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--An Active Participant in the Process of
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THE PRODUCTION OF <u>CONJURIES OF IDENTITIES</u>--AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN THE PROCESS OF RE-CONCEPTUALIZING DOCUMENTARY

By

Peyina Lin

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ABSTRACT

THE PRODUCTION OF <u>CONJURIES OF IDENTITIES</u>--AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN THE PROCESS OF RE-CONCEPTUALIZING DOCUMENTARY / NON-FICTION CINEMA

By

Peyina Lin

As a story based on real-life events, that uses actors and fictive characters, many may argue that Jadina's story, an element in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, makes this documentary a fact-fiction, docu-drama, dramatic reconstruction, reality-based film, or any other labeling that describes something between fact and fiction. However, this thesis borrows arguments from several contemporary scholars who write on documentary, to support the argument that <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> is without doubt a documentary. Furthermore, this thesis examines the content of Conjuries of Identities through concepts behind the *consumer model* and behind *storytelling*.

A pilot survey was conducted to evaluate the viewers' reactions to the documentary: whether they reacted to the content as expected; and whether their understanding and belief of the "reality" in this documentary changed because of Jadina's story.

Descriptive data from the evaluation survey apparently supports this thesis' arguments. Most viewers classified <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as a documentary. The intended message did not seem to be disrupted by Jadina's story; rather, it enhanced their interest and attention.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

While explaining why the documentary <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> was made, and focusing on why it has the form, content, and properties it has, this thesis is also an active participant in the process of re-conceptualizing documentary. The overall emphasis of this thesis is not to develop more theories in the continual process of re-conceptualizing documentary. However, since <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> incorporates elements of reality and fiction, and takes the form of a documentary, as will be explained in chapters 2 and 6, the explanations regarding form and elements in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> become part of the contemporary process of re-conceptualizing documentary.

Two major areas will be covered: 1) Explanation of the purpose and process behind the production of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, and why it takes the form it does; and 2) Whether the form manages successfully to achieve the documentary's communicative and assertive intents.

Following is a description of the content covered by each chapter.

Chapter 1, describes <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, and its communication elements-- communicative intent, purpose, target audience, expected effect on the viewer, and format. Since <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> will not be distributed, aspects of marketing and distribution have been omitted.

Chapter 2, gives an overview of the history of documentary and general definitions, concepts and modes of documentary. It also highlights concepts regarding reality and fiction in documentary. However, it does not seek to exhaust the current academic debate about the domain of non-fiction cinema.

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Chapter 3, is a tour of the production process of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as a means of arguing for its classification as a documentary. It does not give a step-by-step formula for the production of a documentary.

Chapter 4, explains some general concepts that help in the understanding of cultural marginality, and how these contribute to determining subject and format of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>. The definitions of the concepts are limited by their relevance to the objectives of this thesis (as described above).

Chapter 5, uses the *consumer model* (focusing on the *information processing stage*) and concepts behind *storytelling* as analogies to explain why the inclusion of Jadina's story is crucial for gaining the viewer's understanding of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>.

Chapter 6, applies concepts of documentary expounded in Chapter 2 to explain the classification of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as a documentary.

Chapter 7, summarizes the results of the survey evaluation of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>. It is mainly descriptive rather than quantitative, and contributes new ideas for empirical research.

Many of the concepts and models borrowed have been tailored to this thesis' purpose. As a result, limitations may not be explicit despite explanation of certain boundaries in each chapter.

CHAPTER 1

ABOUT <u>CONJURIES OF IDENTITIES</u>

Defining Third Culture Kids / Global Nomads and their Abbreviations

The term Third Culture Kids (TCK) refers to individuals who, having spent a significant part of their developmental years in a culture or cultures other than that of their parents, develop a relationship to both. The term Global Nomad refers to Third Culture Kids who grow up in a country or countries other than their passport country, and lived an internationally transient childhood. These children of business executives, soldiers and sailors, diplomats, and missionaries become "culture-blended" and can never change back to monocultural persons. The individual experiences of TCKs involve multiple cultures, and hence they may feel they have no culture. On the contrary, they have multiple cultures within themselves.

For simplicity, Third Culture Kids will be abbreviated as TCKs, and Global Nomads as GNs.

Summary of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>

<u>Conjuries of Identities</u> combines real-life footage and dramatized events to produce Jadina's story. Jadina, a fictional character, grew up in different countries due to her dad's job as a diplomat. While accustomed to dealing with differences around and within herself, these still make her struggle as people around her--her parents, her close friends, her boyfriend--have different expectations from her. Throughout her story, interviews with Sara, Catherine and Pei-Wen--real-life interviewees, all of them with very

different yet with similar experiences as a result of their internationally transient past--substantiate the struggles Jadina goes through. Interviews with professors in the fields of anthropology, sociology, and ethnology are also intermingled with her story.

The content of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> itself provokes critique of the potential damages of judgment and assumptions associated with race and culture; and the editing and arrangement of elements highlight these issues in unexpected ways.

For more details about the role of Jadina's story in the documentary, please refer to Chapters 5 and 6.

Communication Elements

Communicative Intent

To promote understanding and appreciation of Third Culture Kids/Global Nomads, emphasizing two main points: 1) They are marginal between identities, which evolve differently through their interactions in different societies; and 2) despite general similarities, problems and dilemmas are specific to each individual--in this documentary, the story of a racially Asian individual with diverse cultural exposure is portrayed to convey this point.

Point two above, is crucial as the raising awareness of TCKs/GNs may create another stereotype of this category, which would contradict the documentary's purpose. The format <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> takes is crucial in making this point, as explained in Chapter 5.

Purpose

Too often, we tend to classify people into categories--race, gender, nationality, age, etc., and make deductions about them. As a result, we do not accept or appreciate people for what they are--with diverse and unexpected characteristics. The difference between other subgroups and TCKs/GNs is that the latter don't have a widely known identity, nor confirmation from other people that their complex identities are accepted as such. Appreciation and awareness of the international experience TCKs/GNs go through is the first step to providing confirmation to these people with diversity within themselves. This will enable them to foster their experiences constructively rather than to live encapsulated within conflicting identities. Conjuries of Identities intends to raise such awareness.

Target Audience

Conjuries of Identities is designed to appeal to a broad general audience. However, due to specific content related to intercultural experience[1], there is a higher possibility that the viewer with a certain extent of intercultural experience--has experienced being judged by or judging others by their cultural/racial background--will make more sense out of the communicative intent than the viewer with null intercultural interaction. This point is, however, not absolute as viewers with any experience that involves making deductions about other categories of people--e.g., female are more sensitive than male; all politicians are liars; rich people are snobs; punks are anarchists;

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[1] Intercultural experience here refers to any sort of exposure to another culture; e.g. another nation or ethnic group.

etc.--would also relate to specific situations in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>. In fact, some of the viewers in the sample population used in the pilot evaluation of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> (described and analyzed in Chapter 7), claimed to identify or relate their non-intercultural experiences with situations in <u>Conjuries of Identities.</u> For more detail on how <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> claims to be able to appeal to a wide range of audience, please refer to Chapter 5. However, due to pacing, editing style, a more specific target audience would be young adults with some intercultural experience.

Expected Effect on the Viewer

After viewing <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> viewers are expected to be able to recognize TCKs/GNs as an open category. That is to say, that people with internationally transient backgrounds can hardly be lumped into any one single category. Thus, while being aware of the terms TCKs/GN, viewers are expected to recognize that each TCKs/GNs' experiences are unique.

The effect on the viewer was evaluated on a pilot survey, discussed in Chapter 7.

Format

Despite combining elements of fiction and reality, <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> is treated as a documentary in this thesis. Due to diverse discussions, in both scholarly work and the production world about what documentary is and what makes a documentary one, the format of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> deserves a separate chapter: concepts that support its classification as documentary are discussed in Chapter 2; and how the format took shape--including dramatizations of Jadina's story-- is described in Chapter 5. Therefore, the

present section will only be a brief description of the elements that compose <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>.

    <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, combines different elements: 1) Jadina's story--produced with dramatized events and real-life footage; 2) Interviews with Sara, Catherine and Pei-Wen--three Asian females with internationally transient pasts; and 3) Interviews with professors in the fields of sociology, anthropology and ethnology.

CHAPTER 2

CONVENTIONAL AND RENOVATING—DOCUMENTARY

This Chapter is divided in three parts. Part I *Historical Overview*, briefs the history of documentary and highlights the changes in different periods and locations. Part II *General Concepts*, examines documentary and its relationship to narrative and fiction, different *modes of representation* (Nichols 32-75), and how some of these characteristics apply to Conjuries of Identities. Part III *Reality and Fiction* explains how the existing concepts are still insufficient as theories and introduces the concept of *assertion*, which is the main identifier of Conjuries of Identities as documentary.

Part I

Historical Overview

"Pre-Documentary": 1894-1922

Jacobs describes the film forms that existed before the term "documentary", and refers to these as "precursors and prototypes". In fact, "what has come to be called 'documentary' developed slowly over a period of almost thirty years, from 1894 to 1922"... "The earliest hint of the character of documentary was in the first motion pictures projected on a screen: W.K.L. Dickson's Record of a Sneeze (1894) and the Lumière Brothers' Workers Emerging from a Factory (1894). They recorded real events in one minute reels with an accuracy that "made them seem 'objects of magical wonder...

marvelously true to life'". As such, they represent the "very genesis of the documentary idea" (Jacobs 2).

From 1895 to 1900 movies continued to use real life as subject. Then, movies lengthened to two to three minute reels, but they were still "free of any subjective purpose". They were more like extended snapshots or "living pictures" (Jacobs 3).

With the invention of editing in 1903, motion pictures "until then almost exclusively devoted to the film-of-fact's objective recording of unmanipulated actuality, now were suddenly opened up to the rearrangement and reconstruction of reality for narrative and dramatic purposes". The gathering of factual footage still continued in the form of event-centered newsreels, which began in 1910 with Charles Pathé. World War I was its main subject. Newsreels were an "especially important medium of communication between wartime governments and their civilian populations" (Rabiger 13). Although newsreels are documentary material, "as individual episodes they lack the identify of a true documentary film because each is so episodic and disjointed"... and "the events' relationship and meaning lie somewhere else in the overall tapestry of the war" (Rabiger13).

In 1921, the documentary form gained a new advance with Charles Sheeler and Paul Strand's Mannahatta, "an abstract filmic portrait of New York City" (Jacobs 6). It was "a kind of camera poem"..."which made no reference to actual people, places, or events. Instead of reportage pure and simple, the picture tried to realize its subject in terms of the potentialities of the medium by manipulating factual material to express the feel of a city through abstract design". According to Jacobs, the importance of Mannahatta was that "the aim was not to mirror nature, but to break down reality and

reorganize it into a rhythmic composition"..."and introduced the film of fact to a new aspect--art" (6). Mannahatta had little influence in the US, but in Paris and other European countries, it became an important influence in their documentary (Jacobs 7).

Others believe that the "spirit of documentary" was found first in Russia with Dziga Vertov. "He produced educational newsreels that were a vital part of the struggle for allegiance during the Russian Revolution"... "He believed in the value of real life captured by camera and in keeping with the spirit of the time, to abhor the stylized and artificial fictional presentation of life by the bourgeois cinema" (Rabiger 15).

From that period on, the different forms of documentary and in parallel to these, the commentaries on documentary showed awareness and concern about subjectivity, narrative and how distinct to documentary were these aspect vs. other cinematic and literary expressions. These are discussed further in the section *Modes of Representation* below.

1922-1970s

According to most books that write on the history of documentary, the term "documentary" was coined by John Grierson while he was reviewing Robert Flaherty's Moana, released in 1926. However, "documentary's seminal work" is said to be Flaherty's Nanook of the North; a story of "the Eskimo's struggle for food and shelter" (Jacobs 8). "Owing to the constraints of a hand-cranked camera, insensitive film stock requiring artificial light"... "Flaherty had to ask his subjects to do their normal activities in special ways and at special times". Thus, even though it was a recording of actuality, it was still planned, and arranged by Flaherty "into a loose narrative to express what the

filmmaker had learned and experienced from living with his subject and what he wanted the viewer to know and feel about these people and their way of life"..."Flaherty proved there was another reality which the eye alone could not perceive, but which the heart and mind could discern" (Jacobs 8). This concept was also found in Grierson, "pilot of the British documentary movement". He described the documentary as the "creative treatment of actuality", and commented that "art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it" (Rabiger 17).

These acknowledgments are extremely important to documentary because they shape how future documentarians and theorists account for narrative and the subjective voice in documentary. With technology advances and new forms or modes of documentary that surged in reaction to the insufficiency of previous forms (Nichols 23), documentarians explored new possibilities and new topics in reaction to the historical world around them.

Documentary in Other Parts of the World

In America, documentaries often "followed Flaherty's example by showing the struggle between man and nature" (Rabiger 17). The Plow That broke the Plains (1936) and The River (1937) by Pare Lorentz, for example, showed the 'connection between government policy and ecological disaster" (17).

The British documentary school was "committed to the idea of community and communal strength" (Rabiger 18). Night Mail (1936) and Coal Face (1936) are examples of the revelation of "the dignity in ordinary people and their work" (18). Other documentaries followed similar topics.

