Are Documentaries Journalism? The Gap Between a Shared Truth and Verification

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Abstract

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Are Documentaries Journalism? The Gap between a Shared Truth and Verification

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This dissertation examines to what extent the most popular documentaries as ranked by Netflix conform to the principles of journalism as defined by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, vs. the shared truth of the documentary filmmaker as defined by narrative inquiry theory. Fifteen of the most popular documentaries were viewed twice in their entirety. Time-code was noted to mark events and sequences of the narrative for the sake of reference and comparison. They were selected from the documentary categories used by Netflix that most parallel the documentary categories of history, propaganda, art, style, entertainment, biography, and politics or dissident message, which have appeared as the most common categories in the literature. Qualitative analysis found that political documentaries were the most closely associated with a shared truth, while biographical and historical documentaries were most closely associated with journalistic standards. If documentary filmmakers edit fairly, such as by providing clear identification of speakers and sources, offering the facts and voices of more than one side, verifying their facts and claims, stating their premises clearly, and leaving the conclusion open to the viewer, then they are an example of a high level of verification associated with journalism.
Dedication

To my father, Benjamin Jones Jacoway.
Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Michael S. Sweeney and my committee, Dr. Aimee Edmondson, Dr. Joseph Slade, and Dr. Katherine Jellison, for being a searchlight on my horizon. I also would like to thank E.W. Scripps School of Journalism Director Robert K. Stewart.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theory</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Ken Burns, Historian or Revisionist?</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: <em>Hillary: The Movie</em>, Documentary or Propaganda?</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Methods</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6: Results</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography:</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix: Notes on Documentary Content</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1: Introduction

The Metro Goldwyn Mayer Logo appears on the screen, with the famous lion and its iconic roar. The credibility offered by the image offers a sense of security, believability, and reliability.

After the opening title and studio credits of the film, a single slide appears. “The following documentary would like to give special thanks to Dr. Eudora Fletcher, Paul Deghuce, and Mrs. Meryl Fletcher Varney.”

The first quote offered, credited to Susan Sontag, appears in a lower third over a ticker tape parade in Times Square: “He was the phenomenon of the ’20s, when you think at that time he was as well known as Lindbergh, it really is quit astonishing.”

Other quotes follow.

Credited to Irving Howe: “His story reflected the nature of our civilization, the character of our times, yet it was also one man’s story, and all of the symbols of our culture were there. Heroism, will, things like that. But when you look back on it, it was very strange.”

Credited to Saul Bellow: “Well, it is ironic to see how quickly he has faded from memory, considering what an astounding record he made. He was of course very amusing, and at times could touch a nerve of people, perhaps in a way that they didn’t prefer to be touched. It certainly is a very bizarre story.”

The film is Zelig, a work of fiction by American writer and director Woody Allen, a story of the chameleon character, Leonard Zelig. The narrator goes on to describe the climate of America in the 1920s and the opening scene at a party at F. Scott Fitzgerald’s.
It is obviously a satire on the documentary style, which has developed some traditional canons of narrative style, and Allen uses his cinematic talents as a writer and director to make *Zelig* a very believable spoof.¹

The problem is that the same believability of onscreen images is possible with today’s digital and financial toolbox to create a production in a very credible and professional package. And that package can be intended for a specific audience. The differences between claimed facts and shared truths may be undetectable, without further study.

This dissertation will investigate a purposive sample of the most popular documentaries on Netflix, the online movie streaming service, correlating the storytelling techniques of documentary filmmakers with measures and principles of traditional journalism. It will qualitatively examine the content of these documentaries, as measured by such canons of journalism as fact, objectivity and verification, and it will do so through the lens of narrative inquiry theory. It will examine whether the sampled documentaries fit with the terms of journalism, propaganda, history, entertainment, etc. It will examine the producers, topics, voices, actors, arguments, evidence, and findings of the documentaries studied.

Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, veteran journalists and authors, created a reality check system that will be the basis for this dissertation. Their ten-point rating scale on the level of verification has become a standard in teaching journalism classes and also during this age of media convergence. For clarity, it will be important to establish definitions of a documentary and the relative terms of this study.

¹ *Zelig*, directed by Woody Allen, DVD (Fox Searchlight, 2001).
The word “documentary” is described by documentary historian Jeffrey Geiger as referring to “cinematic forms that haven’t always fit comfortably within stricter definitions of the term. ‘Film’, similarly, serves as shorthand for motion picture techniques ranging from celluloid to video and digital technologies.”

Geiger focuses on how films can add to national identity and reviews state actors who implemented the documentary style as works of propaganda. “Films, with the discourses that surround them and the institutions that support them, are central means through which the idea of the national is articulated and culturally determined.”

He particularly studied the propaganda documentaries of the Second World War and how they managed “division and dissent.” His research shows that what one audience may take as the trusted word of documentary could be viewed as pandering by the producer or sponsoring organization. Film historian Susan Hayward said, “Like national affiliations themselves, films and filmic discourses are selective: they can mobilize, promote and also suppress key ideas and myths of the nation.” This confusion can be directly linked to the narrative of the documentary. Does it have information that can be verified or is preaching to the choir, or speaking to an audience that has shared values and a shared truth. Some thirty years after the term “documentary” appeared, Cecil Starr of the Saturday Review complained in 1954 that the documentary not having a proper definition is “an irritation among film-minded people, and the repeated demand for a definition.”

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2 Jeffrey Geiger, American Documentary Film: Projecting the Nation (Edinburgh, United Kingdom: Edinburgh University Press, 2011) 2.
3 Ibid, 3.
4 Ibid.
5 Susan Hayward, French National Cinema (London; Routledge, 2005) 6-8.
6 Geiger, American Documentary Film, 5.
John Grierson, a respected theorist of narrative and documentary, reflected on the role of the documentary and verification. Grierson stresses the creative role of the documentarian and how it can conflict with any form of verification. By trying to be “cinematic,” the documentarian can go beyond clearly stating the facts of the researched and archival material without intending any form of creative license through “arrangements, rearrangements, and creative shaping of it.” This can be a source of the ambiguity between the accurate accounting of the pure documentary and the shared interpretive truth of other productions that make no attempt to offer verification. As a result this can also be frustrating for academic researchers who try to interpret by any form of style, according to essayist Dai Vaughan. Documentaries can, just by the social definition, imply trust, integrity, validity, and of course opinion. Previous studies have been done on the role and social/political transparency of documentary films. Geiger recognizes the confusion between the pedagogical value of the traditional documentary and the umbrella that now includes many types of documentary. Film scholar Bill Nichols studies the balance of social frameworks, technical knowledge, and professional practice. He stresses that the strongest forces shaping true documentary production are the “pressures against distorting actions and events being recorded.” His understanding of the production process and audience reception is that they lie in the hands of the

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9 Geiger, American Documentary Film, 6.
creator and financer. He underlines the importance of an “honest” relationship among all parties—filmmaker, topic, human subjects, and audience.

This dissertation will strive to investigate the perception and intent of documentary films through the lens of journalism principles and narrative inquiry theory. Kathleen Wells writes of content analysis being different from narrative analysis in that the former is “useful when the interest is in the type and number of independent themes observed in a text. Narrative analysis is useful when the interest is in how and why a story is constructed as it is, what it accomplishes, and how the audience affects what may be told.”\textsuperscript{11} The major point is examining it as a whole. It will explore whether the process of constructing the narrative stimulates the process of interpretation and verification or is an indicator of the intent of the producer. To the extent that it is possible, it will strive to be an objective study of what is objective and subjective in today’s documentary world. It acknowledges the lens that viewers use to interpret what has been seen is a reflection of their understanding and satisfaction, whether being a shared truth or desire for verification. It also acknowledges these internal biases and preferences, attitudes, and beliefs can have a major impact on what the viewer responds to and how the producer intends to satisfy a specific audience. While an independent lens may commonly refer to independent film production, it does not refer to the cognitive lens that an audience uses in choosing or assessing a documentary or what the art form of documentary means to them.

My own personal lenses are two-fold. The first, is that I am a middle-aged Midwesterner who developed a personal gestalt with network nightly news and

traditional news values. Being shaped by the pre-Internet era when network news dominated television left me viewing documentaries as being something reserved for historians and artists. Network news was always the bastion for respect and professionalism in broadcast journalism and commonly reached the largest audience of both camps of shared truth and verification. This was at times parallel and sometimes complementary to print journalism. At other times they were not in sync at all. But, it is key that in that pre-Internet time when print, radio and television ruled the media, the documentary form was reserved for the available air time of radio, the investigative journalism and print space that newspapers were afforded, and the public affairs programming of television on the weekends and what would become late-night network news programming. This is in direct contrast to the many avenues of delivery of documentary programming available today. Cable television, online streaming, and DVD distribution can offer all of the categories studied in this dissertation to personal interests, but also serve the needs of many special interest groups.

My other lens comes from twenty years as a documentary film producer and the pressures that came with the job. Those pressures include the responsibility to be active and thorough with historic and archival research, the accountability for a general audience that depends on information that is verifiable, the triangulation of interviews conducted to remove inaccuracies and bias or an agenda from recorded interviews, and the integrity of being true to those who are already knowledgeable on the subject. It has been a delicate balance between providing verification and a shared truth to the audience. The general on-demand environment of today allows producers to seek out an audience with special interests or in search of a shared truth and a shared lens as viewers. This
dissertation will attempt to navigate the current world of documentary and show contrast and similarities between shared truth and verification.
Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theory

Much has been written about the history, style, and clichés of the documentary. Much of the research traces the development of the genre from the United States, Great Britain, Russia and Germany. Film historians Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell found three distinct categories: “the exotic film, the attempt at direct recording of reality and the compilation documentary.”¹ Much of this development took place in the 1920s, up until which time most nonfiction cinematic projects were limited to newsreels and scenic shorts. The upsurge in audience support of documentary came with the popular reception of Robert Flaherty’s Nanook of the North in 1922, which Thompson and Bordwell attribute to the exotic style of documentary.² As an explorer and prospector throughout Canada and Alaska, Flaherty had previously experimented with documenting his expeditions. Nanook of the North spotlighted an Eskimo family. Even though the Eskimo man in the role of Nanook was credited with consulting about the direction, Flaherty planned every scene in advance. Thompson and Bordwell described Flaherty’s process as “balancing authenticity with arranged scenes, as when the Eskimos built an oversized igloo with one side open so that the family could be filmed going to bed.”³ This would become a familiar production style for Flaherty. He followed Nanook of the North with Moana in 1923 about an expedition to the Pacific island of Samoa, only to find that the native population had begun to transition to Western influences. He had scripted that

² Ibid.
³ Ibid.
the native population would re-create a “painful, obsolete tattoo ritual in traditional clothing,” which they obliged.4

Following in the style of Flaherty, American producers Ernest B. Schoedsack and Merian Cooper created *Grass: A Nation’s Battle for Life* in 1925, a story of the migration of Iranian nomads. They followed in 1928 with *Chang*, which was a staged account of a Siamese family. They pushed the exotic style to its limit in 1933 with the theatrical feature *King Kong*.5 At the same time in Eastern Europe, though the Soviet Union pursued the exotic, reality and compilation styles, it was compilation that had an influence on both popular and state documentary. Soviet producer Esfir Shub has been credited with perfecting the compilation style. Using government archival film (what today we might call stock footage) Shub made *The Great Road* in 1928 documenting the Russian Revolution, and *The Russia of Nicholas II and Leo Tolstoy*. Much of the source footage came from home movies of Nicholas II that Shub discovered.6 The compilation style wasn’t lost on American filmmakers. Frank Capra’s highly acclaimed World War II propaganda series, *Why We Fight*, also had to rely on existing battle footage from feature films and government-supplied war footage that had been previously shot.7 Both of these creations, in the Soviet Union and the United States, were a result of not having access to old or current footage. However, both situations contrast what is often practiced today. Staging or altering locations or repurposing footage from another production renders a narrative that is in conflict with journalism principles of validity, just as visual journalists

4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., 170.
understand that it is unethical to alter a photograph, but the practice complements the narrative inquiry theory of shared truth.

Jack C. Ellis and Betsy A. McLane illustrate this point in their description of Flaherty’s style: “The view he offers is his view, his prejudices, his convictions—as about the people he was filming.”

The story titles from *Nanook of the North* were studied by Barry Keith Grant and Jeannette Sloniosky; their findings were that authenticity was also questionable with title slides stating the hunting ground of Nanook and his clan of three hundred stretched over a territory as vast as England. This is another early example of how a documentary can rely on shared truth and that the claims it makes are considered by the audience to be factual.

An important distinction needs to be made about the values of journalism and the relevance that these values may have to film documentaries. The premise of this study is based on how documentaries can be categorized and, in the narrative voice, how they can be held accountable, or not, for their intentions, level of documentation, intended audience and impact on society. The following is a review of the basics of journalism canons and ethics that will be the main measures of the study. These are mainly based on the studies of Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, along with the traditions of Walter Lippmann and others.

According to Kovach and Rosenstiel, “Journalism provides something unique to a culture: independent, reliable, accurate, and comprehensive information that citizens

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require to be free. A journalism that is asked to provide something other than that subverts democratic culture.” Kovach and Rosenstiel base their analysis on not only the history of journalism, but also on how substantial or relevant the basic elements of journalism are today. They put forward ten elements of journalism that will be the measures of this study.

1. Its first obligation is to the truth.
2. Its first loyalty is to citizens.
3. Its essence is a discipline of verification.
4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover.
5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power.
6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise.
7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant.
8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion.
9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience.
10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news.

These measures are what will be used to create a narrative analysis of the documentaries sampled. The analysis will focus on: Will they actually be documenting something factual, truthful, historic or political or rather the subjective view of the producers?

Framing theory has long been a traditional form of academic research and analysis. It is a theory that explains why audiences seek out the information that satisfies them. Erving Goffman created the theory to explain how in everyday situations, media give us a personal frame of reference of how to interpret the circumstances we

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encounter.11 Goffman described a frame as a specific set of expectations “to make sense of a social situation at a given point in time” that can rapidly change given the changing situation.”12 It also can reflect the intent of the producers through the frames that are presented versus the frames that the audience already has preconceived. Walter Lippmann wrote of the pictures that we have in our heads that represent frames to help us understand society and also build a personal identity.13 By this, he meant that human beings experience most of life through mediated reality. They know much of the world not through personal experience but rather through images and words delivered by the media. Over time these create shorthand versions of reality, which Lippmann called stereotypes that help us understand and categorize new information. Without ever being to the Middle East, for example, a person has gleaned and synthesized images of Middle Easterners from the media into stereotypes that help make sense of the world when new things happen in the Middle East. These pictures in our heads are similar to the truths that are presented in the mass media to satisfy the expectations of the audience. Audiences typically choose media that meet their expectations by placing predictable, comfortable images in their heads. When an audience accepts such media images as factual, that is the definition of a shared truth. A disconnect occurs when these shared truths don’t match the larger truth of society, as when a person comfortable with one set of facts is confronted with a larger set of facts that is considered to be accepted wisdom by the world at large. This same disconnect occurs when a documentary producer presents his or her version of

12 Ibid., 333.
truth, rather than triangulating toward truth by presenting facts from many sources, particularly those in conflict.

It begs the question, if news were such an integral part of society, why would audiences seek out news that is false? The answer lies in the intent of the creator and the basic needs of people to reaffirm what they believe. Kovach and Rosentiel said, “The desire that information be truthful is elemental. Since news is the material that people use to learn and think about the world beyond themselves, the most important quality is that it be useful and reliable.”\(^{14}\) They emphasize what many have claimed about the purity and objectivity of journalism, including a rationale for why it should be separate from the state and reflect the news of a society and of a people. It can be the goal of the state, or for the purpose of this study, the goal of the producer or filmmaker, to blur the line between reality and truth in order to make a statement that reaffirms what the audience believes. Kovach and Rosenstiel state that the goals of medieval thinkers and political operatives today are quite similar. They share the goal of not wanting literal facts to interfere with control of politics or religious beliefs.\(^ {15}\) Journalistic interpretation of the truth goes beyond merely being accurate. Sharing a truth requires the building and maintenance of relationships among the story, audience, actors and media.

In direct opposition to verification, narrative theory attempts to evaluate the truth as agreed upon by the interviewer and interviewee, the interviewee and his or her own calculation of the past and the truth of it, and the relationship between what was recorded in the research process and what truth was presented to the audience. Considering the number of video productions released under the documentary category, it is important to

\(^{14}\) Kovach and Rosenstiel, *Elements of Journalism*, 37.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 38.
understand what version of the truth is being presented and whether it lives up to the traditional version of facts and truth as exercised in the journalism field.

Many of the theorists mentioned speak of verification, when the worlds of journalism and media collide. The process of verification that they mention relies on the importance of accuracy being built on the foundation of context, evidence, debate and the key of interpretation, which in a different sense is also the key of narrative theory as described below. Considering the many outlets for documentaries at the present time, including HBO, PBS, Netflix, YouTube, CNN, and Internet streaming in general, the word “documentary” can be confused with “documenting the truth” to the viewing public. “One of the risks of the new proliferation of outlets, talk programs, blogs, and interpretive reporting is that these forms have left verification behind,” Kovach and Rosenstiel said.16

Another challenge to the form of documentaries is the role of historians in assessing historical fact and the role that documentaries have always played in historical presentation. Gordon Wood observed:

One can accept the view that the historical record is fragmentary and incomplete . . . and that historians will never fully agree in their interpretations and yet still believe “in an objective truth about the past that can be observed and empirically verified.” In real life, people can tell when someone has come closer to getting it right, when the sourcing is authoritative, when the research is exhaustive, when the method is transparent.17

The authors mentioned are generally agreed that finding the “truth” is a question involving the intent of the creator of the message, the sponsor of the message and the audience of the message. Some have described today’s era of mass media as being one of

16 Ibid., 43.
affirmation, which is not a great leap from the general academic research based on the topic. “We have seen the rise of a third model in the form of talk radio and in some cable news and elsewhere - a journalism of affirmation, whose appeal is not in verifying the facts skeptically but in affirming the preconceptions of the audience.” Producers and creators can speak to the “general” truth of a message without actually sticking to what may be called the “facts” in the world of journalism.

Researchers have made a case that the intention of journalism practitioners is to present the facts to a community. But that community has changed. The outlets for receivers from the era of cable television, YouTube and Netflix has increased dramatically and has made it possible to confuse what is considered a documentary and what is considered journalism. The basics of journalism were famously examined by the Commission on Freedom of the Press, also known as the Hutchins Commission, in 1947. The commission was created at the request of Time magazine founder Henry Luce to investigate the state of journalism. The commission emerged from concern over publishers pandering the lowest form of news to satisfy large audiences, and the questionable business ethics of the shrinking number of companies that controlled the media. The commission members recommended that newspapers redefine themselves and live up to the following standards for service to the public, providing:

- a truthful, comprehensive account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning.
- a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism.
- a means of projecting the opinions and attitudes of the groups in a society to one another.

18 Kovach and Rosenstiel, *Elements of Journalism*, 47.
• a way of reaching every member of the society by the currents of information, thought, and feeling which the press supplies.¹⁹

These basic principles can apply to multimedia. The five w’s of journalism can adapt to become a scale for evaluating documentary filmmaking: “Who becomes character. What becomes plot. Where becomes scene or setting. Why becomes motivation or causation. Finally, how becomes narrative.”²⁰ This dissertation will add to the existing literature about truth in the documentary by examining what the general public or customer considers a documentary through Netflix rankings. Secondly, it will examine whether the documentary form has the ability to produce high-quality journalism. And finally, it will examine where documentary fits within the traditions of journalism literature.

Michael Massing of the Columbia Journalism Review wrote in 2008 what many people were thinking at the time about documentaries. Concerning documentary production, suddenly everyone was doing it, thanks to the advent of affordable and sophisticated digital production equipment. Critics charged that many of the benchmarks that documentary had established for excellence and fact-finding were being neutralized by a lack of training and voice among the new, amateur creators. “I’ve seen a lot of documentaries, indeed, they’re hard to avoid . . . the word ‘indie’ is invoked with the same reverence once reserved for ‘auteur.’”²¹ Massing referred to the fact that anyone can wear the label of “independent producer” given the easy use of technology and massive numbers of channels for delivery. The explosion of independent production coincided


with the mass popularity of Michael Moore’s documentaries, among others. Moore’s production credits include *Roger and Me*,\(^{22}\) *Bowling for Columbine*,\(^{23}\) *Fahrenheit 911\(^{24}\) and *Sicko*.\(^{25}\) Moore can have a polarizing effect on audiences. The passion that he has for not only film production, but also his topics, leads him to blur the lines separating documentary, feature, and editorial. However, throughout his career he has won respect from fans and critics for his in-depth reporting and budgeting of screen time for facts from all voices. His work has been emulated and imitated by legitimate journalists and productions carrying a propaganda angle, and not always by those who agree with his liberal politics. For example, *Hillary: The Movie*, produced during her time as a presidential candidate in 2008, helped the political action group Citizens United to have a major impact on campaign financing legislation.

Rose Economou of Columbia College challenges the comparison of traditional documentary with the work of Michael Moore and the new wave of so-called backpack journalists. Her observation is that Moore is criticized for his outlandish production style, but that he comes closer to evidence than most of the new breed of documentary creators. She asks if he practices what journalists have traditionally done, to enlighten the audience, strive for understanding and challenge popular myths. She goes on to make the distinction that what separates the documentary filmmaker from the journalist is the


\(^{23}\) *Bowling for Columbine*, directed by Michael Moore, screenplay by Michael Moore. DVD (MGM, 2003).

\(^{24}\) *Fahrenheit 911*, directed by Michael Moore, screenplay by Michael Moore. DVD (Sony Pictures, 2004).

“powerful, purposeful and persuasive use of emotion. Journalists, by and large, don’t travel in such emotion-laden territory.”

Another flag that brings suspicion from journalists to the field of the documentary is the ability to manipulate the story in the documentary’s production process. In post-production the pacing of the editing, music score, sound bites, and other multimedia elements can directly affect the tone of the production and interpretation from the audience. The power of this manipulation perhaps can be seen in the rise of the documentary’s popularity, as many modern documentaries have availed themselves of such manipulation including many that are studied in this dissertation. Steve Mintz, film history professor at the University of Houston, makes an accurate observation that documentaries historically have been referred to as “box office poison.”

Yet things are changing. The 2000s have proved to currently be the golden age of the documentary at the box office.

The top ten for the decade are:

1. Fahrenheit 9/11 | 2004 | $119,194,771
2. March of the Penguins | 2005 | $77,437,223
3. Sicko | 2006 | $24,540,079
4. An Inconvenient Truth | 2006 | $24,146,161
5. Bowling for Columbine | 2002 | $21,576,018

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Eighteen of the top twenty-five most profitable political documentaries were released since 2002.²⁹ This reflects the popularity of polarizing politics reflecting the climate of cable news.

Before the current explosion of documentary production, much of the literature on documentaries was focused on the ebb of documentary production for television, the land where journalism and documentary have long lived quietly together. With the exception of 60 Minutes and a few other long-running magazine programs, the documentary was regulated to film festivals, cable channels and home video. Cara Mertes, executive producer of the PBS broadcast program P.O.V. [short for point of view] and contributing editor to The Independent reports that suspicion about the visual presence of documentary isn’t new, due to the contrasting styles of documenting evidence. She offers this explanation of the relationship between documentary and journalism: “P.O.V. is home to many journalists-turned-film-makers. They have come to public media, often from commercial media [print and broadcast], for a chance to explore their stories from an explicit perspective, to work over a long period of time—sometimes as long as a decade—and for the chance to have total editorial control.”³⁰ This informs the question of

²⁹ Ibid.
whether there really is a separation between the traditional, fact-finding style of journalism, and the looser narrative style of documentary, which is not held as accountable as the work of journalists. Michael Rabiger of the BBC has also offered a smooth transition between the sudden burst in documentary activity and the world of journalism reinventing itself online, with greater accountability resulting from the two-way communication channels of the Internet. He sees both acting with a high degree of transparency, allowing the audience to look behind the scenes and witness the information-gathering process and also expose any sense of deception in both print and multimedia production process. Rabiger observed that the processes are very similar, with the advantage of documentary being the interpretive record and not just a straight accounting. “Who is to say that my notes and memories of an event coincide with those of anyone else who was present,” Rabiger said. Notes documentary producer Errol Morris, producer of The Thin Blue Line and Standard Operating Procedure about his feelings of a documentarian being a journalist, “You interview lots and lots of people, and look at lots of different kinds of evidence. But a journalist’s job—and I do think of myself as a kind of journalist—is to try and ferret out what really happened; to ferret out the truth.”

The challenge of comparing documentary to traditional journalism also was looked at by Ralph Beliveau of the Gaylord College of Journalism at the University of Oklahoma. Beliveau first recognized that both forms carry the mutual label of “factual” due to their shared interest in nonfiction storytelling. He also reports that some audiences

accept both based on their being reliable representations of the facts as long as they “follow recognizable conventions.” Beliveau somewhat takes the other viewpoint that the two disciplines should not be confused. “Documentary is still driven by television journalism in many contexts, and certainly in popular consciousness. But the increasing presence of advocacy documentary is bringing us closer to the moment when the form can again be separated from rather than equated to journalism.” The trend he spots relates to the fact that 75 percent of the top 100 grossing documentaries have been released since 2000. This revenue and viewership is from not only the traditional box office receipts, but also from home cable channels, DVD rentals and now Netflix. Much of the evidence that Beliveau offers is based on today’s era of documentary differing from those of the past. He states that the confusion over objectivity and its relation to documentary and journalism was never meant to be. His argument is centered on the respected process of “verification” of the scientific, academic community and the traditional form of journalism that was a reaction to the partisan press in the United States in the early nineteenth century. His answer is to evaluate both side by side in a rhetorical or articulation sense of study. It is a way that can document what was actually presented in a neutral arena. Concurring in the emergence of objectivity as a journalistic norm after the Civil War is David Mindich, who has long studied and related the historical view of the rise of objectivity as a priority of the American press in the late nineteenth century.

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34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
As mentioned earlier, Jeffrey Geiger has contributed significantly to the literature of narrative truth in documentary. His text, *American Documentary Film: Projecting the Nation*, challenges many of the same assumptions, questions, and categories as this dissertation. The text focuses on how “documentaries have engaged with US national identity and perceptions of American belonging.”\(^\text{37}\) By examining the nationalist narrative that can be attributed to documentary, Geiger traces the development of messaging in the development of U.S. documentaries up to the emergence of television and Internet documentaries. The similarities that run through the literature are the scale of audience perceptions and acceptance of the given facts or truth of the documentary. What confuses the issue is the source of the product. The difference between a Hollywood-produced documentary and an independent production can be dramatically large or insignificantly small. The source of the product can be a Hollywood studio, a political action committee (PAC), government, organized religion, an educational organization, a campaign committee, a lobbyist or any number of others. Joining in the narrative inquiry theory interpretation is the research of Jonathan Kahana, who described truth in documentary as the impact of documentary existing “in its ability to gesture towards worlds, experiences, emotions and structures of feeling beyond the ‘evidence’ it depicts.”\(^\text{38}\)

Kahana’s statement could represent the body of literature on the topic of fact and truth in documentary and this dissertation. It is the contrast of fiction and nonfiction, journalism and propaganda, truth, and the perception of truth. What is objective and what

\(^{38}\) Ibid., 4.
is subjective can be in the mind of the audience, but reinforcing an idea, whether
objective or subjective, can make it a common truth. The same can be said of truth in
documentary—did it teach the audience something or make them question the source?

The relevance of this dissertation and the study of the connection of documentary
and journalism can be directly linked to the curriculum being offered by journalism
schools. Journalism schools are becoming more aware of the connections between
documentary and reporting. Documentary classes or programs have been offered or
recently added at the University of Missouri, New York University, Columbia University,
the University of California at Berkeley, California State University San Bernardino, the
University of Arkansas, and many others. This growth of documentary classes provides
strong evidence that journalism educators are aware of the need to educate their students
on the field of documentary filmmaking, and that they also are concerned that their
students know not only how to tell a story but also to tell the difference between an
entertaining narrative and straight accounting of the basic facts.

In contrasting documentary and journalism, it is also important to include the
actual voice of professionals and journalists with the literature. The dissertation will
include information from the author’s interviews with Gary R. Edgerton, a historian who
works with Ken Burns and is a professor and dean of the College of Communication at
Butler University in Indianapolis, and with Samuel Hynes, a World War II veteran and
award-winning writer who was a consultant and narrator for Ken Burns’ The War. It is
important to include the legacy of Ken Burns because in the popular imagination he
represents fact, history, art, and many of the genres that documentary filmmaking stands
for in recent decades.
A definition of narrative inquiry theory is also required to understand the questions and goals of this dissertation. Shalini Lal, Melinda Suto and Michael Ungar reported from their research, “In a narrative inquiry, the researcher strives to locate theory within a participant’s narrative and keep participant stories intact.” They make the distinction that as opposed to content analysis, narrative inquiry looks at a narrative story or production as a whole unit of analysis, and not as separate pieces of a larger story that emerge. \(^{39}\) Kenneth Gergen, theorist of grounded theory, describes what may be a definition of narrative as “stories that have a value end-point.” This value end-point is important to an audience with a shared feeling of truth. The narrative offers the usual narrative toolbox—coherency, a linear passage of time and possibly most importantly, the inclusion of events relevant to that point—that gives the audience a sense of explanation of the shared truth or meaning of the production. \(^{40}\) This is not done by providing a thorough reporting of a large number of relevant facts and leaving the explanation up to the audience, as in many journalism traditions, but in narrative inquiry, an explanation of the meaning is provided. To paraphrase, practitioners of narrative inquiry theory value the truth as agreed upon by producer and creator, creator and audience, and interviewer and interviewee. The traditional sources and users of narrative research have relied on old and new media to complement their research. Sociological, historical, and media studies are just a few of the academic fields of research that have

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relied on personal interviews, diaries, photos, archival materials including letters and memos and now with email and text messages.

For definition’s sake, what the author has called a narrator is an important concept to narrative inquiry. It is not necessarily a narrator per se, but it is the narrative voice that guides the program. Tilmann Koppe and Tom Kindt, researchers of literary theory, make the point of how the theory of fiction fits into the theory of a narrator and narrative. They speak of a rule-governed attitude and that when it is adopted by the audience, the text can agreeably lead the imagination of the audience to a conclusion. It is part of accepting the text as one unit of analysis and that the overall narrative content is the equivalent to the voice of a narrator, with the exception that the audience has more leeway to imagine the overall narrative as serving the purpose of a narrator in the absence of one. The following model created by Koppe and Kindt demonstrates the outcome with a narrator and without. With a narrator, the audience concludes what the narration suggests. Without a narrator the audience must imagine what the overall narrative suggests.

A – Based on the narrative text, imagine that (S tells that p) (S being narrator and p being audience)

B – Based on the narrative text, imagine

The narration expressed is unreliable if it authorizes the audience to suspect that the narrator does not provide completely accurate information or all relevant information. This is simply the case of the information becoming unreliable if it is not a shared truth. The audience starts to doubt the narrator and the given conclusion. In narrative inquiry theory, in the case with a narrator or without, the audience can be led to an agreeable conclusion, as opposed to a journalistic approach that attempts to present a valid and

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reliable representation of all available and relevant facts and all parties are presented, leaving the conclusion up to the audience based on the evidence.

Koppe and Kindt make a distinction between what they call the narrating idiot and the artful deceiver. Those are a talking head reading a script on one hand and the car salesman who may be a political pundit. Both forms of narrative construction can be tools of masking a production as a documentary. Jan Stuhring, researcher of narrative theory, relates accuracy to a form of verification. Stuhring found that a program providing a shortage of information directly leads to a shortage of accuracy—as opposed to a documentary presented within the traditions of journalism, attempting to provide all relevant information of all voices. Stuhring posits that adequate levels of information provided in the program are essential for the audience’s correct interpretation of what is narrated, so as not to come away with false conclusions.

The studies of Jerome Bruner, a major theorist on narrative inquiry theory, have reflected on the role of the creator, audience, and impact on society. He also has questioned the verification of the process. His questions bring into mind the fluid interpretation offered in narrative inquiry juxtaposed with journalism principles. The trust and acceptance between the narrator and the audience is a necessary trust that goes beyond the evidence offered in traditional documentary based on journalism principles, which earns a trust. “The reflexivity of self-narrative poses problems of a deep and serious order—problems beyond those of verification, beyond the issue of indeterminacy [that the very telling of the self-story distorts what we have in mind to tell], beyond

42 Ibid, 85.
43 Ibid.
The scholars of narrative inquiry rely on the truth being held in the senses, attitudes, and minds of the audience. “A rousing tale of a life is not necessarily a ‘right’ account. It is susceptible to cultural, interpersonal, and linguistic influences,” said Bruner.

Bruner also understood the role of verification and that the context of a narrative can add to verification. Not only are personal narratives important to self-identity, they must also fit into the larger narrative of society for verification. He asks, does the present narrative fit with other larger narratives of society as a piece of a puzzle? “Life stories must mesh, within a community of life stories; tellers and listeners must share some deep structure about the nature of a life, for if the rules of life-telling are altogether arbitrary, tellers and listeners will surely be alienated by a failure to grasp what the other is saying.”

Bruner not only articulated the mechanics of narrative but also created models for study and verification of a narrative. He finds our interpretations to be the result of re-creating a personal narrative, mainly through stories, myths, excuses, rationalizations and so on—unlike the options available from a program presented in a journalistic style where false facts can be weeded out by falsification. Narrative construction can only achieve “verisimilitude.” And that definition is the appearance of fact without verification. Or rather, truth within a certain context or audience, either intended or not intended.

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45 Ibid., 694.
46 Ibid., 699.
Below are some of Bruner’s definitions and explanations of the narrative process:

Narrative diachronicity: A narrative is an account of events occurring over time. The time involved is “human time” rather than abstract or clock time. There are many conventions for expressing the sequences of narrative even in discourse, like flashbacks and flash-forwards.

Particularity: Narratives take on their ostensive reference to particular happenings.

Intentional state entailment: This describes people acting in a setting and the happenings that befall them that must be relevant to their intentional states while so engaged—to their beliefs, desires, theories, values and so on.

Hermeneutic composability: This is required when there is neither a rational method of assuring the “truth” of a meaning assigned to the text as a whole, nor an empirical method for determining the verifiability of the elements that make up the text.

These basic rules provided by Bruner describe the signaling of audience suspicion questioning the facts of a program or the intentions of the producer or narrator. In the steps to gauge whether a narrative is accurate and factual, it is first important to question the intentions of the story, why the story is told the way it is, and how and when it is being told. The background of the producer and the issue will also help inform the audience of any truths that could be suspicious.

Bruner’s accounting of the narrative inquiry theory includes the following rules of thumb in identifying a documentary that may fall outside of any journalistic canons:

Canonicity and breach: Not every sequence of events constitutes a narrative.
Some accounts do not warrant telling.
Referentiality: The acceptance of a narrative obviously cannot depend on its correctly referring to reality; narrative truth is judged by its verisimilitude rather than verifiability.

Genericness: Genres seem to provide both writer and reader with conventional “models” for limiting the hermeneutic task of making sense of the narrative.

Normativeness: Tellability is a form of discourse that rests on a breach of conventional expectation; narrative is necessarily normative.

Context sensitivity and negotiability: This makes context and narrative discourse in everyday life a viable instrument for cultural negotiation. You tell your version, I tell mine, and we rarely need legal confrontation to settle the difference.\textsuperscript{48}

However, it does become more complicated in the sense that some narratives are a compilation of interviews, sequencing, editing, graphics, and a distorted sense of the reality outside of the audience that the piece was intended for. Take, for example, the following questions that might be asked of a documentary: How do actors from both sides of a given issue appear on screen? Are they mentioned? Who is the producer? What are their affiliations and allegiances? What images are shown on screen and for how long? What quotes are used to complement a headshot of the speaker? Jared Gardner and David Herman report from their research of comics that the amount of time spent on a certain subject, topic or persons, and the editing of screen time and complexity can result in a particular reaction from the audience. Their area of study focuses on how the graphic narrative can change the impact of the overall narrative. They write, “Unlike viewers of

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., 11-14.
frame sequences in cinema, comics readers can scan sequences at variable speeds enabling them to develop competing interpretations.\footnote{49}

According to narrative theory, having consented to shoot an interview is usually considered an agreement or endorsement of truth, trust, documentation, and authorization of the end results. Lal, Suto and Ungar also report in their research that narrative inquiry is based on “aesthetic features and capacity to evoke emotion in the audience.”\footnote{50} This theory shares much with the research of Catherine Kohler Riessman demonstrating that people can be more associated with the theme or emotional mood of a project than its historical significance.\footnote{51} These researchers emphasize that the personal meanings participants associate with events are of more importance than the historical accuracy of the events to that person.

Summarizing or paraphrasing the text by a narrator isn’t quite accepted among current narrative researchers. By avoiding narration, it can lead to a rendition of the facts that the audience can interpret and summarize on their own. Given the above background on the issues of truth in documentaries, this dissertation takes the following as its main research question:

\footnote{49} Jared Gardner and David Herman, eds., Graphic Narratives and Narrative Theory, special issue of SubStance 40, no. 1 (2011): 7.  
RQ1: To what extent are the most popular documentaries viewed through Netflix verifiable in the traditional sense of journalism, or just a shared truth of producer and a specific audience?

Two documentaries of Ken Burns and *Hillary: The Movie* will be examined as models for the discussion of whether documentaries fall on the spectrum of journalism and shared truth. These two chapters are part of the background that includes the literature review, but are treated separately because of their length. The study then turns toward a method of examining the most-watched documentaries of Netflix and a case-by-case examination of those documentaries.
Chapter 3: Ken Burns, Historian or Revisionist?

In the past three decades, Ken Burns has offered history in a palatable, entertaining, and easily accessible format to millions of Americans. He has produced and directed twenty-one documentaries, all within a production agreement between Burns and PBS. He is under contract with PBS through 2019, and has five documentary projects under way, including one slated for a 2016 release on Vietnam. This chapter will compare his first production in 1981 with PBS, Brooklyn Bridge, based on the book by David McCullough, with his marathon production of 2007, The War. This comparison will examine the span through the lens of journalistic verification and the shared truth of the comparative inquiry theory. The films were chosen because Brooklyn Bridge was his first for PBS and The War is his most recent that allows for passage of time to evaluate its relative merit. Media reviews, program details, personal interviews with Burns associates and media interviews with Burns are used to evaluate his style of narrative histories and the evolution of that style. Is Burns representing actual historic facts or offering a shared truth of the events he has portrayed in American history?

The style of Burns has been both applauded and criticized. Ever since the release of Brooklyn Bridge, he has been the champion of the documentary voice, inspiring the masses to embrace the convenience of modern-day media equipment to produce a personal documentary. In what was unusual at the time, he became the in-house producer of record at PBS. This arrangement, which allowed him maximum creative freedom, allowed him to rewrite many of the rules of research and the presentation of narrative

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2 Gary Edgerton, telephone interview by Paul Jacoway, February 8, 2012. Gary Edgerton is the chair of the Communication and Theatre Arts School at Old Dominion University.
history. A great deal of criticism was focused on him, questioning his significance as a historian and the value of his productions to history, as is detailed below. His confidants and aficionados write this criticism off as envy.\(^3\) To distinguish between an individual that studies, researches, and reports on historical events for the public record or for education is traditionally an historian. People like Ken Burns is why he calls himself a “secondary source.” He is reinterpreting much material that has already been recorded. Burns is generally regarded as a filmmaker from the traditional community, hence the title “new historians.”

**Reviews of The War**

Much of this criticism comes from a press that may have been tiring of the Burns dynasty. One particular quote from a review of *The War* said, “it is a characteristically serious, patriotic yet flawed account of Americans and their memories.”\(^4\) Burns’ writing with an emotional tone is often the subject of comment. One review read, “[H]e can be declared, stylistically and thematically, the most conservative of all major U.S. documakers.”\(^5\) As evidence of this perceived conservatism, the only “new” production technique offered in the documentary and commented on by reviewers was “there’s no parade of history experts to offer a distanced perspective.”\(^6\) Another review on the same technique said, “My hope was that if Burns had to use writers to explain the background material, he would at least pick journalists who covered the battles from the front lines. He did me one better, He didn’t use any experts.”\(^7\) Instead of using historians on camera

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3 Ibid.
5 Ibid., 2.
6 Ibid., 3.
to explain and describe events in *The War*, Burns chose to use non-historians who offered their first-hand knowledge of history. It was a change in actors from historians to citizens but not a change in style. Most reviewers had a qualm about what battle or historic detail was left out. On-camera expert Sam Hynes, a World War II fighter pilot, referenced one common complaint about *The War*, the belief that Burns omitted the Japanese conquest of East Asia and the Soviet defense against Hitler’s invading armies because of what they saw as Burns’ compulsion with telling the history of the United States and not other nations.\(^8\) He has been quick to emphasize the time constraints of television, even in the relatively long documentary format, and the need to include only what is manageable in the story.

Another addition for *The War* was the use of Hollywood star voices: actors with the weight of Alan Alda and Alan Arkin. Burns has practiced this style in the past, but it becomes more important as the projects get bigger and have more marketing demands. A review published in *Variety* noticed some production advancements from 1990’s *The Civil War*, in which the bulk of images were black-and-white still photographs from the mid-nineteenth century, and other previous projects, in the availability of existing footage from the era, both black and white and color. The added media element offered some relief from the tedious, still photograph repetition over the fifteen-hour broadcast of *The War*. The review also commented on a negative aspect of *The War*: keeping the narrative in chronological order results in continuity problems. Specifically, by telling the story of

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\(^8\) Samuel Hynes, telephone interview by Paul Jacoway, February 22, 2012.
a soldier, the audience is ready for more but must wait until later, being swept off to a battlefield that is next on the chronological list.  

Some criticisms left the subject of The War and directly attacked the Burns style. Variety said:

Burns . . . showed us earlier this fall that even the brand name of World War II is susceptible to being put on something barely related to the original event and exploited for commercial gain. To not tell the cultural reasons people thought at the time that it was “a necessary war.” No, Ken Burns is only interested in why Ken Burns thinks it was a necessary war. All this retrospective emotion! All these weepy violins and plangent pianos. All this scolding of people long dead for their racial and sexual attitudes.

Much of this type of rhetoric toward Burns parallels what he explains as allowing one’s emotions to enter the narrative. James Bowman of The American Spectator gave credit to Burns for using what is termed the “bottom-up style of production,” leaving out the famous generals and leaders and focusing on the everyman who experienced battle first hand, a technique that tends to increase emotion through identification with the principals. Yet Bowman joined the common criticism of Burns’ allowing too much emotion to enter the narrative by saying, “having told us how his subjects feel, Ken then feels the need to tell us how he feels and therefore how we should feel too. USA Today said at the time, ‘Burns, who calls himself an emotional archaeologist, says he was touched by the stories told by veterans.’” In explaining his view, Bowman found it an oxymoron “since archeology concerns itself solely with the bits of people that are left when the emotions and soft tissues are gone – but it certainly isn’t history.”

Bowman also noticed the absence of generals and experts providing commentary in place of

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10 Ibid., 67.
veterans, but he wrote that these individuals being allowed more importance than they had at the time creates a distortion, a “type of voyeurism and self-pity.”

Aside from the criticism offered above from media critics, and provided later from historians, there is no arguing that Burns’ brand of history has worked its way into our educational culture. Giving much credit to his work were researchers Bruce Fehn and James Schul in their study “Teaching and Learning Competent Historical Documentary Making: Lessons from National History Day Winners.” This essay in a teaching guide for history instructors is a strong statement supporting the importance of verification. They reported that many of their student entries on National History Day were in the form of a documentary. They concluded the surge occurred because of “the rapidly expanding availability of documentary making software [editing software] and online archives.” They went as far as creating a category for Burns’ work, based on “skills of analysis, interpretation, source evaluation, use of evidence, and synthesis. These practices paralleled those enacted by historians and student historians who produced source-based written accounts.” They also recommended documentary filmmaking become part of history classrooms. On their judging sheets for their students’ documentaries, they listed the following criteria: is historically accurate, shows analysis and interpretation, places topic in historical context, uses wide research, uses available primary sources, research is balanced, clearly connects topic to theme, and demonstrates significance of topic in history and draws conclusions.

11 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
Their enthusiasm for accepting documentary filmmaking into a traditional history curriculum is challenged by the observations of another academic. David Harlan of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, attacked the academic weight of Burns’s work. He said, “We tend to view the documentaries themselves as little more than historical melodramas, long on misty nostalgia but short on critical analysis.” The article added, “When we bother to review them at all – which is not very often – we invariably dismiss them as superficial, sentimental, and simplistic,” Harlan said historians often go beyond the sentimental presentation and attack the factual foundation of films, such as the argument about leaving out Reconstruction at the end of The Civil War. Burns is quick to explain that sometimes the limitation of existing archives on a topic make it necessary to juxtapose someone’s words with arbitrarily selected photographs. Harlan criticized this style, saying, “He pulls his camera in close and let his people talk, sometimes for two or three minutes at a stretch . . . eventually settling on the person’s face while an off-screen narrator reads from a letter or a diary that, as it turns out, may or may not have been written by the person staring out from the screen. The narrator tells us virtually nothing about this person, other than his name and his home town.” A professor of American history at Princeton University, Sean Wilentz, in a cover article for The New Republic entitled “America Made Easy: McCulloch, Adams and the Decline of Popular History,” said that the new “non-academic” style of history

16 Harlan, “Ken Burns and the Coming Crisis,” 170.
17 Ibid., 154.
has fallen under the control of the entertainment industry, creating a “passive, debilitating spectacle, a neon epic of mind-numbing nostalgia.”¹⁸

Wilentz, Harlan, and historians of their level of experience may have felt a threat from the onslaught of Burns and his contemporaries. They cite the disinterest of their undergraduate students in history after they graduate, unless they are off to graduate school. “We assume that our primary responsibility is to convey this professionally certified knowledge to our students, we teach them how to read academic history,” Wilentz said, in a jibe at popular history storytellers whom they consider to be less than academically rigorous.¹⁹ They speak with disdain of “new historians” who reach the public through novels, biographies, and films. According to the existing literature and interviews, Burns seems to enjoy being a member of the “new historians,” as he explained to Thomas Cripps in an interview about how much he enjoys being the “provocateur of the academic establishment.”²⁰ “I think we’re seeing the same kind of communication with a broad audience to, some would say, rescue history from those who teach it and the scholars who only wish to talk to themselves about it, and to return history to a broad dialogue.”²¹ He added that it was only in the academic community that he found a “sad – painful sort of rejection.” This doesn’t all mean that either the Hollywood “new historians” or the traditional historians reflecting on the work of each other is accurate. It just shows that traditionally there is a distinction given academic historians and filmmakers. Burns’ take on academia is that the academic model has

¹⁹ Ibid.
²¹ Ibid.
required scholars to speak only to themselves in terms that are not understandable by the general public, and thus academics are not reinforcing a shared truth. Burns spoke in the interview of a university academic and friend who feared submitting an article to a popular historic journal, fearing it would hurt his case for tenure.

Burns also defended his manipulation of emotion in his projects and underlying motivation:

I think it’s an absolutely underlying love of my country combined with, what I’ve called an “emotional archeology” that I’m engaged in. The facts, the dates, the events, even the ideas, the intellectual matter of history, are best not only conveyed but absorbed and kept by me and by an audience when they come with certain emotional associations that I wish to excavate along with the facts of the past . . . and that the stuff of the work is unafraid of an emotional content, which I think many scholars are afraid of. That a direct quote can only be used for statistical facts rather than for an emotional content.22

On the issue of re-enacting scenes, he said that he will not embrace re-enactments outside of having people reading journal diaries, and he stops at having actors and actresses re-enacting history and reading lines on camera. He also is put out by accusations from historians that he manipulates words and speakers: “I have been accused by historians of actually placing words in the mouths of my so-called ‘talking heads,’ [people filmed talking in close-ups] so that they will say what I want them to say, and I have never once.”23

Despite the give and take between the disciplines of “old history” vs. “new history,” both schools contribute in producing a documentary for Burns. He described starting with a group of historical advisers, whom he thinks are also good writers, and many of whom he believes are discouraged with the academy. He identified the National

22 Ibid., 747.
23 Ibid.
Endowment for the Arts, which provides much of the grant money that finances his projects, as being his only check-and-balance system along with his ongoing meetings with the group of advising historians.

Once the process begins, I am influenced by these very editors – the board of scholars that we have, my editors and colleagues making the film. . . . We sit and talk about that balance issue, and I make decisions based on “You’ve gone too far here,” or “You really can’t say that,” or “The evidence proves that it’s not that,” or “I really think that we’re lacking the kind of overview of what’s going on in the country at large.”

As far as defending what he cuts out of a production, he claims to have no rule as to what doesn’t make the final cut. He said he understood that historians may be disturbed by what they know is not in the documentary, and would like to see more detail. He said some material are left out because they do not fit the documentary visually. As for his reliance on the narrator, he said, “I have had a narrator in every film. I think it is very important to do that, particularly in history – someone who speaks essentially for the viewer – who is neutral, more objective but is not unmindful of first person testimony that is swirling around in quotes.” He qualified the place of the filmmaker as being a secondary source. In his terms he felt that emotionally “reconfiguring” and “re-presenting” the material in a way that books cannot do, by layering with sound effects, music, and first-person narration, creates a unique experience.

As far as the actual recording process of narration, for The Civil War he recorded “600-700 voices used in the final documentary, with 2,500 recorded segments, frequently with four or five options for any one performance of a personal narrative.”

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24 Ibid.
26 Ibid., 81.
brought an image for the visual segment to stimulate the readers by talking about the mood of the picture and that person’s life. He described the recording of the Gettysburg Address, shifting the stress from the word “by” to the word “people” in the famous, “of the people, by the people, for the people.”

Burns described today’s documentaries to be a polar opposite of the words of Walt Whitman following the battle of Appomattox, “Future years will never know the seething hell and the black infernal background of countless minor scenes and interiors (not the official surface courteousness of the generals, not the few great battles) of the Secession War, and it is best they should not. The real war will never get into the history books.”

