

Intro to Video Editing I

Queens College Art Department | Spring 2019

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Syllabus Website: introvideo-s19.copperbluemediacom

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ARTS 207 - 01

Saturday 1:00 pm - 4:50 pm

IB 212

Continuity

Visual: logical succession of edited events, necessitating consistent placement of props, use of wardrobe, positioning of characters, and progression of time.

Directional: Consistency in camera-subject relationships, to avoid confusing a viewer's perspective.

A script supervisor is usually hired to maintain continuity during shooting.

Documentary vs. Narrative Practices

Film concept

- writing a script
- drawing storyboards
- find funding
- cast + crew
- find location
- writing / drawing a shooting script
- scheduling
- call sheets
- equipment

Cinéma vérité

Cinéma Vérité ("truthful cinema") is a style of documentary filmmaking, invented by Jean Rouch, inspired by Dziga Vertov's theory of Kino-Pravda and influenced by Robert Flaherty's films. It combines improvisation with the use of the camera to unveil truth or highlight subjects hidden behind crude reality.

It is sometimes called "observational cinema", if understood as pure "direct cinema": mainly without a narrator's voice-over.

Cinéma vérité

Cinéma vérité can involve stylized set-ups and the interaction between the filmmaker and the subject, to the point of provocation. The obvious presence of the filmmaker and camera was seen by most as the best way to reveal the truth in cinema. The filmmaker is seen as a catalyst who's intention was to represent the truth as objectively as possible, thus eliminating deceptions in how aspects of life were formerly presented to audiences.

Cinéma vérité

According to French philosopher Edgar Morin, there are two ways to conceive of the cinema of the Real: the first is to pretend that you can present reality to be seen; the second is to pose the problem of reality.

In the same way, there were two ways to conceive cinéma vérité. The first was to pretend that you brought truth. The second was to pose the problem of truth.

Observational Cinema

Observational Cinema

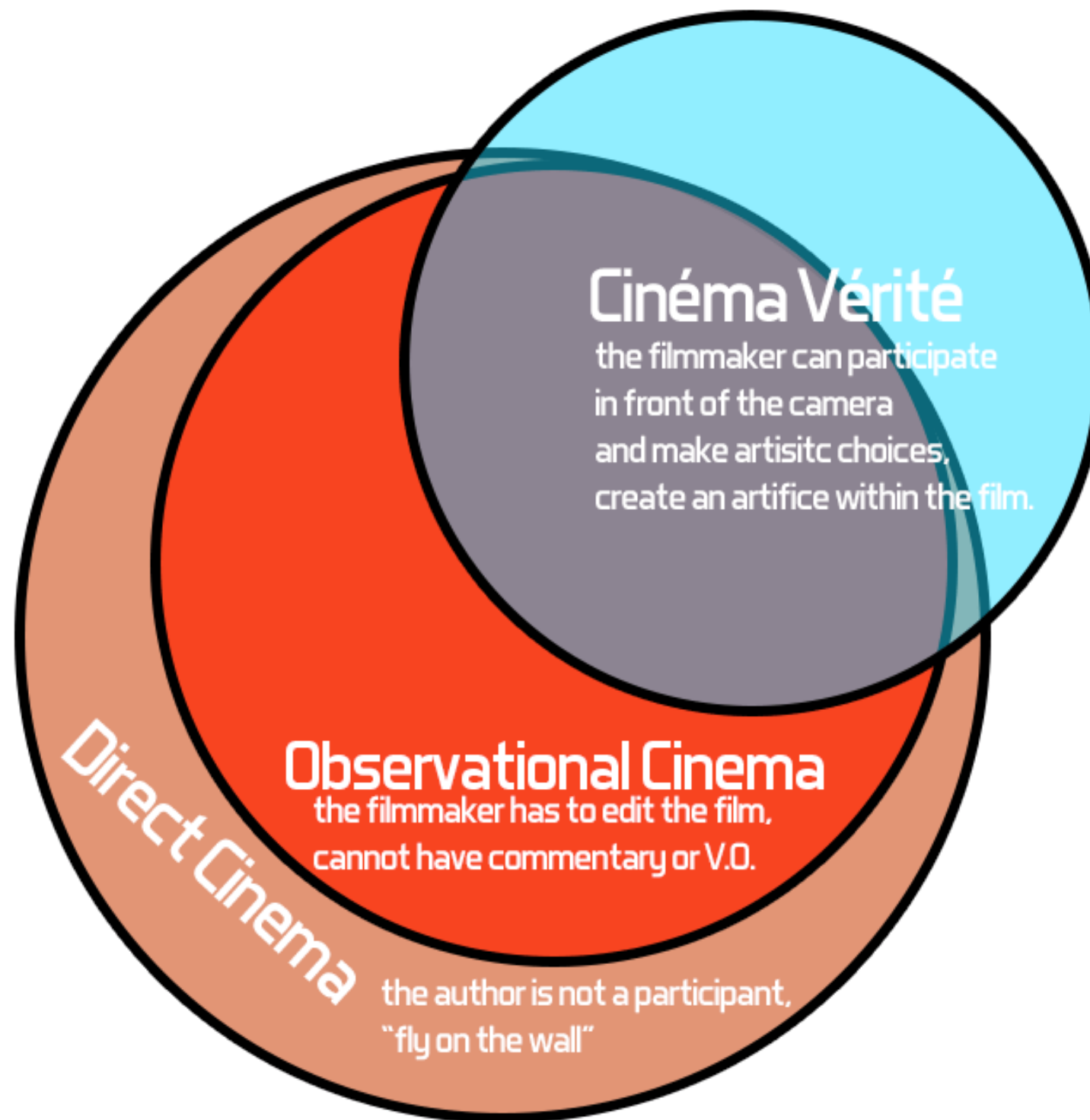
The filmmaker is involved in editing the film and there is no commentary or narrative voice over.

