Documentary Traditions
MCMA 552 History, Theory and Media Art
Thursdays 3-5:50pm

Professor Angela Aguayo
Email: ajaguayo@siu.edu
Office: COMM 1121K
The best way to reach me is via email: ajaguayo@siu.edu
Office Hours: Office Hours: 1-3pm on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday

Course Description:
For well over a century, non-fiction film has figured prominently in the public sphere as a powerful means of persuasion. The course will be devoted to a comparison of current documentaries with those made in earlier decades to illustrate how the art has responded to social, political, and economic realities and to changes in technology and systems of distribution. We will also address predominate artistic movements that thread through documentary history, with a particular focus on documentary circulation from the late 1950s to the present. We will also investigate the intersection of documentary production and globalization, especially as new media technologies become more integrated in our daily lives and documentary viewing becomes a site of social convergence.

Texts (Selected Readings From):

All other class prep materials will be provided by the instructor, this will include films, online material, reading selections, workshop sheets, etc, found on D2L

You will also be asked to research and read your own collected articles from magazines, academic journals and newspapers.
All materials will be placed on D2L for review and preparation in class titled:
CP-357 / CP-470A / MCMA-552 International Documentary

Course Requirements:
Practices of Looking Assignment: You will research a moment in documentary history where filmmakers were exploring the possibilities of the camera and innovating with practices of looking. I would like you to think and articulate what is at stake with how we look through the documentary camera. You will investigate on your own interest in Direct Cinema and Cinéma Vérité filmmaking. I want you to research at least one filmmaker and one film. What inspiration can you take away from these works? How do they innovate with the practices of looking? Please write a two-page paper responding to these questions. You will then make a two-minute creative work or equivalent, inspired by your independent research. Paper = 100 points Creative Project = 100 points
**Journal Discussion Assignments**: We will be engaging in class discussions about the scope, function, strategies, consequences and public negotiation of documentary. You will be expected to contribute to our discussion AND comment on the input of others. Your journal assignments are designed to help you with preparing for these discussions. You should have your journal assignments completed before class. You may choose to keep a journal in a traditional composition book or online with a blog. This will be a place where you can informally explore your own ideas about contemporary documentary, respond to the reading and write documentary reviews. What is required each week:

**Film Critiques**: Each week you will be expected to choose a documentary artifact that engages, in your estimation, a unique contribution to documentary history, theory or production. You will watch one documentary each week and complete a critique the work. You may use the documentaries screened in class.

**Class Prep Response**: You will write a journal entry specifically addressing each assigned out of class materials offered, drawing connections with other readings, thinking historically and extracting the key ideas. You will also include questions for discussion.

Each week the journal assignment is equivalent to four double spaced pages of writing. This is how I will assess your preparation for class. I will be grading the thoughtfulness of your entries, your attention to the specific assignment details, your application and understanding of documentary as well as your willingness to contribute to the ideas of others. If I get the sense people in class are not preparing for class, I will turn this assignment into impromptu quizzes. Journal assignment = 200 points

**Documentary Proposal**: You will write a documentary proposal with a budget. Points = 100

**Final Seminar Project**: You will do a project on a genre, collective, film, filmmaker or approach to documentary production. You project could be written or creative. The project will require original research and thought. If you do creative option, 5-7 page paper and 5-8 minute creative work. If you choose a research assignment, the project should be equivalent to a 18-20 page research paper. Total points 400 (project is 300, 100 for presentation of project to class for feedback)

**Exams**: There will be two short answer exams throughout the semester. You will be able to refer to your journals on the exam. 100 points each, total points 200

Grades are administered based on performance, meeting assignment criteria, punctuality and original thought.

A= Exemplary work that far exceeds the expectations of the assignment.
B= Commendable work that exceeds the expectations of the assignment.
C= Satisfactory work that meets the expectations of the assignment.
D= Below satisfactory work that does not meet the expectations of the assignment.
F= Failure to complete the assignment.
Policies

Preparation: The success of this class is based in part on your willingness and ability to contribute to class discussions. It is important that you carefully and thoughtfully complete all reading assignments prior to the beginning of the listed class period. I reserve the right to administer impromptu reading quizzes to determine your level of preparation should that become necessary.

Participation: Communication is central in building strong communities. I view each class I teach as a community and therefore encourage positive communication. This means that I expect you to share your ideas with your classmates in a thoughtful and well-argued manner. In addition, I expect each of you to listen respectfully but thoughtfully to the ideas of one another. In keeping with this climate of respect, please turn off all phones and pagers before class begins. What I expect: active and courteous contributions to class discussions and projects, positive attitudes towards the class, classmates, and the professor, helping set-up and put away equipment, approaching the equipment with care and caution, completing assignments on time, taking the projects and work seriously, and being helpful to others during their productions increase your grade. If you choose to bring your computer to class, please restrict use to notetaking and research that has to do with class content. Violating these and engaging in uncooperative conduct affect your grade.