Critics continue to question the format of Burns’ productions, including 2009’s documentary about the national park system. Reynolds assailed Burns’ *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea* for “its over-reliance on talking heads and overdrawn narratives, the folksy and rather syrupy soundtracks, and the wearying 12-hour length of it all, tediously exhaustive, an act of supreme vanity, stretching so far beyond the topic’s weight to strain the thread of goodwill Burns has developed.” The framing and selection of shots, sometimes called “the Burns Gaze,” is shown through the editing and writing of the piece. The Burns Gaze implying that you fall in love with the shot and then fall in love with the narrative.

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27 Ibid., 84.
A Discussion with a Veteran and Academic in Burns’ Camp

Gary Edgerton is the chair of the Communication and Theatre Arts School at Old Dominion University. He also is co-executive editor for the *Journal of Popular Film and Television*. His position has allowed him extensive access to Ken Burns for interviews and made him a somewhat self-appointed Burns authority. He dates the style of Burns to the historic work of Robert Flaherty in his groundbreaking silent 1922 documentary, *Nanook of the North*, as the first creative treatment of actuality.\(^{29}\) It wasn’t until rather recently that Edgerton felt the criticism of Burns noticeably increased, as reviews of his first eight films, through *The Civil War*, were unanimously positive about his cutting edge style, which Edgerton found ironic due to Burns’ pan and zoom style of shooting still photos dating to the 1940s and 1950s. Edgerton cites the criticism from a basic frustration with Burns getting the lion’s share of documentary grant funding for the last twenty-thirty years. To Edgerton, the criticism stems from jealousy and envy from Burns’ peers.

He said several genres are available to the documentary filmmaker today, and those who do not mimic Burns are not exempt from criticism. He used Michael Moore as an example of a producer who is at the center of the action, compared with Burns not showing up through the production, which is not something that is shared by Burns’ critics. Edgerton explained that “Burns is not didactic,” something that is consistent with his description of himself as a filmmaker first and an amateur historian second. Like Orson Welles, Edgerton thinks that Ken Burns made his style his own.\(^{30}\)

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\(^{29}\) Edgerton, telephone interview.

\(^{30}\) Ibid.
Burns has often referred to his style of documentary as “bottom up” theory, focusing on the individual and not the great generals or leaders who often get the attention of historians. Edgerton said Burns made this choice essentially to reach baby boomers, who grew up in an era of personal attention and personal narratives. In spite of his conflict with some traditional historians, Burns makes appearances at history conferences and meetings. At one of those conferences, he was on a panel that discussed bias in reporting history. He replied that historians are “cops,” and there is bias everywhere; nothing is free of subjectivity. Edgerton repeated that Burns does not fudge facts; he will tell a good story without giving too much information, much the way he describes the style of scholarly history. He describes Burns’ style as quite conservative in spite of being personally liberal in his politics.31

Edgerton describes Burns’ films as slower paced than what viewers would see from his peers on the History Channel on cable television. “The shot length on the History Channel are five-six seconds, his are twenty-five to thirty seconds. He turns shots into scenes with planning cut-ins all in one image. Being concerned with commercial ratings, the History Channel does not want to lose their audience.”32 Edgerton spoke positively of Burns’ application of emotion to his historical narratives. Burns often speaks of his criteria for selecting projects as an emotional “gut” type of feeling that the project may hold for both him and America. “He said after producing The Civil War that he probably would never do another war film,” Edgerton said. “He didn’t want to be typecast as the guy who does war documentaries. But his gut told him to do something about World War II, when he realized that it was the end of that generation of Americans,

31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
to have a piece where their voice could be heard." Burns was aware of the saturation of World War II books, movies and documentaries, both fiction and non-fiction. Burns also stressed that his projects are not just a matter of research and compilation but also take an emotional toll on the crew as well as they get close to the topic and characters after spending years with them in production. He came to the decision to produce The War nearly fifteen years after The Civil War was broadcast on PBS. During that intervening period, America had seen an avalanche of World War II histories, both historical and sentimental. It was the overwhelming fear that many of the war’s veterans would soon be dead of old age that spurred him to not let any more time pass. According to Edgerton, Burns had a suspicion that many young Americans were not even clear on what countries fought in the war, what side they were on, why there was a war, or if it was a good war or bad war. Supporting his “bottom up” production style, he tried to capture the average American in the war. In contrast, according to Edgerton, what is often shown on The History Channel is the construction of celebrity presidents and generals, the process of military manufacturing, and “boogie man” pieces that clearly villainies everything, everyone, and every symbol that represented the enemy.

Similarly, Edgerton said Burns felt the need to challenge the words of nineteenth-century poet Walt Whitman, that future generations would never have to witness the terror of the Civil War. Burns brings the sensation of many historical moments to life, not in the way of Hollywood filmmaker Steven Spielberg’s realistic treatment in Saving Private Ryan, but in a first-hand accounting of what happened to individuals and the memories that they have had to live with. The “bottom up” theory as applied in The War

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33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
materialized in the selection of the cities that would represent both Americans in battle and on the home front. Four American towns were selected – Luverne, Minnesota; Mobile, Alabama; Waterbury, Connecticut; and Sacramento, California – diverse in their characteristics, to showcase survivors and their recollections. Burns’ crews filmed in these selected locations for more than five years, promoting their presence, interviewing more than six hundred possible participants, and parsing a final selection of forty who would make the final cut of the film. Filming that would represent locations of battles and troop movement was inserted in the script in chronological order, as with many historical books, films, and biographies. In answer to the criticism of developing a character with a back-story from one of the towns and then hopping to another location, this fits perfectly into the traditional narrative style of speaking in chronological, linear fashion that offers verification. Burns explained his selection of towns as part of the randomness that he applies to all of his productions, that you cannot include everything, so it is acceptable to pick topics, events, and locales that will represent the vast landscape of opportunities, which could offer a shared truth.

Edgerton did not elaborate on how the four towns were chosen, but he understood the criteria. The four towns did not have much in common. The research and pre-production process employed was very similar to a random sample of locations and people to represent a diverse set of experiences.

There also has been much debate and a little criticism of the selection of such a simple title for The War. The general reply is, “that is what people called it that were in ‘the war,’ it was the war of that generation,” Edgerton said.\textsuperscript{35} As much as Spielberg with

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid.
Saving Private Ryan and Tom Brokaw with his book, The Greatest Generation, among many examples, many have prospered from the exploits of World War II and its veterans. Burns in many interviews has labeled himself as a patriotic and a proud American, but with his close and long-term relationship with PBS, it is possible that his “patriotism” and choosing topics by a gut feeling may have something to do with timing and smart marketing.36 In 2007 when The War premiered on PBS, Ken Burns did a promotional tour of universities and any other outlet that would prove beneficial for ratings. I went to hear him speak at a small, northern Ohio college with one of my academic colleagues. Both being fans and producers of documentaries, we had the feeling that maybe Elvis was coming. We were not disappointed when Burns spoke of the making of The War, much as a preacher would deliver a sermon. He has a sincere, quiet, almost soothing tone to his voice. He speaks from his heart, with well-chosen words and metaphors, reminding me much of the charismatic gifts of televangelist Joel Osteen. At the end of the presentation he took questions from audience members. One of the questions came from a WWII veteran who thanked Burns for his dedication and talents in producing The War, a story he felt had to be told from the soldiers’ point of view. On our drive home, the discussion revolved around whether this veteran had been chosen from participants in order to ask that question, or was it a sincere account from an anonymous veteran. Either could have been possible.

The expertise, observations, and theories of Gary Edgerton can be compared to those of another informed participant and witness, World War II veteran and scholar Sam Hynes. As discussed earlier, Burns chose to bypass the traditional historians who would

36 Ken Burns, public presentation of the production of The War, Mount Union College, Mount Union, Ohio, April 10, 2007.
offer insight, context, and detail to the narrative of the film, and chose to use average Americans who either were in battle or contributed to the war in their homeland. One of those chosen was Hynes, a war pilot who went on to earn a PhD in British literature. He was not chosen for being a scholar, although the books he has published on the war may have called him to Burns’ attention, but rather for being a soldier. In a conversation with Hynes, he outlined the time he spent as not only a participant offering testimonies in The War but also as a consultant.\(^{37}\)

Hynes was contacted by Lynn Novick, a producer with Burns, in August 2002. Hynes makes the comparison of working on The War with the Iraq War as it was starting and continuing to fill the news. Being a veteran of World War II, Hynes could not quite grasp the intangible feel of the “war on terror” similar to how the “war on drugs” and “war on poverty” felt inside. Working on The War made him feel as if he were working on two movies or two wars at once. Hynes was impressed with the “bottom up” approach taken by Burns, spotlighting the privates and not the generals, and signed on to help. The development of Burns’ project began in a series of letters proposing ideas, asking for feedback, and setting a production schedule. As early as Hynes joined the project, he was under the impression that a good deal of the research had been already completed. The first schedule was for the first draft of the script to be completed by the fall of 2004 and editing to be completed in 2007. The most obvious similarity and difference between Brooklyn Bridge and The War at this point was their difference in length, one hour compared with fifteen, and the production schedule, with both at five years. Hynes was surprised when that schedule was quickly updated and moved forward after the U.S.

\(^{37}\) Hynes, telephone interview.
residents had been interviewed and cast for the film by 2003 with editing set to begin in 2004. The group of advisors [known as The World War Two Film Project Board of Advisors]\(^{38}\) met face to face in New York in February 2003. It turned into three days of reflecting, reminiscing, and brainstorming, and Burns started writing the script after the visit.

When Hynes read the first draft he had a strong reaction to the issue of sentimentality that many critics felt, but from the opposite viewpoint. He took exception to the phrasing in the grant proposal: “Without sentimentality or nostalgia, the film will honor and celebrate the heroism, endurance, determination, sacrifice, and bravery of the generation of Americans who lived through it.”\(^{39}\) Hynes felt the story could not be told without being nostalgic as opposed to critics of Burns’ usual sentimental approach.

Sentiment was a fundamental component of the way World War II veterans looked at the years when they were young and excited. Sentiment colored their view of death and destruction. Yet Hynes believed that nostalgia and sentimentality could dangerously twist history, and advised Burns to not ignore but to look out for “soft distortions” of history as told by the senior veterans on the committee. When two segments were complete, the advisors again went to New York to discuss the drafts in March 2004. Topics included the mobilization of women into the workforce, blacks in the navy, conditions in the Japanese-American internment camps and how the army reported that someone’s child or husband had been killed in battle. When the script for episode three arrived in August, Hynes was concerned about the coverage of D-day. He


\(^{39}\) Ibid., 261.
found the accounting accurate about time and events, but he did not like the commentary of war correspondents, feeling they were too much like sportscasters calling a game. Although war correspondents put themselves under fire to offer verification, the heat of the moment could have fed a shared patriotic truth. He advised Burns to stick to the commentary of veterans.

Hynes found it easy to make comparisons between the Iraq War and “their war.” He considered the newspaper reports from Washington every day during script writing to be a lesson in how organized World War II really was.40

The committee met at Walpole, New Hampshire, in June 2005, home to Burns and his thriving production schedule. As explained by Edgerton, Burns had planned on a life of anonymity and poverty as a filmmaker, but even after achieving success he has stayed loyal to the hamlet he calls home. Hynes described it as more of a collection of houses and buildings with no real streets, curbs, or right angles. For these meetings the committee did not mark up printed scripts but actually watched rough cuts of the episodes. They comment on accuracies, repetition of events or information - basic things that are usually done by the continuity director on a film. Some of the observations made by Hynes included: the number of Japanese pilot casualties was higher than the number of planes shot down, what were called British bombers were actually American B-17s, kamikaze pilots were called volunteers but not all were, the depiction of the Battle of the Bulge had a problem with momentum and pacing, and a pilot from another service was misidentified as a Marine.41 He thought the music at the end was terribly sad, considering that the U.S. won the war. What was the most obvious but overlooked fact that Hynes

40 Hynes, telephone interview.
41 Hynes, “At War with Ken Burns,” 263.
shared, was that even as a veteran seeing the rough cut was like seeing the war for the first time. As a soldier, each person was too busy doing his job, stuck in a cockpit, dodging bullets or hiding in a foxhole for days on end. He was pleased with the attention Burns gave to Americans at home, the patience, anxiety, fear and dread of bad news that they had to live with. One major difference Hynes noticed with this project was the open-ended time allotted to the film. As they worked it grew longer and longer, maybe as more evidence was uncovered or topics discussed. This may be a result of the success Burns has had since *Brooklyn Bridge* and his carte blanche agreement at PBS.

At the end of his work on the project, Hynes felt somewhat empty, realizing he spent more time working on the film than he did in the actual war. He noted the committee’s process of revisions was a repeating cycle of revising, improving, repairing, discussing, and screening. He made a point to express the importance of how Burns relied on “witnesses” to tell his stories along with the common experts and historians. He said he believes that witnesses can describe an event more accurately than historians or any form of second-hand source. He finds the testimonies are more credible than those of non-witnesses, but still warns of creating a “haze” with sentimentality or clouded memories. He described Burns as a “genius, with enormous skills with using primary sources, camera moves bringing artifacts to life, journal entries being read to add a personal voice bringing a project to life much more than just talking-head historians.” He described Burns as having great sympathy for the subjects he chooses, and a gatherer of witnesses. He said he thinks that more people know more about World War II through Burns than “all of the other second tier crap.” He obviously took away a favorable
opinion of Burns, either from being involved on the project, or being a veteran. He is much more favorable than the average critic.

It also may be as a veteran that Hynes repeatedly brings up the comparison to the Iraq War while explaining witnesses and testimony: “We knew we had to tell the truth through testimony, as George Bush cleared his throat and started lying.”

He looks back on his war days with pride. He left the service to become a professor and describes the work as being more sustainable than being a soldier. He claims the only skills he has are to fly a single-engine plane and to write. His remaining group of army buddies thinks that he is a nerd for pursuing academics and his teacher friends cannot ever grasp his stories as a soldier.

The Differing and Similar Styles

Returning to the premise of where documentary filmmakers fit on the journalism continuum line as journalist, historian, artist, or entertainer, Hynes makes a strong argument for their being journalists. Using interviews, Burns reported on World War II as if he were at the scene of an accident, gathering eyewitness accounts for his report. The animosity that some academic historians feel toward him is based on their expertise and his, and their, chosen media for delivery of facts.

One of the major distinctions between the two films, Brooklyn Bridge and The War, is a level of sophistication; again this may be because of his maturation as an artist and also a sign of a new style of documentaries. Where Burns relied on three talking heads in the earlier work, he had numerous talking heads and “witnesses” in the newer work. It is possible that there were only three in the Brooklyn Bridge due to it only being

42 Ibid.
an hour, but my last documentary, *Final Edition: Journalism According to Jack and Jim Knight*, used fifteen experts and witnesses as talking heads. Again, this may be due to the style and pace of the time and not a personal choice of Burns at the time. Another major difference between the two is obviously the length. When it comes to his later works such as *The War*, they have been edited and managed like episodes. Each episode is similar to the *The Brooklyn Bridge* in length, but he has mastered the art of layering. That layering is the simultaneous use of multiple story lines within the overall narrative, and also applying texture through sound effects and narration to static images. When I heard Burns speak, he made a clear case for the use of audio with his productions. Many of his topics leave him hampered with the existing photography of the time. Thus, he has become famous, perhaps even a cliché, for the “Ken Burns Effect” on iMovie software, which uses his pan and zoom techniques with still photos. But what is not mentioned is the extra creativity added by Burns in making a single shot into a scene. Not only does he bring the photo to life with movement but also with sound. He said that whenever a documentary filmmaker shows the viewer a still photo of a cocktail sitting on a bar, the viewer should hear the liquor being poured over the ice cubes, as if it was a live, moving image.

Also evident in his episodic treatment is his use of a tool for which he has received criticism. As the one critic noted, as soon as he had the back-story on a character, Burns would move on to what was next in chronological order. This is an advantage because he can have many characters and subplots to fill the amount of time that his programs need. He doesn’t limit himself to the three talking heads of the bridge narrative, or to one location. In *The War*, he is telling the story of four cities along with
the locations of selected battles and encounters in other countries. Here, he is not only layering with his production style but with his narrative. This episodic format takes the handling of a single event such as building the Brooklyn Bridge, and multiplying it into several events that are collapsed into a larger event. Just as print journalists rely on the nut graph to inform their audience, Burns uses a video type of nut graph at the beginning of each episode of *The War*. He recollects for the viewer what time and events have passed and tells them where they are and who is talking. This is another journalistic tool that allows him to direct a narrative that is sustainable over many episodes.

**The Burns Process**

In the *Brooklyn Bridge* DVD, Burns participates in an interview recorded years later, promoting his general work with PBS. He reflects on his overall style and approach to subjects. He noted he was twenty-two when he started the bridge project, and had initial problems raising finances due to his youthful looks and appearance. Much like my own experience, he approaches his projects with ignorance and curiosity. He described his approach to shooting as being rather unorthodox. In traditional video or film production, you shoot from a shot list, using storyboards, and generally know what you are going to shoot beforehand, not that accidents or surprises don’t happen, but you don’t plan on luck. Burns said it was difficult working on writing a script without knowing if there were photos to illustrate it. His team shoots photos without knowing if there is a place for them in the script, and he admits that this can create chaos in the editing room. He described his process as being very open with research starting on day one and not being complete until the final day of editing. He also noted the trust that he has with his team. He will send someone only from his inner circle to investigate an archive, and it
still terrorizes him that something may be overlooked. Burns has a process, a routine, like
many artists do. He is constantly writing in his head for various projects. He knew he
wanted Sam Waterston for the voice of Lincoln in The Civil War. He treats his music
soundtrack with care, recording it first so that the project will immediately have mood
and pacing from the beginning of production. He finally made a comment on his
treatment of still photos: He believes you cannot just hold up a photograph and take a
picture of it. You have to listen to the photograph; is there the sound of a cannon, are
birds chirping? 43

The best anecdote he offered of the control that a documentary filmmaker has in
the editing suite was for the final edit and screening of The Civil War when his
crewmembers were watching the sequence in which Lincoln is assassinated at Ford’s
Theatre. They arrived at the moment of the gunshot and they stopped the tape in a freeze
frame. Burns described the mood as chilling and sad throughout the whole room –
Lincoln was still alive for one split second, and possibilities existed for history. He
described sitting in a room that was costing $500 an hour, contemplating history and
relying on their basic instincts of the importance of history and the proper preservation of
facts. The largest contribution he probably has made was to bring what Walt Whitman
said would never happen to life: allowing future generations to have the “you are there”
feeling of historical events.

Shalini Lal, Melinda Suto and Michael Ungar reported, “In a narrative inquiry,
the researcher strives to locate theory within a participant’s narrative and keep participant
stories intact.” They make the distinction that as opposed to content analysis; narrative

inquiry looks at a narrative story or production as a whole unit of analysis, and not as separate pieces of a larger story that emerge.\footnote{Shalini Lal, Melinda Suto and Michael Ungar, “Examining the Potential of Combining the Methods of Grounded Theory and Narrative Inquiry: A Comparative Analysis,” The Qualitative Report 17, no. 41 (2012): 11.} This can apply to Ken Burns at a micro level. He always keeps stories intact. But on a macro level, his documentaries are so rich with facts and photography, that the smaller stories are nuggets of verification of the larger story, just like the facts and photos.

Perhaps the biggest difference between the Brooklyn Bridge and The War is the two points in time in which they were produced. Each is an artifact in the collection of Ken Burns’ contribution to the historic landscape. They share more than they diverge. Yes, one is brief, and one is episodic. But as far as theme or backdrop, they could be part of the same series. They are patriotic as critics have accused him of being, and also emotional about the subjects presented. The main difference is the production values of the years when they were made. So much more was possible, given the state of computers in 2007.

Burns has pondered the possibility of making a feature film. He said he would like to do it, but as he has plenty of self-expression and leeway in his presentation of history; a feature would just be a further commercialization of his craft. It would be that moment in the editing suite where they had the option of letting Lincoln live. It is unlikely he will ever go that far to annoy his critics. He may continue to be both historic and share a shared truth through entertainment. Ken Burns is an example of a producer who verifies his work so heavily that it naturally makes him a journalist. On the other hand, his patriotism and sense of drama can attract a particular audience, maybe a PBS
audience. So, it could be an argument for a producer creating entertainment for an audience with a shared truth. But to give an example of the other end of the spectrum of verification or a shared truth, is *Hillary: The Movie*. It was a controversial documentary that led to the Citizens United Supreme Court case. It is detailed in the next chapter, *Hillary: The Movie – Documentary or Propaganda*.
Chapter 4: *Hillary: The Movie* – Documentary or Propaganda?

The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of man’s most precious rights. Every citizen may therefore speak, write, and publish freely, except that he shall be responsible for the abuse of that freedom in cases determined by law.¹ -- French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, 1789

*Hillary: The Movie* opens with a bald eagle encircled with the words Citizens United, creating a logo resembling an official seal. The screen fades to black with a short quote quickly fading in, “The problem with nostalgia is what we tend to do is only remember what you liked and you forgot the parts you didn’t.” After a short pause the name of the originator of those words fades up below the quote, “John Edwards.”² That is one time a Democrat is quoted in the film, and it is under such ironic circumstances. It sets the tone for what would be a controversial film leading to an even more controversial U.S. Supreme Court Decision.

The opening minutes of the film demonstrate the power that a producer has with the aid of editing, framing and priming. Little is known about this landmark documentary that spawned so much debate over political communication, propaganda, and campaign financing. Up to this point of the movie it has an official feel, demonstrating a shared truth, but only implied verification. There has been and will continue to be a great deal of literature and discussion about the legality of *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, the Supreme Court decision that opened the door to huge corporate expenditures in the creation of partisan campaign messages, such as the film’s partisan

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² *Hillary: The Movie*, directed by Alan Peterson (2007; Burtonsville, MD: Citizens United Productions, 2008), DVD.
attack on Democratic Party presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.\textsuperscript{3} It will only accelerate after increased spending on the 2012 presidential election, and questions regarding the sources of the financing. Such an election environment was illegal until this landmark case. Scholarly evaluations have questioned the confusion raised over spending as a form of speech under First Amendment protection. Monica Youn of the New York University School of Law commented, “It may be settled law that political spending is, under some circumstances, entitled to First Amendment protection, but few would argue that money is always speech.”\textsuperscript{4}

This chapter looks at both sides of the controversy surrounding the Citizens United decision, which turned back decades of federal election campaign finance reform legislation and called into question exactly what type of speech is protected under the First Amendment, whether as propaganda disguised as political speech or a shared truth. It investigates coverage from the popular press of the court case and the movie, reviews legislation leading to the case, discusses narrative inquiry theory describing the audience and attraction to the movie, and discusses the situation after \textit{Citizens United v. FEC}.

The mission, identity, and scope of the non-profit Citizens United are important to establish context to the court case and \textit{Hillary: The Movie}. The organization’s website offers the following description of its mission:

\begin{quote}
Citizens United is an organization dedicated to restoring our government to citizens’ control. Through a combination of education, advocacy, and grass roots organization, Citizens United seeks to reassert the traditional American values of limited government, freedom of enterprise, strong families, and national sovereignty and security. Citizens United’s goal is to restore the founding fathers’
\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{3} Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission, 130 S. Ct. 876 (2010).
\end{itemize}
vision of a free nation, guided by the honesty, common sense, and good will of its citizens.\(^5\)

Until the court case was heard, most people were probably not aware of Citizens United. Many are probably still unaware of exactly what the group does. It is basically a documentary production company, and lists powerful Republican Party collaborators such as Newt and Callista Gingrich, Michele Bachmann and Dick Morris (who is a key player in *Hillary: The Movie*). Its president, David Bossie, is also its key film producer. Bossie was known in the 1990s as a dedicated investigator of the Clintons.\(^6\) Michael Boos is vice president and general counsel. Boos was heavily involved in the court case. *Hillary: The Movie* is the most famous in their library of fifteen films. These films are listed on the Citizens United website store, as well on IMDB, the authoritative Internet Movie Database.\(^7\) The Citizens United website reports critical success with its documentaries: *Ronald Reagan: Rendezvous with Destiny* and *A City Upon a Hill: The Spirit of American Exceptionalism*. Other titles include *Hype: The Obama Effect*, *ACLU: At War with America*, and *Celsius 41.11*, a parody of Michael Moore’s *Fahrenheit 911*. They also promote the spring 2012 release of *Occupy: Unmasked* on the homepage, with cover art mimicking the familiar *Phantom of the Opera* costume mask. It is not the purpose of this discussion to prove that *Hillary: The Movie* is or is not propaganda. Citizens United makes it clear that it supports conservative causes and candidates. What this chapter will do is analyze the style and personalities involved in the production and

\(^6\) David Savage, “Backers Seek Permission to Advertise Anti-Hillary Film,” *The Irish Times*, February 8, 2008 13.
\(^7\) Internet Movie Data Base, http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1733113/.
compare it with similar documentaries that could possibly fall into the category of political speech.

*Hillary: The Movie* opens with the traditional video nut graph, giving the viewer a general idea of what is to come. And it also opens with the talking heads in the nut graph not being identified. These nut graphs move fast, and the talking heads are generally not credited until later in the program. It is generally a style choice to not give credits identifying speakers in the nut graph, but this project goes exceptionally a longer amount of time to start offering identification, which frustrates and confuses viewers attempting to determine the basis of their expertise. The nut graph finishes with the talking heads offering quickly edited adjectives describing Hillary Clinton, including: “ruthless,” “vindictive,” “sneaky,” “ideological,” “intolerant,” “liar is a good one,” “scares the hell out of me,” and finally “looks good in a pants suit” from the dependable and always quotable Republican pundit Ann Coulter. These descriptors are followed by equally unflattering headlines. The sound bites come from the recognizable, conservative cast of familiar politicians and commentators: Gary Aldrich (former FBI agent), Dick Armey, Michael Barone, Tony Blankley (conservative columnist for the *Washington Post*), Marshall Brown, Bay Buchanan, Congressman Dan Burton, Joe Connor, Ann Coulter, Billy Dale, John Fund, Frank Gaffney, Jeff Gerth, Newt Gingrich, Rich Hahn, Larry Kudlow, Mark Levin, Charles Lubeg, George Marlin, Michael Medved, Dick Morris (former Clinton advisor), Robert Novak, Robert “Buzz” Patterson, Peter F. Paul, Aaron Tonken, and Kathleen Willey (the Virginia woman who accused Bill Clinton of sexual harassment). As will be examined in detail later in this chapter, *Hillary: The Movie* at times in court has been labeled as having the same character as an attack ad on television.
Political speech and political advertising can sometimes use the obvious and confrontational style of attack ads. On the other end of the spectrum is the biopic. It can tell a story based on history and may offer opinion and slant in a more subtle fashion. Examples include *JFK* by Oliver Stone\(^8\) and *Frost-Nixon* by Ron Howard.\(^9\) There was great anticipation for the premiere of HBO’s biopic *Game Change*,\(^{10}\) the story of the McCain-Palin ticket in the 2008 election and the chemistry and decision-making between them and the campaign manager. All of these listed examples can represent a shared truth of opposing viewpoints and ideology. What is missing in some is a sense of verification. Hollywood can be accused of moving the line between reality and fiction as much as journalists can be accused of blurring the line between news and propaganda. In the closing scene of *Frost-Nixon*, actor Sam Rockwell portraying Frost production aide James Reston Jr. delivers this monologue:

> You know the first and greatest sin of the deception of television is that it simplifies, it diminishes great, complex ideas, trenches of time, whole careers become reduced to a single snapshot. . . . David had succeeded on that final day, in getting for a fleeting moment what no investigative journalist, no state prosecutor, no judiciary committee or political enemy had managed to get: Richard Nixon’s face swollen and ravaged by loneliness, self-loathing and defeat. The rest of the project and its failings would not only be forgotten, they would totally cease to exist.\(^{11}\)

Similar projects have been produced since the success and style of filmmaker Michael Moore and his message-driven documentaries, after Moore broke into public consciousness with *Roger and Me*,\(^{12}\) a documentary about General Motors and Flint,

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\(^8\) *JFK*, directed by Oliver Stone, DVD (Warner Home Video, 2001).  
\(^9\) *Frost/Nixon*, directed by Ron Howard, DVD (Universal Studios, 2009).  
\(^{10}\) *Game Change*, directed by Jay Roach, DVD (HBO, 2009).  
\(^{12}\) *Roger and Me*, directed by Michael Moore, DVD (Warner Home Video, 2003).
Michigan, which appeared in 1989. Most notably among the documentaries released during the 2012 election cycle was *When Mitt Romney Came to Town*. The film is twenty-eight minutes long and is produced in the style of a political tribute piece. It has the appearance of an accolade but quickly takes a negative tone. The film uses a variety of locations and shots to chronicle Americans commenting on how Romney has ruined not only the economy but also their lives. The filmmakers employ many of the same techniques used in *Hillary: The Movie*: newspaper headlines, stock footage, and testimonials to build a believable argument. The surprising element in the Romney film is that it was not financed by any Democrat or liberal PAC or candidate, but by the pro-Gingrich PAC “Winning Our Future,” bankrolled by casino owner Sheldon Alderson. Produced by GOP operative Barry Bennett, its purpose was not to keep Romney out of Washington, but to keep him from the GOP nomination. Traditional documentarian producer Alex Gibney, creator of *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* and *Client 9: The Rise and Fall of Elliot Spitzer* has reason to not give these projects any credibility. “It worries me because it pollutes the form. People could marginalize something that I made by saying that it’s not different than some other piece of paid propaganda that is out there.” Even though *When Romney Came to Town* starts in a serious light, it is known to quickly parody some of the more effective political tribute pieces in history. As much as it celebrates drama, with most camera shots looking down at Romney, and looking up at testimonial actors, it also pays tribute to some with credibility. While watching the video

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15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
tribute to Ronald Reagan at the 1984 Republican Convention, I agreed with the critical assessment that the piece borrowed from the Frank Capra political propaganda bag by showing patriotic images and appealing to a nationalist spirit. Similar imagery is said to be included with the Romney piece.

A key factor in all of the films mentioned, and especially *Hillary: The Movie*, is form of distribution. The movie did make the rounds at theaters, much like Michael Moore’s *Fahrenheit 911*, premiering in Washington, D.C., on January 16, 2008. At the time, producer David Bossie was beginning to make his case that he could not purchase advertising for the film on television or radio. Under the so-called McCain-Feingold campaign-finance laws passed in 2008, there are limits on “issue advertising” and the time periods that those ads can legally be aired. Citizens United had already produced three television ads for the film, two of which can still be seen on its website. The run times are 2:30, 1:45 and :30. The thirty-second ad featured Ann Coulter and the “She looks good in a pants suit” sound bite. Given the nature of these ads, the classification or character of the movie as political speech was taking shape. The ads for the movie, according to the FEC, must have a four-second disclaimer stating that the message was paid for by Citizens United in order to identify them as paid political speech. Bossie argued against such rationale, stating, “What that does is it tells people watching that it is a political ad, but the ads aren’t about politics, they are about trying to drum up business for a movie.”

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18 Ibid.
20 Richey, “*Hillary: The Movie* and Election-Law Gripes.”
movie is susceptible of no other interpretation than to inform the electorate that Senator
Clinton is unfit for office, that the United States would be a dangerous place in a
President Hillary Clinton world, and that viewers should vote against her.” Michael
Moore removed any images or mention of Bush in ads for Fahrenheit 911 to avoid such
problems. Bossie disagreed, due to his film being named for a candidate with their
name in the title giving it a preconception of politics. In the 2007 ruling, the FEC stated
that its regulations on political communications not only covered the magic words, “vote
for” and “vote against” but also any word that suggested a similar call to action.

In addition to having the movie play in theaters, Citizens United planned to offer
the movie on pay-per-view television. That also triggered a key point from McCain-
Feingold that regulates corporation advocacy advertising being broadcast. It applied to
Citizens United because it is a corporation and it takes some contributions from corporate
donations. McCain-Feingold would also require Citizens United to disclose donors’
names. The primary elections being held in California and other parts of the country at
the time triggered the “blackout period” of not allowing corporations or union money for
“broadcast, cable, or satellite communication within 30 days of a primary election or 60
of a general election.” However, under McCain-Feingold there were other avenues of
expression for Citizens United. It was allowed to advertise that the DVD was for sale, but
those ads must also carry a disclaimer. This restriction was enough for Bossie to petition
the Supreme Court, citing his inspiration from Michael Moore. “I saw the impact Michael
Moore was having. I realized the long-form documentary could be a powerful tool to

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21 Ibid.
22 “Exercise Caution: Supreme Court Should Respect Precedent in Deciding
23 Ibid.
deliver a political message.” The legal team for Citizens United consisted of Bossie; Theodore B. Olson, an experienced conservative lawyer and former solicitor general; Michael Boos of Citizens United, and Floyd Abrams, a First Amendment lawyer who worked on the Pentagon Papers case.

Case Law Review

In a groundbreaking case in 1978, the rights of corporations was addressed by the courts in First National Bank of Boston v. Bellotti. The decision allowed corporations to contribute to ballot initiatives that did not directly have an impact on their business.

If the speakers here were not corporations, no one would suggest that the State could silence their proposed speech. It is the type of speech indispensible to decision making in a democracy, and this is no less true because the speech comes from a corporation rather than an individual. The inherent worth of the speech in terms of its capacity for informing the public does not depend upon the identity of its source, whether corporation, association, union, or individual.

Legislation and court judgments banning corporate spending on elections and candidates has a long history. The foundation of this legislation begins with the Tillman Act of 1907, which prevented corporations from donating directly to candidates in federal elections. The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 banned campaign expenditures made directly from the general treasuries of corporations and labor unions. At the beginning of the issues surrounding the regulation of political speech, jurists seemed to be more concerned with controlling corruption than the potential danger of limiting expression.

The precursor of case law leading to the Citizens United decision was Austin v. Michigan State Chamber of Commerce in 1990. In this case the court ruled that curbing

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24 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
the ability of corporations spending disproportionately large resources to influence elections was a sufficiently important government interest to restrict speech. Writing in the *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy*, Breanne Gilpatrick noted that an appellate court in the Austin case upheld restrictions on corporate-funded speech and identified “a compelling governmental interest in preventing the corrosive and distorting effects of immense aggregations of wealth that are accumulated with the help of the corporate form.” This was known as the “anti-distortion interest.” In 2002, the law was made more specific by requiring that corporations make their contributions through “PACs,” political action committees. The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA), also known for the senators who co-sponsored the bill, John McCain and Russ Feingold, sought to close a longstanding loophole that allowed advertising regarding candidates at any time near an election, which was upheld in McConnell v. FEC which prohibited any broadcast ad that names a national candidate within thirty days of a primary or sixty days before an election. Again, leaning more toward corruption concerns than political speech freedoms, the court found the application of political fundraising being managed through PACs was only partially restrictive on speech. In the face of the tradition of following precedent, the Supreme Court turned back Austin, and partially McConnell in Citizens United v. FEC. The case that was brought to the Supreme Court directly challenged BCRA, and Bossie has been quoted as saying that was the

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reason for the production of the film, to turn back McCain-Feingold. Citizens United was filed on the basis of three points:

- BCRA section 203, which prohibited corporations and unions from funding electioneering communications, was facially unconstitutional
- Section 203 was unconstitutional as applied to Citizens United’s marketing and release of the film
- Sections 201 and 311’s disclosure and disclaimer requirements for advertisements were unconstitutional\(^3\)

With the lower court ruling that the film was campaign electioneering and therefore could be limited, Citizens United had the confidence that the ruling would not be overturned, and probably not even heard by the Supreme Court. This was due to it overturning McConnell and the track record of the higher court in defense of controlling corruption over political speech. Despite the recent history of the high court, it heard the appeal from Citizens United and overturned both Austin and McConnell, as well as those parts of the BCRA that prohibited electioneering communications by corporations.\(^3\) In delivering the opinion of the court, Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote, “Section 441b is a ban on corporate speech not withstanding the fact that a PAC created by a corporation can still speak.”\(^3\) Kennedy wrote that rather than being a “partial restriction” on speech, the BCRA actually was a “full ban on speech.” Kennedy reasoned that it was a violation of the Bellotti ruling that “the First Amendment does not allow political speech restrictions based on a speaker’s corporate identity.”\(^3\)

\(^3\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Ibid. In First National Bank of Boston v. Bellotti, the Supreme Court ruled that corporations have the right to make political contributions.
Some in the four-member minority of dissenters on the court may have been as surprised as the general public and the media when the decision was handed down. In his long dissent, Justice John Paul Stevens made a point of the major change in philosophy of the court and the decision represented “a dramatic break from our past . . . and rested on a faulty understanding of Austin and McConnell and of our campaign finance jurisprudence more generally.”  

In what would become a tit-for-tat between Stevens and the textual interpretation of Justice Antonin Scalia, who joined with the court majority opinion but wrote his own opinion, Stevens added, “The framers took it as a given that corporations could be comprehensively regulated in the service of public welfare and unlike our colleagues had little trouble distinguishing corporations from human beings.”  

Scalia replied, “It is far from clear that the Framers despised corporations or sought to deny them First Amendment protection.”  

The debate went on to transform the discussion of what rights a particular type of speech has, to defining who is the speaker and is that speaker being gagged by speech restrictions. This legal argument directly informs the topic of this dissertation. Does a shared truth have the power now to impact all versions of truth?

Robert Sobelman, in his article on the decision, plainly summarized the impact of Citizens United as “the Court held that Congress may not ban political speech on the basis of the corporate identity of the speaker and the content of the political speech.”  

Sobelman summarized the responses from academics, think tanks, and legislators on

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36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
proposed revisions to the Citizens United decision. The first proposal for alterations to the law is from the Brennan Center for Justice, which would amend federal securities laws that would mandate corporations to obtain the consent of shareholders before making political expenditures. Sobelman found this option to be an unrealistically narrow interpretation of Citizens United and unconstitutional under the new law. The second alternative was proposed on the same day of the court’s decision, U.S. Representative Alan Grayson introduced the Shareholders Funds Act of 2010. It proposed that “any expenditure by a public company to influence public opinion on matters not related to the company’s products or services have the approval of a majority of the votes cast by shareholders.”

\[39\] Under this proposal, if an expenditure wasn’t authorized, the company officers would be held personally accountable for the amount of the spending. Sobelman saw the main problem with this proposed legislation as the brevity of the proposal, being only three pages. It didn’t define what is an issue that influences public opinion [or a shared truth] or matters that relate to the companies’ products. Despite its vague language and brevity, it added the details that a majority of shareholders would have to approve of expenditures of more than $10,000 in advertising expenditures a year. It also defined shareholders and spending activities very broadly, including voter registration, and allowed room for exceptions to be approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

After all of the alternative legislative options were evaluated, the main criteria for Sobelman judging their potential for success would be that the language of a proposed

\[39\] Ibid., 359.
law would not violate the corporation’s free speech rights as described in the decision. More specifically it must not infringe upon the corporation’s right to free speech as guaranteed by the First Amendment. This clearly makes a corporation the equivalent of an individual person.

*Theoretical Framework Concerning the Decision*

The French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau offered insight into the topic of shared truth and the ability for people to think on their own and not be led to a decision by false or contrived information as in political advertising. He was skeptical of intellectuals; in his interpretations, the “heart was above the head.” His thoughts on the power of the person and that good will would prevail in any legal system was interpreted by Altschull:

In Rousseau’s powerful imagery, intellect might go astray, but the voice of the people, directed by their feelings, will always take the path of decency. Of course, for intelligent choices to be made, those feelings have to be fed with sound information; thus, education is a dominant force in Rousseau’s thinking. Informed people, acting on their feelings, provided the only kind of government worth having. The concept of the people’s right to know is clearly at hand.

The foundation of his philosophy was based in the goodness of man, and that left alone, bad men would make bad law. Many of his writings sound like warnings—warnings that government should be held in check so that the system of the people, the “bottom up” approach to government, would function as it was designed to. He wrote of the “general will” versus the “will of all.” He characterized the “will of all” to be an assortment of differing opinions composited in a jumble of conflicting opinions. He

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40 Ibid., 363.
41 Altschull, *From Milton to McLuhan*, 86.
42 Ibid., 89.
posits the difference as the private interest versus the public interest. This is an apt
comparison in light of Citizens United. He wrote:

The General will is always right and tends to the public advantage, but it does not
follow that the deliberation of the people are always correct. Our will is always
for our own good, but we do not always see what it is; the people are never
corrupted, but are often deceived. It is the task of the legislator to feel himself
capable of changing human nature, of transforming each individual. The legislator
occupies in every sense an extraordinary position in the state. He is not to exercise
power like a king but he ought to possess such skills with words that he can
persuade the people to follow the dictates of the general will.\textsuperscript{43}

It is the basic belief that is what is good for one is not good for all. The “general will”
would be what is good for the group, and that no one person’s needs or opinions are
above the benefit of all. He juxtaposes them as a basic conflict between democracy and
rule by power. He is concerned with the conflict between bottom up vs. top down
governing. It is the difference between verification and propaganda. As he stated that the
people are never corrupted but often deceived informs the basis of the argument
surrounding Citizens United and that is restrictions on campaign ads to limit undue
influence.

Judging whether \textit{Hillary: The Movie} is political speech or propaganda revolves
around the context of which audience is drawn to it and what effects, if any, it produces.
Considering that the film had limited release and was viewed mostly by supporters of
Citizens United and its conservative doctrine, makes it hard to speculate whether the film
had any effects at all other than reinforcing already-held political beliefs. What is
undisputable, however, is the huge effect it had on Supreme Court decisions on future
political speech. The only similar scenario to examine is the polar opposite of \textit{Hillary: The Movie}, that being Michael Moore’s \textit{Fahrenheit 9/11}. Both had a clear political

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 88.
message, both were documentary in form, and attempted mass distribution to make a political statement.

A study by Natalie Jomini Stroud examines the theory of selective exposure and how Moore’s film might appeal to those that already agree with the political messaging or enlighten others to new information and a change of ideology. Selective exposure operates on the belief that what sources of information a person [or corporation] chooses are based on the beliefs and attitudes that they already possess. In other words, a person with conservative beliefs chooses to expose herself or himself to conservative messages, in order to minimize psychological conflict and reinforce personal identity. Paul Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet studied political information selection and concluded that people select information that “reinforce[s] the predispositions with which they came to the campaign.” Their findings have been replicated to include television, radio, Internet, and other forms of information sources. This is further exemplified by the polarization of cable news with the conservative slant of Fox News, and the declared “think forward” campaign of MSNBC, all of which attract audiences that already have aligned themselves with the political ideologies of the programs and networks. It also explains the blurring of the line between documentaries, news and propaganda. This blurring effect takes account not only who already belongs to the group that believes in the political messaging and who does not, but also who does not recognize the value-loaded nature of the message due to production techniques, as well as those unfamiliar with the topic altogether. What Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet

discovered is that it is easy for messages to reinforce existing attitudes, less easy to create attitudes where none exist, and difficult to change attitudes already in place. Thus, if someone were to attend to a political message without having an opinion about the subject, he or she would be more open to influence than those who already have an opposing opinion. These independent thinkers no doubt were one of the targets of *Hillary: The Movie*. And the movie producers used many techniques to persuade this group by placing an emphasis on manipulation of information above pure reporting.

The main difference between Moore’s film and *Hillary: The Movie*, is that Moore actually made an attempt to have a story, an argument, including new footage with unscripted dialogue and reactions. *Hillary: The Movie* relied on opinion, existing news footage, and editorial commentary. The similarity is the partisan agenda, and political speech. One was the inspiration and business model for the other.

*Fahrenheit 9/11*, which appeared during the 2004 presidential election campaigns, was the first documentary to gross more than $100 million domestically. The film was labeled to be “anti-Bush” and a diatribe against the war in Iraq, and aimed to have an impact on the upcoming election. At issue was whether only Democrats would fill the theaters, nulling the potential impact, or whether some curious independents or conservatives would also fill the seats. Some exit polls suggested so. Stroud conducted a study of people who viewed the Moore film. Her variables were: amount of normal political discussion in a normal week among participants, existing liberal beliefs or negative views toward Bush, and the effect of a moderator conducting a discussion

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47 Ibid.
following the viewing of the film. Her findings followed what most scholars predicted. Those with higher salience to political speech attended the film along with liberals and those opposed to Bush. Discussion after the film also increased negative attitudes toward the president. Those who viewed the film had more negative attitudes toward Bush than non-viewers, even after controlling for demographic, political and media use variables that differed between those who saw the film and those who planned to.48

Another study may have more application to *Hillary: The Movie.*49 University of South Carolina political science Associate Professor David Whiteman took into account not only the effect on the individual viewing the documentary, but also the influence on groups and activists during the whole production and distribution process.50 He made the distinction between the “individualistic model” and the “coalition model,” which suggests the impact of a film’s message arises from multiple interactions, and not just the individual viewer watching in isolation. Whiteman posits that the “development, production, and distribution of a film creates extensive opportunities for interaction among, and impact on, producers, participants, activists, decision makers, and citizens.”51 His coalition model also takes into account the larger political context, beyond the individual viewer, including relevant social movements, and activists and elites that can control dialogue on the film. The key observation by Whiteman that is relevant to Citizens United v. FEC is “films may never achieve the significant distribution, and therefore never enter mainstream public discourse, and yet may have a significant impact

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50 Ibid.
51 Ibid., 54.
in educating and mobilizing activists outside the mainstream."\textsuperscript{52} Elaborating on this concept, Whiteman believes in the creation of a “public space” by a film that can allow public discourse to drive a discussion and offer new light from the general topic of the film. In the case of Hillary, the original packaging could follow the model of Michael Moore when he did not mention George Bush on the cover or in the title of his movie. It created more of a public space and generated conversation on his topic. It is likely that the only public space that Hillary created was among the shared truth of its audience. Chances are the general public have never heard of or seen the movie.

Concerning the issue of a movie’s distribution, there is a strong argument that any campaign message or “documentary” like \textit{Hillary: The Movie} should be available via “on demand” forms of content distribution. Restricting on-demand communication is a form of censorship, and the Supreme Court has already decided, in Stanley v. Georgia\textsuperscript{53} that anyone should be able to view pornography, another highly controversial form of speech, in their own homes, while obscenity is outside of First Amendment rights. This form of distribution is not delivered via public airwaves, or through a widely available cable program. Such distribution to a willing audience is the true meaning of a shared truth. It is a transaction between the viewer and the producer or supplier. No one else is exposed to the content. Therefore, whether it is “political speech” or “propaganda” does not come into play. It is selective exposure in action. The producers had sought to deliver \textit{Hillary: The Movie} via theaters, pay-per-view, and sale of the DVD. McCain-Feingold was properly enforced by the lower court for not allowing promos of the film due to the content, per the court’s interpretation of content and timeliness of the primary season. It

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{53} Stanley v. Georgia, 394 U.S. 557.
doesn’t matter whether the content is propaganda when it is delivered by video-on-demand. Many political science professors and campaign consultants who have commented on dealing with elections post-Citizens United believe the ruling’s impact will be limited to learning to deal with the new rules, as the old rules did not have much effect. So, in that light, maybe Citizens United just puts the financing of a candidate and campaign out in the open again.

Such raw power in the hands of corporations is what alarmed much of the dissenting opinion. They were concerned with the giant leap the Supreme Court made in erasing almost a century’s worth of case law and precedent. It is almost as if they were writing new law and taking the issue into their own hands. As important as it is to protect political speech, it is also important to protect our electoral system and to keep it from being taken hostage by organized, deep-pocketed interests. Political speech was not meant to be protected in a way that allows Newt Gingrich to dominate a certain primary, as in the case of his PAC financing the Romney movie. That is almost a subject that needs to be considered as an antitrust argument, as much as a First Amendment argument. The Citizens United decision could potentially allow one “corporation” to monopolize an industry. By allowing a corporation to have the freedom of speech of an individual is the same as a ruling that reads, “all or nothing, or nothing at all.” It goes beyond the exceptions from McCain-Feingold and Austin that the court disagreed with. It did not fine tune existing legislation. It wrote entirely new legislation.

The point of the Citizens United decision is this: Is propaganda considered political speech? The Supreme Court refused to address whether McCain-Feingold dealt

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with content or timing. The lower court ruled correctly that *Hillary: The Movie* was a “90-minute commercial.” The majority relied on precedent to prop up its claim that they could not judge the content of the message, and conveniently erased the McCain-Feingold precedent in writing their decision.

As shocking as the Citizens United v. FEC decision was, in constructing my response to the decision above I relied on the opinions of political science professors and campaign consultants that I found in a review of the literature. Maybe this is another version of a shared truth. Those comments are that even without the Citizens United decision, political professionals would have used loopholes and legal challenges to funnel corporate money to candidates. I am more concerned that political propaganda can easily make its way into our political process. Rousseau is correct that the “general will” will prevail and that no matter what form the law is in, the integrity of individuals will understand that corporations sometimes lack integrity. If corporations have the same and equal electioneering rights as the individual, they should also have the same and equal voting rights of one vote per individual or corporation. Selective exposure reinforces what Rousseau claims, that people will gravitate to thoughts that feel comfortable to them, and in that light, it doesn’t really matter who paid for what ad or what ad an individual was exposed to. The overwhelming majority had already cast their vote before the propaganda or political speech piece reached their DVR. As John Edwards was quoted as saying, now that his political career is over, “The problem with nostalgia is what we tend to do is only remember what you liked and you forgot the parts you didn’t.”