Direct Cinema

Direct Cinema

is largely concerned with the recording of events in which the subject and audience become unaware of the camera's presence: operating within the "observational mode", a *fly on the wall* approach according to American historian and theoretician of documentary film Bill Nichols.

Cinéma vérité | Observational Cinema | Direct Cinema



Documentary Practices



Robert Flaherty, *Nanook of the North*, 1922

How Robert Flaherty Invented the modern documentary

Documentary Practices

Robert Flaherty is an American filmmaker who directed and produced the first commercially successful feature-length documentary film, *Nanook of the North*, 1922.

In making *Nanook*, Flaherty cast various locals in parts in the film, in the way that one would cast actors in a work of fiction. With the aim of showing traditional Inuit life, he also staged some scenes and editing was a major part of his documentary. His aim was showing traditional Inuit life with his screen family supposedly being at risk of dying if they could not find or build shelter quickly enough. At some point during filmmaking Flaherty endangered his screen family when he pretended at that he could not hear the hunters' pleas for help, instead continuing to film their struggle.

Documentary Practices | Kino Eye



Dviga Vertov, *Man with a Movie Camera*, 1929

Dviga Vertov | Kino Eye

Aesthetic vs Intellectual

Kino Pravda Documentary roots in actualities, stage recreations of life or history, led to fiction films.

Man with a Movie Camera was largely dismissed upon its initial release due to its quick-cut editing, self-reflexivity, and emphasis on form over content. In 2012 Sight & Sound poll, critics voted Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* the 8th best film ever made.

Dviga Vertov, *Man with a Movie Camera*, 1929

Man with a Movie Camera is famous for the range of cinematic techniques Vertov invents, deploys or develops, such as double exposure, fast motion, slow motion, freeze frames, jump cuts, split screens, Dutch angles, extreme close-ups, tracking shots, footage played backwards, stop motion animations and self-reflexive visuals (at one point it features a split-screen tracking shot; the sides have opposite Dutch angles).

Working within a Marxist ideology, Vertov strove to create a futuristic city as commentary on whose purpose was to awaken the Soviet citizen through truth and to ultimately bring about understanding and action. The kino's aesthetic shined through in his portrayal of electrification, industrialization, and the achievements of workers through hard labour. This could also be viewed as early modernism in film.

Documentary Practices | Jean Rouch

Jean Rouch is a French filmmaker and anthropologist. Rouch's practice as a filmmaker, for over sixty years in Africa, was characterized by the idea of shared anthropology. Influenced by his discovery of surrealism in his early twenties, many of his films blur the line between fiction and documentary, creating a new style: ethnofiction.

He was hailed by the French New Wave filmmakers as one of their own. His seminal film *Me a Black (Moi, un noir)* pioneered the technique of jump cut popularized by Jean-Luc Godard.



Documentary Practices | Jean Rouch



Jean Rouch
Moi, Un Noir (Me, A Black), 1958, Short Clip

Documentary Practices | Jean Rouch

The Groundbreaking Ethnography of Jean Rouch

Eight Films by Jean Rouch Trailer - Improvisation

Jean Rouch and His Camera in the Heart of Africa

Chronique d'un été (Chronicle of a Summer), 1960, Short Clip

Documentary Practices | Morris Engel | Independent Production

Little Fugitive influenced the French New Wave and is considered by modern-day critics to be a landmark film because of its naturalistic style and groundbreaking use of nonprofessional actors in lead roles. It was filmed with hand-held 35 mm cameras on a shoestring budget.

