HAUNTED

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CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP / ORIGINALITY

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

(Andrew G. Taylor)

Figure 1: 'Chopper', still from *Siberia*, Photo: Andrew Taylor

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RIP Harry.

PREAMBLE:

This Doctor of Creative Arts project explores a space between still images (photography) and moving pictures (cinema, particularly the documentary), sometimes referred to as the 'still/moving'. The project has two parts: the first is a 25 minute film, *Siberia*; and the second, is a 35,000 word written exegesis, ***S**till/moving: Slide shows, documentary and me.*

Figure 2: 'Igor and gas flares', still from *Siberia*, Photo: Andrew Taylor

ABSTRACT: STILL/MOVING: SLIDE SHOWS, DOCUMENTARY AND ME.

From magic lantern shows to PowerPoint presentations, the slide show has cast a long shadow on documentary film. In the 1880s the New York Police reporter, Jacob Riis, barnstormed America with magic lantern images of urban poverty, hoping to rouse sympathies and eventual relief for the city's underclass. In mid-2006, *An Inconvenient Truth*, a documentary woven around Al Gore's slide show *PowerPoint* presentation, screened to audiences around the world.

My film, *Siberia*, is a memory of a time and place but it could also be thought of as a 'slide show documentary'. This exegesis investigates my own fascination with slide shows and films made from still images. Beyond this personal focus, the exegesis looks more generally at the 'still/moving'; that is, creative work that occupies a space between still images (photography) and moving pictures (cinema).

Recently there has been a wave of interest in the still/moving in installation art and feature films but there has been virtually no written commentary on the still/moving in documentary, and even less on the slide show *and* documentary. This exegesis explores this gap in knowledge through a combination of biographical, historical and theoretical approaches.

The ghost of the slide show haunts many still/moving documentaries but to equate all still/moving works as being 'slide show documentaries' misses the mark. In this exegesis, I analyse how stillness operates within a range of still/moving works and argue that 'still/moving-ness' is also about punctuation, expression, rhythm and music.

My examination of the intersection between the slide show and documentary prises open the relationship between stillness, movement, cinema, photography and auto/biography. It reveals that a characteristic of 'slide show documentaries' is their preoccupation with time, memory, mortality and death.

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PROLOGUE

It was a funny shaped object. A small tin box with irregularly rounded ends, a rectangular aperture in the middle and on the opposite side a small lens, the size of a nickel. You had to gently insert a piece of film – real film with sprockets and all - in the upper part … and by turning the corresponding knob the film unrolled, frame by frame. To tell the truth, each frame represented a different shot, so the whole thing looked more like a slide show than a home cinema, yet the shots were beautifully printed out stills of celebrated pictures: Chaplin's, *Ben Hur*, Abel Gance's *Napoléon*…If you were rich you could lock that small unit in a sort of magic lantern and project it on your wall… I had to content myself with the minimal version: pressing my eye against the lens, and watching. That forgotten contraption was called Pathéorama. You could read it in golden letters on the back, with the legendary Pathé rooster singing against a rising sun.

… And why … couldn't I in turn, make something of the same kind? All I needed was translucent material and the right measurements… So, with scissors, tracing paper and glue, I managed to get a proper copy of the Pathéorama model tape. Then screen by screen, I began to draw a few postures of my cat (who else?) with captions in-between. And all of a sudden, the cat belonged to the same universe as the characters in *Ben Hur*, or *Napoléon*… I had gone through the looking-glass.

Of all my school buddies, Jonathan was the most prestigious; he was mechanically-minded and quite inventive, he made maquettes of theatres with rolling curtains and flashing lights, and a miniature big band emerging from the abyss while a cranked Gramophone was playing *Hail the Conquering Hero*. So it was natural that he was the first to whom I wished to show my masterwork. I was rather pleased with the result, and I unrolled the adventures of the cat Riri which I presented as 'my movie'. Jonathon managed to get me sobered up. "Movies are supposed to move stupid', he said. "Nobody can do a movie with still images".

Thirty years passed. I made *La Jetée*.

Chris Marker, 2003[1]

INTRODUCTION

> Last night I was in the Kingdom of Shadows.
>
> If you only knew how strange it is to be there. It is a world without sound, without colour. Everything there – the earth, the trees, the people, the water and the air – is dipped in monotonous grey. Grey rays of sun across the grey sky, grey eyes in grey faces, and the leaves of the trees are ashen grey. It is not life but its shadow, it is not motion but its soundless spectre.
>
> Here I shall try and explain myself, lest I be suspected of madness of indulgence in symbolism. I was at Autmont's and saw Lumiere's cinematograph – moving photography. (Maxim Gorky, July 1896)[2]

This exegesis is about a space between photography and cinema. I am referring to moving image work that sits between still images (photography) and moving pictures (cinema); sometimes referred to as 'still/moving'.[3] Chris Marker's dystopian science fiction film, *La Jetée* (France, 1962), made almost entirely from re-filmed still photographs, is arguably the best-known example of a film that fits this category. Recently, there has been a considerable amount written on *La Jetée* and Marker[4] and there have also been at least three major publications on the intermingling of film and photography and the still/moving.[5] However, most of this work has concentrated on the still/moving in fiction films or in work exhibited in gallery/installation/fine art realms. There has been little examination of the still/moving in documentary where arguably, the intermingling of photography and cinema has been the most prevalent.

This exegesis investigates this gap in knowledge. It looks at the still/moving *and* documentary in general, and the intersection of the slide show *and* documentary, in particular. Both of these forms shape *Siberia,* the film that accompanies this exegesis.

Despite its significant place in twentieth century popular culture, the slide show as a form has been all but overlooked in both histories of photography and histories of popular culture[6]. In writing about the slide show, I address this oversight but there is more to it than this. My investigation of the intersection between the slide show and

documentary prises open the relationship between stillness and movement, photography and cinema. It reveals a characteristic of 'slide show documentaries' to be their preoccupation with time, memory, mortality and death.

The End of Carousels and Kodachrome

In 2004 the last of the Kodak slide carousels rolled off the production line and in 2009 Kodak stopped manufacturing Kodachrome, the 'classic' slide-film emulsion it had developed seventy years earlier. The *click-chuh-clunk* sound of slide carousels and rich saturated colours of Kodachrome were both deeply associated with slide shows. The end of their manufacture effectively marked the death of the photo-chemical slide show as a popular medium.

Curiously, as the slide show of old was being put to rest, digital slide shows started to crop up like daisies in a graveyard. They are everywhere now: eBay, Flikr, real estate portals, PowerPoint presentations… Adding to this list, there has been a recent spate of large-scale public projections; artists reworking found collections of 35mm slides; and publicly performed slide show monologues.

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There have also been several successful 'slide show documentaries'. Jonathan Couette's *Tarnation* (USA, 2003), mixed slide show, family snaps and home-movie; and in 2004 Agnes Varda released *Cinevardaphoto* (France, 2004), a compilation of three of her earlier film-photo-essays. Guy Madden's, *My Winnipeg* (Canada, 2008), combined idiosyncratic travelogue with live narration in a manner reminiscent of a

slide show.

Some other recent documentaries directly reference their connection with the old 35mm carousel slide show. *Edie and Thea: a very long engagement* (USA, 2009) is structured around a slide show, and the long-term relationship of two New York women, Edie and Thea. *Sadness* (Australia, 1999) is based on William Yang's photographs and his earlier slide show performance monologue of the same title[7].

At the other end of the spectrum from these 'retro' slide show documentaries are online slide shows, like those residing on the *MediaStorm* website.[8] These 'films' blur the traditional distinction between the slide show, photo-journalism and documentary. I discuss several of the above-mentioned works in more depth in the body of this exegesis but first I'd like to briefly outline my creative exploration of this form.

In mid-2009, I completed *Siberia* (Australia, 2009), a film memoir that could also be thought of as a 'slide show documentary'. The story is woven around approximately three hundred still images and some fragments of 16mm film footage. *Siberia* resembles a slide show in several ways: the images are composed primarily from scanned 35mm transparencies (slides); it relies heavily on off-screen narration (singular, male); and it is based on images taken on a journey to an exotic location, echoing a mainstay of the subject matter of the popular 'lounge-room slide show'.

After finishing *Siberia*, I made a list of 'slide show films', or films that I had made using sequences of stills and I was astounded. I had made ten films, like *Siberia*, made almost entirely from stills, or featuring lengthy sequences of stills. This was unconscious. I had no idea this was such a recurring feature of my work. So, one of the underlying questions of this exegesis is: 'Why am I so attracted to the slide show and still/moving forms'?

As I started to research and think about this question in more depth, I found that the slide show and my filmmaking wasn't just some aberrant isolated practice. It also spoke to a tradition of documentary that stretched back to the nineteenth century. From magic lantern shows to PowerPoint presentations, the slide show has cast a

long shadow on documentary film. In the 1880s the New York Police reporter, Jacob Riis, barnstormed America with magic lantern images of urban poverty, hoping to rouse sympathies and eventual relief for the city's underclass. In mid-2006, *An Inconvenient Truth*, a documentary woven around Al Gore's slide show PowerPoint presentation, screened to audiences around the world. This influence of the slide show on documentary leads me to a second line of enquiry: 'How has the slide show influenced or haunted documentary'?

The two questions identified above relate to the subtitle of this exegesis: 'Slide shows, documentary and me'. In stating this, I am flagging up front, that there's an autobiographical dimension to this exegesis. But before going to this 'dimension', I would like to discuss my choice of another word in the overall title of the thesis: 'haunted'.

It is astounding how often the words 'haunts', 'haunting' 'haunted' recur in writing about art, film and photography. These words suggest something of a ghost from the past, a spooky presence that hangs around. The prevalence of the 'haunting' /'haunted' words in relation to early photography can be partially explained by a prevalent belief in the Victorian era in supernatural spirits, ghosts and presences from the 'other-side'. In turn, the chemical process of photography itself complemented these beliefs: figures appearing, as if by magic, on a blank sheet of paper. In more recent times, these words are often used in contemporary photography, film and art reviews, in relation to work that is affecting but hard to pin down; or work that has a slightly spooky dark, forebodingness about it. I am thinking of the mood in a David Lynch film, or Bill Henson's twilight hinterland photos, or countless experimental films and minimalist music compositions.

At the risk of the word being hackneyed, I have still chosen to use 'haunted'. A more plain alternative like 'influenced' is not charged enough. My choice to use 'haunted' in my overall title is not because of a disturbed, fearful sense of the past recurring, so much as an acknowledgment of the past's influence in the present.

Still/moving Ether

In early 2010, I put forward a proposal for a themed 'Still/Moving' panel to the organising committee of *Visible Evidence* (an international documentary studies conference). I thought there was more than enough material for me to put together a paper discussing *Siberia* and the confluence of the slide show and documentary, but I was doubtful there would be enough interest for a themed 'still/moving' panel. To my surprise, the organising committee wrote back soon after, enthusiastic about my idea for a panel. I was still uncertain if my proposal for a panel would resonate with others but after being circulated through email lists, I was flooded with responses. The conference ended up running not one but two 'Still/Moving' panels and there were at least four other papers given in the conference that spoke directly to this theme[9].

This locus may have been a coincidence, however, since the conference, I have come across three separate 'still/moving' phenomenon that suggest otherwise. The first of these are the recent publication of three books focused around the inter-relationship of cinema and photography, stillness and the moving image. The second phenomenon is to do with the surge in popularity of filming moving images with DSLR cameras; & the third is evidenced by a wave of interest in films made from still images. A brief overview of each of these three areas follows, as they all help frame my investigation:

1) Recent Publications

Three recent publications dealing with still/moving themes are: Laura Mulvey's *Death 24 x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image*; David Campany's *Photography and Cinema*; and a collection of essays edited by Karen Beckman and Jean Ma, *Still Moving: Between Cinema and Photography* .

In *Death 24x a Second*, Laura Mulvey investigates time, stillness, movement and death in their cinematic incarnations. Mulvey looks at how new image technologies like the DVD player and the freeze frame of the remote control are changing the way we see 'old media' such as celluloid based cinema.

Campany's book is a survey of some of the ways cinema has influenced photography and vice-versa. He argues that close-ups, freeze frames and the countless portrayals of photographers on screen are signs of cinema's enduring attraction to the still image. And reversing the equation, he cites photo-stories, sequences and staged tableaux as examples of the deep influence of cinema on photography.

In Beckman & Ma's introduction to their series of essays they discuss how in the Lumieres' first public presentation of film, the still sprang to life with the cranking of the projector. The sudden animation of the image amazed audiences and highlighted differences between photography and cinema. "The birth of cinema lead to divergent paths of still and moving images …we now find at the "death" of cinema that these two paths are now coming back to be one again."[10] By way of example, Beckman & Ma mention the number of recent exhibitions where contemporary artists have engaged with the spaces between still and moving photography and with moving image and projection practices.

2) The DSLR 'Revolution'

Another example of the two forms coming back together is the advent of digital SLR (DSLR) still cameras that can also shoot high quality video. The DSLR 'revolution' is more recent than any of the publications mentioned above but it has already had a marked effect on filmmaking and photography.

In September 2008 Canon released the 5DMarkII, a DSLR camera with an added function of being able to shoot HD video. The camera was primarily designed for stills photography and the video component was a secondary 'add-on'. The cameras were not cheap – about $3500 plus extra for lenses and accessories. They were designed for professional users or 'very serious' amateurs. Increasingly press photographers were being called upon to file video for websites and online iterations of news stories, so Canon thought this market would be interested in using the video feature.

Something happened with the release of the 5D that neither the manufacturers at Canon nor the wider photographic and filmmaking communities anticipated. Filmmakers experimented with the cameras soon after their release and had amazing

results. They discovered they could film full frame HD quality video[11] using these cameras. The results were not only technically superior in terms of resolution and image size, they also had an aesthetic appeal that was lacking in most video cinematography, even at the professional end. Because of the size of the sensors and fast lenses that came with these cameras they were able to get a much sought after 'film look' for a fraction of the usual cost.[12] Within months of its release the Canon 5D (and other models and makes that followed soon after) became popular with filmmakers, particularly the independent sector. Subsequently, filming with DSLR cameras has taken off like wildfire. Accompanying this surge in production has been a wave of articles and blogs dedicated to the DSLR 'revolution'. Seminars and short courses on filming with DSLRs are being offered in major cities across the globe[13].

The craze and rapidity of DSLR uptake is settling down as Sony and other manufacturers introduce rival products to retrieve their moving image market share. The cameras are not particularly ergonomic and they have other issues, especially with their ability to record good quality sound. Nevertheless, it is unlikely filming moving images with DSLRs will disappear as a passing fad. And regardless of their future, the DSLRs are a profound manifestion of a stills camera (photography) and a movie camera (cinema) coming back together.[14]

3) Interest in films made from still images

Earlier, I mentioned 'slide show documentaries' (my term) and I touched on a recent wave of films made from still images and drawing upon the slide show form. In March 2011, an enquiry was posted on the Visible Evidence email list server from an academic from Concordia University looking for films revolving around photographs to use for teaching purposes. These sorts of enquiries usually generate only about half a dozen responses. Within three days of the above enquiry being posted there were over 60 responses.[15] A few of the films in the list were simply conventional documentaries about well known photographers but a large percentage were concerned with works that were a meditation on the image or made from still images.

One respondent made the suggestion that it would be useful to distinguish films that theorise photography (e.g. Godard and Gorin's *Letter to Jane*) from films made using

photographs (e.g. The Canadian Film Board's *City of Gold* - a documentary about the 1897 Klondike gold rush made from a series of still photographs). While I think this is a valid point, all the films listed could nevertheless be described as still/moving films. Or could they? What is it that makes a film still/moving? Is this just a handy descriptor for work that falls between photography and cinema, or are there other qualities and attributes of 'still/moving-ness'? What is special or distinct about the rhythm and use of stillness in still/moving 'films'? What aesthetic strategies recur in still/moving work?

From Eistenstein to Tarkovsky, Disney to Deleuze, filmmakers and theorists alike have discussed cinema as a temporal art and the various techniques it uses to create rhythm and condense, stretch, squeeze and manipulate time. This exegesis builds on these ideas by looking at various 'still/moving' documentaries (both historical and contemporary) and analysing how stillness operates within them.

In this exegesis, I explore the still/moving using three different 'lenses' or approaches. The first is a personal and biographical exploration. The second is historical; surveying the slide show from eighteenth century magic lantern shows to the present iterations of the form. And finally, I investigate the still/moving by employing a more analytical and theoretical approach; using a close reading of several 'slide show documentaries' and still/moving films. The first third of this exegesis is weighted towards a personal approach, the middle towards an historical, and the last third towards the 'theoretical', but these three approaches are interwoven throughout.

CHAPTER 1: FROM HERE TO *SIBERIA* AND BACK AGAIN

'*Once upon a time I worked on a film in Siberia, it was not so long ago but it was another age, another era…*' So go the opening lines of my narration to the film *Siberia*. But how did I get there and what led me to that time and place? In this instance what I mean by 'place' is not so much the location or place called Siberia, but more the place where I made a work like *Siberia*; a film memoir made almost entirely from still images. And in getting to this 'place', my account also begins to unravel my fascination with the still/moving form.

Once upon a time, some time between my working on a documentary film in Siberia and making a film called 'Siberia' there was a man who committed suicide. His tragic death is connected to both my story and the story of *Siberia*.

One night, exactly a week after his seventieth birthday party, the man took a train to Melbourne's Flinders Street station. A police witness saw him carrying a heavy load in a sack, across a bridge on the nearby Yarra River. He jumped to his death off the Princes Bridge, a bridge that runs over the Yarra and adjacent to Flinders Street Station. The man was my father.

This account is not going to be a forensic investigation into my father's death; nor his bouts of mental illness, mistreatment and bankruptcy that hastened his demise. (And, as potent a metaphor and literary device as it is, I can't reveal the contents of the load he was carrying on his back)[1]. But he is part of the story and pivotal enough to be placed upfront and centre.

As a young man my father had been relatively 'well off'. Neither of his parents were 'from money'. His father left school at fourteen and a few years later went off to fight in World War One. He survived Gallipoli and France and then after the war made money, managing a hosiery company. Both of my father's parents died before he was thirty and so as a young man, he inherited a tidy sum. In addition to this family nest egg, my father earned a good income doing white-collar managerial jobs until his early fifties.

However, by the end of his life, he had spent this money and more. In fact, he declared bankruptcy not long before he died, as a way of shoring up some of his excessive credit card debts. This wasn't some Alan Bond-like ruse[2]. It helped keep the wolf from his door and was a reflection of a hard financial truth. So much so, that the only material goods and possessions I inherited from my father were an old egg-beater, a small power drill, and some binoculars that had belonged to his father in World War One.

I didn't really care then about this lack of material inheritance and I still don't. However, there was another piece of material inheritance that came my way several years after my father died. This I did care about.

On my fortieth birthday, five years after my father's death, my mother and sister flew from Melbourne to Sydney and gave me the family slide collection (mostly *Kodachrome* slides from the fifties and early sixties). Perhaps, for the rest of the family it was a case of clearing out junk no one else wanted, but for me it was like being given the family jewels. I had studied cinematography at film school[3] and was interested in popular photography and archival images, so it made sense to pass the collection on to me. Physically, I became the care-taker of the family collection – looking after about 1500 slides and a 35mm Kodak carousel slide projector. Symbolically, it felt like I was being given an important role in maintaining family history and memory.

I also had a party for my fortieth. At the time, I lived in a block of flats in Bondi.[4] The flats had a sizeable back yard for that part of the world and as it was a typically hot and humid February night, we held the party outdoors. We drank vodka and lime-based cocktails in the garden under a canopy of two huge crepe myrtles, bursting with pink blossom. I put together a carousel of slides and towards the end of the night projected them on a sheet rigged deep in the dark lush recesses of the back-yard.

It was also only in writing this account that I noticed the metaphorical nature of the words: '*projected ... on a sheet rigged deep in the dark lush recesses of the back-yard*'. I was trying to be literal and descriptive about the site for my birthday slide

show and had no intention of creating any psychological double-meaning.

While this slide collection was the most significant material inheritance I received from my father, paradoxically, it is also a non-material inheritance as well. Slides are tangible material objects but slides and photos are also just images – not the real thing, but traces of the real thing. They are physical *and* ghostly. Or, in Susan Sontag's words: "a photograph is not only an image…an interpretation of the real; it is also a trace, something directly stenciled off the real, like a footprint or a death mask"[5].

Fig. 6: John Taylor, cox of rowing crew, Yarra River, 1942 (Princes Bridge in the background)

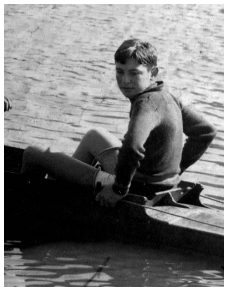


Figure 7: John Taylor, cox of rowing crew, 1942 (detail)

Figures 8A: My inheritance: WW1 binoculars (and case). (Photo: Andrew Taylor, 2012)

Figures 8B: My inheritance: egg-beater & power drill. (Photo: Andrew Taylor, 2012)

Figure 9A: My other inheritance: slides and carousel projector (Photo: Andrew Taylor, 2012)

Figure 9B: My other inheritance: slides and slide boxes (Photo: Andrew Taylor, 2012)

Figure10: Kodachrome slides from Taylor family collection 1952-1965 (Photos: John and Gilly Taylor, c. 1956-65)

Ernestine Hill, my father, slide shows, *Siberia* and Princes Bridge

> " A true journalist prefers a murder to a suicide and both to a wedding…"
> Ernestine Hill, *The Great Australian Loneliness* [6]

Ernestine Hill wrote about characters living in the 'dusty outback' in 1930s Australia[7]. I came across her name researching a film called *Kabbarli*, a dramatised documentary based on the life of legendary figure, Daisy Bates[8]. In the film I suggest that Ernestine Hill helped rescue Bates from obscurity and was the ghost-writer for her now infamous work, *The Passing of the Aborigines.*[9]

I spent seven years writing and researching the Daisy Bates film and in the process trawled through the contents of the ninety-three folio boxes in the National Library of Australia and numerous other Bates collections held in libraries and museums across Australia. Reading her often-repetitive writing and various rants and raves, I noticed how Bates had many of the characteristics of manic depression (bi-polar disorder). This was an illness and diagnosis that had also been given to my father. Daisy Bates and my father were very different characters but together with many other people with bi-polar disorder, they shared the following characteristics: a huge, seemingly tireless energy; a blinkered obsession with a cause or campaign; an ability to charm and entertain, mixed with bouts of anti-social behaviour and periods of exhaustion and depression.

In my research into Daisy Bates' life, I came across three remarkable photo albums in national, state and university archives.[10] The first album was in the State Library of South Australia. It was a record of one of the first trips on the railway connecting Adelaide and Perth, the so-called Transcontinental or East-West line, that was completed in 1917. The album is beautifully bound and presented. It features photographs of fine dining cars, ornate railways fittings, souvenir supper tickets and sample menus – all indicative of the luxury and romance of train travel of this era. Somewhere in the middle of the album are images of Aborigines encountered along the way.[11]

The railway interiors had an old-world charm and curiosity but were otherwise fairly cold and soulless. They verged on being banal and boring, like the snaps a dull relative may show of their travels that dwell on excessive and uninteresting detail. But the images showing Indigenous interaction with the train passengers were arresting and shocking. Gleeful white travellers were juxtaposed with poor and ragged-looking Aborigines, depicted begging or dancing for coins. The images were disturbing because of the vexed history of black/white interaction in Australia, but there was something else too.

When Roland Barthes talks about photography and death, in his influential book *Camera Lucida*, there is almost a romantic melancholy as he mourns the death of his mother.[12] Looking at these photos there was a sense of other deaths as well: death from the spread of diseases and epidemics that followed in the wake of the construction of the line, and the death of an older way of life.[13] These photos really did 'pierce the heart'.[14]

Figure 11: Images from album depicting first passenger journey Port Augusta to Kalgoorlie, East–West line, 1917.

Figure 11B. Aboriginal woman dancing for coins and passenger amusement during travel stop on East-West line, 1924. Photo: H.H. Fishwick, Fairfax Collection. (I found similar images in the 1917 album but these are unable to be reproduced here because of Indigenous protocols, cultural sensitivity and restrictions on copying).

The second album depicted the frontier town of Eucla, an old telegraph repeater town, on the edge of the Nullarbor plain, near the state borders of South and Western Australia. The album was a personal record of typical scenes of life for a colonial settler in Eucla around 1910. It showed Europeans in Edwardian clothes having a Sunday picnic and playing tennis. There were also images of the jetty, the telegraph station, an Aboriginal labourer chopping wood, some so-called 'wild blacks'. A quirky photo showed employees from the telegraph office passing a telegram across a desk, which represented the border between two states. Shortly after the scenes were taken, telegraph technology changed and the town died.

Like the first album, the Eucla album also had some of the feel, the quality that comes to photos with the passing of time. But when I visited the site of the town shortly after seeing the album, it was strange and affecting when I saw the remains of the telegraph station chimney poking up in the sand-dunes. I felt melancholy for the life that had passed. (It is also like the 'order of photography' has been turned on its head – instead of photographic traces from the past haunting the present, it was a case of a remnant of the real coming back to haunt the photographic traces I had seen in the albums).

Figure 12: Eucla Telegraph Office Interior & White Settlers in front of Telegraph Office. Eucla, WA., 1905. From album: "Views of Eucla, 1905".

Figure 13: Sandhills and Chimney Remains of Telegraph Station, Eucla,WA., 1995. Photos: Andrew Taylor

The third album is deep in the bowels of the National Library of Australia, in the Elizabeth Salter Collection. Salter was an influential Daisy Bates biographer who deposited her research notes in the National Library after her biography was published.[15] In the process of her research, she came across the album of AB Bolam and this album made its way into her collection of Bates documents.

Bolam was the Station Master at Ooldea siding, the station on the East-West line, near Bates' long-standing campsite-home. Bolam's album is a curious mix of amateur snap-shots and 'scientific' documentation. The album is bound in kangaroo skin and contains a collection of hand coloured black and white photos with carefully typed captions. Bolam's attention to detail and the ethnographic conventions of the day suggest that he intended the album to be more than just a 'family album'. In fact, there are no shots of him or his family. It is focused on Daisy Bates and the various Aboriginal groups who made their way to the Ooldea soak and the railway siding.[16]

Figure 14A: Women and girls at Ooldea c.1920. Photo: AB Bolam

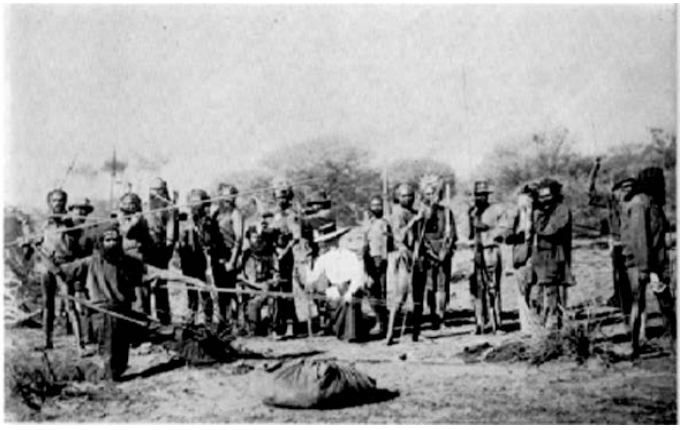


Figure 14B: Daisy Bates posing with men at Ooldea c.1920 . Photo: AB Bolam

Figure 14C: Daisy Bates with children from Musgrave Ranges, Ooldea c.1920. Photo: AB Bolam.

Pictures in the actual Bolam Album are hand-coloured black and white photos, set in beveled mounts with typed captions underneath. For example, the above image has the caption: “Musgrave Children. Just arrived from far away Musgrave Ranges. Fine Clean little fellows, healthy and in good condition. Once down in white mans’ domain few ever return to their real homes. To these the Camera must have appeared a devil”. (Bolam’s spelling & punctuation retained).

All three albums made a considerable impact upon me when I discovered them doing my Bates research in the mid '90s. I was interested in both the photos and also the way they had been bound and collected – the albums themselves. The photographs 'spoke' to my interest in the history of the colonial frontier but I realised that to equate these photos with history was naïve and unsatisfactory. History and historical photographs are not the same thing. But to dismiss the photos as mere historical artefacts also missed the point. Clearly in thinking about history, the photographs and albums provided a trace of the past and a rich source of clues and evidence.[17]

At the time, however, my research was primarily focused on Daisy Bates and so as much as they fascinated me as 'historical objects', I had to put the albums aside and focus on solving the 'riddle of Daisy Bates',[18] and the even greater puzzle for me, of how I was going to raise enough finance to get the film made.

Several years passed but fortunately, I eventually obtained production finance.[19] Prior to this, I had directed short films, educational videos and some TV commercials but nothing of the scale and scope of *Kabbarli*, so the chance to direct the film was a terrific opportunity and I was determined to make the most of it.

However, just prior to commencing pre-production in earnest, I was asked to make a small no-budget film for an installation commissioned as part of the opening exhibition for the Australian Centre for Moving Image (ACMI).[20] In *Kabbarli*, I had a chance to direct a film with a decent budget and some guaranteed theatrical and TV pre-sales, so why waste time and energy on a one-minute no-budget film in a relatively obscure location?

Despite these reservations, I went ahead and made a film based on a script I wrote with the title *Princes Bridge*. It was a simple film that combined stills, voice-over and a pre-existing music track. The style of production (stills with voice-over), resembled *Siberia* but it was made using analogue pre-digital methods. (The photos were filmed with a video camera and then edited in using U-matic video tapes).

I don't regret the time and energy I spent making *Princes Bridge*. I was disciplined enough to keep to my limited artist's fee ($500) and I approached the film like a

'creativity problem': these are the constraints, what can I do taking them as a given? Not surprisingly, the film was a little rough and it needed another pass or two at each stage of production but I was pleased with the result. I was able to talk about my father's death; relate my story to the Princes Bridge location (a place close to both the site of his suicide and the new ACMI museum); and gain a shot of creative confidence heading into making *Kabbarli*.

Recently I looked at the original script for *Princes Bridge* (see Appendix 1). I had forgotten how it was based on a photo album, and a contemplation of the image. It is also an investigation into social and vernacular photography, and telling stories using photos as both a starting point and the underlying basis of the script. Looking at the script reminded me that making *Princes Bridge* was valuable for me in trying to work out when to let the images 'speak' on their own or when to use a combination of words and images. In other words, the project related directly to this doctorate and the creative problems I encountered when making *Siberia*. It was another precedent for my interest in the film-photo-essay, still/moving form. Again, this was largely unconscious – I had forgotten this connection when I set out to make *Siberia*.

Winter 2002. (From this day photography is dead) [21]

Winter, 2002. I remember being struck by an image that appeared on the front page of the Sydney Morning Herald. The image by Herald staff photographer, Nick Moir, showed seagulls in a dense early morning fog. It was a beautiful image and it was linked to an online slide show called *Urban Birds*.[22] Seeing Moir's work online was a revelatory moment for me. Moir's site had been put together using *Flash,* at the time a relatively new software application that was sympathetic to working with images.[23] I figured that using this *Flash* technology, one could make work like Moir's or, if more artful with their writing and juxtaposition of sound and image, they could make a '*La Jetée* -style' of work – not a clone of *La Jetée*, but a film made from sequences of stills. I was excited and attracted to this proposition.

The technology for this type of online slide show existed prior to 2002 but seeing *Urban Birds* was the first time, to my knowledge, that it was both accessible and reasonable quality. (In those days, I used to think, why make films for online

viewing when they looked terrible and took an eternity to download. I still had a romantic idea about the desirability of cinema being shown in cinemas. Also I had trained and worked as a cinematographer and director on film (celluloid) and thought technologies that worked against that were in effect, shooting myself in the foot.[24]

Figure 15: Image from *Urban Birds*, Nick Moir / Sydney Morning Herald, July 2002.

In September 2002, *Kabbarli* was selected to screen as part of the São Paulo International Film Festival and I was invited to attend. Before leaving for Brazil, a colleague suggested I borrow one of the new digital cameras from the faculty equipment store. Compact digital cameras had started to hit the market but were still a year or two away from becoming ubiquitous. The camera I borrowed was an early model Pentax. It was big, slow and clunky: 2 or 3 mega-pixels, with a slow processing time, a long delay between shots and batteries that ran out very quickly.

I read the manual on the plane and took a snap out the window. It was my first foray into digital photography. Between films, parties and *Caipirinha* hang-overs, I wandered the streets of São Paulo and took some photos. I had read no Baudelaire and only a little of Benjamin. Little did I know, I was behaving like a card-carrying *flaneur*.[25] Of course there were initial bouts of shyness and self-consciousness, as I tried to work through my 'stranger in a strange land' angst and the ethical dilemmas

posed when photographing the ‘other’. Sometimes, no doubt, being crass and insensitive; other times, being overly cautious and self censoring.

Aside from problems with short-life batteries and delays waiting for the camera to ‘refresh’ itself, I more or less embraced this new digital ‘freedom’. I did not have to worry about stock and processing costs, so I could afford to shoot with more experimentation and abandon. I still had some residual habits from years of taking 35mm snaps but as I started to loosen up, I took many photos that I once would have considered too boring and banal to waste 35mm film stock on. Who cares if images were hastily framed and under-lit? Shoot first, think later. Don’t worry if it’s crap. Just press delete.[26]

Fortunately, the images were not all bad and to my delight there were many that I liked. There was something different about them that I was yet to articulate. This puzzle started to unravel when I looked at them as a group. Individually few of the photos stood out, but when viewed in a sequence, then they had some resonance.

Figure 16: View from plane window (my first digital photo). Photo: Andrew Taylor, 2002.

Figures 17: São Paulo, September, 2002. (Digital) Photos: Andrew Taylor

I was unsure about how I would get the photos from the camera to my computer. I followed the quick-guide manual and in an instant the photos were 'sucked' from the camera and able to be viewed on my computer. What is more, they looked good. They weren't all flat and 'pixeley' like I expected digital images to be. Even when viewed on my computer screen as large 12" x 9" pictures, they were sharp and their colours rich and saturated.

The images opened in an Apple application called iPhoto. This application was easy to use, intuitive and well integrated with other Apple applications (Apologies, I am not trying to plug Apple, just recall my thoughts and feelings of the time). Within moments of the photos being 'swept' into the computer, they could be arranged,

edited and played back as a digital slide show with an accompanying sound track. This was thrilling. Yes, I could see even then, that these digital slide shows were a little hokey, and the images were gaining power from being placed with 'cinematic' music – like Russian choral music or *Radiohead*– but what a fabulous sketch pad. What a great way to rough out ideas for film-photo-essays (or films, or photo series).

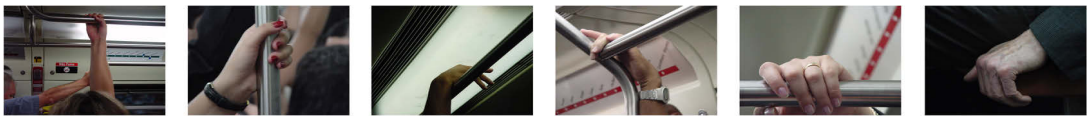


Figure 18: São Paulo hands, September, 2002. (Digital) Photo strip: Andrew Taylor

Writing with images

> "The illiterate of the future will be the person ignorant of the use of the camera as well as the pen." (Lazlo Maholy-Nagy, 1936)[27]

I made two film photo essays in response to this novelty of production and my impressions of the new digital photography (see Appendix 2: *July Road Movie* and *Return to Paradise)*. To move images around and re-arrange their order was far easier and more intuitive than most digital editing programs available at the time. Apart from a more loose and free 'sketch book approach', this allowed for a greater freedom in reversing the usual order of film production. Typically one would write a script or scenario (plus umpteen drafts) and then use this as the plan or blueprint for production. Filmmaking was, and largely still is, just too expensive and labour intensive to make it up as one went along.[28]

iPhoto, on the other hand, allowed for working in a freer and more associative way.[29] I was curious about what would come out of playing with the images, moving them around, sketching with them. What words came out of these associations? What if the pictures came first and then the words? Instead of a script or scenario being written and then images being filmed to illustrate these words, what if the conventional word-to-image order was reversed?[30]

My birthday came around again. Another hot and humid February night. I was now living in Marrickville not Bondi – no more seas breezes or pink crepe myrtle

blossom. A few people came over for dinner and we sat outside to eat and drink. It was a much smaller affair than my fortieth, but yes, I did get out the slides.

I didn't show many slides; just some portraits I had taken over the years: a few in Coney Island (1988); several from Siberia (1992); and a small batch from a more recent trip to Vladivostok (2003). It was a very casual outdoor screening and I didn't inflict a formal lecture on my guests but privately I was interested in the idea of portraits and was looking at various portraits I had taken over the years to work through some questions: Why is our culture so interested in portraiture? What makes a good portrait? How do we judge or assess them if we want to go beyond 'gut reaction' alone?

Figure 19: Coney Island Portraits, 1988 (scans of 35mm Kodachrome slides). Photos: AT.

Figure 20: Russian Hats (Siberia Portraits), 1992 (scans of 35mm Kodachrome slides). Photos: AT.

Figure 21: Vladivostok Portraits, 2003 (scans of 35mm Kodachrome slides). Photos: AT.

Soon after my birthday screening, I made a series of short sketches of film-photo-essays using iPhoto. For example, as part of my curiosity about portraiture, I made a compile of photographic portraits I had taken, mostly people looking straight to camera, in poses that hovered between being performative and naturalistic. I also grouped photos around themes, mostly themes of place or ideas about photography. I deliberately didn't script anything nor did I read any theory. I wanted to see if the images would 'speak' without additional words. I didn't add any voice-over or sound effects but I did add some music – a few tracks from the limited pool I had on my computer.

Figure 22: Images from film-photo sketch *July Road Movie*. Photos: Andrew Taylor, July 2004

I held a screening of several of these works in progress. When the lights went back on the response was warm and a few people in the audience had tears in their eyes. That a sketch could elicit this level of emotional response was encouraging and I felt I was on the right track. I also remember one of the audience, 'J.', wiping tears from her eyes and then quoting a few lines of Yeats: "Things fall apart; the center cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world…".[31]'J.' quoted these lines as an afterthought, but they stayed with me. She had identified a problem with the work in terms of its lack of theme, purpose or unifying force.

The piece on portraiture was played to Nick Cave's '*People Ain't No Good*'. Apart from this song now being dated and over-used (it recently featured in one of the *Shrek* movies), the work's strength was derived very much from the music. The pictures didn't stand up to much when left on their own. People were responding to the emotion of the song more than the images. The films lacked soul.[32]

It was time to put some meat on the bones. I went away and wrote some scripts. The words flowed easily. I thought I had 'cracked it'. The film-photo-essay form was more intellectually charged than conventional TV programs but not as dry, cold and

inaccessible as typical academic discourse. In addition, the scripts would be relatively inexpensive to produce as short TV programs.

I was so enamoured with this film-photo-essay form, that I wrote over twenty different scripts, enough to make three series of short films. One was a series of place portraits called *Haunted*; the next was a series on portraiture, photography and biography called *Love, Death and Photography*; and the third was a narrative based on a trip to Russia in the early 1990s called *Siberia*.

I have included a sample of these scripts as Appendices (See Appendices 3-7). The ones I have chosen here deal with material referred to above – eg. *Making Memory* (*July Road Movie)* is a reflection on my first impressions filming with a digital stills camera; *Ticket to Paradise* is about some photos I took in São Paulo; Lee *Miller and the Rat* is about portraiture; *Ghost Metropolis* is about the Eucla album and a sense of place; and *World War One Album* is about history, memory and popular photography.

I decided to make *Siberia* first. My production pathway – scanning negative to electronic file – was new and untested and I wanted to work through any bugs before embarking on the other series of film-photo-essays. There were no major hiccups in the scanning and editing of the images but I severely underestimated how long it would take for me to complete the project. On the one hand, in filmmaking terms, the form of *Siberia* was very simple: a scripted monologue played against still images. This did not involve the complications and expenses often associated with filmmaking: locations, sets, crews, catering, equipment hire… The underlying photographs were already shot and there were big sections of the script of *Siberia* that barely changed from the earliest drafts. However, the film was very tricky to get right in terms of the amount and weight of words, and its overall rhythm and balance. (And it was terrific not having to bow to the deadlines imposed by a broadcaster or producer but there was a tyranny in this freedom. It meant I could finesse endlessly).

The above discussion relating to expenses and complications of filmmaking, producers and commissioning bodies, leads me to an important consideration in trying to fathom my attraction to still/moving work. Has my interest in making this

type of work simply been a by-product of wanting to produce work outside of reliance on funding bodies and investors? Has it simply been a by-product of budget (or lack thereof)?

