**HOW TO MAKE A DOCUMENTARY ?**

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**DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION**

**LAHORE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN UNIVERSITY**

**Meaning of Documentary**

According to Webster’s dictionary, documentary consists of written down documents. The Wikipedia defines documentary as a non -fictional motion picture with the purpose of documenting some aspects of reality, intended to maintain a historical record. In this regard, Bill Nicholas’s classic book, titled as ‘Introduction to Documentary’ can be mentioned. Documentary film

"Documentary" redirects here. For other uses, see Documentary (disambiguation).

This 16 mm spring-wound Bolex "H16" Reflex camera is a popular entry level camera used in film schools.

A documentary film is a non-fictional, motion picture intended to "document reality, primarily for the purposes of instruction, education, or maintaining a historical record". Documentary has been described as "a filmmaking practice, a cinematic tradition, and mode of audience reception that is continually evolving and is without clear boundaries" Documentary films were originally called "actuality films", and were one minute, or less, in length. Over time, documentaries have evolved to be longer in length, and to include more categories; some examples being: educational, observational, and docufiction. Documentaries are meant to be informative works, and are often used within schools, as a resource to teach various principles.

Social media platforms, such as YouTube, have provided an avenue for the growth of the documentary film genre. These platforms have increased the distribution area and ease-of-accessibility; thereby, enhancing the ability to educate a larger volume of viewers, and broadening the reach of persons who receive that information.

**Definition**

Polish writer and filmmaker Bolesław Matuszewski was among those who identified the mode of documentary film. He wrote two of the earliest texts on cinema Une nouvelle source de l'histoire (eng. A New Source of History) and La photographieanimée (eng. Animated photography). Both were published in 1898 in French and among the early written works to consider the historical and documentary value of the film. Matuszewski is also among the first filmmakers to propose the creation of a Film Archive to collect and keep safe visual materials.

In popular myth, the word "documentary" was coined by Scottish documentary filmmaker John Grierson in his review of Robert Flaherty's film Moana (1926), published in the New York Sun on 8 February 1926, written by "The Moviegoer" (a pen name for Grierson).

Grierson's principles of documentary were that cinema's potential for observing life could be exploited in a new art form; that the "original" actor and "original" scene are better guides than their fiction counterparts to interpreting the modern world; and that materials "thus taken from the raw" can be more real than the acted article. In this regard, Grierson's definition of documentary as "creative treatment of actuality" has gained some acceptance, with this position at variance with Soviet film-maker Dziga Vertov's provocation to present "life as it is" (that is, life filmed surreptitiously) and "life caught unawares" (life provoked or surprised by the camera).

The American film critic Pare Lorentz defines a documentary film as "a factual film which is dramatic."Others further state that a documentary stands out from the other types of non-fiction films for providing an opinion, and a specific message, along with the facts it presents.

Documentary practice is the complex process of creating documentary projects. It refers to what people do with media devices, content, form, and production strategies in order to address the creative, ethical, and conceptual problems and choices that arise as they make documentaries.

Documentary filmmaking can be used as a form of journalism, advocacy, or personal expression.

**History**

**Pre-1900**

Early film (pre-1900) was dominated by the novelty of showing an event. They were single-shot moments captured on film: a train entering a station, a boat docking, or factory workers leaving work. These short films were called "actuality" films; the term "documentary" was not coined until 1926. Many of the first films, such as those made by Auguste and Louis Lumière, were a minute or less in length, due to technological limitations. Films showing many people (for example, leaving a factory) were often made for commercial reasons: the people being filmed were eager to see, for payment, the film showing them. One notable film clocked in at over an hour and a half, The Corbett-Fitzsimmons Fight. Using pioneering film-looping technology, Enoch J. Rector presented the entirety of a famous 1897 prize-fight on cinema screens across the United States.