In Russia of the 1920s, silent film was the solution to a nation of peoples who "neither read nor understood each other's languages" (Rabiger 19). The government emphasized that cinema should be realistic and inspirational unlike Western commercial cinema. Outcomes of government influence were, as Rabiger describes, "heightened awareness of the possibilities of editing", and Dziga Vertov's Kino Eye: "a cinema to record life without imposing on it" (19). Vertov explored the camera's "capability to move", and to be "reflectively aware of itself". Most importantly, "he believed that by compiling a rapid and ever-changing montage of shots, life itself would emerge free of any point of view but that of the all-seeing camera" (19). This concept can be seen in most documentary theory from then on as will be discussed in later sections.

European documentaries of the 1920s and 1930s "tended to reflect more the onset of urban problems" (Rabiger 20). "Joris Ivens, Alberto Cavalcanti, and Walter Ruttmann produced experimental films" around France, Holland, Belgium and Germany. "Their films were characterized by inventive, impressionistic shooting and editing" (20).

The Nazis more than any other power group took great advantage of a "film generation addicted to the cinema". They focused on propaganda films and Hitler's image and power. Riefenstahls' Triumph of the Will (1937) is regarded as "a pinnacle in the exploitation of the nonfiction cinema's potential" (Rabiger 21), and Alain Resnais's Night and Fog (1955), is "possibly the single most powerful documentary ever made about man's capacity for destroying his kin" (Rabiger 22).

New Technology, New Forms

With the introduction of magnetic tape recording and the Eclair self-blimped (mechanically quiet) camera, hand-held sync filming became a reality, and allowed location filming to be less staged and more improvised.

Two approaches on how to handle the "mobile" camera in the 1960s are *Direct cinema* and *Cinéma vérité*. The first emphasized on intruding as little as possible "in order to capture spontaneity and uninhibited flow of live events". The latter, *Cinéma vérité,* originated with Jean Rouch in France. Rouch "found that authorship could legitimately be shared between participants and filmmaker" (Rabiger 23). One of Eric Barnouw's descriptions makes the distinction between the two forms very clear: "Direct cinema found its truth in events available to the camera. *Cinéma vérité* was committed to a paradox: that artificial circumstances could bring hidden truth to the surface" (Barnouw 225).

Diverse film styles and topics surged as technology allowed for more freedom and mobility (Rabiger 25-28). Due to the wide range of topics, styles and usage of equipment, instead of going through the outstanding films in chronological order, the next section will introduce some terms and concepts that will help look at the documentaries from the 1960-today more critically.

Part II

General Concepts

Defining Boundaries

Before talking about what a documentary is, it is important to describe what concept of "definition" this thesis takes. The general misconception is that there is a fixed

definition for what a documentary is. However, as Nichols describes, "documentary is the site of contestation and change":

> Documentary as a concept or practice occupies no fixed territory. It mobilizes no finite inventory of techniques, addresses no set number of issues, and adopts no completely known taxonomy of forms, styles, or modes. The term *documentary* must itself be constructed in much the same manner as the world we know and share. Documentary film practice is the site of contestation and change. Of greater importance than the ontological finality of a definition--how well it captures the 'thingness' of the documentary--is the purpose to which a definition is put and the facility with which it locates and addresses important questions, those that remain unsettled from the past and those posed by the present. (12)

In fact, the different philosophies behind different practices in approach with the camera, show how documentary film has been changing and adapting to the needs of the time, the possibilities offered by the technology and the historical/socio-political environment. For example, mobility allowed documentary in the forms of direct cinema and cinéma vérité; editing motivated juxtaposing images to cause specific effects, or to transform raw footage into narrative; historical situations motivated creative representations of life for different purposes--propaganda by the Nazis, cinéma vérité to allow for ethnographic records of life, etc. Nichols' Representing Reality is used as one of the main references in this section for the same reason that he not only recognizes this dynamic quality of documentary but uses it as an assumption behind any argument or description he poses. In his assumptions is also the idea that "Films do not answer to theory, but theory must answer to film--if it is to be more than idle speculation" (xiv). In the field of theory of documentary, this point needs to be taken into consideration with even more care because "All too frequently, the categories and criteria adopted for

narrative film analysis are assumed to be readily transferable to documentary" (Nichols

xi). In the *Objectivity in Documentary vs. Fiction* below, it is explained how the general

criticism about objectivity in documentary is that it is simply a "disguised fiction, a form

of narrative, like written histories, that makes special claims for its authority by

minimizing its fictive aspects" (Nichols xi). This connection to narrative has lead to the

assumption that the "criteria adapted for narrative film analysis" can be directly applied

to documentary. Nichols' <u>Representing Reality</u> tries to make aware and "spell out in what

ways a documentary gaze may raise questions quite distinct from those of a fictional one"

(xi).

The kind of philosophy described above is very important for this thesis because it

prepares the reader with a critical mind towards what documentary is, and justifies that

new modes and concepts are always possible.

Objectivity in Documentary vs. Fiction

> Documentary, like other discourses of the real, retains a vestigial
> responsibility to describe and interpret the world of collective
> experience"... "But even more, it joins these other discourses (of law,
> family, education, economics, politics, state, and nation) in the actual
> *construction* of social reality.
>
> (Nichols 10)

This role places great responsibility in documentarians to produce objective and

factual material. In fact, *objectivity*, *fact,* and *reality* have been the filters used to

determine the genre.

Concerns about objectivity as expressed by scholars and critics have followed

some patterns or waves. One of the first waves criticized the strategy of presenting

opposing points of view as being fair and unbiased, and that "adversarial balance"...

"ensures a fair, unbiased view of the events and personalities in question" (Rabiger 7).

Rabiger explains the argument that criticized adversarial balance:

"emphasis on equipoise is a strategy originally devised by journalists as safe passage through a minefield of dangers and responsibilities. One, ever present in the collective mind of any institution, is to avoid ever being proved wrong since that brings discredit and even lawsuits. From this point of view, it is only commonsense to camouflage all opinion as that of others and to make the writing conform to a standard, faceless style". (7)

"Penetrating yet fair-minded exposure of a subject's issues is often called 'objectivity'", and "the artful ways that news and documentary practitioners have disguised their own biases have beguiled the public into thinking that the documentary form is itself objective" (Rabiger 8). Despite being aware of the impossibility of objective reality, and somehow bearing the "stamp of fiction" (Ponech 78), the documentary still plays the role of a discourse of power. Just from the perspective of the audience expectations, for example, there is a big contrast between what the audience expects from fiction vs. what they expect from a documentary, as Nichols describes: "we consider the imaginary realm of fiction as having a metaphoric relation to history and lived experience"...(5). While also interpreting real life through the eye of the camera and the documentarian--both subject to personal choice and careful arrangement to emphasize personal goals--, "in documentary we often begin by assuming that the intermediary stage--that which occurred in front of the camera--remains identical to the actual event that we could have ourselves witnessed"... (Nichols 25).

Departing from this difference--how the viewer expects "reality" makes every decision in documentary production an ethical one. For the same reason, the next section examines the documentary and its different dimensions.

How Nichols Examines Conventions of Documentary

Nichols' Representing Reality is used as the main source of reference for several reasons. First, he acknowledges the dynamic quality of active choice in documentary, examines the relationship between documentary and narrative fiction, and discusses how different criteria should be used. At the same time, he acknowledges that "documentary, like the individual work of fiction, holds theory at bay" because everything is "subject to modification, subversion, or overthrow" ... (xiii). No other single work accomplishes what Nichols does in his book (x).

Defining Documentary

With the acknowledgment that documentary as a concept is not a fixed one, as described in the first subsection of Part II in this thesis, Nichols uses three definitions of documentary "since each definition contributes something distinctive and helps identify different sets of concerns" (12). These are from the point of view of: 1) the filmmaker, 2) the text, 3) and the viewer.

1) The Filmmaker:

The status "as an institutional formation" is what characterizes documentary. This institutional definition begins "to hint at the importance for the filmmaker, of a shared

sense of common purpose" (15), "guided by a fundamental preoccupation with the representation of the historical world" (16).

Documentary, though far from being a formal institution (like the government, education, economics, and the like), still carries certain constraints or limits to what is admissible within the genre. These constraints are related to the "ethical dicta and ritual practices" that will be described in the section of *modes of representation.* (Nichols 15)

2) The Text--compared to narrative fiction.

What characterizes documentaries as texts is that they "take shape around an informing logic", which "requires a representation, case, or argument about the historical world" (Nichols 18).

This is a more familiar and conventional way to define documentary, and is compared with narrative fiction for better understanding and contrast. While the concepts on "re-enactment" do not support <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as documentary, other concepts related to editing and argument definitely support <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as documentary.

Conventions of form vs. fiction:

Primarily *observational documentaries* "exhibit structures closer to those of narrative fiction" (19). In narrative fiction, the structure follows: character-based conflict, complications, and resolution. In documentary, the structure above is replaced by: problem, solution and documentary logic. (19). "Documentary scenes are more heavily organized around the principle of sound, or spoken commentary, than fiction scenes" (19). "We may well be able to infer the story of many fiction films by watching the succession of images alone", but "we should be hard pressed to infer the argument of a

documentary without access to the sound track" (19). "In documentary, an event recounted is history reclaimed". Another characteristic is the arrangement of images. While continuity is usually how narrative fiction makes sense, in documentary, the representation of people and places can be intermittent because what matters is the logic and argument behind it" (19). Editing, for example, is evidentiary; that is, "sounds and images stand as evidence and are treated as such rather than as elements of a plot".

In <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>

Fictions frequently place credibility in reenactments, while reenactments risk the credibility of a documentary (Nichols 20). While Jadina's Story in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> is staged, planned and acted, and therefore risks the credibility of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, the arrangement of the material--the intermittent editing around an argument instead of a plot, makes <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> a hybrid. (The argument being that people with internationally mobile backgrounds are diverse within themselves and therefore a conjury of identities.) This idea of hybridity, however, is contested in Part III, through the explanation of *assertive intent*.

3) The Viewer:

As Nichols contends, "The most fundamental difference between expectations prompted by narrative fiction and by documentary lies in the status of the text in relation to the historical world" (25). Nichols adds that narrative fiction also refers to the historical world, but it does so in a metaphorical way (25). While some of the procedures used by the viewer to assign meaning also support <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as a

documentary, these are not the filters used to examine <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as will be explained in Part III of this chapter.

Nichols describes the procedures for viewing documentary as something we do with assigned "motivation", or "the way the presence of an object is justified in relation to the text" (26). "One motivation is realism: the object is present in the text because of its function in the historical world"... "Another form of motivation is functional; the argument itself justifies or makes necessary the appearance of an object"... "Intertextual motivation refers to the justification for the presence of something in the film" as a result of "its expected or anticipated presence in films of a particular kind"... "Finally, formal motivation occurs when we justify the presence of an image by its contribution to a formal or stylistic pattern intrinsic to the text" (26).

In <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>

According to the descriptions above, <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> can be viewed with realism, functional, and formal motivations. In realism, its function to the historical world is clear: globalization has created an environment for people to grow transnationally; the effects of such experiences are portrayed in <u>Conjuries of Identities.</u> Functional motivation exists because one of the arguments of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> is that despite general similarities amongst people with internationally transient backgrounds, problems and dilemmas are specific to each individual; therefore, the inclusion of Jadina's story, and the use of three Asian female interviewees--the necessary objects. Formal motivation exists in the combination and coexistence of different elements in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>. The juxtaposition of commentary from professors, the three Asian interviewees, and Jadina's story are arranged to highlight aspects that would not be perceived otherwise.

Modes of Representation

> Each mode establishes a hierarchy of specific conventions or norms that remain flexible enough to incorporate a great deal of stylistic, national, and individual variation"... "Modes are something like genres"... "They represent different concepts of historical representation. They may coexist at any moment in time (synchronically) but the appearance of a new mode results from challenge and contestation in relation to a previous mode.
>
> (Nichols 23)

In documentary, there are four dominant modes of representation; expository, observational, interactive, and reflexive. Nichols explains very clearly the relationship between each, and therefore, the following descriptions are direct quotes from him (32-33).

Expository documentary, "(Grierson and Flaherty, among others) arose from a dissatisfaction with the distracting, entertainment qualities of the fiction film".

Observational documentary, "(Leacock-Pennebaker, Fredrick Wiseman) arose from the availability of more mobile, synchronous recording equipment and a dissatisfaction with the moralizing quality of expository documentary"... "It allowed the filmmaker to record unobtrusively"...

Interactive documentary, "(Rouch, de Antonio, and Connie Field) arose from the availability of the same more mobile equipment and a desire to make the filmmaker's perspective more evident. Interactive documentarists wanted to engage with individuals more directly while not reverting to classic exposition. Interview styles and interventionist tactics arose, allowing the filmmaker to participate more actively in present events".

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Reflexive documentary, "(Dziga Vertov, Jill Godmilow, and Raul Ruiz) arose from a desire to make the conventions of representation themselves more apparent and to challenge the impression of reality which the other three modes normally conveyed unproblematically. It is the most self-aware mode; it uses many of the same devices as other documentaries but sets them on edge so that the viewer's attention is drawn to the device as well as the effect".

