

**BAFTSS** (British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies)  
4th Annual Conference, University of Reading, 14 - 16 April 2016  
**Thursday 14 April 2016**

**Panel D Documentary Ethics**

**Screening of "Justine" followed by discussion with Dr Brian Winston, Dr Anna Claydon, Dr Pratap Rughani and audience members.**

---

0:01 BW:

We thought we'd start by asking for your immediate reactions and questions that you might have to see where the conversation then takes us.

[Does] anybody have any thoughts or responses?

0:7 Audience (Jane Milton)

I think it's a lovely touching portrait of Justine. And as a filmmaker myself working in television documentaries I'm fascinated by the ethical dilemmas. What was the conversation you had with Justine and the family in the context of making the film?

0:24 PR

That's a great question. Can I just check your permission - we wanted to record the conversation is that ok with everybody? It's partly because we're trying to produce some educational materials framed by these two wonderful people who have done a lot of work in this area so we can help develop that conversation, so just checking your permission for that. Just before starting that I just think, not everybody knows everyone - is it worth introducing ourselves?

0:52 AC

Most you probably realised already I'm Anna Claydon, I work at the University of Leicester and one of my areas of work is disability, particularly working at the moment with disability the media and Paralympics in the media - updating some work that we did in 2012 Paralympics with the 2016 coming in too . And I know Pratap - from an event we organised at the Leicester Centre for Independent Living.

1:25 BW

I'm Brian Winston I've done some work on ethics - Pratap and I have been having a long conversation going on year now, for about eight years now about all these things. Good place to start, thank you.

1:38 PR Is it worth us saying our names, and where we're from we'd have a much more collegiate conversation then. Introductions.

2:20 PR

What kind of conversation did we have with the family? OK So I was invited to be

interviewed to be part of this by a wonderful woman called Kate Adams who runs something called Project Art Works in Hastings, and she specialises in the relationship of artwork to - what we loosely call 'disability' and the problematic around that language. It emerges from her experience from her wonderful son Paul and trying to use video to help the medics around Paul and his conditions to understand what was going on. So she has a really integrated art practice which is responding to the way her life and her family's life is unfolding. And then she was developing this idea of creating a number of portrait films and then a colleague of mine Professor Cate Elwes who runs a fantastic journal called MIRA J - she was speaking to her - why don't you talk to me - she'd seen one of my recent films. She interviewed me and I felt I thought - in a way it's going to a new country for me - I don't have - I didn't have - experience of working with people with these sorts of conditions before and I was really intrigued and challenged with the idea: How do you work with the idea of consent - which was underneath part of your question - with somebody or with people who are not able to give their consent in the ways we would normally understand. So philosophically, ethically.. legally, actually was sort of simple - because as far as the law's concerned you get consent of the parent or guardian. OK you can tidy that up satisfy the broadcast whatever - but I think we've got a much more interesting trajectory here - trying to understand, intuit, relate to, the experience of someone who is wired differently to the so-called "neurotypical". And that challenge was where - that woke me up and made me think - well yes, let's see if that's possible. Then I embarked on a period of about 18 months intermittent training with her (Kate Adams) and spent time in their art studio working with people with a range of different 'disabilities' and sharing our inspirations - film-work we felt we could relate to and out of that, after doing that for a long time Kate then said we will write to you with the name of somebody - the family - then you can write to them to see if you can work with each other. I think that back story is quite important really because then I felt a little more competent - I still felt very naked in a way - as I say it's like going to another completely different situation and I questioned my own flexibility(?) and I had to unlearn a lot of things about - you mentioned broadcast - a lot of the things about narrative filmmaking particularly anything that has a journalistic spine to it because of many of the things that would lead a story, to make it something a commissioner might think it may be of interest in their view to an audience. Those things are likely to keep Justine in a very tightly defined box. Frankly I'm not interested in that. There's plenty of that work out there - some of it necessary - but the documentary observational enquiry I felt can be broader than that - so that's what I was trying to explore.