Attendance: Attendance is critical to your success in this class. Both lectures and class discussions are designed to make it easier for you to understand the material. You may miss class TWO time without penalty. However each absence over two will reduce your final letter grade by five points. Outside documentation of an absence is not necessary, as your two allotted absences should cover medical, family, and/or personal emergencies during the semester. In-class work may not be made up except by prior arrangement for a university excused absence.

Assignments: All work must be turned in on time. This means at the beginning of the indicated class periods. Do not skip my class to complete an assignment. If for an exceptional reason I agree to accept late work, be aware that you may be penalized up to ten percent for each day past the deadline. If you anticipate difficulty completing an assignment, please see me for assistance well before the deadline.

All papers must be typed, double-spaced and conform to standards of spelling and grammar. The style manual is designed to assist you with this task. All papers must be formatted using either MLA or APA style.

Academic Honesty: Learning and teaching take place best in an atmosphere of intellectual freedom and openness. All members of the academic community are responsible for supporting freedom and openness through rigorous personal standards of honesty and fairness. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty undermine the very purpose of the university and diminish the value of an education.
Do your own work. If you are confused about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask and see the policy. It just isn’t worth it not to do your own work.

**Students with Special Needs:** Students with special needs (as documented by the Office of Disability Services) should identify themselves to the instructor at the beginning of the semester in order to arrange any necessary assistance.

**Building Emergency Response Protocols for Syllabus:**

**University’s Emergency Procedure Clause:**
Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT’s website at [www.bert.siu.edu](http://www.bert.siu.edu), Department of Public Safety’s website [www.dps.siu.edu](http://www.dps.siu.edu) (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. **It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency.** The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

**Students With a Disability:**
Instructors and students in the class will work together as a team to assist students with a disability safely out of the building. Students with a disability will stay with the instructor and communicate with the instructor what is the safest way to assist them.

**Tornado:**
During the spring semester we have a **Storm Drill**.

Pick up your belongings and your instructor will lead you to a safe area of the basement. No one will be allowed to stay upstairs. Stay away from windows. The drill should not last more than 10 minutes. You must stay with your instructor so he/she can take roll. Students need to be quiet in the basement as the BERT members are listening to emergency instructions on handheld radios and cannot hear well in the basement.

**Fire:**
During the fall semester we have a **Fire Drill.**

Pick up your belongings and your instructor will lead you to either the North or South parking lot depending on what part of the building your class is in. You must stay with your instructor so he/she can take roll. As soon as the building is all clear, you will be allowed to return to class.
These drills are to train instructors and the Building Emergency Response Team to get everyone to a safe place during an emergency.

**Bomb Threat:**
If someone calls in a bomb threat, class will be suspended and students will be asked to pick up their belongings, evacuate the building and leave the premises. Do not leave anything that is yours behind. We will not allow anyone back into the building until the police and bomb squad give us an all clear. **DO NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONES.** Some bombs are triggered by a cell phone signal.

**Shooter in the Building:**
If it is safe to leave, move to a safe area far from the building away from where the shooter is located. If anyone has any information about the shooter, please contact the police after they have gone someplace safe.

If it is not safe to leave, go into a room, lock the door and turn out the lights. Everyone should spread out and not huddle together as a group. Don't stand in front of the door or in line of fire with the door. Students' chair and desks should be piled in front of the glass and door as a barricade and the teacher's desk, podium and anything movable can be pushed against the door. This is intended to slow down any attempts to enter the classroom. If it looks like the shooter is persistent and able to enter, make a lot of noise and have the students use everything in their backpacks to throw at the shooter to distract him.

Silence all cell phones after one person in the room calls the police and informs them of their location and how many people are in the room. **Be quiet and wait for the police to arrive.** The police are looking for one or more shooters, and they have no way of knowing if the shooter is in the room people are hiding in. For this reason, when the police enter the room, no one should have anything in his/her hands and each person **MUST** raise his/her hands above his/her head.

**Earthquake:**
In the event of an earthquake, you are advised to take cover quickly under heavy furniture or crouch near an interior wall or corner and cover your head to avoid falling debris. Outside the building are trees and power lines and debris from the building itself that you will need to stay away from. In the building, large open areas like auditoriums are the most dangerous. Do not try to escape on a stairway or elevator. Do not hide under a stairway. We do not recommend that you stand in a doorway because the door could shut from the vibrations and crush your fingers trapping you there.

**Rave Mobile Safety Alert System:**
We recommend that you sign up for the Rave Mobile Safety Alert System. It is a new system that replaces the WENS system to alert you through emergency text messages on your cell phone and emails for emergencies on campus, weather reports and emergency school closures. You have to sign up. If you were signed up for WENS it does not roll over. You have to sign up for Rave Mobile Safety Alert System. Go to Saluki Net, go to
my records tab, under SIUC Personal Records, click on View My SIUC Student Records, Under Main Menu click on Personal Information, click on View and Update Addresses and Phones, in the middle of the page click [Update Addresses and Phones], under phones click Primary: This will take you to Update Addresses and Phones – Update/Insert, under primary phone number for this address put in your cell phone and submit. For more information, visit dps.siu.edu, contact SalukiTech at 453-5155 or salukitech@siu.edu.

