

# Documentary Film and History

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## Introduction

Documentary films dealing with historical subjects are increasingly popular with audiences. They have of course always been a staple of public service broadcasting. Now within the proliferating world of cable and satellite television we have specialist channels exclusively concerned with history programming such as the History Channel and a number of others, for example Discovery and National Geographic, with a substantial percentage of such programming. How do documentary film-makers picture the past and in what ways does their approach differ from the orthodox writing of history?<sup>1</sup> Is the documentary a populist form which necessarily involves the 'dumbing down' of academic history? On the other hand, can the inclusion of historical documentary material within the television schedule extend access to historical understanding to a broader range of people than the specialist texts of academic written history?

In this paper I draw upon my own work as a documentary film-maker concerned with historical issues to explore some of the ways film- and programme-makers have dealt with problems of historical representation and narrative.

## The Historian's Scepticism towards Film

From the outset let us admit that historians have a deep suspicion towards the notion that film-making might represent a methodologically valid way to 'do' history. And yet, historians and documentarists by and large share a commitment to an ethic of public communication with its attendant notion of truth and impartiality. However, historians remain suspicious of the epistemological status and cultural role of documentary film. Many have concerns about the evidential status of the forms of personal testimony and narrative revelation that documentary films often rely upon. Many are uncomfortable with the notion of memory as a constitutive concept within historiography and have remained aloof from the sustained debate about 'popular memory' that has taken place within critical studies.<sup>2</sup> And this is so despite the development

of oral history approaches within their discipline and the increasing use of visual sources and media contents as historical data. Historians have, however, been slow to engage in the corresponding critical debate around the mediated and contingent nature of collective memory and photographic record.

The scepticism of historians towards film has not of course inhibited historians from offering their services as historical consultants to programme-makers tackling historical subjects. Within the BBC model of the historical documentary the historian-as-consultant functions as a source of 'quality control'. They are brought on board to oversee and underwrite the authenticity of programme content in accordance with the existing state of historical knowledge. Within this Reithian-inspired model historians don't need to know much – or indeed anything – about the programme production process or about the formal features of film.<sup>3</sup> They are hired to vouch for the historical credentials of the piece.

From this perspective the historical documentary can look like an applied and, let's face it, 'second rate' form of doing history. Dependent for its factual accuracy on the mother discipline, the historical documentary film is viewed as an act of communication of previously accredited historical knowledge relayed through a mass medium.

The historians who actually appear in front of camera in historical documentaries have largely approached the challenge of televising history from a pedagogic standpoint, often operating with a model of broadcast documentary as a form of illustrated lecture. The historian/presenter marshals their arguments before the camera and illuminates these employing the visual resources that lens-based media can make available – live-action cinematography revisiting historical sites, dramatic reconstructions of events, expert testimony, use of picture archive, etc. The great masters of this genre were of course A.J.P. Taylor and Kenneth Clarke, who in a simpler television age produced spell-binding performances to camera with relatively few cinematic resources at their disposal.

But the model has tenacity within television. Today Simon Schama has assumed the mantle of the 'history man'. Besides writing the scripts of the series he has been involved with,<sup>4</sup> Schama has also had a significant input into other aspects of some of these productions, including the choice of locations and elements of visualisation strategy. Unlike Taylor and Clarke, Schama in his films has to deal with the indignity of large sections of dramatic reconstruction where out-of-work actors and hapless extras are directed to show us how things looked, felt and indeed *were* in 'olden times'.

Documentarists remain divided about the validity of re-enactment within factual film-making. The problem is that documentary film in its contract with its audience vouches to represent *the* world and not just a fictional construction of *a* world given flesh in the diegesis and design of a film. Yet, no

matter how thorough our historical research, in the absence of recorded testimony and preserved image we can only represent the distant past (or indeed any historical period prior to the late nineteenth-century) by making a series of assumptions about this via a filmic diegesis.