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55 *Hillary: The Movie*, DVD.
The irony of the decision can be traced directly to the mission statement on the website of Citizens United. “Citizens United is an organization dedicated to restoring our government to citizens’ control.” Nowhere on the website does it mention “restoring our government to corporate control.” David Bossie has been quoted as saying that his whole point of producing Hillary: The Movie was to overturn BCRA. Victory for David Bossie. He did not make a great piece of cinema, but he did push propaganda and electioneering to a new height and also rewrote First Amendment law. However, the court has been known to dramatically depart from precedent as they did in Brown v. Board of Education. Sometimes it is drastic and for the good, and sometimes the outcome is yet to be seen.
Chapter 5: Methods

For this dissertation, documentary projects were viewed as a whole, based on the premise of narrative inquiry theory. Fifteen of the most popular documentaries ranked by Netflix were chosen. These fifteen documentaries were each viewed twice in their entirety. Time-code was noted to mark events and sequences of the narrative for the sake of reference and comparison. They were selected from the documentary categories used by Netflix that most parallel the documentary categories of history, propaganda, art, style, entertainment, biography, politics or dissident message, which have appeared as the most common categories mentioned in the literature.\(^1\) They originated from the list of Netflix’s most watched documentaries. The Netflix categories that most match the desired categories and those that were studied are: Biographical documentaries, HBO documentaries, historical documentaries, PBS documentaries, political documentaries, and social and cultural documentaries. The selection of the fifteen documentaries from the six categories was weighted per category depending on the large or small amount of selection per categories.

Netflix is the world’s leading Internet television network with more than 44 million members in more than forty countries enjoying more than one billion hours of TV shows and movies per month, including original series.\(^2\) The service was created in 1997 as an online streaming service, but primarily a mail order DVD service at a time when

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video rental stores were still somewhat thriving. The company has the widest worldwide reach and has the most centralized selections of DVDs available. The film descriptions used below are those provided by Netflix on its website.

As noted earlier, Shalini Lal and Melinda Suto state, “In a narrative inquiry, the researcher strives to locate theory within a participant’s narrative and keep participant stories intact.” They make the distinction that as opposed to a content analysis study; narrative inquiry looks at a narrative story or production as a whole unit of analysis, and not as separate pieces of a larger story that emerge. This distinction is important to an audience with a shared feeling of truth. It is just the difference between content analysis and narrative inquiry that feeds this study. “Content study is useful when the interest is in the type and number of independent themes observed in a text, and the constant comparative method is useful when increasingly abstract thematic categories are conceptualized for the purpose of grounded theory development.”

To paraphrase, practitioners of narrative inquiry theory value the truth as agreed upon by producer and creator, creator and audience, and interviewer and interviewee.

Below is the most current selection for this proposal, chosen in April 2014. It is important to remember that is a popular culture venue and the most watched list would change depending on current trends and tastes. However, being a purposive sample, the selection will be based on the description of the documentary, as displayed on Netflix. The earliest selected documentary, based on the above criteria, was produced in 1986.

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That year, significantly, is after the appearance of HBO (1972)\textsuperscript{5} and the first Ken Burns full-length documentary (\textit{Brooklyn Bridge}, 1981)\textsuperscript{6}, and only two years before the emergence of backpack journalism.\textsuperscript{7} Backpack journalism was not only a trend for independent producers that would carry all their equipment on their back and be a one-man band and handle video, audio, and lighting. But, it also reflected the trend in the first Iraq War in the 1990s with network correspondents having to navigate reporting, shooting, editing, and uploading their stories from behind enemy lines. It was the beginning of multiplatform reporting and became an economic necessity for reporters at broadcast affiliates in the 2000s. All other documentaries selected for this study were produced in or after 1990.

\textit{Measures}

Kovach and Rosenstiel base their analysis on not only the history of journalism, but also on how substantial or relevant the basic elements of journalism are today. These are the basis of what will be the ingredients of the measures of this dissertation.\textsuperscript{8} Their ten elements of journalism, described in the introduction, aided in the process of answering the following questions regarding each film.

\begin{itemize}
  \item Do actors from both sides of a given issue appear on screen?
  \item Are all viewpoints mentioned?
  \item Who is the producer/s?
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{6} Ken Burns, “Brooklyn Bridge,” http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/brooklynbridge/about/.
\textsuperscript{8} Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, \textit{The Elements of Journalism} (New York: Three Rivers, 2007), 3.
• What are their affiliations and allegiances?
• What images are shown on screen and for how long?
• What quotes or b-roll are used to complement a headshot of the speaker?
• Is there a sense of an attempt for verification or just agreement between the producers and intended audience of a “shared truth?”

From the list above, each film was judged independently as a whole, based on narrative inquiry theory using these points as variables or indicators. Each film was either categorized as a form of journalism or a form that requires a shared truth. The journalism category represents documentaries that provide all sides of an issue or story by just presenting verifiable facts. Documentaries based on a shared truth, as the literature suggests, have a shared end point. This determination was based on the data reported in the results section based on time-code, sequences, and events in each documentary. Any references to b-roll can also be referred to as cutaways. A-roll would be the interviews conducted. B-roll could also be referred to as cutaways. It reinforces the narrative by practicing the journalism principle of “show don’t tell.” It helps tell the story by showing locations, documents, photos, and other information that supports the narrative and quote that it supports. It traditionally, in a technical sense, can help “cover up” rough transitions from the a-roll such as jump cuts, blurry shots, and other awkward a-roll footage.

To ask the question “are documentaries journalism?” begs many questions. Is that their purpose? Are they in themselves considered purposive? But, the real question is do they answer a question of what the desired audience wants to hear or a general audience that wants news? Is it important that they are accurate to historians? It is important that they are true to ethnographic studies? The basic principles of journalism can separate the
differences between informed communication and a monetary tool for propaganda or politics.

Documentary Sample

Biographical documentaries:

Super Size Me\(^9\) 2004

Director Morgan Spurlock takes a hilarious and often terrifying look at the effects of fast food on the human body, using himself as the proverbial guinea pig. For one month, Spurlock eats nothing but McDonald's fare.

What Happened to Jack Kerouac?\(^{10}\) 1986

Counterculture icon and On the Road author Jack Kerouac travels from fringe to fame and back again in this absorbing documentary. Numerous vintage TV clips reveal the troubled but undeniable genius of the Beat Generation king. Many of Kerouac's contemporaries are also on hand for colorful and poignant anecdotes; the guest list includes Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, William Burroughs, Neal Cassady, Carolyn Cassady and others.

God Grew Tired of Us: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan\(^{11}\) 2006

After raising themselves in the desert along with thousands of other "lost boys," Sudanese refugees John, Daniel and Panther have found their way to America, where they experience electricity, running water and supermarkets for the first time.

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\(^9\) Super Size Me, directed by Morgan Spurlock, DVD (Sony Pictures, 2004).
\(^{10}\) What Happened to Jack Kerouac, Netflix, accessed June 1, 2014.
\(^{11}\) God Grew Tired of Us: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan, directed by Christopher Quinn, DVD (Sony Pictures / National Geographic, 2007).
HBO documentaries

Death in Gaza\textsuperscript{12} 2004

Documentarians James Miller and Saira Shah planned to produce an in-depth look at the culture of martyrdom and hate pervading the Middle East. In 2003, they chronicled the lives of three Palestinian adolescents growing up in war-torn Gaza. Miller and Shah also wanted to show the Israeli side of the dispute, but during filming, Miller fell victim to the conflict when Israeli forces killed him. This HBO special relates the tragic story.

Thinking XXX\textsuperscript{13} 2004

Adult-film stars bare their souls about their careers and their celebrity in this behind-the-scenes look at the making of photographer Timothy Greenfield-Sanders's book \textit{XXX: 30 Porn-Star Portraits}. Along with footage of Greenfield-Sanders as he shoots the portraits for his revealing tome, the film also captures candid conversations about the porn industry with authors, artists and cultural experts.

Last Letters Home\textsuperscript{14} 2004

Ten families read letters from their loved ones killed during Operation Iraqi Freedom in this powerful and moving HBO documentary by Oscar and Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Bill Couturie (Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam). Photos of the soldiers in military and civilian life are shown as family members read the final correspondence received from Iraq and share their thoughts and memories about the fallen troops and the realities of war.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Death in Gaza}, directed by Saira Shah, DVD (HBO, Frostbite Films, 2006).
\textsuperscript{13} \textit{Thinking XXX}, directed by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, DVD (HBO, 2006).
\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Last Letters Home}, directed by Bill Couturie, DVD (HBO, 2004).
Historical documentaries

*The Nazis: A Warning from History*15 1997

Through archival footage and interviews with those who survived Adolf Hitler's reign—including unrepentant Nazis—this comprehensive documentary series sheds new light on the rise of the Third Reich in Germany. Chapters reveal how the Nazi state compelled ordinary people to commit atrocities, the order and disorder within the German army, and Hitler's propensity for getting his minions to do his work, among other enlightening facts.

*9/11*16 2002

This heartfelt documentary was created by award-winning French filmmakers Jules and Gedeon Naudet, who simply set out to make a movie about a rookie NYC fireman and ended up filming the tragic event that changed our lives forever. The program includes additional footage and interviews with the heroic firefighters, rescue workers and the Naudet brothers, providing exclusive insight to their extraordinary firsthand experience of the day's events.

Political documentaries

*Hillary: The Movie*17 2008

Released during her 2008 bid for the U.S. presidency, this provocative documentary examines the political foibles of Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton through interviews with more than thirty journalists and politicians. Delving into the senator's involvement with the futures market, her Senate race and her Senate record, the film includes appearances by Dick Morris, Newt Gingrich, and Ann Coulter.

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This provocative film cuts through the hype surrounding Barack Obama and uncovers disturbing evidence that the president is working to turn America into a fascist state aligned with a nefarious one-world government. Featuring commentary from outspoken author Webster Tarpley, the wide-ranging exposé also shows how a cabal of international financiers controls Washington politicians, how banks orchestrated the financial collapse of 2008 and more.

**Social and cultural documentaries**

**Gasland**\(^{19}\) 2010

In this Oscar-nominated documentary, director Josh Fox journeys across America to examine the negative effects of natural-gas drilling, from poisoned water sources to kitchen sinks that burst into flames to unhealthy animals and people.

**Vanishing of the Bees**\(^{20}\) 2009

This documentary details the economic, political and ecological consequences of a dwindling world honeybee population. It's a phenomenon with a name—Colony Collapse Disorder—but no explanation or solution exists.

**Jesus Camp**\(^{21}\) 2006

Operated by pastor Becky Fisher, the Kids on Fire School of Ministry aims to indoctrinate children into a Christian movement that blends political activism with religion. This documentary follows three kids at the controversial summer camp.

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\(^{18}\) *The Obama Deception*, directed by Alex Jones, DVD (Alex Jones Productions, 2009).
\(^{19}\) *Gasland*, directed by Josh Fox, DVD (Docurama, 2010).
\(^{20}\) *Vanishing of the Bees*, directed by George Langworthy, DVD (Hive Mentality Films, 2009).
\(^{21}\) *Jesus Camp*, directed by Heidi Ewing, DVD (A&E, Magnolia, 2007).
PBS Documentaries

The Ascent of Money: The Financial History of the World

2009

British historian and author Niall Ferguson explains how big money works today as well as the causes of and solutions to economic catastrophes in this extended version The Ascent of Money documentary. Through interviews with top experts, such as former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker and American currency speculator George Soros, the intricate world of finance, including global commerce, banking and lending, is examined thoroughly.

Ken Burns: The War / 2007

A seven-part series brings World War II to life through the harrowing personal accounts of soldiers and others from "typical" American towns.

Final Evaluation

Each documentary from the final purposive sample was evaluated according to the list of Kovach and Rosenstiel’s ten elements of journalism that inform the categories of verification and shared truth. The results were analyzed on how many of the journalism standards from the above-mentioned list appear in the analysis of each documentary and by how often any of the time-coded categories reflect the journalism principles. Based on the evaluation of the documentary according to Kovach and Rosenstiel’s criteria, I have rated each film as strongly a work of shared truth, moderately a work of shared truth, moderately a work of journalism, or strongly a work of

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journalism. The data are reported in the following “results” section and summarized and analyzed in the “discussion” section.
Chapter 6: Results

Kovach and Rosenstiel’s ten criteria are applied below. To recap, they are (1) obligation to truth, (2) loyalty to citizens, (3) discipline of verification, (4) independence from subjects, (5) independence in monitoring power, (6) providing a forum for public criticism and compromise, (7) making the significant both interesting and relevant, (8) being comprehensive yet proportionate, (9) allowing practitioners to exercise conscience, and (10) expecting citizens to have rights and responsibilities.

Due to some parties in the documentaries not being identified, time code reported in the appendix may not be comprehensive. Furthermore, time code of individual speakers, used primarily to weigh screen time for various viewpoints, was not kept for documentaries that did not provide opposing points of view.

Biographical Documentaries

Super Size Me:¹ is listed in Netflix’s biographical documentary section but has the feel of a television news magazine with a great deal of humor and satire injected. It is biographical only in the sense that it documents Morgan Spurlock’s experiences with his diet. The movie starts in journal style, recording dates and times, reporting on the experience that the director had while living only on food from McDonald’s. The documentary highlights the dependence Americans have on fast food and the result of becoming an overweight nation.

At 00:01:07 the movie shows an American flag and offers a quote from McDonald’s founder Ray Kroc that clarifies the ironic example of McDonald’s that is

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¹ Super Size Me, directed by Morgan Spurlock, DVD (Sony Pictures, 2004).
used in the movie: “Look after the customer and the business will take care of itself.” It rings as ironic because giving the customer what they want isn’t always good for the customer. The movie is also educational in tone offering charts and graphs throughout the movie as a teaching aid with statistics on healthy nutrition and resulting effects as evidence of Spurlock’s argument as stated in the nut graph:

   Everything is bigger in America. We have the biggest cars, the biggest houses, the biggest companies and the biggest people. America has now become the fattest country in the world. Congratulations. My mother cooked dinner every day. We never ate out. Now people do it almost every day. Now being overweight is only behind smoking as the second cause of death in America. People sued the fast food restaurants. 

The movie continues to set up its main theme by filming Spurlock (who also acts as narrator) at his initial checkup at his doctor’s office. He is warned before venturing on his dietary investigation and journey that it is dangerous and will be a stress to his body. This is reinforced when he visits his physical trainer, who mentions that the diet is harmful in a general sense because many of the people who eat fast food barely get even the minimum walking exercise by sitting at their workstations all day. At 00:13:32 a title appears on the screen, “The Last Supper” which sets up the last healthy, home-cooked meal of a salad, vegetables and meat.

   The common availability of fast-food restaurants is underlined when Spurlock conducts man-on-the-street interviews on the first day of his new diet, shortly after the title “Sue the Bastards” appears. When he interviews a woman from France, she makes the point that it is the American way to sue instead of just practicing self-restraint, leading to Americans having the international reputation of being overweight. She

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2 Ibid.
3 Ibid.
mentions that she never supersizes her meals while eating out and doesn’t feel the need to overindulge. An American woman echoes the Frenchwoman’s views, stating that McDonald’s also offers salads as an alternative to calorie-heavy meals. Spurlock gets many responses of a carefree nature when many young men mention their favorite fast-food outlets and locations and menu items, while enjoying their moment on camera. One man says lawsuits against the fast-food outlets for damages to human health should be thrown out of court. Spurlock reviews the work of John Banzhaf, who is the catalyst and coordinator of many of the lawsuits being brought against fast-food companies. Despite the great challenges Banzhaf faces, Spurlock mentions his track record of success suing the tobacco companies.

John F. Banzhaf III, law professor at George Washington University, mentions the historical environment of home nutrition and compares it with the dietary climate of today:

I think fast food is mentioned before all of the other causes in most of the articles and books and studies that mention it is a sudden epidemic. We have had neighborhood restaurants for over hundreds of years. It can’t be the foods we are eating at home, we have been eating at home for hundreds of years. Something is very different.4

Spurlock continues his journal entries and footage of his experience eating at McDonald’s intermixed with testimony from nutrition and legal experts. At 00:14:10 the rules of the experiment are given: Spurlock must eat three meals a day at different McDonald’s locations while visiting some of the fattest cities in America. This is followed by Spurlock including in his narration his experience with the history of McDonald’s. He reflects on a time when the restaurant chain offered only one size of

4 Ibid.
drinks and fries, and how that transitioned to the company making large varieties and sizes of meals and being an attraction for all members of the family with as well as providing playgrounds and televisions. He even mentions the need for automakers to enlarge the size of cup holders in new cars in order to accommodate larger drinks from fast-food outlets.

Footage of his tour of McDonald’s include a session of Spurlock eating his first supersized meal featuring shots documenting how long it can take to finish the meal, showing the five-, ten-, and fifteen-minute stages resulting in Spurlock vomiting out his car window after completing the meal. This footage is followed by a montage of his talking heads speaking of getting sick, cutting to shots of fat people and vending machines. While not totally defending the fast-food habit, Jacob Sullum, senior editor of *Reason* magazine, makes the claim of societal acceptance, “It is a terrible habit, but when will it become socially acceptable to hector fat people like you can hector cigarette smokers. The smoker can say fuck you. I find it hard to find the distinction between the two.”\(^5\) Acting as industry advocates for change, Spurlock includes footage of a Subway executive holding up his “fat pants” at an industry conference and a Baskin-Robbins executive stating that his father and grandfather both died at fifty-one.

In conclusion Spurlock speaks to ten legal and dietary experts and conducts six man-on-the-street interviews. While there aren’t necessarily two sides to his argument, the only opposition to a healthier diet comes from brief comments in these man-on-the-street interviews. The piece is very similar to investigative journalism, with numerous charts and data that support Spulock’s argument as evidence provided as b-roll for

\(^5\) Ibid.
Spurlock’s narrative. The b-roll video footage moves at a pace that documents his narration including shots of eating in McDonald’s, doctor checkups, and a variety of healthy and unhealthy meals at schools and businesses. The documentary relies heavily on documentation and graphics offering data and expert testimony to support the narrative giving it a sense of a journalistic effort. But there is also a sense of shared truth, due to many of the actors already having a disposition matching that of the director. The only opposing viewpoints are those of the man-on-the-street interviews, but with the strong evidence and information offered it appears to have the qualifications to represent journalism. Sony Pictures would appear to have no vested interest other than offering entertainment.

Super Size Me Evaluation

This documentary by Morgan Spurlock is rated as being a documentary with journalism qualities. While Spurlock did not offer testimony from an opposing point of view, outside of the man on the street interviews, he offered enough data in the form of research and expert opinions to provide a healthy amount of verification. While the film was listed in the biography category it would be a better fit in the social and cultural documentary category. It appears from the content that the only biographical element of the film is the time that spent being on the McDonald’s diet. His information gathering activity pushed the project well into the category of verification.

Spurlock’s editing and use of charts and data pushed the movie at a fast pace. His narration injected a sense of humor into what is somewhat a serious subject. But his approach made it a very popular movie with the general public giving the information
reported great reach. Given the size of the entertainment company, Sony, it doesn’t appear those behind the documentary would have any vested interest other than profits.

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes, Spurlock, through use of informational graphics, created a verification support system set to the rapid pace of his narration. Also the narration takes a great deal of time in the documentary and the informational graphics offer some form of verification that takes up the time talking heads normally might use. The traditional talking heads totaled eight and were sprinkled through the movie, but a five to ten-second sound bite was the norm.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens. Possibly, the project does have a narrative voice that would be useful to all audiences as a social conscience, but with lack of opposing viewpoints, it does have the essence of a shared truth with its audience. The eight man-on-the street interviews were all that was offered as opposing thought and only were on the screen for a total of fifteen of ninety-six minutes.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Yes, the research and supporting evidence was displayed in a sense to support the rapid narration, there was always a graphic on the screen to act as verification or evidence. While it did only support the main argument, it went beyond just taking the word of the narrator or talking head by offering evidence that what they were saying was documentable.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover: Yes, the type of social documentary that Super Size Me is, in certain ways creates a separation from the subject. At least 75 percent concentrates on overweight people who consume too much fast food, not people with a good diet and exercise
regime. Spurlock does not take their side, nor the side of the fast-food industry, although he demonstrates the negative results of over-reliance on fast food.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power: Yes. The piece does serve as an independent monitor of power by controlling the content and distribution and willingly offering verification on its own as a work of journalism.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Yes. If documentary is a one-sided message in its original form, it certainly can incite conversation, including criticism, and compromise.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Yes. The proliferation of the documentaries available from outlets such as Netflix makes it imperative to reach an audience that goes beyond a shared truth. Reaching a larger audience may lead to its having an entertaining production style that makes it more interesting.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: No. In the case of Super Size Me, the news was comprehensive from the dietary research displayed on screen, but the overall message was not that strongly attached to exercise as balancing diet.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Possibly. In this case, the film may have exercised a personal conscience. This is coming from Spurlock and not any one else. The only representation from interviews of any industry executives comes in the form of three to four minutes of corporate representatives speaking to a conference event. What Spurlock shows are industry representatives taped doing their presentation at the event. But this technique
doesn’t mean that the film had the endorsement of those companies. Their upbeat attitude is meant to support the proactive style of the narrative. The entertainment factor is hard to ignore.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the truth: Possibly. Citizens do have rights and also the responsibility to be able to judge if the verification process is present as it is in this one, or if there is no verification at all, or just a shared truth.

Super Size Me ranks as moderately a work of journalism. Super Size Me is strongly rated as journalistic in the verification process undertaken by Spurlock. The domination of his voice and narration reaches 75 percent of content, once the nut graph and entertaining opening has passed. It is valued as having a high enough level of documentation and evidence to allow the audience to not have to rely on an existing shared truth, although it lacks point of view from the fast-food industry. The extensive nutritional charts and statistics shown as b-roll allowed for the viewer to follow along and not get hung up on every word mentioned in the heavy narration. An example of the pacing is after the initial nut graph, the narration starts at 00:01:07 and builds up momentum until small pockets of talking head interviews every five to ten minutes.

What Happened to Jack Kerouac? This second sampled documentary is listed in the biography category. The title gives a mysterious air about the actual content of the narrative. It raises the question of whether the producers are trying to solve a mystery about the disappearance of Kerouac or instead are investigating a certain event that happened to Kerouac at a given point in time. That mystery is quickly solved at 00:00:58 with a scroll of text on the screen covering biographical facts and dates of Kerouac’s
short life [he died at forty-seven]. This informational technique repeats throughout the documentary, acting as markers and a tour guide for the piece. At 00:02:00 the nut graph cuts to an extreme close up of Greg Corso, an associate of Kerouac’s. Corso is speaking at a reunion of former friends and associates on the likelihood of their associates being aware of the success that was in their future when they first participated in the Beat movement. “I think they were bull shitters, man, they didn’t know what was going to happen. They wanted it to happen for them but let’s be realistic. America creates these individualists. The thought was they were all together. You don’t call a generation four people. That was the weight that fell on them [Beat poets]. Madison Avenue got on them.”

The narrative continues with a focus on Kerouac’s later life after the decline of the Beat movement, with a parade of testimonies and anecdotes from family and friends that build a picture of what really happened to him that will become a comparison to his professional life as an artist through flashbacks and flash forwards.

At 00:03:08 his daughter, Jan Kerouac, speaks of visiting him and gives an example of his lifestyle in later life:

He was just sitting in a rocker in the front of the TV set watching the *Beverly Hillbillies* with his old, faithful blue plaid shirt on. Just drinking his bottle of whiskey. We just walked in and he looked over his shoulder and goes, “Oh, hi.” He knew who I was immediately but I guess he was very accustomed to his feelings at this point. I guess the only way his feelings came out was in his writing.

Reflecting on a television interview shared by Kerouac and fellow beat poet Allen Ginsberg in 1968, Ginsberg describes Kerouac’s poor state of health, puffy face from drinking, and overall sad state of mind. According to Ginsberg, Kerouac was in a foggy

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7 Ibid.
state, with a wandering mind and having no regard for the seriousness of the situation and the incoherency of his participation in the interview.\textsuperscript{8} Ginsberg relates the time period to the death of Kerouac a year later. As for verification, the editing moves at a rapid clip offering similar, personal reflections of the life of their friend and associate, offering a sense of triangulation and evidence through similar facts displayed in the anecdotes. The dozens, if not hundreds of sound bites move the narrative along without having an actual sense of using a narrator. The majority of interviews both on camera and off camera are using split edits to make long quotes support b-roll and still photographs. Talking heads are repeatedly called on and sprinkled throughout the documentary, but the same sources are relied on for being eyewitnesses to the subject, to create a sense of authority in a true biographical manner.

The young and older Kerouac are both described to show the decline in his once-healthy life. Stills and video show the young and handsome man on television shows hosted by contemporary media icons Steve Allen and William F. Buckley. The appearances not only show a younger man but a more coherent one as he gives poetry readings and elaborates at length about his experience and the writing process. At 00:06:00 his estranged wife at the time, Fran Landesman, describes his declining health and self-destructive habits:

Actually the Jack that we met when we lived in New York changed as the years went by when we would come back from St. Louis. We very often saw Jack and it was very sad to see what was happening to him. Puffy face and everything else just from all that booze. He told me once, “I am a Catholic and I can’t commit suicide for my family, but I plan to drink myself to death.”\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid.
A writer and friend, Michael McClure, speaks of being struck by the Hollywood looks of Kerouac when they first met and how McClure was struck by how self-conscious Kerouac was, much like a high school student would be. The production often returns to the crawl on the screen, and in this instance it lists the cast of characters who would become his inner circle in New York and later in San Francisco, including Ginsberg, who was a freshman at Columbia University at the time, and William Burroughs, a Harvard-educated junkie ten years Kerouac’s senior. The three often ventured to a Times Square Laundromat to meet their shady friend Herbert Huncke. These friends handle the majority of the interviews that make up the narrative of the documentary along with friend and writer Greg Corso. A majority of the b-roll used was stock footage, both professional and supplied by friends for San Francisco in the 1960s. Both color and black and white, of New York and San Francisco are used as b-roll to support the narrative as well as many audio recordings of public poetry readings by Kerouac. John Clellon Holmes describes the early days in New York and the early creativity of Kerouac, “I heard that Jack had this big book which he carried around in a doctor’s bag and weighed forty pounds. That was his first novel, Town in the City.” One of the remaining leading characters is Neal Cassady, who would become one of Kerouac’s best friends who also shared natural good looks, and would be the inspiration for the main characters in many of Kerouac’s novels. Cassady is the spotlight of much of the stock footage used of Kerouac and Ginsberg.

Much of the focus of the remainder of the documentary is on the highlights of Kerouac and friends in San Francisco doing readings and his decline leading to his death.

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10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
What Happened to Jack Kerouac?, using a biographical style, falls squarely into the category of using the rules of journalism. While the characters may have a shared truth of the man and the context of the time, the evidence presented in the piece describe the historical facts of the man while using the Beat poet era as a backdrop. It is not meant to be a history of only the Beat Generation. The creator of the film, Richard Lerner, appears to have had the intent of creating a historical document without an ulterior motive. There is an attempt at verification through stock footage and interviews that offer a form of triangulation. They do this by offering forms of evidence out of need due to the limited group of survivors, through still photos, news footage, public records, and audio recordings that can be used as a form of triangulating facts. It was used for the closing section of the film of his mother and his death that went for nine to ten minutes with only being able to pan and zoom on stills. The use of historical text scrolling on the screen keep the narrative tone set in a historical and factual light.

What Happened to Jack Kerouac? Evaluation

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes, it strives to document his life as a poet and writer, and the dominating theme that sets up the movie is the decline in his health in his later years. It appears at 00:03:08 when his daughter makes the first mention of his alcoholism. Much of the remainder of the film is dominated by his relationship with his declining mother. One of the most common connections between his life as a poet and novelist and his older years in seclusion is the natural shyness that he felt all his life in spite of wanting to be a celebrity.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: Yes, the sources who speak offer a well-documented story of his career and make it clear that most of the interviews given are
speculation and only have triangulation through multimedia to verify some facts. The whole effect is to portray the good and bad of a literary icon.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Yes, it falls into the verification category. It is well-researched and has excellent use of triangulation through multiple platforms.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. With the content being biography and history, its practitioners must only maintain a respect for the facts from research and avoid creating a shared truth.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Possibly. In cases like this of the historical kind, it is still good to serve as an independent monitor of power for independent control and much like Hillary: The Movie, it can be exploited in both directions of a verification system and a shared truth.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: No. This is not necessarily so in this movie. Depending on ownership an independent production is different for storytelling than a traditional news outlet, but not regarding the steps of verification. A story viewed through the narrative analysis theory might not favor a public criticism and compromise.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Yes. Appearing throughout the movie are sequences in which the creators may have struggled to get enough media for audio and video. But what it allows them to do is play jazz music, while Kerouac would read along to stills of period photos. At 01:03:08, Kerouac reads of a poem relating Charlie Parker to Buddha. At 01:16:48, he reads
a poem about his mother with the same style of fitting existing stills with required narrative elements. They made it interesting and relevant.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: Yes. With biographers and historians having the same pressure as journalists for verification, in some cases they have even more pressure to report it in a historically correct manner and in the correct context. Through a narrative inquiry frame, storytelling may be more important to reach an agreeable meaning and ending to the narrative. This may have had two audiences in the end, but blends nicely.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Yes. If using personal conscience will lead to a verifiable truth, then of course it should be used if normal ethical standards can’t me met. A story like Kerouac’s could be edited in a way that does not properly reflect his life; it depends on who is being interviewed sometimes. But that leads back to triangulation.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: No. In the case of the biographical and historical genre, it is important to be protected under human rights legislation as a private citizen, but also protect the characters that are in the narrative.

What Happened to Jack Kerouac? ranks as moderately a work of journalism. What Happened to Jack Kerouac? is an example of verification and research and falls within processes that honor journalism. The production is rich with source material. When the creators do not have video, they rely on old still photographs and vice versa. It was produced in 1986 as a tribute and piece of culture and nostalgia. The use of slides throughout the film offered verifiable facts and save on the production minutes otherwise
spent listening to the narrator for this important background information. Even though there is always potential of a story of this nature being interpreted for an audience. The producers used very little narration and only at the opening edit at 00:01:10 a question offered by the interviewer bled into the microphone—the only time in the film that the voice of the filmmaker was heard. Outside of that, there was hardly ever a voice on interviews from the host or interviewer. The main trio of Burroughs, Corso, and Ginsberg act as the general narrator and tour guide. There is some question regarding balance throughout the production in my review. Although the story of Kerouac’s alcoholism and drug addiction is highlighted through the narrative and is necessary, there is a very hard-to-measure imbalance between his young and insecure days and the ability to answer the question of what happened to him. It is clear a work of solid journalism practices.

*God Grew Tired of Us: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan* is the third and final film from the biographical category. The DVD is the only one from the sample that opens with advertisements for other DVD projects. Seen without having experienced the documentary, the ads create a tone that offers implications of the featured documentary by the titles chosen for promotion, both of which have a Christian storyline. The titles featured are *Facing the Giants*, which is about a Christian football coach who practices his faith on the football field, and *The Second Chance*, a vehicle for Christian singer Michael W. Smith. When the actual documentary begins it is quickly established as strictly a historic and biographical piece, without any messages from the production company.

The action begins at 00:01:04 with a shot of Sudanese children in an African refugee camp reading a community bulletin board regarding opportunities for relocation
in America. At 00:01:51 the shot cuts to footage of young kids playing soccer and the activity in the village to establish the location and conditions of life in their home. The opening narration of Nicole Kidman establishes that the project has a humanitarian feel to its historical content: “The war between North and South, that is Sudan, started in 1983. Two million people lost their lives due to that war – civil war.” A slow zoom of Sudan on a map of Africa over the opening narration dissolves to shots of the village. The movie continues with the interviews of the boys featured in the documentary who will be followed on their journey to a new life in America, establishing the main characters and story of the civil war. The film relies on three shooting crews covering the Sudan location and the homes that the boys moved to in America -- in Syracuse, New York, and Pittsburgh. Initially the documentary makers just use the audio of the boys with b-roll video of their home. An unidentified voice is quoted as saying, “I left when I was six. The vision or picture of Southern Sudan is kind of getting away from me. It’s going away from my mind. This, my Mother Homeland, was beautiful and I can compare it to nothing.”¹² Shots of straw villages are featured during the quote, and then cut to shots of healthy, brightly dressed women in the village. At 03:03:06 a lower-third credit appears on the screen identifying the speaker, “Panther Bior.”¹³ The shot changes to Bior, who begins to describe a healthy, beautiful Sudan from memories of his family before the war. “The climate was good, the life was nice. We have a lot of food throughout the year, vegetables, fruits, everything. And it was very rich soil. My father was a farmer, cattle

¹² God Grew Tired of Us: The Story of Lost Boys of Sudan, directed by Christopher Quinn, DVD (Sony Pictures / National Geographic, 2007).
¹³ Ibid.
keeper . . . and I used to tend my cattle with my friends.”\textsuperscript{14} His narrative of Sudan is paired with a montage of video shots showing crops and cattle, with farmers working in the fields and young boys singing as they herd the cattle.

At 00:04:33, the boys camp is introduced with the title, “Kakuma, Kenya U.N. Refugee Camp. Population: 86,000 Sudanese.” The shots rotate through video of boys singing in a happy tone and chanting. The narrator adds a brief history of the camp to the nut graph to establish the main storyline, “The Kakuma Refugee camp became home to thousands of orphaned young men. Known as the lost boys of Sudan, they arrived here after walking thousands of miles through the wilderness of Sudan to escape their country’s bloody civil war. The lost boys had no idea they would spend nearly a decade trapped on the border of their country.”\textsuperscript{15}

The second main character is introduced as John Bul Dau. He is given the same style of a split edit featuring him speaking with footage of the young men still singing. He speaks of the pride that he has for his country stemming from the belief that a person should be proud of himself and his birthplace. The shot changes to him speaking from a small room that he calls home, and he continues to elaborate that he will never be able to return to Sudan for fear of the war. The third main character, Daniel Abul Pach, is featured with an exterior shot showing the village in the background. He comments in broken English:

\begin{quote}
If there is peace in Sudan, I will come. But if no peace, I will not come to Sudan. I will not come because people are being shot. They shoot small people like us. We don’t know, they have just killed our parents. Like my father has died at that time when I first go through Ethiopia when we were running. We were in cattle camp. They came and shoot my father, which mean if I go now to Sudan, they can kill
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
me again. Like my mother now, I don’t know where she is with her kids. Maybe they have died. Imagine.16

This final quote sets the conflict presented to the main characters and is accomplished at 00:07:08. The narrator follows by giving a brief history of the conflict, which leads to war. The trouble began with the creation of one Sudan from two smaller entities when the British abandoned colonization in the 1950s, leaving behind a conflict between religion and oil. This is explained over footage of military activity in the fields. It is detailed that in 1987 the government in the Arab, Muslim northern half of the nation instructed its soldiers to kill all young males in the black, animist and Christian southern half regardless of age. All young men who didn’t run to the bush were killed. The boys speak of eating mud and drinking urine during their long walk to an international camp built in Ethiopia. The documentary then shifts the stage to the United States with the narrative focusing on their adjustment to their new home and the challenges of learning about American society, holding a job, and missing their families. It continues to follow their ascent through the remainder of the film. Becoming used to a capitalist society and financially supporting their surviving families in Sudan is juxtaposed against their activist concerns about making their new country aware of their story and the challenges in Sudan. At 01:22:15 the movie concludes with shots of their mothers and families arriving at the airport in native dress, singing native songs.

Much like What Happened to Jack Kerouac?, this documentary is a biography and describes an historical event. The facts of the case are outlined early, and sound historical facts are included in the main narration. There is no opposing view, say, from officials in northern Sudan, and the intent of the producers appears to be of an activist

16 Ibid.
light. Special thanks are given at the end of the film to supportive celebrities including Dermot Mulroney, Mike Myers, and Brad Pitt, who served as executive producer. With production being shared with National Geographic, the style of the documentary falls into the historical style of the company. While there is a shared truth about the conditions in Sudan, much of the information is journalistic at heart informing the world of the event and situation that may not be common knowledge to a general audience. The b-roll offered as evidence verifes the stories the boys tell of their homeland. It goes back to the basic question of this dissertation of practicing verification or a work of shared truth. In the words of Finley Peter Dunne, “‘The job of the newspaper is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.’”17 God Grew Tired of Us, while providing verification, creates empathy and ultimately takes the side of the Lost Boys. This is in the journalistic tradition of advocating for the powerless against the powerful.

God Grew Tired of Us: The Story of Lost Boys of Sudan Evaluation

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Possibly. The documentary did cast light on an international topic. But it can easily be seen as a shared truth or propaganda, as it tells the Lost Boys’ story form their perspective and not from others. It at times feels like two movies, while viewing. The history part and the success story part at times can be disconnected as having two separate narratives.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens. No. This question can be seen as what is the intended audience. On many projects it can be viewed as the difference of a verifiable project or a shared truth that is the belief of the small group of citizens making up the shared belief and intended audience.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification. Yes. Verification in this case is in the historical facts that are presented. With the brand of the National Geographic as a producer, verification can become taken for granted. At times there appears to be a feeling of it being staged, as at 01:22:15, when John Bul Dau’s mother arrives at the Syracuse Airport. The project appears to have required a lot of preproduction. But it does offer historical verification of the history of the boys’ journey and of the challenges of the entire population of Lost Boys.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. Yes. The practitioners do not seem to be too close to the subject, which is apparent through the problems the boys in Pittsburgh had with culture shock and feeling American discrimination. The creators of the documentary never directly assist the subjects; for example, despite the Lost Boys obviously needing advice and money, the producers do not provide it. The end of the film that documents the success the boys enjoyed with awareness of the problem appears to be a bit staged, and was a harsh transition. It was followed by the producers’ names.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Yes. It does serve as an independent monitor by bringing the project to light for an American audience that might not get that much foreign news or missed the entire events behind the exodus of the Lost Boys from Sudan.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Possibly. The project did create a forum for the conditions the community was faced with after the war, and the struggle to survive and stay alive in the wake of international aid. The opposition in northern Sudan—the Muslim Arabs who fought against the
black tribes of the south—was represented in locally shot war footage, but in no other way.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant. Yes. The contrast between their homeland and America likely made it interesting for more audiences.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: No. In regards to presenting the news in proportion, there is no discussion from the northern Sudanese government. Thus the documentary, while employing journalistic techniques, is one-sided.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Yes. The production is well financed with a high profile with financiers. As a production with an activist type of feeling, the practitioners did exercise their conscience to bring awareness to the issue.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news. Yes. For a production that one would assume to be intended for a U.S. or English-speaking audience, it is the responsibility of the citizens to stay active if it piqued any interest. Opportunities to donate to the Lost Boys are evident, as Dau has created a nonprofit foundation to promote health care in his homeland, now the independent nation of South Sudan.

God Grew Tired of Us ranks as moderately a work of journalism. God Grew Tired of Us: The Story of Lost Boys of Sudan is rated by this dissertation for having a substantial level of verification. Most of this comes in the form of actually documenting the historical background of the war and the attempts of the people to recover from the
devastation of family and culture. It has the *National Geographic* historical feel [the *Geographic* was the video distributor] before the midway of the film, when it resulted in four crews shooting simultaneously, offering verification and parallel time lines for believability. By not being rated as a narrative inquiry frame shows that by documenting the before and after of the three boys trip abroad and back can distill two different audiences who may have their own shared truth in their culture, different than the others. The documentary could be rated as a narrative inquiry project if the long project was broken into two separate shows from different countries. But, in the form that it is in, meets the requirements for an honest production seeking to report a story that can be trusted and verified, even with a public relations tone.

*HBO Documentaries*

*Death in Gaza*\(^\text{18}\) is the first documentary sampled from the HBO category. It is an accounting of filmmakers documenting the tense relations and lifestyles in the Gaza Strip. It also offers an insight into war journalism and the daily threats war correspondents face. The topic selected offers the directors a challenge to present sensitive subject matter in an objective light.

Similar to many documentaries in the sample, the movie starts with a journal style with a title at 00:01:20 setting a time marker of “May 2\(^{\text{nd}}\) 2003.”\(^\text{19}\) The title is displayed over ambient audio of gunfire and street sounds. Saira Shah handles lengthy and detailed narration through the film after the death of the film’s original director, James Miller, and features the original point of view camera work of Miller. At 00:00:17, a title appears that gives the background on the conflict: “They were entering a region that had been in

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\(^{18}\) *Death in Gaza*, directed by Saira Shah, DVD (HBO, Frostbite Films, 2006).

\(^{19}\) Ibid.
turbmoil for more than fifty years. The Gaza Strip and its Palestinian Arab population fell under Israel’s control following the Six Day War of 1967.” At 00:01:23 news footage is shown giving the international impact of the Miller incident, “A British cameraman has been shot dead by Israeli forces while filming in the Gaza Strip. James Miller was near the Egyptian border when he was hit in the neck.” At 00:01:48 there is a color shot of Miller that dissolves into a still shot of the same picture on the front page of a newspaper story. The narration continues to explain the lifestyle of a war correspondent with shots of Miller with his wife and children. The shots change to footage of Palestinian families placing their hands on the graves of freshly buried, martyred sons. Audio from the camera is edited together with Miller commenting during a television interview that sometimes you want to just turn off the camera as to not interfere, but that as a journalist that would deny the opportunity to report to a vast number of people what is actually happening. His narration is over his shots of the funerals in the streets, with family members hovering close together and putting their hands on the caskets.

The audio returns to the TV coverage of his death explaining that the Israeli army denied involvement but shows local footage from another media outlet of the Miller crew waving white flags. At 00:03:45 Saira Shah, with many dramatic pauses in the narration to make room for shots of children with weapons, makes the following distinction regarding the intent of the production:

This film isn’t about the rights and wrongs of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is about the people who get sucked in. About James. And about children getting caught up in a grown up war. James had planned a film about Israeli children too.

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20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
So the story isn’t finished. But James did bear witness. Everything you are about to see is through his eyes.23

A title appears on the screen to set the first location for the production: “Nablus, The West Bank.” This is the town where they will make contact and develop relationships with the children who will be the featured subjects of the documentary. The footage cuts to scenes of explosions, and people running from smoke. A good portion of the remaining audio narrative is from the camera microphone featuring James. He instructs Saira to hand him his bulletproof vest and to keep the camera running as he puts it on while locals yell to them to come to where they are to shoot the violent conflict. Saira narrates that the ground is covered with blood and pieces of skin, and audio from the camera picks up individuals saying that it was Israel’s version of peace. The footage continues of local Palestinians picking up body parts to be buried with the remains.

The narration continues to create a story that is sympathetic to the grief and reactions of the Palestinians. If offers a description of the towns becoming prisons to its residents because of the roadblocks and checkpoints constructed by the Israeli army. When the documentary makers attempt to question a guard at a checkpoint about what had just happened, they are told to move back away from the checkpoint despite the identifying clothing and signage designating them members of the press. The narrative goes on to explain that the source of the conflict facing the town is a result of Israeli tanks and bulldozers demolishing apartment buildings to construct Israeli housing. The bulldozers are pummeled with rocks and bricks thrown by Palestinian children. At 000:08:48 a title is offered on the screen introducing the first subject of interest, Mohammed, who is twelve years old. The narration makes the distinction at this point

23 Ibid.
that James would not usually be included but due to the change in scope of the production, his audio offers some sort of verification. However at times the documentary makers do come close at to offering a shared truth of the Palestinian community, not that their intended HBO audience shares this truth, but verification of the seriousness of the situation is more powerful.

Ahmed is the second boy introduced as a subject of the film. Ahmed offers the following quote while playing a video game featuring gunfire:

My mother says, “Don’t go near the Israelis . . . they shoot . . . they don’t know Islam . . . they’re criminals . . . whatever they see, they shoot. She says that a lot, but I don’t listen. I want to be nice to the all the world. Except my enemies, the Jews. Some pigs [Israelis] do pray. But their prayer is useless. They don’t say “God is Greatest” They don’t know the Koran. They pray like this. They just bend a bit. But we have education. We know what moves to make. They pray standing up.”

The footage cuts to kids playing with toy guns in a game they call Jews and Arabs, which used to be played with rocks and stones. They explain that the players have to die. The video cuts to real pictures of a boy being shot, and his gravestone. Ahmed is pictured with a masked man that Saira describes as a candidate for recruitment. She asks the masked man if he thinks Ahmed is too young and he replies, “Don’t worry, Sister. If we lose our little brother, there are thousands to replace him.” Ahmed is asked how he would like to die, to which he replies that they wouldn’t shoot him due to being too young. The footage cuts to shots of young boys wearing headbands like those of the martyred soldiers and the grave of a young boy.

The third boy who is studied is introduced as fourteen-year-old Salem. He is meeker than Ahmed and has more innocent rhetoric. The editing returns to a journal style

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24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
of pacing showing the time of day throughout what would be the documentary makers’ final day. The footage ranges from Ahmed making a dynamite bomb for his new friends to shots of the production team waiting out a confrontation between the bulldozers and the local population. They are confined to the house of a family with whom they have become friendly. The team debates if they should try to escape or tape the confrontation; they decide to shoot the event. At the suggestion of their host family, they carry white flags and display their press credentials. The documentary concludes with the tragic event that took James’s life, with footage of a local film crew documenting the event.

*Death in Gaza* is a wonderful production, but offers a unique challenge to categorize it for this dissertation. Even though the narration makes the distinction early in the production that there was an intention to have a companion piece to feature Israeli children and the opposite side of the conflict, as a stand-alone production it does appear to be sympathetic to the Palestinian situation and offers a strong narrative of their shared truth. As mentioned before, the HBO audience may not hold the views of a shared truth that is true to the actual definition of narrative inquiry theory, in which the production would be intended for an audience that shares that ideal. But with the point of the production being to shed light on the Palestinian situation, any audience member naïve to the situation may acquire a bias about Israel. Many of the slides used to explain the Israeli-Palestinian history early in the production could be interpreted as the Israeli government acting as a bully. On the other hand, the video shots and point-of-view approach do offer some sense of verification in a journalistic sense. The shots of war and mourning do show the aggression aimed at the communities and some justification for retaliation. As a stand-alone piece, there are no real arguments or voices that explain the
Israeli side of the conflict. There are no interviews or footage to show the other side of the conflict. The strongest argument of the intention of the producers’ HBO broadcast is that it is a detailed profile of war journalism. However, with the extensive footage shot and direction of the Miller’s it is a true model of the cinema verite style of becoming part of the background.

*Death in Gaza, Evaluation*

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes. *Death in Gaza* is the purest example from the sample of offering verification and being journalistic, purely through the creators’ excellent camera work which led to the narrative and perfecting the POV format.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens. Yes, as the late James Miller states at 00:02:28, “Your human response is actually to not intrude and to switch the camera off and move away.” But the film does turn its eye on conflict and danger, and does so unblinkingly, in order to inform and educate.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Yes, Miller is later quoted as saying, “But, if you do that [move away], you’re not actually bearing witness to what’s happening to them. You are showing a vast number of people the actual reality of that situation.” These quotes are over extreme close-ups of rituals over dead bodies in the streets with families mourning.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. Possibly. The example of *cinema verite* is also true regarding *Death in Gaza*. With such intimate camera shots it is hard to not become part of the story by being intrusive.
The project is a cross between *cinema verite* and modern investigative journalism, hence the close personal relationships.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Yes. The producers made it clear in the opening that before the death of Miller, there was a project planned that would investigate the state of children in Israel. This disclaimer was important to act as an independent monitor and as a journalist. Other than that statement, the reputation of the producers, and the excellent narrative the project could easily be taken as a shared truth by a narrative inquiry.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Yes. The subject itself opens the door for criticism and compromise, both in a journalistic and political way.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Yes. *Death in Gaza* brings everyday headlines to a forum that most people would gloss over in everyday news. Also the death of James Miller, which spanned almost five minutes beginning at 00:01:48, put a face on the story via BBC news footage.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion. Possibly. As a piece by itself, the news is comprehensive but not in proportion -- not without the companion Israeli children piece they mentioned. Israel was portrayed in the documentary as the enemy, almost in an invisible way, mainly because they shot it on the ground in the neighborhoods they chose. There was no time given to the Israeli side or voice. But it would have been out of context and watered down their trust with people and also their focus for this film.
9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience. Yes. The practitioners do exercise their personal conscience and make it clear when they reiterate that the project is about the children and not politics.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news. Yes. *Death in Gaza* is a perfect case for the audience having to educate themselves on a subject that is the least bit historical or political. Even though in the true sense of offering verification, having all voices represented is important, in an on-the-ground qualitative project like *Death in Gaza*, it may not be possible.

*Death in Gaza* ranks as moderately a work of journalism. *Death in Gaza* fits into a journalism model, mainly because of the verification offered in the production style of the producers, and would have rated strongly as journalism if it had opposition voices. It probably is the strongest example of the journalism measures of the sample. This is also based on the creators’ ability to act as investigative reporters, but at the same time stay out of the story when possible (obviously, the death of one of the creators needed explanation and thus had to become part of the story). Saira Shah also does an impressive job as narrator and director, considering she lost her partner. The narration is very sparing and allowed to breathe, while allowing the subjects to act as the narrative. More than half of the narration is dedicated to historic facts or information regarding the shots.

*Thinking XXX*\(^2\) is another documentary from the HBO category. While this documentary carries the HBO name, from the very opening frame, it clearly is intended for an audience with a shared truth of the director. Narrative inquiry theory offers an explanation. The profanity and obscenities from the very beginning eliminate the

\(^2\) *Thinking XXX*, directed by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, DVD (HBO, 2006).
potential viewership of a general audience. Many audience members would not be able to view this as a biography or history. Many would not make it past the title and the cover art. It is “out of the box” intended for an audience with a shared truth.

The film begins at 00:00:00 with an unidentified female talking head explaining the attraction of pornography and goes on to give an explicit list of human sexual body parts. The production cuts to the photographer, Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, and what inspired the film—his plan to make a book of photographs of porn stars:

Twenty-five years ago I started taking large-format portraits with an antique view camera in my East Village studio. My first subjects were New York artists. Soon I was asked to shoot actors, musicians, and eventually even presidents. Now I have a new subject, porn stars.27

The quote appears over shots of David Bowie, Jimmy Carter, and George H.W. Bush. An unidentified female talking head explains that the porn field first attracts models as participants, and none are motivated by money or an expectation of getting wealthy. Her quote is accompanied by shots of porn stars fully clothed and then a second montage of the same individuals naked during a camera shoot. At 00:01:48, the first identified interview is Faye Wattleton. She explains that a level of curiosity is common when people look at porn stars as the models and actors are so inaccessible. Her belief is that most people share a secret desire to be porn stars at some point in life.

