

**Santa Barbara City College
Film Studies Department**



FS121 – Documentary Film (3.0 Units): Section 35574 > Fall 2010

Instructor: Nico Maestu

Room: A161

Day/Time: Tues. & Thurs. 12:45-2:50 PM

Office: ECO1, #16

Office Hours: Tues/Thurs: 11:30-12:45 & by appointment

Class Website: <http://filmstudiesonline.com>

Film Program Website: <http://film.sbcc.edu/>

Phone: 805.965.0581 ext. 2528

Email: filmst121@sbcc.edu

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Available at the SBCC Bookstore

- Nichols, Bill. Introduction to Documentary. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001. ISBN# 0-253-21469-6.
- Grant, Barry Keith and Jeannette Sloniowski, Eds. Documenting the Documentary. Detroit: Wayne State University, 1998. ISBN#0-8143-2639-0.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to the history and theory of documentary film. Traces the changing conceptions of “reality” by various international filmmakers and writers. Through the stylistic study of classical and less conventional films, the aim is to problematize notions of objectivity, truth, and knowledge and to place the films within a historical, cultural, and political context. Lectures, discussions, and readings will be supplemented by the screening and critical analysis of representative films.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Analyze a documentary film or films in relation to periods, styles, genres, and movements using film terminology.
- Differentiate documentary filmmakers within film history from the 1890s to the present.
- Apply stylistic film analyses to historical periods of documentary film history.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Midterm and Final: There will be a midterm and a final during this semester length course. These exams will cover information from the lectures, films, and readings. The majority of the information you will need to know for these exams is in the class textbook and will be covered during lecture. It is thus crucial for you to

complete the assigned readings and attend all class sessions so as to be successful in the class. There will be short essay questions in each of the exams. You will have two hours to complete each exam. The Midterm will cover material from week 1 to 7 and the Final from week 8 to 15.

Make-ups: There will not be any make-ups for the exams. You must come to class the day of the exam or you will miss that particular exam. Check the Final Exam schedule on the www.sbcc.edu to know the exact day and time of the final. There will not be any make-up exams.

Paper: You will need to write a term paper (7-9 pgs., approximately 2,300 words) for this class. You will need to email (filmst121@sbcc.edu): 1) a brief paragraph describing your topic; 2) a description of your research; and, 3) a working thesis statement and a brief outline of your paper prior to the paper due dates, as outlined in the schedule. The paper topic will be distributed well in advance of the paper's due date. Late papers will also not be accepted. (no attachments)

Papers are evaluated in terms of their responsiveness to the assignment and to the material presented in class and in the readings, the logical coherence of their arguments, their quality of organization, their rhetorical sophistication, as well as their adherence to grammatical conventions. All papers should reference specific readings assigned for the class (MLA format). Outside research is highly recommended; you can research books and articles in the Library.

Weekly Writing: Every week you will need to answer and reflect on a series of questions related to the film screened and to the week's lesson – the questions will be given in class and are also available on the class website (<http://filmstudiesonline.com>). These are informal writing assignments that should be typed, single spaced, and approximately 500 words long in total per week; these should be emailed to filmst121@sbcc.edu. You should use these for discussions during class. They are like journal entries in which you analyze the films screened, examine interesting scenes, techniques, and themes, note the flow of the narrative, and relate readings and topics covered during lectures to the films. You will receive a maximum of 10 points per response, for a total of 150 points. There are no make-ups for these. Be sure to check for grammar and spelling before turning in your writing.

You will need to email (filmst121@sbcc.edu) these weekly writings on their due dates by the beginning of class – (no attachments)

Email format for Weekly writings: You will need to email (filmst121@sbcc.edu) these weekly writings on their due dates. When sending an email, the subject line of the email should read:

Subject: First Name Last Name, 35574, Unit #

(35574 is your CRN number for the class) > If you do not format your emails correctly, the email will be resent to you.

Extra Credit: There will be optional extra credit assignments for this course throughout the semester beginning after the midterm. These will be announced in class with specific due dates. For each of these assignments you can receive a maximum of 10 extra points of credit for your overall grade in the class.

Readings: All readings must be completed by their assigned dates so as to be prepared to discuss the day's topics and to make thoughtful contributions to discussions. The readings cover many films and filmmakers; in order to discern which are crucial to the class and to the exams, it is important for you to take notes during lectures, film screenings, and discussions.

Films: We will be watching an eclectic selection of films this semester. Some of the films are available at

video stores but many are not, so it is critical to attend all class sessions and screenings. Some of the films will also be available at the Learning Resource Center.

