

**Through the Lens: How Documentary Film on the Revolution in
Grenada Contributes to History**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my parents William and Laura Grant.

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Abstract

Documentaries on the Grenadian Revolution are numerous. They are/were mostly produced by independent filmmakers from Grenada, the United States, Britain, and France. At present, some are unavailable to researchers. Most commemorate the brilliance of Maurice Bishop, and secondarily praise the efforts of the micro-nation. Some document the invasion by the United States. Independent filmmakers employ a variety of methods and modes to tell their stories from Cinéma Vérité, Direct Cinema and other techniques such as reenactments to animation. Most use contemporary ambient footage, historical footage, photos, and archival footage when available. Music plays a great part in most of the independent documentaries.

A narrative method is employed by most directors, and the documentaries are chronological for the most part. The narrative usually begins with a description of a corrupt dictator, an idealist youthful emerging hero, and a celebratory and a hopeful population who embrace the revolution. It continues and almost immediately the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) is met with resistance from the United States because of its ties to Cuba. The PRG feels the pressure while it tries to build alliances outside of the capitalist First World. This proves difficult and inside the government, the Central Committee begins to fracture. Internal turmoil ensues and the revolution quickly descends to an almost inevitable collapse and end.

Most of the documentaries take a neutral to positive view of the revolution at its beginning. The Coup was relatively bloodless, only two people were killed on March 13, 1979. Four years later on October 19, 1983, Maurice Bishop and seven cabinet members were executed in Fort Rupert above St. George's. How the Central Committee made

decisions have been speculated about to this day. Most of the documentarians were unable to penetrate the Central Committee and hear their side of the story. However, more than one documentary captures significant footage from October 19, 1983 and is available for viewing. This study hopes to highlight how documentaries are sometimes primary source documents, as well as evidence of events in some cases, and hence contribute to history.

Keywords

New Jewel Movement, Grenada Revolution, People's Revolutionary Government, Maurice Bishop, Bernard Coard, Desimma Williams, Fort Rupert, Operation Urgent Fury.

Biographical Information

In July 2020 Norman Grant completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy from The University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras. In 2007 Grant completed the requirements for the master's degree in English at the University of Puerto Rico. Before that, Grant earned the Bachelor of Arts degree in Theater Arts from the University of the District of Columbia in 1995. In connection with the above he has worked most recently as an adjunct English professor at Montgomery College in Germantown, Maryland. He also taught in Puerto Rico at Inter-American University, the University of Puerto Rico, and the New School of Languages. Grant has most recently presented a paper at a conference in Grenada called *The Grenada Revolution 40 Years After: Commemoration, Celebration and Critique* titled "Direct Cinema and Grenadian History: The Case for *Forward Ever*". The paper suggested that film can have a high historical value. In 2007 at the *Caribbean Without Borders* conference in Puerto Rico, he presented a paper on the drama of Derek Walcott. His paper focused on an unpublished play called *Viva Detroit*. The paper entitled "These Islands Are Yours: Neocolonialism as seen in Derek Walcott's *Viva Detroit*" was published in 2013 in the *Contemporary Theatre Review*.

Even the Dead will not be Safe from the Enemy.

Walter Benjamin

Like the orator of old, the documentarian's concern is to win an audience's assent, not to serve as an "information transfer" device.

Bill Nichols

Introduction

The aim of this study is to establish in some limited way the fact that documentary film has historical value equal to written sources. Documentary film has a long history of exposing wrongdoing within government institutions, corrupt practices within private corporations, and illegal behavior of individuals. However, when historical accuracy is the goal, documentary film and film in general are rarely given the pride of place that is occupied by physical documents even in the twenty-first century. Film like the physical documents before it can (if unedited) repeat the same text continually. The subject of the study is the Grenada Revolution as treated in documentary film. The area of study has been neglected for the most part. I think this was/is due to the fact that in historical studies film is seen as usually confirming what was written rather than breaking new ground. As this study will, documentary film deserves a place at the table as primary-source documents, in some cases providing fact and evidence unavailable in print. The study will survey the historical record in print and in film for basic facts on the Revolution. Next, the study will consider the ethics of filmmaking and how evidence is gathered. Filmmakers' analyses of the events of the four years in question are at the heart of the study. Finally, it will examine if, when, and how the films contribute to an understanding of this history in the general sense of attaining an accurate memory of the past, not complete memory but additional facets of memory. The reader will find that the filmmakers treat the early revolution with affection but are annoyed with the detentions that would later be a major irritant on the world stage. Filmmakers noticed the developing bonds between Cuba and Grenada, and how the United States moved against the fledgling Government, employing propaganda in the early stages. Filmmakers noticed the hostility of the Reagan Administration and how it targeted the People's Revolutionary Government and

made it difficult for the People's Revolutionary Government to get out of the way of the Reagan Administration. Also, they noticed how an inevitable end was coming in a military action. Some filmmakers warned the world of what was happening in Grenada. For the most part the world did nothing. The superpower was deaf to the few mild protestations raised and moved on. The early interest in the Grenada Revolution was sparked by the defiant tone taken by the young leaders. The world watched as the United States destroyed the young government that everyone knew was coming. Filmmakers must have known that an early end was a distinct possibility as the fate of other socialist governments attested. Filmmakers knew at the beginning that the Revolution might not be long-lived. Therefore, their interest must have to some degree been because they anticipated something like the train wreck at the end of 1983. Filmmakers working after those events were able to dissect the activity of the PRG and the United States governments. With the exceptions of institutional and government sources, later independent filmmakers also point to the tragedy at the end of the People's Revolutionary Government.

In May of 2019, the author travelled to Grenada to attend a conference on the fortieth anniversary of the advent of The Revolution. The author visited some of the key sites of the events of 1983, including Grand Anse Beach, St. George's University, Fort Rupert (now Fort George), and the official residences of Prime Minister Bishop, and Sir Eric Gairy. In particular the design of Fort Rupert makes it clear what one witness described as an assault from above as plausible. The placement of Fort Frederick above Fort Rupert made it also plausible that the events in fort Rupert could be monitored from Fort Frederick. The beauty of Grand Anse beach made it clear why it was, and is, a tourist destination. The research trip authenticated the events described in print and shown onscreen. Some of those events recorded on film are subject to debate despite the reliability of film to hold to a single vision. Because film can only repeat a single text again and again, and is unable

to respond to cross-examination, qualified immunity and skillful interpretation often undermine obvious meaning, as will be seen in the Rodney King footage.

When film was first introduced in 1888 it was at the forefront of technology. Early innovators in the late 19th century Louis Le Prince in England, Louis Lumière in France, and Thomas Edison in the United States, showed realistic human and mechanical activity on-screen. The term “sur le vif,” translated as *on the go*, or on the spot, reveal the seeming spontaneity of the films, they were termed “actualities.” This is one of the earliest definitions of documentary filmmaking. John Grierson later clarified the idea calling film “creative treatment of actualities” (8). Technological advances, including the addition of sound and then the advent of synchronized sound, moved the medium forward. Those who had never traveled could see and hear bands play in distant lands, see and hear elephants bellow or lions roar. The primary attribute of all film is to convey movement and then sound. The viewer could see where an event occurred, could judge height, distance and time. The audience could travel with the filmmaker to places that they would never go.

Robert Flaherty produced *Nanook of the North* (1922), in which he observes and participates in the activities of an arctic family on the Hudson Bay, as they go about their daily activities. To modern eyes, it is obvious that a cameraman is filming the family’s affairs. There are many obvious ways in which Flaherty interfered in the flow of events. A famous example is the manner in which Flaherty films (Allakariallak, aka) Nanook constructing an ice window for his igloo, which in fact was a cutout constructed for the purpose of the film, filmed inside and out. Despite intrusions like these, the film is credited with giving the western viewer a sense of arctic life. The silence of the film allows the audiences to visit without the intrusion of narrative. Although

silent (music accompanied theater showings) and without dialogue, the film reveals the lives of its subjects.

Filmmakers have been showing contemporary events since its inception in the late nineteenth century. They showed audiences what people, places and things looked and sounded like. Film conveyed senses of height, depth, immediacy, and distance, topography, vastness, beauty, ugliness, and horror. As such it is also an appropriate vehicle for examining historical events. Yet film has not always received the merit it deserves as evidence in historical documentation. The very word document evokes the written word. Written analysis has held sway over almost all scholarship therefore, it is important to show how other mediums contribute to the understanding of events in their context (s). Filmmakers document those events as well.

A series of European films without narration appeared that chronicled life in major cities, nature, and weather. Among these was Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), in which he observes people in daily activities while sometimes participating with them in the scenes he creates in Kyiv, Odessa, and Moscow. In the United States newsreels, government training films, and war reels after the Second World War proliferated, and were transferred to television when it appeared in the 1950s. Advancing technology allowed filmmakers to place themselves in front of the camera or in the heavens as voice of God narrators. Talking head lecturers also led viewers through film narratives which largely obscured the lives of the subject people.

In 1960 Direct Cinema pioneer Robert Drew complained about the lecturing of early documentaries. Elements of Direct Cinema still exist today because for the most part they do not lecture. Dave Saunders describes the history of observational filmmaking in *Direct Cinema*, a style that is still employed to some degree in most of the independent films in this study. The emergence of both Direct Cinema and Cinéma Vérité are important in the history of documentary films. The

difference between the two is that Cinéma Vérité allows the filmmaker to participate in the process of filmmaking, speaking and appearing on camera. The two versions of the idea of film truth arrived in 1958 as the post-war generation began to come of age. Social norms were being challenged and technology accommodated an interest in the individual. These two anthropological genres are important because they set standards which characterize the style of the films made to chronicle the Grenadian Revolution. Around the end of the 1950s filmmakers took advantage of the emergence of new technologies: lighter shoulder-held cameras, synchronized sound, and faster film. It became possible for filmmakers to work in more diverse locations, and in natural light. What this allowed for was the freeing of the documentarian from a fixed location or studio. Direct Cinema, a term coined by Albert Maysles, originated in Quebec, and was prompted by the emergence of youth culture. Michel Brault and Gilles Giroux's *Les Raquetteurs* (1958), and Giroux's *Golden Gloves* (1961) were early examples of the genre. The first practitioners of Direct Cinema in the United States were filmmakers like Richard Leacock and Roger Tilton, *Jazz Dance* (1954), Robert Drew, *Primary* (1960), D.A. Pennebaker, *Don't Look Back* (1967), Fred Wiseman, *Titicut Follies* (1967), and Albert and David Maysles, *Salesman* (1969). Direct Cinema practitioners pretended invisibility which would produce its own set of problems, while Cinéma Vérité practitioners were very visible in their productions.

These filmmakers from the middle to late twentieth century put the subject out front. They mostly refrained from appearing in front of the camera in order to give greater play to the subject; they preferred to have the subjects relaxed and going about their daily pursuits without interference from camera and crew. Of course, this is only partially obtainable, but that was the goal. Fred Wiseman began to chronicle institutions and how they functioned. The landmark *Titicut Follies* (1967) examined the conditions inside Bridgewater State Hospital, a Massachusetts mental facility

with deplorable treatment of patients. The film was so disturbing that it was banned and was completely or partially censored for many years until Wiseman finally prevailed in court.

Direct Cinema theory posits that viewers are able to follow events without intrusion of a voice-over, talking head or the voice of God, narration is eliminated, and the filmmaker is not seen. In this way, the wall between the subject and the viewer is erased, and the viewer would sense their own participation in the events onscreen. The genre remains a legitimate measuring stick for guiding documentary efforts that act as exposés rather than conventional storytelling. But the limitations soon became apparent when filmmakers were faced with political realities that forced their hands. The observational method revealed that something could be lost by not displaying an “overt political commitment in their work” which derived from what was in some cases a “failure to challenge problematic self-representation” (Rabinowitz 125). Social actors sometimes misrepresent themselves in the events they describe. Audiences tend to believe individuals who describe events that they participated in. But because a social actor can lie or deceive, the filmmaker must decide when a speaker should be challenged. A filmmaker may become aware of inaccuracies or misrepresentations during the filming process and decide to intervene and correct the record. So even though the offscreen interviewer is unseen, sometimes they must break the illusion of invisibility. Nevertheless, social actors, truth tellers or not, are the foundation of expository and participatory filmmaking.

These types of issues are prevalent in investigative historical documentaries in which the filmmaker seeks a heretofore hidden truth. Usually there is a reason the fact (s) have been hidden. That is the case with some documentaries here. When the filmmaker follows the facts and is unafraid of where they might lead, then the film approaches a state of reality. The discourse needs no embellishment. This theoretical approach holds that some of the film work under consideration

here has enduring value for its clarity and courage. An audience is asked to believe that something or some idea has merit and deserves attention, the screenwriter then tells audiences what the facts mean. The profundity of film is seen when the facts shown onscreen match events in the real world. Historical documentaries rarely shout when the facts are available and presented in a straightforward manner. The films in question here lie between the two positions of observation on the one hand and participation on the other.

Neither Hollywood nor documentary films are created in a vacuum. As will be discussed below social conventions, which are group beliefs and biases, play a large role in what is shown onscreen. Michael Rogin as quoted in Robert Stam's *Film Theory: An Introduction* (2000), pointed out that the four most transformative moments in American films, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1903), *Birth of a Nation* (1915), *The Jazz Singer* (1927), and *Gone With the Wind* (1939) "all organized themselves around the surplus symbolic value of blacks, the power to make African-Americans represent something beside (sic) themselves" (273). Michael Rogin's insights on the treatment of racial minorities in American film inform my understanding of how film has been used to project racist notions, an example of which is found in one of the documentaries in this study, in Bruce Paddington's film *Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution*, President Ronald Reagan speaks before a gathering, saying that the United States had just liberated Grenada from Communist thugs. The statement is played more than once in the documentary, once near the beginning of the film and then later toward the end, adding to its symbolic value and impact. The President suggests that black revolutionaries were incompetent, amateurish, and thuggish. These were the "dog whistles" of the 1980s but those sentiments are explicit in the Oval Office of 2020, designed for certain audience members. Reagan played upon racist notions in the population to downgrade the efforts of the PRG. This is an editing choice; the director uses this notion of "surplus symbolic value" to reveal that race

played a significant part in the hostility played out by the Reagan Administration. It was Capitalism versus Marxism plus one, which also ties into Bishop's statement at Hunter College that the Grenadians were perhaps more dangerous to the US than Cuba, or Nicaragua because they spoke English and were black.

As will become apparent in the documentaries below, postcolonial societies in the Caribbean as recorded on film show how self-determination was limited. Ania Loomba points out that Europe never gave its colonized subjects the same level of self-individuation that they accorded themselves (Stam, *Film Theory* 293). As subjects of Empire they operated at the pleasure of London or Paris, and once liberated, Washington D.C. Therefore, when the former colonial subjects gained independence, their freedom was not complete, they were still subject to a prevailing hierarchy, and were not equals on the world stage. Grenadian independence in 1974 did not grant sovereignty. Don Rojas, former press secretary for Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, called it "Flag Independence" (Hartman). The small nation immediately began to arm itself, knowing that they would meet opposition from the West. The United States, itself a group of former English colonies, accords itself full sovereignty because of its military might. Therefore, it can treat a small neighbor as if it had been its *own* colony and invade without consequence.

The filmmaker is faced with the issue of how the events in question should be presented. Should the great and the small share in equal measure screen-time and comment in order to achieve neutrality and objectivity. Paul Ward decries "the assumption . . . that 'neutrality' should be the necessary aim of all documentarists and, furthermore, that being perceived to be neutral or impartial (or fair and balanced) to borrow the US network *Fox News*' rather inaccurate slogan) one somehow automatically achieves objectivity." Mike Wayne quoted in Ward, makes a distinction between "objectivity of the object (world) and objectivity of the subject. The former is a recognition that

there exists an objective world, 'out there,' independent of human experience. The latter is the erroneous belief that it is possible for particular people (subjects) to take up an objective position, where they can view (and comment on) things in a manner unencumbered by their 'subjectivity.'" Stuart Hall also writes about a "false symmetry" in terms of giving equal weight to both sides of an issue, in the hope of appearing to be fair. All three point to the fact that most issues are rarely balanced between equal forces and the filmmaker has a choice to make. Ward holds neutrality and fairness in low regard. The documentarian must take a side and fight for it (60-61). The director expresses very strong views on the place that documentary film should occupy. In the above instances the author powerfully sets the tone for the documentarian.

For Walter Benjamin historiography is about struggling with, seizing, and commemorating curated facts. This is true for the documentary historian as well. Writing about film focused on historical events involves a double bind for a film historian because the film is the primary window through which they must look to examine the underlying facts and determine the filmmaker's fidelity to those facts. The historian accesses the filmmaker's creative interpretation of those facts in their presentation of the past. Documentarians must gather facts, assess their meaning, and choose what to do with them. For Ward, the filmmaker must take sides, because power is in the particular; a director's viewpoint, and passion must come into play in the work itself. One has to believe that as Walter Benjamin says, "even the dead will not be safe from the enemy" and Ward says the filmmaker should act accordingly (60).

For Ward, filmmakers should engage in reconstruction of historical events in order to reclaim the truth. It is not so much recreating what happened but showing why the event happened the way it did. Some force or forces move people to act. As noted above, the voice and actions of the dead are silenced or erased unless their views are preserved. These are what Benjamin calls the

“moments of danger,” at the precipice, where lines are crossed, where change occurs. Again, “it is not so much the mapping of the ‘way it really was’ that is important, but the recognition that histories are constructed” (60). Historians decide and conclude which facts are relevant and deserve inclusion and which facts do not. Objectivity is rarely possible even if desired because it is almost impossible to know every contributing event, every person involved. Objectivity, as drawn from notions of neutrality or impartiality, is a flawed concept because the documentarian is not magically outside the socio-historical context that is depicted in the film. Even for events that the filmmaker did not witness or experience, their view is shaped by a milieu of events in the world, past and present. Re-readings of historical events should show the viewer what happened and why, exposing the “contextual forces at work,” explaining rather than simply describing. Ward points toward uncovering the “underlying ideological conflict that caused the event to happen” (61). Such filmmaking has power because the viewer can envision similar situations in their own lives and empathize with the participants. Ward’s *Documentary* is a foundational source and inspiration for this attempt to examine documentary film on the Grenadian Revolution.

Bill Nichols’ theoretical approach drives the investigation of documentaries found herein on the Revolution. Nichols is a leading theoretical force on documentary film in the 21st century. His view is that documentary styles emerge from prior types of filmmaking. Models are taken from outside of filmmaking and are employed to explain the six modes of documentary filmmaking which are categorized as Poetic, Expository, Observational, Interactive, Reflexive and Performative. Jack Ellis calls Nichols’ approach organic, accessible, and functional (334). Nichols sets a standard of what historical documentary filmmaking could encompass, and Jill Godmilow specifies an additional element of usefulness, or value in which viewers can effectively respond to the issues presented on screen. Documentary filmmaking is by definition part of what Bill Nichols

calls the “discourses of sobriety”; such discourses also include science, economics, medicine, military strategy, foreign policy, educational policy, and politics (*Introduction* 36). Within the discourses, departure from sobriety occurs when facts are obscured or replaced by opinions however well informed. The first six categories are subject to abuse but are usually exposed fairly quickly. The last category is perennially under stress due to the desire to gain and /or retain political power.

Documentary filmmaking retains its sobriety when presentations and conclusions are factually based. Examinations of facts may be uncomfortable for some persons. However, the viewer benefits from revelations of the unknown. Directors present the facts in context and value on film. The resulting truths revealed may be more or less complete and may take different forms in the hands of different filmmakers but should come to similar conclusions or reveal gaps in understanding an issue:

These are the ways of speaking directly about social and historical reality... what we say and decide can affect the course of real events and entail real consequences. These are ways of seeing and speaking that are also ways of doing and acting. Power runs through them. An air of sobriety surrounds these discourses because they are seldom receptive to whim and fantasy... They are the vehicles of action and intervention, power and knowledge, desire and will, directed toward the world we physically inhabit and share. (36)

The above is found in Bill Nichols’ *Introduction to Documentary*, which reiterates that filmmakers are not simply passive storytellers. The filmmaker is responsible for indexical references to events which the films explore. The apparent truth may not tell all. The filmmaker

may suspect that social actors are not always truthful, and a filmmaker may be wary of a subject's motivations, all of which highlights the need to adhere to known facts. In other words, filmmakers can only be so creative with historical material and still engage in sober film discussions.

Interviews of persons involved in historical events are the primary method of gathering information about the subject. When the original participants are unavailable, secondary sources play a part in retelling a story. Interviewees have individual views of the events and rarely provide seamless accounts of what happened in the event in question. However, they are the best first choice for a filmmaker. Archival and historical film footage, photographs and newspaper articles also provide useful primary and secondary source material. When these sources are exhausted, reenactments and animation fill empty spaces where no archival or historical footage exists. But they are at least one more step removed from the events they portray. No filmmaker must subscribe to Nichols' view, in order to be truthful. But subscribing to the idea of Discourses of Sobriety, a filmmaker is reminded that, as an example, medicine as a discipline cannot present speculation as evidence, or hunches as cures, and therefore filmmakers are also called to a high standard. This approach authorizes, invigorates, and encourages filmmakers to stay close to the facts, and question those facts when interpreting events. All films under consideration in light of this rather recent documentary theory will use the theory as a compass to re-read other films and television programs on the Grenadian Revolution, all of which inform readers about what, where, when, how and why the Revolution came into being, progressed, stalled, regressed, imploded, and was almost erased from history.

Filmmaker Jill Godmilow as author and in interviews expresses a distaste for some documentaries which she calls "a corrupt form of public knowledge" when they claim authenticity because of recorded footage (*Kill the Documentary*), an idea that the footage is in and of itself both

evidence and proof. The footage is evidence and stands in for the audience, as it shows some event or condition that the audience did not experience, but it is not proof of what a filmmaker proposes.

In a 1997 interview with Ann Shapiro, the director points to the closed stories of some documentarians citing the 1968 CBS program *Hunger in America*, hosted by Charles Kuralt and David Culhane, and Ken Burns' *Civil War* as examples. Godmilow's point is that the contemporary documentary does not take the step toward revealing the underlying reasons why certain conditions persist. CBS was one of the big three networks at the time and had many corporate funders. The Public Broadcasting System is also funded by corporate donors who may not wish to be indicted on screen. Power demands reflections. All power structures reward their own players. In years past filmmakers who refuse to play inside the structure never gained access, and those who could not play within the rules only rarely succeed regardless of effort or tenacity. Filmmakers that operate independently stand a better chance of telling the stories that they find compelling. Newer cheaper technology has made this possible.

Filmmakers until recently were faced with the daunting task of financing their films and the prospect of being ostracized for choosing certain subjects to film. Facing such an uphill struggle some filmmakers choose to guarantee funding and not alienate audiences that wanted to be entertained or informed, but not offended. For the most part, documentarians avoid arousing anger or anxiety in an audience. An audience is a significant thing, a creature anticipated and studied; a collective group that, whether in theaters, at home or online, feels or thinks that it has witnessed something different and new. The audience has something to talk about, something to widen the intellectual and emotional experience: when this point is achieved it is satisfied. It feels as if it has also experienced the events on screen and catharsis ensues. It is then freed from the anxiety produced in an individual who has been an actual participant in the events like the ones displayed

onscreen. Afterwards the individuals within can complete the experience with a satisfied notion that “There but for the grace of God go I.” These documentaries are usually made for middle-class audiences, which are preselected in the sense that directors assume a certain level of education and therefore affluence. This group can pay to see documentaries in controlled settings where they can learn about The Other (“What’s Wrong” 1999, “Killing” 2014). When a director tells a story for educational purposes only, the audience will learn something new and perhaps feel better about itself. But when the director sees a problem that needs attention and writes with edification in mind then the documentary might well provoke action in the actual world. The issue is whether the film investigates the subject sufficiently to allow the viewer to see how a cause produced an effect. In Ann -Louise Shapiro’s interview Godmilow stressed that the object is “to deconstruct the subject, to take apart that exact [comfortable] relationship with the audience ” (“How Real is Reality” 1997). The same year Lynne Miller interviewed Godmilow where she engaged the fallacy of the “authenticating pedigree” of the film footage itself (“Undocumenting”). Similar to the idea above of film as proof, the idea of self-authentication elevates the filmmaker to a position of authority. The filmmaker was on location where the events occurred and therefore their interpretation of said events must be taken as fact, also known as the *I Was There* factor. Godmilow ends up moving from Nichols’ term of instrumental documentaries to her term of usefulness. The ideas are complementary. Usefulness for Godmilow is a quality that is provided for by a filmmaker which gives viewers an avenue for response in the real world. This avenue leads to a place of action. When filmmakers attempt to uncover and liberate deliberately hidden facts, so that a society may act in its own behalf to correct abuse by parties in official or unofficial capacities, this then is useful filmmaking. Jill Godmilow’s notions of usefulness put a fine point on the relevance of the documentaries in question.

Recent examples of investigative documentary films which uncover deliberately hidden facts and had the power to change events in the real world are numerous. Some examples of this type of investigative documentary are: *The Witnesses* (2020) about sexual abuse of children within the Jehovah's Witnesses religious organization; *The Luanda Leaks* (2020) documenting the criminal activities of Isabel Dos Santos in Angola; *Who Killed Malcolm X?* (2019) Abdur-Rahman Muhammad's attempt to reopen the murder case, because he believes the men convicted in 1965 were not the killers; *I Am Not Your Negro* (2016) about James Baldwin's unerring insight and honesty about race in America; *O.J. Made in America* (2016) which chronicles the life of the racially transcendent athlete; *Blackfish* (2013) on animal abuse in the entertainment industry; and *The Central Park Five* (2012) which takes a close look at five young New Yorkers who were falsely convicted of rape. There are many others that share this feature of clear-eyed investigation by staying close to the facts; they tend to reveal realities hidden below the surface. Film can provide details visually and aurally that may not be available otherwise. There is one basic standard at work here, which is to identify facts that contribute to history which can be gleaned directly from the film. In this study the criterion is an item that presents otherwise unknown facts that are not found elsewhere, and which establishes a film as primary source.

In the case of the Grenadian Revolution the discussion is heavily weighted in favor of the written record, there is a huge amount of scholarly historical literature available with well over seventy books written on the Revolution. Books are published almost yearly on the Revolution. New texts on the Revolution, some of which have yet to be published and are too recent to all be included here, are Bernard Coard's *Skyred: A Tale of Two Revolutions* (2020), Laurie Lambert's *Comrade Sister: Caribbean Feminist Revisions of the Grenadian Revolution* (June 2020), Phillis Coard's *Unchained: A Caribbean Woman's Journey Through Invasion, Incarceration and*

Liberation (2019), and William Joseph Bryant's *The Grenada Revolution... Answers, Legacies and Footprints: A Leadership Guide to the Young Grenadian* (2019). The revolution continues to fascinate authors who continue to add to the growing corpus of recent texts.

The breadth of authors is staggering from US Government officials, academics, and independent scholars, to Caribbean, British and European scholars. Of course, the Grenadian voice is also heard as many participants of the events and times have written on the Grenadian Revolution. The strictly historical accounts of the revolution are presented by Jay Mandle, Anthony Payne, Robert Pastor, Shalini Puri, and Ann Wilder, all of whom wrote about the events of the revolution and their significance. Amnesty International took up the cause of the so-called Grenada 17, Susan Mains explored issues of justice. *New York Times* journalists Milt Freudenheim, Mark Kurlansky and Robert Treaster wrote about the revolution as it happened. Kai Schoenhals and Gregory Sandiford focused on the New Jewel Movement (NJM). Lawrence Whitehead examined issues relating to the move toward Socialism. Brian Meeks assessed Revolution Theory and the Caribbean. Arthur Newland scrutinized religious practices, including church and Rastafarian participation during the period. Jermaine McCalpin describes how the Truth and Reconciliation Commission missed the mark. Nichol Phillips paid attention to the role of women in the revolution. Mark Adkin, Stephen Zunes and Edgar Raines dissected Operation Urgent Fury and its mishaps. Bernard Coard, Joseph E. Layne and John Ventour, former members of the Central Committee and the Grenada 17, contributed to the historical record particularly about the events of 1983.