Gore Vidal, who is credited in his title as an author and historian, offers some authenticity. He is one of the fifteen authors who were asked by the photographer to write essays for the book that is the subject of the documentary, others include Lou Reed and Nancy Friday. Vidal explains, “We never seem to tire of looking at naked bodies is true,

27 Ibid.
but they always have to be new ones.”28 The photos are meant to show a different identity of the same individuals. Greenfield-Sanders describes the shock of seeing the models fully clothed after shooting them in an everyday scenario. His description is matched with shots of the models preparing for their shoots, both naked and clothed, and the photo shoots they participated in. He describes his history of shooting with an antique, large-format camera with the identifiable inverted lens view. A common production technique of the documentary is viewing the models through the inverted lens while shooting and then dissolving to the final print for the book. Extensive time, at about 10 minutes each is given to each participating model in the documentary beginning with Savanna Samson. While preparing her wardrobe for her clothed session, she explains her introduction to the porn industry: “I worked at Scores, the gentlemen club in Manhattan, before I started making movies and my husband really wanted me to make a movie for a wedding present and I was appalled at the idea at first.”29

She speaks of being drawn to the idea after looking at samples and having the comfort that she would remain anonymous. Jesse Jane then appears naked in a swimming pool and explains her motivation started as a young teen. She doesn’t view herself as a porn star but more as an actress. Gina Lewis, who considers herself a businesswoman and an actress having sex on camera, shares the same reasoning. At 00:04:42 the male point of view is offered by Sean Michael, who feels that sex can be portrayed in a tasteful way and not necessarily as porn:

Because I love women and you don’t degrade something that you love. In the old days it was about people who just loved sex. A female you know really enjoys her sexuality. Someone who comes across like that, she is a sex goddess. But if she’s

28 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
there looking at her nails or watch while doing a double anal, people will think she is just a slut because it is not about that, it is about art in a way.\textsuperscript{30}

Another production style that may reflect the photographer’s sense of design is the relocating of title credits around the screen from one model to the next. Sean Michael’s identification credit is on the top right part of the screen, with that of Nina Hartley appearing on the bottom right. Hartley goes on to explain her motivation as an extension of her feminist feelings dating to her days growing up in Berkeley in the early 1970s. Her explanation makes the connection from her feminist feelings, giving her the ability to enjoy having sex in front of thousands of people. To further illustrate the contrast between their professional role and personal life, footage is shot of them at home with spouses.

Heather Hunter, an African American porn star, explains her upbringing: “I grew up in a family that was pretty much the Huxtables [of NBC-TV’s \textit{The Cosby Show}]. I was daddy’s girl. I couldn’t do wrong with a guy like my dad.”\textsuperscript{31} She also is shown in her back yard with her dogs during her explanation that black porn is often seen as low class and not very flattering. Famous erotic film director John Waters moves the discussion to the economics of porn and potential to make a decent living. Heather Hunter says porn offers a lot of revenue for someone with just a high school education. Waters describes the range of good-paying pornography jobs, with being a \textit{Playboy} model and gay porn leading the way in potential earnings. He also explains that some of the models if not in porn would be flashers in everyday life.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
At 00:27:35, Sharon Mitchell contributes to the capacity to make a living and the potential for self-improvement that porn has given her:

In the adult entertainment industry I started in 1975. In 1996 I went back to school. I finished my masters in public health and I will be a PhD next year. I run the Aim Healthcare Foundation. We are a nonprofit organization. We serve over 900 hundred people a month by monitoring people for HIV and STDs on a monthly basis for porn.  

The film winds to a close with one of the few expert opinions offered by Adrian Nicole Leblanc, author: “Early on as I was reporting, somebody who had no exposure to pornography at all, it was the astonishment that these young women would watch porn literally almost as instructional videos.” The narrative comes to a close about what areas of porn have the highest paydays, including gay porn and roles that do not allow for condoms. The film ends with recovering porn stars speaking of growing tired of sex and wanting to raise a family or return to school.

The documentary for the most part is intended for a shared audience. Narrative inquiry theory is evaluating a project as a whole. Generally, the project isn’t particularly offensive, but with the topic being one that only a certain audience would find visually palatable and many potential viewers possibly finding it offensive as a whole, it belongs to a shared truth narrative style. There is no conversation offered from people, actors, doctors or experts who are opposed to porn or any discussion of the addictive and harmful potential of the industry. All of the models chosen earn a healthy living and enjoy their profession, which complements the aim of the director to involve people who are comfortable being nude and have experience posing. The only sign of verification is showing the models in both their personal and professional lives. The documentary

32 Ibid.
33 Ibid
begins to have a biographical or historical tone at times, but fails to give a clear sense of either beyond the stories of the models.

Thinking XXX Evaluation

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: No, it doesn’t speak to a truth beyond the story of being a happy, successful, and healthy porn star. And that is a limited truth.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: Possibly. The content in the documentary is accurate and doesn’t claim to be an endorsement or hard news. It is informative and lighthearted.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Possibly. Many of the interviews confirm that the industry can be a healthy and profitable environment. What was intended as a showcase for the director’s book is a behind-the-scenes look at the porn models.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. Thinking XXX mainly deals with social and pop culture issues. No, it is not intended to be taken seriously as journalism beyond the profiles of the models involved.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Possibly. The project is well financed with HBO being a producer and controls the tone of the message and the audience. It does not dig into the dark side of pornography.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Yes, it does. The topic alone creates conversation and offering a profile of healthy people suggests compromise.
7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant. No. Being a snapshot of pop culture, Thinking XXX offers a borderline topic in a tabloid TV format.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: No. Fitting with a program that draws a shared truth conclusion, the topic is not in proportion at all with no opposing voices offered. It is offered in a lighthearted tone.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Yes. The producers do exercise their conscience and the closest they come to making a statement is that the porn industry isn’t bizarre as a whole.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: Yes. The clearest right and responsibility for an audience that doesn’t share the narrative approach is that they can always boycott or change the channel.

Thinking XXX ranks as strongly a work of shared truth. This project clearly fits into the shared truth type of audience. Even if the subject matter is controversial, it is presented in a lighthearted but informative matter. It is intended to be a vehicle for the book of photography that spawned the documentary by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders. The narrative is basically from the interviews with the models with some color offered from the writers who wrote essays for the book. The models generally create a conversational rhythm with more than half saying how they are planning on or already have moved on with their education or own businesses from porn. However, they are contrasted by quotes relating porn to feminism and views on stigma issues.
Last Letters Home\textsuperscript{34} is the final documentary from the HBO sample. This documentary upholds the reputation that HBO has earned for strong production values.\textsuperscript{35} The film begins with a narrative and shooting style that would repeat itself as the formula for all of the segments of the film. At 00:00:26, the film opens with a shot of a handwritten letter on lined notebook paper with the words, “Dear Mom and Dad.”\textsuperscript{36} The camera does a slow pan of the letters highlighting words such as “Baghdad” and “missing home.” The shot dissolves to a typed letter with the sentiment of missing home. Another dissolve changes the shot to another handwritten letter mentioning that most of the soldiers are just kids and asking for prayers. At 00:01:37 a title fades onto the screen in two sections, and “Last Letters Home” appears over the final letter. The second title fades in “Voices of American Troops, From the Battlefields of Iraq.”\textsuperscript{37}

The thematic introduction begins setting the style for the movie giving cause of death and military rank over a still photo of the deceased soldier, “Spc. Michelle M. Witmer was killed by enemy fire in Baghdad, She was 20.”\textsuperscript{38} The shot fades to a skyline of trees over the title identifying the location of the family of Witmer being New Berlin, Wisconsin. The image cuts to an establishing shot of the suburban Witmer home and then cuts to a shot of the family yard. A lower-third credit identifies the parents as John and Lori Witmer. John holds the letter as if it were a cherished artifact and shares, “She just wrote it on school paper and you can see how it kind of got stained in her purse.”\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{34} Last Letters Home, directed by Bill Couturie, DVD (HBO, 2004).
\textsuperscript{35} “It’s Not History, It’s HBO,” http://www.academia.edu/347936/Its_not_History_its_HBO.
\textsuperscript{36} Last Letters Home.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
Mother Lori says, “You can turn on the news, you can turn on CNN, but this was right from the heart, uncensored, straight from the mouth.”\textsuperscript{40} The mother’s quote gives a strong indication of the pure journalistic quality of the documentary, offering facts from the battlefront that give verification of the true battle experience. Sister Charity reads the letter over a montage of Michelle in uniform and out of uniform, with a zoom on a still of Michelle leaning on her hand. The stills last five seconds each, another technique that would be repeated in later segments of other letters of victims of the war sent to their families. The dissolves cut to a shot of the mother and father as Charity reads from another letter of Michelle describing a drive-by attack she experienced in Iraq.

The style of the narrative moves from one family member to another as they read from Michelle’s writing, and Charity reviews Michelle describing the ghetto environment of her quarters in Iraq and the fear of local crime alongside the fear of enemy forces. The family goes on to read emails. The mother shares an email addressed to the father:

\begin{quote}
Dear dad, I love you so much. You can’t imagine how much I think of you. I hope you have lots of fun today and the weather is lovely. We had a briefing telling us to prepare as much as possible for what lies ahead. Things like children running out in front of the vehicles as they try to get us to stop. We have to prepare to hit people because stopping is not an option. I guess every convoy that has gone up north has taken fire. The question of if we will or not is not even really a question. Just a guess as to when. I’m doing my best. I have been a little depressed lately. It has been three months since I got deployed. Wow, time does not fly. Happy Father’s Day. I love you so much.\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}

The shot changes to a montage of photos of Michelle in her role as a soldier: standing guard, holding a rifle, and at attention with her fellow soldiers. A dissolve changes the shot to the mother and sister reacting to the father reading the email. Mother Lori reads from another email addressed to father John that she describes as being under her

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid.
ownership since she first read it, insisting that she carry it with her constantly, showing it to anyone whom she met. Michelle wrote in the email in very descriptive writing about her friend whom she would watch jogging along the river, who would be killed a few weeks later. At 00:07:23, the reality of the situation turns to the grieving period. John Witmer describes his experience and emotions:

That was on March 30 and she was killed on April 9. We’re still not even close to be able to sort it out and express it. I mean it’s just been, someone said it’s just like having a limb blown off and for the first time you can’t even look at it. Eventually you can look at the wound and you can kinda adjust, but it just takes a long time to grasp what happened. We’re still not there yet.42

The shot cuts to random video of the family getting emotional while they all share their experience coming to terms with the death of Michelle and the impact of the letters. The style of the first segment of Michelle Witmer and her letters home ends with the segment marker style that will be repeated for every segment. The title “Michelle M. Witmer, February 13, 1984 – April 9, 2004” appears on screen. The screen fades to black, coming up on the opening of the second segment. At 00:08:50 a photo of a male soldier smiling in portrait comes up on the screen with the title: “Pfc. Raheen Tyson Heighter was killed by enemy fire in Al Hawd, he was 22.”43

The title dissolves to a shot of blue sky over an urban parkway with a title identifying the home of Pfc. Heighter’s family as Bay Shore, New York. Shots portray a wreath on a casket and car parked in front of the family home. Cathy Heighter, mother of the soldier, explains her excitement when she heard reports of President Bush announcing to the country on May 1, 2003, of the major part of the war in Iraq being over. She is on screen with an extreme close up showing her emotion, and the image cuts to a wider shot

42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
of her wearing his camouflage jacket. He had explained in letters that Saddam Hussein had been defeated, and the news only excited her more and she started to anticipate when he would be home. By June 1, when he had not returned home, her excitement turned to worry and anxiety. It only was magnified when she saw a change in his previously happy tone in the following letter that she holds tightly to her chest:

Dear Mother, Today is a blissful day. Mother, you are the most important person in my life and today is the first time that I realize how you have tried the hardest to bring the bestowed, honest and hidden qualities out of me. Well mother, my feet have been placed on the firm ground. Without your teaching being what it has, it would not have been possible. As I sit here in tears, time goes by like a continuous ground hog day over here. In the beginning there was a lot of bloodshed but though there still are terrorists that don’t want us here, I will see you in September or October at the latest. Love, Raheem.44

The letter is read to a montage of his childhood mixed with shots of him at battle. She goes on to explain that she was immediately alarmed by the tone in his words and when he might come home. He had never expressed his emotion to her in such a way, and she thought he might be hiding something. “Two days later, they came to tell me that my son had been killed in Iraq. I went crazy.” She then starts to cry. The segment ends with a still of Raheem’s graduation photo with the title, “Raheem Tyson Heighter, December 8, 1980 – July 24, 2003.”

The style is repeated for eight more fallen soldiers, giving the city of their family home while the parents read from their letters. Last Letters Home demonstrates principles of journalism mainly in its use of primary sources and use of the letters as documents that act as realistic artifacts of the experience of a soldier in Iraq. It gives the viewer insight into life as a soldier and acts a historical review of the environment of Iraq during the war. The production value of HBO compensates for a lack of available video by the

44 Ibid.
handling of family photos and those from the war front as b-roll. They offer a sense of authenticity. If there is any sense of a shared truth it is that all of the actors tell different stories but they are variations of a shared experience. But with only one consistent viewpoint expressed, the intended national audience does not have a shared truth with the production unless they have shared the same experience.

Last Letters Home Evaluation

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes. The documentary gives insight into the challenges of being a young soldier in Iraq and is told through the lenses of family communication. It may appear as sentimental flag waving, but the family profiles are done so well, the issue becomes secondary. The point was that by showing both sides of the kids, both soldier and kid, the contrast alone would be good journalism. And they were right.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: Yes. The narrative tells of the trials and tragedy of war without getting overly patriotic or subjective.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Yes. The letters stand as the backbone of the narrative and also as verification. Written letters are one of the oldest forms of verification and this film uses them well.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. Possibly. Being a simple biographical documentary, independence isn’t that much of an issue. The editing theme moving from one family to another in a Main Street, America, style also adds balance.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Yes. The documentary stays away from politics and focuses on the human narrative.
6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: No. It hints at the debate over the war, when at 00:12:05 Cathy Heighter speaks of being excited when Bush announced the withdrawals. “Two days later, they came to tell me that my son had been killed in Iraq. I went crazy.”

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Possibly. It frames the war in a way that is approachable by everyone, being about the families and war in general.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: Yes. The creators were successful in not allowing the depressing subject matter dominate the entire film. It was the largest portion of the narrative, but it was included that the soldiers did enjoy and were proud of serving and made friends.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: No. The conscience of the producers is demonstrated in the formatting that included ten profiles in sixty minutes in equal increments. There also was no overt editorializing included in the narrative.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: Yes. This program could be looked at from the political right or the left, if the audience member had a preconceived notion about anything to do with the war. But it is presented for open minds.

_Last Letters Home_ ranks as moderately a work of journalism. This documentary is so formatted that it lends itself to verification of facts and neutral reporting. It strongly represents traditional journalism principles. Every segment is an equal mix of photos as a soldier and as a civilian. The number of photos is even across every segment. Every
segment is built like a template with opening titles listing rank and hometown and closing titles listing cause and date of death. The letters offer solid evidence and a narrative for the entire hour. Along with interviews with family, the letters and emails take up more than half of the program. Some are read and some are just referred to in conversation or as graphics on the screen.

The Nazis: A Warning from History Sample documentaries from the historical category might offer the highest form of verification as practiced by both journalists and historians. Such is my overall impression from doing this examination. This film begins with a nut graph that doesn’t practice the traditional editing style of documentaries by offering shots of quick talking heads summarizing the narrative of the project. The BBC production immediately identifies the speaker, both on and off screen. The same holds true of the performance of the narrator acting as a classic tour guide, leading the audience through the narrative and locations.

The five-hour program is designed to be divided into hour-long chapters for broadcast. Setting the feeling for the narrative the documentary opens with the picture of a young child giving the Nazi salute. Even though the production had access to excellent historic stock footage, both in color and black and white for b-roll, the producers do not totally rely on it, mixing it with contemporary footage. This newer footage is mixed with historic footage showing locations both then and now. Narrator Samuel West establishes his authority, utilizing the mixing of old and new footage in the opening sequence:

“Hidden in a forest which is now Poland, on the border of Russia, laid the remains of a

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45 The Nazis: A Warning from History, directed by Laurence Rees, DVD (BBC, 2005).
concrete town. For three crucial years during WWII, this was home to one of the most infamous figures in world history.\(^{46}\)

Audio of Adolf Hitler delivering a speech is played under the old and current footage of his former home intact and in ruins. The producers’ heavy reliance on the use of stock photos demonstrates the common practice of employing the Ken Burns effect of slow pans and zooms to embrace the detail of the still and to stretch the on-screen length of the still to replace the absence of stock footage. The seriousness of the subject and emotion of the production is stressed by using an abundance of shots of corpses, starving people, and young children both as victims and as embracing Hitler. Another Ken Burns technique is the use of the voices of actors substituted for the missing narrative of historic figures who have died. To underline the authenticity of the narrative, closed captioning is used with English titles to communicate the interviews with survivors who speak in German. Stock footage was even found from WWI that sets the history leading up to the Nazi era. Documents, charts, and graphs are used on screen to reinforce the statements of the narrator and interview subjects. By the 00:17:19 point, the documentary had already included seven different interviews.\(^{47}\) Historical background is also provided about all of the main Nazi power players.

The producers do attempt to give a voice to both supporters and detractors, with the following quote representing those who were sympathetic to Hitler, “He looked right in my eyes when I first met him and he looked right through me like he was looking somewhere else or through me. I then knew that he did have a beautiful side.” Former Hitler youths shared in their interviews similar statements about giving their devotion to

\(^{46}\) Ibid.
\(^{47}\) Ibid.
Hitler after they had looked in his eyes. To counter the positive impression some gave of Hitler, many former associates address his insecurity when challenged and his habit of depression and long hours of sleeping. The documentary ends with a former aide describing the day that Hitler made a deal with Russia to invade and divide Poland: “The sky was blue and yellow and purple and red and burgundy and grey. I was afraid to look at him but a young female aide confronted him and said that this is going to lead to more death. He looked away and immediately went to his room.”

_The Nazis: A Warning from History Evaluation_

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes. It had access to the entire BBC research team and is meant to be a record of history, not an interpretation.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: Yes. Covering the Nazi era every step of the way reflects on all the parties that were involved.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Yes. Along with personal accounts, government documents, newspapers, and other archival materials are used impressively.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. Yes. They do keep a distance by creating an atmosphere of reporting the facts or reporting the news.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Yes. This is accomplished with the BBC umbrella and also by staying independent enough that the producing country could not be identified from the content.
6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Yes. It does by the reach that the program has through broadcast and DVD distribution. It is a topic that will always be discussed.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Yes. By offering a narrative storytelling technique, this offers the entire lead-up to the Nazi era that reads like a story and not just dry history.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: Yes. The documentary is constructed with a worldview and does not limit the story to just Germany or Europe.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Yes. They exercise their conscience by liberally showing the torture and death in still photos and film throughout the documentary.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: Yes. The epic historical documentary puts pressure on the audience to have basic knowledge or interest in such a long project and deep subject. Beyond the “warning” of the title, there is little overt attention to the responsibility of citizens to prevent a resurgence of fascism.

_The Nazis: A Warning from History_ ranks as strongly a movie of journalism. As is true with other historical documentaries studied in this dissertation, _The Nazis: A Warning from History_ offers an extremely high level of research and reporting and embraces verification and journalism standards. Use of current and recent stock footage gives it a contemporary feel and is a relief from the marathon of still archival photos and documents. The narration is supplemented by first hand and expert interviews to carry the
narration forward and to relieve the monotony offered by constant narration. Considering it is a traditional documentary, it remains contemporary due to the quick editing style and use of multimedia, as opposed to the many programs on the topic done by the History Channel.

9/11 The narrative of this documentary also employs the style of offering the timeline in a journal continuum. The irony of the work of the filmmakers was that they had a totally different production planned and became witnesses and recorders of one of the most significant moments in our history. While they turned the focus of the documentary to the disaster, the film opens with the original narrative intact. The film begins at 00:00:00 with the following title slide:

On September 11, 2001, the firefighters from engine 7, ladder 1 responded to the World Trade Center. This is their story. It is also the story of how New York City’s bravest rose to their greatest challenge. What you are going to see is the only known footage from inside Tower 1 – an eyewitness account of one of the most defining moments of our time.

This cuts to shots of the collapsed towers during the short beginning, offering a preview of what is to come. James Sandler, friend of the two French filmmakers, acts as the opening narrator, a job that he will share later with the two French brothers. He opens the film with the following words: “I’ve been a New York firefighter for nine years at Ladder 1 downtown. Last summer, the summer before 9/11, there were days we would go to the towers five times during a single shift. But nobody, nobody expected September 11.”

Shots of firemen laughing during a normal day are replaced by firemen looking up to a sound of an airplane and slow-motion clips of people running on the street.

49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
Jules Naudet comments about people being chosen to be witnesses to history, and how it was their turn. Before the documentary moves back to the original premise of shooting the rookie at work, the nut graph includes shots of the smoking towers and smoke rolling down the street. The progression of time leading to the attacks is marked by titles on the screen with the first identifying that it is July 10, 2001. Jules Naudet describes the anticlimax of the filming so far with Tony the rookie anxiously waiting for his first fire to prove his worth to the firemen and to himself at a time where he had so far only experienced hazing. It had been four or five weeks for him with no fire. All he had experienced was cooking and cleaning. Tony’s story takes up most of the first thirty minutes of the production. The transition to the morning of September 11 begins with footage of people going to work over audio from a radio show, “It should be a beautiful day today, the afternoon temperature about eighty.”

James Sandler describes the routineness of the morning as the battalion responded to a call of a suspicion of a gas leak. “It was basically camera practice. Jules had only been shooting for a few weeks. Before that Gideon was the main cameraman. It was 8:46 in the morning.”51 The battalion chief describes the morning: “We checked for a gas leak with meters. It was pretty routine. And then we heard a plane go over and in Manhattan you don’t hear planes go over too often. Especially loud ones.”52 They cut to shots of firemen looking up from the gas leak, while Jules raises his camera to record the first airplane going into the towers. From this point on it becomes a journal of the history of the day as the tragedy unfolds. There are interviews with various firemen from the firehouse but most are not identified. Jules Naudet describes the initial scenario:

51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
We parked right under the awning of One World Trade Center and the chief puts his gear on and I remember asking, “Can I go in with you,” and he says, “Yes, stay with me.” And I hear screams and right to my right, there were two people on fire burning. I just didn’t want to film it. No one should see this.

The firemen make the judgment that the jet fuel resulted in the windows blowing out on the ground floors. Jules continues to shoot both inside and out, while his brother Gedeon Naudet begins walking from the firehouse to the towers and captures footage of the second airplane hitting the towers. On his journey he shoots footage of people looking up and also collects spontaneous footage of reactions on the ground of people speaking in a variety of languages quizzing each other about what really happened. Gedeon handles a good deal of the narration from this point forward, explaining his footage and the remaining events, due to his brother being inside the towers. He continues to shoot through the night, resulting in having footage of the collapse of the towers in the daytime and the confusion surrounding the cleanup and digging through the rubble.

Similar to the samples from the Netflix history category, 9/11 acts as a historic document offering a strong sense of verification through a journal of video shots, with the French brothers narrating as filmmakers and witnesses. James Sandler continues to offer insight into the frame of mind of the firemen and how they performed their duties reacting to the disaster. The narration continues to act as witness reports reporting the developing facts as true journalists. The strength of verification comes in the form of photojournalism controlling the narrative. Not much narration was needed other than to explain how they performed their duties. The video footage is augmented with television news updates throughout the day to reflect real time public reports of the situation along with news from the Pentagon and of the other airplanes.
9/11 Evaluation

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes. The creators’ dedication to shooting all aspects of the destruction offered valuable insights for the moment and history.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: Yes. The footage of the aftermath and the clean up completed the story of New York beyond the terrorist act.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Yes. The production process practiced by the producers offer instant verification with the raw footage shot and the POV of the minute by minute event coverage.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. Yes. The brothers not only were respectful but turned out to be of assistance to the firefighters.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Yes. The creators were free to roam with their cameras and have access to wherever the firemen were working if it was safe. They do not examine points of view opposed to the actions of the firefighters, but it would be extremely surprising in the post-9/11 atmosphere to find such opinions.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise. Yes. On this particular day it added to the rapidly building archive of the events of the attack. The on-board microphone captures a lot of fireman chat that could show them in a confused light.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Yes. The coverage of the collapse of the towers and cleaning up the rubble chronicled the quickly changing picture of what is relevant. No doubt the events of 9/11, which
dominated the news, were a natural draw for those seeking on-the-ground details of that day as documented by the film. In other words, the subject matter was so inherently tied to the world’s most significant news event that the creators did not need to do much to try to make their film interesting and relevant.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: Yes. The chronological style of packaging the project is a great aid in information management.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Yes. The question of what shots to include and the consequences of being morbid was an ethical question that the moment dictated.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news. Yes. On that day I am sure that most of the country was tuned in to all media.

9/11 ranks as strongly a work of journalism. 9/11 is clearly a journalistic work, that unfortunately being in that place on that day as a videographer would be a challenge for any journalist. The power of the POV style of shooting gives the production a look similar to a “you are there” feeling. The narration by the brothers is unobtrusive and just updates the location of the shot. Organizing the editing in a day by day and hour-by-hour format keeps the story informed and in the proper context. The advantage of having access to the firemen was the battalion house could serve as a source of backstory for the towers and the city.

**Political Documentaries**

*Hillary: The Movie*53 This review was based on the consideration of the impact that this documentary had on the political and legal system. It was monitored to check on

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the number of talking heads representing both sides of the issue and whether it was more propaganda than a journalistic approach reporting on the supposed political speech that is documenting the presidential campaign in 2008, the life of Hillary Clinton, and her career as associated with President Bill Clinton. The film opens with the Citizens United logo, resembling that of a patriotic symbol with the colors of red, blue, and white and an eagle centered in the middle of the circle. The only statements by a Democrat are the words of then-Senator John Edwards, who was running against Hillary Clinton for the party’s nomination for president: “The problem with nostalgia is what we tend to do is only remember what you liked and you forget the parts you didn’t.” He repeats them later on the screen.

At the 00:00:34 point, a montage of newspaper headlines is shown from the 1990s reflecting the court challenges faced by Hillary Clinton, and her many denials of charges. Each slide lasts roughly one second, with the pacing of the editing resting on every fourth slide highlighting one single powerful word from a headline, including the words “perjury,” “lies,” “veracity,” and “deception.” The initial sound bites of the nut graph are matched with close-ups of stills of Hillary showing serious facial expressions. The early talking heads are not identified. Twelve people are included with mostly derogatory remarks until 00:02:44 when the headline montage returns to the screen at a faster pace featuring buzz words resting on every fourth slide including “guilty,” “cronies,” “forgetful,” and “obstruction.” At 00:05:21 there is the first narration featured by an unidentified speaker:

Could she become the first woman president in the history of the United States? Almost every American knows her name. But who she really is remains largely a mystery. Hillary Clinton points to her time in the White House as a large part of her qualifications for the job. But most of the news media has forgotten that her
time as first lady was mired in controversy. She was the only first lady that was under criminal investigation. In both Little Rock and Washington, D.C., she was plagued by scandals.

Two more unidentified talking heads follow, bringing the total to fourteen. This is followed by a quick rotation of comments from the talking heads reinforcing the nut graph. This is followed by several clips of Hillary Clinton’s speeches including the iconic clip of Hillary commenting in front of an African American crowd stating, “Congress is being run like a plantation, and you know what I am talking about.” Ann Coulter makes the reply, with no identification given, “You know what I am talking about girlfriend, that’s how she’s going to get to power, by accusing the Republicans of running a plantation at a black church on MLK Day. That’s it, OK.” Two more unidentified sound bites from individuals from the opening follow. No speakers are identified until 00:10:16 when Ann Coulter is identified as a nationally syndicated columnist and bestselling author.

Speakers are identified when covering the Travelgate incident, including Billy Dale, former director of the travel office discussing being fired; Representative Dan Burton, R-Indiana, suggesting the Clintons were using cries of corruption as a mask; and former FBI agent Gary Aldrich speaking of corruption by power over a picture of Hillary with Senator Ted Kennedy. The film also includes Tony Clankley, former editorial page editor of The Washington Times, a conservative newspaper, suggesting the Clintons were an example of the corruption of the time, and columnist Robert Novak citing the Travelgate controversy as an example of Hillary’s meanness. The narrative shifts to accounts of sexual harassment in the Clinton White House and Hillary’s use of private
investigators to intimidate accusers as confirmed by former Clinton aide Dick Morris, who attributes his resignation to the use of intimidation.

The narrative then reviews the controversy and scandal surrounding Peter F. Paul, former Clinton fundraiser. At 00:31:00 the narrator interprets the scandal this way:

In 2000, Peter Paul met with Hollywood fundraiser Aaron Tonkin, who previously had been homeless. He was a celebrity-obsessed con man who in just a few years became one of the top moneymen in Hollywood. He, like many Clinton associates, ended up in prison for fundraising scams. Tonkin was promised that through donations to Hillary’s Senate campaign, he would be given access to Bill Clinton once he left the White House.54

Failures of the Clintons’ health care proposal, which was substantially a project of Hillary, and criticism of her ignoring northern New York and its farmers during her term in the Senate follows in the narration and through talking heads. The narrative moves to Hillary Clinton “flip flopping” on issues such as terrorism, military aid, and the blocking and intimidation of the producer of the five-hour documentary The Path to 9/11. The program implies that the Clintons had opportunities to prevent 9/11 but didn’t take action. Cyrus Nowrasteh, producer of the program, claims, “There were efforts to get me, Disney, and ABC to pull the program. I got death threats at my house, I got hate mail. Intimidation included threatening letters from five senators, including Harry Reid, that they would pull station licenses. They had never seen the movie. It was just politics.” The narrator follows with the incident of Sandy Berger, former National Security Advisor to President Bill Clinton, stealing and destroying classified documents that are presented as an argument relevant to the narrative:

Former Clinton National Security Advisor Sandy Berger says he accidently destroyed government documents. He pleads guilty to accidently stealing and destroying classified documents. The documents supposedly revealed Clinton’s

54 Ibid.
awareness of the millennium bomb plot and Sudan’s offer to turn over Bin Laden in 1996.\footnote{Ibid.}

The controversy surrounding \textit{Hillary: The Movie} was not centered on the position taken by the producers, but on the argument of exhibiting the film as a political ad during an election. For the sake of this dissertation the content is looked at according to how many voices from each side of the issue are given room to speak. By counting talking heads, over a dozen interviews are included with identification after the nut graph. At least that many are quoted without identification during the nut graph. Not one supporter of Hillary Clinton or neutral party is interviewed or quoted during the entire documentary, placing it squarely in the area of an audience that would have a shared truth with the producers, and clearly in the propaganda category. Citizens United as the producer of the movie brings with it a reputation for producing right-leaning documentaries. Though there may be some truth in the headlines shown from newspapers regarding the reputation and legal allegations of Hillary Clinton, there is no further investigation into verifying the facts. The headlines chosen and still photos of Clinton all have an angry and negative connotation to much of the b-roll. It is difficult to evaluate if the headlines shown are of the traditional, “objective” reporting voice or of an editorial. Given the large point size and the serious fonts, the headlines shout with the impact of reporting a breaking news story, however the tone and content of the headlines have an editorial stance, in the style of a tabloid newspaper seen at the grocery store checkout. The verification issue is the challenge to the argument they offer. The newspapers posting the headlines are not identified. From a production standpoint, the headlines are not on the screen long enough—one to two seconds—to offer a credit or lower third that a
viewer would have time to read or comprehend. This is to the benefit of the producer presenting a sensational argument in the shared truth environment. It is a perfect example of a documentary with a shared truth between producer and audience. Sensational headlines do not represent facts beyond accusations and possible legal actions. Hence the fast editing style. Sensory overload of multimedia production allows the producer to manipulate the message received by the viewer. It can be interpreted as verification to an audience in a shred truth experience.

Hillary: The Movie Evaluation

1. First obligation is to the truth: No. There is not any evidence presented that is not more than speculation of the truth. The visual and narrative argument that is offered leads the documentary to assume a foregone conclusion. Many of the facts presented are points in history, including the Clintons’ legal battles, but the outcome of them is not discussed. The people interviewed are partisan voices and pundits. They may speak what they see as truth, but they leave open no other possible interpretations of the facts.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: No. This is the perfect example of a funded project that appears as a documentary but feeds an audience that has a shared truth. It is not concerned with citizens in general. The irony is that a company that was named Citizens United produced it. There was little chance from the beginning that an audience searching for verifiable facts would see this documentary in a theater as the producers originally intended. Thus, it is loyal to only its own cult of believers, and unites only those who already share a set of beliefs.
3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: No. *Hillary: The Movie* provides strong evidence of the shared truth that is the cornerstone of the narrative inquiry theory. There is absolutely no discipline of verification. It is a reinforcement of the attitudes and beliefs of an agreed audience. As the theory suggests, the audience places value on the whole rather than the parts. The producers are speaking to an audience that agrees with them. The producers do nothing to convince a general or mass audience of individual facts by providing information that could be verified as in Travelgate and the bias of the people selected to comment.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. Yes. The practitioners/producers maintain an independence from whom they are covering in that an opposition work naturally would not have access to the subject, but that is a given considering that they are speaking in an opposition voice.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power: Possibly. *Hillary: The Movie* serves as an independent monitor of power in the sense that it is funded by the producers and wasn’t a product of an established journalism institution. It does raise questions, as in if it were presenting a list of facts in a courtroom setting, but the producers do little to show outcomes of the suggested controversies and verification of the facts provided. Examples would be Whitewater, the many sexual scandals and the high level of popularity and approval levels held by the Clintons at the time of production.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise. Possibly. *Hillary: The Movie* handles this quite well. It offers the position of public criticism and trust of Hillary Clinton. However, it does not offer a forum of any compromise.
The outcome of lawsuits and controversies is never discussed. With or without any mass distribution, as the Citizens United case was built on, it reads like a ninety-minute political ad of hate speech.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: No. At the time of the proposed release of *Hillary: The Movie*, it was significant and relevant to the 2008 presidential election. It may have never swayed voters due to it being a product of shared truth. The project was significant in a way of being topical at the time, but was meant to build the conservative base or opposition to Hillary Clinton in the way the “facts” are presented and not challenged. In this way, it made elements of Hillary’s background more relevant than a dispassionate analysis would have made them.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: No. The documentary is comprehensive in a historic sense. It covers all of the major challenges, both legally and professionally, in a continuum line of the public life of Hillary Clinton. But it is not in proportion at all. The producers did not choose the option of showing the outcome of the controversial situations that Hillary Clinton or the Clintons were embattled with in the time period discussed. The outcome of those situations was in the Clintons’ favor and was part of the public record when the movie was produced.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience. No. The practitioners did exercise their personal conscience [or lack of a journalistic one] and those of the audience that have a shared truth. But that is why it reads
like a ninety-minute political advertisement. There is no relevant conscience of journalism values of verification, avenue of defense.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news. Yes. This topic in journalistic sense is probably the most relevant to this dissertation. Whether the documentary reflects accurate news or is a piece of history, citizens have the responsibility to educate themselves. In the case of *Hillary: The Movie*, it is the responsibility of the voter at the time it was made to be informed on the issues, character of the candidate, and history as based on facts.

*Hillary: The Movie* ranks as strongly a movie of shared truth. This documentary is the most obvious example of a shared truth relationship between the producer and audience. Every point on the Kovach and Rosenstiel checklist has been violated in some way. The film features no representation of the opposite point of view, and a pro-Hillary stance is not even mentioned. It is full of hate speech. The production company has a track record for producing “documentaries” that have an agenda with a clear allegiance to the conservative ideology. The images and b-roll cast a negative light on the subject and help manipulate the narrative. Headlines are shown that are focused on legal issues and buzz words. Many of the talking heads are not identified until well into the film. It does offer a mask of credibility by having notable politicians [they claim thirty] participate in interviews that support the point being made by the producer.

*The Obama Deception*[^56] is listed in the political documentary column. The documentary begins at 00:00:00 with footage from the Obama inauguration and his audio, “Contrary to what you have heard, I was not born in a manger. I was actually born

[^56]: *The Obama Deception*, directed by Alex Jones, DVD (Alex Jones Productions, 2009).
on Krypton and sent here to save the planet earth.”\textsuperscript{57} The quote is followed by a graphic of Obama with the words “hope” and “deceit” floating around his head with a Superman insignia on his chest. He continues in the speech to say that the nation will have a civilian national security force. A graphic appears on the screen that reads “Obama Youth Brigade.” Obama appears at a public speech with the crowd chanting, “Yes We Can.” It is followed by shots of young boys doing calisthenics. At 00:01:11 an unidentified male House of Representatives member makes the statement, “Where did you come up with the number, 700 billion dollars? Here is the Treasury spokeswoman’s quote, ‘There is no particular data point, we just wanted to come up with a really big number.’”\textsuperscript{58} It cuts to Obama commenting that Republicans and Democrats who oppose his plan should step up to the plate. At this point no plan has been mentioned by name. Rapper KRS One appears on the screen and offers insight into the theme of the documentary:

Barack is like the manager of Burger King. All presidents are, including Bush. It’s like this. When your fries are cold, when your burgers not done right, you go back to Burger King, or America, or your government and you say, “My burger’s cold. I want new fries.” First, you go to the cashier, which is the courts. You argue to the courts. The courts, if you can’t get no justice with the cashier, you say, let me see the manager. I want to go to the Supreme Court.\textsuperscript{59}

The comments of celebrities continue with former governor and wrestler, Jessie Ventura, talking with Willie Nelson. Ventura makes a comparison of politics becoming like pro wrestling, in which a participant threatens his opponent and says he will hang him to the high wire, and then they all go out together. Nelson agrees, “It’s all show business. Democrats and Republicans aren’t really opposed to each other.” The narrator

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
finishes the set-up to say that this is not a partisan movie despite the name of the project and the cover art.

America in 2009 was desperate for change. The past eight years had been a disaster. George W. Bush, who had claimed to be conservative, had tripled the size of the federal government. Tripled the size of government, and destroyed the image of the United States worldwide.\textsuperscript{60}

A graphic of the word “tyranny” appears on the screen. The narrator goes on a rapid-fire six minutes of offering rhetoric of the failure of both Obama and Bush and how they only serve Wall Street. Webster Tarpley, author and historian, is the main quarterback of the documentary:

If you look also at the people Obama has put on his appointments list, it’s all Wall Street. It’s government by Wall Street and for Wall Street. Nobody from heavy industry. There is nobody from the auto sector. Nobody from Silicon Valley. Nobody from big oil. Nobody from defense. Nobody from labor. No retirees. No small business. It’s pure Wall Street. The only people that have a voice in Obama’s oligarchy is Wall Street. That’s all there is. It is the most extreme Wall Street administration that we’ve ever had.\textsuperscript{61}

The general conversation becomes centered on the Bilderberg Group, a group that is credited by the narrator and journalist Daniel Estulin as being a secret society in favor of a new world order with Obama as its chosen leader. Henry Kissinger is quoted as saying Obama is the prefect leader for a new world order. Estulin and his film crew try to crash a meeting with the Bilderberg Group that was supposedly attended by Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. The narrator continues to excitedly state “our” case, constantly looking directly into the camera. At 00:36:14 the narrator says, “Barry Goldwater was correct when predicting our future. The last eight presidents were controlled by the Bilderberg Group.”

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
The documentary uses a technique often used to offer legitimacy or verification, and that is to show selective newspaper headlines. As this point of the film, the shared truth would be with an audience that shares the conspiracy theory model the filmmakers are arguing. Many of the headlines report on broken campaign promises by Obama, which the narrator attributes to the Bilderberg Group. The remainder of the documentary is based on discrediting Obama, continuing to use language such as “liar” over and over. The narrator ends with, “Even if Barack Obama was the greatest person in the world, he was groomed and brought to power by the world elite to carry out their agenda. Humanity must look past Barack Obama and realize that presidents come and go. But the shadow government and their program of global enslavement continues.”

As for verification, there wasn’t much offered in a true journalism sense. What was featured consisted of newspaper headlines that highlighted the missteps of President Obama. Webster Griffin Tarpley, Gerald Celente, and the narrator are the primary voices heard with very little information offered from interviews or documentation. The piece did center on the conspiracy theory of the creators and offered “our” viewpoint. No opposing voices were featured from either the right or the left. Most of the b-roll consisted of embarrassing footage and stills of Obama and Bush featuring maps and charts to support the argument. The shared truth of this narrative inquiry theory example is strong but it was hard to detect what audience shares their conspiracy truth. Obviously those dissatisfied with government in general.

The Obama Deception Evaluation

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: No. There is no reference to any verifiable proof. It is propaganda for the Bilderberg Group theory, but it begins with the
premise of the truth behind the Bilderberg Group and does not explore alternatives.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: No. The project appears to be concerned only with citizens who are disgruntled and will believe a conspiracy theory.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: No. It is possibly more extreme than *Hillary: The Movie* in regards to offering any evidence to back up claims. Webster Griffin Tarpley, Gerald Celente, and the narrator are the primary voices and only repeat what the other has said to back up their claims.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. No. The creators are independent of Obama, but they are not independent of each other or any other speakers on the documentary. They underscore each other’s claims, creating an echo chamber effect.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Yes. Webster Griffin Tarpley appears to be the monitor of power being obsessed with the conspiracy theory and spreading the word against Obama.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Possibly. It is a good vehicle for stirring up conversation and excitement in a sensational way, but there is really no feedback loop, other than approval or disapproval in a commercial sense.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: No. At 00:08:25, the narrative shifts to reviewing presidential history and citing choice moments that appear to support their conspiracy and continue for twenty minutes, which
then shifts back to the Bilderberg Group, until 00:45:00 when the “Obama is a Liar” theme repeats.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: No. There is no sense of proportion after the dust settles from all of the ranting and raving of the three talking heads. And it doesn’t come very close to comprehensive with any specifics about the theory other than that the banks are bad.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Yes. The entire documentary is a reflection of personal conscience and shared values and truths of the audience. Through the lens of narrative inquiry theory, when judged as a whole, there is nothing here except their personal conscience, or lack of one, by the creators.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: Yes.

This is a documentary that would require the audience to do a lot of research after viewing to answer some of the claims made in the film of the Bilderberg Group, and some questionable Obama historic references of flip flopping.

*The Obama Deception* ranks as strongly a movie of shared truth. *The Obama Deception* is a pure example of propaganda designed for disgruntled citizens who have a belief in a shared truth of a conspiracy involving the nation’s banks. The narrator speaks for more than forty-five minutes in the documentary, and Tarpley takes up most of the rest reinforcing what the narrator has already said. At the 50:00 mark, Tarpley begins to wrap up the documentary and never delivers the crystal clear definition of what the conspiracy theory really stands for beyond corruption of the banking system. There also
is no solution offered and in the true narrative inquiry, bringing the shared truth to be that there is a problem but no solution is required just to believe.

In *Gasland*, Josh Fox opens his documentary with shots of gas drills and starts his narration by saying, “I’m not a pessimist. I have always had a lot of faith in people that we wouldn’t succumb to frenzy, rage or greed . . . until we figure out a solution without destroying the things that we love.” The screen cuts to the wide shot of him backing into the shot playing his banjo and wearing a gas mask. At 00:00:39 the nut graph starts quickly with footage from the House Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources showing testimonials on the safety of natural gas. It also offers up the opposing viewpoint quicker than any other films in the sample. The footage cuts through frantic panning shots of the testimony, echoing the pace of the hearings. Member No. 1: “There are numerous shell-based gas stations [industry name for drilling well locations] in the United States which contain trillions of cubic feet of natural gas.” Member No. 2: “In fact, it has been described recently as an ocean of natural gas. We feel that these four natural shell stations and it is a game changer for not only America’s natural gas industry but also for our nation, our economy and our environment.”

The shots are edited tightly together with an industry representative offering the final point of view from industry:

I’m here today representing the thirty member states of the Interstate Gas Commission which produced 99 percent of our domestic oil and gas. Studies done by GWPC, EPA and IOGCC over the last eleven years have found no real credible threat to underground drinking water from hydraulic fracturing. Recently, however, there has been concern raised over the technology to tap these valuable resources. Such reports are not accurate.62

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62 *Gasland*, directed by Josh Fox, DVD (Docurama, 2010).
Josh Fox introduces himself and rounds out the nut graph explaining the history of his family home and the threat of gas wells coming to his area of Pennsylvania. He shares a letter on camera offering him $100,000 for the gas rights to his property. The film is heavy with narration, both in a very informative and comic way. He explains living near rivers and his concern for the water and starts to expose an activist side to his quest through the statement, “What would it mean if the rest of the world adopted natural gas as the fuel of the future. And what I didn’t know was the 2005 energy bill pushed through Congress by Dick Cheney exempts the oil and natural gas industries from the Clean Water Act.”

He starts the journey of the film with shots of him driving and at home with his telephone as he tries to reach representatives from Halliburton and other energy companies, with no response. He receives a call from a friend named Pat Darnelli in the neighboring town of Dimock, Pennsylvania. Darnelli offers testimony that will set the tone of the documentary:

Sometimes it bubbles when you pour it. I won’t drink it. When Cabot came in to drill the wells, I told them to drink it and they wouldn’t. There were days where all four kids were sick and out of school. For over a month we couldn’t even really eat anything.63

It also sets the tone for how Fox will offer verification, through photojournalism. Despite his informative and entertaining narration, it is with his camera that he builds a case. Much like the style of Death in Gaza and 9/11, the point of view from his camera offers the strongest evidence. He visits other people in Dimock with similar stories and later receives a phone call from a neighbor. He is given a jar of the tainted tap water by the neighbor, which tests positive for toxic fracking chemicals. This is his deciding factor to

63 Ibid
document the issue. He proceeds to document his trip to Weld County, Colorado, where the notorious footage of a sink on fire was shot at the Markham home. Mr. Markham tries to re-create the fire in the sink for the camera. Mr. Markham holds a lighter up to faucet. “Just a second, it will go up in a minute,” he says. Within seconds flame fills the entire sink.  

Fox pays a visit to the acting director of the Weld County Oil and Gas Division, receiving the following questions from the director: “Is there a theme to your documentary? Is there a message you are trying to get across with it? I’m sorry but I can’t help you. Good luck with your documentary. I can help you off the record with some background information if that will help.” At 00:25:12 a local television news crew picked up the footage that Fox has been shooting of various fires from the fracked gas. They reported it as breaking news: “New news tonight on a story you almost have to see to believe. That’s right, flames shooting from the faucet from a home in Fort Lupton. We then found out that the Ellsworth family is not the only ones having contaminated ground water from natural gas.” Fox continues on to Wyoming, which is home to a great deal of federal Bureau of Land management lands, which has had a lot of building of wells. He visits more farms and hears similar testimony. He shoots his gas mask photo while on public lands.

Even though he demonstrated signs of activist journalism, his form of verification was enhanced by his camera and number of testimonies. He did offer the opinions of the hearings in Washington, D.C., but did not offer views from any property owners who had positive experiences with having wells on their land. This may imply a shared truth, but

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64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
the piece was hugely successful with a general audience at a time that it was a hot button topic.

*Gasland Evaluation*

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes. Fox immediately starts with his nut graph explaining that his purpose is to educate himself on fracking. In the process he also educates the audience. Much like Spurlock in *Super Size Me*, Fox is the primary narrator. Once past the nut graph at 07:30, he continues his narration at a very fast pace, but it has the support of very detailed graphics that follow his narration.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: Yes. The film came at a time when there was a lot of public curiosity on the topic and he answered a lot of questions. Even though it is not long before the viewer can detect an agenda, due to 90 percent of screen time featuring anti-fracking data or interviews, and at 07:38 his frustration shows in the footage when he can’t get any industry officials to return his calls.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification. Yes. Similar to 9/11, the style that Fox utilizes of filming almost every minute of his activities [or what he chooses to show] offers immediate verification of what someone said, where they are, and the context.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover: Possibly. Fox tries to stay neutral with his interviews, but at times he seems to get them excited by hitting hot-button points about their inconveniences and bills.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power: Yes. It certainly does serve as an independent monitor of power. Fox takes backpack journalism to another level.
He not only acts as producer, director, writer, and videographer, but the constant narration while performing the other tasks had to be grueling. What is obvious is that he has a second cameraperson with him constantly and it also makes the viewer wonder how big of a crew may have been behind the scenes and on the road.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise. Yes. Even though there tends to be a slant of an anti-fracking message, a viewer could take away an educated opinion on either side from what Fox covered in the documentary.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Yes. At 00:30:04, Fox has a section titled “The Whistleblower” with Weston Wilson of the EPA in a somewhat outspoken accounting of how the government has dealt with it so far. It gives the viewer a break from Fox and offers a bit of authenticity and verification. And of course, the shots of tap water exploding into fire create a visual hook that grips the viewer because of its oddity and danger. This is dramatic footage; journalistically, it is also accurate and verifiable.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: Possibly. *Gasland* is comprehensive and backed up with video footage and info graphics. However, it is out of balance with representation. The only pro-fracking voices are the industry representatives in the government hearing in Washington, D.C., and the sequence lasts only ten minutes and is edited in a way that is more entertainment than information. There are fifteen anti-fracking actors, and more importantly, they take up the entire remainder of the documentary, when added to the constant narration of Fox.
9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience. Yes.  

*Gasland* is entirely about the personal conscience of Fox. Similar to *Super Size Me*, it is very self-driven to deliver a personal message. Like *God Grew Tired of Us*, *Gasland*, if it can be perceived as advocating, advocates for the powerless against the powerful.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: Yes.

This is a perfect example of how a documentary that reaches a mass audience can be a source of information on an important topic and the audience has the opportunity to embrace these important projects without having to search on their own for relevant information.

*Gasland* ranks as strongly a work of journalism. *Gasland* shows strong journalism qualities in spite of its lopsided representation of one side over the other. The details of fracking are included in the informational graphics and this documentary is fact filled enough that an audience member could come away with a pro or con assessment of the information presented. His camera and location shots offer verification of what had been an urban legend previously.

