

of expected limits is precisely the film's point, and Welsh, who admires the film in some ways, assuming more traditionally that such excesses tend to alienate important segments of the viewing audience.

Mary Ann Youngren's essay connects the universal human concerns of the film with the theories of Jung. She suggests that some of the film's powerful imagery is rooted in the imagery of Jung's archetypes. Also, she sees the film as extending Jung's own ideas about the plight posed for modern human beings by the global arms race.

Gregg Walker's paper explores *The Journey* in terms of the theory of conflict resolution, particularly intrapersonal conflict resolution. Drawing upon several theoretical models of conflict, Walker analyzes both the method of the film and the responses to the film from several of his students as they watched *The Journey* over a ten week period.

Catherine Collins assumes a third theoretical perspective; her concern is with narrative, and by employing structuralist narrative theory, she attempts to explain how and why the film chooses to construct narrative in such a different way. Her approach provides a context in which to understand the film's unconventional narrative strategy.

My concluding piece is meant to carry the discussion of reading the film somewhat further on a more concrete level. I am inclined to agree with MacDonald and Collins that the film's violations of traditional form, while they may alienate some viewers, are perhaps the film's most important contribution. Hence, in a close look at a relatively short sequence, I try to show how different reading strategies lead to praise on the one hand, and to Welsh's reservations on the other.

As all the essays here reveal, *The Journey* is anything but a restrictive subject. In its global scope, in its great length, and in its reflexive concern with its own process of constructing meaning, this film offers much to discuss and consider, all the more so now that we have witnessed the tightly-controlled media packaging of the Gulf War.

KSN

## THE JOURNEY: A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

*Peter Watkins*

May I ask you something? Please do not think of *The Journey* as a narrative film in the traditional Hollywood meaning, or as being like many of the story films in the cinema today.

*The Journey* does not have a beginning; then an early "attention-grabbing" violent scene; then a middle slow-scene; followed by a sub-climax; final slow-scene before the ultimate climax (which is often violent); and the final soft landing at the conclusion. *The Journey* has none of these things. It is constructed in an entirely different way. The purpose in constructing *The Journey* in its present form is deliberate, and is directly related to the subjects discussed in the film.

WAR  
RACISM  
AGGRESSION  
ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION  
"OBJECTIVITY" AND "THE TRUTH"  
CENTRALIZATION OF POWER  
OVERCOMING BARRIERS  
THE FIRST GLIMPSE  
INFORMATION  
THE JOURNEY  
PROCESS

May I ask you to please look at this picture with me? It is of four human beings who live in the island of Tahiti in what is called "French" Polynesia. The man in the foreground is Joachim Tamatoa Lucas. Next to him is Hinano Lucas. Hinano is Joachim's sister. Next to Hinano is Augustine Lucas, married to Joachim. Next to Augustine is Maea Tematua, a friend. These people participate in *The Journey*. They live in that part of the Pacific where the French are testing their atom bombs. Several of Hinano's children died at childbirth or shortly afterwards from "unknown causes." Hinano's husband died of cancer. The French authorities told her it was because he smoked cigarettes. These are amongst many people—families—couples—discussion groups—collectives—who "appear" in





*The Journey*. How have I—the filmmaker—affected what we think about them and how we perceive them as human beings?

## MEDIA AS MANIPULATOR

Before I talk about my own role as a manipulator, may I say something in general about the role of the audio-visual media of film and television and their language systems? You, the reader, may say, “That is a rhetorical question, because you, the filmmaker, are in control of things, and you are going to say something anyway, whether I like it or not, and in a manner and form over which I, in the public, have no control. . . .”

Yes, that’s right. And that is part of the immense question with which *The Journey* is grappling: what is the power of those working with contemporary communications media—in fact, what is the very role of the story-teller, no matter what medium or form he or she is using?

How can we work with this question? What is its relationship to the issues of war and peace, to the future of our planet, even to every

aspect of our lives today? First:

Can I say something in general about the role of the audio-visual media of film and TV, and their language systems?