5:46 BW

I don't think there's any ethical problem you see. I think that - first of all - there's a whole issue around consent which is largely mythic. People don't get consent - you know - and nor should they necessarily give it. Anwar Congo, for instance, wasn't told by Joshua Oppenheimer that people were likely to think worse of him if you demonstrated how you garrotted Communists, right? I think that there are multiple

variables here so the crucial place for me to start thinking about that is actually the start of the film. What's significant about the start of the film? It's not indexed as a film. It has no title (it does have a title) it has footage - and immediately my first response - Pratap was worried about me getting it - my first response was when we started cooking this up - I sent him an email and I said "Who's it for?" and he said, of course, the care workers. And I immediately thought of Fogo - of the Fogo Islands, which has nothing to do with disability but everything to do with how people are presented on screen. Now the Fogo experiment - and for those of you aren't deeply into documentary - the Fogo experiment was conducted almost by accident in 1969 by the National Film Board of Canada because a community on an island off Newfoundland was being moved by the government in St John's and the social worker said - literally to a passing National Film Board filmmaker called Colin Lowe (sp?) they can't get a hearing, so maybe if we put them on a screen they could get a hearing. So they go the hearing. They got their fishing boats renewed they got a fishing plant, etcetera which this year celebrates its 75th anniversary - and the point about that is that this is a film not made for the audience it was made for these guys who were making this decision. That led to something in Canada called the Challenge for Change programme. For me, there are a number of films which are really extremely important in that regard, one of which - and this speaks directly to that - this is just the first part of the answer. One of the films - about recipients of welfare just talking to camera, and they showed it in every welfare office across Canada. They made them all sit and watch it - how these people felt about how they were treated and so on and so forth. So what I'm saying is that there's one element of the whole ethical issue that has to do with what I call channel.. Where are you showing this? So all the problems you raise in - yes - the other people in the educational set up - people in the park I don't care about - public domain - but there's a question about domain. Where are they? What are they doing? Who are they? All these issues can be variable. And I think most of those are simply answered by the question of channel. So I would have an instant reaction if this had started with a title and music or even like "Hold Me Tight Let Me Go" .

9:06 PR

You could see it as a pre-title because the title does come...

9:07 BW

.. at the end.. that's ok, but what I'm saying you don't give anybody the indexing ability so its obviously not directed in the usual sort of direction and I think that's really interesting.

9:19 AC

It does connect in that there is - a current PhD student at Montfort University called Damila Naylor who is doing a very interesting project, which cuts across what you are saying about Fogo and also some of the stuff that Pratap is doing. She is doing a project around self-portraiture - people with disabilities, in Northern Cyprus. One

of the things that she's engaging in is this idea of a. who is the image for? And who is controlling the image? - and her explicit desire within this project is that her project is that her work is disseminated to policy makers because in northern Cyprus there is a particular issue around disability rights and support funding - and I think one of the things that toward the end of the film Pratap, especially when we have the family testimonials at the end is that - with this shift from something that is more of an edited actuality type of construction to something that becomes more of a plea that is centred around long term care issues - and I think that idea of who it is for is absolutely one of the things that helps refine.

10:37PR

The family - that's not Justine, that's Mum, Dad and the others - they made that decision. I went down with a lot of the actuality that wasn't quite the fine cut - it was near the fine cut - and all sorts of things emerged from that. One really beautiful thing about families is.. we were showing the sequence in the playground - and Mum said - "I thought she'd never do that - that's not Justine" - so there were discoveries within the family. I thought that was very telling about families because very often people think they know each other in more a three dimensional way in perhaps than they do. Perhaps that can be broken open by people seeing what people are like in other contexts. Then when we got the end of that conversation - it was a very warm conversation - Justine was there. She appeared to - what I would describe as "assent" if we get into that conversation about the nature of consent. She appeared to assent. And then Mum and Dad particularly Mum said "we want to say something" and for me this was very much - the attraction was, as I intimated earlier - trying to make something that centred in the extent into which one can intuit and understand Justine's experience - not all the people around her - many of, you know, are fantastically well motivated, do all of these things and so on. But that is not the experience of the individual, and that's what interests me. We hardly get to glimpse, hear, understand, intuit, what that experience might be like. Which leads me to one phrase and then I'll stop - the art and ethics of not knowing - well if we just stay with the art of not knowing - because of what I'm not doing is saying is either "I have her consent" or fully understand the way in which Justine makes sense of her world - and I think that takes us into a really rich / dangerous area of really admitting we don't like to admit this - that we don't know.

