Though relativelyunknown in the English-speaking world, Jean Rouch (1917–2004) was a formative influence on the French New Wave and a towering figure in ethnographic cinema, completing over one hundred films, both fiction and documentary. In addition to analyzing Rouch's key films, Paul Henley examines the technical strategies and aesthetic considerations—both rooted in his youthful enthusiasm for surrealism—that together with his concept of "shared anthropology" underpin Rouch's cinematographic legacy. Featuring over one hundred and fifty images, The Adventure of the Real is the first comprehensive analysis of his practical filmmaking methods and an essential introduction to Rouch's work.

"Paul Henley's rich, well-researched book offers the interdisciplinary approach to Jean Rouch's career we have needed all these years. Both intellectual history and formalist analysis, this vibrant set of readings is packed with detailed information about the theories and practices informing Rouch's films. Henley illuminates the work of a complex director who remains vitally important to anyone interested in anthropology, film studies, or French culture."

SAM DI TORIO, Hunter College, CUNY

"This is a splendid book—well researched, original, and lucidly written. I have no doubt it will become a classic: the single indispensable book on Rouch and his work. Henley provides a vast amount of information, detailed analyses of many of Rouch's films, and above all a subtle and probing fascination with Rouch's 'praxis.' The book is particularly illuminating as to Rouch's working methods, which only a practicing filmmaker with a gift for analysis and a fund of personal experience could have carried off—a rare combination."

DAVID MACDOUGALL, Australian National University

"The idea of the adventure aptly captures Rouch's unique attitude to film and to his subjects, whether in his main arena of Africa or back in France. Many have fallen under the spell of Rouch's reputation, often with little access to his work, but few have the ethnographic experience that Paul Henley brings to bear on evaluating this inspiring, yet controversial figure. Henley is not afraid to criticize and point to weaknesses in Rouch's work, but his superbly researched account of the Rouchian praxis as the product of very specific determinants makes an invaluable contribution to our understanding, and should win him new respect for a great pioneer."

SARAH CHRISTIE, Birkbeck College, University of London

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laboration with Germaine Dieterlen about the Sigui, the world-renewal ritual cycle of the Dogon of the Bandiagara Escarpment in eastern Mali. Here I shall propose that Rouch thought of cinema as the Dogon think of the Sigui, namely, as a means of transcending the limitations of the normal human life span.

**8: Chronicle of a Violent Game**

There remains the most difficult, the most moving, the most secret [aspect of social life]: wherever human feelings are at stake, wherever the individual is directly involved, wherever there are interpersonal relationships of authority, subordination, comradeship, love, hate—in other words, everything connected with the emotional fabric of human existence. There lies the great terra incognita of the sociological or ethnological cinema, of cinema-verite. There lies its promised land.

EDGAR MORIN, 1962

While anthropologists may debate whether *Les Maitres fouls*, *Juggler*, The Lion Hunters, or possibly the Dogon ritual films represent Jean Rouch's most important ethnographic work, and screen studies specialists argue the case between *Moi, un Noir* and *La Pyramid humaine* as the most influential on the development of the French New Wave, as far as documentarists generally are concerned, it would surely be *Chronicle of a Summer*, shot in 1960 and released in 1962, that would be considered the most significant of his films. Indeed, the leading media studies author, Brian Winston, goes so far as to suggest that in the English-speaking world, "*Chronique d'un été* has been, more or less, the Rouch oeuvre in its entirety; and its meaninglessness questions the impact of the man (at least on the mainstream of anglophone documentary production over the last half century) in terms that stay much beyond *Chronique d'un été*.”

Somewhat paradoxically, however, in terms of its underlying praxis, *Chronicle of a Summer* is in some ways atypical of Rouch's work as a whole. In large part, this is due to the influence of the codirector, Edgar Morin. A sociologist rather than a practicing filmmaker, Morin is a much more interesting figure than is generally acknowledged in anglophone milieux and certainly in the visual anthropology literature, in which there is a tendency to present him as no more than an over-intellectual stooge who is regularly upstaged by Rouch in the course of the film. Born in Paris in 1928, the son of Greek Sephardic Jewish immigrants, he had changed his
name from Nabokov to "Morin" during the Second World War when, as a member of the Resistance, he had to conceal the fact that he was a Jew. After the war, Morin was appointed to a research position in the CNRS and was already a rising figure of Parisian intellectual life by the time he came to make Chronicle. Prior to making the film, he was probably best known in intellectual circles for two well-received books on the effect of cinema on the human imaginary, *Le Cinéma ou l'homme imaginaire* (1956) and *Les Stars* (1957). He was also known as the editor of the leading Marxist journal *Arguments* and as the author of *Autopsique*, a personal memoir about his engagement with and subsequent expulsion from the French Communist Party. In subsequent years, Morin would come to be recognized in France as a major multidisciplinary thinker, with publications ranging across a wide range of topics including the nature of nature, consciousness, and complexity. In the many profiles of his career that are available on the Web, his participation in the making of *Chronicle* is generally only mentioned in passing and often not at all, which is symptomatic of the fact that although this film may be widely regarded by documentarists as a milestone of documentary filmmaking, it represents a relatively small part of Morin’s personal curriculum vitae.\(^5\)

Over the course of his career, Rouch shared the direction of a number of other films—notably the Sigot films, which he codirected with Germaine Dulac—and the research films that he directed with the ethnomusicologist Gilbert Rouget—but in these other cases, the codirectors mostly left the actual filmmaking up to him. However, this was not the case with *Chronicle*, and Rouch clearly found the sharing of directorial authorship particularly demanding. Although Morin and Rouch started out in general agreement about the objectives of the film and the methods that they would use, in the process of actually implementing their ideas, a number of major differences of opinion arose between them. Codirection, Rouch discovered, was not a matter of teamwork based on mutual collaboration but, as he put it, "more a violent game where disagreement is the only rule, and the solution lies in the resolution of this disagreement.\(^4\)

The ups and downs of the cat's cradle of relationships involved in the making of *Chronicle*, as well as the many different transformations that the film went through from initial conception to final version, have been wittily recollected by Morin in a memoir written shortly after the release of the film. This "chronicle of a film," as he dubs it, provides unique insight into the process of making a "documentary" (even though he actually denies *Chronicle* that particular label) and, as such, deserves to be read by any student of documentary filmmaking. In this chapter, I will be relying particularly on Morin's account, supplemented by commentaries by Rouch and a number of third parties, to discuss the practical processes whereby *Chronicle* came into being. First, though, we should begin with a brief description of the film as it was finally released.