Shoestring aesthetics

> "Working on a shoestring, which in my case is often a matter of circumstance than of choice, never appeared to me as a cornerstone for aesthetics…" (Chris Marker, "Notes on Filmmaking")[33]

> " Give me two photographs, a Moviola and some music and I'll make you a film" (Santiago Alvarez quoted in Derek Malcolm, *Santiago Alvarez LBJ*)[34]

The relative lack of expense required for reworking slides and stills into moving image work definitely accounts for some of my attraction to the still/moving. And while I agree with Marker's point that shoestring budgets alone do not constitute an aesthetic strategy, the limiting of choices dictated by lack of budget can lead to unorthodox and interesting aesthetic choices (such as making a film almost entirely with still photographs, à la *La Jetée*). Similarly, while I cannot claim to have made work with anything like the committed political intensity of Alvarez and other radical Latin American filmmakers, in my making ultra low budget work there is some shared commitment to exploring possibilities for oppositional filmmaking and alternative forms of cinematic expression.

I wanted to state these budgetary considerations now, for fear that in their obviousness they be overlooked or left out altogether. That being said, as much as budget constraints have been a consideration in me making still/moving work, there is more to it than this.

My narrative so far gives an account of how I came to make *Siberia*, and is a partial answer to the associated question of why am I so attracted to the slide show, and still/moving form? It does not answer the broader question framing this exegesis: 'how has the slide show haunted documentary?' In order to address this question, I take a step back and look at the slide show form. The next four chapters focus on the

slide show. They follow an historical progression from magic lantern presentations through to contemporary iterations of the form.

CHAPTER 2 - THE MAGIC LANTERN AND DOCUMENTARY

How has the slide show influenced or haunted documentary? To answer this question, I need to go back and look at the magic lantern. The magic lantern was pivotal to the development of both the modern slide show and documentary cinema.

A magic lantern and the modern 35mm slide projector operate in a similar way: a beam of intense light is passed through a transparency and enlarged through a series of lenses and projected in a darkened space.[1] Despite this direct similarity there was over five centuries of change and innovation that separated the invention of these two types of projection.

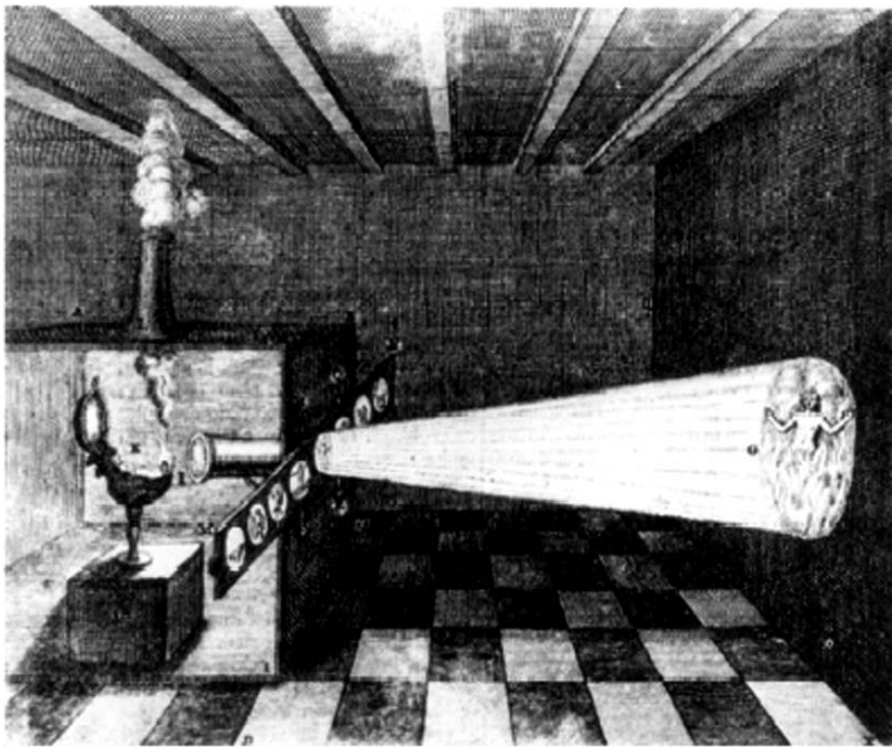


Figure 23: First illustration of a magic lantern projection, in: Athanasius Kirchner, *Ars Maga Lucis et Umbrae*, Rome 1646.

A brief history: lanterns of fear, phantasmagoria, and famous *savoyards*

The invention of the magic lantern dates back to the 15th century and stands alongside the camera obscura, shadow shows and magic mirrors as part of the history of optical projection prior to the invention of both cinema and photography. Magic lanterns enjoyed huge popularity in the late 18th century Europe and were used in every corner of the globe until well into the 20th century.

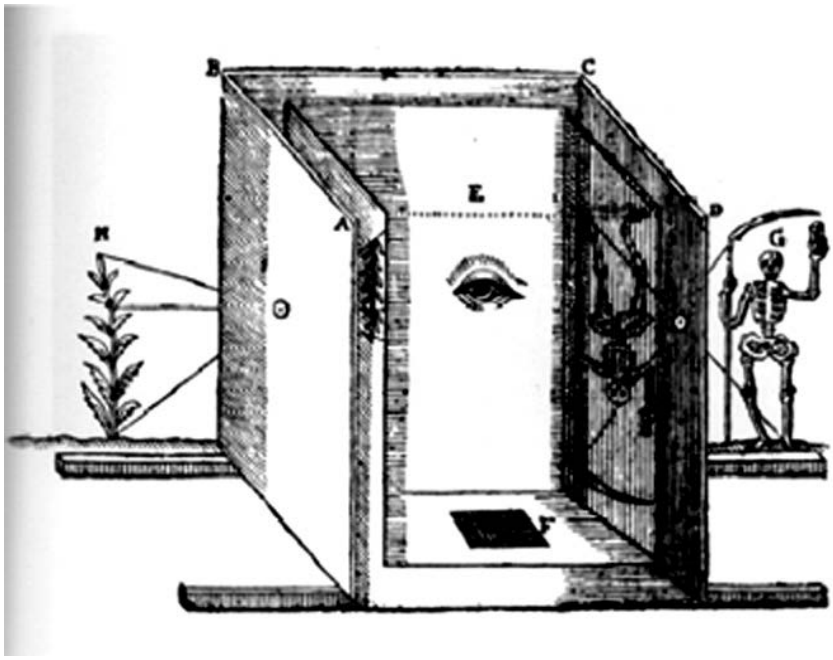


Figure 24: 'Camera Obscura with Projection of Skeleton Holding a Scythe', 1651.

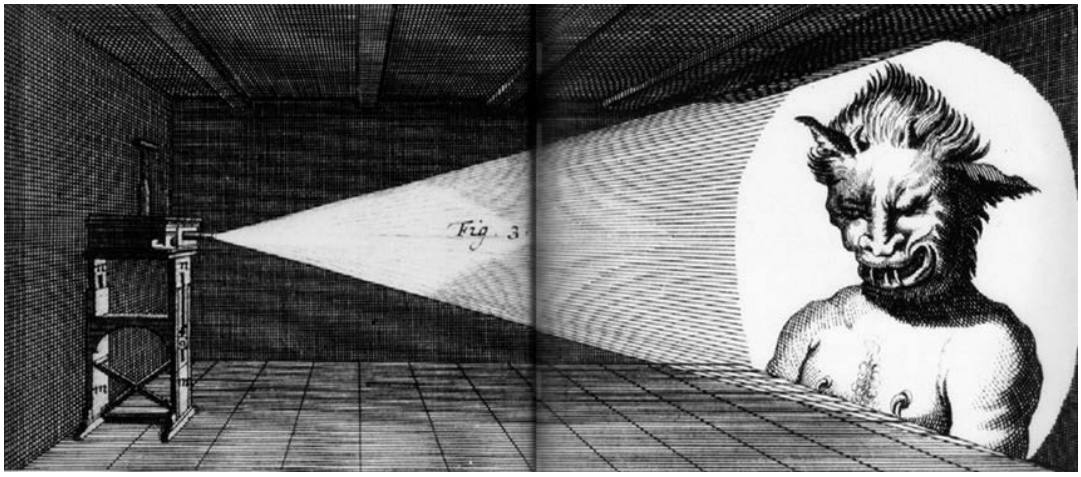


Figure 25: 'Lantern of Fear', in Gulielmo Jacob's, *Physices Elementa Mathematica*, Geneva, 1748

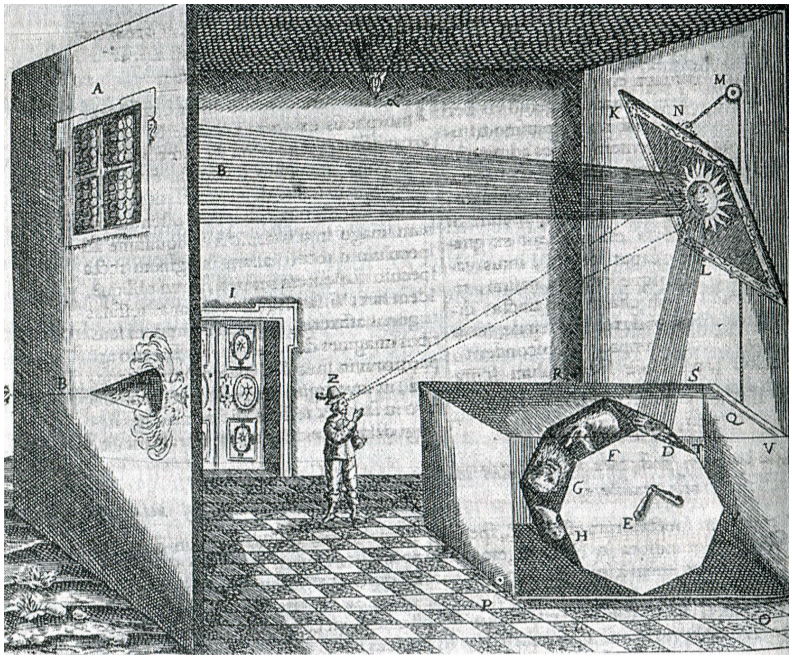


Fig. 26: 'Metamorphosis machine', in Athanasius Kirchner, *Ars Maga Lucis et Umbrae*, Rome 1646.

In 1649, a German Jesuit, Anthanasius Kircher, published *Ars Magna Luci et Umbrae* (The Great Art of Light and Shadow). Kircher's book presented scholars with techniques of optics, mirrors and lenses needed for the projection and viewing of illuminated images. Then in 1659, the Dutch scientist, Christian Huygens simplified earlier processes and invented the 'lantern of fear' or magic lantern, a box fitted with lenses that allowed the magnified projection of images painted on glass. According to historian Laurent Manonni:

> "These views could be static or in motion, thanks to the juxtaposition of fixed and movable glasses. Huyguns drew the first known moving slide, showing a skeleton performing various movements, based on …a book of engravings, *Dance of Death"*.[2]

Figure 27: Image from Hans Holbien's book engravings, *The Dance of Death* , Lyon, 1538.

The magic lantern quickly spread across the world, thanks to the Jesuits, who were, in Mannoni's words, "the world's first traveling show people."[3] Magic lantern shows achieved global ascendancy during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, culminating in complex 'phantasmagoria' shows emerging in France around the time of the French Revolution.

Phantasmagoria were pre-cinematic theatrical shows that combined magic and illusion with advances in science. In these illuminated spectacles, stories were performed with magic lanterns and rear projections creating dancing shadows and frightening melodramatic effects. These lively, interactive events incorporated narrative, mythology and theater in a single art form. They entertained a wide audience and provided a space to consider the otherworldly, mobilizing viewers' anxieties regarding death and the afterlife.

The historian, Marina Warner, links the popularity of the phantasmagoria with economic and social changes occurring towards the end of the eighteenth century. During this time there was a rise in secular amusements courting fear and horror.

> " In London, Edinburgh, Paris and Berlin, the rising classes of working men and women as well as the leisured hedonistic bourgeoisie made up new spending audiences presiding over the emancipation of fantasy from the priestcraft".[4]

The presenters of these phantasmagoria were highly skilled performers known as *savoyards.* Famous *savoyards* developed cult followings and were known throughout Europe. Marina Warner cites the Belgian, Etienne Gaspard Robertson, as a preeminent example:

> "In the wake of the Terror in France, brilliant impresario, balloonist, and cinematic pioneer, Etienne Gaspard Robertson inaugurated the thrills of horror movies when he projected spectres into smoke - including the severed head of Danton, a recent victim of the guillotine". [5]

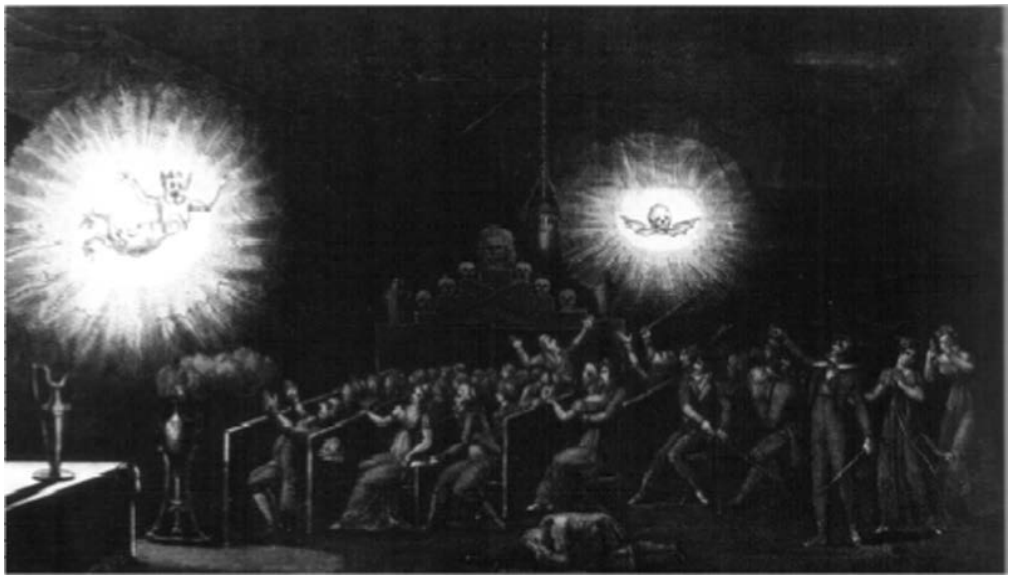


Fig 28: Robertson's Phantasmagoria in a disused cloister of an old Capucine Chapel in Paris. 1797

Throughout the nineteenth century, the interest and popularity of magic lantern shows increased. Advances in optics and mechanical engineering enabled lanterns to project larger and brighter images. There were also sophisticated biunial and truiunial lanterns (lanterns with two or three lenses) that enabled a skilled projectionist to create special effects and illusions of motion. Towards the end of the century there was a flowering of magic lantern activity and by the 1890s there were over 28 manufacturers of magic lanterns and slides in London alone.[6]

From the mid-nineteenth century photographic images could be reproduced as lantern slides. In addition, improvements brought on by nineteenth century industrial manufacturing combined with economies of scale, to such an extent, that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, magic lanterns and glass slides were marketed to domestic audiences. Magic lantern shows were no longer the sole provenance of *savoyards* and 'expert' presenters in Mechanics Institutes and town halls. The magic lantern slide show became a feature event in middle-class drawing rooms around the world.

Lantern slides remained popular in the earlier years of the twentieth century, but by the end of the First World War they had been eclipsed by cinema. The advent of the Box Brownie and subsequent popularisation of photography, hastened the magic

lantern's decline. The introduction of 35mm slides and slide projectors were the final nail in the coffin.[7]

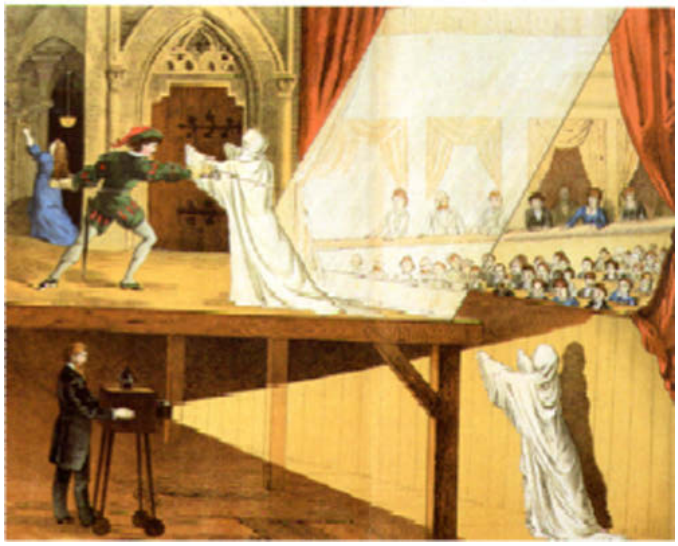


Figure 29: Magic Lantern Show. Engraving of popular illusion "Dr. Pepper's Ghost', staged first in 1863 by John Henry Pepper, at the London Polytechnic, a popular 19th century lantern venue.

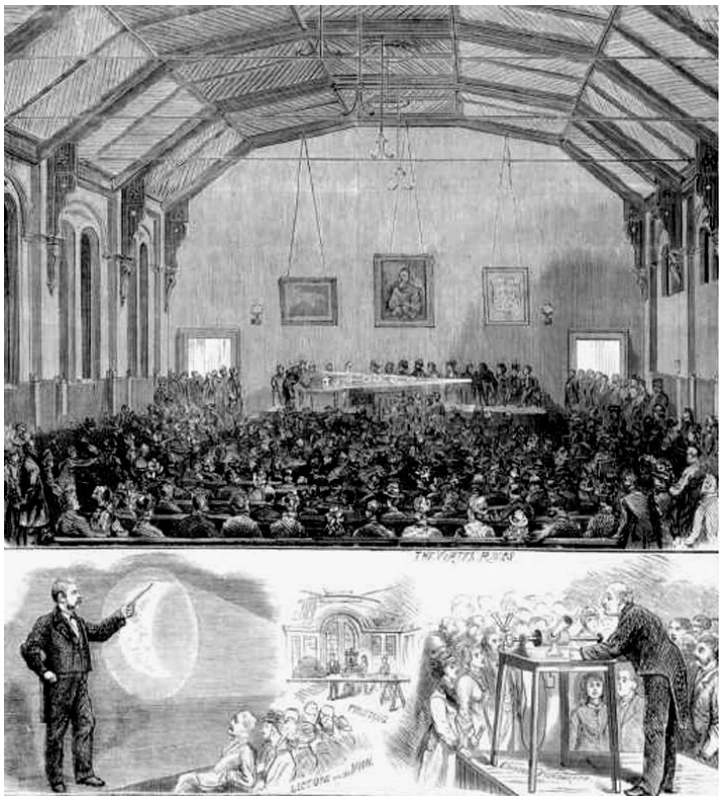


Figure 30: Illustrated Lecture. Conversazione at the New Congregational Hall, Melbourne, 1839 'Lectures on the Moon' by lantern slide at lower left, with demonstrations of printing, the Edison phonograph, and (upper image) vortex rings.

Figure 31: Triunnial lantern. c. 1890

Figure 32: "Man Eating Rats" lantern slide, c. 1850. The "Man Eating Rats" mechanical slide was considered a classic. The main glass slide was stationary and depicted a man asleep in bed with his mouth open. By turning a handle at the right a second circular glass slide with a continuous circle of rats drawn on it was rotated to create the impression that rats were leaping off the bed into the man's mouth. Moving the lever at the left up and down moved a third glass which made the man's jaw move so that he appeared to be eating the rats. Mr William Lillywhite screened the "ratcatcher" slide during his lantern exhibitions in Adelaide in 1853. For a reanimated version see: *You Tube* 'The Rat Catcher', Accessed May, 2012 < http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZJqRhKBSzg>

The Magic Lantern in Australia and New Zealand

Elizabeth Hartrick's *Consuming Illusions: the magic lantern in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand 1850-1910*[8]**,** maps the prevalence and diverse applications of the magic lantern in the Australasian colonies. Hartrick gathers a significant amount of material evidence to support her claims that magic lanterns were significant and widespread in colonial culture, and were popular as entertainment on a private, domestic and public scale. In doing so, Hartrick's work brings to light a cultural practice that had remained largely invisible in histories of photography, cinema, and popular culture in nineteenth century Australasia.

Hartrick and prominent early cinema historians, Michael Chanan and Tom Gunning, argue that even though magic lanterns have been largely overlooked by traditional scholarship they were not some isolated aberrant form existing in a remote cul–de–sac, off the main road to the modern cinema industry. Hartrick *et.al*, make a convincing point about how the importance of the magic lantern has been largely overlooked in histories of cinema (and photography and popular culture, for that matter too)[9]. Hartrick cites Gunning to support her related argument that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, magic lanterns were a central part of visual culture:

> "Although it is undeniable that early indicators of moving picture technology can be readily discerned in lantern practices, the special effects of motion, were basically a sideshow to the key role the magic lantern took on, in much of nineteenth-century Europe, as the mass medium of visual information " [10]

While acknowledging the point about the magic lantern having been largely overlooked in histories of cinema, I'd like to pick up on another point that comes out of Gunning's quote. A shift appears to have happened from the magic lantern being immensely popular as a "secular amusement courting fear and horror" to it being a medium that played a "key role…in much of nineteenth-century Europe, as the mass medium of *visual information*". Or perhaps it was not so much a *shift* as a *split* between the magic lantern being used for amusement and the lantern being used for informational purposes.

The evidence indicates there was considerable use of the magic lantern for mass information but not surprisingly, the large purpose-built lantern houses in turn of the century London, like the Adelaide Hall and London Polytechnic, featured popular melodramas and ghost stories, not informational illustrated lectures.[11]

Short of any detailed quantitative analysis, it is reasonably clear that magic lantern usage became split into two broad categories in the later part of the nineteenth century. The first I'd like to call 'magic lantern shows'. These shows followed in the wake of the phantasmagoria and used the magic lantern for popular entertainment. 'Magic lantern shows' included reenactments of popular melodramas, ghost stories, and spectacles of magic, illusion and motion.

The other broad category I'd like to call the 'lantern lecture' or 'illustrated lecture'. These drew upon the lantern as a source of useful knowledge and 'rationalist entertainment'. These occurred predominately in schools, universities, Town Halls, Mechanics Institutes and other venues run by moral and self-improving societies.

A look at the rise of social reforming and moral improvement societies in the nineteenth century, sheds further light on the connection between the magic lantern and what became known as 'documentary cinema'.

'Rational recreation', 'useful knowledge' and Victorian culture

From the middle of the nineteenth century there was considerable activity in America, Britain and its colonies to establish social reforming and moral improvement societies. The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was established in Great Britain and numerous Working Men's Clubs and Mechanics' Institutes were established throughout Britain, America and Australasia. Ideas of 'rational recreation' and 'useful knowledge' were central to these institutions.

Many of these organisations were affiliated with puritanical Wesleyan and Methodist sects, or were part of Temperance Leagues or other 'wowserist' organisations like the Rechabites. (In Britain and its colonies, such as Australia, this meant these

organisations were also by default, pro Queen and Empire, and anti Irish/Catholic).

Historian Peter Bailey has set out how energetically middle-class values and concerns informed the new discourse of rational recreation in the mid-nineteenth century. Bailey argues these self-improving organisations were:

> "Part of a wider social philosophy which gained increasing adherence throughout the nineteenth century in response to the phenomenon of 'leisure' in an industrialised society on one hand, and on the other, problems of social order and public health faced by English society".

> "Improved and 'improving' recreations were an important instrument for the education of the working classes in the social values of middle-class orthodoxy… Steeped in the sensibilities of the bourgeoisie, the agendas of these institutions vilified and attempted to repress many of the leisure activities of the lower classes, noisy 'unstructured' behavior such as drinking and singing in saloons". [12]

In Hartrick's account, she argues that the twin pillars of useful knowledge and rational education was "not confined to the public and institutional realms, (they) entered middle class homes in the form of 'philosophical toys' for children, youths and adults".[13] She claims:

> "As a powerful, versatile technology … the magic lantern was well suited to serving the tenets of rational recreation, combining amusement and instruction for the dissemination of an expanding repertoire of 'useful knowledge' to an ever widening audience socially and geographically".[14]

Hartrick gives examples of the magic lantern's role in Sunday school and day school, where it was held to be of value as rational recreation, particularly for children and young adults. Other examples of the magic lantern being used as a visual aid in educational contexts range from clearly defined pedagogical applications, such as the teaching of history, geography and science in public schools and universities, to more general courses of instruction offered to the public, to informative slide lectures presented in colonial lunatic asylums to aid patients in the recovery of their mental health[15].

Others have written about the ideological role the magic lantern played in nineteenth century Victorian imperial expansion. Anne Maxwell looks at the lantern use in constructing ideas of the 'primitive savage' in displays that were part of the Great Exhibitions in the Victorian era.[16] And in *Picturing empire: photography and the visualisation of the British Empire* (1997), James R. Ryan looks at the Colonial Office Visual Instruction Committee, established in London in 1902. This Committee developed and promoted a lantern slide program "to instruct, first, British school children about their Empire and, second, the children of the Empire about the 'Mother Country'.''[17]

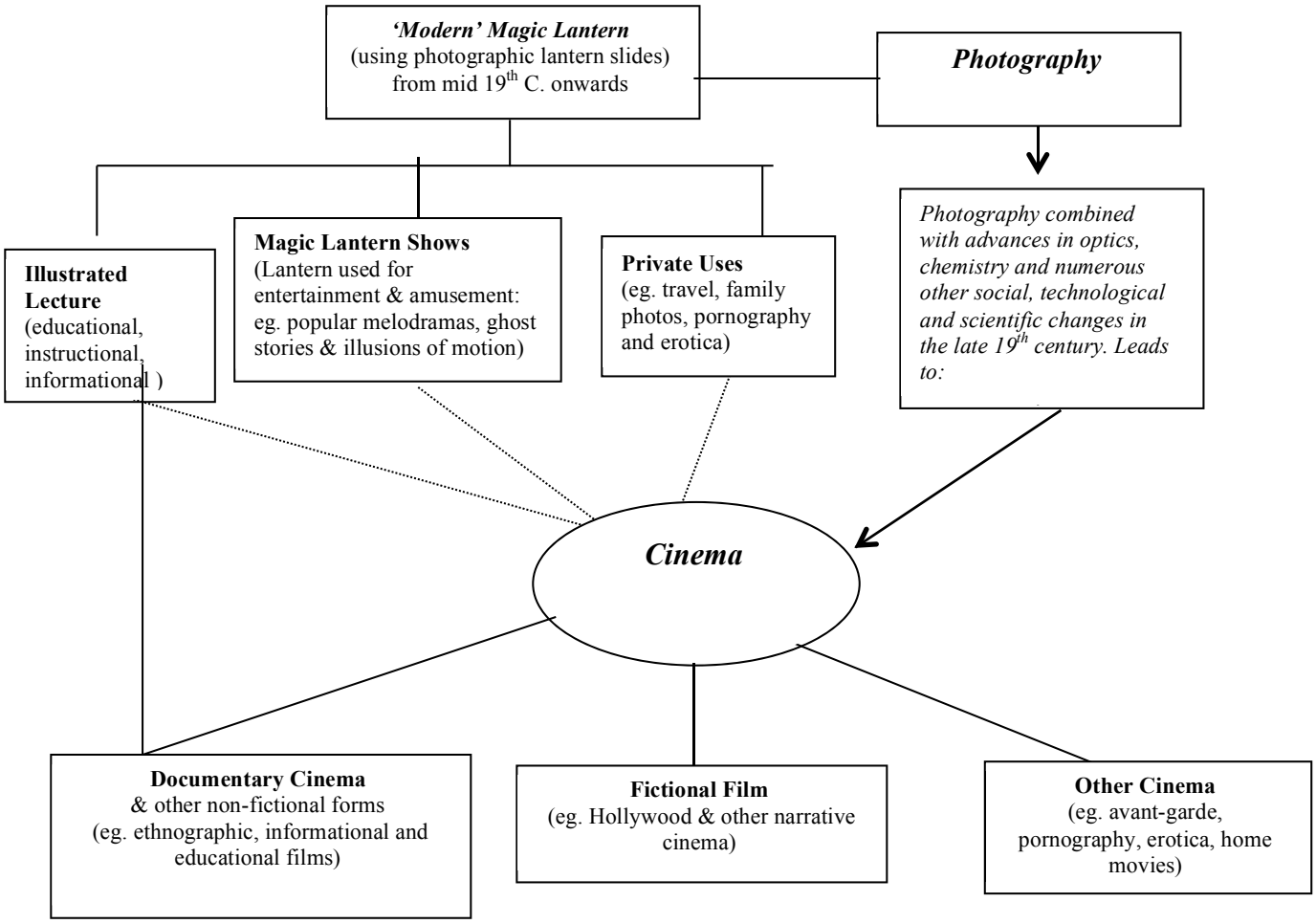
Finally, my own research into Daisy Bates, revealed a frequent reference to 'lantern lectures' she gave in Perth in the early 1900s at the exclusive Karrakatta Club, as well as the Perth Historical Society.[18] One of her titles from this era speaks volumes in terms of Victorian moral crusading and ideas of social improvement: "*Efforts made By Western Australia: Towards the Betterment of Her Aborigines"*.[19] A newspaper advertisement for one of Bates' lectures provides further evidence about the culture of illustrated lectures. It reads:

> Town Hall Perth, Tuesday October 5, 1909. 8pm. Under the patronage and in the presence of His Exellency Governor and Lady Edeline Strickland. Lecture on "Our Aborigines", by Daisy M. Bates F.R.A.S, etc. illustrated by Lantern Slides … Proceeds in aid of girls reformatory and House of Mercy. [20]

The Illustrated Lecture and Documentary Cinema

The 'illustrated lecture' or 'lantern lecture', informed by ideas of 'rationalist entertainment' and 'useful knowledge', was a direct antecedent to the form that became known as 'documentary cinema'. The following diagram summarises this connection and the magic lantern's role in the evolution of documentary (see over):

Links between the Magic Lantern, Illustrated Lecture and Documentary Cinema



I will return to this diagram at the end of the chapter. Before I do this, I would like to look at three case studies to substantiate my claim about the connection between the illustrated lecture and documentary cinema. Jacob Riis, Lewis Hine, and Herbert Ponting all worked with magic lanterns and photographic images in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Today their subject matter would be classified as social or documentary photography.

Case study #1: Jacob Riis' and How The Other Half Lives

Jacob Riis' book *How The Other Half Lives* is considered a pioneering work of photojournalism. It features Riis' photographs of the squalid and overcrowded conditions of Manhattan tenements. These photographs were first used as part of an enormously popular magic lantern lecture.[21]

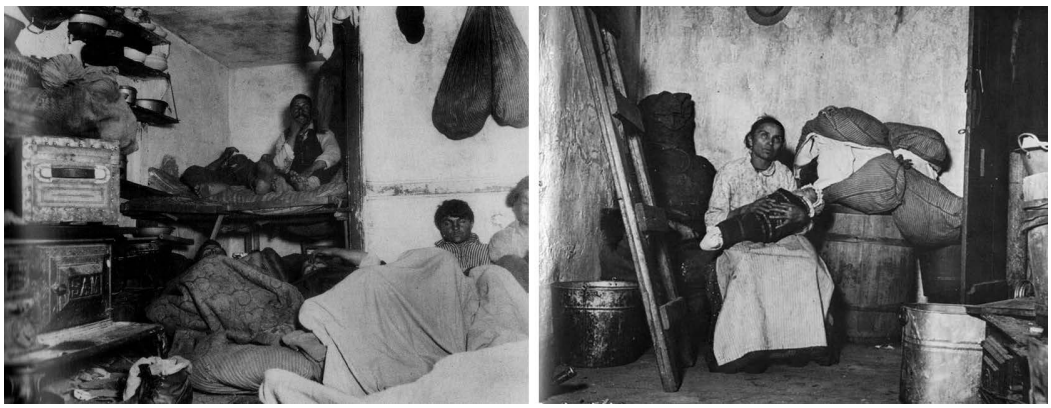


Figure 33: ‘Lodgers in Crowded Bayard Street Tenement’ & ‘In the Home of an Italian Rag-picker, Jersey Street’, *How the Other Half Lives*, Jacob Riis, c.1895.

Figure 34: ‘Bandit’s Roost’, *How the Other Half Lives*, Jacob Riis, c.1895.

Jacob Riis worked as a carpenter in Copenhagen before emigrating to the United States in 1870. Unable to find work, he was often forced to spend the night in police station lodging houses. Riis did a variety of menial jobs before finding work with a news bureau in New York in 1873. Aware of what it was like to live in poverty, Riis was determined to use his journalistic skills to communicate this to the public. He

constantly argued that the "poor were the victims rather than the makers of their fate".[22]

In 1888 Riis was employed as a photojournalist by the *New York Evening Sun*. Riis was among the first photographers to use flash powder, which enabled him to photograph interiors and exteriors of the slums at night. He also became associated with what later became known as muckraking journalism – a term originally used in association with a school of investigative journalists advocating social change.

Riis' first show was to the New York Society of Amateur Photographers. According to sources at the time, Riis gave a vivid account of poor New York living conditions and was a powerful orator and excellent communicator.[23] Riis eventually took his 'illustrated lectures' on the road, electrifying audiences with the modern marvel of the magic lantern and images captured by the newly developed flash photography.

> "His viewers moaned, shuddered, fainted and even talked to the photographs he projected, reacting to the slides not as images but as a virtual reality that transported the New York slum world directly into the lecture hall." [24]

Riis' magic lantern lectures illuminated the plight of New York's poorest and the unsafe conditions of their tenements. In this respect his shows could be considered the prototype of the socially committed documentary film. The success of the shows led to Riis securing a book deal in 1890. The book was widely circulated and influential. After viewing the work, Theodore Roosevelt, then president of New York City Board of Police Commissioners, had the city police lodging houses closed down.

Today, flash photography is ubiquitous. But for late 19th century urban audiences, flash photography was a new invention. For these audiences, it was rare for a camera to be pointed in the direction of the urban slum and if it was – prior to the use of Riis' flash photography – most interior shots would be unusable, as it was too dark for an image to be resolved (electric house lighting did not become widespread until well into the 1920s).

In 1900, it is estimated that up to a third of New York residents were living in

poverty[25] and by all accounts, Riis' passion and skill as an orator, combined with his consummate magic lantern showmanship, made this inequality and suffering seem tangible and graphic. However, I'd argue that Riis' photographs and magic lantern shows were famous not so much for *what* he showed – 19th century urban audiences were familiar with poverty – but *how* he showed it.

Previously, the dark and overcrowded tenement interiors remained invisible to the wider public but using the new invention of flash photography, Riis was able to obtain an exposure. Riis' photographs literally showed the world in a new light. In addition to this novelty, lantern slides maintained their detail and clarity even when projected on a large screen. (Even a lantern of mediocre quality could project bright and clear images more than 20 feet (6 metres) across).[26] In other words, Riis' audience not only saw a reality projected in a new light, they saw it on a scale that added to the spectacle. The success of Riis' *How the other half…* presentation was interrelated with the power, fascination and shock of the new.

Recently, Riis' photographs have been the subject of debate and critics have questioned his intrusive and sensationalist approach. Many of his slum photos were taken in darkness while Riis pointed his camera at unsuspecting subjects, surprising them with the illumination of the magnesium flash. The harsh look of the flash photographs registered as shock on the faces of the subjects. This look came to stand for candid and objective photography partly because it resembled the spontaneous look of the newly introduced snapshot. At the same time, several of Riis' photographs are partially staged. For example, his photographs of children sleeping in the streets show them feigning sleep.[27]

Figure 35: 'Sleeping Street Arabs', *How the Other Half Lives*, Jacob Riis, c.1895.

Riis' lantern lectures came with fiery speeches that used the rhetoric of evangelical religious sermons. These were initially given mostly to middle class audiences in New York, to people who had little direct experience of the slums. And although he focused on the plight of the poor, Riis was a social conservative. He advocated for change to come primarily through philanthropy and he divided the poor into the deserving and undeserving. Women and small children fitted the former category and criminally inclined males, the latter.[28]

Contemporary reservations and criticism of Riis' work notwithstanding, his lantern presentations had much in common with the documentary film. This is also reflected in the debates that have recently surrounded Riis' work. The issues in these debates concerning questions of truth, ethics, fabrication, dramatization, intent, intrusion, voyeurism, and self-serving 'do-gooderism' – all frequently air in debates about documentary film to this day.

Figure 36: 'Police Station Lodgers' (Eldridge Street Station, an old lodger and the plank on which she slept). *How the Other Half Lives*, Jacob Riis, c.1895. The woman in the photo is blinded by flash light.

Case Study #2: Lewis Hine and magic lantern slides

Lewis Hine is most famous as a documentary photographer but like Riis, Hine also projected his images in a series of magic lantern presentations. Hine's images of child labour were intended as vehicles to agitate for social reform.

Hine was originally a school teacher. He worked at a progressive New York institution, the Ethical Culture School, and learnt photography at their request. Hine made photographs of immigrants arriving at Ellis Island and living in the poor neighbourhoods, "so that students may have the same regard for contemporary immigrants as they have for the Pilgrims who landed at Plymouth Rock."[29] While working at the Ethical Culture School, Hine began freelancing for the National Child Labour Committee (NCLC). The NCLC attempted to reform child labour by urging legislation to control industrial hiring practices. Between 1907 and 1918, Hine traveled around America taking over five thousand photographs of child labour. He often assumed a false identity to photograph children working in factories, mines,

canneries and mills.[30]Eventually, Hine's photographs contributed to the passing of child labor laws.

Working for the NCLC and other social welfare organsations, Hine presented his photographs as lantern lectures. Hine developed the concept of the 'photo story', to describe his creative assemblages of photographs and text. These were designed to make powerful educational and artistic statements on the printed page, twenty years before the editors of *Life* magazine "invented" the format.

Figure 37: Child in Carolina Cotton Mill, Lewis Hine 1908

Hine went on to photograph the work of the Red Cross in Europe after World War I and also documented the construction of the Empire State building. Hine's attitude towards social photography shifted in the latter part of his career and his "work portraits" put labourers in the center of the picture and celebrated their skill and perseverance.[31] Many of these portraits were published in a book: *Men at Work: A Photographic Study of Men and Machines* (1932).

Figure 38A: Empire State Construction Workers. Photo: Lewis Hine, c.1931

Figure 38B: Empire State Construction Workers. Photo: Lewis Hine, c.1931

Hine's work was foundational in what became known as 'social' or 'documentary photography'. His influence is evident in the Depression-era photographs taken as part of Roy Stryker's Farm Security Administration project. It is also evident in countless examples of socially committed documentary film work: from early

documentaries like Pare Lorentz's *The River* (1938) and *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (1936); through to later influential films like Barbara Kopple's *Harlan County, USA* (1976).

Case Study #3: Herbert Ponting and the illustrated lecture as travelogue.