And creating that space to dare to not know and then see what emerges - that really interests me and I think its something that could have resonance across a range of disciplines. I see something that's very clear to identify within questions of disability. But actually it's something much - it's about the nature of being human.

12:50 BW

I've suddenly realised that we started the conversation and I didn't say that this is pretty nicely shot - to put it mildly, right - it's very very sensitively (filmed).

13:02 Audience (Phil)

I was just thinking about what you've just said actually Pratap. I was thinking about my reaction to this it was precisely the filming itself as we went through the 27 minutes. I became aware of her frequently seeming to be - as an audience member knowing nothing about these people at all - very cut off from everything around her, which is reflected in the way that you shot it. We often see her standing at one remove looking at the window at something that's happening, all that kind of thing - and I wondered, going back to the art of not knowing, if your framing of her is actually making us know, something about her.

13:55 PR

Yes.

13:56 Audience (Phil)

...but it's also your interpretation of how she is, in terms of interaction with her family and indeed with other people around her - not saying this terribly well - but I'm slightly uneasy about this term of "not knowing" because it seems to me to that you are actually forcing us to know something - but I'm not sure what it is.

14:14 PR

Oh good. Yes that's great then that's working. The act of looking, putting a frame around something the audial act, choosing what we tune into out of all the myriad sound happening around us what we choose to focus on - those are a series of human conscious and non-conscious decisions. So what I'm not saying is the art of not knowing means everything's open - this is a film that has a shape, a duration, emerges from certain traditions, wrestles with those traditions in some ways it moves between - if we were in (Bill) Nichol's modes - typically you wouldn't see something that's heading towards direct cinema for me going into something that's pretty journalistic - so there's something's happening there. Absolutely I want to say that those are a lot of cultural decisions and we have different views about whether they worked and how we shoot it differently and so on but it remains the case for me that I think by trying to open up the question of not knowing and the legitimacy of not knowing the idea to try to take an audience particularly through that first 22 minutes or so - just trying to pause for a moment and see is it possible to get a sense of what it might for another in a very different environment. And something I noticed around Justine is that she's drawn to the thresholds, she'll often stand in the space between a room - like in a corridor, say - or in her birthday party she would stand on the edge. She'd be ready to move or not move - and the shot - that ends the direct cinema section - actually, that (at the party Justine is alone looking away while others chat together) to me that was as visual translation of the ideas that were really striking me because - you can barely see it now - appreciate it..

16:08 Audience (Phil)

I was going to say that's the shot that actually caused me to think

16:11 BW

Oh yes that's critical.

16:13 PR

It's her 18th birthday party and she's absolutely central - all the cards, all of that - and she lives, as her brother puts it, "in a bubble" and for any parent it's almost hardwired, you want to touch her, you want to hold your child when they're young you want them to sit on your knee, or just that contact and so on, Justine will not be touched, she will not allow touch. And that is a huge huge thing, and you can see, I thought I saw in the physiognomy of her wonderful sister and mum the way that they hold themselves, you can see the love for her in the party. For example between the sister and Justine, pouring out of her - but they know they can't move towards her. They've learnt to do that they know how to encode that. So what I would say that some of the decisions to hold the frames wide enough to see the space, sometimes the deeper space around the character - absolutely - that's a cultural judgement. And the precise depth of field - its not all of her world is held in sharp focus - but what I hope its doing is revealing what I think is a truth about the way she moves and lives.

17:23 BW

Well this is the - I'm sorry - go on..

17:26 Audience

On the same subject, the one shot in particular early on where you zoom - I think it's a zoom - very slowly in - and what the camera is doing is (close) to her face and I remember being quite struck by it - thinking she's completely unfazed by it but she's probably not engaged with it at all - she's not aware of it - it's hard to know...