An examination of a portion of the literary production and its significance to this study will be found in Chapter 1 "The Revolution on the Page." These scholarly efforts begin immediately as early as 1984. The next year 1985 a conference was convened by the Caribbean Institute and Study

Center for Latin America in San German, Puerto Rico which focused on the revolution, producing research papers on the events in Grenada. The above-mentioned newer publications coincide with the 40th anniversary of the beginning of the revolution in 2019 and will probably accelerate toward 2023 which marks the ending of the Revolution. In Chapter 2 “The Film Record,” the films on the Grenada Revolution are chronicled and examined as visual artifacts. They record the Revolution on film, some during but most after the years of the PRG and play a part in how the revolution is seen today by a third generation of Grenadians who are coming of age. In Chapter 3 “Ethics and Evidence in Documentary Filmmaking” issues regarding guiding principles are examined, and how film has been unconvincing when used as evidence historically, inside and outside of the United States judicial system. Chapter 4 “The Director’s View,” will look at design, editing and stylistic choices employed by the filmmakers. The events of the Revolution are considered one by one in chronological order, each recorded event is considered and examined according to the way that each director presented the event. In Chapter 5 “Contributions to History,” conclusions are presented about whether the films maintained fidelity to the known facts at the time the films were produced. Fidelity to the facts establishes the basis for rereading history and making possible useful analysis for social action.

Documentaries on the Grenada Revolution explore the historical period from 1979 to 1983. This range of years is expanded when filmmakers look at the prior period of the Eric Gairy Administration from the 1960s to 1979, and the years after 1983 when Operation Urgent Fury removed the Revolutionary Military Council and changed the course of Grenadian history. The years following that event until the present are included in discussions on the Grenada Revolution because some films in this study are as recent as 2019. Participants discuss their reactions to the events during the years of the Revolution. Filmmakers document various aspects of the

Revolution and repeat or echo what other scholars present on the Revolution. However, they are able to add a visual aspect which separates their work from other scholars. In the case of historical footage, viewers are able to see what happened in addition to reading about it. The early films showed the Revolution at work; people develop land, build homes and repair roads. Later films show the Revolution under stress, and others show the day of collapse on October 19, 1983. Film from this day is crucial in establishing a standard for what can be known from watching the film. Among the later films, interviews on the events of that day also establish the validity of the criterion of what can be known from watching the film alone. Some of these films reveal the unpleasant, adhere to the known facts, and are useful in providing an avenue for present and future Grenadians to reexamine received history. Documentaries are valuable when they challenge the record, but if the viewer hides within social conventions, the films change nothing.

Film in this Grenada Revolution collection contain visual elements unavailable in the printed scholarship, footage which often display facts not found elsewhere. In this study there are films which show many things unseen before, but only a few reveal something important which can only be gleaned from the films themselves. In a comparative study of this type between written scholarship and filmed scholarship on the revolution, the reader must be aware of what has been written by historians, in order to know what is absent from the record. It is not fair to indict early historical scholarship which may not have had access to a filmed record, and/or because the films were found, or produced after their work was completed. Another development is a case where a filmmaker explored an area that had been closed before and found new material, thereby establishing a certain criterion. In this case it was specific interviews and details of an assault, and in another case, it was raw footage tangential to a bigger argument. But in both cases, they are not seen elsewhere. The standard of film as witness is the Abraham Zapruder film of the precise

moment of the assassination of President Kennedy. That moment is not recorded on film by anyone else, and Zapruder's film is the criterion, or the gold standard film record for that terrible incident. In the Grenada Film collection, there are some less dramatic but important examples of standards set within the films as well.

Chapter One: The Revolution on the Page

The New Jewel Movement Coup on March 13, 1979 which later became known as the Grenadian Revolution, removed a controversial elected leader, and replaced him by young ideologues led by Maurice Bishop. The Grenadian Revolution provoked strong emotion both at the time of its existence and afterward. On the conservative side there was/is the right-leaning United States Government, which first isolated the island nation, harassed it in the press, and then, invaded the island four years later at its weakest point, in order to prevent the revolution from reconstituting and recovering.

A cottage industry exists on the subject of the Grenada Revolution. Books, essays and articles were written both about the revolution, its demise, and the Invasion by the United States. The subjects written about most were Eric Gairy, Maurice Bishop, Operation Urgent Fury, The Grenada Papers, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, The Grenada 17, The New Jewel Movement, International Relations, Socialism, Sociology, History, Reflection, Race, Economics and Justice. The authors, some mentioned here, range from well-known military officials to private individuals.

As historians began to write about the New Jewel Movement, two different camps began to assemble. The prevailing views of the revolution might be summarized in two case studies, one a semi-official review of documents confiscated after the Invasion and another view from an individual scholar with a personal view of the revolution.

The United States confiscated papers during Operation Urgent Fury and later published some of them. They were published by ICS Press as *The Grenada Papers* in 1984. With a foreword by Sidney Hook, and edited by Paul Seabury and Walter A. McDougall, the text is a clear-eyed

look at the interior of the People's Revolutionary Government. The texts that are listed show the correspondence of the Government with its counterparts around the world, as well as internal papers, and letters that reveal the machinations within the Central Committee. Seabury and McDougall display the warts of the PRG and how the group began to implode. Although the papers are not the totality of PRG documents, the choice of material does not paint the revolution in the best light. The players are all too human and their foibles are exposed. Their political philosophy and connections to Cuba made them suspect to the United States. Because the text(s) originate inside the revolution they often show the sometimes-petty squabbles, which reveal the humanity of the participants. *The Grenada Papers* never condemn the revolution but critique and criticize it. But because they do so, the texts leave the revolution exposed to ridicule by those who hated it. However intended, *The Grenada Papers* justified the Invasion by the United States. The text speaks against the revolution.

Another nuanced pro-PRG critique written on the 30th anniversary of the end of the revolution is Shalini Puri's *The Grenada Revolution in the Caribbean Present: Operation Urgent Memory*, published by Palgrave in 2013. Although writing after the revolution, the author covers almost all aspects of the revolution and its aftermath including weather, natural disasters, and artistic expression. This text is contemporaneous with two documentaries that will be analyzed in the following chapters, also marking the thirtieth anniversary. Puri records the confessions of Joseph Ewart Lane that the revolution did not train them for compromise, and that almost all solutions involved force or coercion of some sort, implying that when conflicts arose, they would not be settled peacefully. Because the Revolution ended in violence, followed by an invasion, an acrimonious trial and convictions, it is not surprising that this period, although glorious, is also shrouded in shame. Puri notes the irony that "the Grenada Revolution forms no part of the history

curriculum taught in Grenadian public schools” (9). This academic lacunae contrasts with a Reagan Museum in Grenada, plaques to American servicemen that were killed in the Invasion, October 25th -the day of the Invasion- being inaugurated as a national holiday, and the printing of Grenadian postage stamps honoring Ronald Reagan (9). Evidently, both the commemoration and the postal display are longstanding 21st century recognitions of President Ronald Reagan and Operation Urgent Fury. These later developments stand in contrast to and above the Grenada Revolution and how it ended.

Puri notes a significant failing (discussed below) in commemorations of the Revolution that holds true for film treatments of the Revolution and points the way forward:

The discourse that commemorates the Revolution often repeats one flaw of the Revolution and its vanguard: their preoccupation with heroes and their excessive focus o[n] the leadership. Perhaps rather than immobile and aggrandized stone faces, what is needed is public memory of the masses moving. There is a vast sea of people who unreservedly gave their energies to the Revolution, and whose memory does not achieve the solidity of stone. These memories slip through one’s fingers like sand. (150)

Public memory must however deal with the events as they occurred, however unpleasant, and the masses are made up of individuals, one of which was George Louison, a significant early member of New Jewel and something of a mediator at the end between the Central Committee and Bishop. Louison was detained on October 19, 1983, and whether at Richmond Hill or Fort Frederick, he claimed that he heard the machine gun fire and saw the white signal flare fired from Fort Rupert to alert those at Fort Frederick that Bishop was dead (227). This claim will return in two of the documentaries.

The author documents that Bishop himself signed detention orders for many citizens, including some NJM members who opposed certain policies. They were detained without trial and mistreated, and this, not the delayed elections, is what “eroded the mass base” (227). In a reference to *They Could Only Kill Me Once* by Callistus Bernard (then known as Iman Abdullah), Puri notes that “It is possible to read [his] entire narrative without unambiguously learning that it was he who opened fire on Maurice Bishop and sprayed him with bullets. Whether such actions were justifiable or not may be disputed; that Bernard carried them out is not in dispute – yet, at least in the prison narrative, he limits his admission of responsibility” (231).

The image of Che Guevara is highlighted and how the Grenada Revolution’s focus on leaders and not the people were mistakes and that “the masses’ embodied conviction is ultimately more important than the abstract correctness of any vanguard” (256). Strict adherence to political philosophies and the building of leaders, or heroes, got in the way of serving the people. Che Guevara is a universal icon of revolution in the twentieth century and his image and the model it represented influenced those who came after.

Puri again quotes Joseph Ewart Layne from his book *We Move Tonight: The Making of the Grenada Revolution*, that “In the final analysis, it was the confrontational instincts – and not the democratic tendency within the Grenada Revolution (and within all the revolutionary leaders) – which prevailed” (235). The struggle within the Vanguard took precedence over the needs of the people. One side had the people, the other side had principle, and both were convinced that they were right. Layne concedes “neither side could have won. It was a lose-lose situation. A compromise alone could have provided winners. But we were not skilled in the art of compromise. It was not part of our arsenal . . . [it] finally caught up with us” (235). It is a general principle that power needs to see itself in action, reflected as if in front of a mirror; Puri records this as “The need

that power has for performances of subordination” (273). Ultimately, confrontation and subordination brought the Revolution to an end.

The Revolution is criticized for its shortcomings and failure to take the people into account as it worked out its policies. The author points out that there is “[a] receding of the self-evident and singular authority of the foundational texts of socialist practice” (262). Marxist-Leninist theory was not autochthonous to Grenada and was based on a different model. It was difficult for the PRG to transfer and accommodate it to the realities of Grenadian life. This is not a gentle critique; it says what many dissidents must also have thought and felt. The fact that many Grenadians refused to side with the revolution says much about how the PRG had not prepared the people by engaging them in the process of deciding how they would govern going forward. In spite of the foregoing, it is clear that Puri sees the revolution as a positive development that went wrong. Considering that Eric Gairy and his Mongoose Gang enforcers had terrorized the New Jewel Movement that opposed his leadership, there was ample impetus to replace him at the first opportunity. Considering too that Gairy’s controversial election win in 1976, which prevented the New Jewel Movement from coming to power earlier, thwarted their initial efforts. Another means was necessary. When the New Jewel Movement took power as the People’s Revolutionary Government, Gairy’s supporters remained. The New Jewel Movement did not or could not bring along those that found solidarity with Gairy. Puri points out the mistakes that were made and laments the possibilities that were never realized.

Historian Selwyn Cudjoe has key insights into the American Revolution and compares it to what happened in Grenada. A Trinidadian, the author writes with the authority of someone close to the revolution, that is, as a person who saw and heard what he wrote about. He notes that the rivalry between Bishop and Coard could have had its origin in the early 1970s, due to the fact that Bishop

was a founding member of NJM with Unison Whiteman, while Coard was not in Grenada at the time of the founding of the party. To be fair, Coard had his own core group called the Organization for Revolutionary Education and Liberation (OREL), which merged with New Jewel. When the People's Revolutionary Government collapsed, and the executions occurred on Oct 19, 1983, the initial reaction of neighboring countries was one of relative calm. In the days leading up to the Invasion the CARICOM (Caribbean Community) meeting in Trinidad turned down plans to intervene in Grenada just days before the Invasion because they felt that, in economic terms, the revolution had outperformed "any other country in the eastern Caribbean" (6). The eastern Caribbean was alarmed but not ready to take up arms to rectify the situation.

Bruce Paddington, whose film is part of this study, wrote about films that focus on the Caribbean, and points to how the West tolerates black autonomy, as long as it remains docile ("Caribbean Cinema"). Racial mixing or miscegenation is the source of an irrational fear of obsolescence. Former colonial sites are seen as uncivilized and lack the ability to govern themselves. (94). This was written ten years before *Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution* and is a reference to films about the Caribbean originating outside the region. The instability of the region was highlighted as one of the stated reasons for the Invasion, which was why a rescue of the students at St. George's Medical School was necessary. The student body, including a large number of white females was vulnerable. Cudjoe says the CARICOM countries were relatively calm, but Paddington hints that someone else would be nervous, namely President Ronald Reagan.

Robert Pastor, former member of the National Security Council, describes how the antagonism began in "The United States and the Grenada Revolution: Who pushed First and Why?" Pastor saw three phases of relations as initiated by the US - (1) empty embrace, (2) distant and cooler relationship, and (3) confrontation and attempts at intimidation. He points to the back and

forth that ensued between the US and the new Grenadian government, because of the latter's move to get closer to Cuba. Documents seized after the Invasion -thirty five thousand pounds to be exact - indicate that the New Jewel Movement was Marxist-Leninist from the start (2). Starting with Zeitlin and Scheer, Pastor compiles and quotes from various sources. He noted that the US cut the sugar quota from Cuba and that the US had never acknowledged how it dominated Cuba and ignored its aspirations prior to the revolution. Quoting V. S. Naipaul who described an aging Eric Gairy as "a feared and somewhat eccentric Negro shepherd-king," Pastor saw Eric Gairy as "an embarrassment to the newly educated Grenadians, whose path to power was blocked by his continued popularity among the poor" (6). It becomes clear that a subtle parallel exists between pre-revolutionary Cuba and Grenada in which the United States supported oppressive right-wing governments; it gave refuge to Batista and Gairy when they fell, but then interfered with their successors. The People's Revolutionary Government saw the need to protect and defend itself. The arrests of James Wardally and Chester Humphrey in February 1979 in Baltimore on transshipment of weapons charges is one of the first indications of the New Jewel Movement arming itself to address Gairy prior to taking power (7). On March 10, 1979 Vincent Noel was arrested in Grenada, other NJM leaders were interrogated, and the movement went into hiding. Gairy left the island on March 12th to go to the US. On March 13th, the four leaders, Bishop, Coard, Austin and another unnamed person voted on whether to seize power. Coard and Austin voted yes, Bishop and the other member voted no, and a George Louison was called in to break the tie. They attacked at 4 am.

The so-called bloodless coup was a rapid change of power, only two people were killed during a takeover that was completed by day's end. The Eastern Caribbean Nations met in Barbados on March 14 and 15, and initially pledged non-interference. George Louison pledged that early elections were coming. Even so "the leaders decided to withhold recognition" (10). The

Eastern Caribbean Nations were relieved to see change come to the region, “Many of us were so glad to get rid of Eric Gairy that we (the English-Speaking Caribbean) were prepared to overlook the means by which this regime was ended” (10). Radio Grenada became Radio Free Grenada and took on a propagandistic tone. The People’s Revolutionary Government dismissed the pro-Gairy police force and army. The United States government initially planned cooperation with the new government having recognized the flaws in the Gairy regime. Ambassador Ortiz offered limited help to the new government, reportedly the aid was from a Special Development Activities fund which could disburse small grants in the neighborhood of five thousand dollars (11). It was ridiculed by Bishop and rejected. But before that, Bishop appeared to express interest in help from the US. On March 25th Bishop suspended the Grenadian constitution. Cuban planes with arms and personnel began to arrive at Pearls airport. In the early days of the revolution, Bishop feared that Gairy was planning an invasion to restore his government. But Ambassador Ortiz was sent to assure him that the United States was not aiding Gairy in any effort to restore his government and that to do so would be a violation of the US neutrality act and that the United States would prevent it from happening (10). Also, Bishop would not submit a formal request for military aid during this period. The PRG would not meet with AID officials that came to assist the new government.

Pastor reports that Bishop and Coard were reacting from the expanse of “Caribbean political culture, which places a high value on defiance” (16). In other words, their tit-for-tat was “par for the course.” These were relatively young men in their early to mid-thirties who reveled in the black power movement, which saw no place for calm quiet negotiations. President Carter had a regional policy which allowed the United States to lose the competition for Grenada to Cuba, and the USSR, while it focused on the region at large. This may have been a deliberate ploy to isolate

and make an example of Grenada. Justifiable paranoia caused Bishop to see the US as the enemy (19).

In 1979 the United Nations presented a resolution condemning the Soviet Union for invading Afghanistan; the People's Revolutionary Government voted against the resolution. The new government shuttered *Torchlight*, detained political prisoners and prohibited other political parties. It engaged in a tit-for-tat with the United States over the arrest of Wardally and Humphrey in Baltimore for gun-running violations; in retaliation Grenada arrested an American woman as a spy. There were a few more of these reciprocal arrests. In 1981 the new President Ronald Reagan took a harder tone and made derogatory comments about communism. Reagan withdrew aid to Grenada. In August 1981, naval forces prepared in Vieques, Puerto Rico for an invasion known as Amber and the Ambertines, an obvious reference to Grenada and the Grenadines (23). The nation of 100,000 people could not secure the funding to become self-sufficient and by 1983 the PRG found itself nearly bankrupt and isolated. The PRG was faltering and unable to independently support itself, soliciting routine office equipment from allies. The Congressional Black Caucus and TransAfrica invited Bishop to the US. On this visit he attempted to meet with President Reagan, Vice President George Bush, Secretary of State George Shultz, and other high-level Administration figures. However, he did meet with the Assistant Secretary of State Robert E. Lamb, at the State Department, but without consequence. It seems that Bishop's harsh rhetoric fed into the United States trap of isolation regarding Grenada.

Robert Pastor's and the late Kai Schoenthal's papers for the symposium in San German, Puerto Rico in 1985, include mention of the relatively minor omission from the films concerning higher education abroad, but which is hinted at in the Hunter College speech. Bishop speaks about how during the Gairy era few Grenadians were able to be educated abroad at world-class

institutions. Yet some of the leaders of the PRG were among those few and had benefited from their social class. Bishop, Coard, and Whiteman were educated abroad during the 1960s. They were among the privileged middle class: mainly businesspeople, importers, hoteliers, and merchants that could afford to send their children away to be educated. Although not stated here, the People's Revolutionary Government did send students to Cuba, North Korea and the USSR for education.

Race is always an issue in the Western Hemisphere and Grenada is no exception. The Grenadian middle class was dominated by people of lighter skin color. As hoteliers the Bishop family falls into this class. There is a flip side to the race issue when examined from the inside of Grenadian society. Brian Meeks shows that Bishop's claim in the Hunter College speech that only a handful of people were able to travel overseas for education may be contrasted with the fact that local college education was made available during the Gairy era for over 352 local students between 1960 and 1970 (143). Yet these newly educated students began to see the Gairy regime as problematic. As the group that Bishop, Coard and Radix represented returned to Grenada, they also saw Gairy as representing a past that needed changing. Gairy's stronghold in the rural areas was black agricultural workers who were a bulwark against these newly educated urban semi-elite. That stronghold was to endure long into the revolution and after the People's Revolutionary Government.

Historian Kai Schoenhals documents how the internal struggle to some degree reflected the extreme pressure of attempting to rapidly transform a society from post-colonialism to socialism. In "The Road to Fort Rupert: The Grenadian Revolution's Final Crisis," Schoenhals presents the theory that a primary cause of the internal breakdown was "mental and physical exhaustion of the top leadership by the summer of 1983." In a nutshell, it was a case of too much being asked of too few members of the PRG. He observes how the members of the Politburo and the Central

Committee “were called upon to address even the most minor matters (such as the installment of Christmas lights). . . which should have been delegated to subordinates,” also noting that several members of the Central Committee took ill during 1983. Four and one half years was the length of the Revolution, REVO for Grenadians, but “If the Revolution had survived for just a few more years, returning Grenadians would shored up the desperately needed governmental infrastructures and eased the pressure on the upper governmental echelon” (6). Anger, misapprehension, and paranoia were underfoot while the documented events raged overhead.

Schoenhals disputes the idea that the Soviet Union supported Bernard Coard, and Cuba supported Bishop during the final days of the Revolution, noting that “both the Cuban and Soviet governments were unpleasantly surprised by the internecine struggle within the Grenadian leadership and did not take sides before the murder of Bishop on October 19” (2). According to Maurice’s mother Alimenta, Castro and Bishop had a father-son relationship and Castro was distressed by the executions and referred to Coard as the “Pol-Pot of the Grenadian revolution” (2). After the Invasion, the United States painted “the Coard faction in the “most lurid colors” in an attempt to sympathize with the Bishop faction. In August 1984 Bishop’s “Line of March” speech was released by the State Department implying that there was no distinction between the two groups (1). “The middle class never abandoned its admiration for Maurice Bishop, who with his charm and graciousness, seemed to reflect their own social background. Bishop’s father Rupert was a self-made, successful businessman who had initially disapproved of his son’s radicalism. There was also the fact that Bishop shared the right skin color with the Grenadian bourgeoisie whereas Bernard Coard, whose father was a lower civil servant, is . . . black” (3). It is more likely that Coard’s father’s occupation played a more significant part in their lack of acceptance of him than his skin color. Schoenhals notes that Grenadians showed little love for the Coards during the years

of the Revolution and Phyllis “was viewed with undisguised hostility” (2). Internal division was more significant than Cuban or Soviet alliances.

Ina Julien, whose late husband W.E. Julien had owned much of the land that was designated for the Port Salines Airport, would fly from Barbados and later New York to Grenada to attempt to recoup some compensation from the government for their financial loss, but she never received money from finance minister Coard. Bishop would extend funds to her, and her view of the two leaders was based on that. On March 13, 1983, the PRG displayed new Soviet weapons on the fourth anniversary of the Revolution. Tensions had built up during this last year of the Revolution. An attempted assassination of Basil Gahagan, a high PRA official, injured his girlfriend at her apartment. In addition, the Venezuelan ambassador was shot at during this period. Schoenhals attributes this activity to anti-revolutionary forces. The soldiers were grossly underpaid, and some were abandoning the People’s Revolutionary Army and going to Trinidad.

The euphoria felt at the ending of the Gairy regime was fading, and the new government had difficulty in providing all of the things that a functioning society needed. The airport construction was draining most of the government’s funds away. The television station was in danger of going off the air, and foreign aid was drying up (5). Coard resigns from the Politburo and the Central Committee. Tensions build within the PRG as many members of the Central Committee express dissatisfaction with Bishop as leader of the Party and the Government. One year later accusations of murder conspiracies go back and forth between the Bishop faction and the Coard faction. The Central Committee called an “Extra-ordinary Meeting” or meetings which lasted from September 14 – 16, 1983. According to Schoenhals, it was Liam James that proposed the Joint-Leadership idea. He also places the executions at James’ feet along with Ewart Layne, and Leon Cornwell. He says that Layne ordered Callistus Bernard and Lester Redhead to execute

Maurice Bishop and his closest comrades; the author attributes this information to confidential sources (8). Schoenhals does not describe when and how he was able to participate in meetings with these key figures but describes them as firsthand accounts. Cletus St. Paul traveling with Bishop reportedly called ahead to Grenada before Bishop would return from Eastern Europe by way of Cuba, and reportedly said “blood would flow” when they returned to the island. The Coards lived mere yards away from Bishop. They went into hiding based on rumors of death threats. When Bishop reneged on his agreement to accept joint leadership, many NJM members turned on him calling his Administration “Gairyism with a Bishop face.” In the minds of hardliners within the PRG, Bishop had replaced Gairy as dictator.

The late sociologist Ronald Fernandez who specialized in Puerto Rico’s independence issues wrote *Cruising the Caribbean: U.S. Influence and Intervention in the Twentieth Century* (1994). Fernandez explores the idea that the coup which brought the New Jewel Movement to power was not opposed by the British Crown because they had soon “secured the cooperation of Sir Paul Scoon.” As a result, the British Governor-General was allowed to remain in place, as a way of maintaining connections with the Crown and the Commonwealth. The Carter Administration initially agreed to work with the new government, but within days changed its mind, escalating the conflict to a battle to contain communism. US ambassador Benjamin Ortiz was said to be hostile to the black revolutionaries. There are implied threats from the US but no direct references to the New Jewel Movement. On April 13, 1979, Bishop responds to the harassment with the now famous retort that “No country has the right to tell us what to do, or how to run our country, or who to be friendly with; we are not in anybody’s backyard and we are definitely not for sale” (404 - 407). Reagan inherits and amplifies the cold war climate toward Grenada. In four years, the President would find the justification needed to implement the planned Invasion. The White House

manufactured a rationale for invading the island, that of rescuing endangered students. In a revealing statement, Fannie Houghton in *The House on Coco Road* stated that she heard that Sweden and Canada were making plans to evacuate their citizens during the curfew, and when she approached representatives of the United States she was told that there were no such arrangements. Of course, they needed to be there when Reagan's Cavalry arrived.

The United States desired a suitable stalking horse, so the government sent written instructions to the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States on how to request aid, urged president Modica of the medical college to change his mind and say that the students felt threatened, - "We chatted with him. . ." and he finally changed his mind (409). According to Fernandez, Sir Paul Scoon was evidently coerced into allowing his office to be used as a conduit for the US Invasion, as a secured rescued hostage Scoon inadvertently confirms the danger that students were in. They physically "secured" him to facilitate the effort (411). The Invasion "was routinely invoked as a sign of new toughness, reaffirming the Monroe Doctrine, big stick, and gunboat diplomacy" (412). Reagan later boasted that we liberated that nation from communist thugs. Fernandez notes how The Crown and the Commonwealth acquiesced when it came to Grenada in 1983,

Numerous historians agree that the United States was extremely hostile to the People's Revolutionary Government during both the Carter and the Reagan Administrations. Conservative administrations usually seek to prove the validity of their beliefs. Therefore, the fact that Reagan accelerated the attack and increased the tension on the new government is not surprising. The films under discussion in this study reflect those attacks and show some of the discomfort.

Chapter Two: The Film Record

There are several full-length documentary treatments on the Revolution. The majority of documentaries on the Grenadian Revolution are complimentary of the initial efforts of the New Jewel Movement, while almost all acknowledge that the detentions in the first year of the Revolution were unwise. The films can be grouped according to content and editing, which are categorized here based on when the films were produced as Promise, Reflective and Commemorative. The early filmmakers shot their own footage and had use of extensive local television coverage. Early footage was favorable and praised the revolution, especially focusing on Maurice Bishop and his scintillating oratory. This can be seen in various documentaries taken from Caribbean Insight Television (CITV) footage filmed during the revolution, including the recent entries: 2017's *The Peaceful Revolution* and 2019's *Maurice Saw Them Coming*. Among the exceptions to the CITV footage are the Associated Press (AP) Archives which show some of the earliest footage of the Revolution with interviews by the British Press. Another category of documentaries which originate from United States Government sources are usually matter-of-fact commentaries on events as they are shown onscreen. *The National Archives: Special Report* is one of this type. Narrated in French it obscures original English questions and answers. In a second National Archives video called *Visit of President Reagan to Grenada, 1986*, an animated President, gives voice to American exceptionalism. The President allows that Grenadians are Americans too, in the hemispheric sense. Government sources are concerned with the actions of Governments, so these documentaries focus on bilateral relations in post-Invasion Grenada.

