

"This epic documentary is destined to become one of the touchstones of American nonfiction cinema." - New York Film Festival

LOVE & DIANE



a film by Jennifer Dworkin

This film is a presentation of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)

A Co-Production with Arté France



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Synopsis

Love & Diane tells the epic story of a family over three generations. At its heart lies the highly charged relationship between a mother and daughter, desperate for love and forgiveness but caught in a devastating cycle.

For Love, the world changed forever when she and her siblings were torn from their mother, Diane. Separated from her family and thrust into a terrifying world of institutions and foster homes, the memory of that moment is more vivid to her than her present life.

Ten years have passed since that day and Love and her five siblings have been reunited with their mother. But all have been changed by the years of separation. They are almost strangers to each other and Love is tormented by the thought that it was her fault. At 8 years old she was the one who revealed to a teacher that her mother was an drug addict. Now she is 18 and HIV+. And she has just given birth to a son, Donyaeh.

For Love and Diane this baby represents everything good and hopeful for the future. But that hope is mixed with fear. Donyaeh has been born with the HIV virus and months must pass before his final status is known. As Diane struggles to make her family whole again and to realize some of her own dreams, Love seems to be drifting further and further away from her child. Diane, torn by her own guilt over her children's fate when she was an addict, tries to help and to care for her grandson. But when Diane confides her fears for her daughter to a therapist, the police suddenly appear at the door. Donyaeh is taken from Love's arms and it seems to the family as if history has repeated itself.

Now Love must face the same ordeal her mother had faced years before. She is charged with neglect and must prove to a world of social workers, therapists and prosecutors that she is a fit mother. And Diane must find the courage to turn away from her guilt and grasp a chance to pursue her long-deferred dreams.

While the film takes us deep into the life of a single family, it also offers a provocative look at the Byzantine "system" that aims to help but as often frustrates the family's attempts to improve their situation. The film differs from many documentaries that deal with the problems facing poor communities in that it eschews "talking heads" and interviews with "experts" and aims instead to immerse the viewer in the experiences and thoughts of a family trying to survive and retain autonomy in the face of terrible challenges.

155 minutes, 35mm & Beta SP, U.S.



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Festivals

Independent Spirit Truer Than Fiction Award
Sundance Film Festival
New York Film Festival
Locarno International Film Festival — Golden Leopard
One World International Film Festival — Best Documentary
Full Frame Documentary Film Festival — MTV News Documentary Award
Cinema Du Reel Film Festival — Special Mention
PRISM Award Nominee
IDFA, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam
San Francisco International Film Festival
Seattle International Film Festival
Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival
Cleveland International Film Festival
Dallas Video Festival
Nashville Independent Film Festival
Film de Femmes International Film Festival
Get Reel Black Film Festival
Boston Women's Film Festival



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Quotes

"This epic documentary is destined to become one of the touchstones of American nonfiction cinema."

-New York Film Festival

"A masterpiece." -Sean Farnel, Toronto International Film Festival

"Best Documentary of 2002." -Laura Sinagra, *Village Voice*

"Jennifer Dworkin's epic 2 1/2 hour docu explores the right-wing cliché of the 'welfare queen' — the black woman with a lot of kids and a crack habit — not to avoid the stereotype but by refreshing out, settling the viewer in to an unmediated intimacy with her subject... tremendous emotional force and uncompromising honesty. "

-Ronnie Scheib, *Variety*

"Dworkin brilliantly uses the form to involve the viewer in a warts-and-all complexity that confounds facile judgment, while creating the frustrating slowness of a system of social services that often nurtures the very ills it attempts to cure."

-Ronnie Scheib, *Variety*

"Jennifer Dworkin's compelling documentary immerses you so intensely in the problems of the Hazzards, a troubled New York family living on public assistance, that by the end of its two and a half hours you feel almost like a member of the household... What lifts the movie above many other high-minded documentaries dealing with poverty and the welfare cycle is the filmmaker's astounding empathy for both Diane and Love."

-Stephen Holden, *New York Times*

"The strongest American film at the [New York Film] Festival and the best documentary I've seen in years. It's a major discovery... 'Love & Diane' is sheer exhilaration, a movie of awesome emotional power and devastating social relevance... a richly humanizing experience. It is vital, necessary film that deserves the widest possible audience."

-Nathan Lee, *The NY Sun*

"[An] extraordinary documentary... impressionistic, poetic..." -Stuart Klawans, *The Nation*

"A compelling film about hope and recovery." -Merle Bertrand, *Film Threat*

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Director's Statement

I first met members of the Hazzard family many years before I began making LOVE & DIANE. I was teaching as a volunteer in a homeless shelter in Harlem developing a photography workshop for children, which later turned into a Super 8 film project. Diane's two nieces and nephew were in my class. They had been living in the shelter since their mother, Victoria (Diane's sister) had died. Over a period of several years I became close to these three children. I began a film project with them about the experience of growing up in a shelter. When I went to graduate school in upstate New York, we planned that the eldest girl, Selina, would join me after high school and attend a local community college. But she had a year of high school left and decided to move in with an aunt I had never met—Diane Hazzard. Shortly after Selina moved in with Diane and her daughter Love I went over to see them.

