
FORUM: Where is the Line?

Representation, exploitation and ethics in documentary filmmaking

When people think of documentary film ethics, they often think of distorting events, manipulation of images or plagiarizing. But what about issues of exploitation, power and representation? Are there people or situations that others should not film? What is informed consent as it relates to children or people who are impaired, severely ill, traumatized or even dead?

In a world where 'haves' are often fascinated with images of 'have-nots', and where images of war and poverty are everywhere, the creators and consumers of images often forget that the person in a film is a member of someone's family. Appearing in a film can have an impact for years to come. Does the director have a duty of care?

This forum will discuss the subject of power dynamics between filmmaker and film subject and potential repercussions of participating in a documentary film.



MODERATOR

Anita Ho received a PhD in philosophy from the University of Alberta, and is currently Assistant Professor in the Centre for Applied Ethics at the University of British Columbia. Her teaching and research interests include biomedical ethics, research ethics, cross-cultural ethics, and communication ethics.



PARTICIPANTS

Meghna Haldar is an award winning filmmaker based in Vancouver. Her feature documentary *Dirt* screened at DOXA in 2008 and won the Best Documentary Award at Toronto's Female Eye Festival in 2009. She has recently completed a film for Knowledge called *Though the Heavens Fall* and is writing a screenplay set in Bollywood.



Haida Paul has worked in film and television for over 40 years, collaborating with filmmakers from Canada, India, Britain, the US, the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia. She has been a teacher and lecturer at the Directors' Guild of Canada, Cineworks, Simon Fraser University, Emily Carr University, and the University of British Columbia.



Murray Siple began his film career at Emily Carr and went on to make extreme sports videos including the cult classic *Cascadia* and *The Burning*. In 1996, a serious car accident changed Murray's life forever when he became a quadriplegic. Ten years later, Murray returned to filmmaking, incorporating his passion and distinct viewpoint in the documentary *Carts of Darkness*.



Tami Wilson has been active in Vancouver's documentary community for 12 years as a festival programmer and filmmaker. Her most recent project, *FLESH*, explores the gender politics of meat through a cross-section of female perspectives. It premiered at the Vancouver International Film Festival and is now required viewing for Eco-Feminist students throughout North America.

Forum is free of charge.