American television programs like *America's Defense Monitor* and the Public Broadcasting System's weekly *Frontline*, are likewise concerned with the aftermaths of Urgent Fury. By and large independent filmmakers from the United States and Trinidad focused on the

Revolution itself. These filmmakers working without institutional resources include Damani Baker, Estela Bravos, John Douglas, Joanne Kelly, Bruce Paddington, and Norris Wilkins.

The films listed below were produced by various filmmakers from the Associated Press, Grenada's Caribbean Insight Television, Independent filmmakers in the early days of the PRG, Hollywood, the United States Government and PBS, to the Military Channel. Amnesty International produced a documentary about its efforts on behalf of the Grenada 17. The ten plus films under consideration here may be grouped into three semi-open categories (1) Promise, the early days (2) Reflective post-Invasion, and (3) Commemorative. The categories are drawn based on the years that the films appeared. To provide context most filmmakers explore what preceded the making of their films.

The very few treatments which fall into Promise, at the initial stages of the revolution, may also be thought of as journalistic efforts due to the recent startling effect of the New Jewel Movement's coup against Eric Gairy. These films gather evidence on the Revolution for the outside world. This group consists of at least ten short *AP Archives* films of thirty minutes or less. These films often show everyday life in Grenada starting with Independence Day in 1974. There are several that focus on the beauty of Grenada, and some actually interview major players. These AP films cover a wider temporal range than most, from the early 1970s to and including footage of the Invasion at Port Salines in 1983. The Cuban Institute of Arts produced the significant *Grenada: Pequeño País, Gran Revolución* (1980) translated in English as *Big Revolution in a Small Country*. This film commemorates the first anniversary of the Revolution. A large portion of historical footage attributed to Caribbean Insight Television in Grenada has been used by many filmmakers and appears to represent the period between 1979 and June 1980. The same footage serves as the basis for later films such as *Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution*, and *Maurice Saw them Coming*.

Another group of films appear after the Queen's Park bombing of June 19, 1980. These films include Joanne Kelly's *Grenada: Portrait of a Revolution* (1980) which also has a later release date of 1983, John Douglas's *Stand Up Grenada*, (1980), and a second film on the revolution called *1984: The Future Coming Towards Us* (1983). The bombing may not have been the impetus for the films and some of them do not display distress or alarm onscreen. Douglas's *Stand Up Grenada* is the only film that focuses on the funeral(s) of the young girls that were killed at the rally. In some ways these films mark the end of the beginning when the Revolution took its first blow of many to come.

The vast majority of films fall into the Reflective post-Invasion category. These films are the *National Archives NARA films* "TV Satellite: Special Report on Grenada" (1984), and "Visit of President Reagan to Grenada (1986)." Television programs on the revolution include PBS *Frontline*: "Operation Urgent Fury" (1988) and *America's Defense Monitor* "Grenada Revisited" (1991). There are several other documentaries not included here with Urgent Fury in the title. An early production from 1983 by *Thames TV* contains interviews with Sir Paul Scoon at the time that he was appointed interim Prime Minister, after the Invasion. The Military Channel's documentary *Operation Urgent Fury* also focuses on Paul Scoon. Governor-General Scoon was in office in different capacities from 1978 to 1992, which suggests that the United Kingdom had not abandoned Grenada even during the high days of the Revolution, the Fall, or the Invasion.

The Commemorative films look back at the Revolution and its significance. The Military Channel's *Operation Urgent Fury* (2013) was among the first of the commemorative television programs, but it reflects on the Invasion and not the Revolution. *Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution* also released in 2013 tells the story of Grenada from Eric Gairy to Dr. Terrance Marryshow in Fort Rupert in 2011. The China Global Television Network released *Grenada:*

Lessons from a Cold War in 2015 looks back at the Invasion and the events on October 19, 1983. *The House on Coco Road* released in 2016 is reflective of the director's mother's journey from the 1960s through the 1980s, which includes the end of the Revolution. In 2017 and 2019 respectively, Norris Wilkins produced *Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution* and *Maurice Saw Them Coming*, both films look back with admiration at the Grenada Revolution.

The following films were unavailable for this study. The French film *Grenade: Six Mois D'une Revolution* (1979), Ellen Ray's *Grenada: Nobody's Backyard* (1980), the American Security Council's three volume *Attack on the Americas!* (1982), a 1983 film, title unknown, about Maurice Bishop's trip to the Soviet Union, the Grenada Foundation's *Grenada: Take Off of a Dream* (1983), and a Sky Productions film called *Maurice* (1984). This last film may be Estela Bravos production of the same name. There are numerous other You-Tube videos, Television programs, records, and cassettes that address the same issues that the films explore and are worthy of examination. Many of the You-Tube productions have merit but cover much of the same material using the same footage.

Filmmakers Damani Baker, Estela Bravos, John Douglas, David Grey, Joanne Kelly, Bruce Paddington, Norris Wilkins, Amnesty International and the China Television Global Network are the primary directorial sources explored here. Some of the various other treatments by the US Government, news agencies, Hollywood, and individual Grenadian filmmakers that both create and borrow from the above filmmakers are examined as well. (Appendix A)

Promise

The Promise period refers to the last days of Eric Gairy's reign as Premier and Prime Minister from Independence in 1974, the Coup, and the period leading up to and including the

bombing in Queens Park on June 19, 1980. This period is called Promise because it includes the rise of the New Jewel Movement and its ascent to power. Because Eric Gairy had just been deposed, his influence was still felt in Grenada. Therefore, some parts of the first group of films deal with Eric Gairy and his professional life. In some sense his peak period beginning in the 1950s is prologue and his deterioration as a leader was a cause of the revolution.

The *AP Archive* videos from the early days of the PRG are distinctive. One called “Bishop Makes His Move” includes footage of Maurice Bishop walking through Eric Gairy’s former home looking through his mementos of Obeah and books on UFOs. Also found is earlier footage of Gairy in his heyday, walking through the grounds on the same compound. A British interviewer speaks with a very thin Maurice Bishop as he arrives in a chauffeur-driven Jaguar. Bishop is clearly in charge at this point, as he beckons Coard to follow him when they leave. Another video called “Grenada Caribbean Socialism” focuses on teaching socialism to the citizenry. In several cases the students stare into the distance as the instructor speaks. Bishop responds to offscreen questions about some unrest amongst the population. He complains that some are interested in developing large-scale commercial marijuana operations. Bishop does mention the Rastafari.

Another early entry is *Grenada: Big Revolution, Small Country*, from Cuba narrated in Spanish with subtitles when English is spoken. The film was produced by El Instituto Cubano Del Arte E Industria, directed by Victor Casaus and narrated by José Rodríguez. The film is designed in historical units and follows modern events starting with the coup. It ends with support from other progressive governments in the region, namely Jamaica and Nicaragua. The film then looks back at the 1651 event known as Carib’s Leap, also called Freedom Leap in Sauteurs, where Amerindians jumped to their deaths rather than submit to French rule and slavery. Enslaved Africans replaced them until 1834, when emancipation ended the practice. The film returns to the twentieth century

with commemorations of one year of self-rule. The film was made on the anniversary of the Revolution, March 13, 1980. There is grand aerial footage of St. George's with cruise ships docked at bay. Tourists were on the ground despite foreign propaganda. Original footage and music from this documentary have been used as historical footage by other filmmakers, most notably Bruce Paddington.

The film begins with an overview of Eric Gairy's home after the 1979 coup. One room is filled with religious statuary, ceremonial honors, honorary degrees from various universities and another most curious object. A literal wheel of fortune with names on it bespeaks Gairy's interest in the paranormal, and the occult. Gairy seems to have been part of an era of the late 1960s, that was marked by increasing interest in nontraditional spirituality, although this footage indicates that he had interest in religiosity in general. Also, in Gairy's home are photos of Augusto Pinochet and Castillo Armas, on display to verify his right-wing bonafides.

Hudsin Austin describes how the New Jewel Movement developed a military wing as early as 1973, because of Gairy's increasing reliance on violence when met with political opposition. After the beating of Maurice Bishop and the shooting of Rupert Bishop, Gairy is figuratively indicted by the NJM and a wanted poster with Gairy's photo is shown. In this film Bishop rails against destabilization efforts against Grenada, one being rumors of a Soviet Naval base in Carriacou, another about rumors of Fidel Castro being the puppet of an unnamed puppet master, and more questions directed at Grenada because of the buildup of arms on the island. Bishop does not state where the inquiries were coming from. The media comes under scrutiny and a major newspaper is closed. This indicates that efforts to undermine the government were at work early in the Revolution. Bernard Coard speaks about the need for full participation in the Revolution. Rarely

is Coard given screen time when Bishop is available and certainly after 1983, he is no longer seen at all. But in this early film Coard is second among equals.

Joanne Kelly's *Portrait of a Revolution* (1980) presents the revolution from the ground up. The film focuses on the people and not the leaders. The film reflects curiosity about the nascent revolution and some of the problems that were emerging on the island. Historical footage from 1980 show everyday life. The approximately 30-minute documentary avoids the obligatory interview with Bishop or Coard. The director interviews significant men and women in the early days of the revolution. The film is organized thematically, with sections on social programs, the economy, Cuban influence, elections and detention. Members of the PRG speak to an unseen interviewer about the various programs at work and how the revolution is proceeding. It is just over a year into the revolution and signs of discontent are evident. Publisher Alister Hughes speaks of detentions and outside influences on the body politic. An unnamed American woman speaks about how Gairy controlled people by invoking Obeah. At this point in the Revolution spirits were still high, but signs of discontent were apparent. Phyllis Coard, John Beggs, Ray Donnell, George Louison, Lloyd Noel and Kendrix Radix are interviewed. Rare footage of Angela Bishop is shown in this documentary. The title is telling in that Kelly paints a picture in which the early euphoria is followed by the nuts and bolts of constructing a new society, which is exhausting and not often pretty.

John Douglas's *Stand Up Grenada* in 1980 is approximately 47 minutes long and is a mixed media, black and white, and color film. An online film called *Future Coming Toward Us* by Footage Farm, is taken from the last thirty minutes of this film. Which is not to be confused with Douglas' 1983 film of the same name. The sound quality of *Stand Up Grenada* suffers from ambient interference, and distance between interviewee and microphones. It is narrated by

Desimma Williams, future ambassador to The Organization of the American States who dedicates the film to historic Grenadians from Arawaks to Julien Fedon. Numerous victims of the Gairy government are named from Anson Pain to Ari Bishop. The People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) was just past its anniversary. The film begins in late June 1980, at a gathering for a funeral procession which most likely is for one if not all of the victims of the bombing at Queen's Park on June 19, 1980; the victims' names were Laurice Humphrey, Laureen Phillip and later Bernadette Bailey. It is an overcast day. Young women hold a banner dedicated to Butler Strachan and the date June 19 is blazoned on the banner. A young Phyllis Coard and other unidentified women are interviewed, one of which may be historian Beverly Steele. The latter woman notes how the Revolution has alerted other nations that the Caribbean could be on the verge of escaping the grasp of imperialist nations. At the same time the film contrasts the efforts of the PRG with the opposition it generated. The film emphasizes that the People's Revolutionary Government had enemies even before it came to power.

During the late 1970s the Gairy Government had sent members of the Grenadian military to train under Chilean strongman Augusto Pinochet. Allegedly General Pinochet had sent ammunition to Gairy disguised as medical supplies. A single unmarked plane from Chile is said to be on the tarmac at Pearls in Grenada, indicating former Prime Minister Gairy's alliance with Augusto Pinochet. Douglas's editing hints that the weapons seized later that year may have come from Argentina. This would also imply a connection to the United States military. Douglas cuts to photos of a beaten Bishop and Unison Whiteman after the famous bloody Monday beatings on January 24, 1974. The film begins to highlight its main theme, which is that the United States, starting with the Carter Administration undermined the efforts of the People's Revolutionary Government, primarily through the CIA. This was the period in which the CIA's Operation Condor

was operating and was allied with various dictators in South America to thwart Socialist Regimes. Douglas cuts to footage of Cheddi Jagan, the Guyanese president who is said to have been overthrown by the CIA in 1965. In footage from Guyana mysterious fires engulf key buildings. In Grenada, the narrator says that a fire of unknown origin destroyed a tourism office, which led to a loss of faith within the travel industry in the stability of Grenada.

In the fall of 1979, an attempted coup was uncovered. Maps showing debarkation points in Grenville, a second point in the south near Calivigny, and a third point perhaps near Gouyave. The map is on the screen for mere seconds. Photos of ammunition and weapons on tables are shown, *Stand Up Grenada* by Lord Short Shirt plays simultaneously over aerial photos of the CIA headquarters in Virginia. The implication is that the sheer number of rounds of bullets indicate a source outside of Grenada. On November 4th Prime Minister Maurice Bishop held a news conference in which he explains his belief that this was more than a local effort. Photos of Bishop, Jackie Creft, Unison Whiteman, Hudson Austin, Alimenta Bishop, and Demo Grant are displayed in succession. These photos speak to the political, military, and social cohesion during this period.

The PRG returns to governing. Schoolchildren walk on the streets of the Carenage. Voiceover stressing productivity and progress accompany footage of people at work. Visible examples of foreign control through investments are TEXACO and ESSO oil refineries. Both companies were alleged to have cooperated with the CIA, in other countries, implying the same in Grenada. A worker at the power plant checks meters and gauges. Photos of unnamed trade union leaders are shown alongside evidently identifiable buildings coinciding with Bishop's voiceover allegations that these men were pawns, or operatives of the CIA. A strike was called for at the power plant and was to coincide with the attempted coup which would have thrown the entire island into chaos. Phillip Agee, a former CIA agent, reveals how the CIA operated in the Caribbean

by infiltrating unions and using them to create unrest. He blames these operatives for destroying property and crippling economies in progressive countries, referring to Guyana again. President Carter speaks to an American audience from the oval office, describing how a task force would be set up in Key West, Florida to handle issues in the Caribbean. The President does not mention Grenada in the speech. However, Carter does use the term encroachment, suggesting a Soviet presence in the region; Grenada would have been a potential object of the speech rather than its subject. The President's Daily Diary for October 1, 1979 records that the Administration was worried about Soviet military buildup in Cuba.

Later in October 1979 Maurice Bishop addresses the United Nation's general assembly. He references the Cold War and a renewed interest by the United States in the Monroe doctrine. The film shifts back to the PRG under siege. *Human Rights* by the Mighty Swallow plays over scenes of workers unloading sacks of flour on the docks in Grenada. Voiceover narration notes that some shipments of flour from the US had been poisoned.

Bernard Coard points to the regional media which is set on overthrowing the People's Revolutionary Government. Coard does not name the man in charge of the regional destabilization efforts. In July 1979 *Torchlight's* frontpage headlines graphically show the influence of Cuba in Grenada. One cartoon shows a caricature of Fidel Castro sitting on a dock fishing for countries. The fish are variously marked Jamaica and Guyana, while Grenada is still at large. *Torchlight* and other newspapers wrote about the revolution in negative terms and suffered the consequences.

The film delves into an area that is controversial: a claim was made that the local Rastafarian community was allied with anti-revolutionary forces, both inside and outside of Grenada. The significance of this section is found in the coverage of the Rastafarian movement, and the alleged connection between it and the local newspapers and possibly the CIA. An unnamed

Rastafarian soldier, hair intact, spoke about how the Rastas lacked political power and that the rumors about them being pawns of the CIA was not true. There were reportedly some references to statements in the *Torchlight* newspaper, referenced above, which inflamed the tension between the Rastafarian community and the PRG, again, no names are invoked. Local publisher Leslie Pierre is mentioned in passing but is not named as the cause of the problem, but Pierre was detained during the revolution. A positive view of the revolution is displayed as the narrator reminds the viewer that a higher standard of living in Grenada was attained in the first year of the revolution. There were very serious issues at play during this first year, from hostility by the United States, to internal unrest, attempted overthrow, and media manipulation. The film specifically points to a group called the American Institute of Free Labor Development as a CIA cover group that trained operatives to pursue political ends favorable to the US government. In spite of these factors, the narrator and the director take a measured approach to the events displayed onscreen. The film ends with aerial footage of Fort George while Prime Minister Bishop states that the revolution will accept the challenges ahead.

An article entitled “Film – Grenada: US target” in the CIA’s online reading room originally printed in *The Guardian* of July 1 1981 by Johnathan Bennett, describes Ellen Ray’s film *Grenada: Nobody’s Backyard* (1980) as a hard-hitting look at the destabilization efforts of the CIA in Grenada. The article points to the same above mentioned entity called the American Institute for Free Labor Development as a front for the CIA. Ray’s film disrupts a narrative of incompetent socialism by focusing on the United States Government efforts to undermine the small nation, “This film is a small but significant effort to prevent the US from doing so.” At present the film produced by Covert Action is unavailable for viewing.

1984: The Future Coming Towards Us (1983) was finished just prior to the end of the revolution. It starts with Bishop's speech at Hunter College. Narrator Vinnie Burroughs notes how the revolution ended just three months after this speech. On this trip the prime minister reached out to the Reagan Administration to normalize relations between Grenada and the United States. In this speech Bishop notes how in the view of the United States government, the Grenadian revolution poses a risk to the United States because of its possible influence on African Americans. The unnamed female narrator describes how Grenadians had been abused during the Gairy years and the Revolution needed to teach people that things could change. Citizens needed to be educated about new possibilities.

A young John Beggs and George Nurse speak on the subject of participatory democracy and show how it worked in practice. Various scenes of people at work; women kneading dough, children singing, all speak to the people participating in the revolution. McGodden Kerensky "Cacademo" Grant (this early footage may be original) speaks on the waterfront about acceptance of a certain reality. Possibly responding to outside criticism, Grant says that Grenadians are "slaving for ourselves," so that whatever the revolution means and despite its difficulties, it is the people's right to determine their future. During the depression of the 1930s many Grenadians went abroad to find work. One of these was Eric Matthew Gairy. He returned to Grenada in 1950 to begin his political career. Popular with the agricultural sector Gairy gained advantages for workers. But he gained advantages for himself as well and ran a self-serving government. A young Val Cornwall describes how Eric Gairy exported the best things to other nations, which she calls "conscious underdevelopment." Gairy served foreign interests. Caldwell Taylor, Ambassador to the United Nations, describes Gairy's self-analysis by saying that he felt that he was only answerable to God. Therefore, his activities were sanctioned by God. Taylor's assessment was that in Gairy's

mind he ruled by divine right. In the midst of his tyranny on the island, Gairy was knighted by the Queen of England. Gairy was accused of personal corruption and sexual exploitation of women seeking government employment. Economic decline is usually the straw that breaks the camel's back. All of these things together precipitated the need to remove Gairy from power and establish a new government.

The stage was set for the coup that would become the Grenada Revolution. According to Maurice Bishop, the New Jewel Movement was tipped off (some say by sympathetic police) that leaders of the movement were to be killed while Gairy was away in the United States. When the New Jewel Movement moved against Gairy, the Mongoose gang was jailed, while Gairy remained in the United States. Reportedly there was only 24.00 EC\$ (approx. \$9.00) in the Treasury. Significantly, inspirational signs replaced commercial billboards around the island. According to the World Bank, there was 2% economic growth during the first year. Healthcare was recognized as a right. The first new secondary school was built in 180 years. But the shadow of the US loomed large over the small nation. A telling moment in the film is when an unidentified young girl says, "We want the people of the United States to be as free as we are in Grenada." Anticipating changes to come, the People's Revolutionary Government knew that the people must be prepared for the roles that they were expected to play. Various scenes of the revolution at work are shown such as literacy programs, and construction projects. The documentary describes the problems encountered by organizers and workers; participation faltered in certain areas. Workers are stigmatized as coming from backgrounds of mythology and fallacies. Although not stated outright, this comment may be a reference to the mostly rural agricultural workers. Women are shown operating tractors; employed in novel construction jobs.

Fitzroy Bain says that people come forward when they feel they have a stake in society. An example is a man who designed a trap for insect pests. Bernard Coard describes how the island had four-hundred years of private-sector capitalism, and waste, but the revolution in a collective way was making use of agricultural refuse, canning mangoes, and bottling fruit juices. Coard states that capitalism left the island in poverty. Candia Alleyne describes how the propaganda under Gairy had been that imported food was superior, and as a consequence Grenadians did not want to eat locally produced food. She disputes the notion as imperialistic and notes how 70% of flour from wheat was imported from the United States. Needless to say, Grenadians were not growing wheat.

On this note the film shifts to imperialism and its effects. The US State Department warned American tourists not to travel to Grenada. The June 19, 1980 bombing is recounted, and the narrator attributes the bombing to CIA-inspired local operatives. Reagan decries the building of the airport. California congressman Ron Dellums contradicts the notion that there is military significance to the new airport. Bishop says that the island was being destabilized on a daily basis. The primary way this was done was through the press. The Prime Minister reads from *New Chronicle* which describes the prison farms that were “cooking prisoners” on the island. The crowd gets a good laugh from the notion.

Women, young and old, speak of participating in the militia. Local response to the bombing and the implication of foreign involvement alerted the PRG that the nation should stay alert. On the domestic front, Candia Alleyne posits that Grenada cannot return to importing food from abroad because that would impair their work against poverty, which she calls “working without answering questions.” Alleyne might be implying that they could answer philosophical questions about whether Marxist-Leninist theories worked, and about how things could be improved. Again, there is a contrasting of the revolutionary government with the Westminster model, and how the local

meetings are grassroots efforts that replace traditional democracies where voting every five years was the norm.

Reflective

The Reflective post-Invasion period runs from October 25, 1983 to 2013. More documentaries were made during this period than the other two. The first was *Maurice* directed by Estela Bravos (1984), which contains color footage of the attack on Fort Rupert that is often shown in black and white in other documentaries of the period. The film begins with Senator, a poet and teacher who sings along with children a haunting lament about the killings in the fort. One of the lyrics is: “*They Shouldn’t have killed Bishop, Oh . . . Oh No.*” Alimenta and Ann Bishop describe the personal loss of son and brother. (There is more to the Ann Bishop interview found in *The House on Coco Road* where she describes how debilitated Maurice appeared while under house arrest). Bravos juxtaposes Nicholas Braithwaite and Kendrick Radix in a point counter point discussion about the Revolution and its aftermath. Braithwaite was the interim chairman of the advisory board for the post-Invasion government. Braithwaite thought that Bishop was sincere, but that he did not share his ideology. A young woman who may be Ann Peters speaks about the conditions during the revolution. Lyden Ramdhanny says that ideology was not the crucial issue in the attempt to change the party. He says that leadership issue had come up before and Bishop had defended Coard, the Prime Minister stressed that Party unity was important. Ramdhanny identifies the Coard Clique very early in the revolution. Ramdhanny does not identify Bernard Coard’s personal ambition as the cause of the breakdown, but that impression hangs in the air. At this point in the film Senator says that they (the Central Committee) were drunk on “theory,” and book knowledge. Kendrick Radix in a rather extensive interview describes how Maurice was a complete

man without the flaws of pettiness or having a need to exact revenge, suggesting that other people were not so gifted. When Brathwaite says that they were trying to get better medical care to the island, Bravos cuts to Radix who says that the Cuban doctors had been expelled. There are several photos of crowds of people in the streets on October 19, 1983. An unidentified seventeen-year-old female student describes how they left school that day to free the Prime Minister from house arrest. The former residence still stands on mount Wheldale, a shadow of its former glory (Fig. 1 below).

Fig. 1. Remains of Official Residence of Maurice Bishop (2019)



The single photo of Bishop as he was taken to Fort Rupert is found in this video. Original footage of the crowd taking Bishop to Fort Rupert shouting “we got we leader” is also found here. In an extensive interview George Louison describes the ambition of Bernard Coard and the ultraleft-leaning faction of the party that ousted Bishop. This interview covers the same material as a

similar interview in *Forward Ever*, both cover Louison's views about the demise of the PRG. In the *Forward Ever* interview, George Louison makes an additional claim that a flare was fired from Fort Rupert to signal completion of the executions. Kendrix Radix says that the group that claimed to speak for the masses ignored them when they expressed their will in the streets when Bishop was freed from house arrest. The young singer Scorpion looks directly toward the camera and asks whether the new government would retain the free education and medical care that the revolution provided. Judy Williams expresses her view "that women could [now] see themselves as people." Finally, a young unnamed soldier explains why he could not shoot at the masses because it would be like shooting at family members. The film shows that within one year after the end of the Revolution people realized what was lost and were willing to speak about it; that would soon change.

The 15-minute French narration film from *National Archives, Arts and Culture: "TV Satellite File: Special Report on Grenada"* (1984) focuses on the period immediately after the Invasion. In succession, armored cars roll down the streets of St. George's, airport construction, confiscated weapons, and WWII era machinery from the warehouse stockpiles are shown. St. George's students thank soldiers as they depart the island; the film then cuts to idyllic scenes of Grand Anse beach. In rapid succession local officials are interviewed, including interim Prime Minister Paul Scoon, Charles McIntyre, Nicholas Brathwaite, Herbert Blaize, Francis Alexis, George Brizan, Richard Hill, Leslie Pierre, Alistor Hughes, and another unidentifiable man in the tourism sector. What the interviewees said is obscured by the narration. This film designed for a French-speaking audience may be a propaganda video to assure tourists that it is safe to visit Grenada again.

The National Archives produced another film called *Politics International: "Visit of President Reagan to Grenada, 1986."* The 24-minute film in English commemorates the arrival of President Reagan on Feb 20, 1986, a day that was declared a national holiday that year. Air Force One lands at Port Salines airport, The President unveils a plaque at the airport, and places a wreath on the grounds of True-Blue Campus. Forty thousand people assemble in Queens Park to hear the President praise William Galway Donovan's quote about how a naked freedman is better than a gilded slave. This interpretive flare is directed at Cuba and the Soviet Union. Reagan castigates the People's Revolutionary Government and proclaims that the United States saved Grenada from becoming captive to the Soviet Union like Cuba. He promises United States aid and predicts how these efforts were good for Grenadians. Unemployment is still high (two years after the Invasion); the United States has spent, is spending or will spend seventy-two million dollars in Grenada. The short film concludes with photos of Market Square in St. George's, a subtle note that confirms for the viewer that the United States will sell to Grenada, not the other way around. All was not well.

The only known Hollywood treatment of the Operation Urgent Fury is Clint Eastwood's *Heartbreak Ridge* (1986). Grizzled Vietnam veteran Tom Highway (Eastwood) trains young marines for an unnamed mission. The contribution of this film to history is the acknowledgement that US forces were unprepared and disorganized. Confusion reigned, yet the mission succeeded in spite of itself; superior power and sheer numbers won the day. The purpose of Operation Urgent Fury was to wipe away the Vietnam syndrome.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Public Broadcasting System produced a *Frontline* documentary called – "Operation Urgent Fury" (1988). The documentary was co-hosted by Judy Woodruff and Seymour Hersch. The first scenes are of troops disembarking in Grenada, juxtaposed with a young Lucy Painter, who states that they were put in more danger by the Invasion

than by the Revolutionary Military Council. Hersch also questions whether the students were truly in danger, and whether any efforts at diplomacy were attempted before the invasion. Ambassador to Costa Rica, Francis McNeal admits, “We didn’t know very much, [there was] no diplomatic presence, we lived by the description in our own rhetoric.” The streets were empty, and if this is original footage taken during the curfew, it reflects the fact that some journalists were on the scene. (British journalists were said to have arrived in a private boat from Barbados). During the curfew General Austin reportedly offered to open supermarkets for the medical school students. If true, it was a remarkable concession. Reagan’s State Department ignored superintendent Charles Modica’s assurances that the students were in no danger. Geoffrey Bourne, a resident doctor at the medical school, and son Peter Bourne, an advisor to President Carter on health matters and director of the Office of Drug Abuse Policy, noted how the Reagan Administration ignored their assurances. Student Joseph Panielli affirms that no student was taken hostage by the Revolutionary Military Council, and the aforementioned Lucy Painter in another location reiterates that she thought the Invasion put them in more danger. The marine barracks terrorist attack in Lebanon occurred on October 24, 1983, killing over two hundred marines while they slept, and Operation Urgent Fury was launched against Grenada the following day on October 25th. The Invasion was lauded by the Reagan Administration. It was seen as a sign of strength and was crucial to Reagan’s reelection. Tellingly, the military revised training procedures.

