



Department of Communication and Culture

Film Studies (FILM) 305.10 - Lecture 01 Canadian Documentary Film

Fall 2011

Lecture Wednesday 14:00 - 15:50 Lab 01 Friday 14:00 – 16:50

Instructor:	Dr. Brian Rusted
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Office Hours:	Monday 14:00-16:00, or by appointment

Additional Information

Some films screened for this course may contain content that is sexually explicit, emotionally disturbing, or offensive. Please feel free to discuss this with the instructors if you have concerns.

Students may find the need to attend and pay for films screened off campus in order to complete some of the assignments for this course.

Course Description

The course explores the contributions of Canadian filmmakers to the development of the documentary genre. Particular emphasis will be given to the history and evolution of films produced by the National Film Board with attention to the work of directors such as Colin Low, Michael Rubbo, Alanis Obomsawin, Bonnie Klein, etc

Objectives of the Course

This course will provide students with the opportunity to explore distinctive contributions made by Canadian directors and producers to the documentary genre. Course objectives include providing students with a sense of the following:

1. The institutional character of documentary production in Canada;
2. The historical movement from government propaganda to social action;
3. The cinematic strategies that

produce realism, *cinéma vérité*, reflexivity, engagement and social change; 4. The technological developments that have contributed to Canadian documentary style.

Internet and electronic communication device information

No cell phone use during class. Laptops and pads to be used only for purposes related to the course.

Textbooks and Readings:

Leach, J. and J. Sloniowski, editors. *Candid Eyes: Canadian Documentary Film Reader*. University of Toronto Press, 2003.

Ellis, Jack and Betsy McLane. *A New History of Documentary Film*. Continuum International 2005. (This book is available online as an internet resource through the library. It has not been ordered at the Bookstore.)

Nichols, Bill. *Introduction to Documentary*. Indiana University Press, 2001. (This book is available online as an internet resource through the library. It has not been ordered at the Bookstore.)

McMaster, Cameron. *Getting Real: An Economic Profile of the Canadian Documentary Production Industry*. Toronto: Documentary Organization of Canada, 2011 (Available as an online resource here: http://docorg.ca/sites/docorg.ca/files/GettingReal4_2.pdf)

Readings on reserve in the University Library, as assigned.

Additional readings available online, as assigned.

Assignments and Evaluation

The final grade in the course will be based on the completion of **three (3)** assignments due during the term, and a registrar scheduled final exam. Each of these four assignments will be worth a total of 25% of the final grade.

Students may choose to complete **three (3)** of the following four (4) assignments as their term work for this course:

1. An in-class presentation that provides a critical introduction to a film or film(s) screened during a particular week. The presentation will take approximately 10 minutes and demonstrate fluency with relevant readings and concepts. A formal, written version of the presentation (with appropriate citation and referencing) will be submitted on the day of the presentation. Sign-up times for this option will be discussed and finalized in the first week of class. This assignment will be worth 25% of the final grade.
2. A paper on an historic response to or use of a documentary. Using archival and/or

secondary research materials, write an essay that locates a particular film in relation to (for instance), its initial distribution, or use in a particular social context. You may choose to provide some context for appreciating the critical or interpretive categories operating at the time of its production, or you may choose to provide some context about the production technology at the time, and so forth. This assignment will be worth 25% of the final grade, and will be due in class October 12.

3. A *reflexive* review of a Canadian documentary. You may choose to review a contemporary work screened locally, or used in a local non-theatrical context. Your review should be explicit about what motivated your choice of topics (audience reaction, structure of the film, technical aspects of editing, or qualities of your response, etc.) to write about, and what criteria you have used to critically evaluate the film. Your choice of film should be substantial enough to provide scope for the assignment. Viewing a documentary online or domestically on DVD is not an option. This assignment will be worth 25% of the final grade, and will be due November 16.

4. A paper on the style of a particular documentary filmmaker considered as an *auteur*. Looking at a minimum of two films by a particular film director, discuss aspects of their work that you consider distinctive. Reference should be made to the subject matter, camera work, editing, ethical tactics, and so forth. This assignment will be worth 25% of the final grade and will be due in class, December 7.

Each of the above assignments should be approximately 5-7 typed, double-spaced pages with appropriate referencing and academic style for research papers. Please ask if you are unsure.

The final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar. Prior to the end of term, class time will be allocated to discuss the form and content of the questions for the exam.

