



**Den Norske Fredsfilmpriisen**  
The Norwegian Peace Film Award

# REEL PEACE

## THE EMERGING FIELD OF PEACE FILM

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## **Abstract**

The thesis aims to shed light on the emerging field of peace film and the discourses that describe the field. This part of peace media has steadily increased since the new millennium, but has been given little academic attention. Rather than analysing the peace films themselves, how they are received and used in social settings is the focal point of the research. Peace media institutions share the view that it is vitally important to bring our discourses and frames into the light of consciousness. Hence, discourses and frames are a main subject of analysis in this thesis. The peace film field is still an emerging field, and therefore there is not a common understanding of what it entails. This is what the thesis intends to explore, hopefully providing a contribution to the study of peace and the media, and in particular new knowledge about the peace film field.

Keywords in this thesis are: peace, film, discourse, change, power, dialogue, social, audience, reception, engagement, political, art.

## **Sammendrag (in Norwegian)**

Masteroppgaven tar for seg det fremvoksende fredsfilmfeltet og diskursene som beskriver dette feltet. Den fokuserer på et område innen fredsmedia som har vært i stadig vekst siden millenniumskiftet, men som så langt har blitt viet lite akademisk oppmerksomhet. Heller enn å analysere fredsfilmene, har fokus i forskningen vært på hvordan fredsfilmer blir mottatt og brukt i sosiale sammenhenger. Det hersker enighet blant fredsmedia-institusjoner om at det er viktig å sette søkelys på de diskursene og rammene vi ubevisst er en del av. Derfor fokuserer oppgavens analyse hovedsakelig på diskurser og rammer. Fredsfilmfeltet er fortsatt i etableringsfasen, så det finnes ingen felles forståelse av hva det omfatter. Det er dette oppgaven søker å utforske, forhåpentlig som et bidrag til studiet av fred og medier, og særlig til ny kunnskap om fredsfilmfeltet.

Nøkkelord i oppgaven er: fred, film, diskurs, forandring, makt, dialog, sosial, publikum, mottakelse, engasjement, politisk, kunst.

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*Jenny Sørensen Vaage  
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# 1 . INTRODUCTION

*“Make art, not war”<sup>1</sup>*

In this thesis I investigate peace film as an emerging field within peace media. The following pages constitute an attempt to map and frame this emerging field. As a practical phenomenon, peace films are labelled more and more often at film festivals around the world. Both at established film festivals, such as Berlin International Film Festival (The Berlinale), and at specialised peace film festivals the term is accepted as a description of a group of films. There are several examples of peace film awards in connection to established film festivals. *The Independent Peace Film Award* (FFP)<sup>2</sup> is awarded annually at the Berlin International Film Festival and is to this date the only peace film award at an A-level festival.<sup>3</sup> This award has existed since 1986, and is the oldest peace film institution I have come across in my research. I have also chosen to include *the Norwegian Peace Film Award* (NoPFA), which is awarded annually at Tromsø International Film Festival, Norway. To this day, it is the only peace film award in Norway. These two peace film awards are part of the empirical material in this thesis.

Peace film *awards* are only one part of the puzzle that constitutes the peace film field. In some places, people have started specific peace film festivals that celebrate the films labelled ‘peace film’. In this thesis two such film festivals, *the Global Peace Film Festival* in Florida and *the New York Peace Film Festival* in New York, both in the USA, will be included. As my data will show, peace films seem to be a rather heterogeneous group of films.

## 1.1 Background for the Study

Consider how much you know because you have seen it on film. Several of history’s most important events in modern time have been documented on film and have thus contributed in shaping our collective view of the events. The film medium has, from the start, taken us to places we have never been and shown us phenomena we otherwise never would have seen. In this sense, films may be understood as texts.

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<sup>1</sup>The motto of Jimmy Mirikitani, Grand Master Artist, in the film *The Cats of Mirikitani*

<sup>2</sup>Friedens Film Preis

<sup>3</sup>The *International Federation of Film Producers Associations* (FIAPF) have compiled a list of the most prestigious festivals known as ”A festivals” or “category one”

## **Personal Experiences**

My motivation for writing about this field is based on my experience as a volunteer at film festivals. In January 2011 I volunteered for the first time at Tromsø International Film Festival (TIFF). There I was given the task of coordinating the Norwegian Peace Film Award (NoPFA) jury. This was one of my first experiences with peace film.

The first film I saw that had been labelled ‘peace film’ by an award or a festival was Linda Hattendorf’s *The Cats of Mirikitani* (2006). This was in 2007, when the film was awarded that year’s Norwegian Peace Film Award. The film made a deep impact on me. Years later (in 2011) I met the American director, Linda Hattendorf, in Tromsø when she came to be a member of the very jury I was coordinating at TIFF. I found it interesting that a filmmaker who won the award, a few years later was invited back as a member of the awarding jury. Since then I have been in New York and worked with Hattendorf on her latest project, a documentary on cultures of peace. Through these meetings I got to experience in depth what peace film can be about. This motivated to make it the topic of my thesis.

Due to these encounters with peace film, I found it curious that there existed so little research on this field. When I found that this topic so far has received little academic attention, my motivation only grew stronger. To my knowledge there is no other thesis written specifically on the topic of peace film as a field.

### **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The peace film field is still an emerging field, and as a consequence there is not a common understanding of what it entails. This is what this thesis intends to explore, hopefully providing a contribution to the study of peace and the media, and in particular new knowledge about the peace film field. Rather than the films themselves, how they are received and used in social settings is the focal point of my research.

**The research questions** that I aspire to answer in this thesis are:

How and when did the peace film field emerge in Western culture? Which discourses describe the emerging peace film field? And how are these discourses constructed?

The empirical material and methodology applied in answering the research questions are presented in the sections below.

## 1.3 Empirical material

### The Questionnaires

As part of my research for this thesis, I distributed questionnaires by email to several peace film institutions in the USA, Germany and Norway. I sent the questionnaires to the current board members of the NoPFA (Norwegian Peace Film Award), and received replies from two of the three: Greuel and Bjørhovde. From Germany, Gorges, jury-coordinator and member of the board of the FFP (International Peace Film Award, Berlin), responded to the questionnaire I sent her. The executive director and founder of the GPF (Global Peace Film Festival, Orlando), Streich, also contributed answers to the questionnaire. From the NYPPF (New York Peace Film Festival), Co-Founder and Executive Producer, Tanaka, responded. In addition to sending the questionnaire to different peace film institutions, I also sent an expanded version of it to peace filmmaker Linda Hattendorf. She received a questionnaire that contained all the questions sent to the institutions, in addition to some film specific questions about *The Cats of Mirikitani*.

The questions I distributed were focused on the characteristics and criteria of peace films and its contexts. When forming the questions, I regarded peace film as a phenomenon, and it was partly the responses to this that made me reconsider and rather view it as an emerging field. All the respondents have given written consent for public exposure of their responses connected to this research. The responses to the questionnaires will be securely stored, and can potentially be accessed on request. The respondents were:

1. Ulla **Gorges** – The International Peace Film Prize, Berlin
2. Gerd **Bjørhovde** – The Norwegian Peace Film Award, Tromsø
3. Hermann **Greuel** – The Norwegian Peace Film Award, Tromsø



4. Nina **Streich** – The Global Peace Film Festival, Orlando, Florida
5. Yumi **Tanaka** – The New York Peace Film Festival, New York
6. Linda **Hattendorf** – Peace Filmmaker, located in New York

From this point on, the respondents are referred to by last name only.

When the respondents are quoted in the text, the reference is coded as follows: First letter in the respondent's last names (in the case of Gorges and Greuel, the first two letters), followed by the letter Q (referring to question) and a number (showing which question in the questionnaire the response is an answer to). I.e.: Go-Q1 refers to Ulla Gorges' answer to the first question in the questionnaire.

### **The Websites of the Peace Film Institutions**

In addition to the responses to the questionnaires, the websites of the peace film festivals and awards are also included in the empirical material. The various peace film institutions all have a mission statement or other form of description of what they view as peace films, or the characteristics they look for in the films they label with this term. The NoPFA does not actually use the term 'mission statement' on their website, but rather call it 'regulations'. The regulations are an account of what kind of film that can be awarded the NoPFA. Like the NoPFA, the FFP does not present a specific mission statement on their website, but on the English translation of it, the theme and range of the films that have been awarded the prize is presented. Unlike the awards, both the NYPPF and the GPF have specific mission statements on their websites.

### **A Film Selection**

To get a general idea of what kind of films are labelled 'peace film', the film selections of the NoPFA and the FFP are presented. In order to do so I have compiled two schemas (one for the FFP awardees and one for the NoPFA awardees) where the films are presented with title, nationality, director, producers, subject, theme, genre and award year. These two schemas are attached as appendixes. Rather than a part of the analysis, this presentation supplies a context to the mapping and framing of the peace film field.

## **Filmmaker Linda Hattendorf and *The Cats of Mirikitani***

Due to my access to this material, I have chosen the filmmaker Linda Hattendorf and her film *the Cats of Mirikitani* (2006) as a shadow case, intended to give resonance to the findings in the thesis. Hattendorf is, in this context, a notable filmmaker, in that her film project (which I was involved with in the spring semester of 2013) is explicitly intended to be a peace film.

### **1.4 Thesis Structure**

In the attempt to answer my research questions, an empirical analysis was needed. To meet the aim of my study of discovering the discourses of peace film, the methodology applied on the empirical material is threefold. First, in order to map out the field, a description of a selection of films that have been labelled “peace film”; secondly, discourse analysis with the specific method of qualitative content analysis of the questionnaires; and third, a case presentation of the filmmaker Linda Hattendorf and her award-winning film *The Cats of Mirikitani*.

In this investigation of the peace film field I adopt an interdisciplinary approach, using theories from peace and conflict studies as well as media studies. Variations on the theme of discourse theory can be found in the disciplines of anthropology, communication, linguistics, literary studies, political science, social psychology, and sociology, as well as in interdisciplinary fields such as cultural studies. These theoretical perspectives inform my methodology of discourse analysis. Finally there is an epistemology, a theory of knowledge, embedded in my theoretical perspective and thereby in my methodology. Thus, generally speaking, the epistemology informs the theoretical perspective, which in turn informs the methodology that guides the choice of method. As will be shown in the theory chapter, in undertaking discourse analysis, theory and method are not always easily separated.

In chapter 2, “Mapping the Peace Film Field”, the width and scope of the peace film field is examined. I include contextual factors such as the historical circumstances surrounding the dissemination and reception of the films, and the discursive setting of the peace film field. The focus is on the development of the field and its background. As a start, an account of different peace media concepts that can be seen to have influenced the peace film field is presented. Peace journalism is introduced with the aim of providing context to the analysis of

the peace film field. This is followed by an elaboration on a selection of specific peace film institutions. The reader might start to see, from this, the outlines of a rough map of what has characterised the development of the peace film field, where this field comes from, what the peace film institutions have in common, and what separates them.

In the next chapter, “Theoretical Foundation – Peace, Discourse, Film and Media Reception”, the terminology and theoretical concepts used throughout the thesis are introduced. When looking at peace film as a field, discourse is a focal point of analysis. In general, discourse theory tends to be associated with qualitative, interpretative methodologies that focus on the social construction and exchange of meaning through *texts*, defined broadly to include not only written texts but also records of spoken words, gestures, symbols, images, film, and other expressive cultural artefacts. It will be argued that mass media representations matter, that they have the capacity to naturalise particular ideological subtexts and, thereby, influence audience reception. The norms, values and premises, which are implicitly conveyed in films (re)produce patterns of support and restraint, which systematically promote some, while suppressing other options for individual and collective action. Also, theories of peace, film and reality, power, and representation are used in the effort to highlight this field.

In studying discourses, the reading of the material will always be influenced by the researcher’s previous knowledge and experience. From a social constructionist perspective all knowledge is viewed as being discursively produced and therefore contingent, with no possibility of achieving absolute or universal knowledge since there is no context-free, neutral base for truth-claims. With this in mind, a researcher should try to acknowledge their own role in the research process and evaluate the results in relation to their consequences. This action is what Jørgensen and Phillips refer to as the researcher’s “reflexivity”.<sup>4</sup> Reflexivity involves taking into account that the researcher’s knowledge production is productive – it creates reality at the same time as representing it. However, following the social constructionist premise, Jørgensen and Phillips acknowledge that we will never be able to produce fully ‘transparent’ knowledge. This is further elaborated on in the concluding remarks.

In chapter 4, “Findings and Discussion”, the discourses in the peace film field are examined. The films that have received the NoPFA and those that have received the FFP are presented at

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<sup>4</sup> See for instance Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:175

the beginning of the chapter. Here we peruse the film selections to see whether or not the two awards have chosen similar films for their prize. We look at what separates the selections of the two, and what they have in common, by investigating what kinds of film (genre, theme) that have received the awards and if one geographical area dominates the selections. Rather than a part of the analysis, this presentation supplies a context to the mapping and framing of the peace film field. This is followed by an exploration of the different discourses in the field. Based on the responses to the questionnaires and the websites of the peace film institutions, I utilized discourse analysis in an attempt to draw some conclusions about the discourses that describe the peace film field. This thesis is less about the discourse of the films themselves, and more about the discourses that surround the films and in that way affect reception. The analysis is intended to serve both as a presentation of the emerging peace film field, and as an exploration of the discourses that describe the field. Towards the end of this chapter, the case of peace filmmaker Linda Hattendorf is used to reflect on and contextualise the analysis of the peace film field. Lastly, I provide a short recap of my findings and present the need for further research.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, the methodology chosen in this thesis will be questioned, and the findings will be concluded.

## **1.5 Limitations**

I have not attempted an exhaustive analysis of all the discursive practises identified in the peace film field. Many socially significant patterns that have been identified in the empirical material have been omitted from this particular analysis. Hopefully these may form the focus of other studies.

Discourse analysis will be emphasised in chapter 4, “Findings and Discussion”, but in order to make room for a discussion of the epistemological implications of the findings, discourse analysis will be tuned down in some sections of the discussion.

The first question every respondent was asked in the questionnaires was: “*What motivated you to start working with peace film?*” (Q1). The thought behind this question was to get an idea about where the respondents come from, which experiences they bring with them that might shape their answers. I have chosen not to research the backgrounds of the respondents

further beyond what information they provide in their answers to the questionnaires. Instead I have based my conclusions on what they wrote in the answers to the motivation question. It is important to mark that the amount of information they provide about themselves is considerably varied (some provide quite a lot of information, while others do not mention themselves at all). It is not improbable to assume that all of the respondents (perhaps except Hattendorf – who does not strictly belong to one specific peace film institution) were coloured by their institutions when answering the questionnaires. They all displayed a desire to promote their own institution in the best possible light and to highlight the institution before their own personal motivation. In a different study, with a larger scope, it might be interesting to investigate what this can tell us about their answers.

When looking at the film selections of the awards it is noteworthy that some of the films have the same producer.<sup>5</sup> It would have been interesting to interview these producers on why they chose to produce the films in question. Do they have an ambition of supporting peace films? Or is the fact that several of the films they have produced have received peace film awards just a coincidence?

One film that stands out in the selection is Michael Winterbottom's *In This World* (2003).<sup>6</sup> It is the only film that has received more than one peace film award. In February 2003, the film received the FFP and in January 2004 it was the first film to receive the NoPFA. Does the fact that it has received the two awards make it more of a peace film than the other films that have the same label? In another study (one where the films themselves is the main focus) it might be interesting to make a thorough analysis of this film, to see what it is about it that has made two different awards agree that it is a peace film. It would also be interesting to interview the jury members of both the 2003 FFP-jury and the 2004 NoPFA-jury, but because of the limitation of this thesis, that will have to be left for another study.

There are many examples of film festivals focusing on human right/social awareness issues that by some may be included in the peace film field. This thesis is limited to institutions that specifically mention the term 'peace' in their titles.

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<sup>5</sup> See appendix. Film Selection NoPFA and Film Selection FFP

<sup>6</sup> For more information about the film, see: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0310154/>

## 1.6 Working Definitions

For a common understanding it is necessary to clarify some of the terminology and concepts used in this thesis. The concept of ‘peace’ is notoriously difficult to define. The thesis adopts Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung’s understanding of peace as “the absence of direct, structural and cultural violence”. This is what Galtung calls *positive peace*.<sup>7</sup> Positive peace is that which sustains peacefulness beyond just the absence of war. With this understanding as the point of departure, I will investigate the understanding of peace adopted by the peace film institutions and actors within the field.

*Discourse* can be defined, in general terms, as the fixation of meaning within a particular domain. This thesis adopts Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Phillips’ understanding of the concept of discourse as “a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)”.<sup>8</sup> Peace theory and discourse theory will be discussed in the theoretical chapter.

*Peace film actors* is the term I have chosen to use when collectively referring to the people working with peace film, be it at festivals, awards, foundations, as filmmakers or in other ways. Some of these actors have been respondents to my questionnaires.

The peace film awards, festivals, foundations, etc. will in this thesis collectively be referred to as *peace film institutions*. In this context institution is understood as any structure or mechanism of social order governing the behaviour of a set of individuals within a given community. In this case established organizations or foundations, especially dedicated to education, public service, and culture.

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<sup>7</sup> Galtung 1996

<sup>8</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:1 - emphasis original

## 2. MAPPING THE PEACE FILM FIELD



Before peace film emerged as a field, there were other examples of links between peace work and the media. To understand the wider picture, it may be helpful to look at some of these links that existed prior to/ or developed simultaneously with peace film; peace journalism, peace media, and the historical development of media as a means for peace.

The exact origins of the term peace film are difficult to place. As will be discussed later on, several of the respondents to my questionnaires made a point of the fact that peace film has always existed, ever since the beginning of the film medium. You can go back through the history of film and probably find many films that could be labelled peace film, but no one did so at the time. Take for instance Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* (1940) or Stanley Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964). One point of view expressed by the respondents to the questionnaires is that as long as there is an interest in peace, and the film medium exists, there can be peace films. However, in this thesis the focus is on the labelling that has become more and more common over the last twenty years or so. In the section below conditions that might have contributed to the development of specific peace film awards and festivals will be explored.

### 2.1 Peace and the Media

*Peace journalism* may be viewed as one of the forerunners to the peace film field. Authors like Johan Galtung (2002), and Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick (2005), have suggested peace journalism as an alternative strategy for critical journalists covering wars and conflicts.

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<sup>9</sup> Inspired by GPF4

Galtung introduced the concept of peace journalism in the 1960s. Since the mid-1990s it has emerged as a new, trans-disciplinary field. It claims to be of interest to professional journalists in both developed and developing countries, and to civil society activists and university researchers. Peace journalism as suggested by Galtung defines war as a problem in itself and promotes non-violence as a means of conflict resolution.<sup>10</sup> Galtung's model builds on the dichotomy and contrast between what he calls 'war journalism' and a 'peace journalism' approach. The model includes four main points where the two approaches are contrasted. According to Galtung, war journalism is violence-oriented, propaganda-oriented, elite-oriented and victory-oriented. The war journalism approach is often linked to a zero-sum game where the winner takes it all. This is the belief that only one party can win and that both parties aim to win. This view is based on classical international relations game theory. It is the opposite of a win-win-approach, which considers that if both parties work together they can enhance both their positions.<sup>11</sup> The peace journalism approach assumes a normative and ethical point of departure. It asserts to offer a solution-oriented, people-oriented and truth-oriented approach.

It means focusing on possibilities for peace that the conflicting parties might have an interest in hiding. Peace journalism is people-oriented in the sense that it focuses on the victims (often civilian casualties) and thus gives a voice to the voiceless. It is also truth-oriented in the sense that it reveals untruth on all sides and focuses on propaganda as a mean of continuing the war.<sup>12</sup>

From a discourse theoretical perspective, the question of "whose truth" presents itself. Truth, like representation, is a contested phenomenon. This will be elaborated on throughout this thesis.

Lynch and McGoldrick further developed Galtung's model in their book *Peace Journalism* (2005). They define peace journalism as "when editors and reporters make choices [...] that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict".<sup>13</sup> In its *ideal form*, peace journalism claims that it "shows backgrounds and contexts of conflicts; hears from all sides; explores hidden agendas; highlights peace ideas and initiatives from anywhere at any time".<sup>14</sup> Again, in a discourse perspective, this may seem to

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<sup>10</sup> Galtung 2002

<sup>11</sup> Perez de Fransius 2013:7

<sup>12</sup> Galtung 2002: 261 - 270

<sup>13</sup> Lynch & McGoldrick 2005

<sup>14</sup> Peace Journalism Website



be problematical. Hearing from all sides may be an overly optimistic ambition. And will it not be coloured by the journalist's own perspective, filters and perception? Peace journalism seems to require that the journalists stay objective, something discourse theory, as will be shown, suggests is not entirely possible. Today peace journalism is taught at several universities and schools all over the world, and is becoming an established discipline and field. Peace studies in higher education has come of age.<sup>15</sup>

In the article "Emphasising Images in Peace Journalism",<sup>16</sup> the Norwegian professor of journalism Rune Ottosen contributes to the concept by suggesting that, in promoting a peace journalism strategy, more emphasis should be placed on visual elements. This gives to the theorization of peace journalism the focus on aesthetics that I find lacking in Galtung's model. One of the reasons presented by Ottosen for putting more emphasis on the visual elements, is "simply that we remember visual impressions better than verbal".<sup>17</sup> He also draws attention to how looking back through history, "visual impressions of war coverage are more present in our memories than written texts."<sup>18</sup> This will be discussed in the analysis.

