit, shots were then combined to form a dramatic whole. This “dramatic construction” includes variation of shots for impact, use of extreme long shots and close-ups, cut-aways, tracking shots, parallel editing, match cutting and variations in pace (Dancyger, 2002). In a scene from *Birth of a Nation* (1915) Elsie is seen playing the banjo to an injured soldier in the make-shift hospital where she works as a nurse. The interaction starts as Elsie approaches the soldier in a wide establishing shot (illustration 2.3 above). As soon as she starts singing to him, the two characters are shown in alternating close-ups, emphasising the effect Elsie's song has on the injured man (illustration 2.4 and 3.5). The end of her song coincides with a return to a wider shot, concluding the intimate moment created for her song by the matching close-ups. When she takes a letter out of her pocket to read to the soldier, a close-up of the letter is included, allowing the audience to read it at the same time she does. By designing and editing each shot in a way that enhances a specific moment in the story, the narrative clarity and emotional impact of the film are heightened. These conventions of dramatic construction are used in documentary practice today to structure films and emphasise content and emotion. The editing innovations made during the first three decades of filmmaking, the silent period, culminated in continuity editing, the dominant style of editing in film today (Murch: 1995; Dancyger: 2002; Bordwell & Thompson, 2004). Walter Murch calls the development of editing as a system, “the cinematic equivalent of the discovery of flight” (1995: 7).

The goal of continuity editing is to make cuts invisible to viewers, so that they can focus on the events and emotion of the narrative rather than be distracted by the way the film has been constructed. Traditional Hollywood feature films require suspension of disbelief in order to affect the audience emotionally. Within the context of the continuity style it is believed that if the audience notices the editing, it draws their attention away from the narrative and emotion of the film, hampering their engagement with the meaning of the story (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 284 - 285). And “If no ‘meaning’ is taken, there can be no ‘consumption’”, countering the very purpose of mainstream cinema production, mass consumption (Hall, 1993: 508).

Continuity editing consists of a complex system of filming strategies and editing devices. This includes matching screen direction from shot to shot. If a character exits one shot from left to right, for example, she should enter the next shot from left to right. Framing characters engaged in a dialogue in separate shots using opposing looking directions, known as maintaining the axis of action or the 180-degree rule, is standard in the continuity system. If the first character is facing left to right in the first shot, for example, the second character will face right to left in the following shot. Additionally match cutting, matching action from one shot to the next to make that action seem continuous, is critical to creating so-called invisible cuts. These continuity editing strategies are all used in an attempt to make the construction of the film as inconspicuous as possible to the audience.

This seamlessness in the use of form in the continuity system enhances engagement with the narrative and emotion of the film, aiding suspension of disbelief. It reduces the audience's awareness of the construction of the film and of the filmmaker who constructed it. The less visible the form of the film, the more easily the content can flow to the receiver. In a documentary this could lead to audiences believing the content presented in the film more easily. This increases the pressure on the filmmaker to remain truthful, unbiased and objective. As will be seen later in this study, continuity editing encourages unproblematic decoding of the message. It will be argued that this is to the detriment of active, intellectual decoding of the message while enabling the subjective perspective of the filmmaker to be accepted more easily by the receiver.

Soviet filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein stressed the significance of editing, stating that "Cinema is, first and foremost, montage" (1999a: 15). Though inspired by Western filmmakers like Griffith who were using continuity editing, Eisenstein propagated a style of editing that relied on juxtaposition and clashes between shots rather than seamlessness. He devised a five-tier theory of montage (discussed in more detail in Chapter Four) that relies on editing devices that are conspicuous. He used this approach in seminal fictional features such as *The Battleship Potempkin* (1929), which continues to inspire filmmakers to this day. Eisenstein's greatest contribution to the field of editing is his concept of intellectual montage. He showed that by combining

two shots that have concrete meaning, a third conceptual or emotional meaning could be generated from the association. In this way connotative meaning could arise from the meeting of two denotative signifiers. And in his words “juxtaposing representational shots” could serve to create “visual exposition of abstract concepts” (1999a: 17). Eisenstein's academic and political approach to editing proved to be unsustainable, however, and by the late 1920s he was being criticised for his “excessively formal and 'esoteric' approaches” (Bordwell and Thompson, 1999:459). Some of the devices he pioneered have been absorbed by the mainstream, but many are not in common use in commercial features today. Techniques like radical juxtaposition of shots and extremely rapid cutting would counter the suspension of disbelief that continuity editing aims to engender.

Theorists like Anna Grimshaw, following Andre Bazin, feel that editing is “artificial and contrived” by its very nature. For her, editing allows “the world [to be] fractured into pieces and reconstituted according to the subjective view of the film-maker” (2001: 73). For this reason some documentary filmmakers have attempted to limit the amount of editing in their films in an attempt to ensure truth, feeling that any omission of filmed material would be a subjective manipulation by the filmmaker. But it can be argued that pointing the camera in a particular direction already excludes certain information. The fact that a camera is present changes the behaviour of the subject, and very often the impulse to make a film in the first place is born from a desire to present a particular, even biased or tendentious, point of view. Wolf Koenig’s perspective, expressed in the documentary film *Cinéma Vérité: Defining the Moment* (1999), is that “every cut is a lie, but a lie in order to tell the truth”. This acknowledges the importance of editing in the construction of meaning in a film and at the same time points to the filmmaker's desire to use that meaning-making potential to encode her subjective view – what *she* sees as the truth – into the text.

2.4 A SHIFT TO ACKNOWLEDGING SUBJECTIVITY

The dominant documentary discourse has historically been aimed at promoting truth and objectivity in documentary texts. The very language theoreticians, critics and academics use to define the documentary film is representative of the complexity of perspectives around the topic of objectivity in documentary filmmaking. Richard Barsam's observation, noted in 1976 in *Nonfiction Film Theory and Criticism*, that "today's view of the nonfiction filmmaker is one who creates the most objective film possible" (1976: 16) is still valid. In fact, valuing the filmmaker's striving for film truth has become so accepted in documentary practice that Attie Snyman could assert as recently as 2008 that it is in fact a criterion for judging whether a film can be called a documentary in the first place. He posits that:

The content of the documentary programme should be presented in an objective, honest and truthful way, without misleading the viewer, deliberately or otherwise

and that

[p]ersonal, political or other views which do not reflect the facts in an objective way should never form part of the documentary content (2008: 2).

Snyman's definition of the documentary places all the responsibility for objectivity and ensuring truth securely on the shoulders of the filmmaker. In his view:

The documentary programme tells us about actuality – on condition that it tells a complete story, containing information or evidence in terms of a structured theme, topic or subject. It is the direct opposite of the fictional feature film, which is created by human imagination. A documentary is not fictional. It is structured reality (2007: 3).

Snyman's conditions are strict and, I would argue, unrealistic. They do not allow for a presentation of only one side of a story. Films that are abstract, unstructured or poetic seem to be excluded. And so, evidently, are documentary films that make use of imaginative techniques in their production. Many films that are generally considered as "documentary" could not be considered as such if evaluated according to Snyman's criteria. Michael Moore's films, *Bowling for Columbine* (2002) and *Fahrenheit 9/11*

(2004), for example, are rhetorical in nature, using actuality footage to present an argument in order to promote Moore's "personal , political or other views" on an issue. For this reason it is doubtful whether any of Moore's films could be included under the category of documentary as Snyman defines it. Contrary to Snyman's perspective, Bordwell and Thompson believe that "An unreliable documentary is still a documentary" (1997: 44). And an argument can be made that a viewer can only get an objective perspective on a subject through exposure to several films and other sources, because "no *one* film is capable of providing one objective Truth or Reality for all" (Cain, 2008: 31, my italics). Moore's films fulfil a crucial function within the American mass media landscape precisely because of his subjectivity and overt bias. His films present a view that opposes the popular views presented by news networks such as CNN and Fox. Michael Moore performs a function by presenting an *alternative* point of view. He questions the mass media messages presented to the American public and as such has sparked valuable debate on various levels of American society, in the media and on political platforms. By viewing and evaluating the conservative state-sanctioned perspective *and* Moore's subjective questioning of it, the American viewer can become more aware of the complexity of the issues and is better equipped to form her own, individual, perspective.

According to Snyman, a documentary film also cannot be imaginative, but is in fact "the direct opposite of the fictional ... film". Snyman's definition seems to leave little space for imaginative use of cinematography, editing or music in documentary film – all of which are striking and much lauded characteristics of Errol Morris's *The Thin Blue Line* (1987). This film, which is referred to in many well-respected publications that deal with the history and nature of documentary (Bordwell & Thompson: 2004; Nichols: 1991), would struggle to be classified as a documentary in terms of Snyman's definition. On the most literal level, it is a film about a murder and the dispute about who committed it. But in telling the story it employs an emotionally charged original score composed by Philip Glass and dramatic re-enactments that were designed, staged, lit and acted. Furthermore, these dramatizations change in content and staging over the course of the film to reflect the various perspectives of the different eyewitnesses to the crime. It also deals imaginatively with time, flashing back to the

scene of the crime repeatedly as different witnesses remember what they saw and heard on the night of the murder. According to Pepita Ferrari, it was as a result of the way that *The Thin Blue Line* showed, through creative use of dramatizations, the contradictions in the evidence given by the different eyewitnesses that the protagonist was found innocent at his appeal (2011: np). The film calls into question the very nature of what is seen as "evidence". Through its presentation of various subjective views, it signifies the complexity of any attempt to be truthful or objective in a documentary film.

Snyman's view sits at one end of the spectrum in the objectivity / subjectivity debate, but is certainly not the only perspective on the nature of documentary film nor of the role of the documentary filmmaker. In his description of documentary, Michael Rabiger includes reference to the filmmaking impulse of the documentarist:

At its best, the documentary film reflects a fascination with, and a profound respect for, actuality ... The documentary exists to scrutinize the organization of human life and to promote individual, humane values (1987: 4).

Though a much more open and inclusive definition of documentary than Snyman's, it is still fundamentally restrictive in its assertion that a documentary film should "promote individual, humane values". In terms of this definition films like Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1937) and *Olympia* (1938) could not be documentaries because they were commissioned by and celebrate the Nazi party, one of the most *inhumane* institutions in recent Western history. As detestable as the message underlying the films is, *Triumph of the Will* and *Olympia* go beyond being mere propaganda films through their creative use of form (cf. Grierson). They belong, in Rabiger's own words, "undeniably ... with the greatest documentaries of all time" (1987: 16). In this case it is the bias, tending towards inhumanity, that underlies the subjects of the films and remains uncriticised by the filmmaker, that would render these arguably invaluable historical records ineligible for documentary status, if measured against Rabiger's own criteria. It seems that Rabiger's definition aims to protect viewers from a subjectivity that is not compatible with "individual, humane values". This is itself indicative of a deep-seated subjectivity, albeit one that promotes what Rabiger holds as positive

values.

Bordwell and Thompson are much more inclusive in their definition of a documentary film, stating that it “purports to present factual information about the world outside the film” (2004: 128). This perspective allows for the inclusion of films that are one-sided, biased or even downright inaccurate, since they need only “purport” to present “factual information”. But the definition remains restrictive in one crucial respect. It limits documentary films to those that are focused on “the world *outside* the film” (my italics). What is significant in the context of this study is where this definition leaves a film that refers to the world outside itself while *also* referring to itself. And this is exactly the kind of film that will be analysed in Chapter Four of this dissertation.

It seems that the oldest and most concise definition of documentary, John Grierson's, that it is “a creative treatment of actuality” (Barsam, 1976: 15), is the most inclusive and accepting of different films. It does not ask for absolute truth from the film nor lack of bias from the filmmaker. In fact in this definition the filmmaker's perspective is implied. This allows not only for the creative impulse of the filmmaker, but also for her individual subjectivity.

Attempting to eschew subjectivity in documentary film often stems from a fear of the filmmaker's bias entering into the text, and a fear of the text becoming, at best, one-sided or, at worst, propaganda. However, Roland Barthes's perspective on photography – that “the photographer bears witness essentially to his own subjectivity, the way in which he establishes himself as a subject faced with an object” (1985: 356) – is equally applicable to the documentary film. This is reflected in a contemporary trend towards acknowledging and studying, even celebrating, subjectivity in documentary film.

An example of this trend is the Truth or Dare: Art and Documentary conference and screenings held in London in February 2006 at Whitechapel Art Gallery and the Tate Modern. Truth or Dare featured a combination of art pieces that used film to document actuality and documentaries that are deemed creative or experimental in their choice of content, use of form or methods and places of exhibition (Pearce & McLaughlin, 2007:

9). In the book *Truth or Dare*, which was an outcome of the event, Michael Renov refers to the “dialogue between seer and seen, the *subjectivity* of the maker facing the objecthood of the world” (2007: 14, my italics).

By encoding information into the film form, “subject matter and ideas become somewhat different from what they might be outside the work” (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 67). This is a result of the formal characteristics of the medium, but also because the subjective perspective of the filmmaker is encoded into the text. In addition, different viewing conditions have an influence on how the text is read. And each viewer decodes the film message in a subjective way, ascribing individual meaning to the text. Stuart Hall refers to the absence of a “degree zero” in this process.

Naturalism and ‘realism’ – the apparent fidelity of the representation to the thing or concept represented – is the result, the effect, of a certain specific articulation of language on the ‘real’. It is the result of a discursive practice (1993: 511).

The receiver/decoder of the message (viewer) is then clearly also a partner to the sender/encoder (filmmaker) in the meaning-making process. This shared meaning-making role implies a shared responsibility in searching for truth, rather than undue pressure on the filmmaker alone to attempt to be objective. Thus a documentary becomes, in the words of award-winning South African documentary filmmaker Francois Verster, “an interpretation of the truth, a perspective on reality” (2008: np). For Egyptian filmmaker Jihan El Tahri, almost all aspects of documentary filmmaking, including the point of view the filmmaker uses, her selection of subjects and the actual shooting and editing of the film, are subjective. But in her view documentary filmmakers have “a certain obligation to make sure the content is somehow verifiable and not just emotional” (2011: np). Australian filmmaker David Vadiveloo believes that documentary films are never objective, but do contain facts, and agrees with El Tahri that those facts should be verifiable. He holds that “to pretend that we are not subjective as filmmakers, that's simply not realistic” (2011: np).

Many factors have an influence on the perceived veracity of a documentary film. These include the intention of the encoder of the message, production and post-production

factors during the encoding (the receptiveness of the interviewees, and whether the camera is in the right place at the right time to capture a privileged moment) and the context of the reception of the message by the receiver (previous experience, knowledge of the subject matter, age, screening conditions). There is no absolute truth that a viewer can simply draw from the text. The discursive practice might be known to both sender and receiver of the message and so the language is shared. But the articulations are so varied and complex, that it can be argued that no two viewers will draw exactly the same meaning from viewing the same documentary film. It is necessary to acknowledge, then, that in both the encoding and decoding of documentary film "there is only subjective truth" (Cain, 2008: 31). As cinematographer Michel Brault states in the documentary film *Cinéma Vérité: Defining the Moment*:

Truth is something unattainable. We can't think we're creating truth with a camera. But what we can do, is reveal something to viewers that allows them to discover their own truth (1999).

2.5 CONCLUSION

Perceptions about the objectivity or subjectivity of the documentary filmmaker have shifted over the years. Some theoreticians and filmmakers have asked for objectivity in the filming and editing of actuality. Others have emphasised filming strategies they felt would allow the filmmaker to capture reality or the truth. Today there is a lingering expectation among audiences that, because documentary films represent the pro-filmic world, they should be truthful and that the documentary filmmaker must be objective. Contemporary filmmakers such as Verster, El Tahri and Vadivaloo acknowledge that subjectivity is implicit in the act of documentary filmmaking. At most, the audience can expect that the filmmaker will feel obliged to ensure that the content of the film is verifiable. In practice, not all filmmakers hold to this obligation.

I would argue that the documentary film can be defined as much by the subjectivity it captures implicitly as the reality it attempts to depict overtly. And once subjectivity is

acknowledged and accepted as intrinsic to the documentary form, the focus of a study of documentary editing can shift to the use of form and medium in the service of communication and expression.

The following chapter will build on the foundation of the objectivity / subjectivity debate and explore the value of the self-reflexive mode of representation in the documentary to prompt the audience to participate in meaning-making. Since film is a message that is composed largely (but certainly not exclusively) of indexical signs, where the "sign ... enjoys an existential bond between itself and that to which it refers", it encourages greater suspension of disbelief in the receiver (Nichols, 1981: 164). As will be shown through the structural analysis of a selection of contemporary South African documentary films in Chapter Four, inclusion of references to the means of representation in the content or structure of the film signifies the filmmaker's presence to the audience. These references to the encoding of the text allow the receiver to decode the text in a more aware and active way, opening the text to an "investigation ... [of] the *construction* of truth and reality, the significance of film form, and the pursuit of more profound analyses of issues" (Cain, 2008: 31). This intellectual engagement with the text acknowledges the subjectivity of the sender and promotes active awareness of this in the decoding of the text by the receiver.

CHAPTER 3

THE SELF-REFLEXIVE MODE OF REPRESENTATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter established that the subjectivity of the filmmaker is implicit in documentary filmmaking. Insisting on objectivity from a filmmaker is unrealistic and denies an important part of what makes a documentary film unique, namely the encounter of a specific filmmaker's subjective perspective with the pro-filmic world she is documenting.

Continuity editing, editing that aims to hide the craft of the editor by being as unobtrusive as possible, has been adopted as the dominant mode of editing in mainstream fiction and non-fiction film (Bordwell *et al.*, 1986). The result is that viewers are not expected to be very active in the decoding process. This could make viewers more receptive to the content of the film and susceptible to any bias of the filmmaker.

The self-reflexive mode of representation stands in opposition to established modes of representation and employs conspicuous devices to remind the audience that they are watching a film. This entails not just showing the world, but at the same time showing *how* it is shown. This metacommentary allows for multiple layers of meaning to be contained within the text. Thus the structure of the film becomes part of the audience's experience of the film, "the topic of cinematic meditation". And because the audience registers the process of construction, there is potentially an increased interaction between the viewer and the text (Nichols, 1991: 56-57). The awareness of the construction of the film also implies an acknowledgement of the "authoring agent", the filmmaker (Nichols, 1991: 58). And so the text acknowledges that the subject matter is being shown from a particular point of view and is open to critique.

There are three possible layers of self-reflexivity that can be taken into account in a study of documentary films. Firstly, the filmmaker can have a self-reflexive intention and use conspicuous devices intentionally when encoding the text. Secondly, the text can be said to contain self-reflexive devices regardless of the intentions of the filmmaker. And finally, the viewer's decoding of the text may become self-reflexive if she is reminded by the characteristics of the text that she is watching a film. All three of these layers will be explored in this and the following two chapters.

This chapter contains an introduction to the self-reflexive mode of representation, with particular emphasis on its use in non-fiction film. The self-reflexive mode of representation is introduced; self-reflexivity is shown to be linked to transgressions of established forms and dominant modes of representation; and its potential effects on the viewer are explored. This background forms the theoretical grounding for the structural analysis of a selection of South African non-fiction films (Chapter Four) to identify and discuss self-reflexive editing devices; and for the practical use and (qualitative and quantitative) testing of those devices (Chapter Five).

3.2 THE SELF-REFLEXIVE MODE OF REPRESENTATION IN DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Most mainstream documentary films make use of conventional structuring devices and "nonfiction films ... in recent years ... have followed a handful of familiar models" (Scott, 2011: AR8). Among mainstream documentary filmmakers it is seen as "professional" to combine visuals and sound in a flowing and logical way to represent the events of the film in a way that maintains coherence of time and space. Continuity editing is aimed at suspension of disbelief, providing content in an accessible and seamless way to increase audience engagement with the narrative and emotion of the film. Joseph V. Mascelli writes in *The Five C's of Cinematography*, one of the most widely prescribed texts in film schools around the world, that "it is Continuity that decides success or failure of the production" (1965: 67).

Making the viewer aware that she is watching a film, on the other hand, relies on the opposite strategy: making the construction of the film conspicuous to the viewer. The filmmaker may acknowledge her subjectivity through cues present in the text. In this strategy "the work turns in on itself and speaks about its own artistic conventions" (Polan, 1974: np). Making the filmmaking process more visible in the film increases the viewer's awareness of the construction process behind the film and is therefore self-reflexive. If one believes documentary filmmaker Jennifer Baichwal's perspective, expressed in an interview in *Capturing Reality: The Art of Documentary*, "there's no such thing as an objective voice, so you must acknowledge perspective" (2008). And so the presence and bias of the filmmaker should be acknowledged. This allows the viewer to be more intellectually engaged and critical in the viewing of the material. Once a viewer is intellectually engaged by the film, she can begin to question its means of representation and its content. Thus the viewer's ability to question and analyse the documentary's content as she decodes it becomes as important as, if not more important than, the filmmaker's level of putative objectivity towards the subject matter while encoding it.

When form is used that "will leave the spectator's intellect free and highly mobile" (Brecht in Willett, 1984: 191), the spectator becomes a more active participant in the construction of meaning. In the documentary context, the filmmaker can be biased, but she can acknowledge her bias through editing devices that remind viewers that they are watching a film. Through this awareness the viewer begins to "expect the unexpected" (Nichols, 1991: 62), encouraging an active reception and critical decoding. Instead of expecting to receive objective content passively, the viewer participates in the process of meaning-making, constructing her own individual, subjective perspective.

What is of importance to this study is that the self-reflexive mode of representation is not the norm in mainstream documentary production. In fact "the great preponderance of documentary production concerns itself with talking about the historical world" exclusively. So, the self-reflexive documentary differentiates itself from the majority of documentary film products available to the general public by also addressing questions of "how we talk about the historical world" (Nichols, 1991: 56-57).

3.2.1 SELF-REFLEXIVITY IN NON-FICTION FILM



Illustration 3.1: Edgar Morin and Jean Rouch talk to Marceline, one of their subjects in *Chronicle of a Summer*.

The most prevalent form of self-reflexivity in documentary films is showing the director on screen. An early example of this is *Chronique d'un été* (Chronicle of a Summer, 1960). In this seminal *Cinéma vérité* film the filmmakers, Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin, are shown on camera communicating with their subjects to discuss the concept of the film (see illustration 3.1 above). In contemporary documentary practice the film *Super Size Me* (2004) is an example of a film in which the director appears on screen. The director, Morgan Spurlock, includes himself in the film, as it is his experience that is being documented. Thus he becomes his own subject. Here the self-reflexivity arises from the filmmaker's shift from operating behind the camera to appearing in front of it; it does not arise from the desire to explore, or make evident, the methods of construction of the film. Not all self-reflexive devices are this overt. Through using conspicuous editing devices, it is possible for the filmmaker to acknowledge her presence within the film and for the viewer to be reminded that she is watching a film without necessarily having to include the filmmaker on screen.

One of the earliest examples of self-reflexivity in non-fiction filmmaking, *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), exhibits several self-reflexive devices, including conspicuous editing. The very title signals the self-reflexivity of the film, and shots of the eponymous man with the movie camera abound. In addition, the editor is shown at work and conspicuous editing is evident in the final product of this editing process, the film itself.



Illustration 3.2



Illustration 3.3

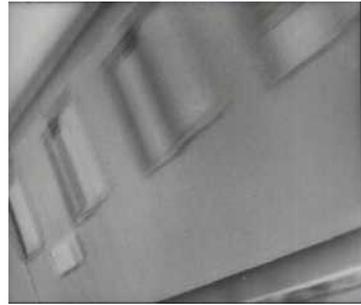


Illustration 3.4



Illustration 3.5

A wide shot of a train approaching is followed by close ups to create tension in *Man With a Movie Camera*.

One of the sequences following the exploits of the cameraman shows, for instance, how a shot of a train from the level of the tracks is achieved. By intercutting progressively more rapidly between the cameraman setting up on the tracks and the approaching train (see illustrations 3.2 to 3.5 above), the impression is created that the cameraman is in danger of being struck by the train.



Illustration 3.6

A wide shot reveals the cameraman removing his camera from a hole next to the train track in *Man With a Movie Camera*.

But then it is revealed that the camera had been placed safely in a hole next to the tracks (illustration 3.6). This scene is sophisticated in that it shows, more or less simultaneously, the method of filming and the result obtained by that method. This

opens up knowledge of the text's means of representation to the viewer. It also demonstrates how editing can manipulate the audience through selective inclusion and significant omission of information and through the creation of visual associations.

3.2.2 SELF-REFLEXIVE EDITING



Illustration 3.7



Illustration 3.8

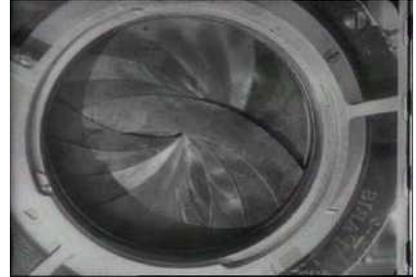


Illustration 3.9

A window blind, a woman's eyes and a lens are intercut as they open and close in *Man With a Movie Camera*.

In *Man with a Movie Camera* the editing itself becomes a significant feature of the film through being made conspicuous. Editing devices used in the film include (among others) quick cuts and intercutting between different subject matter to emphasise similarities in their theme or content. To show the beginning of a day in the city, for example, shots of window blinds, a woman's eyes, and a camera lens opening and closing are intercut (see illustrations 3.7, 3.8 and 3.9 above). Cutting between the blinds and eyes opening signifies that the city is waking up. Thus the city is personified as a woman. The addition of the images of the camera to the sequence personifies the lens. The camera is like a living organism, looking at the world. This signifies the subjectivity of the filmmaker. It is through the editing, the association formed between three unrelated elements by cutting from the one to the other, that the visual metaphor is created and subtext is encoded. The meaning in this sequence comes not from the individual signifiers – the blinds, the eyes and the lens – but from the association between them.



Illustration 3.10



Illustration 3.11

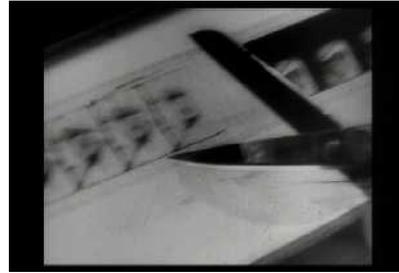


Illustration 3.12

The editor is shown at work in *Man With a Movie Camera*.

Not only are the effects of editing explored in *Man With a Movie Camera* in scenes like the one described above, it in fact becomes part of the subject matter of the film. Elizaveta Svilova, the editor of the film, is seen at work at a light table cutting film, selecting takes and splicing them together (see illustrations 3.10, 3.11 and 3.12 above). Including the editing process as part of the content of the film gives the audience tools to understand how the editing juxtapositions and comparisons they see in the film are achieved. It is made clear that the editor has the power to stop time, flit from moment to moment, and from place to place. These glimpses behind the scenes of the film's production make the audience aware of the editor and show how she creates the filmic reality by selecting, omitting, combining and manipulating elements of filmed actuality. By making overt the artifice of the filmmaking process used, Vertov presents the pro-filmic world while at the same time showing how it is presented. The viewer sees "the constructed images rather than a slice of reality" (Nichols, 1991: 57).

3.2.3 EDITING STYLE

Editing style can be seen as a continuum of codes. A classic Hollywood narrative employing continuity editing exclusively would be on the one end of the continuum. On the other end of the continuum would be experimental films such as the works of Stan Brakhage. The self-reflexive style of editing is located somewhere between continuity and experimental editing on the continuum, and can borrow from, question, subvert and combine devices from any point on the continuum.

An editing style can be identified based on common characteristics across different films regardless of the specific content of the films. Editing style is often linked to the genre of the film, the content or subculture presented in the film, the target audience for the

film or, ideally, a combination of these factors. Different styles are sometimes combined in one film. For the purposes of this study I divide editing style into four broad categories, namely continuity editing, deliberate editing, self-reflexive editing and experimental editing. Each style is associated with a predominant editing pattern, “the typical pattern – order of shot types” prevalent in films of that style (Chandler, 2004: 133). In order to understand what makes certain devices self-reflexive, it is necessary to explore conventional and unconventional styles of editing.

Continuity editing (see Chapter Two for more on this system) had become a “standardized style” by the 1920s (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 448). This system has become the *de facto* strategy for maintaining clarity and coherence in the representation of space and time. It has become so well-established, in fact, that today “anyone working in narrative filmmaking around the world is expected to be thoroughly familiar with it” (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 285). I believe that this statement is equally true for mainstream fiction and non-fiction film editing.

The goal of continuity editing is to make cuts invisible to the viewer, so that she is not distracted from the narrative or from emotional identification with the film (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 284-285). The Oscar winning South African-produced documentary *Taxi to the Dark Side* (Gibney, 2007) makes use of continuity editing. The film exhibits many of the conventions of drama, such as a three-act structure. The transitions from shot to shot are seamless and one hardly registers the cuts, if at all. This allows viewers to focus on, and lose themselves in, the narrative and forget about how the film was made.



Illustration 3.13



Illustration 3.14



Illustration 3.15

A wide establishing shot is followed by two closer shots showing detail from the same scene in *Taxi To The Dark Side*.

Continuity editing relies predominantly on the “conventional” (Chandler, 2004: 133) cutting pattern. The conventional cutting pattern is characterised by starting sequences with wide establishing shots before cutting to medium shots or close-ups (see illustrations 3.13 to 3.15 above). This pattern is effective for establishing the environment and the relationships between characters, before showing more detail and drawing the audience into the scene. It avoids confusion and is familiar to mainstream audiences because it is the most commonly used pattern. It is intended to reflect the way a person normally moves through the world. If you meet someone for the first time, for example, you arrive at the meeting place seeing the person and their surroundings (comparable to a wide shot), as you walk towards the person you move closer to them (similar viewpoint as a medium wide shot or medium shot) and then move close enough to shake their hand (comparable to a medium close-up or close up). Cutting gradually closer mimics this progressive focusing of attention.

Walter Murch believes that cuts work thanks to a physiological mechanism that is comparable to the cut, the blink. According to him, we blink as we refocus our attention from one element or view to another. This blink in effect cuts out the movement of the head or eyes produced by the change of attention. And so we see something and then we see something else – we don't take in the movement between the two points of attention (1995: 60). By moving progressively closer and by using cuts to do so, the conventional cutting pattern mimics both human movement through the world and the ellipses of unnecessary information produced by blinking. The result is that in most cases the shifts of attention brought about by the cuts appear naturalistic and inconspicuous to the audience.

Continuity editing is a well established style of editing for many documentaries. As a matter of fact, it is the style taught generally, and certainly taught first, at most film schools. But it is not the only way of editing a documentary sequence. The deliberate editing style can be used to stimulate audience interest, highlight events or to emphasise emotion in a film. An intriguing editing pattern can then be used to order shots. The intriguing editing pattern is characterised by cutting between close-ups and medium shots before cutting to wider shots. This stimulates the audience's curiosity

first by providing details of character or action, before the context or environment is revealed. It is most often used to create or emphasise tension, conflict, danger or strong emotions. By initially denying the audience the comfort of understanding the full context and seeing the action completely, the effect of a stressful event is mimicked and a feeling of unease is created.



Illustration 3.16



Illustration 3.17



Illustration 3.18

Detail is given in close shots before the context is revealed in a wide shot in a scene from *Taxi To The Dark Side*.

In *Taxi to the Dark Side* this intriguing editing pattern is used on several occasions, starting with a sequence in which the journalist Carlotta Gall relates how critical information about a prisoner's torture death was revealed to her (see illustrations 3.16 to 3.18 above). Many scenes in the film are structured in such a way that information is gradually made available to the audience. By starting with closer shots and then going to wider shots, the audience is first prompted to speculate about the context before it is revealed. Like a thriller fiction film, the gradual revealing of information is used to sustain the audience's interest. Using the intriguing editing pattern amplifies this strategy.

It is important to note that these first two styles (continuity and deliberate) and patterns (traditional and intriguing) are not mutually exclusive. As a matter of fact, they are used together routinely in many fiction genres such as suspense, thriller, comedy and drama as well as in documentary films such as *Taxi to the Dark Side*. Deliberate editing is used at key points in predominantly continuity-style films precisely because the change in style is effective in signalling a change in emotion and thereby effecting tension or even shock.

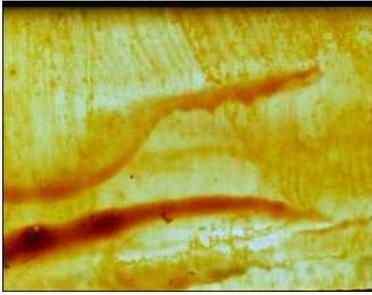


Illustration 3.19



Illustration 3.20



Illustration 3.21

Three images from Stan Brakhage's *Love Song*.

Experimental editing is located on the opposite end of the editing style continuum. To create the short film *Love Song* (2001) for instance, Stan Brakhage painted individual frames of film by hand, each frame constituting an individual “shot” (Illustration 3.19 to 3.21). This results in a complete absence of any cinematic continuity, temporal pattern or recognisable shape. The film resists interpretation because we cannot “read” many of the images at all, and “nothing seems to hang together in any of the ways that we have learned to expect from our previous experience with montage” (Grauer, 1998: np). In *Brakhage on Brakhage*, four video encounters with the filmmaker that accompany the films in the Criterion Collection *Brakhage Anthology*, Brakhage describes consciously creating these frames in a way that resists meaning. He refers to the combination of the frames as “unnamable” because “you can say things about it, but ... it's obvious that it resists that kind of usage”. He is so careful to prevent the emergence of recognisable images from the work, that he describes removing consecutive frames from the film that become, when played back, “too close to the nameable ... too coherent in the normal old ways” (1997).

The self-reflexive style of editing can be placed somewhere between deliberate and experimental editing on the continuum of editing style, but it does not inhabit one fixed position on the continuum. Self-reflexive editing is evident when the editing of a film makes viewers aware that they are watching a film through focusing their attention on the formal elements of the film. Self-reflexive editing encourages interaction with the text on multiple levels, as the viewer can engage with the content and the structure of the film. Self-reflexive editing is often fast paced, disjunctive and jarring. This increases the visual intensity of the film, heightening its effect. Fiction films like *Natural*

Born Killers (1994), *Man on Fire* (2004) and *District 9* (2009) have been edited in the self-reflexive style. This style of editing can incorporate flash frames, jump cuts and animation. Self-reflexivity often arises from a combination of different editing styles and patterns in one film. Non-fiction films like *Dogtown and Z-Boys* (Paralta, 2001), a film about the history of skateboarding in America, and *Fokofpolisiekar: Forgive Them For They Know Not What They Do* (Little, 2009) took inspiration for their editing from the fast pace and energetic movements of music videos. They are contemporary examples of documentaries that use self-reflexive editing and they demonstrate how arresting conspicuous editing can be in non-fiction film.



Illustration 3.22



Illustration 3.23



Illustration 3.24

Three consecutive close shots from *Fokofpolisiekar: Forgive Them For They Know Not What They Do*.

A jarring cutting pattern, characterised by cutting between close shots without the use of wider, contextualising shots, is often used in self-reflexive editing (see illustrations 3.22 to 3.24 above). Characters and details are much more important than narrative, temporal or spatial clarity. Characters, events and objects may be shown, but the audience might never find out where the events occur, what triggered them or what their consequences are. This can be effective in communicating mood or atmosphere as well as concepts. The viewer has to engage with the film actively to draw meaning from it; meaning is not presented to a viewer in an uncomplicated or mediated way. The value of self-reflexive editing lies in its ability to engage the audience actively since, according to Murch:

suggestion is always more effective than exposition. Past a certain point, the more effort you put into wealth of detail, the more you encourage the audience to become spectators rather than participants (1995: 15).

Self-reflexive editing is not used nearly as often as continuity and deliberate editing,

and it is therefore recognisable as different from mainstream editing styles. It is not as open to a variety of different interpretations (or, as in some cases, resistant to interpretation) as experimental editing can be. It invites the audience to engage actively with the text to make meaning of what they see on the screen. Where continuity editing largely fixes interpretation, self-reflexive editing often requires that viewers make connections between details or infer context from the actions shown. Viewers may have to wait longer to have the questions that are posed by the film answered, if indeed those questions are answered at all. And they are constantly reminded that what they are watching is, indeed, a film. This ensures that engagement with the film is not limited to emotional reaction, but that intellectual responses are also triggered.

3.3 FILM FORM AND THE DECODING OF THE TEXT

The formal aspects or conventions of a kind of text, in this case documentary film, develop over time within a given discourse among a set of practitioners (Nichols, 1991: 32). A film's form is made up of the relationships between the elements that constitute the film (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 66). This can include, but is not limited to, conventions of story, character, structure, cinematography, sound and editing.

Decoding is a dynamic process. Viewers “constantly seek ... order and significance, ... anticipate upcoming events, ... draw conclusions, and ... construct a whole out of parts”.

The process of making meaning in film is therefore not one-sided, but a discourse, an interaction between encoder and decoder (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 65 - 66).

Though there are similarities in form between instances of a particular kind of text, different interpretations of individual texts are possible, since different viewers can decode a text in different ways. And so the meaning of a text is also dependent on the decoder. Stuart Hall (1993) is careful to make it clear that decoding is far from arbitrary, though. It entails “polysemy”, not “pluralism”. The structure of the text can restrict the amount of polysemy the decoder can experience in decoding the message.

Form is important because it provides cues that guide the audience in how to decode

the message in a meaningful way (Hall, 1993: 509). The codes that fix the denotative meaning of a film are usually the accepted rules of film form. And it is largely through these rules that decoding on the connotative level can be cued (1993: 513). In mainstream documentary films the form used allows for a high level of fixing of the denotative meaning, reducing the number of connotative meanings cued. The more cues the text contains, the less problematic and active the decoding is. If the text contains fewer cues as to how it should be decoded, the decoding requires more active participation from the decoder. It is the argument in this dissertation that self-reflexive editing devices open the text up in this way, promoting an active decoding position in the viewer.

3.3.1 TRANSGRESSIONS OF FORM

As we use media in our everyday lives, we become so familiar with their conventions that "the codes involved often seem 'transparent' and the medium itself seems neutral" (Chandler, 1994: np). Though "audience reception and 'use' cannot be understood in simple behavioural terms" (Hall, 1993: 509), familiarity with codes does allow the information contained in the message to flow with apparent ease from sender to receiver. This process would seem to promote clear communication, but the transparency that develops as the sender and receiver become familiar with the codes of the medium may lead to passivity in the responses of the audience, allowing them to become spectators of, rather than participants in, the process of communication. Mainstream films become formulaic as filmmakers repeatedly use tried and tested devices, presumably in an attempt to ensure commercial success. Genre conventions create and affirm audience expectations and so aid in this commercial imperative. The familiarity with the formal aspects of film "frosts the window onto reality", preventing critical viewing and signalling the need for a new mode of representation. By developing new codes, the form can be revitalised. So, "a transgression of codes" can re-engage the audience, while it expands the formal system (Polan, 1974: 5).

Hall posits three hypothetical decoding positions, namely dominant-hegemonic, negotiated and oppositional (1993: 516-517). The first, the dominant-hegemonic position, "takes the connoted meaning ... full and straight, ... operating inside the

dominant code". The more conventional a film is in its construction, the more closed it is to variance in interpretation. In the case of film editing, the formal system that is most fixed is the continuity style of editing. As shown before, it is aimed at clarity of meaning and transparent communication of the narrative and emotional content of the film. It can be used when the filmmaker wants to lead the audience's interpretation of the film firmly in a particular direction. I contend that it is preferable for a documentary filmmaker to maintain a certain level of porosity in the text, an openness in the cues that lead the audience to draw meaning from the text. The second decoding position, the negotiated position, allows for "some exceptions to the rule" on a specific level, though the hegemonic viewpoint provides "grand significations" about the abstract or general. I contend that the most desired position for documentary film is the third position, "oppositional", in that it allows for both the specific (the situation the documentary is set in) and the general (social, political, global context) to be interrogated (Hall, 1993: 516). This allows for "a movement out of the self-enclosed world of the artwork toward a real world which the mediations of art usually leave behind" (Polan, 1974: np). This is of particular value in the documentary context, where the content of the film purports to represent the "real world".

I believe that this decoding position can be encouraged through the use of conspicuous editing devices. Through the use of such conspicuous or self-reflexive editing devices, the text can be opened to "an active participation" of the decoder with the text, so that she is constantly "creating and readjusting expectations about form as the experience develops" (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 69). When self-reflexive editing devices are used, the connotative level of meaning is opened, because the formal system, or denotative level, is less fixed.

3.4 THE EFFECT OF SELF-REFLEXIVITY

The need for questioning and analysis can make access to the text more challenging to the audience. It is realism – in the case of cutting film, continuity editing – that gives

the audience apparently “unproblematic access to the world through traditional physical representation and the untroubled transference of psychological states from character to viewer” (Nichols, 1991: 57). In the case of a film that makes use of self-reflexive devices, the audience must become more actively engaged with the film to decode its meaning, because the way the text has been constructed is more open, inviting viewers to contribute their subjective interpretations.

Brecht's writings provide theoretical grounding for any art form that engages its audience conceptually, not just emotionally. He places his Epic theatre in opposition to Aristotelian theatre, which according to him encouraged a “passive” reaction from the spectator. Epic theatre does not “make the spectator the victim ... of a hypnotic experience”, but rather “make[s] it possible for him to take a critical attitude” (Brecht in Willett, 1984: 57, 78). The active engagement of this “critical attitude” plays a vital role in countering the kind of passive viewing that leads to acceptance of the information and ideology presented as being beyond question. That is why Brecht advocates *Verfremdung*, a form of representation that ‘alienates’ or distantiates the audience by eschewing the familiar to the extent that the audience is discouraged from merely accepting a play or film at face value or responding to it only emotionally. Through this distantiation Brecht wants instead to prompt the audience to view the work critically, thereby raising the prospect that the artistic representation does not merely entertain, but also effects social and political change.

Brecht sees audience members as individuals, each capable of his or her own opinion and interpretation of the material presented. In his view it is therefore “more important to be able to think above the stream than to think in the stream” (1984: 44), to be able to engage actively, intellectually with the presentation rather than be absorbed passively, emotionally by what is being presented. By being made consciously aware of the constructedness of a presentation, the audience is prevented from being uncritically absorbed into *what* is being presented. Each audience member must make up her own mind, rather than be led by the beliefs of the filmmaker.

In Laura Mulvey's view, mainstream Hollywood cinema perpetually restricts itself to “a

formal *mise en scène* reflecting the dominant ideological concept of the cinema" (1993: 113). So, alternative filmmakers cannot challenge mainstream films only by subverting expected filmic content, but must also reject conventional aesthetics. Since the formal elements of cinematography (focus, movement and framing) "combine with invisible editing [to ensure] realism", making the editing visible should be part of the strategy for breaking away from established forms (1993: 113 - 118). This affirms Brecht's approach, which makes use of devices outside established theatrical practice to prevent passive reception of the material presented in a play by the audience.

Mulvey identifies three forms of "looking" in film, namely onscreen characters looking at each other, the camera looking at those characters and the audience looking at the representation thus captured. The illusion of reality in mainstream film relies on the latter two kinds of looking remaining invisible to the audience, "prevent[ing] a distancing awareness in the audience". So, to challenge mainstream conventions, the 'looking' of the camera and the 'looking' of the audience must both become overt (1993: 123). The aim for Brecht and Mulvey seems to be to confront the audience rather than to reassure or merely entertain them. By challenging the audience through the film rather than constructing it in a way that allows them to lose themselves in it, the audience is engaged intellectually, allowing the structures and ideology of the film to be interrogated. An art form that acknowledges its own construction prompts the audience to a more active form of critical engagement. The audience is then "required to observe ... the world itself in a critical, contradictory, detached manner" (Brecht in Willett, 1984: 146). By interacting with the work of art and with its method of construction, the audience's attention can also be focused on the "real world" outside the "world of the artwork" (Polan, , 1974: np). And this is what is critical to an art form, such as documentary film, that aims to challenge or even change viewers' perceptions.

3.5 SELF-REFLEXIVITY AND AUDIENCE ENTERTAINMENT

A potential pitfall of using self-reflexive devices is that the film may become overly

intellectual or unable to engage the audience at all. If a documentary filmmaker makes her film in order to reach an audience, create awareness of a topic or influence perceptions, she will want her film to be seen by as many people as possible. No filmmaker makes a film to *not* be seen. So, although Mulvey's proposed strategy of "break[ing] with normal *pleasurable* expectations" (1993: 113, my italics) seems valid in theory, it would be very difficult to implement in practice. With the use of self-reflexive devices comes the "hazard of the textual voice overwhelming" the content or message of the film (Nichols, 1991: 58). But I suggest that, through the use of self-reflexive editing devices, it is possible to unsettle audience expectations and make viewers aware that they are watching a film, while also making the experience pleasurable. I therefore contend that a documentary filmmaker who makes use of self-reflexive strategies should find a balance between creating intellectual awareness of the film as a film, while still maintaining the audience's emotional engagement with the material presented.

3.5.1 EMOTIONAL AND INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT

Using the self-reflexive mode of representation does not have to mean that viewing a documentary cannot be pleasurable or emotionally engaging. According to Brecht, distanciation "is not the result of a rejection of the emotions, nor does it lead to such" (1984: 145). It is possible to be simultaneously emotionally and intellectually engaged while watching a film.

In his discussion of fiction films influenced by the MTV style of editing, Ken Dancyger describes what he calls a "self-reflexive dream state" (2002: 190). He posits that a heightened engagement with the film results from the emotional safety provided by the distanciating effect of the film's self-reflexivity. While being aware of the means of representation and thus intellectually engaged, viewers can simultaneously engage with the film emotionally because they feel secure thanks to the filmmaker's acknowledgement that the film is merely a film. One does not have to fear real emotional pain (however vicariously portrayed), because what one is seeing is 'just a film'. The result is that the viewer can "be simultaneously very involved, and not involved at all" (2002: 190, 191). To paraphrase Brecht: to think *at once* in and above

the stream (1984: 44).

In psychology this would be described as feeling empathy rather than sympathy. Sympathy entails “the heightened awareness of another’s plight as something to be alleviated ... a way of *relating*” and is often seen as synonymous with pity. Empathy, on the other hand, is used to indicate “the attempt of one self-aware self to understand the subjective experiences of another self ... a way of *knowing*” (Wispé, 1986: 314, my italics). It is important that the therapist does not feel as the patient does, nor pities her, but instead understands the feelings of the patient. This distance is not impersonal. The therapist is engaged with the *emotion* of the patient and can respond *intellectually* to it at the same time. Without this simultaneous involvement and distance, therapy would not be possible.

This distinction is useful in examining the emotional responses elicited by different modes of representation in documentary films. The effect of viewing a self-reflexive film that makes use of Brecht’s *Verfremdungseffekt* can be seen as similar to the empathetic response of a therapist to her client, while a conventional film that makes use of continuity editing would be much more likely to elicit a response similar to sympathy. A self-reflexive film allows for the viewer to “recognize [the film’s] subject”, while simultaneously being aware that something about it is “unfamiliar” (Willet, 1984: 192). This creates a barrier to complete immersion (sympathy). Viewers feel, but do not get lost in the feeling (empathy). They can think while feeling.



Illustration 3.25



Illustration 3.26

An animated interview and cut aways from *Slavar*.

An example of this effect can be seen in the documentary *Slavar (Slaves, 2008)*. This short animated film is based on an interview conducted in 2003 by Danish filmmakers David Aronowitsch and Hanna Heilborn, and deals with child slavery. Two Sudanese children, Abouk (9) and Machiek (15), who were freed from slavery, are interviewed about their abduction, captivity and liberation. Though the voices are the actual ones recorded during the interview, the original filmed image has been replaced entirely with an animated one. The faces have been rendered in a stylised way that hides the identities of the subjects and creates a distancing, self-reflexive, effect (see illustrations 3.25 and 3.26 above). The questions, mannerisms, hesitations, corrections and interruptions of the original interview have been preserved, creating a poignant tension between the realness of the speech and the artificiality of the images.