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment. Please return assignments directly to the instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: Yes

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/info. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you wish help with your writing at any stage, including drafts, you are invited to contact the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, **students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**

For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture (Revised, effective September 2008):

Letter Grade	Grading Scale	Grade Point Value (see U of C Calendar: Academic Standing)
A+	96-100	4
A	90-95.99	4
A -	85-89.99	3.7
B+	80-84.99	3.3
B	75-79.99	3
B-	70-74.99	2.7
C+	65-69.99	2.3
C	60-64.99	2
C-	55-59.99	1.7
D+	53-54.99	1.3
D	50-52.99	1
F	0-49	0

In this course, assignments will be assessed with letter grades that correspond to the University's 4-point scale. In the case of assignments that are scored numerically, you will receive a letter grade based on converting the score of that particular assignment using the grading system provided above. You may receive a grade that falls between two letter grades (for example a 3.5 is the mathematical mid-point between a B+ or 3.3 and an

A- or 3.7). In such a case, the instructor reserves the right to scale the grade upwards (for example from a B+) to the next nearest letter grade (an A-).

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. For details see www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/info. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link:
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see
<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see the Department of Communication and Culture research ethics site: <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics>, or the University of Calgary Research Ethics site:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb>

Additional Information

Reserve readings will be drawn from the following books placed on reserve for this course in the Library (books with "*" are also available electronically):

Aitken, Ian. *Film and Reform: John Grierson and the Documentary Film Movement*. Routledge, 1990.

*Aitken, Ian. *The Documentary Film Movement: An Anthology*. Edinburgh University Press, 1998. (Available through www.questia.com)

Evans, Gary. *In the National Interest: A Chronicle of the National Film Board of Canada, 1949-1989*. U of T Press, 1991.

Graham, G. *Canadian Film Technology, 1896-1986*. University of Delaware Press, 1989.

Grant, Barry and Jeanette Sloniowski, eds. *Documenting the Documentary: Close Readings of Documentary Film and Video*. Scholarly Book Services, 2002.

Jones, D.B. *Movies and Memoranda: An Interpretive History of the National Film Board of Canada*. CFI 1981.

Jones, D.B. *The Best Butler in the Business: Tom Daly of the National Film Board of Canada*. U of T Press, 1996.

*Khouri, Malek and Darrell Varga, eds. *Working on Screen: Representations of the Working Class in Canadian Cinema*. University of Toronto Press, 2006.

Lewis, Randolph. *Alanis Obomsawin: the vision of a Native filmmaker*. U of Nebraska Press, 2006.

Low, B. *NFB Kids: Portrayal of Children by the National Film Board of Canada, 1939-1989*. Wilfred Laurier, 2002.

Renov, Michael. *Theorizing Documentary*. Routledge, 1993.

*Steven, Peter. *Brink of Reality: New Canadian Documentary Film and Video*. Between the Lines Press, 1993.

Waugh, Thomas. *The Right to Play Oneself: Looking back on Documentary Film*. University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

Waugh, Thomas. "Show us life!" *Toward a History and Aesthetics of the Committed Documentary*. Scarecrow 1984.

Winston, Brian (1995). *Claiming the Real: The Griersonian Documentary*. BFI.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

The course will be organized by the weekly topics listed below. Weekly readings from the text, library reserve or online are indicated. Films to be screened during the Friday lab are also indicated.

Week 1, Sept 14 Emergence of Documentary Genre

- Leach and Sloniowski, Introduction
- Ellis and McLane chapter 1
- Rothman, Chapter 1 in Grant and Sloniowski 2002

Nanook of the North (Flaherty) 66 min 1922 xmv5736001

Nanook Revisited (Massot) 55 min 1990 xmv5751401

Week 2, Sept 21 Grierson

- Jones, chapters 1 and 2
- Ellis and McLane chapter 8
- Guynn, chapter 2 in Grant and Sloniowski
- Aitken, 1990, chapter 5, "Public Relations, propaganda and documentary film 1900-1939"

Night Mail (Grierson) 24 min 1936 xmp0120201

Song of Ceylon (Grierson) 40 min 1943 xmp0120301

Grierson (Blais) 58 min 1973 xmv5621301

Look to the North 20 min 1940? xmp0169001

Week 3, Sept 28 Unit B

-Hancox, Richard in Leach and Sloniowski

- Evans 1991, chaps 3 and 4, (The Golden Years Pts 1 and 2)

With Canadians in Korea 16 min 1950? Xmp0169801

Caribou Hunters (Greenlees/Daly) 18 min 1950 XMP0154601

Corral (Low/Daly) 12 min 1954 xmp0174001

Paul Tomkowicz, Street Railway Switchman 10 min, 1954 XMP0103001

City of Gold (Daley) 22 min 1957 xmp0144901

Cattle Ranch (Cote) 21 min 1961 xmp0356301

Along Newfoundland's Shores 8 min 1962 xmp0149201

Week 4, Oct 5 Technology

- Barry Grant in Leach and Sloniowski

- Seth Feldman in Leach and Sloniowski

- Evans, 1991, chapter 13 "Not with a bang but a whimper"

The Days Before Christmas (Jackson, Koenig, Macartney-Filgate) 29 min, 1958

http://www.nfb.ca/film/The_Days_Before_Christmas/

Lonely Boy (Koenig/Kroitor) 27 min 1962 xmv6091101

Candid Eye 110 min, 1993 XMV5952001, starting at minute 38 with Fox and

Leiterman's One More River (Fox and Leiterman) 52 min, 1963.