*Social and Cultural Documentaries*

*Vanishing of the Bees* is a film from the social and cultural category. The film opens with what would be a recurring theme of a storybook opening displaying the chapter marker for the film. It opens with what appears to be educational stock footage that appears a bit disjointed at first, appearing to be from random sources and eras. At 00:03:15, the packed nut graph cuts to footage of Peter Jennings on ABC reporting on the

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disappearance of bees all over the world. The narrator makes the first fresh appearance introducing the beekeeper that discovered the missing bee situation:

The first beekeeper in the United States to bring this mysterious disappearance to light was David Hackenberg. Hackenberg owns and manages around 1,000 beehives and works with his son Davey. Together they bring bees to apple orchards, almond groves, pumpkin patches, and blueberry fields across the country.\(^{67}\)

Narration cuts to Hackenberg explaining his career and deep experience as a beekeeper.

Narrator: “In October of 2006 David Hackenberg discovered massive honey bee losses and announced it to the world. The discovery thrust him into the spotlight and created quite a buzz.” Cut to cover of *USA Today* announcing the situation, split edit to Hackenberg speaking to a group:

On November 12 in 2006 at about 4:00 we rolled up to the yard of bees south of Tampa, Florida, to pick up four hundred hives of bees and they were empty. There were no bees in the boxes, about thirty-six of them had a few bees or a good-looking beehive but for the most part most of them were empty. About three weeks before that they were good bee hives. That all became news in early February of 2007 when it hit the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and the next day it was in 487 newspapers around the world.\(^{68}\)

Shots of newspaper covers are displayed during Hackenberg’s address, which cuts to coverage on *60 Minutes*. Two associates of Hackenberg’s are introduced as the other two main characters of the film: David Mendes, a beekeeper in Florida, and Dennis vanEnglesdorp, who is a scientist in Pennsylvania. The graphic transitions continue with the pages turning of the book revealing historic illustrations of bees. It cuts to footage of Rick Smith, a third-generation beekeeper, in the process of shutting down his farm. He explained, “This is just us sorting through dead hives. This is agonizing for these guys.

\(^{67}\) Ibid.
\(^{68}\) Ibid.
We’ve run into problems through the years. but this is a problem we have never run into before.”69

Narrator: “Cases of Colony Collapse Disorder, or CCD, were documented in thirty-five states. Scientists across the country combined forces to applying CSI-style tactics.” Cut to maps of the country during the narrator’s quote.

VanEngelsdorp comments on how beekeepers are dealing with the problem, while scientists have found no cure. “What has happened is beekeepers have become very good at replacing their dead hives, and a beekeeper is going to tell you he loses thirty percent of his hives a year. All they have to do is they split their colony in half and put another queen in.”70 Michael Pollan, professor at the University of California at Berkeley, speaks of almond growers asking the U.S. Department of Agriculture to be approve the importation of bees from Australia. This is the first mention of the USDA and the EPA becoming the focus of blame and criticism in the documentary. The narrator offers alternative ways to handle the situation including holistic beekeeping and replacing the honey in a hive. Simon Buxton, beekeeper of three hives, offered an opinion about the alternative means:

That’s like feeding your kids junk food and then feeding their kids junk food. Push that over a hundred generations. The privilege of being a beekeeper is to generate as much honey as possible. We keep bees so that we can contribute to pollination. And actually the future of beekeeping is not the beekeeper with 60,000 hives. But rather 60,000 people each with one hive. All of them approaching the art of beekeeping as a holistic practice.71

The narrator begins to criticize the EPA. She compared its methods of approving farm products with the European proactive style of testing chemicals. David Hackenberg:

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69 Ibid.
70 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
“You know the thing that is interesting to me about Europe is that they are living in a
different idea. They are more precautionary. We’re going to put it out there and see what
happens.”

David Mendes closes with him relating his experience with the EPA after no cure
for the bee problem has been found. “Do you know how the EPA works in this country?
EPA doesn’t do any research. Manufacturers do all of the research and submits it to the
EPA and they either say yes or no or we need more information.”

*Vanishing of the Bees* is somewhat advocate driven. In spite of not finding a cure
from the American scientific community, a great deal of the argument is one sided and
starts with an educational tone. There were eight interviews with beekeepers outlining the
problem, but no mention was made of attempting to talk to EPA representatives. This
hurts the case of verification. The b-roll was informative and fit the story but somewhat
repetitive when more time could have been spent on the American scientific research
efforts. The piece stands alone as more of an educational tool. With the amount of time
spent on the EPA at the end, it started to lose its focus. The strongest case to be made for
any sense of verification is from the triangulation offered from different interviews.

*The Vanishing of the Bees Evaluation*

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes. It appears that the practitioners were one of
   the first warnings about the bee dilemma. Even though there was no conclusion
drawn, it brought attention to the issue.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: Yes. The long opening consisting of educational
   stock footage gave the documentary an early tone that it was meant to be

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72 Ibid.
educational to all. Documenting a danger to food production should be a clarion call to citizens, as the subject has impact with potentially every viewer.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Possibly. Coverage of the actual missing bee problem begins with the interview of David Hackenberg at 00:04:26. For the next thirty minutes he describes the problem with his hives, which verification being offered by David Mendes and David vanEngelsdorp. For the first thirty minutes, there is not much evidence offered besides testimonials.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. No. The practitioners of this film seem to be experts on beekeeping and are well connected in the community. They seem to be feeding on an activist frame at the end.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Possibly. It does act as independent monitor of power, mainly in the way that the U.S. agencies are discussed but not featured. It is not until the creators shoot in England and France that there are any government voices.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Possibly. The activist tone and mystery behind the project invites criticism and compromise on the topic of bee care and government regulations.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Possibly. To somewhat add relief from the heavy and constant coverage of beehives and farm machinery, at 00:17:02, there is a nice break out sequence about the history of honey as a food and the bee in literature. As noted above, the subject matter regarding the potential impact on food sources is by definition relevant.
8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: No. Having representatives from government agencies would offer a more proportion other than interviews with beekeepers just implying the government position. The documentation of the problem is comprehensive considering it was an ongoing issue.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Yes. It is a message from the beekeeping community to the world alarming them of the significance of the problem.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: Yes. This is probably one of those stories that will receive little attention from most citizens. Outside of a feature story in the newspaper, they will probably never hear of the story outside of a novelty—unless, of course losses in the bee population do have a demonstrable impact on food availability or price.

*The Vanishing of the Bees* ranks as moderately a work of shared truth. *The Vanishing of the Bees*, through the lens of narrative inquiry theory, is speaking to an audience with a shared truth. The production has a feel that it is aimed at the beekeeping industry. It begins with an educational section that covers the history and basic information of the honeybee. However, the narration takes a turn towards looking for blame as well as answers in the second half of the documentary. At 01:02:57, when comparing the European system to the U.S. she comments, “The FDA decides whether or not to approve based on what is called risk assessment. This process allows to expose the public to risk as long as the EPA decides that those risks are reasonable.” This leaves a
feeling of it’s the “same old, same old” for beekeepers. It is followed by beekeepers making similar statements but no officials are covered.

_Jesus Camp_ is also listed in the social and cultural section. At 00:00:53 the basic premise begins with audio of a radio call-in show over footage of the rural highway and fast-food restaurants. The film returns to audio of a call-in guest:

I believe as Christian citizens of this country that we should be actively involved in this historic moment. And if the churches across this country, believers can come together and take a stand, I believe we can have a powerful impact on this process. 

The audio cuts to the second caller: “We had better not sleep through this point of decision because frankly future generations depend on us. Pray urgently that God’s perfect will be done,” the listener says. The video cuts to shots of a flag waving in front of a “God Bless America” sign. The audio cuts to the radio host, “From the pulpit comes this mean-spirited message. Us against them. And that is what the religious right is doing in the United States, dividing this country. There is this entanglement of politics with religion. What kind of lesson is that for our children?”

At 00:03:45 there is a dissolve to a shot of Christ Triumphant Camp. Then the film cuts to children performing a musical in a call-and-response style chant, “Now is the Time.” Then the video cuts to shots of parents and teachers in the audience clapping and children crying. The female teacher addresses the crowd while announcing their summer camp:

OK, so listen, moms and dads. I want to tell you about a couple of things we have in the bookstore. We have a School of Evangelism for Kids. It doesn’t sell very well. I think people think this is going to be a door-knocking manual and it’s not. There is a hands-on manual that teaches kids how to start a conversation with

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[^73]: _Jesus Camp_, directed by Heidi Ewing, DVD (A&E, Magnolia, 2007).
[^74]: Ibid.
their friends and how to win a loss. [or how to recruit your friends manual] All right, now I want everyone to raise your hands and we are going to pray in tongues. 75

The film cuts to shots of kids speaking in tongues. At 00:13:57 the teacher asks boys in the class how many kids are they bringing. A title appears in the lower left over a shot of the countryside from a car window. It says, “Evangelicals believe that to obtain salvation they must be ‘born-again’ by accepting Jesus as their savior. 43% of Evangelical Christians become ‘born-again’ before the age of eleven.”76

On the screen is a conversation with kids sitting in the cafeteria talking about how one girl looks like Harry Potter, and they reflect on how they were taught at church that the movie is witchcraft and they aren’t allowed to watch it. Then some giggle. At 00:45:48, a shot appears of an older boy walking and getting excited and practicing to preach.

They told me I was going to preach tonight. I’m really excited to be teaching to kids. I’ve never really preached to a whole lot of kids I didn’t know. I feel, I mean I really feel that we are a key generation. When I see people or a person who are non-Christian, there is always something that doesn’t seem right. Something that makes my spirit feel yucky. All this world feeds you is trash. It’s like candy and meat. I want the meat.77

The documentary closes with a debate between Becky, the church schoolteacher, and the radio host about the proper interpretation of religion in society. Shots of the older boy and other kids preaching on the street as the radio audio continue.

Jesus Camp offers a narrative that opens and closes by showing the other viewpoint in a more direct way than most of the films sampled. The scenes of the kids having a spirited discussion of which ones have or not seen Harry Potter after being told

75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid.
not to do so also demonstrates a varying point of view. The titles displayed on the screen outlining the beliefs of evangelicals and their success rate are strong with a message and could appear to imply a shared truth. While they do offer a sense of verification by allowing the variety of radio callers, they counter with the strong statements during their church service. It could be intended to have an audience with a shared truth, but it also has a feel that they want to share the message with a large audience.

*Jesus Camp Evaluation*

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: No. It offers nothing informative other than the limited history of the evangelical movement. The camp scenes are somewhat startling but not news.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens. No. Its first loyalty is to the youth of the church and its message.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: No. The narrative mainly echoes the beliefs of the church. Accusations are made that the younger generation needs to be exposed to positive messages are not verified other than a mother homeschooling. At 00:14:54, she says, “One popular thing to do in American politics that the summers in the past few years are the result of global warming. That’s not really a big problem is it?” Her son answers, “Nope. I don’t think it’s going to hurt us.”

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover. Possibly. In this case it is all about the messaging. In that case, it is much like Hillary, an example of a shared truth.
5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power: Yes. The documentary has a feeling of spreading the message to members and recruitment of children. What may be just a human profile to a general audience is propaganda in other interpretations. While it documents a culture, it is religious speech in the majority of its content.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Yes. The producers open themselves up to the world to look inside their religious culture and philosophies. Their message is so strong that it is not meant for an audience for compromise but a shared truth.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Possibly. It makes the activities of the church interesting to any audience, with the praying in tongues and seizures. Relevance is not really present outside of the youths in their church.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: No. There really is no news here. It is a nice feature story highlighting their church, but the narrative is about issues that are already part of the social awareness.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Yes. They obviously exercise their personal conscience everyday of life and throughout the entire documentary. It is expected of them to exercise their personal conscience.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: Yes. As stated earlier, this could be a documentary that doesn’t reach much further than a shared truth or human interest.
Jesus Camp ranks as strongly a work of shared truth. Jesus Camp is a vehicle to deliver a message to an audience with a shared truth. Even though the producers had extensive and generous access to the church, congregation, and camp there were no interviews with any of the members beyond just cinema verite style observation footage. The curious and somewhat bizarre title to an unknown audience will at least raise curiosity. If not for the humorous playground scene there is not much deviation from the religious message. The only representation of the other point of view is the radio host who comes from a traditional view of religion and doesn’t understand the extreme. Other than that, there is no attempt at verification. Without the use of a narrator, it can be confusing which side of Jesus Camp is being shown. The devoted spiritual side or a case of cult-like extremism. Only one side is being shown and no matter what the thinking is of the viewer to satisfy themselves, they will still only be shown one side.

The Ascent of Money: The Financial History of the World\textsuperscript{78} This traditional documentary from PBS is similar in style and tone to The Nazis: A Warning from History in the way that it is intended to be shown in episodes for television viewing. It also enjoys the same luxury with having the research and production facilities behind you such as PBS, BBC, and HBO. The Ascent of Money: The Financial History of the World is an example of a traditional program produced by PBS that can be updated in a way that makes it current and contemporary with the 2008 economic scare. The narrative is similar to the Obama conspiracy theory in that both films are based on the history and importance of money to society and history. The difference is the timeliness of this film. It opens with the narrator giving the broad topic a current application:

\textsuperscript{78} The Ascent of Money: The Financial History of the World, directed by Adrian Pennink, DVD (PBS, 2009).
Welcome to the world of money. Bread, cash, dough, dosh, loot, lucre, moola. In the past year it has broken some of the biggest names on Wall Street and in financial centers around the world. And while former masters of the universe crash and burn, the rest of us are left worrying if our savings would be safer in a mattress.\textsuperscript{79}

The opening narration is over shots of Wall Street and the streets of New York in fast motion. Professor Niall Ferguson, speaking on the connection to money, comments, “Once more, I want to reveal financial history as the essential backstory behind all history. Banks decided the Renaissance, but the bond market decided wars.” The conversation continues to stress the influence of stock markets on world peace and that market failures created revolutions. The episodes span a range of topics: *From Bullion to Bubbles* covers the development of currency; *Bonds of War* is about war financing, *Risky Business* covers developing new markets, and *Planet Finance* is about world markets.\textsuperscript{80}

The opening episode is rich with stock footage and stills of Wall Street and the hustle and bustle of New York City, with rapid shots of people on their cell phones, crowded streets, sidewalks, and street crossings. The narrative moves in the direction of current relevancy and explains how financial factors can upset a local and world economy at any time and how 2008 can be associated with historical lessons. Without actually editorializing the narrator mentions that powerful people have fallen, but they are the same people who were supposed to fix everything.

To complement the historical timeline and make it relevant as well, a sequence is introduced, “Imagine a World without Money.” Starting with the Incas and the understanding of a basic economy and currency, the metaphor will continue through the historical timeline. The episodes start with the Incas, ancient Mesopotamia, and moves

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
through the fourth episode to reach the present day and the meltdown of 2008. In the spirit of verification, along with the Nazi documentary, historical documentaries have sensitivity to research and verification equal to the world of journalism. Especially in the spirit of the BBC and PBS being the producers of the pieces with large staffs and access to stock source clips and documents. Interviews with scholars and government experts, including former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker and American businessman George Soros, along with dozens of others are included throughout the documentary, but the narrator handles the majority of the narrative.

*The Ascent of Money Evaluation*

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes. Being a historical documentary by definition, it is obligated to the truth. But also has the ability to update the content to make it more contemporary to more citizens.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens: Yes. In this case, it is loyal to all citizens, but primarily to the PBS audience, which might imply having an audience with a shared truth, but the historical content is beneficial to any audience.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Yes. Broadcast documentaries from the traditional sources like PBS, HBO, BBC, and others thrive on verification coming from the tradition of a large journalism and research organization.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover: Yes, but in this case the content is already verified historically and the narrative focuses on reviewing history and tying it to different eras and similarities.
5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power: Yes. Being a PBS production and having such a massive storyline, it requires a great deal of independent monitor power.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Yes. Having such high visibility will allow more people to be exposed to it and communicate their views. It will feed the current debate of the economy at time of release.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Yes. The earlier production offers history in an entertaining and fast moving production style. This is key to a program of such length. The opening references to 2008 and any later mention of it make it relevant again.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: Yes. The comprehension is the backbone of the piece with the amount of detail and documentation offered. Proportion is relevant to how often they mention 2008 to not overstate the endpoint.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: They display their conscience in being true to history, but there really is no room for personal conscience in a project that is so based on documentation and verification.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: Yes. This is an important topic and often is referred to as a topic that is not understood by the average voter.

*The Ascent of Money* ranks as strongly a work of journalism. *The Ascent of Money* is strong with verification and upholds journalism standards. It is primarily a historical
documentary having no real issues to represent. There is no strong detection of a shared truth other than people might all agree that the economy was bad at the time. The program is objective enough when making any reference to the current economy, not citing any partisan views outside of statistics.

*Ken Burns’ The War* is a PBS multipart documentary. The narrative begins on screen commenting on the documentary’s treatment of World War II, “This is the story of four American towns and how their citizens experienced that war.” In the Ken Burns chapter in the dissertation, there is discussion of how Burns’ crews spent five years in each of the towns before shooting, to build a network and to pick the right individual to feature in the section on that town. At 00:02:20, the traditional Ken Burns tools appear, lush music, pan and zoom of beautiful black and white photography, and the lush baritone narrator. He introduces Glenn Frazier of Alabama, the first spotlighted veteran. Frazier lied about his age and joined the peacetime army. He volunteered for the Philippines, thinking it would be safe. While being bombed by Japan, his family in Alabama was told he had died.

At 00:03:45, Sam Hynes is introduced; he was a narrator and consultant on the documentary. Hynes is a veteran of the war and went on to teach English literature. Hynes and many of the other interviews in the film are meant to be with witnesses of the event and not academic historians. Burns’ choice to use the four cities as anchors allows him to go back and forth like episodes. The ability to cover battles and then go back and forth in time in the four cities is effective. He opens every episode with a recap of what happened in the previous episode and ends with a summary, just like in episodic

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81 *The War*, directed by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, DVD (PBS, 2007).
television programs. At 00:08:45, the narrator says, “The war affected everyone and every town in America. Towns like Luverne, Minnesota; Sacramento, California; Waterbury, Connecticut, and Mobile, Alabama.” The quote is read over wartime shots of those towns.

The graphic for the title of the movie, “The War” doesn’t appear until the nine-minute mark. The reporting of the vacuum in America during the war with people having a hard time imagining it is communicated well with b-roll footage representing healthy and happy times back home on the farm. The shots chosen almost have a Norman Rockwell feel. A good deal of the first two hours deal with establishing of a backstory of the four towns and soldiers ties to the areas. As the characters from the towns are identified, the street address of the house they lived in is read. The next character from Luverne is introduced as Quentin Aanenson. He brings with him a reminder of discussion at the time of the movie that Burns wanted to make the long documentary before the majority of wartime people had passed away. The long episodes execute an excellent editing routine of playing round robin from each town to the next, introducing new characters, only to rotate back through the cities once again updating characters and local storylines. The basic population, climate, ethnicity and source of industry are covered in the development of each city. The theme of reading the address of the person being discussed continues through the episodes. For each episode, the title graphic of that episode doesn’t appear until the 00:20:00 mark.

It is apparent that Burns’ skills had grown tremendously from The Brooklyn Bridge, mainly in how to manage a long narrative. He does an excellent job of allowing the narrator to handle important historical topics such as Pearl Harbor, but allows his
“witnesses” to handle the rest of the narrative through a conversation style of editing moving from one interview to the other on the same topic. It also is effective when making transitions from war history to pop culture history, for example, the popularity of escapism at the movies but also being exposed to newsreels. Burns’ sensitivity to the power of audio adding to authenticity, *The War* adds radio audio clips to the mix of the narrative to give a voice to war footage. The heavy narration is also left to the narrator and it reminds me as the viewer that Burns didn’t use any historians or academic experts for the project relying on witnesses like Samuel Hynes to make reoccurring appearances adding a more veteran big picture accounting. But, it also crosses your mind if lack of historians hurt any verification credibility at the time. In retrospect, it doesn’t appear to have impacted any verification at all, besides the narration is not credited to a source. Burns still uses the screen shot of newspaper headlines and they are reputable, national newspapers and also local papers from the four towns selected. Period music also moves the casual sequences along as in most of his productions. Burns’ attention to detail down to the music and including sound effects to sweeten the sound only brings the narrative to life more and offers some form of context. News reels also add to the context of the day in a newsworthy sense, by adding a timestamp on the clip, just a newspaper front page would. If it was a smaller production, it could be accused of pandering to an audience with shared truth, that audience being the war veterans, or as Tom Brokaw calls them, “The Greatest Generation.” But with the length and scope of this documentary, it at times goes beyond verification and is a pure history lesson. It is a lesson of journalism principles as applied to documentary filmmaking.
The War Evaluation

1. Its first obligation is to the truth: Yes. It is not only American history, but also world history. Being such a long program allows Burns to cover facts that others don’t have the time to investigate.

2. Its first loyalty is to citizens. Yes. It reads like a history book with oral histories included.

3. Its essence is a discipline of verification: Yes. The mass amount of information covered in the documentary relies on verification as other history projects do. The color commentary from the witnesses offer an interesting form of verification.

4. Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover: Possibly. As always, they should keep their distance from what they cover, but Burns always seems to let his romantic side creep in, by highlighting Americana and nationalist pride.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. Yes. Burns is the ultimate monitor of power, having the stamina and resources to spend years on his programs.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise: Yes. Ken Burns’ projects being broadcast on PBS have become a traditional public forum for criticism and compromise of issues he chooses to cover.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: Yes. Burns does that in The War by the narrative and personal anecdotes offered by the witnesses. It can offer a lighter side of the long story and break the ongoing historical narration.
8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: Yes. Burns is begging the question by choosing such a long running time if the topic will grow tired or will source material run thin. The technique of breaking the cities into segment reporting breaks up the long segments and keeps it in proportion.

9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience: Yes. Burns always exercises his personal conscience by emphasizing patriotism and injecting his devotion to American history.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: Ken Burns is probably personally responsible for getting large audiences to watch documentaries on television. His pop culture personality has made it easy for viewers to embrace. 

_The War_ ranks as strongly a work of journalism. _The War_ is rich with journalistic principles and avenues of verification. By not featuring historians as talking heads, Burns is left to offer verification through his b-roll, photos, and documents as he has always done. The project tells a historic story of war, but also a story of our country that discusses social attitudes such as treatment of Japanese Americans.
Chapter 7: Discussion and Conclusion

Walter Lippmann described the press as similar to a searchlight, doing its job, looking for need. “Men cannot do the work of the world by this light alone,” he wrote in Public Opinion. “It is only when they work by a steady light of their own, that the press, when it is turned upon them, reveals a situation intelligible enough for a popular decision.” Documentary can work in the same way. It can be a slow process to shine a light on one topic at a time. It cannot complement the breaking news reporting of today, but it wasn’t meant to. This dissertation has attempted to show what it can, and cannot, do.

Results of Narrative Inquiry

The results of the narrative inquiry of the documentaries in the sample would be somewhat as expected, but for different reasons at times than predicted. Out of fifteen documentaries, analysis using the measures of Kovach and Rosenstiel determined ten to adhere to the principles of journalism, leaving five that were considered to be dealing with a shared truth. The five titles were Thinking XXX, Hillary: The Movie, The Obama Deception, Vanishing of the Bee, and Jesus Camp. What these titles have in common is a shaky foundation of verification and the choice to not show all sides of a story.

The strongest group of titles that scored high as having journalism qualities were the historical documentaries, mainly due to the research committed and resources available. Ken Burns has an advantage with having programs that run hours beyond the length of a traditional documentary, giving him the opportunity to cover more topics and in greater depth. The Nazis: A Warning from History is another example of the ways long

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projects offer such an opportunity to explore topics in depth and offer more verification. One unexpected result of the analysis was the identification of a group of films that all were based on the narrative being videography in a POV type of constant documentation, in which the cameras are constantly recording in a *cinema verite* style. Those were *Death in Gaza, 9/11, and Gasland*. The intimate documentation of these films’ topics offered the strongest form of verification of the sample. The broadcast documentaries from the traditional institutions such as PBS, BBC, and HBO offered the highest production standards, which added to their command of a subject. Having to show the most creativity in offering verification were the historical documentaries. Many times they did not have living witnesses, and they had to rely on various alternative or multimedia sources. The *Hitler* and *the Ascent of Money* productions relied heavily on visual communication techniques, as does the work of Ken Burns.

There appeared to be more similarities than expected, at least among projects and purposes in the same categories. The intent of the producer was remarkably apparent on some of the documentaries, such as *The Vanishing Bees*, and the content of the documentary could suggest the outcome of the evaluation, such as the activist advocacy of *God Grew Tired of Us*.

*Hillary: The Movie* and *The Obama Deception* have varying degrees of the same problem, almost a zero rating for verification. Citizens United offered only one Democrat in ninety minutes in *Hillary*, and three men shouting at the camera about an Obama conspiracy theory in the *Obama Deception* provided the most evidence of a shared truth on the list.
Kovach and Rosenstiel base their analysis of the principles of journalism not only on the history of journalism, but also on how substantial or relevant the basic elements of journalism are today. I would like to review below how the sample generally fared in regard to the Kovach and Rosenstiel categories, as well as what particular categories may have been problematic for some. These have been the basis of the measures of this dissertation.\(^2\) They put forward ten elements of journalism:

1. **First obligation is to the truth:** This category did not apply to the films that had an activist agenda, such as *Hillary: The Movie* and *The Obama Deception*, but it also was a problem for the films that only approached their agendas obliquely, such as the anti-government slant of *The Vanishing Bees*. The result is that those films generally turned out to have a shared truth approach.

2. **Its first loyalty is to citizens.** Some of the films were so one-sided that they would never score well on this issue. *Hillary: The Movie, XXX, The Obama Deception*, and to some extent, *The Vanishing of the Bees* may have trouble with this question.

3. **Its essence is a discipline of verification:** The projects that have an advocacy edge or merely offer an argument for one side in an informational sense sometimes miss this step. *Super Size Me* and *Gasland* fall into this category.

4. **Its practitioners must maintain an independence from those they cover.** Some of the projects require a close relationship to the subject that threatened to compromise independence. *Death in Gaza* is a perfect example of this. The film’s

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creators were shooting in a *cinema verite* style, but also documenting the kids at the same time, which requires a high level of trust.

5. It must serve as an independent monitor of power. This generally comes across as a yes for most of the documentaries in the sample. The ones that would have trouble with this were those that lost control of their narrative, or the production got in the way of the story or was a distraction. For example, *The Obama Deception* degenerates into paranoia and psychobabble.

6. It must provide a forum for public criticism and compromise. Some of the films don’t lend themselves to public criticism and compromise, due to their distribution not reaching an audience that would maximize the impact and create a truly public forum. *Jesus Camp* would be an example of this.

7. It must strive to make the significant interesting and relevant: The historical documentaries, such as the documentaries about Kerouac and World War II, handle this well. Many times they dealt with tired material yet the creators managed to keep it interesting and entertaining.

8. It must keep the news comprehensive and in proportion: This can be a failure for documentaries that have an advocacy issue or are just being informational on one side of a topic. The only thing that can save a narrative that becomes redundant is high production standards to keep the documentary running. *Gasland* succeeds more than *The Obama Deception* because of the creator of the former sought out opposing sources and context, while the creators of the latter reduced complex issues to a single conspiracy theory with no alternative explanations.
9. Its practitioners have an obligation to exercise their personal conscience. This is a “yes” for all of the documentaries because it is usually something important to the producers or the community. Most journalists working for traditional media cover the news as it happens, or as news stories are assigned to them. On those occasions when they do choose their own stories, such as enterprise stories on a beat, they are constrained by time and space [broadcast vs. printed pages] or by the pressures that devoting themselves to a beloved story place on the need to cover other, ongoing news. Documentary filmmakers have greater luxury of time in two ways: the time they can commit to doing a project, and the time they can use to explain the project. Such investments of time would be expected to coincide with exercises of conscience.

10. Citizens, too, have rights and responsibilities when it comes to the news: This is usually a problem, considering that most of the titles in the sample will not reach a mainstream audience. Thus, in most cases it is the responsibility of the audience to be educated and seek out sources beyond those in the documentaries. Whereas mainstream journalists are taught to seek multiple voices in their news stories, documentary filmmakers exercise greater latitude to shape their work. Viewers may not realize what they’re not being told in a documentary.

Judging them as a whole was not difficult, being that not many were in the middle of the spectrum between journalism and shared truths. I expected to find more documentaries in the sample that were of the shared truth nature. There was a wide range of styles and production values. In our multimedia world, there is more potential for a wide variety in quality and content. The sample did display a good representation of
different projects representing budget concerns, intended audiences ranging from large to small, and purpose of the documentary depending on the category. Differences in budget concerns are apparent between a regional, national, or international production. The high quality of the BBC and PBS productions are reminiscent of a time when that was the level of production quality that was expected, but the avenues of circulation were minimal with just a few major television networks. With there being so many outlets today for documentary viewing, from cable television to YouTube to Netflix, it is no surprise that there are so many titles that are intended for niche audiences.

Netflix has allowed producers at all levels to make their documentaries available for distribution. What is informative about their documentary selection is that most of them are only available on DVD and not for streaming. This suggests that the demand isn’t high enough to justify carrying a large inventory or to make the effort to make them available online. However, it is clear that sales and viewership are at an all-time high spread across many delivery avenues allowing for more titles and more producers. Netflix can be generalizable for this study due to the vast catalog they offer to possibly the largest audience in the world. With as many avenues available for distribution, and as many titles available, Netflix is the most centralized and trafficked source of documentaries.

Each documentary was evaluated as a whole based on what was reported from the viewing. They were also rated as having journalism content and procedures based on the attempt to show verification, or rated as having a shared truth depending on information provided in the narrative based on narrative inquiry theory, or a truth agreed upon between producer and creator, creator and audience, and interviewer and interviewee.
Many forms of evidence were offered, both real and imagined. For example, newspaper headlines pictured in documentaries can act as valid forms of support or as a smokescreen to give a false impression of validity, such as when a headline from an editorial is presented as one from a news story. According to the norms of documentary filmmaking, images that are shown typically should follow the spoken word in a journalism context, as when an event appears on screen while someone is speaking about it. In film and video they refer to it as “cutting to the word.” The decision on which headlines to choose and display can greatly impact the impression that is delivered. The choice of photos of the subject can have the same effect. At times some of the productions do not offer on-screen identification via lower-third titles, or verbal identification of talking heads. This is typical for documentaries in the opening minutes; this creates a mystery about their identity, authority, or expertise. However, it is not typical to wait until the middle of a documentary to make such introductions.

It is normal production style to have a nut graph move quickly with edits and cuts, not giving enough screen time for identification, but the suspension of identification usually does not last long. Some productions, such as *Hillary: The Movie*, let the mystery go up to ten minutes or more without identifying who was speaking, which can confuse and frustrate an audience and also cast doubt on the credibility of the speaker. The historical and biographical documentaries offered the most disciplined productions with fact finding and verification. Another credible form of demonstrating a visual journalism style of verification were the productions that used a lot of videography on location for evidence.
Two examples of major documentaries that are on different ends of the verification spectrum are the chapters in this dissertation on Ken Burns’ *The War* and Citizen United’s *Hillary: The Movie*. Ken Burns has learned early in his career the importance of evidence and verification. His subjects often have dealt with people no longer living who witnessed the events being described. He is left to compensate with artifacts and documents discovered during the intervening years, which he and his staff find through archival research before they start production on a documentary. He was quoted in the chapter as saying he only trusts a few people to do archival research for him and still would like to do it himself. He is always afraid that someone else might miss something, as archival research is so important to his production process. He is also a historian and for respect of historical correctness he is thorough. The chapter also mentions the criticism he has received from historians who say that Burns can choose which parts of history he wants to cover, and the audience then believes that what he depicts is totally correct. Burns has also received criticism for adding a sentimental layer to his direction and for calling himself a patriot, with the criticism saying his rose-colored glasses can taint the proper interpretation of the facts. He and his generation of producers have been called the new historians.

Ken Burns’ intense research comes long before the application of the style that has made him famous. His attention to detail as a director brings his productions to life and makes the research worthwhile. The thousands of photographs, documents, and sound bites that went into *The War* are unfathomable. To Burns, all of these add credibility to the sequence and re-creates the context in which the historical moment took place. Burns has also a creative approach to audio. Probably out of having to learn from
just having access to still photos, he appreciates how an ambient sound effect can bring an old black and white photograph to life.

Some of the criticism of Ken Burns can be attributed to jealousy. His role as a “new historian” has been well earned. Even though that was a label attached to him through reviews and academic evaluation, he is still primarily a filmmaker, which was his first intent in the beginning. He has introduced a whole generation to documentary films. He brought documentary film back to television and to a mass audience. Having his affiliation with PBS is enough to make many a producer envious if not jealous.

_The War_ could possibly be his last epic swansong considering its length and marathon broadcast of the event of its release. The majority of the projects he has taken on since have been in the sixty to ninety minute length. It also represents a period of technological growth in America that anyone could have access to technology and equipment to make a documentary and everybody suddenly was “Ken Burns.” This point can be seen in some of the films in the sample. They are all of a high quality, but one can see a curve of production quality and values. The final element of Burns’ offering verification is the rich style that others have tried to emulate--what has become to be called the “Ken Burns Effect,” the technique of a slow pan and zoom over a still photograph. The technique has been around for decades, but Burns is so reliant on still photographs that he has become known for it. It has added to his reputation of being accurate to viewers.

The other end of the spectrum is _Hillary: The Movie_. It was meant to be a public statement on Hillary Clinton’s supposed lack of presidential qualities and qualifications. It was produced by Citizens United, a conservative video production company known for
working with conservative candidates such as Newt Gingrich. The documentary became more famous for the Supreme Court ruling that a business has the same speech freedom rights as an individual. It is ironic considering that the DVD was not allowed to be advertised per election law due to the candidate’s name being on the cover and its classification as political speech. Then it becomes a case about something almost completely different.

Though Ken Burns doesn’t often cover a current topic, he makes efforts to look at facts from multiple viewpoints to make an accurate assessment. *Hillary: the Movie* could not be seen as fair and balanced. It is a parade of conservative leaders and talking heads who already have their minds made up. Where Ken Burns uses graphic images to reinforce his story, he leaves the images on the screen long enough so it can be determined if they are from a reliable newspaper or source. Meanwhile, *Hillary: The Movie* also uses headlines and graphics, but only leaves the images on the screen long enough for the viewer to be able to read one or two sensational words, but not long enough to identify the source.

*Hillary: The Movie* is a workshop in manipulative production techniques. Any image of the hundreds that are shown of Hillary has a negative connotation. Either she has a frown, looks tired, or is mid-conversation in a secretive stance. The headlines that are shown do not display more than one or two words. An effective technique was that the film ran talking heads together in a carousel, rotating responses to the same question, which creates an illusion of agreement and verification in the viewer’s mind. The filmmakers were also very careful in identifying talking heads. Many of them were low-level politicians and medium-market commentators, such as writers for the conservative
and low-impact *Washington Times*, who don’t have national recognition, at least not across the aisle. This documentary could never be judged anything but fit for an audience with a shared truth of the producer. The filmmakers aim to create the “truth” that there is no conclusion to draw other than that Hillary Clinton is a liar and can’t be trusted. Liar is an effective term, especially when repeated over and over.

Production style can manipulate a message, and lack of credibility can become apparent almost subliminally when producers use graphics and other tricks to produce a sensational message. Style, on the other hand, can enhance a production and its credibility by being invisible. Headlines shouldn’t scream a message. They should present it in a readable and clean presentation. Again, they are almost invisible. Editing doesn’t have to be so fast and sound bites so short to create a feeling of intensity and reinforcement of the same message. Such editing creates a feeling of sensory overload and can make some people uncomfortable. A production with a clean look lets clips breathe during slower edits. The audio from talking head clips shouldn’t step on each other during the transition. Let the audio breathe for a beat as well. *Hillary: The Movie* includes all of these manipulative tricks and breaks the “invisible” unobtrusive theory of style. The size and goal of the producers can also be reflected in production style. Small production budgets can be reflected in the appearance of graphics and other media files.

Cara Mertes, executive producer of the PBS broadcast program *P.O.V.* [short for point of view] said, “*P.O.V. is home to many journalists-turned-film-makers. They have come to public media, often from commercial media [print and broadcast], for a chance
to explore their stories from an explicit perspective, to work over a long period of time—sometimes as long as a decade—and for the chance to have total editorial control.”

The documentary raises an important question about citizens’ responsibility to inform themselves or just take what is available and comfortable. The issue with Citizens United would not be an issue if all citizens took responsibility to be well informed from a variety of sources. But it is a stretch to consider whether it would endanger democracy if the majority of the population gets their news from aggregators or a source that fits their comfort zone, beliefs, and attitudes. Citizens’ responsibility for informing themselves about public issues, or lack of the exercise of such responsibility, has been an issue throughout the history of democracy. It is important for citizens to be proactive and seek out deeper facts, the history and context of a news story, and also opposing voices. For any mass of uninformed or unmotivated voters, things may not change much; selective perception and the theory of cognitive dissonance, which suggests that people attempt to align their attitudes to be in harmony and ignore, minimize, or rationalize information that challenges those attitudes, suggest that those who choose to watch documentaries such as *Hillary: The Movie* likely have already made up their minds about Hillary Clinton, and so have those who choose not to do so. Similar patterns no doubt affect news consumption of Fox News and MSNBC. But are partisan news outlets, including documentaries, optimal? If getting your news from just one source is OK, well, doesn’t it depend on what that source is [does it adhere to the principles of journalism?] and how

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the news is delivered? Is backstory included and are all sides identified? Or is it just a repackaged version of a wire service report trimmed to fit a space.

The intention of the source is also worthy of investigating, as in the case of Citizens United being a partisan voice. The pattern of people seeking out a source that is in line with their beliefs supports people going back to a news channel that fits their politics. This form of news usage fits into the narrative inquiry theory as people or programs that operate under a shared truth audience. The problem with this model is that it promotes a vicious circle. Citizens keep repeating the same patterns of news consumption, If they don’t break the pattern, they don’t hear anything new.

The vast spectrum of documentaries available makes it apparent that democracy would benefit from citizens being aggressive and responsible for their media usage. Just from this sample, some of the most popular documentaries have little-to-no level of journalism fundamentals or verification. Some are so far from verification that they appear as an editorial.

This brings the discussion back to the original research question:
RQ1: To what extent are the most popular documentaries viewed through Netflix verifiable in the traditional sense of journalism, or just a shared truth of producer and a specific audience?

The majority are verifiable in the traditional journalism sense, if that is their purpose, but it is apparent that five of the fifteen documentary filmmakers examined in this dissertation did not intend to follow journalistic norms. And that is their choice as filmmakers. If, however, documentary filmmakers edit fairly, such as providing clear identification of speakers and sources, offer the facts and voices of more than on side,
verify their facts and claims, state their premises clearly, and leave the conclusion open to the viewer, then they are an example of a high level of verification, and stand as works of journalism.

However, as has been discussed, with so many channels of delivery in the present market, it is easy and attractive to produce media or content that can be marketed to a niche with a shared truth—to connect at a primarily emotional level with a relatively small audience, rather than on a rational level with a relatively larger one. “The desire that information be truthful is elemental. Since news is the material that people use to learn and think about the world beyond themselves, the most important quality is that it be useful and reliable.”4 The quote is from Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel and a good example of their philosophy. News in today’s media landscape can be very selective. It may be up to the news consumer or citizen to seek out multiple sources of news, but referring back to the quote, who is to decide what is useful and reliable? That is a question that the body of documentary filmmakers would fail to agree on, as they do not agree on whether to embrace standards of journalism or what they see as a greater shared truth.

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Gary Edgerton, telephone interview by Paul Jacoway, February 8, 2012.


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Movies in Sample


Gasland, directed by Josh Fox, DVD. Docurama, 2010.

God Grew Tired of Us: The Story of Lost Boys of Sudan, directed by Christopher Quinn, DVD. Sony Pictures / National Geographic, 2007.


Jesus Camp, directed by Heidi Ewing, DVD. A&E, Magnolia, 2007.


The Obama Deception, directed by Alex Jones, DVD. Alex Jones Productions, 2009.


Thinking XXX, directed by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, DVD. HBO, 2006.


Other Movies


Brooklyn Bridge, directed by Ken Burns, http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/brooklynbridge/about/


Books


*Articles*


Gentile, Bill. “Backpack Journalism”
http://www.american.edu/soc/backpack/Leadership.cfm


**Court Cases**


Appendix: Notes on Documentary Content

Note: Quote marks are used only for captured exact quotes, and notations of the rest of spoken words or text are close paraphrases. In addition, where time stamps or time code registrations do not appear, that reflects there being no conflict of opinion in the movie. The documentaries are listed in the order that they were viewed as made available from Netflix.

Key:
1S or 1shot = One shot
2S or 2shot = Two shot
CU = Close up
MS = Medium shot
WS = Wide shot
Lower third = the lower part of the screen where a graphic would appear.

Hillary: The Movie

Opens with Citizens United logo (oval shape) CITIZENS UNITED on top of oval white on red white stars across bottom white on blue. Eagle centered in middle.

Music symphonic quartet.

00:00:18 White on black title slide, “The problem with nostalgia is what we tend to do is only remember what you liked and you forget the parts you didn’t.”

00:00:26 Title attribution appears below quote, “John Edwards.”

00:00:34 Montage of scanned newspaper headlines from 1990s run across screen – roughly one second each, “Evidence against Mrs. Clinton seems persuasive” “Mrs. Clinton Files Affidavit on Whitewater” “Deputy independent counsel says he wrote ‘rough draft indictment’ of Hillary Clinton March 18, 1999” “perjury” “First Lady’s Account of Meeting w/McDougal Disputed” “subpoenas first lady” “Mrs. Clinton, for her part, denies any role in the firings and does not remember bringing any pressure on the staff.” “’Lies” “Grand jury probes her role in ‘sham’” “Hillary, shielded from questions, touts book on tour in Little Rock” “Tale of Two Hillarys” “Veracity” “Mrs. Clinton and Madison’s losses” “First lady is questioned” “Panel probes anxiety over testimony oh Hillary” “Hillary’s web of deception” Rhythm of editing rests on every fourth slide with a powerful single word.

Music changes to more somber solo horn.

00:00:52 Serious close up profile of Hillary leading into montage of photos of speeches, all of the serious close up variety
00:01:05 Talking head of woman, no lower third. “She is driven by the power she is driven to get the power. That is the driving force in her life.”

00:01:09 Talking head of man, no lower third. “She doesn’t answer questions.” Stills mixed in with sound bites.

00:01:15 Ann Coulter “She is the expert of not saying what she believes. She will run on attacking Republicans and being the first woman, and oh, isn’t that amazing, oh it’s a woman and she can walk and talk.”

00:01:24 Talking head man, no lower third. “The law here is passing out favors, whether it’s unions here, the farm bloc there.”

00:01:33 Talking head man, no lower third. “She is steeped in controversy, steeped in sleeze, that’s why they don’t want us to look at her record.”

music returns to midtempo symphonic.

00:01:40 Talking head woman, no lower third. “I would recommend that Hillary Clinton appreciate that she is not going to be by any means the candidate of American women, they have diverse views on politics just like men.”

00:01:50 Talking head man, no lower third. “At the core of almost every investigation we did for eight years, we had problems with the Clinton administration and she was at the core of them.”

00:02:03 Talking head man, no lower third over newsroom. “It is part of the Clinton method, that is to say what you need to say at any given moment and rely on the memory of the American public and the support of the mainstream media to support it.”

00:02:15 Talking head man, no lower third. “The twenty-year plan really is, is that the Clintons share power, one would be president eight years and then the other would be president eight years over a span of twenty years with a little bit of Republican in between perhaps.”

00:02:25 Talking head man, no lower third. “What happened was the Bill and Hillary in their mid-twenties before they ever took their marriage vows, they took their political vows.”

00:02:33 Talking head man, no lower third. “A lot of people say do we have to go through all of the old Clinton scandals again, and the answer is you don’t, Hillary Clinton scandals are a gift that keeps on giving.”

Music picks up tempo.

00:02:44 Headline montage returns to screen at a faster pace featuring buzz words resting on every fourth slide: “guilty” “cronies” “forgetful” “obstruction.”
00:02:58 Returns to montage of Hillary head shots at work with single words spoken by the previous talking heads: “ruthless” “vindictive” “mendacious” “anal” “sneaky” “ideological” “intolerant” “liar is a good one” “scares the hell out of me” “looks good in a pant suit.”

00:03:15 accelerated flashing of headlines appearing behind title mask of HILLARY: THE MOVIE.

00:03:24 fade to block music slows down, single shots of Pentagon and White House, Secret Service with car.

00:03:39 iconic photos continue with Hillary announcing exploratory committee, “I am not just starting the committee but I want a conversation with America, let’s talk, let’s chat. Let’s talk about your ideas and mine.”

00:03:50 Secret Service slow mo video returns.

00:04:04 Return to slow mo video of Hillary in 1990s giving speeches Woman audio, no video or lower third: “The challenge for Hillary Clinton on the campaign trail is she can’t pretend to be something she is not. She is far more liberal than she will want to let on. That means you have to be very controlled, you can’t be too spontaneous.” Video of talking head woman appears, no lower third.

00:04:26 Stills of Hillary speeches, audio. “I am sick and tired of people who say if debate with me and you disagree with this administration you are somehow not patriotic and that isn’t right and we should stand up and say we are American’s and we should disagree with any administration (in excited tone).”

00:04:42 Fade to Hillary stills and campaigning video waving. Talking head man, no lower third, voice only. “She is a person who is struggling herself with trying to figure out who she is or more importantly how she wants to present herself. Her own advisors told us that her type of authenticity is issue one, issue two, and issue three.” Talking head appears.

00:05:01 Still of Hillary, audio of Hillary doing Southern accent, “I don’t feel like I’m tired, I’ve come too far from where I started from.”

00:05:21 First appearance of unidentified off camera official narrator, shots of Hillary continue.

“Could she become the first woman president in the history of the United States? Her name is known by almost every American. But who she really is remains largely a mystery. Hillary Clinton points to her time in the White House as a large part of her qualifications for the job. But most of the news media has forgotten that her time as first lady was mired in controversy.”
00:05:58 Talking head woman, no video voice over repeat of headlines. “The core of the controversy was how Mrs. Clinton has been in answering questions, sometimes under oath about Whitewater and other matters.”

00:06:00 Return to Narrator. “She was the first, first lady who was under criminal investigation. In both Little Rock and Washington, D.C., she was plagued by scandals.”

00:06:13 Unidentified male voice over magazine covers. “Senator Clinton has an extraordinary ability to obfuscate, refuse to answer questions, and up until now has been given an extraordinary pass on this.”

00:06:24 Camera shot of YouTube page with John Edwards making comments called “Important Differences.”

00:06:51 Quick round of talking heads from intro echoing Clinton’s need to lie.

00:07:17 Narrator over Hillary stills. “Over the past sixteen years Hillary Clinton has no doubt become one of the most divisive figures in America. How this makes her suited to unite the country as president is troubling to many.”

00:07:30 (Anne Coulter, no lower third) And if you recall seeing Hillary Clinton speaking at a black church on MLK Day, what a coincidence.”

00:07:30 Hillary commenting at speech in front of black crowd of “Congress being run like a plantation, and you know what I am talking about.”

00:07:43 (Anne Coulter, no lower third) “You know what I am talking about girlfriend, that’s how she’s going to get to power, by accusing the Republicans of running a plantation at a black church on MLK Day. That’s it, OK.”

00:08:00 Narrator over headlines flipping by: “After announcing her bid for the presidency fellow Democrats including (picture of Oprah but no mention of her) former Clinton confidant and Hollywood mogul David Geffen (picture of Geffen) publicly questioned Hillary’s integrity and truthfulness. Such breaks in the Clinton inner circle begged the question. What is the truth about Hillary Rodham Clinton.”

00:08:21 Talking head man from intro, no lower third speaks of Hillary narcissism from 1960s. Another round of talking head men from intro, no lower third speaking of making things up.

00:08:49 Narrator: “So who is the real Hillary Clinton? Is she a brilliant trailblazer meant to make history as the first female president? Or is she ruthless, cunning, and willing to do anything for power?”
00:09:04 Press conference footage. Male reporter in audience asking first lady if Susan McDougal lied, and was there any shredding of documents and photos. Clinton replies, “Well, I don’t know anything about that.”

00:10:00 Shots of Hillary with Bill and Chelsea. Random talking heads off camera, no ID, talk about the character of the media.

00:10:16 Ann Coulter, Nationally Syndicated Columnist – Best Selling Author (first talking head with lower third for id) speaking of “character flaws being a behavioral problem. And psychopathic psychology says that you couldn’t be elected to dogcatcher if you were a Republican.”

00:10:29 Narrator: “The politics of personal destruction was a phrase popularized by the Clintons in the 1990s by calling the attacks as what Hillary described as the vast right wing conspiracy. But is she actually better at practicing that fine art than being its victim.”

00:10:46 Tony Clankley, former editorial page editor, The Washington Times. “They use the trick of accusing your opponent with your own malfeasance. Accuse Republicans of speaking honestly about the ethical questions while they speak honestly about the ethical dishonesty of their opponents.”

Fade to angry shots of Hillary in public.

00:11:16 John Fund, columnist, OpinionJournal.com. “Even Democrats will admit that the Clintons are particularly aggressive when it comes to campaigns. They use the war room as a military metaphor to attack the other side.”

00:11:38 Shots of headlines.

00:11:42 Tony Clankley, former editorial page editor, The Washington Times. Travel office comments, keeping lackeys employed.

00:12:13 Narrator: “When the Clintons moved to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in 1993, White House veteran Billy Dale was the director of the travel office. Dale had faithfully served seven presidents starting with John F. Kennedy in 1961. But Dale, who actually voted for Clinton, would soon find out that business under the Clintons would not be business as usual.”