In 2008, Kimberlye Kolwaczyk brought peace journalism a step further. Together with Dominik Lehnert, she developed *the peace media framework*. The peace media framework is a training tool for individuals and groups using media for peace building. The peace media framework focuses on how the media (not only journalism) can be used to build a sustainable positive peace. It focuses on how new media today make the media more accessible to people than ever before, and how new media is used to promote activism, and start movements, that anyone can contribute to.

According to Kolwaczyk, not only journalists, but everyone who uses media for peace building need training in how to effectively add values like proactive non-violence, dialogue and conflict analysis to their media habits.<sup>19</sup> This is what they aim to provide through their website, which they describe as a media literacy resource.<sup>20</sup> The first site of its kind, the website's mission is to build *peace media literacy* by providing a showcase of successful examples of how media can be used to build a sustainable, positive peace. Later, Kolwaczyk

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<sup>15</sup> Webel & Johansen 2012:1

<sup>16</sup> Ottosen 2007

<sup>17</sup> Magnussen & Greenlee 1998 quoted in Ottosen 2007:2

<sup>18</sup> Ottosen 2007:2

<sup>19</sup> The Media for Peacebuilding website - About

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

has also created *Media for Peacebuilding*, which aims to organize and facilitate project-based workshops to build sustainable peace through media. In the workshops people learn the foundations of peace and conflict theory, the peace journalism model, with the goal of learning how to develop and implement a peace media project.<sup>21</sup>

Today, more and more peace media institutions like the one above are created. Another example is the database called *PeaceMedia*, a joint project between the United States Institute of Peace's Media, Conflict and Peacebuilding Center of Innovation and Georgetown University's Conflict Resolution Program. They collect media resources that they believe help promote peace. On the website they state that their goal is to "share media that inspires and enables viewers to promote peace and mutual understanding across the globe."<sup>22</sup> The database is a collection of every type of media with peace related content, documentaries, photos, games etc. These tendencies show a general interest in gathering peace related media in one place. More and more websites and institutions focusing on peace and the media are created, and since the start of the new millennium, several new peace film festivals and awards have been created all over the world.

## **2.2 Peace Film – A Historical Perspective**

As mentioned in the introduction, *the Independent Peace Film Award* (FFP)<sup>23</sup> is the oldest peace film institution I have come across in my research. In the years since it was established (1986), there have been developed several specialised peace film festivals, celebrating this group of films. Most of the peace film institutions I have encountered in my research were founded after year 2000, which means that there was a gap of almost 15 years from the founding of the FFP before this interest in peace films really expanded.<sup>24</sup> One might speculate as to what world events might have influenced this development.

Social activism has always been an important way to achieve change and get your voice heard. With the new media technologies that exist today, social media has proven to be a very effective arena for this kind of activism. But it is not limited to social media. The traces of this

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> PeaceMedia website

<sup>23</sup> Friedens Film Preis

<sup>24</sup> See the Chronological Overview of the Development of the Peace Film Field on page 20

activism can be found both in the peace media framework and in peace film institutions. Seeing as two of the institutions examined in this thesis came to be in 2003 (in addition to one in Canada, which is not included here), it is not improbable that the War on Terror might have had an impact on their being established. In a situation where mainstream media, policy makers and corporations are focusing on war, terror, and fear, it is not surprising that some people may come together and attempt to introduce a discourse of peace and positive change. Here one might compare the activism of peace films with other forms of activism using media to get the message through: The Occupy Movement, The Arab Spring, Hactivism – Anonymous. Due to the limitations in this thesis, this is something for another study.

In researching this field I have familiarised myself with many examples of peace film awards, peace film festivals and other peace film institutions. Most of the newly established festivals calling themselves peace film festivals are found in the USA, but there are also examples of peace film festivals in Canada,<sup>25</sup> Japan,<sup>26</sup> Indonesia,<sup>27</sup> Sweden,<sup>28</sup> and Italy,<sup>29</sup> among others. I have come across many in my research, but several of them have been hard to find detailed information about. Limiting my focus to peace film institutions in Europe and the USA, I have chosen to further investigate two festivals in the USA, one award in Germany and one in Norway.

### **Peace Film Awards**

I have chosen to use *the Norwegian Peace Film Award* (NoPFA) in Tromsø, Norway as point of comparison when looking at peace film awards. Having limited my research geographically to Europe and the USA, the NoPFA is, as mentioned in the introduction, one out of two awards that have been included in my study. The other award is *the Independent Peace Film Award*<sup>30</sup> (FFP) in Berlin, Germany. With the FFP being the oldest peace film institution I have come across, my own experience with the NoPFA, it was a natural choice to

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<sup>25</sup> Vancouver International Film Festival 4 Peace <http://www.filmfest4peace.org>

<sup>26</sup> Tokyo Peace Film Festival (TPFF), their website only provide information in Japanese: <http://www.peacefilm.net/>. The festival was established in 2004 by Yumi Kikuchi, a former business woman turned environmentalist and peace activist. For some information in English, see: <http://mainichi.jp/english/english/features/news/20130926p2a00m0na006000c.html>

<sup>27</sup> International Film Festival For Peace, Inspiration, and Equality <http://internationalfilmfestivals.org/index.htm>. The festival was established in 2012 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

<sup>28</sup> Peace and Love Film Festival <http://www.peaceandlovefilm.se>

<sup>29</sup> Un Film Per La Pace Festival <http://www.unfilmperlpace.it/paceeng.html>

<sup>30</sup> Friedens Film Preis

take a closer look at these two awards. On the NoPFA website the information about the award is presented in both English and Norwegian, so this information has been easy to collect. The FFP website, on the other hand is mainly in German, with only a small part of the information translated into English. Since my mastery of German leaves something to be desired, collecting this information has provided more of a challenge. This might be evident in that the emphasis on the NoPFA is greater than that of the FFP.

*The Norwegian Peace Film Award (NoPFA)* is awarded annually during Tromsø International Film Festival (TIFF), which takes place in January. The NoPFA was founded on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003 in cooperation between Center for Peace Studies (CPS), Student Network for Peace (SNF) and TIFF. It is a foundation and a non-profit organization with no political affiliation. A board consisting of six members<sup>31</sup> manages the foundation. Each of the three founding organizations appoints two board members. The board is responsible for the administration of the foundation, for its representation, for the nomination of relevant films for the award, and for the appointment of the jury.<sup>32</sup>

In February 2014 the 29th *Independent Peace Film Award* was awarded during the International Film Festival Berlin (The Berlinale) 2014. The year it was established, 1986 was proclaimed as the International Year of Peace by the United Nations,<sup>33</sup> something the FFP mentions in connection with its founding.<sup>34</sup>

The FFP is awarded under the patronage of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). The Zehlendorf Peace Initiative, the Heinrich Böll Foundation, the International Auschwitz Committee and the IPPNW support the award. The award is not just an honorary prize, the winner also receives €5000 and a bronze sculpture by the artist Otmar Alt. This separates it from the NoPFA, which does not include any cash prize.<sup>35</sup>

Each year an FFP jury consisting of nine members selects a film from the Berlinale festival programme, which is awarded the prize. One of the current jury members, Ruth Marianne

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<sup>31</sup> I have been informed by a member of the current board that this is no longer the case, the current board only consists of three members, not six as stated on the website. Information gathered through mail correspondence with Hermann Greuel March 2014.

<sup>32</sup> NoPFA1

<sup>33</sup> UN observances

<sup>34</sup> FFP1

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

Wüdrich-Brosien, has been a member of the jury ever since the founding of the award in 1986.<sup>36</sup> This again differs from the NoPFA, where each jury is appointed for one year only. The NoPFA jury is composed of three people with different backgrounds, such as filmmaker, peace researcher, or student at the CPS. During the first two years the jury was composed of five members. This was also the case in 2010. The jury has otherwise consisted of three members.<sup>37</sup>



The FFP jury<sup>38</sup>



The TIFF Director and the NoPFA jury 2011<sup>39</sup>

Thus the NoPFA jury is at present much smaller than the FFP jury, actually only a third of the size. Also, the fact that the FFP jury selects a film from the festival program in its entirety differs from the NoPFA, where the jury is presented with a specific peace film program, often consisting of about 11 films from which they select the film that is awarded the prize.

## Peace Film Festivals

*The Global Peace Film Festival (GPF)* was established in 2003 in Orlando, Florida.<sup>39</sup> To my knowledge it was the first of its kind, a film festival that was devoted to peace film alone. Since its inception, the GPF has shown over 500 films from around the world. Initially, the weeklong festival took place in December, but in 2006 it was moved to September to coincide

<sup>36</sup> FFP2

<sup>37</sup> NoPFA2

<sup>38</sup> *The FFP jury 2014: From left to right. Back row: Michael Kotschi, Elias Gottstein, Andreas Altenhof. Middle row: Katrin Schlösser, Till Passow, Martin Zint. Front row: Claudia Gehre, Helgard Gammert, Ruth Marianne Wüdrich- Brosien.* – FFP4

<sup>39</sup> *From left to right: Martha Otte (TIFF-director), Linda Hattendorf, Anne Natvig and Mads Gilbert (all members of the NoPFA Jury 2011).* –NoPFA5

with the UN International Day of Peace.<sup>40</sup>

On the GPFF website there is a link to a review by the Community Foundation of Central Florida. In this review surveys conducted at three Global Peace Film Festivals<sup>41</sup> to map the attendance and effect of the festival is presented. These surveys included questions about the impact of the films and ask if respondents intend to take *action* because of what they have seen. In the findings and discussion chapter, the results of the survey will be included in the discourse analysis.

In 2012 the attendance exceeded 6500. 35 % of the attendees were students, and over 50% of the attendees were under the age of 35.<sup>42</sup> To my knowledge, no such survey has been conducted at the other peace film institutions included in this thesis. Otherwise it might have been interesting to compare the attendance at the different institutions events.

The GPFF has had an international presence that started in 2006 with a GPFF-Japan, GPFF programming in Eilat, Israel, the International College Peace Film Festival in Korea and the Human Rights Film Festival in Nepal. In the GPFF report by the Community Foundation of Central Florida, there is information about GPFF initiatives at the works in France, England, Kenya and China. In the US, GPFF curated films have been part of the DC Independent Film Festival, so it is not only isolated to the festival itself.<sup>43</sup>

Four years after the GPFF was established, another peace film festival appeared in the USA, this time in New York City. The New York Peace Film Festival (NYPPF) was established in 2007 and has since then annually taken place in March. In addition, the NYPPF also produces events throughout the year, like sponsoring photo exhibits, producing readings of plays, and poetry readings. Unlike the weeklong GPFF, the NYPPF lasts for two days (a weekend). The festival usually screens approximately 11 films. In 2014 this included two animated shorts, 7 full-length documentaries, a 26 minute documentary, and the 1952 French anti-war classic, *Forbidden Games (Jeux interdits)*. On its Facebook page the festival has written that it had the biggest turnout in its festival history, but I have not been able to document any numbers of attendance to compare with that of the GPFF.

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<sup>40</sup> September 21.

<sup>41</sup> 2007, 2009, 2012

<sup>42</sup> GPFF1

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

These two festivals are not the only peace film festivals I have come across in the USA, but they are the oldest. That is why I have chosen to focus on them in this thesis. Other, more recent festivals are the Peace On Earth Film Festival in Chicago,<sup>44</sup> and the Peace River Film Festival in Punta Gorda, Florida.<sup>45</sup> In addition, the United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF) also has a peace film program.<sup>46</sup> Still, the UNAFF is not a specific peace film festival, and it does not award a peace prize, which is why I have not included it in this study. Rather, it celebrates the power of films dealing with human rights, environmental themes, population, migration, women's issues, refugees, homelessness, racism, health, universal education, war and peace.

### **Other Peace Film Institutions**

A different kind of peace film institution is *the Cinema for Peace Foundation*, which, like the FFP, is based in Berlin, Germany. Founded by Jaka Bizilj in 2008, the foundation focuses on the role of film when it comes to highlighting inequality, injustice and inhumanity, as well as films' ability to offer a hope and vision for a better future.<sup>47</sup> The Cinema for Peace Foundation is not a festival or an award. Their mission is to provide support through the funding, production and worldwide distribution and promotion of humanitarian and social justice film projects.<sup>48</sup>

The Cinema for Peace Foundation has an initiative called Change through film, and in connection to this they front the view that moving pictures shape our perception of reality. They emphasise the responsibility of the world of film and media, and adhere to the view that our perception of the world is fundamentally shaped by the media and by pictures. According to the Cinema for Peace Foundation, no other medium has such a direct impact on the consciousness and emotions of the people.<sup>49</sup> One of the respondents to the questionnaires, Gorges from the FFP, mentioned this foundation in her answer, but referred to it as “something completely different, just a big event, using Berlinale-stars for their show. Nothing for “normal” people or audience. But sometimes they are warding (sic.) good

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<sup>44</sup> <http://www.peaceonearthfilmfestival.org>

<sup>45</sup> <http://peacriverfilmfestival.org/>

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.unaff.org/2014/index.html>

<sup>47</sup> CfPF1

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> CfPF2

movies, maybe by coincidence.”<sup>50</sup> The different peace film institutions do not necessarily take each other very seriously (or even know of each other).

Another example is the *Peace Film Library* in Bergen, Norway, which shows that the NoPFA is not the only peace film institution in Norway. This institution is a co-operation between the local department of Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and Bergen Public Library. When I went to the library and asked about the peace films, the staff did not at first know of this. They had to search their database before they found the list of films that together make up the Peace Film Library. The list includes 35 titles, and as such is not a very comprehensive library.<sup>51</sup> Also, it is not very well advertised for.<sup>52</sup> The films vary in genre from short films to documentaries and fiction. Still, the fact that it exists shows an interest (small as it may be) in film as a means for peace building. Throughout the world, there are most likely a wide variety of such institutions and initiatives.

The examples above have been chosen to show the width and scope of the emerging field of “peace film”. The last two examples (especially the peace film library) show that it is not just contained to festivals and awards that are connected to festivals, but can also include other forms of institutions. In addition to what has been explored in this chapter, there are also examples of students’ film clubs for peace,<sup>53</sup> smaller film festivals (Sweden, Italy) and several institutions out side of my geographical limitation (Japan, Canada, Indonesia, South Korea,<sup>54</sup> Costa Rica<sup>55</sup>).

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<sup>50</sup> Go–Q6

<sup>51</sup> See appendix 3 – WILPF Peace Film Library

<sup>52</sup> None of the people I have mentioned it to have ever heard of it (myself included, until I was informed of its existence by one of its creators at a peace symposium).

<sup>53</sup> Peace and Justice Films: <http://www.peaceandjusticefilms.org/2012fall/index.html>

<sup>54</sup> Gwangju International Film Festival - Kim Dae Jung Nobel Peace Film Award:  
<http://www.giff.org/eng/sub02/?item=sub8>

<sup>55</sup> Costa Rica Festival Internacional De Cine - Paz con la tierra (Peace with the earth):  
<http://www.costaricacinefest.com/index.php/es/el-festival/paz-con-la-tierra>



## **2.3 A Chronological Summary of the Development of the Peace Film Field**

**(1960s** – Galtung introduces Peace journalism)

**1986** – The International Peace Film Award is founded in Berlin, Germany in the UN International Year of Peace

**(1990s** – Peace journalism emerges as a new, trans-disciplinary field)

**2000** – Kim Dae Jung Nobel Peace Film Award is founded in Gwangju City, South Korea

**2003** – The Global Peace Film Festival (GPFF) is established in Orlando, Florida

**2003** – The Norwegian Peace Film Award is founded in Tromsø, Norway (December)

**2003** – Vancouver International Film Festival 4 Peace is established in Vancouver, Canada

**2004** – Tokyo Peace Film Festival is established in Tokyo, Japan

**2004** – The Peace it Together-programme is started in Canada

**2006** – Un Film Per La Pace Festival is established in Trieste, Italy

**2007** – The New York Peace Film Festival is established in New York, USA

**(2008** – The Peace Media Framework is developed by Kimberlye Kolwaczyk and Dominik Lehnert)

**2008** – The Cinema for Peace Foundation is founded by Jaka Bizilj in Berlin, Germany

**2011** – The Peace Film Library is created in Bergen, Norway by WILPF

**2012** – The International Film Festival For Peace, Inspiration, and Equality is established in Jakarta, Indonesia

**2012** – Paz con la tierra (Peace with the earth) is established in San José, Costa Rica

**2012** – Peace and Love Film Festival is established in Dalarna, Sweden (April)

### 3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

#### - PEACE, DISCOURSE, FILM AND MEDIA RECEPTION

In this investigation of the peace film field, theories from several fields are applied to make up the theoretical framework. The two most influential theories are those of peace theory and discourse theory. Discourse is a focal point of analysis, but I have not fully adhered to the suggestions of Jørgensen and Phillips to translate other theories into the discourse analytical framework. In using discourse theory, my aim is to connect discourses that describe and inspire the peace film field. This section first presents the theory of peace, which makes the foundation of the following investigation. This is followed by a presentation of discourse theory, which includes discourse analysis and the analytical tools that are used in decoding the empirical material. Theories of power, representation and film are also presented in this chapter.

#### 3.1 Peace Theory – *What is Peace?*

*“Peace (...), is not something realized once and forever, but a capacity for empathy, creativity, nonviolence”.*<sup>56</sup>

To approach the questions raised in this thesis it is important, firstly, to establish what is meant by peace. The terminology of ‘peace’, or ‘peace work’, is not uniform; there exist many different definitions even within the peace community. For a common understanding, it is necessary to clarify the terminology and the concepts used in this thesis.

To many people the word peace is equivalent with the absence of war. This is a traditional view on peace, and it is a notion of peace that is easy to grasp. Like so many other concepts, peace is easier to define in terms of what it is not, rather than what it is.

Norwegian peace researcher Johan Galtung has proposed a dual definition of peace, distinguishing between what he calls *positive* and *negative peace*.<sup>57</sup> The definition of negative peace is the absence of war and physical violence – as described in the paragraph above. In other words: when no active, organized military violence is taking place, there is negative peace. This situation is certainly to be preferred over violence and war, but is not necessarily *peaceful*. The concept of negative peace is immediately intuitive and empirically measurable.

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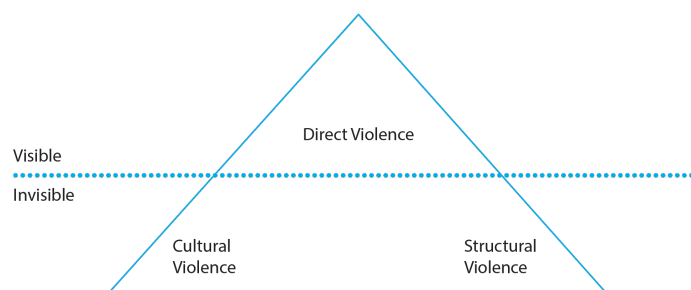
<sup>56</sup> Galtung 2002:6

<sup>57</sup> Galtung 1996; Webel & Johansen 2012; Barash & Webel 2009

The definition of positive peace is more complex. Positive peace entails more than just the *absence* of violent conflict. In the book *Peace and Conflict Studies* David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel, based on Galtung’s definition, write that positive peace is “a social condition in which exploitation is minimalized or eliminated and in which there is neither overt violence or the more subtle phenomenon of underlying structural violence.”<sup>58</sup> In this understanding, positive peace denotes the continuing presence of an equitable and just social order, flourishing of health and voice, as well as ecological harmony. Thus ‘positive peace’ is said to define peace in terms of the *presence* of a state of affairs that is beneficial for all parties in the relationship/society.<sup>59</sup>

Positive peace then, is that which sustains peacefulness beyond just the absence of war. It is systems, cultures and institutions put in place that actively seek to cultivate peace rather than simply address or divert violent conflict. The concept of positive peace challenges the asymmetrical structures of power in the present world order. Peace scholars and activists alike acknowledge this normative quality in positive peace as productive in the effort of transforming asymmetrical structures into more just, equal, nonviolent and ecologically sustainable institutions in the future. Like health, peace is a normative state that is commonly accepted as a goal for individual people as well as for society as a whole. Positive peace is applicable to all people, not just to those in conflict affected and fragile states, but to people worldwide with the aim of nurturing respect, diversity, and difference. As will be elaborated on in the analysis chapter, this notion of peace is central to peace film institutions.

Put in another way, positive peace is the absence of what Galtung calls direct, cultural and structural violence.



Johan Galtung 60

<sup>58</sup> Barash & Webel 2009:7

<sup>59</sup> Brunk 2012:17

<sup>60</sup> Galtung in WILPF

*Direct violence* is the most obvious, overt form of violence, defined by Galtung as “avoidable impairment of fundamental human needs or life which makes it impossible or difficult for people to meet their needs or achieve their full potential. Threat to use force is also recognised as violence”.<sup>61</sup> Natural disasters may make it difficult for people to fill their needs, but since they are not avoidable they will not count as violence, even though their effect on people or communities may be violent. Direct violence includes human intention. *Structural violence* is “non-intended slow, massive suffering caused by economic and political structures of exploitation and repression.”<sup>62</sup> It is built into the social, political, and economic institutions of society that provides access to power, wealth and voice to some people/groups but not to others. Underlying both structural and direct violence is *cultural violence*, which refers to the aspects of culture that can be used to legitimate or justify direct and structural violence.<sup>63</sup> The existence of structural violence, such as unequal distribution of resources or a corrupt political system, and cultural violence’s legitimation, inevitably produces conflict and often direct violence. Galtung’s triangular notion of violence may be turned on its head into a peace triangle as well. In this sense, positive peace encompasses cultural, structural and direct peace.