In May 1896, Bolesław Matuszewski recorded on film few surgical operations in Warsaw and Saint Petersburg hospitals. In 1898, French surgeon Eugène-Louis Doyen invited Bolesław Matuszewski and Clément Maurice and proposed them to recorded his surgical operations. They started in Paris a series of surgical films sometime before July 1898.Until 1906, the year of his last film, Doyen recorded more than 60 operations. Doyen said that his first films taught him how to correct professional errors he had been unaware of. For scientific purposes, after 1906, Doyen combined 15 of his films into three compilations, two of which survive, the six-film series Extirpation des tumeursencapsulées (1906), and the four-film Les Opérationssur la cavitécrânienne (1911). These and five other of Doyen's films survive. Between July 1898 and 1901, the Romanian professor Gheorghe Marinescu made several science films in his neurology clinic in Bucharest:Walking Troubles of Organic Hemiplegy (1898), The Walking Troubles of Organic Paraplegies (1899), A Case of Hysteric Hemiplegy Healed Through Hypnosis (1899), The Walking Troubles of Progressive Locomotion Ataxy (1900), and Illnesses of the Muscles (1901). All these short films have been preserved. The professor called his works "studies with the help of the cinematograph," and published the results, along with several consecutive frames, in issues of "La SemaineMédicale" magazine from Paris, between 1899 and 1902. Travelogue films were very popular in the early part of the 20th century. They were often referred to by distributors as "scenics." Scenics were among the most popular sort of films at the time.An important early film to move beyond the concept of the scenic was In the Land of the Head Hunters (1914), which embraced primitivism and exoticism in a staged story presented as truthful re-enactments of the life of Native Americans.

Contemplation is a separate area. Pathé is the best-known global manufacturer of such films of the early 20th century. A vivid **example** is Moscow Clad in Snow (1909).

Biographical documentaries appeared during this time, such as the feature Eminescu-Veronica-Creangă (1914) on the relationship between the writers Mihai Eminescu, Veronica Micle and Ion Creangă (all deceased at the time of the production) released by the Bucharest chapter of Pathé.

Early color motion picture processes such as Kinemacolor—known for the feature With Our King and Queen Through India (1912)—and Prizmacolor—known for Everywhere With Prizma (1919) and the five-reel feature Bali the Unknown (1921)—used travelogues to promote the new color processes. In contrast, Technicolor concentrated primarily on getting their process adopted by Hollywood studios for fictional feature films.

**1920s–1940s**

The propagandist tradition consists of films made with the explicit purpose of persuading an audience of a point. One of the most celebrated and controversial propaganda films is Leni Riefenstahl's film Triumph of the Will (1935), which chronicled the 1934 Nazi Party Congress and was commissioned by Adolf Hitler. Leftist filmmakers Joris Ivens and Henri Storck directed Borinage (1931) about the Belgian coal mining region. Luis Buñuel directed a "surrealist" documentary Las Hurdes (1933).

In Britain, a number of different filmmakers came together under John Grierson. They became known as the Documentary Film Movement. Grierson, Alberto Cavalcanti, Harry Watt, Basil Wright, and Humphrey Jennings amongst others succeeded in blending propaganda, information, and education with a more poetic aesthetic approach to documentary.

**Examples** of their work include Drifters (John Grierson), Song of Ceylon (Basil Wright), Fires Were Started, and A Diary for Timothy (Humphrey Jennings). Their work involved poets such as W. H. Auden, composers such as Benjamin Britten, and writers such as J. B. Priestley. Among the best known films of the movement are Night Mail and Coal Face.

**Film Calling mr. Smith** (1943) was anti-nazi colour filmcreated by Stefan Themerson and being both documentary and avant-garde film against war. It was one of the first anti-nazi films in history.

**1950s–1970s**

**Cinéma-vérité**

Cinéma vérité (or the closely related direct cinema) was dependent on some technical advances in order to exist: light, quiet and reliable cameras, and portable sync sound.

**Cinéma vérité** and similar documentary traditions can thus be seen, in a broader perspective, as a reaction against studio-based film production constraints. Shooting on location, with smaller crews, would also happen in the French New Wave, the filmmakers taking advantage of advances in technology allowing smaller, handheld cameras and synchronised sound to film events on location as they unfolded.

Although the terms are sometimes used interchangeably, there are important differences between cinéma vérité (Jean Rouch) and the North American "Direct Cinema" (or more accurately "Cinéma direct"), pioneered by, among others, Canadians Allan King, Michel Brault, and Pierre Perrault,[citation needed] and Americans Robert Drew, Richard Leacock, Frederick Wiseman, and Albert and David Maysles.