Notes During Film Screenings: Although you may feel like you are in a movie theater when the lights are dimmed and the film begins to play, remember that this is a class, so it is important to enjoy the film but also, and most importantly, to take notes during the film screenings. You should write down information about the films' styles, characters, themes, narratives, and any questions you may have. These will be useful during discussions and for your exercises.

Participation: Students are expected to attend all class sessions. Part of this class is based on in-class discussions of films screened and of readings assigned. In order for you and your peers to benefit the most from this class, all students must participate in class discussions.

Attendance and Participation Policy: Attendance and participation at all classes is mandatory and students are responsible for all lecture material. Some of the material covered in lectures may not be in the books. Also, some of the films screened in class are unavailable or difficult to find in many video stores. Be aware that you will receive a grade for Participation. **If you miss 3 class sessions or more and so do not participate in the class discussions, you will lose all 50 points for Participation.**

Plagiarism Statement: Plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common knowledge) material without acknowledging the source. Types of plagiarism are: deliberately submitting someone else's work (including copying directly from a source without documentation, having someone else write a paper, cutting and pasting from the internet), and carelessly or inadequately citing. A student who plagiarizes at minimum will fail the assignment; beyond that plagiarized papers and exams will result in a failure for the course. You are not obligated to cite any sources for your film exercises; for your paper, you will need to use the MLA or Chicago format.

Attention Regarding Plagiarism: Be aware that each semester, students are caught plagiarizing > usually by copying full sentences and/or paragraphs from websites and not citing them, by submitting a paper purchased online, and/or by submitting someone else's work (either in the class or in a past class). In ALL cases the student caught fails the assignment, and may fail the class, as well as be placed on file in the Dean of Discipline's Office. I strongly discourage you from plagiarizing – you will regret it!

GRADES

Breakdown		Grade Scale / Points	
Weekly writing/quizzes:	150 points	A	450-500
Midterm:	100 points	B	400-449
Final:	100 points	C	350-399
Term Paper:	100 points	D	300-349
Participation:	50 points	F	0-299
Total:	<hr/> 500 points		

Throughout the semester, there will be opportunities to add points to your overall grade by completing extra credit assignments.

CLASS POLICIES

Eating and drinking: Although we will be watching projected films on a screen and the experience may appear to be similar to that in a film theater, realize that this is a classroom. It is thus important that you do not bring food or drinks to class (a water bottle is acceptable).

Trash: Do not throw trash or anything else on the ground in the class. It is unacceptable in a film theater, and it is absolutely unacceptable in the classroom. If you have dropped anything during class, please look around before you leave and pick up your belongings. If you need to throw something away, there are plenty of trashcans outside.

Phones: As a courtesy to the rest of the students in this class and to me, the instructor, please turn off your phones during class. It is very disruptive during lectures, discussions, and screenings.

Behavior: Everyone's cooperation is necessary for the semester to run smoothly and for everyone to benefit fully from this class. Be courteous to your fellow classmates and to the instructor. If you have questions or comment, please do not hesitate to raise your hand and express yourself in a respectful manner.

DSPS: SBCC students with disabilities who are requesting accommodations for classes, college activities or tests should use the following SBCC procedure. (NOTE: This also includes students who are requesting to bring service animals into classes. This procedure also includes requests to bring into classes personal service attendants who are not SBCC employees.)

- [1] Contact Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS).
- [2] Submit documentation of your disability to the DSPS office.
- [3] Communicate with a DSPS counselor regarding options for services and accommodations.
- [4] Reach written accommodation agreement with the DSPS counselor and your instructor.

SBCC requests you complete this process at least ten working days before your accommodation is needed, in order to allow DSPS staff time to provide your accommodation.

Contact: DSPS office (805) 965-0581 x 2364, SS Building, room 160, dspshelp@sbcc.edu

SCHEDULE

Additional readings may be assigned throughout the semester.

Week 1

Tues, Aug. 24

Introduction to course – The beginnings of documentary

The Lumière Brothers First Films, a selection (1895-97, France)

In the Land of the Head Hunters (Edward S. Curtis, 1914, USA)

Nanook of the North (Robert Flaherty, 1922, USA)

Grass: A Nation's Battle for Life (Cooper and Schoedsack, 1925, USA)

Thurs, Aug. 26

Encounters at the End of the World (Werner Herzog, 2007, USA: 99 mns.)

Due on Thurs:

Read: Documenting the Documentary: Ch. 1.