**Table 1 Matrix of key terms about positive and negative peace**<sup>64</sup>

VIOLENCE	DIRECT VIOLENCE =	STRUCTURAL	CULTURAL
	intended	VIOLENCE =	VIOLENCE =
	harming, hurting	unintended	intended or unintended
		harming, hurting	justifying violence
NEGATIVE PEACE	[1] absence of = ceasefire	[2]absence of =	[3] absence of =
		no exploitation; or	no justification; or
		no structure = atomie	no culture = anomie
POSITIVE PEACE	[4] presence of = cooperation	[5] presence of =	[6] presence of = culture
		equity, equality	of peace, and dialogue
PEACE	negative + positive	negative + positive	negative + positive

The UN defines a culture of peace as involving values, attitudes and behaviours that reject violence, endeavour to prevent conflicts by addressing root causes, and aim at solving problems through dialogue and negotiation.<sup>65</sup> As such, peace is a normative endeavour, with an explicit aim at promoting change in an unjust world order. Hence, challenging discourses of war, inequality and injustice is central to the promotion of peace.

<sup>61</sup> Galtung 1996

<sup>62</sup> Galtung 1985

<sup>63</sup> Galtung as quoted by Peter Lawler 2008:86, see also Galtung 1990:291

<sup>64</sup> Galtung 2010 in Webel & Johansen 2012:75

<sup>65</sup> Global Peace Index in Webel & Johansen 2012:48

## 3.2 Defining Discourse

Discourse can be defined, in general terms, as the fixation of meaning within a particular domain. According to discourse theory, the ‘reality’ of society is a social construction, often perceived as real because of sedimented discourse – a long series of social structures and arrangements that we usually take for granted and therefore do not question or try to change.<sup>66</sup> Some discourses are so firmly established that their contingency is forgotten. In discourse theory these are called *objective*.<sup>67</sup> We are so accustomed to the objective discourses that we do not give them a second thought, we take them for granted. Questioning such taken-for-granted discourses and phenomena is central to discourse analysis.

James P. Spradley defines culture as “the acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behaviour”.<sup>68</sup> Our culture is the common context in which we live, and has a large body of shared knowledge that people learn and use to engage in this behaviour called reading. The struggle between different knowledge claims can be understood as a struggle between different discourses, which represent different ways of understanding aspects of the world (such as peace and war) and construct different identities for speakers (such as politicians/state leaders, filmmakers, activists, and victims of violence). The general idea behind discourse is that language is structured according to different patterns that people’s utterances follow when they take part in different domains of social life. Discourse analysis is the analysis of these patterns.

### Discourse Analysis

#### – Questioning the Taken-For-Granted

According to Jørgensen and Phillips, discourse analysis must be applied as a theoretical and methodological whole – a complete package.<sup>69</sup> It is not to be used as a method of analysis detached from its theoretical and methodological foundations. They divide this package into four parts; philosophical (ontological and epistemological) premises regarding the role of language in the social construction of the world, the theoretical models, methodological

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<sup>66</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:55

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*36

<sup>68</sup> Spradley 1980:6

<sup>69</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:4

guidelines for how to approach a research domain, and specific techniques for analysis. Researchers must accept the basic philosophical premises in order to use discourse analysis as their method of empirical study. In discourse analysis, *theory* and *method* are intertwined.

The authors also state that it is possible to create one's own package by combining elements from discourse analytical perspectives and other social and political theory, in order to produce a broader understanding of the empirical material.<sup>70</sup> This is what I am aiming to do in this thesis.

Discourse analysis can be viewed as having its roots in the critique of structuralism in France in the late 1960s. A central contributor to this critique was Michel Foucault. Foucault has played an important role in the development of discourse analysis, both through theoretical work and empirical research.<sup>71</sup>

Foucault's work is generally divided in two phases; an early 'archaeological' phase and a later 'genealogical' phase, although the two overlap. His discourse theory forms part of his archaeology. Foucault defines a discourse as a group of statements that belong to the same discursive formation. Foucault's aim is to investigate the structure of different regimes of knowledge. In other words: the rules for what can and cannot be said, and the rules for what is considered to be true and false. He adheres to the general social constructionist premise that knowledge is not just a reflection of reality.<sup>72</sup> According to Foucault, discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak.<sup>73</sup> He conceives discourses as relatively rule-bound sets of statements, which impose limits on what gives meaning.

Foucault developed a theory of power and knowledge in his genealogical work. According to him, power does not belong to particular agents, but is spread across different social practices. It needs to be considered as a productive network, which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.<sup>74</sup> "Power is responsible both for creating our social world and for the particular ways in which the world is formed

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<sup>70</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:4

<sup>71</sup> Fairclough 2003:123; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:12; Neumann 2001:13

<sup>72</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:13

<sup>73</sup> Foucault 1972:49; Neumann 2001:17

<sup>74</sup> Foucault 1980:119

and can be talked about, ruling out alternative ways of being and talking.”<sup>75</sup> Thus, power is both a productive and a constraining force.

### **Power and Discourse**

Discourses are governed by rules and therefore in some ways involve the exercise of power. Several theorists argue that discourses have the capacity of changing simple power into ‘legitimate’ authority. Discourses naturalise norms, values and premises, which (re)produce meanings, institutions, and performances, and entail power relations. Therefore, representations in the virtual realm of the mass media matter for issues of war and peace in the real world. Mass media representations shape a commonly held sense of what the world is and ought to be.<sup>76</sup> Another way of putting it is that mass media representations have decisive influence on discourses and on practises.

Different discourses are engaged in a constant struggle to achieve hegemony. Hegemony means the effort to fix the meanings of language in a way favourable to the stakeholder in question, and through this, create dominance of one particular perspective. A positive view on this struggle is that since culture is a result of man’s efforts, man can change culture. Structures of institutions like the legal system, schools and the economic system are human made, temporal and contingent, and as such open to transformative change at any time.

When talking about hegemony, the concept of ‘power’ is essential. According to Jørgensen and Phillips, the concept of power often accompanies the concept of discourse.<sup>77</sup> They point out that discourse analysis aims to carry out *critical* research, in other words to investigate and analyse power relations in society and to formulate normative perspectives from which a critique of such relations can be made with an eye on the possibilities of social change.

Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells also connects the concepts of power and discourse. He states that power is exercised by the construction of meaning on the basis of the discourses through which social actors guide their action.<sup>78</sup> Castells suggests the following definition of

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<sup>75</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:14

<sup>76</sup> Lincoln 1989:4-5; Pötzsch 2011a:7; Kellner & Ryan 1990:14

<sup>77</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:2-3

<sup>78</sup> Castells 2009

power, as “[...] the relational capacity that enables a social actor to influence asymmetrically the decisions of other social actor(s) in ways that favour the empowered actor’s will, interests, and values.”<sup>79</sup> He views power as the most fundamental process in society. Values and institutions define society, and power relations define what is valued and institutionalized. Thus power defines society.

### 3.3 Film, Discourse and Reality

*”Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it.”*<sup>80</sup>

The present thesis undertakes an exploration of the relationship between discourse and ‘reality’ in relation to film. It works under the assumption that this relation has an impact on the peace film field. Bertolt Brecht distinguished between realism as “*laying bare society’s causal network*” – a goal realizable within a reflexive, modernist aesthetic – and realism as a historically determinate set of conventions.<sup>81</sup> There are many understandings of the concept of art, as contrasted by Brecht in his quote above. The term ‘realism’ is uncommonly contested and elastic.

In film theory the use of the term is influenced by debates in philosophy and literature. Discussions about reality and representation in film stretch back to the early days of film theory. An on-going aesthetic debate within film theory has to do with arguments about whether cinema should be narrative or anti-narrative, realist or anti-realist.<sup>82</sup> The realist view claims that art “imitates” reality or, in Hamlet’s phrase, holds “the mirror up to nature.” If the idea of art is to create an illusion of reality, the introduction of the motion picture made this possible to achieve in an unprecedented way. A leading exponent of realism in cinema is Siegfried Kracauer. Kracauer argued that because film literally photographs reality, it alone is capable of holding a mirror up to nature. According to Kracauer, film reproduces the raw material of the physical world within the work of art. Kracauer insists that it is the obligation and special privilege of film to record and reveal physical reality.<sup>83</sup> From a discourse theoretical perspective, this is problematic since ‘reality’ is seen as a contingent concept that is created and changed through social process.

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<sup>79</sup> Castells 2009:10-11

<sup>80</sup> Bertolt Brecht quoted in Alford 2010:37

<sup>81</sup> Stam 2000:153

<sup>82</sup> See Stam 2000:16 & 153

<sup>83</sup> Kracauer in Braudy & Cohen 2004:142



As well as a realist view on film theory, there is also an anti-realist view. According to the anti-realist view, “film must offer an interpretation of the world or, by the manipulation of the camera, create an alternative world”.<sup>84</sup> This view adheres with discourse theory’s perception of ‘reality’ as contingent and open to change.

A leading exponent of the anti-realist tradition is Rudolph Arnheim. Arnheim believed that cinema should not simply reproduce reality but originate, interpret and mould reality.<sup>85</sup> Also French philosopher Gilles Deleuze was occupied with the power of cinema to “create alternative realities – to expand our perceptual, affective and conceptual horizons”.<sup>86</sup> This relates to the connection between power and discourse in the representation and construction of reality. For Deleuze, realism “no longer refers to a mimetic, analogical adequation between sign and referent, but rather to the sensate feel of time, to intuition of lived duration, the mobile slidings of Bergsonian *durée*. *Film restores the real rather than represents it.*”<sup>87</sup>

This thesis works under the premises that films help shape our social reality, contribute to a shared cultural memory, and transform what we take reality to be.

Italian filmmaker, philosopher and writer, Pier Paolo Pasolini, saw both reality and its filmic representation as discursive and contradictory. Reality is a “discourse of things” which film translates into a discourse of images, what Pasolini called “the written language of reality”.<sup>88</sup> As noted by professor of Communication, Michael Karlberg: “Most approaches to discourse theory rest on the underlying premise that language, and language use, do not merely reflect or represent our social and mental realities, but they actually help construct or constitute these realities.”<sup>89</sup> Through discourse analysis one can explore how films construct reality, challenge reality or maintain (maybe even sediment) existing perceptions of reality. Professor of Cinema Studies, Stephen Prince, views the construction of cinematic discourse as the deployment in film of an elaborate semiotic system, the address, and effects, of which could be comprehensible in Althusserian-Lacanian terms as the interpellation of subjects.<sup>90</sup> Using a

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<sup>84</sup> Braudy & Cohen 2004:142

<sup>85</sup> Arnheim in Braudy & Cohen 2004:143

<sup>86</sup> Deleuze quoted in Sinnerbrink 2013:325

<sup>87</sup> Stam 2000:259 – emphasis made

<sup>88</sup> Pasolini quoted in Stam 2000:113

<sup>89</sup> Karlberg 2012:1

<sup>90</sup> Prince 1993:17

symbol system like language, in this view, entails being positioned - socially, ideologically - in and by the categories that system has helped create. Thus film, like language, could be comprehensible as discourse, as the creation of apparent meanings where only true relations of difference prevail (due to the arbitrary nature of the sign and the consequent need for it to receive definition only in relation to what it is not, i.e., to all other signs).

Stressing the signifier as a differential construction enabled film theory to emphasize communication as discourse, as a culture-bound activity, relative to and differentially patterned by the unique social worlds of diverse groups of interactants. Signs, whether linguistic or cinematic, were viewed as culturally instantiated: “Sign systems don’t produce meaning outside of the social and cultural context from which they have developed.”<sup>91</sup>

Texts are inherently *multivocal*. They do to different extents allow for different and competing decodings, or readings. Some emerge as closed while others more openly rely on an active involvement of the receiver in the production of various possible meanings.<sup>92</sup> In the words of war film theorist, Holger Pötzsch: “Different decodings of multivocal texts generate different meanings, which again are combined into discourses, which either reinforce or challenge the institutions and performances of and within a culture.”<sup>93</sup> When viewing a film, the spectator is positioned by various textual and extra-textual discourses at the same time. These discourses waver between versions of reality, which they constantly negotiate.

Pötzsch notes that:

The formal properties of a movie (camera movements, close-ups, slow motion, music and sound, and so forth) constitute a textual frame that provides indices and reading instructions to audiences. In positioning the spectator within the discourse of a movie, these technical and narrative features reduce the paradigm for possible articulations and push reception in a particular direction.<sup>94</sup>

This thesis is less about the discourse of the films themselves, and more about the discourses that surround the films and in that way affect reception. Films are products of discourse, as well as they produce discourse. They are the conscious articulations of the filmmakers who

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> Pötzsch 2005:7

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Pötzsch 2011a:77

can aim at reinforcing or subverting already established discursive frames. In the viewing process, audiences actively engage with the filmic text, and can rearticulate it on the basis of the formal properties that frame reception. Through their formal properties – camera, editing, music, speech, sound, etc. – films establish the emergence of filmic universes. The audience is invited to perceive the film world in a particular manner, and to engage in particular characters. According to Pötzsch “Films give rise to filmic universes that are populated by characters the viewer can identify with. This identification is framed through the deployment of particular technical and narrative devices, and implies the discursive positioning of the spectator within textual frames.”<sup>95</sup>

*One of the hypothesises of this thesis is that the peace film field changes the extra-textual framing of the films that are labelled peace film, and thus might also change the reception of the films.*

In the words of American cognitive theorist and metaphor analyst, George Lakoff: “Frames are mental structures that shape the way we see the world.”<sup>96</sup> Our frames shape our goals, our plans, how we act and what we perceive as good or bad outcomes of our actions. They also shape our social policies. Thus, Lakoff argue: “Reframing *is* social change.”<sup>97</sup>

Frames are an invisible part of us. They are part of the “cognitive unconscious” – structures in our brains that we cannot consciously access. Still, we know them by their consequences. Among other things, frames shape what counts as common sense. We also know frames through language. “All words are defined relative to conceptual frames,”<sup>98</sup> Lakoff argues. When we hear a word, its frame is activated in our brain. Reframing is changing the way the public sees the world, changing what counts as common sense. As language activates frames, we need new language to create new frames. To think differently we need to speak differently. Framing is about attaining language that fits your worldview. We talk about language, but it is the ideas that are essential. People think in frames, but we need language to spread/communicate our ideas. A general finding about frames is that if facts doesn’t fit a strongly held frame, the facts will be ignored and the frame will be kept.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Pötzsch 2011b:31-32

<sup>96</sup> Lakoff 2004:xv

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*37

### 3.4 Different Representations of Reality

*“More than a rational calculation of interests takes us to war. People go to war because of how they see, perceive, picture, imagine and speak of others; that is, how they construct the difference of others as well as the sameness of themselves through representation.”*<sup>100</sup>

I hypothesise that Der Derian’s quote also is relevant for peace. It is possible that the actors of the peace film field hold the hope that people will stop going to war if the way they see, perceive, picture, imagine and speak of others is changed. Perhaps this is what they are trying to achieve through peace films? This will be further investigated in the analysis.

Representation is an extremely elastic notion, which extends all the way from a piece of wood representing a man to a film representing a day in the life of several people. Sometimes one thing can stand for a whole group of things. The representational sign never seems to occur in isolation from a whole network of other signs. In the words of Professor of English and Art History, W. J. T. Mitchell: “When something stands for something to somebody, it does so by virtue of a kind of social agreement [...] – which, once understood, need not be restated on every occasion.”<sup>101</sup>

There is a long tradition of thinking of literature and art in general in terms of representation, but there is also an equally long tradition of discarding this notion. There have been many challenges to the notion of representation in art. Though representation traditionally was looked upon as mimesis/imitation, this is no longer the dominating view. Stephen Heath has written “That reality, the match of film and world, is a matter of representation, and representation is in turn a matter of discourse [...] [I]n this sense at least, film is a series of languages, a history of codes.”<sup>102</sup>

In Mitchell’s “quadrilateral of representation”, there are two diagonal axes. The “axis of representation” connects the representational object to that which it represents, and the “axis of communication” connects the maker of the representation to the beholder. In the crossing of these two axes, Mitchell points out a potential problem with representation: the possibility

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<sup>100</sup> Der Derian 2002:110

<sup>101</sup> Mitchell 1995:13

<sup>102</sup> Heath quoted in Prince 1993:17

of misunderstanding, error, or downright falsehood.<sup>103</sup> I assume that the gap between representation and represented is constitutive for processes of meaning production. Mitchell emphasizes the uncontrollability of representations. They take on a life of their own that escape and defy the will to determine their meaning. Every representation exacts some cost, in the form of a gap between intention and realization, original and copy.<sup>104</sup> Representations do not merely reflect objects, but take part in their constant discursive constitution and negotiation.

Since antiquity, representation has been the foundational concept in aesthetics and semiotics. In the modern era (i.e. in the last three hundred years) it has also become a crucial concept in political theory. Representation can never be completely divorced from political and ideological questions. One obvious question that comes up in contemporary theories of representation, consequently, is the relationship between aesthetic or semiotic representation (things that “stand for” other things”) and political representation (persons who “act for” other persons).<sup>105</sup>

In this thesis the term ‘aesthetics’ (from the greek *aisthesis*, meaning sensation, perception, awareness) is used to say something about the peace film actors’ view on the peace films and the peace film field. It is mainly used in the context of reflections around audio-visual and affective elements of film. There are many definitions of ‘aesthetics’, but a bit simplified one might say that the two main definitions of ‘aesthetics’ are as the theory of beauty, or as ‘philosophy of art’.<sup>106</sup>

This thesis is concerned with a film field, and as such it is aesthetics in relation to film (film as art) that is in focus. Peace film can be seen as a means to represent political and ideological questions. Film is communication, and peace films often touch upon political questions. In this sense it is possible to view peace film as a form of political communication.

According to David Machin and Theo van Leeuwen, the most influential political discourses today are not found in newspapers and political speeches, but in Hollywood movies and

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<sup>103</sup> Mitchell 1995:12-13

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* 20

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* 11

<sup>106</sup> Bale & Bø-Rygg 2008

computer games.<sup>107</sup> Influence can be connected to the power of the filmic impact as well as the number of people that are reached through films and games.

In the book *Art & Agenda: Political Art and Activism*, Gregor Jansen and Robert Klanten investigate the interactions between politics, art, and activism. They argue that, since “the beginning of postmodernism in the 1960s, art’s political aspect has expanded in several different directions; in turn, challenging the monopolization of politics by the state, its organs of power, the parties, and their organizations.”<sup>108</sup> The relationship between peace film and political art will be examined further later on in the thesis.

In 1964, Marshall McLuhan published *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, where he declared that the “electric media” of the twentieth century (telephone, radio, movies and television) were breaking the tyranny of texts over our thoughts and senses. Our isolated, fragmented selves were becoming whole again, merging into the global equivalent of a tribal village.<sup>109</sup> McLuhan was a master of turning phrases, and one of his most famous quotes: “*The medium is the message*”, is well known by every media student. This aphorism was not only an acknowledgement of the transformative power of new communication technologies. McLuhan was also sounding a warning about the threat this power poses.

### **3.5 Discourse Analytical Tools**

Peace film is, as of now, not an established genre. In this thesis it is considered as a field. A group of people have, since 1986, started using the term ‘peace film’ in the attempt to classify a certain group of films. Hence, to unmask some of the aspects of this field, discourse analysis is applied to the empirical material. In this section, some analytical tools that will be applied in the analysis are presented. The aim of this study is to find out how the peace film field is ascribed meaning discursively and what social consequences this has.

Discursive accounts of reality are important and have social consequences. In the words of Jørgensen and Phillips: “[...] discourses, by representing reality in one particular way rather

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<sup>107</sup> Machin & van Leeuwen 2005:119-120

<sup>108</sup> Jansen & Klanten 2011: 5

<sup>109</sup> Carr 2010:3

than in other possible ways, constitute subjects and objects in particular ways, create boundaries between the true and the false, and make certain types of action relevant and others unthinkable.”<sup>110</sup> In this sense, discourse is constitutive of the social. A discourse is formed by the partial fixation of meaning around certain *nodal points*. A nodal point is a *privileged sign* around which the other signs are ordered. The other signs acquire their meaning from their relationship to the nodal point.<sup>111</sup> Nodal points will be one focal point in the analysis of the empirical material in this thesis.

All signs in a discourse are what Jørgensen and Phillips call *moments*. The meaning of moments is fixed through their difference from one another (differential positions). A discourse is established as a totality in which each sign is fixed as a moment through its relation to other signs. In other words, a discourse is a reduction of possibilities. All the possibilities that are excluded by the discourse form, in their terminology, *the field of discursivity*. That is, the meanings that each sign has (or has had) in other discourses that are excluded by the specific discourse in order to create a unity of meaning. The field of discursivity, as a term, describes only the excluded possibilities, and does not include the existing discourses. Hence, a discourse is always constituted in relation to what it excludes (the field of discursivity).