There are many ways in which I can ask this question—each of them affects how you respond.

Is there any “neutral” or “objective” way of framing this question? Is this possible in any way, personally or professionally? And what is a “professional”?

## THE ROLE OF A PROFESSIONAL

Who am I, where do I come from, and what is my social and economic background? How did I relate to my parents? What about my relationships with women or men? How am I with my children? What age am I, and how secure or insecure with my life am I? Have I recently quarreled with someone close to me? What do I feel about that? What about my self-image at this time? How is my ego? Do I have political convictions? How do they affect my work? And why do I do my work—what are my reasons for making films, or for writing in a newspaper or for sitting in the dark pressing buttons in a TV news studio? Why—exactly—do I do this?

And what about the corporation I work for, and its economic and vested interests? Or those of the government of the country I live in, and its reasons for wanting to maintain hierarchical control over its people? And what of the relationship between the government and the media in this respect?

Or the connection between the government and the media and the deeper “system” which dominates the society in which I live? Does my “responsibility” as a “professional” mean that I feel I must guard and maintain this system? Or should I view my role as a “professional” differently?

And what about you, reading this, who belong to that distant body we refer to in our profession as “the public” or “the audience”. . . ? Supposing you don’t want me to make this statement about the media, or supposing you have something else you prefer to do instead of reading these words?



Do you need a space?  
Here is a space.

If you wish, please use it to write in any other statement you would have preferred I raise instead. Or perhaps another way of phrasing the original statement. If you want to, please use this space and any other spaces to write to me in care of this journal.

Or you can use this space to look at, and to think of other things, instead of having your eyes read my words. Then you can put the paper down and come back to it later. Or not at all.

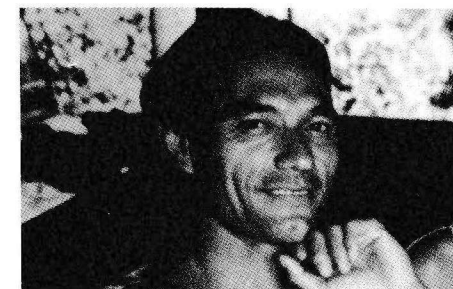
Can we find ways to work with the intensely dominating forms of the Hollywood cinema and of world television so that we can challenge—even dissolve—their power? How much do we understand this power and the effect it has on our lives? How often do our governments—our educational systems—the executives and producers and artists and technicians who organize the mass-media—talk with us in the public about these questions?

How often do they ask these questions of themselves?

Let's look again at Hinano, Augustine, Joachim and Maea, in the photo I took on the island of Tahiti in January 1986, while we were filming the Polynesian scenes for *The Journey*.

Why is Joachim so dominant in the foreground? Is this because I am a man? How does the large expanse of the table affect our feelings about the three women sitting in the background? Why are they sitting in the background? Because I am a man? Did I ask any of these people to play any role in framing this picture, or in selecting how or where they sit? (When I took the photo, I didn't consider any of these questions.)

And what happens if I frame these four people differently—if, for instance, I isolate one of them in a close-up? Is there any difference in our perception of Joachim seeing him alone like this?



What now if there are two people together in the same frame?

Another aspect of the language-system which is in every film we see and which confronts us each time we switch on television is that every image and sound is embedded into a structure which we can envision as a grid: This is the way in which film-time and space is divided into a rigid structure which is clamped down over the subject we are watching. And this is exactly the same for *Officer and a Gentleman* and the evening news on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation cinema. There are also many close parallels with the traditional layout of a newspaper.