Week 2

Tues, Aug. 31

European and Soviet Experimentation in the 1920s*clips from* Rain (Joris Ivens, 1929, Netherlands)*clips from* A Propos de Nice (Jean Vigo, 1930, France)*clips from* Berlin: Symphony of a Great City (Walter Ruttmann, 1927, Germany)

Due on Tues:

Week 1 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).

Read: Nichols: Intro; Documenting the Documentary: Ch. 2.

Thurs, Sept. 2

clips from The Man with the Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov, 1929, Soviet Union: 68 mns.)*clips from* Koyaanisqatsi (Godfrey Reggio, 1982, USA)Man on Wire (James Marsh, 2008, UK, USA: 94 mns.)

Sat, Sept. 4

Note: Last day to Add and Drop course.**Week 3**

Tues, Sept. 7

John Grierson and the British Documentary MovementDrifters (John Grierson, 1929, UK)Industrial Britain (Robert Flaherty and John Grierson, 1933, UK)Song of Ceylon (Basil Wright, 1934, UK)Night Mail (Hary Watt, Basil Wright, 1936, UK)Man of Aran, a selection (Robert Flaherty, 1934, UK)

Due on Tues:

Week 2 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).

Read: Nichols: Ch. 1 & 2.

Thurs, Sept. 9

The Cove (Louie Psihoyos, 2009, USA: 92 mns.)*clips from* Trouble the Water (Carl Deal, Tia Lessin, 2008, USA: 90 mns.)*clips from* The Corporation (Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott, 2003, USA: 145 mns.)**Week 4**

Tues, Sept. 17

European Documentaries of the 1930sLand Without Bread (Luis Buñuel, 1932, Spain)*clips from* Triumph of the Will, a selection (Leni Riefenstahl, 1934, Germany)

Due on Tues:

Week 3 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).

Read: Documenting the Documentary: Ch. 4 & 6.

Thurs, Sept. 16

The Gleaners and I (Agnes Varda, 2000, France: 82 mms)**Week 5**

Tues, Sept. 21

US documentaries of the 1930sThe River (Pare Lorentz, 1936, USA)The City (Ralph Steiner, Willard Van Dyke, 1939, USA)

The March of Time, a selection (1935-1951, USA)

Due on Tues: Week 4 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).
Read: Nichols: Ch. 3.

Thurs, Sept. 23 Food Inc. (Robert Kenner, 2008, USA: 94 mns.)
clips from An Inconvenient Truth (Davis Guggenheim, 2006, USA)

Week 6

Tues, Sept. 28

US Films during World War IIThe Battle of Midway (John Ford, 1942, USA)Prelude to War (Frank Capra, 1943, USA)Let There Be Light, a selection (John Huston, 1946, USA)***Distrubition of Term Paper topic.***

Due on Tues: Week 5 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).
Read: Nichols: Ch. 4.

Thurs, Sept. 30 The Fog of War (Errol Morris, 2003, USA: 95 mns.)
clips from No End in Sight (Charles Ferguson, 2007, USA)

Week 7

Tues, Oct. 5

British Docs during the War and US/European films after the WarLondon Can Take It (Humphrey Jennings, 1940, UK)Listen to Britain (Humphrey Jennings, 1942, UK)Louisiana Story, a selection (Robert Flaherty, 1948, USA)Guernica (Alain Resnais, 1950, France)Night and Fog (Alain Resnais, 1955, France)*clips from* Shoah (Claude Lanzmann, 1985, France: 503 mns.)

Due on Tues: Week 6 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).
Read: Documenting the Documentary: Ch. 12.

Thurs, Oct. 7 Fast, Cheap, and Out of Control (Erroll Morris, 1997, USA: 80 mns.)

Week 8: Midterm

Tues, Oct. 12

Review for Midterm

Due on Tues: **Paper topic due (one paragraph)** > Email paragraph describing topic selected to filmst121@sbcc.edu > Explain why you selected this topic, how you plan to analyze it, what historical period you might be focusing on, what interests you in these films, any research you have done. (no attachments)

Week 7 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).

Thurs, Oct. 14 **Midterm (Lectures and readings from Week 1-8)**

Week 9

Tues, Oct. 19

Direct Cinema in the US and Cinema Vérité in France*clips from* Chronicle of a Summer, a selection (Morin and Rouch, 1961, France)*clips from* Titicut Follies (Frederick Wiseman, 1967, USA)*clips from* Primary, a selection (Drew Associates, 1960, USA)*clips from* Don't Look Back (D.A. Pennebaker, 1967, USA)

Due on Tues:

Read: Documenting the Documentary: Ch. 13.