According to Jørgensen and Phillips, the field of discursivity denotes all possible, excluded constructions of meaning, while *order of discourse* denotes a limited range of discourses that struggle in the same terrain. We will shortly look more closely at the order of discourse, but first there is another concept that is relevant and must be introduced. *Elements* are the signs whose meanings have not yet been fixed, i.e. signs that have multiple potential meanings (they are polysemic). Hence, discourses strive to transform elements into moments by reducing their polysemy to a fully fixed meaning and thus establish closure.<sup>112</sup> *Closure* can be seen as a temporary stop to variations in the meanings of signs. An example of closure can be in Galtung’s definition of positive peace as a capacity for empathy, creativity and non-violence, which excludes violent solutions to conflicts.

The concept of *the order of discourse* is used as a main pillar of the analytical framework. In general terms, discourse is defined as the fixation of meaning within a particular domain. In addition to this, there is also a need for a conceptualisation of the different discourses that

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<sup>110</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:145

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.* 26

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.* 26-28

compete in/for the same domain. This can be provided by the concept of order of discourse. “An order of discourse is defined as a complex configuration of discourses and genres within the same social field or institution”.<sup>113</sup> Thus, the order of discourse can be taken to denote different discourses that partly cover the same field, a field that each discourse competes to fill with meaning in its own way. In the analysis, my reading of the order of discourse in the peace film field will be presented.

In finding and documenting an order of discourse, the concept of ‘floating signifier’<sup>114</sup> is a useful tool. The floating signifiers that different actors fill with different content can be seen as indicators of orders of discourse. “That a signifier is floating indicates that one discourse has not succeeded in fixing its meaning and that other discourses are struggling to appropriate it.”<sup>115</sup> The discourses at play and how they relate to one another are what constitute the order of discourse.

A common method of delimiting research is to focus on a single order of discourse. When focusing on the different, competing discourses within the same domain, it is possible to investigate where a particular discourse is dominant, where there is a struggle between different discourses, and which common-sense assumptions are shared by all the prevailing discourses. Jørgensen and Phillips note that the relationship between contingency and permanence within a particular domain can be explored by studying an order of discourse. Areas where all discourses share the same common-sense assumptions are less open to change, whereas areas where different discourses struggle to fix meaning in competing ways are unstable and thus more open to change.<sup>116</sup> Framing the study of the peace film field in terms of an order of discourse enables an analysis of discourses in the peace film domain.

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<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.* 141

<sup>114</sup> Developed in Laclau & Mouffe’s discourse theory – See Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:28-30

<sup>115</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:148

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*142



## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This thesis works under the premises that films help shape our social reality, contribute to a shared cultural memory, and transform what we take reality to be. To textualize a domain of analysis is “to recognize, first of all, that any “reality” is mediated by a mode of representation, and second, that representations are not descriptions of a world of facticity, but are ways of making facticity.”<sup>117</sup> This view on representation is widely supported by other theorists,<sup>118</sup> and forms the foundation for my perspective in this thesis.

I am not trying to “make facticity”, but rather to uncover how the different actors within the peace film field construct an alternative reality through production,<sup>119</sup> interpretation, communication and dissemination of peace film. In other words, how the peace film actors make sense out of the field as they do. In my initial research process, I started out viewing peace film as a phenomenon. In the course of the research however, and particularly in view of the responses to the questionnaires, I have decided to rather approach it as a field.

As mentioned in the “limitations” section of the introduction, I have not attempted an exhaustive analysis of all the discursive practises identified in the peace film field. Many socially significant patterns that have been identified in the empirical material have been omitted from this particular analysis. In some sections, discourse analysis also will be tuned down in order to make room for a discussion of the epistemological implications of the findings.

The ways we think and talk about a subject, influence and reflect the ways we act in relation to that subject. This is the basic premise of discourse theory.<sup>120</sup> Kellner and Ryan<sup>121</sup> point out that films make rhetorical arguments through the selection and combination of representational elements that project rather than reflect a world. As a result of the fact that films execute a transfer from one discursive field (social life) to another (cinematic narratives), films themselves become part of the broader cultural system of representations that construct social reality and discourses. Control over the production of cultural representations is

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<sup>117</sup> Shapiro 1989:13-14

<sup>118</sup> Karlberg 2012; Deleuze quoted in Sinnerbrink 2013; Pasolini quoted in Stam 2000; Brecht quoted in Alford 2010; Heath quoted in Prince 1993

<sup>119</sup> Though most of my respondents are not engaged in this part.

<sup>120</sup> Karlberg 2005; Foucault 1972; Jørgensen & Phillips 2002

<sup>121</sup> Kellner & Ryan 1990:1

therefore crucial to the maintenance of social power. Films may habituate audiences to current social order and reigning political discourses, so they come to seem natural. Conversely, films may also have the power to question and contradict current social order and discourses, in order to provide alternative views on commonly accepted narratives.<sup>122</sup> The analysis of the empirical material explores this span of utterances between acceptance and contestation.

## 4.1 The Peace Film Selections

To get an idea of what kind of films that are labelled ‘peace film’, the section below compares the film selection of the FFP awardees with the film selection of the NoPFA awardees. The NoPFA calls itself the *Norwegian* peace film award, while the FFP has chosen the title the *International* Peace Film Award. Is the FFP more international than the NoPFA? This will also be investigated in the section below.



Considering the fact that the FFP has been awarded for 29 years, it comes as no surprise that this award’s selection of prized films is of considerably more substantial size than that of the NoPFA, with its 11 years. Thirty films<sup>123</sup> have been awarded the FFP, while only eleven films have received the NoPFA. Out of the thirty FFP film awardees, six are from Germany, four are from the USA, and in total twenty-six different nationalities are represented (fourteen of these are part of co-productions of two nationalities or more).<sup>124</sup> There are films from Russia, France, Israel, Cuba, Australia, Iran/Iraq, the Netherlands, Croatia, the UK, etc. In the eleven films that have received the NoPFA, sixteen different nationalities are involved (ten of which

<sup>122</sup> Kellner & Ryan 1990

<sup>123</sup> In 1994, two films was awarded the FFP

<sup>124</sup> See appendix 2 - The FFP Film Selection

are part of co-productions of two nationalities or more).<sup>125</sup> In other words, the two awards both have an international selection of films, from a number of continents. Still, six of the films that have been awarded the FFP are productions with the same nationality as the awarding institution, while none of the films that have been awarded the NoPFA are actually Norwegian (the fact that Norway is a smaller nation, with fewer films produced, should be taken into account).

Winterbottom's *In This World* (2003)<sup>126</sup> received the FFP in 2003, and in January 2004 it was also the first film to receive the NoPFA. *In This World* is a docu-drama from the UK about two Afghan refugees who leave a refugee camp in Pakistan for a better life in London. Their journey is illegal, and filled with danger. They must use back channels, bribes, and smugglers to achieve their goal. The film is shot in documentary style, but it is in fact a drama performed by amateur actors mostly playing fictionalised versions of themselves. It reveals a unique situation and involves the audience in an experience. When watching the film one gains an understanding of what millions of people today are going through. This film is the only film in the included peace film selection that has been awarded two peace film prizes. As mentioned in the introduction, it could have been interesting to make a thorough analysis of this film, but because of the limitation of this thesis, that will have to be left for another study.

When looking at the film selections with style in mind, it is apparent that a peace film can come in many shapes and forms. More than half of the films that have been awarded the FFP are documentaries (17/30), including one short documentary and one docudrama. The rest is a mix of dramas (8/30), films that are closer to the war film genre (4/30), and one comedy. In contrast to the FFP, the NoPFA has mostly been awarded to dramas (7/11). One documentary, one animated documentary and two docu-dramas make up the rest of the selection. From this information, it is tempting to draw the conclusion that it is not the genre that makes a peace film. Apparently it can be everything from documentaries to dramas, animations and comedies. The peace film actors' statements support this conclusion. It is not the style that makes a peace film. "That a film contributes to a dialogue to expand understanding, *whatever the issue. Whether fiction or non-fiction*, many peace films are educational, while at the same time entertaining."<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> See appendix 1 - The NoPFA Film Selection

<sup>126</sup> For more information about the film, see: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0310154/>

<sup>127</sup> S-Q3 – emphasis made

The respondents to the questionnaires seem to agree that there are no formally established criteria for calling a film a peace film. Still, they make an attempt to list some when asked the question “*What would you view as the most important criteria for characterising a film as a peace film?*”

Most of them seem to agree that there should be an aesthetic element, and that the filmic qualities matter. A criterion that is presented by the respondents is that a peace film should attempt to make the audience understand some of the mechanisms, social, political or personal, that result in conflict/war.<sup>128</sup> In their view, the audience reception is in focus.

Another aspect that reappears in the responses to the questionnaires is the focus on the story and themes the films convey, as well as on the power of film to communicate universal questions and possibly bridge divides. This is apparent from responses like “the subject matter is clearly stated and staying focused”,<sup>129</sup> and “to pick up silent voices through films regardless of the subject.”<sup>130</sup> From the latter I interpret that the respondents would like the films to be multivocal rather than following the dominant Hollywood protagonist/antagonist model.

Even though the respondents do not specifically state *which* stories and themes define peace films, we get a general idea from statements like: “A peace film may come in many different shapes in my opinion. It may deal with small communities and individuals, or it may take up problems facing the world at large”,<sup>131</sup> and “Many peace films are about learning about and/or understanding people and ideas different from one’s own.”<sup>132</sup> This is also touched upon in statements like “The story the film tells is the story about human beings in their relation to each other”<sup>133</sup>, and “The films, [...] attend to questions how human beings are treated through political situations.”<sup>134</sup> How we relate to one another in groups or as individuals, and what counts as knowledge, is shaped by power relations. As such, depicting human relationships at any level may be viewed as political.

The most important elements in the responses seem to be the focus on story, audience and effect.

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<sup>128</sup> B-Q3, S-Q2-Q3

<sup>129</sup> T-Q4

<sup>130</sup> T-Q1

<sup>131</sup> B-Q2

<sup>132</sup> S-Q2

<sup>133</sup> Gr-Q3

<sup>134</sup> Gr-Q2

## 4.2 (De)constructing the Discourses in the Peace Film Field

I assume, in the present thesis, that mass media representations matter,<sup>135</sup> that they “play an important role in determining how social reality will be constructed”.<sup>136</sup> The construction of social reality takes place through discourse. Since a discourse is a reduction of possibilities, the field of discursivity is all the possibilities that are excluded by the discourse.

A discourse is always constituted in relation to what it excludes. Going back to the research questions; *Which discourses describe the emerging peace film field? And how are these discourses constructed?*, the analysis’ main focus is derived from interplay between the empirical material and the theoretical considerations into an analysis of the discourses describing the peace film field.

One of the located themes in the empirical material is *agenda*. This is a key component in the construction of a discourse on what is at the core of the peace film field, and is seen as a superior category ascribing meaning to other sub-categories in the empirical material.

### Order of Discourse: Art as (Peace) Agenda

*“Whatever the forms it takes, whatever the discourse surrounding it, or within which it intervenes, art can have a social impact that answers to the political.”<sup>137</sup>*

An order of discourse is defined as a complex configuration of discourses and genres within the same social field or institution.<sup>138</sup> While the field of discursivity denotes all possible, excluded constructions of meaning, the order of discourse denotes a limited range of discourses that struggle in the same terrain. A point in case is the War Film discourse that borders the terrain of peace film, and struggles to include elements such as ‘conflict’ ‘conflict resolution’ and ‘conflict management’ in its discourse. Whereas Peace Film adheres to an understanding of conflict transformation and “capacity for empathy, creativity,

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<sup>135</sup> The power of film is emphasised again and again in the empirical material

<sup>136</sup> Ryan & Kellner 1990:13

<sup>137</sup> Bal 2011

<sup>138</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:144

nonviolence”<sup>139</sup>, both discourses struggle over hegemonic understanding of how conflicts are best solved. It is in the interplay between discourses that the social consequences become most apparent. In cases where two or more discourses in the same area present different understandings of the world, the researcher can begin to ask what consequences it would have if one understanding were to be accepted instead of the other.<sup>140</sup> One may say that the actors in the peace film field seem to have a goal of changing pre-established discourses in an attempt to promote peace and peace building. One contra factual perspective following such working hypotheses proposed by Jørgensen and Phillips could be the following: If peace film institutions succeeded in disseminating peace films on the expense of war film distribution, how would this affect public opinion and social behaviour? Since the focus in my research has not on effect but rather on the peace film field, answering such a question would be speculations only.

As previously explained, nodal points are privileged signs around which the other signs acquire their meaning. In the previous example, the nodal point conflict gives meaning to conflict transformation, conflict resolution and violent conflict/ (escalation towards) war, respectively. Focal points in this analysis are the nodal points that are established from the responses to the questionnaires, as well as the websites of the peace film institutions.

Hence, as the order of discourse, the discourse ‘*Art as (Peace) Agenda*’ is analytically projected upon the empirical material. The order of discourse is the common platform of different discourses in the peace film field, and discourses are the patterns of meaning within the order of discourse.<sup>141</sup> Thus, the order of discourse denotes a limited range of discourses that strive in the same terrain. *Agenda* is here understood as a set of issues and policies laid out by ideological or political groups, in this case peace film institutions.

As argued by Lakoff, “Reframing *is* social change”.<sup>142</sup> This is the point of departure for the reflections on the relationship between peace film (art) and social change. There is an apparent social aspect to the peace film field. “Social” is a word that reappears several places in my research (5/6 respondents mention it in the questionnaires, and it surfaces more often than not in the websites of the peace film institutions). The main goal of the people working within the field seems to be social change – changing the world into a better, more peaceful

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<sup>139</sup> Galtung 2002:6

<sup>140</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:145-146

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.* 144

<sup>142</sup> Lakoff 2004:xv

and creative place.<sup>143</sup>

In this material, *agency* is the nodal point in the discourse of agenda. Included in and/or bordering this order of discourse are the following discourses: *'Art as Agency/Change'*, *'Reception'*, *'Film as Communication'*, *'Film as Art'* and *'Film as Peace Media'*. In the following sections these discourses will be presented, elaborated on and discussed.

Early on in this thesis I touched upon the relationship between art and the political. Jimmy Mirikitani's motto: "*Make art, not war*", the quote at the very beginning of this thesis, goes to the core of this relationship. Also, in his answer to the questionnaire, Greuel refers to the NoPFA as "an important expression to point out discussions around political processes and conflicts."<sup>144</sup> Film can be viewed as an unorganized and unpredictable actor in the political scene. Politics in this context is generally understood to mean the regulations of "basic activities" in all areas of social life – a situation that allows non-politically cultural or artistic areas of social activity to mix with politicized activities.<sup>145</sup> Politics is the social organisation that is the outcome of continuous political processes. In language structures, as well as in institutional and social structures of society, traces of these outcomes may be found.<sup>146</sup> In its reframing attempts, the peace film field may be read as a political field.

As mentioned in the theory chapter, power is understood as that which constitutes the social. Power shapes knowledge, our identities and how we relate to one another in groups or as individuals. It is the relational capacity that enables a social actor to influence asymmetrically the decisions of other social actor(s) in ways that favour the empowered actor's will, interests, and values.<sup>147</sup> This concept of power sees the social as contingent, open to change. The respondents and peace film institutions seem to have in common that they view the social as open to change, which I choose to call an optimistic view on change.

In the book *Film Festivals: Culture, People, and Power on the Global Screen*, Cindy H. Wong investigates the social aspect of film festivals. According to Wong, festivals "provide places in which multiple agents negotiate local, national, and supranational relations of

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<sup>143</sup> Cf. Jimmy Mirikitani's motto "*Make art, not war*"

<sup>144</sup> Gr-Q1

<sup>145</sup> Jansen & Klanten 2011:5

<sup>146</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:145-46

<sup>147</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:145-46; Castells 2009:10-11

culture, power, and identity.”<sup>148</sup> Festivals constitute a dynamic system where cinema – a specific cultural artefact – circulates. Multiple actors continuously strive to “redefine its meaning and place in its immediate environment, a wider film world, and larger socio-economic and political contexts.”<sup>149</sup> Ultimately, film festivals have become important centres for the development of film knowledge and film practices. Film festivals and the people who create and re-create them have the power to shape which films we as audiences and scholars wish to see, which films we respect or neglect, and often, how we read such cinematic works. In the words of Wong: “[...] film festivals provide a unique network through which all those involved in cinema may view the past, explore the present, and create the future.”<sup>150</sup>

From this it can be argued that peace film festivals influence interpretation. Films can potentially get a “new” meaning when included in a different discourse (i.e. a discourse of peace) than it originally was a part of. Barbara Babcock refers to attempts to change pre-established discourses as *symbolic inversion* – conducted along three lines: *status change*, *access change*, and *re-reading*.<sup>151</sup> The status change approach implies attempts to increase the status of particular texts that are seen as important, with the objective of increasing their impact, turning them into foundational ones. It can also involve an effort to decrease the status of foundational texts in order to reduce their influence. In the context of the peace film field, the emphasis on certain films as peace films may be viewed as an attempt on a status change approach – increasing the status of peace films and downplaying the status of war films and other films that glorify violence. However, whereas the inversion attempts apply to the audience of peace film festivals/field, it cannot be concluded whether or not this ‘rubs off’ to other audiences watching the same film(s) in other contexts. For this to happen, this will rely on the media coverage, public debate and the general change in societal discourse that follows changing texts into foundational ones. As an example of a film that became a foundational text in this sense, Richard Attenborough’s *Cry Freedom* (1987) and its influence on world opinion on South-African apartheid connected injustices can be mentioned.

Access change attempts to include formerly marginalized texts into the dominant archive. Through peace film institutions, a presumptively receptive audience is introduced to films they might not otherwise have come across.

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<sup>148</sup> Wong, Cindy H. 2011:1

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*2

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*2

<sup>151</sup> Babcock 1978:14



Re-reading means conducting oppositional readings of dominant foundational texts. In addition to striving towards status change and access change, peace film institutions can also be sites for alternative readings of film. Babcock's application of the term text can be read on different levels. By framing films that are dominantly viewed as belonging to established genres like drama or war film with the label 'peace film', peace film institutions can offer alternative readings (or re-readings) of films.

From this, one might conclude that peace film institutions may attempt symbolic inversions along all of the three lines presented above. According to Karlberg, Western-liberal discourses of power and the social practices associated with them prove to be inadequate to the task of creating a peaceful, just, and sustainable social order.<sup>152</sup> Having recognized this, progressive scholars and social reformers have begun articulating alternative discourses of power, along with alternative models of social practice. Karlberg interprets these efforts as a project of discourse intervention – an effort to change our social reality by altering the discourses that help constitute it. Perhaps the peace film field can be perceived as a similar project of discourse intervention.

One thing the different peace film institutions seem to have in common is that they emphasise the power of film. On the NoPFA website there is a quote by Ola Lund Renolen, the festival director at the time the NoPFA was established, on why the award was established. He starts by pointing out the power of film and states that this is most often regarded as a problem for society (i.e. the view that violent movies can make people more violent). Then he emphasises that the NoPFA wants to focus on the positive power of storytelling in films. He states that their (the NoPFA and TIFF's) involvement in film and storytelling is genuinely constructive and positive, and that they believe in the power of a story. This adheres closely to Deleuze's belief in the power of cinema to create alternative realities.

Renolen highlights that they believe that films matter, "that they have an influence, that they impart knowledge, positive attitudes towards foreign culture and lesser-known aspects of our own culture." Towards the end of the quote, Renolen says that they "believe in films that have ambitions to contribute to the expression of thoughts of a better world, films that dare stand up and cry out about abuse, films that confront power structures and oppression mechanisms

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<sup>152</sup> Karlberg 2005:1

in the global society.”<sup>153</sup> In this, elements like “influence,” “impart knowledge,” and “ambitions to contribute to the expression of thoughts” adheres to a discourse of *Agenda* as well as one of *Agency/Change* and *Education*.

Through Renolen’s statement, the NoPFA foundation places itself on the positive side of the on-going ‘power of film’ debate that has been a topic since the beginning of the film medium. This discussion is often dominated by the fear of the effect of violence or pornography, but in this case it is rather a belief in the power of film to change the world for the better. Still, when talking about the power of film, the question of propaganda/manipulation is not far behind.

Film can feel as if it liberates the viewer from the confining present environment, by gestures such as speeding-up and close-ups. It expands the available images immensely. The growing propaganda or mobilisation potential of images we have experienced over the last century can be seen as positive because it has lent itself to progressive propaganda, to revolutionary newspapers, pamphlets, placards and fly posters (and today to peace films). Propaganda films may be understood as strategies that operate to re-establish and create psychological dispositions that result in a particular construction of social reality, “a commonly held sense of what the world is and ought to be that sustains social institutions.”<sup>154</sup> Thus, propaganda films may be said to support status quo.

This propagandist function may be even more available to construct powerful and even suppressing myths, especially when the means of cultural production are monopolised by the powerful, like the case of Goebbels’ Nazi propaganda films. What’s more, the overwhelming pressure of constant imperatives from all-pervasive signs may create a world of generalised anxiety, and a loss of private reflection. An illustration of this is found in Adam Curtis’ documentary *The Century of Self* about how those in power have used Sigmund Freud’s theories to try and control the dangerous crowd in an age of mass democracy.<sup>155</sup> The documentary depicts the impact of Freud’s theories on the perception of the human mind, and the ways public relations agencies and politicians have used this during the last 100 years for their engineering of consent.