The film follows a group of young people living in Paris in the summer of 1960, exploring their views about work, love, and happiness but also about the colonial wars then going on in Africa. Over the opening shots of the early morning rush hour in Paris, Rouch's offscreen voice identifies the film as an "experiment in cinéma-verité," to which ordinary men and women have undertaken to give a few moments of their lives. In the first half of the film, the investigation proceeds by means of a variety of verbal devices, including survey-style questions in the street, real-time discussions, and informal one-on-one interviews conducted by Morin. One of the subjects, Marceline, having been invited to walk through various locations in Paris and give free rein to her thoughts, is moved to talk about her experiences during the war when she and her father were deported to a German concentration camp. These various oral testimonies are interspersed with a few relatively brief sequences of the subjects going about their daily lives at work or home.

About two-thirds of the way through the film, the subjects leave Paris for their summer holidays, and there is a shift in emphasis from static discussions physically anchored in one place to sequences in which the subjects are moving about, though there continues to be a heavy emphasis on dialogue. The general tone of the film also becomes more lightweight. Several subjects are shown at the beach in the south of France, while others are shown at a picnic in Fontainebleau Forest, close to Paris, teaching their children to climb a small outcrop of rocks.

Eventually the subjects all return from their holidays and are shown a preliminary assembly of the rushes. The reception is much less positive than Rouch and Morin had been expecting. Some subjects think that the film completely misrepresented their lives, while others think that it is too intrusive, encouraging an immodest degree of self-revelation. Rouch and Morin are left walking up and down amid the ethnographic display cases in the Musée de l'Homme ruminating on the nature of the truth that they have brought to light.

In addition to his disagreements with Morin, Rouch also found himself constrained by the concerns of the producer, Anatole Dauman, the head of Argos Films, who seemed to have acted as some sort of acheter between the two directors but who, like all producers, also had his own agenda; namely, to complete the film "on time and on budget." The form of the film was also greatly influenced by the succession of distinguished cinematographers who worked on it, as well as by the important technological innovations that they and Rouch were introducing even as the film...
was being made. Later, in the edit suite, in the hands of several different teams of editors (about whose appointments Rouch was constantly arguing with Dauman), the rushes resulting from the pooling of these various interests and skills at the production stage underwent a further major transformation. For reasons that I shall describe below, in some sense this transformation in postproduction appears to have undermined, if not actually betrayed, the original ambitions of the directors and the cameramen. Yet despite all these different inputs and the fact that the project started out with only the vaguest of script ideas, rather like a medieval cathedral that possesses architectural harmony despite having been built by many different masons over several centuries, the film that eventually emerged from this complex set of relationships possesses a remarkable overall coherence.

“Comment vis-tu?”

Although attributions of the authorship of Chronicle invariably put Rouch's name first, in Morin's account it was he who first had the idea to make the film. According to his account, in December 1959, while attending the first Festival dei Popoli in Florence as a member of the jury for the ethnographic section, he was much impressed by John Marshall's early film about the San "bushmen" of southern Africa, The Hunters, first released some three years previously, since it had succeeded in communicating the essential humanity of the San despite their exotic appearance and unfamiliar way of life. At the same festival, he also saw a number of films shot in urban locations, including the documentary made in South London by Karel Reisz, We Are the Lambeth Boys, released in 1958, which had managed to get beyond what Morin called the "Sunday best" reality of current affairs documentaries and to show what these teenagers were really like when they were simply hanging out at their youth club.

Both these films had employed, at least in part, a handheld camera to achieve their effects. Morin formed the idea of applying this technique to a film about Paris and thought that the best person to do this was Rouch since he had already developed this technique into a fine art in his African films. He had become, as Morin put it, a "filmmaker-diver who plunges into real-life situations," infiltrating communities "as a prey" not as the director of a film crew. Since Rouch was a member of the same jury at Florence, Morin proposed to him then and there that they should collaborate on a film about their own "tribe," the Parisians. As his migration work in Africa was coming to an end and he was looking for a new challenge, Rouch readily agreed. With Rouch on board, Morin later had no difficulty in selling the idea to Anzolo Dauman.

On his return to France, Morin published an article in January 1960 in the journal France Observateur entitled "For a New Cinéma-Verité," linking the project with the concept of kina-praxis or "cinema-truth" first developed by Erri De Vito, the Polish-Russian Constructivist filmmaker. Best known for his experimental 1969 "city film," Man with a Movie Camera, Vertov had fallen foul of the Stalinist diktat in favor of Socialist Realism, and by the time that he died in 1956, he had become a marginalized and largely forgotten figure in the Soviet Union. In France, however, his ideas had been kept alive by the Marxist cinema historian Georges Sadoul, though his films remained very difficult to see and would not become readily available until the mid-1960s, sometime after Chronicle had been made. Indeed, Morin later confessed that at the time that he wrote the article for France Observateur, he was more familiar with Vertov's ideas than with his films. As for Rouch, although it seems that he may have previously had some awareness of Vertov's work, it was only after working on Chronicle that he began to associate his own way of working with that of Vertov. In various different guises, it was an association that he would continue to make for the rest of his life.

The term cinéma-verité has a checkered history in the literature on documentary filmmaking. For a period, particularly in North America in the 1960s and 1970s, it was understood to denote a documentary practice that aspired to reveal an entirely objective truth about the world and, as such, was associated with the work of the Direct Cinema filmmakers, referred to in the Introduction to this part of the book. However, this understanding is considerably at odds with the original meaning of kina-
praxis as conceived by Vertov. He coined this term not to refer to some objective truth that could be delivered by cinematic means but rather to the distinctive way of viewing the world that had been made possible by the invention of the "ciné-eye," that is, the cinematographic apparatus. It was clearly in this latter sense that Rouch also understood the term. "For me," he once commented, "cinema-truth has a specific meaning in the same way that 'ciné-eye' does, designating not pure truth, but the truth particular to recorded images and sounds: ciné-truth." But while at a very general theoretical level Rouch and Vertov may have shared this view about the nature of cinematographic reality, at the level of actual practice, there seems to be very little in common between their respective filmmaking approaches. The visual aesthetic of Rouch's films, throughout his career, remained generally realist and, once the technology allowed, was based on the long take and a "normal," progress-
of a "normal" chronology. But perhaps even more significant are the differences between Roux and Vertov with respect to their ideas about the precise nature of the truth made possible by the "ciné-eye." For Vertov, the term kino provide referred primarily to the process of perceiving the world: the ciné-eye could go anywhere and see anywhere. It could fly in the air with airplanes, watch from beneath as a train thundered overhead, pry into a lady's boudoir. In the edit suite, these images captured by the ciné-eye could then be transformed in all manner of ways they could be juxtaposed in provocative ways, superimposed, speeded up or slowed down, even run backward. In this way, humanity's vision of the world could be transformed. For Roux, on the other hand, it was not so much the perception of the world but rather the world itself that was transformed by the cinematographic process as the presence of the camera provoked the subjects into revolutionary performances that were different from their normal forms of behavior.