Thurs, Oct. 21

Don't Look Back (D.A. Pennebaker, 1967, USA: 96 mns.)*clips from* Gimme Shelter (Albert and David Maysles, 1970, USA: 91 mns.)*clips from* Monterey Pop (D.A. Pennebaker, 1968, USA)*clips from* Woodstock (Michael Wadleigh, 1970, USA)

Fri, Oct. 22

Note: Last day to withdraw.**Week 10**

Tues, Oct. 26

Post Direct Cinema and Cinema Vérité*clips from* An American Family, episode 2 (Gilbert, Raymond, 1973, USA)*No Lies* (Mitchell Block, 1975, USA)*clips from* La Soufriere (Werner Herzog, 1977, Germany)*clips from* Cinema Verite: Defining the Moment (Peter Wintonick, 1999, Canada)

Due on Tues:

Email paper update – (one paragraph about research, films, scenes, changes) to filmst121@sbcc.edu > take the previous proposal further by explaining more specifically what period you selected and why, as well as how you plan to analyze it. Provide information about the research you have done on the topic. (no attachments)

Week 9 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).

Read: Nichols: Ch. 5; Documenting the Documentary: Ch. 20.

Thurs, Oct. 28

Sherman's March (Ross McElwee, 1986, USA: 157 mns.)**Week 11**

Tues, Nov. 2

Documentary in the 1970s*clips from* Hearts and Minds (Peter Davis, 1974, 112 mns: USA)

Due on Tues:

Week 10 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).

Read: Nichols: Ch. 6

Thurs, Nov. 4

Harlan County USA (Barbara Kopple, 1976, USA: 103 mns.)**Week 12**

Tues, Nov. 9

Reflexive and Interactive Documentaries: 1980s*clips from* This is Spinal Tap (Rob Reiner, 1984, USA)

clips from Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould (François Girard, 1993, Portugal / Canada / Finland / Netherlands)
Cane Toads: An Unnatural History (Mark Lewis, 1987, Australia: 46 mns.)

Due on Tues: **Email Paper thesis and outline** to filmst121@sbcc.edu (no attachments)

Week 11 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).
Read: Nichols: Ch. 7.

Thurs, Nov. 11 **Veterans Day – NO CLASS.**

Week 13

Tues, Nov. 16

Poetic Documentaries / Archival Films

clips from Lessons from Darkness (Werner Herzog, 1992, France, UK, Germany)
clips from Radio Bikini (Robert Stone, 1987, USA)
clips from Atomic Café (Loader, K. Rafferty, P. Rafferty, 1982, USA)
clips from The Civil War (Ken Burns, 1990, USA)

Due on Tues: Week 12 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).
Read: Nichols: Ch. 8; Documenting the Documentary: Ch. 23.

Thurs, Nov. 18 The Thin Blue Line (Errol Morris, 1988, USA: 103 mns.)

Week 14

Tues, Nov. 23

Performative Documentaries: the Essayistic Approach

Sicko (Michael Moore, 2007, USA: 123 min)

Due on Tues: **Term Paper due (7-9 pgs., approx. 2,300 words)** – email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format and NO ATTACHMENTS).

No weekly writing this week – just complete the paper.
Read: Documenting the Documentary: Ch. 24.

Thurs, Nov. 25 **Thanksgiving – NO CLASS.**

Week 15

Tues, Nov. 30

Digital Technologies and Documentaries

clips from Tarnation (Jonathan Caouette, 2003, USA)
clips from Born into Brothels (Zana Briski, Ross Kauffman, 2004, USA, India)

Due on Tues: Week 14 writing > email to filmst121@sbcc.edu (follow the correct format).
No Reading

Thurs, Dec. 2 Deliver Us from Evil (Amy Berg, 2006, USA: 101 mns.)
Review for Final

Week 16

Thurs, Dec. 9

Due on Tues:

11:00AM-1:00PM > Final (Lectures and readings from Week 9-15)

No writing this week – just study for the final.

Please note that this syllabus is subject to change.

Film Glossary

DIEGESIS: In a narrative film, the world of the film's story. The diegesis includes events that are presumed to have occurred and actions and spaces not shown onscreen.

MISE-EN-SCENE: (French, "putting into the scene") *What* is filmed, including all the elements that appear on the screen, such as the settings and props (decor), lighting, costumes, make-up, etc.; the arrangement of things and spaces in front of the camera.