Indeed in picturing the past, directors settle for a form of coherent verisimilitude that has little to do with the observational practices of documentary film-making and everything to do with the realist codes of the nineteenth-century novel and the twentieth-century ones of the costume drama. Interestingly, Schama has said that he saw his writing task on the series he has worked on as akin to providing a screenplay. I'll call this approach, found in many historical documentaries, 'unreconstructed reconstruction'. The introduction of 'well-dressed' fictive elements into a documentary film can be a destabilising one. The desire to achieve the 'look' of the past and to hypothesise how people looked, dressed, talked and behaved peddles the illusion that we as audience can directly access the past through the photographic power of the filmic medium. It offers us the illusion that the screen can be an unmediated window on the past showing us 'how it really was'.

### Re-enacting History

However, there *are* other ways to do dramatic filmic reconstruction of the past. My first film, *We'll Fight and No Surrender: Ulster Loyalism and the Protestant Sense of History* (1989), and two later ones, *Redeeming History* (1990) and *Out of Loyal Ulster* (1993), sought to engage with popular senses of history in Ireland and their role in the construction of collective identity. This perspective quickly took the film-maker beyond the illustrated lecture model and beyond the faux naturalism of costume drama.

*We'll Fight*, for example, involves a 'reconstruction' of the iconic moment in loyalist history when the fabled twelve Apprentice Boys of Derry rushed forward to slam the gates of the city in the face of the advancing Jacobite army in December 1688, thereby committing the beleaguered Protestants of Ulster to the Williamite cause.

We 'monkeyed around' with the 'parts'. During the shoot a number of unemployed Catholic young men habitually hung around the walls 'killing time'. We asked them to 'perform' the shutting of the gates event by closing a modern security gate erected by the British Army within the original Magazine Gate of the city and used to control vehicular access to the commercial centre of Derry. This 'live action' material was then intercut with footage shot at a later date of loyalist bands parading at a 'Relief of Derry' commemorative parade. We see the bandsmen advancing in full regalia towards New Gate which leads into the historic centre of the city. In our cut the loyalists 'play the part' of the besieging Jacobite forces while the Apprentice Boys are played by the nationalist youth in a playful reversal of traditional roles.



Fig. 6 Loyalist Band: *We'll Fight and No Surrender*

I guess we were seeking to make past and present collide – not, I might add, in the reassuring formula of Irish revisionist historiography where the professional historian exposes the mythic status and folly of popular and ideologically charged versions of history, loyalist or republican.

In *Redeeming History*, commissioned by Channel 4 Television, we invited a group of Protestant sixth-form pupils from a school in Derry to explore aspects of a radical Protestant tradition. The film explores the period of the Volunteer movement, in particular the political career of one of its leaders, the enigmatic earl bishop of Derry, Frederick Augustus Hervey. As the young people got further into the story of what we can call – for want of a better term – Protestant nationalism, they discovered the difficulties the Volunteers had in accommodating the democratic requirement of Catholic Emancipation within their demands for political autonomy for the Irish parliament. As the project developed, significant differences of opinion appeared within the group of young people. These appeared to relate to contemporary political anxieties and division within the Protestant community. In a key sequence in the film we explored Hervey's failed attempt to convince his fellow Volunteers at the national convention of the movement in Dublin to support the extension of the franchise to their Catholic fellow-nationals.<sup>5</sup>

Radically different filmic elements are brought together to narrate this key episode in Irish history: contemporary footage of a St Patrick's Day parade in Dublin attended by the young Protestants; heated discussions among the pupils on the question of political identity and contemporary republican terrorism. Hervey's impassioned speech to the convention is delivered by actor Stan

Townsend. This performance is intercut with contemporary footage of members of the loyalist Apprentice Boys of Derry burning an effigy of the iconic traitor to the loyalist cause, Robert Lundy, as they do annually every December. Through montage, past and present, fact and myth, ethnographic report and filmic enactment are brought into an expressive alignment. History is grasped as a process of troubling investigation that can lead to communal self-questioning. Our engagement with the past reveals the anxieties and interests of the present.

