

Film Studies 373R- History of Documentary Film

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Office hours: T,TH 12:30-1:30pm, Wednesday 1:20-2:20pm. I am always happy to set up a time to meet outside of my office hours.

Occasionally, I will be pulled away during office hours for a meeting. If you plan on attending office hours, please let me know in advance so I can be sure to be present.

Lecture: MW 2:30pm-4:10pm 215A Pierce Hall

Screening: Monday 4:20pm-6:20pm 215A Pierce Hall

Course Objectives:

This course is designed as a historical survey of documentary/non-fiction film. Due to obvious time constraints, we cannot cover every trend, director, and documentary in film history. Instead, we will focus on some of the major developments in documentary practice from the Anglo-American tradition, as well as a variety of other traditions, including films from the Soviet Union, Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain. In addition, we will consider several theoretical problems, including the idea of objectivity in documentary, the ethics of documentary, and the mixing of fiction and non-fiction modes in certain films.

Learning Outcomes

- Identify foundational/influential trends and concepts in documentary film
- Analyze nonfiction cinema's structure and style, as well as the rhetorical strategies embedded in these formal elements
- Describe the salient historical influences on documentary films, including technological, regulatory, aesthetic, and financial factors
- Identify the ways in which documentary films exist within a global framework and the various cultural, political, economic, and aesthetic influences that exert influence in the production of a documentary

Required Texts:

Barnouw, Erik. *Documentary: A History of the Non-Fiction Film*, Second Revised Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.)

Additional readings are available on Canvas.

Course Requirements/Grade Breakdown:

Attendance, Informed Participation in Discussions	10%
Quizzes	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
8-10 pg. Paper	30%
Final Exam	20%

Screening Reports

10%

Weekly Assignments: You will take a quiz at the beginning of many, if not most, classes. The quizzes focus on the main ideas of the reading for that day or on the film screening to be discussed that day. You are allowed to drop the two lowest quiz scores.

You will also have weekly screening reports that are assigned at the end of lecture on Monday and are due at the beginning of class on Wednesday. Unless otherwise instructed, these are one page, typed, double-spaced responses to the question(s) posed at the end of class on Monday. An absence from class on Monday is not an adequate excuse for not having your screening report on Wednesday.

Midterm and Final Exam: The midterm and final exams are designed to test your knowledge of material covered in readings, lectures, and discussion, as well as your familiarity with the films and extended clips we view in class. The exams will consist of multiple-choice questions, identifications/short answers, and at least one essay question. You must take the final exam at the assigned time.

Paper: You will write an 8-10 page essay exploring the historical context of an individual documentary film. You will receive a detailed description of the assignment during the semester.

Attendance and Participation: Diligent attendance is absolutely required, both in lecture and for the screenings. I will take lecture attendance every day, and more than three absences will result in a letter grade reduction in your final grade. These three allowed absences are for medical and family emergencies. You do not get three “free” absences in addition to emergency circumstances. Consistent tardiness is not tolerated. Three late arrivals to class constitutes one full absence. If you are more than ten minutes late to class, you will be marked absent.

Simply being present in class is not sufficient to receive an excellent participation and attendance grade. In addition to being present, you must also make informed, meaningful, and consistent contributions to class discussion. Watching and discussing films are group activities and your conscientious participation in both activities will be factored into your final grade.

Readings: You should complete the readings prior to each lecture. We will not always go over this material in lecture or discussion, but you should still read carefully and take notes. Everything in the readings is fair game for the exams, and you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss this material every day. Also, please bring readings to class so that you may reference them in discussion.

Classroom Policies: Please do not use laptops, cell phones, iPads, beepers, etc. in lecture or during the class screenings. Please do not bring in food during the class screenings. There is no talking allowed during our screenings, and all laptops and

cell phones must be off. Students enrolled in this class deserve the best screenings possible, so please be respectful.

Late Assignments: All assignments must be turned in when specified. All exams must be taken only at the time offered. There are no opportunities for makeup exams or alternative exam times. There will be no extra credit assignments. Do not send me assignments as attachments via email. If you are not present when an assignment is due, you are still required to hand in the assignment before class begins. Feel free to slip it under my door or put it in my mailbox.

E-mail: I will occasionally send out email announcements or lecture supplements via email. Plan on checking your emory.edu email account frequently during the semester.

Academic Accommodations:

Access, Disability Services and Resources (ADSR) works with students who have disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, students must contact ADSR and complete the registration process. Faculty may not provide disability accommodations until an accommodation letter has been processed; accommodations are not retroactive. Students registered with ADSR who receive a letter outlining specific academic accommodations are strongly encouraged to coordinate a meeting time with their professor to discuss a protocol to implement the accommodations as needed throughout the semester. This meeting should occur as early in the semester as possible. Contact Access, Disability Services and Resources for more information (770) 784-4690 or adsroxford@emory.edu. Additional information is available at the ADSR website at <http://equityandinclusion.emory.edu/access/students/index.html>.

