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Preface

This book is primarily intended for anyone with an interest in documentary film studies, and especially the transformations associated with the production of documentaries during the long 1960s. Hopefully, it might also be of some use to researchers and teachers working across interdisciplinary areas such as health and medical humanities, disability studies, and comparative cinema and screen studies.

In scope and argument, it inevitably focuses on the relations between documentary and radical psychiatry within a predominantly Western context. It is true that some psychiatrists—influenced by the writings of figures like Albert Memmi, Paulo Freire, Octave Mannoni, and Frantz Fanon—wanted to more actively "decolonize madness" but in applying essentially Western categories and cultural assumptions to historically colonised societies, they risked becoming complicit in a neo-colonial enterprise rather than an anti-colonial one. This is an important issue in the history and politics of documentary film (especially, given the "humanitarian" role often attributed to ethnographic filmmaking) and to do it justice would require a dedicated study involving extensive archival and transcultural research. In general, documentary filmmaking on the relations between radical psychiatry and anti-colonialism is rare enough, and even contemporary films about Fanon—for example, *Concerning Violence* (Goran Hugo Olsson, 2014) or Isaac Julien's *Frantz Fanon: Black Skin, White Mask* (1995)—will tend to focus on biography and political theory, rather than psychiatry and Fanon's relationship with institutional psychotherapy. That all said, *Frantz Fanon: Memories from the Asylum*, a 2002

documentary directed by the Algerian filmmaker, Abdenour Zahzah, is a notable exception in this regard.

For social historians of the long 1960s, the relationship between radical psychiatry and feminism is similarly important, although again there are relatively few independent documentaries from that era on the work of feminist "anti-psychiatry" campaigners in the US, like Hogie Wyckoff, Phyllis Chesler, Judi Chamberlin, or within a more European context, figures such as Françoise Dolto, Juliette Favez-Boutonnier, or Antionette Fouque and the Psychanalyse et Politique group. Maud Mannoni and the special education project she established at Bonneuil-sur-Marne was the subject of two documentaries, both directed by Guy Seligmann (*Vivre à Bonneuil*, 1974; *Secrète Enfance*, 1977), and her associations with Jacques Lacan, the Clinic of La Borde, Fernaud Deligny, and even RD Laing and David Cooper, created opportunities for dialogue between alternative pedagogy, institutional psychotherapy, and "anti-psychiatry". Although reference is made to these connections in this book, a more wide-ranging discussion would distract from its ostensible focus on feature documentaries, rather than shorter-form interview-based productions for television, education or training purposes. Furthermore, as the 1970s unfolded many feminist therapists and theorists (including Dolto, Mannoni, Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Juliet Mitchell, and Jessica Benjamin, for example) became more interested in exploring the possibilities presented by psychoanalytic feminism than in advocating for, or against, radical psychiatry. The commitment to filmmaking within this intellectual and activist context was also increasingly expressed through avant-garde, counter-cinema forms and practices, as in the case of figures like Laura Mulvey (*Riddles of the Sphinx*, 1974), Carola Klein (*Mirror Phase*, 1978), Dore O (*Kaskara*, 1974), and the Jay Street Collective's *Sigmund Freud's Dora: A Case of Mistaken Identity* (1979).

Yvonne Rainer's *Journeys from Berlin/1971* (1980) also belongs to that tradition, and its references to the Red Army Faction (RAF)/Baader-Meinhof Group might implicitly accuse this book of being insufficiently critical of radical psychiatry; especially in relation to its more extremist elements, such as the Socialist Patients' Collective (SPK/Sozialistisches Patientenkollektiv). Based in Heidelberg, and founded by Wolfgang Huber in 1970, the SPK counted amongst its ranks individuals closely associated with the RAF. However, in disseminating its political demands, the SPK preferred publishing articles, pamphlets, and manifestos rather than producing documentary films. Similarly, filmmaking was not the

preferred, or even a very practical, mode of communication for intercultural and "anti-psychiatry" movements in Latin America, especially in Mexico, Argentina, and El Salvador, where the work and writings of figures like Cooper, Guattari, Franco Basaglia and Franca Ongara Basaglia, Thomas Szasz, Marie Langer, and Robert Castel directly influenced organisations such as the Red Latinoamericana de Alternativas a la Psiquiatría, or the Federación Argentina de Psiquiatras (FAP).

All of this might seem a somewhat long-winded way of pointing out that this book has not been written by a historian or anthropologist of psychiatry. The critical practice adopted throughout is attentive to relevant contexts without unduly privileging them over questions of cinematic form, structure, intention, and method. Just because a documentary filmmaker's motives are good does not necessarily mean they are pure, any more than because something is factual means it is true. All documentary filmmakers (whether they like to admit it or not) are involved in negotiating these paradoxes: to research, write, frame, shoot, edit, and produce a documentary film is to enter into realms of creativity, imagination, choice and subjectivity. Hopefully, what follows is sympathetic to filmmakers who embrace this reality and who do not presume to possess "the truth", and who, in their filmmaking, recognise an opportunity to discover something about themselves as well as radical psychiatry and the politics of mental illness.

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