Historian Robert Rosenstone argues that the experimental history film is a distinctive way of doing history.

Rather than opening a window directly onto the past [it] opens a window onto a different way of *thinking* about the past. The aim is not to tell everything, but to point to past events, or to converse about history, or to show why history should be meaningful to people in the present.<sup>6</sup>

To 'converse about history' . . . 'to make it meaningful' . . . could these not be common aims for the historian and the film-maker?

### Oral history and Visual Record in the Documentary

Documentary film with its power to provide personal witness and to explore memory through our visual archives has contributed to re-establishing the new centrality of the oral and the visual as sources for 'doing history' and perhaps this will be its abiding contribution to the sort of 'postmodern historiography' envisaged by Rosenstone.

In my film *The Last Storyteller? / An Scéalai Deireanach?* I explored the role of oral record and visual archive in exploring folk memory. This film, made in both English and Irish, follows the life of folklore collector Seán Ó hEochaidh (who died in 1992) and deals with the eclipse of traditional storytelling within Gaelic culture in the twentieth century. However, it also muses on how filmic language – including the evocative power of moving-image archive – might provide a new resource for the re-telling of folk tales and for the exploration of myth as communal narrative. The film retells a number of the classic folk tales Seán collected in Donegal from the 1930s. Fictive elements – footage from Brian Desmond Hurst's 1935 version of *Riders to the Sea* are combined with documentary footage of a 1940s Irish market town and with contemporary live action cinematography to retell a traditional story – *The Cobbler and his Wife*. We explore Donegal folk ways and interrogate myth.

One area where the conversation between historians and film-makers might usefully begin is around the use and interpretation of the archival image. These images, both still and moving, serve as both testimonies to past events and as an expressive resource for visual storytelling.