America’s Defense Monitor “Grenada Revisited” (1991), is a combination of historical footage and contemporary analysis. It does not celebrate the revolution but does not condemn it either. Rather it points out the fact that confusion was left in the wake of Urgent Fury. Former Ambassador Sally Shelton speaks of Gairy’s thuggish ways and that he was “responsible for killing a number of people.” Speaking in the present tense she says that people speak in favor of the

revolution. In addition, there was a “big effort” to improve living standards, but she was “not sure they succeeded – the will was there.” Shelton states, “I don’t see the PRG as a threat to the US.” Kendrix Radix states that the Reagan policies caused the ultra-leftists [to prevail]. It is not clear when the statement was made or what he was referring to. Radix may be alluding to the nature of the Reagan Administration’s aggressive opposition which confirmed the ideas of the Marxist faction of the PRG. Tourism Minister Lyden Ramdhanney states that putting Bishop under house arrest was “political suicide . . . [it was a] basic error” that led to the unrest in the population. The narrator concludes that wars, big and small, rarely leave tidy solutions in their wakes.

A stand alone in this era is David Grey’s *Prisoners of the Cold War* (2005), a British production which focused on the efforts of Amnesty International to have the case of the Grenada 17 reopened. Amnesty International brought pressure on the United States, Britain, and Grenada for what they saw as a travesty of Justice in the Maurice Bishop Murder trial. It is narrated by Fiz Marcus who repeatedly draws attention to the inner workings of the Central Committee and how decisions were made. The conundrum before Amnesty International was if they were to advocate for the Grenada 17 they certainly had to acknowledge their responsibility in the executions and then argue that the failure to facilitate due process in the lead-up to the trial, prevented the Grenada 17 from receiving a fair trial. Some members of the seventeen were facing imminent execution. Jackie McKenzie, Richard Hart, John Kelly, Crofton Croffe, Piers Bannister, Noreen Scott, and Jean Tate are interviewed across seven episodes. They recount events from the 1980s as well as their current endeavors to get the prisoners released. Grenadian academic Gus John provides trenchant analysis of what the Grenada 17 should do, which he implies is to acknowledge decisions made concerning the events of October 19, 1983. The documentary notes the lessening hostilities toward the

seventeen as the years pass. The change in mood is said to be primarily responsible for the willingness of authorities to begin releases a few years later.

Commemorative

The films of the following section are reminiscent of the revolution and commemorate the people and events from 1979 to 1983. The earliest of this group is *Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution* (2013). Bruce Paddington's 113-minute documentary focuses on the entire period of the Grenadian Revolution in the Caribbean from 1973 to 2011. Paddington is interested in multiple perspectives on the Revolution. He interviews or displays onscreen over 30 persons, with Maurice Bishop appearing the most with over seven appearances. His focus is clear, the film was a commemoration of the REVO and Bishop in particular. Jacqueline Creft appears onscreen in a single photo at the beginning of the film. It was Creft who dined with the director in the summer of 1983. That meeting inspired Paddington's interest in the Grenadian Revolution.

The film was screened in 2013 marking the thirtieth anniversary of the Invasion of United States military forces. It made use of earlier historical footage from the era., some of which may have been filmed by John Douglas. Sections of the film were taken from *Pequeño Pais, Gran Revolucion*. Archival/historical film and photos of Sir Eric Gairy, the Mongoose Gang, Fidel Castro, Ronald Reagan, and others are liberally used throughout the film. The calypsonian Mighty Sparrow sings about the routing of Gairy from the island in *Wanted Dead or Alive*. The spirit of the time is captured by AP footage and amplified in Paddington's film.

The subject of the film is the rise of the New Jewel Movement, and the People's Revolutionary Government. Led by the charismatic Maurice Bishop, the small island nation captured the imagination and hopes of many in the Caribbean and the world. A budding socialist,

Bishop found solidarity with the Cuban revolution and received Cuban support. Because of that support, it was predictable that the revolution would be opposed by the neighbor to the north. The United States could not tolerate another “communist” country in its lake. The government was undermined and weakened by the CIA, and perhaps the State Department, which spearheaded a propaganda campaign against the PRG. In 1983 a power grab split the party. Maurice Bishop and seven other cabinet ministers and supporters were executed in Fort Rupert on October 19, 1983. The United States invaded six days later and arrested the remaining members of the Revolutionary Military Council, bringing the revolution to an end.

The film begins in approximately 1973 recounting the end of the Gairy era, to mark the nadir of recent Grenadian history and ends it in 2011 in Fort George with a commemoration of the loss of lives in 1983. Beginning with the rise of the New Jewel Movement and the repression of dissidents, to the executions at Fort Rupert and the US Invasion, the ending of the Revolution returned Grenada to a low point in history, with American influence looming overhead. The trial and convictions are not addressed in the film, only the gradual release of prisoners in the mid-2000s. This is the ending of the nadir of Grenada’s reputation, a level similar to the end of the Gairy era. The military intervention obscured what happened after October 1983, such as what happened to the remains of those executed that were removed to Camp Calivigny, and then allegedly taken to True Blue Campus of the medical school before disappearing. These questions are still unanswered. *Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution* was released on the 30th anniversary of the beginning of the revolution to recuperate Grenadian history from overt American dominance in general, and to honor Maurice Bishop in particular.

Operation Urgent Fury (2013) was produced by a group calling itself DevGRU5022 for the Military Channel. There are other documentaries with Urgent Fury in the title and it is

sometimes difficult to distinguish between them because they cover the same material. The unnamed narrator calls the NJM coup a Cuban-inspired effort, implying direct involvement. Soldiers retell the story of the Invasion. Paul Price mentions the older pilots from the Vietnam era. The documentary recorded the confused effort of Operation Urgent Fury, and that the element of surprise was lost; included are scenes of a helicopter pilot unable to land and putting the chopper down in trees. In another incident, helicopter pilot Keith Lucas crashes and dies after the helicopter is hit. On Grand Anse Campus, superintendent Modica tried to chart potential landing locations for the military. Back in Washington D.C., President Reagan declares victory while two hundred and thirty students were waiting to be rescued. After four days the military declared on October 29, 1983 that major action ended. Although the documentary is pro-United States it does record the several mishaps along the way.

The China Global Television Network (2015) produced a twenty-minute documentary *Grenada: Lessons from a Cold War*, which looked at the contributions of China to Grenada after the Invasion. Interviewer, Stephen Gibbs visits Fort Rupert, renamed Fort George, alongside Callistus Bernard. Bernard explains the political philosophy which got Maurice Bishop killed, his adherence to the Cuban model which posits a belief in the maximum leader. Bernard is treated gently, there are no questions about his responsibility as leader of the firing squad. Perhaps the earlier interview with Paddington taught Bernard caution. To be sure, he has served his sentence and his debt to society was paid. Bernard did not owe the interviewer a confession.

The House on Coco Road (2016) is distinctive as a documentary for several reasons. The film is made by primary witnesses to the events it describes. Early on in the film, Maurice Bishop in an interview describes how the Grenadian Revolution had as its goal the creation of a new man and a new woman, free from the clutches of American consumerism. The influence of the United States

commercial operations was and is immense, and it was not a small thing to attempt to escape the superpower's grasp. Gordon Rohlehr quoted in Bruce Paddington's "Caribbean Cinema: Historical Production" describes the effect of American Cinema, namely that it has fostered an "erasure of anything like a Caribbean consciousness by American values, lifestyles, goods and services that are mindlessly absorbed by Caribbean people as they are resolutely marketed by American capitalism" (109). American film and television are marketing tools for the United States.

The film echoes a similar desire of some Americans to attempt a life outside of the commercial domination of the United States. Employing family footage and photographs it follows the Baker family from the American south to southern California. These photos and home video are some of the clearest historical footage from the 1980s, such as the crowd scene on the way to Market Square after the release of Maurice Bishop from house arrest. The footage appears to be from Caribbean Insight TV and some of it is captured in other documentaries, but this appears to be first-generation film. The assault on Fort Rupert is in color with some audio. The official homes of Bishop and Coard on Mount Wheldale are also shown and they were well maintained. This footage must be from the early 1980s, because there are cars in the driveway of Bishop's residence, and the home is freshly painted and clean.¹ The film also documents Hudson Austin's radio announcement on the evening of Oct 19, 1983 of a complete curfew with orders to "shoot on sight."

Damani Baker directs a family chronicle which coincided with a historical event. It coincided because the director's mother Fannie chose to put the family in a place at the leading edge of progress, a place that descendants of enslaved people could live out the dream of self-determination, and experience different life possibilities. Fannie Houghton was a friend of Angela Davis in California and was inclined to pay attention to the Grenadian Revolution when it emerged

¹ When the author visited Grenada in 2019, the Bishop residence was in disrepair as shown in Fig.1.

at the end of the 1970s. She was friendly with the Bishop and the Coard families, having met both families through Davis. It appears that the Houghtons lived on the island for a year. Her family was also there at the end when the United States invaded, and her family was airlifted from the island by the military along with the St. George's medical students.

The documentary is distinguished because of the relationship between the director and the subjects. The relatives of Maurice Bishop speak with the director on what happened in October 1983. Alimenta Bishop shows Baker family photos of a young Maurice, as well as photos of his father Rupert, mother Alimenta and Maurice together. Maurice's sister Ann speaks to the director about visiting Maurice when he was under house arrest in the days just before the end in 1983. Baker emphasizes the generational resilience of the Bishop family with a brief scene of Maurice and daughter Delia possibly at the airport construction site, and next years later Delia rededicates the airport in her father's name. Delia thanks everyone in her family's name including her mother Angela. Angela Bishop left Grenada with her children and moved to Canada, possibly in 1981. Angela Bishop's absence from accounts of the Grenada Revolution is unexplained. She appears in a single documentary, *Portrait of a Revolution*. The absence of the former wife of the Prime Minister may be due to the fact that she was not in Grenada during the later years of the Revolution.

Baker recounts a story of his family's journey from Louisiana to California to Cuba, return to the US, venture to Grenada, and finally returning to San Francisco. *Coco Road* opens in an Airport as passengers wait to board a plane to Grenada. The year is 1999 and Baker and his family return to Grenada for the first time since 1983. Fannie narrates the family's history from working as sharecroppers in Louisiana, to becoming early Great Migration residents of Los Angeles, and to her desire to live another life in Grenada. The family originates in Louisiana as sharecroppers and Baker's grandmother "Gramm's" describes life as sharecroppers. The family decides to leave that

area for California where Fannie's father works as a roofer and was able to purchase a home in an all-white neighborhood. Fannie eventually ends up at UCLA in the mid-sixties, at a time of civil unrest in the country related to race and the Vietnam War. Fannie supports the black student union at the university. Shootings on campus at Campbell Hall were the product of COINTELPRO, a secret FBI operation designed to disrupt black subversion, specifically the Black Panthers.

The film explains the connection between Americans Angela and Fania Davis and the Grenadian Revolution. Angela Davis was a Marxist feminist who raised the ire of Governor Ronald Reagan who had her fired from her teaching position at UCLA. Fannie is impressed by the highly educated Angela Davis, who had developed a personal relationship with the imprisoned George Jackson, also known as the Soledad Brother. In 1970 Jackson's brother Jonathan planned an armed attempt to free him in a hostage trade. It failed, Jackson was killed, and afterward Davis was charged as an accomplice, because she was legal owner of the guns used in the attempted rescue. Davis flees Los Angeles, is captured in New York, returned to California, tried, and acquitted of murder charges.

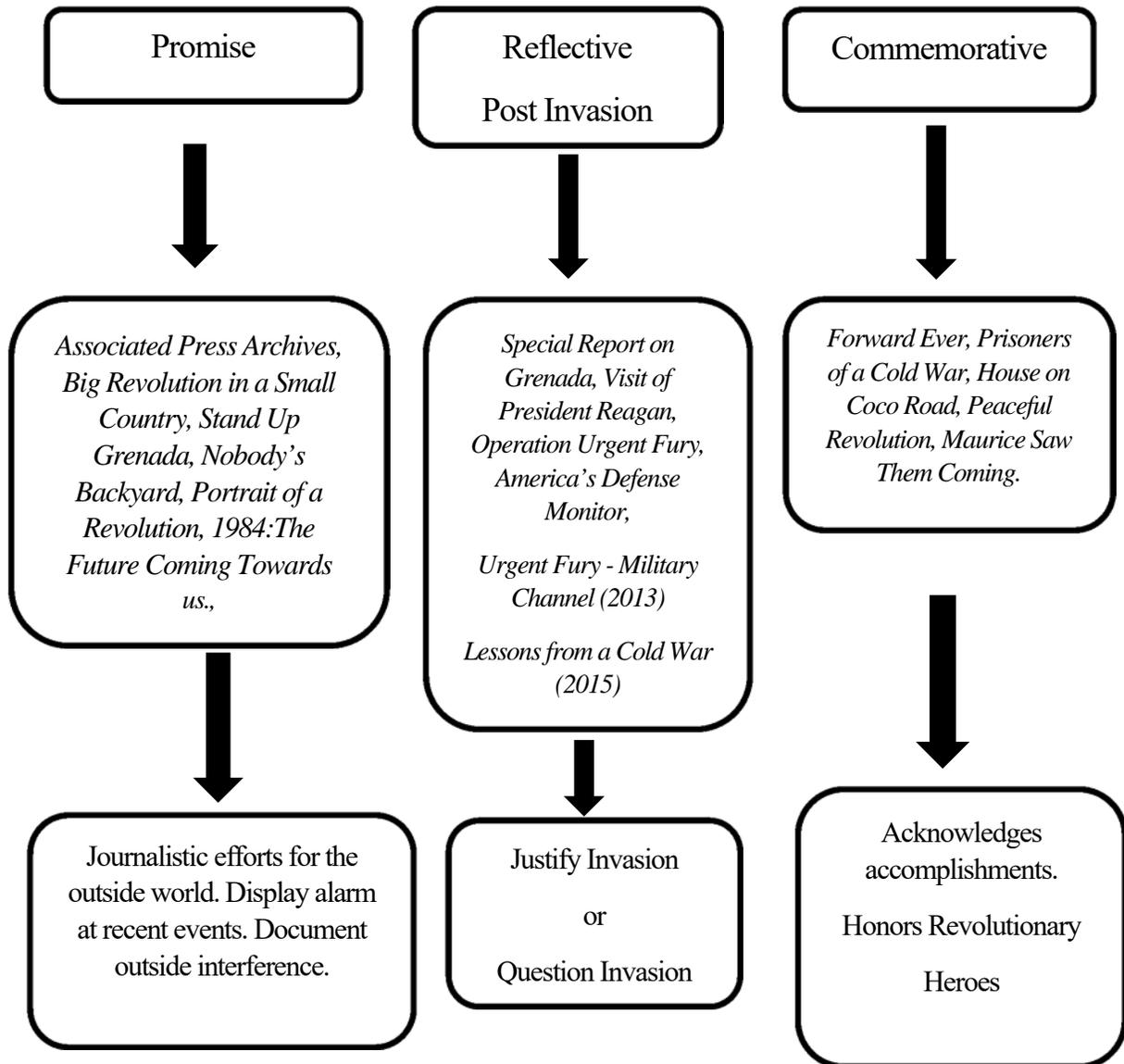
During the 1960s many young people from the US, black and white, went to work on Cuban farms and this experience opened Fannie's eyes to possibilities of life outside the confining racial boundaries of the United States. Sometime after March 1980, Angela Davis was invited to speak at the Women's Day celebration in Grenada. Davis invites Fannie Houghton to Grenada; Davis introduces Fannie to the leaders of the Grenadian revolution, and she is recruited to teach on the island. Fannie Houghton moves her family to Grenada in 1982, their idyll is short-lived, interrupted, and they evacuate during the Invasion of 1983. In the final scenes, presumably in the 21st century, Baker returns to Grenada with his very young son to commemorate the family history that transpired there.

Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution (2017), produced by Norris Wilkins, narrated by Lady V using stock footage from Caribbean Insight Television, repeats the content of almost all other treatments of the revolution using historical film. It was a war of ideologies, Capitalism vs Socialism, imperialism vs self-determination, President Reagan vs Maurice Bishop. A young Val Cornwall says “Gairy permitted his country to serve foreign interests . . . [We] were shipped away.” The good things of Grenada comforted other countries. UN Ambassador Caldwell Taylor’s analysis of Gairy’s thought process is repeated in this documentary. He says that Gairy thought that his success came from God, who must have withheld the rains. Agricultural production dropped during his time as Prime Minister. Some of this must also be due to union organizing, social unrest and strikes. A woman’s scream is heard offscreen as the narration points to blatant sexual exploitation as a norm when hiring women to civil service positions, which must mean that the practice was not singular. The New Jewel Movement was a new platform to organize anger against Gairy and the Mongoose gang. Other groups had preceded them but had never caught on like the New Jewel. Desimma Williams single statement concerning the “bomb” as shown in other documentaries is repeated here and may give the impression that it was something of a mantra with the Ambassador, but it is simply a statement that was repeated in several documentaries. The narrator Lady V indicates that this was the beginning of internal turmoil, the “bombing provoked division between Coard and Bishop.” How this division manifested itself is not specified. The logic of the editing suggests that Bishop did not respond forcefully enough, he did not crack heads as the expression goes, but in a speech that evening Bishop excoriates the counterrevolutionaries, apparently in approval of the execution of Strahan Phillips. The documentary records no further actions by Bishop at the time. This may be the point when the two leaders began to diverge in their approaches, but it is not stated as such. No other documentary specifically points to this moment as

the beginning of division within the PRG. Another controversial statement by Lady V concerns October 19, 1983, when claiming that during the assault on Fort Rupert, “Hundreds of terrified citizens jumped to their deaths.” This statement has never been confirmed.

Maurice Saw Them Coming - CITV (2019), also produced by Norris Wilkins and narrated by Lady V, is the second Grenadian-produced film represented in this study. The production is in three parts: “The Revolution Is Under Attack,” “Acts Against the Revolution” and “Defending the Revolution.” Wilkins employs historical footage from the revolutionary era, and from *Urgent Fury* files. Some events are recreated through animation and others through reenactments. Audio is sometimes inaudible. Key players during the revolution are interviewed like Fitzroy Bain, George Louison, Ann and Alimenta Bishop. The films commemorate a Marcus Garvey birthday celebration on August 23, 1981. Bishop’s theme is that invasion is imminent, which runs through the three episodes. Bishop was prophetic and predicted the Invasion after the discovery of weapons in 1980, a full three years before it occurred. Bishop noted that US Admiral Robert McKenzie had publicly spoken about Naval exercises in Vieques, Puerto Rico aimed at intimidating Grenada. Fig. 2 graphically shows how filmmakers observed the excitement of the early efforts, were apprehensive in the days surrounding the first anniversary, some but not all were horrified by the Invasion and takeover, then were finally appreciative of what the Revolution had been. Exceptions to the above are *Maurice* (1984) which sees the Revolution as praiseworthy even though it is produced during the Post Invasion period, and in contrast the Military Channels *Operation Urgent Fury* (2013) and CTGN’s *Lessons from a Cold War* (2015) although produced in the Commemorative period commemorate the Invasion rather than the Revolution. All three films are exceptions to the general parameters of the work of their contemporaries (Fig.2).

Fig. 2. Filmmaking in Grenada



The documentaries on the Grenada Revolution do not specifically record the loss of vibrancy in the society after the end of the PRG. It was an empty space that was not always apparent until after some time has passed. Grenadians suffered from internal trauma that scarred subsequent generations, forcing young people to question the course their country had taken. Patricio Guzman's film *Chile: Obstinate Memory* (1996) documented the same phenomenon in Chile after the violent overthrow of Salvador Allende and the installment of the Pinochet government. For Grenadians this condition began at some point after the Invasion in 1983 when citizens faced a crisis of conscience in which they had to come to grips with what had happened during the revolution and how they were to assess the People's Revolutionary Government's record. This was an internal matter that divided people based on how they saw the place of the Revolution in Grenadian history. The despair was more than opinions about what happened and when, but more about what happened and why. The shocked population was left to grapple with quandaries like these after they had endured the events of October 1983. After the executions and the US Invasion the country went through a long period, attested to by many, of shock and soul searching. When October 19, 1983 eliminated the former prime minister, the US government saw this event as signaling the opportune moment to sweep away the remaining elements of the PRG. The response to Operation Urgent Fury was mixed because some resented the Invasion on principle and others welcomed the end of the Revolutionary Military Council. Some Grenadians flew the American flag as a sign of gratitude for their deliverance.

A long period of silence ensued in which Grenadians shied away from stating their views unequivocally, at least to outsiders. Patricio Guzman calls this condition *memories suppressed* where people will not talk about what everyone knows to be true. What David Scott calls the sense of being stranded in the present. The question of course is "how [do we] render audible the

wounded silence” (71). Hayden White is a source for Nichols on the issue of historical trauma, White says that great trauma cannot be forgotten nor understood, it casts a shadow as long as its meaning remains elusive, and when meaning is finally assigned a horizon is established. An end point could be imagined where the defined event begins to recede. The end of the Grenada Revolution is more than the violent Invasion from the United States; it was also the actions within the PRG. (Nichols, *Speaking Truths*, 120)

Scott’s wounded silence is healed by exposing and then treating the wounded and most painful parts of the events; one of which was uncovering the reason(s) for the events of October 19, 1983. Only one of the documentaries under review would enter this space. It is not surprising that the documentary was not met with universal acclaim in Grenada, especially among some of the generation that experienced the events firsthand. The crucial space into which this documentary entered was an area surrounded by questions concerning the issuance of executive orders to execute in Fort Rupert on October 19, 1983. This is an important investigation because it seeks to answer assertions that have been made by many but without corroboration. The subject is tendentious, and some filmmakers are suspected of having ulterior motives. Yet one filmmaker Bruce Paddington, ventured into this space.

Chapter Three: Ethics and Evidence in Documentary Filmmaking

Filmmakers are responsible for their productions and in order for their work to maintain sobriety they must respect the facts before them. They can wound by mishandling the people they encounter. Documentary filmmaking is rife with possibilities for misuse of the reputations of communities, subjects, and social actors. Filmmakers face an important challenge when dealing with previously wounded communities. The people are in some ways the creations of the filmmaker. Their stories are shaped by the filmmaker to serve the filmmaker's purpose. They present events in their lives for scrutiny, usually without compensation (Appendix B). Documentary filmmakers have responsibilities to all of the above because unlike narrative filmmakers, they deal directly with reality. Actual villages, towns, cities, and people involved in the incidents in question are potentially at the mercy of the filmmaker.

Nichols rejoins the issue by asking questions with self-evident answers to prompt the thinking of filmmakers:

What obligations do filmmakers have to . . . actual people whose lives spill beyond the frame and whose conduct before the cameras may itself pose acute ethical, if not legal issues? What obligation do filmmakers have to avoid distortion, misrepresentation, or coercion, be it overt or extremely subtle, even if such acts appear to serve a higher goal, such as "getting the story" or "exposing injustice"? What further obligation do they have to an audience that will come away with a fresh understanding of some aspect of the historical world based on the representations made by a film? The film may join important and timely issues. The filmmaker's moral or political perspective on those issues will be conveyed by

expressive techniques that strive to move and perhaps persuade the viewer: what responsibility does the filmmaker have for ensuring that persuasive techniques do not mislead or distort established fact, manipulate chronology or causality or disregard basic rules of evidence? (*Speaking Truths* 155)

Documentary filmmakers have another responsibility to citizens interviewed on film. They are required to present social actors as they exist in reality. Which might not be how some see themselves in reality. The filmmaker must attempt to document their lives while remaining sufficiently detached in order to do so. The filmmaker must determine what value to place on the information received. The assembled footage must approximate reality so that it is accepted as legitimate. Filmmakers must grapple with the cost and limits they place on successfully completing a film. Luis Buñuel admitted at a Columbia University speech, found in Alexandra Juhasz's *F Is for Phony*, that to complete the film *Land Without Bread* (*Tierra sin Pan*) it was necessary to compensate the people of a local village:

All the shots that you see in the film had to be paid for. Our budget was slender, but fortunately it was sufficient for the meager demands of those poor people. The population of Martilandrán, one of the poorest villages, placed themselves at our disposition in return for a couple of goats that we got them to kill and cook, and twenty large loaves of bread, which the people ate all together, with the meal directed by the mayor, who was possibl[y] the most famished of them all. (97)

Buñuel had no qualms about feeding a village of people to get them to participate in filming when those people were undernourished bordering on starvation. Yet for purists, Buñuel violated documentary norms by doing so. Buñuel's situational ethics changed the lives of the Martilandrán's at least temporarily.

Compensated actors are trustworthy when an event is described factually. The ethic of honest portrayal on screen is the most important and significant aspect of the portrayal or interview process. Which is to say that what the social actors believed and/or said, was what actually appeared onscreen. The issue of unfairness to social actors may also take the form of omission. It occurs in what does not make it to screen, or what viewpoints are left out of the discussion. And while being fair to a particular person or viewpoint is the objective, the filmmaker may actually do an injustice to the overall issue under discussion.

In one of the films under discussion in this study the filmmaker left out a significant part of the story in order to promote another. Bruce Paddington's film *Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution*, an admittedly pro-Bishop documentary, is notable for the absence of certain players. The Rastafarians, The Grenada 17, and participants from the United States and Cuban governments are all missing from the documentary. The story that is told is complete without them, but the entire story suffers from their omission. Paddington is not obligated to film every known fact about the Revolution. But the entire story is multifaceted, and each facet adds to a more complete picture. Therefore, firm conclusions are difficult to come by when significant viewpoints are missing. In this case the director met with less than total cooperation, which may be reflected in the selection of persons interviewed onscreen. The film was a nuanced portrait of the Revolution. This is the point stressed by a new generation of theorists and documentarians. Nuance has come into play in 21st - century scholarship as the final resting place of many research efforts. It is not just that there is always more to learn, but that it is rarely possible to come to hard and fast conclusions, even when all the facts are presented. When filmmakers establish a position on the subject matter as they should, it becomes increasingly difficult to include and accommodate material that contradicts or draws attention away from the main thesis, and still come away with a film that is conclusive and

not violate the increasingly short attention span of audiences. When used as both noun and verb, nuance and nuanced describe how historians, theorists and filmmakers come to conclusions. There is the realization that the story always has another shade or turns in another direction ever so slightly. One problem with documentaries after Oct 1983 is that Maurice Bishop emerged as sole national hero. Some documentarians followed narrative film convention by focusing on the individual and the personal struggle as emblematic of the whole. The narrative tendency in humans is for writers and documentarians to rotate towards victors and thereafter the vanquished, and thus present complete stories.