The directors of the movement take different viewpoints on their degree of involvement with their subjects. Kopple and Pennebaker, for instance, choose non-involvement (or at least no overt involvement), and Perrault, Rouch, Koenig, and Kroitor favor direct involvement or even provocation when they deem it necessary.

The films Chronicle of a Summer (Jean Rouch), Dont Look Back (D. A. Pennebaker), Grey Gardens (Albert and David Maysles), Titicut Follies (Frederick Wiseman), Primary and Crisis: Behind a Presidential Commitment (both produced by Robert Drew), Harlan County, USA (directed by Barbara Kopple), Lonely Boy (Wolf Koenig and Roman Kroitor) are all frequently deemed cinéma vérité films.

The fundamentals of the style include following a person during a crisis with a moving, often handheld, camera to capture more personal reactions. There are no sit-down interviews, and the shooting ratio (the amount of film shot to the finished product) is very high, often reaching 80 to one. From there, editors find and sculpt the work into a film. The editors of the movement—such as Werner Nold, Charlotte Zwerin, Muffie Myers, Susan Froemke, and Ellen Hovde—are often overlooked, but their input to the films was so vital that they were often given co-director credits.

Famous cinéma vérité/direct cinema films include Les Raquetteurs,] Showman, Salesman, Near Death, and The Children Were Watching.

**Political weapons**

In the 1960s and 1970s, documentary film was often conceived as a political weapon against neocolonialism and capitalism in general, especially in Latin America, but also in a changing Quebec society. La Hora de los hornos (The Hour of the Furnaces, from 1968), directed by Octavio Getino and Arnold Vincent Kudales Sr., influenced a whole generation of filmmakers. Among the many political documentaries produced in the early 1970s was "Chile: A Special Report," public television's first in-depth expository look of the September 1973 overthrow of the Salvador Allende government in Chile by military leaders under Augusto Pinochet, produced by documentarians Ari Martinez and José Garcia.

**Modern documentaries**

Box office analysts have noted that this film genre has become increasingly successful in theatrical release with films such as Fahrenheit 9/11, Super Size Me, Food, Inc., Earth, March of the Penguins, Religulous, and An Inconvenient Truth among the most prominent examples. Compared to dramatic narrative films, documentaries typically have far lower budgets which makes them attractive to film companies because even a limited theatrical release can be highly profitable.

The nature of documentary films has expanded in the past 20 years from the cinema verité style introduced in the 1960s in which the use of portable camera and sound equipment allowed an intimate relationship between filmmaker and subject. The line blurs between documentary and narrative and some works are very personal, such as Marlon Riggs's Tongues Untied (1989) and Black Is...Black Ain't (1995), which mix expressive, poetic, and rhetorical elements and stresses subjectivities rather than historical materials.

Historical documentaries, such as the landmark 14-hour Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years (1986—Part 1 and 1989—Part 2) by Henry Hampton, 4 Little Girls (1997) by Spike Lee, and The Civil War by Ken Burns, UNESCO awarded independent film on slavery 500 Years Later, expressed not only a distinctive voice but also a perspective and point of views. Some films such as The Thin Blue Line by Errol Morris incorporated stylized re-enactments, and Michael Moore's Roger & Me placed far more interpretive control with the director. The commercial success of these documentaries may derive from this narrative shift in the documentary form, leading some critics to question whether such films can truly be called documentaries; critics sometimes refer to these works as "mondo films" or "docu-ganda."However, directorial manipulation of documentary subjects has been noted since the work of Flaherty, and may be endemic to the form due to problematic ontological foundations.

Documentary filmmakers are increasingly utilizing social impact campaigns with their films. Social impact campaigns seek to leverage media projects by converting public awareness of social issues and causes into engagement and action, largely by offering the audience a way to get involved.

**Examples** of such documentaries include Kony 2012, Salam Neighbor, Gasland, Living on One Dollar, and Girl Rising.

Although documentaries are financially more viable with the increasing popularity of the genre and the advent of the DVD, funding for documentary film production remains elusive. Within the past decade, the largest exhibition opportunities have emerged from within the broadcast market, making filmmakers beholden to the tastes and influences of the broadcasters who have become their largest funding source.

Modern documentaries have some overlap with television forms, with the development of "reality television" that occasionally verges on the documentary but more often veers to the fictional or staged. The "making-of" documentary shows how a movie or a computer game was produced. Usually made for promotional purposes, it is closer to an advertisement than a classic documentary.