My third example highlighting the connection between the illustrated lecture and documentary comes from "Consuming illusions…", Anne Hartrick's history of the magic lantern in Australia and New Zealand. Early in this work, Hartrick cites the example of the professional photographer Herbert Ponting, who was part of Captain Robert Scott's 1911 Antartic expedition. Prior to the expedition, Scott suggested a program of regular lectures and theatrical evenings to help relieve the tedium of four months of Winter darkness.[32] In his personal account of the expedition Ponting wrote:

> My own cooperation in these evenings consisted of half-a-dozen lectures about my travels in foreign lands, illustrated with lantern-slides. I had brought my own lantern with me – a most ingenious and compact one I had bought in Canada several years before – and about five hundred lantern-slides of the Far East, made from my own negatives and coloured by Japanese artists during my long stay in Tokyo.[33]

Scott commented regularly in his journals on the contribution of Ponting's lantern lectures: "His store of pictures seems unending and has been an immense source of entertainment to us during the winter. His lectures appeal to all and are fully attended."[34] "In the dreary night he fixed up his carbide light," wrote fellow explorer Cecil Meares, "and took us around the world quick as winkin'".[35] Ponting listed the lecture titles as: 'Switzerland'; 'Across Northern India;' 'Burma and Ceylon;' 'Peking and the Great Wall of China;' 'Flowers, Festivals and Customs of Japan;' and 'Japanese Temples and Scenery'. Scott wrote enthusiastically about "golden pagodas gleaming in the noonday sun, and a hundred other scenes a glow with colour of that fascinating East … to remind us that all the world was not ice and snow and science."[36]

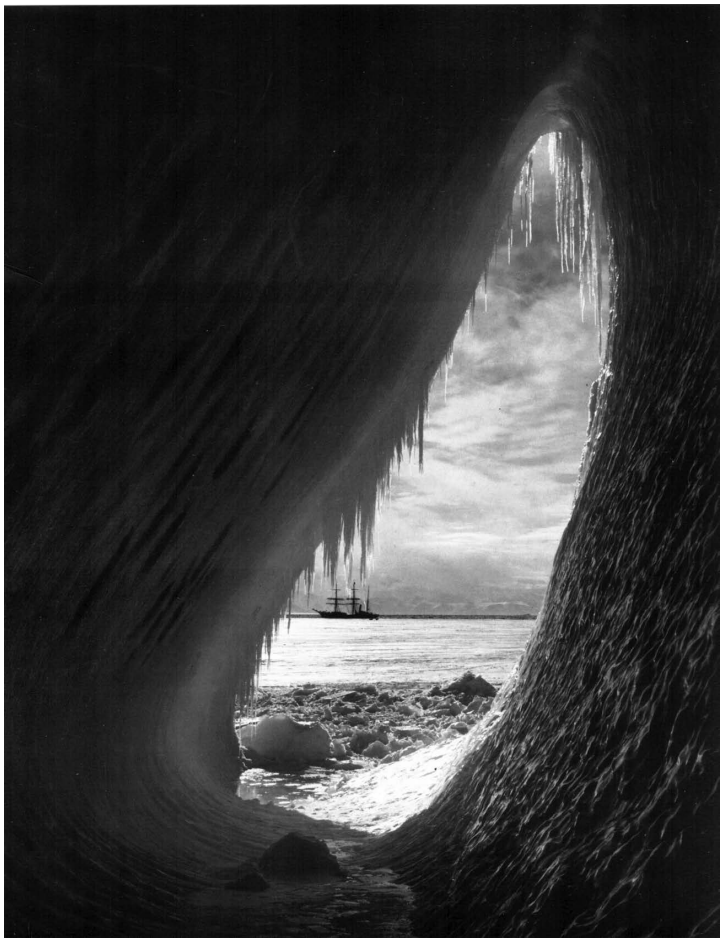


Figure 39: Scott's ship, *Tera Nova*, seen through an ice cave. Photographer: Herbert Ponting, 1913

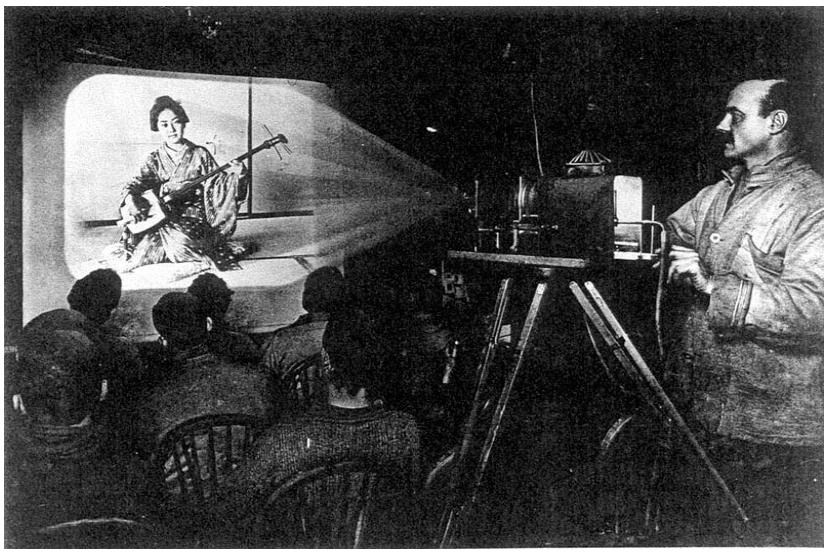


Figure 40: Ponting showing lantern slides to members of Scott's Antarctic Expedition 1911 ... "to remind us that all the world was not ice and snow and science". (Photographer unknown).

The surreal nature of the spectacle contrasted strongly with the harshness of their immediate reality. This almost hallucinatory quality is conveyed by Scott in his description of the lecture on India. He found Ponting's "impressionist style of lecturing … very attractive, enlivened with distinctly dramatic reminiscences, and vivid description". "We saw," he continued, "a confusing number of places – temples, monuments, and tombs in profusion, with remarkable pictures of the Taj Mahal – horses, elephants, alligators, wild boars, and flamingoes – warriors, fakirs, and nautch girls."[37]

The description of Ponting's shows with Scott's reference to a "confusing number of places" is reminiscent of a 35mm lounge-room slide show narrated by someone returning from travels to an exotic location. Clearly there are links between Ponting's lantern shows and more modern 35mm slide show. (I pick up this thread in the next chapter).

Ponting's shows also share common ground with ethnographic and travel/adventure documentaries. For many, these 'scientific' and commercial styles of documentary are seen as 'poor cousins' or lesser forms of documentary. For some purists, travel/adventure documentaries are not considered documentary at all. To help locate Ponting's work in a documentary tradition and to tease out some distinctions between different documentary forms, I'd like to draw upon an essay by the influential documentary pioneer, John Grierson.

Grierson's "lower categories" & "documentary proper"

In 1932, Grierson wrote a landmark essay, 'First Principles of Documentary'.[38]In this essay, Grierson claimed that all films made from natural material (footage filmed on location) can be regarded as documentary but educational films, scientific films, illustrated lectures, and newsreels are "lower categories" of filmmaking. Later he went on to argue these "lower categories" are distinct from documentary. For Grierson, the "documentary proper", in contrast to the "lower categories" of factual filmmaking, arranges and shapes the "raw material, that is reality"[39].

Grierson's legacy extends to this day. His short-hand definition of documentary as the "creative treatment of actuality" is still frequently used as an initial reference point in documentary text books. State film funding bodies rarely fund 'lower categories' of documentary, and most well-established film festivals have rules against their inclusion. One only has to glance at some dull 'educational' documentaries or crude travelogues, and it is easy to see where Grierson was coming from.

In Grierson's terms, Ponting's work is more aligned with a 'lower category' illustrated lecture than a 'documentary proper'. However, if documentary is thought of as a genre and the travelogue and ethnographic film subgenres, then there are clear links and points of connection between Ponting's illustrated lectures and documentary. And even if we were to take Grierson's definition at face value and accept that illustrated lectures, travelogues and educational films were 'lower categories', there is still a strong argument to be made that these have contributed to the development and evolution of documentary.

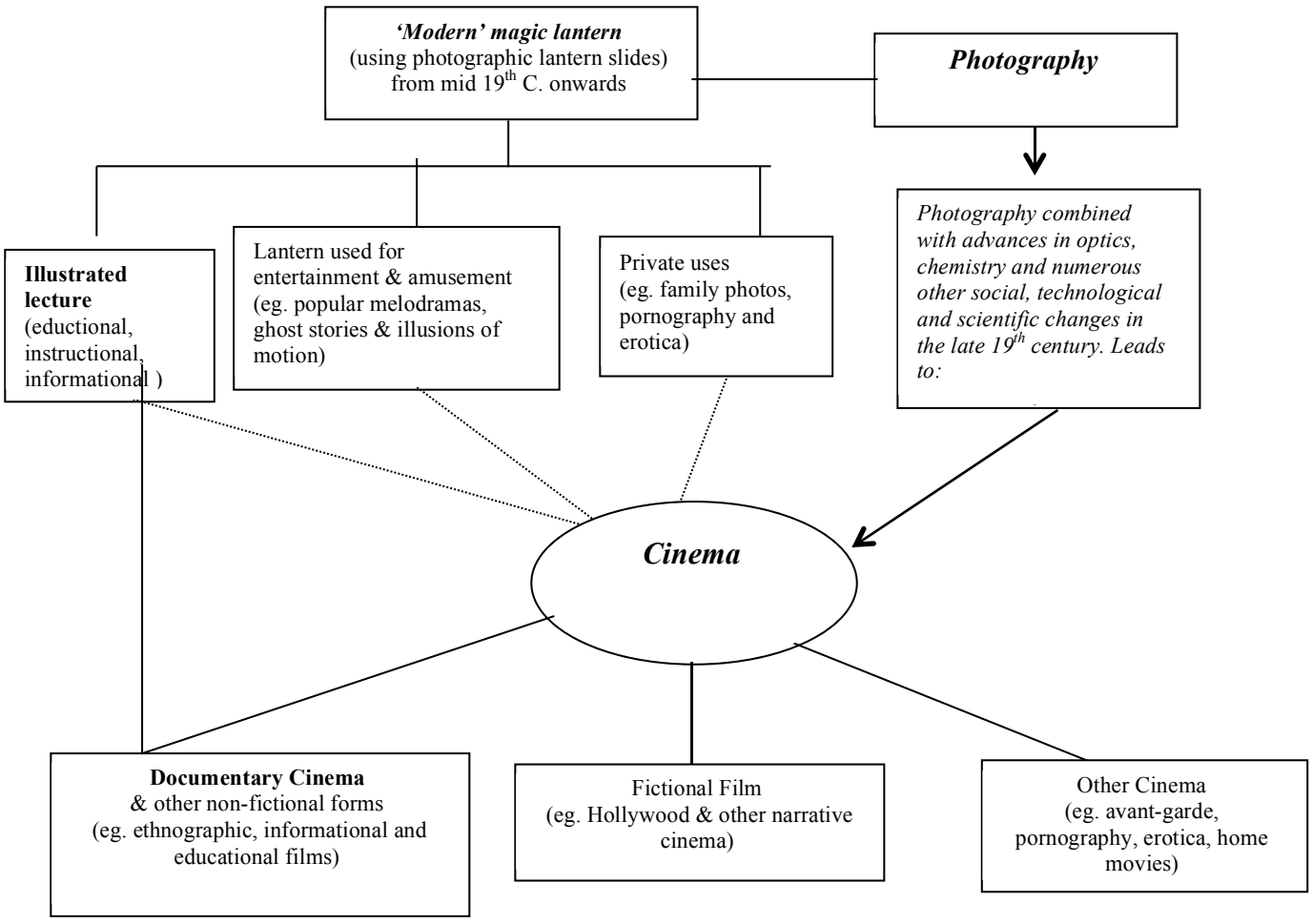
Today, Grierson's heirarchy reads as being overly determined and somewhat snobby. (He was a Scot, but his typology has echoes of the English class system with a hint of social Darwinism). Over and above this, Grierson's rigid definition does not allow for the hybrid nature of documentary. Frequently these 'lower categories' form a significant part of 'documentary proper'. And there are countless works entrenched in the canon of 'documentary art' that are some form of hybrid between 'documentary proper' and 'lower categories'. The highly influential early documentary, *Nanook of the North* (USA, 1922), is in part an ethnographic film, a 'scientific film' (a nature documentary), travelogue/adventure film and an illustrated lecture. More recently, Ross McEllwee's *Sherman's March* (USA, 1986) is a hybrid of an illustrated lecture about Sherman, a travelogue through the South, and an ethnographic portrait of young Southern women (as well as comic and essayistic meditation on romantic love in the age of nuclear war).

And although it is not "entrenched in the canon of documentary art", *Siberia,* is also a good example of a 'documentary proper' mixed with 'lower categories'. The film

is part illustrated lecture, travel/adventure film, ethnographic portrait, memoir-essay, environmental/social issue film and 'making-of' documentary.

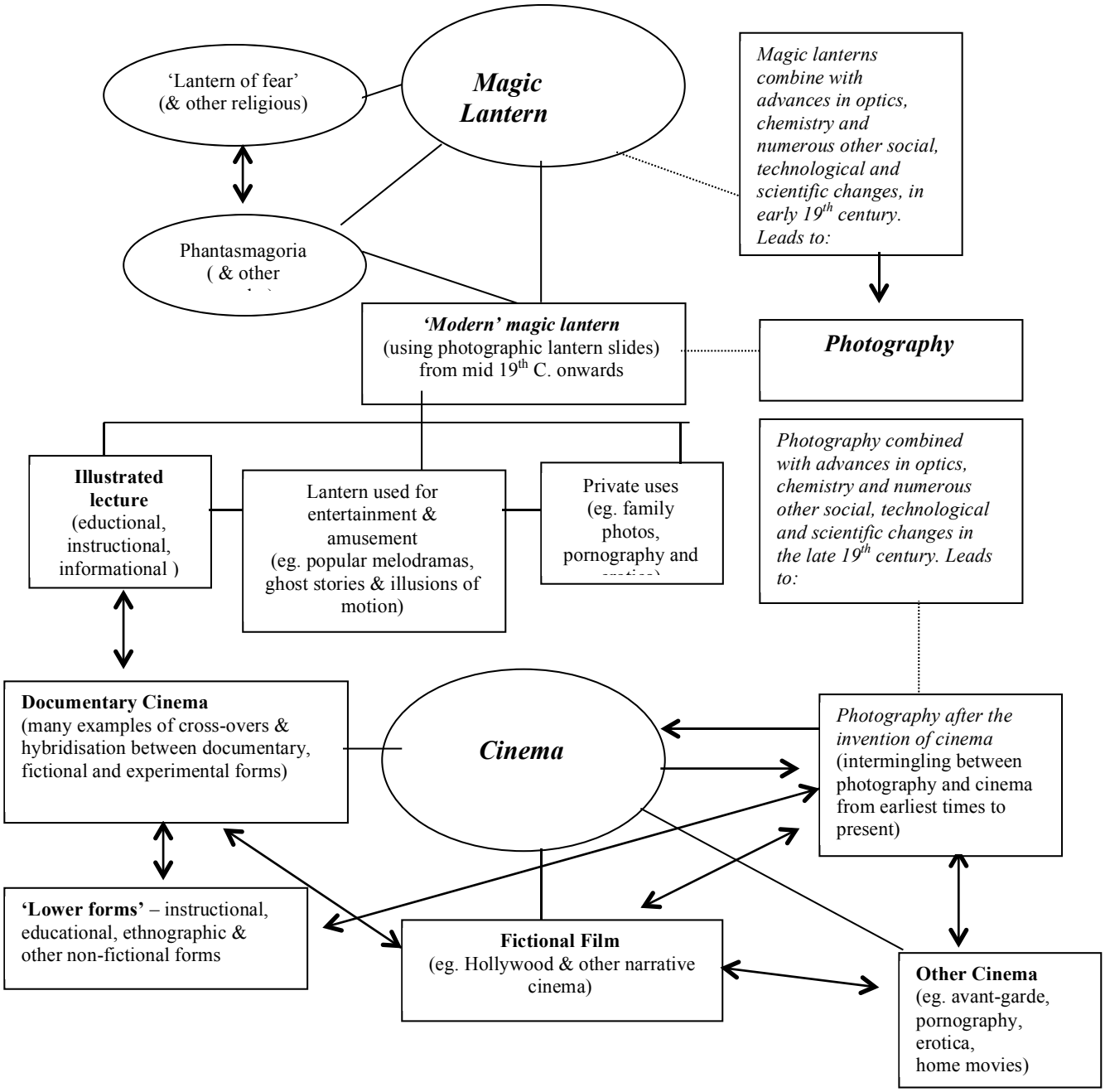
With this hybridity in mind, I'd like to return to my earlier diagram that summarises the magic lantern's connection and direct role in the evolution of documentary (reproduced below):

Fig. 41 Links between the Magic Lantern, Illustrated Lecture & Documentary Cinema



This schematic representation appears relatively neat and clearly divided but it oversimplifies matters by leaving out all manner of cross-overs and hybridisation between fiction and non-fiction, 'lower forms' and 'documentary proper', and moving and still forms. History is more complex and complicated. Here is the above diagram with some additions that try to reference some of this complexity:

Fig. 42: Connections between the Magic Lantern, Illustrated Lecture and Documentary Cinema with Reference to Cross-overs, Hybridity, and Intermingling of Forms:



In trying to acknowledge complexity, the above diagram becomes overly complicated and confusing (And animation and recent digital forms are not in the picture and would complicate matters even further!). But the hybridisation and cross-overs I am trying to incorporate into my diagram are not only a part of modern media production, they are arguably one of its salient features. Furthermore, this intermingling is not confined to the digital era and there are examples that go back to cinema pre-history. Before concluding my discussion of the magic lantern I'd like to look at one example that highlights the hybrid nature of magic lanterns and early cinema.

The example is that of the magic lantern's use for religious instruction. On first impression, it is easy to imagine this sitting squarely on the educational/'non-fictional side of the equation'. (See Figures 41 & 42 above). The use of magic lanterns for religious purposes, especially by proselytising religions, such as The Salvation Army, suggests otherwise. Hartrick's discussion of the Australasian Salvation Army's Limelight Department brings out this point:

> "From 1880 to 1900 they developed the colonies' most sophisticated visual technology production and distribution network…whereas educational applications favoured factual and literal content, religious users frequently exploited and developed the more spectacular and affective qualities of the medium for their purposes".[40]

Through contemporary eyes, these Limelight department slides look more comic and 'high camp' than serious and religious. Their artifice and theatricality fits more neatly within a framework of fictional filmmaking – or perhaps even Queer screen – rather than documentary. (See Figure 43 below).

Figure 43: Lantern slides from the Limelight Department's *Soldiers of the Cross*. The recreation of biblical scenes looks highly theatrical and 'camp' through contemporary eyes. The backgrounds may have been painted directly onto the slides or sets and painted backdrops 'dressed' into frame.

Cinema historians, Chris Long and Luke McKernan, have written extensively on the Salvation Army's Limelight Department. Their description of early Limelight Department productions is rich in details of this little known aspect of early cinema history and is further evidence of its hybrid nature:

"Film projections were gradually introduced into … programmes throughout 1897, and … the Salvation Army went into film production seriously in 1898. A glass-walled studio was constructed in Melbourne for the taking of films and life-model slides".

"The first Army films were exhibited in February 1898… Known first as *The Commandant's Limelight Lecture*… it was most commonly known as *Social Salvation"*…Individual stories featured throughout, in slide and film form, showing how people who had fallen astray were rescued by the Salvation Army. Films of slum dwellings were employed to challenge the audience to rise to the problems faced…"

"Social Salvation led the way to a second production, *Soldiers of the Cross*. Sometimes mistakenly described as the world's first feature film, this was another 'multi-media' presentation of songs, slides, films and scripture on the theme of Christian martyrdom. The impetus was the Limelight Department's earlier successful presentation of the Lumière passion play films, *La Vie et la Passion de Jésus-Christ* (1897), filmed by Georges Hatot (a director who worked on Lumiere productions). Booth wrote out his lecture, with descriptions of the slides and films necessary, and a cast of 150 (recruited entirely from Army members) acted out the scenes…

The premiere took place on the 13th of September, 1900 at Melbourne Town Hall. The show lasted just over two hours, three-quarters of which was occupied by lantern slides, interspersed with fifteen ninety-second films".[41]

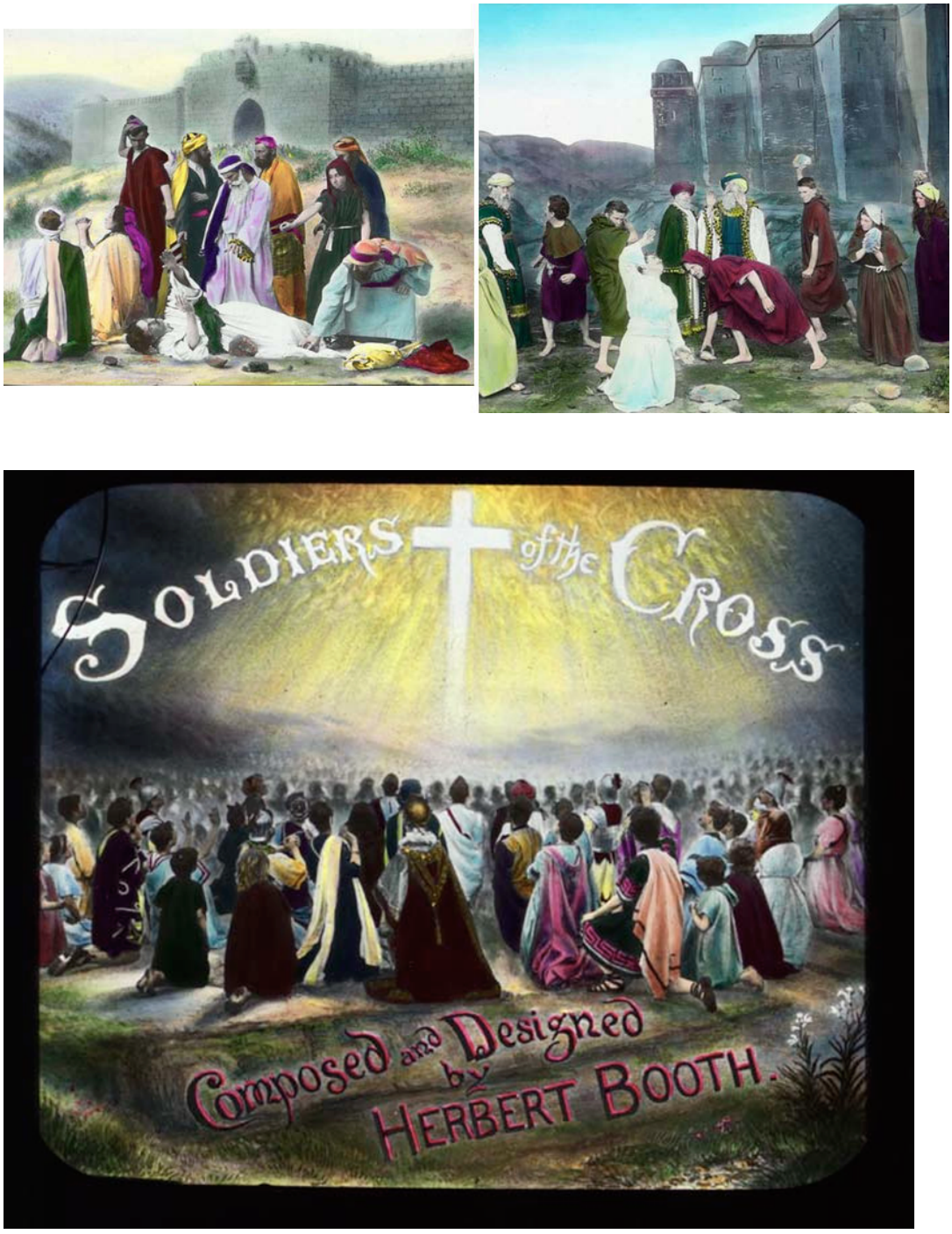


Figure 44: Slides from *Soldier's of the Cross*, Salvation Army , Limelight Department 1900. The title slide above is an interesting variation to the 'written and directed by' auteurist credits of today.

Long and McKernan's account refers to a blend of personal testament, dramatic recreation, actuality footage, lecture, public spectacle, and 'multi media' event. Their description of the Limelight Department's production makes it clear that its hybrid nature was more than just a technological hybridity involving a combination of still

and moving pictures (lantern slides and cinema). It also involved a mixing of disparate forms.

If I was to expand on my diagram above to incorporate this cross-over and hybridisation, it would be even more complicated. A systems engineer or evolutionary biologist could probably make a better fist of my diagram, but my point is that I don't want to gloss over this complexity with a neat, seductive and over-simplified picture. Indeed, it is the search and interrogation of the forms that don't fit neatly into these sorts of diagrams that helps propel this investigation. In Chapter 5, I begin to look again at some of this intermingling and cross-fertilisation but first I'd like to pick up on the thread I left loose at the end of the Ponting example above (the slide show in the Antarctic). In the next chapter I look at the 35mm slide show and its influence on documentary.

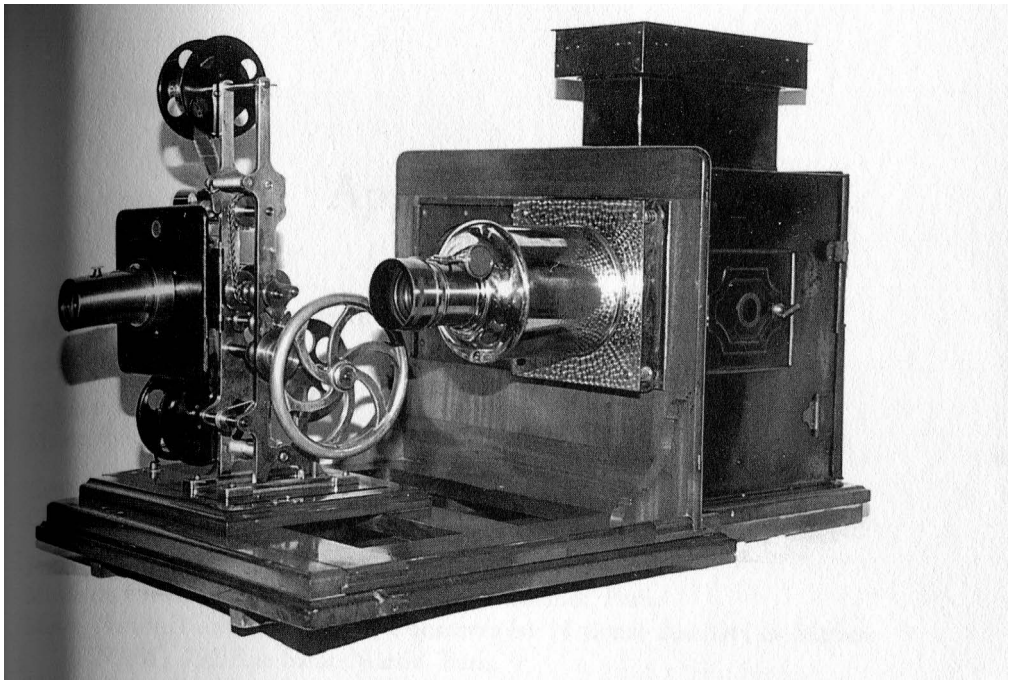


Figure 45: Hybrid Lantern and Cinema Projector c.1900

Figure 46: The cover of Salvation Army Magazine, *War Cry*, New Zealand, 1896. The image gives an indication of the scale, size and popularity of the Limelight Department's lantern slide spectacles. The lanternist is on the lower left and speaker far right.

CHAPTER 3 NEXT SLIDE PLEASE

> This device… isn't a spaceship, it's a time machine. It goes backwards, forwards. It takes us to a place where we ache to go again. It's not called the Wheel. It's called the Carousel. It lets us travel the way a child travels. Around and around and back home again, to a place where we know we are loved. (Don Draper, from the TV series *Mad Men,* pitching for a new Kodak account, while showing slides of his young family)[1]

In the previous chapter, I argued there was a direct connection between magic lantern illustrated lectures and documentary film. In this chapter, I argue this connection continued after the demise of magic lantern, with the advent of the modern 35mm slide projector. In both its design and many of its applications, the slide projector was a direct descendant of the magic lantern. What separated the slide projector from the 'modern' magic lantern of the early 1900s were advances in technology. Combustion illuminants, such as kerosene or whale oil, were superseded by electric light; fragile double-layered glass slides were replaced with 35mm film and automated slide carriers.[2] Before I discuss the link between the magic lantern, 35mm slide shows and documentary in more detail, I'd like to sketch a history of the 35mm slide form.

'God and Man Invented Colour': A Brief History of Kodachrome and 35mm Slides

Early colour photographic technology was crude and unstable. Slides were made using a monchromatic additive process on a potato dye. In 1935, after over twenty years of experimentation and research, two part-time musicians, Leopold Godowsky and Leopold Mannes, developed a subtractive colour process[3]. The results were vastly superior in terms of verisimilitude and stability of colour. The patented version of the new film stock and process developed by Godinsky and Mannes was called Kodachrome. (Hence the quip, 'God and man invented colour'). (See Appendix 8 for a lengthier account of the invention of Kodachrome).

Kodachrome, the world's first commercially available colour film, was released in

1935. It was initially released as 16mm movie film and then later in strips that were cut into single frames for stills. In 1937, Kodak introduced a 2” x 2” cardboard slide mount (the ‘ready-mount’) and began to sell slide projectors. During the depression and World War Two, sales of Kodachrome were slow but they sky-rocketed after the war, peaking in the 1960s.

Figure 47: Kodak Advertisement, 1959. The 2x2 inch ready-mount is shown top left.

Despite its slow beginnings, it is fair to say that Kodachrome revolutionised colour photography. Its vibrant saturated colours and remarkable archival stability made it a benchmark for colour photographers. Kodachrome became hugely popular in the United States and many other Western countries after the war and remained 'the gold standard' for colour photography for decades. Its popularity only started to decline with the introduction of the simpler E6 slide processes and better colour negative stocks from the late 1960s onwards. In the 1980s, Fuji made significant in-roads into Kodak's dominance and the popularisation of domestic video recorders added to its decline. Recently, the widespread popularity of digital cameras and camcorders have led to it being totally eclipsed in the domestic market. Sales were negligible when the product was eventually discontinued in the 2008.[4]

Slide Shows: A *Fata Morgana* of Suburban Memory?

Despite the prominent place of the slide show in post war culture, there is scarce mention of it in either histories of photography or studies of popular culture. Like magic lantern presentations of an earlier age, written accounts of the post-war slide show have fallen through the cracks. Literature and cinema abounds with references to cameras, photographs, and even photo-albums but mentions of slides and slide shows are rare. So much so, recently, I started to wonder if the mythical post-war lounge-room slide show ever really existed. Perhaps they were a dream, an illusion, some form of prosthetic memory? Was a 'Kodachrome serum' administered along with polio shots?

Although the evidence is thin on the ground there are still enough traces of slide shows to put rest to these fanciful ideas. In the movie, *Catch me if you can*, (USA, 2002), there is scene where FBI agent Carl Hanratty (Tom Hanks), shows his fellow agents a slide show of the fugitive in different guises. In an episode of *The Simpsons* a visiting anthropologist shows the family images of Africa on a screen rigged in their lounge-room[5]. And there is the example mentioned at the start of this chapter, from the first series of *Mad Men*. In this episode the brilliant creative director, Don Draper, is pitching for the new Kodak account. His pitch involves a wheel-like

device that holds multiple slides. Don conjures the nostalgic warmth of the fairground and childhood as he suggests to the Kodak people, they call the device a carousel, not a wheel.

The use of the carousel device in *Mad Men* works on several levels. It locates the show in the early 60s (the actual Kodak Carousel was released in 1961). Secondly, slides are shown as part of the culture of corporate presentations and in turn, the corporate slide show references the popular domestic slide show. Don shows the clients images of his young family in family recreational settings – on a picnic, in a park, out in the back-yard and on his wedding day.[6]

Closer to home, Edna Everage used to regale audiences with slides from England when she performed for Australian audiences, after returning to her home in Moonee Ponds. Part of the gag was the insertion of a risqué 'girlie' shot cropping up seemingly unexpectantly amongst her more conventional tourist slides showing Big Ben, Buckingham Palace and the Palace Guards. (She blamed her husband Norm for their surprise appearance in the collection). [7]

Figure 48: Images from *Mad Men* 'The Wheel'. Don Draper pitches for Kodak account .

Individual Memories

Aside from these popular culture references, most people born before the mid-seventies have some individual memories of slide shows. These are now often hazy and ill-defined. Here are some that I have collated from a website dedicated to the memory of Kodachrome[8]. This first memory I've quoted at length because it is unusually vivid and is a great snap shot of post-war America and slide culture. (The Stereo Realist referred to was a 3D camera).

> … I am a dedicated and long-time stereo photographer. The rugged Stereo Realist is my camera of choice. And, right now I am on my last brick of Kodachrome 64. I'll miss it when it's gone…
>
> The Kodachrome slide shows that I remember were photographed and projected in 3D by Emil and Stella Miller who were long-time church friends of my parents.
>
> Emil Miller was corporate/portrait/wedding photographer in the post-WWII years in Dayton, Ohio. Dayton at that time was a booming industrial center, home to NCR, Delco, Frigidaire, Mead Paper, Lau Industries and a host of other manufacturing businesses. The place was full of engineers, machine shops, factories, and aerospace firms…
>
> …Business was profitable. Emil and Stella enjoyed nice vacations; road trips in the summer, ski trips in the winter, as well as European or Asian travel. This they covered extensively in 3D.
>
> In the winter they occasionally hosted parties where they would project their slides; the kids sitting on the floor up front and the parents comfy on furniture in back and everybody wearing cardboard glasses. These shows were a lot of fun, not only for the subject matter but for the unusual 3D effect. … We would look at the pictures and feel like we could step right into the screen and stand in front of the Eiffel Tower, or walk through the gates of the newly opened Disneyland...(Jed S) [9]

Along with the lounge room 'family slide show', slide shows were also used in universities, schools, corporate presentation rooms, clubs and societies, and amongst

church and religious groups. Here are some other recollections of slide shows from the Kodachrome memorial website that allude to other uses of slides:

> … My History and Geography teacher … used his own slides of different historic buildings and scenery to illustrate lessons. And *every* slide included his car on it somewhere even if in the distance...rather like "Where's Wally", but with a green Hillman Minx (Richard E).[10]

> When I was a child our family slide shows used one of those "two-at-a-time" back and forth projectors where you would scoop out the last slide while the new one was on the screen and then slide the mechanism across to the other side, and repeat. I felt really mature when I could do the "slide step" all by myself. I also loved the smell of the old glass-bead screen.
>
> I still do slide shows, but with a carousel projector. Once or twice a year I gather fellow F1 racing enthusiasts together and show …
>
> Nothing beats the look of a projected slide. At my son's urging I tried projecting my digital shots but they paled in comparison. This year the last of my Kodachrome will be exposed at the Canadian and Hungarian G.P.s. I look forward to the clack and hum of the projector come September or October.(Uffen)[11]

Most of the posts on Kodachrome Forum are from respondents living in the United States. In order to get a broader cross-section, I collected some memories from friends and acquaintances living in Australia. I've reproduced three of these below. The first reflects something of childhood memories, suburbia and the awe and wonder of slides. The second and third reflect more about the tedium and boredom often associated with slide shows:

> My father was a pharmacist and a '60s technology sorcerer. I remember him so enamoured with his collections of box brownies, and reel to reel tape recorders…We of course also had the Kodak slide carousel and the yellow lidded plastic boxes.

My father loved to tell the story of how his chemist shop was robbed and somehow all the paper photos were stolen but the thieves had left behind the slides box and so luckily many of our family memories were preserved…

I remember family slide nights with Uncle Tony and Aunty Doreen. The kids all in pyjamas and dressing gowns fresh from a bath and with slightly damp hair. The warmth of the light box intermingled with the warmth of family and the promise of the greatest show on earth – lifesize images of us sleeping, us playing with hoolahoops, some boring adults at parties then us again on swings or pretending to drive the family car until finally we'd get back to the beginning. (It was always a surprise when that first slide would pop up again). (Annie B)[12]

Danny and I had a memorable slide night once many years ago. His alcoholic uncle who was actually a sweet and sensitive man set up his Kodak projector with a round magazine, many piles of boxes of unsorted, unedited slides and his Johnny Walker. He and his wife, both Italian, had made annual protracted overseas trips and he wanted to show us the results. We sat there for hours in the dark in their grand house watching a series of unfocussed, blurry, nebulous shapes. He introduced each one pretty well in the same way.

' *This is Aunty D. standing in front of – not sure what this is – I think it's a church, it might be upside down, it looks a bit blurred, it's maybe Italy but it could be Spain. Anyway I think it's a church.*'… By this time he was quite drunk and we were comatose, still trying to murmur appreciative comments every time our eyes fluttered open. Aunt D. went to bed. It went on till after midnight and it could have been the most boring night we've ever spent. (Rosie S.)[13]

When I was a young kid my parents would get intermittent visits from two of their closest old friends, a married couple who were both artists and photographers. They were quite adventurous travelers for the time (this would have been the 1950s-early 1960s) and had become very interested in Japanese

> arts. They would visit after returning from their trips and after dinner we were all settled in the living room with a screen and slide projector and many, many slides of Japan, explained in minute and enthusiastic detail.
>
> How I dreaded the boredom of these bloody slide shows. They were almost certainly of good quality and you'd think they should have been interesting, but they seemed to be interminable; far worse than the alternatives of playing, reading books or watching TV. (Dave S). [14]

I have reproduced several more of these memories of slide shows as an Appendix **(see Appendix X).** They are rich, evocative and often humorous but they speak more directly about childhood, memory and suburbia than they do about the slide show *and* documentary.[15] So now, rather than pursue these sociological and historical surveys, I am going to take a different approach; one that brings me back closer to my original focus looking at the slide show *and* documentary.

Slide shows *and* Documentary?

First, I will deal with the more obvious. In an educational context, slides were used to convey visual information and were part of an idea that learning could be 'modernised' (and enhanced) with audio-visual aids. As early as 1895, WT. Stead wrote:

> "Photography and the magic lantern are going to democratise sects, educate the masses and contribute to the evangelisation of the world … The time is coming when a school without a lantern will be as absurd an anachronism as a school without a slate or an inkpot". [16]

In the twentieth century, the idea of using slides and audio-visual aids in education took hold and these became prevalent in schools, universities and government agencies. In this sense, the instructional 35mm slide show used in educational, corporate and training contexts, followed on directly from the magic lantern slides used in illustrated lectures.

Figure 49: 'Illustrated Lectures are an Important Part of Instruction'. Students receiving instruction in the discipline of aerial photography interpretation, USA School for Aerial Photography, Rochester, NY. c 1918.

Many state agencies had an Audio-Visual Unit (AV Unit) that produced slide shows along with posters and pamphlets. For example, health departments used slide shows in health promotion as part of the process of conveying information and educating the public. Some AV Units were resourced to the point they were able to move beyond the slide show and printed pamphlet. They also produced moving pictures, known variously as informational films, instructional films, or educational films. (In business and commerce, they were also known as industrial films or 'industrials'). Public and private sector AV Units were not mutually exclusive and both their workforce, clientele and subject matter crossed-over. For example, a government agency may have commissioned an AV production about the importance of mining in the modern economy; and a private mining company's AV Unit may have produced an occupational health and safety film.

The Prelinger Archive is a specific example. This is a large North American

collection of 'ephemeral' films (advertising, educational, industrial, and amateur). Included are films produced by and for prominent US corporations, non-profit organisations, trade associations, community groups, and educational institutions. The Archive features titles such as *About Bananas* (1935); *Telephone and Telegraph* (1946); *Health: Your Cleanliness* (1953); *How to Keep a Job* (1952); *Narcotics: Pit of Despair* (1960); and *Century 21 Calling (1964)*.[17]

Regardless of topic, a characteristic of these training and instructional films is the frequent use of techniques associated with documentary films: the use of archival and actuality footage; off-screen narration; maps, charts, graphs; and simple stylised recreations or dramatisations. The Prelinger Archive has literally thousands of examples of films made using these techniques.

Another recurring characteristic of these 'industrials', is the frequent use of still images, similar to those found in magic lantern and 35mm slide shows. And although the use of still images tended to decrease by the late 1950s and early 1960s, it was still a common feature of productions made as late as the 1980s. I'll briefly mention just one of these as a case in point. The film is sponsored by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and is about the approval process for new drugs, especially in the wake of the 'aids epidemic'. The look and feel of the program is 1950s but it was made in the 1980s. It has the uninspiring title: "*FDA Approved*" and features wall-to-wall narration, diagrams with arrows, statistics and bar charts. It is all still images (slides) and there is no movement apart from dissolves and wipes between the different slides (in this way its look is similar to many contemporary *PowerPoint* presentations).

Figure 50: Three frames from "FDA Approved -The Slide Show". Produced by FDA, 1985.

Greirson had a Point…

Some consider corporate or educational films a subgenre of documentary. More frequently, though, they are considered a non-fictional relative. Their 'hammy' acting, heavily scripted scenarios and obvious instructional orientation excludes them from being considered as 'real' documentary. Grierson's distinction between 'lower categories' and 'documentary proper' may read today as being somewhat snobby but it is difficult not to admit there is some validity to his distinction when confronted with the sheer banality, dullness, didactic nature, and crudeness of the propaganda in many of the titles housed in the Prelinger Archive, and similar collections around the world.[18] Nevertheless, whether sub-genre or poor cousin, real or pseudo documentary, there is a pattern of overlap and cross-fertilisation between slide shows and 'lower categories', and 'lower categories' and 'documentary proper' (as I argued in the previous chapter, following my discussion of Ponting and magic lanterns).

I could comb through the Prelinger archive, and similar, and tease this point out but I fear this is all a bit too matter of fact and obvious. There may have been similarity and cross-over between the still and moving, the informational slide show and the documentary, but it is stretching matters to argue this equates with the slide show haunting documentary.