17:44 BW

You were some distance away.. actually

17:48 PR

Yeah I mean I worked off a pretty long lens - that's well observed, that zoom - but - sorry it's an interesting observation you make - not that I shot it particularly well I didn't mean that. I worked off the long end of a zoom, its a very deliberate decision partly because there are times where when I wanted to be out the way and there were times when she almost came to court the camera.

18:07 BW

Yes when she walks toward ..

18:09 PR

... and that was quite unusual and I found that so so touching.

18:13 BW

She obviously trusted you ... it's like the little children in "Hold Me Tight (Don't Let Me Go)" - Kim Longinotto has that ability. By the way, its an essential talent unspoken and unexamined of great documentary filmmakers that they have that - you know, that people just respond to them even though they are behind the camera so you can take that as a compliment...

18:38 PR

Well that's a high compliment

18:39 BW

No no no - I've often thought that and it's really, it's critical but it occurs to me this talk about - the interesting problem about consent is really I think to do with the whole issue - the Rouchian issue of "mentalitee", right? That there's what you're trying to do really, is to give us some sense of what the world - how this person experiences the world without coming any judgement or putting her into any pigeonholes. Which is extremely admirable but it speaks to the difficulties of actually penetrating surfaces. And that why Rouch does all the re-construction and the re-enactments and all those sorts of things - which obviously she can't do because..

19:20 PR

And that's generous - but it's not what Phil's saying - he's saying come on, be straight about it - you've made a load of judgements here - it's not an open...

19:27 BW

Oh sure

19:29 PR

I want to acknowledge that that's true - but also that there's an aspiration to be a little bit broader than maybe in my case I would have been, if I hadn't attempted to put down some of my reflexes and try to step into that not knowing..

19:44 AC

Yes

19:44 PR

.. and it is really hard cause I was there - "I'm getting nothing here" I have no idea what kind of form this story will take - and then. Slow down. Advocates of the slow movement argue for this - and you start to see small gestures become major story points. The opening of a gate...

20:02 AC

I think that's one of the things - this tension between - how in shooting something - we are aware of, and use certain - "narrativising", rather than storytelling, devices - like the zooming in - to give a sense of affect, and the extent that we are trying to represent a subject on the screen. And you know one of the things I - two particular shots - that I found powerful apart from this one - the first while shopping and you're inside the car, and there's the whole thing of opening the door coming in and out of the door and that does seem to penetrate into certain depth it seems to have different level of engagement about it. It's more you are in an internal space and Justine wanting to come into you as a kind of meeting point. And the other one is in the party sequence where they are singing happy birthday, and she's in the centre of that group. She is clapping and she's even mouthing the words but the moment that is over she moves to the edge. These are two very different shot set ups but they give us a different sense of how the filmmaking process is working alongside using a sense of - implying and interpretation and also trying to stand back - this tension between the two, I think stylistically comes through.

21:43 BW

I thought - when I watched it yesterday - I actually felt intrusive not in the sense of invasion of privacy. I felt intrusive because you can conceive there are two ethical responsibilities I think - one to the people you film and one to the audience. And I actually think that the only ethically responsibility you have to the audience is to provide them with sufficient information to come to judgement. And I watched this film for two or three minutes and I couldn't come to judgement - I didn't know how old this person was, I didn't know what was wrong with her, I didn't know why I was watching - but I sort of did - then I thought, this film is not for me, right? ie the general audience. I thought that this was its strength and its importance and simply transferring it to a general audience is where you start to get the moral difficulties about what they are doing in terms of objectifying the condition and so on and so forth. And then you can start making the case - well, we're not being given enough information - and therefore you've failed in your duty of care to the audience. But I'm saying you're not doing that - so it's not a failure..

23:08 PR

...though you could say in a way it's a failure, and in a way I welcome that. It's a little bit like sometimes when people see their first Satyajit Ray movie - and they're like - when, what's happening? Is anything happening? and so on - and I think being the discomfort of not knowing and hence was this phrase resonates for me - the art of not knowing. What I didn't want to do was give an answer because I didn't feel Justine would ever escape the box that those answers ..would therefore it's delayed until the end..