Indeed the indexical character of the photographic image is seen to



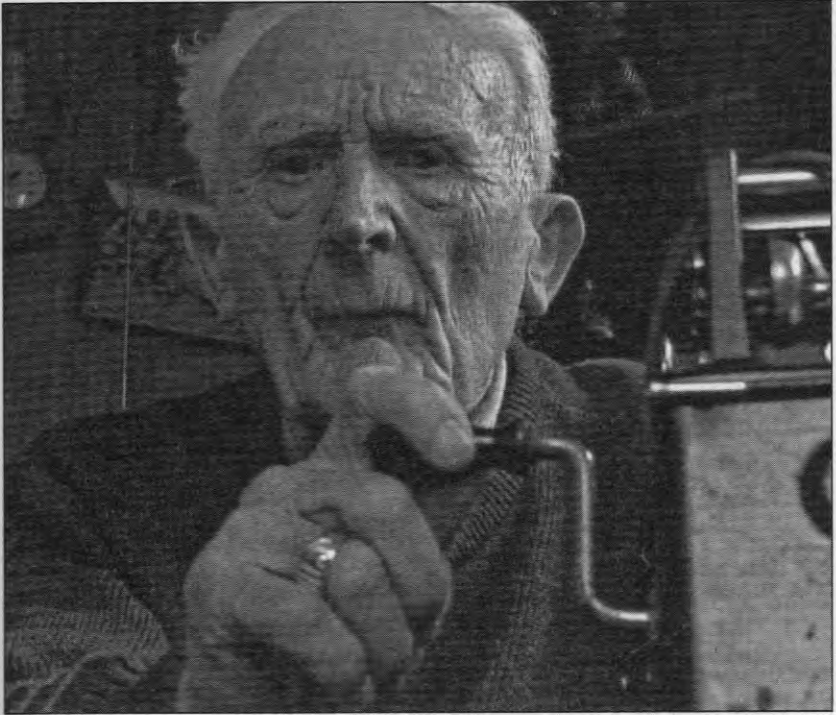


Fig. 7. Sean Ó hEochaidh : *The Last Storyteller*

underwrite the documentary film's claim to facticity. The photographic image signals the presence of the camera on the scene at the historical moment of image capture. The archival image appears to be the closest we can get to the original historical reality, a sort of 'second-degree original'.<sup>7</sup> Digitalisation may be changing all this and certainly the expanded opportunities of image manipulation render the evidential status of the photographic image much more problematic. We have long been aware of the possibilities of artifice in photographic practice, in the use of the airbrush and in the cropping of the print, but also in the camera point of view and in the editorial decisions and occlusions of the operator. Digital manipulation – the term is a tautology of course – greatly expands the capacity for departures from the veridical.

So historians beware! With the photographic image all is not always what it seems. We have not only to attend to the *denotative* aspects of the image, what it points to in the world it depicts, but also to its *connotative* elements, its meaning as a cultural statement and its construction as a technological, cultural and representational process.

With this health warning in mind, how should we deal with this stockpile of images that both documentarists and historians pore over and use? Are these to be treated as primary evidence and mute testimony to an unattainable past or

as narrative resource capable of releasing the submerged voices of history and of attending to their story?

Over the last number of years, in collaboration with my editors Roger Buck and more recently Simon Hipkins, I have developed an archivally based, creative documentary practice which seeks to explore aspects of Ireland's post-Famine past, including the diaspora. *Hard Road To Klondike / Rotha Mór an tSaoil* (1999) drew on a rich reservoir of early film material, both actuality and fictional in character, in order to retell the classic Irish emigrant story of Mící MacGabhann's tramp through frontier America to the Yukon. *Rebel Frontier* (2004) employed a similar archival strategy, now combined with live action re-enactment, to retell the story of the Irish and Finnish miners of Butte, Montana and their struggle against the Anaconda Copper Company during the First World War. The film, narrated by Martin Sheen, employed the additional device of the 'unreliable narrator'. The story of the momentous events unfolding in Butte is told from the perspective of a Pinkerton agent sent to break the miners' strike. This might be a young Dashiell Hammett. *Child of the Dead End / Tachrán Gan Todhchaí* (2009) deals with the life and work of Donegal-born navy poet and writer Patrick MacGill. It also employs a rich corpus of archival images alongside dramatic elements somewhat more elaborate than those found in the earlier films.

These films have been heralded for their use of archive, which has been recognised as quite distinctive within documentary film-making in Ireland.<sup>8</sup> More recently, I have been seeking to make sense of my own creative documentary work and its use of archive material as both historical trace and as narrative resource exploited to engage with the past.<sup>9</sup> Hopefully these reflections might illuminate the broader issues around documentary film as historiographical practice raised in the first parts of this paper.

In the article mentioned above, I discuss the sequence in *Klondike* which portrays the arrival of Donegal emigrant Mící Mac Gabhann in New York in the 1890s on board an emigrant ship. This montage involves fictional elements, period actualities of New York (from the Edison paper print collection), short varieties of staged incidents (from the same source) and live-action footage seeking to capture the historical resonances in the contemporary metropolis. As in other found footage films, no attempt is made to discriminate between these different sorts of footage by the use of any framing or titling device (although at one point the soundtrack with its dubbed sound of a cine projector at work does explicitly invite the audience to peep into a 'cinema of attractions').<sup>10</sup>

The archive material is not used here as it is in many television documentaries to illustrate a didactic argument primarily established via an authoritative voice-over provided by a historian. Stephen Rea voices Mac Gabhann's commentary to provide the film's central narrative thread and does

so in an 'actorly' manner. This, I think, lifts the voice to a level of subtlety where voice, image and soundtrack resonate in an evocative manner creating a diegetic space somewhere between fact and fiction.

Nor is the archive material used as evidence of a past 'way of life'. Indeed the use of the archive is on occasions not strictly bound by concerns with complete historical and geographical accuracy (clearly Mac Gabhann's early life was lived before the advent of film and the moving image material assembled to cover this part of his story is from a much later period (much of it from the 1935 film *Aran of the Saints*).