The effect of this tension is powerful. As signs, the characters become iconic, having a “resemblance to [their] referent”, rather than indexical, where there is an “existential bond between [the signifier] and that to which it refers” (Nichols, 1981: 239). They begin to represent a phenomenon, child slavery, in general while telling of their respective personal experiences. According to Heilborn, “the idea behind the film ... was to use animation to tell a shocking story in a way that doesn’t overwhelm the audience” (Gravgaard, 2009: np). Though the stories are harrowing, the viewer is able to maintain a safe emotional distance while taking in the shocking details. This is an empathetic response, characteristic of the self-reflexive dream state as described by Dancyger.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The film form used by mainstream Hollywood fiction films and television documentaries has been established through years of filmmaking practice. Continuity editing is the editing style prevalent in mainstream fiction and non-fiction film. Continuity editing is intended to be invisible to the audience, and therefore leads to less active decoding of the text and less critical engagement with the message. The self-reflexive mode of representation can be useful in giving viewers critical distance from the material

presented. This allows them to engage with the material intellectually. This distance allows viewers to decode the text critically, questioning the content presented, the integrity of the structuring process and the intentions or bias of the filmmaker. This distancing can also prompt the viewer to look critically at the world outside the film. Self-reflexivity can be effected through breaking the conventions of established, mainstream film form.

Breaking documentary film conventions consistently and excessively can counter audience engagement by rendering the content of the film completely inaccessible. I propose that form and structure should be manipulated in such a way that the audience is at once encouraged to engage with the material intellectually while not losing emotional engagement. In this respect filmmakers can make use of unconventional structures, unexpected shot selections and jarring editing devices. The following chapter will explore specific instances of such self-reflexive editing in a selection of contemporary South African documentary films.

PART II

Self-Reflexive Editing Devices in South African Documentary Films

CHAPTER 4

SELF-REFLEXIVE EDITING DEVICES IN A SELECTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN DOCUMENTARY FILMS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The self-reflexive mode of representation can be used in non-fiction film to signal the presence of the filmmaker and acknowledge the constructedness of the film. This was shown in the previous chapter to play a role in maintaining an intellectual distance between the audience (decoder) and film (text). This distanciation or *Verfremdungseffekt* encourages an active interaction between the decoder and text and a critical attitude in that decoding. This distance does not have to entail disengagement from the film. Self-reflexive editing devices can at once distance the audience critically and aid in the text's potential to entertain the audience. Thus a documentary edited in the self-reflexive style can be enjoyable to watch, while it challenges the viewer intellectually.

In this chapter a structural analysis of a selection of South African documentary films is undertaken to identify, list, describe and analyse self-reflexive editing devices. Most of the films used in this chapter have been in competition at or part of the official documentary selection of at least one South Africa film festival. The Encounters Documentary Film Festival, the Durban International Film Festival, the Cape Winelands Film Festival and the Tri-Continental Film Festival all make use of film scholars and industry professionals to serve on their selection panels. Selection criteria for these festivals include originality, audience interest, quality and novelty. A few films that have not been screened at any of these festivals have been included because they contain specific devices that were deemed pertinent to this study. The films selected for analysis in this study are not representative of the mainstream, but should rather be seen as part of the innovative periphery; not as followers of existing conventions, but

rather as indicators of emerging trends.

Self-reflexive editing devices are evident in films including *Afrikaaps* (dir: Valley, ed: Shamis, 2009), *Dear Mandela* (dir & ed: Kell & Nizza, 2011), *Fokofpolisiekar: Forgive them for they know not what they do* (dir: Little, ed: Steytler, 2009), *Forerunners* (dir: Wood, ed: Shamis, 2011), *Imam and I* (dir & ed: Shamis, 2011), *It's my Life* (dir: Tilley, ed: Loots, 2001), *Journey Towards Sustainable Living* (dir: Cain, ed: van Straaten, 2010), *King Naki* (dir: Wege, ed: Loots, 2011), *Lona Umzimba Wami* (dir: Muholi, Ed: Mokoena, 2011), *Mama Goema* (dir: Ramirez, Gouveia & MacNaughton, ed: Ramirez & Gouveia, 2011), *The Mother's House* (dir: Verster, ed: Neal, 2005), *Porselynnkas* (dir & ed: Kalil, 2011), *Sea Point Days* (dir & ed: Verster, 2008), *Tribes and Clans* (dir: Mahlalela, ed: Makwela, 2009) and *Uprising at Hangberg* (dir & ed: Kaganof, 2011).

Some of the films analysed are overtly self-reflexive in mode, like *Imam and I*. Others, like *King Naki*, include references to the filmmaker's presence or, like *Mama Goema*, exhibit formal elements that can be described as self-reflexive. Self-reflexive devices may be concerned with a particular edit point in a film. This implies the selection and inclusion of an individual shot, or the way in which two shots are combined. A film may also be structured in a way that is self-reflexive, or self-reflexive editing devices may recur throughout a film.

It is worth noting at this point that the role of the editor in the construction of a documentary film is not limited to the arrangement of shots or the adjustment of the pace of the film. The editor must first sift through hours of filmed material to select shots and takes for inclusion in the film. It is not uncommon for thirty hours of footage to be condensed to a couple of minutes during editing. The decision of what to include and what to omit is therefore paramount and should be seen as a critical part of the editing process.

Twenty-eight self-reflexive editing devices are identified, described and analysed in this study. They are:

- ⤴ Inclusion of the filmmaker in the film
- ⤴ Inclusion of interactions between subjects and filmmaker or filmmaking equipment
- ⤴ Inclusion of visible equipment
- ⤴ Inclusion of technical adjustments
- ⤴ Inclusion of visuals of questionable quality
- ⤴ Inclusion of undesirable sound
- ⤴ Inclusion of hesitations
- ⤴ Lack of plot and resolution
- ⤴ Categorical structure
- ⤴ Episodic structure
- ⤴ Associational form
- ⤴ Abstract form
- ⤴ Combination of structures
- ⤴ Shifts in documentary type
- ⤴ Shifts in form
- ⤴ Juxtaposition
- ⤴ Intercutting
- ⤴ Ellipses in content
- ⤴ Jump cuts
- ⤴ Rapid cutting
- ⤴ Long takes without cuts
- ⤴ Form edits
- ⤴ Effect transitions
- ⤴ Superimposition
- ⤴ Omission of chyrons
- ⤴ Interaction between titles and video
- ⤴ Manipulation of playback rate and direction
- ⤴ Recurring images and devices

This list is not exhaustive and it is acknowledged that there are other editing devices that can be described as self-reflexive. The devices listed in this study are the ones identified through structural analysis of the films selected. It should also be noted that self-reflexive editing devices can be seen as occupying positions on a continuum. Some devices being more self-reflexive than others.

4.2 INCLUSION OF THE FILMMAKER IN THE FILM

The most overt self-reflexive device in documentary film is the inclusion of the filmmaker in the film, whether in moving shots, photographs or voice over. The filmmaker can introduce himself to the audience and explaining his position in relation to his subject matter, as Dylan Valley does in voice-over at the beginning of *Afrikaaps*. Sometimes, as in Khalid Shamis's personal exploration of family history and identity in *Imam and I*, the director can himself become the subject of the film. More often directors are seen or heard in their role as interviewer or interrogator, as when Aryan Kaganof is seen interacting with subjects in *Uprising at Hangberg*, or when Brian Tilley is heard off camera posing questions or making comments in *It's My Life*. All of these strategies are useful in positioning the filmmaker as encoder of the text or "authoring agent, opening this very function to examination" (Nichols, 1991: 58).



Illustration 4.1: Dylan Valley and his family from *Afrikaaps*.

In *Afrikaaps* (2009), Dylan Valley uses voice over and a family portrait (see Illustration 4.1 above) to introduce himself and declare his subjective perspective as director. The

photograph of Valley, his parents and his sister, is used as visual accompaniment to his explanation of how he and his sister ended up having English as a first language though their parents are Afrikaans. English was chosen as home language as a form of resistance against what was seen as the language of the oppressor. Valley continues to explain how working on this documentary has changed his view of Afrikaans and given him new respect for a language that is associated with, but represents much more than, apartheid. By showing himself to the audience, mentioning his family and referring to their parenting decisions, Valley makes himself a part of the documentary, acknowledges his subjective view and thereby frames his documentary as self-reflexive.



Illustration 4.2: Khalid Shamis in *Imam and I*.

In Khalid Shamis's *Imam and I* (2011) the director becomes the subject of film. It is through including shots of himself on his journey to find his identity and through a voice-over delivered by Shamis that the film is most obviously self-reflexive. But *Imam and I* also contains many self-reflexive editing devices. Shamis first includes a reference to his relationship to his grandfather, the eponymous Imam, in voice-over in the first minute of the film: "he was my grandfather". Soon after this a clip has been included in which an interviewee addresses the filmmaker directly through the use of phrases like: "You must understand Khalid..." and "...your grandfather...". Shamis is then shown on screen, walking through London before recounting his own history in voice over (see illustration 4.2 above). The title, *Imam and I*, gives a clear indication of who the subjects of the film are, both the Imam and Shamis, the filmmaker. Shamis appears on screen at intervals and the narration, delivered in his own voice, continues throughout the film. He uses his familial relationship with Imam Harun as a device through which to explore the Imam's life and death and the myths that arose around

him. But the film is as much an exploration of Shamis's own identity, an attempt to define himself as the grandson of a legend, who is an absent person but an ever-present symbol in his life.



Illustration 4.3: Francois Verster's feet are visible in the opening shot of *Sea Point Days*.

The film *Sea Point Days* (2008) begins with a point of view shot. It is shot from the perspective of a person paragliding towards the Sea Point promenade, where the rest of the film's action unfolds. Feet are visible for most of the shot (see illustration 4.3 above). This perspective shows how the aerial shot of Sea Point was achieved, while it acknowledges the presence of the filmmaker. The film is Verster's perspective and the inclusion of this shot at the opening of the film alerts the audience to this in an overt way. This shot also connotes the position of the filmmaker: he has a wider perspective than any individual subject; he is outside the subject but draws ever closer as the film progresses.



Illustration 4.4: Aryan Kaganof while interviewing a subject in *Uprising at Hangberg*.

Selecting and including shots of the director are also useful in acknowledging the difference between the voice of the subject(s) and the voice of the filmmaker. The effect of this strategy is twofold. Firstly, the text acknowledges its agenda, whether it is similar to or opposed to that of the subject(s) depicted. The film's point of view can be different from "the point of view of any of the witnesses we see and hear" (Nichols, 1991: 58), but it can also be aligned with the point of view of the witnesses, as is the case in *Uprising at Hangberg* (2011). Secondly, it is an "acknowledgement of [the filmmakers'] difference from those they represent" (Nichols, 1991: 59), of the "otherness" of the filmmakers. In *Uprising at Hangberg* filmmaker Aryan Kaganof can, from time to time, be seen interviewing witnesses of the uprising that occurred in Hout Bay on 21 September 2010, when police forcefully removed informal settlers from a firebreak and protected land. Kaganof's manner is confrontational and he, as a white man, is shown in contrast to the more mild-mannered coloured interviewees. The contrast between Kaganof and his subjects emphasises his otherness from them (illustration 4.4). By including these shots of himself questioning the witnesses, he also positions himself clearly in their favour. He appears aggressive, but from his statements and questions it becomes clear that his anger is directed at the authorities. Kaganof takes a clearly biased position against the authorities and in favour of the evicted residents. He, and the Hangberg residents, are critical of the police, who are shown in the film evicting residents of Hangberg without a warrant and firing rubber bullets at them in a way that is presented in the film to be in contravention of police policy.

Though clips of Hellen Zille, then mayor of Cape Town, are included, the residents' perspective is the only one explored in depth and theirs is the only argument endorsed by the film. Kaganof includes a motivation for taking this extreme, biased position in the text: the media reportage has likewise been entirely one-sided. National and regional print and broadcast media are shown as depicting exclusively the point of view of the authorities, as personified by Zille. Though biased, *Uprising at Hangberg* provides a voice to those who have not been given any space in mainstream media. Kaganof's film presents the opposite of the mainstream media view, not both. And his inclusion of himself in the film alerts the audience to his presence as authoring agent and acknowledges his biased perspective on the topic. By making the presence of the

filmmaker overt, both his position in relation to the subject matter and his “otherness” from the subjects are opened up to criticism.

4.3 INCLUSION OF INTERACTIONS BETWEEN SUBJECTS AND FILMMAKER OR FILMMAKING EQUIPMENT

Interactions between subject and filmmaker or filmmaking equipment could include shots of the subject directly addressing the filmmaker or the audience, the subject commenting on the filmmaking process or the subject accidentally or intentionally interacting with the filmmaking equipment. This gives the audience access to a more rounded view of the subject's life at the point of filming; we see both what she did and how it was filmed. *Cinéma vérité* filmmakers pioneered this strategy (see Chapter Two). It acknowledges the presence of the filmmaker and signifies that what is shown on screen is not real life, but has been mediated by someone. In *Dear Mandela* (2011), for example, there is an instance where a subject runs into the camera during a shot showing a crowd running towards camera. The moment of impact is used as motivation for a cut to black. So in this instance the subject interacts physically with the camera by bumping it, but this also results in an intervention to the editing, since it motivates a cut to black. The moment is self-reflexive because the audience is made aware of the physical presence of the camera, that a subject can run into it and that this can cause the shot to stop.

Interactions by the subject with the filmmaker or equipment can also lend a sense of privileged access for the audience. It reminds the audience that it is thanks to the filmmaker that they can access the world of the subject, fulfilling a persistent human desire, “the ... desire to enter someone else's world” (Scott, 2011: AR8). It can be novel, humorous and provide a glimpse of the character of the subject when she thinks that she is not being filmed, or when she expresses uncontrolled emotion. In the editing of *It's my Life* (2001) elements were included that would normally be deemed unusable in a conventional documentary film. Zackie Achmat, the subject of the film,

meets his friend Mark at an airport restaurant. While Mark speaks on his cell phone, a restaurant staff member in the background stares directly at the camera. With a jump cut the film shifts to Mark looking at the filmmaker and asking: "Can I give him a hug?" before he embraces Achmat. Neither the shot that shows the staff member staring at the camera nor the moment when Mark interacts with the filmmaker would be used if the mode of representation in *It's my Life* were not self-reflexive. The inclusion in this film of these moments signals the presence of the camera: it is something to be looked at. It also acknowledges the presence of the filmmaker: he must be asked for permission before acting in front of the camera. Both these moments could easily have been left out of the film. But their inclusion remind the viewer that it is a film she is watching, and that it was constructed by someone. The authoring agent is not part of ordinary life, since he attracts the attention of bystanders as he works. Some subjects will acquiesce to his authority as long as they are in front of his camera. This raises questions about the ability of subjects to be natural and authentic in front of the camera. It signifies that the camera, by its mere presence, influences the pro-filmic world, and that the filmmaker is not passive nor objective, but in fact actively involved in structuring the events he captures.

A few minutes later in the film Achmat is seen speaking from the front seat of a car as he is being driven from a press conference about Treatment Action Campaign's application to be declared a 'friend of the court' in a case against international pharmaceutical companies. He discusses collaborating with overseas activists, and then seems to realise that he has referred to his collaborators in a less than flattering way. This prompts him to say to the filmmaker: "But you're not going to put that into the film, are you?". The filmmaker does just that. Achmat is referring directly to the construction of the film: the selection of shots for inclusion in the edit. The moment also presents a conversation of sorts between the subject and filmmaker. The conversation starts with the subject's question in the car and ends with an answer in the form of the inclusion of the subject's statement in the film. The filmmaker answers the subject's question through editing. Apart from being self-reflexive, this moment creates the impression that the audience has access to a privileged moment, seeing something that wasn't really supposed to be included in the film.

At one point in *Imam and I* Shamis is heard off camera asking his grandmother about the beginning of her relationship with the Imam: "How did you know he was after you?". She seems to be embarrassed by the question. She laughs nervously, but does not answer the question. By asking "How did you know he was after you?" rather than using a more formal tone, for example, "How did your relationship start?" or "How did he court you?", Shamis's familiarity with his subject, his grandmother, is shown. This signifies the position of the filmmaker inside the topic of the film, rather than outside it. In addition, something is shown of Shamis and his grandmother's personalities through this moment. The inclusion of Shamis's playful challenging of his grandmother highlights how different these two people are. Apart from being from different generations, they are also from different places. Shamis grew up in cosmopolitan London and his grandmother in a relatively closed Muslim community in the suburbs outside Cape Town. He is shown to be irreverent and she is taken aback by this. The grandmother's embarrassment at her grandson's question is at once endearing and slightly uncomfortable. It makes the audience feel for her and for her loss. This moment is a reminder that she did not only lose her husband, but she also lost her daughter (and subsequent grandchildren), because the daughter left the country as a result of the Imam's persecution.



Illustration 4.5: The camera tilts up to reveal the rifle microphone in a scene from *King Naki*.

In *King Naki* (2011) the crew and equipment are pointed out by the protagonist and people he interacts with during a scene in a local shop. He identifies the crew as his "filming white people", at once signalling the presence of the filmmakers to the audience and acknowledging their otherness from himself. When he tells a boy who hands him a cabbage: "Don't look away, you're being filmed here. You'll be on TV soon", the boy counters with: "No way, SABC will never show this". The self-reflexivity

thus extends beyond the film's production process to commenting on the circumstances of its exhibition. The scene concludes with another customer in the shop asking about the microphone. The sound recordist tries to put her at ease by saying: "It's OK, it won't harm you. I'm holding it tight". The camera tilts up to reveal the rifle microphone (illustration 4.5). The microphone is contained in a hard casing covered by a furry wind protector. This is sometimes jokingly referred to as a "dead cat" by film crew members. The woman, who lives in a rural area in the Eastern Cape, clearly has never seen anything like this before and is understandably puzzled. This scene is humorous because of the characters' reactions to the filming, the ways in which the subject explains the presence of the filmmaker and his equipment and because of the variety of reactions to the filming. Self-reflexivity stems from the overt references to the filmmakers and their equipment, reminding the audience of the means of representation.



Illustration 4.6: Mac McKenzie holds his sweater to the camera lens in *Mama Goema*.

Mama Goema (2011) contains several instances of interactions between subject and filmmaker or camera. Musician and composer Mac McKenzie, one of the main subjects of the film, at one point in the film walks closer to camera and presses the armpit of his sweater to the lens while saying: "Smell the work" (Illustration 4.6). This humorous moment comments on the content and on the filmmaking process. McKenzie is seen here hard at work making arrangements for the performance of a symphony he is composing and the subject interacts verbally and physically with the camera.

Later in the film one of the interviewees demonstrates how to make a Goema drum. At the end of the sequence he plays the drum, and then turns to camera and asks: "How do you like it?". Here he addresses the camera physically during the filming process, and the audience by implication during the screening. Because this is a direct question, the audience is prompted to engage with the subject, in effect answering the question the subject poses to camera. The interaction is therefore multi-layered, between subject and encoder during encoding, and between text and decoder during decoding.

4.4 INCLUSION OF VISIBLE EQUIPMENT

Filmmaking equipment is sometimes visible on screen in a documentary film. Though this is normally eschewed in mainstream documentary film, it is sometimes inevitable, especially when events unfold quickly and equipment or even crew is accidentally included in the frame. These instances are only included in mainstream films if the content is of such a powerful or unique nature that the filmmaker is prepared to include the shot despite what would be seen, in the mainstream context, as a filming mistake. Most often this entails the accidental intrusion of a hand-held or pole-mounted microphone into the frame. In a self-reflexive documentary film there is space for inclusion of shots that show the filming equipment and crew, since revealing the filming tools is an effective strategy for acknowledging and referring to the filming process within the body of the text.



Illustration 4.7



Illustration 4.8



Illustration 4.9

Images that acknowledge the presence of the film crew in *Porselynnkas*.

Such *mise-en-abyme* is evident in *Porselynnkas*, where shots of the camera-operator are included on several occasions during an interview for which two angles were filmed. The inclusion of these shots allows for the filmmaking strategy behind the two-camera interviews to be acknowledged. During the interview with Rochell, he points out each of the two cameras (illustration 4.7), identifying the one as a Sony (video camera) and the other as an Apple (iPhone). A shot of the camera-operator reclining on a couch with the camera resting on his belly while filming an interview with Floyed de Vaal is even included in the film (illustration 4.8). It is at once humorous and self-reflexive, because the stance is so different from the shots of him included elsewhere in the film. In most of the other shots he is seen filming actively (as in illustration 4.9) while here he sits seemingly comfortably. This raises the question of how seriously he is taking the filming. And if the camera-operator does not take the filming seriously, the viewer may wonder how seriously she should take the resultant film.



Illustration 4.10: The director holds a tripod while interviewing subject in *Imam and I*.

In *Imam and I*, the director is shown at one point interviewing a subject, Reverend Bernard Wrankmore, while holding a tripod (illustration 4.10). This instance is self-reflexive for two reasons, firstly the equipment is seen on screen and not hidden as would be the case in a conventional documentary, and secondly it is the director who is seen on screen holding the tripod. So, not only is a shot of the authoring agent included, but in that shot he is holding one of the tools of his filmmaking process. This foregrounds the filming process.



Illustration 4.11: A microphone cable is visible over a white t-shirt in *Mama Goema*.

In *Mama Goema*, lapel microphones are sometimes visible during interviews. In conventional documentary films radio microphones are used precisely because they can be hidden underneath interviewee clothing. They do not dip into frame as hand-held or pole-mounted microphones sometimes do (see again illustration 4.5 above). And when cutting between an interview where the interviewee is wearing a microphone and a visual sequences where she is not, the cut is smoother when the microphone is hidden since it is noticeable when a microphone appears and disappears from shot to shot. During an interview with Hilton Schilder in *Mama Goema*, not only is the lapel microphone itself visible, the cable leading from the microphone to the sender box it is attached to is also visible (illustration 4.11). Mounting the microphone above clothing makes it conspicuous, alerting the viewer to the process used to record the sound in that particular shot. This acts as a reminder within the frame that the event was filmed.

4.5 INCLUSION OF TECHNICAL ADJUSTMENTS

Technical adjustments are aesthetically displeasing changes to focus, exposure and composition made by the camera-operator in order to improve the overall quality of the following shot or to compensate for changes in lighting and subject position that have occurred while filming. These changes should be seen as distinct from intentional camera movements and focus pulls that are designed to enhance the narrative or emotional thrust of the scene. They are avoided in traditional documentaries, but are often included in the editing of self-reflexive films since they serve as reminders of the

filming process.

In *Dear Mandela's* opening an interviewee says: "Madiba is like Jesus Christ". The image that accompanies this statement is of a poster of Nelson Mandela. The shot goes out of focus and is then refocused. Since there is no movement in the shot, it would arguably have been possible to use a slightly earlier or later part of the filmed footage in order to avoid the adjustment in focus. But in this instance the defocus is included, signifying the presence of the camera and alerting the audience that they should listen and watch critically. It also functions as a foreshadowing of the negative light that will be thrown later in the film on promises made during the ANC's first election campaign in 1994.



Illustration 4.12a



Illustration 4.12b

An image of Shamis's eyes starts out of focus and later comes into focus in a scene from *Imam and I*.

When Shamis visits the prison cell in which the Imam was found dead in *Imam and I*, a warden describes the Imam's last day as they walk around the prison courtyard. There is a moment when an extreme close up of Shamis's eyes is used as he listens to the warden. The image starts out of focus, but then comes into focus (illustration 4.12a and 4.12b). This focus shift coincides with a wobbly readjustment of the framing, which indicates that this is a technical adjustment and not an intentional focus pull. The fact that the image changes from out of focus to in focus is conspicuous and therefore self-reflexive, but it also signifies Khalid's growing knowledge about his grandfather's death. The way in which Shamis's eyes become more clearly visible as the shot comes into focus is a visual metaphor for how information about his grandfather's death is being revealed to him.

4.6 INCLUSION OF VISUALS OF QUESTIONABLE QUALITY



Illustration 4.13: A damaged photograph is used as a visual metaphor in *Imam and I*.

A photograph in which the Imam's face has become unrecognisable due to damage is used on more than one occasion in *Imam and I* (illustration 4.13). Normally a damaged photo would not be included in a documentary film unless it contains vital evidence pertaining to the narrative or argument of the film. In this case the photo does not contain vital information and yet it is included. This image is self-reflexive because it is so conspicuous. The photo is used when one of the interviewees, Farid Esach, says: "If ever there was something that this community ought to be deeply ashamed about, it was about what they did to the memory of Imam Harun". By associating the damaged photograph with this statement, it becomes a visual metaphor, signifying the defacing of the memory of the Imam.

Video cameras record video and sound in synchronisation. *Porselynnkas* (2011) contains an instance where the visuals and sound of a video clip are overtly identified as having become separated. Archive footage of Alex Omega describing the Porselynnkas performance poetry movement as "the most well documented non-event in the history of whatever" is introduced in voice-over as being "out of sync". The synchronisation between visuals and sound seems to have been lost somehow through degradation of the video source or a technical problem during recording or transfer of the footage. The image is of Omega seated as for an interview, so the lack of synchronisation is conspicuous and emphasised, because it is clear that Omega's voice and lip movements don't match. If the sound and visual are indeed from the same

source footage, it should have been possible for the filmmaker to synchronise them during the editing. This would have been done during the editing of a mainstream film. Including the unsynchronised clip in the film was thus a conscious choice and, I argue, used and emphasised here for effect. The mismatch reminds the audience of the film as film, since the components used to construct a film are overtly mentioned in voice-over and the effect of the mismatched visuals and sound is conspicuous. A perfect match between sound and visuals is normally taken for granted, but here that expectation is challenged. Video footage is defamiliarised to the extent that the audience is prompted to question the role of the filmmaker in the construction of the film. This leads to *Verfremdung*. Because the filmmaker chose not to synchronise the visuals and sound, the question arises whether the two elements do belong together at all. The ostensible de-synchronisation of the footage could very well be a device used to hide that a statement has been ascribed to Omega that he did not make in this interview. It is the unfamiliarity of seeing visuals and sound play out of synchronisation in an interview that opens the text to this kind of questioning and criticism.

4.7 INCLUSION OF UNDESIRABLE SOUND

During a conversation between Shamis and his grandmother (the Imam's widow) in *Imam and I* one can hear a toilet flush off camera. At the time this happens the conversation is emotionally charged as Shamis's grandmother speaks about being neglected by the community after the death of her husband. The sound forms an undesirable distraction from the grandmother's interview and would, as such, have been left out of a conventional documentary. A conventional filmmaker would most likely have left this section of the interview out of the film or asked the interviewee to repeat her statement once the undesirable sound had stopped. This is common practice in documentary filming where sounds from cars, aeroplanes, animals, construction or other people disrupt recording. The inclusion of the toilet flush sound in *Imam and I* is a vivid reminder of the pro-filmic, the world beyond the film and is therefore self-reflexive. It also creates a self-reflexive effect, because ablution is an activity seldom

shown in documentary or fiction films. So, in addition to reminding the viewer of the real world outside the frame of the documentary, being reminded of an activity that is almost never seen on screen also leads to a comparison between this and other films. The tension between real life and life as it is selectively represented in film is highlighted by the inclusion of this moment.

4.8 INCLUSION OF HESITATIONS

In the film *Porselynnkas* the filmmaker and his main subject are on a journey to visit each member of the 1990s performance poetry movement of the same name. Rochell is the third member of the group to be interviewed. The interview begins with a sequence constructed entirely of hesitations, false starts and sighs. In a conventional documentary an effort would be made to avoid these moments, but here they are celebrated and emphasised through their selection and compilation. This sequence places the emphasis on the interviewee's speech patterns. The interviewee is uncomfortable and unsure. Interviewees' comments in conventional documentaries are usually edited in a way that makes the interviewees seem more authoritative and confident. Because these more awkward moments are normally cut out, including them here is a reminder that the speech patterns presented in films are often different from the ones people exhibit in everyday life. In a conventional documentary interview, segments tend to be cut to start after hesitations and end before them. Often hesitations and pauses during statements are purposely cut out and these jump cuts are hidden through being covered by cut-aways. Viewers are therefore not accustomed to hearing hesitations in interviews, especially not this many assembled together. This also results in the sequence placing the emphasis on the editing. The inclusion of these hesitations and false starts leads to questions about the medium, and therefore this sequence is capable of triggering critical, intellectual interaction with this film and questioning of films in general.

4.9 LACK OF PLOT AND RESOLUTION

Narrative is the most widely used structure in fiction film, because it has developed over centuries of oral history, fiction writing and theatre making. According to David Bordwell the classical mode, in which “the story ends with a decisive victory or defeat”, is the form that “conforms most closely to the 'canonic story' which story-comprehension researchers posit as normal for our culture” (1986: 18). It tends to allow a high level of immersion in the world of the story and encourages emotional engagement with the characters. Narrative structure is typically used in the continuity style of editing because it does not place emphasis on itself.

Art Cinema provides an “alternative to [the] classical narrative system” by eschewing structure and linearity, leaving endings open, omitting details and by not showing what motivates characters. It also breaks the rules of continuity editing (Orpen, 2003: 60). *Cinéma désordonné* or disordered cinema, a term coined by David Denby, refers to films that are characterised by “[f]ragmented narratives and convoluted plots”, where closure is “more elusive and subjective” than in commercial cinema (Hassapopoulou, 2008: np). *Sea Point Days* (2008) is a collection of vignettes, connected only by their shared link to the Sea Point promenade. Some characters recur in the film, while others are seen only once and exhibit no character development. None of the stories is overtly concluded positively or negatively. The closure is “aesthetic” (Hassapopoulou, 2008: np) rather than narrative. The film concludes with a visual return to some of the content shown in the introduction to the film. As at the beginning of the film, we see the ticket counter of the public swimming pools at the Sea Point promenade. The shot of the director's feet as he descends to the promenade that started the film is also used to end it (see again illustration 4.3 above). It signifies the end of the filmic journey, but the film provides no clues to what will happen to the characters it follows. This provides a “sense of difficulty, of an obdurate and complicated reality submitting only partially to the filmmaker's demystifying will”, as Scott might call it (2011: AR8). This tension between what *is* and what *can be shown* signals the limits of the filmmaker's structuring control over the “real” world. Through its lack of resolution, *Sea Point Days* acknowledges that the film can only contain a part of its subjects' lives; that the

filmmaker can never capture reality, only a part of it; cannot show the truth, only a subjective version of it. But because audiences have come to expect closure, the open-endedness of *Sea Point Days* can trigger questions such as “What will happen to these characters now?”, “How do their stories end?”, leading to an awareness of the structure and therefore the construction of the film.

4.10 CATEGORICAL STRUCTURE



Illustration 4.14



Illustration 4.15

An animated title introduces each category in *Journey Towards Sustainable Living*.

Though the categorical form is widely used and therefore familiar to many viewers, it is a structure that overtly places emphasis on itself and can therefore be self-reflexive. The categorical form is often used to structure non-fiction film, as it allows filmmakers to collect interviews and visuals relating to particular topics together in separate, clearly delineated sections of the film. *Journey Towards Sustainable Living* (2010) is an example of a film in which the information is structured using categories. The film is about Lynedoch Eco Village, a mixed-income residential village outside Stellenbosch designed around The Sustainability Institute, which is linked to Stellenbosch University. Each topic dealt with in the film functions as a chapter of the film. It is clearly demarcated through a title showing the topic of the chapter and is accompanied by a music change. There are ten chapters, including “Communities” and “Agriculture” (illustrations 4.14 and 4.15 above). Each topic is dealt with individually, featuring different interviewees and visual evidence. The categories all relate to the overarching

topic, Lynedoch Eco Village, yet each category can stand alone because it comprises a distinct sub-topic. When a category heading is provided, this allows the audience to assess the content included after it against that title, aiding in the audience's critical engagement with the subject matter. Using and clearly demarcating categories, as is done in *Journey Towards Sustainable Living*, places overt emphasis on the structure of the film, and can therefore be deemed self-reflexive.

4.11 EPISODIC STRUCTURE

Related to the categorical structure is what can be called an episodic structure, as is used in *Afrikaaps* (2009). *Afrikaaps* follows the creation and performance of a theatre production of the same name. The scope of the film is, however, not limited to a behind-the-scenes of the theatre piece. Digressions allow for inclusion of subject backstories, historical contextualisation and observational footage of current events in the lives of the subjects. The episodic structure used in *Afrikaaps* is distinct from the categorical structure used in *Journey to Sustainable Living*, as the content collected in each episode does not pertain exclusively to one topic, but allows for freer associations of statements and visual evidence.



Illustration 4.16



Illustration 4.17



Illustration 4.18

Images from the “Glossary of Terms” inserts that divide episodes in *Afrikaaps*.

Brecht believed that “the individual episodes have to be knotted together in such a way that the knots are easily noticed” in order to be effective in inducing the *Verfremdungseffekt*. If the episodes are conspicuously divided, it gives the audience “a chance to interpose judgement” (Willet, 1984: 201). Each episode in *Afrikaaps* is

initiated by a “glossary of terms” insert that is different in style from the rest of the footage. These inserts do not function as chapter names, as in *Journey Towards Sustainable Living*, but rather halt the flow of information and restart the film in another direction. They may comment on a theme that arose in the previous section or a theme that will follow. The first of these “Afrikaaps glossary of terms” inserts (illustrations 4.16 – 4.18) appears in the first quarter of the film after the main characters and setting of the film have been introduced. It is presented in black and white, differentiating it from the preceding and subsequent colour footage, and starts with a close up shot of a “*Teach Yourself Afrikaans*” album cover (illustration 4.17). Each insert features a DJ behind a mixing desk (pictured in illustration 4.18 above) who provides an appropriate sound track for the term explained. The source of the music used for the insert is thus acknowledged. It elevates the importance of the music from background accompaniment to active commentary. The inclusion of the visual of the DJ is self-reflexive, as it places emphasis on the production of the music and makes the musician, who is not part of the *Afrikaaps* theatre production, part of the content of the film. These visuals and their matching sounds also demonstrate and comment on the influence hip hop has had on the style of the film. This influence is evident not only in the soundtrack of the film, but in its structure and reflects the inclusion of hip hop as an element of the stage production. The episodic structure is reminiscent of a hip hop song, the glossary inserts forming a repeating chorus. The editing pace of the film is fast and the aesthetic draws on hip hop culture and wall art. The glossary insert ends with the sound of a record scratch, the sound made as a record player needle is pulled off a record. This sound signifies that the insert has come to an end and introduces a change in topic. It is appropriate to the hip hop aesthetic, and provides a catalyst for a sudden change to a completely different location, sound and atmosphere. These insert “knots” are conspicuous and as such would, in Brecht's perspective, allow the audience space to “interpose judgement” (Willet, 1984: 201).

4.12 ASSOCIATIONAL FORM



Illustration 4.19



Illustration 4.20

Images from the montage in Part 1 of *Sea Point Days*.

Sea Point Days, though on the surface categorical since it is divided into five parts by inter-titles, consists of a series of vignettes and avoids traditional structures. Within each part the structure is loose and abundant use is made of associational sequences. The associational form entails “juxtapos[ing] loosely connected images to suggest an emotion or a concept to the spectator” (Bordwell & Thompson, 1997: 129). The beginning of Part 1 consists of a montage of shots of the activities in and around the Sea Point public swimming pools (illustrations 4.19 and 4.20). While music and ambient sounds are heard, the viewer sees tickets being sold at the entrance, underwater shots of children diving and jumping into the water, life guards bantering, waves hitting the pool area outer wall and an ice-cream seller walking along the promenade. All that connects these shots is that they show people and activities around the public pools at the Sea Point promenade. The montage does not establish a main character and does not provide thematic orientation through interviews or voice over. In a conventional documentary a visual sequence of this duration without any voice over or interview sound is uncommon. In *Sea Point Days*, however, the montage continues for around seven minutes before any voices are heard. The film does not orientate the audience to its topic, does not provide context or background, but rather invites the audience to experience the environment it is set in. The setting for the film and the South African context are presented in a way that is more engaging than a didactic voice over telling the viewer what she can already see for herself. In a conventional documentary this kind of sequence would most likely be accompanied by a voice over stating that the film is centred around the Sea Point promenade, listing the activities visitors partake in there

and providing its history. In *Sea Point Days* there is no such voice over. Instead the viewer must interpret the visuals for herself and draw her own conclusions. The sequence thus leaves room for the viewer to speculate about the topic of the film and the image of South African society that is being presented. It is not made clear whether the film is about the pool, the people, a more abstract topic or a combination of the above. It is up to the viewer to come to a conclusion about the topic of the film based on her own subjective interpretation of these associational sequences.

4.13 ABSTRACT FORM



Illustration 4.21



Illustration 4.22



Illustration 4.23

Images of water and skin are combined used poetically in *Lona Umzimba Wami*.

Abstract documentary film makes use of poetic, even incongruous, sequences. *Lona Umzimba Wami* (2011) is a short film by the visual artist Zanele Muholi. The title of the film means “this is my body” and Muholi describes it as a way of celebrating her body, “a memory piece of how I want to remember my body as it matures” (2011, np). This visual poem explores notions of the human body, female sexuality and aesthetics. It consists of music and shots of the artist's body. No voice-over or interview sound is used and the film does not have a narrative or offer any character development. It opens with a long take of light glinting off dark water. The shot is hand-held and because it is therefore reminiscent of a point of view shot, it signifies that the film is a personal one. The images that follow are of Muholi's wet, naked body at sunset as she lies on rocks next to the ocean (illustration 4.21 to 4.23 above). The majority of shots in the film are extreme close ups of parts of Muholi's body. Some images are contextualised, but in some cases the segments of glistening skin seen on screen cannot be placed and so take on metaphorical rather than literal meaning. Images fade in and out, or blend into each other. A shoulder becomes a thigh becomes an armpit.

Her breathing pushes her navel up and down. A knife glides over hair. The impression is not of one body, that of the artist, but of an abstract body, parts of a body that represent the artist's being rather than her shape. The lack of contextualisation makes this film self-reflexive, as it places emphasis on the selection and association of shots in the piece. When watching a film such as *Lona Umzimba Wami* that makes use of abstract form, the audience must engage in a critical process to gather meaning from the visuals provided. And that meaning is more subjective and individual than in a conventional documentary, because the connotative level of meaning is left open through the absence of exposition.

The different documentary forms described above are self-reflexive to a lesser or greater extent in themselves. The narrative and rhetorical forms are the least self-reflexive, while the categorical form is more self-reflexive because the structuring strategy is more evident. Because abstract and associational forms and films that lack plot and resolution are self-reflexive in nature, they may require more critical engagement from the audience to decode.

4.14 COMBINATION OF STRUCTURES

Self-reflexivity may also arise when different structuring strategies are combined or elements of one are used to subvert or deconstruct another. A categorical film might make use of narrative structure to shape each of its categories, or a narrative film might make use of abstract form to emphasise certain themes. This places emphasis on the structuring of the film and because the structure is not static, it has to be re-evaluated by the viewer as the film progresses.

Imam and I is an example of a film that exhibits various structuring strategies. The structure seems to be at least partly narrative, the chronology inspired by the order in which the filmmaker came to know information about his grandfather. So it starts with an introduction to the "Imam" and the "I" of the film's title. "Imam" is Imam Harun, the filmmaker's grandfather; and "I" is the filmmaker himself, Khalid Shamis. Shamis

then relates his motivation for making the film and his journey starts. Jumps in time are vast and there are numerous returns to the Imam's death throughout, so the film is not strictly chronological. Critical engagement is required from the audience in order to follow the flow of events. The film is at times episodic and at times associational. The shifts bring the structuring of the film to the surface of the decoding experience. This is a self-reflexive approach that refocuses the audience's attention on the content of the film.

4.15 SHIFTS IN DOCUMENTARY TYPE

There are many different types of documentary and different sources vary in the number and variety they identify. Types are differentiated by their themes, structures and the elements included in their construction. Among them are compilation documentary, interview documentary, biographical documentary, historical documentary, nature documentary, political documentary, profile documentary, event-centred documentary, and personal/first-person documentary (Bordwell and Thompson, 2004; Snyman, 2008).

Each type may employ self-reflexive editing devices, but self-reflexivity can also be effected through combinations of these different types in unexpected or unprecedented ways. If documentaries that deal with content associated with a particular type of documentary use the conventions of another type (or various other types), this may entail self-reflexivity. *Afrikaaps* contains elements of event-centred documentary (it follows the preparation and performance of the theatre production of the same name), profile documentary (each of the *Afrikaaps* cast members is introduced and their background is provided), personal documentary (the director includes himself and frames the film as a personal journey towards a greater understanding of his linguistic roots), historical documentary (it includes archive footage and historical information) and interview documentary (interviews with experts).



Illustration 4.24



Illustration 4.25

Imam and I shifts between observational and historical documentary types.

Imam and I is both a personal and historical documentary. The filmmaker's personal journey is represented through observational filmmaking (see illustration 4.24); and the Imam's history through interviews and voice-over accompanied by photographs (see illustration 4.25). There is a juxtaposition between the stillness and desaturation of the photographs and the movement and colour in the present-day observational footage. The photographs themselves are part of history, moments frozen in time. They are still and silent. They do not allow movement through space or time, and are therefore limited in their ability to provide information about the past. Many are posed and this signifies that they contain only the view the subjects wanted to present to the world. In the present a viewer's ability to infer context, interactions and motivations from these frozen moments is limited. There is a barrier between the viewer and the past that makes the viewer question the ability of the photographs to tell the whole story of the Imam's life. The viewer relies on the filmmaker's voice-over for contextualisation and detail. The observational footage, on the other hand, contains movement and sound, and is in full colour. It signifies the present and gives the audience a sense of being present. The shifts between the still and moving images are self-reflexive because they lead to an awareness of different methods of representation, emphasising that different documentary types are combined in the film.



Illustration 4.26



Illustration 4.27



Illustration 4.28

Different modes of representation are used in *Sea Point Days*.

Sea Point Days displays several different strategies for gathering verbal information and opinions from subjects, including interviews, *cinéma vérité* style coverage of subjects' conversations and statements to camera. A young man explains what he is doing as he writes a postcard while sitting on a bench overlooking the ocean (illustration 4.26). Two elderly women discuss the smell of the ocean with each other while going for a walk on the promenade (illustration 4.27). A man serenades the camera while leaning against a tree (illustration 4.28). The different modes of filming used to capture these three scenes are typical of specific types of documentary. Having a subject comment to an off-camera interviewer is typical of interview documentaries, while following the conversations of subjects as they happen is typical of observational documentaries. Musical performances are mostly found in event-centred documentaries of a musical theme. What makes *Sea Point Days* self-reflexive is the combination of such diverse information-gathering strategies in one film.

The points where two documentary types meet are reminders that the film has been assembled and also refocus viewers' attention. These intersections produce a *Verfremdungseffekt* as the change in type is conspicuous and forces the viewer out of a complacent position where the film is passively received because the type is familiar. By constantly shifting from one convention to another, such familiarity is counteracted.

4.16 SHIFTS IN FORM

Form can be linked to genre, content and structure. There are certain formal elements that signify whether a film is a documentary or fiction. Documentary form is diverse

and stylistic elements are different for the different types of documentary.

Contemporary mainstream documentary, for example, makes use of sit-down interviews that are carefully composed and well lit. *Cinéma vérité* and observational documentary are characterised by handheld camerawork, long takes of developing action and the absence of formal interviews. Self-reflexive documentaries tend not to adhere to only one set of formal characteristics, but rather shift form. They borrow formal elements from other documentary types and genres and create their own. Form is changed as the content changes in order to match or emphasise the content. Shifts are noticeable and are therefore a self-reflexive technique.

In *It's my Life* the mode of representation of the film is established as observational with elements of self-reflexivity. Seven and a half minutes into the film there is a cut from a wide shot of Achmat reading from a book to a wide shot of a vegetable stand. A change in mode of representation is signalled by several changes in the form, specifically the cinematography. The grading changes from naturalistic to stylised: the image becomes desaturated and the contrast is increased. The camera movement changes from predominantly hand-held (typical of observational documentary) to a very controlled dolly shot (typical of fictional film). The scene that is introduced in this way is a dramatisation of Achmat's memories of his childhood and the change of style signifies a transition to the past and to his subjective perspective. Because the change is radical – from clearly observational and spur of the moment to stylised and controlled – it is noticeable and therefore a reminder of the construction of the film. Because the formal elements in the latter scene signify fiction, the segment also poses certain questions about how the pro-filmic world is represented in the film. Achmat's memories are not presented as “reality” or “truth”, but as a representation that should be read as subjective.



Illustration 4.29



Illustration 4.30

Documentary and fiction forms are combined in *Imam and I*.

In *Imam and I* there is a scene that contains a self-reflexive interplay between actuality and fiction. As a cinema owner tells of instructing the Imam to keep the doors locked during a fund-raising screening of a *James Bond* film in the late 1960s “just in case the police should raid that evening”, the visual cuts to an image from a fiction film showing a door opening to reveal a police officer's face (illustrations 4.29 and 4.30). Later in the interview, as the subsequent raid is referred to, a shot of James Bond and two other characters fleeing is shown. Both these shots are indicative of careful selection. They are from the fiction film, but signify the actual events the interviewee speaks of in the documentary interview. The *James Bond* theme song is audible throughout the interview, even when the face of the interviewee is shown. The tension between fiction and non-fiction form creates an awareness of the film as a film.



Illustration 4.31: Animation is used to illustrate past events in *Imam and I*.

In *Imam and I* animation is used to illustrate past events (illustration 4.31). It is a creative alternative to dramatic re-enactments. This strategy is self-reflexive because it is unconventional to use animation in documentary. It acknowledges the subjectivity of the representation. Animation is a strong signifier of fantasy, as it is associated with

children's fiction. The use of animation in documentary therefore draws attention to itself, blurring the conventional divisions between documentary and fiction forms, encouraging the audience to engage critically with the content of the film. The use of animation in *Imam and I* is particularly appropriate, since Shamis acknowledges in the voice-over of his film that his grandfather, his life and history have been mythologised. Shamis uses animation to illustrate the 'fairy tale' of his family history.

The animation used in *Imam and I* further consists of mixed media, so formal elements are combined even within the animation itself. Some elements are black and white, some colour, and some are more detailed and shaded than others. This signifies that Shamis's view of history has been built up through information gathered from a variety of sources. The security police vehicle represented in stark black and white is reminiscent of a newspaper photograph. Shamis's grandmother is represented in colour, signifying that the oral history Shamis gathered from her was more detailed and nuanced. Some elements seem frosted over, as if they have become unclear through the passing of time or the loss of memory. The Imam himself is also black and white, signifying that he has passed away and that he has become fictionalised through selective memory and frequent retelling of his tale.



Illustration 4.32



Illustration 4.33

Still, line-drawn images live side by side with live action in *Afrikaaps*.

In a sequence recounting the history of colonisation at the Cape in *Afrikaaps*, old film score music is used to dramatic, yet comical, effect to liven up still line-drawn images (illustration 4.32). Video zooms and tilts over the still drawings coincide with beats in the music. Though appropriate to the historical imagery shown, in the context of this

contemporary film that makes use of many hip-hop devices, this is anachronistic and therefore leads to an awareness of the formal elements of the film. This whole historical sequence makes use of a slightly uncomfortable mixture of traditional and self-reflexive devices. Slow dissolves and long superimpositions live side by side with film flashes and cuts to the stage performance (illustration 4.33). These shifts in form serve as reminders that the film is not in fact about the history, but about the play. The history is included to provide context; it serves as a background to and motivation for the creation of the play. The shifts in form also hold the viewer back from complete immersion in the history, rather suspending the viewer between the past and present, emphasising that this long-ago history has an impact on society to this day. This suspension creates *Verfremdung*, leaving space for the audience to participate actively in the creation of meaning and to engage with the representation critically, comparing the recounted history to its creative interpretation seen in the play.

4.17 JUXTAPOSITION

Eisenstein's theory of montage consists of five components, namely metric, rhythmic, tonal, overtone and intellectual montage (1949: 72-83). Several of the components are pertinent to a study of self-reflexive editing, since they are distinct from continuity editing. Eisenstein favoured editing that is noticeable, resulting from clashes and juxtapositions between concepts and images. Eisenstein's montage theory and techniques can therefore be used as a reaction against the dominant mode of representation and to create self-reflexivity through making the editing conspicuous.