23:40 BW

That is the bottom line problem. If you were approaching this in a more



conventional way, right, you would obviously take on the task, because you felt you could "help" right in terms of combating prejudice in terms of particularity of the case, all the sorts issues, that then would lead you - people use the term "journalistic" but I think it's actually more fundamental than that in that sense - that would lead you to a position where you would have to start to explain things. So that you would get the response you wanted. The reason why I felt intrusive was I thought - this film is directed for people who know what's going on. They will take one look at this person and say, ok.. I have a fair idea of the clinical reality of these conditions and I know all about this.. and I don't have that and you're not giving it. I think it becomes a question of morality, thinking about Oppenheimer right, what's the argument with Oppenheimer ? The argument is that he doesn't tell you why the hell these guys are going around killing - he doesn't tell you any of that. He claims he does, but he doesn't, so I think that's a real moral failure. And his excuse is that it's our fault because we wouldn't sit still for an explanation. So I think that what you've done (just to conclude) you've actually - I think it's a fairly extraordinary piece of work in the sense that it doesn't give the general audience anything to go by, but it clearly is extremely sensitive and illuminating in all sorts of ways you never expected it to be. (Phil first then Sue and then...)

25:24 Audience (Phil)

I kind of agree although - what I felt - it was incredibly strong the film, until we got to the point where the family comes in..

25:29 BW

Yes.

25:30 Audience (Phil)

.. at which point I thought - ok - its turning into - Anna you used the word "xxx?" - I'd like to put a different spin on it - as opposed to being in the position of "not knowing" which makes the film admirable as you've just been saying Brian, suddenly I thought we're heading off toward the sentimental - I could feel tears welling up - I felt for this family. I was on known territory.

26:03 BW

Yes. Absolutely. Yes.

26:07 Audience (Phil)

I don't necessarily think it's a weakness of the film it was a jolt I found somewhat uncomfortable, I had a feeling you felt the same thing...

26:16 PR

Do you want to say something .. 'cause some of the people in the event that you (AC) ran ... you want to say something about?

26:19 AC

Precisely.. the event we had in November in Leicester this was particularly the point that a lot of the people from the Centre for Independent Living picked upon - because there are a lot of people there you said "this is exactly my experience - i recognise some of this - this is what it's like to be a family member in this context" - but at the same time there was clearly an engagement with - a sort of disconcernment, that the family were putting their narrative and wanting to direct us to...

26:56 BW

... I thought that's why he made the movie. I thought OK I haven't understood anything up to this point but now I know why he made the movie....

27:04 PR

Would that it would be so simple that you could say .. for this reason. But I was also party to a lot of information some of the strongest - you might say in journalistic terms - if you'd make a journalistic film that would be the thing - and I decided not to use some of that - and some of the visual imagery of self harming and so on. Normally that would be a gift for a researcher.

27:38 Audience (Sue)

I think it's balanced out really well. If the observational part about Justine was not knowing - I'm tempted to bring in phenomenological kind of accounts of how .. a non-judgemental way of relating to a subject in a film at this point because i think that could give a very good account of how we are just with her - we are not nearly as with her as we sometimes can be with a person in a film - because we are just kind of observing neutrally.

27:59 BW

Nobody's with her.

28:00 Audience (Sue)

But I think that not knowing or not judging was balanced out really well by the people who have to care for her and look after her at the end of the film. I didn't think it was the whole point of the film, but I thought it supplied something ...

28:17 PR

And what her sister's .

28:18 BW

How did he get the money??

... of course that's the way my mind works

28:25 PR

When you said "as soon as they spoke, we were on known territory" I think that's interesting. I respect what you say but I don't fully agree with it because I didn't know until I listened and tried to learn to listen a bit more closely the way in which Justine's sister - her life is framed in a form of beauty. as much as a form of adaptation and challenge and so yes it was in a known idiom, I thought I was learning things through that.

29:03 Audience

Very briefly - it's a long the same line as these questions ... I'm very drawn to this idea of not being able to know when it comes to documentary subjects - but I'm wondering if the family testimony detracted from that idea of not knowing, because they seemed to know her so well. She seemed to be - very kind of ok in a lot of ways - but once the cameras on the family came in it made me kind of start thinking oh - do you really know her that well? - it's kind of their own construction of how they imagine that communication taking place with her..Is she able she able to be known then because if you go by their testimony then she very much is.