I would say my line of argument, about the slide show haunting documentary, had run its course, if not for the changes in the uses of slides that started to take place from around the early 1970s onwards. The change I am referring to is when the younger generation started to use slides and slide projection as part of the burgeoning performance and installation art scenes of this decade. I look at this shift and its implications for documentary in Chapter 5. In the next chapter I return to a more autobiographical voice and look at my relationship with slides and the influential role they have played in my life.

(Next slide please.)

CHAPTER 4 BORN IN 1961: ME AND THE CAROUSEL

I was born in 1961; the same year the Kodak carousel was released on the market. It would be stretching matters to say the carousel and I were joined at the hip but we have sort of grown up together. My family was a 'slide family'. They didn't keep shoe-boxes full of snaps, or make photo albums, or shoot home movies. They 'did' slides. Family photos were kept in metal slide tray containers and yellow-lidded plastic boxes, high in a cupboard, near the front door. Being a 'slide family' suggests we were also a 'slide show family'. This tallies with my perception of my family but most of the family slides were taken before I was born and now, when I try to recall actual slide shows, only a few come to mind.

I remember my parents holding a party in a disused milking shed at a small place called Woodstock, about 30 miles north of Melbourne. I was about ten. It was the early seventies, and there were kegs of beer, kaftans and loads of people. At some point in the middle of this swirl a screen was rigged – I think it was a sheet – and my father put on a slide show.

Figure 51: John Taylor at Woodstock party venue, the morning after. c.1972. (Arrow in background drawn in to point to, what looks like, carousel of slides and yellow carousel slide box. The background wall was probably used to project slides not a rigged sheet as suggested in text).

I also remember my father giving repeated versions of a slide show based on a trekking holiday that my father, sister and I took together in Nepal in the late seventies. After my father returned home from Nepal, I continued to travel for a few months in India and South East Asia, as part of a 'gap year' between school and university. When I came home, I also put on a slide show of my own of the Nepal / India trip and have continued to do so at various stages of my adult life.

Figure 52: Nepal, 1978. Photo: Andrew Taylor

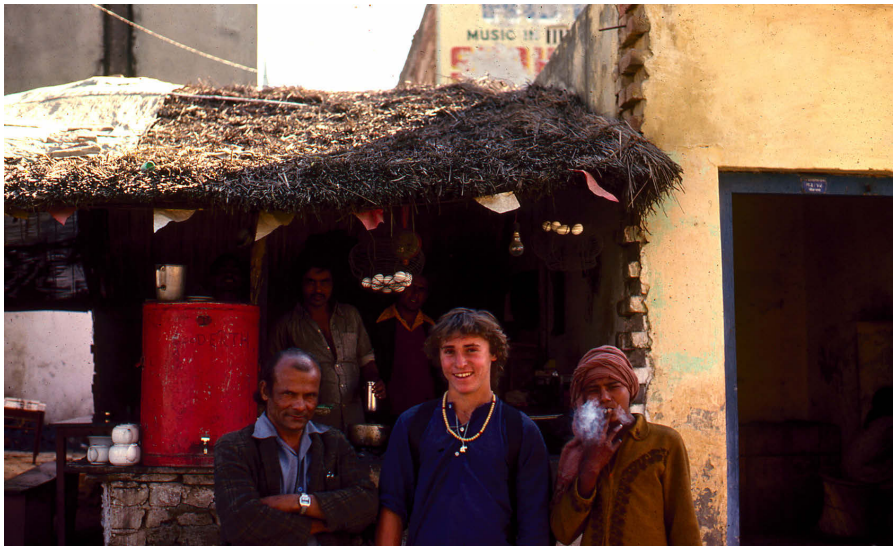


Figure 53: Author, outside chai shop in India during 'gap' year. Agra, 1979. Photo: Anne Taylor

Looking back on the slide shows I have given, most of them have followed from travels overseas or to exotic locations in Australia. I have collections of slides labeled ‘China’, ‘Japan’, ‘Russia’, ‘Outback SA’, ‘Coney Island’, ‘Las Vegas’. One time in the late 1980s, when I was living in Japan, a friend asked me why I still photographed using slide film. I was a little taken aback because I had no real idea. It was a practice I’d inherited: ‘when you travel overseas, you film with slides, then you can have a slide show when you return’. Apart from this reductive logic, I didn’t really know why, other than having some vague idea that slides were better quality – truer, richer, more saturated colour.[1]

My slides fit firmly in a dominant tradition of photography depicting exotic and faraway places. In this regard, there is a direct connection and correlation between my use of slides and photography from the Victorian era on. Clearly, I am part of the socially prescribed and codified behaviour that influences what we take and when. It would be phoney or false to pretend otherwise[2]. But there are some important points of difference too.

Since the mid 1980s, I have worked either professionally or semi-professionally as a filmmaker and this has impacted upon the way I have thought about and approached my photography. I have photographs that are just about light, texture and colour.

Figure 54A: Light, Texture and Colour. (Ceduna, SA) AT. 1986

Figure 54B: Light, Texture and Colour. (From the series *100 Textures Japanese*) AT. 2005

I have photographs that are sketches for imaginary road movies. I have photographs of quirky themes: Japanese vending machines, Russian hats, Indian dogs, Brazilian hands… [3]

Figure 55: Dogs, India. (From the series *Born Again Dog*) AT. 2008

I also have collections of photographs of people taking photographs.[4]

Figure 56A: People Photographing People. (From the series *On Photography in Japan)*. AT. 1988

Figure 56B: From the series *More On Photography in Japan*. AT. 2005

And I have photos that are early attempts of mine at ‘art photography’: experimental double exposures from an ‘alternative’ fashion show; and a series combining Tokyo street photos with TV images of a samurai fight film[5].

Figure 57A: Experimental Double Exposures: ‘Alternative’ fashion show, St.Kilda (& Port Melbourne) AT. 1985.

Figure 57B: Experimental Double Exposures: Samurai fight film (and the Ginza). AT., 1987.

Most of my photography has been self-financed but some has been part of paid work. I have a sequence of slides from 1984 that I used in a sponsored documentary about inner city childcare services[6].

Fig. 58: Slides used as part of sponsored documentary on child-care services in Brunswick. AT. 1984

I also have a collection of photographs documenting a film shoot I was involved with in Shanghai just after finishing film school. [7]

Figure 59A: Joan Chen on set of *Red Rose, White Rose,* a feature film directed by Stanley Kwan. Shanghai, 1994. Photos: AT.

Figure 59B *Red Rose, White Rose.* Art department touch-ups (left) and director Stanley Kwan (right). AT: Shanghai, 1994.

None of the above fit neatly into the conventional categories for popular photography. And the sheer volume of images I took says something about my professional photographic and cinematographic aspirations.

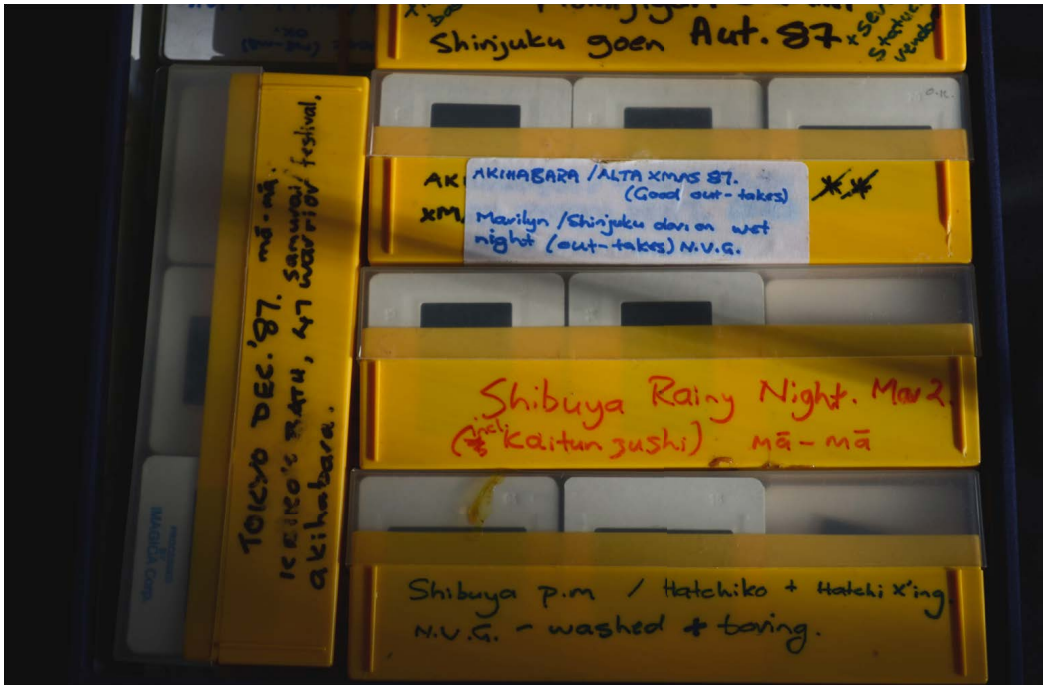


Figure 60: A portion of the slides taken in 1987-88 in Japan. (In total, I took approximately 20 rolls of slides; 30 rolls of print film; and 25 rolls of Super 8).

A theme I have often returned to in my semi-professional photographic pursuit is social photography/portraiture. I have several series of portraits: Coney Island (USA, 1988), Russian Hats (Siberia, 1992), Arbat Portraits (Moscow, 1992), Vladivostok Portraits (2003), Ueno Portraits (Tokyo, 2005)… In making and taking these pictures, I developed a working method involving a brief negotiation, usually in the language of the person photographed, stating I am a tourist from another country (Australia), and asking permission to take their photo. This approach takes a certain boldness but I have found the exchange to be more satisfying and the results more interesting than 'slice of life' approaches, or long-lens secretive naturalistic photos.[8]

Figure 61: Ueno Portraits. Tokyo, 2005

Imaginary Films & 'In-between-ness'

These portraits are 'in-between'. They are in-between tourist snaps and art photos. In-between professional and amateur. In-between 'straight' social documentary and stylised performative portraits. These photos have been influential in developing my eye, and my 'photographic voice' but perhaps there is something about their 'in-between-ness' that pertains more to my broader investigation of forms that fall between photography and filmmaking.

Until recently, I always considered photography as sketches for my filmmaking – not as an end in itself. When travelling I'd film sequences about place or shoot location studies for imaginary films. Some of these are rough sketches, some are more fully formed. These were usually filmed using slides. For example, I have sequences of slides of the 'old Vegas'[9]; Coney Island; a Black Sea holiday camp; and Yokosuka, a US army base town near Yokohama.

Figure 62: From the Series: 'Black Sea Resort', (The Black Sea , Ukraine, 1992). Photos: AT.

Figure 63: From the Series: 'Old Vegas' Las Vegas, 1988. Photo: Andrew Taylor

Figure 64: From the Series: ‘Forbidden Zone’, (The Black Sea , Ukraine, 1992). Photos: AT

Taking so many slides has changed my perception; the way I see and imagine the world. Slides have also influenced my development as a photographer and filmmaker; and have directly influenced my filmmaking, as evidenced by *Siberia* and other still/moving films I’ve made. But a tree does not a forest make. What about my more general thesis that the slide show has haunted documentary? This question is explored more in the next chapter where I look at slide projection and the rise of performance and installation art; and how, in turn, these movements overlapped with the rise of personal and biographical documentary.

As a book-end to this chapter and a bridge to the next, I’d like to end with a reflection on the Woodstock slide event. At this time, I was a school kid living in the suburbs, and have almost no memory of the performance and installation art scenes or slides being used in this way. Thinking back on it though, I guess part of the reason the Woodstock event has remained vivid in my memory is the performative aspect. There were at least one hundred people at the party and at some point the party must have been stopped for my father to do his slide thing. The space was darkened, a sheet rigged, and a ‘mixed bag’ carousel of slides were played. The theme: ‘images of my family and friends over the past twenty years’. On the one hand, the event was naff and looked back to the socially conservative ‘suburban’ slide show; and on the other hand, it was aligned with a ‘70s ‘happening’, or at least, a party performance event. (And my father had the wit to keep it relatively short and contained).

It’s time to look at the how the now-humble slide carousel became a cornerstone of the conceptual and installation art scenes.

CHAPTER 5 THE SLIDE SHOW AND PERFORMANCE & INSTALLATION ART

In this chapter I draw upon the work of North American curator Darsie Alexander, in discussing the use of slides in the conceptual, performance and installation art movements that blossomed in the late 1960s and '70s.

These '60s and '70s art movements were largely separate from the world of documentary filmmaking. However, by the end of the '70s and increasingly from the the '80s onwards, these once-separate worlds have come together. The biographical dimension in the slide-art-performances of Jack Smith and Nan Goldin exemplifies this tendency.

Darsie Alexander and *Slide Show*

In 2005, Darsie Alexander curated a show for the Baltimore Museum of Art, featuring artists who had worked with slides, as part of the conceptual, performance and installation art movements that blossomed in the '60s and '70s. In an introductory essay in *Slide Show,* a book released in conjunction with the exhibition[1], Alexander argues that artists from this era reacted against the cold formalism and intellectual abstraction of avant-garde artists, especially the mid century Abstract Expressionists. According to Alexander:

> It wasn't that the art of the past was seen as inferior or insignificant; rather its values seemed increasingly irrelevant to the new social and artistic climate of the 1960s. As widely accepted norms of style and behaviours came under attack from all sectors of private and political life, the terms of art also shifted. What could (and could not) be called art no longer seemed so clear. Many were interested in the slide medium because it was free of artistic pretence and pedigree: it was cheap, user friendly, and easy to produce.[2]

Initially the strongest proponents of slide projection came from Conceptual artists exploring the concept of time. Alexander again:

> Slide projection was a perfect medium to express these interests. … it provided a way to capture time by operating as a vehicle for photographs made at split-

> second intervals; moreover, as a system for automating and moving still images, it registered time...
>
> Given this relationship to time, it is no surprise then that slide projection was often considered a bridge between photography and film. The round slide carousel (favoured by artists) contains successive slots for images, which are projected *in time* and in sequence like a film. But by the same token, the different frames capture a past moment that was taken *out of time*, like a photograph" ...[3]

Projected slides were used as early as 1952 by John Cage in the ground-breaking, *Theatre Piece No.1*. For Cage, who organized the multifaceted event, slides functioned within a structure of "time brackets" – actions happening at coordinated intervals and locations. Other media were used in conjunction with slides in this event but the use of slides heralded their compatibility with spatial and durational art.[4]

The tension between past and present, and between photography and film, gave slides a duality that was difficult to approximate in other media. Conceptual art demonstrated that an old technology like slide projection, when retrofitted by artists, became a new means of experiencing the elasticity of time through still pictures appearing and disappearing on the walls.[5]

> Projected slides presented artists, especially those engaged in more than one medium or approach, with much sought after versatility at a time of tremendous artistic experimentation and heterogeneity. The modest slide machine was a wide platform for investigating the look and the boundaries of contemporary art.[6]

In this light, Alexander discusses several artist's slide shows. The first is *Hotel Palenque* by Robert Smithson, an artist best known for his large-scale environmental sculptures or 'earthworks'. According to Alexander, Smithson's slide shows were difficult to classify as they were an unusual amalgam of travelogue, artist talk and performance.[7] In another essay in *Slide Show*, the critic Charles Harrison describes *Hotel Palenque* " as striking a virtuoso balance between … the pedantic tone of

archaeological lecture and the bumbling narrative of ‘what I did on my Summer vacation’.[8]

Figure 65: From the Installation: ‘Hotel Palenque, 1969-72 Photos: Robert Smithson

From the 1960s onwards, artists increasingly explored art forms outside of the context of a white-walled gallery. Christo and other artists made large-scale works that were about some form of interaction with the natural and built environment. Many of these artists came to use slides as documentation of these projects. This functional use of slides for documenting art was nothing new – many artists came to know works of art through slides shown in the classroom or lecture hall. What was new, from around this time, was the intertwining of the documentation and the art.

Performance Art & Public Projections

Performance art extended the idea of blending creative practices into everyday life, with the artists body or behaviour taking on ever more prominent position as instigator, actor, catalyst and subject of the art. Alexander cites the example of Ana Mendieta's 1974 work, *Body Tracks*. In this work, a collaborator photographed Mendieta in a process where she dragged her arms, covered in animal blood, down a whitewashed sheet. In doing so, she knowingly produced visual documentation that would enable future audiences to see her work. And according to Alexander "she exploited a medium that would affirm the overriding principle of her art – its investment in the idea of time's passage" [9]

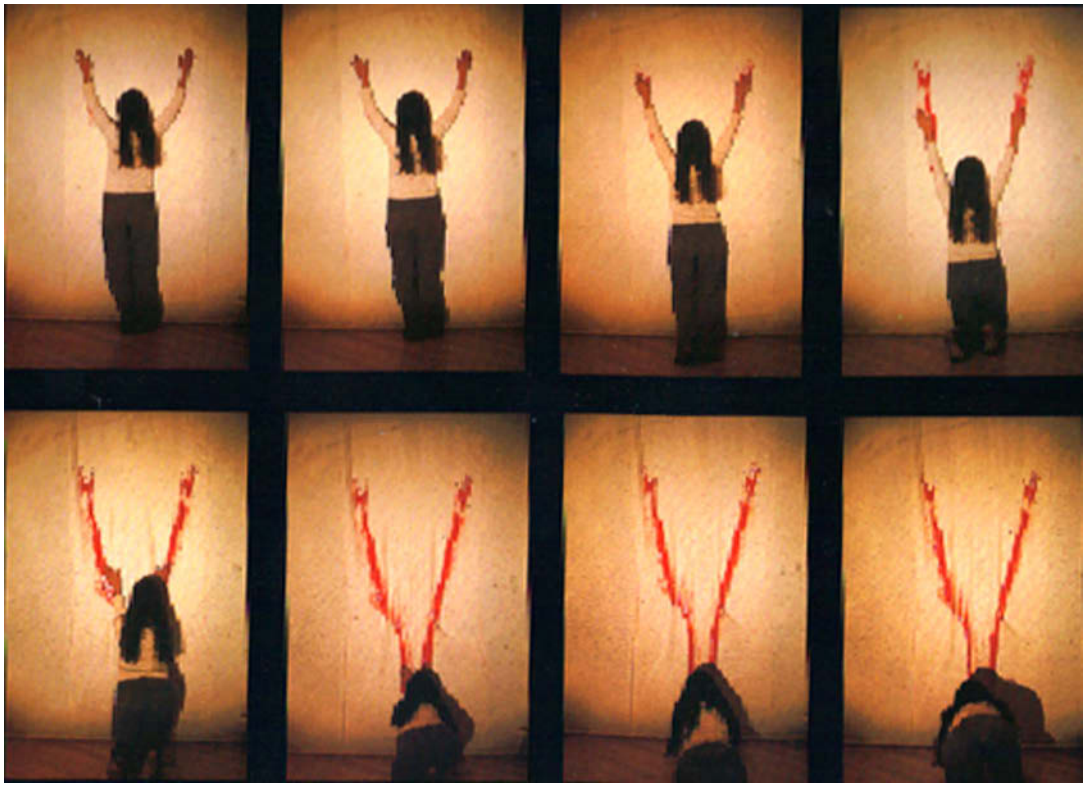


Figure 66: Eight images from Ana Mendieta's 1974 slide performance work, *Body Tracks*.

Increasingly artists performed with and for slides insomuch as they used the medium as both backdrop and document. Most worked with slides made with a 35mm camera; others painted on their slides or inserted substances like bodily fluids into the slide mounts for projection. Performance artists like Yvonne Rainer and Marina Abramovic deployed slides to elaborate upon what they performed with their bodies,

often incorporating images drawn from history books, film and mass media.[10]

In 1970 Lucy Lippard lead a protest against the exclusion of women in the Whitney Art Museum's Annual. The protestors powered a slide projector with a portable generator to project large scale images on the outside wall of the Whitney, protesting against the lack of women represented on the walls within. Other artists developed and extended this idea of using slides as a vehicle for social and political commentary. In the 1980s and '90s the monumental projections of Krystof Wodiczko received critical acclaim. His work disrupted the cityscape by introducing ominous images on buildings in the dark of night.

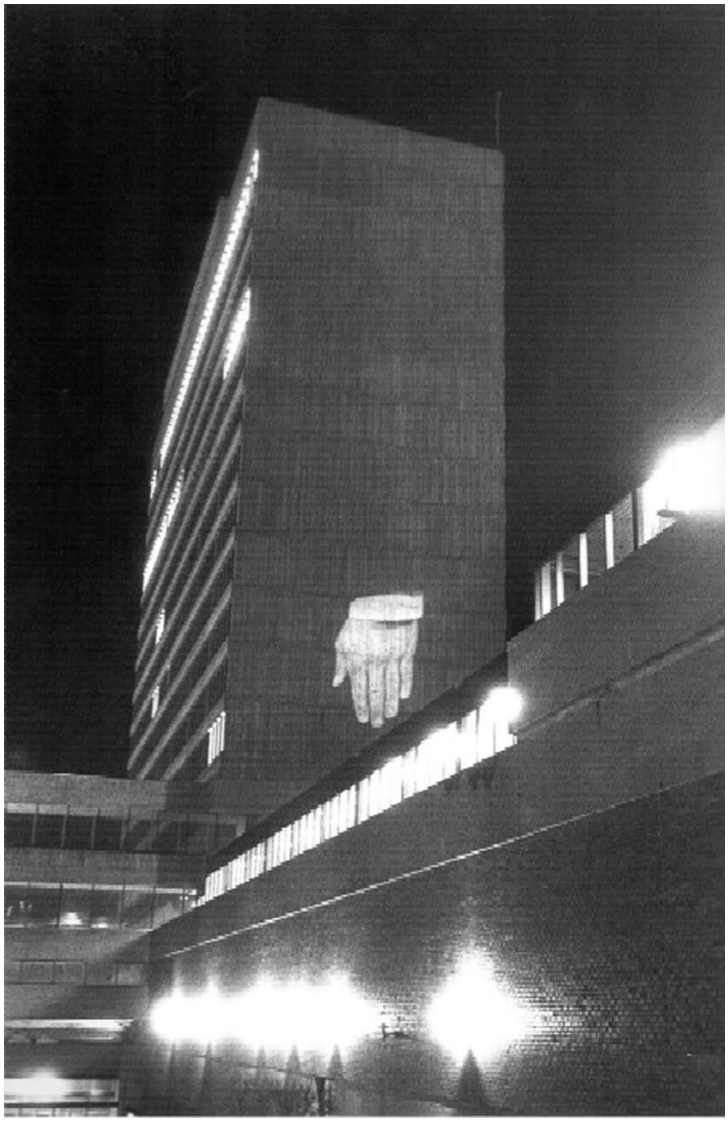


Figure 67: Krzysztof Wodiczko, Scotia Tower, Halifax, 1981.

Figure 68A: *Untitled Film Still #21*, Cindy Sherman, 1977

Figure 68B: *Patti Smith, Still/Moving*, Robert Mapplethorpe, 1978

Jack Smith, Nan Goldin and *The Times Square Show*

In the late '70s New York's Lower East-side became a hive of activity for poets, musicians, filmmakers, performance artists and cross-pollinating combinations thereof. Many of the artists from this so-called 'No Wave' milieu, made performances and films that drew upon mass media and popular culture, 're-discovering' and 're-inventing' narrative along the way. Kitsch, drag and pastiche were a frequent part of the aesthetic and work was performed outside of commercial galleries or mainstream venues. Alternative clubs, bars, warehouses and loft spaces were the venues *de jour* and performance events frequently 'mixed up' music, performance, home movies and slides shows.

The New York based artist, Jack Smith personifies this trend. Smith was a legendary part of the New York avant-garde who gained notoriety for his 1962 film, *Flaming Creatures* (still officially banned in the US to this day). In the late '70s and early '80s Smith became famous for his transgressive performances and "boiled lobster colour slide shows". These slide shows or "jams" were held in his loft or at the Lower East Side's Millennium Film Workshop. Smith's shows mixed a camp, kitsch and orientalist aesthetic with an angry protest against the avaricious 'landlordism' eating up the Lower East Side. Smith played a variety of on-camera personae including an aging drag queen, a clean-cut dandy, and a prince of darkness. He re-mixed and edited music and slides before, during and after performances, so no two shows were ever the same[11]. Andy Warhol and John Waters were inspired by Smith's work as were a later generation of artists including Laurie Anderson, Lou Reed, David Byrne and the photographers Cindy Sherman and Nan Goldin[12]. (Both Smith and Goldin were featured in Alexander's exhibition).

Figure 69: Jack Smith , Still from *Boiled Lobster Colour Slide Show* , 1970-88

In 1980 Jack Smith moved 'uptown' to an abandoned massage parlour that was the venue for *The Times Square Show* (1980). Another artist participating in this show was Nan Goldin. Since moving from Boston in 1978, Goldin had given impromptu slide shows featuring her and her friends in bars and clubs on the Lower East side. Goldin's photographs of the New York demi-monde are probably the best known work surviving from this time. These images were reworked into a slide show

performance piece that became a cult hit, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency.*

The Ballad… had a strong autobiographical dimension. It featured close and intimate portraits of Goldin and her friends – in bedrooms, backrooms and bars; getting married, breaking up; drinking whisky, injecting drugs; crying, alone, vulnerable. According to Alexander: "As a performance, the piece was a document of private life amongst friends, infused with a brutal honesty difficult to attain with biological kin. Its participants gained on screen celebrity as they suffered publicly".[13]

The Ballad… was initially a performance piece, featuring impromptu, live, hand feeding of slides but it became increasingly like a movie as over time the images became carefully selected and sequenced, a sound track chosen and subject matter honed. In 2004, a version of the slide show was acquired by the Museum of Modern Art. It contains 690 slides and is 43 minutes long. Its 'rock opera' soundtrack included Velvet Underground, James Brown, Petula Clark, Kurt Weill and Screamin' Jay Hawkins.

The piece started as a portrait of Goldin and her friends but as the decade wore on it also became a portrait documenting the confluence of youth, drugs, addiction and AIDs. Martin Hefferman, a former dealer and producer of the slide show, recalls that *The Ballad…* "was all about breaking with photographic and cultural restraint. It had the drama of an opera unfolding synonymously with AIDS."[14] In 1986, Aperture published the work as a book and it is still in print. In an afterword written ten years after the book version of *The Ballad…* was first published, Goldin wrote,

> AIDS changed everything. The people I feel knew me the best, who understood me, the people who carried my history, the people I grew up with and I was planning to get old with are gone… I don't believe photography stops time…I still believe pictures can preserve life rather than kill life. The pictures in the Ballad haven't changed. But Cookie is dead, Kenny is dead, Mark is dead, Max is dead, Vittorio is dead. So for me, the book is now a volume of loss, while still a ballad of love…[15]

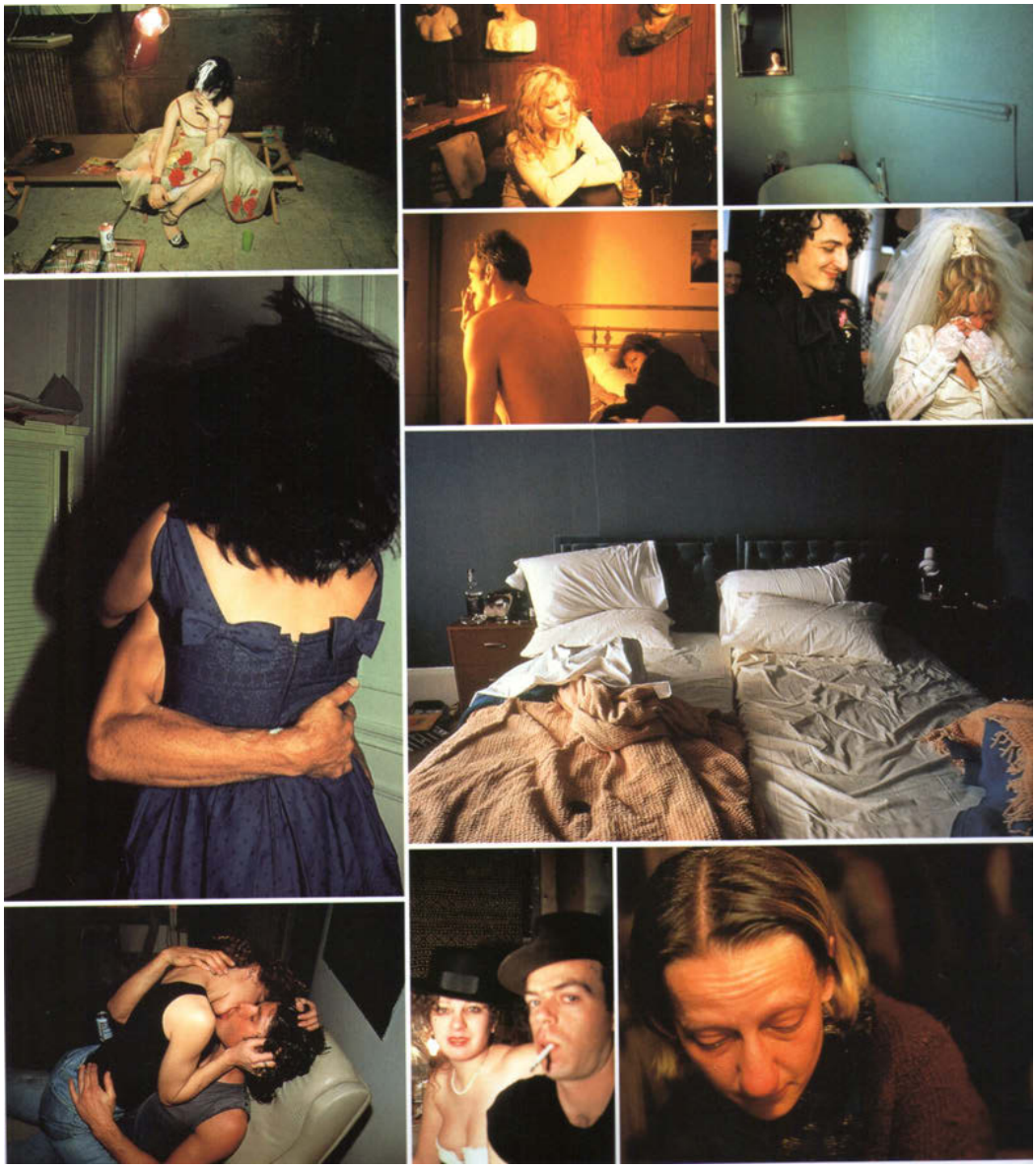


Figure 69: Images from Nan Goldin, *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, 1979-96.

CHAPTER 6 STARTING TO MOVE: THE '80S (& ME)

In previous chapters I have focused on slides and slide shows - the 'still' part of the still/moving. In this chapter the gears start to shift and there is increasing mention of the 'moving' part of the still/moving dynamic. This shift is reflected in my account of the key influences that led me to still/moving work and filmmaking.

I moved away from home in the very early '80s. Along with this being a time of personal change, it was also one of great political, cultural and technological change: Thatcher and Reagan; Madonna and Boy George; Sony Walkmans and VCRs...

Until recently, there is no way I could have articulated a vision of the Melbourne/Australian art scene as clearly or coherently as the one articulated in Alexander's *Slide Show*. But looking back, I can see that even in my own nook – inner city Melbourne – film, photography and 'slide culture' was shifting.

The earliest memory I have of slides being used as part of the performance and installation art scenes dates from the early 1980s. It is a memory of Melbourne writer, poet and occasional performance artist, Ted Hopkins[1] performing a piece about the place where he grew up, in the Latrobe Valley, near the Yallourn power station. The performance was in a building under construction (from memory, it was called the World Trade Centre!). We snuck into this deserted building site at night and no one at the event really knew who, or what, the building was intended for. We all thought it was a big white elephant.

Hopkins' performance was about the company town where he grew up. When he lived there, a new coal seam was discovered nearby, and the town was totally relocated. All that remained were some letter boxes, drive-ways and a few other ghostly traces of the original. Hopkins performed in a kitsch jumpsuit covered in the power company's briquette logos and showed slides of the spooky remains of a place.

I also remember slides being used as part of ' 80s 'alternative' culture. For example, there was a group of young Melbourne designers who called themselves the Fashion Design Council[2]. They put on fashion shows that were considered 'edgy' at the time.

Projected slides were part of the 'edginess' of their parades. Bands with an 'art-rock' orientation also used slides in their performance. I remember the Melbourne band, Camera Obscura, performing while covered in coloured light from abstract slide projections. A friend from the time saw The Triffids perform in England. He talked about how they used visual backdrops made from Super 8 cut into strips, then re-mounted and projected as slides.

Stephen Cummins

Stephen Cummins was a Sydney-based filmmaker who died in the mid '90s from an HIV-related illness. Shortly after his death, the Performance Space, a Sydney contemporary art venue, held a retrospective of his film and photographic work. The show included images of slides projected on a body and then re-photographed to be exhibited as composite photographs.[3]

Figure 70A: Image from Stephen Cummins' *Les Corps Image*.

Figure 70B: Image from Stephen Cummins' *Les Corps Image*.

Cummins' *Les Corps Image* photos struck a chord with me not just because I had been friendly with Stephen before he died but also because I had experimented with a similar technique when I first became interested in filmmaking and photography.

This was back in the early '80s. At the time, I had a tiny room in a shared house in East Richmond. It wasn't much bigger than a futon on the floor but it doubled as my studio/workroom/laboratory. I set up a projector in this little room and projected some images on my chest and re-photographed them. It was a case of youthful play, experimentation and early attempts to make art. I had no real idea what I was doing or why I was doing it, apart from having a fledgling interest in art, photography, filmmaking, and the nexus between all three.

The slides I projected were from my own and my parents' collections. One was from a recent trip I had taken to Papua New Guinea. It was a photograph I had taken of a Highland festival or *sing-sing*[4] at the Mt Hagen show. The others were separate images of my mother and father, who had photographed each other in pink dawn light at the Grand Canyon on their overseas trip in 1966.[5]

Figure 71: John Taylor at Grand Canyon 1966. Photo: EJ. Gilly Taylor

I am a hoarder of images but unfortunately I cannot find the beautiful matching photo of my mother in the pink dawn light, nor my Hagen *sing-sing* slide. Maybe my memory is playing tricks but I was hoping I could at least, find these images as a layer in my Richmond composites. However, these have disappeared too. I did manage to find one image though. It shows one result of my Richmond bedroom experiment:

Figure 72: Andrew Taylor with slide image projected on chest. The projected image is my father taken at Woodstock. See figures 73 & 74 below. Photo: Andrew Taylor, 1982.

My images are far cruder and less resolved artistically than Stephen Cummins' images. But it is curious how these slides projected on my body directly relate to themes I've researched for this doctoral project: self-portraiture, snap-shots and family photography. Here I am, thirty years later, investigating a convergence of art-film-photography; and writing about the intersection between Kodachrome slides, colour, (auto)biography, family photos and memory.

Figure 73A: Sally and Peter Taylor (my oldest brother and sister), aged about four & seven years old, c.1959. The description hand-written on the Kodachrome slide mount says "Aboriginals" (sic).

Figure 73B: John Taylor at Woodstock, c.1972, referencing Peter and Sally's slide pose, above.

I become a (Super 8) filmmaker

In the early 1980s, I was an Arts student at Monash University. I studied History and Politics and also did a few units of Cinema Studies. I wasn't a film buff and hadn't grown up watching a lot of movies, so many of the films screened had a strong impression on me. One of the films screened was Chris Marker's *La Jetée*. The idea one could make a film from stills was completely novel to me then and the style of narration and story-telling also alien and unfamiliar.

I struggled with the film's time-space-memory themes but I was intrigued with the different voice of the film. It wasn't as earnest or crudely partisan as many overtly Leftist political documentaries; and it wasn't as esoteric, cold and minimal as 'art films' we were shown like *Last Year at Marienbad*, *India Song* and *L'avventura*.

During my time at Monash, I became involved with a campus filmmaking group. (In those days we called it a Collective). Some of us had also learned about Godard in film studies courses. We not only 'wanted to make political films, we wanted to make them politically'. Armed with a smattering of Godard and a pinch of Alexander Kluge we set out to make a collective non-hierarchical 16mm film about unemployment and an isolated middle-aged women.[6] It never got finished. (Aside from knowing next to nothing about 16mm filmmaking, the weight of all this worthiness must have been enough to sink it alone!)

Another collective filmmaking venture revolved around the 1982 Brisbane Commonwealth Games and the Aboriginal protests and camp at Musgrave Park. The film was made using Super 8, so the technology involved was more user-friendly than our first 16mm attempt. The Musgrave Park film was finished with the not too subtle title, *We killed for red, white and blue*. It screened on campus and at anti-racism events around town. Flushed with the success of this collective venture and full of insights from two whole semesters of cinema studies, I decided to make a film of my own.

The Grapes of Angst was my first self-authored film. In the 'punk filmmaking' spirit of the times, it was made for less than $40 (including stock and processing). The film

is a road movie - self portrait - *Grapes of Wrath* pastiche. Without going into the detail of the story, the film involved images of the mythical Australian outback juxtaposed against shots from new housing estates on the edges of Melbourne. Most of the film was live-action but significantly, many of the outback scenes were created using re-filmed still photographs.

The Grapes of Angst enjoyed an enthusiastic reception when screened to friends in our East Richmond lounge-room. Beyond this, the film also enjoyed some modest fringe film festival success. The critic, Adrian Martin, selected it to be screened as part of a program of Super 8 films that bent and twisted narrative conventions. From around this time, I started to identify as a (Super 8) filmmaker.

Many of my Super 8 works featured still/moving sequences. My next film after *The Grapes of Angst*, a Super 8 epic, *Urban Blues 'n Pointy Shoes*, juxtaposed an imaginary near future with stylised recreations of 1880s Melbourne, including one lengthy still/moving montage made from archival photographs of the era.

From *In This Life's Body*, to *Sunless* and Tokyo

In late 1984, the legendary Melbourne-based avant-garde filmmaker, Corinne Cantrill, released a feature length autobiographical film, *In This Life's Body*. I never saw the film but remember friends telling me how it was made almost entirely from still photographs of Corinne, at different stages of her life. It ran for almost three hours (147 minutes) and despite its length and singular focus many commented on how successful and moving it was. I talk more about the rise of personal and autobiographical films later in the exegesis in Chapters 7 and 9. For now, I mention this work to give a sense it was part of the ether, when I made the Super 8 film, *And our faces, my heart, brief as a photo*. *Our faces, my heart…* is a film portrait I made for my father when he turned sixty, based on re-filmed photographs taken throughout his life. The title was stolen from a short cryptic John Berger book of the same name.[7]

Perhaps it is misleading to mention this film in the context of John Berger and Corinne Cantrill. My film is neither a radical polemic nor an avant-garde work and many people make some form of photographic collage for milestone birthdays. *Our faces, my heart…*was made simply as a present for my father and apart from a couple of friends, I have never screened the film to a wider audience. The film was significant though, as part of my fascination with the still/moving form. Many of the images from my father's early life are small photo proofs, not much bigger than a postage stamp. The care and attention needed to re-film these stills with a macro lens prompts a close appreciation of the image. I remember the thrill and amazement of seeing these small images projected large when they came back from the lab. They had the warmth and grain associated with a 'Super 8 look' but they were also remarkably clear and focussed.

Figure 74A: Still taken from Super 8 film, *And Our Faces…* Photo: Andrew Taylor

In the mid '80s, I saw Chris Marker's *Sunless*. The film had a limited theatrical release in Australia but it played to packed houses and rave reviews for several weeks. (It is hard to imagine a film like this even getting a theatrical release today!). *Sunless*, is mostly moving images, not stills, but like *La Jetée*, it was inspirational for me in opening my eyes to other possibilities for cinema, especially the essay film.

Recently, when reviewing this film, I have thought of ways that it could be considered still/moving. I discuss these ideas more in Chapter 8. At the time, however, I was most taken by its depiction of contemporary Japan. The film and these images were influential in my decision to travel to Japan in early 1987.

I lived in Japan for a year. I made a living teaching English but spent a lot of my time there making short no-budget Super 8 films and taking photographs. The first film I made in Japan was a portrait of Konishi, an elderly Japanese socialist feminist. I was introduced to Konishi by a non-filmmaking friend, who asked me to help her make some sort of documentary about the 80 year old, Konishi. With our limited resources, I suggested we tell the story of Konishi using stills and play a sequence of these against her talking about key incidents from her life. The use of personal stills with narration is a well-worn method in film biographies but our approach was unusual for the degree we privileged re-filmed still photographs over the use of live-action interview material. The archival stills of young Konishi in 1920s and '30s Japan were fascinating, especially in the context of Konishi's narrative remembering her bold and unconventional life story and involvement in radical politics.