Part III

Reality and Fiction

Although certain aspects expounded above have identified characteristics of documentary in Conjuries of Identities, these are not sufficient to argue that it constitutes a documentary. This section highlights concepts regarding reality in documentary. (Fiction has been discussed previously in *Objectivity in Documentary vs. Fiction.*) In understanding these, the reader should be able to make sense of the great emphasis of this thesis on the inclusion of Jadina's story--the rationale behind it (Chapter 5); how it actually supports the classification of Conjuries of Identities as a documentary (Chapter 6); and how the viewer was able to make sense of it (Chapter 7).

General Perceptions

Can the recorded image of an object be an accurate replica of the object? We are very likely to accept that fiction has a metaphoric relation to history, and that it resembles real-life (Nichols 5). At the same time, as contradictory as it may sound, "in documentary

we often begin by assuming that the intermediary stage--that which occurred in front of the camera--remains identical to the actual event that we could have ourselves witnessed..." (Nichols 25).

As a medium that depends on image recording to compose its message, the question of whether a documentary can actually represent reality will always keep the documentary as a medium on the margins between reality and fiction.

Re-conceptualizing Documentary--a Continuous Process

Innovative styles challenge viewers and commentators; at the same time, new concepts entice more creative forms. Academics, theorists and public writers have written and continue writing about documentary--what it is; how it is constituted; how many styles there are; how it is different from reality-based films; etc. The on-going interest in revising existing published material on the topic, and in writing more about it stems from the practiced idea that, "documentary is what those who regard themselves as documentarists produce" (Nichols 15). Thus, it is bound to change over time. Nichols expresses this point very clearly:

> ...such a definition stresses how the field operates by allowing itself to be historically conditioned, unfolding, variable, and perpetually provisional, based on what documentarists themselves consider admissible, what they regard as limits, boundaries, and test cases, how boundaries come to exert the force of a definition, however loosely, and how the qualification, contestation, or subversion of these same boundaries moves from inconsequential anomaly to transformative innovation to accepted practice. (15)

The concepts brought forth in this section are not a compilation of the existing literature, but a foreground for understanding how Conjuries of Identities is an active

participant in the on-going process of re-conceptualizing documentary.

For reference and contrast on how documentary has been defined, I borrow on the list Ponech uses for the same purpose (74-79). Though not all of the propositions in his list are supportive to categorizing Conjuries of Identities as a documentary, they are still exposed below to allow the reader to form a well-rounded idea of what has formed today's conceptualization of documentary. This will also provide the reader with more information to assess the results from the evaluation survey (see Chapter 7) viewers of Conjuries of Identities completed.

Ponech's list of "fairly standard propositions of regarding the nature of non-fictional cinematic representation" (74-75), displayed in no particular order:

1."...a documentary has as its primary purpose the representation of the real..."

2."..it treats reality, past or present (or future?), either by direct recording or by some indirect means as compilation or reconstruction..."

3."The documentary film came to be identifiable as a special kind of picture with a clear social purpose, dealing with real people and real events, as opposed to staged scenes of imaginary characters and fictional stories of the studio-made pictures."

4."Instead of surrogates for life (theatrical performance, film, drama, etc.) we bring to the workers' consciousness facts (large and small), carefully selected, recorded, and organized from both the life of the workers' themselves and from that of their class enemies."

5."A nonfiction filmmaker is committed by the genre to conveying the literal facts..."

6."Later he [John Grierson] defined it as 'the creative treatment of actuality.'"

7."You photograph the natural life, but you also by your juxtaposition of detail, create and

interpretation of it."

8. "...the art of *re*-presentation, the act of presenting actual physical reality in a form that strives creatively to record and interpret the world and be faithful to actuality."

9. "The *projected world* of a [non-fiction] film is... a *model of the actual world.* "

10. "Documentary has most often been motivated by the wish to exploit the camera's revelatory powers, an impulse only rarely coupled with an acknowledgment of the processes through which the real is transfigured."

11. "...A kind of fictional aura attaches itself to the filmed events and facts. From the moment they become film and are placed in a cinematic perspective, all film-documents and every recording of a raw event take on a filmic reality which either add to or subtract from their particular initial reality (i.e. their 'experienced value'), un-realising or sur-realising it, but in both cases slightly falsifying and drawing it to the side of fiction."

12. "The essential opposition between the documentary and the fiction film is part, I contend, of the convention that, since the emergence of modern historical consciousness, has posited an absolute distinction between the representation of 'fact' and the representation of the 'imaginable.'"

13. "Documentary directs us toward the world of brute reality even as it also seeks to interpret it, and the expectation that it will do so is one powerful difference from fiction."

While many of them make reference to reality by which it is an "extra-cinematic reality", as Ponech describes, or that filmmakers do not only produce but interpret the recorded objects, they are still insufficient to support the classification of <u>Conjuries of</u>

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Identities as a documentary; nor do they sum up Ponech's contribution to this debate (75-76). His dedicated work departs from the observation that "commentaries on what non-fictions are about lack of clarity and detail found in discussions of meaning and reference inside contemporary linguistics, philosophy of language, and epistemology" (76). Many of the supporting arguments to his theories are beyond the scope of discussion in this thesis, as they use concepts and terminology from linguistics, philosophy of language, and epistemology. Nonetheless, a brief introduction to some of the concepts he describes is the most solid support to the classification of Conjuries of Identities as a documentary. The following subsection highlights some of his concepts.

Reality?

What makes a given picture a documentary? Is there a threshold between fiction and reality? Does this threshold determine what pictures can be categorized as documentary?

Although what commentators say on the documentary's object domain "diverge with respect to whether non-fiction ever accurately portrays this domain", most of them associate the genre with the general idea of "reality", and are roughly consistent with Nichols's contention that although non-fictional representations 'aim at' actual historical realities, they nonetheless bear the stamp of fiction. Rather than portraying the world, they only present 'a view of the world'" (Ponech 78).

These descriptions, however, open onto other avenues of confusion about the concept of documentary. For instance, Nichols contends that while documentary does not have the firm outline that other institutions--such as academia, the priesthood, or the

military--have to "pursue socially defined goals with specific budgetary commitments, legislative mandates, and criteria for membership", documentary filmmaking can be characterized as having a status of institutional formation. Documentarians share a common sense of purpose; "a self-chosen mandate to represent the historical world rather than imaginary ones"(Nichols 14). And almost as if some series of rules had been dictated, documentaries take certain forms and styles. Modes, as Nichols calls them, from expository, observational, interactive, and reflexive (32-75), as has already been described in part II of this chapter.

The Concept of Assertion

With quite a different argument of what constitutes a documentary, Ponech takes an approach that liberates documentary from any norms related to form, style and idealized standards of objectivity and accuracy; and yet, such non-normative approach will not necessarily exclude conventional practice, nor will it exclude manipulated, subjective representations where expedient.

Under Ponech's argument, it is not the "conventions or norms--pertaining to form, style, content, truth, or objectivity"--which define documentary. "A cinematic work is non-fiction if and only if its maker so makes it"...if he/she is guided by "an intention to produce non-fiction" (8). I borrow the same thermometer example Ponech uses to support that "reference to reality is the wrong filter on admissibility to this genre" (9). The thermometer's mercury level shows -21° C. Does it then mean that it is in fact -21° C (10)? The mercury could not be working correctly because it's malfunctioning or because someone has changed its reading degrees. Previous paragraphs have already mentioned

the rough similarities of theorists recognizing that a documentary can only represent "a reality". In other words, objective phenomena, is affected by "intention, imagination, make-believe, connotation, fantasy, subjectivity,"... "insincerity, and all that might lead to or converge with fiction" (Ponech 10). To emphasize this point Ponech adds:

> The core of non-fiction consists not of an objective indicator relation, but and **action** of indication, that is, somebody deliberately and openly indicating something to somebody else...To assert is to attempt to give receivers reasons to think that one seeks to produce a certain effect on them, that effect being their recognition of one's intention that they form a given belief. (11-13)

Under such concept, "convention is not an autonomous" property; rather, it "plays a mediating role: The agent adapts her work to a convention when she expects that doing so will help to bring about her aesthetic, professional, or communicative ends, like guiding her audience toward a certain conclusion" (Ponech 13). In other words, convention is the subordinate element to fulfill the assertive intention.

Behind such theory is the assumption that "the audience--by mobilizing a combination of visual and aural perceptions, background knowledge, and non-perceptual beliefs and inferences--will more or less be able to grasp the movie's content and intended force" (Ponech 19). One could argue then, that the audience looks for convention to believe; therefore, to achieve successful communicative intents, convention needs to be followed. However, Ponech's arguments are more "liberal". It is not conventions that restrict the way or style that a documentary should take. While a big part of successful assertive intention--to successfully make the viewer recognize the intended effect-- depends on the viewer: what the viewer has been exposed to; what backgrounds the viewer has; what cues the viewer uses to make inferences; etc. (and there is never an

optimal viewer), assertive intention is a communication act. As such, it must satisfy

certain conditions that show that thoughts have been openly communicated, "and not

merely covertly or privately expressed" (18). In other words:

> this illocutionary intention must be among the maker's effective
> communicative intentions--that is, it has to be something that this person
> has indeed taken steps to try to signal to others... A documentary motion
> picture, then, is simply one that results from the filmmaker having been
> directly guided by a particular purpose, namely, an intention to produce
> non-fiction.
>
> (Ponech 8)

This is perhaps what makes a documentary, under Ponech's arguments, different

to other forms of cinematic expressions. In general, "to make assertions cinematically,

agents use motion picture technologies and representational strategies in order to indicate

to viewers that they are supposed to take the attitude of belief toward that which is

represented" (Ponech 18). Orthodox formats and styles can be used to guide the viewer to

a work's intentional status. This does not restrict the documentary to not use fiction or

other artistically creative means to achieve specific communicative intents (Ponech 8);

like is the usage of Jadina's story in Conjuries of Identities, as explained in Chapters 5

and 6.

Documentary Like Fiction?

The reader should not confuse this concept with the justification that documentary

is just like any other fiction. Just because a cinematic expression uses reality-like

elements, such as interviews, it does not necessarily portray the world we live in. For

instance Blair Witch Project is composed of live shots, but is not a real-story. On the

other hand, even if a program is full of real-people appearances, real actions about their

real life, these elements may not be subordinated to the presentation of non-fiction. Such is the case of talk shows. They are full of real-people appearances, their lives and reactions. However, they are not there to prove these people's lives, but to the greater goal of entertaining spectators.

To summarize the relationship of fiction and assertive intent, we could say that a documentary could have fictive elements if these are subordinate to its assertive intent. However, this doesn't justify the use of fiction in any other documentary whose assertive intent cannot be communicated through the inclusion of fiction. For example, in Conjuries of Identities, Jadina's story, a fictive story based on real-life, exists to assert that the general characteristics about TCKs are the patterns they share, which are relative to time; viewing these patterns through an individual's story asserts that Jadina can only represent herself, which supports the message: "Don't judge people by the category you think they belong to".

CHAPTER 3

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

Despite the naming of this chapter, its aim is not that of describing thoroughly the steps a documentarian ought to take to produce a documentary; nor does it try to go through a thorough explanation of how <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> was produced. Neither does it explain how the interviewees were selected. The aim of this chapter is to highlight those aspects in the production of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> that pertain to the decision process in including the dramatized story of Jadina. The description of the process involved in the production of the <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> is expounded here as a means to reinforce its classification as a documentary. As a story based on real-life events, and that uses actors and fictive characters, many may argue that including Jadina's story, makes <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> a fact-fiction, docu-drama, dramatic reconstruction, reality-based film, or any other labeling that describes something between fact and fiction. However, the producer labels <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> a documentary, according to the arguments in Chapter 2. These will be applied to <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> in Chapter 6.

A Tour of the Production of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>

There is no set way or procedure to follow for documentary production. The style, approach and time order of specific tasks are dependent on the topic, subjects involved, and other social, cultural, economic, political issues, and the determined communication elements--target audience, style, treatment, etc. Books that give a formula for documentary production are abundant, and while some were used as reference for the pre-

production of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, the following is not an exhaustive, mutually exclusive, nor chronologically arranged list of the its production process. The list provides with an overall idea of how the elements that compose <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> took shape.

1. Determine topic and do literary research on the topic.

   Topic: Experiences of people who grew up crossing different cultures.

   Literary Research: Please refer to the bibliography and to Chapter 4.

2. Determine purpose and communicative intent.

   Communicative intent: to promote understanding and appreciation of Third Culture Kids/Global Nomads. (For more details, please refer to Chapter 1.)

3. Determine other aspects of style and format.

   The first attempt to determine style and format was roughly the conventional idea of what an observational documentary is: interviews interlaced with real-life footage of the topic. The style was also a rough idea of fast to semi-fast paced editing. However, neither format nor style had yet taken any concrete form.

4. Plan content desired from interviews.

   Literature that would help understand the experiences of TCKs, GNs, and the socio-cultural, political and psychological aspects that affect them was researched, and contrasted/compared with the producer's personal experience. (The producer is a GN).

5. Contact possible interviews.

   Flyers were posted around the campus of Michigan State University, and information was also disseminated through word of mouth (by approaching people who already

knew someone with internationally mobile background).

6. Design interview questions targeted to interviews, while holding specific questions constant to increase the chances of arranging similar content from the interviewees' next to each other.