Eisenstein's five components are more concerned with *effect* and less concerned with *continuity* or *story*. The components allow for the breaking of many of the rules of traditional continuity editing. The ultimate aim, as is evident from the placement of intellectual montage at the top of the hierarchy, is intellectual activity, not suspension of disbelief. Cuts are not hidden (as would be the case in continuity editing); as a matter of fact they are celebrated and used as devices in the construction of the meaning of the film. Part of their effect comes precisely from being visible. Eisenstein believed the

maximum effect came from shots that do not fit together perfectly but rather jolt the viewer, because “the collision of two factors gives rise to an idea” (1999a: 21), a strategy that is clearly self-reflexive in nature. Instead of hiding the film's construction from the audience, it is purposely made visible. When the audience is consciously aware of the construction of the film, it allows for intellectual interaction between the audience and text. The audience can analyse and question the text in terms of its structure and its content.

The aim with intellectual montage, the fifth and final component of Eisenstein's theory, is to combine shots in a way that communicates ideology and has the potential to influence the audience's perceptions. The meaning comes from the juxtaposition of the shots more than from the meanings of the individual shots that are combined (Eisenstein, 1949: 82).

When juxtapositions are included in documentary films, they force the viewer to consciously compare the two contradictory visuals or pieces of information with each other, making her aware of the text as a construction. This strategy increases the viewer's awareness of the construction of the text because the contradictions

fold the viewer's consciousness back onto itself so that it comes into contact with the work of the cinematic apparatus rather than being allowed to move unimpeded toward engagement with a representation of the historical world (Nichols, 1991: 58).



Illustration 4.34



Illustration 4.35

Cars on a highway and a beggar at an intersection are juxtaposed in *Forerunners*.



Illustration 4.36



Illustration 4.37

Golf balls on a driving range lawn and rocks on an untarred road are juxtaposed in *Forerunners*.

Wealth and poverty are repeatedly juxtaposed in *Forerunners*. The first shots of the introductory sequence alternate between a time lapse shot of a highway with streams of cars speeding past and a shot of a beggar at an intersection (illustrations 4.34 and 4.35). The highway shot is impersonal and signifies progress and the first world segment of the South African population. The beggar signifies poverty, the third world segment. By the third cut from the highway to the beggar, he kneels down in exasperation as cars keep passing him without stopping to lend a hand. After we see Mpumi on the golf course, a sequence is included of a billboard for a “win a home” competition and a man sitting on the ground next to a wall with soot on it. Later in the film a shot of golf balls lying on a driving range's manicured green is followed by a shot of rocks lying on a dusty, untarred road (illustrations 4.36 and 4.37 above). In all three these instances the juxtapositions emphasise the divide between rich and poor in South Africa. They signify that the four main characters in the film have attained their success despite the odds and that they are in the minority. It is through the juxtaposition of the images of wealth and poverty that the audience is invited to engage with the material actively, to draw comparisons and come to their own conclusions about the content presented.

Different subjects are not aware of the contradictions that arise when their statements are juxtaposed to contrary statements made by other interviewees. These contradictions do not occur at the time of filming, but are created through the arrangement of shots during the edit. In *Porselynnkas* one of the interviewees, Albert Snyman, a University of Stellenbosch Drama Department faculty member, says: “Dit het net mense se persepsie van teater 'n bietjie rondgeruk” (It shook up people's

perception of theatre a bit). He is followed by a lecturer in the Art Department at the same university saying: "I really don't see how come you think that this is that significant that the rest of the country, the rest of the world, would care". She in turn is followed by poet/singer Gert Vlok Nel who says: "In my opinie was Porselynnkas die pioniers van performance poetry in Afrikaans" (In my opinion Porselynnkas were the pioneers of performance poetry in Afrikaans). It seems as if the interviewees are engaged in a debate, but the oscillation between the opinions was created through the editing process. The juxtapositions are self-reflexive, since they foreground the construction of the film. The audience is not presented with one opinion and the filmmaker does not introduce or conclude the sequence with his own opinion. Instead the viewer must take in the contradictory statements, weigh them against each other and come to her own conclusion about their merits. This editing device therefore encourages intellectual engagement with the content of the film.

4.18 INTERCUTTING



Illustration 4.38



Illustration 4.39

Miranda's visit to the village she grew up in is intercut with Mpumi at work in *Forerunners*.

Comparisons often rely on intercutting between two different events, characters or locations. The audience is invited to draw conclusions from the similarities and differences they observe. The one often forms a metaphor for the other or they serve to highlight each other's characteristics. In the last quarter of *Forerunners* there are two scenes constructed through intercutting that are of interest in this regard. The one intercuts between Miranda in the village she grew up in and Mpumi at the launch of the

project she has been seen managing for the duration of the film (see illustrations 4.38 and 4.39 above). The other sequence intercuts between Miranda having a sheep slaughtered and cooked in the traditional way in her home village and a “braai” (barbecue) in Karabo's urban backyard. These comparisons rely on contrast. Miranda is shown going back to her cultural roots, while Mpumi focusses on her career. Miranda's sheep is slaughtered in the field and every part of the animal, including the head, is used while Karabo cooks pre-cut meat and sausage on a small portable *braai* in a concrete backyard. Miranda travels to her village to “introduce” her one-year old son to his deceased grandmother while Mpumi travels without her two children and Karabo deals with the challenges of parenting a younger sister who has become so rebellious that their mother cannot discipline her. It is the intercutting of the disparate events that brings into sharp focus one of the central themes of the film, the duality of life for the young urban black middle class in South Africa. All four central characters in *Forerunners* struggle to navigate the divide between the isolating Western business world they function in currently and the traditional, rural families they come from. Some experience pressure from family members to maintain cultural customs and for some there is an internal yearning for traditional wisdom. The sequences described above highlight this struggle by bringing the differences between the two lifestyles into sharp focus through intercutting. Thus the audience has an opportunity to compare elements, identify similarities and differences and come to their own conclusion.



Illustration 4.40



Illustration 4.41

Hilton Schilder and Mac McKenzie's individual demonstrations of Goema are intercut in *Mama Goema*.

Mama Goema contains several examples of comparisons created by intercutting between shots filmed at different times and locations. The comparisons work on the

basis of similarities and differences. These shot arrangements are self-reflexive because they foreground the structuring of the film by emphasising the combination of the two elements. They invite the audience to compare two elements, weigh them against each other and come to a conclusion about the underlying theme or message of the sequence. A comparison of similar sounds recorded at different locations is, for example, used as the basis for one such self-reflexive sequence. In this sequence two different interviewees demonstrate Goema techniques, one on guitar and the other by tapping out a rhythm (illustrations 4.40 and 4.41 above). These two different sounds are combined to create a 'song'. The editing makes use of the similarities between the two demonstrations to combine them in a pleasing way. But because it is clear that the two interviewees performed independently, at different times, the viewer becomes aware of the editing. These two musicians did not work together to create a song; the song was in fact fabricated by the filmmaker through editing and so the intercutting foregrounds the construction of the film.

4.19 ELLIPSES IN CONTENT

Traditional documentaries tend to tell "a complete story" (Snyman, 2007: 3). Ellipses of content – leaving out contextualisation and jumping around in time – is self-reflexive, as this is contrary to the problem-solution-structures that typify conventional filmmaking, in which "causality is the prime unifying principle" (Bordwell, 1986: 19). In traditional documentary films, as in classical Hollywood narratives, "narration tends to be omniscient" and "knows more than any or all of the characters" (Bordwell, 1986: 22). Self-reflexive films tend not to provide "omniscient" narration nor "complete" stories, but rather show elements, even seemingly unconnected ones, and leave space for the audience to add their own interpretations and conclusions during the decoding of the text.

In retelling his family history in *Imam and I*, Khalid Shamis uses temporal jumps to compress the time needed to relate pivotal events. There are, for example, jumps from the Imam's wedding to the birth of their daughter (Khalid's mother) to a letter written

from prison to the daughter and finally to a contemporary interview with the daughter, now grown up. These jumps in time are large and therefore conspicuous. The audience is further made aware of time passing through the way the letter is presented in the film. Shamis reads the letter in voice-over as the words gradually appear on screen. The association of the Imam's words seen in the visuals and Shamis's voice-over emphasises that the film's story takes place simultaneously in the past and present. It also signifies the growing association Shamis feels with his grandfather, even though they never had the opportunity to meet.

Later in the film, when Mr Khoisan talks of how a Christian priest fasted for forty days at a Muslim Kramat (shrine) in homage to the Imam, the statement provides the motivation for a cut to a present-day image of Shamis and the priest eating together while sitting on the floor of the shrine. The jump in time is large, but by cutting from the past to the present, it is possible to engage the viewer intellectually by creating the association between the priest of Mr Khoisan's story and the person shown with Shamis at the shrine.



Illustration 4.42



Illustration 4.43



Illustration 4.44

Images from a montage that shows the unsuccessful search for Omega in *Porselynnkas*.

The search for Alex Omega in *Porselynnkas* is shown in a montage of attempts to track him down. The montage features shots of the crew's car breaking down, the director dancing, Septembir urinating against a tree and a dog running away from camera. The sequence is self-reflexive because it compresses time conspicuously by jumping from moment to moment in the search for Omega. This sequence highlights that a central theme of the film is the tension between stasis and movement. The action of the film is centred on trying to pin down the value and definition of the Porselynnkas movement

as a phenomenon, but by their very nature “happenings” (their word) are fleeting. They are, in the opinion of the female Porselynnkas member interviewed in the film, not significant because they happen and are then over and another “happening” follows. This search not significant either because Omega is never found. It is fleeting and a new search begins as soon as it is concluded. The montage summarises the crew's failed attempts at locating Omega, while this becomes a “happening” in itself. Its impact arises from the ellipses of content that allow the insignificant moments of the search to be foregrounded.



Illustration 4.45



Illustration 4.46



Illustration 4.47

Images that show movement from one position to the next during Willem's interview in *Porselynnkas*.

In *Porselynnkas* the interview with Willem starts with Septembir setting an alarm and stating that the interview location will be changed every time the alarm sounds. The interview is then, indeed, presented in that way, with frequent cuts from place to place. Each change in location is signified by a shot that shows the point of view of one of the two cameras as it is picked up and moved (see illustrations 4.45 to 4.47 above). Because the subject refers explicitly to the filming strategy for this interview, the audience is aware of the motivation behind the ellipses and discontinuities. This interplay between the content and form leads to a heightened awareness of the filmmaking and of the structuring power of the filmmaker.

Only one of the female members of the Porselynnkas performance poetry group agreed to be interviewed for the film. The others are mentioned or shown in archive photographs and video, but do not speak on camera. The absence of the female members of the group is foregrounded and different strategies are used to expose and

address the ellipses of content. In the absence of an interview with Lulu, for example, a shot of her in her car, filmed when the team coincidentally spots her in traffic, is included in the film instead. The inclusion of the shot of Lulu in her car and a voice-over and interview explanation of her absence highlights this ellipsis. Later in the film Septembir states that Miriekie Kiekie was interviewed, but not on camera. Instead he relates after the fact what she supposedly said. In conventional documentaries interviewees are usually seen on camera in the interview setting, so this situation is quite uncommon. It highlights that Mariekie Kiekie's interview is absent from the film. It is self-reflexive because we are led to question how accurate Septembir's recollections of her statements are and whether these statements are even hers at all. When she does appear on camera she herself serves as a substitute for someone else, since she reads a poem written by another female Porselynnkas member. Instead of simply leaving the female members of the group out, the film addresses the ellipses overtly. As a matter of fact, addressing these ellipses of content becomes a main theme of the film. This strategy of pointing out a failing of the film within the film is self-reflexive, because it focuses attention on the construction of the film, alerting the audience to the limitations of the film and the filmmaker. As much as traditional documentaries try to create the impression through their "omniscient narration" that they contain the "complete" truth, self-reflexive documentaries acknowledge explicitly that they can never reflect all views on the subject matter at hand.

4.20 JUMP CUTS

As shown before, the aim in the continuity editing system is to make editing invisible in order to facilitate unimpeded transfer of story and emotion from the text to the audience. When a film contains what Brecht refers to as "an element of 'unnaturalness'" it is noticeable to the audience, reminding them of the construction of the film and is therefore self-reflexive (Brecht in Willett, 1984: 191). A jump cut is an edit point that is visible to the audience because it combines two shots that are too similar or too different to form an invisible match cut. It is a sudden, jarring or conspicuous change on a cut which results from "the joining of two non-continuous

shots" (Dancyger, 2002: 132).

In *In the Blink of an Eye* Walter Murch discusses various reasons for editing or "cutting". The first, logistics, is motivated by the organisational and physical challenges that make it impossible to shoot an entire film in one shot. Because it's difficult to "get ... everything together at the same time, and then ... get ... it all to 'work'", cutting makes filmmaking practical (Murch, 1995: 8). Editing is then, arguably, even more useful in documentary than fictional film, since non-fiction events are not staged and less controlled than those in fiction films. Secondly cutting "allows us to choose the best camera angle for each emotion and story point, which we can edit together for a cumulatively greater impact" (Murch, 1995: 8). The editor can also manipulate the timing of the film, making things happen faster or slower as required by the narrative or emotion at different points in the film. The third reason, and the one most pertinent to this study, is cutting for effect "because cutting – that sudden disruption of reality – can be an effective tool in itself" (Murch, 1995: 16).

Jean-Luc Godard, who started his filmmaking career in the late 1950s as part of the *Nouvelle Vague* (French New Wave), is famous for the use of jump cuts in constructing his first film, *A bout de souffle* (*Breathless*, 1959). As much as *Breathless* challenged norms through its content it questioned filmmaking conventions through its many discontinuous edits. The jump cuts in *Breathless* were variously seen as mistakes, signs of ineptitude, a conscious rebellion against the established studio system or experimentation with film form (Raskin, 1998: np). Though *Breathless* is now acknowledged as a masterpiece, its abundant use of jump cuts never became part of mainstream film grammar. This and the critical responses the film elicited show that jump cuts can be used self-reflexively to prompt the audience to notice and discuss the construction of the film.

There are different types of jump cut that are pertinent to this study. One type is a temporal ellipsis, or a leap in time where the camera does not move at all. Here it is clear that time has passed in reality, but has been left out in the editing. There are several jump cuts in *Porselynnkas* while "Dr Adam Chaos", the alter ego of the main

subject, Sjaka Septembir, waits for the first interviewee, Jaap, to open his door,. The shot size and angle remain much the same, but it is clear that “dead time” while he waits has been cut out. These jump cuts are a disruption of the natural flow of the shot and acknowledge that the shot has been manipulated by the filmmaker. The jumps also signify that “Dr Chaos” stands and waits for a long time and this is emphasised by his facial expression, which clearly shows his discomfort at being left outside waiting. During the interview with Jaap several jump cuts follow, signalling that parts of the interview have also been cut out.



Illustration 4.48a



Illustration 4.48b

The frames before and after a temporal jump cut in *Imam and I*.

Jump cuts are used twice during the introductory interview sequence in *Imam and I*. In both cases the framing is identical before and after the cut (see illustrations 4.48a and 4.48b above). This makes clear that part of what was originally said has been cut out. When jump cuts are used to connect parts of interviews, they make clear that a section of an interview has been cut out during the editing. In a continuity-style documentary such jumps in time would most likely be covered by cut-aways in the form of visual evidence illustrating what the person is talking about. This creates a seamless flow in the visuals and hides the fact that interviews are cut up and stitched together to form the argument the filmmaker wants to make. Here the filmmaker acknowledges, through temporal jump cuts, that he has left a part of the interview out and that he has kept the parts of the interview that he found useful. It is thus signified in the construction of the text that the text does not contain the whole truth, that the interviewee's full statement has not been included and that a structuring agent, the

filmmaker, has constructed the film in the way that he saw fit.



Illustration 4.49



Illustration 4.50

The frames before and after a spatial jump cut in *Forerunners*.

A second type of jump cut is characterised by spatial changes that are too small to satisfy the rules of continuity editing. In this instance the camera moves by less than the thirty degrees required to create a match cut in the continuity editing system. One such spacial jump cut is from a wide shot to medium shot, captured from the same camera position, of an exterior wall of Martin's house in *Forerunners*. It is made all the more noticeable because of the starkness of the wall and because there is no point of interest in the image (illustrations 4.49 and 4.50). Because Martin is then heard saying: "This is a house, it's not a home", the jump cut signifies the emptiness and disconnection he feels from his surroundings.



Illustration 4.51



Illustration 4.52

The frame before and after a continuity jump cut in *Forerunners*.

A third kind of jump cut results from changes in continuity between shots that follow each other, for example, when something or someone seems to be moved around or made to disappear from a space they occupied in the preceding shot. *Forerunners*

contains several edits that are made conspicuous through jumps in continuity. One such example is when Miranda is interviewed in a wide shot on a leather bench in her lounge (illustration 5.51). A cut to another shot of the same area follows, but it is a jump cut because the bench is now empty, as if Miranda has disappeared (illustration 4.52). This visual accompanies her saying of her desire to have a family: “but it didn't work out that way. So that was the pain”. The change to the empty room signifies the loss of her dream of a family and her loss of love.



Illustration 4.53



Illustration 4.54



Illustration 4.55

Jump cuts connect shots of Weideman reading from different books in *Porselynnkas*.

It is also possible to combine the three kinds of jump cut described above. When Weideman is introduced in *Porselynnkas*, this is done through a sequence in which jump cuts are used to combine shots of him reading lines from different books in the bookshop where he works in Stellenbosch (see illustrations 4.53 to 4.55). All of these cuts entail a change in time and continuity, and many in space. Because jump cuts are used and it is clear that the lines Weideman reads are from different books, this sequence is self-reflexive. By combining lines from different books in this way, the result sounds poetic, even though it is clear that many of the lines are from factual texts. The viewer is engaged intellectually as she tries to decode the meaning of the “video poem” constructed from the unrelated lines Weideman reads. Because Weideman is visible on screen reading from the different books, the different sources of the ideas are acknowledged. This video poem thus acknowledges its inspiration within its construction, triggering a meta-cognitive process of meaning construction in the audience.

All of these examples of jumps in time, space and continuity emphasise the editing.

This leads to a heightened awareness of the medium and of the filmmaker's particular use of the medium. This awareness creates intellectual distance or *Verfremdung* that allows the viewer to decode the visual metaphors used to signify the themes and emotions shown in the various films.

4.21 RAPID CUTTING

Walter Murch believes the placement and rate of cuts relate to the rate of human blinking. Patterns of relations between actors' blinking and cutting in films he has edited prompted him to observe audiences when they watch films. According to him blinking frequency relates to thought processes. In a stressful situation, when a person has many conflicting thoughts, her blinking rate increases. When a person is calm, occupied by fewer thoughts, blinking becomes slower (Murch, 1995: 64-68).

Consequently he believes that "the rhythm and rate of cutting ... should be appropriate to whatever the audience is watching at the moment" (Murch, 1995: 68). And so engagement can be increased by using an appropriate cutting rhythm and rate.

Therefore he proposes that cutting should neither be too fast, disorienting the audience, nor too slow, boring the audience, but "if you ... lead ... them ever so slightly, the flow of events feels natural and exciting at the same time" (Murch, 1995: 69).

Walter Murch works almost exclusively in the continuity editing style, having cut such dramas as *The English Patient* (1996), *The Talented Mr Ripley* (1999) and *Cold Mountain* (2003). By breaking the continuity editing conventions described by Murch, an editor can use pace to remind viewers that they are watching a film. Cutting faster or slower than the mainstream convention can both lead to self-reflexivity.

In his book *The Brain that Changes Itself* Norman Doidge summarises studies that have been conducted to ascertain the effect that watching television and film has on the brain. He argues that events in visual media such as television and music videos occur much faster than in real life. In addition, visual media representations are being cut increasingly faster. This results in "an increased appetite for high-speed transitions" in the visual media (2007: 309). In his opinion *the way visual media are constructed is*

more powerful in changing brain chemistry and neurological functioning than the *content* of those media. It is the very transitions mentioned above, especially sudden ones like jump cuts, rapid cutting and sudden changes in sound, that trigger the “orienting response” (309). Our instinctive reaction to such a sudden change is to orient ourselves towards it, in other words turn to face the perceived threat and try to interpret it. When watching television or a film, such sudden changes occur on the screen, where our attention is already focused. So the effect is to heighten our attention, to re-focus it on the screen, which is why we want to carry on watching. According to Doidge, there would have been recovery time for our ancestors between threats from predators and alerts about potential food sources. But because visual stimulation in our technologically advanced age comes at such a rapid rate, with “typical music videos, action sequences, and commercials trigger[ing] orienting responses at a rate of one per second” (310), there is simply no recovery time. We are constantly on the alert.

When using metric montage, the first of the components of Eisenstein's theory of montage, the primary editing decision is based on duration. Shots' durations are relative to each other. All the shots in a particular sequence may, for example, be of exactly the same duration regardless of their content. Shortening shots in this way abbreviates the time available to the audience to absorb the information in each shot. This can increase the tension and excitement resulting from the scene (Eisenstein, 1949: 72). The principle of metric montage can also be used to cut sequences of visuals to a piece of music. In *Mama Goema*, for example, there are montages cut to music where certain cuts are placed exactly on beats of the music. One such example is in a history sequence that includes background about the VOC and slavery in the Cape. The cuts are emphasised by the beats of the music. The cuts are more conspicuous because they coincide exactly with the beats. Thus the visual and aural changes happen at the same time and emphasise each other.

Metric montage is pertinent to this dissertation because it is usually noticeable. A pattern arises from the steady pace of the cutting. Self-reflexivity arises from the audience's awareness of that pattern. Self-reflexivity can also be effected through

breaking the pattern. Once the audience becomes aware of the pattern and can anticipate when the next cut will happen, omitting a cut at the expected moment or changing the pace entirely will also make the audience aware of the editing. In *Afrikaaps* match cuts and jump cuts follow each other in quick succession on the beats of a piece of music that Jethrow Louw plays on a San bow instrument. The music serves to bind together the quick cuts of disparate and non-sequential images of rehearsals and preparations. The pace allows for a lot of visual information to be packed into a short duration. This quick sequence serves to build tension towards a segment in which the *Afrikaaps* theatre group gets lukewarm responses from the Baxter Theater board when they are shown a selection of segments from the play during its development. The quick pace of the former sequence creates excitement and anticipation, while the slower pace of the latter signifies the anti-climax and disappointment generated by the response from the board members. The contrast between the fast and slow pace amplifies the effect.

4.22 LONG TAKES WITHOUT CUTS

Long, unedited takes are typical of *cinéma vérité* filmmaking of the late 1950s and early 1960s. In the perspective of the *cinéma vérité* filmmakers, cuts amounted to deliberate manipulation of the film and therefore impaired the truth value of the events portrayed (see Chapter 2). By avoiding cuts, *cinéma vérité* filmmakers hoped to make their films look more real and therefore ring more true. But in a contemporary context where viewers are exposed to a wide range of television and film products, many of which are fast paced, “[w]hen an image lingers it eventually calls attention to itself” (Nichols, 1991: 60). Thus, long takes can increase the viewer's awareness of the formal elements of the representation (Nichols, 1991: 60).



Illustration 4.56



Illustration 4.57

Long takes of photographs are used in *Imam and I*.

Several still photographs are held for a long time in *Imam and I* (see illustrations 4.56 and 4.57 for examples). Past events are recounted in voice-over and accompanied by photographs that illustrate the statements. Movement has been added to photographs to varying degrees, some manipulated digitally and so animated, some assembled on a flat surface and filmed together using camera movement from one to the other, and some zoomed into or out of. In the latter case, these zooms are predominantly slow, and the images held on screen for a long time. This ensures that there is time to take in a lot of detail in each photograph. The eye is led from the face of the main subject of the photo, across other faces, over the background and then has time to settle back on the face.



Illustration 4.58

A photograph of Khalid and his mother is held on screen for a long time in *Imam and I*.

An image of Shamis and his brother pictured with their mother and an older man is one

such shot (illustration 4.58). The mother is the initial focus of the photograph (she leans towards the camera and looks directly at it). The attention flows from her face to that of her son, over the older gentleman's hand as he holds the boy, and back to the mother's face.



Illustration 4.59

A slow zoom in to a photograph of the Imam accentuates the tension created by an interviewee's statement in *Imam and I*.

When Farid Esack speaks of difficult political times in South Africa around the time of the Sharpeville uprising and Nelson Mandela's trial, a photo of the Imam is shown in which he sits at the centre of a row of men as if at a press conference or public gathering (illustration 4.59). He sits slightly slumped, he seems to be chewing the nail of his right thumb and his arms are folded over his chest. The overall impression is that he is stressed. A slow zoom in to his face provides the only movement at this time. The photograph is held for a long time, and this emphasises the tension created by Esack's statement. Because these images are held on screen for as long as they are, attention is drawn to them, and consequently to the construction of the film.

4.23 FORM EDITS

“Form edits” rely on similarities between two visuals that are combined through cuts,

dissolves or other blend transitions. Similarities in composition, colour and shape can, for example, be used to motivate a transition from one shot to the next (Thompson, 2009: 91). Form edits are self-reflexive because they draw attention to the editing of the film. They encourage intellectual engagement with the film form because they are conspicuous and signify connotative meaning. On the denotative level, form edits encourage comparison between two images on the basis of their physical characteristics. On a connotative level, further interrogation of the content is encouraged by the evaluation of those similarities. Form edits seem to ask: "Are the elements in these shots connected to each other, and if so how?"

The early work of experimental filmmaker Stan Brakhage was in large part self-reflexive in addition to being experimental. Victor Grauer quotes Stan Brakhage describing himself as "the most thorough documentary filmmaker in the world because I document the act of seeing as well as everything that the light brings me". On the two extremes of transitions, Brakhage's editing is characterised by jump cuts as much as form edits, or "plastic cutting" (1998: np).

When Brakhage uses jump cuts time starts and stops, the film jumps instantaneously from one time, context, theme or object to another and shots often "refuse ... to 'link up', conceptually, with [their] neighbours". On the other extreme, plastic cutting hides the moment of a cut, for example, ending one shot in black and beginning the next in black so that the cut occurs at a point where the two shots are identical (Grauer, 1998: np). This can lead to temporal confusion, since elements that should not be able to occur in the same shot now do. In *Wedlock House: An Intercourse* (1959), for example, a person can be seen the one moment in a wide shot and the next moment in a close up, without a cut visible between the two. A window can be seen in full one moment and a moment later, seemingly in the same shot, only a detail of its curtain is visible. Brakhage used moving lights and carefully placed cuts to achieve this effect. As a light swings away from the object shown, the shot is left in complete darkness. A cut is made and the next shot starts in darkness just before a moving light swings onto another (or the same) object in a different position or composition. So, through these form edits that rely on the similarity of the colour in the two images, objects within the

frame as well as the camera's relation to objects and the environment can change in a way that is so out of the ordinary that it triggers an intellectual response in the audience. Because the denotative meaning of the text is not fixed by conventional codes, connotative meaning is opened up to polysemic interpretation.

Moments where two images are visible at the same time, trigger a meta-cognitive process, making the viewer aware of the viewing process. Transitions are not part of the content of the film, but rather elements of its construction. By making transitions conspicuous the construction of the film is therefore emphasised, making the audience aware of watching the film, "the act of seeing seeing itself" (Grauer, 1998: np).

One such transition, the dissolve, is characterised by a gradual change from one shot to the next. It can be used to accentuate similarities or differences between adjoining shots. For the duration of the dissolve the two images are simultaneously visible, though to varying degrees as the transition progresses. *Forerunners* features many form edits that rely on dissolves. They are used to show changes in time or location, for aesthetic reasons or to emphasise a relationship between two elements, creating a visual metaphor.



Illustration 4.60



Illustration 4.61



Illustration 4.62

The image before, during and after a form edit in *Forerunners*.

The opening sequence of *Forerunners* introduces the four main characters of the film. It consists of shots of the four characters driving at night. The images that have been selected for inclusion in the sequence feature selective focus and limited depth of field, and have been composed and executed in an aesthetically pleasing way. The dissolves that connect the shots are aesthetically justified by the focus and depth of field of the shots. One transition consists of a dissolve from a shot of out of focus lights that form

soft, round shapes to a shot of Miranda's pregnant belly (see illustrations 4.60, 4.61 and 4.62 above). This is a form edit where the transition relies on similarities of circular shapes between the two shots combined. This form edit signifies hope and possibility, as the unborn child is associated with light. The use of such "match dissolve[s]" throughout the sequence results in a flowing arrangement of shots that blend into each other. And it is the use of the form edit that "helps the audience to interpret meaning" in the sequence (Thompson, 2009: 92).



Illustration 4.63a



Illustration 4.63b



Illustration 4.63c

A dissolve emphasises the similarities between a shot of a television and the exterior of a house in *Forerunners*.

Another form edit that communicates connotative meaning in *Forerunners* is a dissolve from a television on a cabinet in Martin's lounge to an exterior shot of his house showing the porch where the subject is sitting. The porch pillars align exactly with the edges of the television screen. Because the compositional lines of the two shots align, this draws attention to the transition and consequently to the construction of the film. The correlation between the two shots points to careful selection and combination of the shots during the edit. Dissolving rather than cutting emphasises the similarities between the shots, heightening their effect (illustrations 4.63a and 4.63c). It is more noticeable because the viewer has more time to compare the compositions while the two images are on screen simultaneously (illustration 4.63b). This leads to an awareness of the medium and the authoring agent who selected and combined the shots in this way. The television is switched off, and so it is still and lifeless. There is no movement on the porch and the wide shot size makes the subject look lost and lonely in the space. This edit is preceded by the subject saying: "I have no spiritual connection with this space". The visual signifies the emptiness the subject feels, his disconnection from his own home.

4.24 EFFECT TRANSITIONS



Illustration 4.64a



Illustration 4.64b

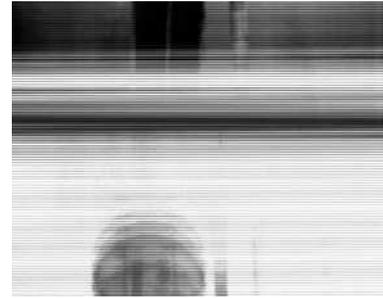


Illustration 4.64c

A film roll out is used as transition effect from a photograph in *Imam and I*.

Transitions that are unconventional or designed to be visible can also be self-reflexive. In *Imam and I* a sequence about the Imam's love of cinema ends with a photo of the Imam. The transition to the next section of the film is a replica of a film roll-out, the freezing and shifting of an image that results from the slower running of the projector at the end of a roll of film (see illustration 4.64a, b and c). It is accompanied by the sound effect of a film projector. There is a tension between the stillness of the photo and the movement of the transition effect. The editing device, the film roll-out transition and the sound that amplifies it, signifies *moving* pictures, but the image it is used to transition from is clearly a *still* image. This tension leads to an awareness of the film as a film, because it is clear that the film roll out was not organically created during the filming, it was added in post-production.

In the same film a quick white flash, accompanied by a soft popping sound, is used as a transition to a photograph over the shoulder of a man holding a camera to his eye. When the shot zooms out, it is revealed that the photograph is of the Imam being photographed by several people in a small crowd. The flash represents a camera flash and so signifies the moment a photograph is taken. And yet the image it is associated with is not a moving image of a photographer in action, rather it is a still image that contains no movement or sound. This transition is therefore conspicuous, as it emphasises the tension between stillness and movement. This specific photograph is particularly apt for acknowledging subjectivity, since it creates the feeling of looking over the shoulder of the photographer. This photographer is an individual among

others with cameras. His viewpoint is different from the others. And our viewpoint is different from his, because we are looking at him from the perspective of another photographer. This photo within a photo signifies that the way history is captured is relative, and the flash transition serves to focus the audience's attention on the image and thus heightens this effect.

Photographs are used throughout *Imam and I* to visualise the story of the past, so these instances of *mise-en-abyme* created by the effect transitions are very apt to foreground the construction of the film. The Imam's history is told through 'the eye of the beholder', a subjective perspective. The film acknowledges that its content consists of information gathered from many different sources. And they are all looking at the subject from different vantage points, like the two photographers in the example above.

4.25 SUPERIMPOSITION

Superimposition entails the layering of two visual elements over each other. *Tribes and Clans* (2009) starts with an introductory sequence consisting of archival news footage of apartheid era political speeches and protests. This sequence sets the agenda for the rest of the film. Images are distorted and degraded. Filters, including snow and flashes, are digitally superimposed over the shots in this sequence. This simulates the appearance of old VHS footage. As a transition into shots, the image rolls in and is grainy. It then settles and changes to normal quality. The same device is used as a transition out of shots. It is clear that the different images have different sources, a combination of new footage, archive footage and stills. So the superimposition creates tension that opens the sequence to questioning by the viewer. The sequence triggers questions like "What is old and what is new?" and "Are these effects integral to the footage or have they been added by the filmmaker?".

In *Porselynnkas* blurry patches are superimposed over elements of the frame. When archive footage of Porselynnkas "happenings" is shown, blurs are used to obscure the genitals of naked performers. A blur is also used over the face of one of the

interviewees to obscure her identity (see illustration 4.86 later in this chapter). Such blurs are conspicuous and therefore call attention to themselves. They alert the audience to the construction of the film and are therefore self-reflexive.



Illustration 4.65

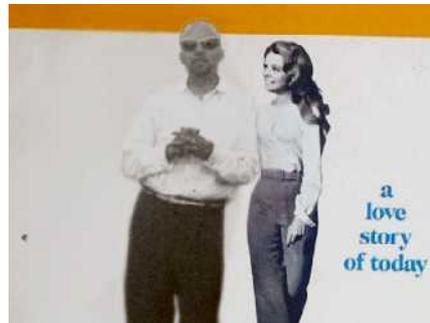


Illustration 4.66

An image of the Imam leaning against a lamppost is taken from a photo and superimposed onto a movie poster in *Imam and I*.

In *Imam and I* photos are manipulated through superimposition throughout the film. A digital effect is used to cut out elements in photographs based on their relative distances from the camera. These elements are then moved in relation to each other. This animation lends the two-dimensional images a sense of depth. In another instance the Imam's image has been digitally cut out from a photograph and superimposed onto a movie poster to become part of that poster (illustrations 4.65 and 4.66 above). The result of this layering device signifies the Imam's love of film. It is self-reflexive because it is clear that the final image has been fabricated, created from a combination of a publicity poster and an old photograph. The photo of the Imam is one that was used on its own and in its full, original version earlier in the film, so it is recognisable as a familiar image at this point. The way the Imam's figure has been superimposed onto the poster makes it look like the woman pictured in the poster is looking at him. But it is clear from the difference in size of the two figures and from the difference in quality of the two representations that the final image shown here on screen has been fabricated. It is the conspicuousness of the fabrication that reminds the audience of the construction of the film and that there is an authoring agent who has combined these two disparate images in order to communicate connotative meaning.



Illustration 4.67



Illustration 4.68



Illustration 4.69

Through the use of superimposition the Imam is shown disappearing from a family portrait in *Imam and I*.

At another point in the film a photo of the Imam, his wife and two children is shown. The figure of the Imam disappears from the photo (see illustrations 4.67, 4.68 and 4.69). This animated superimposition is used as a visual metaphor for the Imam's death, the topic of discussion at that point in the film. The device is self-reflexive because the removal of the image of the Imam from the photo is gradual and conspicuous. Photos don't normally 'do' this, so the work of the filmmaker is emphasised.



Illustration 4.70a



Illustration 4.70b



Illustration 4.70c

The superimposition on a frame around a photograph of the Imam as a young man is animated.

When a photograph of the Imam as a young man is shown, a gradual zoom out coincides with the animation of the picture frame (illustration 70a, b and c). The decorative border of the frame has been removed digitally and is gradually superimposed on screen as the zoom progresses. More and more detail is added to the cardboard frame, first the scrolls of the decorative border, then the photographer's signature and the words "Eid Mubarak" below the photo. This leads the viewer's attention from the photograph to the words below it, placing the photograph in context and emphasising its source. It was taken at the end of Ramadan to commemorate the festival that ends the month of fasting. As the voice-over is referring to the Imam's

promise to fast every Monday and Thursday for the rest of his life, the association with the photograph is appropriate. Later in the film Islamic newsletters produced by the Imam's students are animated in a similar way. Most of them are hand drawn. The words and pictures appear gradually on screen, signifying the creation process. This also refers to the vast differences in means of communication used in the 1960s and the ones available today. The Imam's followers drew newsletters by hand; today digital superimposition can be used to animate those hand-drawn products. What once was still can now be animated. The tension between the old and new means of representation focuses attention on the various mediums used here and thus on the film as a film.

4.26 OMISSION OF CHYRONS

A chyron is text stating the name and designation of an interviewee. It is customary that chyrons are superimposed over interview shots in the lower third of the screen to identify speakers and qualify their inclusion in the documentary. In the traditional documentary film *The Manuscripts of Timbuktu* (Maseko, 2009) for example, chyrons identify interviewees as experts in their fields (history, anthropology, sociology) and signify that the information given by them is legitimate and carries weight.

If chyrons are omitted, this creates a certain amount of tension for the audience. In *Sea Point Days* chyrons are omitted throughout the film. The audience can only rely on the content of the film to surmise who a speaker is. This triggers a heightened interaction with the material. Rather than taking the content in passively, the viewer is forced to analyse the content for clues to the identities of the various characters. In some instances it is possible to find out who a person is because another person addresses them directly or refers to them in the film. Councilman JP Smith is, for example, shown appearing on a radio show and he is introduced by name and designation by the DJ. In other instances the viewer can deduce a person's role or station in life from their actions or appearance, but may never find out what that person's name is. Most of the homeless people pictured in the film remain nameless.

This anonymity within the structure of the film signifies their anonymity living on the streets and their rejection by mainstream society. The lack of identification in the film signifies and emphasises the way they are seen by the police and council volunteers in the film: as statistics rather than people.

In the introductory sequence of *Fokofpolisiekar: Forgive Them for They Know Not What They Do* (2009) a visual sequence is accompanied by extracts from various interviews. No interviewees are shown and no indication is given of who the various speakers are. Omitting the chyrons and faces at this point in the film signifies that the opinions of experts and laypersons should be weighed equally, that all perspectives collected here are of similar value, and that the source of an opinion is not as significant as what is said. These disembodied voices emphasise the construction of the film, since the omission is conspicuous.

A sequence of unidentified interviewees is used at the beginning of *Imam and I* to introduce issues around the Imam's life and death. Faces are visible, but no chyrons have been superimposed over the shots. So this sequence provides more access to the subjects than the *Fokofpolisiekar: Forgive Them for They Know Not What They Do*, but still some information is withheld. Later in the film this kind of sequence recurs with many of the same speakers introducing the security police interrogator, Spyker van Wyk. This time chyrons are superimposed over the video so that viewers can see who the speakers are. They are identified as activists or somehow involved with human rights or the anti-apartheid struggle. Having access to their resistance credentials here emphasises their views and adds to their credibility. We believe their statements because they are established as having the right kind of experience to make them. The absence of chyrons from the earlier sequence is emphasised by their presence in this one. It also makes it clear that the omission earlier was a conscious decision by the filmmaker.

The voice-over statement "Toe vra ek die opinie van 'n deskundige" (So I asked an expert) introduces an interview segment in *Porselynnkas*. No chyrons are provided in the film, so there is no way for the audience to judge the validity of the voice-over's

assertion that the interviewee is an expert. There is also no way of judging what she is an expert on, so there is no way to conclude what her perspective on the subject matter might be.



Illustration 4.71a



Illustration 4.71b

Porselynnkas performance poetry group members are given a handmade 'chyron' in *Porselynnkas*.

When the members of the Porselynnkas performance poetry group are interviewed, however, they are given chyrons of sorts in an organic, creative way. Each member's segment starts with them getting a cream pie squashed in their face (illustration 4.71a). The pie dish has their name on the bottom, created using cut-out letters that recall the main title of the film. This handmade 'chyron' is then held up, so it is organically included in the frame rather than superimposed as would be done in a conventional documentary film (illustration 4.71b). These unconventional chyrons are self-reflexive in and of themselves, but also emphasise the absence of superimposed chyrons on the expert interviewees in the film.

This omission of contextualisation for the interviewees in these films opens the content of the interviews up to critique. It is more difficult to place a statement and to weigh its validity without knowing its source. This prevents snap judgements based on the background or level of expertise of the speakers. The decoder is forced to take each statement in the text at face value. This leads to some discomfort, because information that is usually provided in this kind of text is withheld by the encoder. Consequently the decoder must work harder to decode the message in the absence of the missing

information. This *Verfremdungseffekt* increases the level of intellectual engagement required from the decoder to decode the text.

4.27 INTERACTION BETWEEN TITLES AND VIDEO



Illustration 4.72



Illustration 4.73



Illustration 4.74

Video and titles interact in *Forerunners*.

In *Forerunners* the illusion is created that there is interaction between elements in the shots and the titles superimposed over them. At one point, for example, it looks as if a shopping trolley that is pushed down a road wipes the "Soweto" title in front of Karabo's parental home off screen (illustration 4.72). A "Johannesburg" title looks as if it is attached to the side of a building (illustration 4.73). It has been placed in three-dimensional space to match the angle of the side of the building and lens flare has been applied to it to match the reflection of the sun in the windows. When Miranda is pictured in an over-the-shoulder shot at her baby-shower, her chyron is flipped horizontally so that it looks as if it is seen from behind, just as she is (illustration 4.74).

Because elements in the physical world and digital effects cannot in reality interact with each other, creating this illusion in a documentary triggers an awareness of the medium and is therefore self-reflexive. It is clear that the interactions seen on screen are not really possible, and so the effect signifies that the film has been constructed by someone who has the power to manipulate the way reality is presented. This leads to critical consideration of the filmmaker's role in representing actuality and her position towards it.

4.28 MANIPULATION OF PLAYBACK RATE AND DIRECTION

In *Afrikaaps* an extract from an old film about the story of the VOC is used to illustrate an interview about history. Towards the end of the section the traditional fiction film extract is given a hip-hop edge when the seventeenth-century settler on screen walks backwards as the film is reversed to signify the interviewee's statement: "But, we need to take one step backwards". This association of the statement and visual is humorous and self-reflexive. There is very little doubt that the playback direction of the shot was manipulated in the editing of the contemporary documentary. This self-reflexively acknowledges the presence of the filmmaker at a moment when *Afrikaaps* is arguably at its most conventional, making use of archive footage to illustrate the content of a sit-down interview. The power of the filmmaker to 'reverse' history and to make a character on screen bend to his will is signified in this moment. As I have observed viewers laughing at this effect on several occasions, I believe that there is awareness of the film as construction both in the encoding and the decoding at this moment. An interaction between the filmmaker and viewer through the text is triggered.

In Part 1 of *Sea Point Days* an elderly couple is introduced. Later, in Part 4, the wife is seen again, but now she is alone, and it is revealed that her husband has passed away since they were last filmed. A sequence follows that includes photos of the couple and stills taken from the earlier sequence of the couple when both were still alive. Freezing the frames from the lively, earlier sequence signifies the death of the husband and the loss the wife feels. The stills frames are devoid of life; they are memories frozen in time; they have lost their temporality. The stills are grainy because PAL video resolution is not as high as photographic resolution, 72 dots per inch (dpi) as opposed to 300 dpi. This emphasises that the stills were taken from the video footage seen before. The inclusion of these stills focuses attention on the construction of the film because it is an intra-textual reference back to the first time the couple were shown in the film.

The introduction of the director, Matthew Kalil, at the beginning of *Porselynnkas* is composed of a voice-over that starts after the image of Kalil and his main subject, Sjaka Septembir, has been frozen on screen. Here the filmmaker interrupts the narrative of the film in order to comment on his role in its construction. This emphasises the distinction between the content and the structure of the film. The content of the film has stopped for the moment, but the commentary on the structure continues.

Later in the film, when Gysie is interviewed, he recounts how he filmed the Porselynnkas movement's "happenings". His statements set up an expectation that the resultant footage will soon be shown in the film. The interview takes a sudden turn when Gysie says: "Maar met die brand ..." (But with the fire ...). At this point the image suddenly freezes and the person delivering the voice over exclaims: "Wat?!" (What?!). The freeze frame and exclamation capture the shock and horror the filmmaker must have felt at hearing that the footage he sought had been destroyed. So, in addition to providing a break for commentary by the director, such a freeze with commentary can also serve to amplify events or emotions in the content of the film. But most importantly they are self-reflexive, functioning as magnifying glasses to focus viewer attention on the construction of the film and its authoring agent.

4.29 RECURRING IMAGES AND DEVICES

Recurring images or recurrences of self-reflexive editing devices (such as the ones described above) is also self-reflexive because these shots and devices are emphasised and made conspicuous through their repetition in a film.



Illustration 4.75



Illustration 4.76



Illustration 4.77

Compositionally divided frames recur in *Forerunners*.

Recurring imagery abounds in *Forerunners* (2011). Out of focus shots, shots featuring reflections, shots filmed through obstructions or semi-translucent materials, fans turning and images that are vertically divided through compositional elements are repeatedly included in this film. From early in *Forerunners* the recurring device of a vertically divided frame is established. The first instance is an image of one of the main characters, Mpumi, sitting on the left side of the frame with a "Soweto" title on the right. The shot is of two doors leading to two rooms next to each other with a dividing wall between them. It is this dividing wall that creates the vertical split of the frame (see illustration 4.75 above). The framing of the shot emphasises how small the rooms are that the two doors lead to. This is appropriate as the character is talking about her family's past and the poverty her parents experienced.

A few minutes later the vertically split image recurs. This time it is used for an interior shot of a person walking into an office on the left, while another person sits at a desk in the adjacent office on the right of the frame. The frame is split by a physical dividing wall in the location (see illustration 4.76 above). So, again an element of the real world is used to create a stark and striking compositional device that also functions as visual metaphor. Here it signifies separation and isolation as each person sits alone in his office. It signifies that beneath the glossy veneer of Western business success there is a fundamental feeling of separation for these characters, as when Martin says about his house in a security complex: "This is a house, not a home".

When Karabo visits his mother in Soweto, the "Soweto" title appears on the right side of the frame superimposed over an interior wall, with the mother on the left side of the frame. The doorway to the lounge where the two are seated creates the vertical divide in this image. The mother faces right to left, seated in a chair in the lounge beyond the doorway (see illustration 4.77 above). Her head is compositionally cut off by the wall edge. This divided image, combined with the uncomfortable framing of the mother, signifies the disconnect between mother and son, and that she does not understand him or his Western way of life.

When Miranda speaks about the collapse of her relationship with the father of her child

during the last third of the film, a cut-away is included that shows her changing her baby's nappy on the right hand side of screen with a window framing a view of other houses' roofs on the left. This frame is divided by an interior wall in her house. Miranda seems isolated and lonely. The divided screen here signifies the break-up, the divide between her and the father of the baby.

Each divided frame functions as a visual metaphor for a specific emotion or event pertinent to its position in the film. Collectively, they also signify one of the main themes of the film, the dual pulls of the Western business world and traditional African customs and family values. The recurrence of the device is self-reflexive because the visual is unconventional enough to engage the audience in a critical process. There is an awareness that the effect was achieved deliberately through framing, and because it recurs throughout the film it foregrounds the structure of the film as a whole.



Illustration 4.78



Illustration 4.79

A photograph is flipped when repeated in *Imam and I*.

In *Imam and I* several photographs are repeated. One example is a photograph of the Imam sitting with a group of men (illustrations 4.78). When it is used the second time in the film, it is flipped, so where the Imam was seated facing left to right before, he now faces right to left (illustration 4.79). The photo was unidentified at first, but when it recurs it becomes clear from the voice-over that it was taken during a visit to Jordan, Syria or the West Bank around 1967. The image is recognisable, so its repetition shifts the attention from only the content of the photo to an awareness of the construction of the film. The audience is invited by the recurrence of the image to think back to having

seen the image before. The viewer is led to become aware of the presence of a filmmaker who can choose to use the same visual twice. The earlier inclusion of the image left questions such as: "Where was this photograph taken?", "When was it taken?" and "What event does it depict?" open. The recurrence of the photograph provides the answers to these questions.