The movie was filmed on location at Coney Island and Brooklyn, using a unique, concealed strap-on camera, which made it possible for Engel to work without a tripod and large crew. It allowed him to have thousands of beach-going New Yorkers as extras without their knowing it.



Morris Engel, Ray Ashley, Ruth Orkin, *Little Fugitive*, 1953

François Truffaut

French film director, screenwriter, producer, actor, and film critic, as well as one of the founders of the French New Wave.



François Truffaut
Day for Night, 1973

François Truffaut | Day for Night

Plot:

A film director (François Truffaut) tries to get his movie made while observing the real-life dramas in his actors' lives. Fading icon Severine (Valentina Cortese) forgets her lines when she drinks, while her co-star, Alexandre (Jean-Pierre Aumont), is fixated on his lover's imminent arrival. Meanwhile, insecure young star Alphonse (Jean-Pierre Léaud) has emotional outbursts, yet seems well-balanced compared to Julie (Jacqueline Bisset), a British actress recuperating from a nervous breakdown.

François Truffaut

In *Day for Night* sequences filmed outdoors in daylight are shot using film stock balanced for tungsten (indoor) light and underexposed (or adjusted during post production) to appear as if they are taking place at night.

Day for Night, 1973, Filming "Meet Pamela"

Day for Night, 1973, What is a Director?

Day for Night, 1973, The Wrong Door

Day for Night, 1973, A Cat That Can't Act

Day for Night, 1973, Actors Are So Vulnerable

Day for Night, 1973, Cinema is King

Day for Night, 1973, The Car Stunt

Day for Night, 1973, What a Funny Life We Lead

Day for Night, 1973, Everyone's Magic

Day for Night, 1973, Life is Rotten

Documentary Practices | Warner Herzog



Werner Herzog
Fitzcarraldo, 1977

Documentary Practices | Warner Herzog

Besides using professional actors - German, American and otherwise - Herzog is known for using people from the locality in which he is shooting. Especially in his documentaries, he uses locals to benefit what he calls "ecstatic truth" (as opposed to the literal or factual truth). He uses footage of the non-actors both playing roles and being themselves.

Documentary Practices | Warner Herzog

The use of non-actors alludes to Eisenstein's typage:
A face without make-up, or a substitution of "naturally expressive" types for actors. A typage tendency may be rooted in theater presenting possibilities for growth, as an indicator of definite affinities to real life through the camera.

Werner Herzog, *Fitzcarraldo*, 1977

Boat over mountain

Werner Herzog, *Fitzcarraldo*, 1977

Klaus Kinski - Fitzcarraldo fight

Cinéma vérité | Lars Von Trier



Lars Von Trier
Dancer in the Dark, 2000, Excerpt

Dogme | Lars Von Trier

Operating within a set of Restrictions

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dogme_95



Lars Von Trier

Breaking the Waves, 1996, Bess vs Jesus

Breaking the Waves, 1996, Excerpt

Lars Von Trier | Emotional Cutting

Lars Von Trier films are a journey to the human heart. His dramas seek a cosmic relation to the human condition.



Lars Von Trier - Deconstructing Cinema

Documentary Practices | Jørgen Leth



Jørgen Leth,
The perfect human, 1968

Documentary Practices | Lars Von Trier



Lars von Trier, Jørgen Leth
The Five Obstructions, 2003
Obstruction #1 Cuba

Documentary Practices | Lars Von Trier



Lars von Trier, Jørgen Leth
The Five Obstructions, 2003
Obstruction #3 Brussels

Documentary Practices | Lars Von Trier



Lars von Trier, Jørgen Leth
The Five Obstructions, 2003
Obstruction #4 Cartoon

Documentary Practices

the
creators
project

In 2010, a group of young filmmakers called Court 13 gathered in southern Louisiana to make their first feature film-
Beasts of the Southern Wild.

Ben Zeitlin, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, 2012
Making of Beasts of the Southern Wild

Documentary Practices | Social Media



Desi Lydic Investigates Environmental Racism in Colorado

Project 3 “Self Portrait”.

This can mean whatever you can imagine. Start planning your project. Decide whether you want to script or assemble your self-portrait. Begin writing, storyboarding and gathering assets: digital artifacts, music and sounds, b-roll, textures, schedule interviews, location shoots, asking your classmates for help. Think about how you want to plan your production. Come to class with your script or storyboard or both.