Conversations with possible interviewees were established to determine which individuals to use for actual on-camera interviews. Off camera interviews were conducted with five people with very diverse backgrounds and of diverse ethnicity. Two of them were selected based on the insights they provided into the conflicts they faced due to their internationally mobile backgrounds.

7. Carry out interviews.

On camera interviews were conducted with two people. One of them is Sara, who is actually part of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>. The other person (whose name is omitted here, and whom will be referred to as X) was not used after assessments in point 9 and 10 below.

An on-camera conversational interview was also conducted with Dr. Ruth Hill Useem, who coined the term Third Culture Kids.

8. Assess the content obtained from the interviews and revise style, format and communicative intent.

The interviews with Sara and X, an Indian male, were both very rich in content; similar, yet quite distant due to culture specific experiences; i.e., Sara's interaction with her mom and the values imposed on her from the Korean society and mainly from her mom, vs. X's experiences in Brazil, very different to his experiences in Europe due to his racial appearance.

9. Assess whether the obtained material is efficient in achieving the communicative intent.

Both interviewees were quite eloquent. However, their answers to the same questions differed in their level of abstraction. While Sara answered questions with more concrete examples of her experiences, X (a Ph.D. student in anthropology), tended to bounce the question back with concepts, theories, and terms in question. While the two interviews provided with a wide range of possible material for the documentary, they asked for a revision of the communicative intent. How could the two interviews be used optimally in terms of successful communicative intent? Should any specific aspect of the experiences Third Culture Kids face be emphasized over others? If so, which one?

10. Since the process of re-assessing the communicative intent vs. available material to achieve the communicative intent, and the reasoning behind the decisions after such assessments were the crucial parts to including Jadina's story in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, these are divided in two separate chapters: Chapter 4, *Understanding Marginal Identities & Racial Differentiation to Reassess Subject, Format and Style*; and Chapter 5, *The Consumer Model and Storytelling*. Chapter 4 describes the re-evaluation of which aspect of the experiences GNs face should be emphasized. Chapter 5 gives a rationale for believing that including Jadina's story is the best way to achieving successful assertion.

11. After the re-assessments described in number 10 above, the rest of the production involved recruiting actors, screenwriting, directing, etc., all of which are beyond the scope of this thesis.

12.More interviews were conducted.

13.Evaluation.

Evaluation is described in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 4

UNDERSTANDING MARGINAL IDENTITIES & RACIAL DIFFERENTIATION TO REASSESS SUBJECT, FORMAT AND STYLE

Behind the purpose of raising awareness of TCKs is the contestation of whether existing well-known categories in this society fairly describe and individual, specifically a Global Nomad, who has lived an internationally transient childhood and adolescence. A category does not fairly describe an individual if it does not take into consideration how the individual identifies himself/herself. "How the individual perceives and feels about self constitutes the core of an identity" (Kitano 105). When existing categories do not exhaust how individuals view themselves, using categories to make deductions and generalizations can become very dangerous; especially when using these to draw conclusions in surveys, census and other forms of research. For instance, in a questionnaire about social perceptions, a Global Nomad born in Malaysia, but raised in Sweden, Japan, and the US, will provide the researchers with very different results than would anyone, who has been raised solely in Malaysia. Another example of the disadvantage of inexhaustive categories would be when questionnaires or application forms use nationality as a filter for an individual's qualifications. They could be losing very valuable contributors.

"Identity consists, in a large part, of the way that others view the self" (Kitano 105). Since physical appearance is what we first see when meeting someone, looking different from the majority in a society affects an individual's identity. Therefore, while <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> describes some of the general characteristics of Third Culture Kids and Global Nomads, it also covers aspects related to racial differentiation. As a result,

individuals selected for on-camera interviews were narrowed down to those of East Asian racial background. This allowed for portrayal of issues related to racial appearance and how it is deduced as being related to culture. Some general concepts that helped in the decision making of format and style can be found in Appendix C. Concepts regarding cultural marginality are defined below.

General Concepts

Third Culture Kid (TCK),

Term coined by sociologists Dr. Ruth Hill Useem and Dr. John Useem.

"A TCK is an individual who, having spent a significant part of the developmental years in a culture other than that of his/her parents, develops a sense of relationship to both. These children of business executives, soldiers and sailors, diplomats and missionaries who live abroad, become "culture-blended" persons who often contribute in unique and creative ways to society as a whole.

The individual blend will vary, depending on such factors as the intensity of exposure to a second or third culture, at what age a child comes into contact with a culture other than that of the parents, the amount of time a young person spends within a second or third culture, etc." (qtd. in Britten)

Global Nomad (GN)

"One who grows up in a country (or countries) other than his/her passport country. This term implies an internationally transient childhood" (qtd. in Britten).

"A person who had an internationally mobile childhood due to their parents' work. This differentiates these people from refugees and immigrants, who have a lot in common

with global nomads but also a lot that is different. Importantly, the people from those experiences already have an identity, whereas until recently, children of internationally mobile professionals were only identified by terms like 'military brat', 'foreign service brat or kid', 'missionary kid'. There was no acknowledgment of the common culture that the kids from these different groups have: that of the 'third culture'... These are people whose individual experiences include many cultures, and may as a result feel they have no culture, and appear to have no defined culture of their own". Their experiences as outsiders in a culture have life-long impacts. (Sutherlan)

Cultural Marginality,

Cultural marginality describes an experience; one typical of global nomads and others who have been molded by exposure to two or more cultural traditions. Such people don't tend to fit perfectly into any one of the cultures to which they have been exposed but may fit comfortably on the edge, in the margins, of each.

Cultural marginality is in and of itself neither bad nor good although the experience has the potential to be both. It is characterized by the potential for, on the one hand, feeling at home nowhere and, on the other hand, feeling at home everywhere. (Schaetti)

Encapsulated Marginality,

Encapsulated marginals typically experience themselves as isolated. They perceive their circumstances as so unique that they cannot, envision a peer group with whom they can relate. Global nomads may respond by abandoning their international selves in order to try and assimilate into the society in which they find themselves.

Those who are trapped in their marginality tend to be unsure of who they are.

They surrender their own opinions, their own concerns, to follow somewhat aimlessly the action of those around them. They may have difficulty making decisions, defining their boundaries, identifying personal truths. They often feel alienated, powerless, angry, that life is devoid of meaning. (Schaetti)

Constructive Marginality,

People who are constructive in their marginality have also been buffeted by conflicting cultural loyalties. In struggling to understand themselves, however, they have come to understand their cultural marginality. They have developed a strong sense of who they are. They have a clear commitment to a personal truth and are able to form clear boundaries in the face of multiple cultural perspectives. They are able to move easily and powerfully between different cultural traditions, acting appropriately and feeling at home in each. They tend to put their multi-cultural experiences to good use. (Schaetti)

How Do These Concepts Help Determine Content, Format and Style?

"Rendon suggested that high rates of mental illness among immigrant groups may be partially the result of conflicting cultural orientation and the difficulties involved in establishing a sense of identity" (Schwarzer, Bowler & Rauch 211). In describing the minority situation, Kramer states:

> The psychological concomitant of racial visibility is personal invisibility. When a categorical status is internalized without another set of cultural values even to cause conflict, there are no social alternatives available to serve as a source of identity. The individual experiences a sense of nonexistence rather than of marginality, and there is no positive response from within that can offer any psychological resolution. The resulting tension is all but intolerable. (18)

Being racially, ethnically, and/or culturally different from the dominant culture; or

identifying with a group other than the dominant culture--whichever it is that one is

emerged in are in the list of "Issues That Affect Self-Identification of Marginals" by J.

Bennett. (114). History, research and personal experience all support that racial

differentiation is a big contributor to how someone experiences other cultures. Yet, such

experiences are not equally understandable by people of different racial appearance.

> When it is *your* difference that is being denied, it's hard to deny that there's
> a difference!...denial can be thought of as a luxury of the dominant group.
> Generally it is only members of that group who can afford both financially
> and psychologically to remain oblivious to cultural differences.
> (Bennett, M. 33)

Two tasks become apparent here: First, the content of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>

needs to be inclusive of racial differentiation. Second, since one of the factors that affect

the way someone experiences his/her involvement in other cultures is how he/she is

hierarchically positioned in the hierarchical "Ethnic-Racial Stratification" (Kitano 42-

43)[2], how to convey the content of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> to the widest range of audience

needed to be carefully assessed. The first point is discussed in the subsection below. The

second, the assessment on how to approach the widest range of audience, is discussed in a

separate chapter--Chapter 5, as it involves other concepts that need to be examined

integrally.

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[2] Ethnic-Racial Stratification refers to the status a race carries. In this hierarchy, the White
Caucasian male is at the top of the hierarchy, and Blacks are in the lower end of the Hierarchy.
Asians and different types of Hispanic minorities are spread in between depending on their
nationality.

What about Global Nomads of Oppressed Ethnic Minorities?

Bennett, M. states when explaining his "Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity" that:

> sensitivity toward ethnic, regional, and other domestic cultural differences may follow the general pattern of sensitivity development. However, when the difference involves people who have been oppressed for reasons of race, ethnicity, class, gender, or sexual orientation, there may be some variation in the forms of ethnocentrism exhibited". (28)

With this in mind, and given that some of the conflicts that the interviewed Third Culture Kids faced were related to the cultural ideology in the places they lived, the content of Conjuries of Identities was clearly going to include aspects related to the culture of the interviewed individuals, and those related to their experiences as racially different individuals in a culture other than that of their parents.

The Selected Interviewees

Interviewees were selected according to their internationally transient backgrounds, their ethnic/racial backgrounds and the degree of intercultural involvement they had, as a result of their father's profession and the schools they attended.

Sara, is an Amerasian (half American, half Asian) born in Pusan, South Korea. She is fluent in Korean and English, and mingles very well with both local Koreans and Americans. She went to an American school, where only non-Koreans were admitted. Even though living in Korea, she was encaged in an atypical society of foreigners living in Korea. At the same time, she was also spending all her summers in the US. So, her identity as a non-Korean was pretty clear to her, aside from her carrying a US passport. However, she was never oblivious of her Korean side. Her mom inculcated all the values

she thought were important in the Korean society. These will later on make her struggle between conflicting values when studying in the US.

Catherine, racially from Taiwan, was born in New Zealand, and moved to different countries due to her dad's job as a diplomat. The countries she has resided include: South Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, Sweden, Taiwan, Boston, Taiwan (in chronological order). She speaks fluent English and Mandarin, and was once also proficient in five other languages. She provides with the greatest range of mobility, and with insights to what is involved--academically, specific to Taiwan vs. other countries; and socially. She carries a Taiwanese passport, and looks Taiwanese, or pure Asian. The struggles she has gone through and the attitude she has trained herself to have, makes her a very reflective, strong and successful person. You could recognize her inner-diversity without speaking with her.

Pei-Wen, racially from Taiwan, provides us with a multicultural experience with a degree of assimilation not seen in Catherine nor Sara. Pei-Wen moved to Chile since very early stages of her life, and has lived there until her undergraduate studies, which she did in Taiwan. She seems to have assimilated to both the Chilean and Taiwanese culture at the cost of the other culture while living in these two places. However, she still developed to embrace difference within herself, and to view it constructively while remaining open to experiencing new horizons.

Intercultural Sensitivity Is a Process.

Intercultural Sensitivity, as understood in Milton J. Bennett's *Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* refers to:

the way people construe cultural difference and in the varying kinds of experience that accompany different constructions..., and it is assumed that such sensitivity can be described in developmental terms better than as a collection of specific behaviors... Thus, behaviors such as negative stereotyping will be treated as simply manifestations of a certain stage of construction" (24).

It is important to note that the model does not assume a one way permanent progression. In addition, each of the stages exposed below are subdivided, described in detail, and explained in their cognitive, affective and behavioral dimensions by M. Bennett. In this section, however, many of these sub-stages are lumped together, without mentioning the different sub-stages, as for this thesis's purposes, it is enough to have an overall sense of development. The idea of process is by itself significant and encouraging to the making sense of the diverse experiences Global Nomads are exposed to, and of how they are affected--, as it sets a structural framework for the stories portrayed in Conjuries of Identities.

According to Milton J. Bennett, Janet M. Bennett and other researchers who study the intercultural experience, intercultural sensitivity happens as a process, in terms of developmental stages of personal growth. In M. Bennett's *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*, the development into intercultural sensitivity is divided in two big stages: the ethnocentric stages and the ethnorelative stages.

Ethnocentric stages

In the ethnocentric stages, the general assumption is that the worldview of one's own culture is central to all reality. People in these stages have a variety of ways to react to the unfamiliar cultures or races. Some examples are: denial of difference--the person

does not consider the existence of cultural difference, and may use means such as isolation from other cultures, or by only perceiving that which is familiar (30-31), or by intentionally creating distance. Other sub-stages in the ethnocentric stage are negative stereotyping of others' cultures while positively stereotyping one's own (35-38).

Ethnorelative Stages

In the ethnorelative stages, the fundamental assumption is that cultures can only be understood within a cultural context. "There is no absolute standard of rightness or goodness that can be applied to cultural behavior". "One's own culture is not any more central to reality than any other culture, although it may be preferable to a particular individual or group"(46). Global Nomads are somewhere in the continuum of the ethnorelative stage. At this stage, "cultural difference is nonthreatening... Cultural difference is more likely to be enjoyable and actually sought after in these stages (47).