This is a topic that  I shall return to again in part 3 when I consider Roux's shooting praxis in greater detail. Suffice it to say here that this fundamental difference between Vertov and himself about the nature of the truth made possible by the ciné-eye is something that, in my view, Roux never fully acknowledged. Morin, on the other hand, even back in 1960, recognized in his article in France Observateur that there was a significant difference in the nature of the relationship that the two filmmakers sought to develop with their subjects. Whereas Roux was the "filmmaker-diver" who "plunged" into the social world that he was filming, Vertov's strategy often consisted of filming subjects by means of a hidden camera, catching them unaware in a voyeuristic way and sometimes against their will. This aspect of the Vertovian technique, Morin suggested, was not acceptable, and in the article, as flagged even in the title, he emphasized the need to develop a new form of cinéma vérité, one that went beyond Vertov's voyeurism and was built instead on a strategy akin to the classic ethnographical fieldwork technique of participant-observation. Indeed, Morin suggested, the "true father" of this new cinéma vérité was "doubtless much more Robert Flaherty than Dziga Vertov."

Curiously, neither Morin in his memoir, nor Roux—at least as far as I am aware, since he made many pronouncements on the film over the years—drew attention to the feature that, in retrospect, seems to be the most obvious formal similarity between Man with a Movie Camera and Chronicle of a Summer, namely, the quite unabashed reflexivity. Even if Vertov had sought to hide the fact that he was making a film from his subjects, he constantly reminds his audience about the process, showing not only the eponymous cameraman in shot, but also the editor, and

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**FIGURE 8.1. Reflexivity in François Truffaut's Tirez sur le pianiste with the aid of a number of bottles of wine.** Natacha and Marcelline conduct interviews in the street: "Are you happy or unhappy?" "That depends... have you read Dostoevsky?"

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even an audience watching the film within the film. Roux and Morin take this reflexivity one step further, for not only do they share the process of construction of the film with the audience, but they also share the process of construction with the subjects. For Roux, this was nothing new, representing merely a further extension of his commitment to the "shared anthropology" that he had been practicing in Africa since 1954, when he first began showing his works to his subjects. But as one might expect, given his left-wing political inclinations, Morin was also entirely sympathetic with this strategy (fig. 8.1)."
slightly different angle. Whereas Rosch thought of the subjects’ camera-
induced performances as drawing on the unconscious conceived, in the
Surrealist manner, in a positive sense, as a source of creativity, Morin ap-
proached it from a more conventional psychoscientific perspective, be-
lieving that these performances would have an effect similar to that of a
psychoscientific consultation, bringing to the surface ideas and feelings,
and not necessarily positive ones, that had been banished to the uncon-
scious by repressive psychological mechanisms. But these were differ-
ences of emphasis rather than of kind, since historically both Surrealism
and psychoscientific were drawing on a common inheritance in Freudian
ideas. Moreover, both Morin and Rosch were agreed that the process of
bringing out what would otherwise remain hidden in the deep recesses
of a film subject’s mind was, on balance, beneficial for the subject in that
it would help to break down the barriers that normally obstruct social
relationships. 12

Morin and Rosch also agreed that the film should be entirely depen-
dent on these performances provoked by the camera and that these could
therefore be no script. Instead, as Morin explained in the synopsis that
he wrote to obtain filming authorization from the Centre National de la
Cinématographie, their aim was to gather together a number of subjects;
present them with the simple question, “Comment vivez-vous?” “How do
you live?” and take it from there, letting the subjects’ responses determine
the direction that the film would then follow. 13 In an allusion to the fa-
nom play by Picardello, he and Rosch would be “two authors in search
of six characters.” There would be no artificial narrative, and the film
would conclude not with a title indicating “The End” but with a “To Be
Continued,” in recognition of the fact that the subjects’ lives would soon
after the filming had ended.

In effect, Morin proposed, the film would not be a documentary at all,
but a program of research based on “an experiment lived by its authors
and its actors,” clearly echoing here the intertitle close to the beginning
of Man with a Movie Camera that declares that it is “an experiment in vi-
sual communication.” In the course of this experiment, Morin explained,
there would be no “most” between filmmakers and subjects, since the
former would participate directly in the lives of the latter. Even at this
proposition stage, Morin envisaged that there would be a screening of a pre-
liminary assembly to the subjects, as in La Pyramide humaine, the pur-
purpose of which was to attempt “the ultimate psychodrama.” That is, after
the screening, the subjects would be asked what they thought that they
had learned about themselves or their fellow subjects, or about their re-
relationship to the filmmakers and the filmmaking process. 14

In short, when the “experiment” began, Morin and Rosch were largely
agreed both about the objectives of the project and the methods to be
employed. But as they set about actually making the film, a number of
crucial differences between them soon began to emerge.

From Alienation at Work to Waterskiing

These differences between Rosch and Morin derived to some extent from
their respective political postures. Throughout his career, Rosch made
every effort to avoid political statements. In postindependence Africa,
he argued, it would be “imperialistic” for any European to seek to in-
fluence the political values, while in France, he was never publicly associated
with any particular political project. Indeed, he was deeply suspicious of
those who hoped to change the world through political activism. If he
had any sort of political credo, it appears to have been anarchism with-
out militancy. 15 In contrast, Morin was a Marxist of decidedly militant
inclinations. He had joined the French Communist Party at the height of
the Second World War and had remained a member, albeit a somewhat
disaffected one, until he was expelled for his criticism of the Soviet sup-
pression of the Hungarian uprising in 1956. At the time of filming Chron-
icle, he continued to be closely associated with various left-wing political
groups, many of which openly supported the Algerians in their war of
liberation against the French colony that was still in full flow at the time
that Chronicle was being made.

Since Rosch had only recently returned from Africa, he initially al-
loved Morin to select the subjects and without him being fully aware of
what Morin drew almost exclusively on his own left-wing friends and asso-
ciates. 16 Although the first commentary point refers merely to unspeci-
fied “men and women” ending themselves to an “experiment in cinéma-
verité,” suggesting that they may have been randomly selected in some
way, the reality was that many of them came from this very particu-
lar segment of the Parisian population. At first, Morin’s principal strategy
for getting answers to the question, “How do you live?” was to arrange a
number of meals at his own apartment or those of his left-wing friends
that brought together a few of his old comrades, some workers from
the Renault factory at Billancourt and a number of left-wing students.
In a series of these mealtime scenes, surrounded by evidence of good
food and drink, as well as by clouds of smoke from untipped cigarettes,
the subjects, accompanied by both Rosch and Morin in shot, set about
throning such heavy-duty matters as alienation in the workplace, the
problems of transport workers’ housing, and the Algerian war.