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<sup>153</sup> *Ola Lund Renolen, TIFF Festival Director 1998-2004, January 2004. NoPFA3*

<sup>154</sup> Kellner & Ryan 1990:14

<sup>155</sup> For more information about the documentary, see: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0432232/>

If the audience absorbs the film, but the audience is itself trapped in mythologies and alienated subjectivity, then the revolutionary power of film is truncated. The absorption of art becomes repetitive, and the lines of flight available are correspondingly reduced.<sup>156</sup> As Twentieth Century Fox founder Darryl Zanuck put it, “If you have something worthwhile to say, dress it up in the glittering robes of entertainment and you will find a ready market [...] without entertainment, no propaganda film is worth a dime.”<sup>157</sup> Zanuck’s statement here points to the competing discourse of *film as entertainment*, bordering the discourses identified in the peace film field of discursivity.

Like Renolen, the GPF2 also refers to the power of film, in their case in the mission statement: “The Global Peace Film Festival was established to utilize *the power of the motion picture to further the goal of peace* on earth.”<sup>158</sup> They state that the GPF2 “presents films from around the world and global discussions that *highlight the power of this extraordinary medium* as it relates to new peace issues”.<sup>159</sup> This belief in the power of film supports the identification of a discourse of agency/change as well as agenda. Hence, from the perspective of the powerful/manufacturers of consent, peace films may be considered as a body of documents that stand at the centre of dissident political movements.

Films’ power to change individual (and collective) perception of society is pointed to by half of the respondents to the questionnaires (3/6).<sup>160</sup> In the contemporary world, too many images of horror can make horror invisible. When we expose ourselves to too frequent depictions of it, it can make us impregnable to empathy with the experience of horror, or other politics-driven affects. Excess “naturalises” horror and obscures the mechanisms of that process. As Theodor Adorno famously wrote after the Second World War, art “after” horror risks turning horror into pleasurable experience.<sup>161</sup> Extracting from the responses to the questionnaires, still tragic and devastating films sometimes concurrently make us feel hope, make us stronger and help us conquer difficulties.

In addition to the framing power of film, Lakoff reminds us of the power of images. In the premotor cortex of our brains we all have what are called mirror neurons. These neurons fire

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<sup>156</sup> See Robinson 2013

<sup>157</sup> Zanuck quoted in Alford 2010:170

<sup>158</sup> GPF2 - emphasis made

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>160</sup> Go-Q additional comments, S-Q1, H-Q9

<sup>161</sup> Adorno in Bal 2013:20

either when we perform an action or when we see the same action performed by someone else. There are connections from the part of the brain where the mirror neurons are found to the emotional centres.<sup>162</sup> This connection may contribute to explaining the power of film to affect people's emotions, and sometimes change the way we think. Film has the powerful ability to accurately emulate mood and tone, bringing a story to life. Because film sees light much the same way as the human eye, the captured image feels natural and real. Visual images in all their different forms have changed the way we view the world, our history, present and future.

This adheres to Ottosen's emphasis on visual elements in peace media (in his case peace journalism, but it can be applied to other approaches as well). Ottosen explains his focus on the visual with the fact that we remember visual impressions better than verbal and that looking back through history, it is apparent that visual impressions of war coverage are more present in our memories than written texts.<sup>163</sup> This point is also applicable to the film medium: connected to the mirror neuron research, the visual element of film plays an essential part in its powerful influence on the audience.

Lakoff also points to the old dichotomy between reason and emotion. The Enlightenment thinkers saw reason and emotion as opposites, with emotion often standing in the way of reason, holding back the potential of the unfettered mind. However, as Antonio Damasio showed in *Descartes' Error*, this view was utterly mistaken since it has been shown that reason *requires* emotion. Emotion is both central and legitimate in political persuasion and its use is not an illicit appeal to irrationality. The proper emotions are rational.<sup>164</sup> It is rational and reasonable to be outraged by horrendous occurrences like torture, violence and war. Maybe these are the mechanisms the respondents refer to when they emphasize the influence of film on the audience's involvement and action.

### **A Discourse of Agency/Change (Art as Agency/Change)**

In the first reading of the peace film field, the nodal point *change* emerged. Through this, a *discourse of Change* was identified. For a researcher there is always the risk that this is something projected onto the reading of the research material, but for analytical purposes,

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<sup>162</sup> Lakoff 2004:54

<sup>163</sup> Ottosen 2007

<sup>164</sup> Lakoff 2008:8

creating discourses are productive. In studying the responses to the questionnaires, the mission statements and the research material in general, one thing that kept turning up was *the aim to affect or influence the audience*, and through that the world in general.

From the information gathered from the questionnaires and from the festival websites, at the heart of peace film, we find *the belief in film as a means of social change*. A discourse of Change can be constructed through the chain of equivalence from the following elements in the responses: “a peace film should encourage and enrich the audiences (sic.) life and commitment.”,<sup>165</sup> “more than a passive viewing experience, [...] a place to use the power of media to inspire audience engagement.”,<sup>166</sup> “social responsibility”<sup>167</sup> and “social commitment”,<sup>168</sup> as well as “social justice, humanitarian acts, nuclear disarmament”,<sup>169</sup> “shift the paradigm”,<sup>170</sup> and “interested in seeing films that try to ‘*make a difference*’, that is, have impact – politically and culturally. And peace films may in my opinion be said to have potential to do just that”.<sup>171</sup>

Another empirical element supporting the discourse of Change in the peace film field is the Cinema for Peace Foundation’s Change through film initiative. As mentioned, Change through film fronts the view that moving pictures shape our perception of reality because our perception of the world is fundamentally shaped by the media and by pictures.

The results from the surveys conducted at the GPF1 also support this discourse of Change. The surveys included questions about the impact of the films and asked if respondents intended to take *action* because of what they had seen:

In 2007, 59% of respondents said the film they saw changed their opinion. In 2009, that figure increased to 64%. A new question, "Did the film you saw make you want to take action?" was answered in the positive by 69% of respondents. There is much anecdotal evidence that audience members have taken action, inspired by a film they have attended at the festival.<sup>172</sup>

From this, the discourse of Change was recognized as being one of *agency* as well. The word ‘agency’ is here used in the sense proposed by the media group at the Centre for

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<sup>165</sup> Go-Q4

<sup>166</sup> S-Q1

<sup>167</sup> Go-Q1

<sup>168</sup> Go-Q2

<sup>169</sup> T-Q3

<sup>170</sup> H-Q4

<sup>171</sup> B-Q5 - emphasis made

<sup>172</sup> GPF1

Contemporary Cultural Studies in Birmingham (led by Stuart Hall), as the *subject's agency* or *freedom of action*. In this respect, agency refers to the complexity of media reception.<sup>173</sup> Hall's 'encoding/decoding' theory argued that recipients were able to interpret or 'decode' messages by codes other than the code that was 'encoded' in the text.<sup>174</sup> Hall's theory was based *inter alia* on Gramsci's theory of hegemony, which ascribes a degree of agency to all social groups in the production and negotiation of meaning.<sup>175</sup> In the context of this thesis, agency is seen both in the message of the films, and when the audience, because of a film, is motivated to action (change).

Streich is the only one of the respondents (1/6) who used the word *activist* to describe herself. In her response, a discourse of agency is established through the words: "having been a peace/social justice activist", "more than a passive viewing experience", and "a place to use the power of media to inspire audience engagement".<sup>176</sup> This last element can also be part of the discourse of Art as (Peace) Agenda.

In the review by the Community Foundation of Central Florida the two-fold long-term goal of the GPF is presented. The first goal is to encourage audiences to become active engaged citizens. They emphasise how the films in the program are chosen to inspire and encourage the audience to take action for positive change in their communities - whether local, regional, national or international. "The GPF aims to act as a conduit between its audiences and non-profit organizations that work on issues addressed by the films in the program (i.e. peace, social justice, environmental sustainability, conflict resolution, etc.)"<sup>177</sup> Here, elements like "encourage audiences", "active engaged citizen", "inspire", "take action" and "positive change" make a chain of equivalence that supports the construction of the discourse of Agency/Change in the peace film field.

The information analysed here is found in the review by the Community Foundation of Central Florida. To my knowledge there is no similar report about the NYPF. Still, I have chosen to include the report on the GPF because of the second goal that is presented: the GPF aims to encourage filmmakers to make more films about these issues and to work with

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<sup>173</sup> Hall et al. 1980 in Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:16

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> Gramsci 1991 in Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:16

<sup>176</sup> S-Q1

<sup>177</sup> GPF1

filmmaker alumni to track the impact of their films in the Central Florida area.<sup>178</sup> There are similarities between this second goal of the GPFF (to encourage filmmakers to make peace films) and Gorges' point about the FFP award being a motivation for the filmmakers to make more similar films. "It is an encouragement for the directors, as it awards not only a good film but an attitude / position."<sup>179</sup>

Gorges' point is supported by Dieter Kosslick, the festival director of Berlin International Film Festival, who has stated: "It is good that the Peace Film Award exists. It is more important than ever. The world is full of wars, injustice, torture and exploitation, through this prestigious award it is not only an encouragement for the dedicated filmmakers, but it also generates attention to the victims."<sup>180</sup> Together, these three elements (the GPFF's second goal, Gorges' point and Kosslick's statement) support the identification of a discourse of Change in the peace film field.

According to filmmaker Hattendorf, the most important criteria for characterising a film as a peace film is that it "portray(s) *actions, thoughts, and dialogue* in the present or past which somehow support the ideals of peace - that is, in brief: the absence of violence and the presence of justice".<sup>181</sup> In her response, the discourse of agency is established through elements like "actions", "thoughts" and "ideals", which in a discourse of change become moments. "If we as an audience simply stop attending films that support the norm, and support instead films that depict an alternate way of seeing and being, then perhaps there will truly be a peace film phenomenon."<sup>182</sup> In this part of Hattendorf's response, both a discourse of agency (audience power) and a discourse of Reception (alternative way of seeing) can be identified.

### **A Discourse of Reception**

According to Prince, culture-bound attitudes inflect the content of film narratives, along with their stylistic visualization, at the point of production and, again, through what the viewers

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<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>179</sup> Go-Q5

<sup>180</sup> Author's translation: "Dieter Kosslick, Festivaldirektor: Gut, dass es den Friedensfilmpreis gibt. Er ist wichtiger denn je: die Welt ist voller Kriege, Ungerechtigkeit, Folter und Ausbeutung. Da ist die Auszeichnung durch diesen renommierten Preis nicht nur eine Ermutigung für die engagierten Filmemacher/innen, sondern generiert auch Öffentlichkeit für die Opfer.(im Januar 2012)" FFP1

<sup>181</sup> H-Q3

<sup>182</sup> H-Q5

draw from those narratives.<sup>183</sup> In the case of the peace film field, it is the latter – what the audience draws from film narratives – that seems to be in focus. The debt to Saussurean linguistics is apparent in the premise that the connections between cinematic representation and the world are, in all important aspects, a matter of historical or cultural coding and convention. That is, that filmic representation is a matter of symbolic rather than iconic coding and that a viewer, rather than perceiving a film, “reads” it. This adheres with Babcock’s concept of symbolic inversion.

As shown in the section above, a large part of the peace film field has to do with change and inspiring the audience to act (agency). In addition to the discourse of agency/change, there is a discourse of reception that seems to have the same agenda. There are activists all over the world working to change the current socio-political situation and create a more peaceful society. The peace film field may be looked upon as one such type of activism. Through the making of peace films, filmmakers can challenge the existing structures of power and contest the status quo in our war-thorn reality. This adheres to Prince’s point that culture-bound attitudes inflect the content of film narratives, along with their stylistic visualization, at the point of production and, again, through what the viewers draw from those narratives.<sup>184</sup> As Hattendorf mentioned in her answer to my questionnaire, “It is possible that a growing interest in peace rather than war as a subject in film stems from a way of *seeing* film rather than a way of creating film. And that in turn can ultimately influence how films are made.”<sup>185</sup> In other words, it is not (only) the filmmakers that have the most essential role in the peace film field. Thus, it is primarily the part where Prince points to what the viewers draw from film narratives that is transferrable to the peace film field.

A discourse of Reception can be constructed through the chain of equivalence from the following elements in the responses: “way of seeing film rather than way of creating”,<sup>186</sup> “voices heard”,<sup>187</sup> and “understanding”,<sup>188</sup> in addition to “dialogue”,<sup>189</sup> “more outlets for their

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<sup>183</sup> Prince 1993:17

<sup>184</sup> Prince 1993

<sup>185</sup> H-Q5

<sup>186</sup> H-Q5

<sup>187</sup> T-Q1

<sup>188</sup> S-Q3-Q4, B-Q3

<sup>189</sup> S-Q3-Q4, H-Q3



consumptions”,<sup>190</sup> and “observe”.<sup>191</sup>

Hence, the use of the label ‘peace film’ so far appears to be something that is applied in the reception of films, not during production. *From this is implicated that it is the festivals, awards, jury members and audiences who hold the essential roles.* Today, it is the context of reception that makes a film a peace film. In other words it is based on the way the film is read by its audience, something that may be influenced by the surroundings/setting the film is watched in.

### **A Discourse of Communication (Film as Communication)**

To achieve agency and change through film there is an implicit need for communication. Film is communication, and peace films often touch upon political questions. In 2005, the French sociologist and philosopher Bruno Latour published *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*, where his new concept of the political expanded “political representation techniques” to include science and art<sup>192</sup>. In doing so, he emphasised *the context* in which things are formed. In this sense it is possible to view peace film as a form of political communication.

According to McLuhan, the technology of a medium disappears behind whatever flows through it – be it facts, entertainment, instruction or conversation. “As a window onto the world, and onto ourselves, a popular medium moulds what we see and how we see it – and eventually, if we use it enough, it changes who we are, as individuals and as a society”.<sup>193</sup> Films embody, communicate, enforce, and suggest meanings. Also, Matthew Alford draws attention to the widespread view that the cinema is the most important medium for transmitting political ideas in his book *Reel Power: Hollywood Cinema and American Supremacy*.<sup>194</sup>

A discourse of Communication can be constructed through the chain of equivalence from the

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<sup>190</sup> S-Q5

<sup>191</sup> T-Q5

<sup>192</sup> Latour & Weibel 2005

<sup>193</sup> Carr 2010:3

<sup>194</sup> Alford 2010

following elements in the responses to the questionnaires: “understanding”,<sup>195</sup> “voices (heard)”,<sup>196</sup> and “reach most people”,<sup>197</sup> in addition to “deep feelings”,<sup>198</sup> “film as a tool to tell stories”,<sup>199</sup> “universal questions”,<sup>200</sup> and “dialogue”,<sup>201</sup> “communications”,<sup>202</sup> “special access”,<sup>203</sup> as well as “the film medium”,<sup>204</sup> “inspire”,<sup>205</sup> “make us feel, realize”,<sup>206</sup> and “raise awareness”.<sup>207</sup>

Bordering this discourse of Communication is a discourse of Education. This discourse can be established through the following chain of equivalence: “education of the heart, emotional intelligence”,<sup>208</sup> “understanding”,<sup>209</sup> “many peace films are educational while at the same time entertaining”,<sup>210</sup> and “learning”,<sup>211</sup> but in this material this discourse is marginalized.

In the empirical material, the practical aspect of dissemination does not seem to be a topic. The effective distribution of the films - spreading the films far and wide – is not mentioned by the respondents or on the websites. The respondents to the questionnaires do not explicitly say anything about who should spread the films and whether or not that is a goal in itself (something that may be viewed as film festivals’ unique position and assumed purpose). This appears to be something implicit, taken for granted.

According to Wong “*Film festivals create and participate in public spheres of discussion through global media [...]*”.<sup>212</sup> This applies to both the GPFF and the NYPPF. They both use websites and social media to create interest and debate around their festivals. The GPFF has an extensive website, on which they link to four different social media sites; Facebook,<sup>213</sup> Twitter,<sup>214</sup> Flickr<sup>215</sup> and Pinterest<sup>216</sup>. They also send out a newsletter.<sup>217</sup> The same goes for the

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<sup>195</sup> S-Q3-Q4

<sup>196</sup> T-Q1

<sup>197</sup> H-Q1

<sup>198</sup> Go-Q2

<sup>199</sup> Gr-Q1+Q3

<sup>200</sup> Gr-Q3

<sup>201</sup> S-Q3-Q4, H-Q3

<sup>202</sup> Gr-Q1

<sup>203</sup> Go-Q1

<sup>204</sup> B-Q1+Q5, H-Q1

<sup>205</sup> SQ2-Q4

<sup>206</sup> B-Q4 - underline original

<sup>207</sup> T-Q5

<sup>208</sup> Go-Q2

<sup>209</sup> S-Q3-Q4, B-Q3

<sup>210</sup> S-Q3

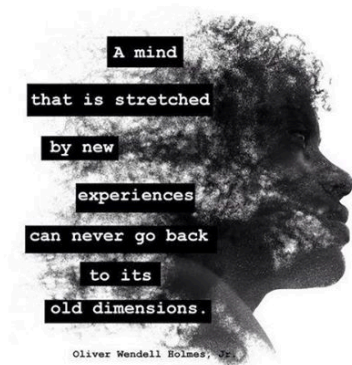
<sup>211</sup> S-Q2

<sup>212</sup> Wong, Cindy H. 2011:2

<sup>213</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/PeaceFilmFest?fref=ts>

<sup>214</sup> <https://twitter.com/PeaceFilmFest>

NYPFF, and they make use of even more social media sites. The NYPFF is on Facebook,<sup>218</sup> Twitter,<sup>219</sup> Youtube,<sup>220</sup> MySpace,<sup>221</sup> Tumblr<sup>222</sup> and Flickr<sup>223</sup> and they also have a blog.<sup>224</sup> They do not update the blog very often, but it is an addition to the website.



The picture above was posted by the Global Peace Film Festival to its Facebook page in January, with the text: ”*This is what we do and our fans tell us so - sign up now for our next newsletter by clicking on JOIN MY LIST, at top right of this page - of course, you're free not to stretch your mind.*”<sup>225</sup> According to the festival, the picture summarises what they aspire to do – they *stretch minds*. This is clearly seen as an important function.

The festival uses Facebook to spread information and as a way of marketing their newsletter, using humour to reach people.<sup>226</sup> Their Facebook-page is filled with pictures like the one above, mixing humour and motivation in an attempt to get people involved. It also includes articles like “10 Sentences That Can Change Your Life for The Better” and “Support the Creation of a U.S. Department of Peacebuilding”. This use of the Facebook page points not only to the discourse of Communication, but also to the discourse of Agency and the discourse of Art as (Peace) Agenda.

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<sup>215</sup> [https://www.flickr.com/groups/peace\\_pics/](https://www.flickr.com/groups/peace_pics/)

<sup>216</sup> <http://www.pinterest.com/ninastreich/global-peace-film-festival/>

<sup>217</sup> In addition, the GPF offers a list of peace related initiatives in their area, see:

<http://peacefilmfest.org/community.html> (accessed 01.05.2014)

<sup>218</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/NYPeaceFilmFest?fref=ts>

<sup>219</sup> <https://twitter.com/NYPeaceFilmFest>

<sup>220</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/user/NewYorkPeaceFilmFest>

<sup>221</sup> <https://myspace.com/newyorkpeacefilmfestival>

<sup>222</sup> <http://nypff.tumblr.com/>

<sup>223</sup> <https://www.flickr.com/photos/91255438@N04/sets/72157632278346807/show/>

<sup>224</sup> <http://newyorkpeacefilmfestival.blogspot.no/>

<sup>225</sup> GPF3

<sup>226</sup> The researcher Majken Jul Sørensen emphasises the importance of humour as a method of non-violent action in her book *På Barrikaderne for Fred* (On The Barricades for Peace – author’s translation) (2012)

While the GPF has a focus on the peace cause and involving people in this through their Facebook page (in addition to advertising for its events), the NYPPF uses its Facebook page mainly as a way of advertising for its events. In addition, the NYPPF also have a focus on the anti-nuclear cause, and several of the posts are in Japanese.<sup>227</sup> Their web emphasis is less on the wider aspects of peace, but they still include some motivational remarks – for instance posting a RIP notice for Nelson Mandela – and link to some articles. The variety is thus wide as to what peace encompasses. Moreover, the understanding of peace seems to be taken for granted and presumed shared within the institutions and across communication lines.

Where does the border between communication, education and therapy go? In the Norwegian weekly newspaper, *Morgenbladet* nr. 18 2014, the exhibit *Art is Therapy* is discussed. This exhibition is critiqued for potentially reducing art to a means rather than a phenomenon with autonomous value. Additionally it demonstrates the danger of going too far in our belief in the power of art, at the expense of art itself. I will not explore this path further in this thesis, but remind the reader to keep this in mind in the evaluation of the ambitions of the peace film field. One may ask if the instrumental use of art to reach the aim of peace affects our perception of art, and in which ways. This however, may be the topic of another study.

### **A Discourse of Film as Art**

Film is mentioned in connection to art by most of the respondents (5/6). Some of them focus on film being art, or an art form, others focus on art as special access or the aesthetics of film. Among the respondents, Bjørhovde (NoPFA) specifically emphasises film as art:

Surely it (peace film) has something to do with the increasing amount of serious attention given to the film medium, *film as Art*? If we argue that film is perhaps the *most important international art-form* today, it is quite natural that an increasing number of critics – and audiences – are interested in seeing films that try to “make a difference”, that is, have impact – politically and culturally.<sup>228</sup>

Borrowing from Bourdieu, this response points to a high-cultural perception of film: the respondent does not talk about an art, but *Art*. In this quote lies an implicit link between film as art and a belief in films’ political and cultural impact. Another respondent who mentions art in relation to peace film is Tanaka, though in a more general way than Bjørhovde. “(...) art

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<sup>227</sup> This might be explained by the fact that one of the founders of the festival, Yumi Tanaka, is originally from Japan.