Illustration 4.80: A split screen effect is used to show a cut-away and interview at the same time *Mama Goema*.



Illustration 4.81: A split screen effect is used to show two angles of the same performance in *Mama Goema*.

Split screens recur as a device in *Mama Goema* (see illustration 4.80 and 4.81 above). The combination of two images on screen at the same time is used variously to show visual evidence without cutting away from an interviewee, to show two cutaways of different things at the same time, or to show two camera angles of the same performance at the same time. Because split screens are not common in mainstream documentaries, their appearance here is conspicuous and leads to a focus on the

construction of the film. The split screens pose an invitation to the viewer to compare the two images, since they are presented on screen at the same time. This draws the viewer's eye more rapidly over the frame, as she must take in detail from the left and right of frame and compare the two images. The simultaneous inclusion of the images also alerts the viewer that there is a reason for their combination, that they should be compared and connotative meaning should be gathered from the comparison.



Illustration 4.82: Matthew Kalil is introduced at the beginning of *Porselynnkas*.

Porselynnkas explores the search for identity and the shifting nature of identity, and does so in a light-hearted way through the repeated use of juxtaposition. When director Matthew Kalil introduces himself at the beginning of the film, the shot chosen for his introduction shows him virtually wrestling with an old typewriter along with his main subject, Sjaka Septembir, the founder of the Porselynnkas performance poetry movement (illustration 4.82). We hear Kalil speak before we hear the voice-over in which he supposedly introduces himself. It is clear that the voice-over is being delivered by someone else, not Kalil. In addition, the voice-over voice identifies Kalil as "Matewis", not Matthew, acknowledging the difference between the director we see on screen and the voice identifying himself as the director. This juxtaposition creates tension between reality and representation. We are not sure who the real Matthew Kalil is. This play with identity recurs throughout the film and becomes one of its main themes.



Illustration 4.83



Illustration 4.84

The main character of *Porselynnkas* lists his numerous pseudonyms.

Sjaka Septembir, the primary subject of *Porselynnkas*, is introduced at the beginning of the film through a sequence in which he lists his alter-egos. The sequence contains cross-cutting between a contemporary interview and archive footage. Sjaka is framed in similar shot sizes and he looks directly at the lens in the archive and present-day footage. In both the archive and present-day footage Septembir is framed in close-up and he looks directly at the lens. The differences between the two sources are highlighted by their repeated juxtaposition (see illustrations 4.83 and 4.84 above). Because the two shots are so similar in composition and the subject is engaged in the same activity in both, listing his pseudonyms, the juxtaposition triggers an awareness of the construction of the film. The shifts in time, place, chrominance (colour saturation) and video quality signify the subject's shifts in identity. As the sequence alternates from old to new, from good- to bad-quality footage and from black and white to colour, so Sjaka Septembir becomes Diamandt Wolf or Jan Afganistan. The correlation between the content and the structure emphasises the recurring theme of questioning identity in the film.

The contradictions shown in the director and the subject's introductions signify that identity is not easy to define. Both these sequences encourage viewers to question the notion of fixed identity: the director's, the subject's and, by implication, their own. This is a self-reflexive process initiated by the juxtapositions of visuals and sound in the first sequence above, and of archive and contemporary footage in the second.



Illustration 4.85



Illustration 4.86

Kalil tells Septembir that one of the interviewees wants her face blurred out in *Porselynnkas* and in the following shot that interviewee is shown with her face obscured.

Porselynnkas does not shy away from using humour, showing its own mistakes or calling itself or its characters into question. As a matter of fact it seems to relish sending up the very documentary form. It even calls into question whether the subject matter should be taken seriously. At one point a sequence of interviews with theatre owners about the Porselynnkas movement's "happenings" at their venues during the late 1990s, is introduced through a shot of the director speaking to Septembir. Septembir is shown sitting in the passenger seat of a car. Kalil sits down in the driver's seat and closes the door (illustration 4.85). He then says: "She hates you. She hates Porselynnkas. She won't even appear on camera. I have to blur her face out". From this shot the sequence cuts directly to a medium shot of a woman speaking. Her face is indeed, as anticipated by the previous conversation, blurred out (see illustration 4.86 above). Her interview is intercut with that of another theatre owner as they relate some of the details they remember of the Porselynnkas "happenings". The sequence concludes with a return to the shot in the car with Kalil commenting that: "She's probably right. It probably was crap", followed by him and Septembir laughing about this. The director's appearance on camera is in itself self-reflexive, reminding the audience of his existence as authoring agent of the film. In addition, he comments on the filming process, making the focus on the construction of the film more overt. By including his statement in the film that the Porselynnkas movement was "probably ... crap" he subverts the subject of the film by himself questioning its merit. This is self-reflexive, as the audience is given license to also view the film critically and question the merits of what they are seeing.

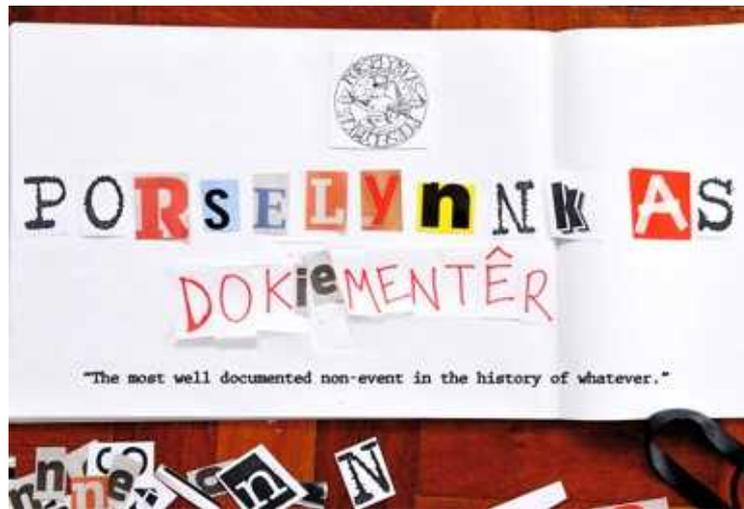


Illustration 4.87: The *Porselynnkas* DVD menu and poster.

Later in the film when archive footage of Alex Omega describing the Porselynnkas movement as “The most well documented non-event in the history of whatever” is included, his statement is shown once and then the image is frozen. During the freeze the voice-over says: “Sê gou weer” (Say [that] again”) before the statement is replayed. So his statement is repeated in the film, emphasising it. Omega's statement is used as the tagline of the film and appears on the DVD box, menu and the film's poster (see illustration 4.87). In this instance the repetition of the statement is contained in the film, through the freeze and replay device used in the sequence, but it also recurs outside the film. At the point when Omega is shown making the statement, it is quite possible that the viewer has been exposed to the statement at least once, either through the film poster, DVD box or DVD menu. Revealing in the film what the source of the statement is encourages a meta-cognitive process of comparison to the promotional material and recognition, which should lead to some satisfaction at having solved the puzzle.



Figure 4.88

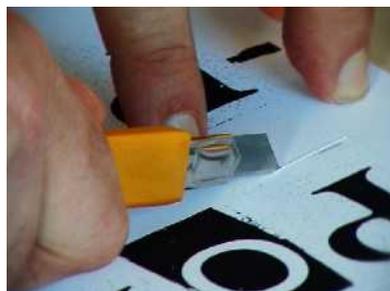


Figure 4.89



Figure 4.90

The construction of the main title is shown in *Porselynnkas*.

The construction of *Porselynnkas* is repeatedly acknowledged and foregrounded. The way the title of the film is presented at the beginning of the documentary introduces this recurring device. The main title of the film is shown to be fabricated and, what's more, the fabrication process is documented. Much of the film, starting with the main title, has a handmade appearance. The copying, cutting and pasting of letters to form the word "Porselynnkas" is shown as part of the film (illustrations 4.88, 4.89 and 4.90 above). This is a visual metaphor for the process of film editing, and references to the editing recur throughout the film. Editing is later foregrounded in the sequence described earlier, where there is a cut from a shot in which Kalil says that one of the interviewees wants her face blurred out, to the image of the woman with a blurred area over her face. This demonstrates the power of the director and emphasises the editing process. With one cut it is demonstrated that the editing process allows the filmmaker to combine two different shots that refer to each other, jump around in time and apply a digital effect to obscure the identity of an interviewee.



Illustration 4.91: The word "Porselynnkas" is set alight in the end credits of *Porselynnkas*.

The recurrence of images and devices in *Porselynnkas* culminates in the end credits. End credits in mainstream documentary films are most often white lettering on a black background and roll across the screen at the end of the film. The end credits of *Porselynnkas* consist of head and shoulder shots of the director and the camera-operator superimposed over the scrapbook letters that were used to construct the opening title of the film (illustration 4.91 above). This unconventional way of providing end credits is self-reflexive because it is an acknowledgement of the presence of the

individuals behind the production of the film. Kalil and the camera operator state their names and roles in the production, placing emphasis on the construction of the film. The two superimpositions also interact with each other. While the camera operator introduces himself, Kalil looks left to right as if at the camera-operator. When Kalil introduces himself, the camera operator looks right to left as if at Kalil. The letters of the word "Porselynnkas" are swept together and set alight, signifying the end of the performance poetry group and of the documentary. The film is circular thanks to this return to the main title. This reference back to the beginning of the film is self-reflexive, and also provides aesthetic closure to the film. Burning the title signifies the end of the journey for the filmmakers, but also the death of Porselynnkas as a movement. Because the title is destroyed, it also poses the final question about the merit of the subject matter of the film, inviting the audience to come to their own conclusion about the value of the Porselynnkas performance poetry movement and of the documentary film that takes the movement as its topic.

Recurring images and editing devices can be used to comment on the theme(s) of a film, to emphasise events or emotions at key points, to create punctuation points or breathing space in a film and to encourage intellectual engagement in the decoding of the film.

4.30 CONCLUSION

Self-reflexive editing devices are evident in several contemporary South African documentary films. Some films, like *Imam and I* and *Porselynnkas* are overtly self-reflexive in mode. Others, like *Afrikaaps*, *King Naki*, *Sea Point Days* and *Uprising at Hangberg* include references to the filmmaker's presence. Yet others, like *Forerunners*, *Dear Mandela*, *Fokofpolisiekar: Forgive them for they know not what they do*, and *Mama Goema* do not include the filmmaker, crew or equipment as part of the film, but rather exhibit formal elements that can be described as self-reflexive. The self-reflexive editing devices identified in this chapter range from particular, conspicuous edit points

to structuring devices.

It was found in the films selected for this study that self-reflexivity can be effected through: inclusion of the filmmaker in the film, inclusion of interactions between subjects and filmmaker or filmmaking equipment, inclusion of visible equipment, inclusion of technical adjustments, inclusion of visuals of questionable quality, inclusion of undesirable sound, inclusion of hesitations, lack of plot and resolution, categorical structure, episodic structure, associational form, abstract form, a combination of structures, shifts in documentary type, shifts in form, juxtaposition, intercutting, ellipses in content, jump cuts, rapid cutting, long takes without cuts, form edits, effect transitions, superimposition, omission of chyrons, interaction between titles and video, manipulation of playback rate and direction and recurring images and devices.

I propose that viewing is most active when there is a mutual awareness by the encoder and decoder of this self-reflexivity. In such instances, the filmmaker uses certain strategies intentionally in encoding the text for the purpose of engaging the audience intellectually. The viewer in turn is to a greater or lesser extent aware of the film as a film during the viewing, "prompt[ing] the viewer to a heightened consciousness of his or her relation to the text" (Nichols, 1991: 58). The viewer is not only aware of the content of the film, a primary layer of meaning, but is also faced with a second layer of meaning, a glimpse of the way that the text has been encoded. This allows the audience to engage critically with the content of the text, enabling a critique of its authenticity and veracity.

This intellectual process stems from a certain distance from the text, or *Verfremdung*. The decoder does not passively ingest the content and is not "entangled" in it (Brecht in Willet, 1984: 78). Instead she is aware of the text as a text while decoding the message. This is not to say that the message itself gets lost in an overly complicated decoding process. The most effective self-reflexive texts are simultaneously appealing and intellectually engaging to the audience. And the value of self-reflexive editing devices, as will be seen in the following chapter, lies in their dual ability to entertain while opening the text to an aware and critical reception by the decoder.

PART III

Case Study

CHAPTER 5

BOOZA TV: A CASE STUDY FOR THE USE OF SELF-REFLEXIVE EDITING DEVICES IN A PERCEPTION CHANGE PROGRAMME

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Booza TV (Corrigan, 2011) is a documentary series consisting of six 24-minute episodes. It examines drinking culture in the Western Cape through a combination of interviews, illustrative cutaways, dramatisations, re-enactments and animation. It was commissioned by the Western Cape Departments of Health, Social Development and Community Safety with the aim of challenging prevailing attitudes and beliefs regarding alcohol consumption and what can or should be done about alcohol abuse and its consequences. The director/producer of the series, Dr Joanne Corrigan, has a dual specialisation in mental health and public health.

For this study *Booza TV* was used as a practical implementation of the insights gained from the literature review (Chapters Two and Three) and the structural analysis of existing films (Chapter Five). I was one of two senior offline editors working with Dr Corrigan and the rest of her team on the post-production of the series. I submitted a motivation for incorporating self-reflexive editing devices in the editing approach to the series and Dr Corrigan accepted the proposal. Before the series was refined and finalised, both quantitative and qualitative data on audience responses were gathered. This was done to test the efficacy of the series as a tool for perception change, to measure audience responses to the self-reflexive devices, and to assess how the episodes should be refined to best reach the target audience, young drinkers in the Western Cape.

My editing contribution to *Booza TV* was inspired by the German dramatist and theorist Bertolt Brecht in two ways, and I also tested the efficacy of these approaches during

the two rounds of research described below. The two overlapping approaches tested were (a) whether using self-reflexive editing devices could lead to a desirable degree of critical distancing or *Verfremdung*; and (b) whether editing a documentary in a way that was designed to be perceived as entertaining by the target audience, making use of self-reflexive devices, could enhance its ability to effect perception change in an audience. The primary research question is thus:

Does the construction of the documentary series, specifically editing it in an engaging way by using self-reflexive editing devices, play a role in the reception of the content of that documentary by the audience?

Booza TV forms part of a larger project that aims to change drinking behaviour in the Western Cape. According to the Medical Research Council:

alcohol abuse is the third leading cause of death, disease and disability in South Africa. In the Western Cape, it is probably the leading contributor to the burden of disease, killing at least 300 people per month, most of whom are below 40 years of age (Corrigal, 2011c).

Booza TV is aimed at a broad target market of “young binge drinkers”, which includes urban and rural inhabitants of the Western Cape (Corrigal, 2011a: 1). In style the series aims to appeal predominantly to a young urban audience, the segment of the target market most at risk of alcohol-related harms. The documentary episodes are intended to function in two domains: “firstly, as stand-alone products and a series for broadcast, and secondly, to form part of structured, facilitated workshop-based interventions in areas with high alcohol-related harms” (Corrigal, 2011: np). For a detailed description of the conceptual approaches followed in designing *Booza TV* in order to appeal to the target audience, please see Addendum One.

5.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data about (a) viewers' perception change and (b) their responses to the editing of

Booza TV were gathered during two rounds of testing conducted with samples drawn from the target audience of the production. First, I collaborated with Dr Corrigan and her research team in conducting empirical, non-experimental research to gather quantitative data about how viewers' perceptions about alcohol-related issues were changed by and how they experienced the viewing of *Booza TV*. For this purpose appropriate samples were selected, questionnaires were prepared and screenings of all six episodes of the series were arranged. At each screening respondents completed both a pre-screening and a post-screening questionnaire about their habits and perceptions regarding alcohol, as well as their perceptions about the documentary and their experience of watching *Booza TV*. This allowed researchers to carry out a comparative analysis of the data gathered from respondents' responses before and after watching each episode. I selected the "youth drinker" sample from the quantitative round of research for inclusion in this study.

Following this quantitative research, I conducted a focus group interview with the first-year students enrolled in the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) Film and Video Programme, in which I teach part time. This second round of research was conducted in order to further explore viewers' experiences of the self-reflexive editing devices used in constructing *Booza TV*. The first year group was selected as a sample, because they had a limited degree of familiarity with filmmaking strategies and editing devices at the time the interview was conducted. Though they had already attended about four months of lectures, their knowledge of editing devices was limited and they had not received any input on editing styles in general or self-reflexive editing specifically. It was hoped, though, that they would be able to articulate their impressions of the film form more clearly than a sample that had no prior knowledge of film form.

Only Episode One was screened to these students. They completed simplified pre-screening and post-screening questionnaires that focused on their viewing habits and experience of the episode. A focus group interview was then conducted. The focus group questions were designed to probe respondents' perceptions of, and reactions to, the use of cinematic form in *Booza TV*. Care was taken to avoid leading questions (see

Addendum Six for a list of focus group interview questions).

I felt it was necessary to conduct this second, qualitative, round of research for two reasons. First, after concluding the quantitative research with Dr Corrigan, I felt that the data gathered clearly showed that *Booza TV* was capable of changing viewers' perspectives on alcohol, but that their reception of, and reaction to, the use of the editing devices in the production, though tested, had not been adequately probed. Secondly, triangulation is critical to ensuring the validity of data gathered, and comparing the quantitative and qualitative data collected allowed for inclusion of a more diverse set of respondents (Maree & van der Westhuizen, 2007: 39).

The analysis of the data from both quantitative and qualitative rounds of research point positively to the potential of self-reflexive editing devices to (a) contribute towards effecting perception change in a documentary production, and (b) contribute towards audience engagement with that production. Following a description of the editing approach, the quantitative and qualitative data related to medium use, specifically self-reflexive editing devices, are outlined and analysed below.

5.3 EDITING APPROACH

Over the course of the series Dr Corrigan aimed to “deconstruct how we view alcohol, to look at drinking culture as though alcohol was a new drug on the planet and to challenge people to think about why it is we treat alcohol and other drugs so differently” (2009: np). This intention to engage the audience intellectually and have them re-evaluate preconceived notions about alcohol is self-reflexive in nature and therefore ideal for the use of self-reflexive editing devices.

5.3.1 PRODUCTION STRUCTURING DEVICES

Booza TV's structure is based on the Transtheoretical Model for Change. It is widely used in the design of medical and social behaviour change programmes (Corrigan, 2009b: np). It “describes behavior change as a process in which individuals progress

through a series of discreet phases or stages of change” from unhealthy or undesirable behaviour to new, more healthy or desirable behaviour (Maibach & Cotton, 1995: 42).

The five stages of change as set out by James O. Prochaska and Carlo C. DiClemente (1984) are as follows:

1. Pre-contemplation, before any action is considered;
2. Contemplation, at which point the subject considers change, but may do so for a prolonged period before starting to experiment with new behaviour;
3. Preparation, when the subject has decided to change and is about to take action, but is still planning how to do so (respondents may experiment with new behaviour at this stage);
4. Action, when change is being implemented actively; and
5. Maintenance, when the new behaviour is becoming habit.

The intention was that *Booza TV* episodes would encourage viewers' progression through these stages. Because there are multiple episodes, the intervention is not solitary but repeated and reinforced. According to Maibach and Cotton “People move more efficiently through the stages when stage-appropriate processes are used; similarly, if some processes are used excessively at inappropriate stages, they can actually obstruct change or precipitate a relapse to an earlier stage” (1995: 43). It was therefore vital that, through editing, appropriate information was included in each episode, and that the episodes were ordered in a way that encourages progression through the stages rather than discouraging it. To this end information was selected and structured with the intention that Episodes One and Two would encourage viewers to progress from pre-contemplation to contemplation, that Episode Three would encourage preparation, that Episodes Four and Five would encourage action, and that Episode Six would provide viewers with strategies for maintaining new behaviour. For a summary of the key themes and goals of each of the six episodes, please see Addendum 4, 2.1 Series Outline.

5.3.2 THE VALUE OF ENTERTAINMENT AND INTELLECTUAL ENGAGEMENT IN A PERCEPTION-CHANGE PRODUCTION

Two Brechtian principles (discussed in more detail in Chapter Three) were used to guide the editing approach and style I used for *Booza TV*. The first is *Verfremdung*, the use of stylistic and structural devices to keep the audience emotionally distanced from but intellectually engaged with the material presented, enhancing their critical responses. The second is the combination of entertainment and instruction, as in Brecht's conception of the *Lehrstück*.

5.3.2.1 Perception change through engagement

In Brecht's view people are naturally drawn to pleasure, but not to “an object of instruction that offers them neither profit nor social advantages” (in Willett, 1984: 32). Brecht did not make an absolute distinction between the concepts ‘entertaining’ and ‘instructive’, but regarded the performing arts as being able to instruct while entertaining. The purpose of the *Lehrstück* or learning-play in his *oeuvre* is not to show the world as it is, reflected in a naïve form of naturalism, but is driven by the more Marxist impulse to present it as “it may be changed” (Brecht in Willett, 1984: 79).

In Brecht's view, when “feelings, insights and impulses ... are forced on us ... we learn nothing” (Willett, 1984: 190). Erica Weintraub Austin, whose research focuses on media literacy, family communication and health issues, shares this view. She believes:

a common mistake in campaign design has been to assume that portraying a behavior as bad or unhealthy (such as binge drinking ...) will cause [people] to reject it ... Knowledge-based campaigns thus rarely affect ... people's attitudes and behaviors (1995: 114).

What makes media such as film and television – and today mobile media and the internet – particularly powerful in effecting social change is their wide popular diffusion and their ability to penetrate into and influence the youth market through making use of the conventions of popular entertainment. Creating learning tools that “excite as well as enlighten” is also known as edutainment (Jack, 2010: np). Just as Soul City Institute of Health and Development, *Booza TV* aimed to implement this principle by

“harnessing popular culture and communication to bring about social change” (Usdin, 2009: 578). That is why *Booza TV* was designed to appeal to young binge drinkers by maintaining “an entertaining, open-minded approach to the subject matter”. This was done through “adopting a tongue-in-cheek style with high entertainment value”. To this end interviews with ordinary young drinkers were included to acknowledge an awareness of the drinker's point of view. By acknowledging that drinking can be “fun, create shared memories and enhance a social space” we hoped to increase viewer identification with the series in order to draw them into the programme (Corrigan, 2011a: 1).

Because “a moralistic approach” would lead to “resistance”, edutainment entails “the weaving of social issues into entertainment genres” (Usdin, 2009: 578). Therefore in a documentary, such as *Booza TV*, that aims to effect perception change, an explicitly didactic approach should be avoided and structuring devices should be selected that have the potential to appeal to the audience. This in turn will encourage viewers to engage with the material voluntarily. That is why *Booza TV* uses humour, contemporary music, celebrity interviews and fast-paced visuals in an attempt to remain appealing and engaging to the target audience. It also includes perspectives and experiences from ordinary people in a non-threatening way to avoid being instructional and didactic. The intention was to make a documentary that viewers will want to watch, and so to expose viewers in a pleasurable way to content designed to influence their perceptions by engaging them critically.

Booza TV employs a mixture of styles in order to maintain visual interest and appeal to a visually literate, young audience familiar with the conventions of popular culture. This not only keeps the episodes fresh and varied, but also allows for sudden changes of style, setting and content. Classically filmed interviews are combined with *vox pops* or man-on-the street interviews, cut-away sequences of ordinary people in real environments engaged in actual activities. In addition, dramatised and animated sequences are used to illustrate key points. These fictional scenarios are in many cases intended to “sketch almost absurd situations that are humorous but simultaneously provoke critical engagement with the subject matter” (Corrigan, 2009: np).

My contention is that the benefit of editing a documentary in a way that the target audience finds appealing is that they should then *choose* to watch the documentary of their own accord. But effecting perception change, not entertainment of the audience, is the real aim of the production. It is through intellectual and critical engagement with the content – encouraged through self-reflexive editing of that content – that the audience can go beyond being merely entertained. When an audience is pleasurable engaged with but critically distanced from the material presented, they can interact with it critically while wanting to carry on watching. And it is this intellectual engagement with the material that has the potential to spark perception change.

5.3.2.2 Intellectual engagement through the use of self-reflexive editing devices

For Brecht the *Verfremdungseffekt* ('alienation' or distanciation) allows the audience to view the material presented in a "critical, contradictory, detached" manner, rendering their attitude towards the material "active, practical, positive" (Willett, 1984: 146). In order for information to be internalised by viewers, it is critical that they are not presented with solutions and conclusions, but are allowed the mental space to critically evaluate the perspectives presented. *Booza TV* contains cues that are intended to lead the audience to certain specific conclusions regarding alcohol and its harms, but those conclusions are not explicitly included in the text. Statements and visuals have been selected and structured in such a way that each viewer is encouraged to select and compare the content in a personal way. Instead of saying 'binge drinking is bad', *Booza TV* shows how a drunk young woman makes a fool of herself at a party after drinking too much. Instead of quoting statistics of alcohol-related dangers, *Booza TV* interviews young people about how unpleasant it is to get sick after binge drinking. Instead of telling viewers not to drink, patients at an emergency room are interviewed and they talk about the role alcohol played in how they sustained their injuries. By keeping viewers at an emotional distance while engaging them intellectually, they are encouraged to view societal norms and people's behaviour in a critical way. The intention is that viewers then come to what they perceive to be their own conclusions.

The continuity style of editing was employed for parts of the documentary, but it was

interrupted at key points with the deliberate and self-reflexive styles of editing (see Chapter Three for a detailed discussion of editing styles). My aim with this use of overt devices in the construction of the film was to make the audience aware that they are watching a film. Thus I used self-reflexive editing devices in *Booza TV* in order to jar the audience out of passive reception of the information and into a more intellectual and critical relationship with the documentary. Making viewers aware of the film *as a film*, a subjective presentation of reality constructed by a filmmaker, I hoped to make them critical about the validity of the content, allowing them to question what they see.



Illustration 5.1



Illustration 5.2



Illustration 5.3

The action of drinking is repeated in three consecutive shots in *Booza TV*.

Each episode of the *Booza TV* series is segmented using the episodic structure (a self-reflexive structure discussed in detail in Chapter Four). I believe that dividing each episode into segments interrupts the flow of information, reminding viewers that they are watching a film. This was done to counteract passive viewing and refocus the audience's attention critically on the material presented. Within each segment, material was edited to highlight patterns of contradiction and similarity (see illustration 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 above). Repetition and juxtaposition, both identified in Chapter Four as self-reflexive editing devices, were used in this regard. My intention was to create a humorous situation when different people say the same thing, or contradict one another, and when visuals contradict the verbal content. Observation of respondents during the qualitative and quantitative research screenings confirmed this effect. An example that consistently elicits laughter is a sequence showing different interviewees' favourite drinks. The sequence starts with a variety of drinks, each person naming a different one, showing diversity of preference. The cutting is fast and intended to

stimulate interest. Several male interviewees name beer as their favourite drink: "Beer", "Yeah, beer", "Beer, beer and more beer", "Beer, lots of beer". Then, suddenly, a young woman with a high voice says: "Whiskey". First variety of preference is shown, then a clear pattern is highlighted and finally the pattern is contradicted. This creates surprise and is also intended to prompt viewers to reflect on their own drinking preferences in a critical way.

Booza TV aims to initiate social change by focusing viewers' attention on themselves as individuals first. One of the ways that this is done is by presenting (often contradictory) perspectives from several individuals. I believe that by including a question and then several different answers to that question, viewers are prompted in turn to answer, for themselves, that same question. In many of these cases the voice of the director posing the question off-camera has been included in the edit to this purpose. This device is self-reflexive and reminds the viewer of the constructedness of the documentary. I included the voice of the director with the intention of making viewers feel as if the question was being posed *to them too*, prompting them to formulate their *own* answer. The intended thought process is: "I see here what other people prefer. I see many people like beer and some like whiskey. What do I prefer to drink? Why is my choice the same as, or different from, those I see in *Booza TV*?". This strategy is used throughout the series to encourage viewers to consider progressively more harmful aspects of their drinking behaviour. Though this inward perspective, and potential self-criticism, may be experienced as uncomfortable at first, it is ultimately fruitful, because "man (sic) ... does not have to stay the way he is now, nor does he have to be seen only as he is now, but also as he might become" (Brecht in Willett, 1984: 193).

In the editing of these sequences, I consistently aimed to create sequences reminiscent of conversations between people, highlighting parallels and contradictions between different interviewees' views on alcohol. This was done to highlight patterns, similarities in beliefs, and also conflicting opinions about the same topic. I found this particularly useful, as it is important for the success of the series as a tool of perception change that audience members feel as if they had come to their own conclusions about

the validity of the views being expressed, rather than having been preached to. The value of this lies in the idea that most people “respond best when involved in their own decision making” (Austin, 1995: 115). Arranging shots showing different interviewees answering the same question was intended to make the viewer aware that different individuals hold different views on the same topic. I hoped that this would prevent passive acceptance or rejection of a singular view, as often required by didactic films, but rather allow the viewer to see that her view is one of many. Of course, the perspectives and visuals collected in *Booza TV* were selected and structured in such a way that there are enough views and evidence present for viewers to draw conclusions that are in line with the goals of the production. But that conclusion is seldom provided overtly in the film. The intention was not to force a conclusion on the viewer, but rather to allow space for each viewer to feel as if she is coming to her own, individual conclusion. The goal was that each viewer should weigh up the perspectives presented in the film along with her own and then form a new perspective. This was in turn intended to encourage viewers to take responsibility for their own views and to empower them to change those views, and their behaviour if necessary, through feeling as if they were coming to conclusions independently about the issues at hand. I believe that this strategy is appropriate for a perception-change programme as it is in line with the Transtheoretical Model for Change and with Weintraub Austin's assertion, discussed above, that negative information should not be presented didactically in behaviour-change campaigns (1995: 114-115).

Some segments of footage that would be routinely excluded from a traditional documentary were included in *Booza TV* in an attempt to remind the audience that what they see on screen has been selected by a filmmaker. The tension between what is normally seen or heard and what is actually seen or heard here is intended to give the viewer an awareness of the film form, a characteristic of self-reflexive viewing. In this regard several moments showing interviewees thinking and hesitating before answering a question posed by the director are included. The director can be heard off-camera on several occasions, making a comment or prompting interviewees to elaborate on their statements. The voice of the filmmaker has been included in an attempt to remind the audience of her presence, that there was someone who *made*

the film. An interviewee directly addressing the director, saying “That’s a good point”, after the director asks whether there is indeed a difference between drugs and alcohol, is intended to further emphasise the presence of the filmmaker. The inclusion of direct questions is also intended to add to the effect of the device of including multiple perspectives by making the audience feel as if they too must answer the question, as if the question has been posed to the viewer too. The intention is to encourage a self-reflexive interaction with *Booza TV*, where the audience add their own answer to the various perspectives collected in the episode.

5.4 FINDINGS

A full discussion of respondents' alcohol-related perception changes is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The *Executive Summaries of Episode Findings, Booza TV Project Report*, and *Elsies River Project Final Report* are attached to this dissertation as Addenda Three, Four and Five respectively and provide more information on these findings.

In summary, a comparison of the pre-screening and post-screening questionnaire data show that *Booza TV* can indeed shift viewers' perceptions about alcohol-related issues.

The analysis that follows here is focused on respondent's perceptions about and experience of the use of the cinematic form itself in *Booza TV*, gathered through the quantitative and qualitative rounds of research.

5.4.1 AWARENESS OF THE MEDIUM, ENTERTAINMENT AND LEARNING

5.4.1.1 Respondents' baseline viewing habits

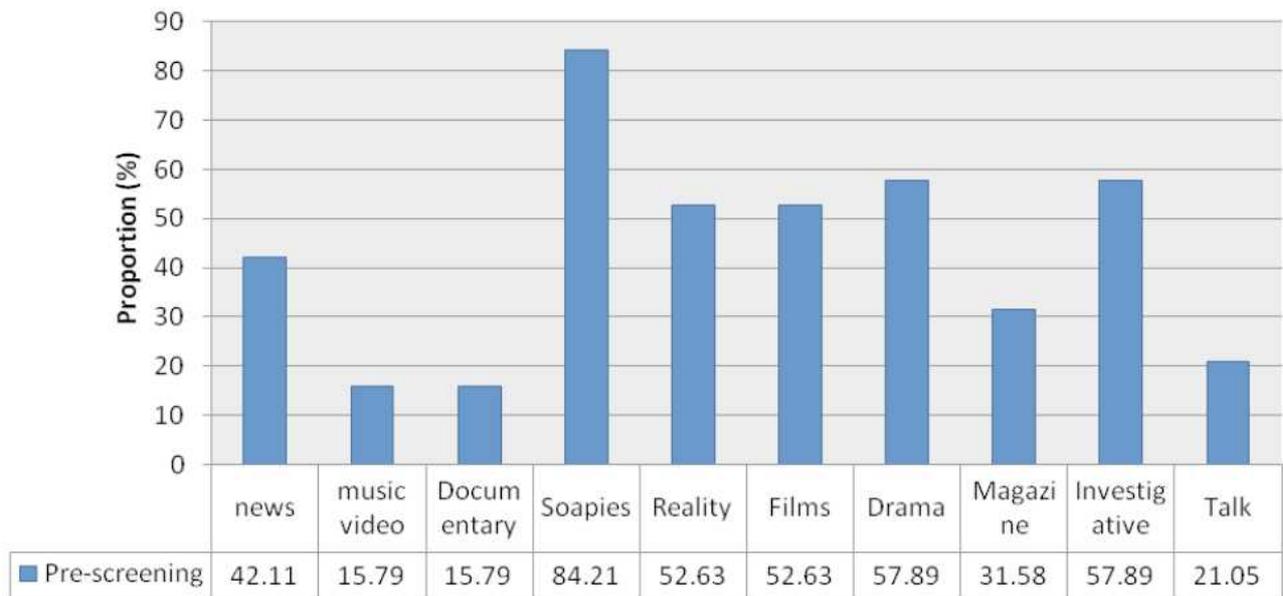


Figure 5.1: Respondents' baseline television viewing habits, youth drinker sample.

The data captured as a baseline for the television-watching habits of the youth drinker sample (see Figure 5.1 above) before seeing *Booza TV* shows that documentary (along with music videos) is the least watched of the different types of programmes listed. Only 15.79% of these respondents chose documentary as a type of programming that they watch. At 84.21%, soap operas (soapies) are by far the most watched type of programming, followed by drama and investigative programmes (57.89%), and reality and feature films (52.63%).

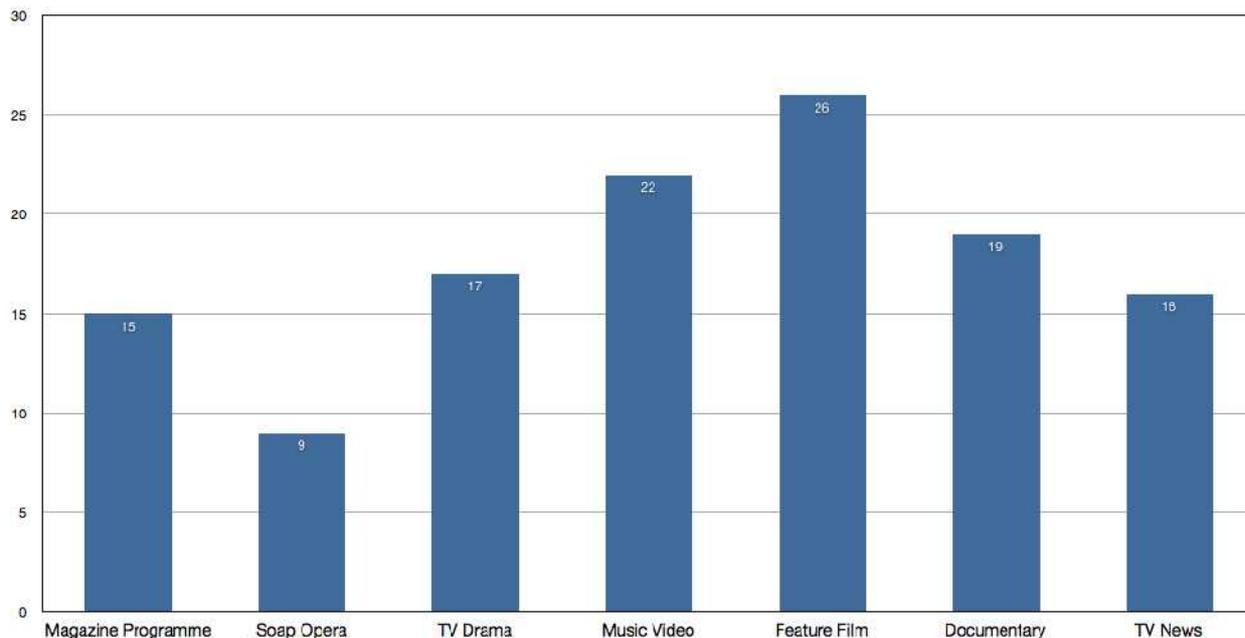


Figure 5.2: Respondents' baseline television viewing habits, CPUT student sample.

The baseline data gathered of the viewing habits of the CPUT student sample before the focus group interview was conducted were somewhat different from that gathered for the youth drinker sample, but they too favoured other forms of programming over documentary (see Figure 5.2 above). The students favoured feature films, with 100% of respondents saying that they watch feature films and 53.84% choosing feature films as the type of programming they watch most. Music videos were more popular than soaps, TV drama and TV news. 73% selected documentary as one of the types of programming they watch, but only 7.69% of the sample said that they watched documentaries the most.

In the pre-screening questionnaire 89.47% of the youth drinker respondents viewed documentary as "Educational" and none viewed it as "Entertaining". The data gathered from the pre-screening questionnaire point to a correlation between respondents' view of documentaries as not entertaining and how few of them watch documentaries when given a choice. Before seeing Episode One of *Booza TV*, the CPUT student sample saw documentaries as predominantly "Informative" (73.07%) and "Educational" (26.92%). Only two respondents (7.69%) thought documentaries were "Exciting" and only one

thought they were “Entertaining”.

The data about respondents' baseline viewing habits and previous experience of documentary films were gathered in order to draw a comparison between respondents' preconceived ideas about the entertainment value of documentary and their actual experience of *Booza TV*.

5.4.1.2 Perceived entertainment and desire to view further episodes

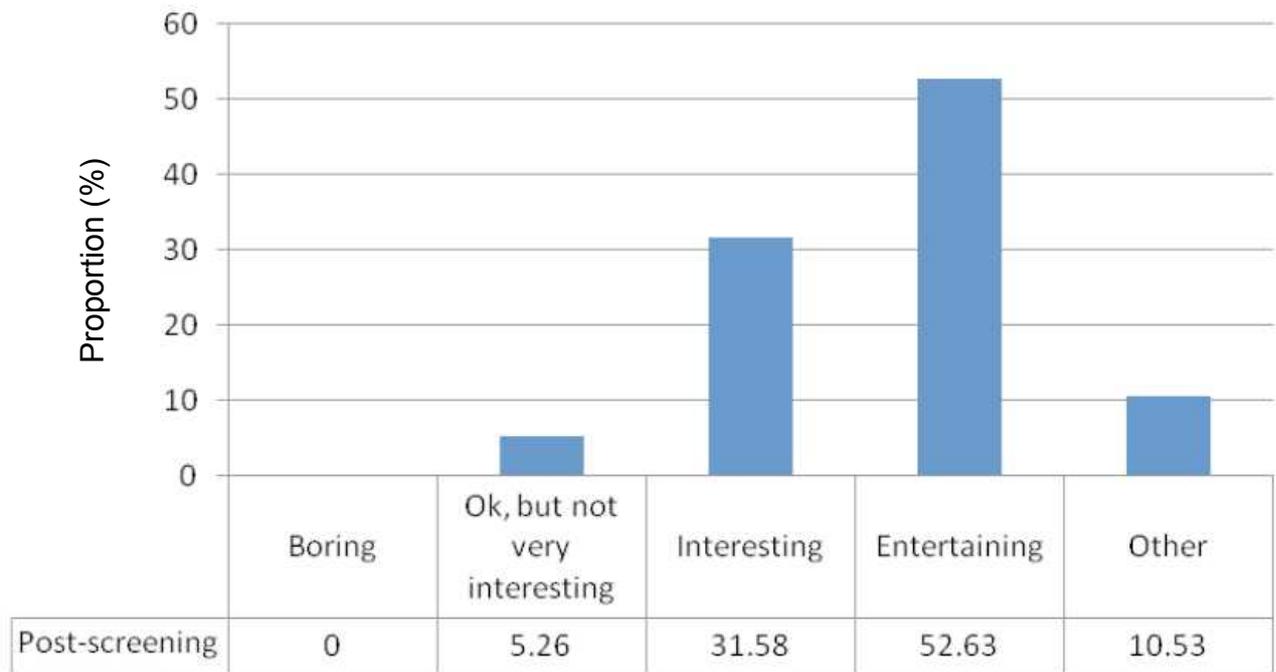


Figure 5.3: Episode One rating, youth drinker sample.

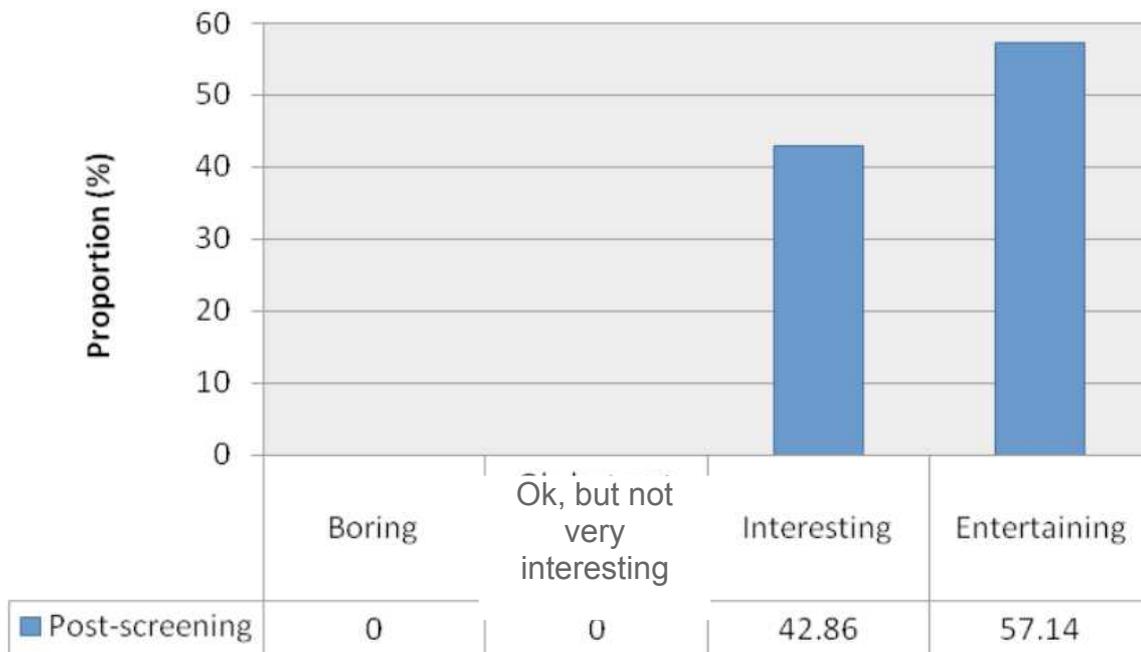


Figure 5.4: Episode Six rating, youth drinker sample.

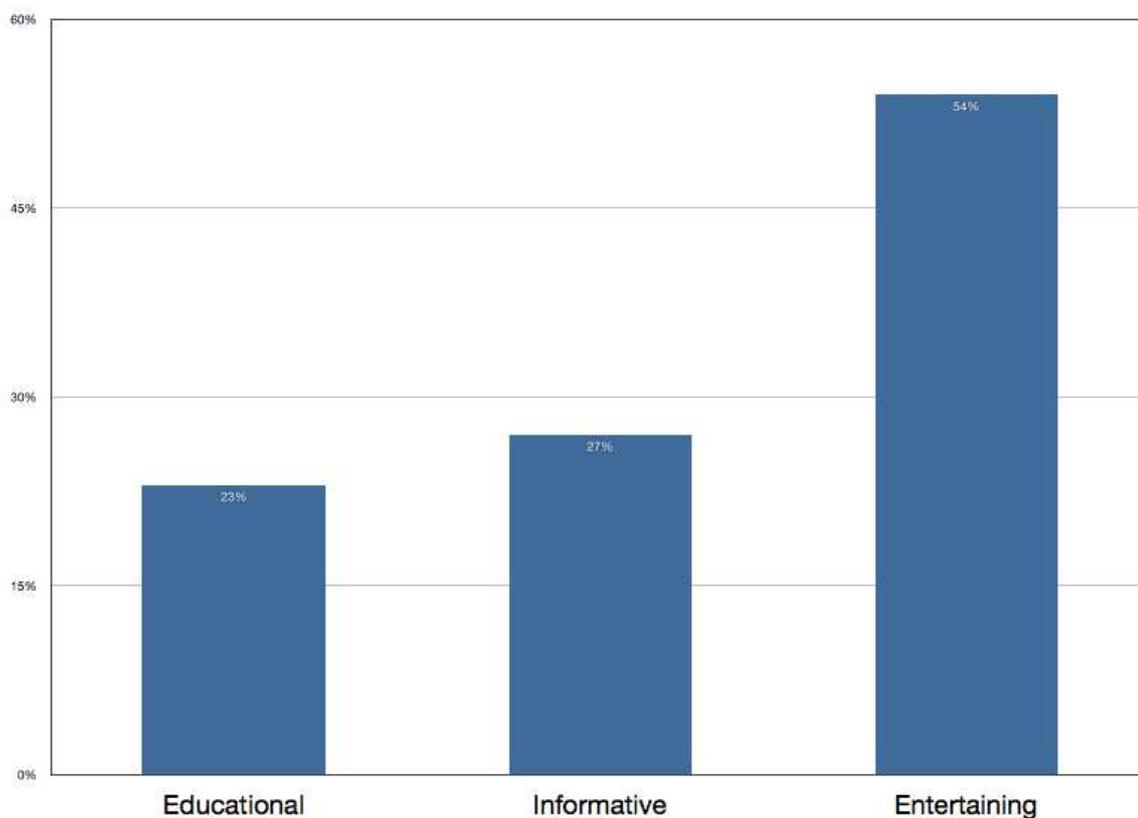


Figure 5.5: Episode One rating, CPUT student sample.

When asked to rate their enjoyment of the episodes after viewing them, the youth drinker sample found them predominantly entertaining and interesting (see Figures 5.3 and 5.4 above for two examples). From these ratings, and from their overall evaluation after watching the whole series, it is clear that they found *Booza TV* entertaining and effective at engaging viewers, despite the baseline lack of interest in documentary programming measured before the screenings. After seeing Episode One the majority of the CPUT student sample (53.84%) said that they found *Booza TV* 'Entertaining'. 26.92% saw it as "Informative" and 23.07% as "Educational" (see Figure 5.5). Not a single respondent from either of these two samples said that *Booza TV* Episode One was "Boring". This points to viewers' enjoyment of *Booza TV*, a very positive affirmation of the filmmakers' intentions to use entertaining editing as a way of structuring the content.

Based on the post-screening questionnaire responses for all samples, it is clear that the dominant view of *Booza TV* was that it was entertaining and therefore a conclusion can be drawn that more people would be likely to watch (and carry on watching) *Booza TV* than other documentaries currently being broadcast on television. Thus a conclusion can be drawn that *Booza TV* delivers on its stated aim of engaging its target market through the use of content and editing that were designed to be entertaining to the target audience.

During the quantitative research several episodes were also measured as being successful at motivating viewers to watch further episodes. The majority of youth drinker respondents indicated on the Episodes One and Two post-screening questionnaires that they would like to watch the following episodes. And after watching Episode Six, all respondents from the youth drinker sample replied positively when asked whether they would watch *Booza TV* if they came across it during a normal scheduled television broadcast, showing that *Booza TV* compares positively to the samples' favourite television programming.