The obligation to social actors is also tied up in the difficult task of fidelity to original intent which is found in the use of archival and historical footage, the two terms are used interchangeably by documentarians. For the purposes of this study, archival film is stock footage and photos from the era but unrelated to the central events in the documentary. Historical footage is found footage, and photos from the era that display the central players and places of the documentary which reveal pertinent facts about the events in question. Both are historical and both may be found in an archive, but one group is general and the other is specific. The use of archival footage displays for the viewer what fashion, automobiles, architecture, music and movies were extant at the time. Historical footage places the principal characters in motion either before or at the time of the events in question. Home movies, family photos, weddings, graduations, other youthful accomplishments made up the foundation of historical photos and footage. In the best cases, filmmakers identify historical photos and film footage for what it was at the time of filming. This is apparent in *The House on Coco Road* where Bishop and Houghton family photos and film are described as such without interpretation or attribution. This openness is not always visible in documentary film. Archival and historical footage can be misused depending on the objective of a filmmaker.

Archival and historical footages were almost always intended for purposes other than what is found in a documentary film. Directors use photos and footage to tell their stories, not to recreate original intent. Viewers have no way of knowing original intent if the filmmaker obscures it. The director's hand may be more easily seen if original intent can be determined. In one of the Associated Press films (RR7912A) (1979) Eric Gairy was filmed dancing at a night club, perhaps the one that he owned. The man is dressed in a brightly colored shirt and pants and is wearing sunglasses, at night. His dress is typical male attire from the early 1970s. The footage is said to be on the occasion of Independence in 1974. But because Eric Gairy had been overthrown and was seen as corrupt and perhaps decadent, the dancing is seen to be more than innocent celebration. This historical footage is indifferent to the Prime Minister but could later be interpreted differently, because after the coup the country was unsettled. On the eve of independence, the celebration and the film itself evidently had no significance except to the dancers, and after Gairy had been ousted and the film footage was used in a documentary, the dated footage suggests a leader out of touch with his people. The footage meant one thing for the people involved and another for those who would view it just a few years later. The AP filmmakers looked back at Gairy as a symbol of colonial power relations between England and Grenada, and their treatment of him was a trick or sleight of hand, rather than a blatant misuse of the footage. The shock of the March 13, 1979 Coup made Eric Gairy an instant relic, and by 1979 changes in fashion date the Prime Minister to an earlier era. Innocent celebration could now be seen as decadence, due to his blatant misuse(s) of power. The short documentary or news file is edited to place Eric Gairy in an unfavorable light; he revels at his enemies' demise, pursues the study of flying saucers at the United Nations, and dances the night away post-independence. The fashion and musical milieu of 1974 when the original footage was made had shifted away from the button-up formality of the 1960s to the more casual

dress of the seventies. The fashions had changed and so had the leaders. By 1979 the world saw that the celebration captured in the original footage was short-lived, the transition to independence was not a smooth process; there was a long strike and the economy suffered. The film suggests that welcome change had come to Grenada without saying as much. Historical footage is at the mercy of the filmmaker, which is not to say that the filmmaker is intentionally deceptive, but each has their individual viewpoint and vision. Historical footage will be reinterpreted by each generation to suit its growing appreciation of a subject.

Facts and Rhetoric

In Nichols' view all discourses seek to establish that evidence is independent of interpretation. Facts appear to stand alone as something self-evident rather than an invented. Facts are indeed something that can be pointed to and agreed upon as actual, residing in the here and now, or there and then, but agreed upon as self-existent. Writing in *Speaking Truths with Film: Evidence, Ethics and Politics in Documentary*, the author describes how it is that facts become evidence:

Evidence, then, is the part of discourse, be it rational-philosophic, poetic-narrative, or rhetorical, that is charged with a double existence: it is part of the discursive chain but also gives the vivid impression of residing external to it. In other words, facts become evidence when they are taken up in a discourse, and that discourse gains the force to compel belief through its capacity to refer evidence to a domain outside itself. (99)

Fact integrated in discourse can equal evidence when handled skillfully. Something like this occurred with founding father and second President of the United States, John Adams, who

repeated a phrase that has come down to us as received wisdom. When he was acting as defense counsel in the trial of British soldiers who killed five Boston citizens in what came to be called the Boston Massacre, Adams said that “facts are stubborn things, and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passion, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence” (“Adams’ Argument”). The stubborn facts were that the British soldiers had been attacked by colonists, and their panicked response was to fire into the crowd. Five civilians were dead, and sentiment against the British soldiers was high. Adams took the case at considerable political risk. However, Adams’ reading of the facts was that the soldiers had been harassed and attacked by ruffians led by a certain Crispus Attucks. Having been attacked first, the soldiers had a right to self-defense. They were responsible for the deaths, but in fact had responded to aggression, rather than having initiated it. Facts presented as evidence were accompanied by convincing rhetoric:

it is more important that innocence be protected than it is, that guilt be punished, for guilt and crimes are so frequent in the world that all of them cannot be punished. But when innocence itself is brought to the bar and condemned, especially to die, the subject will exclaim, it is immaterial to me, whether I behave well or ill; for virtue itself, is no security. And if such a sentiment as this, should take place in the mind of the subject, there would be an end to all security whatsoever. (“Adams’ Argument”)

Adams won acquittals for six soldiers and only two others were convicted of manslaughter. As Nichols has noted, the facts do not speak for themselves as is commonly stated, they need an advocate to present them in order to persuade, convince and change viewpoints (*Speaking Truths* 100). As found below, convincing juries with facts alone is not always successful.

Adams' success in court was not happenstance, it was due to the nature of the rhetoric that he employed to make his case. Facts are given meaning when invited into a discourse; at this point they may become evidence of any given notion depending on the creative impulses of the speaker or the audience. This point is reached when historians make

Inferences that are always based on questions directed toward a careful examination of the facts themselves. They can only come to serve as valid evidence when freshly taken up in the author's own interpretive discourse. The historian must pose questions based on his or her inferences about what really happened rather than adopt the views of others. (*Speaking Truths* 102)

A key insight is found in R.G. Collingwood's *An Idea of History* that "we should focus not on the content of statements but on the fact that they are made - in other words, that our analysis must not accept what others represent the case to be, but ask, 'what light is thrown on the subject in which I am interested by the fact that this person made this statement?'" (275). In other words, why would someone say this or that about this subject, which will be seen in the analysis of Selwyn Strahan in *Forward Ever*. Interpreting a set of facts on a given subject can lead to numerous conclusions. But facts are stable and do not roam on their own unless or until scholars move them into places of their choosing. But "careful interpretation leads us down a straight and narrow path to the truth, not a labyrinth of competing interests and multiple interpretations whose merits may be decided more by power, or at least rhetoric, than by logic" (*Speaking Truths* 104). A fact becomes evidence when someone asks pertinent questions about it. Adams questioned whether the events had transpired as described and found that the facts defied the story. In the Adams case it was seen that both plaintiff and defendant, the British soldiers and the colonists, shared a set of values which allowed for an agreed upon basis of operation. Evidence

rarely convinces over-against social conventions. Conventions based on tribal dynamics usually hold and when challenged from the outside, from the Other, hold especially firm. The triumph of the tribe over evidence is more norm than outlier. This phenomenon is rarely controverted.

Evidence and Conventions

What applies to courtroom rhetoric and acquittal equally applies to the use of film and its effect on human conventions. The Colonists and the British soldiers in Boston shared a single set of values which allowed for a decision which exonerated the soldiers. Film footage can be compelling and in an early case the footage reinforced prevailing views against Nazi Germany after the Second World War. The magnitude and formality of the case, the uncertainty about how to adjudicate the evidence, and the fact that the eyes of the world were watching, caused the tribunal to be restrained in sentencing. The International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg accepted film footage as evidence in the war crimes trials after the Second World War. American jurisprudence has accepted film and video as fact and evidence in felony death cases. Starting with Abraham Zapruder and ending with 21st century police shootings, film has played a curious part in determining the outcome of criminal cases. The role is not a leading one and the results are surprising. In most of the following cases social convention prevailed over evidence and facts. Film as fact has been especially stubborn because it can be repeatedly viewed, and even when it does not convince it may be remembered. As evidence in court it is often compelling. Yet it rarely overturns societal conventions. What it does is influence and leave a mark.

Film as evidence has played an important role in criminal proceedings. The following three films were marked by controversy, the Nuremberg footage for what it contained and revealed, the Zapruder footage for its historical value, and the *Gimme Shelter* for what it revealed about human

nature. An early example of film presented in court as evidence was the “Nazi Concentration Camp” footage shown in November 1945 at the Nuremberg trials. During said trials the courtroom witnessed the horrors of the Nordhausen and Buchenwald concentration camps showing dead bodies of prisoners and emaciated survivors. Lawrence Douglas writing in “Film as Witness: Screening Nazi Concentration Camps Before the Nuremberg Tribunal” notes the opening statement of US Supreme Court justice Robert H. Jackson who said:

The wrongs which we seek to condemn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant, and so devastating, that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored, because it cannot survive their being repeated. (449)

A very high bar indeed. Jackson went on to describe the nature of the evidence:

We will show you these concentration camps in motion pictures, just as the Allied armies found them when they arrived. . . . Our proof will be disgusting, and you will say I have robbed you of your sleep. . . . I am one who received during this war most atrocity tales with suspicion and skepticism. But the proof here will be so overwhelming that I venture to predict not one word I have spoken will be denied. (450)

The actual footage shown at trial was not described, but the reactions of some members of the German high command were noted at the time; some bristled, and others turned away from the screen. The film was unprecedented as evidence presented in a courtroom and the nature of the images on film made it difficult for the Tribunal to decide what they meant, and how the law should apply to such evidence. Ultimately Jackson was correct in his opening statement, and although the film has come down to us as evidence of the Holocaust, at the time it was seen as evidence of war atrocities. Here film evidence was documentation “of a crime that lies outside speech. . .outside

reason” (481). The Tribunal had difficulty defining and coming to grips with how to categorize the crimes. But ultimately, they decided that the leaders were responsible for the soldiers’ actions. In some ways it anticipates RICO legislation in the late twentieth century where crime bosses were indicted because of their subordinates’ actions.

Less than twenty years later in Dallas, Texas dressmaker Abraham Zapruder filmed the Kennedy assassination. Twenty-six seconds of film totally changed how the event would be viewed. There were other films and photos of the event but not of the moment of impact; the Zapruder film is significant for its completeness and clarity. Both issues would be challenged in later years. The Warren Commission report released in September 1964 concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone. The film showed something that would be interpreted differently as shown by Giglio, and Zelizer. The Warren Commission’s Report was opened to reinterpretation. The film was available to the Commission when it was researching the assassination; problems arose when the film was bought by *TIME* magazine, copied, recopied, spliced, and rearranged. Bootleg copies of the film began to emerge during the 1960s; a version was played on television in 1975. But it was not until the 1991 release of *JFK* that the moviegoing public got to see Zapruder’s film, along with Oliver Stone’s interpretation of what occurred that day. Controversy erupted after the film’s release because Zapruder’s film had been doctored almost from the beginning and the fact that the chronology of events was called into question. Yet the importance of the film in assassination studies has never been questioned, as noted by Josiah Thompson, an early proponent of conspiracy theories quoted in Peter Knight’s, *The Kennedy Assassination*:

Abraham Zapruder’s movie served as a major piece of evidence for the Warren Commission, and it has become a crucial historical document for independent researchers ever since. To an untrained eye it appears to be only a silent, hurried,

somewhat blurry view of the President's limousine. Yet if it is studied with the utmost care and under optimum conditions, it can yield answers to enormous questions. Where did the shots come from, and when were they fired? Limited in scope though it is, the Zapruder film is capable of answering those questions .

(138)

When released in its various versions it changed the way people interpreted the events of November 22, 1963. For some it confirmed the Warren Report and for others it validated the idea of a second shooter on the grassy knoll or other locations. Its clarity and its completeness was called into question to the degree that in later years audio modifications and video enhancements changed the film into spectacle. The single most significant home movie had been rendered into a near cartoon.

Film as witness is somehow unable to speak for itself and say what it means. Qualified immunity protects police officers who kill while on duty and skillful interpretation prevails in court to shield police officers from accountability. In some of the following cases a crime in progress is caught on film, and often a death is recorded. Although the victims were ordinary citizens, their deaths were still significant. The filming of these events causes alarm in the population, but in the legal system the footage had little impact. The recent Brooks and Arbery shootings in Georgia and the Floyd killing in Minnesota were caught on film, all seen as racially motivated attacks, and they remain to be adjudicated in court. The national unrest may reflect a new respect for film as evidence. However, in historical terms film as unshakeable witness has not been convincing.

Changing individual minds within groups is not an easy task, and overturning community beliefs is almost impossible, especially when a competing belief comes from outside :

Reason is often insufficient to move us to adopt new values or alter our beliefs, but any effort to have us do so that flies in the face of reason returns us to a pre-Enlightenment, antiscientific worldview based on mystification or, in more modern terms, spectacle. Such a view may have appeal for some, and it can be persuasively championed – as fundamental religious groups and other zealots demonstrate. It can be championed with sincerity, with heartfelt belief. The presence of mystification can also serve as a litmus test to search for an ethics that insists on respect for established fact, accepted evidence, and the basics of reason – even as we recognize that facts, evidence, and reason prove an insufficient basis for [our] most fundamental values and belief. (*Speaking Truths* 157)

Unconscious mystification is the almost always negative characterization of persons outside of the group. Therefore, mystification in analysis or filmmaking is a litmus test for bias. An individual, a viewing audience or a jury is inclined to see and hear what local convention dictates that they see and hear. If mystification or spectacle is present in analysis of groups, persons, events, or facts, then it allows the in-group to exonerate a guilty member and convict the innocent other.

Such is the case when examining the court case following the concert at the Altamont Speedway Free Concert in California. Direct Cinema filmmakers Albert and David Maysles, along with Charlotte Zwerin filmed a free concert on Dec 6, 1969 at the Altamont Speedway outside San Francisco, featuring the Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead (who did not perform), Carlos Santana and The Rolling Stones. The film *Gimme Shelter*, released the following year, preserves that event. It was notable because it revealed the unrest and chaos in the crowd that day. The band had arranged to have the local Hell's Angels bikers provide security in exchange for free beer. The Hell's Angels did their jobs, they were hired to provide the rough edge that the Rolling Stones

wanted as their moniker. And several scuffles erupted in front of the stage involving concertgoers in various stages of undress and intoxication. All of which was somewhat contained, but it was the presence of Hell's Angels onstage that changed everything.

Dave Saunders writes that choosing the Hell's Angels to provide security was consistent with this image and almost guaranteed violence:

For the motorcycle outlaws, most of whom were from poor backgrounds, primal aggression was, and had always been, the only possible means of personal or group expression. They wanted to affirm their tribe's nobility and potency not by burning draft cards, but by existing collectively outside the parent culture, creating and maintaining an almost totally independent community based on disregard for anything (including human life) other than bikes – the symbols of their creed. (132)

Meredith Hunter, an 18-year-old African-American man brought a firearm to the concert for protection because his sister Dixie had warned him about racist attitudes in the area. Patty Bredehoft, his white girlfriend accompanied him to the concert. Hunter got into an altercation with the Hell's Angels, brandished the gun and was stabbed to death in front of the stage. The stabbing was caught on film and included in the Maysles brothers' film. Hell's Angel Alan Passaro was charged with Hunter's murder, Passaro pleaded self-defense, he was tried and acquitted on January 19, 1971 well over a year after the event. Donovan Bess describes the trial in *Rolling Stone*; a law and order jury acquitted Passaro, a member of Hell's Angels known for neither law nor order ("The Altamont Trial"). Footage of the stabbing was shown to the jury in the murder trial. Sasha Frere-Jones' also describes how the film seems to linger on Hunter with the gun in his hand ("The Chaos"). An unnamed trial witness claims that Hunter was trying to flee when he was stabbed. Despite his onscreen murder Hunter is unnamed in the film. An all-white jury found the defendant

not guilty. The edited footage showing the stabbing on screen presented as visual evidence was insufficient to convince a jury to convict Passaro, a civilian, of any crime.

Twenty years later in Los Angeles, California, on March 3, 1991, black motorist Rodney Glen King was relentlessly beaten for fleeing and resisting arrest by four white police officers while other officers looked on. A civilian, George Holliday, filmed the event from his balcony and sent the footage to local news station KTLA. The footage clearly showed King being beaten repeatedly, and the incident was covered by news media around the world. On March 15, 1991 Sergeant Stacey Koon and officers Laurence Powell, Timothy Wind and Theodore Briseno were charged with excessive use of force. The Rodney King trial was moved from LA county to Simi-Valley, in Ventura County. A three-month trial ensued in which Holliday's footage was shown repeatedly. On April 29, 1992, the four policemen were acquitted of the charge of excessive use of force. Qualified immunity shields police officers in court proceedings from personal responsibility. That evening the LA Riots began, lasting six days, taking 63 lives and causing over one billion dollars in property damage. A year later in 1993 Stacey Koon and Laurence Powell were found guilty in a federal proceeding of violating King's civil rights (Sestry, *When LA Erupted*).

On March 16, 1991, the day after charges were brought against the officers, another shooting incident in Los Angeles was recorded on film. Korean storeowner Soon Ja Du shot and killed 15-year old African-American Latasha Harlins in a shoplifting dispute. On November 15, 1991, Du was convicted of voluntary manslaughter and drew a sentence that consisted of community service and suspended jail time. The defendant and the victim had different values within the community and the business owner was more valuable than the teenager. The store camera video, or witness had little effect on the jury.

The footages from Maysles, Holliday and of Ja Du case were clear and unequivocal; the events and the players were identifiable and the actions unmistakable. In the above cases, someone is abused or killed, in one case under the color of law. The footages are facts and were used as evidence in trials but failed to convince and persuade juries to abandon group convention. The footages and the corresponding testimonies were not convincing. In the above cases the phenomenon lay within white communities, from whom juries were drawn and their unwillingness to convict whites when the victims were black. In Korean storeowner Du's case, although the store owner was convicted, the sentence rendered was mild and in practical terms functioned as an acquittal.

In Los Angeles, California on June 12, 1994 Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman were found dead in the entrance way of her condominium. On June 14, 1994 former football great Orenthal James Simpson was charged with the murders. The Nicole Brown-Simpson, Ronald Goldman murder trials, better known as the O.J. Simpson trial, are relevant here because the joint trial was related to the Rodney King case, at least tangentially. The verdicts in the latter cases were in some way influenced by the Rodney King verdicts. There was no film footage of the defendant at the crime scene. But there was an audio recording of the interrogation, released in 2016. During the questioning Simpson may have indicated motive when he admitted that he was trying to reconcile with Nicole as recently as three weeks prior; emotions may have been at the surface for either or both of them. In closing arguments lead defense attorney Johnnie Cochran directed his remarks to the mostly black jury in socially relevant terms, appealing to racial solidarity. After eleven months of televised testimony, the defendant was acquitted of the charges. Reminders of the officers' acquittal in Simi Valley undoubtedly played a part in the acquittal. The documentary *O.J. Simpson: Made in America* records one juror who all but admitted that the King trial verdict played

a part in the Brown-Simpson, Goldman verdict. Social convention played its part in both verdicts. The memory of the Rodney King footage reminded jurors of how the judicial system weighed cases based on race, so they returned the favor.

Evidence is never convincing in and of itself, it must be supported by rhetoric and argument which places it in context. And as was the case with the above cases, its success is dependent on an emotionally effective presentation in court. What it takes is prosecutorial or defense performances which display facts and build them into evidence to convince a jury that the defendant is guilty or not guilty of said crime. Therefore, the results suggest that in and of itself film can proceed to a certain point but no further: It can act as evidence but not proof.

The importance of rhetorical development in influencing feeling and thinking requires continued adjustments because although views and attitudes appear permanent, they in fact are constantly changing as the population consisting of identifiable groups shift in number and location:

Rhetoric is not an immortal art. Its reliance on expressive technique points to its primary reliance on commonly held assumptions and expectations, expectations, values, and beliefs. Crucial though such things are, they are not established by logic or science alone, or else they would not be shared *beliefs*. Values and beliefs form the bedrock of a society, and in a complex, diverse society more than one set of assumptions and expectations, values and beliefs will exist. They will contend for dominance. (*Speaking Truths* 156)

Raw footage of police shootings in the United States in recent years have been caught on camera in which police officers, often employing department body cam video, are shown shooting citizens. Until 2020 these officers were rarely prosecuted and even more rarely convicted of murder or manslaughter. Police officers are exempt from being held accountable as individuals for violating

a citizen's constitutional rights, so it is not surprising that film has a reduced influence in these cases when brought to court. The phenomenon is not always racially motivated but often seems so. The shootings of 12-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio; Laquan McDonald in Chicago, Illinois; Walter Scott in North Charleston, South Carolina; Philando Castile in Falcon Heights, Minnesota and the asphyxiation of Eric Garner in Staten Island, New York are just a few examples of state-sanctioned killings caught on film. In the above five cases only two officers were convicted. Jason Van Dyke was convicted of second-degree murder in the shooting of Laquan McDonald, and Michael Slager was convicted of second-degree murder in the Walter Scott case. Slager was convicted after the intervention of federal law enforcement agencies. The above two cases are exceptions that prove the rule, juries rarely side with the black citizen when faced with police shootings. Film presented as evidence does not convince juries to convict someone they may need for protection in the future. Social and cultural considerations overwhelm the evidence presented.

Attempting to rewrite history is a daunting task, only the intrepid enter this space.

Filmmakers must persuade audiences to the filmmaker's interpretation of an event. As we have seen film in and of itself does not convince juries, but it may persuade audiences to change their viewpoints on history. Film cannot rewrite the events of former times, but it can change viewpoints of them. Robert A. Rosenstone suggests the same as quoted in Robert Toplin's *History by Hollywood* in referring to Oliver Stone's *JFK*:

questioned popular impressions about the superiority of written history over filmed history. He noted that many scholars are more comfortable with the printed medium because they believe that it comes closer to the truth in portraying the past. They think that a book is more effective than a film in showing complexities of motivation and causation. To them, historians of the printed word are committed to

working with facts and reconstructing reality, whereas filmmakers seem to show reckless disregard for the facts as they construct their own versions of reality.

Rosenstone pointed out, however that those who accept this viewpoint overlook the creative nature of all historical interpretation, whether in writing or in film .(9)

Oliver Stone's thesis that a second gunman participated in the assassination was provoked in part by the Zapruder film. His conclusion was also aligned with the 1979 House Select Committee on Assassinations' conclusion that a conspiracy was probably behind the assassination. A second gunman is not necessary for a conspiracy to be at play. Stone's repeated playing of the fatal shot and its aftermath impressed on the minds of a second generation of Americans that another gunman was a viable possibility. Zapruder's footage shows the President's reaction to the fatal shot. Because of the movement of the President's head, the large exit wound appears to be an entry wound. Stone's interpretation of the footage interfered with the received notion of the Warren Commission. It appeared that the written record was insufficient to explain all of the facts on the ground. Stone's *JFK* entered this space and offered another perspective on the event in Dallas, however unfounded in its premise, the film was popular. False leads can also convince audiences to alter viewpoints and contribute to history by refining viewpoints, because once exposed the notions are not relied upon again. *JFK* rewrites history, although not as intended.

Chapter Four: The Directors' View

As stated in the introduction, Bill Nichols has established in his theoretical framework that there are six major modes of representation when it comes to documentary filmmaking. They are the Expository, the Poetic, the Observational, the Participatory, the Performative, and the Reflexive. Of the six modes of representation identified in Nichols, the overwhelming majority of documentaries represented here are Expository in nature. The outliers are *Forward Ever* which combines Expository, Observatory, Participatory and Poetic elements, and *The House on Coco Road* which is Expository, Participatory and Reflexive. Most of the other filmmakers use more than one mode to retell, investigate, interview, speak, perform, testify, and reflect on what has happened in the past. Of the six modes the Poetic is least represented because most filmmakers are recreating history and employing logic rather than abstraction or emotion in their analyses. The history covered in the documentaries does not lend itself to rhythm and pattern except when applied to the editing of filmmaker Paddington. Bill Nichols describes how filmmakers use the editing process to tell their stories. In the observational mode a director is interested in allowing the story to tell itself, as it were, so continuity is important. In those films the viewer must be able to casually follow the story from event to event. But in the expository mode the design switches to a more active way of editing:

Evidentiary editing brings together the best possible evidence in support of [an argument]. The filmmaker's responsibility [is] to make his or her argument as accurately and convincingly as possible even if it requires recontextualizing the points of individual witnesses or experts, and a practice of intervening in what

occurs before the camera by means of the interview but without showing the filmmaker or even including the filmmaker's voice. (*Representing Reality* 17)

Nichols defines voice as an authorial presence. The filmmaker's perspective provides the viewer with implicit rather than explicit instruction; it is "wholly embedded within stylistic choices of selection and arrangement (*Representing Reality* 128). It is something like the difference between what is said and what is meant, what is shown and what is actually revealed. The director's intention has another quality "Voice, then is a question of how the logic, and perspective, of a documentary gets conveyed to us" (*Introduction* 69). The director is like a silent front seat passenger guiding the driver/viewer to an unknown destination.

The Revolution through the Lens

The filmmakers working during the early 1980s looking at the beginning stages of the People's Revolutionary Government were mostly positive. Coming on the heels of the autocrat Eric Gairy, the Revolution could possibly have been a breath of fresh air in the Caribbean. The fact that the new government was attempting to move in a socialist direction is seen by filmmakers as matter of fact. People are interviewed about what they were doing rather than why they were moving toward socialism or whether they would be successful. Emphasis is put on the conditions they encountered when they began. Evidentiary editing from this period reveals the directors' approval of this early stage of the Revolution and its efforts to improve life in Grenada. This is true for almost all documentaries that deal with the first stages. No one is on record as saying that the People's Revolutionary Government was a danger to anyone.

President Carter attempted to isolate Grenada from his Caribbean Basin Initiative, but he is not reported to have been unduly alarmed; even his public remarks about setting up a response team

in Key West from the Oval Office is most likely concerned with Cuba. President Carter plays a very small role on film during this period. He is President from the beginning of the Revolution in March 1979 to January 1981, including the period in which a bomb is placed in Queen's Park. President Reagan was more aggressive in his dealings with Grenada using what the CIA called "low intensity conflict" areas, to refer to countries that would be interfered with short of war. He only became publicly vocal after it was clear that the International Airport was becoming a reality.

The *AP Archives* records the facts of the revolution in journalistic terms as an unnamed interviewer questions Bishop about the conditions leading up to the coup; Bishop volunteers answers about what happened after Gairy left for New York, and why the New Jewel Movement choose to move when it did. Bishop is treated with respect by the Associated Press reporter and is accorded the space to charge Eric Gairy with abuses of power, without rebuttal. The reporter does not challenge Bishop's version of events. The Associated Press reporters were free to move about the island during the last days of the Gairy Administration. There is an abundance of footage surrounding Independence in 1974, and other touristic type footage of island beauty. The New Jewel Movement recognized the need for good press in the formative days of the Revolution. The Associated Press footage constitutes the basis for later documentarians.

Joanne Kelly's *Portrait of a Revolution* backs the efforts of the early People's Revolutionary Government. The film was underwritten by local television station KQED, the San Francisco Public Television Station. Evidently it was completed after the June 19, 1980 bombing in Queen's Park. The bombing in Queen's Park received little coverage in the United States. Kelly is not naïve about the fact that there is opposition to the PRG, and people are being detained by the new government, but allows Kendrix Radix to explain that these things occur as a matter of course. A revolution will produce opposition. The film shows Grenadians as they go about their daily

activities building homes and roads. George Louison, Director of Youth and Education, points to interference when he says that the United States was “attempting to chart our course.” Louison does not specify what those attempts were. The film shows the people of Grenada as resolute, and again George Louison states that the bomb that exploded was too sophisticated to be locally produced. He is not pressed to name the United States as culprit.