When I met Diane, her children had been living with her for two years after a six-year separation. Love's return home had been particularly traumatic. For much of those two years she was a runaway, often living on the streets. I sensed the intense love that Diane and Love had for each other as well as the anger and guilt over the past. I was drawn to focus the film on their story. Both Love and Diane were very interested in the idea of making a film about their experiences; both felt they had something important to say. I was particularly struck by their strong desire not to be seen as "statistics" or to be seen stereotypically as doomed, as well as their conviction that a film telling the unvarnished truth would serve an important purpose.

A highly personal film that looks at the lives of a mother and daughter over several years, it also explores, from their point of view, the extraordinary challenge of retaining autonomy in the face of a social "system" that has almost limitless, often arbitrary power over the circumstances of their lives. Diane's children and home could be taken from her in an instant based on a misunderstanding that could take years of struggle to undo. Diane and Love are inspirational in their refusal to give up. Equally extraordinary was their commitment to making this film true to what happened and how they felt.

I wanted as much as possible to immerse the viewer in Love and Diane's experience of the world. I avoided interviews with "experts" on the social policy issues that came up. I did not try to make this an objective film. But the film is also not purely observational; an important part of the film is the sequences that are about the past as remembered by the family. The past is a vital part of this story. Love and Diane both search constantly for explanations in the past as they fight to change their lives in the present.

In the end, the film is an attempt to do justice to what I learned from Love and Diane.



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Production Style

The film is a mix of verité scenes and “interior dialogues” of the main subjects. One of the central aims of the filmmaker and editor was to find a way to show not only what happened over the shooting period but also what those events meant to Love and Diane, how they interpreted them. We hoped to add some sense of a mental, interior life and of the constant process of self-explanation that is missing in purely verité films. These sequences often use visual material, mostly Super 8 footage, that was shot by members of the family.

The film was shot over a period of many years although the central story takes place over two and a half years from Donyaeh’s birth. It was guided by constant discussion with the subjects about the process and goals of the documentary.

Interview List (in rough order of appearance)

Love Hinson (Diane’s second daughter, 18 at start of film)
Donyaeh Hinson (Love’s son)
Diane Hazzard (mother – formerly an addict, has brought her family together again after many years of separation)
Trenise (Tootie) Arnold (Diane’s third daughter)
Morean Arnold (Diane’s fourth daughter)
Willie Hazzard (Diane’s second son)
Courtney White (Love’s boyfriend)
Tameka Arnold (Diane’s eldest daughter)
Lauren Shapiro (Love’s attorney)
Antonia Diaz (Donyaeh’s foster mother)
Charles Modiano (Strive instructor)
Charles Hazzard (Diane’s oldest son, deceased, cared for all his siblings while his mother was an addict)



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Credits

Producer/Director:	Jennifer Dworkin
Editor:	Mona Davis
Cinematography:	Tsuyoshi Kimoto
Executive Producer:	Jennifer Fox
Consulting Producer:	Doug Block
Additional Camera:	Doug Block, Jennifer Dworkin, Aaron Edison, Robert Fiske, Victoria Ford, Frederick Nielson, Justin Schein, Carolina Zorilla de San Marin
Additional Sound Recording:	Eddie O'Connor and John Tipton
Consultants:	Roger Graef, Robert Kiley, Michelle Materre
Assistant Editors:	Fabiana Ferreira, Michael Chen, Saul Nachshen, Jacob Steingart
Post Production Supervisor:	Beth Landau
On-line Editor:	Lars Woodruff
Sound:	701 Sound, Ira Speigal, Marlena Grzaslewicz, Mariusz Glabiinski
Re-Recording Mixer:	Robert Fernandez
Fiscal Sponsor:	Women Make Movies

This film is a presentation of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB).

Additional Funding

Arte France, British Broadcasting Corporation, Popplestone Foundation, New York State Council for the Arts, Wellspring Foundation, The Donnet Fund, The Ettinger Foundation, The Eastman Foundation, The Liman Foundation, The Adelaide Ross Foundation, International Assets, Transactions, LLC, Bruce Cohen

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Biographies

Jennifer Dworkin – Director/Producer

Love & Diane is Jennifer Dworkin's first film. Jennifer was born in New York but grew up in England, returning to the United States for college. She has an MA and is pursuing a PhD in Philosophy at Cornell University but is currently on leave. Her research was on the subject of conscious access and self-knowledge. She is the recipient of several research fellowships and was awarded the 1997 Fellowship for Excellence in Research and Academic Promise in the Cognitive Sciences from Cornell University. Jennifer Dworkin has known some members of the family portrayed in *Love & Diane* since 1989, when she taught photography workshops for children in NYC Tier II shelter system. These workshops grew into a program teaching kids still photography and filmmaking with Super 8 cameras. She has worked extensively as a volunteer and group leader for several children's charities. Jennifer learned filmmaking in the course of making this documentary (over many years).