After watching Episodes One, the CPUT student sample respondents were also asked on the post-screening questionnaire whether they would watch *Booza TV* if they came

across it on television, whether they would like to see the rest of the episodes and whether they would recommend the series to others. The majority of respondents answered positively to all three of these questions. 92% of respondents said they would watch *Booza TV* if they came across it on television, 96% that they would like to see the rest of the episodes and 92% that they would recommend the series to others. During the focus group interview with the CPUT student sample one of respondent identified the editing devices that contribute to the success of the first episode in "hooking" the audience. He noted that the fast pace and excitement of the first episode "gets you interested in the beginning and then they go into the more serious part towards the end after you're ... already hooked. Then ... you wanna keep watching" (Student 8.1, Addendum Seven). At the conclusion of the focus group interview several respondents from the CPUT student sample asked whether they could watch the other episodes (see Addendum Seven, Focus Group Interview Transcript). At the beginning of my next contact with them, during their weekly lecture with me, several again asked whether they could continue watching the series. The deduction can therefore be made from the data gathered from the quantitative and qualitative research that the early *Booza TV* episodes are effective at encouraging viewers to want to watch future episodes.

The first episodes' ability to entice viewers to watch further episodes is particularly important as the seriousness of the topics dealt with increases after Episode Two. Episodes Three, Four and Five show the effects of alcohol abuse, alcohol-related violence, motor vehicle accidents and personal injury. The filmmakers feared that they could, therefore, alienate viewers if this content were not placed after the more entertaining first two episodes. Furthermore, though exposure to only one or two of the episodes can have an impact (as is clear from the quantitative data regarding perception changes between pre-screening and post-screening questionnaires for each episode summarised in Addenda Three, Four and Five), it is the filmmakers' intention that viewers should watch all six episodes of the series. The series has been structured in such a way that (a) episodes build on each other and (b) topics are referred to in increasing depth over several episodes. It is by watching all six episodes that the audience may experience the full impact of the series. The intention was also that

viewing all six episodes will encourage viewers to progress through the stages of the Transtheoretical Model for Change, promoting long term maintenance of perception and behaviour change.

From the findings above, it is clear that *Booza TV* is indeed perceived as entertaining by viewers. Entertainment was, however, not the primary goal of the *Booza TV* series. The intention was to use entertainment as a vehicle for content aimed at effecting perception change. Self-reflexive editing devices were seen as critical to *Booza TV*'s ability to change viewers' perceptions. The contention in this dissertation is that by presenting conclusions didactically, viewers remain passive in their reception of the material. By presenting them with content in a way that encourages active interaction with the material, it was hoped that they would be prompted to evaluate the material critically, coming to their own conclusions and internalising any resultant perception changes.

5.4.1.3 Awareness of editing devices

The goal of continuity editing (discussed in more detail in Chapter Four) is to make cuts invisible to the viewer in order to avoid distraction from the narrative and emotion of the film. In editing *Booza TV*, however, I made a conscious attempt to make cuts conspicuous to the viewer in order to subvert the traditional continuity style of editing. Self-reflexive devices were used in all six episodes of *Booza TV*. Viewers' awareness of these devices and their reactions to them were tested using Episodes One and Four. Episode One was used for the quantitative and qualitative rounds of research; while Episode Four was also used for the quantitative research, during which all six episodes were screened to respondents. Thirteen self-reflexive devices were purposefully included in Episode One and nine in Episode Four.

I contend that respondents' awareness of the editing devices is significant in this study because it demonstrates an awareness of the construction of the film. This is indicative of an awareness of the film as a film, a hallmark of self-reflexivity.

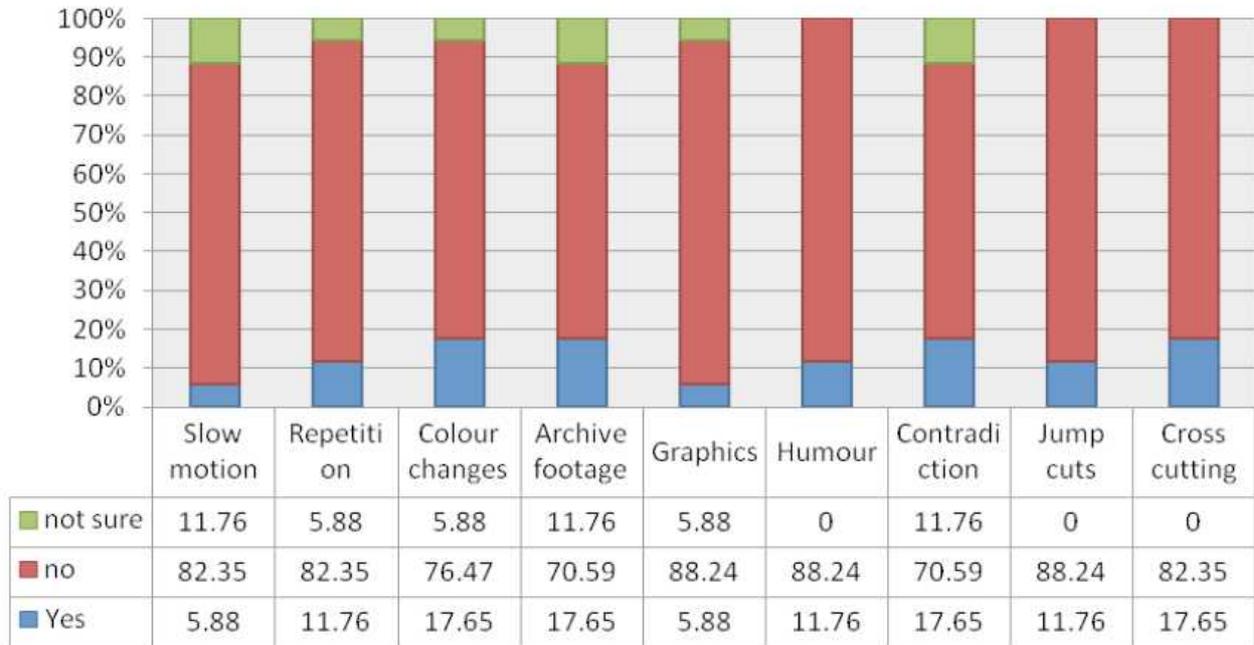


Figure 5.6: Editing devices noticed by respondents in *Booza TV* Episode 4, youth drinker sample.

The youth drinker sample’s awareness of editing devices was probed in detail after the Episode Four screening. I selected nine self-reflexive devices for use in the editing of the episode. Every one of these nine devices was noticed by a percentage of the respondents: 5.88% were aware of the use of slow motion in the episode, 11.76% noticed repetitions, 17.65% noticed colour changes, 17.65% noticed the inclusion of archive footage in the episode, 5.88% noticed the use of graphics, 11.76 noticed the use of humour in the construction of the film, 17.65 noticed contradictions, 11.76% were aware of jump cuts and 17.65% were aware of cross-cutting. This means that on average 13% of the audience was aware of any given device being used. Considering that the aim of continuity editing is to make all edits entirely invisible, or noticed by 0% of the audience, an average of 13% of the audience noticing editing devices consciously can be deemed fairly significant.

During the qualitative focus group interviews with the CPUT students respondents made reference to noticing several of the self-reflexive editing devices used in Episode One. Self-reflexive editing devices mentioned by the CPUT student sample were: noticeable cuts, fast cutting, variations in pace, ellipses, inter-cutting, use of close ups out of context, inclusion of out-takes, juxtaposition of different views, use of a variety of

interviewees (with specific reference to the inclusion of different races, and the combination of perspectives from experts and ordinary people), time lapse, use of a variety of settings, superimposition, effect transitions and inclusion of multiple formats and sources.

The devices mentioned by the most number of respondents, namely fast cutting, juxtaposition of conflicting opinions, the inclusion of perspectives from a variety of people (not just experts) and the use of a variety of (video and film) sources and formats, are discussed in detail below.

5.4.1.3.1 Rapid cutting

I used rapid cutting as a recurring device in *Booza TV*. One of the characteristics of MTV-inspired self-reflexive editing identified by Dancyger is "pace" or "brevity" (2002: 188). Episode One contains several sequences with fast cutting. Fast cutting was used for both interview and visual sequences. Some of the shots included are so short that it is difficult to take them in. This was inspired by the speed and energy of music videos and other youth programming and was used in the hope of engaging a young audience. This fast cutting is intended to be noticeable to the audience, focusing attention on the editing of the documentary and, it is hoped, sparking self-reflexive engagement with it.

Fast cutting was the self-reflexive device noticed by the largest number of the CPUT students. One of the focus group respondents stated that "it keeps you anxious and excited ... and the confusion, like, a lot of confusion" (Student 8.4, Addendum Seven). Later in the focus group interview another respondent picked up on this same device, stating that it reflects the experience of a person drinking alcohol in a social environment. He related the fast cutting to an impaired sense of time passing when intoxicated, stating that "when you go partying, you get in that state of mind. And suddenly you're like: 'oh shit, it's already two o'clock'" (Student 14.4, Addendum Seven). This points to a powerful dual effect self-reflexive editing devices can have. While these devices remind viewers that they are watching a film, they can also emphasise the concepts or emotions communicated by the film. Fast cutting in this context is noticeable to the viewer, but at the same time serves to represent the feeling

of intoxication in a visual way. So, amplification of emotion or events and self-reflexive distancing should not be seen as mutually exclusive. In fact, it seems that self-reflexive devices are *particularly effective* at signifying connotative meaning to viewers.



Illustration 5.4



Illustration 5.5



Illustration 5.6

Three consecutive close shots lacking establishment, from *Booza TV*.

As shown in Chapter Four, continuity editing relies predominantly on the “conventional” (Chandler, 2004: 133) or safe cutting pattern. In this pattern environments and the relationships between characters are established in wide shots before showing more detail and drawing the audience in with closer shots. This strategy is safe because it creates little confusion and is familiar to mainstream audiences. In *Booza TV* sequences cut fast were often constructed from close-ups used out of context, lacking establishment (through wider shots) of the geography or setting. This results in the “confusion” the respondent mentioned above (see illustrations 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 above). This disjunctive editing should make it difficult for the audience to place shots and it is hoped that this will lead them to question how images and statements have been presented to them. This self-reflexivity is intended to prompt the viewer’s natural instinct to arrange images and statements into a coherent whole, to “organize a pattern of sounds and images into a progression of thought” (Dancyger, 2002: 189). This difficulty in organising images and sound into coherent patterns will require active engagement from the audience. It could spark questions such as: “Who is this person?”, “Where is she?” and “Where does this fit in?”. In these instances critical decoding of the text is required from viewers and I believe this will lead to a self-reflexive awareness of the construction of the film.

A strategy used intermittently throughout the episode is to have one interviewee start a statement and another finish it. This is done to place emphasis on the fact that many interviewees hold similar opinions or have had similar experiences. This device also increases the pace of these interview sequences, as it allowed for large sections of interviews to be cut out and hence compressing views expressed. In the second half of the episode two separate stories about children and teens drinking during the festive season are inter-cut. This is done to emphasise the similarities between the two experiences, even though the two events occurred in different neighbourhoods and to people of different ages and cultures. It also allows for each of the two stories to be shortened and so the main events can be emphasised. This strategy was used in order to keep the pace of the episode fast and engaging and to draw attention to the editing quite explicitly.

Several focus group respondents noticed the sequence described above and other sequences in which phrases from different speakers are combined in order to construct sentences. One respondent noted that through "the editing ... one person says one word and another person says the next" (Student 8.2, Addendum Seven). A second respondent related this device to another self-reflexive device, namely combining perspectives from a variety of interviewees (discussed in more detail below) by saying "it wasn't one person sitting down, giving ... his five minutes of the thing. It was his sentence, and someone else's sentence" (Student 9.4, Addendum Seven). This points towards inter-cutting functioning as a means to compare, in short succession, viewpoints from a variety of speakers. A third respondent referred to the editor cutting "word for word", using only "snippets" of interviews. He then related this device to his own experiences of being intoxicated by describing it as:

like when you go out at night, you go party, you wake up the next morning, you only remember bits and pieces of the night and that's what I kinda clicked with the editing, it's only bits and pieces (Student 8.2, Addendum Seven).

This statement clearly shows that this editing device is effective at eliciting awareness of the film form in viewers (and heightening self-awareness). It is another instance where the self-reflexive editing serves not only to heighten the audience's awareness of

the construction of the film, but also to amplify the content thus presented.

One of the respondents noticed another sequence of abbreviated shots, namely one showing interviewees' hesitations before answering the director's question as to whether there is a difference between drugs and alcohol. He repeated his recollection of the question posed by the director off-camera and then described remembering seeing "A lot of people undecided, like, 'um', 'um'". He also directly mentioned the editing, adding that "it could change people's minds a bit" (Student 8.4, Addendum Seven). In this response he clearly relates what he sees on screen to the editing and also to the overall aim of the series, namely to change viewers' perceptions about alcohol.

5.4.1.3.2 Juxtaposition of conflicting opinions

In several instances in Episode One of *Booza TV* interview statements were selected and arranged to show differences of opinion about a particular theme or question. One example is when people from different walks of life are asked to name the day of the week on which they believe people drink the most. Several different opinions are heard, and in one case a group of people interviewed together are even seen contradicting each other on camera. The contradictions in *Booza TV* were included in an attempt to avoid didactic presentation of information, so that the viewer would not feel that a conclusion is being forced on her, but rather be able to come to her own conclusion about the topic at hand.

The students' responses point to this goal having been achieved. One of the respondents referred to the episode as "well balanced". She elaborated by describing the juxtapositions of different, conflicting perspectives as follows: "they'll bring a bad side and then they'll bring a positive side and a bad side, so it's like it's not all negative or positive". She concluded that this shows that the filmmakers "try to make it realistic" (Student 9.2, Addendum 7). The explicit reference to the device is a positive indicator of its effectiveness as a self-reflexive device, since it clearly elicits awareness of the film form. It also seems from the student's analysis of the effect of these juxtapositions that she experienced them as providing various perspectives without explicitly favouring one. This is in line with Weintraub Austin's assertion that negative information should

not be presented didactically in behaviour-change campaigns, but rather that viewers should be allowed to come to their own conclusions (1995: 114-115).

5.4.1.3.3 Inclusion of perspectives from a variety of interviewees



Illustration 5.7



Illustration 5.8



Illustration 5.9

People from different walks of life are interviewed in *Booza TV*.

Not just experts are used to provide perspectives on drinking in *Booza TV*. Expert views are combined with views from ordinary people (see illustrations 5.7, 5.8 and 5.9 above). An effort was also made to include interviewees of different races and socio-economic classes in an effort to make *Booza TV* more inclusive demographically, in the hope that different viewers would feel as if the documentary is speaking to them specifically. By including multiple perspectives from a variety of people, the intention was to prompt the viewer to imagine how she herself would have answered if the interview questions were posed to her. The intention of this device is to encourage more active involvement by the viewer with the material presented in the documentary, and to prompt viewers to inject their own perspectives into a viewing of *Booza TV*.

The inclusion of a variety of interviewees of different races and from different walks of life was noticed by more than one of the CPUT student respondents. One commented that "it's good that they got both black and whites doing the same thing" because, as she explained, it is interesting that different people exhibit the same behaviour even though they come from different backgrounds and have been exposed to different parenting styles (Student 11.4, Addendum 7). The conversation around the effects of differences in upbringing sparked by this statement among the other focus group respondents points towards this device having prompted them to examine the

phenomenon of drinking in more depth. The influence of parental drinking on the early onset of drinking behaviour in teenagers is one of the topics explored in the episode. So, the conversation among the respondents in the focus group interview points positively to the episode's ability to spark debate on a topic. Judging by the respondent's statement above, I would argue that the editing device of including perspectives from a variety of interviewees encourages critical engagement with the content. Because viewers are actively engaged by the material, it stays with them after viewing the episode. In this case, rather than simply accepting that one's drinking pattern was a result of one's upbringing, respondents were prompted to explore multiple factors that can lead to excessive drinking, including geographical location, background, race and socio-economic status.

One of the other respondents described the value of this non-didactic approach when he stated:

it wasn't experts that were giving their opinion, it was those that go partying, those that just drink at home, those that drink here and there and there. And everybody's input was given and so it wasn't a one-sided thing of an expert only saying this is why people drink. It's people actually saying: 'This is why we drink' (Student 9.4, Addendum 7).

This statement links up with the perspective of the respondent (above) who referred to the juxtaposition of different views resulting in a "balanced" perspective being presented in *Booza TV*. In light of Weintraub Austin's assertion that didactic campaigns are not effective at effecting behaviour change (1995: 114-115), I conclude that the students' statements point to self-reflexive editing devices contributing to countering such didactic modes of communication.

Furthermore, when I questioned the respondents directly about whether the inclusion of different kinds of people made them feel like the documentary was speaking to them, several answered affirmatively, with one saying: "Yes, it does, 'cause it goes to everyone" (Student 12.1, Addendum 7). This points positively towards the inclusion of multiple perspectives from a variety of others achieving the goal of prompting the audience to focus attention inward towards themselves and their own perceptions and behaviour.

5.4.1.3.4 Colour, texture and format changes

Shifts in colour and other characteristics of the visuals “create a sense of stylization that affirms this is a media event and manipulation you are watching” (Dancyger, 2002: 194). *Booza TV* contains material from many different sources, having several different styles including animation, graphics, archive footage and humorous re-enactments.

Archive or “stock” footage in Episode One includes clips from educational films made in the 1950s and 1960s, video downloaded from the internet and home-movie footage. In certain instances contemporary footage was manipulated to supplement this device. In these cases the clips were desaturated and film scratches were added to the visuals to make them seem older. In several instances sections of the episode are introduced with stock footage, the “Hangover”, and “Teen drinking” sequences, for example.

Alternating between different film and video sources is intended to make the audience aware of the medium because the differences are emphasised through the alternations from one medium to the other. Several of the focus group respondents noticed the variety of formats and sources in *Booza TV* Episode One, noting animation, graphics and archive footage. Archive footage was noticed the most. One respondent said: “the old videos was cool” (Student 14.7, Addendum Seven) and another noted that “That footage that they would slip in when somebody says something ... looked like it was from a movie or something. I like that” (Student 14.1, Addendum Seven). Both these statements indicate that the archive footage was noticeable to the respondents and also that it aided in making the documentary more visually appealing to the audience. The second respondent above made this explicit by stating that the episode “was actually cool ... I was interested in it, which I never am really, because I don’t really enjoy watching documentaries. But this one ... I was just watching and I enjoyed that whole piece ... the part when they brought up drugs and alcohol and then it was, you know, clips”. One can deduce from these responses that the combination of material from different sources in *Booza TV* played a role in creating visual interest, maintaining the audience’s attention and in making them aware that the series has been constructed by someone.

The number of self-reflexive devices specifically referred to by the CPUT student sample during the focus group interview points positively to the ability of conspicuous editing devices to elicit an awareness of the film form. Considering that eleven of the fifteen self-reflexive devices used in the episode were noticed by the respondents, I feel that the responses show that the aim of making the audience aware of the filmmaking, was achieved.

5.4.1.4 Awareness of the filmmaker and filmmaker's subjectivity

According to Brecht, “he who is showing should himself be shown” (Willett, 1984: 45). Making the editing more visible increases the audience's awareness of the “process of representation itself” (Nichols, 1991: 56), allowing the viewer to be more intellectually engaged and critical in the viewing of the material. Therefore testing whether there were indeed elements of the construction of *Booza TV* that succeed in reminding the audience that there is a filmmaker behind the construction of the programme was important.

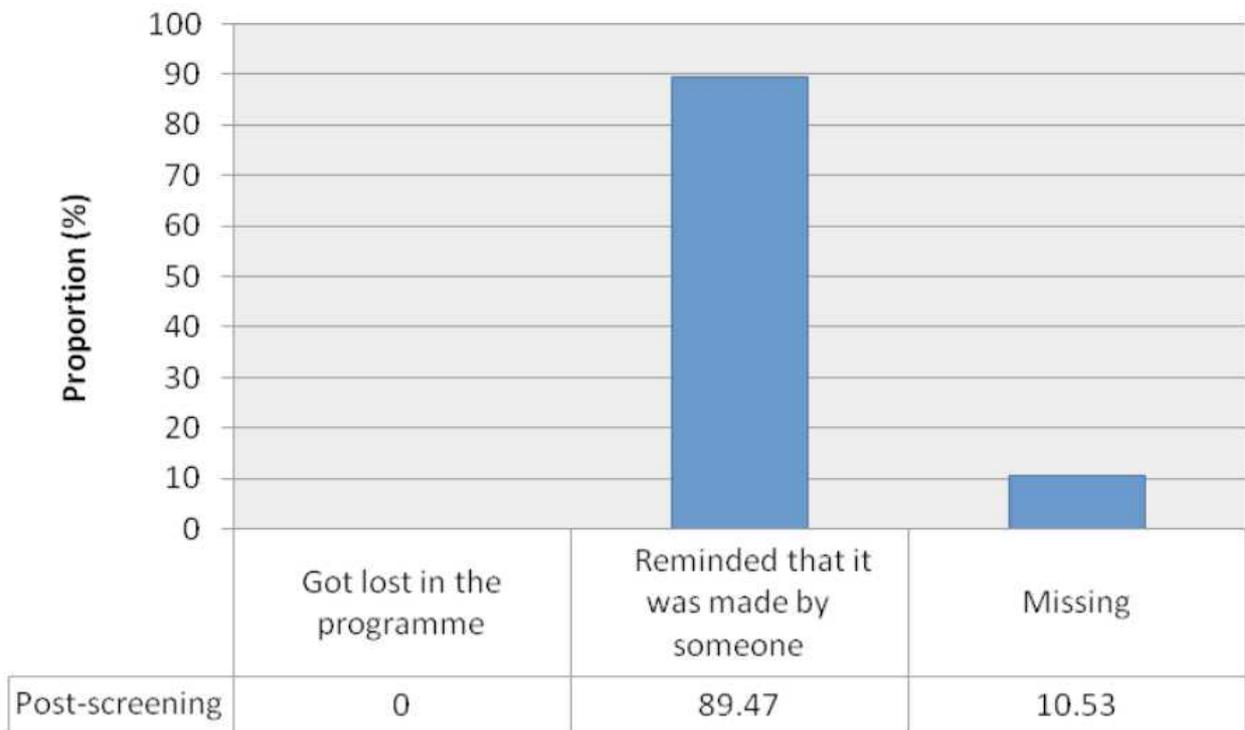


Figure 5.7: Respondents' awareness that *Booza TV* was made by someone (self-reflexive viewing), youth drinker sample (“Missing” indicates respondents who did not answer the question)

In response to a question designed to test viewers’ awareness of the filmmaker who created *Booza TV*, youth drinker respondents consistently answered that there were

things in the programme that reminded them that it was made by someone (see Figure 5.7 above). After watching Episode One 89.47% (all who answered the question) responded that they were aware of the film as a film while watching it. No viewers responded that they got "lost" in the programme and forgot that they were watching a constructed episode. After Episode Two 84.21% were aware of the filmmaking, while 10.53% said that they "got lost in the programme". The data gathered through these two questions clearly indicate that *Booza TV* indeed promotes self-reflexive viewing.

The language used by the CPUT student sample during the focus group interview affirms the data gathered through the quantitative round of research. It is clear from the way the student respondents framed observations that they were aware of the filmmakers and the role they played in constructing the material. Different respondents used phrases like: "the way that they made it" (Student 8.1, Addendum Seven), "the editing, it's cut like ..." (Student 8.2, Addendum Seven), and "when they show" (Student 10.3, Addendum Seven). References to "the filmmaking" (Student 8.5, 9.2, 11.4, 15.9, Addendum Seven), "the editing" (Student 8.2, 8.4, 9.4, 9.6, Addendum Seven) and "a camera" (Student 10.2, Addendum Seven) were also used when mentioning the devices noticed, clearly indicating that the respondents saw a link between the device they see on the screen and the creator responsible for putting it there. It is further worth emphasising that more than one respondent explicitly made the link between the visibility of the editing and intention of changing viewers' perceptions. One stated directly that the way a particular sequence was edited "could change people's minds" (Student 8.4, Addendum Seven) another stated that *Booza TV* 'was done very well, in such a way that it affects us all" (Student 8.5, Addendum Seven).

One of the CPUT student focus group respondents noticed that many of the interviews were filmed in real environments. He described this as giving the episode a "raw" feel. He noted that this effect was as a result of the episode showing "people doing what they do", instead of staged re-enactments. He related this effect clearly to the filmmaking approach, by adding that "you couldn't really plan stuff like that. You just take a camera and show you this is how you are" (Student 10.2, Addendum Seven).

His direct reference to the way that the material was filmed points positively to an awareness of the film form and therefore, I would argue, a self-reflexive viewing of the material. Another respondent noticed the changes in location as a result of the sudden changes in background sound. He described the presence of music in the background while people are talking as “very much live”. He sees the effect of this device as making viewers feel as if they were there, making the events depicted seem “real” and “raw” (Student 13.1, Addendum Seven). From these responses the conclusion can be drawn that the acknowledgement of the artifice of filmmaking contributed to viewers experiencing *Booza TV* as more realistic. So, it seems that by including both the filmed world and how that world was filmed, a documentary can represent a more comprehensive view, including both the pro-filmic world and the filmmaking process. This confirms the hypothesis stated at the beginning of this dissertation that self-reflexive editing devices are effective in acknowledging the subjectivity of the filmmaker, thereby lessening the pressure on her to try to be objective.

The number of respondents from both samples who were aware of the presence of the filmmaker while watching *Booza TV* indicates that a critical distance was indeed successfully encouraged throughout the series. The value of self-reflexivity lies in acknowledging and making overt the bias of the filmmaker so that the viewer is not so easily manipulated, but can hopefully come to her own conclusion about the content presented in the film. And as seen earlier in this chapter, designing campaigns to encourage a feeling that one comes to one’s own conclusion is much more effective in promoting and maintaining behaviour change than trying to force information on viewers didactically.

5.4.1.5 Perceived learning

The data gathered through screenings of all six episodes during the quantitative research show that all episodes of *Booza TV* are effective at shifting perceptions about alcohol (see Addenda Three, Four and Five for more detailed analysis of the quantitative findings). For the discussion that follows a selection of the data gathered before and after the Episode One screenings is used as a sample of *Booza TV*’s ability to shift viewers’ perceptions. The filmmakers’ intention with Episode One was to shift

viewers from Stage One to Stage Two of the Transtheoretical Model for Change, namely from Pre-contemplation to Contemplation. These data reflect that *Booza TV* was in fact effective at making them aware of alcohol-related issues and influencing respondents' perceptions in the way intended by the filmmakers.

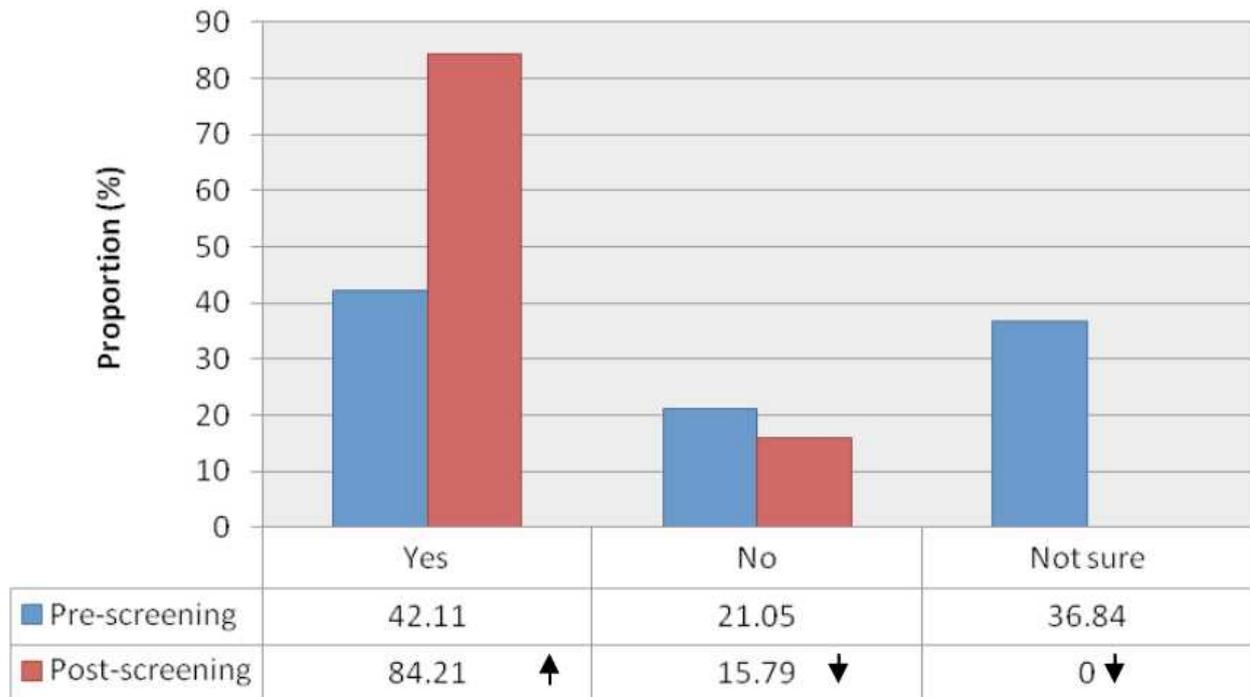


Figure 5.8: The shift in youth drinker sample's perception of the extent of the drinking problem in South Africa compared to other countries from the Episode One pre-screening to post-screening questionnaire. The figure reflects their answers to the question: “Do South Africans drink more than people in other countries?”.

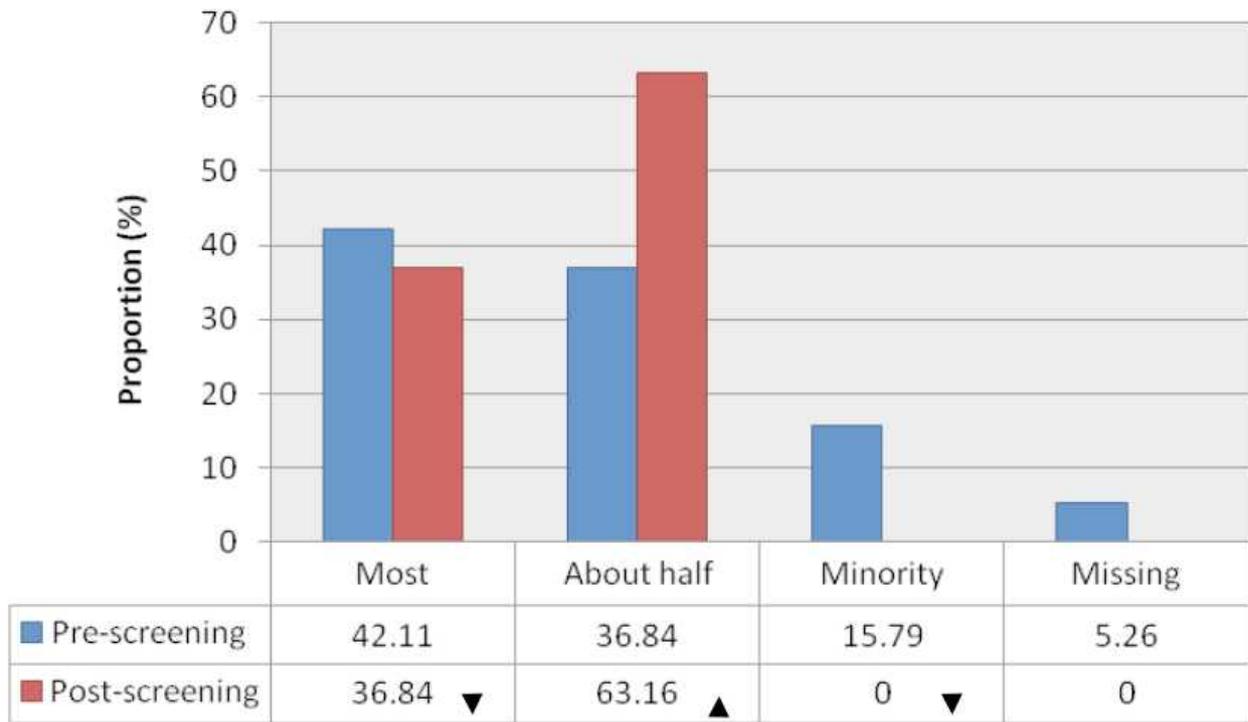


Figure 5.9: Youth drinker sample's perception of the proportion of South Africans who drink alcohol, Episode One.

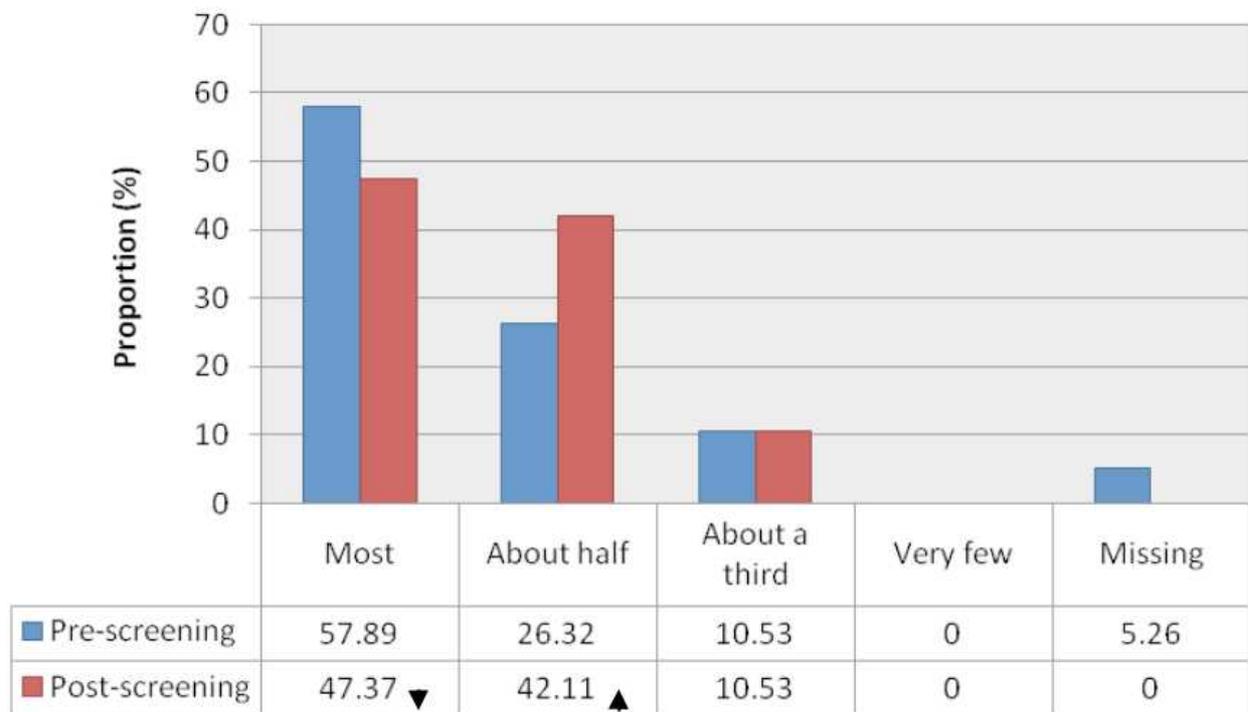


Figure 5.10: Youth drinker sample's perception of the proportion of drinkers who drink too much, Episode One.

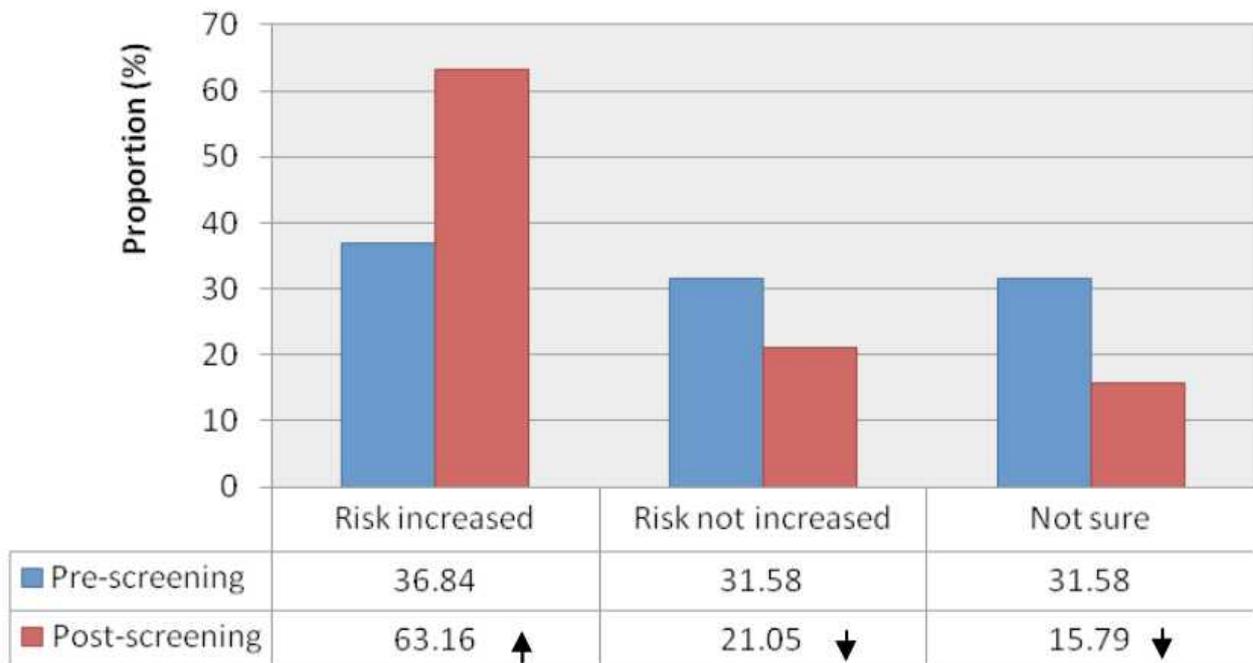


Figure 5.11: Youth drinker sample's perception of the association between parental drinking and the risk of drinking in children, Episode One.

A comparison of the Episode One pre-screening and post-screening questionnaire data shows, for example, that respondents had learned from the episode that South Africans drink more than people in most other countries (Figure 5.8), that not all South Africans drink alcohol (Figure 5.9), that there are fewer South Africans who drink excessively than they originally thought (Figure 5.10) and that risky drinking is more likely to be associated with parental drinking than they initially thought (Figure 5.11).

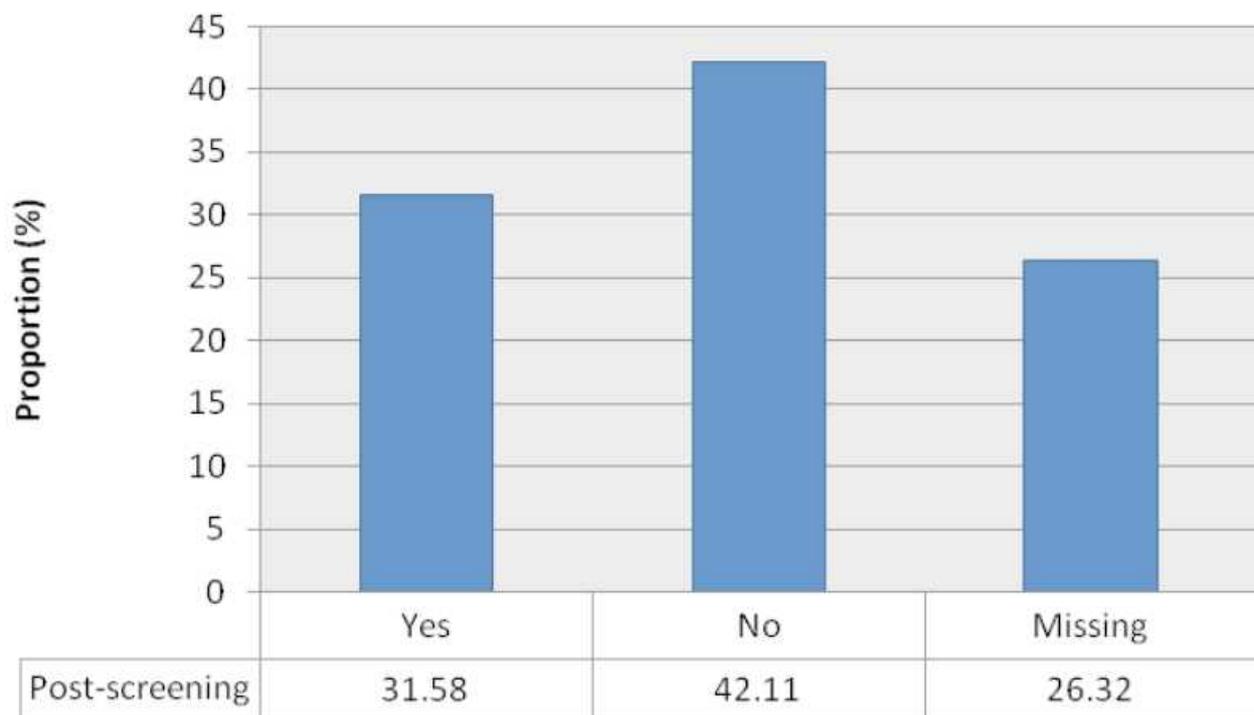


Figure 5.12: Respondents' perception of learning after viewing Episode One of *Booza TV*, youth drinker sample.

In the light of the shifts in perception evident from the data gathered, the episode can be seen as having succeeded in its primary goal of serving as a perception-change tool. When the youth drinker respondents were asked whether they felt as if they had “learned” anything from watching Episode One, however, the majority were not aware that they had learned anything (Figure 5.12). Only 31.58% of respondents from the youth drinker sample felt that they learned anything new from *Booza TV* after viewing Episode One, 42,11% stating that they learned nothing new. And yet the changes in perception evident between the pre-screening and post-screening questionnaires points to the efficacy of the episode in changing perceptions.

The changes in perception measured contradict respondents’ view that they did not learn anything new from the episode. This points to the episode not making viewers feel as if a point of view is being forced on them. Instead it can be argued that they feel as if they have come to their own conclusion about alcohol and drinking. It is my contention that it is owing to the self-reflexive construction of the episode (and the series as a whole) that viewers are prompted to engage critically rather than passively with the material. The various perspectives presented are evaluated and weighed up in

order for viewers to come to their own conclusions. It is the contention in this study that the learning process is thus internalised, rather than perceived as imposed from outside, thanks to the self-reflexivity of the viewing process.

5.5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.5.1 CONCLUSIONS

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, the analysis of the pre-screening and post-screening data for all episodes of the series gathered during the quantitative round of research shows positive perception changes in the respondents (see Addendum Three for an executive summary of the findings showing positive perception changes over the whole series). Therefore, *Booza TV* proved successful in its aim of effecting perception change.

When the perception change findings from the quantitative research and the quantitative and qualitative findings regarding respondents' enjoyment of *Booza TV* are analysed together, Brecht's view that learning and entertainment are not mutually exclusive is supported. Furthermore, it is possible to deduce from the focus group respondents' comments about their awareness of the film form that *Verfremdung* did in fact occur during their viewing of *Booza TV*. Their observations demonstrated that they were aware of the film as a film, observing the editing devices used. It is clear from their responses that they were engaged by the content of the episode at the same time. This dual emotional and intellectual engagement with the material is exactly the kind of active, critical viewing I was hoping to encourage through the use of conspicuous editing devices.

The content of *Booza TV* is not seen so much as "learning" as it is as "entertaining". And therefore the viewer is more open to receiving (and hopefully retaining) new perceptions from the viewing. Viewers feel as if *they* have come to a *conclusion*, not that an authority's view has been presented to them didactically. Their perception

change has as much to do with the way the message has been encoded as it does with the message itself.

From the *Booza TV* field research I conclude that self-reflexive editing devices are effective at (a) reminding the viewer that she is watching a film, (b) making the film enjoyable to watch, (c) signifying connotative meaning, and (d) distancing the audience sufficiently to enable them to engage with the film critically and actively. My contention is further that the audience's enjoyment of *Booza TV* contributed to their reception of the content contained in it, and therefore to the perception change measured.

5.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It seems from the data gathered that *Booza TV* is effective at helping viewers progress from Pre-contemplation to Contemplation, but shifts to later stages of the Transtheoretical Model for Change could not be measured by the present field research. Where the intention during the design and production of the series was that each of the episodes would accelerate viewers to a following stage of the Transtheoretical Change Model, the field research could only measure the shift from Stage One to Stage Two.

To retain the maximum number of respondents from the youth drinker sample for each of the episode screenings, the test screenings were held within a few days of each other. For behaviour change to set in more time is needed between screenings in order for viewers to internalise learning from each episode and successfully progress to the next stage of change. It is therefore recommended that episodes are screened at least one week apart. It is further recommended that *Booza TV* be used as a basis for a more comprehensive intervention, including guided viewings, supporting literature and group discussions. And finally I believe that the effectiveness and reach of *Booza TV* could be greatly increased by making use of internet and mobile social media in addition to using conventional exhibition and distribution methods to reach audiences. Extracts from episodes or whole episodes could be made accessible to a wider audience through YouTube and Vimeo. A website, blog, Facebook page and regular Twitter activity would serve to support the information provided in the series. These social media would provide forums for *Booza TV* viewers to share their thoughts and

experiences, supporting and cementing the learning gained from viewing the series.

The medical research around *Booza TV* is ongoing. At the time of writing this dissertation, the plan was that *Booza TV* would be rolled out, starting at the beginning of 2012, to various distribution points in the Western Cape, where the episodes can be screened to the public. These points include clinics, community centres, municipalities and other public service points. By the end of 2011 Dr Corrigan had also received close to two thousand requests for copies of the series from various organisations and individuals.

Data about Western Cape emergency room admissions related to alcohol will be gathered over the course of the several years. A comparison will be drawn between data from before and after implementation of the series. This data will show whether *Booza TV* is indeed effective at going beyond changing perception to changing behaviour on a large scale.

After completion of the *Booza TV* field research I came to the conclusion that we had effectively tested whether viewers noticed the self-reflexive editing devices used and whether they were aware of the presence of the filmmaker. The methodology followed, however, was not appropriate for testing to what extent self-reflexive devices are more effective at encouraging active and critical viewing than more conventional editing styles. Therefore it is recommended that research be conducted making use of comparative viewings. To achieve this, I recommend that two versions of the same material should be edited, one version using continuity editing and the other self-reflexive editing. I recommend that a sample of diverse respondents be drawn and divided into two groups. The one group should view the continuity sequence and the other the self-reflexive sequence. Questionnaires should be administered and a focus group interview conducted with each group after the screening to ascertain their responses to the structure and content of the material. The *Booza TV* qualitative focus group interview questions could be used as a basis for preparing questions for these focus group interviews. The findings from the two groups should be compared and analysed to ascertain how viewers' awareness of the film form and filmmaker's bias and

their responses to the content are influenced by the style of editing used. Specific emphasis should be given to (a) whether editing devices are noticed by respondents in each case, (b) whether respondents equate these devices with a filmmaker who structured the content, (c) whether they perceive this as an acknowledgement of the subjectivity of the filmmaker and (d) whether the viewing of the self-reflexive sequence is more aware, active and critical than the viewing of the continuity sequence.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The discourse around the subjectivity of the filmmaker has been central to documentary film theory and practice for almost a century. As shown in Chapter Two of this dissertation, some theoreticians and filmmakers have required objectivity in the filming and editing of the pro-filmic world. Others have emphasised filming strategies they felt would allow the filmmaker to capture reality or the truth. Today there is a lingering expectation among audiences that, because documentary films strive to represent the real world, they should be truthful and that the documentary filmmaker must be objective. Many, if not most, contemporary filmmakers and theoreticians acknowledge, however, that subjectivity is implicit in the act of documentary filmmaking. At most, the audience can expect that the filmmaker will feel obliged to ensure that the content of the film is verifiable.

I argue that the documentary film can be defined as much by the subjectivity it captures implicitly as the reality it attempts to depict overtly. And once subjectivity is acknowledged and accepted as intrinsic to the documentary form, the focus of a study of documentary editing can shift to the use of form and medium in the service of communication, expression and debate.