Acceptance:

At this stage, cultural difference, both behavior and value, is first both acknowledged and respected. Linguistic relativity is accepted--"languages are seen as shapers of realities rather than simply as tools with which to represent an a priori universe" (48). In addition, "people begin to recognize differences in communication style" (48). There is acceptance of different worldview assumptions that underlie cultural variation in behavior (49). "Intrinsic to this stage of development is a sense of *process.* Essential to the concept of process is that values are not something we have. Instead we participate actively in valuing differences (50).

Adaptation:

This term stage excludes connotations of "'assimilation', wherein one's identity is

absorbed by a new culture" (qtd. in Bennett, M. 51). In assimilating, one may gain culturally appropriate ways of communication at the expense of one's own. Central to this stage is the respect for the integrity of cultures, including one's own. Thus, different worldviews are acquired in an additive process, rather than in replacement, which is what a lot of the young immigrants do (52). However, to have a more comprehensive experience of another culture requires an individual to be empathetic and pluralistic, and not just shift temporarily into portions of different worldviews.

Empathy:

Empathy is referred to here as the "ability to experience differently in a communication context" (Bennett, M. 53). This is different from sympathy, "where one attempts to understand another by imagining how one would feel in another's position" (53). It is ethnocentric in that it demands only a shift in assumed circumstance (position); not a shift in the frame of reference. Empathy in contrast, "is based on an assumption of difference, and implies respect for that difference and a readiness to give up temporarily one's own world view" (53). A stage beyond empathy is Pluralism.

Pluralism:

Here, difference must always be understood totally within the context of the relevant culture. "This requires that understanding of difference must derive from actual experience within that complete cultural frame" (Bennett, M. 55). So, a pluralistic person would have two or more internalized cultural frames of reference. Pluralism usually involves some significant living experience in another culture. Characteristic of all pluralism is the internalization by one individual of two or more fairly complete cultural frames of reference (Bennett, M. 55).

Integration:

The ethnorelative stages culminate, according to Adler, with a "multicultural person whose essential identity is inclusive of life patterns different from his own and who has psychologically and socially come to grips with a multiplicity of realities""(qtd. in Bennett, M. 59). Furthermore, "this person is always in the process of becoming a part of and apart from a given cultural context" (qtd. in Bennett, M. 59). "The integrated person understands that his or her identity emerges from the act of defining identity itself" (Bennett, M. 60) In this stage, "identity is an act of constructing reality... By being conscious of this dynamic process, people can function in relationship to cultures while staying outside the constraints of any particular one" (Bennett, M. 60).

Before achieving this level of total integration of ethnorelativism, multicultural individuals may be struggling among all possible choices of alternative perspectives and thus be "outside all cultural frames of reference... There are no unquestioned assumptions, no intrinsically absolute right behaviors, nor any necessary reference group. And it is certainly true that many marginal people experience great discomfort and dysfunction as a result of their status""(Bennett, M. 62). However, marginality can be constructive when it is preceded by all elements of adaptation and choice in the stages mentioned above. In this stage, "the constructive marginal also experiences disintegration as a function of cultural shifts"... "but choice is an accepted responsibility for taking charge of one's own identity. Yet, as Bennett explains, it is not so much a case of becoming individualistic as it is of becoming self-reflective" (Paige 118). This is to clarify that transition from encapsulated marginality--where the marginal individual cannot make decisions, is not the opposite of being individualistic. When the marginal individual makes his marginality

constructive, he is not behaving individualistically, but understanding the differences and

making decisions accordingly. In contrast, an individualistic person may not feel marginal

or conflicted by his marginality because he has no real understanding of the differences

among different cultural loyalties.

The Importance of Raising Awareness of Intercultural Sensitivity

M. Bennett explains:

> Pluralism may be accidental... such as might be the case with young
> children raised abroad, with untrained personnel posted to long overseas
> assignments, or with member of minority groups who are forced to live in
> the dominant culture. In these situations, people may understand and even
> respect differences with which they are familiar, but they may be unable to
> recognize or use this sensitivity as part of a generalized skill in adapting to
> cultural difference.
>
> (Paige 56)

In this case, it is not true intercultural sensitivity, but simply increase in the

number of cultures with which one identifies. Individuals with this kind of experience

may actually hurt the promotion of true intercultural sensitivity (qtd. in Paige 57).

However, with appropriate training, people in this type of partial pluralism can construe

their experience into a highly developed cultural sensitivity. And it is believed, as J.

Bennett explains, that cultural mediation could be best accomplished by those with no

identity towards any reference group, yet who can operate in different cultural contexts

(qtd. in Paige 65). With this in mind, the communicative intent of Conjuries of Identities

seems a more plausible one as will be explained in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

THE CONSUMER MODEL AND STORYTELLING
IN <u>CONJURIES OF IDENTITIES</u>

Two concepts explain why the inclusion of Jadina's story enhances the possibility of successfully achieving the communicative intent. First, the concepts behind the *model of consumer behavior* are borrowed to explain the importance of grabbing the viewer's attention and holding it until there is *yielding/acceptance.* Then, the value and purpose of storytelling is borrowed to explain why the inclusion of Jadina's story in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> can be the best means to grabbing the viewer's attention and gaining *yielding/acceptance*--which in terms of the communicative intent would be to understand that TCKs/GNs are: 1) marginal between identities, and 2) that despite similarities problems and dilemmas are specific to each individual. <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> emphasizes aspects of TCKs/GNs of oppressed minorities. The first concept arises in reaction to the traits in viewership behavior, and is explained in the immediate subsection below. The second concept arises in reaction to the aspects of GNs/TCKs that would be included in the documentary, and is explained in the three other sections that follow.

The chapter starts by giving an overview of the stages involved in the *Consumer Behavior Model.* Then it makes an analogy to the *information processing stage.* It then explains the concept of *storytelling* and how it helps to achieve the communicative intent.

Consumer Behavior Model in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>

In reaction to the need to satisfy the viewer in order to gain its viewership, the Consumer Model is used as analogy. The Engel-Blackwell Model, first offered in 1968,

is one the most popularly used consumer behavior models. While the model borrows

from behavioral science--psychology and sociology--, and there is also behavioral science

that describes viewership behavior, none of the research on viewership behavior

approaches the viewer's decision process from a "marketer's perspective". Borrowing

from the consumer model, allows for an analogy between the way the consumer and the

viewer's information processing flows; it also allows to treat the viewer's reaction to

information from a "marketer's perspective". After all, the aims of both the marketer and

I, in this case the producer, are the same: To "sell". *Marketing* may be defined as "human

activity directed at satisfying need and wants through exchange processes" (Loudon &

Bitta 10). From a marketer's perspective, then, the objective behind any assessment

related to the content of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> seems obvious: Which is the best way to

gain the viewer's attention, understanding, belief? In other words, how do I "sell" my

content to the viewer, satisfy their viewing tastes, and in return gain their viewership?

Taken directly from Loudon and Bitta's book *Consumer Behavior* the Engel-

Blackwell Model (graphed in Appendix B) is explained as follows:

> The model contains five components: (1) input stimuli, (2) information
> processing, (3) a decision process, (4) decision-process variables, and (5)
> external influences. The form of these components and how they relate to
> each other varies depending on the degree of involvement that the
> consumer is experiencing in a given purchase situation. The term
> 'involvement' describes the personal relevance or importance that a
> consumer perceives in a given purchase situation. Under the conditions of
> high involvement, as might occur when purchasing a new car, the
> consumer perceives considerable importance in the purchase situation and
> is likely to engage in extensive (involved) problem-solving behavior. This
> is usually characterized by a serious effort at information search and an
> intensive evaluation of alternative. Low involvement situations occur
> when the consumer perceives little personal relevance or importance to a
> purchase. In such cases, the purchase is likely to be made on the basis of
> existing levels of information and with only modest amounts of
> deliberation. (34)

To account for differences due to high- and low-involvement conditions, Engel and Blackwell have offered two versions of their model. For the analogy to be made, the high -involvement model is used (Appendix B). The core of the model is the *decision-process* component, where consumer behavior starts. Analogously, viewers who have had more-indepth intercultural experiences, and as a result experienced being marginal or misjudged by appearance will be the "consumers" in the *High Involvement Version* (the consumer spends more time studying the product to buy; likewise, the audience has spent more time in understanding another culture). Conversely, viewers with little or no intercultural experience that enables their experience as being marginal will be the "consumers" in the *Low Involvement Version* (the consumer does not have too much knowledge about the product, but still purchases it; likewise, the low-involvement viewer has less knowledge of other cultures, but will still watch <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>). It is important to note that as an analogy, it will have its flaws--there will be situations that don't fit. However, the wide variance of the version in which the viewer will fall, the model's *decision process variables*--motives, evaluative criteria, lifestyle, normative compliance and informational influence, beliefs, attitude, and intention--, and the *external influences*--cultural norms and values, reference group/family--might explain the variance.

The *High Involvement Version* is used here as an example. However, in order to adapt to the medium being used, the model will start with the *Information Processing* stage rather than the *Decision Processing* stage. This is due to the difference in the "consumption nature" of any potential viewer of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, most of them

clueless about what they will see, or what they will gain from viewing it. Unless Conjuries of Identities is recommended by a previous viewer, or is described in a database or in some other format where it would come up as a result to a search by the viewer, the analogy to the *Consumer Model* could never start with *Problem Recognition* as the actual model does. Thus, the analogy starts with the *Information Processing* stage. This is of course, influenced by the beliefs and attitudes the viewer has; and just like a consumer's "beliefs and attitudes which have influenced the consumer's preferences toward brands...", is known as *"routine purchase action"*--that is, many of the model's steps will be passed through quickly because a satisfactory solution to the purchase problem has already been identified--, the viewer may have strongly formed attitudes and perceptions regarding culture, race, and nationality which will not change despite the documentary's multidimensional approach--enticing the viewer with dramatizations, giving proof and different perspective through real-life interviews, etc. This point will be referred to again in the explanation of the survey in Chapter 6.

This chapter focuses mainly on how the format of Conjuries of Identities is crucial in influencing the viewer's *Information Processing*. The steps involved in *Information Processing* are, in the Engel-Backwell model: *exposure* to stimuli; after which the stimuli must be able to capture the consumer's conscious *attention* to "significantly influence extensive problem solving"; the next, *comprehension* stage involves "deriving meaning from information that has been attended to and holding this meaning in what is termed short term memory where it can be retained briefly to allow further processing"; the next step "*yielding/accepting* occurs when information is compared to evaluative criteria, and as a result existing beliefs held in permanent memory are either reinforced or changed"

(Loudon & Bitta 36). The model continues to describe how the yielding/acceptance results in permanent retention of information, that may modify the consumer's attitudes, which involves another set of factors named the *Decision Process variables*. This is where the model reaches beyond the scope of this chapter, where the focus is on understanding how the viewer processes information; how to take advantage of this understanding to "market" the communicative intent of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>; and how the chosen format seems to take advantage of the viewer's information processing stages to achieve the communication intent.

Assuming the analogy between *information processing* in consumer behavior and viewership behavior is a valid one, the needs assessment of the potential viewer follows.

The *exposure* to the stimuli will be partly involuntary, as many of them would be watching because the medium--the documentary--was exposed/presented to them, and not because they searched for it. In order to proceed into gaining the viewer's understanding of the content, the stimuli needs to capture the viewer's *attention*, and I add here, the stimuli must hold the viewer's *attention span* long enough in order to convey enough information. The viewer will then derive meaning from the information and move to the *comprehensive stage*. Finally, the viewer evaluates the available criteria, creates, reinforces, or changes beliefs; that is the viewer enters the *yielding/acceptance stage*.

The following example is posed for further clarity. For the viewer to be personally aware of the experiences that some Third Culture Kids face, they need to not only believe the content of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, but also to somehow identify or feel some degree of empathy with the stories presented. It is not enough to just believe that the stories are real. The *Consumer Model* is used again to explain. Suppose person Y has seen a new

haircare product: J displayed in the supermarket (Y is aware of its existence), and has read on its labels and seen on TV advertisements of the wonders it does. Y has also heard from friends who have used the product that it has helped them with their personal hair problems. (Y is aware and believes the stories are true.) However, since Y doesn't have any of the problems J claims to solve, Y has never thought of trying out J; forget changing the one Y has been using! Y cannot find traits in her experiences with her hair that help her identify with what hair J claims to help. Y starts getting interested in the product advertised when it comes with a new quality that seems to treat Asian, long, hard, frizzy hair. Y identifies with the new quality and starts to get interested in the product because it appeals to her senses in a way that she can personalize the product to her needs (now Y is personally aware). In some unique way, Y identifies with the product, and decides to buy it. Analogously, for Conjuries of Identities to achieve its intended objective of promoting understanding of the dilemmas Third Culture Kids face, it needs to entice viewers to the content in such a way that they can somehow identify with the stories. This is slightly more complex than the hair product example, as not all viewers would have had social interactions that would help them identify with the experiences of Sara, Catherine, nor Pei-Wen. (Whereas everyone has to, in some way, deal with their hair.) Despite these extraneous barriers, Conjuries of Identities is able to gain this trait of identity from the viewer through Jadina's story as is explained in the next subsection.