Mona Davis – Editor

Mona Davis, winner of Best Editor Emmy for *The Farm*, multiple award winning documentary on the notorious prison in Angola, Louisiana, has been editing documentaries since the early 1980s, when she doubled as Editor and Associate Producer of her first film, *In Our Water*, a study of the pollution problem in New Jersey's water supply. *In Our Water*, produced and directed by Meg Switzgable, won a Columbia DuPont Award and was nominated for both an Academy Award and an Emmy. *The Farm*, distributed theatrically and also seen on the A & E Network, was nominated for an Academy Award and was a Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize winner in addition to being voted Best Documentary of the Year by the New York Film Critics Circle, the L.A. Film Critics Circle and the National Society of Film Critics.

Ms. Davis, a native New Yorker, is a graduate of the NYU film school and has edited many highly honored documentaries. Some of the most distinguished are: *A Perfect Candidate*, a revealing portrait of Oliver North using footage from his senatorial campaign against Robb. (Nominated for an Emmy. Producer-Directors, R.J.Cutler and David Van Taylor. Associate Director, Mona Davis.). *Dream Deceivers*, about the trial of a rock star whose Satanic flavored recordings allegedly motivated a teen fan to commit suicide. (Nominated for an Emmy. Shown at the Berlin Film Festival. Winner: International Documentary Association Award, PBS Best of the West Award, CPB Gold Award. Producer/Director, David Van Taylor). Mona also edited *Age 7 In America*, the American version of the British documentary series, *Seven Up*, which interviews a group of subjects at seven year intervals, starting at age seven. (Winner: Peabody Award. Producers: Michael Apted & Vicky Bippart. Director: Phil Joanou.)

Jennifer Fox – Executive Producer

In 1980, Jennifer formed her own production company, Zohe Film Productions. She produced, wrote and directed two narrative shorts, entitled *Pomello: One Day and a Boy* (1980), and *The First Illusion* (1981). She worked as an Assistant Producer and Writer for the nationally syndicated television program, *PM Magazine* and on the production of several shorts for WNET's *Sesame Street*.

She produced, directed and wrote the internationally acclaimed, award-winning feature documentary, *Beirut: The Last Home Movie*. *Beirut* was released theatrically in seven countries and televised in seventeen countries worldwide, including an American broadcast as a Frontline Special in 1991. Invited to over twenty of the most prestigious documentary film festivals worldwide, it won seven international awards, including Best

Film of the Year and Best Cinematography, Sundance Film Festival, United States (1989), Grand Prize Best Film, Cinema Du Reel, Paris, France (1989), The Young Forum Selection, Berlin Film Festival, Germany (1989), and Golden Gate Award, San Francisco Film Festival, United States (1989). In 1989, Jennifer was hired as a director and cinematographer to spend a year and a half videotaping the world tour of the Tibetan Buddhist Lama, Namkhai Norbu Rimpoche. She recorded over sixty hours of videotape, covering thirteen countries, including a two-week visit with Namkhai Norbu's close friend and Nobel Prize Laureate, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The footage is currently part of an extensive Buddhist archive in Archidoso, Italy.

Jennifer has recently completed the groundbreaking ten-hour documentary series, *An American Love Story*, which she produced, directed, and photographed for Public Television, and which aired nationally on PBS September 12-16, 1999. *An American Love Story* has been screened to critical acclaim at the 1999 Sundance, Berlin, and Edinburgh Film Festivals (as well as others), and at the Film Forum in New York City. The series has also aired in Israel, Denmark, Norway and Finland. Jennifer's other credits include Executive Producing *On the Ropes*, a feature-length documentary produced, directed, and photographed by Nanette Burstein and Brett Morgen. At its premiere at the 1999 Sundance Film Festival, *On the Ropes* was awarded a Special Jury Award. It went on to win the Best Feature Documentary of the Year award at the IDA 1999, Best Documentary at Urban World Film Festival 1999, the Golden Gate Award in San Francisco 1999, and an honorable mention at the Amsterdam Documentary Festival 1999. The film is funded by Fox Lorber and TLC and has been released theatrically in fifty markets. It was broadcast in April of 2000 on The Learning Channel. Jennifer is the Executive Producer of *Portrait of a Survivor as an Artist*, Kit-Yin Snyder's feature-length documentary that explores the personal journey of a traditional Chinese artist in the modern world. She is also Executive Producing, *Absolutely Safe*, a feature length investigative film about breast implants by Carol Ciancutti.

Jennifer has lectured about documentary filmmaking in numerous festivals and universities in both Europe and America. She has also given Master Classes on documentary filmmaking around the globe. She was sent by the United States Information Service to give seminars on independent filmmaking in Pakistan and India. She has consulted on numerous documentary film projects in all phases of production and distribution. Jennifer is currently teaching filmmaking at New York University's School of Film and Television and Film Video Arts in New York. She previously taught at The School of Visual Arts for two years. She has recently completed the feature length screenplay, *Lila: A Fairy Tale*. She is one of three filmmakers featured in the film, *The Heck with Hollywood!*, a portrait of the trials and tribulations of independent filmmaking in America. She is also featured in the new film about the history of the verité movement called, *Cinema Verite, Defining the Moment* by Peter Wintonic.