Ellen Ray’s *Grenada: Nobody’s Backyard* is unavailable and the only reference to the film is an article from the British newspaper *The Guardian* (US edition) from 1981, by Jonathan Bennett. Ray’s film was produced by Covert Action which at the time was a Washington-based watch group, allegedly founded by ex-CIA agent Phillip Agee. A group called Covert Action exists today, but it is not clear that it is the same group. The important point that Ray’s film exposes is the fact that independent countries in this hemisphere are not free to determine their own destinies. The United States undermined governments it could not control, coerce, or bribe. This is not always the case but usually obtains when fearful leaders need scapegoats to redeem their honor and esteem, as was the case in 1983 when the United States needed to throw off the so-called Vietnam syndrome.

Airport

The airport construction at Point Salines was the single concrete accomplishment of the People’s Revolutionary Government that stands today as a symbolic monument to the Revolution. It was also the major irritant to the Reagan Administration because the President saw capital in viewing the airport as a military threat. No other nation large or small had garnered as much attention from the United States as did Grenada for building a modern airport for international travel. The Reagan Administration invested the airport with significance for its own purposes and acted upon those impulses. Only half of the films mention the airport specifically, some due to the fact that the airport

was in the early days of construction and had not become the issue that it would be in 1983. The documentaries that do mention the airport see it as an accomplishment for the PRG, as an irritant to the Reagan Administration, or simply as the initial landing site for Operation Urgent Fury. Another documentary highlights airports as symbolic of mobility in modern life, and another as the locus of salvation. President Ronald Reagan lands in triumph on Airforce One at the very airport he decried earlier, adding insult to injury. The airport had no features which would enable military operations, no hardened bunkers, underground fuel storage, nor parallel taxiways to facilitate rapid ingress and egress. Dr. Cudjoe asserts that the airport at Port Salines would be:

Only the sixth largest airport in the Caribbean. Plessey Airport, a British company which headed the construction team that was building the airport at the time that Grenada was invaded listed eleven facilities which were needed at a military airport. None of these existed in Grenada. (*Boston Globe*, 2 November 1983).

Filmmakers treated the airport construction differently based on the voice that they employed within their films. The National Archives films and America's Defense Monitor do not treat the airport with any significance. I was merely the location of the Invasion. Filmmakers that treat the airport with significance are Bruce Paddington, John Douglas, Estela Bravos and Norris Wilkins saw the airport completion as something the PRG could be proud of. All three employ aerial footage of Grenada, footage of the airport under construction, and interview Bob Evans, director of airport construction. Evans is filmed and recorded as saying that funding came from Finland as well as Libya. He describes how military airports are constructed, and that Port Salines did not have the features of military airports. Estela Bravos places British engineers on-site to explain how much had been done with rather primitive equipment. In these cases, the filmmakers refute the notion that Cuban and Soviet Union financing alone was responsible for the airport

construction. All of the above filmmakers edit their films to say that the United States could or must have known the above and ignored it. If individual filmmakers could access the data, then the United States government with far greater resources, could have done the same. What is true is the fact that the PRA had anti-aircraft guns in storage in locations near the airport that were deployed during Operation Urgent Fury. The above filmmakers are rather silent on this fact, possibly it was unknown at the time. On the other hand, institutional and television filmmakers like the *National Archives: Special Report*, *The Military Channel* and *Frontline* tended to side with the view that Cuban and Soviet influence was the dominant factor in the airport construction.

The National Archives treats the airport at Salines in Grenada as a locus for insult. It was not a coincidence that President Reagan landed at the very airport that he was so worried about as a way to insult the People's Revolutionary Government. The video opens with the landing of Airforce One, and soon after the President is at St. George's University laying a wreath for fallen American soldiers and later that day speaking at Queen's Park. All three locations were significant to the Reagan Administration's desire to degrade the People's Revolutionary Government; the airport as supposed military base, the medical school (now university) as the impetus for the Invasion, and Queen's Park as reminder of the violence and death in 1980. The narration contrasts with the known facts about what happened in Grenada. The President does not mention that the Invasion had been planned for years. Nor did he mention that he refused a meeting with Bishop where he very easily could have demanded conditions that Bishop would likely have rejected. But that could have trapped Reagan as well and invasion would have to be ruled out. Destabilization was working and was a factor in the upheaval within the PRG. The fall of the PRG is one thing but an Invasion is another; it is dramatic and conclusive and invigorating for the victors. This is reflected in the voice of the unnamed director of this film: America is Back.

In some ways the Maurice Bishop International Airport is the centerpiece of *The House on Coco Road*. At the beginning of the film his family is returning to Grenada to revisit the island for the first time since 1983; in the second half of the film the family departs the island at Port Salines during the evacuation in 1983; then at the end Baker and son return to Grenada to evaluate family history. Although it is primarily expository, the filmmaker participates onscreen as narrator and social actor. There is also a semi-poetic dance that Baker shows the audience as Ronald Reagan haunts his family's story from the 1960s to the present. As actor, Governor and President, Reagan represents Americanism. As actor he appears in an unnamed film riding a horse chasing "Indians" to avenge the killing of a white soldier. As Governor, Reagan fires Baker's mother Fannie from her job at UCLA for her association with the "communist" Angela Davis, and for the hockey hat-trick, the President orders the invasion of the country where his mother has moved her family. At the outset of the film President Reagan's face is shown in double exposure overlaying the Baker family as they disembark on their return journey to Grenada. These events are juxtaposed with the Maurice Bishop and San Francisco International airports as the Houghton/Baker family keep crossing forbidden boundaries.

CIA Involvement/Destabilization

The Central Intelligence Agency, often in conjunction with the State Department, has a long history of interfering in the internal affairs of smaller socialist countries in the western hemisphere. Yet the United States Government routinely denied involvement in foreign affairs, until they were exposed. Notable exceptions were director William Colby's and ex-agent Phillip Agee's revelations in the 1970s. Since then the Freedom of Information Act has revealed the activities of the Agency. The agency operates ahead of the Defense Department and in parallel with

the State Department to influence and advance US interests on foreign soil. The CIA website acknowledges that intelligence work by its nature leads to speculation. However, the agency could not be accused of skullduggery if the evidence were not forthcoming.

The CIA is the subject of a Hollywood film which describes alleged involvement in another country's political affairs which run parallel to what happened in Grenada. When the official mandate of the agency requires it to interfere in another nation's political affairs, it is not usually visible unless one is on the ground. Sometimes allegations are verified. A case in point is found in a commercial film that might shed light on how the agency operates on foreign soil. Thomas Hauser wrote *The Execution of Charles Horman* (1978) in which he described the death of the young American in Chile, during the military coup which removed Salvador Allende from power (Toplin, 108). Hauser's thesis was that there were links between US officials and Horman's disappearance. The 1982 film called *Missing* directed by Costa Gavras goes a step further and specifically points to the unnamed US ambassador to Chile, played by Richard Venture in the film. Said Ambassador Nathaniel Davis of the State Department and two others sued Costa Gavras for defamation and hinted that the film damaged the United States reputation and ability to function. In various ways the suit pointed out that there were serious flaws in presenting the single view that the United States government had been involved in the death of an idealistic young American journalist who had been asking questions about how Augusto Pinochet (unnamed in the film) came to power. The case was settled out of court. The questions that Robert Toplin asks about *Missing* and Chile are the same type of questions that documentarians must ask about their filmmaking:

Does it tell the truth about the United States role in Chile's affairs? Were

Americans partly responsible for the military coup in Chile, as the film suggests?

Did the U.S. government in Chile, including Ambassador Davis, have foreknowledge of Charles Horman's execution and possibly order it? (105)

The aim of the documentary is to uncover the truth, to find responsible parties, and to reveal what they knew. As Senator Howard Baker asked during the Watergate hearings, what did the President know and when did he know it? It was in this spirit that Gavras developed his film. It is also what Walter Benjamin means when he says that "even the dead will not be safe from the enemy" (Ward 60). Charles Horman's motives and reputation were being besmirched by his own government even as his body lay buried in a stadium wall. Costa Gavras admitted that he developed the film's thesis to accommodate Ed Horman's view that something was amiss in the handling of his son's disappearance. For Gavras the death was more than random violence and almost certainly was known by the State Department; with tacit approval or benign neglect, at the very least they looked the other way. Gavras knew that what actually happened was something like what he presented in the film. It was the only truth that could be presented without firsthand accounts by participants. This is the path that documentarians must tread, the filmmaker must proceed on the best likely information, a set of facts that are probable of a certain conclusion but not conclusive. In this actual case captured in narrative film, the world witnessed what may have happened in 1973 in Chile. The fact that *Missing* stayed close to the known facts but only its interpretation was called into question reveals just how close Gavras must have been to reality.

Documentarians focusing on the Grenada Revolution do not identify CIA agents. They do however point to activity believed to be inspired by the Agency. Some mention a well-known former agent, show photos of suspected agents or collaborators, while others merely state suspicions. Early filmmakers Douglas and Kelly working in 1980 may not have known the individuals working for the agency in Grenada. But they did point to institutions that were

connected to the CIA, like the US Agency for International Development and the American Institute for Free Labor Development. In the CIA Reading Room archives *The Associated Press* of February 26, 1983, documents destabilization efforts in regard to Grenada during both the Carter and Reagan administrations. In addition, Dr. Cudjoe notes how the United States “went out of its way to prevent the members of the European Economic Community from assisting the Government of Grenada in this [airport] endeavor” (13). Both inside and outside of Grenada the US government was making its presence felt. And yet when the Invasion occurred in 1983 key aspects of local knowledge were missing. Soldiers there to rescue students did not have accurate grid maps; they didn’t know the terrain, distances between landmarks or locations of roads because they were using five-year-old tourist maps, nor did they know about a second campus, or a third location of students where more than 400 students were housed. The glaring errors made by the US military and the general confusion in which they found themselves hazards a guess that preparation was sorely lacking in Operation Urgent Fury. It developed this way for some reason that is not stated in unclassified official documents.

The CIA must not have been as prevalent on the ground as some have surmised. The online CIA reading room contains several documents that confirm the early concern on the part of the Carter Administration. A memo from the White House by National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski to the Director of Central Intelligence states, “The president is concerned about the growing Cuban presence on Grenada and it is urgent and important that we move to focus international press attention on this development ” (May 8, 1979).

This may be the impetus for the daily destabilization that Bishop referred to in documentaries, and the Agency proposed further actions:

The CIA considered plans to destabilize the leftist government of the tiny Caribbean island of Grenada. . . The 1981 plan was focused on economic destabilization affecting the political viability of the government. The plan was stopped by the Senate Intelligence Committee. In the same press release *The Washington Post* reports that “Covert operations against Grenada were discussed in the Carter A but Carter ruled out everything but propaganda. (*Associated Press* February 26, 1983)

One agent remained undercover and evidently unknown. Another CIA reading room document from the *Iowa State Daily* dated November 9, 1983 points to an agent on the ground in Grenada. In “Ex-CIA agent: Grenada signals Nicaragua invasion” John Stockwell claims to have known Bishop personally and that he was in Grenada only weeks before the end in 1983. What Stockwell’s assignment was in Grenada is not stated in the article and he was not named by any filmmaker in this group of documentaries.

Stand Up Grenada records Bernard Coard speaking in 1979 after the attempted coup was discovered where he mentioned how the negative foreign press routinely attacked the PRG. He also does not name the antagonist, but maybe it was unnecessary for the crowd he was speaking to. Grenadians and the filmmakers recognized the opposition in the press. How much the filmmakers knew at the time is unknown. However, almost all documentarians mention that the United States interfered with the People’s Revolutionary Government, some going so far as to say that the CIA was behind both the November 1979 attempted coup with its huge cache of weapons, and the 1980 Queen’s Park bombing. John Douglas’ two films mention the CIA, Norris Wilkins’ two films also specifically mention the CIA. *Stand Up Grenada* produced after the Queen’s Park bombing and the narrator points to the destabilization process at work, citing how local citizens were working hand in

hand with the CIA. The film starts with funerals for one or all of the three young women killed that day. The narrator never specifies which persons were thought to have been involved in the bombing.

In the same film Douglas introduces Phillip Agee. Agee, an ex-CIA agent, had gained fame in the middle 1970s as a whistleblower with his memoir *Inside the Company*, in which he named CIA operatives in Central and South America and noted how the agency subverted progressive governments. In 1980 the State Department revoked Agee's passport and thereafter Maurice Bishop granted Agee a Grenadian passport. A photo of Agee and Bishop together with a small child documents the connection between the two men. Reportedly Agee travelled to Grenada during the years of the Revolution. It is not clear if he was in Grenada at the time of the bombing. Someone was the source of the charge that the CIA had influenced the counterrevolutionaries. However, no individual is named as a CIA operative in any of the films.

One film by the late Ellen Ray, *Grenada: Nobody's Backyard*, does document the players that may have acted against the revolution. Writing for *The Guardian* in July 1981, Jonathan Bennett reviews the film:

The documentary leaves no doubt that Grenada is the latest victim of Washington-based destabilization. The camera records the destabilization tactics in action in Grenada. The viewer actually witnesses the work of the assassination squads, the smears of the reactionary media, the denial of trade in medical supplies and the subversive strikes of some essential workers. ("Grenada: US Target")

According to Bennett, the 1980 documentary points to the above mentioned AIFLD which operated as a front for CIA operations in Grenada. This is the same agency cited above in the John

Douglas film, and it should be noted that Ellen Ray also worked on the Douglas film. In the most direct statement by a journalist to date, Bennet says:

The US government is trying to destroy a revolution and is counting on keeping most Americans indifferent to the fate of a tiny, out-of-the-way island so the destabilization program can succeed. This film is a small but significant step to prevent the U.S. from doing so. (“Grenada: US Target”)

The above article, also found in the CIA library reading room archives, states that it appeared in the *Guardian* on page 18 from July 1, 1981. Why Ray’s film was screened a year after production is not explained in the article. The Queen’s Park bombing of June 19, 1980, is not mentioned in the article, and therefore the film may have been produced before the event. Bennett’s description of the contents of *Grenada: Nobody’s Backyard* is remarkably similar to the contents of John Douglas’ *Stand Up Grenada*. They were produced the same year and filmmaker Ellen Ray worked on both films. It is likely that there is a lot of shared footage and directorial vision.

Joanne Kelly’s *Portrait of a Revolution* also identifies culprits in conjunction with the destabilization process at work. Kelly records Kendrix Radix admitting that detentions were necessary and asserting that “the Budhlalls were never members of our party.” Major (name not rank) Louison notes that the bombs attributed to the Budlalls were of superior technology. George Louison also points to the US as a detrimental force in Grenada (*Portrait*). The film points to internal dissent rather than evidence of outside interference.

In the recent *Maurice Saw them Coming* (2019) a sometimes barely audible Maurice Bishop on Marcus Garvey Day in 1981 predicts an invasion by the United States. It was obvious that the PRG was informed of military preparation in Puerto Rico. Of the numerous persons detained during the revolution the charge of espionage was not widely cited, nor were charges of

collaboration with an enemy. Expatriate Stanley Cyrus was widely believed to have been collaborating with the CIA and was detained for a while during the revolution, but even Cyrus is not named specifically. All of the films that hint at CIA involvement are expository in nature, but no film identifies individual agents. The Intelligence Identities Protection Act of 1982 had not yet been enacted, which made it a felony for an American citizen to reveal the identity of a covert CIA operative (United States Congress). The above-mentioned Phillip Agee provided much of the impetus for the act with his revelations. This prohibition however, applied to American citizens only.

In general, filmmakers did not shy away from indicating that the United States was heavy handed in dealing with the new government, and this is confirmed in news accounts and televised statements from the United States itself. In these documentaries Grenadians on the ground expressed their dissatisfaction with the manner in which they were treated by the United States. The CIA admits its meddling with the new government, which is confirmed in the agency documents that have come forward due to the Freedom of Information Act. Ellen Ray's film *Grenada: Nobody's Backyard* which pointed to the American Institute for Free Labor Development which operated as a front for the Agency. The United States military made no attempt to hide the fact that Grenada was being intimidated and it is documented by filmmakers. It is interesting that with the evidence at hand, Grenadians in the documentaries fail to name the antagonists in their country. Maybe Grenadians were uncertain about the identities of CIA agents, although the Budhlall brothers and Strahan Phillips were alleged at the time to have CIA connections. The evidence is scant in that regard. These citizens to varying degrees had differences with the PRG and may have acted on their own volition. The early filmmakers may not have wanted to tread where local citizens

were unwilling to go. It is often difficult to analyze events from within while they are occurring. Filmmakers may have simply refused to speculate on what they could not prove.

Detentions

For the most part the documentaries in question do not focus much on the persons detained without trial during the revolution. Kelly does record Kendrix Radix's explanation that the detentions were necessary, "I don't know where a revolution exists in which a counterattack has not occurred" (*Portrait*). President Reagan alludes to the terror of being picked up at home by goons during late night raids (*National Archives*). Lyden Ramdhanny, George Louison and Peggy Nesfield were the only cabinet members that acknowledged the detentions on film.

In *Forward Ever* in the section entitled "Human Rights" Paddington begins to examine what went wrong within the People's Revolutionary Government. The director trusts Peggy Nesfield, treating her with respect by filming her in extreme closeup, indicating her reliability. The Bishop confidante admits that the detentions were extensive, with hundreds of people being detained. At this point in the film, the director becomes more directly involved onscreen by personally questioning the remaining interviewees. This change in tactics by the director challenges the received story and promotes his interpretive theory. Dissenters are profiled, from journalists Tillman Thomas and Leslie Pierre, to writer Nellie Payne. Paddington cuts to Bishop who admits that some dislocation was necessary when the PRG felt it needed to re-educate someone. This footage of Bishop is the only historical footage shown in this section. Historically the dissenters were mostly apprehended early in the revolution, but the director places this section after the climax at Hunter College to introduce a new theme. Opposition is on the horizon. Paddington is taking the viewer toward a conclusion. For Paddington, this dislocation is something that must be

acknowledged in order to get to his major point which is that the Revolution was a worthwhile effort. Paddington subsumes a minor theme within the major story.

Being detained for any length of time without trial is not a minor thing by any means for anyone. Wynston White was detained in the early part of the Revolution and remained there until Operation Urgent Fury freed him in 1983. He is the center piece of *Grenada: Lessons from a Cold War*. Another detainee, onetime publisher and later Prime Minister, Tillman Thomas, was also featured in the documentary. Publishers Leslie Pierre and Alister Hughes were also detained during the Revolution and their accounts are mentioned in several of the documentaries like *Forward Ever*, *Portrait of a Revolution*, and the National Archives: *Special Report on Grenada*, but their stories are not turning points in any of the documentaries.

Rastafari

Documentarians pay little attention to the Rastafarian movement in Grenada, the movement is handled at arms-length. They are mostly spoken about rather than spoken to. The group is rarely introduced formally, and the fact that a large number of soldiers were Rastas could be deduced from footage in *Stand-Up Grenada*, the title echoing Bob Marley's anthem *Get Up Stand Up*. Dreadlocks, distinctive vocal tonal quality and word usage identify the Rastafarians onscreen. The soldiers have a measure of independence, a distinctive quality which indicates that they were their-own-men, and it is visible onscreen. The Rastafarian movement in Grenada was rural and involved in agriculture, including marijuana cultivation. Although unstated on film, they had lost favor within the Revolution. This was a degradation from the early days when many had been active supporters of the NJM. In an early AP documentary "Bishop Makes His Move" the Prime Minister speaks about commercial marijuana cultivation as presenting a problem for the

PRG, but he does not reference the Rastafarian community specifically. In *Stand Up Grenada* the narrator posits that Leslie Pierre through his paper *Torchlight* influenced the Rastafarian movement in Grenada. Exactly what they were provoked to do is unstated but the film intimates that they may have been involved with the CIA in the attempted coup of late 1979.

Arthur Newland quotes from Ikael Tafari's *Rastafari in Transition* in which Tafari describes how the rift became a chasm in the early days of the PRG. Bishop's government

Stands charged by the brethren [for] retreating from their earlier positive stand on Black Power. Especially after the entry into the picture of Bernard Coard and his Organization for Revolutionary Education and Liberation (OREL) faction with their hardline, doctrinaire, Stalinist stance, the more positive position of Bishop's wing of the party (which had been more sensitive to the racial and cultural issues of struggle) faded rapidly. (211)

According to Newland, Tafari saw the influence of Cuban ambassador Rizo as cynical calculated repression in which the disciplining and removal of Rastas from the military would produce a reaction that could then be acted upon. Tafari interviews Ras Nang (aka Prince Nna Nna), a key figure in the early days of the revolution and trainer of People's Revolutionary Army forces. Nang notes how Rastafarians were a major part of both the New Jewel Movement, and the People's Revolutionary Army. The Rastafarian movement is significant for its willingness to speak truth to power. Nang found fault with the retrenchment of the Bishop government and expressed his displeasure. Nang himself was jailed during the REVO. Neither Newland nor Tafari specifically state that the Rastafari were involved in any overt effort to destabilize the revolution, but that hint remains in the air in Douglas's *Stand Up Grenada*. Tafari's interview reveals that the Rastafarians had been promised elections and a part in the new government, and Bishop reneged on that

promise. The fact that the Rastafarian soldiers were made to cut their hair, and their children were harassed in school, caused them a significant amount of grief, and created a distrust of the PRG. Leslie Pierre may have picked up on the broken promises and wrote about them in *Torchlight*. Headlines such as “Marijuana Smokers Angry” and “Rastas want man in Government,” are examples of the news coverage that the PRG disapproved of. Another headline is accompanied by a dramatic drawing of two Rastas back to back with a caption “Rastas to Protest.” The Rastafarians were being ostracized and they were responding.

Tafari, quoted in Newland, says that the underlying issue was not hair or marijuana but philosophy, “The issue had been to Coard less an issue of ganja and more about who should control the minds of young people – Haile Selassie or Karl Marx” (211). Therefore, it may have been predictable that the PRG would be reluctant to include the Rastafari in the government. As mentioned above in *Stand Up Grenada* (55), the Rastafarian movement felt powerless and was reacting to news coverage rather than instigating issues. At the time of the filming they appeared supportive of the Revolution and the part they played as soldiers. Tafari exhibits for the reader how progress follows a predictable path in former colonial societies; there existed an:

Almost unbridgeable-cultural gap between the Western-educated, technically oriented, Eurocentric intelligentsia (from among the upper section of the petty bourgeoisie) which manages the state, and the Afro-centric religious-oriented, traditionalist, poor peasant/artisan/semi-proletarian mass base of the peoples struggle, both in Africa and the Caribbean. (213)

The Rastafarians were not included in the new government for unstated reasons. Their open association with marijuana cultivation and use must have been a factor in their relegation to the sidelines of the Grenada Revolution. Ras Nang noted how his meetings with Bishop were

different from his encounters with Coard. One was pleasant but duplicitous and the other was authoritarian and doctrinaire. As the PRG moved forward it found inspiration in Cuba, and theory in Moscow, neither was inclined to find solidarity with the Rastas. Whether filmmakers and/or social actors knew it or not it was easy to point to the CIA as puppet master when there were legitimate local concerns by citizens who had contributed to the success of the NJM and helped it move toward governing as the PRG. The dearth of specific filmic references to this indigenous group that suffered under the Revolution is curious to say the least.

Hunter College

On June 5, 1983 Maurice Bishop delivered his most celebrated speech outside Grenada at Hunter College in New York. The speech is recorded in part by some but not all documentarians that cover this period. The full speech is captured in *Maurice Bishop Speaks* by CITV (2017). It is considered the highlight of Bishop's public orations. According to Gary Williams in "Brief Encounter," the speech was given two days before Bishop's State Department meeting with National Security Advisor William Clark (675). Bishop is quite forceful in pointing out how the Grenada Revolution has raised the living standards of all Grenadians. He notes that the State Department put special emphasis on the Revolution's potential to influence African Americans. This made Grenada a dangerous prospect for the future unless something changed. For John Douglas' *Future Coming*, it is the high point. The film had been completed before the disastrous events of Oct 19, 1983, and the speech was added later. The speech marked the imminent meeting between Bishop and Clark. Despite its importance it is not emphasized by later documentarians during the Commemorative era. *Future Coming* in 1984 and *Forward Ever* in 2013 are exceptions to the above.

Bruce Paddington treats the speech as the climax of the Revolution and is the high point of *Forward Ever*. Stylistically the director uses four different sections from the speech, three quarters of the way through the film. He uses the speech to answer critics of the Revolution regardless of their placement in time. For Paddington, Bishop is the Revolution, and this is his finest moment. Paddington uses the speech to frame different epochs of the Revolution. The Hunter College speech is edited into three sections; the first appearance of Bishop onstage, placed in the early part of the film, acts as the initial foundation point when the Revolution is still in promise. Another section called "Human Rights" deals with detentions, and the director's response is a section from the speech where Bishop declares that Grenadians are returning home in record numbers. Finally, a section that included Bishop's warning about the potential to influence African Americans marks a high point within the speech. The speech marks both the emotional climax of the last days of the Revolution, and the beginning of decline. In the film troubles began in earnest; anachronistically Bernard Coard resigns from the Politburo and the Central Committee. The resignation occurred in 1982, but by placing it here the director is echoing blues singer Keb Mo's warning that *The Worst is Yet to Come*. The speech also anticipates the final third of the film as the hero is about to meet his end.

The Hunter College Speech is remarkable for the fact that it is obscured from history and to some degree by the documentarians themselves. It is in this space that the Grenadian Revolution is expressed to the world. If the Revolution was worthy of recognition, then it was here that Bishop expressed its most salient points. Bishop enters a space that was occupied by Malcom X, which is to say that he was someone who was willing to face the debased infantile racism of the United States government come what may. But more so, Grenada would not submit to the economic exploitation of the United States, which after all is the purpose of oppression. This is a different

space from that occupied by the Civil Rights movement, which had come 20 years before and upset the white establishment, cost lives, but had run its course in the minds of many. Stokely Carmichael, aka Kwame Ture from Trinidad spearheaded the black power movement in the United States. Ten years earlier Ture began to express ideas that reverberated later in the Grenadian Revolution. Whereas the Civil Rights movement in the United States had made significant advances, it failed to complete its task, through no fault of its own. Assassinations wiped out significant players, but this stage had to come first. Once Africans in the Americas understood that they were met with an almost eternal opposition then the next stage could commence. Black Power was about self-determination; it had nothing to do with white Americans. It is this theme that the PRG inherited, which is to say that the People's Revolutionary Government was not interested in dominating others but standing on their own feet.

Breakdown

Inside the Central Committee a group of OREL members began to assert the notion that Maurice Bishop was not up to the task of leadership. According to Lady V in *The Peaceful Revolution*, this division became visible as early as 1980 after the Queen's Park bombing. Documentaries that focus on the internal division are *Maurice, America's Defense Monitor* "Grenada Revisited" and *Forward Ever*. In *Maurice* poet Senator speaks about ideology and theory as the driving forces within the Central Committee that were major factors in the breakdown. In contrast, Tourism Minister Lyden Ramdhanny notes that ideology was not at the heart of the division. If ideology was not at the heart of the breakdown, then leadership was. Ramdhanny hints that evidence of the naked ambition of a group acting as one, was evident quite early in the fledgling days of the government. Later Ramdhanny acknowledges that putting Bishop under house arrest

was political suicide, and by inference identifies the earlier mentioned group (“Grenada Revisited”).