Week 5, Oct 12 Observational cinema

- Nichols, 2001, chapter 8 "How can we write effectively about documentary?"

- Ellis and McLane, chapter 14

Warrendale (King) 100 min 1967 xmp014151

Week 6, Oct 19 Visual Anthropology

- Ruby, Jay (1991). "Speaking For, Speaking About, Speaking With, or Speaking Alongside- An Anthropological and Documentary Dilemma" *Visual Anthropology Review* Fall 1991 Volume 7 Number 2. (downloaded from: <http://astro.temple.edu/~ruby/ruby/speaking.html>).
- Burnett, Ron (1995). "The Eyes Don't Have It." *Critical Approaches to Media*. (<http://rburnett.ecuad.ca/the-eyes-dont-have-it/>)

Circle of the Sun 29 min 1961 xmv5561901

Eskimo: Fight for Life (Young) 52 min 1970 xmv5973701

Yesterday – Today: Netsilik Eskimo (Blais/Balikci) 58 min 1971 xmv6167801

Week 7, Oct 26 Challenge for Change

- Jones, Chapter 10, Movies and Memoranda
- Evans, 1991, Chapter 8 "In Search of a Mission"

Hutterites (Low) 28 min 1963 xmp0023601

Cree Hunters of Mistassini (Low/Richardson) 59 min 1974 XMV6026701 or xmp004581 whichever is 59 min.

VTR Rosedale (Chatwin) 31 min 1974 xmv5685801

Week 8, Nov 2 Reflexivity

- Jeanette Sloniowski in Leach and Sloniowski
- Joan Nicks in Grant and Sloniowski 1998
- Jones 1996, chapter 4 Thermometer of Truth

Waiting for Fidel (Rubbo) 58 min 1974 xmp0364401

Daisy: The Story of a Facelift (Rubbo) 1983 RD118 .D35 1983

Week 9, Nov 9 Studio D

- Joan Nicks in Leach and Sloniowski
- DiCaprio, Lisa. Not a Love Story: The Film and the Debates. *Jump Cut* 30, 1985 (<http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC30folder/NotLoveStory.html>).

Not A Love Story (Klein) 68 min 1981 xmp0301661

Kathleen Shannon on film, feminism and other dreams (Rogers) 50 min 1997 PN1998.3
.S53 K38 1997

Week 10, Nov 16 New Documentary

- Stevens, chapter 6 interview with Diamond
- Lord, chapter 8 in Khouri and Varga
- Minh-ha in Renov chapter 5 "Totalizing Quest for Meaning"

The Lull Before the Storm (Diamond) 100 min 1990 HQ1459 .B7 L85 1990 V.1

Week 11, Nov 23 The Committed Documentary

- Bruce in Leach and Sloniowski
- Chuck Kleinhans, Chapter 17 in Waugh
- Waugh (2011), chapter 7
- Nichols, 2001 chapter 7 "How have documentaries addressed social and political issues?"

Forbidden Love: Unashamed Stories of Lesbian Love (Weissman and Fernie) 85 min,
1992 XMV5506901

Case Study: Cambodia and East Timor (Wintonik and Achbar) 29 min 1994
XMV5986801

Week 12, Nov 30 Indigenous Documentary

- Zuzana Pick in Leach and Sloniowski
- Steven, chapter 6, interview with Obomsawin
- Stewart, Michelle. The Indian Film Crews of Challenge for Change: Representation and the State. *Canadian Journal of Film Studies*, 16:49-81, 2007.

Ballad of Crowfoot 10 min 1968 xmp0002501

Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance (Koenig/Obomsawin) 120 min 1993 xmv6282701

Week 13, Dec 7 New Technology and Distribution

- Graham, chapter 11 "Television and the Quest for Mobility"
- Burnett, Ron "Video Space/Video Time: The Electronic Image and Portable Video (downloaded here: <http://www.eciad.ca/~rburnett/videospace.html>)
- Chapter 7 in *Getting Real 4*
- Diamond, Sara. "Quintessence One Step Forward: An Embedded History of Digital and

Interactive Documentary.” *Horizon* 09, 2003.

(<http://www.horizonzero.ca/flashsite/issue9/issue9.html?lang=en§ion=cover9>)

Scared Sacred (Ripper) 105 mins 2004 XDV0634 01