**CPR/Defibrillator and First Aid Class:**
If you would like to take a CPR/Defibrillator and/or First Aid class, contact LaVon Donley-Cornett, lavon@siu.edu or call 453-7473.

**Women's Self Defense Classes** are offered to female students faculty and staff by the Department of SIU Public Safety. For more information contact Officer Mary Stark marys@dps.siu.edu.

**Class Schedule:**

**Unit One:**
**Documentary Movements**

**Week One (8/27):** Introduction to History of Documentary and Practices of Looking  
*Screening:* Introduction to Documentary and

**Week Two (9/3):** Cinema Verite and Direct Cinema  
*Reading:* Barnouw 231-253  
*Screening:* Cinema Verite: Defining the Moment

**Week Three (9/10):** What is Documentary? The Explorer, Reporter and Painter  
*Reading:* Barnouw 33-82  
*Screening selections from:* Nanook of the North (Flaherty, 1922) with Werner Herzog’s Grizzley Man; Vertov’s Man With a Movie Camera (1929) and Berlin: Symphony of a Great City (1927) by Walter Ruttmann  
**Due:** 3-page paper, part one of the Practices of Looking assignment

**Week Four (9/17):** Sound, Fury and Art: The Advocate, Bugler, Prosecutor  
*Reading:* Barnouw 83-182  
*Screening selections from:* Drifters (1929) by John Grierson and Triumph of the Will (1935) by Leni Riefenstahl and The River (Pare Lorentz, USA, 1938)

**Week Five (9/24):** Clouded Lenses, Sharp Focus: The Poet, Chronicler, and Promoter  
*Reading:* Barnouw 183-230  
*Screening selections from:* Why We Fight (Frank Capra, U.S., 1943, 52 min), See It Now series on McCarthyism (1953) by Edward R. Murrow  
**Due:** 3 min creative assignment part two of the Practices of Looking assignment
Unit Two: Defining the Moment

**Week Six (10/1): The Essay Film and other Experiments**
*Reading:* “How Can We Describe the Observational, Participatory, Reflexive, and Performative Modes of Documentary Film?” (Ch 7) in *Intro to Documentary* by Bill Nichols and <http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/features/deep-focus/video-essay-essay-film-some-thoughts>
*Screening:* Sans Soleil (1983) by Chris Marker

**Week Seven (10/8): Art and Guerrilla Media**
*Reading:* Barnouw 253-351
*Grad Students:* Deirdre Boyle, “Subject to Change: Guerrilla Television Revisited,” 3-95
*Screening selections from:* Media Burn (1975) by Ant Farm, Selections from the Media Burn Archive http://mediaburn.org/category/guerrilla-television/

**Week Eight (10/15): The Autobiographical Impulse**
*Screening:* Sherman’s March (1986) by Ross McElwee

**Week Nine (10/22): History, Authority and the Documentary Form**
*Reading:* “English-Language Documentary in the 1990s and Beyond—Reality Bytes” in New History of Documentary Film (2011) by Ellis and McLane
Screening: The War (2007) by Ken Burns and Winter Soldier (1972) by Winterfilm Collective

**Week Ten (10/29): The Music Documentary: A Love Story**
*Reading:* TBA

**Week Eleven (11/5): Race, Civil Rights and the Documentary Experience**
*Reading:* “Eyes on the Prize: Reclaiming Black Images, Culture and History” in *Struggles for Representation* (1999) by Elizabeth Amelia Hadley
*Screening selections from:* Eyes on the Prize (1987) and The Untold Story of Emmett Louis Till by Keith Beauchamp (2005)
Week Twelve (11/12): The Intersectionality of Labor and Memory

Unit Three:
Digital Awakenings and Participatory Media Culture

Week Thirteen (11/19): The Rise of Popular Documentary: Animals and Politics
Reading: “The Re-visioned American Dream: The Wildlife Documentary Form as Conservative Nostalgia.” In Uncovering Hidden Rhetorics

Week Fourteen: Thanksgiving Break

Week Fifteen (12/3): Mobile Media, Globalization and Digital Storytelling
Reading: Zimmerman 154-197
Grad Students: Digital distribution, participatory culture, and the transmedia documentary by Chuck Tryon in Jump Cut.
Screening: Bodies of War (2007) by Ellen Spiro and Phil Donahue and 5 Broken Cameras by Burnat and Davidi (2011)

Week Fifteen (12/10): The Digital Cinema Revolutions
Reading: Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide By Henry Jenkins. P. 1-25 and http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/blog/the-6-most-innovative-interactive-web-documentaries
Screening: Hollow (2013), Public Secrets
Final Projects Due

Final Exam: 12/17, 2:45-4:45pm