Tsuyoshi Kimoto – Cinematographer

Born in Osaka, Japan, Tsuyoshi Kimoto has spent the last fifteen years in the United States, including eight years of cinematography studies. For four years he trained under veteran PBS documentary film producer/director Marian Marzynski. His documentary feature credits include several films produced and directed by Marian Marzynski: *Gomrowicz Story*, *Escape from Japan* and *Anya In and Out of Focus*. He shot *Halsted Street, U.S.A.*, directed by Sundance Film Festival Award winner, David Simpson as well as *Go Monk Go* produced by Gus Van Sant, directed by Chris Moniux. Tsuyoshi won a Student Oscar and Emmy Award for *Arn Chorn Pond, a Cambodian in America* which he produced, directed and photographed. As well as his feature credits, Tsuyoshi has extensive television, music video and educational credits.



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Interview

One day last fall, just before the New York Film Festival opening, Jennifer and I sat down at a Village café and talked about “The Making of ‘LOVE & DIANE’.” The following interview is the result. (As told to: Michelle Materre, Program Consultant at Women Make Movies).

Michelle Materre: So Jennifer, tell us a little about how you got the idea to make the film.

Jennifer Dworkin: Well, I was teaching an after school program at a Tier II shelter in the city. First, I was teaching photography and then gradually started teaching filmmaking with Super 8 cameras. And I had a very different idea at that point, which was to make a film about four different families with children growing up in the homeless system. I recruited a representative group of families and embarked on making this documentary. But, I’ve never made a film before. I didn’t know anything about making a documentary. It was way out of control because I had no money and so many characters. I sort of gradually got very broke so eventually had to give it up and go to graduate school. Meanwhile, I had become very close to one of the families with children who were basically orphans living there with an uncle who was increasingly sick. And they just sort of start of hanging out with me more socially than for the film and eventually I sort of became an adopted godparent to two of them. I started organizing them to do stuff with me and my friends like sending them to summer camp... eventually one of them came and lived with me. The film was completely refocused when one of these kids, Selena, moved in with her aunt for a year. That’s when I met Love and Diane and I realized that they were just fascinating and articulate and had a very interesting story and interesting take on life. So I started to film with them and then the film was really borne from that.

MM: Did you have any idea that the film would take on the direction that it did?

JD: No, not at all. I had a very different idea and the proposals I wrote at the beginning suggest an extremely different course for this film. I was very taken, in particular, by Love’s stated plan for her life. And I thought this would make a great film because she wanted to make a film that showed her coming from where she was now -- having come home from all those years in foster care and having suffered so much and becoming HIV positive. But she wanted to become a writer; she wanted to go to college; and she wanted me to help focus her towards that. And of course things didn’t turn out that way. So the film, even though it does end in triumph of a sort, it became a much more painful and sad journey in some ways.

MM: How long was the actual journey of the film from start to finish?

JD: From when I first met Selena it was twelve years. From when I first met Love and Diane it’s five years. If you count the year and a half to two years of editing, it would be about six or seven years.

MM: So tell us a little bit more about the journey of making the film?

JD: Well the making of was shaped by the lack of funding for a great deal of the time, which meant I had to make this film with sort of a patchwork, you know, with whatever camera I could afford -- whatever DP or no DP I could afford. No sound person, ever, until, I think, the last day of the shoot! You know, a car when I had a car -- otherwise, it was the subway. I had to work and I had various jobs, some of them were out of town. The real turning point for the film came when I got the ITVS grant and I could make it a fulltime occupation, but it was always really important to me to make it as technically clean and proficient as possible. So I tried to shoot on the best quality I could afford. I tried to really use all the money during production on technical quality, which I think is extremely important.

MM: What kind of help did you have? How did you find qualified people when you had so little money to help

make a quality film?

JD: I basically spent any money I earned on making the film. I self funded it and I worked out some barter deals. I did some script writing and proposal writing for people in exchange for paying for their certain number of days working on the shoot and that was really helpful, so there's a lot to be said for barter!

MM: I think more people need to think about that.

JD: Yeah, barter's just a good technique. Whatever you're good at you can exchange for what you're not good at or what you need, particularly in the film community where there's not a lot of cash floating around. It works really well. And then I also used my filmmaking skills to get jobs – you know I make films for summer camps, and that kind of thing. I did some weddings. Eventually I started to understand after ITVS, the potential of fundraising through more traditional sources and I started to really seriously doing foundation grants and foreign sales and brought in much more money that way.

MM: Do you think the film would have gotten to the degree that it had, without ITVS, if you had continued to fund it out of your pocket?