Gary Williams, writing in “Prelude to an Intervention: Grenada 1983,” documents how a number of factors, including tactics and personality, led to the breakdown of the PRG and made governing difficult if not impossible:

By the fourth year of the revolution the populace had grown disillusioned with the PRG. The economic downturn meant the government struggled to meet Grenadians’ increased socio-economic expectations and the Marxist-Leninist dogmatism of the PRG had little in common with the masses and alienated the small middle-class sector. Bewilderingly the PRG criticized the churches as subversive in a strongly religious society. The PRG’s mass organizations gradually lost support and a combination of the dislike of regimentation and poor pay led to the demoralization of many army and militia members .(136)

It is not surprising that the *National Archive* and *Frontline* documentaries make no mention of the strife within. The view of the United States government was that the division within was irrelevant when compared to the major issue of Grenada’s association with Cuba and the Soviet Union. It is true that insular documentaries also fail to highlight the internal strife that led to the events of Oct 19, 1983. Wilkins’ *Peaceful Revolution* puts little emphasis on the crucial period in early October which led up to Fort Rupert. Baker’s *The House on Coco Road* also omits this section of history. These gaps in expository filmmaking lead the viewer to see these omissions as less important historical events when they were the most. In both cases the events were extremely sensitive, and some filmmakers were reluctant to take sides.

19 October 1983

America's Defense Monitor, *The National Archives*, *Forward Ever*, *The House on Coco Road* and *Maurice* deal with the day of the executions in Fort Rupert. *Forward Ever* shows a still black and white photo of the assault on the Fort. *The National Archive* footage of the same scene reveals rapid gunfire heard on-film from Fort Rupert with people jumping from walls. In addition, there is the faint sound of single shots. It cannot be determined if the single shots are in response. *The House on Coco Road* shows the same footage with armored cars approaching the Fort. The CITV cameras document the vivid scene on the ground in the "we got we leader" scene as the crowd moves toward Market Square. In some of the clearest footage of the Fort Rupert assault, rapid gunfire is heard without the corresponding single fire shots.

The most extensive retrospective of that day's events is found in *Forward Ever*. George 'Porgy' Cherubin was on duty that day in the Fort. Ann Peters, Pamela Cherubin and Ann Bain were inside the communications center. The dominant voice of nurse Ann Peters describes the events as well from her point of view, including the explosion from the rocket-propelled grenade, the death of Gemma Belmar, the subsequent shooting, and the valiant surrender of Porgy Cherubin, who described the assault which included soldiers firing through the roof from vantage points above the center. (Fig. 3) The communications center was being assaulted from ground level and above. There was no defense against this kind of assault and George Cherubin probably saved many lives that day.

Paddington cuts between interviews so that they repeat a single theme. Increased pacing moves toward the impending disaster. At one point in the interview, George Cherubin says that there were no weapons in the Fort and that Bishop declared that he did not want violence. From

their point of view within the command center it was not much of a fight and the fact that a quick surrender was achieved reveals that there were not enough weapons and ammunition to continue. Einstein Louison denies that there were significant numbers of arms in Fort Rupert. Nor does he admit to handing out weapons in the Fort. The short video footage recorded in the documentaries echoes the 15 to 20-minute one-sided encounter. Therefore, it is most likely true that efforts to arm civilians to fight back was not successful. Bishop was not suicidal, therefore they surrendered.

Fig. 3. Roof of Communications Center at Fort (Rupert) George



Bodies at Calivigny

Independent and institutional filmmakers would possibly vary in their approaches to the fate of the bodies. The variance is that almost all filmmakers after 1984 ignore the issue of the fate

of the bodies at Calivigny, while one filmmaker tried to investigate the fate of the missing bodies. Bruce Paddington is the sole filmmaker to address the issue. The critical issue of what happened to the bodies of those executed in Fort Rupert is front and center of his effort in this section of the documentary. He gently chides former Prime Minister Tillman Thomas about why the Grenadian government could not ask about the bodies. Thomas demurs in his answer. This type of questioning may have been unfair because the interim government was totally at the mercy of the US military.

The only person in the film who speaks unequivocally on the issue is Bernard Coard in a TV interview, who states that “the Americans have the bodies.” Callistus Bernard or others removed the bodies to Calivigny and supervised the incineration. The bodies were burned, to preserve them in one place. Adkin names a witness to the event (81). The American military had control of all significant government functions after the invasion, and if as Callistus Bernard claimed that “[he] brought the Americans to show them where the bodies were,” it was because he was under American authority. Pamela Cherubin retrieved her father’s personal items, but she does not say where this event happened, and she says that no bodies were in the pit. But she does not say that she saw an empty pit. It is possible that the retrieval occurred offsite. However the event occurred, Mrs. Cherubin was able to identify certain items that belonged to her father, evidently recovered from the pit. What happened after that is uncertain, but wherever the bodies were taken, they were under the control of the US military. The bodies of the eight executed in the Fort and some of the others that died that day went missing. One urban legend is that the bodies were taken to True Blue Campus before removal from Grenada. In later years, a recovery unit was sent from the United States to St. George’s to search for the bodies, but nothing was, or has been found. Much like the later Osama Bin Laden burial at sea, the United States military likely feared that a Maurice Bishop memorial gravesite in Grenada might spark a revival of the Revolution. A memorial to

Bishop was placed in a St. George's cemetery in 2013. Aware of Bishop's charisma, the United States did not want to enshrine Bishop as a martyr. Mark Adkin notes that Grenadian and Caribbean peacekeeping forces were kept away from the excavation of the bodies (372) Most likely all eight or more bodies were taken by American naval forces and buried at sea. If this assessment is incorrect in detail then something like this occurred because the remains have never been found, and therefore these families have lived with a broken memory for over 36 years. To date there have been no official reports or public declarations from the United States about the fate of the bodies.

Operation Urgent Fury

The Associated Press film *Grenada-Barbados Invasion* (1983) contains some of the most extensive real-time footage of the Invasion. Helicopters land at Port Salines, troops disembark and take up defense positions, and soldiers walk the streets looking for Cuban and PRA soldiers, in that order. By 1984 and afterward there is opportunity for reflection and reexamination of the Invasion. Some like the National Archive documentaries confirm the legitimacy of Urgent Fury. Weapons found were evidence of Cuban and Soviet aid and intent to militarize the small country. In 1986 celebratory events are staged just outside this same airport. A few years later there is some skepticism about the necessity of the Invasion as found in *PBS' Frontline*, and *America's Defense Monitor's* "Grenada Revisited". Damani Baker is unique in that he actually participated in the evacuation as a young child and documents his anxiety during those days.

The otherwise forgettable *Heartbreak Ridge* (1986) is notable for its acknowledgment that the US military was disorganized and worked at cross-purposes, with confusion across the services about unit responsibilities. *Frontline's* "Operation Urgent Fury" (1988) shows ambassador Sally

Shelton-Colby who during the Carter Administration notes that the PRG was making efforts to develop a relationship. If this is a reference to her time as ambassador from 1979 to 1981, it is seldom acknowledged that Grenada was attempting to maintain diplomatic relationships with the United States. Langhorne Martin, speaking for the State Department, says that Bishop was an unelected leader; therefore, he had no standing on the diplomatic stage. Several responsible people at St. George's Medical school attest to the fact that students on its several campuses were in no danger, which confirms that the Reagan Administration ignored assurances of the insignificance of Grenada as a military threat. The Administration needed to flex its muscles. Washington-based WETA Public Television station broadcast "*The Power of Television News/The Power of Pictures*" (1987), hosted by Edwin Newman, noted that "Any televised war will be lost. Pictures convey the realities of war." Operation Urgent Fury coming hard on the end of the Vietnam War eight years earlier, which was called the first television war because of the wide network coverage, was going to be different. In this exercise, the first after Vietnam, the military officially prevented American reporters from covering military action in Grenada. Reporters were prevented from leaving Barbados and kept out of Grenada, with only a few independent reporters arriving during the curfew and before the arrival of US forces. The routine retelling of the Invasion found in *Operation Urgent Fury* (2013) confirms Eastwood's assessment. Interestingly there is no contemporary CITV footage from inside Grenada unless it is not identified as such.

Ambassador to the United Nations Caldwell Taylor, in a statement that is repeated in several documentaries, mentions how the United States has a long history of invading sovereign nations. He says that the US had invaded over 200 countries (Native Nations included) since its own independence. These invasions are marked by attempts to solve political, financial, or business

issues through force. In this case the issue was political, and the spur-of-the-moment invasion was marked by blunders:

And all this despite Grenada having been the center of communist activity in the region for over four years. This horrendous failure on the part of the intelligence community, particularly the CIA, meant that troops were badly briefed, had no tactical information, and were led to believe it would be a walkover. (Adkin 336)

The viewer is left with the question of whether what prevailed in the People's Revolutionary Government: was paranoia or justifiable fear. The CIA was not behind every tree in Grenada, but their efforts were sufficient to make it seem so. If they financed the Budlall brothers and/or the Rastafarians, the evidence has not been forthcoming. The intelligence was scant, but they effectively frightened the PRG and may have induced and precipitated the implosion within simply due to nervousness and exhaustion. Whatever their level of presence or absence, a certain level of incompetence in providing usable intelligence led to the loss of 19 American soldiers. In addition, Grenadian and Cuban civilians, workers and soldiers were also possibly needlessly killed.

The footage of the Invasion itself lends itself to journalistic analysis of the function and extent of the military operation. In the hands of directors, the footage takes on additional meaning and/or the issue itself becomes a useful tool. For the National Archives both 1984 and 1986, the Intervention/Rescue is performed in behalf of helpless students, and Grenadians to prevent their exploitation by the Soviet Union, and then three years later the President Reagan reflects and celebrates. The directors of these institutional documentaries perform a needed service for the United States by bolstering foreign policy and backing political decisions. Operation Urgent Fury by DEVGRU5022 is a pro-US military compilation of almost all archival stock footage, reenactment, and archival interviews. This seems to be an in-house production for service

members. In spite of its one-sided approach to Operation Urgent Fury it does gently criticize the confusion on the ground. All of the above are expository in nature and reveal the director's apparent voice.

The most intriguing treatment of the Invasion was found in the China Global Television Network in *Grenada: Lessons from a Cold War* (2015). The unnamed director presents the Invasion and rescue in symbolic terms. Produced thirty-two years after the Invasion, it recounts the return to Grenada by Army Ranger Robert Ross who unites with Wynston Whyte, a prisoner during the PRG Administration. The director films Ranger Ross outdoors in full sunlight on the grounds of Maurice Bishop International Airport, and Whyte indoors in ambient light, both reflecting their respective locations in 1983. Ross came from outside of Grenada to rescue the imprisoned citizens in 1983. The men are symbolically reunited, although it is a first meeting, but each man represents his nation and place in 1983. The Grenadian thanks the American for rescuing him, and the American thanks the Grenadian for being there to be rescued. Stephens Gibbs interviews Callistus Bernard and allows him to reassemble his place in the October 19 massacre. Bernard offers advice on what went wrong with the PRG. The film recounts how the three major groups came together and clashed during the Revolution: the PRG, the Cubans, and the Americans. The Soviet Union is absent from the film, the Cold War has ended, and they need not be reckoned with. The playpen is peaceful today and at least in this documentary China is in part responsible for that peace.

Trial and Aftermath

Only one of the films in question focuses on the Grenada 17, The Maurice Bishop Murder Trial or The Grenada Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The one exception was made in the

21st century and is discussed below. As early as 1984 a focus on return to democracy is found in one documentary, reflection in another and celebration in a third . In the *National Archives*: “Visit of President Reagan 1986,” the President obscures the fact that the Invasion was planned years in advance. The director’s voice is found in their work and here in the National Archive film it is one of praising a superlative United States vs a degenerate People’s Revolutionary Government. *America’s Defense Monitor*: “Grenada Revisited, 1991” also points to the otherwise obscured Sally Shelton-Colby, Ambassador to the Eastern Caribbean during the Carter Administration. In a separate interview from the one filmed for *Frontline*, Shelton-Colby reiterates that she did not see Grenada as a threat to the United States. She saw the PRG’s good will. As noted above Lyden Ramdhanny’s admission that detaining Bishop under house arrest was a crucial mistake, he is the single cabinet member that speaks on that matter which led to end of the REVO. In “Grenada Revisited,” the director’s voice or compelling logic was that United States foreign policy hinged on the fact that Grenada could not defend itself against the superior forces of the United States, and therefore, the United States made an example of the small nation.

The above-mentioned *Prisoners of the Cold War (2005)* was a series of talking head interviews that revealed some of the inner workings of the PRG in the last days, the Invasion and life afterward for British citizens and Grenadians who were repatriated to England. Gray highlights how the work of The Committee to Free the Grenada 17 made possible the change of status of the remaining members of the Grenada 17 from felons to political prisoners. Initially they were, in alphabetical order Hudsin Austin, David Bartholomew, Callistus Bernard, Bernard Coard, Phyllis Coard, Leon Cornwall, Liam James, Vincent Joseph, Ewart Layne, Colville McBarnette, Andy Mitchell, Cecil Prime, Lester Redhead, Cosmos Richardson, Selwyn Strachan, Christopher Stroude, and John Ventour. This documentary also recorded the fact that moods were changing in

the early years of the 21st century, and that Grenadians were finally ready to move on. The fact that no other documentary film covered the trial may reflect the same initial anger and resentment.

Chapter Five: Contributions to History

It may be argued that none of the films in question offer anything to the historical record, because what is presented on screen had been written about before. If that is to be taken at face value then none of the heretofore unseen interviews, nor footage from the events in question, nor statements by participants add anything to the written record which has gone before.

Documentaries contribute to history within the confines of social convention and leave an indelible mark which alters interpretations. The footage once viewed cannot be unviewed.

Surpassing the Text

The visual aspect of movement and sound on camera is compelling to viewers. Film is the perfect medium to exploit human expression. The confessional aspect of interviewees who witnessed the events of the Revolution allow viewers to see and hear nuances, which convey emotions and intent not easily captured in words on the page. To see and hear significant players express their viewpoints, whether credible or not, necessarily surpasses the erudite expressions of the most gifted critic. To see and hear the footage of Grenadians expressing joy at releasing their leader as they parade the streets of St. George's on October 19, 1983, would be difficult to match in words alone.

The events of forty years ago in Grenada as recounted on film are capable of contributing to an enhanced understanding of the Revolution. The evidence found in the films themselves suggest a complexity not found in some accounts. The received story of the end of the New Jewel Movement and the Grenada Revolution itself is presented in simplistic terms and evade motivation. In the United States the story of the Invasion is still cloaked in the notion of a rescue mission. That,

of course, was secondary to the primary and original goal of eliminating a socialist government from the region. The problem was that the charismatic Bishop evoked worldwide interest in the Revolution and when he was executed it gave the Reagan Administration their single best opportunity to intervene and “avenge” the death of the moderate prime minister. There is considerable evidence that since an invasion was planned, such an invasion could also have resulted in Bishop’s death. The evasion of motive is seen in the fact that the United States had been planning to invade for some time, but needed, not a provocation but an excuse to act. The triggering event came on Oct 19, 1983, and regime change was effected within days.

The footage of the assault on Fort Rupert found in the above documentaries offers a clarification to accounts of a battle between relatively equal forces. Although only seconds long in all versions, the footage reveals something different. The footage does not reveal the event in its entirety, but it offers a counter narrative to official accounts of the events. A case in point may be found in *The Grenada Chronicles* account of General Austin’s radio address on the evening of October 19, 1983:

Maurice Bishop and his group fired on the soldiers killing two members of the PRA – Sergeant Dorset Peters and Warrant Officer, Raphael Mason, and wounding several others. The Revolutionary Armed Forces were forced to storm the Fort, and in the process the following persons were killed: Maurice Bishop, Unison Whiteman, Vincent Noel, Jacqueline Creft, Norris and Fitzroy Bain, among others. (19 October 1983)

The operative phrase above is “in the process” because the event attested to by witnesses in the communication center happened during the initial assault which is captured in several documentaries. The video footage and audio reveal a one-sided battle, at least the portion preserved

on film, resulting in citizens jumping from the walls of the Fort. Those eight persons listed above were arrested and taken to the top square and after some time executed against a wall. The video footage does not contradict General Austin except to show that his statement overplays the magnitude of the battle.

Officials' Report

As mentioned above, during the Carter Administration the United States had an ambassador based in Barbados for the Eastern Caribbean. Sally Shelton was interviewed twice, once for Frontline (1988) and again for Grenada Revisited (1991). It is not clear when the interviews took place, but in the Grenada Revisited interview, the ambassador speaks in the present tense indicating that it may have occurred before she left office, or certainly before the Invasion of 1983. The significance of both interviews is that the ambassador stated that (1) the PRG was making efforts to develop relationships [with the United States], and (2) that she did not see Grenada as a threat to the United States. Both interviews appear to be efforts to set the record straight, although it is not stated as such. In a 1991 print interview with the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, the Ambassador adds to the above by noting the complex nature of dealing with the PRG. Shelton found herself working at cross purposes with the new government saying that there were no plans to invade during the Carter Administration for good reason and that the students were not in danger. In answer to Charles Stuart Kennedy's questioning.

Kennedy – I assume you could get in [to Grenada]. Could You or not?

Shelton-Colby – Oh, yes. Yes, I did. I ultimately concluded, however that they did not want good relations with us. (46)

Shelton-Colby describes how once agreements were made and meetings concluded that by the time she arrived back in Barbados, the PRG would be attacking the United States in the press, radio, and TV. Shelton-Colby ultimately concluded that the PRG could not be trusted to follow through on agreements. What also may be visible in these instances were early divisions within the People's Revolutionary Government, as the events of 1983 would later reveal.

Kennedy – Did we see this as anything more than sort of something we hoped would work out, and we didn't see this as becoming a real focus of the military?

Shelton-Colby – After something of an effort, Stu, which I partially described, to improve the relationship with them, the decision was taken in Washington, against my recommendation to disengage from Grenada. . . I felt that was wrong, because I felt it was important to keep trying. (47)

Shelton confirms that during her tenure, no plans were in place for a military action.

Shelton-Colby - As I recollect, there was no consideration given whatsoever to actually invading, because short of a good reason, there [really] wasn't one. They were hostile but a lot of governments are hostile. (48)

Kennedy asked about the safety of the students:

Kennedy – Was the medical college established when you were there?

Shelton-Colby - It was there, it had been there for a long time.

Kennedy - Did you have any concerns about this?

Shelton-Colby - No, I didn't

Kennedy - How did you describe the medical college?

Shelton-Colby - The students were constantly reassuring me, when I would visit with any of them, that they did not feel in any danger whatsoever. The Grenadian

government left them totally alone. So, I did not perceive there being any particular threat to them. Of course, there was no violence while I was there. (48)

The ambassador's statements as a whole are complementary and reflect the ambassador's personal view that her efforts were not successful in bridging the gap between the two nations. The Carter Administration disengaged from bilateral and regional relations with Grenada but saw no need to attack the Island nation. Needless to say, Ambassador Shelton-Colby would not be around when the Reagan Administration began to step up its assault on the dangerous Spice Island. These interviews recorded on film and in print, provide opportunities to look inside the State Department just before it changed from one Administration to another. Together the interviews disturb the narrative that the United States feared the People's Revolutionary Government.

Contemporary Journalism

Dr. Cudjoe asks a most pertinent question: why did Bishop go to the Fort? Cudjoe quotes *The Grenadian Voice* of November 20, 1983:

Noel and Whiteman then led the people to the Market Square so that Bishop could address them. A section of the crowd however went with Bishop to Fort Rupert for which purposes is still unclear. Sometime shortly after 1:00 p.m. Norris Bain was in the Market Square assuring people that the Prime Minister would address them. Three armored cars arrived at Fort Rupert from Fort Frederick and started firing into the crowd. People screamed, with terror as they were shot, crushed, and smashed by the armored cars and many automatic rifles were firing. (15)

Two days later, a *Trinidad Guardian* report suggests that Bishop contacted the Cubans to assist him in being restored to power. Cudjoe brings up an intriguing theory about what Bishop may have expected to find when they entered the fort. Cudjoe suggests that “The Army apparently had moved its headquarters from fort Rupert to fort Frederick, during the time of Mr. Bishop’s house arrest” (15). If this was the case, then fort Rupert, which should have had a cache of weapons, was empty. This is corroborated by George Cherubin’s statement that there were no weapons in the fort. The fort was the communication center to the outside world and that certainly would be an important reason to go to the fort, but also the aim of securing weapons could also explain why Bishop choose going to the fort over going to Market Square. The choice of destination may have been based on what he expected to find there. Cudjoe supports his theory by quoting *The Trinidad Guardian* of November 22, 1983, in which an unidentified aide to Maurice Bishop stated:

We were faced with the problem of not having enough weapons to arm the masses, because the AKs (automatic rifles) we had were given to a group of comrades to capture the Telephone Company, so that Maurice could get a message to the outside world as to what was happening in the country, the former aide said. It was while these comrades were on their way to the Telephone Company, and the Prime Minister and the others were in the room discussing their next move, since there were no weapons in the fort, that the soldiers attacked the fort shooting into the crowd. (Cudjoe 16)

Mark Adkin has also documented that Bishop dispatched people to the telephone company, and that securing weapons was on Bishop’s mind on the morning of Bloody Wednesday (57).

Primary Sources

Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution is important because Paddington attempts to answer fundamental questions. The director uses the film to do more than perform a service of homage to the Revolution, but also to push back against the received American version of Grenadian history, in order to create a new Grenadian history. In order to increase the relevance of the investigation he successfully elevates Maurice Bishop to near mythic status, doing so through editing in a single scene. Bishop is captured in a 1983 *TeleSur* interview where he describes the potency of the Revolution while sitting by the sea. The scene is reminiscent of the Gospel of John, where the resurrected Messiah meets his disciples on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Paddington is subtle but manages what Jill Godmiller calls “the documentary moment of victory,” employing what might be called a “Bishop Substance” (Shapiro). An aura is created in which the fallen hero is forever present.

Evidence from the film indicates that in parts it may be taken as primary source documentation, which is not to say that the speakers are correct in their assessments, or that Paddington answered the fundamental question of responsibility, but that this film has historical value because it asked fundamental questions. After Abraham Zapruder filmed the Kennedy assassination, the film was bought and kept in corporate hands for a period and suppressed for years, but when released provided information only written about in the Warren Report. In like manner *Forward Ever* presents late primary-sourced views of some key members of the Grenada 17 who had only been released in the last few years before 2011. Although the events were in the recent past, they could not be fully explored because several of the key players had been unavailable. Some of these, then, are primary source interviews. They deserve the same scrutiny

and evaluation as other earlier primary source interviews and documents. Even with these interviews on the record, there are still things unsaid, and the search for what is in that silence is what the film adds to history.

The interviews of a few people from the documentary may shed light on the subject. Two of the interviews provide what I call “criterion facts” information found in the films themselves. In order they are Selwyn Strachan, Communications Director; Bob Evans, Director of Airport Construction; Peggy Nesfield, Director of Protocol; George Louison, Agriculture (Louison was interviewed by someone else); and Callistus Bernard, a soldier. The following interviews are assembled on the basis of their relevance to the question of executive decisions and subsequent actions.

Selwyn “Sello” Strachan is the key figure in this discussion because he was the member of the Central Committee who attempted to explain their position. Strachan, who sat in Fort Frederick that day with other unnamed Central Committee members, posits that the Committee was fearful of civil insurrection when Bishop entered Fort Rupert, and serious civil unrest could occur if citizens occupied the fort. To members of the Central Committee this was a disturbing turn of events. In *Forward Ever* the narration returns to Bishop’s entry into Fort Rupert. John Ventour who also suspected that the crowd was planning a military action, states that Christopher Stroude told Bishop that he could not bring civilians into the fort. What happened next changed the course of Grenadian history.

Paddington interviews Strachan, as he describes the events after Bishop’s release from house arrest, [The people and Bishop] ...were heading for military headquarters. Entering a military compound changes the entire [picture]. [The soldiers] were standing outside of the Armoured car:

not prepared for war. The ‘no armed civilians’ (sic) immediately started to fire on the soldiers. Conrad Mayers was shot, soldiers had to return fire [and] if fired upon they could return fire.

Strachan does not describe the assault on the fort. Documentary footage shows some of what happened next. After the assault Bernard stated that his assignment was to arrest the leaders. Arrest can carry the additional meaning of stop or end. Callistus Bernard received his orders when he left Fort Frederick and if he received additional orders it has never been officially confirmed. Strachan equivocates; both denying and perhaps confirming the charge stating that, “I don’t think arresting anybody was uppermost in anybody’s mind...” Strachan realizes the implications of what he has said, no one was thinking of arrests, and to be sure no prisoners were taken. Realizing this admission and its implications Strachan attempts to take partial responsibility for what happened,

Strachan - I know that I have to bear some responsibility for. . . I’m not saying I ordered the killings, but I have to bear some responsibility for what happened because I was one of the leaders.

Paddington questions him with a statement.

Paddington – Somebody made the decision.

Strachan - Or, somebodies. Do I have the answers, No?

Strachan blames the soldiers for getting out of control.

Strachan - The rage of the soldiers reached a certain peak, and anything could happen.

On the issue of white flares having been fired in Fort Rupert to signal the execution of the prisoners.

Strachan - Did not happen.

But he also says something to the effect that it would be difficult to determine if a flare had been fired with all of the commotion that day. Strachan acknowledges the suspicions of some that an executive decision was made.

Strachan - But that did not take place.

Paddington - Who's responsible for the killings?

Strachan - That is a very difficult question to answer.

R. G. Collingwood would ask "what does this statement mean? (275) An agreed upon decision to take collective responsibility for the decision might answer his question.

The following witnesses confirm that it is unlikely that a low-ranking soldier would execute a prime minister, that orders were in fact given to execute and the visual confirmations were given upon completion. Bob Evans, who was not an eyewitness to the events in Fort Rupert, because he had been arrested and was being detained, states boldly that between October 19 and October 25:

The Americans weren't here. [There were] heavy machine guns, [used in the shootings] everybody knows that the fort had to be cleaned up because it was gruesome. The bodies were cut in two. A lot of cleaning up, they brought the fire engines up there to wash the blood away. A lot of people saw... , know what happened.

Evans asks Paddington to name a country where a private in any army could put a prime minister up against a wall and shoot him. Paddington lets the question hang in the air.

Peggy Nesfield is treated with respect, filming in extreme closeup viewed straight on. She is an important witness, an authority who was a close friend of Bishop. Nesfield admits that "something was wrong" and that more than 1,000 people had been detained in four short years. Paddington cuts to Bishop explaining why detentions were necessary. Bishop says that there were

threats to National Security, and that some counterrevolutionaries needed to be confined for a period. He notes that confinement was preferable to killing people by, ironically, the firing squad or pretended shoot-outs in the hills, or accidents. The new government was adversely affecting some in the population. Nesfield tells Paddington that she also spoke with Bishop about the internal friction within the party and how he faced real opposition. Bishop dismissed her warning. She told Bishop “I think that they are working against you. . . I saw through them.” Later Bishop admitted that she was right. Paddington follows this logically with questions about what happened at Fort Rupert. Nesfield did not think it was spontaneous, or dependent upon momentary rage. She says, “It was planned; an order was given. Christopher Stroude at the trial said that he/they had been given an order by the CC. Some soldiers didn’t want to do it. Callistus Bernard told them that they had been given orders from the CC. They would have been killed.” This is a direct statement that the killings were in fact executions. According to Nesfield, both Stroude and Bernard spoke about orders received by the Central Committee.

The late George Louison determines that the Revolution failed because of Bernard Coard’s extreme ambition, the move to the left ideologically, and [Bishop’s] failure to get control of the party and thereby control of the army. Louison speaks about flares being fired in both forts. He states that red flares were fired from Fort Frederick after the Central Committee approved the executions and a white flare was fired from Rupert to confirm that the orders had been carried out. Louison is the only speaker who mentions flares, yet Selwyn Strachan almost confirms that the event did happen.