Figure 74B: Keiko Aoki. Frame from Super 8 film, *Yokusuka Holiday*. Photo: Andrew Taylor

Yokusuka is a town near Yokohama, that houses a large US army base. It is a strange place; full of faded empty bars, popular with servicemen in the ‘50s and ‘60s, when there were many more servicemen stationed there and the US dollar was strong against the yen.[8]

Towards the end of my year in Japan, I travelled to Yokusuka with my girlfriend, Keiko. We made a short film there called *Yokusuka Holiday*. The film riffs off an iconic image of Audrey Hepburn, a perennial cult figure in Japan. It is like a cross between *Stranger than Paradise* and *Roman Holiday.* All the exteriors were filmed using a grainy black and white Super 8 stock, and the interiors were all filmed using stills and later reworked into still/moving sequences in the final film.

Figure 75: Harajuku singer in late afternoon light. Tokyo, 1987. Photo: Andrew Taylor

After leaving Japan, I travelled in Europe and America for 6 months and returned to Australia in the latter part of 1988. In my 18 months overseas, I had amassed a huge collection of slides and many rolls of Super 8. Carrying on with a time worn tradition, I put together a selection of my best slides and showed these to friends and family. I was aware of the groans associated with the word ‘slide show’ and so I tried to keep the show short and visually rich. I kept narration and commentary to a

minimum. But by the late ‘80s, slide shows were becoming rare and people had a fresh appreciation for the quality of the projected image. Slide shows had a certain retro-charm and nostalgia about them. Little did we know the sun was setting on this lounge-room form.

Figure 76: Couple in late afternoon light looking at view from Empire State Building, 86th Floor Observatory. New York, 1988. (with pre 9/11 World Trade Towers in background). Photo: Andrew Taylor

Trish’s & *Pocari Sweat*

Melbourne’s Victoria Market is a long way from New York’s Time Square but something of Nan Goldin and Jack Smith’s slide show performance spirit made its way there via Trish’s Cabaret. Trish’s was a small cabaret performance space near the markets, lovingly owned and operated by an old drag queen, Trish.

Trish had been around. In her younger days she had been a dancer in Vegas and had worked in clubs in King’s Cross. But when I met Trish, she hated Sydney and was happier being a big fish in a small pond. She was the impresario and artistic director of shows that she also devised, staged and choreographed in her own space in Peel Street, West Melbourne.

The venue was split in half. One half was a cosy coffee shop with a few snacks for sale. The other half was like a small theatre restaurant (without the restaurant!). It had a stage, mirror ball, red velvet curtains and it was so small and intimate, you only needed twenty people for it to feel full. Occasionally when Trish wasn't putting on a show of her own, she would hire out the space. After discovering this, a few friends and I put on an event there based around a shared interest in Japan. It was a cabaret show combining performance, film, slides and music. Many of the images screened were culled from my recent time in Japan but they were reworked for theatrical staging, as opposed to simply being images from my travels that I may have shown in my lounge-room. Looking back, I see the event as a bridge between showing slides in the domestic sphere (my lounge-room) and slides being used as part of an artwork made for the general public, such as William Yang's slide-performance events or a still/moving film like *Siberia*.

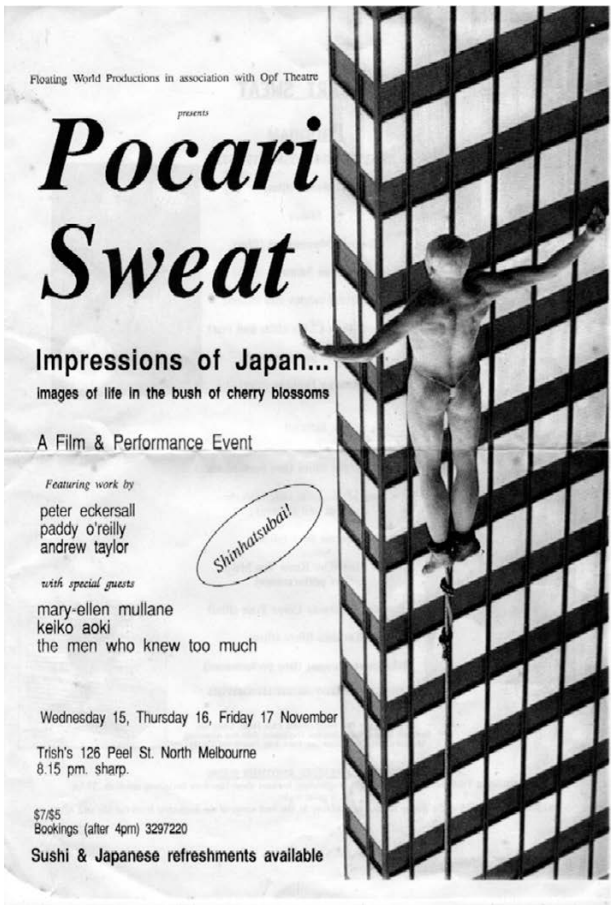
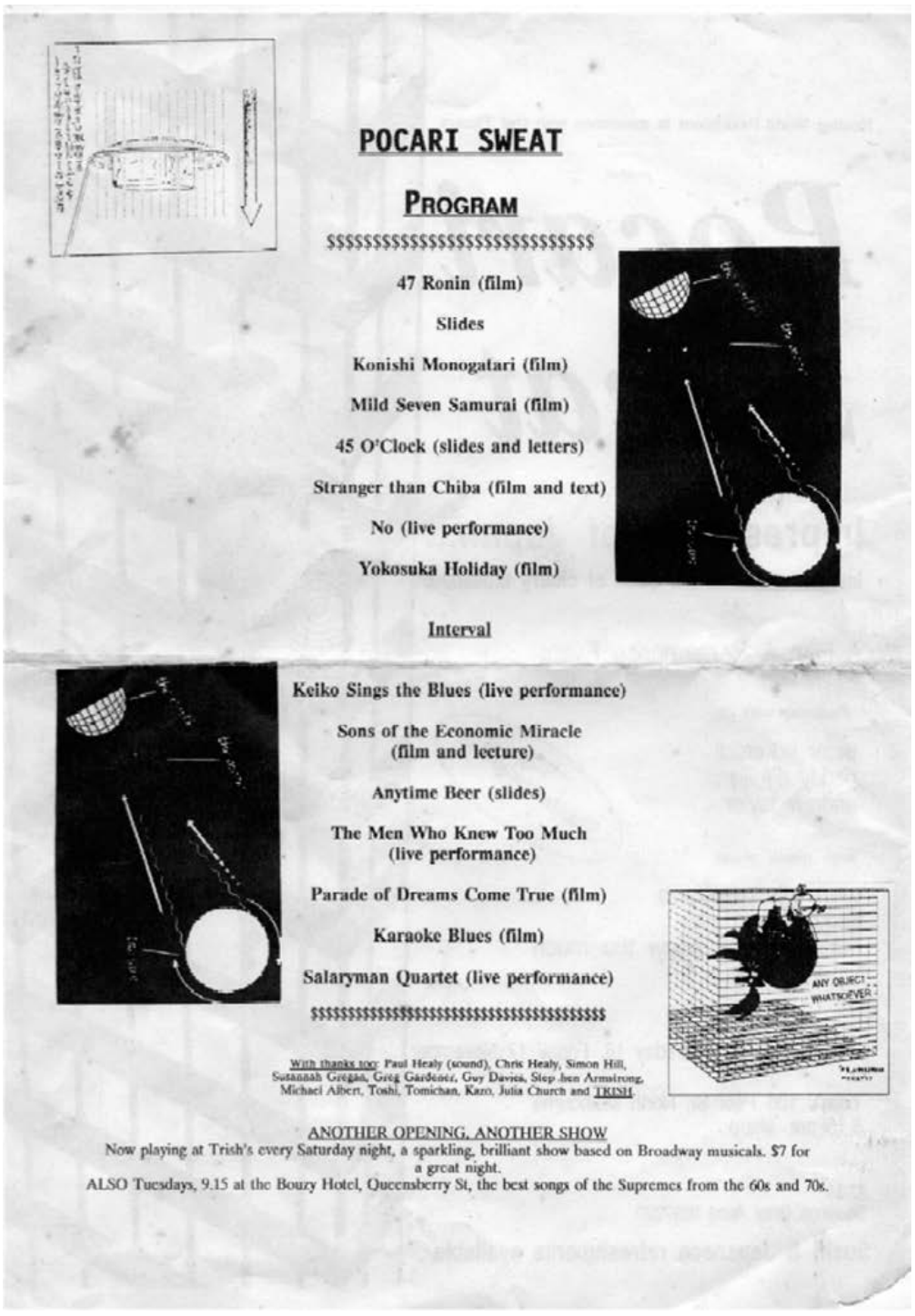


Figure 77A: A4 Handbill made to promote "Pocari Sweat" slide performance event at Trish's (front)



POCARI SWEAT

PROGRAM

$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$

47 Ronin (film)

Slides

Konishi Monogatari (film)

Mild Seven Samurai (film)

45 O'Clock (slides and letters)

Stranger than Chiba (film and text)

No (live performance)

Yokosuka Holiday (film)

Interval

Keiko Sings the Blues (live performance)

Sons of the Economic Miracle
(film and lecture)

Anytime Beer (slides)

The Men Who Knew Too Much
(live performance)

Parade of Dreams Come True (film)

Karaoke Blues (film)

Salaryman Quartet (live performance)

$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$

With thanks too: Paul Healy (sound), Chris Healy, Simon Hill, Susannah Gregan, Greg Gardener, Guy Davies, Stephen Armstrong, Michael Albert, Toshi, Tomichan, Kazo, Julia Church and TRISH.

ANOTHER OPENING, ANOTHER SHOW

Now playing at Trish's every Saturday night, a sparkling, brilliant show based on Broadway musicals. $7 for a great night.

ALSO Tuesdays, 9.15 at the Bouzy Hotel, Queensberry St, the best songs of the Supremes from the 60s and 70s.

Figure 77B: Back of A4 Handbill with program details of "Pocari Sweat" event held at Trish's, West Melbourne, in November 1989.

CHAPTER 7 FROM ST.KILDA TO KING'S CROSS: '80S FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY

The early '80s saw changes in the culture and technology of photography. These included: a rise in the popularity of tertiary photography and photomedia courses; E6 slide processes eclipsing Kodachrome; colour being taught at art schools, not just black and white; and photography being exhibited more frequently in fine art galleries. The words 'photograph' and 'artwork' became interchangeable and so did 'photographer' and 'artist'.

The subject matter of photographs was also changing. As in other areas of post-modern expression, there was frequent blurring of high and popular culture. Many photographs from this era quoted popular and vernacular forms such as the postcard or family album. Others combined a 'happy snap' aesthetic with art-photography intent.

In Melbourne (and I imagine, other urban centres of the time), there was a rise in an aesthetic dubbed 'art school punk'. This was a cross between predominately middle class art school students and the influence of punk and new wave. The punk music ethos of 'anyone can do it', 'if you can play three chords, you can play guitar' informed the photography and filmmaking scenes, as well.

Craig McGee and colour in the '80s

> "With toxic blood, flouro vision and plastic heart, I squirm the ooze"
> (Craig McGee, artist statement, 1987)

Figure 78: *Untitled* from the series "The Price Is Right Television". Craig McGee, 1983

Craig McGee's *The Price Is Right* photos are an excellent case in point. I met Craig briefly around the time he took these photos, through a mutual friend who was studying at university with me. We both lived in St.Kilda and were part of a loose-knit Prahran / St.Kilda 'scene'. My university friend was also called Craig and both he and Craig McGee had been friends at school (they went to Caulfield Grammar, along with Nick Cave and former Birthday Party bass player, Tracy Pew).

After school, McGee studied photography at Prahran 'art school'[1], the epicentre of Melbourne 'art school punk'. In 1983, his graduating year, McGee produced a series of photos that made a splash. The photos were taken from the popular TV game show, *The Price is Right*. They showed the host, Ian Turpie, and guests in heightened excited 'TV states'. The photos were critically acclaimed and exhibited in prominent galleries in Melbourne and Sydney[2]. They went on to be included as part of a survey show, curated by Helen Ennis and held at the National Gallery in Canberra: *Australian Photography: the 1980s*. (Other photographers featured in the exhibition included Tracy Moffat, Bill Henson, Fiona Hall, Anne Zakhalka, Robin Stacey and Anne Ferran).

Of course, just as there is a range of photographies and photographic styles today, so there were in the '80s. However, McGee's photos are significant for a few reasons. They reflect a shift in the subject matter of photography towards a work that referenced popular culture and other media such as film and TV; they are in colour; and they typify what I am calling a 'post punk' or 'post punk art school' aesthetic. Rolling these three things together – imagery drawing upon the popular culture; the use of colour; and a post-punk aesthetic – creates a different sort of photo art than one characteristic of the previous decade.

McGee's photos are not just in colour – it is bright, lurid, artificial colour. By the 1980s, the unspoken assumption about colour and fine-art photography was breaking down. Previously there had been a snobbery about colour photography. Colour was for amateur photography – holidays and family snaps. Art photography was in black and white. Fine-art photographers – in the United States people such as Ansel Adams, Imogen Cunningham, Alfred Stieglitz; in Europe, Robert Doisneau, Henri

Cartier-Bresson, Andre Kertesz; and in Australia, Max Dupain, David Moore, and Olive Cotton – were all known for their black and white photos. At times, some of them experimented with colour, or did advertising or editorial work in colour, but black and white was their preference, their 'thing'.

By the '80s many photo artists were using colour. And their use of colour was not about naturalistic realism. It was expressive and painterly. McGee's colour was bright and lurid; Nan Goldin's warm and grungy; Bill Henson's soft and mysterious; and Martin Parr's saturated and hyper-real. Tracy Moffat's *Something More* (1989) series is now internationally renowned and has fetched record prices at art auctions[3]. Its colour is bold, lush and surreal. The colour in the work's central image is difficult to forget. It features Moffat playing a version of herself, wearing a vibrant red cheongsam.

Figure 79: *Something More #1* from "Something More" series. Tracy Moffat, 1989

McGee's work typified the 'post-punk' or 'art school punk' aesthetic. An assumption underlying this aesthetic was the 'ugly' (the loud, the gaudy, the crass) could be considered 'beautiful'. McGee's work made virtue of the low-fi resolution of the image; the television's narrow colour spectrum, pixels and broadcast lines. *The Price is Right* series was exhibited in high art contexts (for example, the Australian National Gallery) but in its reworking of a game show into art, its aesthetic was much closer to TV and popular culture than European philosophy or fine art.

The influence of TV and popular culture evident in McGee's work was also a characteristic of more widely known photo artists from this era. Cindy Sherman achieved prominence with her early self portraits based on B-movies and Tracy Moffat's photographs drew heavily upon references from film, TV and popular culture.

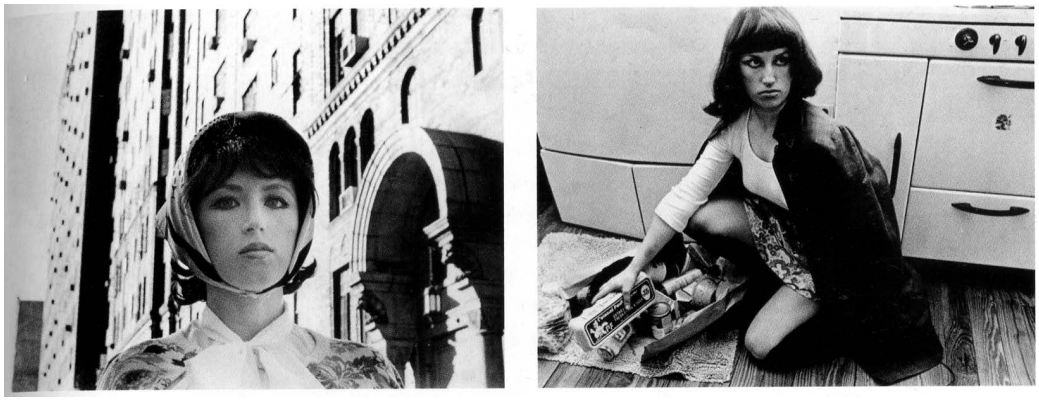


Figure 80: *Untitled Film Still #17* (1978) & *Untitled Film Still #10* (1978). Cindy Sherman.

The Super 8 Filmmaking Scene

The characteristics that I have attributed to McGee's work are also evident in many of the Super 8 works that were made as part of a thriving 'underground scene' in '80s Melbourne and Sydney. These works were mostly in colour; reflected an art school/post-punk aesthetic; and many re-worked or quoted popular culture (TV, '50s genre movies, and iconic stars of an earlier era).

Many likened the '80s Super 8 filmmaking scene to a punk 'anyone can do it' aesthetic. 'You don't need a million dollars and a fat AFC grant to make a film, just

your parent's old Super 8 camera and a roll of Kodachrome'[4]. (In the 1980s, this was about $10 including processing, development and return delivery by mail!).

In Melbourne, these filmmakers often came out of art schools like RMIT, Prahran College and Philip Institute. In Sydney, there was much Super 8 activity emanating from the Alexander Mackie (later to become COFA), Sydney College of the Arts and NSWIT (later UTS).

The Super 8 scene was part of alternate 'new wave' culture. An influential figure like Melbourne based artist, Philip Brophy, was part of the Super 8 scene, and the alternative art and music scenes. He also did work where all three coexisted: performing as part of an 'art band' that shot Super 8 films and used projections in their performances. The band was so cool and conceptual they didn't have a written name, just three symbols: ↑➔🡻 (but everyone called them '*tsk*, *tsk*, *tsk'*).

The fashion of the '50s and early '60s was rejected by '60s radicals and the '70s counter-culture. It was too recent and closely associated with their parents' generation. It was too 'square', American, middle class, old-fashioned, plastic, artificial, gender specific... In short, for the youth and radicals of the '60s and '70s, it was totally uncool. Short hair gave way to long hair. Perms gave way to more natural looks. Straight legs to flares. And so on.

By the '80s, there was a return to some of the styles of the '50s and early 60s. These now had a certain retro-cool. With a knowing wink to its kitsch and mainstream associations, the youth of the early '80s revived lounge music, short hair, cocktails, stove-piped suits, '50s patterned frocks and stilettos, and a love of big cars and 'Americana'.

This style was reflected in many of the Super 8 films. It hovered between a tongue-in-cheek pastiche and a more narrow nostalgic adoration ('who cares if it's about middle -American smaltzy family values, that colour looks beautiful' or 'it ain't rock and roll but that Frank Sinatra guy has a certain jazzy cool that can't be denied').

The slide projector and the Super 8 camera were part of this '50s/early'60s retro package and they came with ready access, as they were often found gathering dust in the closets of parents' family homes. (Or could be acquired for next to nothing at pawn shops, flea markets or garage sales). This new Super 8 generation were way too sophisticated to film Super 8 home movies, like their (boring suburban) parents may have done in days gone by, but they liked the look of 1950s, early '60s home movies. The saturated colours and soft flicker of Super 8 was part of its appeal.

Figure 81: Still from Gary Warner's Super 8 film, *Of Everything* (1987)

Kodachrome and the Colour of Super 8

Kodachrome Super 8 film was the favoured stock. Like Kodachrome slide stock, its colours were rich, saturated and larger than life. Colour technology and perception had shifted since the immediate post war decades and Kodachrome colour was no longer the main gauge of what 'true' colour looked like. Kodachrome Super 8 and slide colour was almost antithetical to fluorescent colours that flooded the market in the '80s.[5] Kodachrome was also different to other versions of photographic colour: the colour of TV; the colour of polaroids; the colour of '70s print film; or the 'cooler' colours of E6 slide stocks (Ektachrome, Fujichrome, Agfachrome) .

In the 1980s, the Sony Corporation became globally prominent. The Sony Walkman revolutionised listening and paved the way for today's MP3 players. Sony VCRs, portapaks and camcorders also became prevalent as the decade advanced. Slides and Super 8 were, in part, a rustic and romantic reaction against this. They used photo-chemical technologies developed in a previous era, and these were unlike the electro-magnetic technologies flooding the market. In comparison to videotape, the 'film look' was said to be warmer, richer, more textured and painterly. These were all

qualities favoured in fine art and painting departments and the photo-media courses and 'Vis.Comm.' departments, they had given rise to.

And the proof was in the pudding. The colour of camcorders compared with Super 8 and slides was washed out and flat. There were a few video artists making a name for themselves but this work was often cold and formalist, flouro and garish, high-tech. and alienating, or a combination thereof. Video art often existed in white-walled 'elitist' gallery contexts and was readily dismissed as being boring.

On the other hand, some prominent art-house directors like Paul Cox and Werner Herzog were known to have used Super 8 in feature films. Former Super 8 filmmakers, like Jim Jarmusch and Derek Jarman, had moved from the 'underground' and had became well-known art-house auteurs. And in the case of Todd Haynes' *Karen Carpenter Story* (USA, 1987), a Super 8 film became a cult feature.

More locally, some Super 8 filmmakers in Melbourne and Sydney had an elevated status as (Super 8) auteurs. In Melbourne, I am thinking of people like Bill Masoulis, Chris Windmill and Anne-Marie Craven, and in Sydney, Virginia Hilyard, Catherine Lowering and the Marine Biologists (Nick Meyers, Andrew Frost, Sean O'Brien). High profile artists/critics associated with Super 8 included Adrian Martin, Philip Brophy and Maria Kozic.

To be a Super 8 filmmaker was an expression of mixed and contradictory artistic aspirations. One the one-hand, it was about subverting 'real' filmmaking, and on the other, it was about becoming a 'real' filmmaker; that is, directing features or music videos with actual cash production budgets. It was about making 'film art' – work concerned with colour, tone and texture – and not surrendering to 'mainstream', 'industry' values like having professional acting, well-crafted production techniques, and stories that were dramatically engaging and resolved. It was about being 'alternative' as opposed to making populist, easily-accessible work that surrendered to, or even engaged with, 'making sense' or commercial concerns.

In other words, Super 8 (and by extension, the Kodachrome technology of slides) represented much more than a bunch of scrappy ultra low budget films. The wave of interest in Super 8 was in equal part an expression of post-punk art school revolt; a wave of retro nostalgia; a reaction to suburban VCR and camcorder technology; and a mixture of artistic aspiration, statement, pretension and pose.

Figure 82: Kodachrome Super 8 box, cartridge and film.

A Convergence of Film, Photography and Autobiography

The changes in art practice outlined in both Darsie Alexander's *Slide Show* and my own brief accounts of early '80s film and photography, led to film and art practices more open to a convergence of film, photography and autobiography. Jack Smith and Nan Goldin's work exemplifies this trend. But Goldin's work was also an exception. Little of the work made by the Melbourne and Sydney Super 8 filmmakers was as overtly biographical as Goldin's *Ballad*... These filmmakers may have raided their parents' closets for old cameras and projectors, but it took another decade or so before Australian filmmakers started to raid these same closets for stories.

Beyond the narrow confines of the Melbourne and Sydney Super 8 scenes, there were some Australian artists making work that echoed some of Goldin's film-photo-biographical exploration. Corinne Cantrill's *In this Life's Body* (1984) is a good example. Su Ford's experimental film *Faces* 1976-96 (1997) also falls between photography, film and biography, and Carol Jerrem's photography (and films) from the mid to late '70s are heading in this direction as well. Nevertheless, when Merillee Bennett's *Song of Air* (1987) was screened at the Melbourne film festival in the late 1980s, it made a strong impact and stood out for its then, unusual style. *Song of Air* belongs to a body of feminist work, increasingly popular from the '70s onwards, that uses images from the past to interrogate and question representation and patriarchal

power. In *Song of Air,* Bennett re-works her family's 16mm home movies. The film is narrated by Bennett using a letter form that is written to her recently deceased father. This literary device enables Bennett to address her father (and the audience) in the first person. In this respect, Bennett's work not only aligns itself with the 'personal is political' adage of feminist politics, but also a growing body of first person and biographical documentaries that – like *Siberia* – have mined personal archives of slides, photographs and home-movies.[6]

I look at some of these first person biographical documentaries in my discussion of contemporary 'still/moving-ness' in Chapter 9, where I argue this convergence of film, photography, and autobiography is one of the characteristics of still/moving works. Before making this case, I have one more 'archeological dig' to uncover another antecedent of contemporary 'still/moving-ness'. In the next chapter I look at some influential documentary films from before the 1980s that are made predominantly from still photos.

Figure 83A: *Joy 1964, Joy 1974*, from the Time series 1962–1974 Photos: Sue Ford.

Figure 83B: *Ross 1964; Ross 1974* from the Time series 1962–1974. Photos: Sue Ford

Figure 83C: *Ross 1964; Ross 1974* from the Time series 1962–1974. Photos: Sue Ford

Figure 84: *Faces* (1976-96) Sue Ford & Ben Ford , film screening

CHAPTER 8: SLIDE SHOW DOCUMENTARIES AND WHAT IS 'STILL/MOVING-NESS'?

In this chapter, I explore the questions, what is 'still/moving-ness'?; and what is significant and special about the still/moving form?

To date, I have been using the terms 'slide show documentary' and 'still/moving films' somewhat interchangeably. Essentially, I have been saying that a slide show documentary is documentary that is heavily narrated and has a 'visual track' made predominantly from still images. In referring to still/moving films, I have referred to several of these slide show documentaries and touched on some other works that combine cinema and photography, or fall somewhere between the two on a spectrum.

Rather than get into a lengthy discussion defining these terms, I am going to describe four films that are well suited to the label 'slide show documentary'. I do this partly to make a working portmanteau definition of the term. I also do this to make the point that the 'slide show documentary' label is a convenient short-hand term but it is limiting in thinking about the still/moving *and* documentary. What other characteristics do these still/moving documentaries have beyond a resemblance to the slide show?

After looking at four examples of 'slide show documentaries', I return to this chapter's central questions: what is 'still/moving-ness'?; and what is significant or special about the still/moving form? In order to answer these questions, I examine some 'still/moving documentaries', and identify characteristics of still/moving work beyond the more obvious echo of a slide show.

Four 'slide show documentaries'

The four films I describe that are well suited to the label 'slide show documentary' are Alain Resnais*' Van Gogh*, (France, 1948); Agnes Varda's *Salut les Cubains* (France, 1963); Colin Low and Wolf Koenig's *Yukon Gold* (Canada, 1965); and Ken Burns' *The Civil War* (USA, 1991).

Van Gogh, (France, 1948)

In 1948 Alain Resnais was invited to make a film about the paintings of Van Gogh, to coincide with an exhibition that was being mounted in Paris. *Van Gogh* (1948) won prizes at both the Venice Film Festival and the Academy Awards. At the time the work was critically acclaimed for its bold and unorthodox approach to the 'artist documentary' and it is now seen as a significant step in Resnais developing the essayistic voice evident in his later documentaries such as *Night and Fog.* The visuals of the film focused on Van Gogh's images but the narration was also a meditation on art, creativity and the psychological state of Van Gogh.

It is strange to see *Van Gogh* through contemporary eyes. At first glance it seems staid and old-fashioned: Van Gogh's sunflowers, red hair and swirling colourful skies are all filmed in black and white not colour; and it feels very static. The story of Van Gogh's life is told as a series of static images drawn entirely from his paintings and details therein. These static black and white images from Van Gogh's paintings are arranged as a series of stills, that slowly move from one to the next. They are narrated by off-screen commentary. The combination of narration and still images is clearly reminiscent of a slide show.

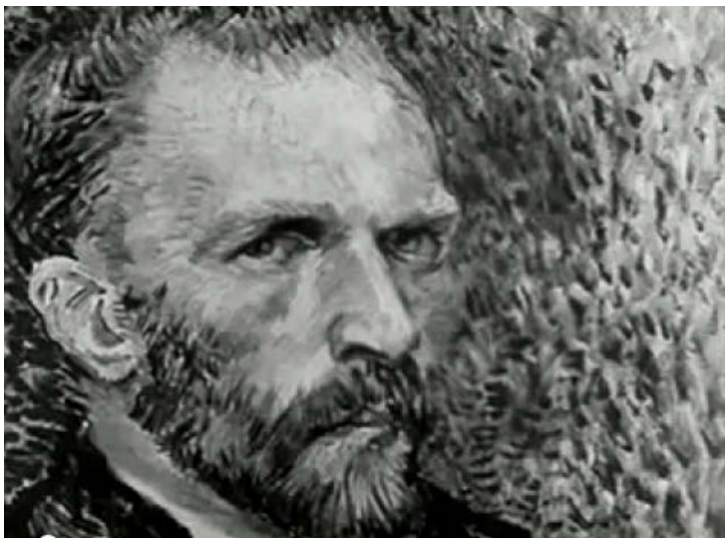


Figure 85: Still from *Van Gogh*, directed by Alan Resnais.

Salut les Cubains (France, 1963)

Agnes Varda's *Salut les Cubains* is a photo documentary portrait of Cuba filmed shortly after the revolution. To make the film, Varda took over 800 black and white images while visiting Cuba and reworked these into a partially animated film portrait. On the surface *Salut les Cubains* has all the hallmarks of a slide show – a journey to an exotic location, narrated images of travels, sub-groupings of images in into themes such as education, schools, farms, industry.

Salut les Cubains is a short joyous propaganda piece that seems naïve and almost 'happy tractor driver' in a contemporary light. The film has a socialist realist flavour reminiscent of the 'Mao and happy peasant' photo magazines, that the Chinese friendship societies used to distribute in the mid-1970s. In the DVD introduction to a recent re-release of *Salut les Cubains*, Varda mentions that it is important to see the film in the context of 1963. Varda remembers how excited she and other leftists were about the Cuban revolution – the possibility of revolution with jazz music, 'revolution with *cha cha cha*'.

Figure 86: Still from *Salut les Cubains* photographed & directed by Agnes Varda

City of Gold (Canada, 1957)

City of Gold was produced by the National Film Board of Canada and directed by Colin Low and Wolf Koenig. It chronicles Dawson City during the Klondike Gold Rush in the late nineteenth century. The film was narrated by Pierre Berton, a well-known Canadian author, journalist and television personality.

The film is 'book-ended' with two live action moving image sequences but the body of the film is made entirely from archival stills (glass plate negatives), rediscovered in a roof during a house demolition in Dawson City in the late 1940s. Pierre Berton's narration combines with archival stills to chronicle the roaring stampede days of the Klondike Gold Rush, where in the Summer of l898 more than 40,000 fortune seekers from all over the world blew in to Dawson City, the capitol of Yukon Territory. Sequences of archival stills are arranged in a loose chronological order to recreate the journey to the goldfields and scenes from life in Dawson city at its height. We see chains of people making their way up the steep and icy slopes of the Chilkoot Pass, then scenes of men building boats to sail the 500 mile trip down river to get to Dawson City. By the time most arrived in Dawson, the rich claims had been made and most spent months in backbreaking toil in the gold fields of Bonanza Creek. Over images from deep under ground to the booming frontier town above, we hear of the heart-ache and toil of the miners and stories of the salons, dancing girls, and some of the ostentatious displays of wealth, for the few who did strike it rich.

The film has dated. The tone of *City of Gold* now seems sentimental and its descriptions of the miner's quest for gold comes across as being overly heroic, like a 1950s 'boys own adventure' story. However, in its day, the film made a large impact. *City of Gold* won the Palme d'or for Best Short Film at the 1957 Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for an Academy Award. It was also screened and awarded prizes at numerous international film events and was distributed commercially in North America with *And God Created Women* (Bridget Bardot's first feature film). It is reputed to be the most popular title ever produced by the Canadian Film Board.[1]

At the time of the film's release, the use of archival stills to recreate an historical

event was unorthodox and innovative. The photos were re-filmed using an animation stand, thus allowing for more precision and control in creating movement within the images. (Low worked at the CFB with the acclaimed animator, Norman McLaren). Narration and music added further drama to the events depicted, and *City of Gold*'s use of archival still photographs has been cited by Ken Burns as an inspiration for his own documentary work.[2]

Figure 87: Still from *City of Gold* (1957) Directed by Colin Low. Fortune seekers make their way up notorious Chilkoot pass en route to Yukon gold fields.

The Civil War (USA, 1990)

The Civil War is a documentary about the American Civil War directed by Ken Burns. It was first broadcast on public television in the United States (PBS) in Autumn of 1990 and was watched by over forty million viewers during its initial broadcast, making it the most-watched program ever to air on PBS. It went on to receive wide commercial release and critical praise in both America and many other overseas territories.

This highly acclaimed mini-series traces the course of the U.S. Civil War from the abolitionist movement through all the major battles, to the death of President Lincoln and the beginnings of Reconstruction. The story is mostly told in the actors speaking

the words of the participants, through their diaries and letters, along with interviews and commentary with prominent historians such as Shelby Foote.

Foote's sonorous Southern accent and thoughtful insights into the war, helped make him a minor celebrity after the first screenings of the series. However, the most striking aspect of the production is its heavy reliance on archival stills, especially photographs taken during the war. During the creation of the movie, Burns made extensive use of more than 16,000 archival photographs, paintings, and newspaper images from the time of the war. These still images are inter-cut with live-action interviews and 'timeless' images of nature (slow moving rivers, vivid crimson sunsets…). Even after allowing for the interviews and moving image 'overlay' shots, approximately two thirds of the show's total ten hours running time, features still images on screen. In other words, the series has more six hours of still images; and these are predominantly archival photographs.

It is important to note that these photographs are not completely static. Like the images in *City of Gold*, many of these images are partially animated with pans across the surface of the image, or slow zooms in and out highlighting details. This technique of partial animation of archival letters, photographs and graphics has entered the vernacular and is now known as the 'Ken Burns Effect'. (The 'Ken Burns Effect' is the 'slide show' pre-set on Apple's iPhoto application).

Despite Ken Burns' renown for this partial animation of images, when reviewing the program recently, I was struck by how often the still images were held on screen as static stills. (It is not all 'Ken Burns Effect' gone mad!). I was also struck by how much the *Civil War* was a version of history as an illustrated lecture/slide show. Along with its use of still images, the show's heavy reliance on voice-over; didactic nature; long, methodical retelling of detail; and use of static inter-titles/chapter headings, all added to this impression.

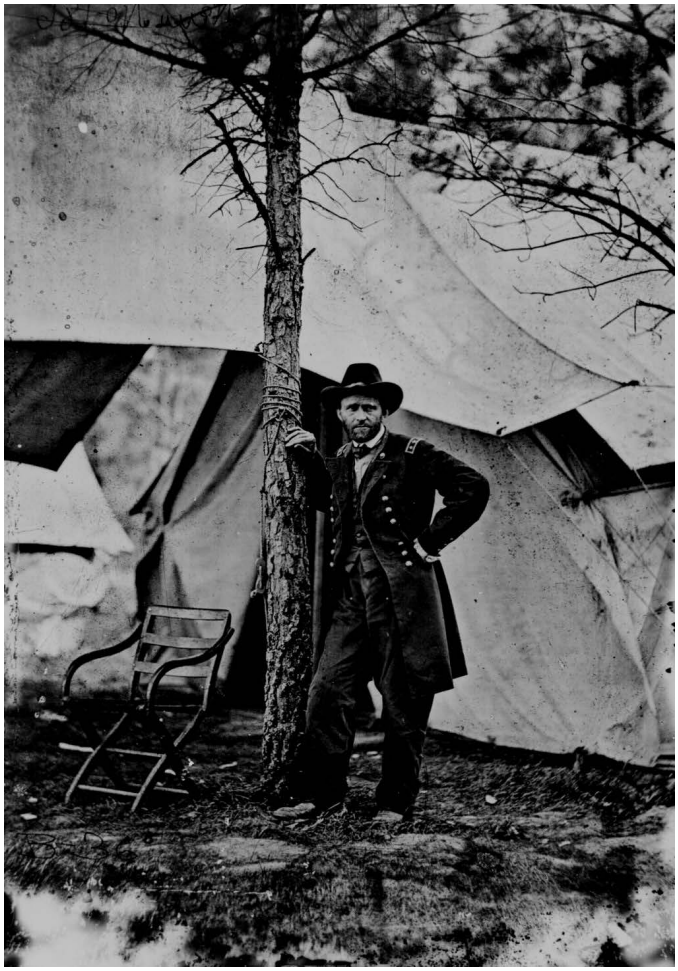


Figure 88: Still from *The Civil War* Directed by Ken Burns. (Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant 1864).

The above examples all fit so neatly with the label ‘slide show documentary’ that you can almost hear the *click-ker-chunk* sound of the carousel as they play. But is this the feature that enabled them to garner so much critical acclaim in their time? Is there a more fruitful way to analyse and think about them? Rather than being type cast as slide show documentaries, would it be more useful to think about them as hybrid works, or as a subset of animation, or collage/assemblages, or film essays? … Do these and other still/moving works have anything to say about a tension and interplay between motion and stasis, animation and stillness? Is there anything else to still/moving work apart from it being a mixture of still and moving images and having an affinity with both photography and cinema? I will answer these questions but to do so I need to talk generally about the intermingling of photography and film, and then more specifically, about the Left Bank Group and essay film.

Photography and Cinema

Since the very earliest days of cinema, there has been a cross-fertilisation between photography and cinema. David Campany's book, *Photography and Cinema,* is a brilliant short survey of some of the manifestations of the intermingling of these two forms. Campany opens his account with the observation that in the earliest roll of moving picture ever – a Lumière Brothers' film depicting delegates attending a photographic conference in Lyon – there is a shot of a man with a stills camera who stops, stares and pretends to take a picture of the cinematographer (presumably one of the brothers, Auguste or Louis)[3].

From this moment on, there have been countless iterations of film and cinema being intertwined. Campany gives examples of numerous films about photographers, and films that use photographs as a central part of their plots (for example, one fifth of all *noir* films ever made use a photograph as a key prop, plot point, or piece of evidence)[4]. Campany also looks at the work of three prominent post-war photographers – Robert Frank, William Klein and Ed van der Elsken – who all made films that reworked their photography, as well as photo-books that featured photographs with a cinematic look. In his overview of the intermingling of film and photography, Campany also cites artists like Cindy Sherman, who made photos that looked like films stills; *photoromanzes* – popular photo comic book versions of films; and the famous inter-war exhibition, *Film und Foto,* that featured artists like Laszlo Maholgy Nagy, who worked across both film and photography, and proposed 'camera-less films' that were somewhere in between.

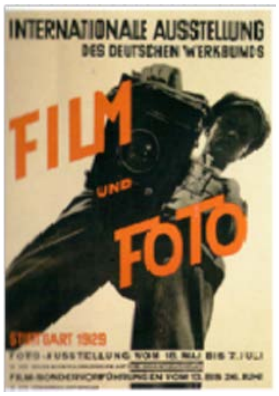


Figure 89: Poster from1929 Exhibition, *Film und Foto.*

Figure 90: Publicity still from *Rear Window* (1954). One of the many examples Campany cites that involves the intermingling of film and photography. (In the film the James Stewart character was a 'real life' action photographer before he was injured and reduced to being a voyeur).

Adding to Campany's overview, I'd argue that this intermingling of photography and cinema has been most apparent in documentary cinema. I would also argue that it found a particular form in the immediate post war years in France in a group originally known as the 'Group of Thirty', now more commonly referred to as the Left Bank Group. Three figures central to the Left Bank Group of directors are Alain Resnais, Chris Marker and Agnes Varda.

In the next section I concentrate on some of their early work to illustrate how their particular styles of cinema could be characterised as still/moving.

Figure 91: Still from opening credit sequence of *Salut les Cubains* photographed & directed by Agnes Varda

The Essay Film and the Left-bank Group

In a 1948 essay "The birth of the New Avant-Garde: The Camera-Stylo", Alexandre Astruc wrote:

> … the cinema is quite simply becoming a means of expression, just as all the other arts have been before it… After having been successively a fairground attraction, an amusement analogous to boulevard theatre, or the means of preserving the image of an era, it is gradually becoming a language…
>
> That is why I would like to call this new age of cinema the age of the camera-stylo (camera pen)… It (cinema) can tackle any subject, any genre. The most philosophical meditations on human production, psychology, ideas, and passions lie within its province…[5]

Along with influential essays by Hans Richter and Andre Malraux, Astruc's words became part of the intellectual foundations of the French New Wave and the essay film. In 1953, Alain Resnais, Chris Marker, Agnes Varda, Alexandre Astruc and other members of the 'Group of Thirty', lobbied for the development of the short film as the grounds for developing essayistic film practices. By the mid '50s, the term *essai cinematographique* (cinematographic essay) was in frequent use in France.[6]

The group of artists, writers and filmmakers who made up the 'Group of Thirty', were part of the French New Wave (*nouvelle vague*) milieu but were more overtly political, literary and 'experimental' in focus than their more commercially successful counterparts from the 'Right Bank Group' affiliated with *Cahiers du Cinema* (Godard, Rivette, Chabrol, Truffaut et. al). There was certainly some cross-over and interaction between the two groups and Agnes Varda and Jacques Demy are often listed as prominent directors associated with both the 'Right Bank' New Wave and the 'Group of Thirty'. Recently, however, prominent figures from the 'Group of Thirty' have became known as the Left Bank Group partly to distinguish them from their *Nouvelle Vague* (New Wave) contemporaries [7].