Is the film-maker guilty of playing free and easy with documentary sources? Is he involved in some sleight of hand in this blurring of the boundaries of fact and fiction in the choice of the archival mix?

### Fact and Fiction in the Documentary Enterprise

I would see *Klondike* as falling within a tradition of 'found footage' film-making. As Beattie tells us, the found footage or compilation film is one where:

The found footage film maker may combine nonfictional images selected from sources as varied as commercial stock footage, newsreels, home movies and fiction footage to construct an argument about the socio-historical world.<sup>11</sup>

This sort of film has its origins in a set of avant-garde visual practices based on the found object, the method of collage and on early theories of film montage. Traditional television documentary film-making of course habitually employs elements of the found footage approach, but as Stella Bruzzi notes, it uses archive '... illustratively, as part of a historical exposition to complement other elements such as interviews and voice-over'.<sup>12</sup>

In general it does not share the concerns of the found footage film-maker with problematising the sources it uses. Nor is it concerned with making the compilation of the material and its *retournage* an aesthetic end in itself.

The found footage film does not seek to offer the immediate, indexical access to the past promised by the original photographic sources from which it is assembled. In the found footage film the images are all mixed up. Combined together under a montage principle, they establish a different sort of relationship with the past to the indexical claims made for the individual photographic image. The relationship of archival element to historical event becomes a *figurative* rather than a referential one. Found footage film-making lies somewhere between documentary and fictional modes of representation as it does between documentary practice and that of the avant-garde film-maker. It offers a critical reading of history and its sources. As Keith Beattie argues:





Fig. 8. Montage: *Hard Road To Klondike*

In this way, metacommentary and historiography are implicated within a process in which source or 'found footage' is interrogated via filmic collage to release functional and valuable ambiguities inherent in the footage.<sup>13</sup>

Thus *The Hard Road To Klondike* seeks to remain faithful to a traditional practice of storytelling while drawing on the figurative powers of the photographic image and the practices of found footage film-making. The film recasts the autobiographical recollections of one particular migrant worker and his passage to the new world. Mici Mac Gabhann's story is a thoroughly modernist one, speaking as it does to a wider experience of colonised peoples and of diaspora. This broader theme is explored not only via his account of his passage to the new world but in his musings on his encounters with the native American peoples he meets in Montana and later in the Yukon.<sup>14</sup> In turn, our treatment and its use of found footage casts Mac Gabhann's story in broader terms. The archival photography employed freed from its indexical 'obligations' can function in a metonymic manner to paint a bigger picture.

*Rebel Frontier* is also a story of diaspora – in this case the attempt by emigrant Irish and Finnish workers to bring distinctively European traditions of radicalism (nationalism, socialism and syndicalism) into the US labour movement at a pivotal moment in the class struggle in America. In this case the film plays the evidential power of the archival image off against the fictive possibilities of the 'unreliable narrator'. In the film we 'embody' the voice-over

(provided by Martin Sheen) in the persona of a Pinkerton agent who identifies himself as 'Abraham Byrne'. Byrne tells us he has been sent to Butte to spy for the Anaconda Copper Company.

ABRAHAM BYRNE (VO)

And who am I you may ask? You can call me Abraham Byrne, in 1917 just twenty-two years old, fresh out of Baltimore and eager for a slice of the action. Up to then my work for the agency had been pretty routine stuff, matrimonial and missing person cases. This I reckoned was gonna be different . . .