JD: Well some of our really good footage is pre-ITVS. It's on Beta. What I really couldn't have done without that help was post-production because however expensive production is it's nothing compared to post-production. At a certain point I discovered that I could shoot myself if I had to, I could do a day for free-- just get on the subway, take my own camera. I owned my own mics by this point. I could do a day of production for lunch money. Post-production has been extraordinarily expensive. ITVS really made it possible to finish the film.

MM: Besides ITVS, did you have any other funders or friends?

JD: Yes, the film is a co-production of ARTE and friends. They were major funders. The BBC contributed a significant amount of money. New York State Council on the Arts, and in particular, one private foundation. I spend a lot of time in the foundation library and I really try to see what's out there in terms of money and of course Women Make Movies.

MM: I was going to say, we've had a relationship for a while with this film and I know how hard you worked on it. I know it was always a struggle. What kept you going? I talk to filmmakers all the time and I tell them if they don't have the persistence then it's probably not going to happen. What gave you your persistence of vision?

JD: It wasn't, you know. I think for some people it's the conviction that they're going to succeed in the end, which I never had. I'm a born pessimist. I never thought I would finish this film! I think it's part stubbornness. I had too many people telling me that I would never finish it. I had a whole bunch of people try to take it over.

MM: You are a Taurus too, aren't you?

JD: Yeah.

MM: That stubbornness pays off.

JD: Partly stubbornness. Partly that, even if I thought nobody else would be interested in it, I was enormously interested in it. I was fascinated. It was a form of the most important learning that I've ever done in my life, even though I was in graduate school. Making this film just opened up the world for me and introduced me to a way of seeing the world and understanding what was going on in our society that was sort of irresistible to me. I think curiosity and what I wanted to know, even though I wondered if anyone else wanted to know. I was very interested.

MM: Having seen the film in an almost completed state and having seen it in various incarnations along the way, the material that you ended up utilizing is something that I think only comes through on the screen when you do have a close relationship with your subjects.

JD: Yes, I think that's right and this is not the kind of film that anyone could have made quickly. This is a film that did result from a very long relationship and a good deal of mutual trust. I think it's always true to some extent, I had a very long time to understand how Love and Diane saw their life and I got a lot of guidance about how to shape the film from that. There was an element of, they knew how they wanted to talk about their lives and they had a vision of their lives that was much more coherent and better worked out than most people have

in that they knew how to tell their stories. In their conversations with each other, they'd get to the heart of whatever issue it is. They're very expressive! Those scenes are a combination of the fact that they knew me very well, and the fact that they know what's going on in their lives very well and they get to the heart of it. That's very compelling.

MM: I know one of the issues that's come up in the past and you're probably going to be confronted with again is you're not African American. You're making this very intimate portrait of this African American family who may have not had the easiest road along the way, but there is the final reward at the final part of your film. How do you talk to people about that experience?

JD: Well it is the hardest question for me as you know. So much so that I think the fact that I embarked on this film was a result of a certain kind of political naiveté on my part because I grew up in England where this is not this kind of... well... it's just a very different situation. It's basically, it was when I was a child, a homogenous society. Some people live there from the so-called "Empire", but it was a very different situation. I embarked on this film out of wanting to know about aspects of American society that I didn't normally have access to. It's an important motivation for documentary filmmakers to know about what they don't know about and to discover and to act as a conduit for people who are not part of the community to understand something about that community, but at the same time, having spent a lot of time in America now, I can see that portrayals of African Americans are basically dominated by white authorship. I think it's a problem. I can understand it's a problem and it's probably not something I would do again for that reason. However, unwittingly, I was participating in something that is a significant social problem.

MM: Well I think it's taken years for people to acknowledge that, and also not to take on the attitude that we need to make films about everybody.

JD: A lot of people tell me that. A lot of people push that view on me. You know it's all of this awful political correctness and they want me to be anti it, which I am sometimes when it's silly, but I don't think this is silly. I think that media is such an important aspect of our society that we almost get our self images from television and radio and the magazines. It's so important, even to forming a self-concept in America, that it is a delicate question of who's included in all of that "image making". I don't know what the answer is... but I do have my own economic theory. Have I ever tried this out on you?

MM: I don't think so.

JD: My economic theory of documentary filmmaking, which I think it explains why it's almost entirely dominated by one social upper middle class of white people. Here's my theory. My theory is that nobody that's in a family that's upwardly mobile would become a documentary filmmaker because it's marginal. Basically it pays nothing. It's artsy, but not in a way that's ever going to bring you anything that's significant in terms of money or fame. So essentially it's something that would only happen in a family, that's been professional for a while. It's a decadence. You don't care about making money and bringing your family upward because...

MM: You don't have to think about it.

JD: Right, you don't think about it. It's a privilege to think this is a way you can spend your life. I believe it will come in the African American community more as families become professional over more generations. And then they'll be as angry about their kids doing this as my parents were – "Why didn't you go to Law School?" I did! It's a rebellion in a sense. It's like, "Yeah, I don't care about all of that stuff that you struggled for. I'm going to go out and do my thing." And my parents are not pleased.

MM: All of that education down the tubes!

JD: Exactly. So it takes a while to get there. And my children will start the upwardly mobile path again because I won't be able to send my children to private school and all of that stuff that I had.