## RAPID CUTTING RATE

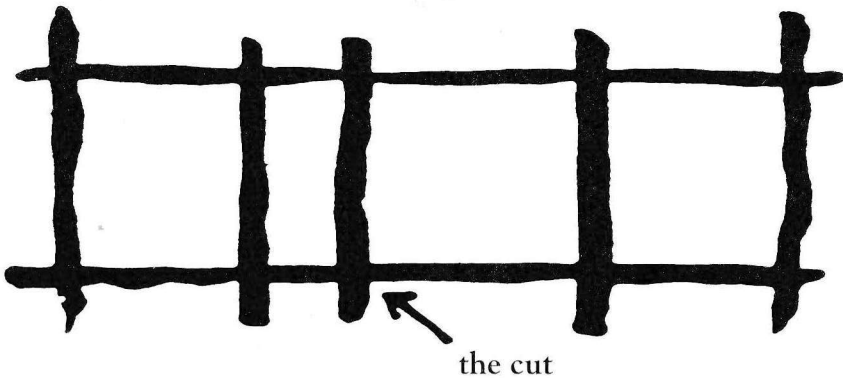
One aspect of this structural organizing—and we are all familiar with this—is that usually only a brief period of time is allocated to the span of each image, or sometimes each subject, before the filmmaker (or the copy editor in a newspaper) “cuts” to the next.

If we turn to the specific form of the cinema for a moment, research tells us that this rapid rate of cutting is a phenomenon which developed very early in the history of the cinema, first in Hollywood, then to be adopted by the European cinema, then subsequently honed into other theories of montage (mostly moving very rapidly) by the Russians and other schools of filmmakers.

But even as we fell into the horror of the first modern World War, the cinema was already developing the fragmented and decisive narrative style which has remained a constant ever since.

We need to talk about so many different aspects of this language system and its process—or, to be accurate in a broader social context, its lack of process. Cuts (hard and soft); continuity cutting and matching; cross-cutting; reverse angles; inserts and cutaways; montage; the closeness or distance of the subject on the screen (close-shot, mid-shot, long-shot); tracking shots; pans and tilts of the camera; the use of different lenses and the depths of field they give; weight and mass of image on the screen at any given moment in time, uni- and omni-directional movement; the different lighting techniques; filters; the use of colour, black and white and tinting; animation, pixillation and live action; the effects caused by different microphones, recording and sound mixing techniques; synchronous, asynchronous and overlapping sound—and so on.

Let's just take on a line from this grid-structure.



## AVERAGE SHOT LENGTHS

If we are to try to see this aspect of the grid-system, in a way so that we can identify it, and monitor it, we need to work out a method for this. One that I have used in the past ten years—and which has also been used by Professor Barry Salt in England during the invaluable work he has done in this field—is to divide the length of the film by the number of cuts (or shots) it contains. This gives us an Average Shot Length, and it is an invaluable means of monitoring the grid-structure—its patterns, its variance according to individual directors, its repetition of usage according to different forms of cinema.

I have included a table of some Average Shot Lengths. Please remember that a “cut” means moving abruptly from one mass of information on the screen to the next. Each mass or body of information—represented collectively inside a separate strip of celluloid called a “shot”—is manipulated by the director or editor into a determined length.

Each “shot” can contain many complex levels of information, which can have scores if not hundreds of separate and interlinked meanings for us—and which can function on our deepest levels of thinking.

How long, then, does the grid-system allow us to contemplate each of these shots—these masses of information, as they are flashed before our eyes on the cinema or TV screen?

1915-1926

USA		
	<i>Birth of a Nation</i> (D. W. Griffith)	7.5s
	<i>A Modern Musketeer</i> (Allan Dwan)	4.0
	<i>True Heart Susie</i> (D. W. Griffith)	6.0
	<i>Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse</i> (Rex Ingram)	7.0
	<i>Ben Hur</i> (Fred Niblo)	4.0
GERMANY		
	<i>Dr. Mabuse der Spieler</i> (Fritz Lang)	7.5
	<i>Metropolis</i> (Fritz Lang)	7.0
FRANCE		
	<i>L'Atlantide</i> (J. Duvivier)	8.0
	<i>Poil de Carotte</i> (J. Duvivier)	5.0
USSR		
	<i>Bronemosets Potyomkin</i> (J. Eisenstein)	4.0