29:47 PR

Are you able to be known, by anyone, in the fullest sense? And I think that's the generic - it left me with that question, if you like. My daughter's four and a half - she wasn't speaking at the time she was yet to grow into speech - and I'm communicating with non-speaking wonderful creature - I'm trying to intuit what's happening and make sense of in our relationship and I think that was teaching me a lot all the way through. Then I was with Justine trying for Justine to accept me with a camera, and at the beginning she said yes to me and no to the camera. And most of my background is being able to negotiate and try to get permission to be able to film. Here was someone who was saying - without saying - but making it clear - uh uh - don't want that - but I'm interested in you. And so a lot of my approaches were being confounded by the reality of that - and because I was robbed of language I couldn't use the normal negotiation or the arts of persuasion or trying to understand the difference. Couldn't use language, I just had to be with her and see where that thing's going.

31:04 Audience

..did you feel like you could intuit ...

31:06 AC

.. that's where the assent thing comes in..

31:08 BW

... with infants, who are, by the way, infants... unable to talk.

31:15 Audience (Phil)

We're talking about two different experiences though here...

31:16 PR

Sorry Phil, there's someone who wanted to speak...could we take that comment first? To be fair...

31:22 Audience

It's not really a question, in fact its a.. I wanted to share a word with you. I've been trying to work with the idea of "rudimentariness" and I was struck by the fact that - I can't Google "rudimentariness" and find object - but this is one. I kind of thought ...

31:40 BW

Yeah. Interesting.

31:41 Audience

.. in this film because I think this gives me an idea of how it can be performed at a documentary level. What I mean by "rudimentariness" is that you never give up on wanting to know. And if you start saying, ok disability teaches us that we are all unknowable, that's great, except then we refuse to know that disability (.....), we are constantly going back and forth. And I was thinking that perhaps what has disappeared because the beauty of the film remains, is what you have to do in order to get there. So funnily enough, the rudimentariness of the conversation that you have to negotiate with her. You know the way in which you thought maybe you were succeeding, maybe you were failing - even that you don't know - for me is reflected in the discussion we have. We'll never know if it's ethical because we would want purity, right? We would want finally find the right way of filming somebody that we don't understand but maybe ..

32:40 BW

.. you can't.

32:41 PR

.. you can't... or certainly the formula is only one part of the conversation. I won't go - I've spared you my presentation where I go into all this.

32:52 AC

I was just going to say I agree. I think it makes a lot of sense.

32:57 Audience (Phil)

What I was going to say I think is slightly along the same lines - this issue of - what I was going to say was - we're talking about two different experiences here - one is your experience as the filmmakers and what you were talking about, our experience as the audience of the film that you have made. In other words there are two different kinds of "is-nesses". There's the "is-ness" of the filmmaking process and

your attempt to find out whether it's possible to know anything which (Mireille?) has just addressed and then there's the "is-ness" of us here in what is essentially a film performance and then a performance of a debate where we're actually trying to discuss what we feel as an audience affected or not affected by what we've seen on screen so I think as the debate's been going on we're talking about two slightly different things. They overlap, but I think they are rather different.

33:55 AC

I think that there's a third "is-ness" though as well (...) I think the third "is-ness" of course, Justine's experience, the experiential quality within it because - what Mireille was saying, about the element of - the way in which, rudimentariness, the in which we interpret a simplicity in its strictest sense and one of the things that ties in with the interest we have in the fact that there's a lack of labelling, there is an unknowingness, in terms of disability studies is this element between constantly labelling and people wanting to define themselves through their "label-free" communication. And I think that one of the things - yes we watch Justine and we don't have a label, we see the interviews at the end and we pick up on glimmers of things that have happened and that you've told me more of in the past - the specificity of what's happened in the years proceeding you filming Justine and her family. There's this disavowal of labelling that I think is very much in the heart of a lot of people who have disabilities wanting to be seen in their own individual right rather than be seen through their disability. And I actually think that one of the things that we do here is that we start to be able to see Justine as an individual not because she is physically more isolated on screen, but because she is the most sympathetic person on the screen. Because we see people talking about her without her - we see people talking about her as if she's not there, but with love. So there's the whole discourse around "nothing about us but without us" (?) that's going on as well - so for me not having a label is not a problem and the existential quality is important.