In their early careers Resnais, Marker and Varda, all collaborated with each other in significant ways: Resnais edited Varda's first feature film, *La Pointe Courte* (1954). Marker was credited as assistant director on the Alan Resnais' *Night and Fog* and they also worked together on an earlier documentary, *Statues also Die* (*Le Statues meurent aussi*) (1950-3). Varda and Marker both worked on *Salut les Cubains* and *Sunday in Peking* (*Dimanche à Pékin*) (1956), and all three collaborated on the collective film *Far from Vietnam* (*Loin du Viêt-nam*) (1967)[8].

In thinking about what constitutes 'still-moving-ness' or what makes a film 'still/moving', an obvious starting point is to look at films made predominantly from still images. In the introduction to the exegesis, I mentioned Marker's highly influential short film, *La Jetée* and Agnes Varda's film-photo-essays. Clearly both of these filmmakers are important in my investigation into 'still/moving-ness' but before moving on to a discussion of their work, I'd like to first look at Alan Resnais' documentary about the holocaust *Night and Fog (Nuit et Brouillard)* (1955). *Night and Fog* is a less obvious example of a still/moving film but is an important one all the same. The film is, arguably, also a precursor to later essayist works by both Varda and Marker.

Alan Resnais and *Night and Fog.*

When Resanis was approached to make *Night and Fog*, he initially refused to do so, saying the horror of the concentration camps was unfilmable. He eventually agreed to do the project as a collaboration with the writer Jean Cayrol, a former camp inmate. Resnais does not attempt to document the reality of the concentration camps. Instead he offers a reflection, a set of questions, a probing of our responses.

On first impression, *Night and Fog* does not fit a still/moving paradigm as neatly as the Varda/Marker works mentioned above. It is not a 'typical' still/moving film insofar as it does not feature an image track made predominantly from photographs, and it is made from an outwardly conventional mixture of still and moving archival footage, like many documentaries are to this day, especially 'history documentaries' (documentaries dealing with historical themes and subject matter). In addition to this, *Night and Fog* is initially so unsettling and affecting that it defies formal dissection. But upon closer analysis, the film contains many of the stylistic traits characteristic of the films of the Left Bank directors, including, I would argue, a tendency towards 'still-movingness'.

The film opens with colour moving images filmed in the present (1955). The camera slowly tracks over seemingly peaceful picturesque countryside before resting on a barb-wire fence, revealed to be the remnants of a former concentration camp. Throughout the film, colour images filmed in the present, at the site of the former camps are inter-cut with black and white images from the past. The colour images are filmed as a series of slow floating tracking shots that travel cautiously over the remains of the camps. There is very little movement within the frame but as the camera slowly moves it investigates, probes and questions the stillness, the 'everydayness' of the exterior reality it shows. At one point the narration asks how could one decide to build these camps? It then answers its own question: "Like any other construction job - contractors, estimates, competitive bids, and no doubt a bribe or two".

These colour travelling (tracking) shots are initially filmed outside of the former concentration camps. They show picturesque European countryside, railway lines,

and entrance gates. The exterior surface reality of the former camps often appears banal, almost benign. The narration comments: "A crematorium from the outside can look like a picture postcard", (at first) "nothing distinguishes the gas chamber from an ordinary blockhouse"[9]. The colour sequences then travel inside, beyond the gate-houses and barbed wire. Each time the film cuts back to the moving camera we are led deeper and deeper into the camps. The camera moves through former barracks, bunk houses, and hospital wards, eventually ending up inside the remains of concrete gas chambers. Every one of these colour tracking shots heading to the gas chambers, moves in a slow but definite left to right direction. It is like a hidden but relentless logic, as if to imply everything we are seeing, is headed towards this gas chamber end.

The black and white sequences in *Night and Fog* use a mixture of archival moving footage and still photographs. Initially this mixture of archival elements is used as illustration for the commentary. For example, we hear a roll call of Jewish names from different parts of Europe and we see images of people from various European cities: Lodz, Zagreb, Odessa. Perhaps this was unusual in mid 1950s documentary filmmaking but there is nothing remarkable about this approach to documentary illustration today, other than how deftly Resnais combines narration with still and moving images. The viewer is reluctantly swept along with an archival narrative flow that shows people being isolated, arrested, interned and transported by rail. For the people depicted, they travel to an unknown destination. (Not so, for the viewer).

In *Film and Photography*, David Campany reminds us that the shorter the film's take is, the more like photography it becomes. At an extreme, if a shot was a single frame in length then there is nothing between it and a photograph[10]. In Resnais' *Night and Fog* the film is edited so initially the moving and still images mesh well and work in creating narrative flow. The stills tend to be on screen for a short time and could almost be construed as short shots (of moving image footage). However, as the film progresses, the stills are held on screen long enough to break this narrative flow. They appear as photographs not short shots. They are locked off (static) and held for several beats, so we feel their silence staring back at us, like punctuating question marks.

The film theorist Raymond Bellour, talks of the 'pensive' moment when a viewer is presented with a photograph or a freeze frame in a film. For Bellour, ' pensiveness' is a suspension, a moment of anticipation when things are in balance. Literally and psychologically, the still image causes a pause.[11] Bellour's idea of 'pensiveness' is apt in relation to the use of still images in *Night and Fog*. There is a moment of abrupt punctuation shortly after the trains arrive at a concentration camp. A still photograph of a newly arrived inmate stares back at us in big close up. The sudden insertion of a tight shot creates a graphic disjuncture and the look to camera is more direct than the previous images. The inmate looks shocked. His eyes wide open. This use of a still image works in terms of it fitting with the sequence of events depicted, and the time and place of the story, but it also breaks the narrative flow and has a piercing, affective impact. The regularity of this expressive use of still images increases as the film progresses and the viewer is led further and further into the depths of the camps. In one scene the viewer is shown archival footage of a hospital ward in a concentration camp. It shows people lying in beds, faces gaunt. We see one moving image and then another of bodies barely moving, almost dead. It then cuts to a still image of a patient actually dead. The person's eyes are wide open, staring nowhere. Frozen, still. "They all die with their eyes wide open".

Other images in *Night and Fog* only become sinister through association. As the colour tracking shot, continues its slow forensic journey into the camps, it takes us past a series of old rusty ovens. The rusty old ovens covered in dust and cobwebs look rustic until we are reminded they were once used for cremation. In a following sequence of black and white archival photographs, we see images from warehouses showing huge piles of old shoes, reading glasses, combs, and shaving brushes. These objects are all 'innocent' enough in themselves but become haunting when told they once belonged to former inmates. Following from these photographs of objects is a photograph of some hair. At first the hair is shown in a tight close up. It is a blurry mess but as the camera pulls back it is revealed to be a mountainous mass of (dead) women's hair that stretches to a distant warehouse horizon.

Towards the end of the film we see an horrific and surreal still life composition depicting piles of dead. We see another of these photographs, and then another. The sequence then cuts to what looks like another still image of dead bodies. The frame has a similar appearance and composition to the preceding still images but it suddenly springs 'to life'. When this 'still frame' starts to move, it is revealed as archival moving image footage, showing brutal footage of a bulldozer shoving piles of dead bodies into a mass burial site. In the hospital sequence mentioned above, a series of (barely) moving images suddenly become drained of all life and freeze in a death pose. In this sequence, poses of death suddenly 'unfreeze' and the image turns to life, as the camera pulls back to reveal the shocking footage of the bulldozer moving in and shovelling piles of dead bodies.

Figure 92: Mountains of shoes once belonging to concentration camp inmates. Still image used in the film, *Night & Fog* (1955).

Today there is nothing novel about using colour footage to signify the present and black and white archival to signify the past but according to Resnais, this was artistically bold and unusual in the mid 1950s. In a radio interview some years later, Resnais says that he was unaware of any other film that had done this before he made

Night and Fog.[12] Films back then were either filmed in colour, or black and white but not both.

The mixing of colour and black and white is by no means the only innovative aspect of *Night and Fog*. The film is narrated through voice-over that is delivered in a flat, matter of fact manner. The script is written with a cool detached, questioning and even ironic, tone. In other words, it is almost antithetical to the dominant documentary voice of the day: authoritative, didactic, expositional.

Philip Lopate writes how the voice-over is filled with skepticism and a doubt. He quotes from the film: "(it is) useless to describe what went on in these cells"; "words are insufficient"; "no description, no picture can reveal their true dimension" ; and "Is it in vain that we try to remember?".[13] (This final quote foregrounds a theme in the work about the necessity of remembering and the impossibility of doing so. Themes Resnais would revisit in his most famous feature films *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959) and *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961)).

Night and Fog uses many still images and a singular male voice over narration but it would be an oversimplification to suggest it was a slide show. The film uses stillness and movement in a very particular way and its rhythm of editing and musical score has more in common with unusual syncopations of modern jazz than the more regular (and typically monotonous) beat of a suburban slide show, or the didactic drone of an illustrated lecture.

I can easily argue the case for *Night and Fog* to be thought about as a still/moving film or in terms of its stillness and movement but to suggest *Night and Fog* shares common ground with the slide show, or is a 'slide show documentary' misses the mark. It makes much more sense to connect Resnais' film with different intellectual and artistic traditions: musical, literary, essayist, and philosophical. Its score and rhythm of edit has affinity with modern(ist) jazz. Its essayist approach, with literature and philosophy – from Montaigne, to Proust, to Astruc. Its mixture of colour and black and white, still and moving, has precedent in Resnais' earlier documentary assemblages and perhaps even the inter-war collage work of the likes of Hannah Höch and John Heartfield. [14]

So, instead of arguing that the slide show haunted Resnais' *Night and Fog*, I'd like to continue my exploration of the still/moving documentary by looking at some of the ways Resnais' work and *Night and Fog* may have haunted the Left Bank Directors, especially its most famous essayists, Agnes Varda and Chris Marker.

Resnais, Marker, Varda: TV, Philosophy & Photography

As mentioned above, Marker, Varda and Resnais all collaborated with each other but it is fair to assume Resnais' early directorial work had a strong influence on both Marker and Varda. Resnais trained as an editor and camera operator before moving into directing and made over 25 documentaries for French Television before making his first feature film, *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959).

Night and Fog and the documentaries of Resnais' Left Bank contemporaries, Agnes Varda and Chris Marker, were more idiosyncratic and reflective than those made in the more pragmatic Greirsonian documentary tradition, that favoured an observable 'concrete' actuality. In the essayistic works of the Left Bank directors, the filmmaker's own subjectivity became part of the subject of the enquiry. This essayistic approach has its roots in a French intellectual tradition stretching back to 16th Century French philosopher Michel de Montaigne. For Montaigne an investigation into the world and its meaning entailed an investigation into one's own subjectivity and intelligence.[15]Significantly, Marker and Varda both came to film with a background of having studied philosophy. (Little is known of Marker's early life, but there is an apocryphal story that Marker spent some time studying with Sartre in the 1930s).[16]

Aside from a background studying philosophy, Marker and Varda also came to film with a working knowledge in photography, not cinematography. Varda and Marker have both made documentary essays that utilise the photograph far more than conventional documentaries. Looking at these films is interesting in light of my interest into what makes a film still/moving. Both of these filmmakers have returned to this question in their work. It is not necessarily a question asked explicitly in the

narration but it is implicit in the visual strategies and styles of their films. The film-photo-essays of Varda and Marker both make visual arguments or enquiries about film and photography; stillness and motion. For Varda and Marker, film and photography are not necessarily antithetical mediums; and stillness and motion opposite modes of expression. In the film-photo-essayistic works of Varda and Marker, film and photography often coexist within one work, and their 'nature' and the differences between the two is used in a poetic, musical and expressive way. In order to make this point more tangible, I will look at some examples of the film-photo-essay work of Chris Marker and Agnes Varda.

Marker first.

Marker, slide shows and still/moving expression

> I am an essayist … Film is a system that allows Godard to be a novelist, Gatti to make theatre and me to make essays.
> (Chris Marker, quoted in Nora Alter, *Chris Marker*)

> Marker is a 1: 1.33 Montaigne
> (Richard Roud, "Sight and Sound", Winter, 1962-63).

Several of Marker's works can be described as still/moving simply in terms of the large number of photographs or still images the works employ. Most famously, *La Jetée* (1961) is made entirely from still images, except for one very short sequence involving a blinking of the eye. *If I had four Dromedaries* (*Si J'avias quatre dromadaires*) (1966), is made from re-working eight hundred still photos, many of these taken while working on a series of 'alternative' travel guides, *Small Planet* (*Le Petite Planet*) for the publisher Edition du Sueil. Another work *The Koreans* (*Coréennes*) was published as a photo-text album but had an iteration as a 16mm film. And *Photo Browse*, a compilation of just over three hundred photos, appeared as part of the installation work, *Zapping Zone* (1990).

Marker's first collaboration with Alan Resnais, *Statues also die*, (*Les statues meurent aussi*) (*1950-53*) is not made from still photographs but features many static and

inanimate images of statues and African art. (*Statues also die* was commissioned as a film about African art but Marker and Resnais took it to another level and in their hands became an essay about the cultural impact of colonialism, and the consequences of imposing a white imperial gaze upon African art and culture). [17]

Following from *Statues also die,* Marker's first documentaries where he was the sole director were two travelogues entitled *Sunday in Peking* (1956) and *Letter from Siberia* (1957). My discussion concentrates on these two films and Marker's later and most famous documentary work, *Sunless* (1983).

On the surface, there are some definite points of connection between a slide show, *Sunday in Peking*, *Letter from Siberia*, and *Sunless*. These films are all, at least partially, motivated by journeys to foreign lands and a fascination and curiosity with the exotic; and although they are made mostly from moving pictures not stills, they are all narrated like a slide show, by an off-screen voice – usually male (or in the case of *Sunless*, a female speaking on behalf of a male). *Letter from Siberia* even has one sequence that directly references a magic lantern slide show. Here, a history of the goldrush is illustrated by bordered sepia photographs, animated to pass back and forth, like an old fashioned lantern show.[18]

However, like Resnais' *Night and Fog*, to dismiss or reduce these films as mere slide show travelogues, misses the point. All three films are to varying degrees also reflections about less tangible themes: representation, art, communication, collective politics, memory, time, and death. *Sunday in Peking* and *Letter from Siberia* were both 'sponsored documentaries' and are in fact more like 'straight' travelogues than *Sunless*. However, there is still evidence in these early Marker films of an innovative use of collage elements (cartoons, paper cut-outs, extracts from fictitious TV commercials); and a questioning of truth and documentary representation. In a well-known sequence in *Letter from Siberia*, location footage from an intersection in Yukust is shown four times in succession. In the first instance, it is shown without narration. We see road labourers, a Russian Zim car and an Indigenous Yukut man with an eye injury. The footage is then repeated but this time the narrator interprets it from a pro-Communist official Soviet perspective. Next, an anti-Communist

perspective, and finally from a more personal space, somewhere in between the two. Marker makes no claim that any of these interpretations are more truthful than the next but he does bring into question the nature of documentary truth and representation. (By implication he is suggesting the film is not the reality of Siberia but just one possible version or interpretation of a contested and changing reality).

Sunday in Peking is a film portrait of a day in the life of Peking (Beijing). It is Marker's first film as director and is perhaps the most conventional of his early work. Nevertheless, it has signs of his developing voice as a film essayist. His voice-over commentary is coloured with humour and wry political comment. Marker likens the bustle of the old quarter to a China of the movies – opium dens and Bogart leaving hurriedly in a white suit – and just as the commentary is about to be engulfed in orientalist cliché, Marker shows a shot of an old woman hobbling on bound feet. He suggests this price of tradition makes modernisation a far more attractive option. Marker's commentary is also heightened with vivid poetic metaphors ('light midway between water and silk', 'gymnasts as lean as cats', 'the early morning fog that makes the city look as if it has just got out of a bath').[19] *Sunday in Peking* also has evidence of Marker's later 'assemblage-ist' tendencies. There is short account of China's history set to a montage of paintings and popular illustrations and 'mixed media' scenes that draw upon Chinese opera and street puppet shows.

In *Letter from Siberia,* Marker's essayistic voice and assemblage approach is far more developed and adventurous than in *Sunday in Peking.* In her commentary on the film, Catherine Lupton points out that the dilemmas of representing Siberia

> "are addressed explicitly in the commentary and activated by a playful mixing of cinematic idioms… *Letter from Siberia* contrasts colour with black and white sequences, and combines still photos with animation – including a spoof television commercial for reindeer products – with location footage and archive film extracts".[20]

Marker's *Sunless* is an even less obvious candidate to be considered as a still/moving work than Resnais' *Night and Fog* but I would like to discuss some of the ways it may be considered so. Early in the film there is a sequence in a Japanese cat

cemetery. A woman is bowed in prayer. It is filmed with a movie camera but the composition is locked off and then held for a length of time, so it could almost be a filmed still image. Suddenly the image moves and seems to spring to life, as the woman raises from her statue-like prayer pose. In an excellent piece of hand held camera work, the camera pans up with the movement of the praying woman, then cranes up as she stands, and travels around her as she moves. (The movement is adept and unassuming but would have been very difficult to do with a hand-held 16mm camera, even with an excellent focus puller).

Clearly, there is some interplay between stillness and movement in the cat cemetery sequence but this alone does not warrant special attention in terms of still/moving-ness. After all, this could be seen as observational documentary camera 101: 'the subject is still, the camera stays still; the subject moves, the camera moves with it ...' There is however, other interplay between the still and moving in *Sunless*, that is illuminating in terms of the still/moving.

Early in the film, there are three moments where Marker uses freeze frames as punctuation points. After talking about remembering and forgetting (and the relationship between the two), the narrator asks "How can we remember thirst?" (I guess this is about how can we remember a feeling, a physical sensation?). The image shown with this narration is an image of a woman on a ferry looking at water and the wake going by. She turns to camera, looks into the lens and the image freezes for about ten seconds. The length of time is long enough to stand out as an unusual juncture in a moving picture film. It also allows space to think about the cryptic comment. (I think I can remember thirst but maybe I can only remember a time when I felt thirsty).

Shortly after this moment are two more extended freeze frame moments. The first is in a working class bar in a Tokyo suburb called Namidabashi. The camera man/narrator (an alter-ego of Marker's) says he paid for a round of drinks in the bar. 'It's the kind of place that allows people to stare at each other with equality. The threshold below which every man is as good as any other and he knows it'. Cut to a medium close-up of an older looking man with a face that looks like it has been

toughened and hardened with age and too much drink. He turns to face the camera. Freeze frame. 10 seconds.

We then are introduced to a jetty on Fogo in the Cape Verde Islands, once a marshalling yard for slaves in the former Portuguese colony. People of mixed Portuguese and African decent are milling around awaiting for a boat. Several of the people look at the camera looking at them. The narrator asks: "Frankly have you ever heard anything stupider than to tell people – as they teach in film schools – not to look into the camera?" As the question is posed we see an image – locked off and almost as piercing as a still – of a handsome young African woman looking straight into the lens. We then see several images of people at the jetty aware of the camera looking at them. Mostly, the people look away, but in the final image a young woman looks straight back at the camera looking at her. Cue the freeze frame. 10 seconds.

Figure 93: Three images from *Sunless* (1983). Cape Verde Islanders looking at the camera. The final image is held as a freeze frame.

Using freeze frames in this manner, Marker is saying something about the inter-relationship of cinema and photography (and time). But this is a truism – any moving picture that freezes the image poses some sort of question about the inter-relationship of cinema and photography (and time). I don't think this questioning is his reason for these extended moments of stillness. Instead, I think this interplay between motion and stasis is more to do with editing, storytelling and rhythm. The freeze frames are extended moments of pause, reflection and punctuation. The three freezes occur within a minute or so of each other, and in each of them, the subjects look into the lens. They are 'beats', and the final Cape Verde island freeze is 'a cap' to an action, the end of a pattern of three.

In other words, part of still/moving-ness is not only to do with rhythm and punctuation (or upsetting our expectation, anticipation of a certain rhythm and punctuation). It is expressive and even musical.

With these ideas of still/moving in mind, I'd like to now turn to look at some of Agnes Varda documentaries. Like Marker, Varda has a large and impressive body of work including the film-photo-essays, *Ulysses* (1982); *Ydessa, Teddy Bears and etc.* (2004); and seventeen episodes of *Une minute pour une image* (*One minute per image*), a series of meditations on specific photographs made for French Television in 1983. But rather than open up discussion of these later film-photo-essays, I'd like to return to the earlier work of hers that I discussed above, *Salut les Cubains.*

Varda and *Salut les Cubains'* still/moving rhythms

> ***Photogénies*** **magazine:** Photography and Cinema: first cousins or inimical brothers?
> **Agnes Varda**: Cinema and photography throw back to each other – vainly – their specific effects. To my mind cinema and photography are like a brother and sister who are enemies… after incest.[21]

In my earlier brief discussion of *Salut les Cubains*, I suggested that on the surface it resembled a slide show. That is: the film is made almost entirely from still images; it

documents a journey to an exotic location; it relies on voice-over narration; and it is organized around conventional themes such as education, schools, farms, industry. In this regard, the film has the hallmarks of a slide show travelogue, or a picture essay in *Time-Life* or *National Geographic.*

On the other hand, *Salut les Cubains* turns these conventions on their head and is not like a slide show travelogue, or a *National Geographic* picture essay in significant ways. The film mixes live action and stills; it is all filmed in black and white; it is deliberately photographed to be an animated film; and the organising principle is not just conventional categories of farmers, faces, arts, and culture but is also playful and idiosyncratic. At one point the images are organised around a theme of Cuban men and beards; at another, the curvy figures and sexiness of Cuban woman; and late in the film, there is a – very French New Wave – nod to Cuba evoking Hollywood (big American cars from gangster films and cowboys who look like characters from *Johnny Guitar*).

The narration is different as well. It is a dialogue of sorts not a monologue, and the two voices – one male and one female – are in song, in rhythm and in counterpoint to each other. It is like the man is the verse and the woman is the refrain and chorus. Finally, the film differs from a mainstream slide show travelogue, or a picture essay by taking sides with the revolution (not vice versa, as per the dominant American and French media of the early '60s, Cold War era when it was made).

Early in the chapter I indicated the label 'slide show documentary' was perhaps, convenient shorthand, but it was also limiting. In the case of *Salut les Cubains* this is clearly the case. The film takes a well-worn form – the travelogue – and re-works it in playful and inventive ways. *Salut les Cubains* is much more than a 'slide show documentary'. It is an exploration of a form and innovative hybrid of film, music, documentary, photography and propaganda.

Earlier in the chapter, I talked about still/moving-ness not just being concerned about rhythm and punctuation but it also being expressive and even musical. Reviewing *Salut les Cubains*, I was struck by its joyousness, its love of people and faces (its humanity), *and* its musicality. It did not feel like a film poem, so much as a piece of

film jazz. The animated portrait of *Salut les Cubains* seemed like an attempt to combine modernist ideas of visual music with social(ist) realist documentary. (Varda's 'revolution with *cha-cha-cha*'). [22]

The film opens with live-action footage of Cubans playing jazz in the street. Music continues for most of the twenty-one minute duration. There are some changes in tempo and tune but an Afro-Cuban beat is never far away. The opening credit sequence sets up the film in other ways as well. Images pan from musicians playing infectious Afro-Cuban jazz to the French film crew documenting them. As the camera pans to the Westerners filming and sound recording, there is a freeze frame and then a superimposed credit. This is a simple and effective strategy for an opening credit sequence but it is also an unassuming piece of documentary reflexivity; foregrounding the constructed-ness of representation, and that the film is ultimately an impression from a group of Western tourist/reporters. This type of reflexivity – a questioning of our choices, our means of representation, how we perceive images – is a recurring theme in the work of Varda and other Left Bank directors.

The opening credits also establish a still/moving approach, as part of the film's visual style. Musicians play. The scene is full of movement, life and liveliness. Suddenly it is frozen still. The musical beat continues but there is a moment of pause and punctuation in the visual track. This rhythmic interplay between motion and stillness recurs throughout the film. After the opening credit sequence the rest of the film is made totally from photographs, so it is not just a matter of using select freeze frames in moving images. Re-watching the film it is clear that Varda set out to make an animation using photographs. Varda did not just shoot eight hundred images in Cuba and then put them together on a film editing bench. There are numerous sequences where the camera is locked off and then dozens of photographs are taken from that position. When re-assembled in editing, these then play back as animated sequences. Most of these locked off sequences depict people in active modes – working, dancing, playing. Because these people have been photographed while moving during activity, when they are reanimated in a film timeline, it is almost as if they become doubly animated. For example, there is a sequence in the film featuring a legendary Cuban musician and dancer widely known as 'The King' (Benny Móre).

Through a repeated sequence of animated stills (and some amazing editing), 'The King' dances to the beat of the music towards camera. The images move from showing his full body-length in a medium wide shot, to him dancing towards camera and looking straight into the lens in a big close up. At this point the still frame is held for several extended beats and the image stops moving.

Figure 94: 'King Benny', *Salut les Cubains* (1963). Three images from a film sequence made from an animated series of photographs showing 'King' Benny Móre, in a fluid dance to camera.

Movement and stasis. Rhythm and punctuation. There is a pattern about still/moving-ness forming here. Before ending this chapter, I am going to quickly return to looking at *City of Gold* and *The Civil War* to draw out this idea further. *Salut les Cubains* is a very different film to either *City of Gold* or *The Civil War* but like *Salut les Cubains*, I would argue that these films are also limited and short-changed by the label 'slide show documentary'.

In my earlier discussion of these films, I mentioned they both contained some live-action sequences. *City of Gold* is 'book-ended' with two live-action moving image sequences and the archival stills used in the *The Civil War* are inter-cut with interviews and 'timeless' images of nature. In both of these works, the moving footage is reminiscent of filmed photographs. That is, the camera is locked off and the frame is held for an extended length of time with barely any movement within the frame. For example in *Civil War* we may see an image of a crimson sunset over a slow barely moving image of the Mississippi river. In *City of Gold* we see a ruin of an old gold-rush era house. The paint has peeled, the signage is faded and worn. It is dead still. The only thing that stops it looking like a photograph is some dust or dandelion seeds floating by in the foreground. These aren't just isolated examples. Burns instructed his camera operators to film 'overlay' shots as if they were stills.[23] And in *City of Gold* all of the opening shots of Dawson City are filmed with a locked off camera with very little movement within the frame. Gradually the image is stilled to such an extent it seems to burst to life when, in fact, the filmmakers do cut to the archival stills. Part of this 'bursting to life' is the amount of activity shown in the archival images. Part of it is the rapid banjo music that accompanies the archival photos, and part is also the change in tempo of the narrator - gone are the sleepy days of an old ghost town and here we are with the excitement of the quest to make it to Dawson and strike it rich.

This is getting complicated and one of the factors that complicate matters is the use of music and sound – both elements that play key roles in animating the images of both *Civil War* and *City of Gold* (and probably most films ever made). There is a lengthy discussion to be had about the role of music and sound design in animation, in general; and in still/moving films, in particular. For now though, in the interests

of focusing this discussion, I am closing the lid on this can of worms.

In the first paragraph of this exegesis I defined still/moving films as those that sat between still images (photography) and moving pictures (cinema). This definition still holds but in the body of the exegesis, I deepened it in two main ways. Firstly, I argued the ghost of the slide show haunts many documentaries, especially those that may be termed still/moving. Secondly, I argued that to equate 'slide show documentaries' with 'still/moving-ness' misses the mark and that the still/moving is something more. It is also an inter-play of motion and stasis used for punctuation and expression, rhythm and music.

In the introduction of this exegesis, I also made a big claim that a characteristic of still/moving documentaries was their preoccupation with time, memory, mortality and death. I explore this contention in the final part of the exegesis.

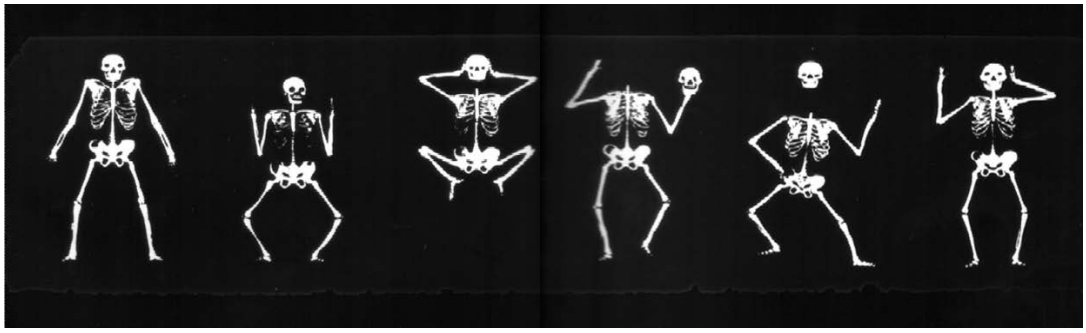


Figure 95: 'Dancing Skeleton' Magic Lantern Slide designed to be projected in sequence, to make a still/moving animated sequence, pre the invention of cinema. TH. McAllister, USA, c. 1880.

CHAPTER 9 DEAD BUT STILL/MOVING

> Photography never ceases to instruct me when making films. And cinema reminds me at every instant that it films motion for nothing, since every image becomes a memory, and all memories congeal and set. In all photography there's the suspension of movement, which in the end is the refusal of movement. There is motion in vain. In all film there's the desire to capture the motion of life, to refuse immobility. But in film the still image is in vain, like the forboding of a car breakdown, like watching out for death.
> (Agnes Varda, 1984)[1].

> Film is all light and shadow, incessant motion, transience, flicker, a source of Bachelardian reverie like the flames in the grate.
> Photography is motionless and frozen, it has the cryogenic power to preserve objects through time without decay. Fire will melt ice, but then the melted ice will put out the fire.
> (Peter Wollen 'Fire and Ice', 1984)[2]

My chapter title 'Dead but still/moving' can be read three ways. It refers to the slide show being a dead form but there still being life in it (as suggested by the contemporary slide show examples mentioned in the Introduction). It also refers to an obvious point of difference between photography and cinema – one being still pictures and the other moving. And finally, it refers to a continuum between photography and cinema. If we think of cinema as a series of projected still images – a second of moving image is typically 24 or 25 projections of still images – then still and moving image photography form two ends of a spectrum and the slide show, magic lantern presentations, and contemporary still/moving work occupy a space somewhere in between.

Figure 96: Two buckets. Still from *Siberia* Photo: Andrew Taylor, 1992

Death 24x a Second

Laura Mulvey's book, *Death 24x a Second* investigates time, stillness, movement and death in their cinematic incarnations. A central idea running through Mulvey's book is an examination of a fundamental illusion of cinema: twenty-four still frames per second of screen time creates the illusion of motion. Reflecting on Vertov's, *The Man with a Movie Camera*, Mulvey discusses a sequence where the movement of a galloping horse is frozen into a still frame of a horse and is then reanimated… "In stillness they (the horse frames) represent photography but in movement they represent cinema".[3]

This technical observation is nothing new but Mulvey marries this observation with an exploration of ideas of the psychological *uncanny*[4] and an association of photography with death. According to Mulvey:

> The answer to Godard's question in *Le Petit Soldat* (1960) – 'What is cinema? … truth 24 x per second' should also be 'death 24 x per second'. The photograph's freezing of reality - truth in Godard's definition - marks a transition from the animate to the inanimate, from life to death.[5]

As smart and seductive as this sounds, in order to go along with Mulvey's arguments we need to accept the link between still photography and death. To assist us here, Mulvey looks at writing on photography by Andre Bazin and Roland Barthes.

Embalming time, the death mask as an index and *memento mori*

In Bazin's "The Ontology of the Photographic Image", he argues the process of embalming time, stopping the flow of time is perfectly realised by photography.

> "Death is but the victory of time. To preserve the bodily appearance artificially is to snatch it away from the flow of time, to stow it neatly away, so to speak, in the hold of life".[6]

In Barthes' *Camera Lucida,* the presence of death in the photograph is a constant recurring theme.

> 'All those young photographers who are at work in the world, determined upon the capture of actuality, do not know that they are agents in the capture of death'. [7]

At another point Barthes follows in the wake of Bazin's 'embalming', 'preserving' and 'mummification' analogies:

> 'For death must be somewhere in society; if it is no longer (or less intensely) in religion it must be elsewhere; perhaps in this image which produces death while trying to preserve life'.[8]

In *On Photography*, Susan Sontag rolls these ideas of Bazin and Barthes together in the oft quoted passage:

> All photographs are *memento mori*. To take a photograph is to participate in another person's (or thing's) mortality, vulnerability, mutability. Precisely by slicing out this moment and freezing it, all photographs testify to time's relentless melt.[9]

Figure 97: Andre Bazin, 1918-1958 (Photographer unknown)

Figure 98: Roland Barthes, 1915-1980 (Photographer unknown)

Figure 99: Susan Sontag, 1933- 2004. Photo: Jill Krementz

Death Everywhere

After reading Mulvey et. al, I started to see manifestations of stillness and motion, life and death everywhere. Especially death. I started to see every film made as a film about death. Populist thrillers or more extreme blockbuster action films with huge body counts could be read as veiled explorations of death. Many photographs and still life paintings, appeared to me as meditations on life and death. And if they weren't about death, then every other work I saw seemed to be about time, memory, mortality… Here we are back at death again. Not quite. Death is final, mortality is a contemplation of that finality.

Figure 100: *Untitled* Photo: David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson, ca. 1845

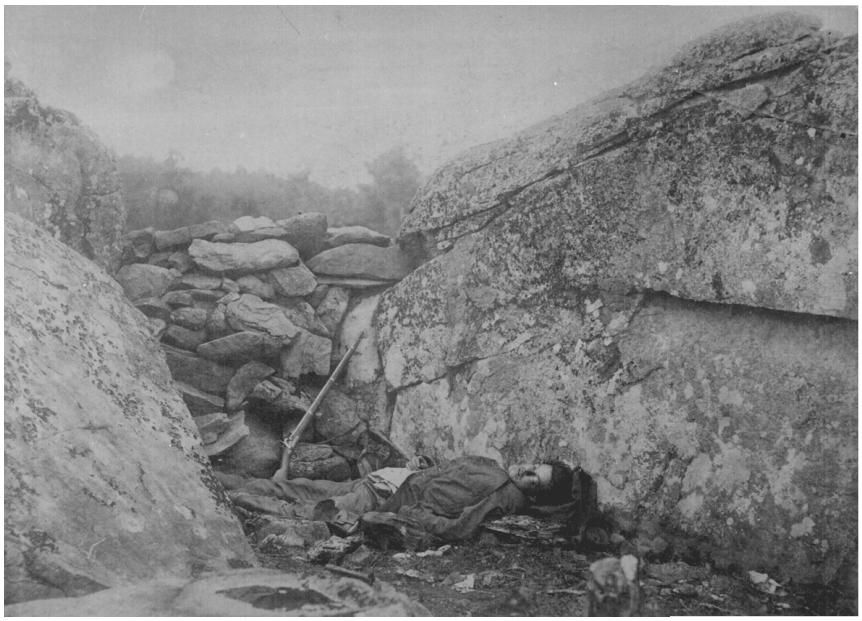


Figure 101: Dead Confederate sharpshooter in the Devil's Den, Gettysburg, Pa., July 1863. Photographed by Alexander Gardner. (One of the images used in Ken Burns' *The Civil War*).

Figure 102: Union and Confederate dead, Gettysburg Battlefield, Pa., July 1863. Photographed by Timothy H. O'Sullivan.

Figure 103: *Paris communards* Photo: André Adolphe Eugéne Disdéri, 1871

Figure 104: Body of Joe Byrne, member of Kelly Gang. Photo: JW Lindt, 1880

Figure 105: *Car Accident – US 66, between Winslow and Flagstaff, Arizona.* Robert Frank, 1955

Figure 106: *Untitled* Photo: Carl Mydans, 1963

Figure 107: *Vanitas Still Life* Oil Painting: Aelbert Jansz, c.1645.

The Cold of Winter

Maybe these repeated 'visions of death' were a case of the 'new car phenomena'. After all, 'life', 'death', 'time', 'memory', 'mortality' are major themes in works of art. They are not exactly new either. But I was taken by Mulvey's arguments and her work has resonated with me. I've noticed that one of the characteristics of 'slide show films' and still/moving sequences is how often they are used in film to reflect on life and death; time and memory. The frozen horse sequence from Guy Madden's *My Winnipeg* plays like a visual thesis on themes in Mulvey's book: the animate/inanimate; motion/stasis; life/death... Madden's sequence sets out at a cracking pace. Using animated paper cut-outs, it depicts race-horses fleeing a fire at a racetrack in Winnipeg. In the frenzy of their flight they dive into a nearby river only to be trapped by some compacting frozen ice. The narration and images slow down to a walking pace. Archival footage shows the horses' faces and necks poking out of the frozen river, twisted and distorted in anguished poses of death. The horses and their poses of death remain frozen in ice and snow throughout the following winter. Madden's wry commentary chimes in to describe the frozen horse heads as being, "like eleven knights on a vast white chessboard".[10]

Figure 108: Still from archival film footage showing horses trapped in frozen river. Reproduced as part of an animated mixed media sequence, ' The Cold of Winter (1926)', in Guy Madden's *My Winnipeg*.

The above *My Winnipeg* example is not an isolated case. Significantly, all of the films mentioned in the introduction – *Edie and Thea…*, *Sadness*, *Tarnation*, *An Inconvenient Truth* – are all, in part, meditations on 'time-memory-mortality' and are concerned with 'life-death' themes. In light of this idea these works are discussed below.

Edie and Thea : a very long engagement

Edie and Thea: a very long engagement opens on two silhouetted figures (Edie and Thea) looking at slide images of their younger selves projected on a kitchen cupboard. The style is loose, casual, at home – the camera wobbles and re-frames. The crack and handles of the kitchen cupboard used as a screen are clearly visible. Edie and Thea respond to the images with gasps of recognition, wise-cracks and narrational asides.

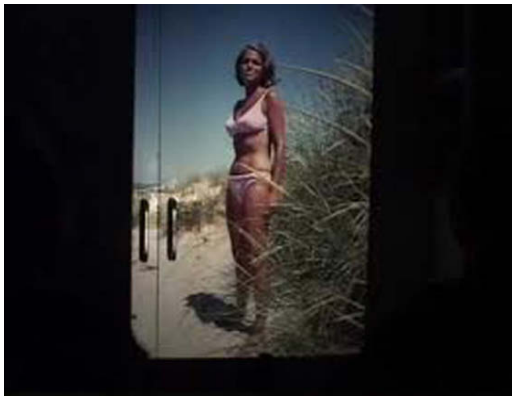


Figure 109: Slide of Edie projected on kitchen cupboard. Still from *Edie & Thea: A very long term engagement* Photo: Susan Muska & Greta Olafsdóttir, 2009.

The women in the projected images are attractive and thirty-something. Young. The women commenting on the images are eighty-something. No longer young. The film is a story of a long-term relationship, an extraordinary love-affair, and New York/lesbian social history. The opening juxtaposition between the young and old Edie and Thea also establishes it as some form of meditation on youth, age and mortality. This is reinforced by continued cross-cutting throughout the film between images of Edie and Thea, as young women, and images of them now. Their respective life stories are told in parallel to the story of them travelling to Canada to be legally married, after being in a relationship for fifty years. As the story unfolds, Thea becomes increasingly frail. She dies before the film is released and her passing is acknowledged in a full frame 'text card' before closing credits roll. So, on one hand, the film is a celebration of the two women's lives together but on the other, it is also a documentation of the end and death of this life together.

Sadness

The film version of William Yang's slide show monologue*, Sadness,* interweaves two strands. One, is a slightly folksy recreation of a journey to north Queensland, where Yang explores his Chinese-Australian heritage. The other is a series of reflections based on Yang's friends – mostly gay men from Sydney – who Yang photographed while a social photographer in the late '70s and '80s, and then later when many were dying from HIV-related illnesses.

The film opens on images of 35mm slides being shuffled around a light box. Yang

narrates off-screen: ‘All my work begins with photographs’. We then see images suggesting Yang’s Chinese-Australian heritage and several images of young men and parties from the ‘80s. Yang continues his narration: ‘When I re-read my diaries from the early 90s, I saw that I’d been to more wakes than parties…’

Slides are placed in a carousel and a close-up of Yang’s hand presses the slide remote-control, advancing the carousel to the next frame, and the film to the next sequence. A haunting wooden flute underscores Yang’s narration, and sets the tone for the film’s ensuing meditation on sadness, death and dying.