He appears fleetingly before the camera as a character throughout the film but his presence is established primarily via his voice-over. The agent looks back over the tumultuous events that took place in Butte and on occasions – such as the lynching of Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) activist Frank Little – is revealed as a possible participant in these events. Dashiell Hammett (1894–1961) had a short career as a Pinkerton agent before emerging as a writer. He appears to have been in Butte, Montana during the labour disturbances that occurred there during the First World War. Later he drew upon this experience in the writing of his classic detective novel *Red Harvest* (1926), also set in Butte, though at a slightly later period. However, in our film the mythic status of Hammett's involvement in the Butte events is identified by a number of interviewees who make clear to us that we may be dealing with rumour, hearsay and legend, in short with the 'contingency of memory', rather than with attested historical fact.

MARK ROSS

Dashiell Hammett came to Butte in 1917 as an operative for the Pinkerton Detective Agency, which had been hired by the Anaconda Company to keep an eye on the miners . . . in the labour unrest that was happening at that time here in town.

DAVE EMMONS

Pinkerton was the favourite agency of the company by that time and amongst the spies who worked here during those years was Dashiell Hammett

KEVIN SHANNON

We know Dashiell Hammett was offered \$5,000 . . . you know who Hammett was . . . eh?

JERRY CALVERT

He was employed as a private detective and that formed the basis of his detective fiction later on . . .



Fig. 9. Jacky Corr: *Rebel Frontier*

Our narrator 'Abraham Byrne' can then only be regarded as a potentially unreliable one. He may or may not represent Dashiell Hammett. He may or may not be giving us an accurate account of his activities in Butte. The historical record is unclear and the narration reflects that.

Most of us are aware of the negative portrayal within documentary film criticism of the 'voice of God' narration typically found within much of the documentary output of television. This voice is often didactic in tone, authoritative in manner and expository in form. Voice-over does not have to be like this; it can choose to problematise the historical testimony of its contributors and the truth claims of the documentarist – as in the case of Abraham Byrne in *Rebel Frontier*.

Certainly in all three compilation films discussed here I quite consciously sought to depart from a 'voice of God' narration in favour of a voice-over that had more in common with the 'inner monologue' found in fiction film-making. Here the voice-over is frequently used to reveal a person's inner thoughts and motivations. These can often be ironic and contradictory (although the voice-over can also be asked to provide exposition and narrative coherence). Certainly the impact of using a nuanced voice-over such as that found in *Rebel Frontier* is not only to destabilise the veracity of the narration but also to create a different sort of referential relation of voice to archival image to that found in the traditional television documentary.

*Child of the Dead End* also addresses the problem of evaluating the truth claims of life writing and the veracity of narrations based on such sources. From the beginning in its title sequence it offers the viewer an exploration of 'the fact and fiction of the life of a writer'. Historians have rather assumed that Patrick MacGill's early novels, in particular *Child of the Dead End* (1913)

and *The Rat Pit* (1914), can be read as autobiographical accounts of MacGill's time as a navy in Scotland and accordingly that they are an important historical source for understanding the life of the migrant Irish in pre-First World War Scotland.<sup>15</sup>

I am not sure that is how MacGill saw his work. His first novels combine social documentation and Gothic narrative in equal measure (above all in the tragedy of *Norah Ryan*, central to each book). I was clear that from the outset our film would have to mirror the ambivalent handling of fact and fiction present in MacGill's work. Accordingly the film archival sequences are segued into dramatic re-enactment of scenes from MacGill's books and vice versa. The original scene from the books may or may not portray events MacGill directly experienced. We simply don't know. Other scenes in the books are clearly fictive in nature and are presented as such in the film. Thus we fairly faithfully follow MacGill's account of the early life of his character Dermod Flynn as a *spalpeen* in Ulster and the west of Scotland provided in *Children of the Dead End*. This element of the book is usually regarded as 'thinly disguised' autobiography, not least because MacGill also rehearses this account in various newspaper interviews he gave. Moreover, his description of the life of the Irish itinerant labourer in Scotland in the first decade of the twentieth century is capable of some degree of verification with regard to the historical record.<sup>16</sup>

The dramatic reconstructions in the film seek congruence with the archival material used, not to try and elide the two and create the illusion of a window on the past but hopefully to open up larger social issues as the drama plays out against a visual record of the time. Why did socialists like MacGill enlist in the



Fig. 10. Dinner Party: *Child of the Dead End*

British Army? How were such men regarded in post-independence Ireland? The interweaving of the two strives to parallel the manner in which fact and fiction, documentary report and Gothic fable mingle in MacGill's life writing, an admixture which proved very successful in helping him achieve realist outcomes as a writer.