36:14 Audience (Phil)

.. but there is a label, actually, as you tried to say to Brian earlier on. Actually we see her name after the pre-credit sequence if you can call the name "Justine" credits. That's important.

36:27 BW

We see that and we get ..

36:28 Audience (Phil)

To me Justine is a very meaningful name. It raises all sorts of connotations and without anything else around that name, you are constructing things as an audience member.

36:32 BW

But those of us who lack the benefit of your Francophone education, don't necessarily do that... I think that there's something else which is just in terms to do with debates about documentary. Is about performativity, which I think is a totally misused term - and in connection - it doesn't talk about authenticity, right? And there's the whole question about representation and presentation and being and acting, so and so forth. Here's a person - I don't know this, right, cause it's unknowable, but the way to bed is that, she isn't acting, this is who she is, and that gives that particular quality of - so you do start to feel a bit you can intuit who she is. You don't even feel that about the rest of the family - right. Because they are actually in presentational mode once you start talking to them interviewing them and so on.

37:41 AC

But I think we do see Justine in presentational mode - I think towards the end when she's really comfortable -

37:46 BW

Oh sorry - when she's dancing and so on - I should have said that -

37:49 AC

Also when the family are in the living room, you know,

37:52 BW

Well she is in sort of a presentational state, space -

37:58 AC

Yes. She's on stage.

38:01 BW

- they're all there sitting looking at her.

38:02 PR

So you think that if you're in presentational mode, whatever that means,

38:06 BW

This is Tom Warr's (sp?)... it's awareness

38:12 PR

Yes, so what happens to notions of authenticity??

38:13 BW

The, my problem about the performativity issue is that you can't have an inauthentic performance. So Stella (Bruzzi) talks about - all appearances in documentary have to be authentically appearances in documentary which doesn't

really help you come to judgment about their authenticity right, I mean they are authentically misrepresenting themselves - so I don't think that's very helpful, right? But this is quite different. So that's what I was thinking of. But Tom Warr in one of - basically the only piece of any length written about the question of acting in documentary - representing oneself, he actually makes the distinction between awareness or assumptions that you can make as the audience of awareness so it's - the whole argument about the observational and whether people are acknowledging the presence of the camera - you can never be sure about it and you get this reversed irony of the look to the camera in direct cinema as an earnest of otherwise unnoticed presence of the camera. All those.. But that's not what's happening here, no.

39:37 PR

And I left those things, in direct address.

39: 38 Audience (Phil)

We're talking about different levels of authenticity. Obviously it's authentic because it's a documentary but I was wondering when she was singing - I was wondering to myself - to what extent is this almost Pavlovian - that they're actually cueing her in to do something which she has learnt how to do. And it's not actually a decision she makes in the way that a character or person in a documentary might actually make a decision to be...

40:07 BW

No, she does it, yes.

40:08 Audience (Phil)

quasi - authentic

40:12 BW

Sure. But I deduce, right, that that's very important that people are not being constantly referred to as if they're not there. That they have agency, right, and everybody does have agency and why should people who have "disabilities" not have agency? And if they have agency, presumably they have the agency to perform - inauthentically - should they so desire. But it's hard to know whether she - because one isn't a clinician in any sense - it's hard to know the degree to which. But I think you're absolutely right - she's not an alien! She's clearly an English child - I mean, young woman, right. I mean she looks beyond perfectly normal - you can make that point - she's extremely photogenic - which is interesting of itself. You know, she's not a "victim" in the Griersonian social deprived sense - she's clearly in a very comfortable environment.