NARRATIVE FORM: A type of filmic organization in which the parts relate to each other through a series of causally related events taking place in time and space (linear or non linear). Good examples of non-linear (*Pulp Fiction* or *Memento*).

Plot: In a narrative film, all the elements that are directly presented to us, including their causal relations, chronological order, duration, frequency, and spatial locations.

Story: All the events that we see and hear, plus all those that we infer or assume to have occurred, arranged in their presumed causal relations, chronological order, duration, frequency, and spatial locations.

Narration: The process through which the *plot* conveys or withholds *story* information.

FRAMING: the spatial representation of figures in relation to the edges of the screen (the frame). Framing changes when the camera moves.

Close-up: People or objects have been filmed from a short distance. With a person, the head and shoulders would fill most of the screen.

Extreme close-up: A small object or body part fills most of the screen. With a person, for example, a head, face, or eye fills the screen.

Medium shot: People or objects have been filmed from a medium distance. With a standing person, he/she is seen from the waist up.

Long shot: People or objects have been filmed from a distance. A standing person's entire body would be seen or a large object would be in view (car, storefront, several people).

Extreme long shot: Humans are very small; crowds and landscapes can be seen.

Establishing shot: A shot at the beginning of a sequence, showing the spatial relations among important figures or objects and the setting in a scene.

Long take: A shot that continues for an unusually lengthy time period before the transition to the next shot.

EDITING: in a finished film, this is the set of techniques that govern the relations between shots.

Shot: A single continuous image that is not interrupted by a cut. The framing may change, due to camera movement or the movement of objects or characters, but this is a continuous take.

Cut: An instantaneous change from one shot or image to another.

Montage: Two or more images are juxtaposed, often creating meaning through their relation to one another that was not present in either one image by itself.

Dissolve: The slow replacement of one shot by another (the first shot is briefly visible under the second).

Scene: A segment of narrative film that takes place in one time and space or that uses crosscutting to show two or more simultaneous actions.

Sequence: A series of scenes or shots unified by a shared action or motif.

Ellipsis: The shortening of *plot* duration achieved by omitting intervals of *story* duration.

Graphic match: Two successive shots joined so as to create a strong similarity of compositional elements (ex: color, shape).

Continuity editing: A system of editing that maintains continuous narrative action, so that the editing goes unnoticed by the spectator. Continuity editing often involves the following editing methods:

Crosscutting: Editing that alternates shots of two or more lines of action going on in different places, usually simultaneously.

Shot/reverse shot: Two or more shots edited together that alternate characters so as to maintain the illusion that they are looking at each other. This is typically used for conversation and often captures a part of the back of the head and shoulder of one of the characters.

Eyeline match: Shot A shows someone looking at something; shot B is what the person is looking at. If the person looks left, the following shot would imply that the looker is off-screen right. This often incorporates a **point-of-view shot:** the camera occupies a certain character's physical space, seeing what that character sees, often from the angle at which he or she is presumed to see it. Point-of-view shots create a subjective positioning of the character within the diegesis.

CAMERA MOVEMENT: the movement of the camera (not figures) during shooting.

Pan: A stationary camera pivots horizontally from right to left or left to right.

Tilt: A stationary camera pivots vertically up or down.

Tracking shot: The camera moves (or dollies) forward or backward on tracks.

Zoom (in or out): Movements of the lens (not the camera itself), producing change in size/distance of images.

Crane shot: a shot with a change in framing accomplished by having the camera above the ground and moving through the air in any direction.

FOCUS: the definition/clarity of the image in relation to the camera lens.

Soft focus: An intentional blurriness (often used for leading ladies' close-ups).

Deep focus: Several different planes in the image are in focus at the same time.

Depth of field: The distance within which objects are in focus.

CAMERA ANGLE: the position of the frame in relation to the subject it shows.

High angle: People or objects are filmed from above; viewer looks down at the action.

Straight-on angle: People or objects are filmed looking straight at them or the action.

Low angle: People or objects are filmed from below; viewer looks up at the action.

Canted frame: Horizon is tilted one direction or another, appears "crooked."

SOUND/MUSIC:

Voice-over: Unseen character or narrator speaks from a different time/place that is not within the time/place represented on screen (not in the fictional space and time).

Voice-off: Unseen character who is heard speaking and is within the same time/place as the people and objects seen on screen.

Diegetic sound/music: Sound and music that take place within the fictional world of the characters, where the characters can hear the sound.

Non-diegetic sound/music: Sound and music from outside the fictional world of the characters that they cannot hear. It is added on after the original footage is completed and is often used for emotional or dramatic purposes.