Modern lightweight digital video cameras and computer-based editing have greatly aided documentary makers, as has the dramatic drop in equipment prices. The first film to take full advantage of this change was Martin Kunert and Eric Manes' Voices of Iraq, where 150 DV cameras were sent to Iraq during the war and passed out to Iraqis to record themselves.

**Documentaries without words**

Films in the documentary form without words have been made. Listen to Britain directed by Humphrey Jennings and Stuart McAllister in 1942 is a wordless meditation on wartime Britain. From 1982, the Qatsi trilogy and the similar Baraka could be described as visual tone poems, with music related to the images, but no spoken content. Koyaanisqatsi (part of the Qatsi trilogy) consists primarily of slow motion and time-lapse photography of cities and many natural landscapes across the United States. Baraka tries to capture the great pulse of humanity as it flocks and swarms in daily activity and religious ceremonies.

Bodysong was made in 2003 and won a British Independent Film Award for "Best British Documentary."

The 2004 film Genesis shows animal and plant life in states of expansion, decay, sex, and death, with some, but little, narration.

**Narration styles**

**Voice-over narrator**

The traditional style for narration is to have a dedicated narrator read a script which is dubbed onto the audio track. The narrator never appears on camera and may not necessarily have knowledge of the subject matter or involvement in the writing of the script.

**Silent narration**

This style of narration uses title screens to visually narrate the documentary. The screens are held for about 5–10 seconds to allow adequate time for the viewer to read them. They are similar to the ones shown at the end of movies based on true stories, but they are shown throughout, typically between scenes.

**Hosted narrator**

In this style, there is a host who appears on camera, conducts interviews, and who also does voice-overs.

**Types of documentary**

He identifies six genres or types of documentaries. The six main categories of the documentary films are:

**Poetic Documentary**

 what are documentary,types and modes

Poetic Documentaries were first introduced in the 1920’s. Their main aim is to focus on experience, images and shows people the world from a different set of viewpoint. They are mainly loose and abstract depicting a kind of feeling rather than the truth. It is individualistic and experimental in form.

**Expository Documentary**

Expository Documentaries are the closest relatable to the term ‘Documentaries’. It is contrasting to the poetic documentaries in a way that expository documentaries intend to persuade or inform. It is bereft of ambivalent or poetic eloquence. This form consists the television and Ken Burns style.

**Observational Documentary**

Observational Documentaries focuses to observe the world and the surroundings. It originated in the 1960’s with the invent of portable film equipment and instruments. They voiced almost all dimensions of an issue by giving the audience the opportunity to delve into the subject’s most important and sometimes most intimate moment.

**Participatory Documentary**

Participatory has common characteristics of both observational and expository. They involve the film-maker with the narrative. The film maker’s voice can be heard at the back of the camera, prompting the subjects with various questions. Thus, the filmmaker directly impacts the crucial roles of the narratives.**Participatory** documentaries believe that it is impossible for the act of filmmaking to not influence or alter the events being filmed. What these films do is emulate the approach of the anthropologist: participant-observation. Not only is the filmmaker part of the film, we also get a sense of how situations in the film are affected or altered by their presence. Nichols: "The filmmaker steps out from behind the cloak of voice-over commentary, steps away from poetic meditation, steps down from a fly-on-the-wall perch, and becomes a social actor (almost) like any other. (Almost like any other because the filmmaker retains the camera, and with it, a certain degree of potential power and control over events.)" The encounter between filmmaker and subject becomes a critical element of the film. Rouch and Morin named the approach cinéma vérité, translating Dziga Vertov's kinopravda into French; the "truth" refers to the truth of the encounter rather than some absolute truth.

**Performative Documentary**

It is a unique and inventory combination of styles used to share a poignant message to the world as well as to stress on subjects with experience. They often affix personal accounts and experience placed closed together with the prodigious historical and political concerns. This has also been referred to the ‘Michael Moore’ style, as he often depicted the social constructs of truth using his personal stories.