<sup>228</sup> B-Q5 - emphasis made

form – film, dance, music – are the best tool to appeal to general public.”<sup>229</sup> Tanaka does not elaborate on this or link it to supporting facts, but rather states it like a fact. This way of phrasing the sentiment makes it seem clear that this is their point of view, not an objective observation.

A discourse of Film as Art can be constructed through the chain of equivalence from the following elements in the responses: “a good film (peace FILM prize)”,<sup>230</sup> “artistic methods”,<sup>231</sup> and “Film as *Art*”,<sup>232</sup> as well as “art as special access”,<sup>233</sup> “the most important international art form today”,<sup>234</sup> and “art form”.<sup>235</sup> In addition, elements like “the film medium”,<sup>236</sup> and “film as a tool to tell stories”<sup>237</sup> also signalise a discourse of film as art, though less explicitly than the others. The respondents, notably, do not explicitly problematize the role of art in today’s society. Rather, they take for granted what the label “film as art” actually entails. Rhetorically, one might ask: Does it entail the same for all of them?

According to the discussion in *Morgenbladet* mentioned above, it may be appropriate to stretch and bend the concept of art in understanding the potential for film as art. In the post-modern era we have thought of art as something free and unattached to power relations. With the tendencies seen across the world today of restricting expressions that do not fit the worldview of the power holders, this could lead to a longer discussion. However, in light of the limitations of this thesis I will refrain from elaborating further on this, leaving it as a point of reflection.

Even though the NoPFA draws on peace theory in its regulations, the other criterion that is mentioned has to do with artistic qualities. The mentioning of “*creative, artistic way*” draws attention to the aesthetics of the films. It is a peace *film* award after all. This point, about the aesthetic, filmic aspect of peace film, is one that is also made by the respondents to the questionnaires (2/6).<sup>238</sup> Like the NoPFA, the FFP also draws attention to the aesthetic aspect of peace film: “The award goes to a work that puts the aesthetic elements of film in a special

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<sup>229</sup> T-Q1

<sup>230</sup> Go-Q2

<sup>231</sup> B-Q5

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>233</sup> Go-Q1

<sup>234</sup> B-Q5

<sup>235</sup> T-Q1

<sup>236</sup> B-Q1 + Q5, H-Q1

<sup>237</sup> Gr-Q1+Q3

<sup>238</sup> Go-Q2, B-Q5

way in the service of peaceful coexistence and social commitment.”<sup>239</sup> The information from the awards supports the identification of a discourse of film as art in the peace film field. The discourse ‘Film as Art’ will be further developed in the section about filmmaker Linda Hattendorf and her film *The Cats of Mirikitani*.

### **A Discourse of Peace Media**

As previously mentioned, the interest of this thesis is not only the construction of social reality, but also how this reality can be contested. Hattendorf still sees “[...] the vast majority of films depicting mainstream history as the history of war, and assuming that violence and conflict are at the heart of all compelling drama.”<sup>240</sup> She also identifies “[...] a growing interest in peace rather than war as a subject in film”<sup>241</sup> and in her response, she contrasts peace with war, and peace films with war films. In this, one can identify a discourse of peace (or Peace Media), contrasted with a discourse of war/violence.

Hattendorf’s dichotomy between peace films and war films is reminiscent of Galtung’s dichotomy and contrast between what he calls ‘war journalism’ and ‘peace journalism’. Peace journalism as suggested by Galtung defines war as a problem in itself and promotes non-violence as a means of conflict resolution. The peace film actors, too, define war as a problem, in addition to emphasising the role of films in conflict prevention and peace building.

Hattendorf adheres to the Peace Media discourse by contending that at the core of “a ‘peace film’ is the value/ideal of peace. Unlike a film which focuses on and glorifies war, a peace film celebrates and honors peace, and explores peace as a complex, concrete phenomena.”<sup>242</sup>

As is discussed in the theoretical chapter, this thesis is based on an understanding of peace as positive peace, which entails more than just the absence of violent conflict. The concept of positive peace challenges the asymmetrical structures of power in the present world order. Scholars and activists alike acknowledge this normative quality in positive peace as productive in the effort of transforming asymmetrical structures into more just, equal,

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<sup>239</sup> Author’s translation: ”Der Preis geht an ein Werk, das die ästhetischen Mittel des Films in besonderer Weise in den Dienst des friedlichen Miteinanders und des sozialen Engagements stellt.” FFP1

<sup>240</sup> H-Q5

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>242</sup> H-Q2

nonviolent and ecologically sustainable institutions in the future.<sup>243</sup>

Lakoff reminds us of the importance of vocabulary and concepts in perpetuating frames. “Reframing is everybody’s job”.<sup>244</sup> In a media perspective, reframing is not limited to journalism, but expands to all forms of media. Frames are not just present in the news, but also in movies, TV programs, books, advertisements etc. In peace studies, efforts to implement a culture of peace also incorporate the arts (high and popular), public education and awareness. As touched upon in the theory chapter, peace is a normative endeavour, with an explicit aim of promoting change. Hence, one might claim that the peace film field - by actively challenging discourses of war, inequality and injustice - is central to the promotion of peace.

A discourse of Peace Media can be constructed through the chain of equivalence from the following elements in the responses: “At the core of a ‘peace film’ is *the value/ideal of peace*”,<sup>245</sup> and “*One aspect of peace (and peace films) is about respecting others, despite disagreements, and learning how to find common ground that allows coexistence and creates harmony*”,<sup>246</sup> in addition to elements like “peace the pressing issue of our time”,<sup>247</sup> “presence of justice”,<sup>248</sup> “dialogue”,<sup>249</sup> “global peace”,<sup>250</sup> and “*the idea that peace begins in each and every person on the planet*”.<sup>251</sup> Also more indirect elements like “Freedom of solution” (empowerment),<sup>252</sup> “democratization of media”,<sup>253</sup> and “contrast... mainstream media”<sup>254</sup> construct the discourse of Peace Media. Within these statements lies the idea that media can play an active role in peace building.

In her response to the questionnaire, Streich presents the GPF definition of peace as very broad and intended to be encompassing:

Beginning with the idea that peace begins in each and every person on the planet. It encompasses family, community, one’s country and/or the world. It is much less about the lack of war than

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<sup>243</sup> Cf. Galtung 1996; Webel & Johansen 2012; Karlberg 2012; S-Q2

<sup>244</sup> Lakoff 2004

<sup>245</sup> H-Q2 - emphasis made

<sup>246</sup> S-Q4 - emphasis made

<sup>247</sup> H-Q1

<sup>248</sup> H-Q3

<sup>249</sup> S-Q3-Q4, H-Q3

<sup>250</sup> T-Q2

<sup>251</sup> S-Q2 - emphasis made

<sup>252</sup> Gr-Q4

<sup>253</sup> S-Q5

<sup>254</sup> T-Q5, Go-Q5, H-Q5

about the hopes and aspirations of people the world over - and how to realize those hopes and aspirations. It encompasses cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, gender, geographic diversity and understanding. A peace film is not the opposite of a war film.<sup>255</sup>

The definition of peace presented here by Streich adheres with Galtung's definition of positive peace. As a discourse of peace media, it seems to seek to construct rather than simply reflect reality.

In addition to Streich's response, the GPFF mission statement also presents a definition of peace. "With a mission to expand the definition of peace beyond anti-war, ideology, activism or specific causes, the Global Peace Film Festival films and events suggest a more personal message as reflected in the daily lives of individuals and communities the world over."<sup>256</sup> This statement adheres with the concept of positive peace.

This is something the GPFF have in common with the NoPFA. The NoPFA regulations state that "The Norwegian Peace Film Award (NoPFA) is given to a film spotlighting direct, structural or cultural violence, and which in a creative, artistic way contributes to the prevention or reduction of violence/war".<sup>257</sup> From this we can draw the conclusion that the NoPFA is based on Galtung's understanding of peace as the absence of direct, structural and cultural violence. This award's close tie to peace theory might be explained by the NoPFA's ties to the Master in Peace and Conflict Transformation programme at the University of Tromsø.

The FFP does not present any regulations or mission statements on its website, but presents some tendencies from the films that have received the award so far.

Films honored so far had above all a social-political and humanistic background. The search for such film contributions has been called by Christoph Heubner, speaker of the jury of the peace film award „a film trip around the world“. [...] Films range from drama to films for children. They are judged by their message, social involvement and realization.<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> S-Q2

<sup>256</sup> GPFF2

<sup>257</sup> NoPFA4

<sup>258</sup> FFP3



Unlike the description of the NoPFA, this is a broad description, and does not make use of peace theory, or mention peace at all. A large number of films have a “social-political and humanistic background”. When they say that the films are “judged by their message, social involvement and realization”, they don’t *explicitly* express what this message is.

On its website, the NYPPF informs that its mission is “to present films from around the world that advance global peace.”<sup>259</sup> They define ‘global peace’ very broadly, emphasizing the advantages of peaceful solutions to international conflicts, and showing the horrors and costs of war. This is similar to what Tanaka conveyed in her response to the questionnaire.<sup>260</sup> They also screen films that “deal constructively and hopefully with the root causes of war”. This includes the better management of earth’s resources and the sharing of those resources, the peaceful resolution of local and regional conflicts, and the humility and understanding needed when interacting with a different cultural tradition.<sup>261</sup> They claim to have a deep interest in films that deal with the proliferation and consequences of nuclear arms and energy, and many of the films they screen touch on this subject. In this statement, the discourse of peace media is established through elements like “advance global media” and “peaceful resolution”. The festival does not base its approach explicitly on peace theory, but implicitly what is implied in its statement is an understanding of peace as something more than the absence of violence (positive peace).

There are some similarities between the peace film field and the other peace media initiatives presented in this thesis. The peace film field and Kolwaczyk’s peace media framework share the view that media can be used to promote activism, create movements and get people involved in the peace cause. Like peace journalism, the peace film field assumes a normative and ethical point of departure. In its ideal form, peace journalism aims to show backgrounds and contexts of conflicts, hear from all sides, explore hidden agendas and highlight peace ideas and initiatives from anywhere at any time. Most of this is transferable to the peace film field. The respondents emphasise peace films’ ability to portray conflicts and human relations, give voices to the silent/voiceless and highlight peace ideas and initiatives.

An example of a very different kind of peace film institution than those included so far in this

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<sup>259</sup> NYPPF1

<sup>260</sup> T-Q2

<sup>261</sup> NYPPF1

thesis is the *Peace it Together* programme. Peace it Together was started in Canada in 2004 as an attempt of peace building between Israeli and Palestinian youth. The programme's goal and approach is to serve youth and advance peace in Israel and Palestine, through dialogue and filmmaking. They aim to use dialogue, filmmaking and community engagement to empower youth as media makers and change agents, in order to build a just, secure and sustainable peace in Israel-Palestine.<sup>262</sup> The Peace it Together programme differs from the other peace film institutions in that its main aim is the filmmaking (production) of peace films and not the reception (which is what the festivals and awards is mainly concerned with). The question of whether this is successful could be the material for another study.

Even though its approach differs from the other institutions included in this thesis, it is apparent from elements like “dialogue”, “community engagement”, “empower youth” and “change agents” that Peace it Together adheres not only to the discourse of peace media, but also to one of Agency/Change, Reception and Communication in the order of discourse Art as (Peace) Agenda.

### **The Peace Film Field as Contested Terrain**

Kellner refers to mass media culture as *contested terrains*. Its form and content are subject to constant processes of negotiation and renegotiation of meaning between audiences on the basis of texts issued by producers.<sup>263</sup> The idea of media culture as contested terrains where various audiences constantly struggle over the meanings of key foundational texts is interesting when looking at the peace film field. In the present thesis, the situation surrounding the receptions of texts, rather than the producers of such texts, is the focal point in the analysis. What is examined is how meaning is negotiated between the peace film institutions and its audiences.

The peace film field can be perceived as an alternative discourse domain. Peace films operate in a cinematic context where they compete with blockbusting war films and violent action and horror movies. The respondents claim that peace film institutions play an important role in contesting the role and effects of such war films. As peace researcher Oliver Ramsbotham has put it, “We operate inter-subjectively, where our perceptions, interests and needs are

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<sup>262</sup> Peace it Together

<sup>263</sup> Kellner 1995:5

constantly encountering the perceptions, interests and needs of others. The way in which, and the structures in which, these conflicting encounters are negotiated determines whether we are ‘peacemakers’ or ‘warmakers’.<sup>264</sup>

In the empirical material the respondents have not pointed to specific filmic properties that distinguish peace film from other films. Using Pöttsch, we can say that what several responses touch on rather than articulate is the quality of *multivocality* in films that oppose and challenge dominant readings of history and events.<sup>265</sup> In many war and action movies “audiences are consistently invited to identify<sup>266</sup> with only one side in the ensuing conflict [...] This effect is achieved through repeated recourse to dwelling close-ups or mid-shots on individuals, through voice-over thoughts and dialogues, or the deployment of familiar cultural icons, names or habits.”<sup>267</sup> Pöttsch applies this to his analysis of war films. In his reading of the war film Black Hawk Down he presents Nick Broomfield’s *Battle for Haditha* (2007) as an example of an alternative war movie that may have the potential to do just that.<sup>268</sup> As such, war films may share terrain with peace films. This resonates with one of the respondents, who says that a “*peace film is not the opposite of a war film*”.<sup>269</sup> War films that exhibit qualities of multivocality, giving voice to both the protagonists and antagonists in making apparent differentiations along such lines as national belonging, class, ethnicity, religious denomination, gender, age, cultural preferences, or political standpoint, may according to Pöttsch be a means for peace.

Also, films that challenges stereotypes and prejudice may be thought to meet the peace film fields’ somewhat vaguely expressed criteria. A case in point is the documentary *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People* (2006) by Jack Shaheen. In this documentary about Arabic stereotyping in cultural artifacts, Shaheen contends that long lasting propaganda has policy impact on opinions, and habituates a certain reading or decoding of films representing Arabs or ‘programs’ audiences to think about Arab Others in certain ways. Films that show a more diverse and complex representation of Arabs fail to succeed in the US, Dr. Shaheen

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<sup>264</sup> Ramsbotham et al 2005: 319

<sup>265</sup> Pöttsch 2005

<sup>266</sup> Here, Pöttsch employs a wide understanding of the term identification inspired by Smith’s (1995) notion of engaging protagonists. Spectators seldom identify totally with characters. Usually they align merely to certain traits made accessible through a film’s formal properties (such as subjective shots, dialogues, close-ups, and so on) – Smith, Murray (1995) *Engaging Characters: Fiction, Emotion and the Cinema*. Oxford: Clarendon Press

<sup>267</sup> Pöttsch 2011a:81

<sup>268</sup> Pöttsch 2005

<sup>269</sup> S-Q2

claims to have documented in his research. Dr. Shaheen's findings points to the opposite trend in films of what the respondents wish to achieve through peace film.

According to the respondents, peace films should be the opposite of stereotyping. To Greuel, an important criterion is that "the story the film tells is the story about human beings in their relation to each other".<sup>270</sup> Streich claims that peace films "contributes to the dialogue of expanding understanding of other people, other cultures, other ideas... One aspect of peace (and peace films) is about respecting others, despite disagreements, and learning how to find common ground that allows coexistence and creates harmony".<sup>271</sup> Bjørhovde emphasises that the films should manage to make us "not only see, but feel, realize in a deep sense, the (negative) consequences of oppression, violence, war, colonization, injustice, discrimination" as an important aspect of peace films.<sup>272</sup> All these answers point to the opposite of stereotypes, and touch on the quality of multivocality as desired in peace films.

Within the order of discourse 'Art as (Peace) Agenda' several discourses have been identified. These discourses compete within the same domain (the peace film field). One example of competing discourses is expressed in the saying '*one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter*'.<sup>273</sup> This may also be understood as heteroglossia (mixed many-languagedness) or the competition of discourses. Heteroglossia, according to Bakhtin, is the dynamic multiplicity of voices (glossia = tung, hetero = mixed) of genres and social languages that cohabit, supplement and contradict each other in the social struggle of discourses. Bakhtin's term points to the fact that every text is composed of several competing voices in dialogical interrelation. Heteroglossia may be a defining characteristic of the peace film field.

In the discourses of the peace film field, I find that there are many floating signifiers. The element "voices"<sup>274</sup> is a floating signifier that just as well might belong in a discourse of communication, a discourse of reception and a discourse of agency/change. The elements "understanding" and "dialogue", too, are floating signifiers that might belong both in the discourse of communication, the discourse of reception and the discourse of peace media.

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<sup>270</sup> Gr – Q3

<sup>271</sup> S-Q4

<sup>272</sup> B-Q4 – underlines original

<sup>273</sup> Edwards 2004:166; Jørgensen & Philips 2002:36-37

<sup>274</sup> T-Q1

Especially the discourse of reception and the discourse of communication share several floating signifiers.

This thesis understands reading as an active process. Some texts emerge as closed while others more openly rely on an active involvement of the receiver in the production of various possible meanings. Multivocal texts are carriers of a variety of potential meanings. However, every text reflects and is partly determined by previous texts. The meanings produced are dependent on the internal structure of the text in question, *as well as* on the discursive context of its reception. Within this understanding the reader (in this case, the peace film audience), emerges as an active constituent of meanings within the boundaries of textual and socio-cultural frames.

Discourse analysis calls for what the Dutch cultural theorist Mieke Bal<sup>275</sup> calls the need to examine “*unexamined assumptions about meaning and about the world*”. In my experience with peace film, this is at the core of the films and the field in general. Peace films seem to have in common that they seek to challenge objective discourses. Jørgensen and Phillips note that there can be power imbalances between different discourses and that people can have different access to discourses.<sup>276</sup> The peace film actors that are respondents to the questionnaires have through their position as members of peace film institutions central access to the discourses surrounding their field (even though the respect to which they may reflect on this might differ). As such they are also interpellated in a particular way, and their responses must be viewed in light of this. They represent certain discourses that may be taken for granted within their field. Hence, their responses will differ from devotees of war films or mainstream entertainment films. Does what one person perceives as peace necessarily mean peace for another? This question brings the Metallica song *Eye of the beholder* to mind.

Do You See What I See?	Independence Limited
Truth Is an Offense	Freedom of Choice
Your Silence for Your Confidence	Choice Is Made for You My Friend
Do You Hear What I Hear?	Freedom of Speech
Doors Are Slamming Shut	Speech Is Words That They Will Bend
Limit Your Imagination, Keep You Where They must	Freedom with Their Exception
Do You Feel What I Feel?	
Bittering Distress	Do You Fear What I Fear?
Who Decides What You Express	Living Properly
Do You Take What I Take?	Truths to You Are Lies to Me
Endurance Is the Word	Do You Choose What I Choose?
Moving Back Instead of Forward Seems to Me	More Alternatives

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<sup>275</sup> Bal 1999

<sup>276</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:142

Absurd

Doesn't Matter What You See  
Or into it What You Read  
You Can Do it Your Own Way  
If It's Done Just How I Say

Energy Derives from Both the plus and Negative  
Do You Need What I Need?  
Boundaries Overthrown  
Look Inside to Each His Own  
Do You Trust What I Trust?  
Me, Myself and I  
Penetrate the Smoke Screen I See Through the Selfish  
Lie<sup>277</sup>

The actors within the peace film field seem to take for granted that peace is desirable. This might not ring true to all. To some people, conflict and war is desirable (for instance for economic reasons), and thus peace work might be viewed as destructive rather than productive. For “realists” it might also be viewed as a very naïve activity, something not worthy of academic or political questioning. Peace film festivals may be characterised as “activist” festivals. Activism is a concept that can be viewed differently from different perspectives. From the perspectives of governments and world rulers, activism may be perceived as dangerous and rebellious, and not as a positive means to achieve change. Even though recent research has produced data on the effectiveness of non-violent struggle and activism,<sup>278</sup> the view that violence and war is a necessary part of world order still seems to be prevailing across institutions and society.<sup>279</sup> Parallel to this view, in 1999 the UN adopted a Declaration on a Culture of Peace in GA-resolution 53/243A.<sup>280</sup>

#### **4.3. Filmmaker Linda Hattendorf and her Peace Film *The Cats of Mirikitani***



Jimmy Mirikitani, “Grand Master Artist”, *The Cats of Mirikitani*<sup>281</sup>

<sup>277</sup> Writer(s): Kirk L. Hammett, James Alan Hetfield and Lars Ulrich. Copyright: Creeping Death Music

<sup>278</sup> Stephan & Chenoweth (2008); Sharp & Bernal (2013)

<sup>279</sup> Cf. NATO, FN, EU, ICRC’s Geneva Conventions

<sup>280</sup> The UN defines a culture of peace as involving values, attitudes and behaviours that reject violence, endeavour to prevent conflicts by addressing root causes, and aim at solving problems through dialogue and negotiation. - Global peace index in Webel & Johansen 2012:48; UN documents

<sup>281</sup> Jimmy Tsutomu Mirikitani ©LUCID DREAMING INC.