Figure 110: William Yang projects a slide of his friend Allan, whose story forms part of Tony Ayers’ film and William Yang’s monologue performance, *Sadness* Photo: Anne Zahalka, 1996.

The Marlboro Marine

Figure 111: Marine Lance Corporal James Blake aka *'The Marlboro Marine'* Photo: Luis Sinco / LA Times, 2004.

> It's an insane connection that you make with that person... to see somebody in your sights, and to pull that trigger...it's almost like you are there with them, seeing their life flash before your eyes…
> (James Blake, quoted in *The Marlboro Marine*)

The Marlboro Marine (USA, 2007) resides on the site Media Storm and is based on a series of photographs by *LA Times* photojournalist, Luis Sinco, narrated off-screen by returned Iraqi veteran, James Blake. Sinco's photograph of Marine Lance Corporal James Blake (above) became an iconic image in America after the siege of Fallujah in 2004. Sinco's film opens showing partially animated stills of US soldiers in a conflict zone in Iraq but the body of the film is a series of photos of Blake back in Kentucky trying to readjust to life as a civilian. The ex-marine suffers from depression and post-traumatic shock syndrome, his marriage unravels, and his life falls apart. He contemplates and plans his suicide but eventually drives across the country to seek professional help.

The tone and imagery of *The Marlboro Marine* comes from a very different place to *Sadness* and *Edie & Thea*… It doesn't fit the 'time-memory-mortality' paradigm as neatly as these films do but its concern with life during and after war, including Blake's reflections on killing another and his contemplation of suicide, place it

within the contemplative 'life-death' themes characteristic of still/moving films.

The rise of personal and biographical documentaries

> The camera introduces us to unconscious optics as does psychoanalysis to unconscious impulses. (Walter Benjamin, 1936)[11]

Can the preoccupations of still/moving films be accounted for by the rise of personal and biographical documentaries? The films discussed above are all narratives and are either told directly in the first person or have a distinctly personal or biographical focus. Towards the end of my earlier discussion of Nan Goldin's work, I alluded to the trend towards a convergence of photography, biography and documentary. Since the late '70s, we have seen a burgeoning of first person, family and biographical documentaries. Many of these works explore unconscious themes that one may uncover in therapy – eg. the dominance of a father figure, influences of violence or drugs and alcohol, feelings of otherness …These films tend to draw more heavily than others on still and moving images, a combination of stills, slides and home-movies. In her book *Family Frames* (1997), Marianne Hirsch, suggests that in their examination of the family and the past these films have a tendency to examine the still image in more depth and detail, and images are held on screen longer. Hirsch argues that these films are more likely to reveal psychologically. They combine Benjamin's 'optical unconscious' with a psychological investigation into the (filmmaker's) unconscious[12]. This final point combining Benjamin and Hirsch does not negate Mulvey's arguments but it does provide another explanation for the prevalence of 'time-memory-death' themes in so many recent documentaries, especially the ones I have discussed that I began calling 'slide show documentaries'.

An Inconvenient Truth as a meditation on 'time-memory-mortality'?

Surely, it is a big stretch to suggest that *An Inconvenient Truth* is a meditation on 'time-memory-mortality'? Clearly, the film is concerned with the issue of global warming but re-watching the film, it is surprising how much it is *also* concerned with

time and memory. For example; the shots where cross-sections of icebergs are revealed to indicate their age, like rings of trees in an old growth forest, are also depictions of time (and an environmental memory). Similarly, the film's shots of glaciers, giant icebergs and snowy peaks of Kilimanjaro, before and after recent warming, are also images concerned with changes *over time*. And the film's many wide-screen graphs, showing rising levels of carbon and temperatures are also concerned with changes *over time*.

In considering the work as a still/moving film, it is also interesting to note how stasis and movement is used in transitional moments. There are many scenes where Gore has discussed something dire about global warming and we see him looking down pensively or off to the distance. For a few beats the viewer might think it is a freeze frame – he is alive but it is as if he is contemplating death or mortality – and then he blinks or moves his head slightly. Cut to Gore animated and alive again. He is back in the lecture theatre continuing his message of imminent danger (and need for action).

In order to break down the 'coldness' of the filmed lecture format, the film includes sequences where we get to know something more about of Al Gore, the person. Significant episodes from his life are re-created as memories. In these sequences movement is slowed down considerably or stilled altogether. For example; there's a sequence of black and white stills showing Al Gore and his six-year old son in hospital after his son nearly died from a car accident. The pace of the cutting slows down and there is very little camera movement on the stills. The pictures barely move. Neither do the shots of the Harvard lecture theatre, that are used to evoke memories of the place where Gore first became interested in the issues of the film (and where he probably saw educational slide shows a bit like the one he gives in the movie). Images recreating memories of Gore's childhood, back on the family farm down South, are filmed with a warm home movie-like patina. They are moving pictures not stills but the camera speed, rhythm and overall visual style are all slowed down considerably. Like the live-action sequences in *The Civil War*, these sequences in the film have a pace that resembles photographs that are slowly moving.

Photography is Mute…Cinema is Deaf…

So, returning to my fascination with the slide show and the still/moving, moving/still form, perhaps, unconsciously I've been trying to say something about these big imponderable themes: life and death, time and memory… For me it is as if photography alone is too silent to speak. It is mute. And cinema is usually so busy moving that it is unable to stop and hear – it is deaf or suffers from partial deafness. Whereas 'still/moving films' are in-between – they can 'speak' more than still images do standing alone, but they allow more space than their 'pure' moving image relatives.

Mulvey expresses this idea more poetically than I am able to and also gives a further clue for the prevalence of 'time - memory - death' themes in still/moving films:

> Unlike the photograph, a movie watched in the correct conditions (in the dark, twenty-four frames per second) tends to be elusive. Like running water, fire or the movement of trees in the wind, this elusiveness has been intrinsic to the cinema's fascination and its beauty. The insubstantial and irretrievable passing of the celluloid film image is in direct contrast to the way that the photograph's stillness allows *time for the presence of time* (my italics) to emerge within the image… [13]

Conclusion: The Curious Creature that baffled the World

As much as I'd like to end with Mulvey's rich and evocative quote there is a niggling query and doubt with my characterisation of still/moving form that I'd like to discuss. Do still/moving films suffer from being in between two forms? Do they neither have the satisfaction of still photography, where the viewer is allowed to determine the length of their view and time of contemplation, nor the immersive pleasure of cinema (moving pictures). Or, to paraphrase Barthes, do you feel like you have never ever been there before, nor are you not there now?[14] Put simply, are still/moving films 'neither fish nor fowl'?

In concluding (and in defence of some slide show and still/moving work), I'd like to explore a non-pejorative connotation of the phrase 'neither fish nor fowl'. My

example is from the world of natural history. In an article " *The taxonomy of Platypus: the curious creature that baffled the world"* (Moyal, 2002), Moyal writes:

> From the moment the first preserved specimen of a platypus reached England in 1799 it was a wonder. Was this a colonial hoax? A creature with webbed feet and the bill of a duck attached to the body of a quadruped? Astonished naturalists pondered an animal that confounded all their views of taxonomic classification…

Moyal goes on to discuss the profound influence of the platypus in science and evolutionary thought, including its influence on Darwin in formulating his theories of evolution.

> In 1836 Charles Darwin, visiting Australia aboard the Beagle, became the first key British scientist to sight the live platypus…'A Disbeliever in everything beyond his reason might exclaim,' he noted in his diary, 'surely two Creators must have been at work'. But shaping his theory of evolution and natural selection later, that 'wonderful creature', as he called it, seen in an Australian river on a summer's evening, drifted in his consciousness and became a persistent player in his maturing ideas on biogeography and the survival of special species in isolation.
>
> The extreme oddity of the animal and of other Australian fauna fuelled the general British perception that Australia with its convicts was also a 'zoological penal colony' - a faunal Gulag where everything was 'queer and opposite'.

And more recently:

> Researchers discovered that the platypus has an 'electric' beak, a dense set of nerve endings across the shield on its bill that enables it to find its food… From this striking evidence researchers concluded that the platypus left the mainstream and evolved a completely new and distinct sensory system that differed from any other animal…[15]

I have a hunch there is something special about the unorthodox hybridity of still/moving works. They are like the platypus: a form that defies the usual categories;

fragile but well adapted to its environment; thought-provoking; enigmatic; elusive; and revealing of other ways of understanding the world.

In my mind, works as disparate as *Night and Fog*, *Letter from Siberia*, *Salut Les Cubains*, *Yukon Gold*, *The Civil War, Sadness*, *Tarnation*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *My Winnipeg*, and even *Siberia,* are all 'platypus films'. They all share an interest in exploring other ways of showing and telling; of understanding and illuminating the world. At worst, they are all strange and unusual, and at best they are also different and memorable. If nothing else, it is not so bad being a curious creature that baffles the world.

Figure 112: *Platypus*, Watercolour Drawing JW Lewin, 1870

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1	*Princes Bridge* script
Appendix 2	iPhoto Sketches - See attached DVD labelled 'Film-Photo-Sketches'. Titles on disc: *Fobidden Zone*; *The Arbat – One Hour Photo #1;* *Paradise Return;* *Vladivostok Portraits – One Hour Photo #2;* *July Road Movie.*
Appendices 3-7	Draft scripts of film-photo-essays:
Appendix 3	*Making memory (July Road Movie)*)
Appendix 4	Film-Photo-Essay: *Ghost Metropolis*
Appendix 5	Film-Photo-Essay: *Ticket to Paradise*
Appendix 6	Film-Photo-Essay: Lee *Miller and the Rat*
Appendix 7	Film-Photo-Essay: *World War One Album*
Appendix 8	The Invention of Kodachrome
Appendix 9	Memories of Slide Shows

APPENDIX 1

Princess Bridge

The day my father died he gave me an old photo album – photos his father took as a soldier during World War One.

"I know you are interested in history…so I thought you might like these ", he said.

Like most snaps they are more of a record of the holiday than the horror…

Later that day, we drove out to see my sister near the Dandenongs. It was a Sunday afternoon and so there was space to talk. He told me his father had seen the soldier next to him blown to pieces by a shell. It must've been a living hell.

This is a photo of my father as a small boy. Here are some other images of him throughout his life.

On the night my father died someone reported to the police that they saw a man that matched my father's description carrying a heavy sack over the new footbridge across the Yarra, in front of where the old Allen's neon was.

The phone rang at 3.30 in the morning. It was the police. Someone found his body under Princess Bridge – near the site of the new museum.

Here's a photo of him also under Princess Bridge , right next to where he died.

He used to like driving home by the river. It was scenic and it reminded him of his rowing days.

(AT., Draft #4, c. April 2000)

APPENDIX 2

Film-photo-essay sketches - See attached DVD .

APPENDIX 3

Making memory. (July road movie)

I took a digital camera on a holiday. It was mid-2003 but for me these cameras were still novel.

As the memory chip filled up I deleted images to make more memory. I found deleting memory led to narratives emerging. The more memory I deleted, the stronger the narrative.

My stills became like home movies – fragments of a life story.

Snow movie, Catho., pj's b'day , trip to melb., pj and o. at rockpool

While deleting images - making memory - I was reminded of the adage that 'drama is life with the boring bits taken out'.

What will these new digital tools make of projects to document one's life; the diarising of a life.

Web pages and visual blogs featuring daily snaps from people's personal lives have sprung up everywhere. Low resolution images are shared in cyberspace.

The pictures have an air of documentary realism. They are often more intimate and in your face than traditional 35 mm snaps. They are not necessarily more truthful but there's a feeling of veracity because of the

grime and blur and in your faceness about much of the photos. They tend to be grittier, grottier, grungier.

They are more likely to be a slice of life, less an idealised version of reality. Life with the boring bits left in.

Sequence from *Text America* or similar visual blog sites. Pub shots.

As digital photography becomes ubiquitous, there is a growing desire and trend for a pre-digital, painterly photographic look. A romantic other.

Fractured moments, blur and weird distorted colours are more likely to be seen as attractive qualities not photographic mistakes

On the way home from holidays, I filmed a dozen or so images out of the car window and made a very short road movie.

The pictures are pure digital but the softness of the light, their pastel tones and blurriness, gives the pictures a soft 'filmic' quality. (the fluffy clouds remind people of Bill Henson).

It was thrilling to be able to suck the pictures into my computer, arrange them, add a soundtrack and play them as a sequence – all in next to no time.

Yet looking at this micro road movie, I was struck by its sense of yearning and loss. It was as if there was an in-built analogue nostalgia in the new digital aesthetic.

APPENDIX 4

Ghost metropolis.

July 1996

Recently, I chanced across an old photo album in a library collection. It had a romantic quality that comes to things with the passing of time.

The album was a personal record of typical scenes of life (for a colonial settler) in a frontier town in Australia circa 1910.

[Europeans in Edwardian era clothes having a Sunday picnic, playing tennis, the jetty, the telegraph station, an Aboriginal labourer chopping wood, some "*wild blacks*"…]

The town depicted was Eucla – an old telegraph repeater town, on the edge of the Nullarbor plain, near the state borders of South and Western Australia.

A quirky photo showed employees from the telegraph office passing a telegram across a desk, which represented the border between two states.

Shortly after the scenes were taken, telegraph technology changed and the town died.

I visited the site of the town shortly after seeing the album. I saw the remains of the telegraph station chimney poking up in the sand-dunes and felt a melancholy for the life that had passed. (How must Indigenous

Australians feel, when they see their lands that are, but are no more?)

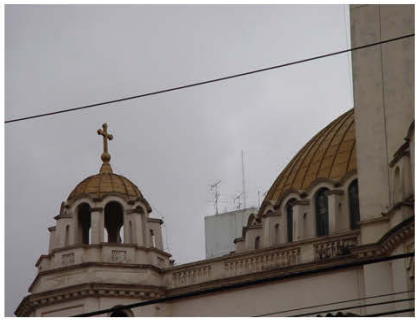
All over Australia, fertile land is turning to salt and water supplies are running out. Based on current trends, scientists predict the cities of Perth and Adelaide will run out of fresh water in less than twenty years. They will be the world's first ghost metropolises.

Spooky or what?

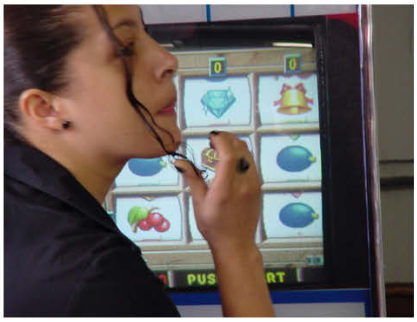
APPENDIX 5

Ticket to Paradise

Ticket to paradise # 1



Ticket to paradise#2



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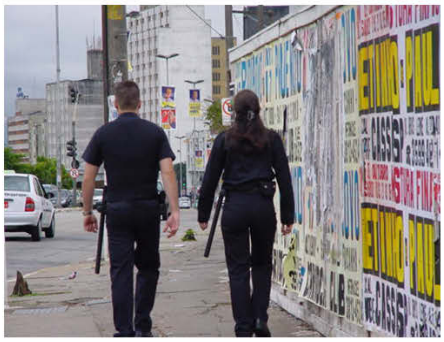


Ticket to Paradise

September 2002

I knew only the clichés of Brazil.

[images of Rio, salsa, Pele, poverty, military dictators, the Amazon…]

Beyond this, my knowledge was bitsy – I remembered the film *Black Orpheus* and the lead couple being so beautiful and sexy it was cruel.

[images of the beautiful and sexy lead couple in *Black Orpheus*]

I remembered Salgado's photos –awesome and epic shots of Brazilian gold miners (the miners were virtually slaves. In a brutal deal they worked seven days a week, 15 hours a day, for piece rates – mostly 3/8ths of nothing).

[Salgado's photos - wide shots showing thousands of ant-like workers trailing up steep sides of the mine; close ups showing the strain of shouldering huge weights up slippery muddy paths]

On the plane I read an amazing account of Palmares, a self-governing community founded by fugitive African slaves from north-eastern sugar plantations at the start of the 17th century. The community flourished but in 1670 the central government decreed the destruction of the Palmares and in the next 25 years mounted no fewer than ten full scale military expeditions against it…

[shots from plane]

The man next to me was going to Fortaleza - a city in the north that I had never heard of that has a population of more than 2 million. It was another reminder of how little I knew of this country.

He told me the incredible story of the Presidential candidate, 'Lula' .

Originally part of a landless peasant family that migrated from the impoverished northeast, the seven-year old Lula worked as a shoe-shine boy in the streets of Sao Paulo and later as a metal worker and assembly worker in the Volkswagon factory. Lula had no formal education and was initially reluctant to be involved in politics...

[shots of 'Lula']

… but he was politicised by life, goal sentences, and being a union organiser. After four attempts, Lula was tipped to win next week's election and become Brazil's first ever democratically elected left-wing leader.

Electioneering in the streets of Sao Paulo.

Twenty million live in Sao Paulo and three million of these are of Japanese descent. Many have been here for generations but still have the speech and outward mannerisms of the Japanese.

Sao Paulo's 'Japan town'.

A few stops from 'Japan town' is a subway stop called *Paraiso* - paradise or heaven. I couldn't resist buying a ticket.

[ticket to paradise sequence]

The trains in Sao Paulo reminded me of Tokyo - fast, efficient, underground, crowded. I didn't feel I could just film faces of strangers - not the old superstition of stealing one's soul - just an invasion of privacy and crass.

[Subway hands sequence]

I wound up at a rustic bar full of Lula supporters, live music, dancing and *caipirinhas* – a sugar spirit and lime juice concoction.

The next day, very hung over, I met a friend of a friend for lunch. Maria was an activist working with Indigenous people from the upper Amazon. The region is a pharmacological cornucopia – it is estimated that two thirds of the world's drugs and natural remedies come from the Amazon basin. Multinational drug companies seek patents for medicines and remedies that Indigenous Amazon people have been using for centuries but their 'ownership' doesn't

fit neatly into patent and intellectual property laws. Maria was working with Indigenous Amazonians to help fight for their rights to this ownership.

Various deadly spiders, vipers and pythons.

Inspired by Maria‘s stories of the Amazon I visited a poisonous snake and spider museum and anti-venom research institute, housed in the leafy grounds of the Sao Paulo University campus.

A scientist milking a venomous snake.

Brazilian scientists were amongst the first in the world to produce a poisonous snake antibody and they remain world leaders in toxicology.

Images from the bus. A pro-Lula university student.

On the bus coming back from the campus, I met a gentle and charming student, Sandrino. He told me about Lula and his plans for people’s forums. He talked of the necessity for social change and the despair for democracy and Brazil, if Lula lost the election.

An airport bar. A drinks waiter. A flight destination board.

My visit was fleeting – less than a week. I now know a little more that than 2 or 3

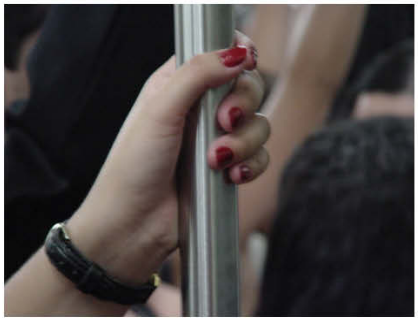
things about Brazil - the tip of an enormous iceberg. I had expected to be confronted by a land of 3rd world poverty. I know there were grim social realities that I was spared but Brazil, with its vast diversity and natural wealth, inspired a sense of possibility and hope. It felt like it could become a centre of a new world, not just the periphery of the old.

Ps.

[Lula]

Lula won the elections and there were enormous celebrations. Soon after coming to power slavery was banned.

Ticket to Paradise



APPENDIX 6

Lee Miller and the rat.

About Lee Miller, Man Ray and the rat. An investigation of a portrait and a killer life story…

Lee Miller & the rat

Lee Miller and the rat.

Image of Lee Miller in bath.

What is a good portrait?

This is one of my favourites. But unless we know who it is, it is just a picture of a woman in a bath. Perhaps a little more - the woman has a strong patrician face – interesting, if not, beautiful. (The boots are curious too).

When we find out it was Hitler's bath and he died two weeks earlier, the photo takes on a creepy, intriguing dimension.

Lee Miller had a killer life story.

She was beautiful, rich and American. In her mid-teens, Conde Nast discovered her on a street corner of New York and she became a successful *Vogue* model.

But there were some *issues* at home. She was raped by a relative when only a child and her father insisted on photographing her in the nude, throughout her teen years.

Shortly after her twentieth birthday, she ran away to Paris.

She continued her successful modelling career and became the girlfriend and muse for the Surrealist artist, Man Ray.

Man Ray's darkroom was situated close to the heart of bohemian Paris. One night Man Ray and Miller were making some prints and a rat ran across the floor. Apparently Lee Miller turned on a light in response to the rat but Man Ray yelled to turn off the light because it would ruin the prints sitting in the development chemicals.

Solarized images of Lee Miller

The flash of light produced a happy accident – the technical term is *solarization* – and the subsequent prints are amongst the best known in the history of photography and contemporary art.

Miller's famous desert landscape portrait – 'Portrait of Space, near Siwa, Egypt, 1937.

Later Miller became a photographer in her own right. This photo was taken in the late 1930s. I think it is a terrific picture – beautifully composed, timeless, enigmatic. It has elements of surrealist, documentary, and landscape photography – it is all of these and none of them.

It encapsulates many of the ideas 'Westerners' have of the so-called, 'Middle-

East'. The desert. The air of decay, romance, riddle, intrigue. The tent – a hint of nomadism, a hint of war.

Image of Miller in army uniform as *Time-Life* reporter.

Towards the end of WW2, Miller became the accredited war photographer for British vogue. She photographed Marlene Dietrich in a satin dress in Paris and then drove on to Germany, where photographed the bombed ruins of cities and war –weary faces. She also took a series of shocking, gruesome pictures of holocaust survivors and concentration camps.

Miller's images of Dachau, and war reportage.

The photos were reproduced on the cover of *Time-Life* and were amongst the first mass produced images the world had seen of the horrors of Nazism.

Miller in later life

Miller's later years were not so celebrated. Most accounts say she descended into alcoholism and became a cantankerous drunk. A recent biography argues that history has been too harsh and she was also sociable, witty and a gifted and creative cook.

Miller in bath portrait.

I am not sure if a photo can ever really encapsulate a person; a life; a soul. But if there is such a thing as a great portrait, from what I know of Lee Miller, this picture is right up there.

APPENDIX 7

WW1 photo album

Reflections on photography inspired by an album of WW1 snaps.

WW1 photo album

I never knew my grandfather, he died long before I was born but the day my father died, he gave me a photo album that had belonged to his father before him. It was an album of his WW1 snaps. “You’re interested in history, so I thought you might like this”.

The world’s first portable, mass-produced camera - Kodak’s box brownie - was launched in 1900 with the slogan ‘you press the button, we do the rest’. The sales of cameras and film stock boomed in the pre-war years and peaked in 1917.

Advertisements for the new ‘instant images’ were often pitched at the female market - mothers documenting babies, childhood milestones and sons going off to war.

(In Australia, there was only a one in five chance they’d return, so a photo really was an important thing to ‘remember them by’).

Women weren’t the only new consumers. Box Brownies were affordable to all but the poorest sections of the working class, especially with the relatively high levels of prosperity that accompanied the war economy. Many, like my grandfather, bought cameras to document their travels and adventures.

> My grandfather's snaps didn't show the hell and horror of the war – quite the contrary – most of his images fit squarely in the genre of exotic travel photography…

sequence of images of colonial adventure - soldiers in Egypt, pyramids, 'primitive' transport, monuments, ruins, grand vistas, exotic dress and customs…

> Other shots, of mates performing and larking for the camera, are the stuff of vernacular photography - from the box brownie era to happy snaps of today.

series of photos with people larking about for the camera

> I had thought Gallipoli, hadn't been mythologised until after the war. But my grandfather's panoramic shot suggests otherwise. Most of the other photos aren't printed much bigger than postage stamps, but the Gallipoli panaroma is an enlarged double page spread.

Postage stamp images and then reveal of Gallipoli panorama in centre of album.

> He must've had some sense that it was an important 'historic site' to take the picture and enlarge it to such an extent. (The camera case in the foreground, a curious self-referential touch).

Close up of camera case in foreground.

There is a huge gap in the album between 1916 and 1918 - the years of the western front and trench warfare - hell years of the war.

Perhaps the men were too busy fighting (to take photos)? Or it was too gory? Crass? Insensitive? Private? Horrific? Or even more banal - not technically possible - the light too dark for box brownies and slow film stock of yester-year.

(Or maybe he did take snaps in the trenches but they were censored)…

Hurley images - soldiers reflected in the puddle like a death march…

Frank Hurley was an Australian photographer commissioned by the government to eulogise the troops' valiant efforts. Hurley's beautiful and poetic images have been passed down as 'actuality' photos but recently they have been revealed as montaged recreations made from composite negatives. Partial fictions that, in Hurley's eyes, stood for a greater truth.

Hurley image - ethereal light shining on carnage in France…

The idea, the myth, of the photograph as historical evidence and truth is still potent, but personally, I find the most poignant images of the war comes from words: soldier's letters re-read to narrate documentaries; snatches of Wilfred Owen

poems I remember from high school; or the prose of a contemporary writer like Pat Barker.

Barker's fiction tells a version of the truth that thousands of box brownie pictures and official war photographers never captured.

Words from Pat Barker's novel, The Ghost Road, read over predominantly black screen. Superimpositions of sparsely recreated illustrative details slowly faded in and out throughout.

Black screen . Close up expression of dead Longstaffe slowly emerges through the black and then slowly melts away - is faded off to black.

MALE V/O

(from Pat Barker's *The Ghost Road*)

October 5

I think the worst time was after the counter attack, when we lay in that trench all day surrounded by the dead. I still had Longstaffe by my side but his expression changed after death. The look of surprise faded. As we listened to the wounded groaning outside two stretcher-bearers volunteered to go out and were hit as soon as they stood up…

Stretcher bearers being shot as soon as they stood up.

By nightfall most of the groaning had stopped. A few of the more lightly wounded crawled in under cover of darkness and we patched them up as best we could. But one man kept on and on, it didn't sound like a human being, or even like an animal, a sort of guttural gurgling like a blocked drain …

Image of blocked drain

…The gurgling led us to him. He was lying half way down the side of a flooded crater and the smell of gas was stronger here, as it always is near water.

Stone skimming over water

As we started down, bullets peppered the surface, plop, plop, plop, an innocent sound like when you skim a stone across a river…The gurgling changed as we got closer, so we knew something different was happening. ….

Deep blue skin.

That sound only comes from a head wound. What made it marginally worse was that the side of the head nearest me was untouched. His whole frame was shaking, his skin blue in the starlight as ours were too, but his was the deep blue of shock. I gestured to Lucas and he helped me turn him further over on his back, and we saw the wound. Brain exposed, a lot of blood, a lot of stuff not blood down the side of his neck. One eye gone…

Black.

Photos hide as much as they reveal.

Slow edited montage refrain of images from grandfather's WW1 album.

APPENDIX 8

The Invention of Kodachrome

The story of the invention of Kodachrome speaks volumes about research and development; music and creativity; New York society and American entrepreneurial capitalism. Early colour photographic technology was crude, unreliable and unstable. Prior to the invention of *Kodachrome*, slides were made using a monchromatic additive process on a potato dye. In 1935, after over twenty years of experimentation and research, two part-time musicians, Leopold Godowsky and Leopold Mannes, developed a subtractive colour process. The results were vastly superior in terms of colour acuity, verisimilitude and stability. The patented version of the new film stock and process developed by Godinsky and Manne was called *Kodachrome*. (Hence the quip, *'God and man invented colour').*

Leopold Godowsky and Leopold Mannes met in High School and became friends. They were both from families prominent in the New York musical world and shared a passion for science and music. While at High school both students conducted early experiments into the chemistry of colour photography and achieved promising results working in their high school physics laboratory.

After graduating from High School Godowsky and Mannes attended prominent Universities. Mannes attended Harvard and majored in music with a minor in physics. Godowsky studied chemistry and physics at University of California, while playing violin for the Los Angles Philharmonic. After graduating Godowsky moved back to the East coast and both he and Mannes pursued careers as musicians. However, both remained interested in an invention to make colour film more stable and life-like and throughout the 1920s they pursued a double career, working part –time experimenting with dye technology. In the early 1930s a family friend organised a meeting with George Mees, a senior R&D person with Eastman-Kodak. George Mees convinced Eastman to put them on the payroll for two years. This enabled the two to dedicate the necessary time, funds and technology to 'crack the code'. It also meant that Kodak, owned the rights to the process they invented at the end of the two year period.

The chemistry was complex. There were 28 separate chemical processes and the timing for each stage needed to be exact. In those days, there were no dark room

timers but Godowsky and Mannes' musical training came to the rescue. They would whistle a set number of bars of music to determine timing of processes while working in complete darkness. According to Godowsky:

> " We couldn't use radiant dial because of the effect it would have on our sensitive materials; and, anyway, we found watches less accurate than whistling the final movement of Brahms's C Minor Symphony at the regular beat of two beats per second. But how could you go into all that with a scientist who'd never so much as heard of the C Minor Symphony?" (Collins, *The Story of Kodak*, 213)

The complexity of the chemical processes required for Kodachrome meant the chemistry was beyond the reach of even the most dedicated amateurs or back-yard enthusiasts. This gave Kodak an additional commercial advantage as the processing of *Kodachrome* had to be controlled by Kodak or its licensees. In effect Kodak was able to keep strict quality control on its product.

Kodachrome, the world's first commercially available colour film, was released in 1935. It was initially released as 16mm movie film and then later in strips that were cut into single frames for stills. In 1937, Kodak introduced a 2" x 2" cardboard slide mount (the 'ready-mount') and began to sell slide projectors. During the depression and WW2 sales of Kodachrome were slow but sales sky-rocketed after the war peaking in the 1950s and '60s.

Despite its slow beginnings, it is fair to say that Kodachrome revolutionised colour photography. Kodachrome's vibrant saturated colours and remarkable archival stability made it a benchmark for colour photographers. It became hugely popular in the United States and many other Western countries after the war and remained 'the gold standard' for colour photography for decades. Its popularity only started to decline with the advent of the simpler E6 slide processes and better colour negative stocks from the '60s onwards. The popularisation of domestic video recorders and more recently, digital technologies, lead to its eclipse in the domestic market. Sales began to decline from the early 1970s and were negligible when the product was eventually discontinued in the 2008. Processing continued until December 2010.

APPENDIX 9

Memories of Slide Shows

Some responses from friends and acquaintances to a request asking for memories of slide shows.

Locking Everybody up in the Dark & Visiting Uncle Alf

I'm probably better on *why* slideshows than actual memories. From the Lumière brothers and the first commercialised 'natural' colour process in 1907, till very recently the only practical way to see colour photographs – as against black and white – was to project the image. Although Kodachrome was used in Australia from the mid-1930s, it was only after the Second World War that it and the Agfa clones became common place, providing a new sort of family photograph and documenting the rush to foreign travel. The death of slide shows began with negative-positive Kodacolor and the cheap colour print well before digital photography, as you could pass the photos round the group at any time, instead of having to lock everybody up in the dark.

The first slide projector in our household was bought by my brother along with a 35mm camera in 1954, when he was 22. It wasn't a carousel, of course, but a simple set-up with a left to right slide holder -- you put the first slide in one side then pushed it in front of the lens, revealing the space to put the next slide, and so on backwards and forwards. The lamps got really hot and you had to pay attention if you didn't want to burn your hands. This was a problem the Carousel largely solved, but it presented its own danger of losing and mangling slides in its innards. (I was three years younger than my brother and was obsessed by moving pictures. I had a very simple 9.5mm projector, and couldn't afford colour film ...)

I think the first slide show I remember was before all this, but probably after the War. We were visiting Uncle Alf, who always seemed a very severe character to us children. He endeared himself to me that day, however, by getting out a projector -- it must have been larger scale than 35mm -- and showing us family pictures in

colour. (I think they were Dufay photos on roll film, which must have been mounted between glass.) My memories is of aunts and uncles and cousins all in the back yard and preferable in front of a flowering garden bed or tree.

That set the pattern for innumerable family slide shows, in darkened and hot lounge rooms, when the relatives came to visit. In those early days of the `forties and `fifties, it was common practice to get in the car and "call in" on unsuspecting relatives unannounced ("We were just passing by ..."). So much so that housewives always had to have a presentable cake at the ready, just in case. Setting up the projector and darkening the room provided a communal activity, and watching colour pictures go by was seen as a novel entertainment -- until with the years that novelty wore off. One has to remember that Technicolor films were still the exception at the pictures and colour television (let alone computerised images) was a thing of the future. Favourite themes were the latest family photographs, usually on some kind of outdoor excursion (as the film stock was relatively slow and did not react well to flash lamps), or the travels of the latest young person to return from the mythical "overseas". Of course, then as now, the most interesting shots were always where one could see oneself in colour as the camera saw one ...

Now the thousands of slides I took when I first went to Europe are stored in innumerable boxes and almost never looked at. One of the reasons was that I was a boring photographer and took landscapes and monuments instead of people. No wonder my audiences in that stifling darkness sometimes dropped off to sleep. I recently bought an apparatus to enable me to scan the best of my slides (those -- invariably Kodachrome -- that haven't sadly deteriorated) and preserve them in digital form. But after initial enthusiasm I haven't got far with that project, as it's so time consuming. (On the other hand all my films have been digitised, because I paid someone to do it!). Isn't this happening all over again, however, as we amass vast archives of photographs on our hard disks -- photographs we'll never look at again. We don't have slide shows but we e-mail our pictures in ever-growing quantities to

unsuspecting and largely unappreciative recipients or, closer to the ethos of the old slide show, we poke a USB key into our 70” flat screen, sit family and visitors in front of it, and there we are back again in the 1950s.

(Angus M, 2012).

Shame, there's no lamingtons

Dad's best man, Bill C. - gay - moved to London in 50/60s? and managed Orson Welles - big bear of a lovely man, huge energetic presence, used to boom into our lives every so often and dad would ask him if he wanted to see some slides. Once he said, 'only if you have lamingtons'. And that became a bit of a saying with Bill C and our family - shame, there's no lamingtons - a potential way out of slide evenings.

…I can still feel the heat of the lamp and the hear the click click in the dark and remember the frustration of the one with the controls moving too fast, or more often too slow...

(AO, 2012)

Baulkham Hills house 70's and 80's style

I have fond memories of all my family huddled around the Kodak carousel with my grandfather in his Baulkham Hills house 70's and 80's style.

He made many a collective pilgrimage to Japan, the central desert during WW2 (he took Box Brownie photos and printed them in the Army), the South Pacific and relived them at countless family gatherings.

(J., 2012)

Long Distance Walking

Slides have played a big role in our families life. We have four children born between 1960 and 1966, and 8 grandchildren.

1. Family growing up, birthdays, weddings - they love to see each other as they were and grandchildren to see their parents and uncle/aunts as young children. We have a shack at Burning Palms again history in slides.

2. We decided to travel together regularly in a camper around the world (about 3 months a time) starting in 1970 and reliving through the slides always fun. Pea & ham soup and slides in front of a fire winter nights.

3. In retirement we started long distance walking (now walked over 60k kms) around the world and again relive through slides. Also give slide shows to encourage walking.

4. They are the base for now 40th - 50th birthdays, engagements etc

(WO, 2012)

Three screens in the garden

Both Phoebe and I came from a family of "sliders".

We still have boxes of yellow trays with clear lids , some of the older slides mounted in card frames. My first recollection was of a box like projector… with my father feeding them manually into it, one side then the other. My mother was mostly responsible for the images.

Gathering usually involved family, quite often at my grand parents house when went to stay for the weekend. This would also involve my aunts and uncles and cousins. As this was before the advent of television, the still visuals were quite a novelty.

I also recall large gatherings of families post mountaineering events, where the respective fathers would unveil their slides in the quest for the most epic shot. The more snow or perilous peaks would get the most response. The assentors and the laggers, the occasional laughter at the revealing of the secret glimpses into the mens' adventures.

I recall my father had a very small camera, due to weight of everything in one's backpack counted. The images it produced were little 16 mm slides which had to be remounted in 35 mm frame in order for them to be projected. This required an

adjustment to the projector location in order for the images to be of similar scale, and some chastising from his fellow adventurers who carried more sophisticated cameras on their trips.

My recollection of our own slide collection was after returning from an epic 3 month overseas trip , was to collate the vast array of images into a big slide night for friends and family. Being concerned about not boring everyone with some 2000 odd selected slides, we decided to borrow two additional projectors and set up three screens in the garden, one large screen mounted on a scaffold.

The images were edited so that three different sized images of the same location or subject were projected at simultaneously, significantly reducing the screening time. I recall a couple of comments afterwards asking was that all they were going to see and were there more.

For Phoebes 30th Birthday, I delved into the Cowdery archive of slides, presenting a slide show to all of her gathered friends, Images of young Phoebe and her family , significant in so much as that neither of her parents were alive to be there and whom I had never met . Despite her slight cringing and embarrassment, I think she was touched. Once again this was before the advent of Power point presentation

(Dylan G, 2012)

The Guitarist Complained

Not sure if you are also looking at the commercial world - but the lapse dissolve slideshow was a very big part of corporate multimedia even up to the mid-90s. …

I remember a lot of slide work during the 80s at different art venues. I did slides for a few performances of 'The Same' a perhaps forgotten post-punk band fronted by Zoe Carides. Home made slides with ink and paint, using two projectors from the back of the room. Looked cool - but the guitarist complained that everything was too dark and he couldn't see his strings, so that stopped as soon as it started. But lots of bands would use slides when they couldn't afford light shows. Much easier to tour.

(MH, 2012)

I remember the slides of ...Machu Picchu in Peru the best

My father did several periods of voluntary work on medical aid ships in South America when I was a kid. From memory, the first was in Chile, another was in Peru and the third and fourth were in Bolivia.... I think the ship docked on the Chilean coastline for the Bolivian stints, then the personnel and equipment were transported from there to La Paz. Each time my father was away for between 6 to 4 months. I vaguely remember my parents' late night discussions about these trips. I don't think my mother liked his going but my father was resolute about the importance of the work and so kept it up semi-annually from when I was 6 y.o. until I was about 10. Towards the end of a few of the trips my mother went down to join him for a few weeks of travel and sight-seeing. Since she spoke Spanish well they got around easily and enjoyed a warm welcome from people they encountered--at least that was my impression from the slide shows held after their return. ... My father was a pretty good amateur photographer and loved the ceremony of slide shows. He'd put hours into preparing the cartridges, and preferred showing to a group of at least 6 adults after dinner and a few cocktails (children were allowed to watch as long as they didn't interrupt and stayed quiet). He had what he considered a state-of-the art collapsible screen and Kodak projector, and he liked the performance of setting up the equipment in front of assembled guests. But despite the supposed quality of said equipment almost no presentation went as smoothly as he would have liked. Sometimes he struggled with the screen. Other times the projector lens was difficult to focus properly. And even though he'd tested and rehearsed each show beforehand, there were always several slides that were either upside down or got stuck in the cartridge. On these occasions he frequently said things like "Gads" and "Rats!" in a low irritable tone while trying to solve the problem and my mother would pass around nibbles and try to distract guests from the grumbling. Her tone tended to sound shrill and exaggeratedly positive when she did this.

I remember the slides of La Paz, Bolivia, and Machu Picchu in Peru the best. I think that the strength of these memories is as much about the exotic beauty of the scenery shown as the fact that my mother, who is terrified of heights and discovered she is particularly susceptible to altitude sickness on a trip to La Paz, looked stricken with

fear or discomfort in all but the mealtime social shots. Narration of slides taken in these places invariably became comical, with my father pointing out my mother's uneasiness and pallor and my mother shrieking about how dreadful the ordeal had been (and, in certain company, especially my aunt and uncle, how unsympathetic, etc., my father had been). These exchanges sometimes got so heated that we children were told to go to bed. When that happened my sister and I would sneak back out to peer around the doorway once everyone was focused on the screen again. ...I have vivid mental images of the jungle foliage, moss and ferns grown over ruin stones, and big Spanish colonial churches shown in some of those slides. The scenes seemed so other-wordly to me at the time, and I half suspected my parents had slipped through some kind of space-time hole to get to them. I couldn't understand how a plane could take someone somewhere so different. I'm sure these slide shows had a lot to do with my wanting to travel as soon as I could in adulthood--though I still haven't been to the heights of South America.

(CB, 2012)

Not another slide!