Although Rosch equipped that idea for collective meals arose from
Morin’s “demonic greediness,” Morin himself believed that the commen-

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sal bonhomie would encourage the free flow of conversation and help the subjects overcome any inhibitions that they might have about being filmed. The film crew was also encouraged to participate and in the mealtime scene dedicated to the discussion of the war in Algeria, they take a particularly active part, with the sound recordist Guy Rophe apologizing that France should stand up for her rights against the Algerian independence movement while the veteran cameraman Albert Vignier, who had been director of photography on such classic works of French cinema as Marcel Carné’s *Le jour se lève* (1939) and Georges Rémi’s *La fundation* and *Les miracles* (1954), accuses the students of not being sufficiently engaged in the debate about the war.

Morin later explained that by including a discussion of the Algerian war at this particularly sensitive time, they were running the risk of falling foul of politically motivated censorship, and in order to forestall this, they had to exercise some censorship of their own in the edit suite. Although the mealtime debate is lively and many of the students condemn the war unreservedly, the possibility of Algerian independence is never actually mentioned. They also cut out a passage in which, in a response to a direct question from Rouss, two students of military service age said they would not go to fight in Algeria if they were called up. One of these students was Regis Debray, who the following year joined the Communist Party. He would later become a confidant of Fidel Castro and a leading figure of French left-wing politics, though at the time of filming, he was still what Morin calls “an individualist in the Camus mould.”

The other student in this exchange was Jean-Pierre Sergent. He appears in the scene immediately prior to the mealtime discussion of the Algerian conflict, in which he and Marceline talk about the connection between the difficulties in their personal relationship, Jean-Pierre’s sense of despair and their general feeling of political impotence. In fact, this scene is made up of material shot on two different occasions, several months apart, though they are linked through the sound track in such a way as to suggest that both sets of rushes were shot on the same occasion. The set of rushes showing Jean-Pierre and Marceline talking about their relationship, mostly raised in a series of relatively tight close-ups, was one of the first to be shot, while the second set, shot considerably later, shows Jean-Pierre on his own, studying hard for his imminent philosophy exam.

In reality, although shot at different times, both sets of rushes were originally informed by political issues directly connected to the Algerian war, though in neither case are these alluded to directly. For the reason why Jean-Pierre was shown studying so intently—which comes first in the scene in question, though it was actually the material shot later—was that if he had failed his philosophy exam, he would have been eligible to be called up for military service in Algeria. As for the interview material with Marceline, one of the reasons that Jean-Pierre was so depressed at this time, as he would explain much later in a 1995 interview, was that prior to becoming involved in the filming of *Chronicle*, he had been active in the *Réseau Jeanne*, a clandestine network based in France that was committed to aiding the Algerian struggle for independence. Earlier that year, the French police had broken up the network and although Jean-Pierre had not been arrested, he was still feeling anxious about the possible consequences.

However, all the references to politics made by Jean-Pierre and Marceline in the edited version of this scene remain steadfastly in the domain of the general. Indeed, just as it seems that one or other of them might be about to move to the particular, there is often a blatant cutaway to Morin looking on, suggesting that a passage from the sound track has been excised at this point. In the absence of this specific political content, one is left with the vague sense that their interpersonal problems are due to some kind of existential crisis that impacts on their relationship, possibly due to the fact that Marceline is considerably older than Jean-Pierre. If this existential crisis has any link to politics, the way this scene is edited suggests that rather than having anything to do with contemporary affairs, it may be a throwback to the war years since in the last shot in the scene, the camera pans down to reveal some numbers tattooed on Marceline’s forearm. Although these are not explained, they would probably be recognized by most viewers, certainly in the early 1960s, as evidence that Marceline had been a prisoner in a Nazi concentration camp.

In the early part of the shoot, these mealtime scenes alternated with intensive interrogatory interviews conducted by Morin. The most dramatic of these, conserved in the final version, was with another of Morin’s friends, Marilou Pavolini, who was then working as a secretary at the *Cabinet du Cinéma* office. In response to Morin’s probing questions, Marilou struggles to find the words to explain her existential dilemma, on the verge of tears and her face a constant ripple of anguish. At one point, she even talks about killing herself, though concludes that she does not even have the right to do this. This scene was shot by Rouss himself from a camera on a tripod, mostly in very tight close-ups on Marilou’s tortured visage. In both respects, this was diametrically opposed to his normal *camera praxis*. But when asked about this many years later, he did not have any very elaborate explanation for this other than that Marilou was talking very nervously and that he had shot the big close-ups "to try to *de-mystify*" (fig. 8.2).

As the shooting proceeded, Rouss began to tire of this way of work-
ing. He did not want to deal only in serious topics. Filming endless discussions of social problems had no interest for him—he wanted joy and gaiety. He also wanted the film to have two or three leading protagonists with whom the audience could identify. He even suggested that Morin could be one of these protagonists, the hero in search of the Holy Grail of Truth, but Morin flatly rejected this idea. On the other hand, Rouch did manage to introduce his own friends into the "cast," including Nadine Ballot, the European who had played a leading role as the débâque in *La Pyramide humaine* (and who would later star in his Paris-based New Wave films) as well as Landry and Raymond, two of the Black Ivorian System who had also appeared in that film. Although the mealtime discussions continued, they no longer took place in Marceline’s house, but outside at *Le Totem*, the restaurant on the terrace of the Musée de l’Homme. Under Rouch’s influence, the main themes of the conversation also moved from alienation at the workplace and the political intricacies of the Algerian war to the more conventionally anthropological issues of Black-White sexual relationships, racism and anti-Semitism, and to the issues raised by the independence struggle going on in the Congo, which although also a delicate political subject, was much less so than the Algerian war since it was Belgian rather than French colonialism that was under attack there (fig. 8.3).

But what worried Rouch more than anything else at this time was the development of a new technique of handheld shooting. This represented a major point of difference between the two codirectors. For Rouch was far more interested in conducting technical experiments than in any political significance that the film might have, while Morin had no interest whatsoever in technical matters. But if Morin was indifferent to the technical experiments, the cameraman whom Dauman had hired for the film were positively hostile to them and they refused to shoot handheld because they feared that the loss of technical quality would be too great. The principal cameraman, the distinguished Albert Viguier, withdrew from the shoot and insisted that his name should not be included in the final credits since he feared that this would seriously damage his reputation. For a short period, Rouch was able to employ Raoul Coutard, who had shot the handheld sequences of Jean-Luc Godard’s *À bout de souffle* (which in themselves had been inspired by Rouch’s own handheld shooting in *Mai, un Noir*) with the 35mm Éclair Caméflex CM3 (designed by innovative camera engineer André Coutant (fig. 8.4)). But when Coutard had to return to other commitments, Rouch was able to persuade Dauman, despite the latter’s serious reservations about the technical experimentation, to bring over Michel Brau, who together with his colleagues at the National Film Board of Canada had been developing the technique of the handheld "walking camera."