00:12:37 Billy Dale, former director of travel office. “We knew that we were in for a rougher transition because we had heard stories from Secret Service agents who had gone to Little Rock for a week’s transition and some of the stories that they would come back with and tell us. We just knew that it was going to be different, we just didn’t realize how different. We were replaced by a friend of the Clintons, Darnell Martin, a partner of Clinton friends and Hollywood producer Henry Bloodworth Thomason, who ran a charter business and was friends with Hillary.”
Narrator: When Congress investigated, they learned that Henry Thomason had multiple conversations with Hillary Clinton about taking over the White House charters. As Dale says, every new administration hires their own White House staff even though no president had done so over 40 years.

Billy Dale: “And I was being accused for stealing $14,000 that I couldn’t account for and meanwhile Dee Dee Myers is in the White House press room saying we were being fired for criminal misconduct.”

Rep Dan Burton, R-IN: “I think they were trying to make it look like they were doing it for corruption over there, because the media liked Billy Dale and the people there.”

Narrator: “Gary Aldrich, retired office of the director, FBI, the last five years of his career was responsible for background checks on White House staff.”

Gary Aldrich: “It was determined that all of these men were qualified to work in the White House and were honest individuals. It was powerful time in my career because I learned that people in powerful positions can use law enforcement almost whimsically” (photos of Hillary w/ Ted Kennedy).

Narrator: “The White House travel office affair became known as Travelgate. When Dale’s legal bills were estimated to reach $750,000, he considered offering a plea deal, a fine of $69,000 and a brief jail sentence.”

Billy Dale: Talks about his older daughter, that if he was found guilty of something he didn’t do, she wouldn’t be able to live in this country anymore.

Narrator: When the case went to trial (picture of taking oath) in the fall of 1995 (headline of journalists defend travel office director) journalists testified as character witnesses including Sam Donaldson and Brit Hume. (Donaldson sound bite). The jury needed less than two hours to reach a verdict. (Headline of acquittal) Ultimately, the office of the Independent Council stated in their final report of the travel office firings was factually incorrect.” (over headlines of Hillary’s handling).

Billy Dale: “Hillary Clinton as a first lady was probably more powerful than any I knew. I learned that she was more involved than Bill was. Bill just wiped his hands of it and let her handle it.”

Tony Clankley, former editorial page editor, The Washington Times. “It was just an example of the ruthlessness of the times and people realized Hillary had as much to do with it as Bill did.”
Ann Coulter: “That was the most illustrious scandal because it was such an Evita Peron act of maliciousness toward these ordinary people. Not the most illegal thing they did but most contemptible.”

Narrator: “Billy Dale wasn’t the only victim of Hillary Clinton’s brutal political machine.”

Robert Novak, nationally syndicated columnist: “I would say it is more important to study her more as a first lady than as a senator to examine her meanness almost from the first day.”

Ann Coulter: “Hillary using the IRS as a threat and to intimidate Paula Jones.”

Narrator: “Using the IRS against opponents was a Clinton specialty, reminiscent of Richard Nixon. Using special investigators to intimidate women associated with Bill Clinton including Jennifer Flowers, Paula Jones and others.”

Kathleen Willey, Clinton White House volunteer: “It got to a point where you were afraid you were being followed.”

Narrator: “Clinton supporter Kathleen Willey alleges Bill Clinton sexually assaulted her in the White House in 1993. Willey believes that Hillary Clinton was aware of White House tactics to deal with perceived enemies. She claims that when she was set to testify against President Clinton in the Paula Jones case a man approached her about her missing cat and that she was not getting the message.”

Jerrod Clark, former special investigator: “Kathleen Willey knows first hand what it is like to be threatened by the Clintons. It made me very uncomfortable. Her car was vandalized and a cat’s skull left on her porch.”

Hillary campaign speech: “If you put me to work for you, I will work to lift people up. Not push them down.”

Dick Morris, former Clinton advisor, best selling author: “I finally parted company with Hillary Clinton when I saw how she was using private detectives to investigate women linked to her husband. (close up) Not to make him a better person but to cattle the women into silence.”

Ann Coulter: “Think of what it says about Hillary Clinton that she was willing to put up with his open philandering.”

Narrator: “Hillary Clinton’s Machiavellian behavior, her willingness to deceive and destroy for personal gain is nothing new. Now, this woman is a hero to feminists.”
20:26:40 Shots of Hillary and Clinton together at rallies. Off camera male voice, no ID. “Bill was more concerned with administrative policy, he left the mess to her. She was better at it.”

20:27:11 Headlines flash across screen under Narrator: Hillary’s mastery of the black cloak of politics is usually hidden in layers of deniability. But when she needs money, even her closest associates are bewildered. Including Johnny Huang and Norman Shu. In 2007 she was forced to return $750,000.”

20:28:38 Mark Levin, nationally syndicated radio host: “It is stunning to me how the media will give her a pass and pretend none of these things happened.”

Clips of newspaper headlines dealing blasé reaction to scandals.

20:28:56 Michael Barone, senior writer, U.S. News & World Report: “I’m a little surprised somebody in the campaign didn’t flag that down and alert the media. Really, Chinatown dishwashers making $1,000 contributions?”

Clips of headlines covering money laundering.

20:29:32 Narrator: “One case in particular comes to mind that outlines Hillary’s startling illegal campaign contributions. (Photos in limo) Even though most of the press has ignored it, Hillary was involved in one of the biggest campaign frauds in the history of the United States. It is a story that is worthy of a best-seller. Cash, cons and Hollywood royalty and it was all caught on tape. Few businessmen have not seen the career heights and depths of Peter F. Paul. In the 1980s, Paul, a Miami lawyer with a past criminal record with a past conviction for cocaine possession and fraud, headed to Hollywood for a fresh start as a promoter and producer.” (pictures with celebrities)

20:30:39 Peter F. Paul, former Clinton fundraiser: “I was confident I could cultivate Fabio into a media icon. Ultimately it led to my first meeting with the Clintons.”

20:31:00 Narrator: “In 2000, Peter Paul met with Hollywood fundraiser Aaron Tonkin, who previously had been homeless. He was a celebrity-obsessed con man who in just a few years became one of the top money men in Hollywood. He, like many Clinton associates, ended up in prison for fundraising scams. Tonkin was promised that through donations to Hillary’s Senate campaign, he would be given access to Bill Clinton once he left the White House.”

20:33:00 Peter F. Paul: “I raised the biggest fundraising concert in the history of Hollywood. I have phone and video footage of Hillary discussing the event and the relationship. She mentioned that I don’t what you are doing but is it OK if I thank you? She was in violation of federal election law. It was billed as the official Hollywood salute to Bill Clinton and had the largest celebrity in history. Then I got a phone call from the Washington Post that they were investigating Hillary’s association with him. They said
they didn’t know me that well after being vetted. I then get a fax on Hillary letterhead asking me to wire transfer $100,000. I became her biggest donor.”

00:34:52 Footage of Bill Clinton at event promoted by Peter F. Paul and partner Stan Lee, per agreement.

00:36:47 Narrator: Amazing the Clintons kept doing business with Paul, even after the investigation had begun (pictures of the three together).

00:38:38 Footage of Peter Paul taking lie detector and admitting that he and Hillary were both aware of their agreements.

00:39:30 Ray Ezell, polygraph examiner: “I’ve been analyzing polygraphs since 1995. Mr. Paul has been truthful to questions answered.”

00:40:07 Footage of Hillary at event thanking all of the accused organizers.

00:40:18 Narrator: The Clinton campaign ultimately paid $35,000 in fines for underreporting the costs of the gala. Is it possible the most experienced candidate running that year was unaware of the dealings? (pictures of Hillary with celebrities)

00:42:09 R. Emmett Tyrrell, editor-in-chief, The American Spectator: “One of her great claims throughout the ‘90s and now as senator is that this is all old news. Well, its old news because the Clintons are repeat offenders.” (newspaper headlines of Bill admitting to deception with Lewinsky scandal)

Shots of headlines flash on screen.

00:42:39 Narrator: Is Hillary really the most qualified to hit the ground running if elected president. After all, she was first lady for eight years and now a senator from New York. (shots of Hillary in Senate and on convention floor). Hillary once said of her opponent that being president is one job we cannot afford to have on-the-job-training.

Convention footage.

00:43:20 Dick Morris, former Clinton advisor, best selling author: “Hillary Clinton has said she has accomplished a great deal in the Senate. Let me tell you what she has done. She has passed 225 bills, including a bill celebrating the 225th anniversary of the American Revolution, to name the Thurgood Marshall Courthouse in New York and to commend the men’s and women’s rugby teams.”

Campaign footage.

00:44:16 Marshall Brown, dairy farmer: “I have milked cows every day of my life for twenty years. She said she had a plan for the dairy industry. Two years later milk in New York cost just what it did in 1970.”
George Marlin, former executive director, Port Authority New York: “She has no clue what is wrong with upstate New York. She made a promise for 200,000 jobs for upstate New York.”

Larry Kudlow, host, CNBC’s Kudlow & Company: “Should she have the promise, oh sure, that is what politicians do. I don’t blame her for making the promise. I blame her for tax cuts in the Senate that took away all of the jobs.”

Photos of Hillary signing legislation.

Newt Gingrich: The Bush tax cuts were the only thing upstate New York had going for them and if not for heavy unionism and heavy regulatory red tape it would be doing dramatically better.

Footage of her promise.

Montage video interviews of New York residents voicing their displeasure.

Narrator: “Hillary’s first attempt to social health care came during 1993 and widely seen as a disaster and provoked the Republican revolution.”

Newt Gingrich: “You would hope she has learned a lot from that experience. It was a failure and she knows it was a failure.”

Dick Armey, former majority leader U.S. House: “Where else have you seen the government make things more efficient and less costly by its presence.”

Hillary talking to crowd about failure of health care.

Tony Blankley, Washington Times: “After the health care failure you could notice that made her more like Pat Nixon, not Eleanor Roosevelt.”

Narrator: “Many people think our health care needs improvement. But is it Hillary’s solution. Hillary is the closest thing we have with European social programs.”

Hillary speaks of cutting budgets to take away money from big business for health care.

Ray Buchanan, former treasurer of the United States: “And as she talks on the campaign trail her purpose of government as she sees it to remold society for the common good.”

Long shot of Hillary looking saintly like on DVD cover.
00:53:00 Audio of Hillary talking about record-setting oil prices against backdrop of mouth open giving speeches.

Long shot of train coming into town blowing whistle.

00:53:10 Narrator: “Welcome to Yuma, Arizona. Much of the local system is 70 percent paid for by the state, which can lead to fraud. Including emergency medical care for illegal citizens that have Medicare. Some are drug dealers. It may resemble socialism when you have to four months to see a specialist.”

Headlines flash across screen of history of Hillary’s health care initiatives.

00:53:50 Narrator: “Hillary’s views on health care may be one of her clearest issues but what exactly does she believe?”

00:55:00 Footage of Hillary trying to clarify her positions at debate.
00:55:20 Ann Coulter: “Tim Russert used the old journalism standby, the follow up question. She could answer the question. She was the same way about the war.”

00:55:30 Conflicting footage of Hillary supporting and not supporting the war in Iraq.

(shots of Hillary with troops)

00:56:12 Narrator: “Flip flopping on driver’s licenses for immigrants is one thing, but words do matter, but words do matter when they affect the lives our soldiers and their families.”

00:56:12 Parents of trooper: “He said, Dad, what could be better or more honorable than to serve your country. I was in Baghdad at the time and I wonder what goes through the minds of those soldiers when they hear stuff like that. It’s very hard to believe her.” (tears up)

Footage of parents looking at son’s grave.

00:59:04 Michael Ledeen, freedom scholar, American Enterprise Institute: “If a legislator does not like the war and says enough already with this war, then cut off the money. But above all, it is not up to the legislator to try and outguess military strategists.”

Shots of Hillary looking sleepy in court.

00:59:28 Ray Buchanan, former treasurer of the United States: “They say she is flipping and she is flopping. No she is not, she is lying in the face of her soldiers.”

1:00:05 Narrator: The war on terror is not the only issue where Hillary is trying to go both ways. When it is politically expedient, Hillary campaigns on her husband’s presidency. When the polls say otherwise, she abandons her record.
1:00:15 Footage of Obama on Nightline, November 26, 2007 saying that Hillary can’t be politically selective.

1:00:46 Footage of Bill Clinton talking during an early campaign speech that his slogan is, “Buy One, Get One Free.”

1:00:05 A former White House military aide talks about when Hillary was in the White House, you were not supposed to make eye contact or speak to her and generally go the other direction. (photos and staged footage of Bill and Hillary).

1:01:30 Narrator: It has often been talked about the blame that Bill and Hillary Clinton assigned to the Bush administration of their failure to prevent the 9/11 attacks.

1:02:00 Military aide Patterson: “Many times in the 1990s we had plenty of opportunities to capture and kill bin Laden, but we were never given the green light. We had intelligence that New York and other cities were being targeted at that same time as well.”

1:03:07 Narrator: “Producer Cyrus Nowrasteh, who produced the television program The Path to 9/11 has been critical of both the Clinton and Bush administrations for their handling of the threat of terrorism.”

1:03:30 Cyrus Nowrasteh, producer: “There were efforts to get me, Disney, and ABC to pull the program. I got death threats at my house, I got hate mail. Intimidation included threatening letters from five senators, including Harry Reid, that they would pull station licenses. They had never seen the movie. It was just politics.”

1:04:41 Nowrasteh shows clips from five-hour program of the process of the government hunting for bin Laden and all the internal conflicts. Blames most of the harassment coming from Bill Clinton’s office.

1:05:55 Ann Coulter: “It is shocking to me that they would alter the program for Bill Clinton. It is shocking to think he would even ask. I can’t even imagine Jimmy Carter doing that.”

1:06:45 Narrator: “National security experts have said on the record that The Path to 9/11 was accurate. Bill Clinton has denied knowing anything about it and says that he was never that close to finding bin Laden. The $40 million project was a ratings smash with nearly 28 million viewers. If you want to rent the DVD you can’t. Why would Disney pass up all of that money.”

1:07:28 Narrator: “Former Clinton National Security Advisor Sandy Berger says he accidentally destroyed government documents. He pleaded guilty to accidentally stealing and destroying classified documents. The documents supposedly revealed Clinton’s
awareness of the millennium bomb plot and Sudan’s offer to turn over bin Laden in 1996.”

1:08:51 Cyrus Nowrasteh, producer: “Those documents were directly related to The Path to 9/11 and hurt any chances of verification.”

1:09:45 Rep. John Mica R-FL, senior member Committee on Government Reform and Oversight: “Sandy Berger had a mission and that mission was to go in and clean up history, clean up mistakes. Destroy any evidence of error, culpability of actions that led to 9/11.”

1:10:25 Narrator: “Sandy Berger was fined and lost his security clearance for three years. It has been reported that he is a consultant for the Hillary Clinton presidential campaign.”

1:10:55 Ann Coulter: “He is really a very foreign policy advisor or he is being rewarded for something and I think that is what it is.”

Headlines flash across the screen and end on Hillary giving a salute.

1:11:35 Narrator: “Hillary is tough on terror as long as it is popular. But the real Hillary Clinton remains a mystery. Maybe now she doesn’t want to deal with foreign policy.”

Shots of Hillary giving speeches, in front of New York skyline.

1:15:30 Narrator: “In spite of the Freedom of Information Act, only one half of 1 percent of the requests have been released from the Clinton Presidential Library. It is known as the Fort Knox of Little Rock. Papers covering Hillary’s years in the White House have been locked away. Three hundred FOIA requests have been ignored. In 2001, President Clinton issued 140 pardons on his last day in office, including the biggest tax fugitive in U.S. history, Mark Rich.”

Somber picture of Bill Clinton at White House podium.

1:16:55 Ann Coulter: “We have paid for those documents. It is our right to know. All of those documents should be released before the election.”

1:17:10 Footage of Hillary saying that the Bush administration is the most secretive that there has ever been.

1:17:20 Footage of bombing of Francis Tavern in New York in 1975 by terrorist group FALN supporting Puerto Rico. Hillary was given letter in New York as senator to push Bill to pardon them, and they were pardoned.

1:20:30 Former FBI agent: “Justice Department told FBI should not release them. Theories have risen that Hillary was the only one to benefit.”
1:21:58 Narrator: “We have only had two father-and-son presidencies in the history of the country. Ironically we might be headed to our first husband and wife presidencies. Historically Americans have never been keen on dynasties. So it is worth remembering that a vote for Hillary is a vote to continue twenty years of either a Bush or a Clinton in the White House.”

1:22:30 John Edwards: “Americans need to know that the presidency is not for sale. The White House bedroom is not for rent and that lobbyist money can no longer be used for influence in the house or the Senate.”

Headlines flash on screen

1:23:30 Narrator: “Finally, before America decides on our next president, voters should know what is at stake. The well being and prosperity of our nation.

Shot of Lincoln Memorial. And shots of Bill and Hillary.

1:23:50 Various talking heads: “It will be a test of the incompetence and character of Hillary Clinton and that will be the challenge she faces.” “It has been said and I agree with it that is the most personal choice that we make.” “Is it something their personal traits, can we trust them, and I think that is where Hillary Clinton has a problem.” “She is not accountable, her personality is such that she believes the end justifies the means, no matter what those means are.” “What if she weren’t married to Bill Clinton, what is it that she has achieved in her life that she should be the most powerful person in the country.”

Slow motion shots of Secret Service walking with limo.

1:25:50 Newt Gingrich: “She says she can’t favor English being the national language, but 85 percent of the people favor English being the national language. There are a number of issues where there is a conflict. She doesn’t favor national judges. Ninety-one percent of the American people do.”

1:26:15 Ann Coulter: “I don’t think the people want to get dragged back to the ‘90s with all of the family dramas.”

1:27:00 Hillary: “In January of 2009, someone will walk up these steps and raise his or her hand to become the next president.”

1:28:00 Directed by Alan Peterson
Executive Producer Producer David N. Bossie
Entire cast list follows
Produced by Citizens United 2008
What Happened to Jack Kerouac?

00:00:00 Opens with Gregory Corso getting miked.

00:00:37 Zooms in with close-up

00:00:58 Text scroll giving biographical information on Kerouac.
Jack Kerouac was born in Lowell, Massachusetts, in 1922, so much a part of the decaying mill town’s French-Canadian culture that he couldn’t speak English until he was six.

00:01:11 CU of Corso. Interviewer asks: “Can you remember some kind of time talking to Kerouac where you guys thought you saw it like it was going to come down?”

00:01:20 Corso: “No way, I asked him once, ‘Did you know?’ He said ‘Yeah,’ and I said why didn’t you tell me that. I could have bought all of your books. They go for about $100 apiece signed. Kerouac, On the Road, first edition, signed, goes for about $500. He could have told me.”

00:01:49 Text scroll giving biographical information. Jazz piano in background.
A high school football star, Kerouac won a scholarship to Columbia University, but when World War II broke out he quit to join the Merchant Marine.

00:02:00 Extreme close-up of Corso: “I think they were bullshitters, man, they didn’t know what was going to happen. They wanted it to happen for themselves but let’s be realistic. America creates these individualists. The thought was they were all together. You don’t call a generation four people. That was the weight that fell on them (Beat poets). Madison Avenue got on them. They were guys the same age as they, and they weren’t in this generation. They were sort of like, they had the power gate, they had the media and all that. Monsieur Kerouac.

00:02:44 Title appears on screen. Richard Lerner presents and fades out.

00:02:49 What happened to Kerouac?

00:02:59 Still painting appears with man’s profile. Jazz music continues. Shot stays for ten seconds.

00:03:08 Jan Kerouac: “Jackie didn’t tell us he had a daughter. He took me over and took me to his house. He was just sitting in a rocker in the front of the TV set watching the Beverly Hillbillies with his old faithful blue plaid shirt on. Just drinking his bottle of whiskey. We just walked in and he looked over his shoulder and goes, ‘Oh, hi.’ He knew who I was immediately, but I guess he was very accustomed to his feelings at this point. I guess the only way his feelings came out was in his writing. So as they were screaming at him from the doorway, he just went, ‘Ahhh.’ So I came in and he was still acting like a boy on his first date or his second date. He knew I was his daughter. I sat down on the couch and I took this opportunity to say, ‘My mother says we have the same hands, can I
see your hands?’ I was always curious about this. My mom had these long, slender fingers and I always had these stocky peasant hands. They were like replicas but only larger.”

00:05:01 Switch to close-up. “We told him we were going to Mexico and we would come back and see him someday, and he goes, ‘Yeah, you go to Mexico, write a book you can use my name.’ Which was his way of saying he knew I was his daughter.”

00:05:25 Herbert Huncke: “He became a heavy drinker. He was older, he hadn’t lost any of his beauty. He was sad, very, very sad, the last time I saw him. His face was quite bloated and wearing a sort of skull cap.”

00:06:00 Fran Landesman: “Actually the Jack that we met when we lived in New York changed as the years went by when we would come back from St. Louis. We very often saw Jack and it was very sad to see what was happening to him. Puffy face and everything else just from all that booze. He told me once, ‘I am a Catholic and I can’t commit suicide for my family, but I plan to drink myself to death.’”

00:06:26 Opening billboard to “Firing Line with William F. Buckley Jr.”

00:06:36 William F. Buckley: “The topic tonight is the hippies and understanding of who we must acquire or die painfully. Mr. Jack Kerouac over here became famous when his book On the Road was published.”

Lower third reading “Late Fall, 1968.” Kerouac sits in a plaid blazer, smoking a cigar, with his eyes closed. His eyes open at the following statement.

William F. Buckley: “It seemed to breaching a life of disengagement. Making a virtue out of restlessness. The irony is when the book was belatedly published in 1958, seven years after it was written, Mr. Kerouac had fought his way out of the Beat generation and is now thought of as orthodox. At least a regular practicing novelist whose thirteenth book is widely regarded as his best.”

Kerouac: “What is the full context of the question?”

Buckley: “The full context is when we enunciate the Great Society, are a significant number of Americans disillusioned by the hippie movement?” (Kerouac starts laughing).

Kerouac: “In the first place I think the Vietnamese War is a plot between the North Vietnamese and the South Vietnamese, who are cousins, to get Jeeps in the country.”

00:08:08 Allen Ginsberg: (who was on the panel): “It was interesting because Jack was pretty drunk and he would space out and not hear. Thinking to himself and a little bit bored. He didn’t give a shit about television or the circumstance or the sacredness or publicness of the situation. It was him, 100 percent.”
Ed Sanders (from the panel on the broadcast): “You don’t have to stack the galleries with ‘we love Daly’ signs. You don’t have to shake down Mrs. McCarthy and search her purse when she is surrounded by four Secret Service guards.”

Buckley: “A lot of people say you don’t have to publish the stuff you publish to be able to love people.”

Kerouac: (singing) “Flat foot floogie with a floy floy.” (closes his coat, crowd laughter.

00:09:17 Rolling title on screen. Less than a year after his appearance on the Buckley Show, on October 21st, 1969. Jack Kerouac died of alcoholism.

00:09:27 Still of pallbearers carrying casket, casket alone, casket exiting.

00:10:09 Edie Parker Kerouac: So when I got to the funeral it was so amazing the people that were there. On one side was the hippies with no shoes with banjos and stuff and on the other side was Stella’s family and they were all Greek and all in shrouds. And my sister and I sat at the other end of the funeral place. Henry Crew and I were romantically involved and he said he wanted to introduce me to his friend who was supposed to be intelligent, so me and Jack went out with Henry for lunch. And I’m from Michigan and I am not to acquainted with the food in New York City. So I went to a New York City deli and had six sauerkraut hot dogs and that’s when Jack said he fell in love with me.

00:10:43 William Burroughs: Kerouac when I met him, and I didn’t know this, but I absolutely had no doubt of his vocation as a writer. But I wasn’t interested in writing at all. He tried to persuade me that I should write. The title Naked Lunch was Jack Kerouac’s title.

00:11:23 Herbert Huenke: Here is Bill with Jack and Joe and he introduced me to Jack. It seems he had something in his pockets in the way of a narcotic. It was some kind of chemical compound. (Zoom to extreme close-up) He thought it would a good idea of trying it out with me and asked me to come up to his room. He was quite handsome then. A young clean-cut American boy, and I have said this before.

00:12:15 Greg Corso: “Our meeting ground was that we were both good-looking guys, and I had just come from prison and he had just come from sea. And when he found out at the time that I wasn’t a faggot, he went double towards me, because most of Ginsberg’s friends at the time were gay and all that shit.”

00:12:42 Michael McClure: “My impression of Jack at the time that he was good looking, movie star good looking. And I thought for sure that this was the only person I had met in my life that was more self-conscious than me. When you are in high school and you feel all those eyes on you.”

00:13:43 Kerouac on Steve Allen show in 1959 (looking young and fit) Allen: How long did it take you to write On the Road?
Kerouac: Three weeks.
Allen: How long were you on the road yourself?
Kerouac: Seven years.
Allen: How would you describe the word Beat?
Kerouac: Sympathetic
Allen plays piano and Kerouac reads from his book

00:17:42 Michael McClure: “Each novel of Jack’s is different. Each novel felt like a feeling of crisis as a visionary artist. There is a different style in each novel. I like his oddball works.”

00:18:22 William Burroughs: “Every writer reinvents themselves. The first person singular is not always true. Jack said he was a spy in someone else’s body.”

00:19:20 John Clellon Holmes: “He was the most imaginative, creative writer I have ever known. If you can’t hear it you can’t understand it. The mix of imagination and reality is what literature is all about. He didn’t think creative writing could be done objectively.”

00:20:34 Lawrence Ferlinghetti: “The same vision in Kerouac is the same vision in Thomas Wolfe. A vision of prewar America that exists in small dusty towns.” Reads poem.

00:21:26 Scrolling text on the screen
Returning from the U-Boat infested North Atlantic in 1942, Kerouac married Edie Parker; and soon met a Columbia freshman, Allen Ginsberg, and William Burroughs, a Harvard-educated junkie ten years his senior. Many nights, Kerouac and Ginsberg subwaysed down to an all-night Times Square automat where a thief, hustler, and raconteur named Herbert Huncke held court.

While nearly all America geared up for war, Kerouac and his friends, in the visionary tradition of Blake, Baudelaire, and Poe, read poetry and wrote their secret manuscripts, experimented with drugs and tried to make sense of the worldwide madness. “We are,” he told his friend the novelist John Clellon Holmes, “a Beat generation.”

00:22:10 Greg Corso: “Alan just knows what’s happening. In the early clubbing days he saw this beautiful Kerouac and he heard he was a writer. Burroughs had the good head. They had no sense of any movement at the time. And I come at the tail end.”

00:22:39 Period footage of New York at night with flashing neon while Kerouac reads Beat poem.

00:23:39 Herbert Huenke: Speaks of the Automat atmosphere, which would become an all night thing. Jack would come down the street with books under his arms.

00:24:36 Allen Ginsberg: Speaks of Times Square with background period footage.
00:25:45 Greg Corso: “A lot of people around that time were knowing, they just couldn’t express it as well. Women and girls would go to the looney bin for shock treatment. That is why they weren’t part of the Beat thing.”

00:26:43 John Clellon Holmes: “I had heard of Jack and I had heard of Ginsberg and I heard that Jack had this big book which he carried around in a doctor’s bag and weighed forty pounds. That was his first novel, The Town and the City. I got to talk to both of them that night. I could tell that he had exuberance and was open souled.”

00:27:31 Edie Parker Kerouac: Speaks of beautiful letter he wrote to her and she sold it to college kids for a dollar each.

00:28:19 Scrolling text on screen
The war over, his marriage ended, a restless Kerouac met a yea-saying car thief and ladies’ man from Denver named Neal Cassady. Cassady became Kerouac’s inspiration, and the hero of his writing. Criss-crossing the continent again and again, mad for experience and knowledge, Kerouac wrote twelve novels between 1949 and 1956 – novels which nobody would publish – and fathered his only child, Jan, during a brief second marriage.

In 1955, Kerouac landed in San Francisco in time for the now-famous “6 Gallery” poetry reading, the first reading of Ginsberg’s epochal “Howl” and the first meeting of the poets like Michael McClure and Gary Snyder – who would soon epitomize Beat Culture. Anne Charters, later Kerouac’s first biographer, was a Berkeley student at the time.

00:28:54 Ann Charters: speaks of poetry reading and Ginsberg being star of the night. She met Kerouac who ran up and down the aisles collecting money for wine for everyone. “He was more accomplished at the time, but didn’t want to read with the group. He described the experience in The Dharma Bums.”

00:30:16 Gary Snyder: Speaks of meeting Kerouac through Ginsberg. Kerouac later that night finally read at length at a friends’ house. They then talked about Buddhism. (Switch to extreme close-up) and discusses what they have in common, drinking. Would drink in an alley in South of Market district acting destitute and then go back to Marin.

Shows stills of Snyder in his youth.

00:31:43 Stock footage of South of Market district, commuters and bums. Jazz piano. Kerouac reads poem about SOMA.

00:35:37 Greg Corso: (extreme close up) “He was a prose writer all right. He was not a poetry poem writer, more of a storyteller. But the way he wrote it down it was poetry. He certainly was a genius.”

00:38:11 Footage of Ginsberg chanting with chimes.

Carolyn Cassady: “When Jack starts reading Dr. Sax, you can hear Neal going on all the time, ‘Oh, yeah’. They were very close and shared a lot of reading.”

Greg Corso: “Jack was great at spotting and defining the individual. Neal Cassady became Jack’s prototype of the Americana individual.”

Footage of City Lights Books continues with conversation with Ginsberg and Cassady about who is running the country.

Ed White: Cassady was far from a model of honesty and good behavior. He grew up on skid row with an alcoholic father.

Carolyn Cassady: “And I would see in his books all of this macho and that wasn’t Jack, not until he met Neal did he borrow the macho character for his books. But they were both sensitive. In Jack, Neal saw and envied the education and the middle class home.”

Footage of Neal Cassady walking without a shirt with friends in home movies.

Kerouac reads about traveling and writing On the Road and meeting a character like Cassady. Stills of Cassady behind wheel of car.

Diane di Prima: “The first time I met Jack I actually met him in bed. They would just push all the beds together. But I think he was shy with women. That first night we talked about poetry and dance.”

John Clellon Holmes: “Jack was a seasonal romantic. He didn’t live in New York, he lived out on Long Island with his mother. He would write and then he would come back into town for a few days and stay with somebody. He would fall into a relationship but when it was time to go back to work he would end it. He always seemed to be with women that were married or in a relationship because it was safe, there was no commitment. He couldn’t deny his work.”

Jan Kerouac: “Today you are going to buy me socks, and my mother would say what are you talking about, I don’t even know what size you were. And he would reply that he didn’t know that his mother always bought his socks. And I think that is what my mom was to him, another mother but they slept together.”

William F. Buckley: “To what extent do you believe that the Beat Generation is related to the hippies? What do they have in common?”
00:50:14 Kerouac: “It is the age. I’m forty-six and these kids are eighteen. It is a Dionysius movement. I didn’t intend it anymore than he did. It is a movement. The hippies are good kids, but the Beat kids were different. A lot of hoodlums and communists jumped on my back and turned it into an attitude of enjoyment. They called it a Beat mutiny. I believe in order. It was pure in my heart.”

00:52:22 Footage of Lowell, Massachusetts. Kerouac.

00:52:22 Father “Spike” Morissette: Lowell was an inspiration for many of his books, just like Neal Cassady was. He always talked about Lowell. Jack was a mystic and I always believed in it. He always was mysterious. Later on in life he was drinking and stuff and I asked him if he was afraid of hell? He lived like a monk with his mother.”

00:54:59 Ann Charters: “What he did as a stylist he came under fire for as a writer is what I like about him. (Extreme close up) Spontaneous prose is the most exciting thing that was going on in the ‘50s and ‘60s, and that is what he chose to do. He put his whole career on the line by writing it and performing it. He could write any style you like. He took the risk that some people might call it typing, not writing.”

00:56:57 John Clellon Holmes: He would have to get into shape before he would work. He would sleep a lot for a couple of days. Take a lot of baths and maybe even go running full well knowing that he would have to work headlong.

00:57:40 Allen Ginsberg: He used for some books. He would use benzadrine and coffee and then sleep it off. He didn’t do it for all of them but for some. That is why later in his life he had to make some shifts. It was too exhausting.

00:59:20 Stock footage of barbershop and city. Kerouac reads a poem.

01:01:49 Ed White: “You know calling yourself a Buddhist is not like calling yourself a Catholic or a Christian. It’s not a label that defines itself right away like a member of a sect with a set ideology. It is a way of mind, a way of seeing the world that can embrace all those other things and still go beyond it. (zoom in) In that sense, Jack was on the way. He digested all of that in small dusty town libraries. It comes out in Mexico City Blues and The Scripture of the Golden Eternity, which is pure Indian Buddhist metaphor.”

01:03:08 Footage of Charlie Parker and jazz music, Kerouac reads poem relating Parker to Buddha. Footage transitions to pictures of Kerouac’s life.

01:05:48 Greg Corso: “I was in San Francisco when he was just about to go on the road. Ginsberg called up and said, ‘Gregory is there, take him along.’ He said he would rather just go with Neal. I was in Amsterdam when On the Road was published. When I came back it was the first time I saw him drunk. He was loving the adulation. That was the downfall for him.”
01:06:50 Steve Allen: “As I already said, Jack was shy and retiring. With his good looks and his reputation it made you think he would bound into a room like Errol Flynn. We were near the corner of Hollywood and Vine around midnight and we said our goodbyes. I would never see him again. He even offered some humor that was not his normal character.”

01:09:15 Robert Creely: “I think it was just the overload of public attention that wanted to be with him and he had to deal with deluge of public attention. Whether they wanted to fuck him or just wanted in.”

01:09:38 Scrolling text appears on the screen

In 1957, six years after it was written, On the Road was published. A substitute reviewer at the New York Times called it “an historic occasion.” Comparing On the Road to Hemingway’s The Sun Also Rises, the reviewer raved that Kerouac’s book was the “testament of his generation.” Less than two weeks later the Times published a new review attacking On the Road, unleashing a crescendo of literary and personal attacks on Kerouac, “the Neanderthal with a typewriter.” That were to continue for the rest of his life.

01:10:07 John Clellon Holmes: He had hoped like all writers do to be appreciated. He didn’t object to being famous, but he realized he wasn’t famous, he was only notorious. When you are notorious you are news, when you are famous you are a solid thing. Jack Kerouac was never taken seriously. They didn’t look at the work they looked at the image.

01:11:18 Allen Ginsberg: There were a few Jewish intellectuals in New York that thought of him some French Canadian anti-Semite.

01:12:15 William Burroughs: Of course he started the cultural revolution of the time to a worldwide extent. The whole Beat movement has a worldwide movement penetrating the Arab characters. All the affiliation with the political activists weren’t part of the original movement.

01:14:45 Footage of panel discussion on William F. Buckley, with Kerouac talking about his conservative family voting record and asking another guest who was a protestor to leave the stage.

01:15:32 Ann Charters: There was an enormous fellowship between Kerouac, Burrows, Ginsberg, and Corso. That was a tricky kind of relationship. They all were writers, (extreme close up) doing drugs, but he left his soul back in Lowell with his mother. He made one last attempt in 1961 to go back to San Francisco but his alcoholic breakdown at Big Sur was the end of the fellowship.

01:18:20 Ginsberg: “I remember his last visit up to see his mother and they were watching television and there was some commentator speaking about Germany and the Jews and the concentration camps and his mother said, ‘They are still worrying about it.’ Jack said they should have killed them off and here they were baiting me. Then they started baiting each other. They were both drunk and started swearing at each other.”

01:20:57 Ann Charters: Speaks at length about the odd connection between Jack and his mother. While visiting one time he got very maudlin about his mother while they were both drunk and he said she was the only woman he ever wanted to marry. Then she pulled the chair away from the wall and showed Charters marks in the wall where he was throwing a knife at her the week before. Comments that they were acting like an old married couple.

Black and white stills of Jack and his mother late in his career are dispersed throughout the previous two interviews.

01:22:28 Greg Corso: I don’t know if he was having a midlife crisis or what, but he seemed to have trouble with middle age like we all do I guess. Once he got the success he didn’t know how to handle it and he wanted it so bad. You have to remember the American media is a tough one, man.

Black and white stills of Jack older and clearly inebriated.

01:23:50 John Clellon Holmes: (extreme close up) No, I never hated him. He was just maddening at times. He would see conspiracies where there weren’t any. It increased with Jack with the intake of alcohol. The fact that he was not understood was not act of stupidity but some organized effort to ignore him, which is quite normal among writers. And sometimes he didn’t want to be associated with the Beat Generation, which at that time had come to represent the beatniks and the hippies. And none of us were that sympathetic to them.

Cut to William F. Buckley show. Kerouac gives Ginsberg (sitting in the audience) the finger.

01:25:10 William F. Buckley: So what is going on, Mr. Kerouac, you appear a bit restless here tonight?

Kerouac: “I was arrested two weeks ago and the policeman said I am arresting you for decay.”

01:25:32 Father “Spike” Morissette: (walking through graveyard) People come out here to see it all the time, but it is hard to find, there is only this little marker. Love notes, bottles of wine, feathers are left and people come from very far.

01:27:10 Kerouac reads from Dr. Sax over shots of Lowell and the church.
01:29:19 Ginsberg: “So Kerouac weeping over St. Mathews Passion was the last face I saw on him. He didn’t burst into tears, but tears would come to his eyes very often in later years in conversation. When he talked about something that he felt sentiment about. His mother, his cats, his writing, his novels, the state of America, but particularly music. His last ten years he was painting crosses and religious symbols and also writing. The suffering form of existence.”

Ginsberg over shots of friends at grave.

01:32:48 Kerouac reads Dean Moriarty poem over Steve Allen piano.

Credits
Produced by Richard Lerner
Directed by Richard Lerner and Lewis MacAdams
Lewis MacAdams interviewer
Gasland

00:00:00 Opens with footage of gas wells

00:00:05 Narrator: “I’m not a pessimist. I have always had a lot of faith in people that we wouldn’t succumb to frenzy, rage or greed.”

00:00:19 Narrator backs into shot from foreground wearing banjo and gas mask. Narrator: “….until we figure out a solution without destroying the things that we love.”

00:00:29 Gasland title appears on screen.

00:00:34 Title dissolves into shot of name on desk, “Mr. Costa, Chairman.”

00:00:39 Mr. Costa: The Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals will now come to order.

00:00:40 Camera dissolves to snowstorm over road leading into quick montage of countryside.

00:00:50 Numerous statements from committee members, with frantic, panning shots of members, water bottles and paper on tables

Member #1: “There are numerous shell-based gas stations in the United States which contain trillions of cubic feet of natural gas.”

Member #2: “In fact, it has been described recently as an ocean of natural gas. We feel that these four natural shell stations, and it is a game changer for not only America’s natural gas industry but also for our nation, our economy and our environment.”

Audio edited very tightly together with no gaps, frantic. Members talk fast. Many people edited together.

00:01:22 Industry representative: I’m here today representing the thirty member states of the Interstate Gas Com Commission, which produced 99 percent of our domestic oil and gas. Studies done by GWPC, EPA, and IOGCC over the last eleven years have found no real credible threat to underground drinking water from hydraulic fracturing. Recently however there has been concern raised over the technology to tap these valuable resources. Technologies such as the process of hydraulic fracturing have been characterized as environmentally risky and inadequately regulated. Press reports and websites allege that six states have documented over 1,000 incidents of ground water contamination from the process of hydraulic fracturing. Such reports are not accurate. And it is my firmly held view and also that of IOGCC that the process of hydraulic fracturing is adequately regulated and needs no further investigating. Thank you for this opportunity to present an overview. Thank you. Thank you for the committee.

00:02:16 Mr. Costa: And thank all of you. (audience laughs)
00:02:18  Dissolve to snow on road 374W and shot changes to dashboard camera focused on driver inside of car.

00:02:26  Driver: “Hi my name is Josh Fox. Maybe I’ll start at the beginning. (Camera shot changes to a TV broadcast of Dick Cheney) This is Dick Cheney. (Camera shot changes to interrupted TV reception). No, maybe I’ll start with a different beginning. (Camera shot picture of home on wooded lot) This is my house. It’s in the middle of woods. Tucked away on a road in Milanville, Pennsylvania. The house was built in 1972 when I was born. (Still photos show house construction) My parents and their hippie friends built it and my family and brothers and sisters and I grew pretty much the same way I did. Little by little. (Still photos of family as kids) There is a stream that runs down the property into the Delaware River. I am learning more about how water is interconnected. (Stills of Washington crossing Delaware and Pete Seeger). In 1972, the year I was born, Pete Seeger and a bunch of banjo playing freaks in the Upper Delaware Valley reminded New York City that if they pollute the Hudson and the Upper Valley Watershed, New York City’s water would be ruined.” (Pete Seeger footage singing)

00:03:24 (footage of Richard Nixon)

00:03:24 Josh Fox: In 1972 President Nixon signed the Clean Water Act into law. It was an era of environmental progress.

00:03:24 Graphic showing years for EPA, Clean Water Act, and Safe Drinking Water Act.

00:03:34 Josh Fox: “The Cold War was on but there was a concept of leisure time, leisure suits. Computers and technology were supposed to bring about the four-day work week and everyone was going to have plenty of time romping around the fields and swimming in the rivers.” (b-roll includes nuclear explosion, leisure suits, playing in yard and swimming)

00:03:44 Josh Fox: (opens with shot of Nixon making a fist) In New York City they were building this. (shot of Twin Towers) But one hundred miles upriver on the banks of the Delaware, we were building this. (shot of his house) My first word was hammer. But it’s 2009. (footage of Obama waving at crowd)

00:04:13 Josh Fox: “One day I got a letter in the mail (shot of letter) from a natural gas company. It informed me that my land was on top of a formation called the Marcellus Shale. It stretched across Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, and West Virginia. And that the Marcellus Shale was the Saudi Arabia of natural gas. (footage of Fox reviewing paperwork) I could lease my land to this company and I would receive a signing bonus of $4,750 per acre. Having 19.5 acres, that was $100,000, right there in my hand. Could it be that easy?”

00:04:42 Josh Fox: “You have probably seen ads on television hailing natural gas as the clean and efficient source of fuel.” (b-roll shows television energy ads)
00:04:52 Aubrey K. McClendon, Chairman/CEO, Chesapeake Energy from TV commercial and other corporate talking heads.

00:05:02 Josh Fox: “What would it mean if the rest of the world adopted natural gas as the fuel of the future? And what I didn’t know was the 2005 energy bill pushed through Congress by Dick Cheney exempts the oil and natural gas industries from the Clean Water Act. (b-roll of Congress and Wall Street) And when the energy bill was stripped of all restrictions, companies like Encana, Williams, Cabot Oil and Gas, and Chesapeake began to use the new Halliburton technology to start the most aggressive domestic gas-exploring campaign in history now occupying thirty-four states.” (b-roll of maps and logos).

00:05:51 Josh Fox: “The method of gas drilling they use is called hydraulic fracturing or fracking. It is a mix of water and chemicals 8,000 feet into the ground. Fracking itself is like a mini-earthquake, it breaks up the rock and releases the gas. In order to frack, you need fracking fluid. A mix of over 596 chemicals. From the unpronounceable to the unknown to the too well known. On the side of that frack fluid truck it should just say add water. Each time they drill a well they need between one [million] and seven million gallons of water. Each time they go back and frack an existing well they need an additional one [million] to seven million gallons of water. They can frack a well up to eighteen times in its life. They started out west, New Mexico, Colorado, and Texas. (list states) 450,000 wells times 18 x 1-7 million gallons. Something like 40 trillion gallons of water. All of it infused with the 596 chemicals and fracking fluid. (switches b-roll from charts to shots of wells and nature). Now they are coming east. From 1972 until now, my whole life, all of this has been protected (shots of ducks and river).

00:07:38 Car driving country road with sound of phone ringing. Car arrives at home. Fox sitting on couch on phone trying to reach people at Halliburton and others to interview about fracking. He is repeatedly told to send a fax and put his request in writing or reaches an answering machine or a disconnect signal. During this time he is out in the wilderness of the yard with a cordless phone.

00:09:06 Josh Fox: Now I am not sure how many of you have experience with streams but when I was growing up we could run up and down the stream for miles. (shots of seedlings floating over stream, dear) This is the place I know. It is the place that runs through my mind. It’s always there, to me it is the source of all life. You need water for life.

00:09:45 (shots of snow road and dashcam) Josh Fox: The closest they were drilling to me was about forty miles from the New York and Pennsylvania in a place called Dimock. A company called Cabot Oil and Gas out of Houston had drilled about forty wells. It is a place that you could get lost without any major roads. I had heard there had been problems; the Pennsylvania EPA said everything was fine. (shots of drilling field) It started with a lot of panic calls from Pat Darnelli.

223
Pat Darnelli: Everywhere there is a hole in the trees there is a well. (In her house) Sometimes it bubbles when you pour it. I won’t drink it. When Cabot came in to drill the wells I told them to drink it and they wouldn’t. There were days where all four kids were sick and out of school. For over a month we couldn’t even really eat anything.

Josh Fox: Other neighbors (on map) complained about their water bubbling. Another neighbor’s well exploded. Once Cabot tech came out and tested a neighbor’s water and told them not to drink it. (He offers several testimonials from Dimock.) Other problems that were happening is their pets’ hair was falling out. (shows footage of horses and pets with poor coats) The DPA told them they were using too much bleach. The family that had a positive reaction from Cabot was giving a pipe to run off the gas from their well. From the neighbors I visited there was something seriously wrong in Dimock. But there was something else. I kept hearing stories about another family who reported that could allegedly light their water on fire. A family who wasn’t speaking to the press. I wondered why and if I could possibly talk my way in. They didn’t want their faces on camera. They did show me their water samples. They knew I wanted to see their water on fire, but they had capped their well.

00:15:26 Footage of Fox getting phone call fn his car from another person with concerns. He went to visit that family.

00:15:30 Josh Fox: A man came to the door and handed me a jar and I asked what it was. He said it was bad stuff and told me to take it and see what it is. I guess he thought I was a documentary filmmaker. I had an idea what it was. I heard rumors of oil and gas wastewater that comes back up out of the ground. I started to compile a list of what happened in Dimock. (b-roll of people, farm building, drilling trucks and dashcam) On my way to drop off the jar at a water testing lab, I said goodbye to my $100,000.

00:19:20 Title “Life in the Red Zone”

00:19:24 Footage of gas tanks and trucks. Title “Weld County, Colorado” to banjo music

00:19:20 Mr. Medenhall at Mendenhall residence: “That’s what it looks like. It is all settled now. But that’s how it came out. Out of the tap.”

00:19:50 Mrs. Medenhall: “In three weeks they contacted Mike by phone and said we tested your water and there is nothing wrong with your water that can be from the gas activity. (she points at jar). So we bought two 500-gallon water tanks and every week we go into town to buy water. We have to use quarters to buy the water. I was a little disappointed in the state. Two weeks ago they had a meeting to address everything. The acting director of oil and gas passed right by question.”

00:21:56 Acting Director Neslen: “Is there a theme to your documentary (to Fox and his camera) Is there a message you are trying to get across with it. (leaves and comes back) I’m sorry but I can’t help you. Good luck with your documentary. I can help you off the record with some background information if that will help.”
00:22:45 Mr. Medenhall: “One day when we were having gurgling coming from the well, I thought I would cap it with a plastic bag and just in a minute it filled up that bag. So for fun I thought I would put a fuse in the bag. So I thought might not go so right and I told Martha, why don’t you call 91 and if it doesn’t go so well, dial the other 1. I lit it and it started floating toward the road.”

00:23:05 Mr. Medenhall in garage: (holds lighter up to faucet) “Just a second it will go up in a minute” (flame fills entire sink).

00:24:52 Josh Fox arrives at Ellsworth home. Mr. Ellsworth: “On this map on the Internet, all of those red dots are wells. This is where I live. That’s why they call it the red zone.”

00:25:15 Local news anchors: “New news tonight on a story you almost have to see to believe. That’s right, flames shooting from the faucet from a home in Fort Lupton. (then they play footage Josh Fox took) We then found out that the Ellsworth family is not the only ones having contaminated ground water from natural gas.”

00:29:06 Highlight reel of all neighbors visited by Fox with fire on taps and water analysis to banjo music.

00:30:04 Title “The Whistleblower.”

00:30:10 Weston Wilson: “I am not here speaking on behalf of the EPA. When the same thing happened in Alabama they came out with this ridiculous statement that it was not toxic. I wrote Congress and said five of the seven-member committee had conflicting opinions. Everything scientific stopped with Dick Cheney’s Halliburton-friendly energy bill. It buried the secret that it was toxic.”

00:33:48 Effective charts “Chemicals that you didn’t know what they were.”

00:34:50 Title: Easter in Wyoming

00:34:55 Josh Fox: “Jeff and Rhonda Locker have been living here for at least thirty years but in the late ‘90s there was a gas company re-stimulating a well behind their house. Rhonda was out doing the wash. The wash went black. They thought they had a small problem with the water. (b-roll of kids playing with father) Without a Laundromat for miles. They were stuck with suddenly contaminated water. They confronted the company with no satisfaction and an independent company confirmed that the water was contaminated. They threatened to sue and settled for $21,000 to put in a unit that would reverse the effect. They had to sign a nondisclosure agreement but verbalized that they wouldn’t honor it. It cost them $4,400 to have their water tested.” (b-roll of old and new equipment)
00:44:43 Wyoming rancher speaks directly to camera appealing to the audience that is having the same issues to unite in a call for action with livestock footage. Family wood home is wife’s grandfathers surrounded by sixteen wells now.

00:55:37 Title: Your Land, My Land, Gas Land.

00:55:40 Josh Fox: “I was going to one of those moonscapes that you see in photographs. One of the biggest and most productive gas fields in the United States. The Jones Gas Fields in Sublette County, Wyoming. (still photos of gas fields) It is at the foothills of the Grand Tetons. It is all BLM land. I could go wherever I wanted. Nobody even questioned me. (still photos of Tetons)

Anatomy of a gas well pt. 1, 2, 3. Used photos from Sublette County as instructional explanation of process and how many truck loads.