Present and past, indexical photographic trace and imaginative re-telling are brought into creative alignment in a manner which hopefully both moves the viewers and causes them to question what they are seeing and what the narrator is telling them. The collision of past and present and of different sorts of documentary images and sounds intermingled with fictive reconstruction provide an interrogation of a key text dealing with Irish migrant experience. The found footage film, like the performative documentary more generally,<sup>17</sup> plots a space between fact and fable. This could be said of most storytelling.

## Conclusion

Documentary film-making today is an exciting field of creative innovation where many of the key elements of the practice and their creative use – the archival image, the voice-over, the reconstructed sequence – are currently up for grabs. In reworking these narrational resources as tools for representing and interrogating history, creative documentary film-making is, I believe, doing important historiographical work. Sooner or later history is also going to have to begin to reflect critically on its 'poetics'<sup>18</sup> and its use of narrative, figurative trope and discursive strategy in its practices of writing and conceptualisation. A postmodern history will of necessity also have to reflect on the role of subject position and ideological inflection in the production of the historical text. Such reflections are now commonplace in enlightened documentary film practice.

After all, despite seventy years of social scientific aspiration central to the *Annales* project,<sup>19</sup> history remains what it always has been – an art of telling stories about the past. Perhaps it shares more in common with documentary film-making than it cares to admit.



14. Noemi's comments were delivered as part of the Q&A with Grainne Humphries immediately following the screening at the Jameson Dublin International Film Festival on 19 February 2010.
15. A. Hochschild, 'Global Care Chains and Emotional Surplus Value', in W. Hutton and A. Giddens (eds), *On the Edge: Living with global capitalism* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2000), p. 131.

#### UNHEARD VOICES: MAIRS AND MCLAUGHLIN

1. See [www.prisonmemoryarchive.com](http://www.prisonmemoryarchive.com) for more information.
2. WAVE was formed in 1991 as a cross-community support organisation for those bereaved during the 'Troubles'.
3. D. McKittrick, S. Kelters, B. Feeney and C. Thornton, *Lost Lives: The stories of the men, women and children who died as a result of the Northern Ireland troubles* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 2004), p. 148.
4. Lorraine Dennis was the producer, Cahal McLaughlin was the director and Jolene Mairs was camera operator and editor.
5. M. Smyth and M. Fay (eds), *Personal Accounts from Northern Ireland's Troubles: Public conflict, private loss* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), p. 1.
6. The Democratic Unionist Party announced plans for an assembly bill '... to ensure that perpetrators of violence ... are not defined as victims', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/northern\\_ireland/8256468.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/northern_ireland/8256468.stm) (accessed 15 September 2009)