The strategy of the "walking camera" radically transformed the shooting praxis of the film. Initially, it involved the use of a small 16mm Arriflex camera in conjunction with a newly developed wide-angle lens, which, in contrast to previous models, did not distort the image. This lens allowed the operator to minimize camera shake while at the same time maximizing the depth of field. However, the motor of the Arriflex was too noisy to use in conjunction with simultaneous sound recording, so the scenes in which it was used had to be shot mute and the sound added afterward. This was the case, for example, with the scene of Jean-Pierre Sargent studying for his philosophy exams described above. But even while the shooting of *Chronicle* was going on, Rouch and Brau were already working with André Coutant to develop an even more compact but also quieter camera based on a prototype developed for military purposes. This was the EMT Coutant-Mahot Éclair, which weighed only 1.5 kilograms but still could carry a 400-ft magazine with a ten-
minute running time. Instead of looking through the viewfinder, the operator held the camera at chest level, relying on the wide-angle lens to achieve an acceptable degree of accuracy in the framing. The new camera remained rather bulky on account of the “blimp,” a soundproofing housing that was necessary to suppress the noise of the motor so that it would not be picked up on the microphones, but it greatly improved mobility. “We could film in the middle of the street, and no one knew we were shooting except the technicians and the actors,” Rouch enthused. Although the extent of the operation might seem absurdly large to us now, living as we do in an era of sound synchronous documentaries shot by a single person on a mobile phone, in 1960, this innovation represented a major technical advance (fig. 8.5).22

However, at this stage, the sound track was still being recorded on an independent tape recorder that had no direct connection with the camera and was not entirely synchronous. Although the Nagre tape recorder used on Chronicle was genuinely portable and was a great improvement on the Spidell that Rouch had used earlier in his career, full synchronicity of speech could only be achieved by much careful cutting and splicing in the edit suite.23 In order to avoid getting the sound recordist in shot while using the wide-angle lens that was an integral aspect of Rouch’s method of “walking with the camera,” the subjects themselves often carried the tape recorder hidden in a bag slung over their shoulder—which explains

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Figures 8.4, 8.5. The “walking cameras” in action. Top, watched by Rouch, Benoît shoots route with the Arri lens; bottom, the KMT Camcorder is in the blimp. The camera assistant (right) carries the battery, while the tape recorder is hidden in a shoulder bag, the strap just visible on the left shoulder of Rouch. Bottom, the subject to Rouch’s right, Delory, is also milled up with a similar microphone, visible just below his right shirt collar, a blimp-sphere draping down his V-neck sweater. Meanwhile, Rouch, obscured by Brutel, moves in (far right) from behind. © Argos Films.
why so many of the subjects in the film appear to favor this particular fashion accessory? Braut had also brought over with him some small Electro-voice lavaliere microphones recently developed in North America, that could be discreetly hung around the subject's neck or clipped on to a lapel, where they would not be readily visible to the camera (though they were still very large by present-day standards). From these hidden positions, the lavaliers could be linked to the tape recorder in the shoulder bag by a cable running under the subject's clothes.

Another innovative sound-recording technique was used in the penultimate sequence of the film, in which Roux and Morin walk up and down amid the display cases of the Musée de l'Homme, reflecting on the significance of their "experiment." In a well-known production photograph, Roux and Morin are shown deep in conversation with, on the left, Braut with his heavily rimmed camera, seated on a makeshift dolly, apparently being pulled backward by an assistant, while in the background one can see the sound-recording team. If one looks carefully, there is a cable emerging from the bottom of Morin's trouser leg. This runs toward the sound-recording team behind, suggesting that he was miked up, and possibly Roux as well, with a lavaliere physically attached to the tape recorder by a cable. However, this photograph was taken during the first take of this sequence rather than during the take that was actually used in the film. This second take was shot a few weeks later and not only are Morin's clothes noticeably different, but there is no evidence of any cables emerging from trouser legs, nor of the ubiquitous shoulder bag. Instead, there is a large microphone very obviously strapped across Roux's midriff, angled toward Morin. This, Morin reports, was a wireless radio microphone. Presumably, it was attached to a transmitter hidden under Roux's clothing, from whence it would have sent a signal to the out-of-shot sound recordist (fig. 6.6). I suspect that this represents the first time that a radio microphone was used in an ethnographic documentary, if not in documentary filmmaking generally.

Following the transformation of the shooting process of the film by Braut's "walking camera" method, static interviews and sit-down meetings were largely abandoned and mobility became the order of the day. One of the first triumphs of the new method was the scene of Marceline walking through Place de la Concorde recollecting the experience of being deported with her father to a German concentration camp during the Second World War. For this shot, the tape recorder was hidden underneath her raincoat and she talks down into her chest, presumably to maximize the quality of the sound picked up by the lavaliere around her neck. In the immediately following scene, set in the empty Les Halles marketplace and in which she continues her auto-voice recollections, she is carrying a large bag.
up by the microphone and the car was simply pushed along in neutral in front of Marceline by other members of the crew, including Morin, as if it were a dolly on a film set. As Marceline was carrying the tape recorder, none of the crew could actually hear what she was saying. But when they played the recording back, and heard her heartfelt story about her experiences in Birkenau, they were all reduced to tears (fig. 8.7).14

Shortly after the shooting of this sequence, in order to introduce some more gaiety into the subject matter, Rouch went with Braudel and a number of the subjects to Saint-Tropez, a glamorous holiday destination on the Mediterranean coast of France. On the way, they shot sequences in an airplane, on a train, and in a crowd, each of which, Rouch claimed, were some sort of "film" in documentary history. None of these "films" actually made it into the final version, but a dramatic shot of water-skiing certainly did. All of these things are now commonplace of documentary practice, but audiences at that time had never before seen this sort of movement in documentaries. Suddenly it seemed that the mobile camera could boldly go anywhere and film anything, and by ingenious placing of microphone and tape recorders, coupled with hard labor in the edit suite, it could deliver fully synchronous rushes (fig. 8.8).15

Initially, Morin did not want to go to Saint-Tropez, and though Rouch finally persuaded him, further disagreements soon arose. Rouch wanted to film a Surrealist dream sequence in which Marilou, wandering alone in a cemetery at night, meets a black man wearing a mask. She runs off and the man pursues her, but then unmask himself only to reveal that he is Landry. The mask that Rouch wanted Landry to wear would have represented Eddie Constantine, the North American actor who featured in many French B movies in the 1950s as Lemmy Caution, US Federal Agent. This character was also the alter ego of Petit Touré, the costar, with Oumarou Ganda, of Moi, un Noir.16 Morin was strongly against this idea as he felt that this self-evident fictionalization would undermine the credibility of the documentary footage that they had already filmed. On the other hand, he was ready to go along with another of Rouch's ideas, namely to present the Saint-Tropez material as if Landry were a Black "explorer" discovering the South of France, an idea that both links back to the central theme of Jaguar and anticipates that of Petit à Petit. Landry is shown emerging out of the sea and then attending a bullfight with Nadine (actually in Saint-Jean-de-Luz, near Biarritz, rather than in...
to life in the sense that some of the subjects had bored their innermost selves to the camera to an extent that they found indecent. Marceline claims that her moving soliloquy about her deportation to Birkenau, which had reduced the filmmakers to tears when they finally married up sound and image, had merely been playacting. One of the protagonists claims that having seen the film, there are certain people in the room whom she hopes never to meet again, but this is immediately contradicted by others who claim, on the contrary, that having seen those same characters, they are looking forward to getting to know them better. In the midst of this exchange of views, Morin seems shocked, almost angered, by the nature of this reaction. It is left to Regis Debray to tie things up by making some comments of a more intellectual character about the aesthetic merits of the film.