00:53:41 Josh Fox “Also being BLM land, I guess anyone could go where they want and play the banjo.” (Picture with gasmask and banjo)
Last Letters Home

HBO and New York Times

Soft orchestral music

00:00:26 Graphic of handwritten letter on notebook paper. “Dear Mom and Dad.”

00:00:39 Zoom and pan of letter keying on words like “Baghdad.”

00:00:51 Dissolve to typed letter keying on words “I miss home.”

00:00:59 Dissolve to second handwritten letter keying on words “They are just kids.”

00:01:22 Dissolve to third handwritten letter keying on words “Pray for me.”

00:01:37 Title “Last Letters Home” appears over final letter. Second titles fade in “Voices of American Troops, From the Battlefields of Iraq.”

00:01:55 Photo of soldier and titles “Spc. Michelle M. Witmer was killed by enemy fire in Baghdad, She was 20.”

00:02:10 Fade to skyline of trees. Title fades in “New Berlin, Wisconsin.”

00:02:19 Cut to shot of suburban home. Interviewer speaks “OK, guys. Tell me about this letter of Michelle’s.” (in backyard of home)

00:02:23 John Witmer: “She just wrote it on school paper and you can see how it kind of got stained in her purse.”

00:02:03 Lower third: “John and Lori Witmer, parents.”

00:02:27 Cut to head shot of sister. Lower third: “Charity Witmer: sister.”

00:02:33 Close up of Lori Witmer. “You can turn on the news, you can turn on CNN, but this was right from the heart, uncensored, straight from the mouth.”

00:02:49 Sister Charity reads letter over montage of stills of Michelle in Iraq.

00:02:51 Stills last five seconds each (in uniform, plain clothes leaning on hand)

00:03:06 Dissolve to 2 shot of dad and sister while she reads about drive by.

00:03:17 Dissolve to shots of Michelle (in uniform smiling)
00:03:24 Dissolve to close up of sister reading about being stationed in a ghetto where they not only have to worry about the common criminal but also the enemy forces.

00:03:30 Dissolve to shots of Michelle in Iraq (holding machine gun pointed over wall)

00:03:39 Dissolve to 2 shot of dad and sister as she reads, “I have been up for eighteen hours now. Please pray for me.”

00:03:51 CU of sister: “I remember when she got this, she was so excited.”

00:03:51 2 shot of mother and father as he reads email from Michelle on Father’s Day. “Dear Dad, I love you so much. You can’t imagine how much I think of you. I hope you have lots of fun today and the weather is lovely. We had a briefing telling us to prepare as much as possible for what lies ahead. Things like children running out in front of the vehicles as they try to get us to stop. We have to prepare to hit people because stopping is not an option. I guess every convoy that has gone up north has taken fire. The question of if we will or not is not even really a question. Just a guess as to when. I’m doing my best. I have been a little depressed lately. It has been three months since I got deployed. Wow, time does not fly. Happy Father’s Day. I love you so much.”

00:03:51 shots rotate of Michelle in Iraq and close-ups of the mother and sister reacting as he reads.

00:05:00 Lori Witmer: “This email is addressed to John, but from the first time I read it, I own it and I wanted to share it with anyone that would listen. It tells a little bit more of who she is. It reads, ‘Hey Dad, it was a warm night in Baghdad. There was a slight breeze in the air and the clouds above looked like they were opening up to release their fury on the dimly lit city below. The young woman running on the path that paralleled the Tigris River, I was hoping that they would open up and dampen her perspirated forehead. To her left was the river and the city lights. To her left was the ruins of what were once the most beautiful palaces in the world. It would only be a few weeks before this chapter of her life would be over. I remember being a student in college when my only concerns was rent and restocking the ramen noodles.” (speaks of friend who was jogging and who was killed in combat)

00:07:23 John Witmer: “That was on March 30 and she was killed on April 9. (2 shot of mother and father)

00:07:35 John Witmer: “We’re still not even close to be able to sort it out and express it. I mean it’s just been, someone said it’s just like having a limb blown off and for the first time you can’t even look at it. (Slow zoom into cu of mother w/ daughters). Eventually you can look at the wound and you can kinda, but it just takes a long time to grasp what happened. We’re still not there yet.” (Slow zoom into faces of mother and daughter as he talks)

2 shot of parents.
00:08:01 Lori Witmer: “It’s numb.”

00:08:01 John Wimer: “Just in shock. And then it starts to wear off, we’re just kind of to
the wear-off stage. After it wears you get to the pain, and the pain is hard.

Lori Wimer: “We’re told it eventually scabs over.”

Charity Wimer: “I’m told you are going to hurt as long and as hard as you loved them.
Now I am never going to stop.” (cu looking directly into camera)

Fade to black, solo lonely horn music.

Fade up to photo of sisters. Title “Michelle M. Witmer” appears on screen. Second title
appears “February 13, 1984 – April 9, 2004”

00:08:50 Photo of male soldier smiling in portrait. Title: “Pfc. Raheen Tyson Heighter,”
“was killed by enemy fire in Al Hawd,” “he was 22.”

00:09:06 Dissolve to clouds over blue sky.

00:09:06 Dissolve to parkway road. Title “Bay Shore, New York.”

00:09:13 Dissolve to flags on wreath and casket.

00:09:16 Cut to car parks in front of house.

00:09:20 Cathy Heighter, Mother: (one shot, wearing Army jacket) “On May 1 when
President Bush announced to the country that the major part of the war was officially
over, I had a sigh of relief.”

00:09:30 Cathy Heighter: (extreme close up) “I felt very relieved. I felt a sigh in my
heart. I thought to myself, ‘Now my son is safe, now my son is going to be coming
home.’”

00:09:42 Cathy Heighter: (one shot) “We’re looking at maybe another month or so and I
will have him home with me. And I also received this letter from him, (puts on glasses)
and it reads: Dear Mother, We have totally abdicated Saddam from power and now we
are in the liberation process. (dissolves to shots of Raheem in uniform, slow zoom in on
photo) I am eating good, working out and reading good literature now that the war is
over. (dissolve to extreme close up of mother) How is business in the salon? How are you
feeling? The group of soldiers I am working with now are good people. They good care
of me. (dissolve to one shot) Tell everyone I said hey. Love, Raheem.”

00:10:22 Cathy Heighter: (shot of hands holding letter, cut to one shot) “When I first got
this letter, he opened with they had brought down Saddam from power, and oh I said, I
am so glad this war is over. (extreme close up) I was expecting him to come home very soon. So when he wasn’t home by the end of June, I got to the point where I couldn’t sleep at night. (dissolving through shots of him with friends in Iraq) My mother called and said, ‘Kathy, you got a letter from Raheem. (cut to extreme close up) I came home that afternoon and I opened the letter and this is what I read. (shot of hands holding letter) ‘Dear Mother, Today is a blissful day. Mother, you are most important person in my life and today is the first time that you have tried the hardest (dissolve to slow zoom of them when he was child) to bring the bestowed, honest and hidden qualities out of me. Well mother, my feet have been placed on the firm ground. Without your teaching being what it has, it would not have been possible. As I sit here in tears, time goes by like a continuous ground hog day over here. In the beginning there was a lot of bloodshed (dissolve to him with rifle) but though there still are terrorists that don’t want us here, I will see you in September or October at the latest. Love, Raheem.’”

00:12:05 Cathy Heighter: “The minute that I opened this letter, and read it, my heart sunk from the very first line. Because I have never heard my son write this way, speak this way. He had never expressed himself this way so I knew that there was something terribly wrong with him that he needed to let me know that he was thinking of me in this way.”

00:12:51 Cathy Heighter: (extreme close up) “Two days later, they came to tell me that my son had been killed in Iraq. I went crazy.” (starts to cry).


Solo somber horn music.

00:13:39 Still of official soldier photo. Title: Sgt. Frank T. Carvill was killed by an explosion in Baghdad. He was 51.

00:13:52 Dissolve to main street in small town. Title: Kinnelon, New Jersey

Dissolve to cu of American flag waving in front of window in house.

00:14:03 Cut to wide shot of front of suburban home

Peggy Carvill-Liguori: (sister) “Danny and Drew are my brother Mike’s little guys. Their Uncle Frank, they loved very much. (one shot, sitting on couch with letter in her hands) He was their favorite uncle. (dissolve to shot of little boys in boat with Frank) They’re boys so they love to play around. He would be on the floor with them, he would be throwing them in the air (dissolve to picture of boy in air) And of all the things Frank did, I think he was at his best when he was with them. It was his own childlike ability to come out and play and they had a wonderful time together. He wrote them a letter, I believe this was the last letter that Frank wrote. It was dated June 2. Frank passed away on June 4. (dissolve to pictures of Frank with kids) Dear Danny and Drew, Thank you very much
for your beautiful book and drawings. I enjoyed reading it very much. The drawings were very good also. I enjoyed seeing the rabbit, is that Hoppy? It was colorful and very well done. I was going to visit you in June but we found out that one of our soldiers had a death in his family. (dissolve and slow zoom of Frank with troop) He had to go back to America right away. However, as soon as I get leave that is the first thing that I will do. When you are in the army, Uncle Sam is the boss. Uncle Sam is the nickname for the United States. I really miss you guys and can’t wait to see you both. You are still my best buds (she chokes up, slow zoom on her face) and we will have fun when I come to Florida. Be good guys and be careful. Watch out for cars when you are riding your bikes. I love you guys very much, God bless, Uncle Frank.”

00:16:00 Dissolve to shots of Frank at work in uniform.

Peggy Carvill-Liguori: “You never know what life is going to give you one day to the next and Frank chose to give up that seat and no one made him do it, but that is typical Frank (extreme cu). I just wish it hadn’t happened and he could have come back and we could throw the kids in the pool. (dissolve to jumping in the pool) I tried to do it but they told me that I don’t do it right. It would have been nice but it wasn’t meant to be.”

00:16:56 Dissolve to shot of Franks holding kids with Father’s Day shirt. Title: Frank T. Carvill, December 11, 1952 – June 4, 2004

00:17:08 Dissolve to still of official photo. Title: Spc. Robert Allen Wise, was killed by a bomb in Baghdad

This formula/style continues for the sixty-minute duration of the DVD for the following chapters in roughly four-minute segments.

Spc. Robert Allen Wise, killed by a bomb in Baghdad, 21, Tallahassee, Florida
Capt. Joshua T. Byers, killed by an explosion near Baghdad, 29, Nashville, Tennessee
2nd Lt. Leonard M. Cowherd, killed by enemy fire in Karbala, 22, Culpeper, Virginia
Pfc. Francisco Martinez-Flores, drowned in his tank near Baghdad, 21, Duarte, Calif.
Capt. Pierre E. Piche, was killed in a helicopter in Mosul, 29, Starksboro, Vermont
Spc. Holly J. McGeogh, was killed by a bomb in Kirkuk, 19, Taylor, Michigan
Pfc. Jesse A. Givens, drowned in his tank in Euphrates, 34, Fountain, Colorado
The Vanishing of the Bees

00:00:00 Storybook opens and turns page to video cu video of bees flying in slomo (b-roll for opening cut to the word)

00:00:36 Narrator: From the dawn of civilization, the honey bee has symbolized hard work, unity and cooperation. (cut to bees entering beekeeper box) These furry insects live in colonies where every bee works for the good of the whole. (cut to cu of bees on honey comb with queen bee) At the heart of every colony of thousands, there is but one queen. While she lays eggs, her daughters the worker bees, run the hive. (cut to cu of bees with honey) Taking on different roles during their lifespan. Nurse bees care for the queen and baby bees. (cut to dark bees by box entrance) Guard bees protect the hive from invaders. (cut to slow mo of bees leaving hive entrance) And forage bees venture out from the hive to gather food and water to share with their colony. (cut to wide shot of bees coming and going in grove with hive box) Honeybees from one hive can visit more than 100,000 flowers in one single day. (cut to cu of bee by flower blossoms) Finding a flower in bloom, a honeybee can get enough food and nectar to make honey. The sweet nectar and nourishing pollen are their reward for carrying out one of the most important tasks in nature, pollination.”

00:01:36 Cut to bland and white historical stock/classroom footage about bees.

00:02:19 Shot of beekeeper in field with mask on.

Beekeeper: “A lot of people out there don’t realize that one out of every three bites of food they stick in their mouth, these bees put on their dinner table. And if they’re not here, we wouldn’t have our fruit and we wouldn’t have our vegetables.” (cut to graphic of veg bin at store)

00:02:41 Random beekeeper in field, no lower third, stock footage: “But also, even the individual bee is fascinating. It is trained to do what it does, which is to go out, collect pollen and honey and bring it back. (cut through extreme close ups of bees pollinating) It has static like electricity when it is flying, so when it lands the pollen jumps on it. It has special notches on its front legs to use as an antenna. The antenna can smell, it can tell temperature. It can measure oxygen and carbon dioxide. And it is an amazing, amazing thing.”

00:03:15 Cut to clip of Peter Jennings of NBC News covering a story about missing bees. Featuring reports from around the world.

00:03:53 Title “Vanishing of the Bees”

Narrator: “The first beekeeper in the United States to bring these mysterious (slow zoom on portrait of beekeeper) disappearances to light was David Hackenberg. Hackenberg owns and manages around 1,000 beehives and works with his son Davey. (cut to video of
Davey in front of barn, wears mask, loads truck) Together they bring bees to apple orchards, almond groves, pumpkin patches, and blueberry fields across the country.”

00:04:26 David Hackenberg: (sitting on side of truck) I started keeping bees in 1952 as a high school project. I was born and raised on a dairy farm (shot of science project) raised with milk cows. They liked honey so I got involved with bees in 1962 (shot of him with bee boxes). Just as a hobby you know. My mother said that will go away quick after a couple of stings. By the time I got out of high school I had a couple hundred hives (shot of toddler in bee gear) and once you do get stung you become a beekeeper. (dissolve to shot of bee field with smoke tool and sound of buzzing)

00:05:17 Long video shots of the process of working in the video field with live audio of David giving direction and conversation. Good close ups.

00:05:43 Narrator: In October of 2006 (shot of cover of USA Today) David Hackenberg discovered massive honeybee losses and announced it to the world. The discovery thrust him into the spotlight and created quite a buzz.

Audio split edit from USA Today to announcer in next shot.

00:05:59 “Let me introduce you to David Hackenberg. This is the gentleman that really raised the red flag. (shot of audience at reception) He mad enough noise to bring it our attention and we thank him for that.” (shot of David at podium)

00:06:09: David Hackenberg: “Where are the bees going and why? (cut to video of beekeepers looking through boxes) On November 12 in 2006 at about 4:00 we rolled up to the yard of bees south of Tampa, Florida, to pick up 400 hives of bees and they were empty. There were no bees in the boxes, about thirty-six of them had a few bees or a good-looking beehive but for the most part most of them were empty. About three weeks before that they were good beehives. That all became news in early February of 2007 (cut to story in St. Petersburg Times) when it hit the Philadelphia Enquirer and the next day it was in 487 newspapers around the world.”

00:06:50: Cut to footage of 60 Minutes.

00:07:21 David Mendes: (lower third, 7,000 hives Fort Myers) “I’ve known David Hackenberg for twenty plus years. We’re both East Coast beekeepers. We go to some of the same farms.”

David Hackenberg: “I’ve known Dave and his brother since they were kids. I met them on the road they were trucking bees north.”

Video of them walking together over next quote.

David Mendes: “There’s been times when I have needed help and called on him and the same thing when he has needed help.” (shot of them at trade show)
David Hackenberg: “We call each other for therapy. We call each other a couple of times a day."

David Mendes: (sitting in orchard) “It’s almost therapy, to talk back and forth. It’s difficult. Your bees are dying and a lot of people think it’s your own fault. (piano bed begins, shot of them in cafeteria) He’s always been a good friend, but when his bees really just fell apart, I started calling him on a daily basis. I joke that it is just to keep him off of the suicide watch, but somehow that’s not a joke.”

Graphic “Fig. 1 – “Waggle Dance” then page turn to story “Where Have All the Bees Gone?”

00:08:32 Narrator: “Scientist Dennis vanEnglesdorp monitors bee health in the state of Pennsylvania. When Hackenberg reported all of the losses, van Englesdorp was one of the first to come to the scene.”

Video of the two in the field. Split edit. Cut to vanEnglesdorp in office.

VanEnglesdorp: “David Hackenberg started very loudly complaining about this condition in November and we required a David Hackenberg because now it is pretty clear that some other people have been suffering this condition and he was right.” (cut to newspaper headline ‘Mystery killer silencing honeybee)

Music begins.

Narrator: “Reports of catastrophic honeybee losses come from across the United States as well as Taiwan, Argentina, China, France, Italy, and many other countries (media reports are shown from around the world). All around the country bees were disappearing and everyone was wondering why. Early in 2007, U.S. scientists formed a task force to study the vanishing bee. They defined the distinct symptoms and named the phenomenon colony collapse disorder. (shots of scientific reports in background, narrator never shown)

00:09:24 Beekeeper in field: The symptoms for colony collapse disorder are that when the colony is completely dead you are finding no bees in the hive or in the atrium. No mites or pathogens to explain the loss. If there any left you only find a handful of very young bees and the queen.

Video of educational video explanation. Beekeeper gives demonstration from colonies that were affected and collected samples. Zoom on queen trying to rebuild.

00:11:34 Photo of old truck “Honey for Energy” page turns to quote by St. John Chrysostom: “The Bee is more honored than other animals, not because she labors, but because she labors for others."
Uptempo theme music begins

Narrator: Beehives have been reported by man to pollinate the crops since the early days of Egypt. Ancient Egyptians floated hives on rafts down the Nile to follow the bloom. (still black and white photo of small boat unloading hives dissolves to modern day semi with hives on the back in same position as boat) Today honeybees are being transported on semi trucks and pollinate $15 billion annually of food in the U.S. alone. Commercial beekeepers like Dave Mendez don’t make the majority of their income from honey (shots of trucks, hives, forklifts) rather from pollination contracts from farmers who rely on the beekeeping industry to produce fruits and vegetables.

Split edit of trucks being unloaded in fast motion with the following quote:

David Mendez: “If you hit hot weather you are going to have to water the bees in the evening, if you get cold weather then below 50.”

00:12:29 David Mendez: (in warehouse describing the honeybee business) “If they got put on the truck last night in Fort Meyers, they probably left at four in the morning and it will probably take about four days traveling. (b-roll of bees being loaded on flat bed and trucks traveling along highway with maps of journey) Those hives will land in Lost Hills, California at an Almond Orchard. They will probably stay there until the middle of March and then they will come back. Middle of May we will ship them up to Maine for blueberry pollination, somewhere near the border of Canada. From there they will go on a truck to Massachusetts for cranberries. As soon as they are done with cranberries, they will come back to Florida and good chance they will end up on the ranch. When media people ask me what is going on with bees, they always ask will there be enough bees for pollination. What I try to emphasize is that is part of the concern. Bees are an indicator of the environmental quality. When bees are dying something is wrong.”

Repetitive with b-roll and personal comments

00:14:51 Rick Smith: This is just us sorting through dead hives. This is agonizing for these guys. (footage of men unloading trucks of dead hives in Yuma Arizona.) I have been in professional beekeeping for the fifth generation of beekeeping. We’ve run into problems through the years but this is a problem we have never run into before. Since Thanksgiving Day we have virtually lost the operation. I really don’t know what we are going to do.”

00:15:55 Footage of beehives being burned.

Narrator: “Going out of business, Rick Smith bid a somber farewell to the family honeybee operation.”

Graphic of bees and the page turn to a series of historic art representing honeybees.
Dennis vanEngelsdorp: “Nothing is as sweet as honey. If you don’t have sugar cane, the only thing that sweet is fruit. If you taste honey and you have never had sugar before, it is the nectar of the gods. It was quite an amazing thing.” (b-roll running of a finger pushing through a beehive to release the honey)

Bee Wilson, author, The Story of the Honeybee and Us: (sitting in living room) “Honey was magical. It was medicinal. It was by far the oldest medicine in ancient Egypt. It was panacea for pretty much any complaint the human body might suffer from. The same in ancient Greece and Rome.”

00:17:02 Narrator: (over ancient drawings) “In the ancient world, bees were thought to be prophetic. The behavior of bees was seen of omens. (repeat of slow motion close up shot of bees in air) If bee swarms would settle on house or temples, it was thought to be some kind of message.”

Marguerite Rigoglioso, Ph.D. author, Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece: speaks of queen representing the goddess.

Uptempo music begins.

Narrator: “Bees are thought to represent female society. All of the worker bees are female and make up 95 percent of the population. They build honey, build comb, protect the hive and raise the young. The drones, the male bees, serve only to mate with the queen. If these honey producing matriarchies were prophetic in ancient times, what message do they hold for us today.” (shot of bees with buds, but great repetition with b-roll with the same shots as intro)

Marguerite Rigoglioso, Ph.D. author, Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece: male and feminine balance is what they are saying.

00:19:16 Narrator: history of bee hunting, good footage of people in forest of Malaysia practicing building beekeeper tools similar to today.

00:20:08 Graphic on page of the parts of the bee for transition. Page turn to quote from Leo Tolstoy: “The closer we examine the honeybee, the more we realize the workings of a beehive encompass territories beyond our comprehension.”

Narrator: “Cases of Colony Collapse Disorder, or CCD, were documented in thirty-five states. (graphic of states) Scientists across the country combined forces to applying CSI style tactics. (recapping is good but repetitive, they are only twenty minutes in) From Florida to California scientists looked at bees, wax and pollen. (shots of scientists working in the field, good, new) And ship them back to the lab for analysis. One challenge was that there were no dead bees left behind by CCD. Even so, their research unearthed a whole new set of questions.”
Narrator reports on scientific findings and the conclusion that initial findings were not the cause of CCD.

00:22:35 Narrator: “During their research scientists uncovered many other theories as well. Some worth investigating and some not.” (shot of newspaper headline “Bees Lost to Cell Phones, Rapture or Outer Space”)

Dennis vanEngelsdorp: “So I have heard everything from the rapture to umm, it being a Russian conspiracy, the Russians have put genes in the bees and were now beaming satellites down to kill the bees, umm, and as a scientist I can’t say it’s not true but it doesn’t seem very likely. What has happened is beekeepers have become very good at replacing their dead hives, and a beekeeper is going to tell you he loses 30 percent of his hives a year. If a cow farmer or a corn grower or an apple producer loses 30 percent of their crop every year, they call the National Guard when cows are starving in Montana. But with beekeepers, all they have to do is they split their colony in half and put another queen in and they can fill in these holes. In a way they become very good in a way they become their worst nightmare.”

Michael Pollan, author – In Defense of Food, professor, UC Berkeley. Speaks of almond growers asking USDA to be able to import bees from Australia and getting it approved.

00:26:50 Graphic transition: Picture of woman in dated long dress looking at bee comb in beehive. Page turn to quote from Bhagavad Gita: “Like the honeybee, the sage should gather wisdom from many scriptures.”

Narrator: Speaks of difference with holistic beekeepers from keeping bees in large migratory populations. Not just for profit. Footage of the different environment. We want to build up immune system in queen bee. They can live up to five years. Commercial beekeepers can kill the queen and introduce a surrogate. Artificial insemination.

Narrator: “Another industrialized beekeeping method under suspicion is the practice of taking honey away from the bees and filling hives with sugar syrup.” (b-roll of the process)

00:31:06 Simon Buxton, 3 Hives, author – The Shamanic Way of the Bee: “That’s like feeding your kids junk food and then feeding their kids junk food. Push that over a hundred generations. How healthy are your great-, great-, great-grandchildren going to be. That’s what we’ve done with the honeybee. We’ve feed them empty sugars when we should be feeding them a rich diet with the raw nectars of the flower. The privilege of being a beekeeper is to generate as much honey as possible. We keep bees so that we can contribute to pollination. And actually the future of beekeeping is not the beekeeper with 60,000 hives. But rather 60,000 people each with one hive. All of them approaching the art of beekeeping as a holistic practice.”
00:34:13 Graphic transition. Old ad for Jane’s Bee Sweet Honey, Pure and Natural. Page turn to quote from The Bible. “See, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.”

David Hackenberg: (in field with his mask on) “I wouldn’t be here keeping these bees if wasn’t for pollination. I mean we can’t keep up with world honey prices. China and Argentina and all of those people have us pinned up against the wall.”

Discussion of imported false honeys and cost cutting and biggest bee loss of 40,000 in history in California in three weeks.

00:41:52 Transition graphic ad for Stony Ridge, Pennsylvania, Apples and Peaches. Page turn to quote from Dwight D. Eisenhower: “Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil and you’re a thousand miles from the corn field.”

Discussion of honeybee problem might come from the farms’ monoculture and pesticides. German chemical weapon inventors in WWI are same creators of pesticides. Informational animation graphics and definitions. Congressional testimony of both Hackenberg and Mendez and systemic pesticides. Relates research to France.

00:53:44 Graphic transition from bee graphic, page turn to Thomas Jefferson quote: “Every man has two countries: His own and France.”

Discussion of France having two-year earlier problem of CDC and called it mad bee disease after being the pioneer of beekeepers. Banned systemic pesticides. Hackenberg and Mendez went to French conference.

Dave and Dave go to England, which started protesting like France. Italy, Germany and others also put bans on systemic pesticides for bee culture.

01:02:57 Graphic transition from art of woman with three bee hives with page turn to quote from Albert Einstein: “It would be possible to describe everything scientifically, but it would make no sense; it would be without meaning, as if you described a Beethoven symphony as a variation of wave pressure.”

Narrator: “Most European governments use the precautionary principle when approving the use of pesticides. This uses safety as the primary guide when approving chemicals intending errors to always fall on the side of caution. The EPA decides whether or not to approve based on what is called risk assessment. This process allows to expose the public to risk as long as the EPA decides that those risks are reasonable.”

David Hackenberg: (sitting on side of his truck) “You know the thing that is interesting to me about Europe is that they are living in a different idea. They are more precautionary. (shot changes to 1 shot) Here in the United States we’re just the opposite. We’re going to put it out there and see what happens.”
Narrator: Another problem with the EPA is what is known as the fox guarding the hen house. (illustration of a fox with a rifle in front of the hen house)

David Mendez: But who funds research. Do you know how EPA works in this country? EPA doesn’t do any research. Manufacturer does all of the research and submits it to the EPA and they either say yes or no or we need more information. When I talked to the folks here in the state here to ask them about it and I said ‘University of Florida or EPA, who has done the research?’ They referred me to the toxicologist at Bayer.”

01:06:13 B-roll of Dave and Dave talking to French about EPA

01:08:47 Closing graphic transition from picture of baby with herd of bees drawing coach with page turn transition to quote from Martin Luther King, Jr. “Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly . . . this is the interrelated structure of reality.” With same transition music.

David Mendez: “I tell people when I am asked about something, I have to ask the bees. And they think I am Dr. Doolittle and I talk to the bees, yeah, it’s not a verbal exchange. You can have all the theories in the world, but you have to ask the bees.”

Discussion of synergy and many problems. Monocultures, pesticides. Scientists are the respected experts, but there are local experts, bee experts. Is the question answered or argument against EPA. Attorney helped ban pesticide.

Ends with montage of pop culture parodies and pleas for help for bees. Long list of credits.
The Obama Deception

00:00:00 Obama inaugural footage

00:00:24 Obama inaugural speech: “Contrary to what you have heard, I was not born in a manger. (interrupted by electronic sounding music from the ‘70s) I was actually born on Krypton and sent here to save the planet earth.

Followed by graphic bubbles showing the words “hope” and “betrayed” floating around Obama’s hands. Picture of him pulling back his suit to show Superman uniform.

Obama during speech: We cannot continue to rely only on our military in order to achieve the national security objectives we have set.

00:00:46 Rahm Emanuel, staffer who became Chicago mayor: Everyone between the age of eighteen and twenty-five will basically have to serve between three and six months of basic training.

Obama during speech: We will have a civilian national security force that is just as powerful and just as strong.

00:00:53 Graphic appears “Obama Youth Brigade.”

00:00:56 Obama appears at public speech saying campaign slogan, “Yes We Can,” with crowd repeating chant, followed by footage of youths doing calisthenics saying yes we can and one youth saying “Obama’s health care plan will include covering (unintelligible) youth services.”

00:01:02 Man talking, no lower third: “Obama is a cruel hoax, he works for Wall Street. He is an agent of finance capital.”

00:01:11 Male House member, no lower third: “Where did you come up with the number, 700 billion dollars? Here is the treasury spokewoman’s quote, ‘There is no particular data point, we just wanted to come up with a really big number.’”

00:01:20 Obama: “The Democrats and Republicans who oppose this plan, I say, step up to the plate.” Dennis Kucinich is shown to the left of the screen and Ron Paul to the right.

No plan has been mentioned regarding any rhetoric at this point.

00:01:25 House member, no lower third, with video of police on the right in riot gear: “A few members were even told that there would be martial law in America if we voted no.”

House member on top left: Henry Paulson on top right of split screen. Committee on bottom of screen.
House member: “Secretary Henry Paulson is no George Washington.”

Kucinich: “I don’t know if anyone questioned Mr. Kashkari that you are working hard. Our question is who are you working for. (slow zoom on Neel Kashkari looking angry)

00:01:52 News footage with various moderators. “Obama pledged that he would resume his security and prosperity talks between Mexico and Canada (shots on screen are of Bush and Canada and Mexico leaders then switch to Obama playing golf) that Bush initiated. The new boss is starting to sound like the old boss. Robert Gates will stay on the job for at least a year. The secret meeting between Obama and Hillary Clinton was reported to be at her house but was apparently wasn’t.”

00:02:16 Footage of Obama riding in limousine. Obama: “We have to give them a stake in the kind of world order we would all like to see.” Map of Asia and Russia is panned over on the screen.

A dissolve that appears to be that map burning goes to a shot of the White House and the audio of a protestor with a bullhorn.

00:02:19 Protestor: “We see you causing depression so that you can blow up the economy and consolidate it and corrupt it. We know you are enemies of free humanity and we are here standing against your tyranny.” Against shots of police guarding the White House.

00:02:40 Narrator: “The Obama Deception, the truth strikes back.” Over photo of Obama with his hand pointing layered over photo of White House with same tragic electronic music playing during the lead and nut graph.

00:02:47 Video of rapper KRS One and turntable playing.

KRS One: with lower third (KRS-ONE, legendary hip-hop artist): “Barak is like the manager of Burger King. All presidents are, including Bush. It’s like this. When your fries are cold, when your burgers not done right. (camera shifts from left profile to right profile) You go back to Burger King, or America, or your government and you say, “My burger’s cold” “I want new fries” First, you go to the cashier, which is the courts. You argue to the courts. The courts, if you can’t get no justice with the cashier, you say let me see the manager. I want to go to the Supreme Court. I want to see the president. The manager comes out and says, ‘Hi, what can I do for you.’ Now the manager can override the decision of the cashier. But you never get to see the franchise owner. We need to go to the top or the bottom. We need to go to where the real architecture of government is and it is not in a president. It is in the global scheme.”

00:04:13 Jessy Ventura, former Minnesota governor sitting in trailer with Willie Nelson: “Politics today is like pro wrestling, and what I mean by that is sitting in front of the cameras and the public we all hate each other. I am going to kick my opponent’s butt and
I am going to nail him from here to high water and I am going to beat the crap out of him, yet behind the scenes we’re all friends going out to dinner together.”

Willy Nelson: “Going out to dinner together.”

Jessy Ventura: “It’s all work. All inter-marriage.”

Willy Nelson: “It’s all show business.”

Jessy Ventura: “It’s show biz. That’s what you have today in politics. Democrats and Republicans aren’t really opposed to each other.”

00:04:46 Webster Tarpley, author, historian (lower third shown, shot of him on phone and switches to one shot) “Left and right mean nothing, all that counts is are you working for Wall Street or are you trying to defend people against the financiers.”

00:04:51 Joe Rogan, comedian, commentator (lower third shown, first shot on stage, then interview backstage) “It is pretty obvious that there have been financial institutions that have been pulling the strings of politicians in this country for a long time. And just the fact that they can donate millions of dollars to these guys funds and campaigns. I mean, how do we not expect it all to go bad.”

00:05:12 Dissolve to shot of Washington Monument.

Narrator: “America in 2009 was desperate for change. The past eight years had been a disaster.”

Cut to George W. Bush at correspondents’ dinner.

Bush: “Those weapons of mass destruction have to be somewhere. Maybe under here.”

Cut to footage of child and military casualties that cut to Bush looking out of the corner of his eyes in comic way before national broadcast speech . . . as narrator begins.

Narrator: “George W. Bush, who had claimed to be conservative had tripled the size of the federal government. (graphic of the word tyranny appears on the screen). Tripled the size of government, and destroyed the image of the United States worldwide.” (video showing waterboarding and suffering)

Bush at correspondents, dinner: “No, there are no weapons over there.” Crowd laughter.

00:06:09 Narrator: “Endless wars. Over a million dead Iraqis and more than 5,000 dead U.S. troops. (video of war dead and coffins draped in U.S. flags). The Patriot Act warrantless domestic wiretapping and spying. (wiretapping graphic appears on screen. Shots of soldiers in U.S. city). The rise of the treasonous North American Union.”(shot of a map that looks like a weather map that doesn’t show the cities of the West or East
Coast, just the Midwest cities, going down to Mexico and up to Canada but does include D.C.)

00:06:22 Narrator: “A deepening recession that will lead to economic collapse. (shots of people sleeping on street and then a shot of George W. Bush at press conference) These factors and other abuses have left the American people in a state of panic and the very existence of the United States. (Shots of US flags at UN) The elite were in trouble. People were beginning to see past their facade and past their front man, the ruling elite behind the robe.” (picture of Bush shaking hands with people in front of flag)

00:06:48 Narrator: “For the first time in history, both parties were universally hated. (shots of the state of union and the standing ovation dissolve to denverpost.com news clip) Congress had a 9 percent approval rating and stalled. On to the scene came a man who promised change we could all believe in. Barak H. Obama (shots of Obama at convention waving from behind his back) had promised an end to the war and to bring our troops home fast. He pledged to uphold the constitution and to stop the government from spying on the American people. (b-roll of taper recorder and constitution, shots of Obama in factories campaigning) Candidate Obama told the American workers that he was going to get them out of NAFTA and GATT. And he is already breaking those promises.”

00:07:28 Narrator: (shot of Obama sitting at State of the Union) And in this film we will prove, that Obama says one thing and does another (shot of Obama with Bush at inaugural walking down stairs) and serves the same elite interests that Bush served. The very interests engineering the financial collapse of a dictatorial government. (more shots of them together on inaugural day) This film is not about the left or right. It is non-partisan. Our past documentary films are among the most damning indictments of George W. Bush and his administration that have ever been made. (graphic of titles of films: “Terrorstorm” “Endgame: Blueprint for Global Enslavement”)

00:08:02 Narrator: (shots of NYPD police car and Times Square) If humanity has any hope of building change for the better, it will not come from the Madison Avenue false reality makers who have cast Barak Obama as the savior of the world. (shot of Obama profile with newspaper headline that supports it)

00:08:14 (still shot of Obama against black background with eye replaced with evil marble looking object that zooms into the work oligarchy) To alter our course from tyranny to liberty, to defeat the corrupt elite, we must get past the puppets and confront the real power structure of the planet.

00:08:25 George H.W. Bush delivering speech at UN. “Now we can see a new world coming into view. A world in which there is the real prospect of a new world order.”

Narrator: “Webster Griffin Tarpley is an accomplished geopolitical analyst and historian (Tarpley walks through revolving door and then on phone) Among his scholarly works
are the unauthorized biographies of George Herbert Walker Bush and Barak Hussein Obama.” (book titles shown, Obama the Postmodern Coup)

Tarpley: “Since Bush, the elder, made his speech at the United Nations back in September of 1990 about the new world order, I think I have become confused about what is going on in the world. The new world order is a more palatable name for the Anglo American world empire. It is a planetary domination of London, New York, Washington over the rest of the world. It is hard to get people to join that or get a part in it if you call it the Anglo-American empire. If you called it the new world order than people in India or places like that or the European union than they will think well there is something in a place like that for people like us too. But that’s not what it is. It’s the Anglo-American world order. It’s really the old world order. It’s the British Empire morphing into the American empire morphing into the new world empire is what you are going to get.”

Narrator: “Combines of powerful men have always battled with each other over the levers of power. (b-roll of bw congressional meeting) Gerald Celente is recognized as one of the world’s foremost trend forecasters and as the founder of the Trends Research Institute.

00:09:50 Gerald Celente: (standing in front of old family pictures?!) “People who are knowledgeable know that the fight this country has been waging since its inception is that the central bankers do not take over the country. (shot changes from profile to front to show wall) And that is why people like Andrew Jackson were elected. And that’s why people revere people like Thomas Jefferson. Takeovers happen, and it is a corporate takeover.”

Shots of portraits of Andrew Jackson.

Narrator: “Agents of the Bank of England attempted to assassinate Andrew Jackson on multiple occasions because of his resistance to a private central bank being set up in the United States.

00:10:28 Gerald Celente: “And it was something that Abraham Lincoln warned and this is by way something I believe is one of the reasons he was assassinated. This is the Lincoln quote. ‘The money powers prey upon the nation during times of peace and conspire against it upon times of adversity is more (unintelligible) than monarchy. (famous shots of Lincoln portraits). More insulate that autocracy. More selfish than beaurocracy. I see in the near future a crisis approaching (shot with Grant at tent) that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. Corporations have been enthroned. An era of corruption will follow and the money power of the country will prolong it’s reign by working on the prejudices of the people until the wealth is aggregated in a few hands and the republic is destroyed.” (all while showing pictures of Alan Greenspan) Wall Street has killed Main Street. (shot of Wall St. and Nassau St. sign)
Obama (State of the Union): “So I know how unpopular it is to be seen as helping banks right now. (shots of McCain and bipartisan guy smirking) Especially when everyone is suffering from their bad decisions. I get it.”

Webster Griffin Tarpley: “Up until the Kennedy assassination, and the beginning of the war in Vietnam, the United States is a very powerful engine for world progress. It is the assassinations, the Kennedy assassination and the others in the 1960s and the beginning of the Vietnam War and the beginning of the absolute domination of Wall Street over every other interest. Nobody else counts except the Wall Street bankers. That has now made the United States no longer a force for progress but more often a force for destruction in the world.”

Gerald Celente: “The military industrial complex has taken over the country along with the Wall Street gang.” (shaking his book in his hand)

00:12:47 Tarpley: “If you look also at the people Obama has put on his appointments list, it’s all Wall Street. It’s government by Wall Street and for Wall Street. Nobody from heavy industry. There is nobody from the auto sector. Nobody from Silicon Valley. Nobody from big oil. Nobody from defense. Nobody from labor. No retirees. No small business. It’s pure Wall Street. The only people that have a voice in Obama’s oligarchy is Wall Street. That’s all there is. It is the most extreme Wall Street administration that we’ve ever had.”

Narrator: (over footage of Wilson) “Before his death, President Woodrow Wilson apologized to the public. Regretting that he had been deceived by a group of international bankers and that the economic system had fallen into their iron grip.”

Talking heads and narrator talk about Eisenhower following the same path of warning and that Kennedy was expected to be a puppet but wasn’t.

JFK fought the oligarchy and was assassinated. Obama is no more than a CEO. That is all a president is. Just a puppet. Even more than a puppet than Hillary Clinton would have been. The public is never really aware of who the real power is. They will always stay in power.

00:18:06 Starts showing world headlines, newspaper clippings and news footage. Kissinger was quoted as saying as Obama was the perfect person to sell the new world order. 2006 Canada Bilderberg Group Daniel Estulin, journalist was a mole. Doesn’t explain what the Bilderberg Group is.

Bilderberg author holding his book. They always insist on a media blackout. They met with Obama as their new face. It was the secret meeting with Hillary.

Narrator often uses the word “we” figured out.

Jim Tucker, reporter, dead
00:26:05 No lower thirds: Somewhat staged and present themselves as journalists before they are kicked out of Marriott during fire drill (supposedly fake) before Obama and Hillary check in with Bilderberg people. Guy is shot in his room on phone acting like Rush Limbaugh.

Footage of followers and intense music as they cover meeting. It doesn’t say anything about this in description of movie.

00:36:14 Cites Barry Goldwater predicting future. Narrator comments that last eight presidents were controlled by Bilderberg Group. Same three talking heads over and over. Speaking directly to camera, preachy.

At forty-five minutes bounces back to theme that Obama is a liar on removal of troops.

Jessie Ventura again.

50 minutes Obama footage. Shows more headlines to support and offer legitimacy. Mentions Obama flipflopping from campaign promises due to Bilderberg. And that his office appointments within twenty-four hours and firing Bush appointees was unusual.

1:00:00 continues to use the word liar.

Destruction of Western nations economies. Mentions law, but conspiracy theory.

Shot of Obama crowds and kids celebrating when he was elected.

Narrator: “Even if Barak Obama was the greatest person in the world, he was groomed and brought to power by the world elite to carry out their agenda. Humanity must look past Barak Obama and realize that presidents come and go. But the shadow government and their program of global enslavement continues.”
00:00:00 Female talking head, no lower third. “What is the use of having a beautiful body or beautiful breasts or a beautiful cock if nobody sees it all.”

Title: a film by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders

00:00:25 Male talking head over shot of old format camera: “Twenty five years ago I started taking large format portraits with an antique view camera in my East Village studio. My first subjects were New York artists. (shot of woman smoking) Soon I was asked to shoot actors (shot of David Bowie, Jimmy Carter, George H.W. Bush) musicians, and eventually even presidents. Now I have a new subject, porn stars.”

Title: “Thinking XXX” under syncopated music.

B-roll of various porn stars fully clothed.

00:01:08 Female talking head: “You just don’t enter this business thinking you’re going to make millions of dollars.”

B-roll of various porn stars unclothed.

Female talking head: “Everybody is fucking someone in life, we are just doing it on film”

B-roll continues

00:01:48 Faye Wattleton (lower third, author/activist): “When you look at the range of pornography and the different characters who have chosen the profession of pornography (switch to one shot) and just who are these people and why are they so inaccessible to us and why do deep down within do we all like to be porn stars at one point in our life.

00:02:03 Gore Vidal (lower third, author, historian): “We never seem to tire of looking at naked bodies is true, but they always have to be new ones.”

00:02:21 Sanders in studio closing screen over skylight: “I had been thinking about shooting porn stars for a while. Particularly nude, because I had never shot nudes and I imagined these would be people who would be comfortable nude. (shot of preview of pages with Savanna Samson) This is the mock up for the book. I asked fifteen writers to contribute essays. Nancy Friday, Gore Vidal, Lou Reed. You have all these different voices and then it kind of leads into the portraits which are going to be clothed and then nude portraits of each porn star. In the exact same pose like Goya. Which is funny, because when you see porn stars in their everyday clothes (shot of Savanna Samson adjusting her shirt in front of mirror) it’s almost startling compared to the way the world knows you as naked I guess.”
00:02:57 Shot of Samson inverted in camera lens taking off robe.

Samson: “I worked at Scores, the gentlemen club in Manhattan, before I started making movies and my husband really wanted me to make a movie for a wedding present and I was appalled at the idea at first.”

Shot of Samson being shot naked in the studio taking direction from Sanders.

Still of Samson that Sanders shot, audio of camera and lights working.

Samson “But then the more I thought about it and the more I watched, the more I liked the idea. Nobody would ever find out and I can get this little fantasy over with. But I got porn fever, so . . .” (laughs)

Jesse Jane (in swimming pool naked) “I chose to be in this industry because I am comfortable with my sexuality and performing on film. (shot of her getting make-up) I was very sexually aware at a very young age. Sixteen was more watching pornos myself. Eighteen wanting to be a porn star, just not knowing how. I’m choosing to make myself a sex symbol.” (b-roll of her preparing for shoot)

Gina Lynn (during shoot): “I think every girl defines herself differently as a porn star. I don’t live the lifestyle of a porn star. I look at it as a business. I am an actress having sex on camera. (one shot) Some girls are addicted to sex. I’m not one of those (back to shoot). I get turned on and off really easy.”

00:04:42 Sean Michaels (ID at top of screen initial shot with light meter in his face) You can have some credible presentation of sex in America even though it’s through porn. (switch to shot on couch of him in Yankees jacket and all-white clothes.) Because I love women and you don’t degrade something that you love. In the old days it was about people who just loved sex. A female you know really enjoys her sexuality. Someone who comes across like that, she is a sex goddess. But if she’s there looking at her nails or watch while doing a double anal, people will think she is just a slut because it is not about that, it is about art in a way. OK, it is the art of fucking.

00:05:34 Nina Hartley (ID at middle of screen, walking through parking deck). “I got into porno because I grew up at a time and a place where I was told I could make my own happiness. (shot of her on couch giving interview and then cut to her fully clothed in studio shoot). I grew up in Berkeley, California, and I was reading feminists texts in the early ‘70s like The Joy of Sex and these things were me, they spoke to me. (switch to shot of her derobing at photo shoot, older woman, switch back to her during interview) For some reason I am comfortable having sex in front of thousands of people, right on.”

Tomas Knurowski, Nina’s Trainer, title lower right. As she works out naked.

00:07:05 Shots cut between her tour of house with husband and her talking about how she likes sex. Husband mentions how normal they are.
Title “Chad Hunt” appears upper left. He is in studio shooting clothed. “I am currently the biggest porn star right now because I have the biggest penis. (laughter, shot cuts to interview). I grew up in a very rural section of Ohio, a real one-light type of place.”

Heather Hunter (title lower right) “I grew up in a family that was pretty much the Huxtables. I was daddy’s girl. I couldn’t do wrong with a guy like my dad.” (shots of her clothed in studio and then in her backyard talking with her dogs and talks about being black in porn. “They were playing the butlers and the maids and the title would be black sludge.”

Others go on to talk about the stigma.

John Walters, filmmaker adds to conversation.

Shots of photographer with his camera.

Discussion starts about what a good living it is. Porn stars have to tour and do merchandising. Economic survival. Some have serious actor credits and get personal power from the income for women.

Heather Hunter “It is a great way to make a living with a high school education.”

00:23:11 Sean Michaels: “It is ironic that women make more than men considering what we have to work harder.”

Discussion about how much porn stars make for what the director asks them to do. How being a Playboy model is so lucrative.

John Walters discusses the difference between gay porn and straight porn and not using condoms.

Gore Vidal (extreme close up) talks about Romans’ treatment of women, raping them and kidnapping them. “It’s behavior, but it’s just not good behavior.”

00:27:35 Sharon Mitchell (title, lower right while being shot nude) “In the adult entertainment industry I started in 1975. In 1996 I went back to school. I finished my master’s in public health and I will be a PhD next year. (shot changes to stills of her clothed) I run the Aim Healthcare Foundation. We are a nonprofit organization. We serve over nine hundred people a month by monitoring people for HIV and STDs on a monthly basis for porn.”

Discussion of not using condoms is American and based on economics.

Shots of inverted camera lens. Both old and young.
Gore Vidal: “Desire begins with taboo and people showing off their naked bodies. And then get paid for it. Everything is about money.”

John Waters: “Some of these people, if they didn’t work in porn they would be flashers.”

Gore Vidal: “Traditionally girls have to think about sex. Boys were meant to squirt and squirt. Girls have to be a little more careful. They have to think about it for nine months as opposed to just playing tennis.”

Adrian Nicole Leblanc, author: “Early on as I was reporting, somebody who had no exposure to pornography at all, it was the astonishment that these young women would watch porn literally almost as instructional videos.”

Discussion of recovering porn stars and going back to school and having kids and not wanting to have sex anymore.

Film ends with credits on white intermixed with photo montage of subjects clothed and unclothed.
Jesus Camp

00:00:15 Title: A&E Indi Films

Shot of freeway beside Sonic and McDonalds Exit. Lower third” Missouri, USA.

Audio of radio show: “What you want, when you want it. KNBC on demand from the voice of Kansas City. News radio.”

More shots of freeway exits, Road Ranger gas station and American flag.

00:00:27 Audio of radio news: “Sandra Day O’Connor, the first woman to ever serve on the high court, has turned in her resignation bringing her career on the high court to an end. Let’s go to the White House.”

00:00:39 Audio of President George W. Bush: “Good morning, I have directed my staff to compile information and recommend for my review potential nominees who will faithfully interpret the Constitution and laws of our country.”

Footage of roads in Kansas continues.

00:00:53 Audio of radio show call-in person: “I believe as Christian citizens of this country that we should be actively involved in this historic moment. (Shot of sign “God Bless USA” with flag blowing in front) And if the church across this country, believers can come together and take a stand I believe we can have a powerful, powerful impact on this process.”

Cut to shot from car window crossing a bridge.

Audio: Unidentified person: “We had better not sleep through this point of decision because frankly future generations depend on us. Pray urgently that God’s perfect will, will be done.”

Cut to shot of countryside from car window.

Audio: Unidentified person: “We are engaged today in what they call ‘culture wars.’ We didn’t start this, but we by his grace are going to end this. And we should say yes, we want to reclaim America for Christ.”

00:01:48 Countryside footage continues. Title upper left, A&E IndieFilms dissolves to and Magnolia Pictures present. title lower left, a Loki Films production.

Shot of radio on the air sign.

Audio of radio host: “From the pulpit comes this mean spirited message. Us against them. And that is what the religious right is doing in the United States dividing this country.
Shot of hand adjusting audio slide volume control. Cut to shot of radio host.

Radio host: No lower third or id. “Alright we have Tyree in Hillside, Illinois, listening on WBCT. What do you have on your mind?”

Shot of audio levels. Cut to extreme close up of host as Tyree talks.

Tyree: “I’m a Christian. I’m a Bible believing Christian. These guys don’t jive with the Christianity and what I have learned and there is an authoritarian kind of way about them and there is nothing gentle or nothing compassionate and to me there is nothing Christian about them.”

Radio host: “It’s upside down. Yeah, I’ve been raised a Christian all my life. I think that is the thing that upsets me the most about what’s happening.”

Tyree: “None of it really makes any sense to me.”

Radio host: “Somehow things have changed since Matthew wrote about Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount. Where Jesus told us to be peacemakers. And right now, everything they do is in the name of God. We need to go to war in the name of God. George Bush of all people is a holy man who’s been anointed with the job of creating a Christian society, not just in America but all over the world.”