As stated in the introduction and then again in the analysis chapter, I have not attempted an analysis of all the discursive practises identified in the peace film field. In the following sections, discourse analysis will be tuned down. Here, filmmaker Linda Hattendorf's voice will be presented as an additional comment and context to the analysis. Hattendorf's film, *The Cats of Mirikitani* (2006), may serve as an illustration of the production side of the prism of mass media culture referred to by Kellner as contested terrains.<sup>282</sup>

The fact that this film has received more than twenty awards at festivals all over the world is likely to have influenced its reception.<sup>283</sup> So far in the thesis, rather than the producers of texts, the situation surrounding the receptions of such texts has been the focal point in the analysis. In this section the voice of a producer of peace films will be presented without too much analysis or comments. Instead, lines will be drawn to the discourse analysis presented above.

### **About *The Cats of Mirikitani***

*The Cats of Mirikitani* is a documentary from 2006 that tells the story of artist Jimmy Mirikitani: his internment and loss of American citizenship as a Japanese-American during the Second World War, his life in old age of homelessness on the streets of New York City, and his eventual reconciliation and reclamation of family and country. *The Cats of Mirikitani* begins in 2001 with shots of Jimmy on the streets and from there unfolds over time, including retrospectives of his life. The film starts out as a documentary about an elderly homeless artist living on the streets of New York and his story. Then, during the filming process, the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center happen. The film begins to explore the parallels between the anti-Japanese sentiment during WWII and the paranoia surrounding Middle Eastern populations in the United States after 9/11. When the 9/11 attacks happen, Hattendorf offers Mirikitani shelter in her small apartment. Over the months they live together, she uncovers his true identity and history. During this period a curious and beautiful friendship flowers, as Hattendorf begins the long process of helping Mirikitani to re-integrate back into society,

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<sup>282</sup> For more information about the film, see: <http://www.thecatsofmirikitani.com/index.htm>

<sup>283</sup> Among others: Audience Award at Tribeca Film Festival 2006, Best Documentary at Dublin International Film Festival, Frida Award for Best New Director at Sun Valley Spiritual Film Festival, Audience Award at Paris Cinema Film Festival, Press Prize for Best Documentary at Femmina International Film Festival, Best Picture Japanese Eyes at Tokyo International Film Festival, Audience Award at FilmFest DC, Norwegian Peace Film Award at Tromsø International Film Festival

recovering, among other documents, his social security card and passport. Hattendorf has made a very personal film about justice deferred, loss and redemption that has touched audiences all over the world. The film makes use of empathic humour as transportation and relief.

The cats referred to in the title are regularly featured in Mirikitani's artwork. They also represent a central narrative element in the film.



Throughout the film, Mirikitani gives an account of his art technique as a combination of both occidental (western) and oriental styles, and refers to himself as “Grand Master Artist”.

Since the release of the film, audiences all over the world have embraced Mirikitani and the film to such an extent that it could be called *The Cats of Mirikitani complex*. The film has an official fan page on Facebook where the audience is reminded of screenings, opportunities to meet Mirikitani in person and exhibitions of Mirikitani’s art. Before he passed away, the audience of the film was also invited to Mirikitani’s 90<sup>th</sup> birthday party in New York City, and after his passing, to a public memorial. Recently, Mirikitani’s artwork has been featured in the children’s book *The Cat Who Chose to Dream*.<sup>285</sup>

### **Filmmaker Linda Hattendorf on Peace Film**

*“I want people to feel history ... to understand the lingering trauma of war and discrimination and the healing power of friendship and art.”<sup>286</sup>*

<sup>284</sup> Artwork by Jimmy Tsutomu Mirikitani featuring a mother and baby cat

<sup>285</sup> For more information, see: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Cats-of-Mirikitani/299557297159>

<sup>286</sup> Cincinnati World Cinema Website – On *The Cats of Mirikitani*



Hattendorf holds degrees in Literature, Art History, and Media Studies and has been working in the New York documentary community for almost two decades. Hattendorf is also an instructor in the documentary program at the New York Film Academy, and edits and consults on social issue documentaries.<sup>287</sup> *The Cats of Mirikitani* was Hattendorf's directorial debut. It won the Audience Award at its premiere at the 2006 Tribeca Film Festival and many more prizes in festivals around the world, including the Norwegian Peace Film Award in 2007. Years later, in 2011, Hattendorf was invited back to Tromsø as a member of the NoPFA-jury.

Hattendorf's latest film project is as mentioned in the introduction a film about cultures of peace. This project is in pre-production. In our context, the fact that Hattendorf has intentionally chosen to make a peace film is interesting. Hattendorf is to my knowledge the first filmmaker who received a peace film award for a film and then let this inspire her to consciously endeavour to make a peace film for her next project. It is not unlikely that others have followed the same path, although I have not yet learned of them. Certainly, some of the peace film festivals and other institutions seem to aim specifically to motivate the production of peace films. Together with the Peace it Together programme, this may be perceived as a new development in the peace film field, moving it from something that earlier has been reserved for the reception of films, to something that affects production.

I sent Hattendorf a questionnaire that included the questions I sent to the peace film institutions, but also added a few film specific questions. When asked about what motivated her to start working with peace film, she answered: "Peace is the pressing issue of our time, and film is the medium that can reach the most people."<sup>288</sup> Her answer is brief and concise. She does not dwell on her personal experiences, not even mentioning herself, and from her answer her motivation does not seem to be linked to any peace film institutions. Thus she stands apart from the other respondents, who have in common that they either mention themselves or the institutions they work for when writing about their motivation. In Hattendorf's answer I read a discourse of peace and a discourse of film as communication, agenda. The answers to the other general peace film questions have been treated in the previous chapter. Below, there will be an examination of her answers to the film specific questions.

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<sup>287</sup> PBS Independent Lens - About Hattendorf

<sup>288</sup> H-Q1

The first of the film specific questions dealt with Hattendorf's motivations for making *The Cats of Mirikitani*. According to Hattendorf, the film began as a simple effort to tell the story of one elderly homeless man in the hope that someone would see the film and help him find a home. As the film developed, she found deep trauma caused by war and racism in her character's past. The film then became a way to explore the links between these past traumas and the problem of homelessness in the present. Ultimately the film looked not only at the problem of war and racism in the past, but parallel historical events in the present (the aftermath of both 9/11 and Pearl Harbor). Thus the film, to her, became a way to make visible a broader context for current social problems and to find lasting solutions through changes in consciousness and society.<sup>289</sup>

I asked Hattendorf about her hopes and expectations for the reception of *The Cats of Mirikitani*. In her response she wrote that she hoped it would help others understand a little-known chapter in American history. "Beyond understanding that history intellectually, I wanted the film to help people to *feel* this history, to care about those who experienced injustice, and to want to know more."<sup>290</sup> This focus on feeling adheres with the other respondents emphasis on the criteria for peace films to create deep feelings and engage and involve the audience in addition to creating understanding.<sup>291</sup>



Jimmy Mirikitani and Linda Hattendorf<sup>292</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> H-Q7

<sup>290</sup> H-Q8 – emphasis original

<sup>291</sup> Go-Q2, S-Q2-Q4, B-Q4, T-Q5

<sup>292</sup> From interview at *A Mānoa Journal blog*

The next question was an expansion of the one before, asking how the reception of the film differed from her expectations. Originally, Hattendorf thought of this as a small film, with a limited and specific audience. Instead she found that the journey of this one man had broad appeal and touched people around the world.

I think the fact that the focus of the film was equally balanced between the trauma of the past and healing in the present was an important factor. I met audiences around the world who were hungry for a little good news - who want to hear stories not of the things that divide us but of the things that bring us together. By focusing on the healing power of community and art, as well as the trauma of war and discrimination, I think the film gave people a sense of hope and empowered them.<sup>293</sup>

When asked what makes *The Cats of Mirikitani* a peace film in her opinion, Hattendorf emphasised the motto of the main character in the film, Jimmy Mirikirani. “*Make art not war.*” According to Hattendorf, this in a nutshell is a key ingredient of a peace film – that it offers an alternative to violence. “Further, this film celebrates and honors the ideals of peace on many levels - on the level of the individual - who attains some resolution within, to peace between that individual and his nation, to peace between nations.”<sup>294</sup>

### **Film as Peace Agenda**

The relationship between the political and art has been discussed throughout this thesis, as a resonance to Mirikitani’s motto: “*Make art, not war*”. Mirikitani’s motto is not as much a belief in change through art as it is the belief that if people were to devote themselves to art, there would be less room for warmaking. What Mirikitani communicates through this statement is a strong belief in the power of art to fulfil human potential. In the discourse of art, change is not so much the goal as the underlying belief that art in itself is a better activity than war. In this sense, Mirikitani’s motto unites the discourse of Film as Art with the discourse of Agency/Change, and as such both belong to the order of discourse Art as (Peace) Agenda.

As discussed throughout this chapter, films may habituate audiences to reigning political discourses and current social order in ways that make them seem natural. On the other hand, films may also have the power to question and contradict current social order and discourses,

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<sup>293</sup> H-Q9

<sup>294</sup> H-Q10

in order to provide alternative views on commonly accepted narratives. In my opinion it is the latter that is characteristic for *The Cats of Mirikitani*. Through methods of visual comparison, sensitivity and impeccable timing, Hattendorf's film becomes a political comment to the psychological trauma of WWII, and the aftermath of 9/11, as well as the workings of social structures/services in the USA. The film subtly questions the way the American government handles conflict, and offers an alternative view on what became the commonly accepted narratives of fear, revenge and violence after 9/11. It also deals very deeply with the impacts of trauma and reconciliation on people's health and self-esteem.

Here, Kellner and Ryan's view that films execute a transfer from one discursive field (social life) to another (cinematic narratives), is given a concrete form. One may claim that *The Cats of Mirikitani* becomes part of the broader cultural system of representations that constructs the discourses within the peace film field and, through that, also constructs social reality. The film adheres to the discourse of Art as (Peace) Agenda as the order of discourse in the peace film field.

An aspect that reappears in the responses to the questionnaires is the focus on the story and theme the films convey, as well as on the power of film to communicate universal questions and possibly bridge divides. Like *Mirikitani*, several of the respondents also seem to adhere to the discourse of art, with a stronger belief in the stories that the films convey than in the medium itself. According to Greuel, the story peace films tell is the story about human beings in relation to each other.<sup>295</sup> The impact of a story is well documented through *The Cats of Mirikitani* and the reception complex that has surrounded the film.

#### **4.4 Summary of Findings and Discussion**

By sketching out the discursive landscape of the emerging peace film field, the findings and discussion chapter has sought to answer the questions: *Which discourses describe the emerging peace film field? And how are these discourses constructed?* In this landscape social reality is repeatedly constructed, sustained and contested through film as well as its social contexts.

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<sup>295</sup> Gr-Q2-Q3

To get an impression of what kinds of film that receive the label ‘peace film’, the film selections of the NoPFA and the FFP have been compared. From the production side, the films are usually placed under genres like drama or war film, and it is on the receiving end that the films get the label ‘peace film’. It is interesting to notice that there is a considerable variation in the form of peace films. There are examples of both feature films, animation films and documentaries that have been awarded a peace film award or been on the program of a peace film festival. Specific filmic properties that distinguish peace film from other films have sparsely been identified in the empirical material, aside from the quality of *multivocality* in films that oppose and challenge dominant readings of history and events.<sup>296</sup> Another proposed multivocal quality of peace film can be characterised by the films ability to project alternative futures and realities.

The respondents made a point of stating that there are no fixed characteristics for peace film. Still, some characteristics of the films have come to light in this thesis. The researched peace film institutions and actors seem to agree that peace films may contribute to peace building and/or to the prevention of direct, structural or cultural violence by highlighting inequality, injustice and by projecting visions of alternative societies and relationships. According to the respondents, peace films should engage, encourage and involve the audience. Examples given by the respondents are films that portray and spotlight social awareness, asymmetric conflict, conflict transformation, (war) trauma, reconciliation, human relations, social change, and human rights issues, without mentioning all. The peace film field seems to agree that the core of peace films is not the stylistic elements of the films but rather that the theme in some sense has to be peaceful, encourage peace work, or promote peace. In other words the peace film actors are socially engaged to promote peace through the means of film.

Film festivals have become crucial centres for the development of film knowledge and film practices, and have the power to influence which films we as audiences and scholars will see, which films we respect or neglect, and often, how we read such cinematic works. This thesis argues that films may get “new” meanings when included in different discourses than they originally were a part of. It also supports the notion that as signs, film images are more than mere reflections of a depicted object. They convey additional meanings, and they are also open for different readings, depending on the context in which they are perceived. These

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<sup>296</sup> Pöttsch 2005

additional meanings connect the text to particular norms and values present in the context. In different contexts, images can thus be read differently.

An important aspect of peace film is the context in which the films are given the label. The peace film institutions do not just provide the audience with a selection of films that are given the stamp of 'peace film', they are also an arena for debate and discussion about the films, their themes and messages, and how they relate to the world today. A criterion that recurs in the responses to the questionnaires is that peace films, rather than alienating people, cultures and conflicts, bring them closer and open the eyes, hearts and minds of the audience to new perspectives. It is not only the films in themselves that are important. The perspective a film is seen through (the peace film institutions) and the context can shape the perception of the situation and message treated in the film. This is a big part of what makes a film a peace film.

The Peace it Together programme differs from the other peace film institutions in that its main aim is the production of peace films and not the reception (which is what the festivals and awards are mainly concerned with). This, together with the information from filmmaker Hattendorf, can be seen as the start of a new development in the peace film field, with the possibility of changing the labelling of peace film from something that happens during reception to something that is decided before production.

Throughout chapter 4, several discourses have been identified within the peace film field. Art as (Peace) Agenda has been identified as the order of discourse, and within it five other discourses has been discussed; Art as Agency/Change, a discourse of Reception, Art as Communication, Film as Art and a discourse of Peace Media. These discourses struggle within the same peace film field (domain), and some of them are more prominent than others. Also, the order of discourse struggles in other discursive domains, bordering to and competing with discourses of war film, and so on.

The discourse of Art as Agency/Change can, in one sense, be viewed as competing with the discourse of Film as Art. The discourse of Art as Agency/Change views film as a means to achieve social change/ peace, while the discourse of Film as Art sees film as having value as an art form in itself. If the two discourses are competing within the peace film field, the one that seems to prevail the most is Art as Agency/Change. All the discourses in the order of discourse are bordering each other, some of them more than others. The discourse of

Reception is based on a discourse of Film as Communication, and what the films communicate in the peace film field is Art as Agency/Change. The Peace Media discourse identifies the agenda that dominates the order of discourse Art as (*Peace*) Agenda. In other words, the order of discourse and the discourses included in it tells us something about what actors in the field perceive peace film as being, at this point in time.

### **Need for Further Research**

I have limited my research geographically to include only the Western part of the peace film field. That does not mean that peace film institutions and actors cannot be found in other parts of the world. Researching this excluded area may be of interest for another study. For example, there exists a peace film award in Costa Rica and one in Mexico, and probably there are many others like them. It is not all that surprising that one finds examples of this kind of activism in a part of the world where there is a history of using the arts for political purposes.<sup>297</sup>

It is not very clear who are the target audiences of peace institutions. In discourse analytical terms this is a question of whether anyone has access to the peace film discourses. An interesting research project for the future could investigate whether prerequisite knowledge is required to access these discourses, be it in media, discourses, art, or film theory. For now, any attempt of mine to answer this would be speculation rather than documented assertions, since these questions were not asked in the questionnaires.

In a larger study it would also have been interesting to investigate not only the construction of discourses, but also which forces sustain these discourses, and which forces contest them. This has only been briefly discussed in this thesis, but could potentially be the topic of a study larger than this one.

Following up on the present study, one might ask: Who might have an interest in the production of a discourse of peace media? And what do they want to achieve by it? Another study could, for instance, assess connections between the production side of peace film and the receiving end (like film festivals and peace activists).

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<sup>297</sup> I.e. the tradition of the theatre of the oppressed (Augusto Boal), as well as emancipatory pedagogy (Paolo Freire) and theology (Martin Baró)

## 5. CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Concluding Remarks - Methodology

Regarding the methodology applied in this study, I find that discourse analysis has been productive in questioning taken-for-granted assumptions in the material. As such, it has given productive knowledge of the prevailing discourses within the peace film field. Still, on the less productive side is the danger that in looking for discourses in the material, one might lose sight of the nuances and variations in the utterances. Combining discourse analysis with political and cultural theories has been productive in giving a variety of perspectives on the discourses that have been constructed to represent the material. Setting out to research the peace film phenomenon I must admit that I perceived the field as less substantial than my research has proved it to be. And still the field expands far beyond those institutions and actors that my research covers.

As to the theory and methodology as a whole package approach in discourse analysis,<sup>298</sup> and to its particular philosophical premises, reflections have been made by critical voices, particularly on its rejection of the existence of an absolute truth. As have been noted earlier, I adhere to the understanding of truth, knowledge and reality as contingent entities. This may be considered in light of Foucault's aim to investigate the rules for what can and cannot be said, and the rules for what is considered to be true and false. Truth, like representation, is a contested phenomenon. To this point I may note that I realise the taken-for-grantedness in my own perspective of peace as a normative goal (to such an extent that it might be considered a truth claim). In this, I accept that other perspectives might to the same extent be held by other "truths". Following the social constructionist premise, Jørgensen and Phillips acknowledge that we will never be able to produce fully 'transparent' knowledge.<sup>299</sup> The best I can do is to be as transparent as possible and question my own taken-for-grantedness to the extent of my capacity.

For reflexivity reasons I must ask what I myself may have taken for granted in researching this field. My Bachelor's degree contained a semester of Peace and Conflict study. This may have coloured my conception of peace theory and its significance to other readers. Also, it is

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<sup>298</sup> Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:4

<sup>299</sup> For further criticism of social constructionism see Jørgensen & Phillips 2002:175



possible that my personal upbringing in a family of artists and peace scholars has made me less prone than other researchers to question the relevance of connecting peace and art to the extent that I do. The fact that my Bachelor's is a mix of subjects from the humanities and social sciences may also have contributed to the emphasis on the political perspective on film in the findings.

The respondents' response rate, enthusiastic attitude and thorough responses to my questionnaires may possibly have been spurred by my own experience with festivals of this kind. Also, the framing of my correspondence and the questions posed in the questionnaires may to some extent have influenced their responses. This is in line with social constructivist critical approach to taken-for-granted knowledge, seeing our knowledge and representations of the world as products of our ways of categorising the world. It is also a reminder of the need for reflexivity on contingency surrounding research processes. Hence, the researcher's own production of knowledge must also be viewed as historically and culturally specific.

Having volunteered for organisations like the Rafto Foundation for Human Rights and the Norwegian Red Cross, activism is close to my heart. Activism in itself is worthy of academic study. The Perestroika debate in political science has brought to light a question of political science's mission, whether its role is to be strictly descriptive or normative. The Perestroikans agree that political science should seek to improve society and not just study how society works. Their commitment has contributed to reverse the trend evident for nearly a century, by which the academic social sciences retreated from engagement with social problems as actors, to occupy what Donald Schön called the "high, hard ground" where things are clear but trivial, rather than occupying the swamp where things are complex, dynamic and confusing but hugely important.<sup>300</sup> I find this debate productive to the role of research, as well as film, in society and the lacking research on dissident activity.

## **5.2 Different Drummers**

### **- The Emerging Field of Peace Film**

*"If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different*

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<sup>300</sup> Schön 1983 in Greenwood 2008

*drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away.*<sup>301</sup>

There is an on-going debate about the power of film and whether this power is positive or negative. One aspect of the discussion is the long-running debate about the power of film to effect real change in the world. This aspect is of special interest to this thesis. From widespread notoriety films to less-known short and feature documentaries that are moving audiences to action, filmmakers now have the tools and outreach to make a difference on countless issues. But while the potential for effecting change is there, important questions remain about the balance between hype and reality, truth and fiction, and exaggerated claims and measurable impacts.

This thesis has explored discourse and representation in relation to peace film as a field. Discourses and frames are mental mechanisms by which we organize our thoughts, ideas and worldviews. When we receive new information we integrate it into pre-existing frames or discourses, which help us make sense of the world. This process is generally not a conscious one, yet it critically colours the reality we see in the world. Peace media institutions share the view that it is vitally important to bring our discourses and frames into the light of consciousness. Hence, discourses and frames have been a crucial subject of analysis in this thesis.

Peace studies in higher education has come of age. In the exploration of peace film discourses, this thesis has touched on a neglected area of scholarship: peace filmmakers' and peace film festivals' relationship to dissenting political movements and voices.

In March 2014 there was an article in the Chicago Tribune called "Let's get flashy with film fest names". The author, Nina Metz, drew attention to the names of film festivals, and particularly the names of peace film festivals. According to Metz, many film festivals are in need of a "branding makeover", especially the humanitarian ones. Her critique is not aimed at the festivals themselves or their contents, but rather at the way they are presented. "Right now, they're too earnest, promising a collection of guilt-inducing public service announcements."<sup>302</sup> Her article was mainly focused on the Peace on Earth Film Festival in Chicago, whose name she compared with "a canned Miss America statement." Productive to this thesis is her questioning of the relevance and appeal in the name peace itself. I relate this to the taken-for-grantedness of the conception of peace in the peace film field, which is implicit

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<sup>301</sup> Henry David Thoreau

<sup>302</sup> Metz 2014

rather than made explicit in many of the responses as well as in the websites. It also touches upon the phenomenon of dissemination of the messages and the films that characterise the field.