MM: But I think that your commitment to the film is something that results in much more than what you would have ever been able to do as an academic!

JD: Yes. Yes and no. You know, as life goes on and I find myself increasingly without any money. I'm beginning to appreciate more and more that this was something I could have given more consideration to as a lifestyle. If I hadn't had everything I ever wanted as kid, I probably would've thought about it more.

MM: Well, I think that's a good basis for an interview. Any closing remarks? Anything about the experience?

Where do you hope to see the film go?

JD: I guess just in general about the experience, I feel like I've learned an enormous amount on many, many levels from this. For one thing it was film school for me. It was a long film school, but it was film school. I learned how to do everything from the beginning to the end. Now I'm trying to learn distribution because I've had to do everything else. It's been an extremely intensive learning process. I was writing and shooting and editing sound through all of post-production. So in that way it's been an incredible experience. It's also opened my eyes to things about American society that I don't think I would've ever known or understood. I feel like I walk around knowing more about the world, which is wonderful.

MM: You can't always get that at film school.

JD: No. It's been a great privilege to have made it even though it's been so painful in many ways. Where I'd like it to go? I'd like the film to have an educational life. I think that it's hard for people to look at it and see it as an obvious educational film because of its ambiguity, its grayness, its certain refusal to take any judgmental stance on anything, even the system. I think that's really underestimating people. I think the film doesn't have to be a ride to triumph in an unrealistic way for people to learn from it. I think that people who've had similar experiences, they will recognize the truthfulness of the film, you know, how hard it is to get out of certain situations, which a lot of films short change, which I've taken through every painful step. So I think it has educational potential that it should always make people think. I think it has some potential, and I've heard this from attorneys and legal aid family court, that it would be a good tool for lawyers and social workers to spark discussions on how things are working. And that's about it. I'd like to go to some film festivals so I could travel.

MM: And that'll be your reward.

JD: Some free trips.

MM: That was good.

JD: Thank you so much.

NEW YORK



WINDOW PAIN: *Love Hazzard, above, and her mother are the focus of docu "Love and Diane," screened at New York fest.*

LOVE AND DIANE

(DOCU)

A Chilmark production in association with the Independent Television Service, Arte France. Produced by Jennifer Dworkin. Executive producer, Jennifer Fox. Co-producer, Sharon Sklar.

Directed by Jennifer Dworkin. Camera (color/B&W, Beta SP/Hi8/mini-DV/ Super 8mm), Tsuyoshi Kimoto; editor, Mona Davis; sound, Stephane Bauer, Ira Spigel. Reviewed at New York Film Festival, Oct. 8, 2002. (Also in Locarno Film Festival.) Running time: 155 MIN.

With: Love Hazzard, Diane Hazzard, Donyaeh.

By RONNIE SCHEIB

Jennifer Dworkin's epic 2½ hour docu explodes the right-wing cliché of the "welfare queen" — the black woman with a lot of kids and a crack habit — not by avoiding the stereotype but by fleshing it out. Settling the viewer in to an unmediated intimacy with her subjects, Dworkin fol-

lows the fortunes of Diane, recovering addict and mother of six, and her daughter Love over a span of three years. Prizewinner at Locarno, pic's tremendous emotional force and uncompromising honesty make for a strong presence on the fest circuit, and limited theatrical run could precede eventual PBS airing.

"Love" starts in Brooklyn three years after Diane has succeeded in reuniting her damaged family, traumatized first by her neglect and then, after the law interceded, by separation, foster care and group homes. In the intervening years, they have become strangers. They fantasized a "happily ever after" ending once they reconnected, but deep-rooted scars and resentments remain.

Dworkin focuses on the most intense of these familial relationships, the mother/daughter duo of the title. Love, emerging from a horrendous hand-to-mouth existence on the streets but still seeking a bond with her mother, is HIV positive. She has just given birth to a boy, Donyaeh, similarly afflicted.

As characters' histories are revealed, patterns emerge that threaten to engulf the principals in a hellish repetitive cycle. Diane is herself the daughter of an alcoholic mother who abandoned her when she was 3 years old. Love, who was removed from her mother when she

was 8, sees her baby wrested from her and, like her mother before her, must surmount all manner of court-mandated obstacles to retrieve him.

Both Diane and Love had babies very young to fill the void created by their absent parents only to become absent parents themselves. Love feels like a pariah because it was she who, at age 8, told her teacher that her mother smoked crack, leading to the initial break-up of the family unit. Similarly, it is Diane's mention to her therapist of a violent fight between Love and one of her sisters that leads to Love's son Donyaeh's being taken away.

No mere collection of talking heads, film's p.o.v. subtly alternates between that of a privileged onlook-

er and that of a distanced observer so that Diane's triumphant graduation from her job-training course is captured by lenser Tsuyoshi Kimoto in lively hand-held close-up while Donyaeh's return home is framed in a long-shot tableau from the next room. Impressionistic imagery, often shot in dreamy, soft-focus black and white, accompanies voice-over monologues wherein Diane recounts her addiction or Love her time on the streets.