1930's

NAZI GERMANY

*Triumph of the Will* (Leni Reifenstahl) 4.4

1940's-Present

USA

*Rambo II* 2.9  
*Star Wars* 3.6  
*A-Team* 5.0  
*Love Boat* 5.8  
*Hill Street Blues* 5.6  
*Tickle Me* (with Elvis Presley) 6.4  
*Casablanca* (with Humphrey Bogart) 6.7  
*Magnum Force* (with Clint Eastwood) 7.4

MULTI-NATIONAL

TV news broadcasts (incl. Japanese, British,  
 Australian, US, Canadian)  
 —approximate average range 3.0-7.5  
*Seventh Seal* (Ingmar Bergman) 10.7  
*The War Game* (Peter Watkins) 11.2  
*Yuendumu*—a public TV broadcast by  
 Australian Aboriginals 24.4  
*The Journey* 45.9

LACK OF CONTEXT

Is it possible that this time structure slices through our feelings and our perceptions, and incorporates this process of fragmentation into the very experience of receiving our essential information? Can we consider that this structure—and the speed of editing is only one line in this grid—can affect our feelings towards the people we see on the screen? Other aspects of this grid, which also repeat themselves in an authoritarian and inflexible structure, are those listed earlier, including *distance from the camera, framing, direction of the eyes, moving shots, cutaways, use of synchronous sound, and non-use of silence.*

It is the repetition and non-flexibility of this grid-system which has become the essential language problem for the mass media of today. It is a problem which is passed directly into the minds and feelings of the

viewing and reading public. Let us dissect, deconstruct, come to understand the process of manipulation and the complex motivations behind it. Above all, let us come to understand the effect of this process on the receiver and evolve new methods of diffusing and dissolving the power of the grid.

How often are we asked to examine or challenge the proclaimed “impartiality” of the TV news corporations—let alone are we invited to participate in decisions as to what is shown on television, when, for how long, and with what language systems?

Our planet—and the people living on it—now face intense peril—so much so that it is of the utmost urgency that we *now* broaden and deepen our self-enquiry towards how we are conducting our lives and our professions and our relations with other human beings.

Much of the peace movement appears to be fragmented, tired and with low morale. We elect—and re-elect—ever greater numbers of corrupt politicians. We are polluting the planet almost beyond recognition. The arms race—nuclear and otherwise—is daily increasing, not decreasing. In so many areas of professional and academic life there is now a terrible cynicism.

We all know this, don't we, even if we could disagree with each other about interior aspects of how and why? We all know this—therefore why do we remain silent—why do we withhold information from each other? Why do we still want power and control over others, given the priorities facing our planet?

These are the issues discussed in *The Journey* and the people in the film—exactly as the witnesses presented by Claude Lanzmann in *Shoah*—offer us a living testimony to a historical tragedy. The only difference between the two films is that this tragedy is happening with all of us—including you and me—now.

Time and time again the people in *The Journey*—Susan, Noriaki, Hanneleis, Pancho Lopez, Gerard, Hinano, Do, Ken, Khaddar, Martina, Tar, Tricia, Ron, Ellen—talk about their lack of knowledge, and they relate this to the role of the mass media and the educational systems under which they live. They talk about the utter lack of context—the lack of depth—the lack of connection between cause and effect. They tell of the fear that many teachers have of speaking out and being accused of being “political” or “non-objective.” They speak of the rigid adherence to the code of “objectivity” in their school systems, and of the anxiety this leaves in them, because it suppresses personal feelings and open debate on the problems facing our world today.



## Would you like to pause here?

We hope therefore that *The Journey* can play a positive role in the enormous debate that we know will develop in the next few years. We have made the film expressly for that purpose.

Not simply to be stared at, not simply to be consumed like food in a fast-food restaurant, but to be worked with, and used, in as many different ways as people can dream up.

There is much information in *The Journey*. This can be shared and discussed. The complex ways in which this information is presented can also be discussed.

There are many internal facets to the form of *The Journey*—the use of black “non-visuals” which serves a little like the spaces in this article—the use of silence or non-verbal information—the complex working with sound and time—all are there to seek alternative ways of communicating, and to open up public discussion on the form and effect of the grid.