The respondents seem to have in common an optimistic view on change in that they view the social as open to change. Setting out from the premises that films help shape our social reality, contribute to a shared cultural memory, and transform what we take reality to be, the respondents' optimistic hope for peace film's impact makes sense. It remains to be considered in another study, however, whether such impact is achieved. From my empirical material conclusions can only be drawn on the intentions, hopes and perspectives provided in the findings. What can be concluded is that, as reframing is changing the way the public sees the world, peace film may be viewed as a new language field attempting to speak differently of what is taken for granted, and hence contribute to creating new frames that we can apply in our thinking about the future. As such, the peace film institutions are part of global social politics, since reframing *is* social change, to quote Lakoff. In its reframing attempts, the peace film field may be read as a political field. This is in line with Bruno Latour's "political representation techniques" which includes science and art,<sup>303</sup> emphasising *the context* in which things are formed. In this sense it is possible to view peace film as a form of political communication.

Through changing the framing of the films that are labelled peace film, the peace film field also seems to influence the reception of the films. It is the festivals, awards, jury members and audiences who hold the essential roles. There clearly exists professional enthusiasm and much volunteer work connected to the researched peace film institutions. Today, it is the context of reception that makes a film a peace film. However, there are signs of a new development in the peace film field, with the possibility of changing the labelling of peace film from something that happens during reception to something that is decided before production.

The aim of affecting or influencing the audience, and through that the world in general, seems to be central to the researched peace film institutions. They seem to have in common an emphasis on the power of film and its potential for challenging the status quo. Supported by mirror neuron research, the visual element of film plays an essential part in its powerful influence on the audience. Peace film institutions, at least those studied in this thesis, attempt

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<sup>303</sup> Latour & Weibel 2005

to achieve symbolic inversions through status change, access change, and re-reading.<sup>304</sup> Together, this may be viewed as a project of discourse intervention, - an effort to change our social reality by altering the discourses that help constitute it.<sup>305</sup> Though this must, in our context, be seen as anecdotal, peace film institutions claim that there is much evidence that audience members have taken action, inspired by a film they have attended. This resonates with the order of discourse Art as Peace Agenda and the discourse of Agency, identified in this material. In a world “full of wars, injustice, torture and exploitation”, peace film awards are not only an encouragement for the dedicated filmmakers, but “also generates attention to the victims”.<sup>306</sup> Hence, the discourse of Agency is also a discourse of Change.

A danger in calling a film a peace film is that it influences reception, since the film is then already interpreted from a specific perspective. Perhaps this may in some cases discourage alternative readings of the films?

The concept of peace seems to be taken for granted as a positive phenomenon. Also, in the empirical material, the practical aspect of dissemination does not seem to be a topic. This appears to be something implicit, taken for granted. In terms of outreach and dissemination of peace film, this still cannot be considered a major media phenomenon. Comparing audience numbers to mainstream films’, peace film’s outreach at this point in time seems limited to a particularly interested and motivated, though growing, niche audience. The peace film institutions themselves play a mayor part in this growth,<sup>307</sup> in their belief that films matter, “that they have an influence, that they impart knowledge, positive attitudes towards foreign culture and lesser-known aspects of our own culture.”<sup>308</sup> In the very moment that I am writing this, there are people struggling around the world who do their best at protecting their humanity against attacks from within or without, be it Syria, Central African Republic or Crimea. Also, there are courageous people risking their freedom and their lives to let the world know about these situations through different media outlets. Peace media in its different forms are small, but important parts of this complex.

From the theory and empirical findings in this thesis, it is tempting to paraphrase Der Derian to give a pointer to the role of representation as it is promoted in this material: People deal

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<sup>304</sup> Babcock 1978:14

<sup>305</sup> Karlberg 2005:1

<sup>306</sup> Dieter Kosslick - FFP1

<sup>307</sup> See The Chronological Development of the Peace Film Field on page 20

<sup>308</sup> Renolen, NoPFA3

with peace and conflicts much based on how they see, perceive, picture, imagine and speak of others and the world; that is, how they construct the difference of others through representation.<sup>309</sup> Difference, it should be noted, need not mean danger, strangeness or emotional distance – in fact, many peace activists specifically stress that it should not be perceived as such.

What theorists and the respondents in this thesis seem to have in common is the contention that art can have a social impact that answers to the political.<sup>310</sup> When we fail to see such impacts on a large scale, it may be because there is such a vast Drum Corps making noise in popular culture. Massive economic and geopolitical actors back this corps. In the media landscape, these actors have claimed so much of the space that they make peace film institutions appear as drops in the ocean. Still, the main goal of the people within the field seems to be social change, changing the world into a better, more peaceful place.<sup>311</sup> If art/film, and peace film in particular, were to have this effect, it would represent an optimistic projection of McLuhan's thoughts about the medium that "moulds what we see and how we see it – and eventually, if we use it enough, it changes who we are, as individuals and as a society".<sup>312</sup> Though the field is sometimes met with scepticism, the results of this study show that peace film actors are actively working towards "peace on many levels",<sup>313</sup> from the level of the individual, to peace between nations.

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<sup>309</sup> Der Derian 2002:110

<sup>310</sup> Bal 2011

<sup>311</sup> Cf. Jimmy Mirikitani's motto "*Make art, not war*"

<sup>312</sup> Carr 2010:3

<sup>313</sup> H-Q10

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APPENDIX 1 - THE NOPFA FILM SELECTION

Title	Nationality	Director	Produced by	Subject	Themes	Genre	Award year
<i>In This World</i>	UK	Michael Winterbottom	Chris Auty, Andrew Eaton, Behrooz Hashemian, Fiona Neilson, Anita Overland, David M. Thompson	Two young Afghan refugees leave a refugee camp in Pakistan for a better life in London.	Refugees, Economic migration.	Docu-drama	2004
<i>Beautiful City (Shah-re ziba)</i>	Iran	Asghar Farhadi	Iraj Taghipoor	The intricacies of Iran's Islamic judicial system is shown through the story of a young Iranian man who has committed murder and is condemned to death.	Retribution versus Forgiveness	Drama	2005
<i>Shooting Dogs (Beyond the Gates)</i>	UK, Germany	Michael Caton-Jones	Richard Alwyn, David Belton, Rémi Burah, Ruth Caleb, Pippa Cross, Jens Meurer, Joe Oppenheimer, Michael Schmid-Ospach, Karsten Stöter, David M. Thompson, Paul Trijbits, Andrew Wood	The Rwandan genocide in 1994.	Conflict, Faith, Courage	Drama	2006
<i>The Cats of Mirikitani</i>	USA	Linda Hattendorf	Masa Yoshikawa, Linda Hattendorf	The life of street artist Jimmy Mirikitani and his journey towards a reconciliation with his past and the U.S. Government.	Reconciliation, overcoming trauma	Documentary	2007
<i>Little Moth (Xue chan)</i>	China	Tao Peng	Tao Peng, Shaofeng Wang, Wenwen Zeng	A child falls victim to the adults who are supposed to be looking out for her.	Human trafficking, Child abuse	Drama/Docu-drama	2008
<i>Waltz With Bashir (Vals Im Bashir)</i>	Israel, France, Germany, USA, Finland, Switzerland, Belgium, Australia	Ari Folman	Ari Folman, Serge Lalou, Gerhard Meixner, Yael Nahlieli, Roman Paul	Folman's (the director) search of his lost memories of his experience as a soldier in the 1982 Lebanon War.	Grief, Redemption, Reconciliation	Animated documentary	2009

<i>The Other Bank (Gagma napiri)</i>	Georgia, Kazakhstan	George Ovashvili	Sain Gabdullin, George Ovashvili	A young refugee and his mother flee war and ethnic cleansing in the breakaway Georgian region of Abkhazia, leaving his father behind.	Ethnic cleansing, The aftermath of war	Drama	2010
<i>Hands Up (Les Mains en l'air)</i>	France	Romain Goupil	Margaret Ménégoz	As an old woman Milana, looks back from year 2067 to her youth and tells the story of her near-deportation from France at the age of ten and the plan her friends hatched to save her.	Childhood, Illegal immigration, Camaraderie and Resistance	Drama	2011
<i>Play</i>	Sweden, France	Ruben Östlund	Erik Hemmendorff	A film about bullying and ethnicity, children robbing other children in modern day Sweden.	Bullying	Drama	2012
<i>Wadjda</i>	Saudi Arabia, Germany	Haifaa Al-Mansour	Amr Alkahtani, Christian Granderath, Verona Meier, Gerhard Meixner, Louise Nemschoff, Roman Paul, Bettina Ricklefs, Rena Ronson, Hala Sarhan	10-year-old Wadjda challenges deep-rooted Saudi traditions in a determined quest to buy a bicycle.	Gender equality	Drama	2013
<i>Omar</i>	Palestine	Hany Abu-Assad	David Gerson, Waleed F. Zuaiter	A young Palestinian freedom fighter agrees to work as an informant after he's tricked into an admission of guilt by association in the wake of an Israeli soldier's killing.	Love and Betrayal	Drama	2014

This list is comprised of information gathered from the NoPFA website and information on each of the films from [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)

APPENDIX 2 - THE FFP FILM SELECTION

<b>Title</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>Produced by</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Genre</b>	<b>Award year</b>
<i>Half Life: A Parable for the Nuclear Age</i>	Australia	Dennis O'Rourke	Dennis O'Rourke	The American Castle Bravo nuclear testing at the Marshall Islands in 1954 and the nuclear fallout from the tests.	Nuclear testing	Documentary	1986
<i>Joe Polowsky - An American Dreamer (Joe Polowsky - Ein amerikanischer Trumer)</i>	Germany	Wolfgang Pfeiffer	Wolfgang Pfeiffer	The life of Joe Polowsky, an American World War II veteran who dedicated his life to promoting understanding between Soviets and Americans.	Peace building, War prevention	Documentary	1987
<i>Signed: Lino Brocka</i>	USA	Christian Blackwood	Christian Blackwood, Ramon Hodel	The story of the well-known Philippine director Lino Brocka and his films. In this documentary, he is shown to be highly politically aware and active.	Political activism through film	Documentary	1988
<i>Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie</i>	USA	Marcel Ophuls	Bernard Farrel, Hamilton Fish, John S. Friedman, Peter Kovler, Marcel Ophuls	The story of Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbi, the Gestapo chief of Lyon, and his life after the war.	The nature of evil, The diffusion of responsibility in hierarchical situations	Documentary	1989
<i>My Private War (Mein Krieg)</i>	Germany	Harriet Eder, Thomas Kufus	Carol Sennett	World War II seen from the perspective of German soldiers.	War from the losers' perspectives, Individuals as humans in a war situation	Documentary	1990
<i>Alice in Wondertown (Alicia en el Pueblo de Maravillas)</i>	Cuba	Daniel Diaz Torres	Humberto Hernandez	The life of the Cuban people. The adventures of Alicia, a culture instructor, reflect the indoctrination, coercion, absolutims, and many other everyday problems in Cuban society.	Handeling everyday problems in a community	Comedy	1991

<i>Rodina Means Home (Rodina heißt Heimat)</i>	Germany	Helga Reidemeister	Anne Even, Wolfgang Hantke, Hartmut Köhler, Eckart Stein, Klaus Wenger, Regina Ziegler	The political atmosphere in Germany and the Soviet Union after the Berlin wall came down and the cold war ended and the uncertain future of the Soviet soldiers who withdrew from Germany at this time.	The aftermath of the cold war	Documentary	1992
<i>Madame Water (Madame L'Eau)</i>	France, Netherlands	Jean Rouch	Menno van der Molen, Andre Singer, Guy Séligmann	Three Nigerian farmers looking for a better way to irrigate their farmland goes to Holland to examine how wind energy is applied.	Protest against Third World development projects looking for solutions that do not fit the needs of the local populations.	Documentary	1993
<i>The Year of a Dog (God Sobaki)</i>	Russia, France	Semyon Aranowitsch	Semyon Aranowitsch, Frigetta Gukasyan, Guy Séligmann, Vyacheslav Telnov	Two disparate people (a criminal man and a naïve middle-aged woman) come together under odd circumstances.	Unexpected love, Conflict resolution	Drama	1994 - 1
<i>Balagan</i>	Germany	Andres Veiel	Klaus Volkenborn	An examination of an Israeli theater group's controversial performance of "Arbeit macht frei", a freeform play which has incited much interest for its caustic take on contemporary Israeli fixations with the Holocaust.	Cross-pollinating the political and the personal	Documentary	1994 - 2
<i>Er nannte sich Hohenstein</i>	Germany	Hans-Dieter Grabe	?	The career of German Alexander Hohenstein, the Amtskommissar in Poddembice following the invasion of Poland in 1939.	?	Documentary Short	1995

<i>Devils Don't Dream!</i>	Switzerland	Andreas Hessli	Isabella Huser	A portrait of former Guatemalan president, Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, the son of European immigrants, a military man who turned revolutionary.	Political change, Regime coups	Documentary	1996
<i>Off Season (Nach Saison)</i>	Germany	Mirijam Quinte, Pepe Danquart	Hans Robert Eisenhauer, Peter Felger, Marjam Quinte, Antoinette Spielmann, Regina Wyroll	Balkan: Mostar was one of the casualties of the war that raged between the political and religious factions that ripped Bosnia apart during the 1990s. The documentary follows the attempt to restore the city to its former splendor.	Rebuilding, Peace building	Documentary	1997
<i>In That Land (W toj stranje)</i>	Russia	Liiya Bobrova	Aleksandr Golutova	A multi-faceted picture of village life in Russia.	Community, Social change	Drama	1998
<i>Journey to the Sun (Günese Yolculuk)</i>	Turkey, Netherlands, Germany	Yesmin Ustaoglu	Ezel Akay, Behrooz Hashemian, Phil van der Linden, Pit Riethmüller	The Kurdic situation in Turkey.	Cultural and structural violence	Drama	1999
<i>Long Night's Journey into Day</i>	USA	Frances Reid, Deborah Hoffmann	Frances Reid, Johnny Symons	Apartheid seen through the eyes of the Truth and Reconciliation commission.	Reconciliation	Documentary	2000
<i>Living Afterwards: Words of Women (Vivre Après - Paroles des Femmes)</i>	France	Laurent Bécue-Renard	Laurent Bécue-Renard	A safe house or halfway house for women and their children who survived the Bosnian War.	The aftermath of war	Documentary	2001
<i>August - A Moment Before the Eruption</i>	Israel	Avi Mograbi	Avi Mograbi	A portrait of the nature and character of Israel, the people who there and their reaction to conflict.	Conflict, Anger, Hate	(Pseudo) Documentary	2002

<i>In This World</i>	UK	Michael Winterbottom	Chris Auty, Andrew Eaton, Behrooz Hashemian, Fiona Neilson, Anita Overland, David M. Thompson	Two young Afghan refugees leave a refugee camp in Pakistan for a better life in London.	Refugees, Economic migration	Docu-drama	2003
<i>Witnesses (Svjedoci)</i>	Croatia	Vinko Bresan	Ivan Maloca	War crimes committed during the Serbo-Croatian war in the early 1990s.	Ethnic conflict	War/drama	2004
<i>Turtles Can Fly (Lakposhta hâ m parvaz mikonand)</i>	Iran/Iraq	Bahman Ghobadi	Babak Amini, Hamid Karim Batin Ghobadi, Hamid Ghavami, Abbas Ghazali, Bahman Ghobadi	The life of children in a refugee camp in the days leading up to the second Gulf War.	Childhood in war zones, The consequences of war	War/drama	2005
<i>Grbavica: The Land of My Dreams</i>	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Austria, Germany, Croatia	Jasmila Zbanic	Barbara Albert, Vinko Grubisic, Damir Ibrahimovich, Boris Michalski, Damir Richtaric, Jörg Schneider, Bruno Wagner	A woman and her daughter struggle to make their way through the aftermath of the Balkan war.	The aftermath of war, Overcoming trauma	Drama	2006

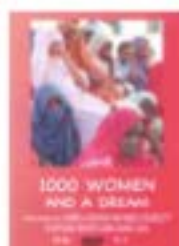


<i>Goodbye Bafana</i>	Germany, France, UK, Italy, Belgium, South Africa, Luxembourg	Bille August	Carola Ash, Frédéric Bal, Dianne Beatty, Guillaume Benski, Roberto Cipullo, Jimmy de Brabant, Kwesi Dickson, Michael Dounaev, Alison Ellard, Ilann Girard, Michel Houdmont, Skady Lis, Stephen Margolis, Kami Naghdi, Livo Negri, Marc Noyons, Gherardo Pagliei, Christine Raspillère, Andro Steinborn, Jean Luc Van Damme, David Wicht, Luciano Sovena	The relationship between Nelson Mandela and James Gregory, his censor officer and prison guard at Robben Island.	Racism, Freedom, Communication across social divides.	(Historic) Drama	2007
<i>Buddha Collapsed Out of Shame (Budaz sharm foru rikht)</i>	Iran, France	Hana Makhmalbaf	Maysam Makhmalbaf	In modern Afghanistan following the removal of the Taliban , a 5-year-old Afghan girl desperately wants to attend a newly opened school but must fight against a society influenced by conditions suffered during the strict Taliban rule.	Gender discrimination	War/ drama	2008

<i>The Messenger</i>	USA	Oren Moverman	Steffen Aumueller, Gwen Bialic, Claus Clausen, Benjamin Goldhirsh, Mark Gordon, Lawrence Inglee, Christopher Mapp, Zach Miller, Shaun Redick, Glenn M. Stewart, Matthew Street, David Whealy, Bryan Zuriff	An Iraq War veteran struggles with his new post at the Casualty Notification Office and meets an ethical dilemma when he becomes involved with a widow of a fallen officer.	Victims of war, The fallout war and its effect on soldiers and civilians	War/drama	2009
<i>Son of Babylon (Syn Babilonu)</i>	Iraq, UK, France, Netherlands,	Mohamed Al-Daradji	Atea Al Daradji, Mohamed Al Daradji, Bader Ben Hirsi, Antonia Bird, Emma Clarke, Pippa Cross, Dimitri de Clercq, Danny Evans, Simon Glass, Hugo Heppell, Nashwa Al Ruwaini, Isabelle Stead	A familys search for a missing son/father in Northern Iraq in 2003, two weeks after the fall of Saddam Hussein.	Hope and forgiveness in the aftermath of war	Drama	2010
<i>Tomorrow Will Be Better (Jutro Bedzie Lepiej)</i>	Polen, Japan	Dorota Kedzierzawska	Arthur Reinhart	Three young Russians boys who live at a train station embark on a journey to cross the border into Poland in the pursuit of a better future.	Hope, Crossing borders	Drama	2011

<i>Just the Wind (Czak a szel)</i>	Hungary	Benedek (Bence) Fliegauf	Laurent Baujard, Nicolas Bovorasmay, Savannah Delcamp- Risse, Pierre- Emanuelle Fleuratin, Benedek Fliegauf, Rebekka Garrido, András Juhász, Linda Mester, Ernö Mesterházy, András Muhi, Mónika Mécs, Michael Reuter, Szonja Ruppert- Domán, David Steinberger	A family struggling to survive in a shack in a wood in the Hungarian countryside where several other Roma families have already been killed.	Racism, Fear, Racially motivated crimes	Drama	2012
<i>A World Not Ours</i>	UK, Lebanon, Denmark, United Arab Emirates	Mahdi Fleifel	Patrick Campbell, Mahdi Fleifel, Caglar Kimyoncu	The lives of people living in the refugee camp of Ein el- Helweh, in southern Lebanon.	Hope, Dignity, Belonging, Friendship, Family	Documen tary	2013
<i>We Come As Friends</i>	France, Austria	Hubert Sauper	Hubert Sauper, Gabriele Kranzelbinder	War-ravaged South Sudan claims independence from North Sudan.	Modern colonization	Documen tary	2014

This list is comprised of information gathered from the FFP website and information on each of the films from [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com).



1000 WOMEN AND A DREAM



AN ICONVENIENT TRUTH



A FORCE MORE POWERFUL



BOGOTÁ CHANGE

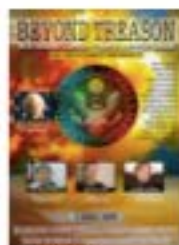


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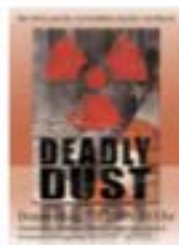
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BIO GEGEN DIE GRÜNE REVOLUTION



BUYING TIME FOR PEACE



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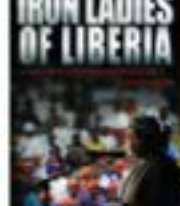
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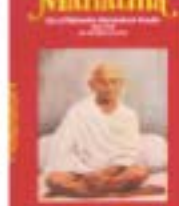
GENE SHARP



IRAQ IN FRAGMENTS



IRON LADIES OF LIBERIA



MAHATMA



MAKING POSSIBLE THE IMPOSSIBLE



MYSTIC IRAN THE UNSEEN WORLD



NEW URBAN GOWBOY



OUTFOXED



PARADISE NOW



PRAY THE DEVIL BACK TO HELL



PRIVATE



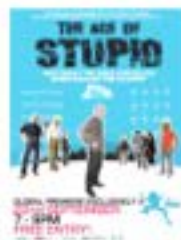
REDEFINING PEACE



SITRONTREET



SHADOW OVER THE LONG WHITE CLOUD



THE AGE OF STUPID



THE MARCHING PEACEMAKERS



URANVÅPEN



WITH ONE VOICE

23.10.2010