#### DOCUMENTARY FILM AND HISTORY: BELL

1. The best discussion of how television documentary series deal with Irish history remains Bob Ferguson's *Television on History: Representations of Ireland* (London: Dept. of English and Media Studies, University of London, Institute of Education in association with Comedia, 1985).
2. In France the debate was closely associated with the attack, led by the historians attached to the Communist Party, on revisionism and historical erasure and the failure of contemporary historians to address French collaboration with the Nazis during the occupation in the Second World War. For the broader debate on 'popular memory' see Foucault, M. and Lotringer, S., *Foucault Live: collected interviews 1961–1984* (New York, N.Y.: Semiotext(e), 1996).
3. As in John Reith (1889–1971), the leading proponent of public service broadcasting and director general of the BBC.
4. *Power of Art* (five episodes, 2006); *A History of Britain* (eleven episodes, 2000–2).
5. On 10 November 1783, the Grand National Convention of the Volunteer delegate met in the Rotunda, Dublin, under the presidency of the Earl of Charlemont. During this time, the claim of the Catholics to vote at elections was advanced by their self-appointed champion Frederick Augustus Hervey, Earl of Bristol and Protestant Bishop of Derry.
6. R. Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past: Challenge of film to our idea of history* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 72.
7. Film theorist Joachim Paech reminds us of the preservative power of the archival image: 'The ephemeral historical moment becomes a permanent presence in the moving image in these archives of history. The photographic image, still or moving, embalms or mummifies history, providing in its visual trace a "second degree original"' J. Paech, 'The Mummy Lives!' in W. de Greef and W. Hesling (eds), *Image, Reality, Spectator: Essays on documentary film and television* (Leuven: Amersfoot, 2001), pp. 57–65.
8. M. Mac Conghail, 'Hard Road to Klondike', *Film West*, 36 (2000), pp.14–16.
9. D. Bell, 'Shooting the Past: Found Footage Filmmaking and Popular Memory', *Kinema*, 21 (Spring 2004), pp. 5–22.
10. This term has been invoked by the historian of early cinema, Tom Gunning, to refer to

- the works of the very early or 'primitive' cinema where spectacle and spectatorship were at the core of the public's fascination with the novelty of the moving image. T. Gunning, 'The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator and the Avant-Garde', in T. Elsaesser and A. Barker (eds), *Early Film* (London: British Film Institute, 1989), pp. 56–62.
11. K. Beattie, *Documentary Display: Re-Viewing non-fiction film and video* (London: Wallflower Press, 2008), p. 82.
  12. S. Bruzzi, *New Documentary: A critical introduction* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 21.
  13. Beattie, *Documentary Display*, p. 85.
  14. Mac Gabhann's capacity as a storyteller in *Rotha Mór an tSaoil* lies in his ability to lift his narrative out of the sentimental reminiscence of the emigrant. His story addresses issues of solidarity and difference between his historical experience as a Gael and that of the Indians marginalised by miner-settlers like himself.
  15. O. Dudley Edwards, 'Patrick MacGill and the Making of a Historical Source; With a Hand List of his Works', *The Innes Review of the Scottish Catholic Historical Association*, 37, 2 (1986), pp. 73–99.
  16. The period of MacGill's life in Windsor was greatly indebted to the discovery in the library of Worcester College, Oxford of an important cache of letters from MacGill to his mentor in Windsor, Canon Sir John Neal Dalton. This revealed the extent of the debt of MacGill to Dalton, who assisted him in editing his early books and in getting them published.
  17. The term has been introduced into documentary film criticism by Bill Nichols to refer to films that depart from earlier concerns with an objective and expository style choosing instead approaches that are often quite subjective in which the film-maker as a presence and his/her practices of constructing their film often figure as much as the social or historical topic they are addressing. B. Nichols, *Blurred Boundaries: Questions of meaning in contemporary culture* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994).
  18. The term is that of Jacques Rancière, the French philosopher, who has argued that historians need to be much more circumspect with regard to their claims of the scientific character of their discipline and more aware of the literary practices that shape their discourse. J. Rancière, *The Names of History* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1994).
  19. The group of French historians involved with the journal *Annales d'Histoire Économique et Sociale*. This school has been highly influential in setting the agenda for historiography in France and indeed across Europe since the First World War. The *Annalistes* championed the use of social scientific methods by historians and concentrated on social, cultural and economic subject matter rather than political or diplomatic themes, encouraging the idea that history could be written 'from below' rather than be simply an account of the activities of political elites.
- TRUE NORTH: GILSENAN
1. A. Camus, *L'Étranger (The Outsider)*, translated by Stuart Gilbert (London: Penguin, 1946).
  2. *The Asylum*, a Yellow Asylum Films production for RTÉ, directed by Alan Gilson, 2005.
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