### ANOTHER FORM OF GRID

What I am trying to work with in this film are the questions of form and structure, including my own. *The Journey* is a voyage of discovery for me as a filmmaker, as much as it is for the families—and I hope for you—on so many other levels. I am seeking ways to confront my own role as a manipulator, in the way I use images, sound and narration. I am also trying to confront the lack of depth and calm and context and openness which the grid imposes. Have I found just another form of grid—this one a little more open, but a grid for all that? I think the answer to this may be yes. But I am not sure.

*The Journey* is made to create and encourage and sustain debate on all these issues, partly by using the process of the film itself—including its flaws—as a reference point.

I do believe that the moral and ethical re-evaluation as to how we are conducting our lives—how we behave with each other—how we handle this planet of ours—is going to acquire great urgency and

public prominence in the next few years, reaching into every corner of social and political life.

The role of the mass media in society will be a central part of this debate, as will the role of education. Despite the enormous problems, I am optimistic that these professions will move out from beneath the shadow. There are too many good people for the existing situation to continue.

Taking the achievement of *The Journey* as an example, we can look at the support of a major Canadian film institution, the National Film Board, in the entire process of the post-production—we can see the concern of those organizing the Berlin Film Festival to show the film—as two extremely positive signs of what can grow and develop across a broad front in our profession. The most important example set by *The Journey*, though, is the one that transcends any debate on form and structure—it is the people who appear in the film and the many, many hundreds in different countries who helped us to organize it and to raise the necessary funds.

### POSTSCRIPT

I wrote the preceding paragraphs just before the first public screening of *The Journey* at the Berlin Film Festival in February 1987. Now I read these words again in August 1989 and I ask myself “What has happened to us since that moment, two and a half years ago?” The situation regarding the world arms race and the media has both improved and worsened, simultaneously. Gorbachev has worked towards reducing both nuclear and conventional arms in the European sphere, but the former and current U.S. governments have presented us with the dismal but revealing spectacle of constantly trying to belittle Gorbachev’s achievements and cast doubt on his sincerity. For those who were in doubt beforehand about the immense vested interests in the U.S. in maintaining the nuclear arms race, the events of the past year or so have provided a sobering lesson. At the time of writing, certain European countries, amongst which are West Germany and Denmark, are resisting the U.S. efforts to block Gorbachev’s calls for disarming European mid-range nuclear missiles.

However, we also need to note that the general world arms race is probably increasing, and that the manufacture, testing and development of ever more “sophisticated” nuclear weapons is also probably increasing . . . despite disarmament at certain levels. This trend is certainly true of the U.S. and most of the world’s suppliers of weapons



to the Third World. It is also true of the Soviet Union. Further, we need to be constantly aware of the shift towards nuclearization by India, Pakistan, Iran, Syria, Libya, South Africa, Argentina and Brazil.

So much for the world arms trade, nuclear and conventional. In a brief word—despite the disarmament, despite even the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and Kampuchea—the killing continues. And the killing continues (and escalates) even on our own streets. A recent article in *Time* entitled “Death by Gun” informed us that 464 people were killed—or killed themselves—by handguns in the U.S. in one typical week earlier this year. Evidently, more American lives are taken in this way in two years than during the entire war in Vietnam. And these 464 lives in one week are related “only” to the U.S.; can we dare to imagine how many lives were taken in that same typical week all over the world? Lives taken by the central American death squads (many of which are organized by the governments themselves), lives taken by the endless killing in Lebanon, lives taken by the suppression of the Kurdistan people, lives taken by car bombs in Belfast, lives taken by the struggle between the Communist and government forces in the Philippines, lives taken by the Soviet government in the Siberian gulag camps, lives taken by malnutrition and neglect amongst the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, lives taken by the government deep in the northern hills of Burma, lives taken by the Dutch in the colonies of Eastern Timor and Irian Jaya, lives taken by the lingering after-effects of the nuclear test-explosions in the Pacific, lives taken by drought, disease, starvation, by armed squabbling and the corruption of government officials, and by direct colonial intervention, in Ethiopia, Moçambique, Angola, Namibia, Zambia, and many other African countries. Lives taken by. . . .