The film form used by mainstream fiction films and television documentaries has been established through years of filmmaking practice. The conventions of mainstream forms have become so widely used that they have become mostly invisible to audiences. Continuity editing is the editing style prevalent in mainstream fiction and non-fiction film. This style of editing is intended to be invisible to the audience, and therefore leads to less active decoding of the text and less critical engagement with the message.

It is hypothesised in Chapter Three that self-reflexive editing devices can be used by filmmakers to signal their involvement in the filmmaking process to the viewer. Self-

reflexivity can be effected through breaking with the conventions of established, mainstream film form. In Brecht's view this would result in the *Verfremdungseffekt*, distancing the audience from the material to the extent that they may view it critically and engage with it intellectually. This intellectual distance allows viewers to decode the text critically, interrogating the content presented, the integrity of the structuring process and the intentions or bias of the filmmaker. This lessens the pressure on the documentary filmmaker to try (or pretend) to be objective.

I contend that viewing is most active when there is a mutual awareness by the encoder and decoder of this self-reflexivity. In such instances the filmmaker uses certain strategies intentionally in encoding the text for the purpose of engaging the audience intellectually. The audience in turn is to a greater or lesser extent aware of the film as a film during the viewing, "prompt[ing] the viewer to a heightened consciousness of his or her relation to the text" (Nichols, 1991: 58). Embedded in the text itself are clues that open the text to questioning and criticism by the viewer. The decoder becomes aware of the encoding of the text through the process of actively decoding it. The decoder does not passively take the message in and is not "entangled" in it (Brecht in Willet, 1984: 78). Instead she is aware of the text as a text while decoding the message. The viewer is not only aware of the content of the film, the primary layer of meaning, but is also faced with the secondary layer of the construction of meaning, a glimpse at the way the text has been encoded. This allows the audience to engage critically with the content of the text, interrogating its authenticity and veracity.

This is not to say that the content of the film gets lost in an overly complicated decoding process. Documentary filmmakers can use self-reflexive devices without forfeiting audience engagement. The most effective self-reflexive texts are simultaneously emotionally and intellectually engaging. I propose that form should be manipulated in such a way that the audience is encouraged to engage with the material intellectually while enjoyment of the film is maintained.

A selection of South African documentary films were examined in Chapter Four to identify, list, describe and analyse self-reflexive editing devices. Self-reflexive editing

devices are evident in several contemporary South African documentary films. Some of these films are overtly self-reflexive in mode, like *Imam and I*. Others, such as *King Naki*, include references to the filmmaker's presence or, like *It's My Life*, *Mama Goema* and *Forerunners* exhibit formal elements that can be described as self-reflexive.

The most overt self-reflexive device is the inclusion of the filmmaker herself in the film. This may include the filmmaker directly addressing the audience, the filmmaker introducing herself to the audience and explaining her position in relation to her subject matter, the director herself becoming the subject of the film, or the director being shown or heard in her role as interviewer or investigator.

Different documentary structures are self-reflexive to a lesser or greater extent in themselves. The narrative and rhetorical forms are the least self-reflexive, while the categorical, abstract and associational are more self-reflexive because the structuring strategy is more conspicuous. Self-reflexivity also arises when structures are combined or elements of one structure are used to subvert or deconstruct another.

Self-reflexivity can be effected through the following editing devices: inclusion of the filmmaker in the film, inclusion of interactions between subjects and filmmaker or filmmaking equipment, inclusion of visible equipment, inclusion of technical adjustments, inclusion of visuals of questionable quality, inclusion of undesirable sound, inclusion of hesitations, lack of plot and resolution, categorical structure, episodic structure, associational form, abstract form and combination of structures, shifts in documentary type, shifts in form, intellectual montage, juxtaposition, intercutting, ellipses in content, jump cuts, form edits, rapid cutting, long takes without cuts, conspicuous transitions, superimposition, omission of chyrons, interaction between titles and video, manipulation of playback rate and direction and recurring images and devices.

The contention in this dissertation is that the value of using self-reflexive editing devices lies in the perception change that can be effected through the intellectual engagement that is triggered when viewers are reminded that what they are watching is a film.

Brecht regards the need for distantiation as crucial to both learning and social change. If the audience cannot question what they see, they are passive and remain unchanged. Content is best internalised by the viewer if she is actively involved in producing meaning. And it is self-reflexive filmmaking that allows the viewer space to come to her own conclusion about the views presented in the film. Opening up codes to oppositional interpretation, as Hall suggests, allows documentary film not merely to function as audio-visual communication, but to shift perceptions and change behaviours. The documentary film can then become “a place for philosophers ... [who] not only wish to explain the world but wish to change it” (Brecht in Willett, 1984: 80).

The *Booza TV* documentary series was designed to lead the viewer through the stages of the Transtheoretical Model for Change. The data gathered through field research, described in Chapter 5, confirm the hypothesis that perception change can be effected by screening of a documentary series that contains self-reflexive editing devices. From the respondents' statements on self-reflexive editing devices – the main point of focus in this dissertation – it seems that these devices can also add to the visual interest of a documentary and can aid the audience's enjoyment of the viewing. *Booza TV* was designed to (a) be pleasant to receive (i.e. entertaining); (b) make viewers aware of the fact that they are watching a film (allowing them to respond to the material more critically); (c) not be prescriptive but rather present different points of view; and (d) in so doing allow the audience to make their own judgements. I argue that self-reflexive editing devices played a critical role in achieving all four of these goals. Self-reflexive editing devices are effective in reminding the viewer that she is watching a film, making the film enjoyable to watch, signifying connotative meaning, and distancing the audience adequately to engage with the film critically and actively. My contention is that the audience's enjoyment of *Booza TV* contributed to their positive reception of the content contained in it (and therefore to the perception change measured – see Addenda).

Documentary filmmaking is an active and dynamic field internationally and in South Africa. All the major film festivals in South Africa, including the Durban International Film Festival, the Tri-Continental Film Festival and Cape Winelands Film Festival, screen

documentary films. The Encounters Documentary Film Festival and People to People Documentary Conference are dedicated exclusively to the screening and discussion of documentary films.

People to People 2011 concluded with the establishment of Documentary Network Africa (DNA), a network of African documentary filmmakers and other interested parties dedicated to making, supporting, promoting and distributing documentary film in Africa. Nineteen African countries were represented at this historic meeting. The working group that was elected at that meeting will discuss, among other topics, plans for establishing a channel dedicated to the documentary film in Africa.

Documentary film as a discipline is growing and diversifying. Topics dealt with, locations shown and approaches followed in documentary film production are constantly expanding. Video production, post-production and distribution tools become increasingly more accessible, opening the field to previously unheard voices. The convergence of internet, mobile and traditional distribution methods has changed the landscape of documentary film distribution over the last five to ten years. Distribution no longer relies on the agendas and profit-centred models of television broadcasters, but is now in the hands of the filmmaker and the viewer. Viewers can dictate what they want to watch and when, where and how they want to access that content.

Documentary, docudrama, fiction film and reality television themes and techniques are increasingly overlapping. Today discussions of the authenticity of filmed representations and the role of the documentary filmmaker are as vital, if not more so, than ever before.

The starting point for this study was the hypothesis that the use of self-reflexive editing devices in the construction of the documentary film could serve to acknowledge the presence and subjectivity of the filmmaker, that this would distance the audience and engage them intellectually and thereby reduce the pressure the filmmaker might feel to maintain objectivity. Through this study I have found that self-reflexive editing devices are capable of doing that and, in addition, that they can communicate subtext and contribute to the viewer's enjoyment of the documentary film. After completing this

study I believe more than ever that self-reflexive editing devices can serve as an antidote to the normative expectation of filmmakers' objectivity in documentary films, and that this approach should be embraced by documentary filmmakers in Africa and around the world.

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ADDENDA

ADDENDUM 1

Booza TV

Conceptual Approaches

CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES USED IN BOOZA TV

- **Appealing to young binge drinkers**

To appeal to young binge drinkers, it is vital that it is clear from the first episode that the series will be an entertaining, open-minded approach to the subject matter. By adopting a tongue-in-cheek style with high entertainment value (see below), utilizing interviews of ordinary young drinkers and indicating that we acknowledge the drinkers point of view- that drinking can be fun, create shared memories and enhance a social space we allow the viewer to identify with the series and main character so that they can be drawn into the programme. The series will then start to critically examine the beliefs we have around alcohol and why it is so many South Africans cannot imagine socializing without alcohol. The viewer will come face to face with the mirages and illusions that we as a society have constructed about drinking, largely through the use of humour, fake alcohol advertisements and juxtaposition of illusions with reality. Viewers will be challenged to think about why it is South Africans drink so much compared to people in other countries and ultimately why it is South Africa and the Western cape in particular, has so much death resulting from alcohol. The dramatic peak of the series will be at this point when, having illustrated the fun aspects of drinking, having debunked many of the myths around drinking, we look death soberly in the eye. The series concludes on a lighter and more optimistic note in which we look at the ways out of the predicament we are currently in. Indeed, individual and governmental level solutions and alternatives will run throughout the series but will come to a head in the final episode of the series.

- **Inversion of the psychological and social marketing techniques employed to sustain risky drinking**

For people to sustain ongoing risk-behaviour of any kind requires them to over-estimate the benefits and minimise the harms of their behaviour. Interestingly, advertisers employ the exact same psychology to sell products, including alcohol. It is helpful to apply this same rationale to the intended behaviour change whereby the viewer should leave with the idea that adopting a new behaviour will result in a net gain of resources. Therefore, the series will highlight the positive aspects of moderate drinking and abstinence. Furthermore, it is essential to deconstruct the perceived benefits of drinking, which very rarely hold once a person is intoxicated beyond a certain point. Theoretically, it should be helpful to emphasise the harms associated with alcohol abuse. However, the evidence indicates that "scare tactics" are ineffective. This may be the case because, the diffusion of innovations is initiated by *individuals*, rather than populations and scare tactics tend to focus on alcohol-related harms at a *population* level. For example, the risk per drinker of being involved in violence on any particular drinking occasion may be on average quite low. However, more "minor" harms such

as social humiliation, interpersonal problems and wasted weekends are experienced by the majority of binge-drinkers on most of their drinking occasions and it is therefore possible that highlighting these types of harms may be more effective as they are easier to relate to on an individual level. Episodes one and two cover these harms.

It is also likely that one of the reasons for the ineffectiveness of 'scare' material is due to the timing of presentation; it would not make sense to give this information to an audience in a precontemplative phase of change. However, if the audience is already in a contemplative or action phase of change the information may have the desired effect. As such, this material is kept for episode four of the series and drinker engagement with the material will be encouraged through framing the issues as questions to be solved rather than a list of harms (e.g. why do some people become violent but not others?). Furthermore, this information is important for policy makers and for mobilising public support for alcohol-abuse related policy such as the Western Cape Liquor Act.

- **Autonomy**

This strategy focuses on highlighting the techniques used by advertisers to sell alcohol and attempts to illustrate the fallacies inherent in the concepts of drinking sold by advertisers. The series will highlight these factors implicitly, but will go beyond mere deconstruction and will illustrate how certain segments of the liquor industry with their aggressive marketing in fact rob people of freedom of choice. Added to this are the countless social pressures to drink from family, friends and colleagues. From our interviews with drinkers in Cape Town, it is apparent that many drinkers drink to achieve a sense of autonomy, as distinct from their highly controlled 'work lives'. It is therefore hoped that binge-drinkers, who are by definition rule-breakers and boundary-pushers, will come to view aggressive marketing and social pressure as an affront to their freedom. Rather than focusing on "responsible" drinking (a concept that is inevitably unappealing to binge-drinkers and youth), the idea is to focus on expanding *freedom of choice* (choosing to drink or not because you want to rather than feeling that you *should* or because you are being told to). Having put the 'benefits' of drinking into perspective, highlighted the advantages of more moderate drinking and the social and other negative repercussions of excessive drinking, it is hoped that this would swing the balance of choice towards moderate drinking. We are not aiming to convince drinkers to stop drinking completely as we do not believe this is an achievable or realistic goal.

- **Advocacy**

The evidence indicates very clearly that the easiest ways for governments to reduce alcohol-related harms is by limiting access to alcohol and enforcing alcohol-related legislation. The

evidence also indicates that advertising of alcohol has a major impact on drinking behaviour, yet in South Africa alcohol advertising remains unregulated. The series therefore has a role to play in mobilising community advocacy and support for such measures (like the Western Cape Liquor Act) and highlighting the roles that communities and government can play in reducing alcohol related harm.

ADDENDUM 2

Booza TV

Research Methodology

Booza TV

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. DOCUMENTARY SERIES PRODUCTION

Primary filming of *Booza TV* took place during 2008. Post production commenced early in 2009 with the offline editing phase. Two months of a first round of offline editing culminated in the establishment of the structure for the series and preliminary selections of content for each of the six episodes. From May 2009 to May 2010 these episodes were compiled and refined. From July to October 2010 the episodes were tested by screening them to test audiences and since then have been further refined by Dr Corrigan.

Thanks to my role as one of the editors on the *Booza TV* documentary production, I was able to take part in all phases of the post-production, including being involved with the decision to edit a series of short episodes rather than one feature length film, contributing to the structuring of the episodes, selecting interview content and visual evidence for each episode, refining and restructuring episodes at an advanced stage of the editing process, researching and including editing styles used in entertainment programming and including self-reflexive editing devices in the construction of the series.

2 FIELD RESEARCH

Data about viewers' perception change and responses to the editing of *Booza TV* was gathered during two rounds of testing conducted with samples drawn from the target audience of the production. First, I collaborated with Dr Corrigan and her research team in conducting empirical, non-experimental research to gather quantitative data about viewers' perception changes after watching all six the episodes. To this purpose appropriate samples were selected, questionnaires were prepared and screenings of the series were arranged. At each episode's screening, respondents completed both a pre-

screening and post-screening questionnaire about their habits and perceptions regarding alcohol as well as their perceptions about documentary and their enjoyment of *Booza TV*. This allowed researchers to perform comparative analysis of the data gathered from respondents' responses before and after watching each episode. Following this quantitative research, I conducted two focus group interviews with Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) Film and Video Programme students who have a varying degree of familiarity with editing devices. This was done in order to probe their experience of the self-reflexive editing devices used in constructing *Booza TV*. I felt it was necessary to conduct this second, qualitative, round of research for two reasons. Firstly after concluding the quantitative research with Dr Corrigan, I felt that the data gathered clearly showed that *Booza TV* was capable of changing viewers' perceptions about alcohol, but that their reception of and reaction to the use of the editing devices in the production, though tested, had not been adequately probed. Secondly, triangulation is critical to ensuring the validity of data gathered, and comparing the quantitative and qualitative data collected also allowed for inclusion of a more diverse set of respondents (Maree & van der Westhuizen, 2007: 39).

2.1 Quantitative Research Design

2.1.1 Questionnaire Design

Maree & Pietersen list several kinds of questions that can be used in research surveys as well as questionnaire ordering principles (2007: 159-160). Elements that were taken into account when designing the quantitative questionnaire for this study include sequence and wording of questions as well as response categories. The questionnaires opened with easy, non-threatening biographical questions such as "What is your age?" and "How long have you lived in Cape Town?". This was done in an attempt to put the respondents at ease and introduce them to the questionnaire format. Questions aimed at probing respondents' beliefs and attitudes around alcohol followed and gradually grew in intensity. They were as far as possible worded in a neutral, non-threatening way, for example "Do you think South Africans drink more than people in other countries? Yes/No/Not Sure", in an attempt to elicit honest, non-defensive answers.

Furthermore, questions were often ordered according to the order in which information was presented in the episode. Questions about how much people in South Africa drink were posed before questions about comparisons between alcohol and other drugs in the Episode One questionnaire, since the information is structured in that order in the episode. Questions around similar topics were arranged together to maintain a logical order and prevent confusion, such as arranging "Do you think South Africans drink more than people in other countries?", "How many people in South Africa do you think drink?" and "How many people in South Africa do you think drink too much?" together. Control questions were included in certain cases, such as asking both "Which episodes of *Booza TV* did you like most?" and "Which episodes of *Booza TV* did you like the least?" in the Episode Six post-screening questionnaire.

Closed questions were favoured in preparing the *Booza TV* quantitative questionnaires. Closed questions allow for selection of one or more response(s) from a list provided on the questionnaire. In most cases respondents were asked to mark their selection(s) with a cross or tick in an empty box next to the option. The reason why closed questions were favoured is because their responses are easier to analyse and compare than data gathered through responses to open questions (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 161).

Types of questions in the *Booza TV* questionnaires included biographical questions, multiple-choice questions, ranking questions and quantity questions (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 160-166). "Do you live in Elsiesrivier?", to which respondents were asked to tick in the box next to either "Yes", "No" or "Sometimes" is an example both of a biographical question and a multiple choice question. "Which kinds of programmes do you watch the most?" with answer options including soaps, documentaries and feature films is an example of a ranking question because respondents were asked to rank the various options in order of preference. "How many drinks did you have during your last drinking episode?" is an example of a quantity question.

Likert scales, according to Maree & Pietersen "probably the most widely used scale", were used in preparing answer-options to many of the questions (2007: 167). In these

cases respondents were asked to choose between responses that included “strongly agree”, “agree”, “disagree”, and “strongly disagree”. In the case of *Booza TV* these scales proved particularly useful in tracking subtle changes in perception. There were cases where respondents did not change within one episode from “agree” to “disagree”, but instead shifted gradually from “agree” to “not sure” and then later to “disagree”. If a Likert scale had not been used, these subtle changes might have been lost between two opposite and limiting options like “yes” and “no”.

In certain cases respondents could select multiple items from a list, specifically where participant behaviour or motivation was being probed. Respondents could, for example, choose more than one reason for drinking alcohol (Episode One pre-screening questionnaire) or indicate a preference for more than one of the *Booza TV* episodes (Episode Six post-screening questionnaire).

2.1.2 Quantitative Sample Selection

For the first, quantitative, round of testing, two samples were drawn from segments of the target audience, namely (1) youth drinkers aged 18 to 35, and (2) stakeholders aged 18 and older working in the field of alcohol-related harms in the youth drinkers' community. Both samples were selected to include respondents from a variety of ages, languages, cultural groups and both sexes.

The respondents of both quantitative samples were selected by making use of the snowball sampling method. Snowball sampling, or “chain referral sampling”, is conducted by first identifying a small sample of appropriate respondents. Each of these respondents is then asked to recommend other appropriate respondents and so forth. This allows the researcher to make use of respondents' ability to “penetrate their social networks to refer the researcher to other respondents who could potentially take part in or contribute to the study” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 80). This sampling method ensures selection of appropriate respondents when insider knowledge of specific subject characteristics is critical to the selection or when the desired respondents could not easily be accessed by the researcher without referrals from individuals trusted by respondents.

In the case of the youth drinker sample, respondents were selected that were (1) acknowledged binge drinkers (2) between 16 and 35, and (3) Western Cape residents. Snowball sampling proved to be ideal both for ensuring that each subject conformed to these criteria and for ensuring that the respondents attended all or the majority of test screenings.

In the case of the stakeholder sample, the researchers aimed to select respondents who were already actively involved in work around alcohol-related harms in the target audience's community. The researchers' expectation was that these respondents would be able to provide insight into the nature of the problems around alcohol abuse in their community. It was also hoped that they would have the potential to become valuable allies in implementing the *Booza TV* behaviour change programme in future as part of their own social programmes. For this reason snowball sampling was also a valid and effective sampling method for this sample.

2.1.2.1 Youth drinker sample

The youth drinker sample consisted of nineteen respondents, ranging between 18 and 35 years, predominantly Coloured and living in Parkwood in Elsiesrivier in the Western Cape. Nine were female and ten male. All were born in the Western Cape. Five were employed full time, three part time and five were students. A further four worked as volunteers and two did not specify their current employment.

2.1.2.2 Stakeholder sample

The stakeholder sample consisted of twenty-four respondents, ranging between 18 and 69 years. Nine were female, thirteen male and two did not specify. Twenty-one of the twenty-four were born in the Western Cape and most (70.83%) were resident in Elsiesrivier at the time of the research. Stakeholder respondents included representatives from non-governmental (37.50% of respondents), governmental (25%) and community (25%) organisations. Respondents stated that of these organisations 83.33% dealt with violence and 58.33% with alcohol in one way or another. Respondents had a vested interest in attending the test screenings, as they stated that they expected to "gain knowledge on negative effects of alcohol and be able to create

awareness among the youth and in the communities as leaders” as well as “gain skills which will be used to help people reduce alcohol consumption” (*Booza TV Stakeholder report*, 2010: 3).

2.1.3 Quantitative Research Screenings

All six the *Booza TV* episodes were screened to each of the two quantitative research samples. Screening venues were selected to ensure accessibility for the respondents. Screenings were therefore arranged at venues close to respondents' places of residence or work. Respondents completed a pre-screening and post-screening questionnaire for each episode screened.

The quantitative research was predominantly aimed at measuring respondents' perception change (a) from before to after each episode and (b) over the course of the whole series. Another study, conducted over a longer period, is being undertaken by Dr Corrigan and her medical research team to measure behaviour change for a larger population in the Western Cape. This medical study is outside the scope of this dissertation. For this reason, the quantitative research screenings were arranged over a short period of time. Though this limited the potential of the series to change viewer behaviour, it was ideal for measuring perception change. The biggest benefit of the short screening cycle was retention of the members of the sample. It was found during an earlier round of test screenings that the sample varied over time if screenings were arranged between one and four weeks apart. Only some respondents would return for each screening, while others missed one or several screenings. By limiting the research to a short period of time, researchers could more easily ensure that the sample stayed consistent for all screenings.

Group administration of questionnaires was selected as a data collection method primarily because all respondents' responses could be gathered at the same time and location and the response rate for the sample would be optimal because the questionnaires were administered by researchers at the screening location directly before and after the screenings. Researchers could also provide additional information, explanations and assistance where needed by respondents. A potential disadvantage

with this method of data gathering is getting different responses if questionnaires are administered by different researchers. This was minimised by selecting a core team to administer all questionnaires (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 157).

2.2 Qualitative Research Design

Further to the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires administered during the first round of field research, a focus group interview was conducted to gather qualitative data. The focus group interview was conducted by me with a group of first year students enrolled in the Film and Video Programme of Cape Peninsula University of Technology, where I taught part time at the time the research was conducted. The aim of this focus group interview was a deeper understanding of the target audience's reaction to the construction of *Booza TV*. I hoped in particular to probe their awareness of and responses to the self-reflexive editing devices I used in the editing.

2.2.1 Focus group questions & questionnaires

A list of open-ended questions were used as a basis for leading the focus group discussion. A "funnel structure" was used and questions started out general but became more specific and pointed as the discussion progressed (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 91). The questions were used as a starting point for the conversation, but I allowed the conversation to develop and respondents to react to each others' responses, sometimes probing respondents where necessary to clarify answers or gather more information about a certain statement. This was done in an attempt to ensure that responses were more spontaneous and varied.

In addition to the focus group interview, respondents were also asked to complete short questionnaires before and after the screening. The pre-screening questionnaire was designed to collect biographical data about the sample as well as setting a baseline for their viewing habits and perceptions about documentary. The post-screening questionnaires collected data about their reactions to *Booza TV* Episode One, including how their reception of the episode compared to their baseline perceptions about

documentary film.

2.2.2 Qualitative sample selection

The qualitative sample was selected from the first year students in the CPUT Film and Video Programme. As was the case with the quantitative samples, all of the respondents fell within the target market (see Addendum number, *Booza TV* Campaign May 2011). Stratified purposive sampling was used to select the sample for the focus group interview. This sampling method entails “selecting participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question” (Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 79). Film students were selected in the hope that they would be able to provide informed opinions about the construction of *Booza TV*, particularly the editing devices used. First year students were used since they had had some introduction to the film medium, but their knowledge is limited and they had not received any instruction on self-reflexive devices. Of the twenty-six respondents in the qualitative sample, sixteen were male and ten female. The youngest member of the sample was 18 and the oldest 31. The mean age was twenty. All respondents currently reside in or around Cape Town.

2.2.3 Qualitative research screenings

For the qualitative round of testing, only Episode One was screened to respondents. It had been designed to function as a stand-alone product in cases where time or access to a particular audience is limited. The data collected during the quantitative research confirmed that it was indeed able to do so. It was found that Episode One is particularly effective at shifting perception around several aspects of alcohol consumption. From this data the conclusion was drawn that Episode One could shift viewers from Pre-contemplation to Contemplation on its own, and so could be used in isolation from the rest of the series if need be.

A large number of self-reflexive editing devices were included in Episode One, and it is therefore ideal for testing viewers' responses to these devices. Self-reflexive editing devices used include noticeable cuts, repetition, juxtaposition, ellipses and inter-cutting, inclusion of a variety of interviewees, alternations in setting, pace changes, colour, texture and format changes, superimposition, fast cutting, inclusion of off-screen

comments and questions, inclusion of out-takes, prominent use of music and effect transitions. Each of these devices is discussed in detail under “Findings” in Chapter Five of this study.

3 DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 Quantitative Data: Descriptive Statistics

After completion of all youth drinker and stakeholder test screenings, the data gathered was analysed. For each sample six per-episode reports were prepared by a statistician. These reports contain data and descriptive statistics for the questions contained in the questionnaires. The data is presented using statistical information, summation paragraphs, bar graphs and summary tables. Bar graphs are particularly advantageous in this instance because the visual comparisons of pre-screening and post-screening responses allow one to see changes in perception at a glance.

3.2 Qualitative Data: Interview Recordings and Transcriptions

The focus group interview was recorded using a digital audio recorder. The recording was transcribed (Addendum Seven). The recording and transcript were reviewed and interpreted in an attempt to identify common themes and patterns. Conclusions were drawn from these interpretations.

Addendum 3

Booza TV

Executive Summaries of Episode Findings

1. EPISODE 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. DEMOGRAPHICS

24 Stakeholders viewed Episode 1. More than a third were representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGO), whereas government and community organisations were each represented by 25% of the participants. The average age of viewers was 38 years (range 18-69).

For the youth screening, 19 participants watched episode 1, of which 10 were male and 9 were female. The average age was 24 years (range 18-34). 40% were employed full or part-time, 20% were volunteers and 25% were students.

1.2. DRINKING AS A SOCIAL NORM

Before the episode less than half of the stakeholders (45%) and the youth respondents (42%) believed that South Africans **drank more** than people in other countries. This increased significantly among both groups to 77% and 84% respectively.

1.3. TYPICAL DRINKING PATTERNS IN SA

The episode was helpful in getting respondents to recognise that about half of South Africans were drinkers. A majority of stakeholders initially believed that most South Africans were drinkers (59%) and this changed to less than half (45%) after the episode. Among the youth group, significantly more respondents provided the correct answer (i.e. that half of South Africans drink) after watching the episode (63% versus 37% previously).

Among the stakeholders there was a shift in perception from "a third" or "half of drinkers" to "most drinkers drink too much". The effect among the youth stakeholders was more muted, with some shift in perception from "most drinkers drink too much" to "about half of drinkers drink too much". As binge-drinkers tend to presume all drinkers drink as much as they do, this is a desirable response.

1.4. THE ROLE OF PARENTAL DRINKING

There was no effect in respondents' understanding of the role of parental drinking increasing the risk of drinking among children, but that is probably because the concept was already well-understood, with 73% of respondents recognizing this relationship at the outset.

Among the youth respondents, there was a far stronger impact. Before the episode only 37% recognized the link between parental drinking and the onset of drinking compared to 63% after the episode. This represented a 70% increase in understanding for this concept.

1.5. ALCOHOL VERSUS OTHER DRUGS

The episode shifted the stakeholders perceptions as to the harmfulness of alcohol compared to other drugs. After watching the episode the 64% of stakeholders considered alcohol to be as harmful as other drugs compared to 45% initially. Slightly more stakeholders saw the link between alcohol and perpetrators of violence after watching the episode, but there was a substantial increase in the understanding that alcohol put one at risk of becoming a victim of violence.

Similarly, among the youth respondents the perception of alcohol being similar to other drugs doubled from 21% to 42%.

1.6. VIEWS ABOUT EPISODE 1

- The majority (>80%) in both groups found episode 1 "interesting" or "entertaining"
- Just over half of the respondents felt that Booza TV was trying to convince them of something (i.e. it was biased to some extent).

1.7. CONCLUSIONS

The episode was very successful in changing the understanding of drinking patterns and drinking as a social norm in South Africa, consolidating understanding about the role of parental drinking, as well as the harmful nature of alcohol relative to other recreational drugs. Only the understanding that one-third of drinkers drank problematically was not well-understood but it was not due to the information being incorrectly conveyed in the episode. Only minor editing changes were made based on viewers reactions to the material.

2. EPISODE 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1. DEMOGRAPHICS

11 Stakeholders viewed Episode 2, 8 of whom had previously watched Episode 1. The majority worked for organizations dealing with violence and/or alcohol-related problems and the average age of viewers was 43 years (range 26-66).

For the youth screening, the same 19 participants described for Episode 1 watched this episode.

2.2. CULTURE OF DRINKING

100% of the binge-drinking youth group cited stress as the main reason why South African's get drunk so often, the second commonest reason given was 'fun'. From the stakeholder perspective, they saw multiple problems as contributing with equal mention of stress, peer pressure, fun, and socio-economic problems. After the screening, stakeholder views came more in line with those of the binge-drinkers.

2.3. ADVERTISING

Before the screening of episode 2, the majority of the **youth group** supported the idea that alcohol advertising leads to increased drinking and there was **more support for regulating advertising (50%)** rather than banning it (15% support). After watching episode 2, the strongest shifts were seen from the *disagree* categories to the *unsure* category indicating that **the episode raised significant doubt in the minds of those who disagreed with the need to regulate alcohol advertising. After the screening, those who did not agree that advertising increases drinking were reduced by more than half in the direction of being unsure.**

With the **stakeholder group**, the majority supported both the banning and regulation of alcohol advertising (although there was **greater support for regulation** of advertising). After watching the episode, there appeared to be a **shift away from banning towards regulating advertising.**

2.4. ACCESS TO ALCOHOL

i. Increasing the Price of Alcohol

The majority of **stakeholders** supported this from the outset, with **no real changes** noted after the screening. For **youth**, there was a **noticeable shift away from strongly disagreeing** towards softer disagreement, uncertainty and agreement (in that order) after watching the episode.

ii. Reducing liquor outlet density

Again, the majority of **stakeholders (81%)** supported this from the outset, with **no changes** noted after the screening. In the **youth** group, there was an increase in support for the idea, an increase in ambivalence and a **major decrease in opposition for the idea.**

iii. Reducing trading hours

The majority of **stakeholders** already supported this strategy before watching the episode and **support for the strategy increased after the screening**. Amongst the binge-drinking **youth group**, the majority of the participants did not agree that trading hours of liquor outlets be reduced pre-screening; these **views were slightly shifted towards agreement and uncertainty, but those who strongly disagreed were not swayed**.

iv. Increasing the legal age of drinking

The majority of viewers in both groups supported this idea with **no changes after the screening** seen in the **stakeholder group** and a **slight increase** in support for the proposal in the **binge-drinking group**.

2.5. VIEWS ABOUT EPISODE 2

- The majority (>80%) in both groups found episode 2 entertaining
- 100% of viewers indicated they wished to watch episode 3
- 73% of both groups indicated that the episode made them think about their own or other's drinking behaviour
- Approximately half of viewers felt they learnt something new in Episode 2
- 63% of binge-drinking youth thought that it might be possible that episode 2 could encourage some people to drink

2.6. CONCLUSIONS

This episode did not perform very well especially compared to other episodes. The decision was either to re-do the episode completely or to delete it from the series. After discussing the options with the editors, it was decided to redo the episode focusing on the following:

- Reduce the material that may be misinterpreted to support the idea of drinking
- Increase the content relating to the harms of alcohol
- Strengthen the argument around alcohol advertising
- Strengthen the narrative structure of the episode (focus group feedback indicated that people were getting lost in the episode)

The episode was completely re-written to fulfill the above criteria.

3. EPISODE 3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1. DEMOGRAPHICS

Due to confusion around the screening time, only 5 stakeholders viewed episode 3; as this episode was not crucial for the stakeholder audience it was decided not to re-screen it and only to test it on the binge-drinking youth group. As such, **only results pertaining to the binge-drinking youth are presented**.

There were 17 participants at the screening of this episode with the same demographics as episode 1 (same audience).

3.2. ROAD INJURIES

- Participants' already viewed alcohol as a major contributor to road deaths and these views did not change after watching Episode 3.
- While the majority of viewers knew the legal drinking limits for driving, those who were unsure remained so by the end of the episode
- After the screening of the episode 27% more viewers felt that current laws on drunk driving are not strict enough

- Views on how easy it is to tell if one is over the legal drinking limit were mixed both before and after the screening, with increases in both viewpoints after the screening- difficult to interpret this finding
- After the screening, 18% more viewers rated drunk walking as a bigger problem than drunk driving, but the majority still saw drunk driving as the bigger problem (this is probably because footage on drunk driving is easier to get and more prominent in the episode)
- The majority of the participants agreed that the legal driving limit should be reduced to zero- support for this increased after the screening

3.3. ALCOHOL AND THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

- The majority view that the media should be allowed to say what it likes (52% agree), was unchanged after the screening and some of those who disagreed shifted to being uncertain on the issue
- Fewer people felt the media shows more of the positive than the negative side of drinking after the screening. However, more viewers felt that the media does not show drinking in a negative light after the screening. This finding is contradictory and therefore difficult to interpret
- After the screening, more people felt that newspapers, TV programmes & music videos show drinking in a positive light
- No change in the majority view that magazines promote drinking by showing it in a positive light

3.4. VIEWS ON EPISODE 3

- More than 70% found episode 3 interesting and entertaining
- Two-thirds of viewers felt the episode was trying to convince them of something

3.5. CONCLUSIONS

1. Overall positive impact of the episode on issues related to road deaths
2. Legal drinking limit not being effectively communicated
3. No impact in changing views that media should also be regulated although more people recognized the impact of media on drinking from alcohol
4. Less people found this episode entertaining/interesting compared to other episodes

As the majority of viewers already knew the drinking limits for driving and as the majority supported a zero blood alcohol legal limit, it was decided that lengthening the section on how to calculate one's limits was not worthwhile- the limits are stated and it was unclear what more could be said to educate viewers. Similarly, it was unclear how one could highlight drunk walking more than already done so; less people spoke about this issue therefore there was more footage pertaining to drunk driving.

Minor edits based on audience responses and focus group discussions were made.

4. EPISODE 4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

19 stakeholders (mean age 48.2 years) and 17 binge drinkers (mean aged 23 years) viewed this episode.

4.2. DRINKING PATTERNS (BINGE-DRINKING YOUTH GROUP ONLY)

- The majority of the participants drink at least once a week
- Slightly more than half of the participants had taken more than 10 drinks in the last drinking episode

4.3 VIOLENCE GENERAL

- After the screening, a greater number of stakeholders saw violence as a big problem in Elsies River.
- Stakeholders cited verbal abuse, family violence and child abuse as the main types of violence occurring. The binge-drinking youth group generally agreed but included robberies as a common type of violence.

4.4. VIOLENCE CAUSES

- More than half of the binge-drinking youth group said that they have become aggressive at least once after drinking.
- 100% of the binge-drinking youth group said they have seen people become aggressive when drinking (two thirds often, one third sometimes)
- Pre-screening, the main cause of violence cited by the binge-drinking youth group was alcohol, whereas the stakeholders cited drugs and socio-economic problems as the main causes
- After the screening there was no marked change in either group on the majority view that most violence is alcohol related or that alcohol can make a person aggressive.
- A greater number of stakeholders thought a drunk person was more likely to get into a fight and also that a drunk person was more likely to be attacked after the screening; no changes on these views were noted amongst the binge-drinkers (although the majority agreed). However, both groups showed a post-screening increase in agreement that victims of violence are likely to be under the influence of alcohol.
- In both groups, there was a post-screening increase in the number of viewers who felt it is not just violent people who become violent when they drink.

4.5 VIOLENCE SOLUTIONS (INCLUDING ACCESS MEASURES)

- While most participants in both groups agreed that the liquor industry, shebeen and bar owners should take part in violence prevention, support for this idea proportion decreased slightly after the screening
- Post-screening, more people in both groups agreed that less shebeens would result in reduced violence and also that reducing trading hours of alcohol would be effective

4.6. RESPONSE TO EPISODE 4

- The majority (>90%) found the episode entertaining/interesting and would have watched it on TV
- The majority felt that the information was presented without trying to convince them of a particular viewpoint
- The majority of both stakeholder and binge drinkers felt that the way in which the episode dealt with violence was upsetting

4.7. CONCLUSIONS

1. The majority of both groups already acknowledged the strong role of alcohol in violence before episode 4- after the screening, these views were strengthened on some parameters (especially in relation to VICTIMS of violence), with the biggest changes seen in the stakeholder group.
2. The episode effectively gets across the message that its not just violent people who become violent when drunk
3. The episode was not effective in increasing support for placing responsibility for violence prevention on liquor manufacturers, bars and shebeens- focus group discussions indicated that this finding may be due to lack of credibility of the liquor industry
4. Episode effective in gaining agreement that both less outlets and reduced trading hours would decrease violence (drinkers and stakeholders alike)

5. The majority (>90%) found the episode entertaining & interesting
6. There were several requests for more footage of coloured/white people in trauma units
7. Across all data sets approximately half of viewers reported the way violence was depicted as upsetting, half as just right, none as too upsetting. During viewings, many covered their faces, one person left the room.

Editing changes were made to episode 4 as follows:

- Reduction in graphic visuals to decrease 'gore' factor of the episode
- Additional footage was obtained to get more coloured and white victims of violence- after two nights at Groote Schuur Hospital only coloured patients were found

5. EPISODE 5 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

5. 1. DEMOGRAPHICS

21 Stakeholders viewed Episode 5. The group was fairly evenly split between NGOs (33%), government and community organisations (both 29%). The average age of viewers was 40 years (range 20-75).

For the youth screening, there were 15 participants all of whom had watched episodes 3 and 4 and 13 of whom had watched the first two episodes. 7 were male and 8 were female. The average age was 25 years (range 18-34).

5. 2. THE VALUE OF THE LIQUOR INDUSTRY

The episode had markedly different effects among the stakeholders and youth with regard to the benefit of alcohol to society as a whole. Whereas Episode 5 had the desired affect on the youth respondents, among whom the perception of the alcohol being more beneficial than harmful reduced from 47% to 27%, it had the opposite effect on stakeholders. An increased number of stakeholders were of the view that alcohol was more beneficial than harmful after watching the episode (from 17% to 57%).

Similarly the episode changed the youth respondents' perceptions of the liquor industry in the intended manner. After watching the episode far more respondents believed that the liquor industry did more harm than good to the economy (from 27% to 40%), and of the 40% that still thought the liquor industry was economically beneficial overall, the feeling was less resolute, with no respondents agreeing strongly, compared to 13% before the episode.

Again the stakeholders understood the message differently. Slightly more stakeholders were moved to suggest that the industry was beneficial for the economy, although the result was not statistically significant. It was also notable that the episode seemed to have a polarizing effect in that it strengthen their opinions as to the overall benefit or harm caused by the industry.

5. 3. THE VIABILITY OF THE LIQUOR TRADE

Episode 5 was helpful in increasing respondents understanding in both groups that shebeeners did not make much money from the liquor trade. There was a slight affect among the stakeholders, but a significant one among the youth group, only of who thought that it was very profitable (7%) compared to 67% initially.

The episode was only moderately successful in changing stakeholders' perception that most of the liquor industry's profits did not arise from the formal trade. However, among the youth respondents the effect was dramatic, with those who agreed that big liquor companies made most money from legal outlets dropping from more than half to less than one third of

respondents, and many of those who believed profits arose mainly from legal outlets were unsure after watching the episode.

5. 4. LIQUOR LICENSING

Among stakeholders and youth respondents in particular, liquor licensing was seen to be biased towards wealthier areas. More stakeholders thought that licensing would be good for job creation after watching the episode, whereas the opinion among the youth group shifted in the opposite direction.

The episode also led to uncertainty among the stakeholders as to whether there was a need for more licenses or more liquor outlets in Elsie's River. However among the youth group there was a consistent and desirous shift in their understanding, i.e. that there should be fewer outlets in their community, of which more should be licensed and that these license be granted in designated zones.

5. 5. ACCESS TO ALCOHOL

Episode 5 shifted both stakeholders and youth respondents perceptions as regards the effect of the WC Liquor Act on access to alcohol, with more respondents agreeing that it would make access more difficult. As to the fairness of the legislation, the episode was not able to clarify this definitively for either group.

Neither stakeholders nor youth were clear after watching Episode 5 that limiting places selling alcohol would reduce violence, but it was felt that reduced closing times might have an effect.

5. 6. VIEWS ABOUT EPISODE 5

Overall the respondents enjoyed the episode and most appreciated the level of complexity, although some of the youth group found some of the dialogue and content too complex.

A focus group with the youth group also revealed that :

- There was a feeling of inevitability about illegal trade.
- The respondents enjoyed the boxing match but felt that portraying the result as a draw would remove any perception of bias.
- The position of the shebeeners was well understood.
- It was not clear whether the episode would motivate communities to support the liquor act, but that it was a useful platform for informing the debate.

CONCLUSION

The episode was very successful in changing the understanding of the benefits and harms caused by the liquor industry, the viability of the informal trade, the effects of changing liquor licensing and access to alcohol. However it was particularly striking that the messages were more effective among the youth group than among the stakeholders. Only minor editing changes were made.

6. EPISODE 6 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

6. 1. DEMOGRAPHICS

12 Stakeholders viewed Episode 6 of which one quarter were light drinkers, the rest being infrequent drinkers and teetotalers.

For the youth screening, there were 14 participants of which half were male and half female. The average age was 25 years (range 18-34).

6.2. THE CULTURE OF DRINKING

There was a slight increase in the proportion of stakeholders who recognized alcohol abuse as any excessive drinking, whereas among youth there was a slight increase in the proportion of respondents who recognized alcohol abuse as drinking that caused dysfunctional families.

Both groups felt it was possible to stop drinking with no marked changes seen after the screening. Among the youth more respondents felt that life would not deteriorate if they stopped drinking (question not posed to stakeholders).

Among both groups the episode was effective in informing the belief that the culture of drinking every weekend could be changed. The effect was far more pronounced among the youth group.

6.3. ALCOHOL ADVERTISING

After watching the episode more youth and stakeholder respondents questioned whether the industry was responsible in their advertising.

The stakeholders were more skeptical as to whether the industry educated people about harms of excessive drinking after watching episode 6, but this did not prompt much of a change among the youth group.

More respondents expressed an opinion as to whether advertising made people drink after watching episode 6. Among both groups slightly more respondents agreed that advertising was influential.

Stakeholders were not swayed into strengthening their view on government regulation of advertising, but youth respondents were far more resolute that government should take a strong role after watching episode 6. In addition 21% of youth respondents felt that adverts should be banned after watching episode 6 (versus none initially). Stakeholder opinions were not influenced in this regard, although it should be noted that 41% of stakeholders were in favour of a ban at the outset.

6.3. RECREATION

Stakeholders were not convinced that recreation would be helpful in reducing drinking, but the youth respondents were very optimistic after watching episode 6 with 71% agreeing that recreation would be beneficial (versus 50% initially).

6.4. PRICING

The stakeholder group remained strongly in support of raising the price, with slight decreases in their support after the episode. The youth group, who were not in favour of this policy, showed less opposition and greater support for the idea after the screening (as reflected by only 65% **not being in favour** of price increases after watching the episode compared to 85% initially).

6.5. VIEWS ABOUT EPISODE 6

Overall the respondents enjoyed the episode and found it interesting or entertaining (> 95%). Episode 6 was voted the favourite by the youth group.

6.6. CONCLUSION

The episode was successful in changing beliefs around the "culture of drinking", the role of advertising and the need for regulation of advertising, and to a lesser extent the impact of improved recreational opportunities and price increases.

THE FULL REPORTS ON EACH EPISODE ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ADDENDUM 4

Booza TV
Report June



PROJECT REPORT JUNE 2011

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1. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

South Africa is one of the leading binge drinking countries in the world with South African drinkers amongst the top 3 highest alcohol-consuming drinkers in the world. Within South Africa, the Western Cape is the drinking capital with the lowest proportion of non-drinkers, the highest binge drinking and unsurprisingly, the highest rates of alcohol-related harms including violence, road traffic injuries and mental illness (including alcohol abuse disorders, depression and anxiety).

The Medical Research Council has demonstrated that **alcohol abuse is the third leading cause of death, disease and disability in South Africa**. In the Western Cape, it is probably the leading contributor to the burden of disease, killing at least 300 people per month, most of who are below 40 years of age. More broadly, alcohol abuse has long-term effects on a number of transgenerational determinants of socio-economic development through its effects on parenting, teenage pregnancy, school performance, poverty, employment and crime. Indeed, the massive impact of weekend binge drinking on productivity and absenteeism is estimated at approximately 3% of the Gross Domestic Product and the costs of alcohol-related violence and crime on reducing tourism have yet to be estimated. Despite the massive death toll and the enormous costs resulting from both economic and emotional losses, **many South Africans remain under the illusion that the way we drink alcohol is acceptable, normal and even desirable**.

Paradoxically, **myths about alcohol abuse pervade the very organisations intended to address alcohol abuse** and its related harms. Our work with communities, NGOs and government has demonstrated that many stakeholders are ill informed as to the effective methods for reducing alcohol abuse and alcohol-related harms. The media are particularly uninformed and can be regarded as the most significant source of misinformation to the general public, perpetuating pre-existing myths about drinking and rallying support against evidence-based policy and legislative measures.

Realistically, the Booza TV campaign cannot undo this extensive social web of myth and misinformation in isolation. However, the ground-work for social change in relation to alcohol has been laid over the last several years - alcohol activists across the country have worked hard to



secure space in the media, public policy and communities and **the time is ripe for Booza TV** to take the debates to the next level and play its part in achieving the vision of a society that treats alcohol more respectfully. To this end, the Booza TV team has participated in the development of the Western Cape Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy and the Western Cape Liquor Act as well as being highly active in contributing to media advocacy, community, provincial and national government anti-abuse initiatives. This work has laid the foundation for Booza TV to achieve its aims.

2. THE BOOZA TV SERIES

Booza TV is a series of six 24-minute documentaries that examines drinking in the Western Cape through a combination of interviews, illustrative cut-aways, action sequences, dramatizations, archival footage and animation.