Callistus Bernard was a young soldier under orders. Director Paddington interviews the newly released Bernard and questions him about the events of October 19, 1983.

Bernard - I led my unit to the top square. Our mission was to arrest the leader(s).

Take the square.

Bernard states that Ewart Layne gave the order to take the top square. An undetermined period of time followed. Some say over an hour ensued between the time that the top square was taken and the firings against the wall that afternoon. Bernard says that the firings were spontaneous. If we take the then young soldier at his word, he is admitting that he went beyond his orders because the leaders were arrested. He did not remove them to Richmond Hill prison to be detained until trial. They never left Fort Rupert alive. Most likely the Central Committee did not expect Bishop to surrender. He would/should have been killed in the Rocket Propelled Grenade attack, and that chapter would be over. As recounted by George Cherubin firing an RPG through the roof of the Communications Center is probably indication enough that prisoners were not desired.

Paddington next asks about the lull or gap between taking the Fort and the shootings.

Bernard contradicts his prior statement that it was spontaneous.

Bernard – [it was] not spontaneous that we started shooting. [there was] psychological break when news came [that] the soldiers had died.

When the news came that Conrad Mayers had died, the soldiers reacted.

Paddington - Did you line them up?

Bernard - No.

Mark Adkin agrees, “[Lester] Redhead seemed to be giving orders; it was he who got the prisoners lined up against the wall” (73). Whether Paddington knew about this detail, is not certain, but if true, it confirms the evasion on Bernard’s part. This then is a minor truth within a major lie.

In a very curious side-statement the former soldier says that there were

Bernard - No speeches. [simply] soldiers cussing back and forth. Maurice was pretty calm; looked spaced out [he was] smoking.

According to Bernard the prisoners did not protest their executions, nor did they attempt to negotiate their ultimate fate. According to Tim Slinger, Bishop was said to have volunteered himself as sole victim and Jackie Creft was said by many to have protested that she was pregnant and should be spared. In any event they all died that day.

The director must have been working on a rumor that Bishop did not face his killers

Paddington - Was Bishop asked to turn his back?

Bernard - Didn't happen in my presence; that's just people talking in court, that didn't occur, to put additional sensationalism. Revenge is what happens in all parts of the world.

An open question is, at what hour did Conrad Mayers expire and when did the news get to Fort Rupert?

In an extreme closeup of Bernard, the offscreen director asks

Paddington - What did you actually do?

Bernard - We basically opened fire on them.

To underscore the point, the director cuts back to Bernard again.

Bernard - No order at all.

Despite the director's use of evidentiary editing to place responsibility at least in part in Bernard's lap, he allows Bernard space to end here

Bernard - We sincerely regret what happened on the 19th, should not have happened. My actions [have] led to a lot of pain, the whole revolution that we worked for [crumbled].

The interviews of both Strahan and Bernard add to the historical record because they are the first-hand accounts of participants who were willing to speak on the record about the events thirty-seven years ago. They sometimes complement one another and sometimes contradict. Their perspectives were different so it is understandable that the stories might not mesh. Paddington's interviews are damaging to the idea of a spontaneous eruption of emotion as the sole impetus for the shootings that day. But Paddington also allows a space for apology at least for Bernard.

Conclusion

Bill Nichols categorizes and organizes documentary film as a discipline among others that require adherence to facts. Placing documentary film alongside foreign policy, medicine, science, economics, military and educational policy, the high potential for effect in the real world is visible. Yet not a large percentage of all documentaries investigate deep enough to uncover hidden truths. As stated above, some of the documentaries discussed here do reach that level for some parts of the film, a level that turns fact into evidence. Whether or not audiences are persuaded or convinced, lies within their own cultural or social domains.

To employ Godmilownian terminology, usefulness in documentaries is found in factual reports, however creatively presented, that engage in sober discourse. When those reports uncover otherwise unknown or hidden information, then those documentaries are useful for addressing and solving problems in the real world. The usefulness is found in providing, directing, and pointing to ways for people to effect change in the real world. Clear-eyed factual documentaries lay new facts on the table and achieve a sort of a (forgive me) useful sobriety. There is little to be achieved by a retelling of the events, without unearthing the hidden facts. The problem with historical documentaries is that the people involved have had time to withdraw and erect barriers and can prevent the release of information that they feel is detrimental. Therefore, once the usual suspects, relevant social actors have been interviewed, often, they are made aware of public reaction and avoid further exposure. They determine which questions are potentially dangerous and which are not. But historical documentaries that focus on finite groups within small communities offer opportunities for diverse perspectives on any subject. Such is the case in Grenada. In small communities all knowledge is shared communally, and rarely are secrets kept for long. In other words, what person A knows about person B is also known by the entire group, and what person B

knows about person A is also known by the entire group. Therefore, there are untold living Grenadians who can offer perspectives on the Revolution that differ from what has been received so far. The Grenada Revolution requires a radical rethinking of its subject which offers a set of profound propositions and opportunities for revelation and transformation (*Citizenfour* np). Godmilow was generalizing above but it fits the specifics of the Grenada Revolution.

In the case of the Grenada Revolution, a thirty-seven-year period intervenes between those events and the present. Questions remain, which if addressed, could clear up areas that remain obscured. A documentary focusing on the Grenada 17 and which allows members to speak freely could help to clear the air with respect to the events of October 19. There may be additional footage from that day because the filming of events up to the firing on Fort Rupert starts and ends abruptly, there is no publicly available footage after the moments of citizens jumping from the walls of Fort Rupert. That was gruesome enough. But it was known at the time that the event had not ended, and that Bishop was being held alive in the Fort. So, it is possible that additional footage exists, and the known footage may be only the tip of an iceberg.

Some of the later documentaries analyzed in Chapter Two are relatively recent and allow room for further investigation because the events have not solidified into the historical record. After the airing of *Blackfish*, Sea World suspended animal shows involving Orcas; *The Witnesses* documents how The Watchtower Society has been sued repeatedly and found responsible for covering up child molestation; and *American Factory* follows the progress of the Chinese auto glass company Fuyao which rehabilitated an abandoned General Motors plant in Moraine, Ohio and then faced a culture clash with American workers who found it difficult to adapt to Fuyao's factory culture. Usefulness is not always found in opportunities to expose the guilty or take official action to correct a problem. Sometimes it is found in reshaping entrenched viewpoints as is found in *The*

Rachel Divide, the story of Rachel Dolezal, a white woman who identified as black, which challenged the boundaries of racial identification.

The Known Known

Something can be known from watching films like *Gimme Shelter* alone without having read any scholarship. First and foremost is that a murder was filmed during the concert. Meredith Hunter was not the only black male at the concert. The incident that led to Hunter's death was freeze-framed at the moment that Hunter pulls the gun from his coat. The next frame shows someone with a knife stab Hunter. What can be learned from the film might not change the conclusions of scholars, but a viewer can know that the Hunter killing was within the drugged and drunken milieu of that day and night. *Gimme Shelter* allows the viewer to see and hear the events of that day at the Altamont Speedway. As vivid as some of the writing on the concert has been, it does not surpass the effect of seeing the events on screen. A standard of sorts was set by this documentary film that had been only reached by the Zapruder film before.

In narrative filmmaking, the filmmaker is free to make creative choices and act upon those choices to complete their own dramatic vision. In documentary filmmaking, there is an unstated assumption that the filmmaker is presenting a version of truth using the facts at hand. In the case of the Grenada Revolution, some facts as well as interpretations are disputed and can be made to support one or more viewpoints of the events under scrutiny. The controversies are not premised on whether an event occurred, but rather on what the event reveals about the overall state of affairs at the time. In a climate like this, a filmmaker speculates at their own peril. Paddington attempts to anchor the film in the facts, and one way that *Forward Ever* does this is by presenting interviews with principal players. As the interviews play out on screen, it becomes clearer that at some point a

decision was made, agreed upon and given to execute Bishop and the cabinet members. The interviews point to the actions of the players during the crisis. Their actions facilitated their rise to power and later caused their downfall. It is clear that Bruce Paddington is convinced that Bishop and the other cabinet members were executed on orders.

The criterion at work here which enhances an understanding of Grenadian history is the evasiveness of Selwyn Strachan. He is uneasy when answering questions about how the soldiers were instructed, and nearly admits that flares were fired for communication. Furthermore, he posits without questioning that arrests were not uppermost in people's minds that day. He ruled out the intention to take prisoners. Again, the former Central Committee member accepts responsibility in the corporate sense, all but confirming that the body was responsible for what happened. This is attested to in Adkin (57) and Wilder (19 October 1983, 126). When Paddington asked him if somebody was responsible, Strachan responds in the plural. Yet he would not name any co-conspirators in the military action. No one except the participants can know exactly what happened that week and the days leading up to the executions. He is essentially correct in that the decision was more corporate than individual. But future historians must speak to the record and ask why Strahan was willing to accept partial responsibility without admitting that an executive decision was made. Negligence is a dereliction of duty. In all of the confusion these things happened and as a member of the Central Committee his actions were called into question. Bernard Coard indicates another operating principle was at work in an interview with Raoul Pantin in 2009:

We took moral and political responsibility for what happened. We did so many things that were wrong. And we've apologized. We don't apportion blame. We take collective responsibility for everything that went wrong. We accept full moral and political responsibility for all of it. (*T & T Express*).

This crucial space of accepting joint responsibility was occupied by the Grenada 17 and for more than twenty years they collectively paid the price.

In the case of Callistus Bernard the criterion is the curious admission and explanation found on film. Bernard said that no orders were received by him to execute. No order was given or received, but for some reason he paused and then carried out the executions. The exact moment of Conrad Mayer's death could confirm Bernard's claim that the soldiers' emotions got the best of them when they heard about it. At this point his soldiers fired spontaneously on the prisoners to avenge Mayer's death. Bernard admits that he did not control his soldiers. Yet neither he, nor his soldiers, were court-martialed for acting without authority. In fact, Bernard was promoted to become a member of the ruling Revolutionary Military Council. With different results in mind, both men divert attention away from other members of the Central Committee. These are the filmed actions and reactions of the two principal players in the film and the interviews are concrete documentations of their actions at a historical moment. The men had completed their sentences and were in no danger of double jeopardy. The one thing that is not so apparent at first glance is that both men were telling a certain truth. Bernard Coard, speaking generally about procedure, confirms that a collective decision would have been made about what to do that day, and it may not have been necessary to give a specific order prior to the executions. However, there are local urban myths about a written order to execute being hand-delivered to Bernard. Mark Adkin repeats a version of this rumor in his retelling of the events of that day (*Urgent Fury* 74). In Adkin's version Bernard himself travels to Fort Frederick to receive further instructions.

In Paddington's film the focus is on Bernard Coard, who was not interviewed in the film. The fact that Coard or other prominent members of the Revolutionary Military Council were not interviewed is an indication of where his thoughts and sentiments lie. Coard apologizes in an

interview on local television. He says that he has apologized publicly and privately, but that some families cannot reconcile. The interviewer does not ask Coard if he is apologizing for ordering the executions. What the director places on the record are the testimonies of principal players answering direct questions about the part that they played in the events at the end of the Grenadian Revolution. The interviews are part of the historical record.

Documentaries that focus on crime-solving are popular because they seem to rectify specific problems. But legal rectification was found in a court of law and in this case the defendant spent many years in prison and has paid the debt to society. A documentarian can aid in the reintegration in the popular mind of persons regarded as outcasts. Filmmakers sometimes have a platform that when used can aid such persons. Nichols points out how “such an effort involves hearing the confession of the perpetrator, assigning responsibility at every level, and finding ways to reintegrate the traumatized perpetrator back into the social fabric that produced him or her” (*Speaking Truths* 194). This aspect is found in Bruce Paddington’s film and to a lesser degree in *Grenada: Lessons from a Cold War*, whose uncredited director provides the same space to a single individual to attempt reconciliation. The individual apologizes without using the word and moves toward reintegration.

Filmmakers cannot include every fact they uncover. Editing is required to make a coherent presentation. Brian Winston allows that

all communication must inevitably omit information - the whole truth, whatever it might be is never available. . . .but there comes a point-perhaps not of itself problematic-where the documentarist’s basic task of “showing us life,” is distorted by a lack of information and the audience is thereby prevented from coming to

judgment. Omission then constitutes de-facto, although still perhaps ethically acceptable dereliction of duty to the audience. A *sin* of omission is in play. (178)

The historical record changes as new information comes to the fore. However, the record suffers when historians and filmmakers omit plausible possibilities that may have played a part in the discussion. I think that this is the case here as most of the literature and films omit significant factors in the story. In this discussion of what transpired on October 19, 1983, it is seldom mentioned that Maurice Bishop intended to engage the Central Committee in a military action. Among the exceptions are the above-mentioned Selwyn Cudjoe, Mark Adkin, and the former Attorney General for the PRG Richard Hart: all mention that Bishop was arming people in the fort. Paddington does address the issue in the negative, as he interviews Einstein Louison who denies the charge. The extent to which Bishop was actively seeking weapons is not clear, but the fact that it is mentioned more than once is significant. The fact that weapons could not be secured is perhaps a reason that Bishop did not resist for long and surrendered. If Callistus Bernard is correct when he says that Bishop did not attempt to demand or negotiate a release, or trial, may be Bishop's recognition that his cause was lost. In other words, he was the leader, his soldiers fought, but his side lost. This could explain why, after the surrender, he saw no basis to plead for his life. All of the scholarship, film footage and interviews in one film show the overwhelming force inflicted on the people in the communications center. Which may confirm this other possibility, which is that Bishop attempted a defense. When this issue is given more credence, it is easier to understand the viewpoint of the Central Committee. They perceived themselves to be engaged in a battle, a battle in which they prevailed, but the price of victory would be considerable, including an invasion, a humiliating trial, convictions, and years in prison.

Distortions of fact create doubt about the truth in all areas. Misinformation and/or misstatements of fact, intentional or not, are among these distortions. A case in point can be found in Norris Wilkins' *The Peaceful Revolution* where the narrator Lady V says, "hundreds of terrified citizens jumped to their deaths." The famous film footage found in several documentaries show people jumping from the walls of Fort Rupert. The evidence for the numerous deaths has never been presented. According to *thegrenadarevolutiononline.com*, using admittedly secondary sources, only twenty-two people are documented as having died as a result of events that day in Fort Rupert. This includes the eight people known to have been executed that day. Most of the other deaths are from gunshot wounds and in some of the other cases the causes are unstated. But none are specifically stated to be from injuries incurred from persons jumping from the walls of Fort Rupert. Ann Peters and Einstein Louison survived the jump from Fort Rupert and Louison was injured. If other deaths had occurred due to people jumping from the walls, the names of the dead and their families would be legendary in such a small society as Grenada. With the exception of Kairouane, the names of the Caribs who jumped to their deaths at Sauteurs are unknown today, but the names of those who jumped to their deaths at Fort Rupert would be well known. This unconfirmed claim is a form of disinformation which distorts the historical record.

Regarding the Future

Documentarians can access the National Archives files to investigate the level of participation by US agencies in Grenadian affairs. This would certainly include further investigation into the extent of CIA interference. If Phillip Agee was correct, even if by implication, then there were far more players involved in funding and supplying of arms to counterrevolutionaries. If as John Douglas hints in his documentaries, the CIA was supplying arms to Gairy through Chile in the

mid to late 1970s, then the New Jewel Movement was targeted before it came to power. The foreign press, particularly in the Caribbean, had been persuaded to disparage the People's Revolutionary Government before the results were in. The unnamed trade unionists that participated in the attempted strike in late 1979 are unidentified in documentaries. American Oil companies must have played a part in coordinating the strike. The lethality and number of arms found in 1979 have never been explained in documentaries. A great number of questions are unanswered about matters like these.

Within the Caribbean, documentarians may be able to unearth more on the continuing relationship between Cuba and Grenada. During the years of the PRG Cuba was more than a reservoir for weapons. They sent doctors, dentists, construction workers and soldiers to aid the nascent People's Revolutionary Government, which is confirmed in *Grenada: Lessons from a Cold War*. The documentary also shows a present connection between the two nations

Shalini Puri's succinct analysis of a central flaw in the first generation of discourse on the Grenada Revolution applies to the first generation of documentary analysis as well. Puri notes that "The discourse that commemorates the Revolution often repeats one flaw of the Revolution and its vanguard: their preoccupation with heroes and their excessive focus o[n] the leadership" (150). It is understandable that in both cases an effort is made to prove that the Revolution was a worthy effort, and its most visible representatives would remind readers and viewers of the Grenada Revolution. First among equals was Maurice Bishop and a sort of hero-worship surrounds his memory and prevails in the effort of some documentarians. The Prime Minister was/is worthy of praise for his vision and efforts to make the Revolution a lasting reality. However, what was and is being lost are other aspects of that period that deserve additional attention.

The Grenada Revolution promoted health care as a right, free milk for pregnant women, free education, and grass-roots participation in the political process. The REVO did not fully accomplish all that it set out to do. It left an incomplete legacy, which has not persisted. Internally Grenada had to reconcile abandoning the progressive advances made in health care, education, and gender equality.

Future documentarians working within Grenada on the Revolution have a considerable amount of material to mine. A major faction within Grenadian society, which did not fill much screen time was the Rastafarian movement: their early participation in the People's Revolutionary Army, their problems with the Bishop government, their attempt to establish a free-standing community within Grenada, and the allegations of external interference that may have unfairly tainted their reputation cost them a more honorable place in Grenadian history. A focus in this corner of the society would yield an enormous amount of information that would add to all perspectives about who and what the PRG actually was. The sins of the Rastafarians, whatever they were, excised them from the story of the Grenadian Revolution in documentaries. Documentarians can investigate how the Revolution functioned in other parts of the nation like Carriacou and Petit Martinique. People living outside the capital would necessarily have a different view of those events thirty-six years ago.

The future holds the possibility of examining the results of two courses of action: aligning with the Soviet Union and falling victim to the United States. A young man from Tivoli expressed this concern at a conference in 2019. Looking back, he was concerned about the consequences of "falling into the arms" of the Soviet Union or United States. This view expressed the real desire of many during the Revolution to avoid entanglement with either superpower. The Soviet Union provided material support via Cuba and maintained a certain distance from Grenada. The economy

was managed by US interests after the Invasion and aid was often insufficient, misappropriated, or misused. Documentaries show that contact with each nation was on the superpower's terms and benefited the superpower first. These aspects of the Revolution and aftermath will find rich yields of vital information about the REVO that highlight the participation of Grenadians who gave of their energies and lives so as to make the Grenada Revolution a reality. The first level of focus has been on leadership and rightly so, but leaders are worthy of only so much attention, especially when the followers are doing the work. It was ordinary Grenadians who put aside personal gain, who took on the task of learning a new economic philosophy, who worked collectively to build a new society, who willingly stood against the United States, knowing the futility of such a task..

Investigations of the Revolution will go on for some time because the Revolution was the people. Many of those people that lived at that time in Grenada, or were expatriates living abroad, are still alive. It is in these areas that the most research will proceed rather than reading texts, listening to audio, or watching film. Once entered into the record these forms of documentation are subsumed into the corpus of material that form opinion. The value will not diminish except when and where the documentation is faulty. Perhaps there are more original written sources, audio recordings or film archives that will yet emerge to inform future generations. When found and made public these artifacts will notably add to an enhanced understanding of the Grenada Revolution.

Appendix A: Documentaries on the Grenada Revolution

(Chronological Order)

1974

Associated Press – *General Strike*

1979

Associated Press - *Grenada Witchcraft*

Grenada Coup

Grenada Bishop's Move

1980

Stand Up Grenada. Dir. John Douglas, Ellen Ray. Intelligent Research and Information Service, 47 mins.

Grenada: Portrait of a Revolution. Dir. Joanne Kelly. KQED, 30 mins

Grenada: Pequeño País, Gran Revolución. El Instituto Cubano Del Arte E Industria Cinematograficos, 27 mins

Grenada: Nobody's Backyard. Dir. Ellen Ray. Covert Action, - unavailable

Grenade: Six Mois D'Une Revolution. Dir. Oliver Landau. ISKRA – unavailable

1981

Associated Press - *Grenada Caribbean Socialism, Caribbean Socialism Cuts, 1 and 2*

1983

Associated Press – US Barbados - Invades Grenada,

Grenada: Take Off of a Dream. Dir. Rigoberto López. 32 mins. – unavailable

1984: The Future Coming Towards Us.- Dir. John Douglas. Caribbean Research Institute.
56 mins.

1984

Maurice. Dir. Estela Bravos. National Film Board of Canada. 26 mins.

National Archives, Arts and Culture: TV Satellite File: Special Report on Grenada, 15
mins.

1986

Heartbreak Ridge. Directed by Clint Eastwood. Malpaso Productions, (conventional
Hollywood drama), 140 mins.

National Archives, Politics International: *Visit of President Reagan to Grenada.* ARC:
54978, 24 mins.

1987

The Power of Television News/ The Power of Pictures. WETA, 60 mins.

1988

Operation Urgent Fury. Frontline. PBS, 57 mins.

1991

Grenada Revisited. America's Defense Monitor, WHMM

1998

Associated Press – Cuban President Fidel Castro Visits Grenada

2005

Prisoners of the Cold War. Dir, David Grey. Silver City Films.

Part 1 – Revolution, Part 2 – Detainees – Collapse,

Part 3 – Invasion and Regime Change, Part 4 – Arrest and Trial,

Part 5 – Travesty, Part 6 – Healing, Part 7 - Hope

2013

Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution. Directed by Bruce Paddington. 113 mins.

Operation Urgent Fury: Military Channel, 44 mins.

2015

Grenada: Lessons from a Cold War. China Global Television Network , 21 mins.

2016

The House on Coco Road, Directed by Damani Baker, Danny Glover, 79 mins.

2017

Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution. Directed by Norris Wilkins, CITV, 65 mins

2019

Slinger, Tim. *Interview with Tin Slinger*. Nationnews.com, 26 mins.

Maurice Saw Them Coming. Directed by Norris Wilkins. CITV

The Revolution is under Attack. 22 mins

Acts Against the Revolution. 17 mins

Defending the Revolution. 23 mins.

Appendix B: Social Actors

(Alphabetical Order)

Maurice Bishop is the subject or object of all documentaries on the Grenada Revolution and is therefore not listed.

Associated Press – (1973 – undated). Preparation for Independence; Independence – Mighty Eagle; Grenada Coup, Grenada Bishop’s Move – Eric Gairy; Grenada Caribbean Socialism; Caribbean Socialism Cuts - Merle Hodge; US Invades Grenada; Fidel Visits Grenada – Fidel Castro, Alimenta Bishop.

Forward Ever: The Killing of a Revolution – Selwyn Strachan, Chris Stroude, Ann Peters, George Cherubin, John Ventour, Lyden Ramdhanny, George Louison, Einstein Louison, Ann Bain, Bob Evans, Callistus Bernard, Kendrix Radix, Peggy Nesfield, Evelyn Whiteman, Dr. Keith Mitchell, Tillman Thomas, Pamela Cherubin, Dr. Terrance Marryshow, Bernard Coard, Marcelle Belmar, Nellie Payne, Beverly Steele, Leslie Pierre, Godfrey Augustine, Brother Valentine, Unison Whiteman, Fitzroy Bain, Andrew Brzezinski, Hudsin Austin.

Grenada: Lessons from a Cold War - Stephen Gibbs, Dr. Terry Marryshow, Irma Vietia, Wynston Whyte, Callistus Bernard, Hudson Austin, Robert Ross, Tillman Thomas, Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher.

Grenada: Nobody’s Backyard – unavailable

Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution. – Lady V, Ronald Reagan, Val Cornwall, Caldwell Taylor, Desimma Williams, McGodden Kerensky Grant, Mighty Sparrow, Brother Valentino,

Dorcas Braveboy, Black Stalin, Ronald Dullums, Theresa Simeon, Bob Evans. Bernard Coard, Phillis Coard, The Beast.

Grenada: Pequeño País, Gran Revolución. – José Rodríguez, Eric Gairy as subject, Hudsin Austin, Bernard Coard.

Grenada: Portrait of a Revolution – Alister Hughes, Unison Whiteman, John Beggs, Phyllis Coard, Ray Donnell, Angela Bishop, Major Louison, George Louison, Lloyd Noel, Kendrick Radix, American tourists, unidentified American woman.

Grenada Revisited. America's Defense Monitor - Sandy Gotherd, Sally Shelton, Lyden Ramdhanny, Kendrick Radix, Desimma Williams, Robert Jordan, Ronald Reagan.

Grenada: Take Off of a Dream – unavailable

Grenada: Six Mois D'Une Revolution - unavailable

Heartbreak Ridge - Clint Eastwood, Mario Van Peebles. Moses Gunn.

The House on Coco Road - Damani Baker, Fannie Haughton, Angela Davis, Fania Davis, Ronald Dullums, Alimenta Bishop, Ann Bishop, Nadia Bishop, Ronald Reagan

Maurice – Senator, Alimenta Bishop, Ann Bishop, Nicholas Braithwaite, Kendrick Radix, Lyden Ramdhanny, George Louison, Scorpion, Judy Williams.

Maurice Saw Them Coming - (1) The Revolution is under Attack, (2) Acts Against the Revolution (3) Defending the Revolution – Lady V, Fitzroy Bain, George Louison, Ann Bishop, Alimenta Bishop, Admiral Robert McKenzie

Nation News – Tim Slinger, Grenada Remembered: The Trial

National Archives, Arts and Culture: TV Satellite File: Special Report on Grenada - Citizens

jump from walls of Fort Rupert, Charles McIntyre, Nicholas Braithwaite, Herbert Blaze, Francis Alexis, George Brizan, Richard Hill, Leslie Pierre, Alistor Hughes.

National Archives, Politics International: Visit of President Reagan to Grenada – Ronald

Reagan.

1984: The Future Coming Towards Us - Vinnie Burroughs, Brian Beggs, Caldwell Taylor,

Desimma Williams, Val Cornwall, McGodden Kerensky Grant, Darcas Braveboy, Bob Evans, Fitzroy Bain, Phillis Coard, Bernard Coard, Candia Alleyne, Caldwell Taylor, Ronald Dullums, Theresa Simeon, Christine Ventour, unidentified men on the street and unidentified young girl.

Operation Urgent Fury – Military Channel - Bruce McGraw, Charles Modica, Paul Price, Eric

Golway, Terry Pohland, Brian Duffy, Gerry Izzo, Stephen Trujillo.

Operation Urgent Fury - Frontline. – Seymour Hersh, Judy Woodruff.

The Power of Television News/ The Power of Pictures. – Edwin Newman .

Prisoners of the Cold War – Fiz Marcus.

Part 1 – Revolution – Jackie McKenzie, Richard Hart, John Kelly, Crofton Croffe, Jean Tate, Noreen Scott.

Part 2 – Detainees – Collapse – John Kelly, Noreen Scott, Crofton Croffe.

Part 3 – Invasion and Regime Change – Piers Bannister, Richard Hart, John Kelly, Jackie McKenzie.

Part 4 – Arrest and Trial – Alan Scott.

Part 5 – Travesty – Piers Bannister, Crofton Croffe, Tony Benn, Gus John, John Kelly.

Part 6 – Healing – Richard Hart, Jackie McKenzie, Piers Bannister, John Kelly, Gus John, Leslie Pierre.

Part 7 – Hope – Noreen Scott, Bishop Desmond Tutu, Richard Hart, Crofton Croffe, Jackie McKenzie.

Stand Up Grenada. – Desimma Williams, Phillis Coard, Beverly Steele, Lord Short Shirt, Phillip Agee, Jimmy Carter, Mighty Swallow, Rastafarian soldier, Bernard Coard, Magnificent Six.

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