The world’s mass media continue to inflict our suffering societies with the razor-edged and fragmented images of this global tragedy, night after night. But we are complicitous. Especially those of us in the Western world who have had—who have—the privilege and the possibility of education, of analyzing what the mass audio visual media has developed into—and who have (deliberately?) rejected that possibility.

In this aspect, the situation has definitely deteriorated in the past three years. So much so, that I am turning more and more of my own efforts to trying to research WHY we are refusing the research—why we in the West are visibly turning our backs on a broad-based analysis of the media and a seeking for more democratic ways of imparting and receiving information that are not based on violently structured grid-systems.

My current work in the social-democratic country of Sweden has provided some very interesting—as well as thoroughly depressing—examples of the problem. I will briefly describe these, because I am convinced they relate to the problems we find today in most Western countries.

## SITUATION IN SWEDEN

Here there are two state TV channels, and an increasing number of satellite TV channels are becoming available. At the present count I think the average Swede can obtain almost a dozen TV channels per night, if one also counts incoming signals from Norway, Denmark, France, the UK, West Germany and the USSR.

The satellite stations include the Sky Channel, Super Channel, CNN, a sports channel, Worldnet, Filmnet, Lifestyle, and MTV. These beam down soap operas, sports and U.S. news programmes, feature films and rock videos.

Further, the per capita use of VHS video cassettes in Sweden is probably amongst the highest in the world, and much of the material to be found in the video shops all over the country is violent in the extreme.

Most Swedish children I question during classroom discussions admit to at least one to two hours of TV viewing per night, seven nights a week. One teenage girl told me she looked at six hours a night. The per capita consumption of video tapes by Swedish young people (especially boys) is very high.

Here we can catch a glimpse of an increasingly AUDIO-VISUALLY influenced society, and there are probably many parallels between Sweden and New Zealand in this aspect, not least in the lack of public or political debate on the meaning of this phenomenon, and on its social and human cost.

A distressing aspect of the situation in Sweden is that decisions, such as those to put up the TV satellite stations, which have a profound effect on the culture and political life of the country, have been made in an extremely centralized way, without any parliamentary debate or national referendum on whether such a development is for the common good or not. They just happen.

There is a complete lack of knowledge by ordinary people as to what is happening here, why it is happening, who controls it, the economic interests at stake, let alone the consequences for the social, political and cultural process.



This is a time when the contemporary mass media in general are centralizing their power more and more, and the distance between them and the public in terms of direct participation grows ever greater.

## LACK OF MEDIA STUDIES IN SCHOOLS

One of the most dangerous aspects of this situation is the apparent lack of opportunity for most Swedish school children to learn how to protect themselves against this contemporary phenomenon—to be able to study the role and effect of the mass media, and to be given the tools to understand the multiple ways in which the media can and do influence us—how they fragment, de-politicize, blur, confuse, and create tension and aggression.

There are very few sustained media studies of any kind in the primary or secondary school systems in Sweden, and even the upper and tertiary levels here show a marked lack of study in this area. A related part of the problem is that even if the media are being studied, often it is from a strictly non-critical reference point—the young people are being taught simply to accept the media as a given status-quo within the society in which they live.

Where this is not true—when the teachers are trying to provide a critical media education—it is often severely offset by their lack of support from the Swedish government and the education system, by the pressures of time caused by a rigid and antiquated teaching schedule, and so on.

One of the worst aspects of the problem in Sweden is that teacher training itself is very weak when it comes to media studies. Most of the mid-career teachers I speak with have had little or no media studies at any point in their professional training, and yet these are the same teachers which the Swedish educational system expects are to teach the new generations about the influence of the mass media. . . . Or does it?

I raise this question, since here we have a central problem, that of the role of the state in controlling debate on the mass media. Some few years ago the Swedish government made statements about the need for mass media studies to be given a priority in the school curriculum. These statements claimed to recognize the increasing impact of the mass media on contemporary life.