2.1. Series outline

The episodes cover various themes as follows:

EPISODE 1: THE CULTURE OF DRINKING

- The culture of drinking
- Normative education about drinking and cross-country comparisons
- The extent of binge drinking and its harms in South Africa
- Comparison of alcohol to other drugs
- Underage drinking (initiation of drinking)
- Influence of parental drinking on initiation of drinking
- Alcohol advertising

EPISODE 2: WHY WE DRINK ALCOHOL AND WHY WE ABUSE IT

- Psychological reasons for drinking
- Reasons for the extent of alcohol abuse in South Africa
- The role of the liquor industry
- Alcohol advertising and marketing
- The history of alcohol in South Africa (animation)

EPISODE 3: ALCOHOL, THE MEDIA & ROAD INJURIES

- The promotion of alcohol by celebrities
- The promotion of alcohol through media (music videos, radio, magazines)
- The lack of promotion of responsible alcohol use or non-drinking
- How easy is it for drinker's to drink responsibly or know when they are over the limit?
- Drink driving and drink walking
- The burden of alcohol on the health system

EPISODE 4: ALCOHOL AND VIOLENCE

- The links between alcohol and violence
- What people fight about when they are drunk
- Environmental factors that lead to drunk fighting
- What can be done to reduce violence (access to alcohol)

EPISODE 5: THE LIQUOR ACT

- The history of access to alcohol in South Africa (animation)
- Current access to alcohol in South Africa
- Debates and different viewpoints about reducing access to alcohol
- The economic costs of alcohol and alcohol and poverty
- Introduction to the Western Cape Liquor Act



EPISODE 6: SOLUTIONS

- Is responsible drinking effectively promoted?
- Teen drinking
- Communities role in reducing access to alcohol
- What communities can do to reduce alcohol abuse in general
- How to drink more safely
- Can we change the culture of binge drinking?
- Benefits of not drinking

2.2. Target audiences

The series is aimed at three **target markets** as follows:

1. **Drinkers** (particularly binge-drinkers aged 18-35 years living in the Western Cape)
2. **Intervention agents and stakeholders** (social groups and organizations whose support and/or action is necessary to reduce alcohol-related harm)
3. **Public messengers** (organisations/institutions responsible for the generation of messages about alcohol, alcohol abuse and how to reduce alcohol-related harm)

2.3. Aim and Objectives

The goal of the project is to challenge and undermine pervasive norms, attitudes and beliefs about alcohol use and the best ways of reducing alcohol-related harm. In so doing, the project aims to reduce alcohol-related harm in the Western Cape

The **key objectives** to support this goal are as follows:

1. Expose and challenge the unspoken and underlying attitudes and beliefs about alcohol
2. Illustrate the effects of the above norms and beliefs on patterns of drinking
3. Contrast our patterns of drinking with those in other countries (normative comparisons)
4. Develop a critical understanding of why alcohol misuse is so prevalent in South Africa
5. Facilitate the weighing up of the pros and cons of binge-drinking
6. Highlight commonly occurring disadvantages of binge-drinking that most binge-drinkers have experienced (public humiliation, regrettable sexual encounters, arguments, poor work performance etc)
7. Increase awareness and understanding of the extent of severe alcohol-related harms in the Western Cape e.g. violence, road deaths, poverty, mental illness
8. Prepare individuals for a change in drinking behaviour e.g. Highlight feasible alternatives to drinking alcohol as a coping mechanism, explore the barriers to behaviour change etc.
9. Increase knowledge about and promote action for safer drinking practices
10. Motivate communities, non-governmental organisations and policy makers to address alcohol misuse
11. Provide communities, the media, policy makers and researchers with a better understanding of how to decrease alcohol-related harms with evidence-based policies
12. Raise advocacy and public support for and participation in the implementation of the Western Cape Liquor Act
13. Raise advocacy for other evidence-based policies e.g. the regulation of alcohol advertising and marketing
14. Provide an entertaining and unthreatening medium in which to transmit this message to a large population at relatively low cost

For a detailed description of the **key messages** of the Booza TV campaign, please see **Appendix 1** (Communications Strategy).



2.4 Conceptual approach of the series

To reduce drinking as well as stimulate the uptake of evidence-based interventions requires behaviour change. A simple and evidence-based approach to changing behaviour is encapsulated by the five stages of behaviour change as set out by James O. Prochaska, as follows:

1. Pre-contemplation – before any action is considered
2. Contemplation – at this point the subject considers change, but may do so for a prolonged period
3. Preparation – the subject has decided to change and is about to take action, but is still planning how to do so. Subjects may experiment with new behaviour
4. Action – change is being implemented actively
5. Maintenance – the new behaviour is becoming habit

Booza TV episodes can be seen to accelerate the progression through these five stages and attempts to address each stage in turn. Because there are multiple episodes, the intervention is not solitary but repeated and reinforced. More detailed information on the conceptual approaches used to engage viewers and move them through these stages can be found in **Appendix 2 (Conceptual Approach)**.

2.5. The production of Booza TV

The production of Booza TV can be described in 6 phases:

- **Preparation and planning** : this involved budgeting, timelines, fundraising, questionnaire development, sampling of participants and procurement of staff and equipment
- **Collection and production of audio-visual material**: the audio-visual consisted of both direct interviews as well as observational (action) material. Additionally, because we are trying to change opinions, rather than just illustrate the status quo, several fictional/dramatic sequences and animation were created. Similar to qualitative research, an iterative process occurs between data capture and revision of the central hypothesis; here the collection of data and its analysis were followed with collection of new material, a revisal of the script and indeed the format of the product (from a film to a series)
- **Data capture**: the audio-visual material was digitised, transcribed and logged (each sentence given a timecode so that it could be located for editing) so that each interview/sequence had its own x-cel spreadsheet
- **Data analysis**: the data within each spreadsheet was categorised into themes and then new spreadsheets were created for each theme. These formed the basis for the various themes/topics in the series. An example of this can be see in **Appendix 3**.
- **Editing**: editing of the audio-visual footage based on the xcel spreadsheet analyses is a similar process to report writing wherein one tries to summarise the findings of the research into a digestible form. However, in addition to summarising information, our final product needs to be entertaining (to maintain viewer interest). Furthermore, the product is not merely about findings but is an *intervention* and therefore and needs to be presented in a manner consistent with health behaviour change models as discussed above.
- **Production of DVD**: the edited product is exported and packaged into a DVD or TV series for piloting

Over 180 hours of footage (including interviews, action footage and dramatised sequences) have been filmed, transcribed, analysed and edited.



3. PILOT STUDY OF BOOZA TV

3.1. Pilot study of the Booza TV series

The series was piloted in the following settings:

- a. Elsies River community stakeholders (pre and post screening questionnaires completed and focus group discussions following each episode were done)
- b. Elsies River and Parkwood Youth (18-35 years) (pre and post screening questionnaires completed and focus group discussions following each episode were done)
- c. Lavender Hill high school students (focus group discussions conducted after each screening)
- d. Khayelitsha Youth (18-35 years) (focus group discussions conducted after each screening)
- e. Stellenbosch University Youth (focus group discussions conducted after screening)
- f. Screening of episodes to Provincial Government Representatives
- g. Screening of 3 episodes at the Global Alcohol Policy Conference in Uganda- audience members included persons working for the WHO, FORUT, Blue Cross and many other organisations whose focus is the reduction of alcohol-related harm
- h. Screening of episodes to MRC researchers

In total, approximately 350 questionnaires were completed by viewers from (a) and (b). The full report can be found in **Appendix 4 (executive summaries for each episode)** but can be summarised as follows:

1. DEMOGRAPHICS

One of the groups tested were 19 young binge-drinkers who ranged in age between 18 and 34 years (average age 23 years), 26% of whom were employed.

Another group was stakeholders in Elsies River; due to difficulties in ensuring group availability, the numbers varied between 11- 24 people across screenings. The average age of the stakeholders was 42 years. They consisted of representatives of local government, provincial government departments, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations. The majority hardly ever drank alcohol or were non-drinkers.

2. CULTURE OF DRINKING

Booza TV successfully challenged a number of harmful perceptions about drinking as follows:

- Booza TV increased the view that South Africans drink more than people in other countries
- Amongst the youth, there was a shift in perception from "most drinkers drink too much" to "about half of drinkers drink too much"
- After watching Booza TV, 64% of stakeholders considered alcohol to be as harmful as other drugs compared to 45% initially. Similar findings were seen amongst the youth group (the perception of alcohol being similar to other drugs doubled from 21% to 42%).
- From episode 1 to Episode 6, the proportion of viewers who felt alcohol was not just good but both good and bad rose by 18.42%.
- By the end of the series, more youth respondents felt that life would not deteriorate if they stopped drinking
- Among both groups Booza TV was effective in informing the belief that the culture of drinking every weekend could be changed. The effect was far more pronounced among the youth group



3. ADVERTISING

From the outset, both groups agreed that alcohol advertising influences drinking and that alcohol advertising should at least be regulated. The proportion of the binge-drinking youth sample who agreed alcohol advertising should be banned rose from 15.79% before Episode 2 to 21.43% after Episode 6. The proportion that supported regulating alcohol advertising also grew as the series progressed (from 52.64% before Episode 2, to 71.43% after Episode 6).

With the stakeholder group, the majority supported both the banning and regulation of alcohol advertising (although there was greater support for regulation of advertising). After watching episode 2, there appeared to be a shift away from banning towards regulating advertising. Stakeholders' support for regulation dropped slightly after the Episode 6 viewing but as this was a different group of viewers to that in Episode 2, it is hard to interpret the meaning. Episode 2 was re-edited after the pilot study.

4. ROAD INJURIES

Participants in both groups already viewed alcohol as a major contributor to road deaths before Booza TV and these views did not change after watching Booza TV. While the majority of viewers knew the legal drinking limits for driving, those who were unsure remained so after the screening. After the screening of the episode 27% more viewers felt that current laws on drunk driving are not strict enough. The majority view that the legal driving limit should be reduced to zero was significantly strengthened after the screening. Booza TV was not effective in convincing the majority of viewers of either group that drunk walking is a bigger problem than drunk driving, but 18% more viewers rated drunk walking as a bigger problem after the screening.

5. LINKS BETWEEN ALCOHOL & VIOLENCE

There was general acknowledgement of the links between alcohol and violence before watching Booza TV amongst both groups. More than half of the binge-drinking youth group reported having become aggressive at least once after drinking with 100% having witnessed aggression in the context of drinking. Views about the links were strengthened by Booza TV; perceptions about whether perpetrators and victims of violence tend to be drunk rose by 21.98% from before viewing Episode 1 to after seeing Episode 4. For the stakeholders, the perception change around the state of *victims* was larger than that around the state of offenders.

6. ACCESS TO ALCOHOL

i. Increasing the Price of Alcohol

The majority of stakeholders supported this from the outset, with no real changes noted. For youth, the proportion that "strongly agreed" rose by 14% and the proportion that strongly disagreed dropped by 17.29% from before Episode 2 to after Episode 6.

ii. Reducing liquor outlet density

Again, the majority of stakeholders (81%) supported this from the outset, with no changes noted after episode 2 but increases in support after episode 4. In the youth group, there was an increase in support for and a major decrease in opposition against the idea.

Episode 5 led to some uncertainty among the stakeholders as to whether there was a need for more licenses or more liquor outlets. Among the youth group, there was a consistent and desirous shift in their understanding, namely that there should be fewer outlets in their



community, of which more should be licensed and that these licenses be granted in designated zones only.

iii. Reducing trading hours

The majority of stakeholders already supported this strategy before watching the episode and support for the strategy increased after the screening. Amongst the binge-drinking youth group, the majority of the participants did not agree that trading hours be reduced pre-screening; these views were shifted towards agreement (the proportion of youth participants who selected "Strongly agree" rose from 0% before Episode 2 to 17.65% after Episode 4) and uncertainty, but those who strongly disagreed were not swayed.

iv. Increasing the legal age of drinking

The majority of viewers in both groups supported this idea with no changes after the screening seen in the stakeholder group and a slight increase in support for the proposal in the binge-drinking group.

v. Viability and fairness of the Western Cape Liquor Act

Episode 5 shifted both stakeholders and youth respondents perceptions as regards the effect of the WC Liquor Act on access to alcohol, with more respondents agreeing that it would make access to alcohol more difficult. As to the fairness of the legislation, the episode was not able to clarify this definitively for either group, however as stated above, support for the need to reduce access was gained. It is interesting to note that the binge-drinking youth's support for centralising alcohol trading in commercial zones was much stronger than the stakeholders'.

7. THE VALUE OF THE LIQUOR INDUSTRY

Whereas Episode 5 had the desired affect on the youth respondents, among whom the perception of the alcohol being more beneficial than harmful reduced from 47% to 27%, it had the opposite effect on stakeholders. Similarly, after watching the episode far more youth respondents believed that the liquor industry did more harm than good to the economy (from 27% to 40%), and of the 40% that still thought the liquor industry was economically beneficial overall, the feeling was less resolute. Again the stakeholders understood the message differently. Slightly more stakeholders were moved to suggest that the industry was beneficial for the economy, although the result was not statistically significant.

8. RECREATION

Stakeholders were not convinced that recreation would be helpful in reducing drinking, but the youth respondents were very optimistic after watching episode 6 with 71% agreeing that recreation would be beneficial (versus 50% initially).

9. VIEWS OF BOOZA TV

Before seeing any of the episodes, the majority of participants from both samples saw documentaries as educational rather than entertaining. However, when they were asked to rate each episode after seeing it, the majority (70-95% depending on the episode in question) in each case found the episode "Entertaining". Participants consistently said (1) that they would watch *Booza TV* if it were screened on television, and (2) that they would like to see the following episode and that they would recommend the series to others. Both these factors indicate positively towards engaging and retain viewers throughout the series. Both (a) getting people to want to watch and (b) making them come back for more are critical to the success of a media production created with the goal of education or behaviour change. In this way, viewers can be



reached and the contact can be retained over the course of the programme so that the full intervention may be administered.

Following the pilot study, several changes were made to the episodes (see **Appendix 4** for details), with episode 2 being completely redone.

3.2. Pilot study of Booza TV PLUS (The Elsie's River Project)

The Open Society Foundation for South Africa provided funding for the evaluation of the Booza TV series as a social mobilisation tool for interventions aimed at the reduction in alcohol-related violence in Elsie's River.

As per the project proposal, the objectives of the Booza TV Elsie's River project were as follows:

1. To identify important stakeholders and key groups at-risk / target audiences through community mapping and stakeholder workshops;
2. To conduct a community assessment regarding alcohol harms, prevention and usage through a process of community consultation and analysis of available data sources;
3. To conduct community screenings and discussions in order to identify obstacles and facilitators to addressing alcohol abuse and related harms in these communities
4. To facilitate identification and implementation of stakeholder initiated community-based solutions;
5. To facilitate local intersectoral governmental support; and
6. To evaluate the impact of the intervention on alcohol-abuse and related harms.

Following a process of stakeholder engagement and community mapping of violence, screenings of Booza TV were conducted with relevant audiences. After the screenings, stakeholders were encouraged to discuss the relevance of insights gained for the planning of interventions. These discussions formed the basis for several workshops which followed, in which evidence about interventions to reduce alcohol abuse were presented and areas for action were discussed. A formal plan for interventions was drawn up by the stakeholders at the Booza TV Imbizo. A pilot study of a data collection tool for injuries at the Elsie's River Trauma Centre was conducted and can form the basis of evaluation once the interventions are implemented. Please see **Appendix 5** for the full report on the **Elsie's River project** and **Appendix 6** for the preliminary study findings of the **trauma surveillance study**.

4. DISTRIBUTION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The proposed **strategy for communications and distribution** can be found in **Appendix 1**. A summary of who will be targeted is described below.

4.1. Drinkers

AIM: Increase recognition of alcohol abuse, reduce binge-drinking, challenge existing culture of drinking, promote safer drinking practices and reduce alcohol-related harm.

TOOLS: The Booza TV campaign intends to expose DRINKERS to the Booza TV series, a quick screening tool for alcohol abuse and information about agencies for further assistance (where necessary).



a. **High-risk drinkers (selected approach)**

- **Area-specific campaign** in 5 highest alcohol-related injury areas as part of the Top 5 Area Project (TAP).
- **High-risk public servants** to be targeted in SAPS, WCED, DOH. Public servants from other departments presenting to wellness programmes (EAPs) with alcohol abuse problems.
- **Drinkers already experiencing alcohol-related harms** that are in contact with government services (health settings (HIV, TB, maternity, trauma); police and justice settings; social work settings).
- **High-risk drinkers in non-government settings:** NGOs dealing with alcohol and/or alcohol-related harms (e.g. FAMSA, LOVE LIFE, SCORE etc).

b. **All drinkers (universal approach)**

- **Drinkers aged 18-35 yrs (general public):** broadcast (SABC/ETV/CTV), website, radio, print, MXIT, mobile phone versions.
- **Drinkers making use of government settings** (e.g. home affairs, traffic department, housing queues).
- **Public servants** (in departments not included in high risk group above)
- **Binge-drinking settings:** Universities and Technicons.
- **Other free screening settings** outside of government (banks, aeroplanes etc).

4.2. Intervention agents and stakeholders

AIM: To gain support for and adoption of evidence-based practice to effectively reduce alcohol related harm

TOOLS: The Booza TV campaign intends to expose intervention agents to Booza TV and information (Website, booklets/fact sheets) about what can be done to reduce alcohol-abuse.

- **General public:** broadcast, website, radio, print, MXIT, mobile phone versions.
- **High-risk communities:** as part of Top 5 Area project (TAP) described above, all key stakeholders in these communities (local government through to community-based organisations) will be targeted.
- **Community-based organizations, Non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, Liquor outlet owner associations, volunteer organizations (e.g. community police forums).** Local government will be provided with Booza TV material and fact sheets.
- **Provincial government incl. the Western Cape Liquor Board Local government** will be provided with Booza TV material and fact sheets.
- **South African Police (Western Cape).** Once identified, all relevant stakeholders will be shown Booza TV and provided with opportunities for debate, discussion as well as information on the new liquor act.
- **National government** will be provided with Booza TV material and fact sheets.

4.3. Public Messengers

AIM: To ensure that information provide to the public about alcohol, its harms and how to address these is accurate and effective as well as providing counter-messaging to alcohol-advertising

TOOLS: The Booza TV campaign intends to expose this group to fact-sheets, make the use of Booza TV materials available and to hold workshops, debates and discussions as necessary.



- Media (journalists, radio djs etc): a media workshops would be held with screenings of Booza TV, discussions, debates and distribution of fact sheets. Booza TV material would be sent to those unable to attend.
- Government communications: link in with Safely Home, Liquor Act, Ke Moja, Arrive Alive, other programmes under the Substance Abuse Policy etc.
- Non-governmental communications: links with AA, SANCA, SADD etc
- Advertising agencies
- Use of Booza TV as teaching material: Health Sciences, Humanities, NGO training etc.
- Dept of Education (life orientation curriculum)

NOTE: THERE IS A FUNDING SHORTFALL FOR THIS CAMPAIGN AT PRESENT

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The production of Booza TV was funded by the Western Cape Departments of Health, Social Development and Community Safety. All funds were administered through the University of Cape Town (School of Public Health) and the Medical Research Council (Burden of Disease Unit).

This project would not have come to fruition without the unwavering support of Professor Craig Househam and Professor Jonny Myers. Furthermore, the series achieved very high production value largely due to the commitment of those involved. In addition, there were many people who gave freely of their time, locations, music and other resources to make Booza TV possible. Booza TV is very much indebted to all those who supported and contributed to this project so generously.

The film production team was as follows:

Director And Producer: Dr Joanne Corrigan

Assistant Producer: Simon Taylor

Editors: Kerrin Kokot, Joanne Corrigan, Liani Van Straaten, Jo Higgs, Marcus Robb, Ryan Van Rooyen

Editors Assistant: Romy Wilson

Graphics/Animation: Anwar Mcwhite, Martin Fischer, Kerrin Kokot, Joanne Corrigan

Sound Mix: Aidan Harper

Title Sequence Music Composition: Dan Eppel

Voice-Over: Rianna Alfreds, Bongo Mbutuma, Mandy And Deon Schreiber, Daniel Barnett

Script Consultants: Simon Taylor, James Taylor, Richard Matzopoulos, Jonny Myers, Thobela Jon, Rianna Alfreds, Donovan Cook

Production Assistants: Michelle Williams, Shelva Carstens

Camera: Elwin Buchel, Pascale Neuschäfer, Joanne Corrigan, Peter Reyneke, Jenna Bass, James Taylor, Carl Raubenheimer, Craig Brown

Administration Assistance: Elize De Kok, Sharon Ferguson

ADDENDUM 5

Booza TV

Elsies River Project Report



**ELSIES RIVER PROJECT MAY 2010 –
DECEMBER 2010**

Final Report April 2011

Prepared for the Open Society Foundation by
Dr Joanne Corrigall
Richard Matzopoulos
Liani Van Straaten

1. Background

The Open Society Foundation for South Africa provided funding for the evaluation of the Booza TV series as a social mobilisation tool for interventions aimed at the reduction in alcohol-related violence in Elsie's River.

As per the project proposal, the objectives of the Booza TV Elsie's River project are:

1. To identify important stakeholders and key groups at-risk / target audiences through community mapping and stakeholder workshops;
2. To conduct a community assessment regarding alcohol harms, prevention and usage through a process of community consultation and analysis of available data sources;
3. To conduct community screenings and discussions in order to identify obstacles and facilitators to addressing alcohol abuse and related harms in these communities
4. To facilitate identification and implementation of stakeholder initiated community-based solutions;
5. To facilitate local intersectoral governmental support; and
6. To evaluate the impact of the intervention on alcohol-abuse and related harms.

This report briefly summarises the project ACTIVITIES and outcomes as per the project OBJECTIVES.

Project ACTIVITIES are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table I. Summary of Booza TV events related to the Elsie River Pilot Project

No	Date	Venue	Participants	Activity	No of participants
1	12 Feb 2010	Elsies River Community Centre	Stakeholders and OSF	Planning meeting	n/a
2	11 March 2010	Elsies River Library	Stakeholders and OSF	Planning meeting	n/a
3	28 May 2010	Elsies River Multipurpose Centre (Conference Hall)	Stakeholders Meeting	Community Mapping Workshop	22
4	8 June 2010	Elsies River SAPS	Stakeholders Screening	Episode 1	10
5	29 June 2010	Elsies River SAPS	Stakeholders Screening	Episode 2	11
6	27 July 2010	Elsies River Library	Stakeholders Screening	Episode 3	7
7	29 July 2010	Elsies River Library	Stakeholders Screening	Episode 4	9
8	4 August 2010	Elsies River Library	Youth Screening	Episode 1	10
9	5 August 2010	Elsies River SAPS	Stakeholders Screening	Episode 4	14
10	18 August 2010	Elsies River Library	Stakeholders Screening	Episode 5 and 6	19
11	25 August 2010	Elsies River Library	Elsies Youth Screening	Episode 1	5
12	2 Sept. 2010	Elsies River Library	Stakeholders	'Way Forward' Meeting	+ - 5 (Cancelled due to low attendance)
13	2 Sept. 2010	Elsies Library	Elsies Youth	Episode 1 and 2	8
14	9 Sept. 2010	Elsies Library	Elsies Youth	Episode 3 and 4	5
15	16 Sept. 2010	Elsies River Library	Stakeholders	Planning Meeting	10
16	27 Sept. 2010	Church building in Parkwood	Parkwood Youth	Episode 1 and 2	19
17	28 Sept. 2010	Church building in Parkwood	Parkwood Youth	Episode 3 and 4	17
18	29 Sept. 2010	Pembi, Durbanville	Stakeholders	Imbizo	19
19	29 Sept. 2010	Church building in Parkwood	Parkwood Youth	Episode 5 and 6	19

Outcomes relating to the various project OBJECTIVES are summarized as follows:

Objective 1: To identify important stakeholders and key groups at-risk / target audiences through community mapping and stakeholder workshops

Stakeholders were recruited for the mapping exercise on the basis of being actively involved in projects in Elsies River either on a voluntary or full-time basis and were categorized as follows:

Category A: Government Departments (Social Development, Dept of Health, Dept of Community Safety, Dept of Education)

Category B: Non-Government Organisations

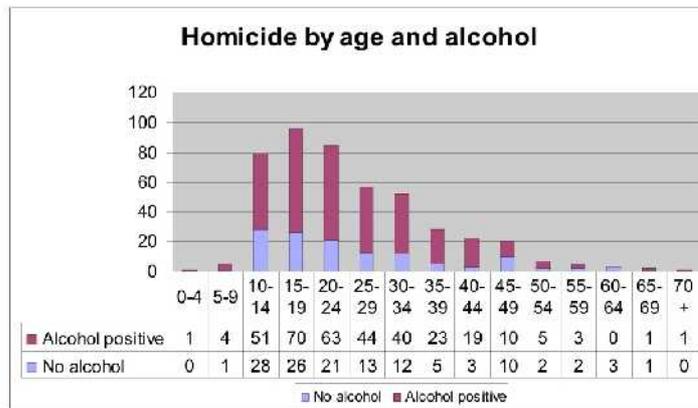
Category C: Business (Shebeeners, other alcohol outlets in the Elsiesriver)

The community mapping exercise was conducted to gain insights into Elsies River community from the perspective of those who live there. We were able to identify which places locals regarded as safe or dangerous, whilst they provided reasons why these areas were regarded in such a way. It also served as a vehicle for Assessing willingness of stakeholders to participate and motivation for involvement in the study. In addition to the information gathered from participants at the workshop, the information was also obtained from STATS SA and the Dept of Education. Most of the participants attending the community mapping workshop were recruited either through the Elsies River Multi-Stakeholder Forum, which has been in existence since 2004, and through the previous engagements of a facilitator appointed by Booza TV to co-ordinate the project. Recruitment was done via telephonic conversations, email and fax correspondence. Approximately 40 people were invited to attend the community mapping workshop with 50% attendance. At the end of the mapping workshop participants were invited to subsequent Booza TV screenings and workshops. Participants were also encouraged to invite additional 'stakeholders' to the screenings provided that they met the criteria described above. A summary report of the community mapping exercise is attached in **Appendix 1**.

Objective 2: To conduct a community assessment regarding alcohol harms, prevention and usage through a process of community consultation and analysis of available data sources; (profile of harms and causes)

In addition to the community mapping exercise (Appendix I), in which safe and dangerous zones were identified, stakeholders were also asked to identify the main types of violence occurring in Elsies River, possible causes and solutions. The findings describing the typology of violence in Elsies River can be found in **Appendix 2**.

Two secondary data sources were also consulted to provide an overview of community safety in Elsies River. First data from Cape Town mortuary-based surveillance comprising all non-natural or injury deaths in the city were extracted for Elsies River for the period from 1994 to 2005. The combined data provided a clear indication of the role played by alcohol, particularly in relation to violence.



Second, retrospective crime data were obtained for the Elsie's River precinct from official police crime statistics. The data for contact crimes (i.e. those that relate to interpersonal violence) are summarised below.

Crime Category	April 2003 to March 2004	April 2004 to March 2005	April 2005 to March 2006	April 2006 to March 2007	April 2007 to March 2008	April 2008 to March 2009
CONTACT CRIME (CRIMES AGAINST THE PERSON)						
Murder	34	20	14	31	24	16
Total sexual crimes	234	190	118	138	99	83
Attempted murder	88	37	38	31	24	24
Assault with the intent to inflict grievous bodily harm	815	555	368	276	224	205
Common assault	1,274	970	666	549	481	526
Robbery with aggravating circumstances	262	227	168	218	224	155
Common robbery	482	252	121	123	104	86

Although the two data sources provided illustrative data, neither was suitable for the purposes of the current study. There were too few deaths in the mortuary database with which to evaluate changing injury patterns and the police data were not available as unit records for analysis. Attempts to obtain more current crime data by smaller geographical areas (i.e. police sectors) proved unsuccessful. These attempts included follow-up visits with police officials including the station commander and correspondence with the provincial management as well as requests to the community policing forum.

A third data source was the Elsie's River Community Health Centre (CHC), a 24-hour facility serving Elsie's River and surrounding areas. Although we were able to obtain headcount data from the District Health Information System, it soon became apparent that these were also not useful for our purposes. The headcount data did not specify whether cases were trauma-related or the event of some other medical emergency, let alone the nature of the trauma (e.g. whether traffic or violence-related). There were also no individual records for further analysis, which prevented any attempt to identify of high risk populations and locations.

Consequently we prepared a sub-proposal for a trauma surveillance pilot project that would provide information necessary to direct interventions and, which if repeated, might provide a tool for evaluation. A simple data collection form was developed and a 10 day pilot project was conducted in November/December 2010. The results, which were presented at a combined meeting of stakeholders and CHC staff on 13 April 2011 (**Appendix 3**), indicated that violence accounted for nearly 70% of trauma cases and that there was a strong association with alcohol. Geographic analysis also indicated which areas had the highest numbers of reported cases (Uitsig, Connaught, Leonsdale and Epping Forest) and that violence was concentrated in areas with high numbers of illegal liquor outlets.

Objective 3: To conduct community screenings and discussions in order to identify obstacles and facilitators to addressing alcohol abuse and related harms in these communities

Screenings with Stakeholders

All 6 episodes of Booza TV were shown at least once to groups of Elsie's River stakeholders. Stakeholders completed questionnaires both before and after the screening of each episode which evaluated their opinions on alcohol and violence in Elsie's River and their attitudes and knowledge about interventions to address alcohol abuse and alcohol-related violence. An hour long focus group discussion was conducted after each screening to gain a more nuanced understanding of their responses to the material presented and how they felt the material related to alcohol abuse and violence in Elsie's River.

Youth screenings

All 6 episodes of Booza TV were shown at least once to groups of Elsie's River youth. Participants completed questionnaires both before and after the screening of each episode which evaluated their opinions on alcohol and violence in Elsie's River. An hour long focus group discussion was conducted after each screening to gain a more nuanced understanding of their responses to the material presented and how they felt the material related to their own drinking.

Stakeholder and youth reaction to Booza TV

1. DEMOGRAPHICS

The number of stakeholders at each viewing varied between 11- 24 people. Many of the viewers at each episode were different due to difficulties ensuring availability of the same stakeholders at the same time for each screening. The average age of the stakeholders was 42 years. They consisted of representatives of local government, provincial government departments, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations. The majority hardly ever drank alcohol or were non-drinkers.

The second group tested were 19 young binge-drinkers who ranged in age between 18 and 34 years (average age 23 years), 26% of whom were employed.

2. CULTURE OF DRINKING

Booza TV successfully challenged a number of harmful perceptions about drinking including the following:

- South Africans drink as much as anyone else: Booza TV increased the view that South Africans drink more than people in other countries
- Most South Africans are drinkers: Episode 1 was helpful in getting respondents to recognise that only half of South Africans are drinkers
- Everyone drinks a lot: Amongst the youth, there was a shift in perception from "most drinkers drink too much" to "about half of drinkers drink too much"
- Alcohol is not a drug: After watching the episode the 64% of stakeholders considered alcohol to be as harmful as other drugs compared to 45% initially. Similarly, among the youth respondents the perception of alcohol being similar to other drugs doubled from 21% to 42%.
- Alcohol is great (few harms): From episode 1 to Episode 6, the proportion who felt alcohol was both good and bad rose by 18.42%.
- Life without drinking would be awful: By the end of the series, more youth respondents felt that life would not deteriorate if they stopped drinking
- Nothing can be done to change the entrenched drinking culture: Among both groups Booza TV was effective in informing the belief that the culture of drinking every weekend could be changed. The effect was far more pronounced among the youth group

3. ADVERTISING

From the outset, both groups agreed that alcohol advertising influences drinking and that alcohol advertising should at least be regulated. The proportion of the binge-drinking youth sample who agreed alcohol advertising should be banned rose from 15.79% before Episode 2 to 21.43% after Episode 6. The proportion who supported regulating alcohol advertising grew as the series progressed (from 52.64% before Episode 2, to 71.43% after Episode 6).

With the stakeholder group, the majority supported both the banning and regulation of alcohol advertising (although there was greater support for regulation of advertising). After watching episode 2, there appeared to be a shift away from banning towards regulating advertising. Stakeholders' support for regulation dropped slightly after the Episode 6 viewing but as this was a different group of viewers to that in Episode 2, it is hard to interpret the meaning.

4. ROAD INJURIES

Participants in both groups already viewed alcohol as a major contributor to road deaths before Booza TV and these views did not change after watching Booza TV. After the screening of the episode 27% more viewers felt that current laws on drunk driving are not strict enough; while the majority of viewers knew the legal drinking limits for driving, those who were unsure remained so. The majority view that the legal driving limit should be reduced to zero was significantly strengthened after the screening. Booza TV was not effective in convincing the majority of viewers of either group that drunk walking is a bigger problem than drunk driving, but 18% more viewers rated drunk walking as a bigger problem after the screening.

5. LINKS BETWEEN ALCOHOL & VIOLENCE

There was general acknowledgement of the links between alcohol and violence before watching Booza TV amongst both groups. More than half of the binge-drinking youth group reported having become aggressive at least once after drinking with 100% having witnessed aggression in the context of drinking. Views about the links were strengthened by Booza TV; perceptions about whether perpetrators and victims of violence tend to be drunk rose by 21.98% from before viewing Episode 1 to after seeing Episode 4. For the stakeholders, the perception change around the state of *victims* was larger than that around the state of offenders.

6. ACCESS TO ALCOHOL

i. Increasing the Price of Alcohol

The majority of stakeholders supported this from the outset, with no real changes noted. For youth, the proportion who "strongly agreed" rose by 14% and the proportion that strongly disagreed dropped by 17.29% from before Episode 2 to after Episode 6.

ii. Reducing liquor outlet density

Again, the majority of stakeholders (81%) supported this from the outset, with no changes noted after episode 2 but increases in support after episode 4. In the youth group, there was an increase in support and a major decrease in opposition for the idea.

Episode 5 led to some uncertainty among the stakeholders as to whether there was a need for more licenses or more liquor outlets. Among the youth group, there was a consistent and desirous shift in their understanding, i.e. that there should be fewer outlets in their community, of which more should be licensed and that these license be granted in designated zones.

iii. Reducing trading hours

The majority of stakeholders already supported this strategy before watching the episode and support for the strategy increased after the screening. Amongst the binge-drinking youth group, the majority of the participants did not agree that trading hours of liquor outlets be reduced pre-screening; these views were shifted towards agreement (the proportion of youth participants who selected "Strongly agree" rose from 0% before Episode 2 to 17.65% after Episode 4) and uncertainty, but those who strongly disagreed were not swayed.

iv. Increasing the legal age of drinking

The majority of viewers in both groups supported this idea with no changes after the screening seen in the stakeholder group and a slight increase in support for the proposal in the binge-drinking group.

v. The Western Cape Liquor Act

Episode 5 shifted both stakeholders and youth respondents perceptions as regards the effect of the WC Liquor Act on access to alcohol, with more respondents agreeing

that it would make access more difficult. As to the fairness of the legislation, the episode was not able to clarify this definitively for either group. It is interesting to note that the binge-drinking youth's support for centralising alcohol trading in commercial zones was much stronger than the stakeholders'.

7. THE VALUE OF THE LIQUOR INDUSTRY

Whereas Episode 5 had the desired affect on the youth respondents, among whom the perception of the alcohol being more beneficial than harmful reduced from 47% to 27%, it had the opposite effect on stakeholders. Similarly, after watching the episode far more youth respondents believed that the liquor industry did more harm than good to the economy (from 27% to 40%), and of the 40% that still thought the liquor industry was economically beneficial overall, the feeling was less resolute. Again the stakeholders understood the message differently. Slightly more stakeholders were moved to suggest that the industry was beneficial for the economy, although the result was not statistically significant.

8. RECREATION

Stakeholders were not convinced that recreation would be helpful in reducing drinking, but the youth respondents were very optimistic after watching episode 6 with 71% agreeing that recreation would be beneficial (versus 50% initially).

10. VIEWS OF BOOZA TV

In regard to viewers' enjoyment of the *Booza TV* series, it is interesting to note that before seeing any of the episodes, the majority of participants from both samples saw documentaries as educational rather than entertaining. But when they were asked to rate each episode after seeing it, the majority (70-95% depending on the episode in question) in each case found the episode "Entertaining". Established television viewing habits were also challenged by the series. The majority of participants stated before seeing any of the episodes that they don't normally watch documentary if they have a choice. But when probed after selected episodes, they consistently said (1) that they would watch *Booza TV* if it were screened on television, and (2) that they would like to see the following episode and that they would recommend the series to others. Both these factors indicate positively towards engaging and retain viewers throughout the series. Both (a) getting people to want to watch and (b) making them come back for more are critical to the success of a media production created with the goal of education or behaviour change. In this way, viewers can be reached and the contact can be retained over the course of the programme so that the full intervention may be administered.

Objective 4: To facilitate identification and implementation of stakeholder initiated community-based solutions

After the screenings were completed, the team held three workshops, summarized as follows:

What interventions can be done?

Stakeholders were presented with the latest evidence of what interventions are effective in reducing alcohol abuse and alcohol-related violence. The feasibility of these options was discussed and important additional stakeholders were identified for the next meetings

What interventions should we do?

The second workshop worked through the interventions in detail and stakeholders were tasked with identifying what the most effective interventions would be for Elsie's River. Six areas of intervention were identified through this process.

Imbizo to develop an action plan and identification of project champions

A day-long Imbizo was held in which the stakeholders were assisted in developing action plans for six priority areas for intervention, viz.:

1. Reducing access to alcohol
2. Create safer drinking environments
3. Increase recreational programmes
4. Education of the community and mobilisation of stakeholders through education
5. Collect information necessary to inform interventions and monitor impact
6. Advocacy

For each area of intervention, stakeholders were asked to consider the following: the status quo; what stakeholders would like to see with respect to the intervention area; resources and obstacles to achieving the intervention and how to achieve the goals of the intervention. Governance structures were discussed and champions for each of the 6 groups and the project overall were identified. The full Imbizo workshop report and intervention action plans is attached in **Appendix 10**.

Objective 5: To facilitate local intersectoral governmental support

All Booza TV screenings, meetings and workshops included representatives of local government including the following:

- Dept of Education
- South African Police
- Ward Councillors
- Dept of Community safety
- Dept of Social Development
- Dept of Health

These representatives formed part of the stakeholder group the process giving inputs into what interventions might be possible through their departments. Stakeholders were also invited to draw up project proposals (relating to the interventions identified at the Imbizo) that could be submitted to the relevant government departments. A brief presentation about Booza TV and the Imbizo interventions was given to the multi-stakeholder safety group to facilitate buy-in from this group. The Dept of Health partnered by establishing a pilot of a trauma surveillance tool at the Elsie Community Health Centre (see **Appendix 3**).

Objective 6: To evaluate the impact of the intervention on alcohol-abuse and related harms

The project was successful in changing stakeholders' perceptions and sense of urgency as regards the importance of addressing alcohol abuse and related harm in the community as shown in the summary of episode findings and the Imbizo discussions (Objective 4). However, slow uptake of community level interventions by the stakeholder group, who seem loath to take the initiative without the involvement and endorsement of the Multi-Stakeholder Forum has rendered premature any possible evaluation of intervention impacts. Nevertheless, the surveillance tool described under Objective 2 has provided a clear indication of the primary target areas for interventions as well as a mechanism with which to evaluate the effect. It is recommended that a follow-up trauma survey be conducted at the CHC in collaboration between the CHC management and the community stakeholders at an appropriate time (i.e. once interventions are in place in the high risk communities).

TO KEEP FILE SIZE TO A MINIMUM, APPENDICES MENTIONED IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT INCLUDED BUT ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

ADDENDUM 6

Booza TV

Qualitative Focus Group Research Questions

**CUTTING REAL
FIELD RESEARCH
ROUND 2: QUALITATIVE**

Focus Group Interview 1: CPUT PPP I

Questions prepared by Liani van Straaten, 2011/05/12

1. What are your first impressions of *Booza TV*?
 2. What messages came across most clearly for you?
 3. How did watching *Booza TV* make you feel?
 4. What did watching *Booza TV* make you think?
 5. What did you notice about the filmmaking?
 6. What did you notice about the editing?
 7. How did the editing contribute to your experience of *Booza TV*?
-

ADDENDUM 7

Booza TV

Qualitative Research Focus Group Transcript

CUTTING REAL
BOOZA TV FIELD RESEARCH
QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW 1 : CPUT Y1
TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY LEONORA LAUBSCHER

1.

Liani van Straaten (LvS) : Ok, so this is 13 May, and this is the focus group interview with CPUT first years. Ok, so the first question is : What were your first impressions? And I heard that, immediately after the screening, you started chatting about things that you noticed in the episode and things that stood out for you. So what were those things? What do you What struck you? What stands out for you? What do you remember? Yes.

Student 1 : How Cape Town people party a lot. Ja, how Cape Town people party a lot.

[Laughter]

LvS : It's fine. This microphone actually picks up quite well.

Student 1 : It's like It's like a tradition we have in Cape Town. Like, we love drinking, we love partying. It's like, ja, it's like something that we love. We don't feel guilty about it.

Student 2 : I think it's like so

Student 3 : It's kinda sad. Why would you wanna spend so much money on one day's worth of alcohol and having fun when you could use that money to produce.

Student 2 : It's so.... It's like so part of our culture. We've grown up with it so much that we don't really see it as something bad. We just, it's the norm to us 'cause we've grown up with this. And just partying and having a drink while you, when you go out. It's like it's the norm.

LvS : Is this something that you've thought of before? The fact that we drink so much in Cape Town?

Student 4 : It's like, it goes with the whole history. From doing it [indistinct] wine farms [indistinct]. The European cultures obviously have a drink with your food. So we're influenced by that. Then coming in the wine farms. [Indistinct] people working on the farm leads to drinking – the 'dop' system. That has now, that has also escalated the drinking. And then just like – people, it's not, it's not that – people can't have a good time. But then I also think, like, we're drinking as a coping mechanism. In today's world I'm sure people are drinking more than they did 10 years ago, because, like, people are working more, they're getting less money. Like my friends will start last night, Thursday. They call it 'klein Vrydag'. Whereby, the week has been this rough that 'klein Vrydag' already starts on Thursday night and that's why we have 'Phuza Thursday'. Which goes across the board of black, white, coloured, Indian, everybody. It's Phuza Thursday. It's happening on Thursday night. And tonight it's gonna happen, Saturday it's gonna happen, and even Sunday till about five o'clock, because Monday we got to go to work.

2.

LvS : So do you agree with the things that people said in the documentary, for example that you drink from Friday to Sunday?

Student 1 : There's one point I don't agree with. I think it's with the ... where they showed the difference between alcohol and drug abuse. From 2000, how many people have died. It's like they're almost promoting, ok, rather use a drug. I think if drugs was as accessible as alcohol, more people will die from drugs. So I don't think that's a valid point, actually, in the documentary.

Student 2 : I think the point was just to make you aware. Not to try to change your mind, to try to convert you. Just to make you aware of what you're doing, that's all.

LvS : Mmm. What did you want to say?

Student 3 : I also think that because of, like, the technology advancements, most people are not, like, clear and ready, because they see it often on TV [indistinct] and all that, then they think that it is cool. And then when they see major sports, like, it is their It serves as something that brings people, like, together. Happiness from that what [indistinct]. If I had a rough week at work, I just drink and then that's it. So the [indistinct] is publicised and that's the problem.

Student 4 : Alcohol's an amazing thing though. I read a couple of months ago, I didn't realise, it's a, alcohol is a high energy, low nutrient drink. So that's why it gets you up there, and it keeps you buzzing, like, it keeps you buzzing, buzzing, and then you crash. So either crash, you'll pass out, you'll just run out, [indistinct] fade. So it's a quick fix, you know, to get where you wanna be. A lot of people are self-conscious, when more phones, more computers, people aren't speaking any more. You go into a party and I went in a party bus now two weeks ago and, like, it's twenty five year olds, twenty six year olds and I think, like we normally speak and we greet, we greet everybody. Alcohol hasn't been flowing, it's a Sunday evening. We've been drinking the whole weekend.

[Laughing] It's a long weekend, ok. So, we get on the bus and the music starts and people like to drink. All of a sudden the conversation starts. Now it's, alcohol is, like, kinda spiritual for me, because the person that doesn't speak to you, will actually speak to you. But it does get crazy after a while, so fights will break out. People will start losing their minds, throwing up. It's how they handle it, and that's where the moderation is to come in. But in this country we drink to get ja crowned.

[Laughter]

Student 5 : Just adding to what Julian said, I agree with him that everyone lives in their own little bubbles with their Face Book and their Twitter and everyone is right there, in front of them. They've got the whole world in front of them. And when they go out and socialise, it's as if they still have those [indistinct] like: "I don't know you. I don't want to talk to you. I don't have your friend on Face Book. Who are you!" And then, all of a sudden, couple shots later, like: "Hey, that guy looks interesting." Funny!! "What's up?" And, then, like, you make more friends.

[Indistinct talking in background]

Student 5 : Next time they're social buddies.

LvS : So ... um, oh, yes?

Student 6 : [Indistinct] like moderation is key with anything. Its like, what I also realise here, I think, like Lukanjo also pointed out, the advertising of alcohol - it's very hard to be moderate when it's being pushed in your face. And also in a positive way. Like the champions taste, keep walking, the better your life, da da da. Its kind of, the way I see it, they're not really worried

about anything like that at all, the alcohol companies, as long as you're spending money on their product, that's all they care about. They don't care who you are, or if your life's better or not, as long as you're buying their drink, it's cool.

Student 7 : Alcohol destroys more lives than cigarettes.

[Overlapping affirmative reactions from several students]

LvS : Ja, I think that was also the point with the, the statistic that you were discussing before, about alcohol and drugs. To, to just say that, um, alcohol is quite dangerous. Sorry, I'm taking up your opinion time. Ja?

Student 7 : Brin and I were just saying now that, at the movies, that's when like, the majority of alcohol ads come on, but it doesn't really make us want to go drink, if you know what I mean. I don't know, it's like every ad, it's Johnny Walker, then it's Cape to Cuba, then it's some flipping island stuff, I don't know what it is. But you don't really like: "Aaa, I'm going to drink after my movie now," like. But there's just a lot of ads in the movies, we've noticed, ja.

3.

LvS : So, so what is it that does trigger you to want to go and drink, if it's not the commercials that you see on the big screen?

Several students : It's the week.

Student 1 : I was speaking to people last night. I was walking out a township. And everybody's like, it's been a rough week for everybody, like across the board. Everyone's just I mean the weather I've been sick. Everybody's, like I've been sick. I'm gonna go drink tomorrow. That's what I'm gonna do. I'm being honest about it. I feel like I need a big party, and that's what's gonna happen. I'm going to a twenty first. I don't know how I'm gonna look. I'm going to enjoy myself. It's gonna be fun. I'm going to be responsible, hopefully. But that's what's gonna go down. But the fact of the matter is, if people had too much of a stressful week - and this is corporate. I mean we are performers and artists and things like that, so we're a bit more chilled and we do take a drink in moderation. But the guys who've been working, parents who are stressing and this. And that's the thing, like, cigarettes don't hurt people, but, like, alcohol, yo. How many people get knocked up on the weekend, smacked up, drugged up, on Rohypnol, and all that. It's just, the way it gets dirty after you consume it, that's the thing.

LvS : Ok, let's make this the last one. Could you please hold that.

Student 2 : What triggers me the most to drink – as meeting new people as earlier before. Because at a party, ok, if you don't drink, you stand out from the crowd. You just, you become miserable, you definitely become miserable, because, uh, if you start a conversation with somebody who has, uh, had a couple of shots, uh, it'll be awkward conversations. It'll be like: "O yes, my name is hu, hu," and that. But then, once you get into the party mood, you're all unified, you know, you can be yourself, ja, ja. That's what triggers me to drink, ja.

Student 3 : May I please

LvS : So it sounds to me like there are two things that come out here that It helps to break the ice, so [indistinct]

Student 2 : Break the ice, ja, it's an icebreaker.

LvS : some people call it a social lubricant. It helps you to be social more.

[Overlapping affirmative responses from several students]

LvS : And the other thing that you also mentioned, is that that's just the way it's done. You would stand out if you didn't.

[Overlapping affirmative responses from several students]

Student 2 : It's the norm, ja, it's a custom, it's a custom, it's a custom.

Student 3 : I just wanna say, the impact of alcohol, to me, as a teenager, like coming up. Me and my group have had more sex out there with alcohol, than when we're sober. When we're sober we become, you know, moral, and we don't wanna disappoint people, but when we're drunk, you know, it's easy to, to suppress the guilt that will come with you waking up with a person tomorrow and not liking it, you know. So that has been a major effect of alcohol.

LvS : It's interesting that the topic of sex hasn't come up before. But it's interesting how what you're saying links up with what Julian said, and that's that after a couple of drinks your decision making is not so clear anymore.

Student 3 : Sometimes you have those, you have those intentions while So, you think about certain things. But then when you're drunk, it make it, you feel kinda easier doing it, you know, at ease doing the type of things that you wouldn't normally act on when you're sober. But you do think: "That girl is hot," in passing, you know. But then when you get with her, in a space where you, people are drinking, then, you know, then you

LvS : You have the guts.

Student 3 : You have the guts to do what you want to do. And say.

Student 4 : There is a saying that a drunk man's words, is a sober man's thoughts. Like you say the first thing that comes to mind, you do the first thing that comes to mind, it doesn't stop you. It breaks down like, if you're drunk, fully drunk, it doesn't stop you from anything.

4.

LvS : Ok, so let's move on to the next question, which is: Which message came across for you most clearly? What message are you left with?

Student 1 : Alcohol consumptions should be taken seriously, you know. That's the message that stood out for me, ja. I had to, ok, look back, do some level of self-introspection a bit to just tell myself that I need to cut down on my drinking habit. [Laughing]. Ja, I need to cut down on my drinking habit, and just find some other ways to have fun, you know, unlike spending the whole portion of my pocket money into drinking.