The Endgame: Transforming Real Time into Cinema Time

The shoot at the Publicis cinema brought to an end some six months of filming that, in total, had generated around twenty-five hours of rushes, which in the early 1960s was a vast amount for a documentary. But having worked very hard to achieve a high degree of authenticity in terms of the content, and of fidelity to the real in terms of technique, once in the edit suite, Rouch and Morin were required by the producer, Anatole Dauman, to reduce this large corpus of material to a maximum running time of no more than ninety minutes. This represented a cutting ratio of about 16:1, which is not high by present-day standards, but documentaries shot on digital video are commonly cut at a ratio of 50:1 or more, nor even by the standards of the Direct Cinema filmmakers working in North America somewhat later in the 1960s, some of whom were cutting at ratios of up to 200:1. But it was very much higher than the ratio that Rouch himself had used on his earlier documentaries.

As Morin points out in the section of his memoir dealing with the editing phase, in fact this process of reduction involved two different problems. One was the matter of transforming real time into cinema time; the other was refining the meaning of the film. With regard to the latter, Morin was keen to retain hold of his original idea of basing the film on an exploration of the subjects' responses to the question “How do you live?” He therefore wanted to structure the entire film on a sequence of themes such as work, the difficulties of living, interpersonal relationships and the summer vacation. Although he shared with Rouch a concern to show how these aspects of contemporary life were experienced subjectively by the protagonists, he did not want the film to be reduced to a series of individual stories. Instead, Morin felt that there should...
be a dimension, not so much of the crowd, but of the global problem of life in Paris, of civilization, and so forth." He wanted the film to end with a message in the form of a montage of the subjects expressing some form of resistance, culminating in a shot of Anguelo, a disaffected Renault car factory worker, striking a tree as he does his kickboxing training in his small garden.

Rouch, on the other hand, wanted the film to be structured entirely on chronological and biographical principles. For him, the main interest of the material was not in the responses that the subjects offered to the question of how they lived, since these were almost invariably the same, namely, that they were bored with their jobs. Much more interesting, in his view, was the development of the subjects over the course of the summer. He had been hoping that events in Algeria or the Congo would reach some sort of critical climax, producing interesting effects on the subjects. But even in the absence of this, he felt that all the subjects should be introduced at the beginning of the film and that the gradual elicitation of their characters and views thereafter should provide the narrative thread of the film. For this reason, he wanted to abandon Morin's original working title, "How Do You Live?" and replace it with "Chronicle of a Summer."

There were also arguments between Rouch and Daumen, the producer. According to Morin, sometimes Daumen considered Rouch no more than "a clumsy bricoleur" while at other times, he thought him "an inspired improviser." Daumen was clearly in his opinion of Morin, sometimes considering him an effective, if neophyte, editor, while at other times as an abstract theoretician who was "massacring the film." Daumen wanted to impose "an editor-in-chief" whose responsibility it would be to rethink the material completely so as to ensure that it would have "an incomparable technical and artistic quality." But Rouch successfully resisted this and suggested that instead he and Morin should work alternately with the editors for a period of several weeks, thereby bringing the material down to the required length by what he called—invoking the memory of his engineering teacher, Albert Cassou—a series of "successive approximations." This involved a sort of dialectic between their respective views: as each took over, he restored some of the material that had been eliminated by the other, but respected some of his excisions, while also alternately excising or respecting the other's additions.

This method eventually produced the desired result, but Rouch experienced great anguish in the edit suite, comparing it to the atroposization of a limb. 26 For him, the original material derived much of its authenticity—and hence its value—from all the hesitations and awkwardness that are a normal part of human interaction and that, with the new developed synchronization sound equipment, they had so triumphantly managed to capture in the rushes. He believed that these seemingly redundant moments in fact lent value to the most essential, important moments in the material, since once they were removed and the important moments were presented without this background as he termed it (literally, "chattering"), they somehow seemed less significant. 27 Yet as the rushes were ruthlessly pared down in the edit suite to the ninety-minute running time that Daumen insisted upon, it was precisely these aspects of the material that were among the first to go.

Rouch also resented the sheer reduction of material in and of itself: in the production phase, they had spent a great deal of time filming a day-in-the-life of Anguelo, the Renault worker, with what Rouch considered wonderful results, only for this to be reduced to no more than three minutes in the final film. For Rouch, this day could have been the subject of a complete film in itself. He admitted to being deeply perplexed by what he would later call "the devil of editing": he simply could not bring himself to accept the idea that editing should consist of isolating little moments of reality from the surrounding rushes and sticking them together with other such moments to produce some meaningful representation of the world. 28

In the end, the final version of the film represented a compromise between the respective positions of all the main parties. Rouch's title was chosen ("How Do You Live?" was considered "too television" by Daumen anyway) as was his preference for a chronologically based narrative. But the real chronology of the summer was radically manipulated so as to conform, on the one hand, to Morin's concern to identify themes that went beyond individual stories and, on the other, to Daumen's concern to have a clear beginning-middle-end structure. Initially, this tripartite structure was to have been represented by the sequence proposed by Morin: "before the vacation," "the vacation," and "after the vacation." But the "after the vacation" part was later deemed too weak to end the film and it was eliminated, with the best parts being moved into the "before the vacation" part. Although it is scarcely credible, among these relocated scenes was the famous Marcelline-Nadine "vox pop" sequence with which the film now begins and in which they go round asking random people in the street the same question, "Are you happy?" All parties agreed that by moving this sequence to the beginning, the agenda of the "experiment in cinéma-vérité" would be immediately established and it would serve as an effective introduction to the series of realistic discussions that make up a large proportion of the remainder of the prevacation part of the film. That contrary to what one might imagine, given Rouch's supposed preoccupation with gatsby, the framing of the "vox pop" question was actu-
ally Morin's idea, though one suspects that he would have been satisfied with the answers, which were mostly in the negative. The only respondents to declare their happiness at any length were not people randomly encountered in the street but a young couple who were actually friends of Rouch. These were the Caissière, whom Marceline and Nadine visit in their apartment overlooking the Eiffel Tower and where they listen to the melodious sounds of a remarkable mechanical music box.