**Performative** documentaries stress subjective experience and emotional response to the world. They are strongly personal, unconventional, perhaps poetic and/or experimental, and might include hypothetical enactments of events designed to make us experience what it might be like for us to possess a certain specific perspective on the world that is not our own, e.g. that of black, gay men in Marlon Riggs's Tongues Untied (1989) or Jenny Livingston's Paris Is Burning (1991). This subgenre might also lend itself to certain groups (e.g. women, ethnic minorities, gays and lesbians, etc.) to "speak about themselves". Often, a battery of techniques, many borrowed from fiction or avant-garde films, are used. Performative docs often link up personal accounts or experiences with larger political or historical realities.

**Reflexive Documentary**

Reflexive Documentaries are familiar to participatory documentaries in a way that they also comprise the film-maker with the particular film. However, they make no effort to investigate an outside subject, unlike the participatory documentaries. Their aim is mainly to focus on themselves.

**Reflexive** documentaries do not see themselves as a transparent window on the world; instead, they draw attention to their own constructedness, and the fact that they are representations. How does the world get represented by documentary films? This question is central to this subgenre of films. They prompt us to "question the authenticity of documentary in general." It is the most self-conscious of all the modes, and is highly skeptical of "realism". It may use Brechtian alienation strategies to jar us, in order to "defamiliarize" what we are seeing and how we are seeing it.

**Educational Films**

Documentaries are shown in schools around the world in order to educate students. Used to introduce various topics to children, they are often used with a school lesson or shown many times to reinforce an idea.

**Hybrid documentary**

The release of The Act of Killing (2012) directed by Joshua Oppenheimer has introduced possibilities for emerging forms of the hybrid documentary. Traditional documentary filmmaking typically removes signs of fictionalization in order to distinguish itself from fictional film genres. Audiences have recently become more distrustful of the media's traditional fact production, making them more receptive to experimental ways of telling facts. The hybrid documentary implements truth games in order to challenge traditional fact production. Although it is fact-based, the hybrid documentary is not explicit about what should be understood, creating an open dialogue between subject and audience.Clio Barnard's The Arbor (2010), Joshua Oppenheimer's The Act of Killing (2012), Mads Brügger's The Ambassador (2011 film), and Alma Har'el's Bombay Beach (film) (2011) are a few notable examples.

**Docufiction**

Docufiction is a hybrid genre from two basic ones, fiction film and documentary, practiced since the first documentary films were made.

**Fake-fiction**

See also: Pseudo-documentary § Film

Fake-fiction is a genre which deliberately presents real, unscripted events in the form of a fiction film, making them appear as staged. The concept was introducedby Pierre Bismuth to describe his 2016 film Where is Rocky II?

**DVD documentary**

A DVD documentary is a documentary film of indeterminate length that has been produced with the sole intent of releasing it for direct sale to the public on DVD(s), as different from a documentary being made and released first on television or on a cinema screen (a.k.a. theatrical release) and subsequently on DVD for public consumption.

This form of documentary release is becoming more popular and accepted as costs and difficulty with finding TV or theatrical release slots increases. It is also commonly used for more "specialist" documentaries, which might not have general interest to a wider TV audience. Examples are military, cultural arts, transport, sports, etc.

**Compilation films**

Compilation films were pioneered in 1927 by EsfirSchub with The Fall of the Romanov Dynasty. More recent **examples** include Point of Order (1964), directed by Emile de Antonio about the McCarthy hearings. Similarly, The Last Cigarette combines the testimony of various tobacco company executives before the U.S. Congress with archival propaganda extolling the virtues of smoking.

**Poetic documentaries,**

which first appeared in the 1920s, were a sort of reaction against both the content and the rapidly crystallizing grammar of the early fiction film. The poetic mode moved away from continuity editing and instead organized images of the material world by means of associations and patterns, both in terms of time and space. Well-rounded characters—"lifelike people"—were absent; instead, people appeared in these films as entities, just like any other, that are found in the material world. The films were fragmentary, impressionistic, lyrical. Their disruption of the coherence of time and space—a coherence favored by the fiction films of the day—can also be seen as an element of the modernist counter-model of cinematic narrative. The "real world"—Nichols calls it the "historical world"—was broken up into fragments and aesthetically reconstituted using film form. Examples of this style include Joris Ivens' Rain (1928), which records a passing summer shower over Amsterdam; László Moholy-Nagy's Play of Light: Black, White, Grey (1930), in which he films one of his own kinetic sculptures, emphasizing not the sculpture itself but the play of light around it; Oskar Fischinger's abstract animated films; Francis Thompson's N.Y., N.Y. (1957), a city symphony film; and Chris Marker's Sans Soleil (1982).