It could be argued that the presence of the camera gooses the women to greater efforts than they might otherwise have expended, but it soon becomes apparent that, being on public assistance, they already exist under far less benign surveillance, and are continually reported upon and judged.

Dworkin's camera becomes a kind of friendly witness, recording a supervised visit between mother and baby or a meeting with a lawyer or the aftermath of a crisis. At other times, the camera wanders restlessly as couples fight in their separate corners or mother and daughter hammer out a fragile truce.

Haunting the whole family is the specter of Charles, the eldest son who kept his siblings fed and functioning when their mother couldn't, and who had three years of college under his belt when he blew his brains out. Both Diane and Love, unsurprisingly, are diagnosed as clinically depressed. In the face of this legacy, the fact that they keep striving seems amazing. That they often succeed seems semi-miraculous.

The confluence of relatively inexpensive video stock and the all-important precedent of "Hoop Dreams" have led to the opportunity to follow a sweeping story in depth and through time. Dworkin brilliantly uses the form to involve the viewer in a warts-and-all complexity that confounds facile judgment, while recreating the frustrating slowness of a system of social services that often nurtures the very ills it attempts to cure.

Arts & Ideas

The New York Times

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2002

FILM FESTIVAL REVIEW

The Catch-22's of Recovery

By STEPHEN HOLDEN

Jennifer Dworkin's compelling documentary "Love and Diane" immerses you so intensely in the problems of the Hazzards, a troubled New York family living on public assistance, that by the end of its two and a half hours you feel almost like a member of the household.

This profoundly intimate movie, one of the finds of this year's New York Film Festival (it will be shown this morning), focuses on the stormy relationship of Diane, the family's 42-year-old matriarch, who is in recovery from crack addiction, and one of her daughters, Love, the single mother of a baby boy named Donyaeh. Donyaeh, a bright, happy child, was born H.I.V.-positive but converts to negative after treatment.

Love, who is 18 as the movie begins, is H.I.V.-positive but asymptomatic for AIDS and has a steady boyfriend who remains peripheral in the film.

Diane is a brave, outspoken woman with a horrendous family history. Now clean and sober and fortified by her Christian faith, she is determined to get a job and reunite under one roof with her family, which has been taken from her and scattered among foster homes. When she enrolls in a rigorous training program to help adults with trou-

bled backgrounds and no job experience to enter the labor force, you passionately root for her to succeed.

An early scene, in which Diane gathers the family in prayer in her new apartment, suggests that her dreams may be within reach. But things quickly come apart. One son, Willie, leaves home and is lost to the streets. The painful turning point of a story that spans several years comes when Diane feels obliged to report Love as a neglectful mother, and Donyaeh is put in a foster home.

Without inditing New York's social service system, "Love and Diane" recognizes the frustrations of being dependent on that

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Film Society of Lincoln Center

Love Hazzard and her son, Donyaeh.

Catch-22's and Dreams In Recovery and Poverty

Continued From Page B1

system with its Byzantine rules and Catch-22 provisions. Diane, for instance, can afford her roomy new apartment only so long as Donyaeh is living under her roof.

Her reporting of her daughter's neglect is a sad case of the tables turning, for when Love was 8, she reported her mother's crack addiction. The family was broken up, and

Love, who still roils with resentment at Diane's neglect, endured a series of foster and group homes. After Donyaeh's departure, Love spends the rest of the movie trying to get her son back. But because she is prone to violent rages and listless depressions and fails to show up at court-mandated therapy sessions, her progress is touch-and-go.

What lifts the film above many other high-minded documentaries dealing with poverty and the welfare

LOVE AND DIANE

Produced and directed by Jennifer Dworkin; director of photography, Tsuyoshi Kimoto; edited by Mona Davis. Running time: 155 minutes. This film is not rated. Shown today at 11 a.m. at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, as part of the 40th New York Film Festival.

cycle is the filmmaker's astounding empathy for both Diane and Love. These smart, complicated women are never made to seem like case studies. As they grope their way toward a tentative peace, you feel how deeply their wounds run and understand with an uncomfortable clarity how fear and anger can sometimes undermine the noblest resolutions.

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The Nation

FILMS

Love, Sandler Style

STUART KLAWANS

PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE • LOVE AND DIANE • THE RING

November 11, 2002

Playing cheek-by-jowl with *Punch-Drunk Love* in the recent New York Film Festival was the extraordinary documentary *Love and Diane*, produced and directed by first-time filmmaker Jennifer Dworkin. Love, in this case, is the given name of a young black woman in Brooklyn. Diane is her mother: a recovering crack addict, now in her 40s, who for years gave up Love and her other children to foster care and group homes. As the film

begins, Diane has managed to bring her family back together, physically if not emotionally. Whether she can keep them together seems doubtful—just as it's doubtful whether Love, in her turn, can prevent a rupture with the next generation. When first seen, Love is 18 years old and unwed and has just given birth to a little boy, who is HIV positive. Before long, Love will be thrashing her way through the child welfare system, trying to win him back from foster care.