Before explaining the concepts and values behind storytelling that support the inclusion of Jadina's story in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, the drawbacks of not having Jadina's story are exposed in the following subsections for contrast.

How Are Interviews with B-roll Insufficient?

The conflicts Global Nomads encounter depend on a number of factors. These may be hard to understand when expressed in abstract adjectives--alienation, powerlessness, cultural estrangement, etc.; or with general statements such as the one posed by J. Bennett:

> The fact that persons with dual cultural membership may experience bouts of alienation can be related to the high degree of pressure placed on them by both of the cultures of which they are a part. Frequently, members of the original culture accuse the marginal of selling out to the new or dominant culture, of being corrupted by new friends, or of failing one's family. Meanwhile, the second culture may apply pressure to conform to unfamiliar roles in order to achieve acceptance or success.
>
> (Paige 115)

Yet, the understanding of these experiences are crucial to the understanding of Global Nomads. It is important to recall M. Bennett's description of empathy in the previous chapter: empathy "describes an attempt to understand by imagining or comprehending the other's *perspective...* It demands a shift in frame of reference..., and implies a readiness to give up temporarily one's own worldview in order to imaginatively participate in the other's" (Paige 53). With this in mind, it is assumed in this thesis that the tendency towards being successfully empathetic to another person increases with the level of understanding one has about that person.

Real-life interviews could help make believe, but they are in many ways insufficient to make the viewer penetrate the interviewees lives, and understand their positions. Too many variables will affect such involvement: the interviewees ability to describe their experiences, their tone of voice, and pacing; the types of questions the interviewees have to answer; the viewer's attention span level; etc.

Getting the viewer's attention and holding his/her attention span is the first crucial step to gaining understanding or any sort of making sense of the content by the viewer. The following subsections describe some of the drawbacks of plain interviews, and how the concepts behind storytelling could be applied to enhance viewer's attention.

Interviews--Pros and Cons

Pros: direct testimonials; belief from audience.

Cons: abstract adjectives and general statements make it hard for the viewer to truly understand; depend partially on the ability of the interviewee to grasp the viewer's attention; are conditioned by the interviewees mood, physical, mental condition at the time being interviewed; are limited in gaining viewer's involvement, which is crucial as will be explained by analogy made to the *Consumer Model* in one of the subsections below.

In order to achieve the communicative intent--to promote understanding of GNs and TCKs, while emphasizing aspects related to their cultural marginality and the experiences bounded to their racial appearance and cultural background--, credibility is an important factor. Yet, if plain interviews illustrated with daily life footage or B-roll of other related content is the style chosen, part of the communicative intent would be lost.

Both drama and interviews are limited in winning the audience's involvement, a crucial step in gaining understanding and therefore a closer to "empathetic" reaction from the viewer. A combination of the two would have a greater chance to gain higher *yielding* from the audience. Fruthermore, point 2 of the communicative intent also would be lost without Jadina's story, as it is only through this story that the maker asserts that one cannot generalize, but must use an individual's life to gain an understanding of issues a certain group faces.

Storytelling

In his chapter of purpose and values of storytelling, Baker writes: "Storytelling brings to the listeners heightened awareness--a sense of wonder, of mystery, of reverence for life" (17). He then quotes Davis: "Story-telling provides the opportunity to interpret for the child life forces which are beyond his immediate experience, and so to prepare him for life itself...It is through the medium of interpretation that all of us, adults and children, come to genuine appreciation" (17). Given the high possibility that the experiences and dilemmas Global Nomads face are unfamiliar to the general audience, or even to those with similar experiences as they might not know that they share similarities with others who lived trans-nationally, the viewer can be treated as a child. Furthermore, given the difficulty in understanding or being empathetic to abstract descriptions, which is what one usually gains from interviews unless the interviewees are extremely adroit at storytelling, using the concepts behind storytelling in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> achieves two results: 1) to gain attention and retention from the viewer; and 2) to gain involvement,

that will lead to interpretation, appreciation, evaluation and *yielding/acceptance* of the content.

Based on these arguments, the inclusion of Jadina's story not only gives <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> a higher chance of successfully achieving its communicative intent, but also supports the classification of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as a documentary through the concept of "assertive intent", explained in Chapter 2. How Jadina's story supports the concept of assertive intent is explained in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6

CONJURIES OF IDENTITIES--A DOCUMENTARY

In the previous chapter, different arguments and rationale were given to the inclusion of Jadina's story. They pertained to style as conditioned by the desired degree of involvement from the viewer, and by the subject matter. This chapter examines the inclusion of Jadina's story in Conjuries of Identities against the concepts of documentary brought forth in Chapter 2.

Two points in Ponech's arguments are examined in Conjuries of Identities:

1) The maker's intent to produce non-fiction.

2) How assertion is made.

The Maker's Intent to Produce non-fiction

The communicative intent of Conjuries of Identities as described in Chapter 1 reads:

To promote understanding and appreciation of Third Culture Kids/Global Nomads, emphasizing two main points: 1) They are marginal between identities, which evolve differently through their interactions in different societies; and 2) despite general similarities, problems and dilemmas are specific to each individual. In this documentary, the story of a racially Asian individual with diverse cultural exposure is portrayed to make this point across.

The experience of being marginal is a reality amongst TCKs/GNs has been described by M. Bennett (Paige 46-66), J. Bennett (Paige 114-130), Schwarzer and others (210-212), in Chapter 3 of this thesis. In the previous chapter the difficulty of making such marginality understood was explained and the reason why Jadina's story would make understanding more likely to happen was given. Clearly, Jadina's story is only a medium

to achieve the end.

Using Ponech's words again, it is not the "conventions or norms--pertaining to form, style, content, truth, or objectivity" (8)--which define documentary. "The core of non-fiction consists not of an objective indicator relation, but an **action** of indication, that is, somebody deliberately and openly indicating something to somebody else" (11). "To assert is to attempt to give receivers reasons to think that one seeks to produce a certain effect on them, that effect being their recognition of one's intention that they form a given belief" (13).

How Assertion is Made

Communicative intent number two is a point made across through the very inclusion of Jadina's story. This point is made even clearer at the end of the whole documentary when, while displaying the production credits on the screen, Dr. Ruth Hill Useem--who had given her comments throughout the documentary-- says:

> You know, I say these things and people make it into a real tight thing...
> Nothing is closed, but everybody wants it closed... I am not a psychologist.
> I am sociologist, and I don't know about individuals per se. I talk about patterns, and patterns change very fast.

An example of how fiction is used as a means to achieve the communicative intent and how assertion is made clear follows:

In the last section, Part IV Luke, Jadina's boyfriend breaks up with Jadina after realizing that he could not understand her due to her not speaking up. After months of not seeing each other, Luke wins a scholarship, and leaves the location. Jadina comes to see him at the airport. They are both optimistic about the paths they have taken. Intermingled are Sara, Catherine and Pei-Wen's clips from their interviews. They share how they have

grown to have a different understanding about their transnational past. Instead of feeling upset about their marginal identities, they are able to view it constructively.

In none of the interviewees' nor the producer's life did such scene with a boyfriend happen. The scene was used to wrap up with an ending that could convey the message of the positive transition most TCKs go through. Assertion that Jadina's story is just a means to achieve the communicative intent is continuously expressed through editing, which clearly indicates a sense of "sur-reality", and in the way Jadina's story openly says--by means of its obviously pre-planned dramatizations; by means of how it is not re-enacting neither of the interviewees lives; by means of making Jadina's experiences very specific to her traveling, her cultural and ethnic backgrounds--that her story is hers. Her story may indeed have similarities with other people's experiences, but also very specific to herself.

The next chapter offers some of the results gathered from a pilot study. These will support--negate whether the communicative intent was successful, and whether assertion was clear.

CHAPTER 7

SURVEY EVALUATION

This chapter explains the survey used to evaluate <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>. Two points are evaluated. The first, whether the communicative intent was achieved; that is, whether the viewer gained understanding and shaped certain beliefs and attitudes (*yielding/accepting*) about Global Nomads/Third Culture Kids\that they are an open category (as described in Chapter 1 of this thesis). The second, is directly related to this thesis's adoption of Ponech's argument of "assertive intent" to support the classification of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as a documentary. It evaluates whether the viewer was able to "recognize the maker's intention that they form a given belief": that Jadina's story exists to make the point that despite sharing experiences similar to other TCKs/Global Nomads, her experiences are specific to herself; and that the story is there to help them make sense of the overall content.

In short, the survey has two objectives:

Objective 1:

To evaluate, in a pilot study, the efficiency of the communicative intention of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>.

Objective 2:

To evaluate, in a pilot study, how the inclusion of Jadina's story affects: a) the viewer's ability to make sense of the content; b) the viewer's interest in viewing; and c) the viewer's ability to see that neither of the intervewees experiences is meant to be generalized--for the same purpose that Jadina's story exists.

A blank survey can be found in Appendix A for reference. As you will notice, not all questions are discussed here, as some of them cover aspects beyond the scope of the objectives above.

Results and Explanation of the Survey

A total of 34 people filled out the survey. Descriptive information of the sample population can be found in Tables 1, 2 and 3 below.

Demographics:

Table 1

Gender	Number of people	Percentage
Male	13	38.00%
Female	20	59.00%
Blank	1	3.00%
Total	34	100.00%

Table 2

Nationality	Number of people		Nationality	Number of people
USA	10 (3 Asian)		Mexico	1
Taiwan	4		Italy	2
Germany	2		Israel	1
India	2		Tunisia	1
Uruguay	2		Holland	1
Mexico	1		Great Britain/Srilanka	1
Colombia	1		Blank	5
Chile	1		**Total**	**34**

Table 3

Race	Number of people	Percentage
Caucasian	14	41.00%
Asian (including India)	9	26.00%
Black	1	3.00%
Hispanic (from Mexico and South America)	2	6.00%
Eurasian	1	3.00%
Blank	7	21.00%
Total	**34**	**100.00%**

On Communicative Intent:

Questions 1 through 4 evaluate the efficiency of the communicative intention behind Conjuries of Identities.

Question 1, an open ended question, asks participants to define the terms Third Culture Kids and Global Nomads. Except for two questionnaires left blank, most participants were able to clearly describe the terms as defined in Conjuries of Identities.

Question 2, a yes/no question, asks participants about their previous familiarity with the terms "Third Culture Kids" / "Global Nomads". Results appear in Table 4.

Table 4

Previous Familiarity	Number of people	Percentage
Yes	12	35.00%
No	20	59.00%
Total	32	94.00%
Blank	2	

Apparently, <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> helped viewers define the terms "Third Culture Kids"/ "Global Nomads". Though 59% of the sample wasn't familiar with the terms before viewing, only two questionnaires were left blank when asked to define the terms TCKs/GNs.

Question 3, an open ended question, asks participants where Jadina is from. Seventeen participants answered "from Taiwan". The rest included terms such as "born in" or "born in..., and grew up in..."; other answers also demonstrated their awareness that nationality doesn't fairly describe Jadina.

Table 5

According to the participants' perceptions	Not appropriate		Fairly appropriate		Somewhat appropriate		Appropriate		Very appropriate	
Born in Taiwan	0	00.00%	1	02.94%	3	08.82%	5	14.71%	25	73.53%
Raised in different countries	0	00.00%	1	02.94%	0	00.00%	2	05.88%	31	91.18%
From Taiwan	7	20.59%	4	11.70%	12	35.30%	5	14.70%	6	17.60%
Is an Asian American	24	70.59%	4	11.70%	3	08.82%	2	05.88%	1	2.94%
Is a TCK	0	00.00%	3	08.82%	2	05.88%	10	29.41%	19	55.88%
Is a GN	0	00.00%	3	08.82%	2	05.88%	10	29.41%	19	55.88%
From the participants' understan-ding, Jadina:										
Identifies as Taiwanese	13	38.24%	7	20.59%	7	20.59%	5	14.71%	0	00.00%
Identifies as Chilean in 1999	14	41.18%	5	14.71%	7	20.59%	6	17.65%	0	00.00%
Identifies as Asian American	25	73.53%	2	05.88%	4	11.70%	1	02.94%	0	00.00%
Other (see 6 in "notes to table 5" below)										

Question 4, a set of scales rating the degree to which participants find a set of phrases appropriate to describe Jadina. Table 5 above, provides descriptive information of the participants' ratings.

Apparently, viewers were able to recognize or form the perception that neither nationality, ethnicity nor existing categories--such as Asian American-- does not fairly describe Jadina. This can be observed from the table above. More than 85% of the people found the term Global Nomad an appropriate to very appropriate description o Jadina. At the same time no one thought descriptions such as "identifies as Taiwanese; identifies as Chilean; identifies as Asian American" very appropriate. For these classifications, the answers concentrated on not appropriate, and were quite dispersed for the fairly appropriate, somewhat appropriate and appropriate.

Notes to Table 5:

1) 2 of the 7 people who classified "Jadina is from Taiwan" as not appropriate, simply filled out "from Taiwan" in the open-ended question "Where is Jadina from?" (Most people in this category gave more specific answers in the open-ended question).

2) 1 of the 4 people who classified "Jadina is from Taiwan" as fairly appropriate, filled out "from Taiwan" in the open-ended quesiton "Where is Jadina from?"