Other scenes that were moved from the post- to the prevacation part included the similarly celebrated scene of Angelo discussing racks in France with Landry, the Ivoirian student, on a staircase, in what was actually Morin's house. This comes at the end of the sequence purporting to be a day-in-the-life of Angelo. The beginning of this "day," which shows Angelo getting up and going to work, and the end, which shows him returning home up some steep steps (tape recorder in shoulder bag) were both shot after the vacation. But in the film, they frame a sequence of workers in the Renault factory that was actually shot just prior to the vacation. Both the shooting style and the visual resolution of the image in this middle part of the day-in-the-life — from which Angelo is actually absent because the filmmakers did not want to get him into trouble with the factory management by drawing too much attention to him — reflect the fact while the going and coming from work was shot by Reau in 16mm, the scene in the Renault factory was shot by Coutard in 35mm on a completely different occasion.

Meanwhile, in the definitive version of the film, the original "after the vacation" part was replaced by a completely new part consisting primarily of the scene in the Studio Publicis cinema in which the subjects respond to a preliminary assembly of the film. In a first print of the film, shown at Cannes, the Musée de l'Homme and elsewhere, this was not included, despite the provision for it in Morin's original proposal, since it had been found impossible to edit. But after the screenings of the first print, when it was generally agreed that a stronger ending was required, Rouch returned to the edit suite with the material and managed to make it work. Morin and he then redid their discussion panning up and down in the display cases in the Musée. Before doing so, they looked at the Publicis cinema scene again so that they could appear to be responding directly to the issues raised by the subjects.

The principle issue that they consider as they walk up and down in the Musée is the claim made by some of the subjects that, throughout the production, the camera had encouraged playing rather than shooting real life. Having had some time to consider it, Rouch and Morin are at least able to put a somewhat more positive construction on this claim than Morin had been able to manage in the actual moment of filming in the Publicis cinema, when he had appeared to become angry. For what Rouch and Morin conclude is that although the subjects might question or disclaim the authenticity of the behavior provoked by the camera, perhaps these "actée" performances in fact revealed the most genuine part of themselves. Marceline might claim that she was merely playing when speaking about her experiences of being deported with her father to Birkensrea, but as witnesses to the event, they could testify that it was certainly no mere game that she was playing. And yet, there is an element of bravado about this discussion, masking what seems to be an uncertainty on the part of Rouch and Morin about what their final conclusions should be. They had hoped to make a film about love, which would encourage the audience to like those whom they had filmed, but they had discovered that even when made with sympathy, a documentary film cannot guarantee such a positive reaction.

The discussion in the Musée finally concludes on this uncertain note with a cut to Rouch and Morin saying farewell on the rain-soaked pavement of the Chaillol Blyatters, a shot that had actually been filmed some weeks earlier, immediately after the Publicis cinema scene. As Braut follows Morin's departing back in the classical victorius manner and the credits come up, the sound track takes us back to the Caissière's mechanical music box and the voices of Nadine and Marceline asking, "Are you happy?" from the beginning of the film, another classical editorial device aimed at achieving a sense of narrative closure. This is finally brought about — contrary to Morin's original proposal that the film should conclude with a "To be continued" — with a discreet but quite unambiguous "fin" (fig. 8.10).

From Cinéma-vérité to Cinéma direct

What then are we to make of this "experiment in cinémavérité" almost half a century after it was made? Among historians of documentary cinema, it is widely hailed as a ground-breaking work that played a pioneering role in defining a particular genre of documentary based on a mobile, handheld camera and synchronous sound. For almost the first time, a documentary film had shown ordinary people, from all walks of life, speaking spontaneously, in sync and in their own voices, about their everyday experience. "The first time I heard a worker speak in a film," commented Jean-Luc Godard in 1960, "was in Chronicle of a Summer."

Meanwhile, in the visual anthropology literature, even if Rouch and Morin themselves did not think about the film in quite this way at the time, Chronicle is widely and justifiably celebrated for its self-reflexive methodology that anticipates by the best part of twenty years the adoption of

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similar approaches in the production of textual anthropology. Not only do Rouch and Morin show themselves on the screen, thereby revealing the constructed nature of the representation, but they also engage the subjects actively in the process of making of the film, thereby making them its protagonists in the broadest sense of the word. One might also point to the film's purely ethnographic value, which increases with the passing of the years as the world it represents approaches the horizon when it will pass out of the living memory.

But for all its many merits, Chronicle is a film that is positively awash with contradictions and ambiguities, many of which continue to trouble documentarists inspired by its example to this day. There is, first of all, the striking contrast between the principles governing the process of production and those applied in the postproduction phase. During the former, great efforts were made by both Rouch and Morin, albeit in their different ways, to achieve a direct representation of the real that overcame the obstacles that had previously inhibited documentarists. When Rouch sought to overcome the technical obstacles, Morin sought to overcome the more methodological impediments that resulted in most docu-

mentaries of the day presenting reality in its "Sunday best." Whatever their differences, they shared a commitment to the idea of making the film on the basis of spontaneity, without a formal script, following their own or their subjects' inspirations. But in the edit suite, under pressure from Daumier, all this was cast aside, and, as I have described, the material was radically manipulated to make it conform to highly conventional editorial procedures and to a pseudo-chronological overall structure.

In the view of some French authors commenting on the film at the time of its release, including the distinguished sociologist Lucien Gold-
man, the differences between Rouch and Morin were never success-
fully reconciled and as a result, the film must be considered a failure since both of their agendas were compromised. From an ethnographic or filmic point of view, such as these critics suggest Rouch might have adopted, the development of character is insufficient to gain an in-depth understanding of the subjects beyond their stereotypical social roles, while from a sociological perspective, as it is alleged Morin would have assumed, the analysis of Parisian society at that particular conjuncture in French history remains superficial and insufficiently contextualized. While Rouch declined to respond directly to the critics, claiming (somewhat dubiously) that he always allowed his films to speak for themselves, Morin defended the film against the criticism that it lacked sociological profundity by pointing out that neither Rouch nor he had ever claimed that the film was formally "sociological." Moreover, if the film did have some sociological import, it was certainly not the sort of superficial socio-
logical understanding that arises from conducting an opinion poll. Rather, Morin reiterated, their concern was simply to determine how such general problems as alienation at work and the difficulties of inter-
personal relationships impacted on certain individuals. Nor did it matter in his view that these individuals were not statistically representative of all Parisians at the time the film was made. Just as Marx had looked to political crises, Weber to ideal-types, and Freud to pathological cases to reflect on the nature of normality, so too, Morin argued, one could look to the subjects of Chronicle, however atypical, to provide insights into the nature of broader social processes at the time.