It was the early 80s and I was visiting friends in Stockholm whom I had met several summers before on the Greek island of Santorini. The show was apparently put on in my honour and there was a good deal of formal preparation including cold beers and aquavit and so on, all designed to show Swedish hospitality at its best. However, I soon detected a certain ambivalence among the crowd, most of whom I didn't know of course, and the atmosphere grew strangely tense as the host manoeuvered people into positions from which "they would have the best view." It wasn't long before I realized that many of those there had been subjected to this type of event before, and they were not looking forward to repeating it. The host proceeded to show carrousel after carrousel of slides of "our" trip, but it quickly became obvious that the slides were centred on one person, and that person was thoroughly absorbed in the subject matter! So much so that he evidently didn't recognize the meaning of various covert glances exchanged, or the occasional deep sigh from a darkened corner. For my part, apart from a slight feeling of guilt that I had been the catalyst for this affair, I could

not help remembering other similar nights when the slide show had gone on too long, and on which the presenter failed to see that what was of central interest to him or her, was almost causing pain for others. For as interesting as a well-presented slide show could be, it could also become tedious very quickly. And yet, even though this Stockholm evening was not a memorable event in itself, it has stayed in memory much longer than many another similar evening, which I no doubt enjoyed a good deal more.

(Owen H, 2012)

Early memory

I remember an early slide show, which was put on by my father using a twin-slide projector, which I recall was yellow. This must have been before the carrousel era. You put a slide in one side, slid the slide-holder across and this brought the slide into view, while leaving the other side free for the next slide. You popped in the next one and reversed the process. One can understand why the carrousel became such a success not long afterwards! I remember two things about these nights in particular. The first was the difficulty my father had in what was a fairly dark room to ensure that the slides were correctly placed in the frame. The result of this was a variety of slides which were back to front, which was easily recognizable if you knew the location, and occasionally upside down, or more often, sideways. I seem to recall some effort at some stage, perhaps of my own later on, to prepare the slides in the correct order and format. The other thing I remember is a sort of childlike vision of the magical change which could come over a well-known room in the house when it was suddenly plunged into darkness as the show was about to begin. Suddenly the atmosphere changed and the flickering image on the moveable screen created a definite sense of things being no longer the same. And there was a similar odd sensation, as of a spell being broken, when the show ended and someone turned the lights back on.

(Owen H, 2012)

SIRT (Slide Induced Residual Trauma)

When I was a young kid my we'd get intermittent visits from two of their closest old

friends, a married couple who were both artists and photographers. They were quite adventurous travellers for the time (this would have been the 1950s-early 1960s) and had become very interested in Japanese arts. They would visit after returning for their trips and after dinner we were all settled in the living room with a screen and slide projector and many, many slides of Japan, explained in minute and enthusiastic detail.

How I dreaded the boredom of these bloody slide shows. They were almost certainly of good quality and you'd think they should have been interesting, but they seemed to be interminable; far worse than the alternatives of playing, reading books or watching TV. Mum enjoyed the slides; dad fell asleep while claiming to be resting his eyes whenever mum woke him up; and I suffered, powerless and restless. Fifty years later, effective treatment for the effects of SIRT (Slide Induced Residual Trauma) remain a matter of controversy, although I am hopeful that a judicious mixture of pharmacology, post-Freudian analysis and SEAT (Slide Electro-Aversion Therapy) will alleviate the intermittent symptoms of rectal hives, night-sweats and bed-wetting.

(Dave S, 2012)

Early 90s Queer Performance Nostalgia

Me singing at the top of my lungs “Don't Tell Me The Moon Is Blue” by Colorbox while a slide show of the universe clicked through over me. I stood all in white upstage against a white wall while nebulas exploded all around me..

Maybe I had a broken heart? Maybe I just loved that song.

The slides were amazing. Though I was disappointed to learn later that the photos of the universe were originally in black and white and then colored later. I still hope that isn't true.

(Su G, 2012)

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NOTES

Prologue and Introduction

[1] Chris Marker, quoted in booklet made as part of the Criterion Collection DVD release of *La Jetée* and *Sans Soleil*, (DVD release 2007).

[2] Maxim Gorky quoted in Alan Cholodenko "The Crypt, the Haunted House of Cinema", *Cultural Studies Review* (10:2, September 2004):99

[3] For an excellent introduction and series of 'Still/moving' essays see Beckman, Karen & Ma Jean, eds. *Still moving: between cinema and photography.* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

[4] For useful discussion of Marker and *La Jetée*, see for example: Nora M. Alter *Chris Marker* (Chicago: Chicago University of Illinois Press, 2006). Also Catherine Lupton, *Chris Marker: Memories of the Future* (London: Reaktion Books, 2005). For a useful account and overview of Marker and the 'Left Bank Group' see: Robert Farmer, "Marker, Resnais, Varda: Remembering the Left Bank Group" *Senses of Cinema*, Issue 52, September 2009, (http://www.sensesofcinema.com/author/robert-farmer/)

[5] Recent publications concerned with the still/moving and the intermingling of film and photography include: Alter, *Chris Marker*; Beckman and Ma *Still moving…*; Laura Mulvey, *Death 24 x a Second: stillness and the moving image.* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006); and David Campany, *Photography and Cinema*. (London: Reaktion books, 2008).

[6] For a discussion of the slide show in installation and performance art see Darsie Alexander, *Slide Show*, (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005). I am unaware of any other dedicated discussion of the slide show form in popular culture studies or social and photographic histories.

[7] Since 1989, William Yang has performed over ten slideshow performance monologues on numerous Australian and international stages. These include *Sadness* (1992), *Friends of Dorothy* (1999), *Shadows* (2002) and *My Generation* (2010). For more information see: http://www.williamyang.com/main.html

[8] *Media Storm*, multi media journalism portal. Accessed September 2011. <http://www.mediastorm.com/pub/projects.html>

[9] Still/moving panels and papers at conference included: *Still/ Moving (I): The Family Album, Slide show and Decay*: Elspeth Kydd 'The Family Photo Album as Metaphor for an Autobiographical Documentary Practice'; Cecilia Aldarondo 'Still-Moving: Photographic Decay as Opportunity'; Andrew Taylor 'Dead but still/moving – slide shows and documentary'.

Still/ Moving (II) Early Soviet, Recent Chile and the Mexican Street: Jesse Lerner 'The Proletarian Camera: Hector Garcia and the Mexican Street'; Jose Miguel Palacios 'Documentary and the photographic image: Questions of semiotics, politics and memory in two Chilean documentaries'; Joshua Malitsky 'Ideologies in Fact: Still and Moving Image Documentary Essays in the Soviet Union 1927-1932'.

Also: Nicole Wolf 'Circumventing the Either/Or; An argument for Stillness While Moving' and Susana de Sousa Dias 'Stillness and Movement, History and Memory'.

Unpublished Papers, Visible Evidence XVII: International Documentary Studies Conference, Bogazici University, Istanbul August 2010.

[10] Beckman and Ma, *Still moving…*, 6

[11] Full frame HD refers to a camera's sensor being able to record or 'capture' 1920 x 1080 pixels per frame. Previously hybrid HD formats like HDV used anamorphic technology to squeeze 1040 x 1080 pixels into the frame and then stretch them out to a 1920 x 1080 pixel frame for playback.

[12] $3500 plus is a hefty amount for an independent filmmaker but in order to produce comparable results with 35mm movie cameras or dedicated HD cameras, prior to DSLRs, then one would have to spend about $50,000 to $100,000 upwards.

The 'film look' is a vague and imprecise term that is bandied around film and photographic circles. It is used in reference to several characteristics that people attribute more to film (celluloid) than video. For example, 'graininess', 'texture', 'warmth', 'softness', 'luminescence'. In reference to DSLR photography, the term is most frequently employed because of the DSLR's ability to create a shallow depth of field look.

[13] See for example: AFTRS, *Shooting HD on the Canon 5D*, http://www.open.aftrs.edu.au/course/C530 , Accessed 25 April, 2012.

[14] As an early example of a camera being able to film stills and moving pictures, Campany mentions the Sept cameras manufactured in France in the 1920s. These cameras were designed to film both 35mm photographs and short takes of moving picture film. The Russian photographer, Rodchenko, bought two of these cameras and gave one to his comrade, Dzigo Vertov. Vertov's influential film, *Man with a Movie Camera* (USA, 1929) is in part an exploration of the stillness imbedded in moving pictures. See Mulvey *Death 24 x Per Second* and Campany *Photography and Cinema*.

[15] Certainly, this is a skewed demographic. The main subscribers are university lecturers teaching documentary studies. They come from all over the world but principally the US, Canada, UK, and Australia. For the published list see: Matt Soar and Scott Prentice, *Films about photographs*, <http://www.visibleevidence.org/wiki/index.php?title=Main_Page>

Chapter 1

[1] If I was to speculate, I imagine it was a prototype of an energy efficient industrial ceiling fan; an invention he had been working on for years without any commercial or financial success.

[2] Alan Bond was a wealthy West Australian entrepreneur. In the early 1990s he was infamous for tax avoidance (amongst other things).

[3] I studied at the Australian Film, TV and Radio School (AFTRS) between 1990 and 1994.

[4] A well-known beach-side suburb and tourist destination, near central Sydney.

[5] Sontag *On Photography*, p.154

[6] Ernestine Hill, *The Great Australian Loneliness* (Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens, 1940), xii.

[7] In the 1930s and '40s, Ernestine Hill was one of Australia's most popular writers but today she is almost completely forgotten. She wrote popular historical fiction and non-fiction and was based in Brisbane and had little to do with the Melbourne/Sydney writing establishments.

[8] Bates is largely forgotten today but from the 1940s until around the mid 1970s, she had a mythic status in Australia as a desert-dwelling Florence Nightingale figure. At the age of sixty, dressed in stiff Edwardian attire, Daisy Bates pitched a small white tent in the scorching sand-hills on the edge of the Nullarbor. Having fled from society, this was her home in exile for the next twenty years. She reigned in the desert, as a self appointed Queen, and adopted the Aborigines as her subjects. Masquerading as an immigrant of aristocratic Anglo-Irish descent, a respectable Victorian lady and an international journalist for *The Times* newspaper, she constantly reinvented herself. Recently, it has been revealed that she was a poor child of the Irish potato famine and a bigamist who married the drover, Jack Bates, while she was also secretly married to the infamous Breaker Morant.

[9] Hill co-wrote or ghost wrote, Bates' most well-known work, *The Passing of the Aborigines* (1938). The contents of the book are based on the numerous newspaper articles Bates wrote to eke out a living while living in the desert. However, the style of the prose is similar to Hill's modern 'snappy' journalistic style, rather than Bates' long-winded and old-fashioned style. Hill also makes this claim in her memoir *Kabbarli* (1973).

[10] Bates wrote voluminously between 1900 and 1940. Her anthropological writing, letters and pieces of journalism are now held in various collections across Australia including: 93 folio boxes in the Archives of the National Library of Australia; a collection of her costumes and some artefacts from her campsite are in the SA Museum; and a collection of her letters in the Latrobe Library in Victoria.

[11] At the time many Aboriginal groups – Pitjanjatjara, Murunitja, Kokatha, Wirangu… – were making their way to the line to supplement their existence upon rations and begging. For more on the influence of railways and rations on Pitjanjatjara in the construction and aftermath of the East-West line, see : Maggie Brady "Leaving the Spinifex: The Impact of Rations, Missions and the Atomic Tests on the Southern Pitjantjatjara" *Records of South Australia Museum.* 20 (1986): 35-37 .

[12] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (London: Fontana Paperbacks Vintage, 1981). See especially 63-71.

[13] For an account and more details of the impact of the line on Aboriginal life and culture see Brady, 'Leaving the Spinifex...', 35-45

[14] I think Barthes' term 'punctum' is largely obfuscating and so I am deliberately avoiding it here and at the risk of dumbing it down, using the phrase 'piercing the heart'. Punctum originally came from the Latin to puncture or wound. Barthes coined the term to describe how he feels touched by certain photographs, because of incidental details which trigger emotionally charged personal associations. See Barthes, *Camera Lucida,* 21-41.

[15] Salter, Elizabeth 1971, *Daisy Bates: The Great White Queen of the Never Never*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney. See also National Library Australia, *Elizabeth Slater Papers*, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/work/35084696>, accessed April 25, 2012

[*16*] Brady, "Spinifex", 37-38.

[17] Annette Kuhn makes this simple but profound point really well in her book *Family secrets: acts of memory and imagination* (New York: Verso, 2002), 21.

[18] Pre-1980s historians and would be biopic-makers like Robert Helpman and Katherine Hepburn, used to wonder why Bates stayed so long at Ooldea (25 years in all, including 16 years in one single stretch). Was she bad, mad, deluded? Misunderstood? Misrepresented? The discovery of her humble origins thirty years after her death makes this less of a mystery. Bates had no money or source of income when she travelled to Ooldea. When Bates first moved to Ooldea in 1917, the Ooldea location provided a supply of water, railway contact and proximity to a large Aboriginal population camped near the Ooldea soak. Ooldea was a strategic location than enabled Bates to maintain lies about her origins; lobby for an official position as Protector; continue with some anthropological field-work; and eke out a living selling sensational newspaper articles.

[19] An unusual deal was set up as part of the 2002 Adelaide Festival of Arts. The then festival director, Peter Sellars, entered a partnership with Brigid Ikin of SBS Independent to help finance several films for the festival. *Kabbarli* (formerly *26 Hook& Eyes*) was commissioned as part of this deal.

[20] The work was just one of twelve, one minute films that were to be part of a retro-futuristic photo booth - a small boutique exhibition space that was to be installed in the foyer of ACMI. In yet another example of the merging of film and photography, 'The Booth' worked like this. The viewer entered a custom-built fibreglass dome to select a film. When the viewer was watching one of these one-minute films, a photo would be taken. A digital image was delivered outside, at the other end, similar to an old-fashioned photo booth.

[21] There is an apocryphal story that after seeing an exhibition of daguerreotypes, Paul Delaroche rushed to back to the *Academie* and announced to all "From this day painting is dead". Of course, we now know painting did not die, but it did change and alter in response to photography and other social changes taking place. Many people have riffed on this Delaroche quote in relation to changes taking place with photography in the wake of *Photoshop* (launched in 1984) and digital imaging technologies.

[22] *Urban Birds*, online slideshow, photographed and narrated by Nick Moir for The Sydney Morning Herald, first published July 2002. <http://www.smh.com.au/multimedia/flash/2002/urbanbirds.html>

[23] *Flash* is a software application that is part of the Adobe Creative Suite (*Photoshop*, *Flash*, *After Effects*). A characteristic of *Flash* is that it works on vectors not pixels, often giving graphics a flat 2D cartoon-like look. *Flash* enabled a good trade off between quality and speed – the images looked good and were quick to stream. The Adobe Creative Suite and *Flash* became an essential part of the tool kit for online producers and web developers as these industries burgeoned throughout the 'noughties'.

[24] Writing this, it is amazing to think about how much and how quickly this part of the world has changed. Pictures online often look fine, broadband is much faster and widespread. Home cinema, view on demand, and HD technologies have all become commonplace. Theatrical exhibition of independent and art-house cinema has always been a struggle but it is now in dire straits and faces enormous competition from the likes of the above.

[25] The term *flâneur* has the basic meanings of "stroller", "lounger", "saunterer", "loafer". Because of the term's usage and theorization by Baudelaire, Benjamin, Sontag and others, the idea of the *flâneur* has accumulated significant meaning as a referent for understanding urban phenomena and modernity.

In *On Photography*, Sontag describes how, since the development of hand-held cameras in the early 20th century, the camera has become the tool of the *flâneur*:

> The photographer is an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitering, stalking, cruising the urban inferno, the voyeuristic stroller who discovers the city as a landscape of voluptuous extremes. Adept of the joys of watching, connoisseur of empathy, the *flâneur* finds the world 'picturesque.' (Sontag,1977), 55.

Wikipedia has a useful entry and overview of the term. See: Wikipedia, *Flâneur*, Accessed 25 April, 2012. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flaneur >

[26] This change in approach hastened by digital photography now seems so obvious, that it is hardly worth stating. But I have stated it, because I think there was something profoundly different in the 'old' approach that is worth remembering. It is also worth noting that the 'new' approach has altered the 'currency' of photography. My use of the term 'currency of photography', is less nuanced than John Tagg's, in his well known essay of the same title, in Victor Burgin's, *Thinking Photography* (1982). In referring to 'currency', I am thinking in simple economic terms – supply and demand economics – use and exchange value. Snaps and vernacular photos still have a use and power but are far less valuable than they once were.

[27] Lazlo Maholy-Nagy (1936) quoted in *PhotoQuotes.com*: *Quotations from the world of Photography*, <http://www.photoquotes.com/showquotes.aspx?id=590&name=Moholy-Nagy,Laszlo>, accessed 25 April, 2012. The original quote can be found in a German book: *"Bilder der Photograpie - Ein Album photographischer Metaphern"* (ISBN: 3-518-12461-7).

[28] I am generalising here to make a point. Certain directors use improvisation in developing characters (and then scripts). The English director, Mike Leigh, is a well-known exponent of this approach. Other directors and actors employ a certain amount of improvisation to solve problems in scripting and staging a scene. Some directors storyboard to the *nth* degree, others reject storyboards and their shot selection is more intuitive and organic, based on blocking and what presents itself 'on the day'. Wim Wenders is a good example of a director who actively dislikes to storyboard. Wong Kar Wai is another well-known contemporary director who works in an unorthodox more free-form, improvisatory sort of way.

[29] Aside from using iPhoto and only still images, I was also working without the pressures of actors, crew, budget or tight deadline.

[30] Again, I am generalising to make a point and most scriptwriters and directors aim for their images to be more than illustrative. A golden rule of scriptwriting is to 'show not tell' and scripts that rely on images to be merely illustrative quickly become leaden or didactic when filmed. The interplay between what is seen and what is heard; what is spoken and what shown visually, is part of the filmmaking dynamic that produces a richness and whole, that is more than the sum of its parts.

[31] "…Things fall apart; the center cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere, The ceremony of innocence is drowned; The best lack all conviction, while the worst Are full of passionate intensity" ... W.B. Yeats, *The Second Coming*, 1919.

[32] I still think this is largely true but it isn't quite that simple. The film-photo-essay form – especially the variation of images and music alone – allows more space than conventional narrative cinema, for audience interaction and emotional response. This idea is discussed in greater depth in subsequent chapters, especially Chapters 8 and 9.

[33] Chris Marker, "Notes on Filmmaking" quoted in booklet made as part of the Criterion Collection DVD release of *La Jetée* and *Sans Soleil*, (DVD release 2007).

[34] Derek Malcolm, *Santiago Alvarez LBJ,* <http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/1999/jun/17/derekmalcolmscenturyoffilm.derekmalcolm > accessed February 13, 2012.

Chapter 2

[1] Elizabeth Hartrick, "Consuming illusions: the magic lantern in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand 1850-1910". (PhD thesis, The Australian Centre, University of Melbourne, 2003):16

I'd like to acknowledge both my gratitude and debt to Hartrick's work, in writing this chapter.

[2] Laurent Mannoni,Werner Nekes, & Marina Warner, *Eyes, Lies and Illusion*. (Melbourne: Australian Centre of the Moving Image (ACMI), 2006), 44.

[3] Manonni, *Eyes…*, 44

[4] Marina Warner, in Manonni, *Eyes…*, 19

[5] Marina Warner, in Manonni, *Eyes…*, 20

[6] The Magic Lantern Society, "A History of the Magic Lantern", Accessed 27 April, 2012. <http://www.magiclantern.org.uk/history/history9.html>

[7] Despite the challenges of cinema and 35mm slides, lantern slides continued to be used by schools and universities well into the twentieth century and there is evidence of lantern slides still being used in university teaching until at least as late as 1930s. See Katsura Miyahara, " The Impact of Lantern Slide on Art History Lecturing in Britain", *British Art Journal* Volume 8, No.2. (2007): 67-71.

[8] Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…"

[9] See Tom Gunning, Introduction to Laurent Mannoni *The great art of light and shadow: archaeology of the cinema* (Devon: University of Exeter Press, 2000); Tom Gunning "Renewing old technologies: astonishment, second nature and the uncanny in technology from the previous turn of the century" MIT, 1998 <http://media-in-transition.mit.edu/articles/index_gunning.html>; and Michael Chanan *The dream that kicks: the prehistory and early years of cinema in Britain* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" 25-40.

[10] Tom Gunning, Introduction to Laurent Mannoni *The great art of light and shadow: archaeology of the cinema* (Devon: University of Exeter Press, 2000), xxxvii cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…", 37

[11] For examples see: The Magic Lantern Society, "A History…", 9 ; and Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…", 44-69: and Laurent Mannoni *The great art of light and shadow: archaeology of the cinema* (Devon: University of Exeter Press, 2000)

[12] Peter Bailey *Leisure and class in Victorian England: rational recreation and the contest for control 1830-1885* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press ,1978) cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 34-35

[13] Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 34-35.

[14] Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 35.

[15] Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 141-161.

[16] Anne Maxwell, *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions: Representations of the 'Native' People and the Making of European Identities* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999).

[17] James R. Ryan Chapter 6 'Visual instruction' in *Picturing Empire: photography and the visualisation of the British Empire* (London: Reaktion, 1997). Cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 27.

[18] Elizabeth Salter, *Daisy Bates: The Great White Queen of the Never Never*. (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1971), 123.

[19] This is in fact the title of a paper Bates wrote 1907 but its contents are similar to the main topics covered in earlier lantern lectures.

[20] Newspaper clipping copies as typed note in *Elizabeth Salter Papers*, MS. 6481, Box 3, Folder 2, National Library of Australia, Canberra.

[21] Cited in The Bowery Boys, New York City History, "The Original IMAX: Jacob Riis and his magic lantern", blog, posted Tuesday, September 2, 2008, <http://theboweryboys.blogspot.com.au/search?q=Riis>.

[22] Spartacus Eduational, "Jacob Riss". Accessed April 27, 2012, http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USAriis.htm

[23] Tyler Anbinder *Five Points* cited in The Bowery Boys, "The original IMAX…".

[24] Quoted in The Bowery Boys, "The original IMAX…".

[25] See James T Patterson *America's Struggle Against Poverty in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2000)

[26] Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 21.

[27] Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History* (3rd Edition), (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2010), 206.

[28] Marien, Photography: A Cultural History…, 206

[29] Hine quoted in Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History…*, 207

[30] Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History…*, 207

[31] This sketch of Hine is indebted to the portrait in Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History…*, 207

[32] Herbert Ponting *The great white south* (London: Duckworth & Co. 1921) cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 19-21

[33] H. J. P. Arnold *Photographer of the world: the biography of Herbert Ponting* (Rutherford; Madison;Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1971) cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 20

[34] Robert F. Scott *Scott's last expedition: the personal journals of Captain R. F. Scott* (Murray: London, 1968), cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 20

[35] Cecil Meares *South Polar Times 1911/12* , cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 20

[36] Ponting *Great white south*, cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 19-21

[37] Scott , *Scott's last expedition…,* cited in Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 19-21

[38] John Grierson, "First Principles of Documentary" (1932). Cited in Keith Beattie, *Documentary Screens: Non Fiction Film and Television* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004) 28

[39] John Grierson, "First Principles…". Cited in Beattie, *Documentary Screens,* 28

[40] Hartrick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 46

[41] Chris Long and Luke McKernan in Who's Who of Victorian Cinema, **"**Henry Herbert Booth", Accessed 10 March, 2012.< http://www.victorian-cinema.net/herbertbooth.htm **>**

Chapter 3

[1] In 2007, a fictional depiction of the origins of the carousel name appeared in cable network TV series *Mad Men*. "The Wheel", written and directed by Mathew Weiner, Season 1, Episode 13. First Aired October, 2007. (USA: Lionsgate Television, Weiner Brothers, American Movie Classics (AMC)).

[2] Hartrick, "Consuming illusions…"*,* 16

[3]Wikipedia has a useful "Colour Photography" page that gives a useful overview of 3-colour, additive and subtractive colour processes. See: Wikipedia, "Colour Photography" , last modified on 17 April 2012, < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Color_photography#Additive_color>.

[4] See Wikipedia, "Kodachrome", last modified on 23 April 2012, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kodachrome>

[5] *The Simpsons*, "Mr. Lisa goes to Washington", episode 2, Season 3, first aired September 26, 1991, (USA: Fox Broadcasting Company) and "Simpson Safari", episode 17, Season 12, first aired April 1, 2001.

[6] There is also a dark double entendre to the images Don projects. Don appeals to the warmth and love of family but has just been kicked out of home having been exposed as a liar, cheat and philanderer. The viewer also knows the moniker 'Don Draper' is an assumed identity. 'Don' took the name of a deceased war buddy, in order to start afresh and disown the broken and violent past of his childhood. So, the place he refers to in his pitch is a mythic idyll. Arguably, this is an extreme extension of the idealised version of life and family constructed in most slides and family snaps shots.

[7] Unpublished interview with E.J. Taylor, Melbourne, 2009. See also: John Lahr, *Dame Edna Everage and the rise of western civilization: backstage with Barry Humphries* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 168.

[8] In 2008, a group of Kodachrome enthusiasts set up a website /wiki called *The Kodachrome Project* in response to the announcement that Kodak was ceasing manufacture of Kodachrome film stock. That a self-funded group of enthusiasts would set up a quasi-memorial website dedicated to a soon to be redundant seventy year old film stock, is remarkable in itself. But after examining the posts, I found it curious that a site dedicated to a legendary slide stock had no posts remembering actual slide shows. I made a post to try and elicit some responses. The recollections quoted are in response to this post. For more see: Dr. Slideshow, March 10, 2010 post "Desperately Seeking Memories of Slideshows…", *The Kodakchrome Project*, 'Forums', 'Kodachrome the History and the Era'. Accessed 27April, 2012<http://www.kodachromeproject.com/forum/index.php>

[9] Jed Skillman post April, 4, 2010 at 5:31am in response to, "Desperately Seeking Memories …"

[10] 'Richard E' March 16, 2010, response to, "Desperately Seeking Memories …"

[11] 'Uffen', March 28, 2010, response to, "Desperately Seeking Memories …"

[12] Annie Breslin, email correspondence with author, March 18, 2012

[13] Rosie Scott, email correspondence with author, March 26, 2012

[14] Dave Sampson, email correspondence with author, March 17, 2012

[15] These oral accounts help give some record of what images were shown, how they were narrated, and the context of their screenings. There is scope for a useful social history/oral history project here to flesh out this record before remaining first-hand memories have completely faded or gone. There is

also space for a more detailed cross-cultural and/or sociological analysis of photography, especially slide photography. Popular photography is not as universally accessible and egalitarian as is often made out. It varies from country to country; rich to poor; industrialised to non-industrialised. In terms of post-war photography in general, and slide photography in particular, wealthy countries and more affluent socio-economic groups were 'more equal' than others. Slide usage also varied because of national and cultural biases. For example: Japan was more likely to use Fuji; Germany, France and Belgium to use Agfa; and the Eastern Block, Orvo.

[16] WT. Stead, *Reviews of Reviews* c. 1895, quoted in Hartwick, "Consuming Illusions…" , 148. See also Hartwick, "Consuming Illusions…" Chapter 5: 'An Instrument of Education' :148-161, for section discussing magic lantern and the modernising of education.

[17] To view or for more information see The Internet Archive, Prelinger Collection. Accessed 28April, 2012.< http://archive.org/details/prelinger >.

[18] In *Death 24x a Second*, Laura Mulvey talks about how the division between narrative cinema, documentary and avant-garde blurs and breakdowns with the passing of time. This dissolving of rigid classification also applies to 'ephemeral' films. Many 'ephemeral' films that were made with serious sober intent are now more likely to be seen as comedies or ironic documentary commentary about 1950s America. In this sense, some of the most 'boring' of these ephemeral films are now interesting. See for example: *What makes a good party* (1950) or *I want to be a Secretary (1953)* or *A day in Vietnam* (1967). See also Mulvey, *Death 24 x a Second , 31*

Chapter 4

[1] There is truth in this and it explains why slides were the industry standard in advertising and editorial work well into the 1990s. Slides or transparencies use a reversal process. The camera original becomes the positive image as opposed to the negative process that involves one more step, an extra 'generation', before prints can be made.

[2] As profound as some of the changes brought in by digital photography are, the vast majority of people still take photographs on subject matter similar to the dominant themes that have emerged since the popularisation of the medium in the early 20th century. Pictures of babies, holidays and rites of passage – birthdays, graduations, weddings – still dominate most private collections.

[3] None of these approaches are particularly novel or unheard of for a semi-professional photographer or even an amateur enthusiast. 'Capturing the quirky' is one of the tropes of photography, or one of the unspoken defining characteristics of what makes something worthy of being photographed.

[4] Again, unwittingly following in the footsteps of Chris Marker, who made a still/moving film, *If I Had Four Dromedaries* (France, 1966), based on 800 of his still photos, many of people taking photos. I say 'again', because Marker also made a film, *Letter from Siberia* (France, 1957). I was unaware of this work until well into the production of *Siberia*.

[5] The samurai fight film was a popular post-war genre in Japanese cinema.

[6] In 1984, I worked as a trainee video maker in a group sponsored by the Victorian Trades Hall Council. As a part of this traineeship we made an informational video for Brunswick City Council, that focused on the different childcare services they sponsored.

[7] I did an internship on a film shot in Shanghai, (*Red Rose, White Rose*, directed by Staley Kwan) and the film school (AFTRS) contributed towards my airfare on the agreement I would give a talk to the students when I returned. Part of my talk was a slide show presentation.

[8] I am not trying to claim some moral high ground, so I hope this doesn't seem smug. My photos are not far removed from a 'National Geographic naturalism' and my working method is not radical. Critiques of tourist photography and the 'colonial gaze' – with the connotations this has of wealth, privilege, power, unequal exchange – could be levelled at these portraits. At the time of taking the photo, the exchange seems reasonable but ultimately, I probably take more than I give.

[9] 'Old Vegas' is the 1950s-'60s wedding chapel, '*Diamonds are Forever*' Vegas; as opposed to the '70s-'80s Caesar's Palace, Wayne Newton, Circus Circus Vegas; or the even more recent one, built since the '90s.

Chapter 5

[1] Darsie Alexander, *Slide Show* with essays by Charles Harrison and Robert Storr (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).

[2] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 9-10

[3] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 5

[4] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 20-21

[5] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 20

[6] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 5

[7] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 11

[8] Harrison Charles, "Saving Pictures" in Alexander, *Slide Show,* 39

[9] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 22

[10] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 21

[11] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 25

[12] Wikipedia, "Jack Smith Film Director, Accessed October 10, 2011. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jack_Smith_(film_director)>. See also documentary film, *Jack Smith and the Destruction of Atlantis,* written, directed and co-produced by Mary Jordan (Canada, 2006).

[13] Alexander, *Slide Show,* 25-26

[14] Hefferman quoted Alexander, *Slide Show,* 26

[15] Nan Goldin, Afterword in *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*, Aperture, 1996, quoted in Janna Ireland's blog March 15,2009 at 8.35pm, Slow Century Magazine, Visual Arts, "The Ballad of Sexual Dependency - Nan Goldin's famous slideshow at MoMA", Accessed 18 October 2011. <http://visualarts.slowcentury.com/>

Chapter 6

[1] Ted Hopkins is not well known outside of Melbourne but he did several interesting and slighty kooky art events. One was a car sound installation piece where cars lined up between the brewery at the top end of city and the War Memorial two kilometres to the south. The cars tuned their radios to a set frequency creating a Doppler effect sound-art-happening. Hopkins also had a certain fame/infamy in football obsessed Melbourne. He had a brief career as a VFL footballer and was influential in Carlton's victory in the 1970 Grand Final over Collingwood. It was a shock victory and a pivotal match in the history of the modern game.

[2] The Fashion Design Council (1983-1993) was a co-operative organisation which promoted and supported innovative independent designers. The Fashion Design Council (FDC) was essentially instigated by designers Robert Buckingham, Kate Durham and Robert Pearce. Members were predominantly young fashion designers, but the FDC included artists and crafts people from many related fields. It extended the idea of fashion into the arena of high art as well as popular culture.

(Information sourced from website: http://www.cyberfibres.rmit.edu.au/biogs/TRC0379b.htm, accessed April 28, 2011.)

[3] *Les Corps Image* was a photographic exhibition at COG gallery, Sydney 1987 as well as a Super 8 film produced in the same year. The body of work formed the basis of Stephen's Graduate Diploma

thesis (Sculpture/ Photography) at Sydney College of the Arts, as quoted in Debbie Lee *et.al*, *Stephen Cummins: A Retrospective* Exhibition Catalogue, 1995. There are images from *Les Corps Image* throughout the catalogue and extracts from Stephen's Graduate Diploma are reproduced on page 9.

[4] '*Sing-sing*' is Melanesian Pidgin and roughly translates as carnival, festival, dance, feast. *Sing-sings* are most prevalent in PNG Highland culture and often involve the exchange, slaughtering and cooking of a pig as well as people dressing up with ornate bird of paradise head-dresses and bright face decoration.

[5] A confessional footnote. As mentioned, I have the family collection of slides. I am also a hoarder of my own photographic and film work. For example, I have kept out-takes from my first Super 8 film amongst a suitcase of old negatives and scraps of film. However, my early crude attempts to make 'photo art' are also a 'smoking gun'. Of all the family slides in my memory bank, the image of my mother at the Grand Canyon and my Highland *sing-sing* image are the only two I can't find anywhere.

[6] Another influence was Alexander Kluge's film, *The Occasional Work of a Female* Slave (Germany, 1973).

[7] John Berger, *And our faces, my heart, brief as a photo* (Pantheon Books, New York, 1984).

[8] One of Shohei Immamura's radical films about post-war Japan, *Pigs and Battleships* (Japan, 1961), is set in the town of Yokusuka, around the time it was full of US servicemen.

Chapter 7

[1] 'Prahran Art School' was officially known as the Prahran College of Advanced Education. It is now part of Swinburne University

[2] Visibility Gallery Melbourne, 1983 and the Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney, 1984.

[3] The *Something More* series of photographs are now internationally renowned and in the 2002, they broke records for the sale price of an Australian photograph. When auctioned by Christies they fetched over $200,000. See "Modern Art Auction Smashes Record". AAP June 26 2002. Accessed April 28, 2012 <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2002/06/25/1023864580881.html>

[4] For a really useful introductory history with references to influential articles in *Filmnews* by Kate Richards (Nov/Dec 1981) and Mark Titmarsh (Oct 1982), see *Sydney Super Eight Film Group*, Web blog by Bob, Sunday December 8, 2008, esp. "Chapter One: A History of the Sydney Super Eight Film Group". Accessed May 20 < http://sydneysupereightfilmgroup.blogspot.com.au/ >.

[5] It seems remarkable now but the technologies to reproduce fluorescent colours only became widespread in the '80s. See: http://www.feedmag.com/column/materialist/cm331_master.html

[6] For more see especially: Karen L. Ishizuka, and Patricia R. Zimmermann, eds. *Mining the home movie: excavations in histories and memories* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). Also Jim Lane *The autobiographical documentary in America (* Madison:University of Wisconsin Press, 2002).

Chapter 8

[1] John C. Tibbetts, "All That Glitters: City of Gold Revisited," *Film*

Comment 31 March-April, 1995

[2] John C. Tibbetts, "… City of Gold Revisited."

[3] David Campany, *Photography and Cinema*. London: Reaktion books, 2008. 7

[4] David Campany, *Photography and Cinema*, 97

[5] Alexandre Astruc "The birth of the New Avant-Garde: The Camera-Stylo"(1948) quoted in Tim Corrigan ,"The Forgotten Image between two shots: Photos, Photograms, and the Essayistic" in

Beckman and Ma Still / Moving pp. 44-45.

[6] "The Forgotten Image between Two Shots: Photos, Photograms, and the Essayistic" Tim Corrigan in Beckman & Ma, *Still moving....*45-6.

[7] For a more extensive discussion See: Farmer "… Remembering the Left Bank Group", and Lupton *Chris Marker: Memories of the Future*.

[8] Farmer "… Remembering the Left Bank Group"

[9] Philip Lopate quoted from booklet essay accompanying *Night And Fog*, (directed by Alain Resnais, France:Argos Films, 1956) Criterion Collection DVD, Janus films, 2003

[10] David Campany, *Photography and Cinema*, 36.

In this section of the book, Campany also reminds us that the longer a take is, the more like photograph it becomes. This is apparent in the use of fixed frame long takes by directors such as Ozu or Hou Hsiao-hsien. Andy Warhol's *Empire* is an extreme of the long take resembling a still photograph.

[11] Raymond Bellour, The Pensive Spectator' *Wide Angle*, IX /1 (1987) pp. 6-10; quoted in David Campany, *Photography and Cinema*, Reaktion Books, London 2008 p 95.

[12] Excerpt from DVD commentary, "Radio interview with Alain Resnais from *Etolies du Cinema* (1994)", on *Night And Fog* Criterion Collection DVD, 2003.

[13] Philip Lopate essay in booklet accompanying *Night And Fog*, Criterion Collection DVD, 2003

[14] Maybe an affiliation with inter-war German Dada is making too much of a claim but there is definitely a strong case to suggest the Left Bank directors were influenced by the Paris surrealists, especially surrealist documentaries that aimed to subvert rational discourse by conveying a sense of the strange and bizarre in the everyday. For more on the affiliation between the surrealists and the Group of Thirty see Catherine Lupton, *Chris Marker : Memories of the Future* , 48

[15] Ross Gibson, "What Do I Know: Chris Marker and the Essayist Mode of Cinema." *Filmviews* (32: 134. Summer 1987-88): 26-30

[16] Farmer "… Remembering the Left Bank Group"

[17] Lupton *Chris Marker: Memories of the Future*, 36

[18] Lupton *Chris Marker: Memories of the Future*,56. Lupton argues convincingly that the 'magic lantern' goldrush sequence is part of the film's heterogenous style and is partially about enhancing mythic and nostalgic parallels between Siberia and the Wild West.

[19] Lupton *Chris Marker: Memories of the Future*, 52.

[20] Lupton *Chris Marker: Memories of the Future*, 54.

[21] Agnes Varda, response to '3 Questions about Photography and Cinema' in *Photogénies* No.5, ed. Raymond Bellour, Sylvain Roumette, Catherine Sentis (Paris: Centre National de la Photgraphie, April 1984). trans. by Ian Farr, 2006 , quoted in David Campany (ed.),*The cinematic: Documents of Contemporary Art* (London and Cambridge: Co-published by Whitechapel and MIT Press, 2007) 62 -63.

[22] Agnes Varda commentary "Salut les Cubains" *Varda Tout Courts* (*Varda Short films*) directed by Agnes Varda, (Paris: Ciné-Tamaris Video; sauf diffusion par le Scérén-CNDP, 2007).

[23] John C. Tibbetts, "… City of Gold Revisited."

Chapter 9 / Conclusion

[1] Agnes Varda, response to '3 Questions about Photography and Cinema', quoted in David Campany (ed.),*The cinematic,* 62 -63.

[2] Peter Wollen 'Fire and Ice', 1984 quoted in David Campany (ed.), *The Cinematic*, 110

[3] Mulvey, *Death 24 x a Second...,*13-17.

[4] Mulvey discusses differences in interpretation between Freud's and Jentsch's use of the word 'uncanny'. For Jentsch, 'the uncanny' had a connotation to do with a sense of the familiar yet strange – *déjà vu* is one example, Madame Tassuad's wax works are another. Freud associated it more with our fears of the dead return to haunt the living. In Mulvey's subsequent use of the term she makes a composite of these two interpretations. Mulvey, *Death 24 x a Second...*37-44

[5] Mulvey, *Death 24 x a Second..,.*14-16.

[6] Andre Bazin, quoted in Mulvey, *Death 24 x a Second...,* 57.

[7] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 92.

[8] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 59.

[9] Sontag, *On Phototography*, 15.

[10] See "The Cold of Winter 1926" *My Winnipeg* , uploaded by zgress October 27, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjnpTg85wqY>

[11]Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", 1936, reproduced in *lluminations*, Arendt (ed.) (1968), 221.

[12] Marianne Hirsch, *Family Frames: photography, narrative, and postmemory.* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 12.

[13] Mulvey, *Death 24 x a Second…,* 66.

[14] Barthes distinction between photography and cinema discussed in *Camera Lucida* (photography = 'having been there once but it has irretrievably passed', cinema = we are there now, it is happening in the present, even if events depicted have passed).

[15] Moyal, Ann, "International Scientific Controversy: The taxonomy of the platypus, the curious creature that baffled the world", *Wisenet* Issue 59, March 2002, Accessed 27 January, 2011. <http://www.wisenet-australia.org/issue59/Controversy-the%20platypus.htm>