Religious Holidays:

Professors are encouraged, not required, to accommodate students' academic needs related to religious holidays. Please make every effort to negotiate your religious holiday needs within the first two weeks of the semester; waiting longer may compromise your professor's ability to extend satisfactory arrangements. If you need guidance negotiating your needs related to a religious holiday, the College Chaplain, Rev. Lyn Pace, ppace@emory.edu, Candler Hall 202, is willing and available to help. Please be aware that Rev. Pace is not tasked with excusing students from classes or writing excuses for students to take to their professors. Emory's official list of religious holidays may be found at http://www.religiouslife.emory.edu/faith_traditions/holidays.html.

Academic Misconduct:

I do not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic misconduct, which includes conferring with classmates on graded assignments or exam answers. Unless explicitly stated by the professor and the assignment, you are not to collaborate in any way with anyone on your coursework. The penalty for any

academic misconduct is a final grade of “F” for the semester. Ignorance of the rules is not an excuse. For more information on academic misconduct, see the Oxford College Student Honor code website at <http://oxford.emory.edu/academics/divisions-degrees/policies/code-of-conduct/student-honor-code/>.

**FS373: The History of Documentary Film
Course Schedule**

Week One: Introduction (8/24)

Week Two: Early Ethnographic Documentary (8/29 & 8/31)

Reading: Barnouw 1-51

Screening: *Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty, US, 1922, 79 min.)

Week Three: Documentary Structure and Rhetoric (9/7)

Note: No Class on 9/5—Labor Day

Reading: Plantinga, *Rhetoric and Representation in the Nonfiction Film*, 83-146

Week Four: Soviet Documentary (9/12 & 9/14)

Reading: Barnouw 51-81

Vertov, "The Vertov Papers"

Screening: *Man With A Movie Camera* (Dziga Vertov, USSR, 1929, 68 min.)

Week Five: Educational Documentary (9/19 & 9/21)

Reading: Barnouw 82-100

Grierson, "First Principles of Documentary"

Screening: *Granton Trawler* (Edgar Anstey, UK, 1934, 14 min.)

Night Mail (Harry Watt, UK, 1936, 28 min.)

Week Six: WWII Documentary (9/26 & 9/28)

Reading: Barnouw 144-172, 180-182

Screening: *Listen to Britain* (Humphrey Jennings, UK, 1943, 20 min.)

Battle of San Pietro (John Huston, US, 1945, 45 min.)

Night and Fog (Alain Resnais, France, 1955, 32 min.)

Week Seven: Early TV Documentary (10/3 & 10/5)

Reading: Barnouw 213-228

Baughman, "See It Now and Television's Golden Age"

Baughman, "The Strange Birth of *CBS Reports*, Revisited"

Screening: *See It Now* (Fred Friendly, CBS, US, 1954, 2 Episodes, 60 min.)

Harvest of Shame (Friendly, CBS, US, 1960, 54 min.)

Week Eight: Direct Cinema I (10/12)

NOTICE: No class on 10/10—Fall Break

Reading: Barnouw 229-253

Maysles, "Father of Direct Cinema"

Levin, "Frederick Wiseman"

Spotnitz, "Frederick Wiseman"

Screening: None

Week Nine: Direct Cinema II (10/17 & 10/19)

Reading: None
Screening: Watch on your own for 10/17: *Salesman* (Albert and David Maysles, US, 1968, 85 min.)
Screening for 10/19: *Titicut Follies* (Frederick Wiseman, US, 1967, 84 min.)

Week Ten: Midterm Review: 10/24; Midterm: 10/26

Reading: Review your notes!
MIDTERM EXAM ON 10/26

Week Eleven: Synthesis Documentary (10/31 & 11/2)

Reading: Barnouw 330-349
Kopple and Perry, "Filming in Harlan"
Screening: *Harlan County, USA* (Barbara Kopple, US, 1976, 103 min.)

Week Twelve: Investigative Documentary (11/7 & 11/9)

NOTICE: No class on 11/4
Reading: Bates, "Truth Not Guaranteed"
Plantinga, "The Philosophy of Errol Morris"
Screening: *The Thin Blue Line* (Errol Morris, US, 1988, 105 min.)

Week Thirteen: Catalyst Documentary (11/14 & 11/16)

Reading: Barnouw 253-262
Moore, "Michael and Us"
Screening: *Bowling for Columbine* (Michael Moore, US, 2002, 120 min.)

Week Fourteen: Poetic Documentary (11/21 & 11/23)

☆ ☆ Paper due at the beginning of lecture 11/21 ☆ ☆
Note: No Class on 11/23—Thanksgiving Break
Reading: Plantinga, "The Poetic Voice"
Screening: *Our Daily Bread* (Nikolaus Geyrhalter, 2005, 92 min.)

Week Fifteen: Ethnography (returns!) and Documentary Ethics (11/28 & 11/30)

Reading: MacDougall, "Prospects of the Ethnographic Film"
"Joe Berliner: Journalist Storyteller"
Screening: *Brother's Keeper* (Berlinger & Sinofsky, US, 1992, 104 min.)

Week Sixteen: Final Exam Review (12/5)

Reading: Review your notes!
Screening: None

Final Exam Tuesday, December 13th, 2pm-5pm