I might describe *Love and Diane* as a movie about two obsessions: Love's determination to recover her son, and Dworkin's to make this film. Its running time of two and a half hours covers the events of some two and a half years, when the filmmaker and her crew must have lived like members of Love and Diane's family. Nothing that happened to them, however private or painful, seems to have been kept from the camera. What's more, Dworkin gave video cameras to the family members and incorporated their footage into the documentary, so their vision would literally be a part of the story. The most impressionistic, poetic passages in the movie seem to have been made by the family members themselves.

Love and Diane is a tough, sometimes exhausting film. It acknowledges the strength that African-American women can show in adversity—especially the strength of their religious faith—but never once yields to glib clichés about resilience. As of this writing, the film has no theatrical distributor. I hope a third obsessive will show up soon to change that.

CITY PAGES

Why Gabriel Garcia Marquez Would Never Get a Job with PBS—and Other Truths of Nonfiction Film

It seemed a little too easy to find the connection between the unemployed yob who took a suburban joyride in a tank and the gay American artist who turned to cannibalism in the Amazon. And who could fail to find the common ground between the opaque French philosopher who cooked up "deconstruction," Jacques Derrida, and the refugee philosopher who orchestrated the bombing of Cambodia, Henry Kissinger?

So when it came to breaking down the 15 movies that make up the second annual City Pages Documentary Film Festival (screening this Thursday through Sunday), we asked Sean Farnel and Michael Galinsky to get to the bottom of this whole nonfiction film thing. Like, what's the meaning of truth anyway? And for a dose of reality, why not just stay home and watch *Dateline* or *Fear Factor*?

Galinsky, by the way, is the co-director of one of the movies in the fest, *Horns and Halos*, the story of what happened when St. Martin's Press dropped plans to publish *Fortunate Son*, a scathing biography of George W. Bush, penned by a convicted felon. (Galinsky will be appearing at the Oak Street Cinema with co-director Suki Hawley on the festival's opening night.) Sean Farnel is the documentary programmer for the Toronto International Film Festival.

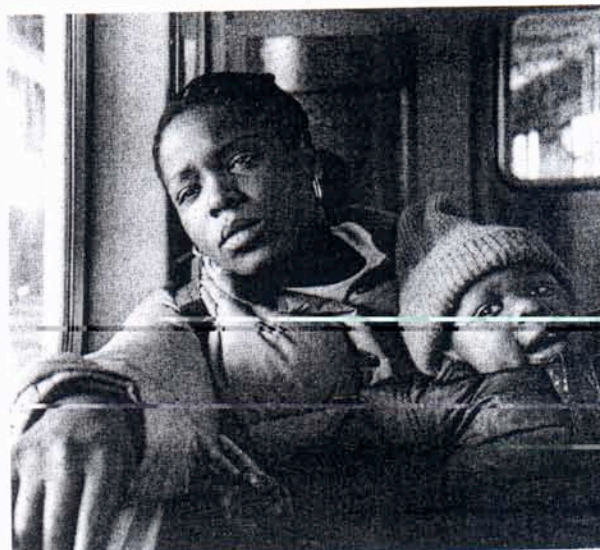
Sean Farnel: When you're making a documentary, there's one sense in which you're simply making a record of something that happened, and another sense in which you're shaping that material into a story. As I see it, the crux of the challenge for a documentary filmmaker involves balancing himself between those two sides: the document side and the story side. And the audience today has become quite savvy in terms of questioning whether the film is telling "the truth" or not.

Michael Galinsky: Often the truth is a lot less clear-cut than people want to believe. Some people have come out of *Horns and Halos* feeling confused because they think they don't know what we think—even though they do. The problem is that we haven't told them. *This is what you need to think.*

Farnel: You haven't wrapped it up in a box and put a ribbon around it. That's the best thing about the documentary films I've admired most in recent years—your film included, and also *Cul de Sac* [about a plumber who stole a tank and drove it through suburban California]: There's ambiguity. Watching those films, you're getting the narrative, but you're also getting the sense that there's a lot more going on than the filmmaker could possibly tell you in 90 minutes.

Galinsky: I think most people who go to see a documentary expect to see a TV documentary, with talking heads and archival footage—a PBS-type thing. As a result, we as documentary filmmakers feel this pressure not only to make it obvious what we think

MAGICAL REALISM



Jennifer Duerksen

about our subjects, but to try to prove something definitive through the process of creating the film. Put it this way: Gabriel Garcia Marquez would never get a job with PBS.

Farnel: Well, it'll be interesting to see what happens with *Love & Diane*. Here is a film—it follows an African-American family in Flatbush through their struggles with drugs and poverty and the welfare establishment—that is absolutely uncompromising in its refusal to bow to narrative conventions. And yet there's this incredible, cumulative power to the movie—it's almost three hours long. I think it's a masterpiece. It's a rare throwback to the unfettered kind of documentary, the kind that's principally concerned with providing a pure record of events.