Yet, in the five to six years that followed, the Swedish government significantly back-pedalled on these pledges. Over precisely this same

period the communications industries have been given a more or less *carte blanche* by the Swedish government to bring in any type of message and beam it down via satellite onto the public.

At this crucial period, when the public debate should be at its sharpest, prospects for mass media studies in the Swedish school system appear to be at an all-time low, with various steps being taken (which I will not detail here) to marginalize media studies in the new teacher training programmes currently being put into practice.

As a result of this progression of events, I am now totally convinced that there is a direct correlation between the lack of critical media studies in the Swedish educational systems and the broader lack of public debate and knowledge about what is currently happening in the mass media.

Thus for the current situation in Sweden. Does it sound familiar? Probably, because with one or two exceptions (Scotland and Denmark, where some steps are being made to introduce media studies in the school system) much of my description can apply to most other countries in the West today. And this is truly depressing, and alarming.

Amongst other alarming factors, one which I have personally experienced in the past few years is that many Western universities are specifically and directly blocking the development in critical media studies. This is in itself a large and very serious issue that I will be writing about on another occasion.

Returning to Sweden, and to the positive aspects of this situation, I can report the following:

## THE SWEDISH PROJECT

The Dramatic Institute in Stockholm has given me a grant to try to examine and counter some of the problems written about here. The Dramatic Institute is a university college which carries out further training for media professionals and also gives media pedagogy to future primary and secondary school teachers. This grant has been strengthened by a further grant from the University of Gothenburg, under the auspices of the UHA, a government department in charge of university and tertiary education in Sweden.

The work I am doing here in a twelve month period is broadly in three phases.

First I am interviewing over a hundred people working in the hierarchy of the Swedish educational system, the unions, union-



affiliated “study circles”, adult education, teacher training, the Swedish TV, regional government education groups, and video workshops.

My initial aim will be to find out what is being taught in ordinary schools, gymnasiums, high schools, adult education, media training institutions, and so on. My particular points of focus will be a) to examine the pedagogical work on all levels regarding the role of the media in society; b) to examine how critical or accepting of current media practices this pedagogy is.

Thus the first part of the research is, we can say, beamed towards the hierarchical level, the initial point of organizing and decision making. But the decision making within the educational system has also become—in one way—somewhat decentralized in Sweden in recent years. Therefore phase two is necessary.

Phase two moves the research out onto the local level, where the actual pedagogy is being applied. Phase two is in two parts—direct and indirect.

The direct part involves my visiting a number of primary and secondary schools, high schools, universities, and adult education centres in various regions throughout Sweden. Here I will discuss the media problem, and the whole question of media pedagogy, with Rectors (headmasters), teachers, and pupils. It is most likely that many of the schools I visit will have little or no media studies in the curriculum. The purpose of these visits will not only be to discuss problems, but to gather people's responses and ideas on how to challenge them constructively, in particular how we might collectively forge new levels of media pedagogy in Sweden.

The indirect aspect of phase two is that we are currently sending out various forms of questionnaires to 300-400 schools all over Sweden. One of these forms is brief, designed basically to find out if media studies are being undertaken at the school. A follow-up form of over fifty pages has been developed to gather detailed information about the type of media studies being carried out, the degree of its critical content, its relationship to the audience, and the analysis of the language form.

An important aspect of these questionnaires is that they call for detailed responses from the teachers about their own problems in teaching media studies, their hopes and wishes for change, and specific ideas they have developed in their media teaching methods.

The other key perspective to this project is to explore ways of developing more “inter-active” film (and video) languages, and ways of bringing peoples' attention to the already existing ones. In this

way, I believe that we can help young people, and the public in general, to understand that not all information video—or video that tells stories, for that matter—need have the Hollywood narrative structure, nor look like the conventional TV evening news.

This brings me to phase three of the project, the practical phase. This is being carried out in Haninge, a local community (“kommune” in Swedish) in the suburbs of Stockholm. The kommune of Haninge has given us a grant to work with local citizens, including teachers and pupils, to develop alternative video projects. We will explore the traditional (manipulative) relationships among video (or film), its subject, and the audience and seek alternative ways of developing more democratic and open means of using these technologies and art-forms.