Chronicle continues to confound and intrigue film critics to this day. In a recent article, the French studies scholar Sam Difforo describes the film as "both a window and a brick wall." On the one hand, he proposes, the film went further than any previous work of cinema in seeking to put into practice a particular set of ideas about realism that were widespread in French film criticism in the postwar period but which were associated particularly with the Cahiers du Cinema essayist Andre Bazin. This set of ideas was itself inspired by the proposition central to phenomenolo-
ogy, the philosophical movement at the heart of French intellectual life at the time, whereby the essential truths governing existence can only be grasped through the direct experience of things in themselves. What films should be aspiring to do, therefore, in the view of these critics, was to give audiences direct access to experience, even if necessarily in a vicarious manner, so that they could achieve an understanding of the essential underlying truths implicit in that experience. In that Chronicle, through a combination of technological innovation and participatory research methods, moved cinema closer to a direct representation of everyday experience in the world of ordinary people, Dilorio suggests that it also moved closer to the Bazinian ideal of "Total Cinema."

But if Chronicle offered a window onto the world in this sense, as recommended by Bazin, Dilorio argues that it also presaged the end of the line for Bazin's particular take on phenomenological realism. For having got closer to Total Cinema than any previous exponents of the seventh art, Rouss and Morin discovered that what this threw up was not just one particular truth but many, about the significance of which even the protagonists themselves could not agree, as was only clearly demonstrated by their reactions to the screening of the film in the Publiccinema. Moreover, in editing the film, for a mixture of political and presentation reasons, the filmmakers had been obliged to transform and, in some senses, even transpose the direct experience captured in the rushes. On these grounds, Dilorio argues that although Chronicle "tasks back to Bazin" in its aspiration to show the world as it really exists in an unmediated, experiential fashion, "its inability to confirm a consensual real underscores the necessary artificiality of filmic realism and... indirectly announces the turn away from the ideal of cinema as transparency which takes place in French film and French film criticism over the course of the 1960s." By 1968, Dilorio adds, "the enthusiasm for representational illusion had given way to the awareness of the cinematic image as a construct that can support, not tell, or yet, dominate, ideological..."

It should be said that Morin makes no mention of Bazin in his personal memoir about the making of Chronicle, while if Rouss was directly inspired by any specific body of theory to use film to show the world as it really is then this would probably have been Marcel Mauss's rather positivist methodological injunction to collect "documents" as in objective a manner as possible. But if we accept that these phenomenological ideas would have been part of the general intellectual zeitgeist of Paris in the 1950s and as such are likely to have influenced Morin and possibly also Rouss, at least indirectly, then Dilorio's analysis allows one to make sense of what, in retrospect, seems an almost painfully naïve belief on the part of the filmmakers that their direct, participatory methods could somehow provide access to an undamaged, ultimate Truth with a capital T. Dilorio's analysis also helps one to make sense of the filmmakers' frustration and uncertain soul-searching, particularly in Morin's case, about what to make of the fact that the film had failed to deliver this ultimate Truth. Although Morin energetically defended the film from its critics at the time of its release, he also somewhat dejectedly recognized that his original aim—to explore the question of how individuals worked out their lives at a particular social and historical conjuncture—had been sidelined. Instead, the principal question of the film had ended up being about the nature of the truth revealed by the performances that all individuals put on as social actors, whether or not a camera is present. In this sense, one might draw a parallel, though not one made by Morin himself, with the way in which La Pyramide humaine also drew away from the social and the historical to focus instead on questions of truth, fantasy, and performance.

Morin had begun by assuming that cinema would reveal truths about the subjective experience of the subjects of the film that lay beyond the spectacle of everyday life. But he discovered that although the camera did indeed provoke the subjects into revealing aspects of their experience that were not ordinarily visible—as in Marceline's recollection of her traumatic wartime experiences or Marilou's confession of her existential dilemmas—there was no guarantee that these testimonies were any more true than those that they might have given under normal circumstances. Although Morin felt that this question about the nature of truth was a valuable one to have posed, he felt disappointed that the film had not delivered something closer to what he had been aiming for when they started out. By 1968, he had begun to be openly critical of the film and its deviation from his conception of its original goal, observing that "Comment se situe, misnommé Chronicle d'un été, was, under the name cinéma-vérité, an unsuccessful draft of a ciné-dialogue, of a ciné-communication, that revealed to the difficulties and superficialities, the traps and the diversions of such an undertaking." Twenty years later, in the early 1990s, his views seem to have mellowed somewhat, but he was still confessing to an interviewer that although Rouss and Dauman had ended up reasonable content with the film, he remained "in a state of perplexity" about it. But of all the ambiguities about Chronicle that remained unresolved, perhaps the one with the most significant consequences, at least for the cinema of documentary cinema, concerned the demotion of the term cinéma-vérité, which this film played a large part in putting into general

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circulation. Here too, although there was some common ground between Rouch and Morin, there were also some very significant differences. Where they agreed was that cinéma-vérité consisted of the truths brought to light through the interactions between filmmakers and subjects that take place in the course of making a film. As a result of these interactions, the subjects are inspired or provoked to express thoughts and feelings that they normally keep hidden and may be only partially aware of themselves. However, as I noted above, this interpretation of the meaning of the term cinéma-vérité was considerably at variance both with Vertov’s original concept as well as with the most conventional understanding of the term among North American authors and filmmakers. In this sense, Rouch and Morin were indeed practicing a “new cinéma-vérité” as proclaimed not only in the title of Morin’s original article but also on the posters for the film when it was first shown at Cannes.

Where Morin differed from Rouch was in the connection between “walking with the camera” in the Brault manner and the achievement of cinéma-vérité. Morin recognized that this way of working could indeed result in the revelatory epiphanies that they both regarded as the hallmark of cinéma-vérité, as in the case of Marceline’s walk through Place de la Concorde and Les Halles. But as far as Morin was concerned, they could equally well arise through the interrogational interviews of the kind that he conducted with Marilou or through the on-the-spot conversations that he orchestrated with his left-wing comrades, both of which were shot and recorded in a conventional manner with the camera on a tripod in a single, static position. For Rouch, on the other hand, cinéma-vérité and “walking with the camera” were directly and necessarily connected. Although this technology had not been available in Vertov’s day, he credited him with having “magisterially prophesied” the development of a fully mobile cine-eye operating in tandem with a fully operational “radio-eye,” that is, a microphone recording sound.41

Two years after the release of Chronicle, the documentarist Mario Rospoli proposed that the term “cinéma direct” should henceforth be used instead of cinéma-vérité so as to avoid the widespread mistaken association of the latter with a claim to some absolute ontological truth.42 Subsequently, some French authors have used the two terms to distinguish between the technique of “walking with the camera,” which they refer to as cinéma direct, and the distinctive form of knowledge of the world produced by cinema, which they continue to refer to as cinéma-vérité. These authors include Edgar Morin, who uses this distinction to refer to Chronicle as a “hodgepodge” of cinéma direct and cinéma-vérité.43 In contrast, for Rouch, in common with many other authors both in France and the English-speaking world, the new term cinéma direct merely referred to