3) 5 of the 12 people who classified "Jadina is from Taiwan" as somewhat appropriate, filled out "from Taiwan" in the open-ended question "Where is Jadina from?"

4) 4 of the 5 people who classified "Jadina is from Taiwan" as appropriate filled out "from Taiwan" in the open-ended question "Where is Jadina from?"

5) All 6 people who classified "Jadina is from Taiwan" as very appropriate filled out "from Taiwan" in the open-ended question "Where is Jadina from?"

6) In the option "other" 12 people (35.29%) gave answers that demonstrated their awareness to Jadina's special identity. Answers such as "has an identity problem"; "multicultural/ Third Culture Kid/ Global Nomad"; "doesn't identify with neither"; "has no clear identity"; and "other--exactly that" are examples of such awareness.

From the notes above, it seems that the perceptions or beliefs that the viewer shaped after viewing Conjuries of Identities was not strong enough as to get a constant response in the open-ended and Likert scale questions. However, several observations can be made:

Even though 23 people or 67.65% of the sample classified "Jadina is from Taiwan" as not appropriate, fairly appropriate or somewhat appropriate in the rating scale, 12 or 35.29% of the sample gave straight answers of "from Taiwan" in the open-ended question "Where is Jadina from?" The following point is worth discussing here: The wording used in the classification of the rating scale could have contributed to such inconsistency in the answers. Only one category can be seen as fully negative: "not appropriate". While the categories are displayed in a uprising scale form, after "not appropriate", the rest of the categories start moving towards a positive attitude: "fairly appropriate", "somewhat appropriate", "appropriate", and "very appropriate". Thus, participants who filled out straight forward answers of "from Taiwan" in the open-ended questions, might have seen the rating categories as positive rather than negative. As negative categories, their answers would not be inconsistent. In other words, the result and still be seen as a consistently positive one.

Therefore, in trying to communicate the simple message that existing known categories are not appropriate classifications for Third Culture Kids/Global Nomads, as for example Jadina, seems to be successful.

On Assertive Intent:

The following questions were posed to evaluate the influence of the format on how the viewers made sense out of the combination of the different elements in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>.

Question 6, is a set of sentences that evaluates how viewers made sense out of the combination of the different elements in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>. (See Table 6).

By asking whether Jadina's story represents the story of other TCKs, including the interviewees, the assertive intent is evaluated. In other words, the viewer demonstrates whether they were able to realize that TCKs/Global Nomads is an open cateogry-- because people with internationally transiend backgrounds can hardly be lumped into any one single category--; and that Jadina's story exists to make the point that despite sharing experiences similar to other TCKs/Global Nomads, her experiences are specific to herself; and that the story is there to help them make sense of the overall content.

Notes to Table 6:

1) Numbers (or percentages) that don't add up to the total of 34 people (or 100%) in the sample are due to questions left unanswered.

2) Though answers are widely spread along the Likert scale, the results seem to show that there was a successful assertive intent; that is, the viewer was able to realize that

Table 6

	Agree		Somewhat agree		Neutral		Somewhat disagree		disagree		Total	
Jadina's story represents the lives of Third Culture Kids/ Global Nomads	24	70.59 %	8	23.53 %	1	02.94 %	1	02.94 %	0	00.00 %	34	100.00 %
Jadina's story represents the lives of female Asian Third Culture Kids/ Global Nomads	19	55.88 %	7	20.59 %	3	08.82 %	1	02.94 %	3	08.82 %	33	97.05 %
Jadina's story represents the life of Sara	2	05.88 %	20	58.82 %	5	14.71 %	3	08.82 %	3	08.82 %	33	97.05 %
Jadina's story represents the life of Catherine	3	08.82 %	17	50.00 %	7	20.59 %	1	02.94 %	2	05.88 %	30	88.23 %
Jadina's story represents the life of Pei-Wen	4	11.76 %	15	44.12 %	10	29.41 %	1	02.94 %	1	02.94 %	31	91.17 %
Jadina's story incorporates aspects from all three: Sara, Catherine and Pei-Wen	19	55.88 %	11	32.25 %	2	05.88 %	1	02.94 %	1	02.94 %	34	100.00 %
Jadina's story is a story that can be understood independently from the interviewees'	15	44.12 %	6	17.65 %	4	11.76 %	6	17.65 %	3	08.82 %	34	100.00 %
Jadina's experiences stem from her growing up trans-nationally	23	67.65 %	8	23.53 %	3	08.82 %	0	00.00 %	0	00.00 %	34	100.00 %
Jadina's dilemmas stem from her growing up trans-nationally	23	67.65 %	6	23.53 %	5	14.71 %	0	00.00 %	0	00.00 %	34	100.00 %
Jadina's dilemmas stem from her being an Asian in the Western society	5	14.71 %	11	32.25 %	6	17.65 %	6	17.65 %	6	17.65 %	34	100.00 %
Jadina's experiences cannot be attributed to her growing up trans-nationally	1	2.94 %	4	11.76 %	0	00.00 %	6	17.65 %	23	76.65 %	34	100.00 %
Jadina's experiences are unique to herself	7	20.59 %	4	11.76 %	7	20.59 %	7	20.59 %	8	23.53 %	33	97.06 %

through Jadina's story, the producer had the communicative intent of making the point that Third Culture Kid/Global Nomad is an open category because it is hard to lump someone with such internationally diverse background into any one category; each story is specific and unique.

No direct question was made about such assertion because it would then be a leading question; that is, the viewer would have been lead to think about something they perhaps hadn't realized had the question not been posed to them. Successful assertion is evaluated through the sets of attitudes in question six.

1) Even though no one disagreed to the statement "Jadina's story represent the lives of TCKs/Global Nomads", 11 people or approximately 32% of the people agreed or somewhat agreed that Jadina's story is unique to herself. 7 people remained neutral, the reasons for which we don't know. However, these people could have been neutral because they were unsure of their judgement. Most of the media the general viewer has been exposed to, tries to gain the viewer's belief about generalizations made. Conjuries of Identities, however, was asking the viewer to question the same generalizations it posed. The viewer might have not been used to question factual information given to them. As a result, they remained impartial on their answer.

The first statement, however, seems to contradict successful assertion. However, this could be due to the vague usage of the word "represent". Jadina's story, although a means for assertion, does definitely display similarities with other TCKs. After all, she is one. As Useem says: "The general problems are the same, but the context changes" (1999).

2) The fact that the perceptions about the degree that Jadina's story represents Sara, Catherine and Pei-Wen were different for the same viewer--the percentages in each category on the likert scale are different for questions that ask whether Jadina's story represented the story of Sara, Catherine or Pei-Wen--may support successful assertion.

Viewers are aware that Jadina's story is not representing any one particular person in full.

On Format:

Question 10, asks about the adequacy of classifying this video as documentary.

Table 7

	Adequate		Somewhat adequate		Neutral		Somewhat inadequate		indadequate		Total	
Is the classification of this video as *documentary* adequate?	16	47.06 %	9	26.47 %	6	17.65 %	1	02.94 %	0	00.00 %	32	94.12%

Notes to Table 7:

1) Percentages are calculated from a total sample of 34 people. Numbers that do not add up to 100% are due to questions left unanswered.

2) Apparently, viewers were not affected by the inclusion of Jadina's story to view Conjuries of Identities as a documentary. None of them answered "inadequate", while 16 or 47% answered "adequate" to the adequacy of classifying this video as documentary. Only one person thought it was "somewhat inadequate", and ther rest were ambiguous about their opinion.

Question 9, tries to evaluate participants' notion of "documentary". Table 8 below is left for the reader's observation as questions are not mutually exclusive, and terms used lack clear definition. For instance, that the viewer thinks that a documentary should represent objective reality doesn't lead to conclude that the viewer thinks that a documentary can.

This leads to questionning the viewer's cognitive level of their linguistic ability, which is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Table 8

	Agree		Somewhat agree		Neutral		Somewhat disagree		Disagree		Total	
A documentary should represent objective reality	11	32.35%	14	41.17%	5	14.71%	2	05.88%	1	02.94%	33	97.05%
A documentary should include real-life events/ interviews	19	55.88%	9	26.47%	2	05.88%	2	05.88%	1	02.94%	33	97.05%
A documentary should openly indicate a point of view	14	41.17%	7	20.59%	7	20.59%	3	08.82%	2	05.88%	33	97.05%
A documentary is adequate as one if it openly indicates a point of view.	10	29.41%	8	23.53%	5	14.71%	5	14.71%	3	08.82%	31	91.18%
A documentary can never represent objective reality, but "a reality"	11	32.35%	10	29.41%	5	14.70%	2	05.88%	5	14.71%	33	97.05%

Table 9

	Agree		Somewhat agree		Neutral		Somewhat disagree		Disagree		Total	
The combination of different elements\intervie ws and dramatizations\w ere confusing (I couldn't make sense out of this combination)	0	00.00%	6	17.65%	2	05.88%	2	05.88%	24	70.59%	34	100.00%
The dramatizations of Jadina's story contributed to my interest in watching	24	70.59%	7	20.59%	2	05.88%	0	00.00%	1	02.94%	34	100.00%

Questions 11, 12 support the arguments stated in Chapter 5, about the role of Jadina's story to gain and retain the viewer's attention, and that it would emphasize the communicative intent rather than detract from it (Table 9).

Results

The evaluation survey seems to support arguments on assertive intent\both on the function of Jadina's story as a medium to gain the viewer's interest and attention, and as an indicator that experiences TCKs/Global Nomads face are specific to each individual.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This thesis covered two major areas: 1) explanation of the purpose and process behind the production of <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>, and why it takes the form it does; and 2) whether the form manages successfully to achieve the documentary's communicative and assertive intents, using concepts borrowed from Ponech's arguments about what constitutes a documentary.

On Jadina's Story and Assertive Intent

Several factors support the inclusion of the fictional story of Jadina in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u>. While a big portion of the thesis is allocated to explaining these factors, they pertain mainly to the 'marketing" of the content; in other words, to gaining the viewer's interest, attention and therefore their understanding of the communicative intent. The main function of Jadina's story in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> is, however, its role as the illocutionary force that communicates the assertive intent (Ponech 8). Assertion is, according to Ponech, after the "maker's intention to produce non-fiction", the "core of non-fiction" (11-13). Jadina's story is, in complement with comments by Dr. Ruth Hill Useem and with the juxtaposition of other elements in the documentary, the main indicator that despite general similarities between TCKs/GNs, problems and dilemmas are specific to each individual. Her story conveys this point by not being a re-enactment of any of the interviewees: Sara, Catherine and Pei-Wen. Her story takes its own form.

On the survey results

The evaluation survey apparently shows that the communicative intent was successfully communicated to viewers. Their answers on the Likert scales that evaluated their perceptions of Jadina's identities demonstrated so. Furthermore, the viewers seemed to have a general idea that Jadina's story was not a direct re-enactment of any of the interviewees. At the same time, viewers seemed to recognize the many similarities between Jadina and the interviewees' lives. This is a possible way of interpreting the level to which they agree with statements that try to make a connection between Jadina and the interviewees or other TCKs/GNs. With this interpretation, it can be concluded that viewers successfully made sense of the maker's assertive intent. (They understand that there are general patterns about TCKs/GNs, but that as such, they are general, and Jadina's life may have similarities with other TCKs/GNs, but it is not a representation of other's lives.) Consequently, apart from aspect of intermittent editing and functional motiviation in viewing, Conjuries of Identities openly asserts its communicative intent. Therefore, it carries that which constitutes a documentary, as argued in this thesis.

Further implications

This thesis has argued that despite the inclusion of the fictive story of Jadina in Conjuries of Identities, this production is still a documentary, under the concepts of assertive intent. Does such a conclusion imply that any fiction is justifiable in documentary? Certainly not. The focus of this thesis was not on whether fiction can be included in documentary, but what medium the maker uses to achieve the assertive intent. Thus, if the use of conventions or anomalies is subordinate to the documentary's assertive

intent, then these conventions and anomalies are justifiable. However, if there is no clear exposition as to how the use of any anomaly is openly communicated as part of the assertive intent, then instead of documentary, the production might belong to another genre.

This analysis is viable to change over time, as without the concept of assertion (recently published in 1999 in Ponech's <u>What is Non-fiction Cinema?</u>) <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> would not be considered a documentary.

The viewer might not be able to make sense out of the assertive intent. However, most viewers had no problem viewing <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as a documentary.

Effect in the Media Landscape

The concept of assertive intent is not widely known, and even though the survey shows that viewers did not have a problem viewing <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> as a documentary, the way assertion is applied in <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> makes it an anomaly to the conventional perceptions of what documentary is. Therefore, **where** <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> is viewed will determine its acceptance. For example, in a journalistic environment, the inclusion of a fictive story makes a piece unreliable and therefore not belonging to the category of news. In a TV viewing setting, where most "documentaries" are observational, <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> would also fall into another category. This concept of assertion is not verbally communicated to the viewer. Whether the viewer reads the assertion depends very much on what the viewer expects in addition to the viewers' previous knowledge, experience, values, etc. Therefore, perhaps such an anomaly can start its penetration through more alternative media, like film festivals,

independent shows or the like, where the audience is more perceptive to the new. I repeat

Nichols comment on his definition of documentary to conclude:

> ... such a definition stresses how the field operates by allowing itself to be historically conditioned, unfolding, variable, and perpetually provisional, based on what documentarists themselves consider admissible, what they regard as limits, boundaries, and test cases, how boundaries come to exert the force of a definition, however loosely, and how the qualification, contestation, or subversion of these same boundaries moves from inconsequential anomaly to transformative innovation to accepted practice. (15)

Whether <u>Conjuries of Identities</u> will endure the test of time and critiques to go

from "inconsequential anomaly to transformative innovation to accepted practice" is a

whole process dependent on the dissemination of new theories, new practices, and

therefore the audience.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Survey

Dear participant,

Thank you for viewing Conjuries of Identities and for agreeing to fill out this survey. The survey should take you approximately 15 to 20 minutes, and the information you provide will be used in the evaluation of Conjuries of Identities, as part of Peyina Lin's master's thesis. By completing and returning this survey, you indicate your voluntary agreement to participate anonymously. Your participation is well appreciated.