The results of this practical work will be linked together with the findings of phase 1 and 2 into a broad report. An essential part of this project is to include the responses and ideas of many teachers, and hopefully also of students, in the report.

The final objective is to present publicly the “findings” in a seminar in Stockholm, and to circulate them in printed form as broadly as possible within the Swedish school system. Hopefully, as a result of the collective dialogue, the findings will include specific ideas for the creation of media studies programmes at different levels of the educational system.

Many teachers I speak with say that they would like to teach media studies, and that they recognize the urgency for this. But they tell me that they lack basic training to carry out this work. They also express their concerns about the antiquated teaching schedules which prevent them from having the time to do so, even if they have the training.

These problems need to be dealt with at the national level by the government and the school system. But in recognition of the fact that such changes might not occur—or might be prevented—or might be very slow in coming—I am hoping that my report will include a number of specific ideas to help teachers implement simple media studies inexpensively and without prolonged formal training (which at the moment is not available to them, anyway).

## CONCLUSION

Over the following two years (1990 and 1991) I will be carrying out the same work, though on a more extended basis, in New Zealand. This is due to the granting of two stipends, one from the



Peace and Disarmament Fund and one from the National Lottery Board.

In many ways, this work is now replacing my work as a filmmaker. I have very much tension at not being allowed to express myself as a filmmaker. I will be writing elsewhere about the personal events of the past twenty-five years, and I imagine that some readers will be hard put to believe some of the story I have to tell. But this is how it is within a profession that has become one of the most corrupt, brutal and suppressive that we can find functioning out on the centre stage of the social process.

To do this media work, in place of being a filmmaker, is for the moment the only way I know of challenging what is happening within the contemporary mass media. But let's have absolutely no illusions: the world of academia, in which much of this media work has to be carried out, is in and of itself very similar to the world of the mass media, with its hierarchy, its intense personal competitiveness, its rejection of subjective individuality, its constant pressing towards uniformity and the acquisition of "pragmatic skills." In multiple ways to which I have already referred (see the example of Sweden) most contemporary Western educational systems are steadily reinforcing the deadly damage being done by the centralized media. Most current teaching methods and most of the curriculums and their time allocations function towards the same end as the grid structures of the mass media.

Add to these dilemmas the fact that critical media analysis is still—in August 1989—a non-event—thirty years after the advent of the mass audio-visual media in most countries and even forty years later in some—and we begin to understand the enormity of the reflexive toxic overload paralysing us today. Add yet again the fact that most Western educational systems, reinforced by the repressive inertia of many Universities, are refusing to deal with the democratic implications of this toxicity for the surrounding community, and I think that many could be forgiven for seriously believing that we have slid beyond the point of return. Indeed, many people at this moment in time do believe this.

Perhaps it is therefore not too surprising that *The Journey*, in dealing with many of these problems, has itself been marginalized to a quite remarkable degree within the West since its emergence over two years ago. Though it has achieved a few positive supporters amongst the ranks of the professional cinema, in the main it has been attacked more viciously than any other work I have ever undertaken. And if any reader could have seen the sheer hatred (fear?) on the faces of the

"radical" film teachers at a recent documentary film seminar in the U.S. as they literally screamed their rejection of *The Journey*, he or she would have deeply understood how these jagged fragments of the grid-system are cutting into the deepest recesses of our souls at this moment in history.

The direct result is that *The Journey*, one of the first direct teaching tools to grapple with these problems, has been bypassed by most educational systems in the West. That it has been bypassed by most film distributors and by most Western TV organizations is hardly surprising, given the present situation, but that educational systems are also refusing to work with such a film at this moment in history offers us a much broader perspective on the complexity and enormity of the problems our society is facing.

But I think that we WILL be able to emerge from this dark forest, and this is why I continue to struggle in the way I do, and this is why I would like to conclude this postscript to the story of *The Journey* by simply reminding you that there will be another postscript, and another, and another. . . .