Student 2 : What other ways?

[Laughter]

Student 1 : What other ways! Maybe join a club, do something, do something positive.
[Laughing] Not, not leave alcohol, though.

[Indistinct general derision and laughter]

5.

LvS : I actually want to run with the line of thinking that you have initiated now. And to ask the rest of you : watching Booza TV make you think about your drinking habits as well?

Student 1 : Yes

LvS : Aha. Some more perspectives? Ok, there we go.

Student 2 : With me, I don't drink. [Applause]. I prefer not to, to have to take a substance to make me feel good. Why do I need that? Why do I need the social lubricant to go up and talk to people? I take it, that, um, it just shows that, like, it cements my feelings like, towards alcohol, and that it just, it really showed that this is what it really is, because people don't always know, like, what really goes on when they, like, start drinking, when they go out and party. They don't have that perception, like: "I'm gonna go home smashed". And, like, I know people, teenagers, like a lot of people that would go home and when they get home, and then their mom is, like, so disappointed. You know what I mean, that whole kind of thing, because when you're drunk, it's not just you. What kind of picture are you showing to other people? They see you, like, if I see someone that's like totally smashed, drunk, out of their mind, they're crawling in the street, puking themselves. I'm, like, that's so irresponsible. You don't know what's gonna happen next to you. You might not wake up, you fall down and you might not wake up, so, yea.

Student 3 : That is true, because, um, over the years, like, when I go out, personally, personal side, um, just kind of made me think of, the one time, like, in my friend's circle, I am considered a party boy. Like, they would always see me out. But lately, now that I came to university, they don't see me out as much. And the one weekend I went out with my closest friends and I went to a bar I used to frequent at in Stellenbosch and the guy came up to me. It's like: "Aaa dude, you are so wasted, are you drunk already, are you drunk already?" I'm like: "No, I'm not really drinking tonight". And he just gave me this look. This like, disappointing look like: "I don't know you anymore." So I was, like: "Ja dude, I'll probably grab a beer later, but I'm not really gonna drink tonight". And everyone's like: "What's wrong with you? You've changed". But I'm like: "Dude, ja". But now I'm back to that again. So

Student 4 : We have a culture like that in this country. We are pressurised to drink. Like, you can't go in, if you've been partying with your friends, and you wanna stop now, it's like: "What's wrong with you? Why not just have one? Just have one, just have one, just have one." Well, you're taking one

Student 3 : One for everyone else.

Student 4 : One for everyone else, but there you start going. And it doesn't stop there. It's like, it's a bit sick, like I had a good point, and I'll get back to it.

6.

LvS : We pressure each other into drinking alcohol, but you don't, it's not like when you go to MacDonald's, people say: "Come on man, have a burger, have another burger, have another burger."

[Laughter]

LvS : So why is it like that with alcohol?

Student 1 : What I can say, like, the message that I saw mostly, is the smiles that alcohol brings. Everybody that I saw there was happy and all that. For example, even now that we're here in class, if the message can come and say there's a truck overturned here in the road, all of CPUT, or half the students will go there and come back happy, because they have what will make them seem happy, because that's what we see on TV.

LvS : That's interesting, so that just shows what is powerful about alcohol. In the back row please?

Student 2 : I think, personally, that every generation's, to me, as I've like, kinda read through history, that every generation has their own challenges. So sometimes, like, for instance the generation of Steve Biko and other people, they were more conscientised in terms of seeing the townships, and being in the township, and observing the township from inside to outside, and how you interact with others. So I don't think most young men, specifically black men, young men at that time, I don't think they drank so much, because there was that whole political consciousness thing. So I think at this moment in time, most youth, they don't live, like, I would, like, I'm inspired mostly by that movie, Troy, where they talk about glory. Most people would live for something that is tangible and want their names to echo years after they're gone. But now people are not preoccupied with greatness, you know, and glory, and, and, like compare themselves with how did Mandela make it from a rural area to Jo'burg, to being a security guard, to being the President, to being a prisoner. All of those things. So we don't have challenges of that nature now. We don't even know who the enemy is for instance. So drinking just helps to pass the time. And we get to enjoy ourselves, waiting, hopefully waiting for something that will be challenging. Like the systems that govern the world, like capitalism, so those count, but they're so subliminal, you know, but they govern our lives. But then we end up drinking, because we don't know where to take part. We're disillusioned with the politicians, so we don't really know where we are. But when we drink, we get friendly and we get happy for a short time. But to go on and move on

LvS : And of course to forget as well. Yes?

Student 3 : Like ok, he said now, like, maybe we need something to fight for, may be right. But like Julian said earlier, things are already so bad in the country, don't you think people will drink more if things just get worse for other people? Like if you are, like, already Let's say go to the Cape Flats, all the people don't have jobs. Now they come to, now they've depression, don't you think they'll resolve to alcohol more, because they know it's an escape?

Student 2 : Personally I don't think so. Like, alcohol affects classes. You know the classes? The poor people, it affects them bad, and the middle class it affects them in a different way, and the top class is affected differently. But you find that the top class will have a variety of alcohol bottles in their cupboard, you know, like food. But they don't drink every day. They own companies, they have to take care of business, but they drink every day, but in limited kind of

Student 3 : In moderation.

Student 2 : In moderation, ja. And then you have poor people who have nothing to do. Most poor people are working. I should check out the trains, how packed it gets with trains coming

into the township, taking people out and bringing them back later on. In one carriage of every train that goes to the township there's, the first carriage, is people just really disregarding the laws. They smoke weed in that carriage, they drink alcohol and they're always harassed by cops, but they don't stop. It's always been there. So it's the matter of people working hard and coming back and feeling, like, they wanna forget about their suppressor. They regard the person who employs them as a suppressor. So when you drink alcohol, you show that it's your time, you're doing whatever you want with your time.

LvS : An escape

Student 2 : Escape, ja.

Student 3 : Ja, but that's what I'm saying. If things became worse, don't you think people will drink more?

Student 4 : You know, it affects everyone to drink. If the CEO is threatened to leave the company, they kill themselves. So it affects everyone. If your situation is worse for you as the individual, you do something about it. You drink or you kill yourself.

Student 5 : I don't think it's really the alcohol, it's not alcohol at all. I just think it's the, it's the person. Like, as a person you see yourself as this rich person, or any kind of person. But it's like, it's in yourself, that, ok, like on this day I'll take one. Black, white or coloured, you can be rich or poor. It's you, it's not the alcohol, like alcohol doesn't tell you: "Ok, you got to have six beers today." You get home and you can have as much beers as you want. You make the decision as to how much beers as you want. The fridge can be full, the fridge can be full, but you tell yourself: "Ok, I'm gonna have one beer today." It's you as a person who says yourself, you can drink. Even Michaela, even Michaela, she doesn't drink at all. But she can tell herself on Saturday, she can tell herself, she is the one that can tell herself: "Now I'll have a half a bottle of Tequila," or what not. It's not the alcohol that's telling her that. Ja.

LvS : The interesting thing though, is, um, after a drink, your ability to make a rational decision is diminished, and then the more drinks you have, the more difficult it becomes.

Student 6 : I just want to say something else, like in a different point. You know how people always say, aaa, after a daft night, I'm never drinking again, bla bla bla. And they always drink again, like I don't understand. That actually happened to me, like I had one of the daftest nights after my matric dance. I passed out. It was like, it will never ever happen again. After that, I told myself: "That can't happen again." It's like, my sister saw me and, like, my friends, they spoke about it for hours, like the main topic of campus for like six months basically, what I did. And I didn't remember most of it. [Inaudible] But I did [inaudible] after that night, I did become more responsible, especially when I started driving. And then I knew I have to be the designated driver every time we go out. So, like, I have one or two drinks early in the night. But I don't know why most people can't just be responsible and mature enough to say: "This is what's gonna happen when I drink." And just not drink as much. Have limits.

LvS : That's a very interesting point.

Student 7 : It also depends on the place and the mood of the place. I mean, if you go to a restaurant, you know, ok

Student 6 : You're not gonna get sloshed.

Student 7 : Ja, you just know, ok, I'm just gonna have a beer, maybe two, and, with my food. But when you're in a club the vibe is so different, and you wanna be, like, you see the people coming together and you just wanna be part of that vibe, because why are you there if you're not gonna celebrate with the people. You need to be a part, so you push yourself to get into the crowd. There are some people, ok, who can say, ok, no, they don't care, but, you know, most people, they want to be accepted into that social stance at the moment.

Student 8 : What I want to know is, like, how many people, after watching this documentary, will say: "I'll never touch alcohol again".

[Indistinct reactions from several students] That's not the point.

Student 8 : That shouldn't be the fact, but, like, does it change your mindset? Because, what I believe is, like, for a drug addict to recover properly, you can go to the You can go everywhere else, but if you go back to your street, where the merchant is there and here, and, like, your influences are around you the whole time, you're just gonna do the same thing. It's called insanity, doing the same thing over and over, and expecting different results. Like, the whole time. So you know, when I go out here today, I go straight home. I get out of the train, will pass the bottle store where people are drinking, and I go home. A buddy calls me, says: "Do you wanna have a beer?" I say : "Ok, cool". Another one will call me, it will happen. If I say no, I get looked upon. "What's wrong with you?" Whatever this. I say yes, it's gonna happen. You know what I'm saying? You loose a friend. It's a lotta pressure. Society It's been a rough week, it's been this and that. So, like, the documentary also, like, needs to get to the I don't know, like, what's gonna happen in the next couple episodes, but, like, the root of the evil. You know what I'm saying? Why we need the poison so much.

LvS : Mmm

Student 9 : Liani, um, just to, um, support what uh, Julian [indistinct] said like. Just when you, just when you, just when you, um, left the classroom, um, like Julian asked us, ja, feel like, all of us want a drink. It's true, like, I'm still shaking a bit on the inside. I really want that, I really want, not, like, again wire, I just want that one drink. Not a six pack or anything. It's up to me how much I want. It's like, it's this, I really want that beer. Like, when I was ticking your questionnaire, like, I think there should be, there should have been an option there, like, we drink also just for the thirsty part of it.

[Laughter]

Student 9 : Like drinking is not something that we have every day. It's not like water. Water we have every day, juice we have every day. We know that taste. But like, something nice too. Like, people say I'm a great wine taster, I like that wine, I like this wine, I like this beer, I like that beer. Also just for the thirst part of it as well.

LvS : Just for the taste part.

Student 9 : Just for the taste, ja.

7.

LvS : Ok. Can I I just want to get back to you, because you made a comment, somebody here made a comment about, in reaction to the question about : "Now, are we supposed to stop after seeing one episode of Booza TV?"

Student 1 : I think it's more to create an awareness of what happens when you drink too much. Because you could see, like, in the beginning of the documentary, it starts very lighthearted, like, with animated ... and people having fun and as it goes on in the episode, they show the bad shit like people passing out and vomiting in the toilets and the bar owners talking about all the stuff, like people pissing on the thing and so, just to create people, this is what's actually happening in the clubs and like, uh, I don't know. But it's not, I don't think they want you to like : “No to drinking,” and stuff like that, because if that happened, the alcohol companies would be very upset with them.

[Indistinct discussion amongst students]

8.

LvS : Let me ask you the next question, which is, which also leads on from what you just said and that is : What did you notice about the filmmaking? So we've talked quite a lot about the content of the documentary, but now I want to hear what you thought about how it was put together, what did you notice about it?

Student 1 : I think the way that they made it, like when they started off with that nice, it gets you interested in the beginning and then they go into the more serious part towards the end after you're, like, already hooked. Then you're like, you wanna keep watching to see what's actually happening. Like I wanna see the rest of the episodes now and see how in-depth they go into the real situation. Like what Julian said, the evil, whatever, something like that.

Student 2 : I don't know if anyone else saw it, but the editing, it's cut like, one person says one word and another person. That's kinda, like, when you go out at night, you go party, you wake up the next morning, you only remember bits and pieces of the night and that's what I kinda clicked with the editing, it's only bits and pieces, ja, like, you remember that one : “Did I really do that?” “No!” Ok, you see, that's a one word...

Student 3 : And somebody else tells you what happened.

Student 2 : Exactly!

Student 4 : It keeps you anxious and excited, like: “What is your overall feeling about it?” on the questionnaire. I said excitement. Not as in excitement as a good, like, you know: “Ooh, I wanna drink.”

[Laughter]

Student 4 : Ja, but like you get excited because it's anxious. Everybody, most people, like 80%, can relate to that, you know. They've been in that club where it's like, ah! It's pumping, people's eyes are out. It's sick, but like, it's ja, exciting. Fast cuts in the beginning and slowing down, word for word, snippets like that. Also, ja, and the confusion, like, a lot of confusion, which, which shows like, you know, it's not really a good thing. It's like, a lot of people like, undecided, like: “Ja, you know, um.” “What do you feel about drugs and alcohol?” “Um, um”. Also, well done on the editing for that, you know. It could change people's minds a bit ultimately, but it is the truth. People see it in a different way. Whereas weed smokers would never hurt anybody, but alcohol abusers just crap, hit the crap out of people in clubs and people are fighting. Like I go into a club or a pub and I feel like, yo, tonight I'm gonna have a good time, but I always feel that some idiot is gonna try some stupid thing.

[Overlapping affirmative responses from several students]

Student 4 : And then Like, you could get provoked. Your friend will get provoked or someone will look for nonsense, and like, but like, ja

LvS : So you feel that alcohol makes people more aggressive.

Student 4 : Some people just can't handle their stuff. And then, even if you can handle it, your decision making isn't, isn't on par, so if someone is, Josh is now 'lolling' there with Lungu, and he's my buddy, and I'm tryin'a, and I'm tryin'a now someone gets 'klapped'. Thats how it happens. Like the story goes like, don't stand up for your friends where people are drinking, because you're probably gonna get hurt. Like, people have been stabbed, people have been killed, and we have a history of violence in this country, all round. Because of our past, our violent past, it's ok for us to, to be in violent situations, witness violent occasions where people get stabbed, killed, this type of things. Everyone has seen something or heard about something and we talk about it, and it's ok. Same way that alcohol is ok. That's like the sickness, like, that's why you need to, like, you need to go back.

LvS : It's the accepted norm, isn't it. Ok, there were a couple of people on this side who haven't said anything. Who wanted to ad something about the filmmaking? Filmmaking perspectives? Yes.

Student 5 : Yea, for me the filmmaking was, was done very well, in such a way that it affects us all, because there's one part, like, the, the guy who has this collection of memorabilia who brings his kid to drink Castle. So I feel sorry for that kid that's not even born yet. Then I feel sorry for those kids who are sitting on the stairs, like, you know, if affects every one. So, we must all work together to find a solution, because it's bad for everyone.

9.

LvS : Ja, that's interesting. So, did you also notice that there were many different cultures and ages collected there?

[Overlapping affirmative reactions from several students]

Student 1 : I was actually gonna say what he said.

LvS : Well, you can add to it.

Student 1 : Um

Student 2 : Also, what the filmmaking What I also liked was that, um, yeah, it's well balanced, um. They'll pick up, they'll bring a positive point like what a person would say, and then they'll bring a bad side and then they'll bring a positive side and a bad side, so it's, like, it's not all negative or all positive. So, they try to make it realistic, because there is like good times and there are your bad times, I suppose. So it's kind of, it's ja, it's good.

Student 3 : For the filmmaking, um, I'll still say, like, 80% of people after watching that will get a beer, and 20% of them might now think, ok, I mustn't drink this much, but they're still going to have a beer after that. I gua.... , I guarantee you, that people after, like, if you watch that half past six, half past six in the night, family time, people will walk out there and go to the nearest [indistinct].

Student 2 : [Indistinct] I just want to go to Stellenbosch now.

[Laughter]

Student 4 : I think, um, what I liked about the filmmaking was the fact that the editing, it was just fast cuts. And that it wasn't one person sitting down, giving like his five minutes of the thing. It was his sentence, and someone else's sentence and it wasn't experts that were giving their opinion, it was those that go partying, those that just drink at home, those that drink here and there and there. And everybody's input was given, and so it wasn't a one-sided thing of an expert only saying this is why people drink. It's people actually saying: "This is why we drink".

Student 5 : And you could see that, actually, during the [inaudible] there, they actually realised, um, they actually, it's like they actually started thinking about their own drinking habits. As like: "Oh shit, we actually drink a lot." [Indistinct] You can actually. You can see it's real.

Student 4 : Consciously drunk.

Student 6 : Sorry, it's not about the editing, but what's fantastic about, like, the way the country is going now, we do have a drinking culture, but like, the cops are clamping down on a lot of things, so people are starting to curb themselves more to be responsible. A lot of spots like, um, your forests and your Tokai forest where people could go and braai and drink at a time, which I remember like young, even before I left for Jo'burg six years ago, you could have a drink there. You can't drink on the beaches any more, you can't drink on Newlands, so, like, because of us just messing it up for everybody, no one can enjoy it, so now you're starting to curb it, so people are getting more responsible, like you'll go to a house party or I'll have drinks at a friends house and they'll say, like, they're not driving, and I'm also not driving. One niece is around the corner, but even around the corner could cause problems, you know what I'm saying? So people are getting responsible in that way. But advertisements are still going up. People are still advertising more. You walk into a bottle store, like at Malmesbury, like I know that place, not know, I know people of that place. The way alcohol, like, specially in small, rural areas, that's where it's the worse! The 'dop' system is still prevalent, people don't have work, killings, beatings, it'ssss ja.

[Indistinct general discussion amongst students]

Student 3 : I feel that the Western Cape is doing well to, like, I have to be honest, drinking, we love it, but Ms Helen Zille is doing a good job, like, cutting out drinking. Like, I think she introduced this new law – two o'clock , clubs close, it irritates people, but

LvS : Three o'clock.

Student 3 : Two o'clock. Aaa, I don't know - two or three, I don't know. But it irritates people, but it is going, it is going to that place that people start to drink less and stuff like that. I think she wants to introduce no drink, and close places on a Sunday, and stuff like that, is going to work, like, let's say in five, ten years time. But, like, we, in black, ja, coloureds and blacks, like, that is business for us, basically, also like. We, there're houses that, they go on till twelve o'clock, one o'clock they're still open. Even though the police do patrol there, the police come, everyone close? Like, no, here's a case for you, policeman. They take the case, they leave the place, like, it's still open. Slowly or sure it's gonna get there, but, you know, it's business for blacks and coloureds, at the end of the day.

Student 6 : It keeps blacks and coloureds down.

LvS : That's interesting.

Student 6 : It's like, is a, is a, the amount of alcohol we consume Um, the history books say that, um, the reason why the 'skollie' element developed, like the gangster, the Cape Flats gangster, [indistinct] 19, 1900's, but the system's not there yet, whatever, but now, people are, the only people needed to work, is in the factories, so they employ women. Men don't have jobs in the Cape. You got a job, you mine and everything, so there's a huge population of coloureds and black people. The women all work in the factories, and the women still work in the factories. What do the men do? They sit at home, idle hands is the devil's playmate. "I don't make money. I'm gonna rob people." So the element started. "So I'll rob you, you're coming from work, I don't make money." We breed pride? We take from our own people, from our own communities, and then the whole gangsterism started, the drinking, the Tik smoking, the crack pipe, this, everything. Dimitri. [Laughing]

LvS : Over to Dimitri. Dimitri, is this a comment about the filmmaking?

Student 1 : Not really.

10.

LvS : Ok. After this one, let's get it back to talking about the filmmaking.

Student 1 : Um, it's that, like, I'm not, I don't want it to look like Gus talked about blacks and coloureds and stuff. Me, growing up in Stellenbosch I'm sure you're familiar with the drinking culture in Stellenbosch?

LvS : I'm afraid I am.

Student 1 : It's notorious. 'Vensters' and 'Jool' and stuff, um.

LvS : Which you saw a little bit of in that episode.

Student 1 : Majority of my friends in Stellenbosch are whites, and we could get away with things at my white friend's house, that we couldn't get away with at my coloured friend's house. Their parents would let us have a beer, or a six pack or they would let us drink out, like, straight out. My friend has a bar in his backyard, and a pool and, like a little lapa, and we would sit there and drink, but you go to my coloured friends? No. That's not ever gonna fly, you can't even smoke at that house. So I think it's kinda interesting that you guys are bringing that. But that's just, like, my point of view from it, too.

LvS : It's interesting, because also in the episode, the person who spoke about being given a little bit of sweet wine on a Sunday afternoon by his dad, was a white man from the generation older than me, which I think that's sort of an accepted thing in middle class Afrikaans culture. But then there was a, the one musician that's standing in the bar, I can't remember his name now. He says : "If I had to ask my father for a beer, he would beat me." So And he's a black guy. So it's interesting how the differences between the generations are different in different cultures. Ok, let's There're two people who haven't said a word yet, so

Student 2 : About the filmmaking? Another thing that I liked about the, the whole episode, was that it was also raw. It was very raw, it wasn't clean or it wasn't very, you know, it wasn't re-enactment also. It was people doing what they do.

Student 3 : Like on the spot.

Student 2 : Ja. It's, like nothing was, like, you couldn't really plan stuff like that. Just take a camera and show you this is how you are. That's what I'm talking about.

Student 3 : Like when they show the bottle store over the whole day, and like, I thought that was very interesting, just to see the actual activity around there.

11.

LvS : And there That was all sped up. Do you think that added to your experience?

Student 1 : I think it , ja I dunno how, but it was interesting.

LvS : Because you saw a whole day there in about a minute and a half. Thats, so, uh ja, I think that allowed you to see quite a lot of how the day progressed.

Student 1 : I understand the whole day, what's actually going on in those people's lives, kinda. They must come there, and you see people coming at the end of the day, knocking on the door, and they get in and they come here and they say : "O crap, it's closed, " and they have to leave. So I get an understanding of that whole community that goes to that bar, so basically.

LvS : Ok, so what Just hang on a second. These two need to say something.

Student 2 : So I just wanna ask, um, are these people aware of, like this documentary? 'Cause if this were to be aired on television, like, a lot of people would get into trouble. So like, do these people know about this?

LvS : Ja, um, all of the people who were interviewed, signed release forms, or otherwise, if they didn't sign a release form, they were recorded on camera saying : "I'm prepared to do an interview." I do wonder, though, at certain points, where there's a bar with fifty people dancing, or a club, whether every one of them signed.

[Overlapping banter amongst students about unacceptable behaviour being caught out on television]

LvS : You wanted to add something?

Student 3 : No, I don't. It's not nice.

LvS : O, was it you? Ok.

Student 4 : On the filmmaking, I just want, um It's also what Julian and Dimitri said about the black and white thing. Um, it's, it's good that they got both black and whites doing the thing, 'cause, we were actually talking about this, me and my other friends, just yesterday, in the morning, that, when white people, like when they were young, they were sent to a corner, whereas blacks if you're naughty when you're young, you get a smacking, like, and you know that you don't do that. But then again, at the same time, because of that, because we grew up with that, you know, if I drink and I get home drunk, I'm gonna get a beating, or I'm not gonna be allowed inside the house, or something like that. And then So you drink, like every time you go out, you drink to get drunk, and then you know it was worth it, kind of a thing, whereas the white people they drink, they get drunk, they go home, it's ok. They do it again the following day. You know what I mean.

[Overlapping discussion amongst lecturer and students, expressing indignation about this type of generalisation]

Student 5 : When we would get home, like not, all of You get home, and like, they'd give you that disappointing look. And then the next morning you'll, you'd get your, you'd get yours, trust me, you'd get yours!

Student 4 : No, yes I know, but as I'm saying, based on the filmmaking, talking about the filmmaking - the fact that they got black and white doing the same thing at the same place, getting drunk, which is what you were saying about the whites and the blacks and Lukanjo about the class. It's not really about that. Here 're showing everyone doing the same thing. We've all been taking the same poison, so to say. You know what I mean? So it breaks all class barriers, alcohol that is.

[Overlapping affirmative responses from several students]

12.

LvS : Does the fact that the [waits for students to quiet down] , the fact that the documentary includes different people from different ...

Student 1 : Ja.

LvS : does that make it feel to you like the documentary speaks to you?

Student 1 : Yes, it does, 'cause it goes to everyone.

Student 2 : South Africans in general.

Student 3 : It's really done well

Student 1 : Exactly, generalising.

Student 3 : It's really done well, 'cause it covers everything.

Student 2 : From high class to low class, from black, white and coloured.

LvS : What is quite interesting, though, is that um, uh. Somebody watched it the other day and she said : "But why aren't there Indian people?"

[Laughter]

Student 1 : They don't drink. [Laughter] Don't look at me! [More laughter]

13.

LvS : You wanted to add something? You sure? Ok, so let's focus a little bit more in on the editing now. So, we've talked about the filmmaking in general, and quite a few of you have made statements about the editing, which was quite interesting to me. I'm not asking about the editing because I was involved with it. I was involved with editing this, but I was one of about five editors. So, I mean, if, I You've mentioned a couple of elements of the editing, but it's not necessarily that I put that specific thing in. So you don't have to worry that you're going to offend me in any way. I would rather hear your honest opinions.

[Overlapping banter and laughing comments from students]

LvS : Aaa! But that's also fine! So, what did you notice about the editing?

Student 1 : The music in the background, like when the people are talking, is very much live. So you feel as if, you know, you're watching it and there's like, this recurring song, which I really like, lekka ja, real, and then lots of close ups, like in your face and it's like really people getting pissed, you can see it's real, it's raw. Lot's of fast cuts in there and things, ja.

[Indistinct reaction from students]

LvS : Just hang on one second.

Student 2 : It was clever how they used almost like a warped kind of a thing when the people were drunk then kinda gave you, like you're really into it now, like you're drunk with them, like, I like that.

Student 3 : Like when they party, you feel like the actual partying lifestyle. Like when that guy's, like: "We always drink," and then it swirled out, kinda like that. When those two guys are sitting, you kinda get that feeling of how they feel when they are totally wasted.

LvS : OK. Sorry, there was just somebody with a hand up in the back.

Student 4 : [Indistinct] The editing was good, but like some of it was just, well, not some, like one or two, like just a bit way too fast like: ok : "What did he say?" Otherwise, ja, it was at a pace, at a constant pace, but some of it was just way too fast to understand.

14.

LvS : Obviously I have seen it a few times, so there were a couple of points where there's something that I think is very funny, that somebody says, but then I noticed that none of you laughed, and then I wondered whether it was just too fast to catch what the person is saying.

Student 1 : That footage that they would slip in when somebody says something [indistinct] looked like it was from a movie or something. I like that. That was actually cool. I mean the thing, the documentary, I was interested in it, which I never am really, because I don't really enjoy watching documentaries. But this one, I was just watching and I enjoyed that whole piece of, you know, when, especially when, the part when they brought up drugs and alcohol and then it was, you know, clips and

Student 2 : Of the sixties.

Student 1 : we, we see

Student 3 : I like that old stuff.

Student 1 : and we see

Student 2 : Back of the sixties.

Student 1 : and we see it, like we see like in re-enactment. The guy says : [Indistinct] and the guy passes the weed to the other guy and stuff like that. I like that.

Student 4 : [Indistinct] I think it pictured kind of there, like how many people do see you when you are like that. You keep repeating it. Like, you don't know how many people see you in one night in that. Like, someone mentioned also the fast when the partying gets more the fast cuts. Like because that is you go partying, you get in that state of mind. And suddenly you're like : "Oh shit, it's already two o'clock".

Student 5 : And all of a sudden you're in your car, and then you're at home, and then you're like : "O my God."

Student 4 : And then you wake up, it's like : "No!"

Student 6 : "How did I get home?"

LvS : Yes, you wanted to add something.

Student 7 : No, I just said, the old videos was cool.

15.

LvS : It's interesting how that shows the contrast, between how they used to make How they used to try and convince you not to drink, versus what you see now.

Student 1 : You know back in the day [indistinct]

Student 2 : Ja well, cigarette packets used to say cigarettes were good for you back in the day.

LvS : Oi!

Student 3 : Like it shows us

Student 2 : No, its about cigarettes, don't worry.

Student 3 : It shows us how, like long ago, black and white, there's people drinking. I know it's not enough, but, you know, I feel like people still It's not gonna stop. Like that was 1944 and people are still drinking. You're not about to stop, and stuff like that , ja.

Student 4 : I know that, um, I saw, read, I don't know where I read it, but to promote, like, cigarettes, they would get famous stars to smoke in certain movies. Would they Do they do the same thing similar with drinking, do they get certain big Hollywood stars to drink?

[Overlapping affirmative responses from several students]

Student 5 : And actual songs.

Student 6 : And we actually see that in clubs, like we, we like, [derisive laugh] it's like a lot of music videos see their [indistinct] in a slow motion. They drink their vodka, their Absolute vodka, and stuff like that. So we go into a club like [indistinct] What clubs do you go to, ja, what clubs do you go to? [Laughter] To feel good, to feel like a VIP, you also buy Absolute vodka, to show that we have achieved, we have achieved.

[Overlapping affirmative responses from several students]

Student 4 : But isn't it clear that they're promoting it, like, it doesn't Don't you take note that they are promoting it and it's not

Student 7 : It's product placement.

[Overlapping debate amongst students about which company has the best alcohol advertisements]

Student 4 : Don't you ask yourself: "Why is it so Why is it promoted so much?," or like: "Why is it seen in a positive way all the time?"

[Overlapping discussion amongst lecturer and students]

Student 4 : This is all about money basically.

[Indistinct discussion amongst students]

Student 8 : I think the reason why we tolerate alcohol drinking, is that it's advertised in the papers that we should perceive it as a lifestyle. Like alcohol drinking is a lifestyle.

[Overlapping affirmative responses from several students]

LvS : The images that are associated with alcohol, do they

Student 8 : It's positivity. You think of positivity while you're drinking, ja

[Overlapping responses from several students]

LvS : He's been trying to say something for a while.

Student 9 : No, I'm just gonna say – the filmmaking side. I, I notice quite often now that, like ten years people use a different, a certain style of doing things, and then another ten years the style changes. This seems to be the norm. In the eighties, like, I've been going back, watching some footage of some documentaries of the eighties and the early nineties. They were very slow and, and, and tried to get to the point as slow as possible. But now we have this MTV type of shooting documentaries even. That's why you say you saw some funny moments, but people didn't laugh. Is that the media's goal is to actually, not really make you, like to conscientise you, though to, the style is to get you in. Then once you're in, you then as an individual gonna determine whether you know how to control You know they got you, which is the plan of the corporation. To get the alcohol to you, and make is sweet if you don't like bitter alcohol. Then ... now you say, ok, I know how to handle alcohol, we like alcohol, but you don't talk about how they actually got to you. And now you should be really talking about how they got you, and then how you can control how they got you. You know, like basically they got you through advertising, like sophisticated advertising and now you're part of Like, it's just like being on Face Book, Twitter and that's how alcohol is. And then Now you tend to control how much you use it. You say : "O, they got to me, but then, I know how to use it," you know . And then you find yourself making some huge mistakes, just one day because you over-did it and then they got you, you know. We all get got!

16.

LvS : It's interesting that they get you in so many different ways, and I think that's something that we don't address yet in this episode, but that we see it everywhere. Like you guys have brought it up, you see it in movies, you see it in TV series, it's in magazines, you see it when you

go to the adverts when you go to the cinema . Yes?

Student 1 : It's like it's in day TV : Isidingo, Barker Haynes always has a whisky, Generations, they always have [fake run down??] whisky. But just to go back a bit, like as stated here [indistinct], like comparing alcohol and drugs. I don't think you really can compare it at all. Drugs kills, like certain drugs, your heroins your cocaines your Tiks, they kill people much faster than alcohol does. Like you really need a lot of alc.... That guy there, his lung, his liver might be [indistinct], might be, um like, raw or whatever, but its gonna take him more drinking really to get into a hospital, compared to Tik. And um

Student 2 : You snort [indistinct] cocaine and od.

Student 1 : Gangsters also, they need, they don't need alcohol, they need like a case, two cases of alcohol to actually go kill somebody, compared to a pill, a pill of Tik to go kill like, a whole family or something. This new drug, I dunno what they call it, they mix heroin and [Interjection : Dunga] Dunga, ja, o flip.

Student 3 : Are they not referring to the actual drinking and that being the direct cause of death. But they're referring to the person that you might knock over, or the person that you might beat up, the person, the wife you might smack around, the child you might hit. It, it, the damage is much more broader. More people, you know I'll never see a It said so many times a husband beat his wife because like, he's stoned, or bec, you know what I mean. Its more families, families, more families is broken apart because of alcohol, I'm sure me, me, most ...

[Overlapping debate amongst students during the above contribution]

Student 2 : Lets say there comes a company cocaine code

Student 4 : More people have been killed.

Student 2 : Let's say there comes a company cocaine code. Let's make cocaine legal, and I push it every day in your face. Don't you think everybody in this class will at least go and try it once?

Student 3 : [Indistinct] I don't see coke becoming legal.

Student 1 : That's what I'm saying.

Student 5 : I don't think so.

Student 2 : Alcohol is available to us.

Student 6 : It's more accessible.

Student 2 : Ja. Alcohol is more accessible, so let's say drugs were more accessible.

Student 3 : No. You're not, clearly, you have been In your point of life, alcohol has maybe at some point, did something to you. But all I'm saying is like, if drugs were as accessible as alcohol, more people will try it or use it once and I think the statistics will make a big turnaround.

17.

LvS : Or, conversely, if alcohol is as, not as inaccessible, but if there's a more negative view

about alcohol? Then fewer people would actually use it.

Student 1 : Ja.

Student 2 : I wanna say like, I don't think it's the product placements for the advertisements that we see on TV, because it's more a perception of the people. In all the movies, ads, whatever, that I've seen it, nobody ever got drunk unless it was like, meant to be. Or like, they wouldn't say like, specifically like, I'm gonna get plastered and gonna get drunk. What you always see is one glass and it would always be like, a thing for a reason, like you always see, like [Indistinct] for example. He only had one glass with the guys with his future mom in law, and that was it. That was the only time I saw it in that whole thingy. So I don't think it's how, or the fact that it is advertised, I think it's how people perceive it.

[Indistinct responses]

Student 3 : Plus, even if alcohol was illegal, let's go back to prohibition, bootlegging, people still drank alcohol.

[Overlapping discussion amongst students]

Student 4 : What Ezra said about the whole product placements and like, only one glass, and like, for example like, soapies, if they do get someone like, to act as if they're drunk, they would show that in a completely negative light. It would be wrong. There wouldn't be like, oh, he's so drunk, that's so awesome, it's so great, whatever, whatever. It would be like : “Oh my gosh you're smashed, you're a disgrace. You're, ja “

18.

LvS : Ok. So, I have another question for you, and this is actually returning to something that we talked about a little bit earlier, and that is : you were watching the episode, did it spark for you a process where you were looking at what other were saying, and then you started thinking: “Well, how would I answer that same question? When do I drink? Who do I drink with? How often?” Things like that. Any ideas about that? Anyone? it make you think about your own habits?

[Affirmative responses from a number of students]

LvS : So I get a resounding 'yes' here?

Student 1 : You think about your own habits, but at the same time it's like

Student 2 : Do you really want to change?

Student 1 : You don't really You see this in a bad way, but it's like, am I gonna change any time soon? Naaah!

Student 2 : Personally I feel guilty enough the next morning after a night out that watching that doesn't really make me feel guilty. I feel sorry for them. I don't feel sorry for myself, because I know I'm doing it to myself. And the only time I really feel bad, is the next morning.

Student 1 : It's yourself, it's not alcohol. Never blame alcohol.

Student 3 : I don't feel guilty, because I know I don't abuse alcohol. It's not like I go out every weekend, like I've been Two weeks ago was the last time I went out and that's when I went

back to Pretoria. And, actually when I went out, all my friends were, like: “You've changed.” And I was, like: “Why?” Because I wasn't partying like them, so maybe Cape Town has a different effect on me. But I'm just saying, like, and I've never been in an environment where like, I know my parents, they will never like, abuse alcohol. So for me it's not, I don't care. It won't change my view about alcohol, because I know I'm not abusing it at the moment.

LvS : It's interesting that you immediately assumed that I meant it in a negative way, like a couple of you said: “It didn't make me feel guilty”. And I asked whether it made you think about how you use alcohol, not like abuse, or anything like that. Interesting.

Student 4 : Ok, after watching it, it made me thought about my father's habits. He works at SAB breweries, and they receive free alcohol every month. So, it's like, every day he has to get a drink. Every day he has to drink something. And for him it's like, um, he doesn't spend much money on alcohol, he has alcohol at home, with him every day.

[Overlapping banter and laughter from students]

LvS : In the back row?

Student 5 : For me, it's like, watching this documentary, like, I've seen documentaries where they talk about drugs and alcohol. This one didn't really blow my mind at the first glance, but then it kinda like To me the style is more video'ish, you know. I would watch it and then forget about it very soon, very quickly. Because to me, I think, maybe I come from a slightly different generation. I like to be with the generation before me, so if a documentary could show me what was before me, and then after, and then where I am, then it, it has an impact. But then, for us, this documentary acts like a mirror of me, getting, coming in through the door in my room, and drunk and this, and just passing by the mirror and saying: “Oh well, I'm drunk”. And then I take my clothes off and go to sleep and forget about it, you know. So I'm just, um, I just wanna see how, how it's gonna go on the other episodes to be able to make a, a good judgement of it. But then I think it was just a mirror, really. Nothing serious. They, they took it from a very high up level, they didn't really go dig deep into what makes people drink, you know. It's just about how. Ja, it's like it shows that we do drink, and so what?

LvS : I see we have five minutes left, so I think we should make these the last two or three statements.

Student 6 : Um, just one thing about the film also that I liked was that it also showed, not just how hard people party and how hard they throw up and stuff, but also how it affects the other people. Like those kids – that one, that, that small kid that was drinking on Christmas Eve and the fact that he went outside and was swearing and called his neighbours out, but they were also drunk. That was also - made people think a bit also of who they affect instead of just themselves with a hang-over the next day.

Student 3 : [Indistinct] ... the next generation of partyers!

Student 7 : Maybe , maybe interview people that are affected, that aren't, that don't remember interviewing their family and friends. That can also bring a different perspective as well.

Student 1 : Ja, I think it's like, the kids, the kids, and that other, um, um sorry, white guy like, it's the, it's the way you're brought up, or so you said. His father or his mother would like, put a, like, a small glass of whine there. It's like the way you're brought up, was that those kids were brought up, sorry, it looks to me they were brought up in a way like their parents were drinking

like, every day. Like: "Aa, I'm also gonna drink every day." Like I, I've, I've been brought up in a way like, drink alcohol but don't abuse it. I've seen my aunties and my mother drink there, but they drink there, and they sleep there, like, at home. They don't take it outside or anything like that, and that's the way that I'm gonna carry myself also. Like my friend, my coloured friends also, have been in a, they've gone up in a way like, in clubs and stuff like that. They were drinking, I'm not gonna drive myself like that. We are going to a state, that more and more people are going to like, be more responsible. It's like, it goes back to the way like, it's the person, it's not the alcohol.

Student 2 : How you were raised in your family and stuff like that, in your community where you come, how your parents are. And also like with that other

Student 3 : And your friends. The people you hang out with.

Student 2 : Like I know Christian people who drink, but Ezra, for example. His parents don't let him drink or go clubbing. It's just how their family is. People 're all different. He's a good person.

Student 1 : Some people actually like, go back to an excuse of drinking's in the Bible, like Jesus had ...

[General banter and laughter]

19.

LvS : There are interesting perspectives here that some people say it's the individual, some people pointed out that it's the habits that you learn in your family, other people pointed out, um, elements of culture and, um, you know, your society, your friends.

Student 1 : Your social circle.

LvS : Your social circle, and then there's the bigger circle as well, and that's the circle of our history, that a couple of people have mentioned and in South Africa specifically the whole idea of the 'dop' system, which even though

Student 2 : It's not allowed now.

LvS : Ja, people like to think that it's not around, but it's interesting to hear that it still is, and even in areas where people are not getting free alcohol, they're not getting payed with alcohol, the legacy is still there. So very interesting.

Student 3 : Just, lastly, it's like, half of those people there, if their mothers had to party with them, I don't think they wouldn't do half the things they'll be doing. It's like, what to, it's like

Student 2 : What is it now?

Student 3 : It's like, I would also teach my I wouldn't It's like teaching your child knowing when to stop and knowing when to stop, because when he goes clubbing, I don't know what he's doing. It's not in my hands any more, but it's like, teaching him responsibility, knowing when to stop drinking and stuff like that.

[Overlapping commentary from several students]

Student 4 : For me now this, this documentary, like, inspired curiosity, because I'm curious, like, how does alcohol, alcohol connect with the ancestors, because I heard a guy that says

alcohol helps you connect with the ancestors and all that. So I have that curiosity now. How does it [indistinct]

LvS : So you're going to research that?

Student 4 : Uuu, I'm thinking of researching that now.

[Overlapping general commentary]

LvS : Other issues that are addressed later on in this series – they go deeper into advertising, there's a section about, um, violence and car accidents. Um, there's quite a bit also about issues that you guys have brought up in terms of the new Western Cape liquor act, which, um, has limited the opening hours of bars and clubs, which has limited the sale hours in Pick and Pays and places like that. Um, and it also looks a little bit at, um Something else that somebody brought up that I find really interesting, was that a lot of places that specialise in alcohol, you can't really get food, like if you go to a club or a bar, there's not a lot of food that you can buy.

[Indistinct comments from a few students]

20.

LvS : But in a restaurant, people who eat and have a glass of wine, or two glasses of wine, it's a little bit more balanced. They're not going to drink. You're not going to go to a restaurant and drink a bottle of wine and not have any food, and of course the food helps to, to keep you sober and not have such a hangover the next day.

Student 1 : They make it extra hot.

LvS : Mmm?

Student 1 : They make it extra hot in the clubs.

LvS : Oh, oh that's interesting. Oh!

Student 1 : They need air con, but they don't have air con.

LvS : They make it extra hot, so you drink. But can you imagine, I mean people Ok, so later on in the series another thing that's really interesting that I just want to mention to you, is that one of the experts says that for females anything more than three drinks, can be classified as binge drinking, and for guys it's five. So think back.

Student 1 : [Indistinct]

LvS : A glass of wine, a beer, a shooter. So that would be wise. That would be your whole evening. So just think back over the last year or so, how many times, girls, you've had more than three drinks and guys, you've had more than five drinks in an evening.

[Incredulous overlapping comments and laughter]

LvS : It's quite, it's interesting if you think about it that way, but then there's also resistance, so the longer you've been drinking and the more you drink, the more resistance you build up. Um, ja?

Student 2 : I was just thinking, it's a good thing, like Zille, and she's publishing all these laws and stuff, but then she doesn't give people other things to do.

Student 3 : Exactly!

LvS : That's another big issue. Recreation.

Student 2 : It's like, it's like, now people are They stopped with the smoking, advertising smoking, but I see a school kid on my way to walking to the train, buying a cigarette, him and his buddy ...

Student 4 : In his school uniform!

Student 2 : In his school, in his school uni

Student 4 : Saw that yesterday!

Student 2 : When, like, when I was at school was a bit long time ago

[Indistinct remarks and laughter]

Student 2 : What you was gonna do, was with a little respect, you know what I'm saying, and I see that going out of the window completely. They won't even stand like this [pause : seems to demonstrate], 'cos when you start smoking at school it's like this [pause : seems to demonstrate] you're looking away, pushing. No, there's none of that. He's standing up, walking. I'm thinking : "Yo! Fifteen!" And then I saw fourteen year old girls, last week Thursday, pretty young, and I, 'cause I can judge age very well. Old!

[Laughter]

Student 2 : Fifteen, I saw it, fifteen, standing buying a cigarette in front of that shop, taking that cigarette, smoking it. The community is watching. I'm thinking : "Yo, not even around to the corner, in the backyard," because that's where you smoke the cigarette, if you are being respectful. None of that!

[Overlapping discussion amongst students]

LvS : What I find interesting, is that I see a lot more people in their twenties and thirties that are quitting, though.

[Overlapping affirmative reaction from some students]

Student 2 : They can't afford it. But as a kid now – that's the excuse now, otherwise they would carry on – but as a kid, you have a rand fifty, you don't have to worry about rent and all that things now, I mean.

Student 5 : Like, at my school last year, I come from like, a really coloured community, so it's like, there's no, it's probably sounds very bad, but there's no shame. Like, you would know exactly who to go to when you were looking for cigarettes. If you wanted someone to smuggle in alcohol, everybody knew how. There were ways, they could tell you : "Look, if you put it in a bottle and you like, mount the cap and let it looks like it hasn't been opened yet" Smuggles alcohol into like, sports events and stuff. And like at the, the, the um 'smokkelhuise', they're like

shebeens in my area, they don't ask you for your ID. They, they know your mother, they know your grandmother, they know exactly at which house you live. They've probably been in your house already, like they know your people. But you walk in they're like: "What you want. What you gonna buy?" Like if you have money, you get your whatever.

LvS : That's very interesting.

Student 6 : It's like, honestly, it doesn't really matter where you go, I don't think like, no matter what school you go to, I think there will always be that one person that has the cigarettes, that has the weed, and that has the alcohol.

[Overlapping responses and laughter from several students]

Student 6 : It doesn't matter where you go, there's always gonna be that person. Whether it's easier to get or not, there's always somebody. And it's gonna happen.

LvS : Well, when I was at school, we always knew who were the guys that looked a little bit older, that could go into a bottle store and not be asked for an ID or you would ask one of the matrics to buy you something. So, there are lots of ways to get around it.

Student 7 : My birthday is the first, [indistinct] of January.

LvS : Oh! So you were the man!

Student 7 : So I was the guy to go to.

[Overlapping commentary and laughter]

Student 4 : Where I grew up, it was like, it wasn't like, we were just like a normal suburb, and even the people there was, a, gullible. Like I took out, like, a medical aid card and I would give my brother's identity, like his ID number and they would sell me alcohol.

21.

LvS : So guys, just to wrap up, because we have run out of time, and I'm sure you want to go off and have a weekend, um ...

Student 1 : Can we watch another episode?

LvS : No, no. Do you want to watch more?

Several students : Ja.

LvS : Aaaa! Ok! Well, I'll see if I can make a plan. Just to tell you a little bit about the purpose of this episode now that you've given all of your perspectives. The idea with this first episode was twofold. The first one was to get people, to get people interested in watching the rest of the series, which, from your reactions it has successfully done. And the second purpose was not to get people to stop drinking, or even necessarily to drink less, but just to initiate them into starting to think about their own alcohol consumption.

So when I started working on the series and looking through some of the footage, the first step for me was It wasn't that I just automatically poured a glass of wine when I started cooking. I started thinking: "Why do I want to drink a glass of wine while I'm cooking?" Or the next time it was a birthday or anniversary and I went to buy a bottle of champagne, I suddenly started

thinking: “But, do I really want to drink a bottle of champagne? Why do I have to drink a bottle of champagne because there's a celebration?” So it just made me think about what I'm drinking, when I'm drinking and in what situations or with what kind of people I tend to drink. And I don't think I drank less immediately, but it just sparked that I started thinking about it. So, from some of the reactions that you guys gave, it sounded to me like it had a similar effect on you. Um, but also, as you go through the series, it definitely builds, and then the series gets much more hectic towards the fourth and the fifth episode, where you saw some of the emergency room footage in the first episode, but there's a lot of more hectic stuff, like head wounds, stab wounds, and where you see some of the effects. Um, somebody who's been beaten up. So you see more of the effects of alcohol.

Thank you so much. You have given incredibly valuable perspectives, and thanks for being so free and open with your perspectives. I really appreciate it.

[Sounds of students getting up and preparing to leave]

Student 1 : Drink juice at your next party!

[Overlapping comments and laughter about drinking orange juice]

LvS : Orange juice! Can you imagine drinking five glasses of orange juice!

Student 2 : Yes, I can.

LvS : Can you? You're on your own, sister!

[More laughter and comments]

Student 2 : [Indistinct] I'm on my own.

LvS : I can imagine one or two, but not five!

[More banter and laughter as students leave lecture room]