Tyree: “You and I know that quote.”

Cut to shot of audio engineer. Cut to shot of host. Cut to shot of audio meter.

Radio host: “There is this entanglement of politics with religion. What kind of lesson is that for our children.”

00:03:45 Dissolve to title “Jesus Camp”

Cut to shot of Christ Triumphant Church

Audio of child over shots of children wearing make-up theatrical style.

Unidentified boy speaking: “There has never been a generation like this one. They are just filled with the dead and dying. In spirit and in body.”

00:04:04 Cut to shot of play type of presentation.

Unidentified boy speaking: “But now is the time for the glorious Lord to cover the earth just like water covers the seas.”

Cut to shots of children in audience watching.
Children respond in a call and response style: “Now is the time.”

In rock opera style, boy goes into dance: “Speak the word of the lord.” Children go into dance with sticks and sing, “Speak the word of the lord.”

Shot of teacher and parents in audience clapping along and children crying.

Shot of woman speaker. Lower third “Children’s Prayer Conference, Lee’s Summit, Missouri.”

Woman speaker, (no ID). “Wow, that is fabulous. Thank you all for coming today. I have no idea of how many people are here but I am told it would hold about 500 (more like 200, judging by the shot) so we are doing pretty good, aren’t we! (Shot of mother with two young girls) OK, so listen moms and dads. I want to tell you about a couple of things we have in the bookstore. We have a School of Evangelism for Kids. It doesn’t sell very well. I think people think this is going to be a door-knocking manual and it’s not. There is a hands-on manual that teaches kids how to start a conversation with their friends and how to win a loss. (cut to shots of kids in audience with name tags). What I want to announce is our camp coming up in August (audience cheers, shots of kids looking excited) and it’s just going to be an incredible time. We have brochures on the camp sitting in the bookstore and you need to pick one up and begin praying about whether or not you can get there this year. OK? Boys and girls, I need everyone sitting up straight and looking this way.” (shot of kids straightening up)

00:07:54

Shot from behind woman speaking.

“Is there anyone in here that believes God can do just anything? (mother holds up children’s hands) God can just do anything. We can say ‘God, just fix the world!’ How many of you know that this is a pretty sick old world? Well, then let’s just fix it. Somebody get your tools out and fix it. Kids you have to change things. (shots of kids looking scared) We have too many Christians who have gotten fat and lazy (speaker is overweight) They don’t want to give up their evening meal. They don’t want to fast for three days or a forty-eight fast or whatever. Do you know Muslims train their kids, children, from when they are five years old to fast during the month of Ramadan. (Shot of young girl taking notes). Listen, we hold the keys. We can change the world. Boys and girls can change the world? Absolutely! (kids clap and whistle) Let’s stand to our feet. Hallelujah. I need you to get serious, serious with God. Say ‘God, I am here to be trained.’ (call and response style, children stand and respond) I’m willing God, I will do what you want me to do. I’ll say what you want me to say. In Jesus’s name, Amen. (shots of kids praying with their eyes closed) If you don’t open your mouth, the Holy Spirit can’t talk. All right, now I want everyone to raise your hands and we are going to pray in tongues. (shot of speaker leading kids speaking in tongues) The Lord Jesus will whisper
in your ear what to say, don’t stop, don’t stop. This is the greatest day of your life, the day you got saved.”

00:08:45 Extreme close-up of girl speaking in tongues.

Split edit from girl speaking in tongues to one shot of speaker. No ID yet.

Speaker: “She’s not in a trance, she’s not out of it, she’s very aware of what’s going on. She’s just hooking up with the spirit. She’s just staying focused.”

00:09:25 Fade to black, title on center right. “Becky Fischer is a Pentecostal children’s minister.”

Still in black, fade to second title on center right. “She runs conferences and an annual summer camp for Evangelical kids.”

Becky Fischer: (one shot) “I think going to a playground of kids that don’t know anything about Christianity and leading them to the lord in no time at all and just moments later they can be seeing visions and hearing the voice of God. (cut to shot of young boy with eyes closed singing. Boy lying on ground in seizure like state) They are so useable in Christianity. If you look at the world’s population, one third of that 6.7 billion people are children under the age of 15. Where should we be putting our efforts? I’ll tell you where our enemies are putting it, they are putting it on the kids. They are going into the schools. I can take you to Palestine and show you photographs of where they’re taking their kids to camps like we take our kids to bible camps. And they are putting hand grenades in their hands and how to put on bomb belts. They are teaching them how to use rocket launchers and machine guns. (cut to shots of kids preying and speaking in tongues) It is no wonder with that intense training and disciplining that those kids are ready to kill themselves in the name of Islam. I want to see young people who are as devoted to the cause of Jesus Christ as young people devoted to Islam. I want to see them radically laying down their lives for the gospel as they are over in Pakistan and Israel and Palestine and all those different places. Because, excuse me, but we have the truth. (Cut to shot of her loading VCR) I would say there is a friendlier environment in the United States towards Christianity today than there has been in my lifetime. And a lot of it in the last few years has to do with President Bush. He has really brought a lot of credibility to the Christian Faith. He is very open, bluntly open in his faith in God.”

00:11:52 Close up of her hand fast forwarding video tape of Jesus Camp with kids crying.

Shot of her talking to two young boys at camp asking how many kids they are bringing.

00:13:57 Title lower left over shot of countryside from car window. “Evangelicals believe that to obtain salvation they must be “born-again” by accepting Jesus as their savior.
New title upper right, “43% of Evangelical Christians become ‘born-again’ before the age of 11.”

00:14:54 Shots of kids watching program about big bang theory.

Mother: “One popular thing to do in American politics is to note that the summers in the United States in the past few years have been very warm. As a result global warming must be real. What’s wrong with this reasoning?”

Young boy: (same young boy who was in hallway with speaker) “It’s only gone up 0.6 degrees.”

Mother: “Yeah, it’s not really a big problem is it.”

Young boy: “Nope. I don’t think it’s going to hurt us.”

Mother: “It’s a huge political issue. And that is why it’s really important for you to understand it.”

Young boy: “Is evolution a political issue?”

Mother: “No, not really, but it’s becoming one now. What if you had to go to a school where they said ‘Creationism is stupid and you are stupid if you believe in it,’ or what if you went to a school and the teacher said, ‘Evolution is stupid and you are stupid if you believe in it.’”

Young boy: “I wouldn’t mind it.”

Mother: “If you look at creationism, you know it’s the only possible answer.”

Young boy: “That’s exactly what dad said.”

Discussion with kids about science doesn’t really prove anything and kids quote that Galileo was right to give up science for God. Mom talks about home schooling.

00:17:40 “I want my kids to know there are two types of people in the world. Those who love Jesus and those that don’t.”

More radio clips of audio show.

00:18:50 “Why are kids taught that there is no global warming? Because they are only concerned with themselves. Our president is telling people that we should only teach creationism. Do you know what is happening in Kansas? They have to teach intelligent design right along side Darwin’s evolution. Well think about that, you have 600,000 children that are being lied to.”
Radio discussion about percentage of Americans that are evangelicals and have elbowed into politics.

“There is a chipping away about the separation between church and state.”

Kids bowling and studying about Jesus. Praying that they get a strike.

00:23:09 Young girl from bowling alley. “I think God’s word is stronger than Man’s word. I always wanted to do people’s nails and I am tired of people making fun of me about God.”

00:25:03 Young girl dancing in her room to heavy metal Christian rock. Expresses why she doesn’t like Britney Spears. “People out there just make this stuff up.”

Kids do pledge of allegiance to the Bible at home schooling.

00:31:09 Shots of Becky Fischer praying and blessing the building and electronic equipment before summer camp so the devil doesn’t invade the children and proceedings.

00:33:56 Becky Fischer: “And while I am on the subject, let me say something about Harry Potter. (shots of kids showing interest) Warlocks are the enemy of God. And I don’t care what kind of hero they are. They are the enemy of God. According to the old testament, Harry Potter would have been put to death.” (some applause, shot of young boy looking over chair. Shot of boy who was being home schooled looking stoic) You don’t make heroes out of warlocks.”

Extreme close up of Becky Fischer

“This is a generation that is going to stand for purity and righteousness and holiness and you are going to serve the Lord all the days of your life. And we declare all those things over you. (shot of young blond boy drinking Pepsi.) I believe this so much that I have given my whole life to see it that you get there.”

Ominous music rises. Close-up shots of kids looking uncomfortable.

00:38:05 Becky Fischer: “I sense in my heart tonight is what I heard the lord say is that is some kids here that say they are Christians, that go to church all the time, but you are one thing when you are at church and you are another thing when you are at school with your friends. You are a phony and a hypocrite. You do things you shouldn’t do. You talk dirty just like the other kids talk. And it’s time to clean up your act. (shots of kids crying and other kids praying) Come up here and get washed. We can’t have phonies in the army of good. Come up here, put your hands in here. Father we just washed them with the water of your word.”

Shot of teen singing tongues in microphone.
Kids that were shown giving testimony in mic.

00:39:15 Shots of thunderstorm over chapel at night. Kids giggling and playing in rain and playing with flashlights in dark of dorm room.

Father lectures to go to sleep and ghost stories aren’t healthy.

00:43:04 Kids in cafeteria.

Young redhead boy: “Mom, doesn’t she look like Harry Potter.” (referring to girl with short brown hair and glasses, kids laugh).

Girl: “I can’t watch it because it has witchcraft.”

Boy with cap: “My mom doesn’t want me to watch those kind of movies because they have witchcraft, but I watch it at my dad’s.” (laugh)

00:45:48 (shot of kid walking and practicing, Kid with mullet getting excited and practicing to preach.) “They told I was going to preach tonight. I’m really excited to be teaching to kids. I’ve never really preached to a whole lot of kids I didn’t know. I feel, I mean I really feel that we are a key generation.”

Shots of young girl who likes a vocal church and breaking dishes. Shots of kids dancing.

00:52:12 Boy with mullet: “When I see people who are into a person who are non-Christian, there is always something that doesn’t seem right. Something that makes my spirit feel yucky. All this world feeds you is trash. It’s like candy and meat. I want the meat.”

Ends with radio debate between Becky and radio host.

Directed by Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady

Executive Producers Nancy Dubuc and Molly Thompson

Ends with Spirit in the Sky by Norman Greenbaum.

Closing shots of mullet boy and girl who likes it loud preaching on the street.
In early 2003, James Miller and Saira Shah went to the Gaza Strip to make a documentary about what it’s like to grow up in a conflict zone.

They were entering a region that had been in turmoil for more than fifty years. The Gaza Strip and its Palestinian Arab population, fell under Israel’s control following the Six Day War of 1967.

During a summit in 2000, Israel proposed handing control of Gaza to the Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, ultimately rejected the deal. Since then, hardliners on both sides have gained ground.

Israeli citizens have been subjected to wave after wave of deadly terror attacks by Palestinian militants. In 2000, Israeli voters elected Ariel Sharon – a Prime Minister who promised to hunt out and kill suspected militants in Gaza and the West Bank.

A Frostbite Films Production
Directed and Filmed by James Miller
Written and Reported by Saira Shah

May 2nd 2003 over ambient noise

“A British cameraman has been shot dead by Israeli forces while filming in the Gaza Strip. James Miller was near the Egyptian border when he was hit in the neck.”

James Miller was the director of this film. On the second of May, 2003, he became another grim headline of the Middle East.”

Dissolve of color shot of Miller picture to black and white of same photo in newspaper news story of his death.
Audio: James Miller was one of the finest documentary cameramen of his generation (shot changes to name James Miller enlarged on screen). Used to working in the world’s most dangerous places. (shot of Miller with his son on shoulders and dog).

00:01:56 Still of James with son and dog becomes video

Saira Shah: “James was also a husband. (pause, shot changes to mom with younger son) And the father of two small children. (video shots continue of James with family) He knew the risks of going to Gaza. (shot of locals carrying weapons and flag and shooting weapons.) But he thought his work could make a difference.” (Shot of locals covering up grave with their hands. Shot of young girl crying.)

00:02:28 Split edit. Male voice, no ID. “Your human response is actually to not intrude and to switch the camera off and move away.”

Split edit. Male voice identified as James Miller, director of Unholy War on CNN’s Larry King Live.

James Miller: “But, if you do that, you’re not actually bearing witness to what’s happening to them. (medium shot of locals looking over dead bodies, extreme close up of old man looking over bodies and crying) You are showing a vast number of people the actual reality of that situation.” (close up of crowd very close to bodies and woman having to be pulled away)

00:02:56 Continuation of news coverage from before. Shot of Israeli army.

Commentator: “The Israeli army said they fired in self-defense. But TV footage shows Mr. Miller and his team waving white flags at the soldiers.” (footage of the white flags).

Cut to daytime explosion and dead people on the ground. Cut to Sharon walking with staff in executive building.

Saira Shah: “This film isn’t about the rights and wrongs of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (shots of protestors in the streets and young men walking down the street. Wonderful pauses in the narration.) It is about the people who get sucked in. (over the shoulder shot of James shooting masked infantry) About James. (Shot of boy with rifle getting shot). And about children getting caught up in a grown up war.”

00:03:45 Shot of hooded woman smiling and pointing up to a military jet passing over.

Saira Shah: “James had planned a film about Israeli children too. So the story isn’t finished. (shot of Israeli girl mourning over coffin. Dissolve to zoom on James sitting with crew smiling into camera) But James did bear witness. Everything you are about to see is through his eyes.”
Fade to black

Title: Death in Gaza

00:04:17

Title: Nablus The West Bank over sound of helicopters. Sound of explosion over black.

Cut to footage of people running from smoke.

Audio from James onboard mic from camera with lower third closed captioning.

James: “Get my (bulletproof) vest ready. Saira: It’s ready. James: “Keep it pointed that way.” (footage from his camera continues of people running away from explosion towards his camera) James: “Keep it pointed that way. Hold it like that and give me my vest.”

Audio from people in the crowd. “Come over here. Film! Film this!”

Footage continues from his camera of people looking at damage. Blood on the ground.

00:05:17 Footage of corpses on the ground.

Audio from camera with closed captioning and translated. “He’s here . . you can film him!” “Guys, keep away! Let him film. . . God is Great.”

Saira Shah: The witnesses say Israeli agents planted bombs in the cars of men planning suicide attacks. A helicopter detonated the charge. This is known as a targeted assassination.”

Audio from camera. “This is peace, Israel’s way. This is peace.”

Saira Shah: “The ground is covered with shreds of flesh.”

Audio from camera: “What is under there. We’re collecting it so we can bury it. There’s some. And there’s blood, tons of it. We’ve buried his brain. Get me another bag.”

Saira Shah: “We’re trying to understand how people learn to hate so deeply. They’re prepared to die in order to kill. So we’re looking for the next generation. The children who will make either peace or war.” (shots of young men looking at bomb site)

00:08:10 Shot of aerial peaceful shot of city streets dissolves to medium shot of soldier at checkpoint.
Saira Shah: “The West Bank is divided by Israeli roadblocks. A new Palestinian uprising broke out in September 2000. Since then, Israel has been defending itself against a wave of suicide bombings. Palestinian towns have become prisons.”

00:09:00 Footage of Israeli guards blocking road.

Audio from camera soldier: “The road is blocked, OK?” Saira: “The road is blocked. What has happened?”

Saira Shah: The soldiers have caught another suspected suicide bomber trying to get to Israel.

Audio from camera: Saira: How long ago did this happen? Did you just catch him now? An hour ago? Soldier: I can’t answer you, please! You will go now, move back, thank you. Move the cars.”

Extreme close-up of soldier

00:11:45 While being concerned about passing tanks.

Saira Shah: from camera. We’re television. Is it safe to be around here? What is going on? What is going on? Unidentified person: Nothing too much. Saira: Is it safe for us to go around here? James: I’m slightly more worried about the tanks than the stones.

00:12:45 Footage of kids throwing stones.

Saira Shah: James’s voice wouldn’t ordinarily be in the film. Now it seems part of the story. The tanks aren’t actually aiming at the kids. But often they get hurt. Stones can’t hurt tanks. So why do they risk it.

They interview kids and get along well. Kids run when tank comes. Gunfire.

Saira speaks of both Israeli and Palestinians getting caught in traffic from tanks.

Heads to Gaza strip. UK news coverage of deaths. Grim city of Rafah. Flattened from being an area of conflict between both sides.

Saira Shah: “We have come to see the children caught in the middle.”

Shots of kid playing soccer against a wall.

Title: Mohammed. Twelve years old.

08:18:48 Shots of Palestinian classroom. Kids talk about what they want to be when they grow up. A doctor, a lawyer so that I can give justice to people. First introduction of music.
Teacher: Israel occupied the Palestinian lands in 1948. Two areas in Palestine were not
colonized. They were the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Who’s going to draw the map
on the board? (Girl draws map) In 1967, Israel occupied the Gaza Strip and the West
Bank. They were ruled by?” Students answer “... The Israelis.”

Shot of apartments getting bulldozed.

Shots of young boys playing video games.

Young boy: “My mother says, “Don’t go near the Israelis... they shoot... they don’t
know Islam... they’re criminals... whatever they see, they shoot. She says that a lot,
but I don’t listen. I want to be nice to the all the world. Except my enemies, the Jews.”
Cut to video game with captions of “shoot, shoot.”

Kids play with toy guns in a game called Jews and Arabs, used to be played with rocks
and stones. Players have to die. Cuts to real picture of boy being shot and gravestone.

Shot of kids at mosque praying.

Kid: “Some pigs [Israelis] do pray. But their prayer is useless. They don’t say, “God is
Greatest.” They don’t know the Koran. They pray like this. They just bend a bit. But we
have education. (shot of Saira over the shoulder of kids while interviewing, nice) We
know what moves to make. They pray standing up.”

Ahmed is kid they are following. Slum.

Saira is bilingual. Deals with the kids. Slum is five miles from the sea but blocked by
Israel settlements. Four-year-old girl says Jews are slums of dogs and learned it on
television.

Video of masked men playing hand slap game with Ahmed, recruiting. Saira asks isn’t
Ahmed too young for this. Masked man says, don’t worry sister. If we lose our little
brother, there are thousands to replace him.

Shots of kids with headbands on, same kids. Saira asks Ahmed at end of sequence, how
would you like to be shot. Ahmed answers they wouldn’t shoot me, I am just a little boy.

00:54:16 Fade to black.

Title: Salem. Fourteen years old.

Filmmakers learn a young boy’s been shot. Footage of boy on stretcher. Throwing stones
at bulldozers. Tanks opened fire. James seems shaken. He finds it difficult to keep
shooting.
Title: Salem dies six hours later. Now he’s a martyr. Shots of kissing his body in streets.

Ahmed gets recruited. Marching with men, looks scared. Shots at night with night cam. “Ahmed is our lookout.”

Title May 2, 2003, 8 AM

Zoom on still of Saira and James.

Saira: This was to be our last day in Rafah. Shots of kids and tractors. Friend says he is worried about Ahmed, that he will be martyred. Thinks they both should be because I will miss him. Mother tries to talk some sense into him.

Title 5:00 PM

Shots of Ahmed making dynamite bomb.

Title 6:00 PM

Shot of tractors kids throwing rocks. Local camera team shots them shooting. They run. Gunfire.

7:30 PM

Leaves camera running. Tank and bulldozers come at night. She are shooting in the dark. An APC stops 100 meters away with night vision. They have shot of the guy. They are watching us.

9:30 PM

They play strange music to taunt Arabs.

10:30 PM
Leave with white flag. Call out. Gun shot. Assume it’s a warning. Another shot, this is the shot that kills James. Another shot, misses

Palestinians print poster of James. Extremists gained another martyr. The rest of us lost James.
Super Size Me / Morgan Spurlock

Opens as comedy. Kids singing a song at kids’ camp mentioning all fast-food restaurants.

00:01:07 Title “Look after the customer and the business will take care of itself.” Ray Kroc McDonald’s Founder.

00:01:21 Shot of American flag. Narrator: “Everything is bigger in America. We have the biggest cars, the biggest houses, the biggest companies (shot of Walmart) and the biggest people. America has now become the fattest country in the world. Congratulations. (Offers stats and charts). My mother cooked dinner everyday. We never ate out. Now people do it almost everyday. Now being overweight is only behind smoking as the second cause of death in America. People sued the fast food restaurants. (offers stats)

Music: Fat Bottomed Girls.


Interviews a trainer about people limiting themselves by sitting at their desk and not walking. Availability of McDonald’s.

00:13:32 Title: The Last Supper. Healthy dinner with his wife.

Title Day 1 Does man on the street about where they eat fast food. Someone from France says they don’t supersize there. Gives rules of the movie. Has to have three meals a day for thirty days. Goes to different McDonald’s.

Title: Sue the Bastards

French woman says it is the American way to sue. A man said if he was the judge he would throw it out. Another woman says you can order a salad at McDonald’s.

John F. Banzhaf III, law professor, George Washington University: “I think fast food is mentioned before all of the other causes in most of the articles and books and studies that mention it is a sudden epidemic. We have had neighborhood restaurants for over hundreds of years. It can’t be the foods we are eating at home, we have been eating at home for hundreds of years. Something is very different.”

Spurlock: John Banzhaf is currently spearheading the attacks against the food industry. Advising many of the lawyers who are going through the process. People say he is crazy. But that’s what they say about him when he first sued the tobacco companies. Until he won.

Mentions McDonald’s has the most reach. They have playgrounds. They attract kids. They started happy meals. He talks to lawyers and nutrition professors while building case. Informative.
One-size fries when they first opened. Cars had to enlarge the cup holder as sizes increased. Took him five minutes to eat it. Shows the ten- and fifteen-minute progress and he pukes out the window.

Title: The Toxic Environment

Offers doctor testimony about getting sick and shows fat people and vending machines

Jacob Sullum, senior editor, Reason Magazine: It is a terrible habit, but when will it become socially acceptable to hector fat people like you can hector cigarette smokers. The smoker can say fuck you. I find it hard to find the distinction between the two.

Other health problems one in every three children born in 1980 will develop diabetes. Scaring of the liver.

Spokesman for Subway with his old fat pants. Kids like him. The world isn’t going to change. You have to change.

Talks to son of Baskin and Robbins who is a health expert. “Both my father and uncle died by fifty-one. You can’t deny this link.”

Morgan gives advice about how to eat at McDonald’s with health expert.

Man on the street and first check in with weight gain.

Shows the McDonald’s legal reply

Commercials with celebrities for cereal and McDonald’s and soda. Kids will be closer and healthier if they have meals with their family at home. Kids couldn’t recognize pictures of Jesus or Washington, but could recognize Ronald McDonald.

Restaurants have to have information charts. Some hid them in the basement. First blood test. Gained seventeen pounds

Visits school. Checks on kids’ diets. Only six out of thirty-six meals are cooked there.

Visits kitchen at Appleton, Wisconsin, school for troubled kids. They give them healthy food and the kids reacted positively with results.

Visited some of the fattest cities in America. Talked about diet drugs as a fix-it. Testimonies from people who had to have surgery. Doctor talking about redemption when it catches up with you.
The Nazis: A Warning from History / BBC


Opens with picture of young child giving heil Hitler sign.

Narrator. Hidden in a forest which is now Poland, on the border of Russia, lie the remains of a concrete town. For three crucial years during WWII, this was home to one of the most infamous figures in world history. (Still bw shots and b-roll)


Narrator has British accent.

Subtitles for German testimonies from old people, veterans, and survivors.

Also uses current footage of mountains, landscape, culture, bars and people. Very historic.

Archives from WWI also.

Closest to a classic documentary or film.

Some testimonies in English, descendants of people in World War II.

Some actor voices used for dead people, in the manner of Ken Burns.

Wonderful documents and period music and representative film stock footage. Short music breaks between narration.

You can hear interviewer ask questions every now and then and it is in German. Good use of charts and graphics

Early roots of anti-Semitism, democracy didn’t work, started in Bavaria. Roots of all three key figures.

00:17:19 Four primary sources so far, six, seven.

Quick edits, b-roll and stills of every major character and location.
One positive testimony about Hitler, no ID: He looked right in my eyes when I first met him and he looked right through me like he was looking somewhere else or through me. I then knew that he did have a beautiful side.

Soldier saying that he wanted to leave but may as well commit suicide. One lady says times got better in our household, times were safer than now, but that is a risk to say. Some former Hitler youth speak of looking in his eyes and giving him their devotion.

Much use of propaganda film, color. Much use of shooting old locations now in color with rack focus and other tools.

Beautiful interviews. Framing and positioning.

Former associates and aides speak of his insecurity when he was challenged and habits of sleeping.

The day they agreed with Russia. The sky was blue and yellow and purple and red and burgundy and grey. I was afraid to look at him but a young female aid confronted him and said this is going to lead to more death. He looked away and immediately went to his room.
00:00:00 White title roll on black: “On September 11, 2001, the firefighters from engine 7, ladder 1 responded to the world trade center. This is their story. It is also the story of how New York City’s bravest rose to their greatest challenge. What you are going to see is the only known footage from inside Tower 1 – an eyewitness account of one of the most defining moments of our time.”

00:00:30 Title 9/11 small on screen with video images of towers after the attack with fireman walking in slow motion dissolving up from behind. Quiet piano music builds up.

Fade to black Fade up to seagull over Hudson River and New York skyline with towers standing. Shot of towers from airplane eye level. Shot of towers from the ground looking up.

00:01:15 Cut to live action of fireman

Narrator: When you work in a firehouse seven blocks from the two tallest buildings in New York (footage of fireman and twin towers before the incident) you get to know every step, every staircase and every story. (footage of fireman in lobby, fire truck backing up)

Cut to firemen in firehouse.

Narrator: I’m James Sandler. (shot of Jim clowning with his friends in firehouse) I’ve been a New York firefighter for 9 years at ladder one downtown. (shot of firetruck backing out of fire house with Jim sitting in back laughing) Last summer, the summer before 9/11, there were days we would go to the trade center five times in a single shift. (shots of them carrying equipment in lobby) My point is we knew those towers as well as anybody. (shots of fireman getting their picture taken with tourists and laughing) But nobody, nobody expected September 11.

00:02:09 Shot of fireman looking up to sound of airplane. Slow motion of people on the street looking up and pointing. Cut to shot looking up at smoking towers. Cut to real time shots of people running on the ground.

Cut to firemen entering building.

James Sandler: On that day guys from my fire house, my best friends, were some of the first firefighters in tower one after the plane hit. (shots of fireman carrying out people) What they did on that day was remarkable. It is almost as remarkable that it was captured on videotape. . . . inside the towers. Beginning to end.

00:03:35 Rapid shots of chaos and jerky camera moves.
James Sandler: The tape was shot by two brothers. Jules and Idian Naudet. (shot looking up from camera) They are documentary filmmakers and old friends of mine. (shot of James with them having fun in the firehouse before the incident mixed with shots of smoke coming down the street).

Cut to interview with Jules Naudet in studio against black background.

Jules Naudet: They always say there is always a witness for history I guess and we were chosen to be the witness.

Cut to distant shots of smoke from the towers and smoke moving down the streets.

James Hanlon, Ladder 1: Lower third identified The strange thing is, the tape, the whole story, kind of happened by accident. I mean, Jules and Gideon didn’t mean to make a documentary about 911. We wanted to make a documentary about a firefighter. That’s how the whole thing got started.

Fade to black

Title: June 9

Switch to people doing jumping jacks in training.

James Sandler: More to the point. The plan was to follow a rookie. On the job we call them probies.

Gedeon Naudet: The idea was to show a kid in nine months which is their probationary period where they have to prove themselves.

James Sandler: We teamed up and by June of 2001, at the fire academy shooting the training. After a few weeks of learning the basics, someone who thinks he may know the basics of being a fireman, he is in for a rude awakening for being a real fireman.

Shots of what tragic fire stories and tragic stills of what may happen and testimony of what may happen Video of testimonials.

James Sandler: We got Tony assigned to my ladder house. It is my ladder house. It is my ladder house, it is ladder one. (shots of Toby doing dishes and working in the ladder house)

Tony: I think I’m doing decently. I’m still waiting for a fire. I think that will make a pretty big difference.

Title: July 10
P.A. in firehouse announcing a fire. Tony runs down the hall. Fire truck runs down street. Fire is just in a trash can.

James Sandler: On camera. They say there are two kinds of clowds that come to a fire house. A black cloud and a white cloud. A black cloud brings all the fires in the city with it. A white cloud . . . just the opposite, no fires.

James Sandler: Off camera. Don’t get me wrong. There were fires. Just not when Tony was on duty. He was a white cloud. (footage of team going to a false alarm)

00:11:20 Jules Naudet: As the days would pass, Tony was waiting for his first fire wanted to prove to the other guys and even more to himself that he was going to be a really great fireman. The guys were not going to make it easy on him. (shots of hazing and training Tony)

Tony: If I wanted to get rich I would have become a lawyer. But I wanted something I could live with for the rest of my life. This I can live with.

James Sandler: You do your job, you risk your life to help people. And with time, you become part of the unique extended family. (shots of picnics and family at firehouse) Tell me one other job where everyone sits down to dinner together, every night.

Tony: It’s four or five weeks and still no fire. It’ll come, probably when I am asleep. (shots of car fire) I got to spray water.

Gedeon Naudet: By the end of August, we knew we had a great cooking show and there were no fires.

Jules Naudet: We were just doing our job, that was a big concern. But when we would talk to the senior guys, they would say be careful what you wish for.

Tony: Yesterday, a twenty-seven-year-old firefighter stationed in Staten Island went to a fire and passed away. This guy left behind a two-year-old son and a baby on the way. This guy was just expecting to go home and see his girlfriend after the tour that day.

James Sandler: When I look back to last summer it doesn’t just seem like a different time, it feels like a different world. Looking back we were all just kind of innocent, especially Tony.

Night of Sept. 10 the French cook lamb chops and bond with the guys.

Radio commentator. It should be a beautiful day today, the afternoon temperature about 80.

James Sandler: It’s begun to sound like some sort of cliché. But really, September 11 started out like every other day. (weather forecast continues) 8:00 in the morning, the day
guys were just coming in. (shots of cooking breakfast) I was off that day. 13 guys in my firehouse were on.

Unnamed fireman. Around 8:30, I think the run came in. (shot of firebell going off) It was a gas leak. We responded. Didn’t think anything of it.

James Sandler: Jules was riding with the battalion chief videotaping.

Jules: It was just another call and I am riding with the battalion chief.

James Sandler: It was basically camera practice. Jules had only been shooting for a few weeks. Before that Gideon was the main cameraman.

Jules: Every time the battalion goes I go. It is the practice. I shoot. (shots of checking gas leak)

James Sandler: It was 8:46 in the morning.

Battalion Chief. We checked for a gas leak with meters. It was pretty routine. And then we heard a plane go over and in Manhattan you don’t hear planes go over too often. Especially loud ones. (shot of fireman at gas leak looking up. Jules raises his camera and catches the plane going into tower one)

Audio from camera of fireman: Holy shit.

Fireman interview: Right then and there, I knew this was going to be my worst day as a firefighter. (shots of Jules shooting chief in fire truck going to the towers.)

James Sandler: The chief made the first official report. It was probably a two minute ride, but it felt like forever. There are so many things going through your head. You felt sorry for the people, the people in the building. Everyone we were passing was just looking up.

Radio reports. Comments of fireman feeling they had never experienced something like this.

Jules: We parked right under the awning of One World Trade Center and the chief puts his gear on (shot of chief putting his gear on) and I remember asking, can I go in with you and he says yep (shot of chief saying come in with me) yes, stay with me. And I hear screams and right to my right, there were two people on fire burning. I just didn’t want to film it. No one should see this.

Sandler continues to narrate and they figure out the jet fuel blew out all the windows. Firemen continue to comment in retrospect. Jules keeps shooting from inside and outside. Other brother at firehouse. Gideon takes his camera and starts walking to the trade center. He shoots the second airplane hitting the tower. Wonderful footage. Shoots reactions in the street. Different languages and discussions.
Sandler continues to give narration explaining the fear and confusion and changing priorities.

Audio of radio coverage over Gideon’s footage. Gideon denied access so goes back to firehouse and shoots Tony being alone and his reactions.

Brothers continue to narrate

Shoot through the night and rescue and digging through rubble.
God Grew Tired of Us 2006

Only DVD with previews and all of them Christian in nature. First ad was for movie about Christian football coach, Facing the Giants. Second ad was for Michael W. Smith film, The Second Chance.

A National Geographic Film

00:01:04 Black children reading public bulletin board.

00:01:51 Title God Grew Tired of Us. Shots of kids playing soccer and people in local village.

Narration [Nicole Kidman, not identified except in credits] with closed captioning below over shot of tree in field. “The war between North and South, that is Sudan, started in 1983. (cut to map of Africa showing Sudan) Two million people lost their lives due to that war – civil war.” Dissolve to shot of Sudan field.

Unidentified voice with closed captioning. “I left when I was six. The vision or picture of Southern Sudan is kind of getting away from me. (cut to 1 shot with him talking. Cut to shot of straw houses) It’s going away from my mind. (Shot of woman walking in dresses with baskets on their heads) This, my Mother Homeland was beautiful and I can compare it to nothing.”

00:03:26 Cut to speaker with lower third. Panther Bior.

Panther Bior: The climate was good, the life was nice. We have a lot of food throughout the year. (cut to shot of two men in canoe riding through marsh) vegetables, fruits, everything. And it was very rich soil. (cut to shot of people walking in fog through cows and sheep) My father was a farmer, cattle keeper . . . and I used to tend my cattle with my friends.

Cut to Panther: In the afternoon, we take them to the riverbank so they can drink water. (Cut to shots with audio of boys singing and tending cattle. Beautiful shots. Cut back to Panther) But when the war came we lost all those things. (Cut to map of Sudan and Ethiopia.) So then we run away.


Narrator: The Kakuma Refugee camp became home to thousands of orphaned young men. Known as the lost boys of Sudan. They arrived here after walking thousands of miles through the wilderness of Sudan to escape their countries bloody civil war. The lost boys had no idea they would spend nearly a decade trapped on the border of their country.
Second quote and split edit. “I am proud to be a Sudanese. It is in my mind that you should be proud of who you are. So I should be proud of being born in Sudan.” (shots continue of men singing)

John Bul Dau (shot of him in small house, lower third identifies him) But I cannot go to Sudan if the war is still. That’s the first thing. If the war is still, I cannot go to Sudan.

Cut to shot of man riding bicycle, split edit.

Unidentified man. “When I left Sudan it was a time that war broke out in our village. People come at nights with guns and if you are not Muslim, they can kill you.

Daniel Abul Pach: (1 shot with village behind him) If there is peace in Sudan, I will come. But if no peace, I will not come to Sudan. I will not come because people are being shot. They shoot small people like us. We don’t know, they have just killed our parents. Like my father has died at that time when I first go through Ethiopia when we were running. We were in cattle camp. They came and shoot my father, which mean if I go now to Sudan, they can kill me again. Like my mother now, I don’t know where she is with her kids. Maybe they have died. Imagine. (pause, shakes his head and gets emotional) So, I cannot go to Sudan again. (Extreme close up)

Fade to black and then sky.

Narrator: In the 1950s as the British abandoned colonization of Northern Africa, they hastily combined two separate territories into one Sudan. Religion and oil ignited a civil war. Pinning the Arab north against the black Christina south. (shots of rockets being fired in fields)

00:07:08 John Bul Dau: The first thing was that people were being shot. Many people have been killed. Women who were around there with us were being raped. Boys like us have been enslaved. (shots of young boys in camp looking in camera) Others were brutally killed.

Cut to shots of people running through fields with weapons

Narrator: In the year 1987 the government announced to kill all male child in the south regardless of age.

Unidentified boy: If you are found and you are a boy, they can just take you, maybe 12 years old, they can just cut you. They can even shoot you, or they can even take a needle and make a hole in your testes. They want to make you sterile when you grow up. (cut to footage from car of burning village)

Unidentified male voice over village footage: When our village was attacked by Muslim government troops at night I took my own way and my mom, my dad, they took their
own way. (cut to shot of boy running through field, reenactment) I was in a dilemma. Have they died? Are they still alive?

Shot of two young men together

Man on right: All the small boy children they were putting in the house in my place and they locked the houses and burned the houses. All children burned in their houses. So we were told by the elders that all children were burned in their houses. All men who are living there are dead, except people who run to the bush. So, we can’t go back to the village.


US agrees to resettle some of the lost boys after they can’t find their families. Shots of them traveling, shopping, cooking and watching TV. Miss friends and worry about them.

Not allowed to work until Social Security cards are given, until then government will give them three months of federal assistance. After that they are on their own and repay air travel to America.

Lost Boy: Is Santa in the Bible? And what is the connection with Jesus Christ? We have so many questions.

In Pittsburgh, cultural problems. Merchants concerned with boys traveling in groups, advised not to. Boys feel America unfriendly.

Gets a letter from home. Tried to find them through Red Cross. Bad news. Family is sick and some killed. Families come to visit. Feels like home.

Shots move to Phoenix for Lost Boy conference. They live in twenty-three states. Movie focuses on John. Becomes an advocate for Sudan. John Dau is his name.

1:22:15 Mother comes to visit John Bul Dau and sings a Sudanese song in airport. Cuts to females in Sudan singing similar song.

Closing graphics: White on black. Panther recently returned from Africa, where he was married and reunited with his mother and brother. After completing his Bachelor’s Degree in Economics at the University of Pittsburgh, he plans to return to Africa to open a school in his village. (over audio of local village singing)

John Bul Dau continues to support his family, both in Syracuse and in Africa, while pursuing a bachelor’s degree at Syracuse University. He has founded a non-profit organization and is currently building a medical clinic in his hometown of Duk, Sudan.
Daniel continues to live at Pittsburgh Job Corps and is taking classes at a community college. He has yet to locate any members of his family.

Cut to shots of village dancing.

Narrated by Nicole Kidman
Written by Christopher Quinn
Featuring Panther Bior, John Bul Dau, Daniel Abol Pach

Without whom this wouldn’t haven’t been possible: Eric Gilliland, Catherine Keener, Jon Levin, Dermot Mulroney, Mike Myers, Brad Pitt
Narrator: Welcome to the world of money. (quick zooms on New York office buildings) Bread, cash, dough, dosh, loot, loola, moolah, The wherewithal. (cut to shot of man in back of cab. Shots of men in suits talking on cell phones) Call it what you like. Money can break us or make us. (Shot of people on street and Wall Street street sign) In the past year it has broken some of the biggest names on Wall Street and in financial centers around the world. (fast motion shots of the floor of the Dow and New York) And while former masters of the universe crash and burn, the rest of us are left worrying if our savings would be safer in a mattress.

Professor Niall Ferguson: (No credit to what university. 1 shot with NYC in background) I want to explain to you just how money has grown to play such a dominant role in all of our lives. (Cut to fast motion shots of NYC) Once more, I want to reveal financial history as the essential backstory behind all history. Banks decided the renaissance, but bond market decided wars. (British accent hard to understand) Stock markets built empires and monetary meltdowns made revolutions. From ancient Mesopotamia down to the present day, the ascent of money has been an indispensable part of the ascent of man. But money's rise has never been a smooth ride.

00:02:05 Title “Ascent of Money” over stock market figures moving left to right, After Effects style.

Voice: Funding for the Ascent of Money was provided by . . . (cut to sponsored insert of Kauffman: The Foundation of Entrepreneurship. Growing Economies, Expanding Human Welfare. Kauffman.org.) (next slide T. Rowe Price, Invest with Confidence) (and by The Smith Richardson Foundation, James and Merryl Tisch and by viewers like you. Thank you)

Imagine a world with no money. Talks about Incas.

Money and credit built on trust.

Episodes
From Bullion to Bubbles
Bonds of War
Risky Business
Planet Finance
The War: Ken Burns

00:00:00 Production begins with list of sponsors and extensive credits. White titles on black background.

00:00:25 Shot of windmill with title: “The Second World War was fought in thousands of places. Far too many for any one accounting. This is the story of four American towns and how their citizens experienced that war.”

00:00:35 Jazz music fades in over black. Still shot of downtown area. Narrator: “One evening in the summer of 1941, several months before the United States would be drawn into the second world war, in a little farming town in Alabama, a sixteen year old high school boy named Glen Downing Frazier discovered that the girl he loved was interested in someone else (shot cuts to nighttime shot of just parked cars on the street). Frazier was so angry and upset that when a juke joint operator refused him service he stalked outside, climbed on his motorcycle and roared through the door, shattering bottles and smashing furniture (shot cuts to cu of pavement that pans out to shot of road). As he raced away, the bar owner chased him down the street with a shotgun.

00:02:47 Shot cuts to still of Frazier in his uniform. Narrator: “The following morning he woke up humiliated, scared, and unable to face his parents. Glen Frazier went to the nearest recruitment office, lied about his age and joined the peacetime army. He volunteered to serve in the Philippines.”

Glen Frazier: “When I volunteered to serve in the Philippines I had no idea we would be in a war. (cut to one shot of Frazier) I thought Germany would be the most likely place that there would be a war. (lower third of his name appears) In my mind I thought it would be safer over there. I never thought Japan would be attacking us.”

00:02:53 Shot of dead soldier on battlefield with audio of artillery in background. Narrator: “Over the next four years Frazier would find himself at the heart of war. Desperate hand to hand combat. (shot cuts to still of soldiers marching through town) A forced march so brutal the world would never forget it. And nightmare prison camps where simply surviving acquired luck, and bravery, and unshakeable will. (cut to still of cars in front of house) Back in Alabama those who loved him would be told he was dead. All Glen Frazier would be able to do is hope that one day he would be able to come back home. “

00:03:54 Title: “A Florentine Film”

Lower third credit: Sam Hynes – Minnesota. Sam Hynes: “Nobody ever thought there would be a good war and I think one might think a just war. I never questioned the necessity of that war and still do not question it. I still look at it as something that had to be done.”
 Orchestra music fades up to shots of dead soldiers in battlefield. Narrator: “The greatest cataclysm in history grew out of ancient and ordinary human emotion. Anger and arrogance and bigotry and the lust for power. (cut to shot of soldiers at Normandy) And it ended with other human qualities, perseverance and faith and leadership and freedom combined with unimaginable brutality to change the course of human events. The second world war brought out the best and worst in a generation. (cut to shot of medics carrying wounded) And blurred the two so that they were almost indistinguishable. (cut to shot of dead bodies laying on ground at concentration camp) In the killing that engulfed the world from 1939 until 1945 between fifty and sixty million people died. So many and in so many different places that the real number will never really be known. (cut to stills of citizens tending to corpses and troops marching on beach) More than eighty-five million men and women served in uniform. But the overwhelming majority of those that perished were civilians. (cut to stills of older townspeople walking through rubble) Obliterated by the reality of war.”

“The United States of America was relatively fortunate. (cut to shots of tired soldiers) More than 405,000 soldiers, airmen, and marines died. But that figure represented proportionally fewer military casualties that was suffered by any of the other major combatants. (cut to stills of destroyed cities) No American cities were destroyed. American civilians were never really at risk. (cut to shots of medics treating citizens and soldiers and soldier hanging American flag off of a second floor European balcony) However if it wasn’t for the sacrifice of American lives the struggles outcome would have been very different. The American economy only grew stronger as the struggle went on. (cut to women on assembly line) And by the time it ended the United States would be the most powerful nation on earth. And a once isolated and insular people would find themselves at the center of world affairs. The war touched every family on every street through every town in America. Towns like Luverne, Minnesota; Mobile, Alabama; Waterbury, Connecticut; and Sacramento, California and nothing would ever be the same again.”

00:08:01 Sam Hynes: “I am not sure that I can speak about why human beings go to war. I think it speaks to a pretty large category. (shot of soldier kneeling cuts to one shot of Hynes) I can only speak as to why eighteen year olds from Minnesota go to war. They go to war because it is impossible not to. Because a current is established in society that is so swift flowing toward war that every young man that steps into it is carried down stream.”

Cut to still of Hynes as young man in uniform. Title appears on screen: “The War” (cut to shot of a front porch with title on screen: “The Four Towns”

Hynes: Luverne, Minnesota, August, 1941. “Miss Aget Ryan who is in town visiting her brother knows what it is to see vast sections of a city ripped to ruin by German bombs. And she remembers the nights that London burned. How she could read a letter by the unbelievable glare. She knows what it means to have high explosive bombs leave craters right outside of the shelter where she was sleeping. She has had her best friends killed. (cut to peaceful country side shots) Looking out at the countryside from the Thompson
porch. She said it was hard to believe the rest of the world was at war. Al Macintosh, Rock County Star.”

Narrator: “Much of the world was already at war in the fall of 1941. (cut to video of farmer examining his field) But to most Americans just recovering from the Great Depression, events overseas seemed unimaginably far away. In Luverne, Minnesota, the biggest town in Rock County, the autumn harvest was only a memory. (cut to video of farmer with daughter on tractor) Its 3,000 citizens had begun the long winter wait (cut to two men being pulled on skis by tractor) until they could sow their fields again.”

Cut to still of Al McIntosh. Narrator: “Al McIntosh, the editor of the Rock County Star live at 517 N. Miss Avenue. He was a newcomer from North Dakota who turned down big city jobs to run his own newspaper. He would find himself trying to explain the unexplainable to his new neighbors. (cut to still of three boys) Six year old Jim Sherman lived with his family at 503 North Estes Street.”

Cut to one shot of Jim Sherman.

Jim Sherman: “I think it was a pretty close knit community. There was a saying that if you don’t want people to know about it you don’t do it. Everybody pretty much knows everybody else” (lower third appears on screen, shot cuts to still of sign ‘Luverne, Minnesota – Crossroads of the world and black and white video of people on downtown streets laughing and socializing).

00:11:30 Shot cuts to still of farmer walking with young boy in pasture.

Narrator: “Four miles south of town near the Rock River there was the fifty acre farm of the Anderson family. There they raised cows and raised oats, corn, and barley. Their middle son, who would face the most fearful fight over France was named Quentin.”

(Shot cuts to still of Quentin school picture, then one shot of Quentin now)

Quentin Anderson: “There was a time when I would be running farm equipment and a lonely airplane would fly over and I would look up and my spirit would soar. That’s where I want to live some time. I want to live that way.”

Music turns to peppy trumpet solo.

Narrator: “In Sacramento, California, the state capitol, Oakies who were refugees from the dust bowl still camped on the edge of town and worked the fields and vineyards of the Sacramento County. (cut to shot of government buildings from aerial still) Sacramento had been the gateway of what was known as the gold rush and the western anchor of the transcontinental railroad. Although it was home to 106,000 people, Sacramento still seemed like a small town. (cut to still of young couple) Tom and Earl Burke would be asked to sacrifice everything for their country. They lived with their parents at 32 Lassen Way, just north of town.”

280
Cut to one shot of Tom Burk

Tom Burke: “It was a pretty friendly town, everybody was just perfect. You could go out on the streets at midnight and you could walk in the dark. Nobody locked their doors. (cut to children playing outside) Nobody even thought of it. It was a nice little town. The lower end of town was actually colorful for us. There were whore houses.”

Burnett Miller: “As you got up to the northern part of town the houses of prostitution were quite fancy. As kids we used to run down there and run through those places.”

Cut to black and white video of front porch of house.

Narrator: “Eighteen year old Burnett Miller lived with his family at a comfortable home at 3643 West Lincoln Avenue. He would discover at the last days of war why it had to be fought. (cut to shot with mother, then cut to still of young Japanese Americans) Almost 7,000 Japanese Americans also lived in Sacramento and the surrounding county. Doctors, lawyers, teachers, and shop owners, as well as some of the most productive farmers in America.”

Music fades from somber to spirited piano.

00:15:20 Narrator: “In Waterbury, Connecticut on the banks of the Naugatuck River a skilled workforce, mostly immigrants and immigrants children turned out screws and washers and buttons. Showerheads and alarm clocks. Toy airplanes and lipstick holders. (cut to stills of factories on the river) Since the nineteenth century its citizens called their town “brass city.” Ray Leopold, the son of a Jewish immigrant from Latvia lived on route eight on the southern edge of the city.”

Ray Leopold: “Waterbury was a center for high quality craft. There were individuals there that could do 1,000 of an inch of work on a thing. If there were zero tolerance required, they could do that too.”

Olga Ciarlo: (One shot) “Well Waterbury had a wonderful Italian community. (cut to shots of Italian businesses) Every Sunday was a picnic for us.”

00:17:25 Narrator: “The Ciarlo family lived at 1032 North Main Street. In the Italian section of town. Their father had recently died. His death would only be the beginning of their loss. And in Mobile, Alabama, population 112,000 the only real industry was shipping. The strength of a generation earlier. What was once a center for cotton and slave trading, Mobile was most known for its annual azalea festival as its leisurely southern air. (cut to shots of old stately homes and downtown) John Grey and his family (cut to still of African American John Grey walking across street with fishing pole) lived on the south side of town near the L&M train tracks at 407 Royal Street. He would soon be asked to fight a war for freedom, but not his. His own countries definition of freedom did not include him.”
John Grey: “Whites and Blacks got a long pretty good within the status quo. (cut to one shot of Grey, lower third appears) But you couldn’t have folks eat at the counter during war time you had to go down to the end and have your sandwich out to eat.”

Narrator: “Across town, Kathryn Phillips and her family lived at 5055 Monterey Place.”

Kathryn Phillips: (cut to still of Phillips family in yard with young soldier)

Kathryn Phillips: (cut to still of Phillips in yard, the cut to one shot). Daddy said that a lot of people made their living by taking in other people’s wash. It was absolutely true. (cut to one shot of Phillips) The pace of life was slow. On a summer’s evening, of course there was no air conditioning so daddy would load us in the car and we would ride downtown to Brown’s Ice Cream. Then we would drive out to Arlington and enjoy the sceneries and when it would cool down enough he would take us back home.” (cut to young African Americans)

Cut to shot of shot down airplane submerged in the ocean.

Narrator: “Nobody in Mobile, Sacramento, Waterbury, Luverne, or anywhere else in America was prepared for what was about to happen to them or their country.”

00:19:53 Nut graph ends. Title appears: “Episode One: A Necessary War”