1. What is a Third Culture Kid/ Global Nomad?

_____

_____

_____

2. Were you familiar with the terms above before viewing "Conjuries of Identities"? Yes / No

3. Where is Jadina from?

_____

4. Please evaluate how appropriately each item describes A) your perceptions of Jadina; and B) how Jadina thinks of herself.

A) According to your perceptions, Jadina:

	not appropriate	fairly appropriate	somewhat appropriate	appropriate	very appropriate
a. was born in Taiwan	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. was raised in different countries.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. is from Taiwan.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. is an Asian American.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. is a Third Culture Kid	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. is a Global Nomad	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

B) From your understanding, Jadina herself:

f. identifies as Taiwanese.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. identifies as Chilean in 1999	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. identifies as Asian American.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
I. other (pls. specify)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

_____

5. Please use the following criteria to describe your interaction with the following groups of people:

never = 0 times

seldomly = casual hellos and conversations; passive interaction (do not actively seek to interact with); most of your friends don't interact with this group either.

sometimes = know a friend(s) who interact closely with this group; have a friend(s) from this group that actively carry conversations with you at least once per week.

often = actively interact with people from this group (at least three times per week); are genuinely interested in this group and understand the differences in attitude and expectations.

always = have a very close friend or immediate relative from this group and interact with them on a daily or close to daily basis. (or have done so in the past for an extended period of time).

	never	seldomly	sometimes	often	always
I interact with people from my nationality.	___	___	___	___	___
I interact with people of my racial background.	___	___	___	___	___
I interact with Caucasians.	___	___	___	___	___
I interact with Blacks.	___	___	___	___	___
I interact with foreign Asians.	___	___	___	___	___
I interact with Asian Americans (defined here as racially Asian with American citizenship)	___	___	___	___	___
I interact with Global Nomads (people who were brought up crossing different countries)	___	___	___	___	___

6. Please mark on your level of agreement to the following statements.

	agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	disagree
Jadina's story represents the life of Third Culture Kids/ Global Nomads.	___	___	___	___	___
Jadina's story represents the life of female Asian Third Culture Kids/ Global Nomads.	___	___	___	___	___
Jadina's story represents the life of Sara.	___	___	___	___	___
Jadina's story represents the life of Catherine.	___	___	___	___	___
Jadina's story represents the life of Pei-Wen.	___	___	___	___	___
Jadina's story incorporates aspects from all three: Sara, Catherine, and Pei-Wen.	___	___	___	___	___
Jadina's story is a story that can be understood independently from the interviewees'.	___	___	___	___	___
Jadina's experiences stem from her growing up trans-nationally.	___	___	___	___	___

	agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	disagree
Jadina's dilemmas stem from her growing up trans-nationally.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Jadina's dilemmas stem from her being an Asian in the Western society.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Jadina's experiences cannot be attributed to her growing-up trans-nationally.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Jadina's experiences are unique to herself.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

The parts summed below are to help you recall the content:

Introduction
Part I - "Home"
Part II - Conjury of Identities
Part III - Look at ME
Part IV - Luke

7a. Is there anything you didn't like about this video? What?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7b. Was there anything unclear or confusing? Please specify.

_____

_____

_____

_____

7c. Is there anything you liked about this video?

_____

_____

_____

8. Did you learn anything? What?

_____

_____

_____

9. In your opinion,

	agree	somewhat agree	neutral	somewhat disagree	disagree
A documentary should represent objective reality.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A documentary should include real-life events/ interviews.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A documentary should openly indicate a point of view.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A documentary is adequate as one if it openly indicates a point of view.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
A documentary can never represent objective reality, but "a reality".	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

10. Is the classification of this video as a "documentary" adequate?

adequate somewhat adequate   neutral   somewhat inadequate   inadequate

(optional) Please comment why _____

_____

11. The combination of different elements -- dramatizations and interviews -- were confusing (I couldn't make sense out of this combination)

agree   somewhat agree   neutral   somewhat disagree   disagree

12. The dramatizations of Jadina's story contributed to my interest in watching.

agree   somewhat agree   neutral   somewhat disagree   disagree

13. Please fill out the following information about yourself:

Nationality (country of citizenship) _____

Race _____

Gender   Male / Female / other _____

(optional) Cultural background _____

14. How did you know about the screening today?

email from Peyina / friends involved in the project / friends not involved in the project

other _____

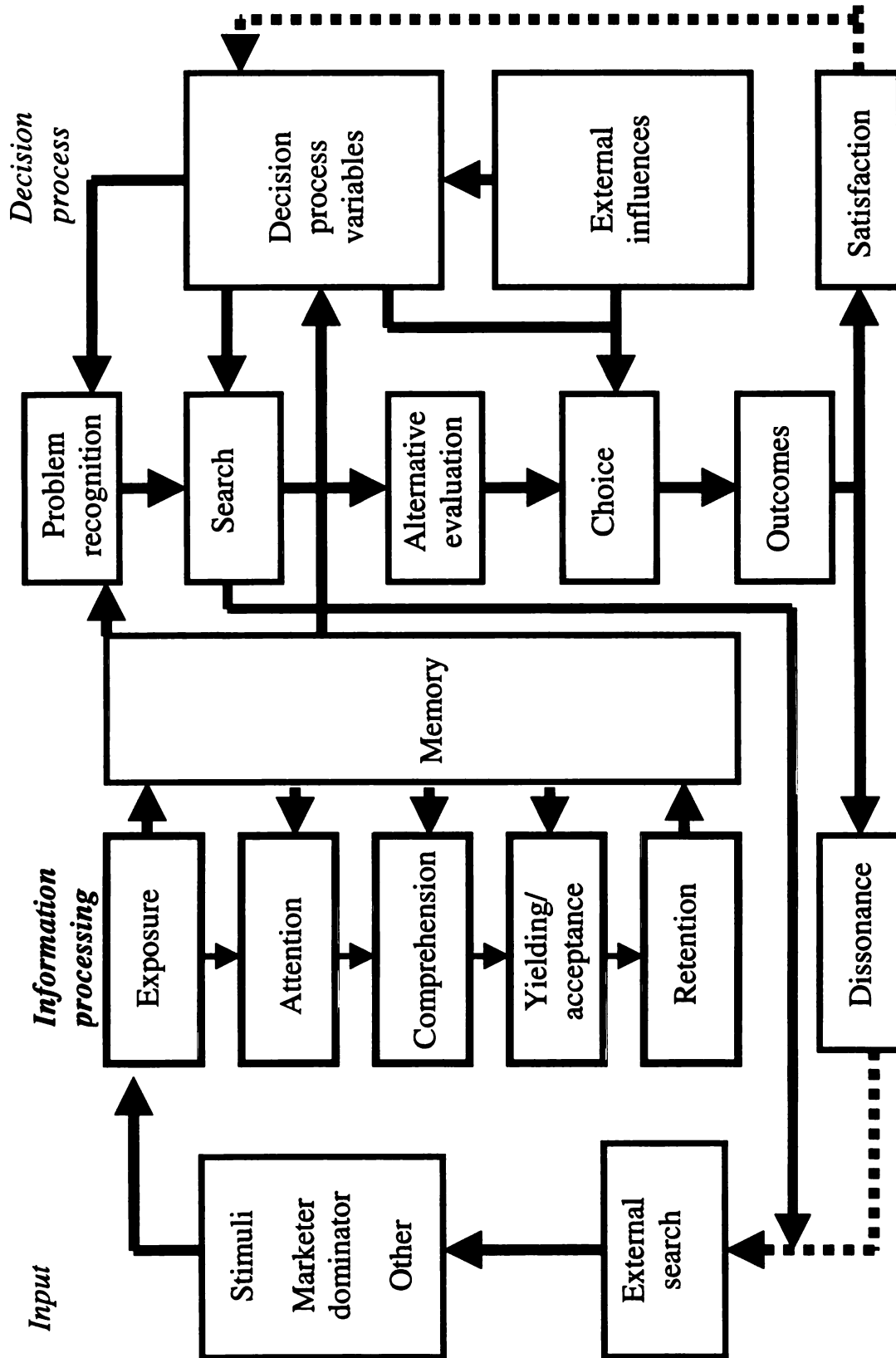15. Where you involved in the production of this documentary?   Yes / No / other _____

Figure 1: Engel-Blackwell Model/Consumer Model

APPENDIX C

GENERAL CONCEPTS

Following are some terms and concepts used in planning the content of <u>Conjuries of Identities.</u>

Race, *n.*

a. One of the great divisions of mankind, having certain physical peculiarities in common. The term is often used imprecisely; even among anthropologists there is no generally accepted classification or terminology. (OED)

b. "Race refers to differential concentrations of gene frequencies responsible for traits which, so far as we know, are confined to physical manifestations such as skin color or hair form; race has no intrinsic connection with cultural patterns or institutions" (qtd. in Kitano 12).

Racism, *n.*

An ideology that considers the unchangeable physical characteristics of groups to be linked in a direct, causal way to their psychological and intellectual functioning and, on this basis, distinguishes between superior and inferior races" (qtd. in Kitano 12).

Ethnic, *n.*

a. Pertaining to race; peculiar to a race or nation; ethnological. Also, pertaining to or having common racial, cultural, religious, or linguistic characteristics, esp. designating a racial or other group within a larger system; hence (US colloq.), foreign, exotic. (OED).

b. **ethnic minority (group),** a group of people differentiated from the rest of the community by racial origins or cultural background, and usu. claiming or enjoying

official recognition of their group identity. (OED)

c. "**ethnicity,** a condition in a society in which certain members choose to emphasize a cultural, racial, or national tie as their primary intrafamilial identity. An ethnic group exists only when member consider themselves to belong to such a group". (qtd. in Kitano 107).

d. "Current views of ethnicity can be divided into the primordial and the structural. The primordial view sees ethnicity as long lasting and permanent; the other sees it as a situational and transitory" (Kitano 107).

Culture, *n.*

a. *absol.* The training, development, and refinement of mind, tastes, and manners; the condition of being thus trained and refined; the intellectual side of civilization.

b. (with *a.* and *pl.*) A particular form or type of intellectual development. Also, the civilization, customs, artistic achievements, etc., of a people, esp. at a certain stage of its development or history. (In many contexts, esp. in Sociology, it is not possible to separate this sense from sense a.) (OED)

Identity, *n.*

a. The sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality, personality. (OED)

b. personal identity (*in Psychology*), the condition or fact of remaining the same person throughout the various phases of existence; continuity of the personality. (OED)

c. "The problem of an overall identity, not just ethnic identity, is critical in modern society. The issue of identity is minor in more traditional cultures in which populations

have remained relatively homogeneous and stable, and immigrants to the United States have been required to discard their ancestral and national identities and to adopt newer ones based on the image of the self-made individual. In addition, the highly mobile social system, with its heterogeneous populations and ever-changing lifestyles, has made the problem of establishing one's identity very difficult in the United States." (Kitano 106).

d. "**racial identity,** is linked to skin color, physical identifiability, and a social definition of race. Because non-Europeans look different from white Americans they cannot participate fully in the American mainstream, and many attempt to formulate an identity that addresses the problem. e.g. The Chinese American.

e. ethnic identity, a broader term including the racial aspect, a relatively new term.

Nationality, *n.* Membership of a country by a person, generally identified by the passport.

Acculturation, *n.*

a. The adoption and assimilation of an alien culture. (OED)

b. "Acculturation is common to intergroup relations in the United States. It connotes the coming together of different cultures into a common culture. Acculturation occurs when different racial and ethnic groups become similar in their thinking, feeling, and acting" (Kitano 22).

Assimilation, *n.*

a. The action of making or becoming like; the state of being like; similarity, resemblance, likeness. (OED)

b. cultural assimilation, process of acculturation "wherein one's identity is
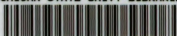
absorbed by a new culture" (qtd. in M. Bennett 51).

c. "Assimilation often seems most closely related to the reversal form of defense, where, for instance, immigrants may be encourage to denigrate their native cultures and embrace the superiority of their adopted one... It promotes replacement of one worldview for a new one" (M. Bennett 52).

Adaptation, *n.*

a. The action or process of adapting, fitting, or suiting one thing to another. (OED)

b. "In adaptation, new skills appropriate to a new worldview are acquired in an *additive* process. Maintenance of one's original worldview is encouraged, so the adaptations necessary for effective communication in other cultures extend, rather than replace, one's native skills" (M. Bennett 52).