41:18 PR

She is - if you want to use that language. The 18th birthday - if anyone has someone with disabilities in their circle - the 18th birthday is a really really horrendous moment in the current funding situation because the state's responsibilities to a child are completely different to an adult and the negotiation over .. And I should just say our screenings are always individually approved by the family and any money that's been generated from screening goes directly to the family. That's been really important - that's taken some negotiation with the film festivals and so on because it's been picked up. And that has happened a bit. That's super important because we make our work, we talk about this, whatever, but in the end the most important person in this whole process is Justine and she needs to see some direct benefit. And for her, turning this into - a few riding lessons - that makes a material difference in her life and I'd like to see more of us exploring that model.

42:25 BW

I just want to add a general point. That that, is really excellent. You know that Kartequin have done it for years. The only people I know documentarists - mainstream established documentarists - who share profits are Kartequin in Chicago - "Hoop Dreams". The "Hoop Dreams" boys got some years early on got 6 figures each, and they actually divided it up like that. I think that's absolutely critical ethical position for a filmmaker.

Sue.

43:00 Audience (Sue)

I was just going to say something - I really congratulate Pratap on a brilliant way he's filmed Justine walking because - compared to her lack of verbal agency - she just doesn't have it without making any judgement about that - I was really impressed by how loose limbed she was in the way that she walked places. In fact for the first five minutes of the film I thought that she was barefoot, I suddenly realised that she was wearing trainers and I thought but she walked like someone walking barefoot. And you just filmed her brilliantly being so comfortable in her own body. That's great.

43:48 PR

Well thank you. Also just wanted to remind you that the sound recordist Iris Wakulenko is here and there were quite specific things about if she (Justine) refuses touch how do you work with a clip mic, for example. So she developed a methodology and together we explored how to move and I wouldn't have been able to move around Justine in that way if we hadn't developed this so I just wanted to acknowledge that.

44:00 AC

I've got on eye on the clock we've got a couple of minutes.



44:04 BW

Last words.

44:46 Audience (Mireille)

Why, for example, would you not want to include that in the film? I was struck by your deliberate absence of yourself since you are working with questions of ethics you could also have framed yourself..

44:19 PR

There are loads of ways to do it.

44:26 Audience (Mireille)

Why for example not put in the film that if its a pedagogical idea why not give somebody else an idea that yeah, all the profits of the documentary could go to her family. Why not include that as part of the story - or did you ever try to make a film like - put her behind the camera - for example, not say, that she cannot be touched?

44:53 PR

Because it's film and the literal-ness of the word is something - I mean I love words, my first degree were in literature and so on - but the act here, with the camera and sound, is to try and translate - or try to inhabit that world so the shot there, for me, is more filmic than me saying something literally about that. Now there are films that do work very well literally but for me, this wasn't going to be one of them.

45:18 IW

Perhaps we could say something about building up the archive?

45:21 PR

Yes. Oh yeah. But your pedagogical points are very well taken. And what we are planning to do is to build - because a lot of people have been interested and said very helpful things around this film - I don't mean praising it - I mean exploring the ideas in it and so we're thinking of making some kind of multimedia educational resource where we might play parts of the film and then you can pull out the ethical judgements and then see stuff that was written or spoken about that. And the decisions can be contested also people can then decide - well then you will probably do it differently - maybe better - but making the judgements more explicit but I think that's the gift of the DVD extra generation as it were. I still wanted a single screen work which - it's in various film festivals - Denver, act Human Rights Festival on Sunday - and I want it to be able to circulate in that world as well.

46:19 AC

If I can wrap up. BAFTSS is going to be donating some money to the family in thanks for letting us see the film and if anyone wants to contribute any further so we can send a little bit more then just come and see me later. What we're going to

be doing is sending them a cheque in thanks for letting us show the film and what usually happens.. As we said, the funding for Justine has dropped off since she's been 18. She does not get the government institutional support that she has had, so every time the film is shown when anybody send a donation to the family it goes straight back in to helping her development and her support.

Thank you very much everybody.

Thank you very much Pratap thank you to Iris thank you very much Brian.  
There's coffee should be waiting for us outside.

47:18 PR

One final thing Anna was out of the room at the time - I wanted to say thank you for the work she does in articulating this conversion. She took an interest in the film and brought it to a room of people who could resonate and identify with Justine and that is very important for me. Thank you.

Ends