For a more extensive list of film terminology, please see David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson's Film Art and Timothy Corrigan's A Short Guide to Writing About Film.

Documentary Film Glossary

- **Authenticity:** the belief that the historical world represented on screen has not been modified.
- **Arrangement:** involves the usual order of parts in a rhetorical speech or film.
- **Auto-ethnography:** ethnographically informed work made by members of the communities who are the traditional subjects of Western ethnography.
- **Cinema of attractions:** the show of unusual phenomena – termed defined by Tom Gunning.
- **Cinema vérité:** French for “film truth” – participatory documentary in which the ‘truth’ is emphasized as the lived encounter between filmmaker and subject.
- **Collective subjectivity:** subjectivity dissociated from any single individuated character. The identification is with the audience as a collectivity.
- **Commentary:** a voice in the documentary which addresses us directly with an explicit argument.
- **Compilation films:** films that rely entirely on archival footage.
- **Demonstrative proof:** concentration on making evidence persuasive, not on ensuring that it is fair, accurate, or even authentic.
- **Direct cinema:** term corresponding to cinema vérité, which for some critics is defined as observational documentary and for others interactive documentary.
- **Discourses of sobriety:** systems that assume they have instrumental power, that they can and should alter the world itself. They regard their relation to the real as direct, immediate, transparent.
- **Docudrama:** stories based on fact but performed by actors and scripted from both documents and conjecture.
- **Editing:** the juxtaposition of two or more shots to create a meaningful relationship between them.
- **Emotional proof:** proofs based on appeals to an audience’s emotional disposition.
- **Epistophilia:** pleasure of knowing.
- **Ethical proof:** proofs based on the projection of the morally or ethically unassailable character of the speaker.
- **Ethnographic film:** anthropological documentary film.
- **Evidentiary editing:** organization of cuts within a scene to present the impression of a single, convincing argument supported by a logic.
- **Expository documentary:** emphasizes verbal commentary and an argumentative logic.
- **Indexical image:** refers to the way in which the appearance of an image is shaped or determined by what it records – its relationship to the ‘real world.’
- **Informed consent:** subjects are told about the film before shooting.
- **Intellectual montage:** the combination of images, or sound and images, explicitly in order to comment on some aspect of the story.
- **Masked interview:** interview in which the filmmaker is off screen and unheard.
- **Metaphor:** link together physically disconnected phenomena to suggest an underlying similarity.
- **Metonymy:** associations between physically linked phenomena; typically an aspect of something is used to represent the whole thing (similar to synecdoche) – ex: the crown for royalty.
- **Modes of representation:** according to Bill Nichols – poetic, expository, observational, participatory, reflexive, performative.
- **Observational mode:** emphasizes a direct engagement with the everyday life of subjects as observed by an unobtrusive camera.
- **Participatory mode:** emphasizes the interaction between filmmaker and subject. Filming takes place by means of interviews or other forms of even more direct involvement.
- **Performative mode:** emphasizes the subjective or expressive aspect of the filmmaker’s own engagement with the subject and an audience’s responsiveness to this engagement. Rejects notions of objectivity in favor of evocation and affect.

- **Perspective:** what the specific decisions made about the selection and arrangement of sounds and images convey to us. This voice advances an argument by implications. The argument operates on a tacit level.
- **Poetic mode:** emphasizes visual associations, tonal or rhythmic qualities, descriptive passages, and formal organization.
- **Realism, psychological:** involves conveying the inner states of characters or social actors in plausible and convincing ways.
- **Reflexive mode:** calls attention to the assumptions and conventions that govern documentary filmmaking. Increases our awareness of the constructedness of the film's representation of reality.
- **Representation:** documentary gives photographic and aural representations or likenesses of the world. It is allied with rhetoric, persuasion, and argument rather than with likeness or reproduction.
- **Rhetoric:** the form of speech used to persuade or convince others about an issue for which no clear-cut, unequivocal answer or solution exists.
- **Self-consciousness, degree of:** the extent to which an expository agency acknowledges itself such that the viewer senses, "an argument is being presented to me."
- **Social actor:** people who continue to conduct their lives more or less as they would have done without the presence of a camera.
- **Voice of authority:** someone we see as well as hear who speaks on behalf of the film.
- **Voice of documentary:** the specific way in which an argument or perspective is expressed.
- **Voice-of-God:** narrator we hear speaking in a voice-over but do not see.
- **Voice over:** a voice which comments upon the images on the screen (can be diegetic or nondiegetic).