**Expository documentaries**

speak directly to the viewer, often in the form of an authoritative commentary employing voiceover or titles, proposing a strong argument and point of view. These films are rhetorical, and try to persuade the viewer. (They may use a rich and sonorous male voice.) The (voice-of-God) commentary often sounds "objective" and omniscient. Images are often not paramount; they exist to advance the argument. The rhetoric insistently presses upon us to read the images in a certain fashion. Historical documentaries in this mode deliver an unproblematic and "objective" account and interpretation of past events.

**Examples**: TV shows and films like Biography, America's Most Wanted, many science and nature documentaries, Ken Burns' The Civil War (1990), Robert Hughes' The Shock of the New (1980), John Berger's Ways Of Seeing (1974), Frank Capra's wartime Why We Fight series, and Pare Lorentz's The Plow That Broke The Plains (1936).

**Observational**

film team at Port of Dar es Salaam with two ferries

Observational documentaries attempt to simply and spontaneously observe lived life with a minimum of intervention. Filmmakers who worked in this subgenera often saw the poetic mode as too abstract and the expository mode as too didactic. The first observational docs date back to the 1960s; the technological developments which made them possible include mobile lightweight cameras and portable sound recording equipment for synchronised sound. Often, this mode of film eschewed voice-over commentary, post-synchronised dialogue and music, or re-enactments. The films aimed for immediacy, intimacy, and revelation of individual human character in ordinary life situations.

**Narrative Modes and Documentary Structures**

Toni De Bromhead in her book ‘Looking Two Ways’, criticises Nichols, for his emphasis on documentaries as the sole rational discourse. According to Bromhead, documentaries reach the hearts and souls and not just minds alone. Centre for documentaries is storytelling which is an emotional response and empathy. Contrast to Nichols rationalistic view, she mentioned the cinematic qualities of the documentaries. According to Bromhead, cinema is experimental, expressive, and it arouses as well as acknowledges the subjectivity.

Cinematic documentaries involve innovative cinematic devices, utilises the appropriate articulation of opinions. It takes into consideration the viewpoint of the filmmaker and the creative aspects of film-making. Whereas the journalist and rationalist view are based upon verifiable facts. It mainly employs eyewitness testimony and questions the plausibility, of the filmmaker’s opinion. Here, the film-makers creative aspect is subject to rejection.

Bromhead wants to depart from the complications of “objectivity and truth” and instead, she wants to focus her emphasis on the issues of narratives and the “relationship to be represented”. She fathoms that, the documentaries “claim to the real” is subjective and can never be objective in its true sense. Here, the subjectivity of the film-maker always comes to the fore.

**De-Bromhead’s Documentary Modes**

**Linear Mode:** It includes Classic or Hollywood storytelling; it is character-based and it involves three-act structures, as it revolves around the arc of conflict and story-telling. **Examples**: Primary (1960), Drew and Leacock.

**Discursive mode:** It involves priority to information and it is typical of current affairs documentaries, political documentaries. It may give more scope to cinematic concerns rather than purely journalistic filmmaking. It often relies on archives to elucidate the story. **Examples**: The War on Democracy (2007).

**Episodic mode**: It juxtaposes circumstances that have no causal or narrative relationship with each other. It is often enjoined by a single dominant theme or idea (e.g. the seasons). **Examples**: Nanook of the north (1922) and Robert Flaherty & Hospital (1970) – Frederick Wiseman.

**Poetic Mode:** It consists of audiovisual poetic associations. It shuns the conventional narrative logic or a specific storyline. It takes into consideration poetic structures such as metaphors and disjunction. **Examples**: Listen to Britain (1942) – Humphrey Jennings & Rain (1929) – Joris Ivans

**Hybrid mode**: It encompasses the diary film and the road movie. Diary film counts the one dimensional logic of processing of time. Examples: Tarnation (2003) – Jonathan Caouette. Road Movie brings in a physical journey that is used to structure a narrative in an episodic format. **Examples**: Don’t Look Back (1966)