

LEC 5012 Documentary Film

Course Description:

Cinematic documentaries are vibrant cultural texts with tremendous sociopolitical impact. They often generate intense discourses in civil society. This **group-work-based skill-developing, and employability-enhancing course** is designed with the primary intention of probing into the various aspects related to the conceptualization, production, circulation and reception of various subgenres non-fiction film. The origin, development and the various transformations through which this genre has gone in various historical periods would be the focus of this course. Apart from this, various approaches to documentary filmmaking, different schools of documentary productions and diverse practices related to documentary films will also be studied here. For exemplification and substantiation documentary films by master documentary filmmakers from around the world, including India, would be screened and analysed. Discussion of key-concepts related to documentary cinema will be another major component of this course. The primary logic behind selection of documentaries for this course is the accommodation of various sub-genres of documentary film from different cultural traditions.

Module I: Introductory components

Introduction to documentary Cinema
Distinction between Feature films and doc films
History of documentary cinema—Features of documentary film
Approaches to documentary making
Theories of documentary
Aesthetics of documentary—Television documentaries
Review of Documentary Films
Major documentary filmmakers: Louis Lumiere, Robert Flaherty, Leni Riefenstahl, John Grierson, Frank Capra, Anand Patwardhan, Michael Moore, Dziga Vertov and so on.
Emerging Trends—Essay Films

Module II: Literature on documentary films

John Grierson	“First Principles of Documentary”
Erik Barnouw	“Glimpse of Wonders”
Patricia A	“[Documentary] Subgenres”
Bill Nichols	“The Fact of Realism and the Fiction of Objectivity”
Frank Tomasulo	“The Mass Psychology of Fascist Cinema”
Jeremy Hicks	“Dziga Vertov: Defining Documentary Film”
Michael Renov	“Toward a Poetics of Documentary”
Carl Plantinga	“What is a Non-Fiction Film?”

Module III: Documentary films for Detailed/Non-Detailed Study:

Lumiere	10 Early Films (Actualities), 1895
Robert Flaherty	<i>Nanook of the North</i> , 1922
Dziga Vertov	<i>Man with A Movie Camera</i> , 1929
Leni Riefenstahl	<i>Triumph of the Will</i> , 1935
Alain Resnais	<i>Night and Fog</i> , 1955
Vittalbhai Jhaveri	<i>Mahatma: Life of Gandbi</i> , 1968
Anand Patwardhan:	<i>Ram ke Naam</i> , 1992
M. A. Rahman	<i>Arajeevithangalkku Oru Swargam</i> , 1993
Michael Moore	<i>Fahrenheit 9/11</i> , 2004
Zana Briski	<i>Born into Brothels</i> , 2004
Haobam Paban	<i>AFSPA 1958</i> . 2006
Miki and Romano	<i>The Dark Side of Chocolate</i> , 2010
J. Oppenheimer	<i>The Act of Killing</i> , 2012
Shivendra Sing	<i>Celluloid Man</i> . 2012
S. Soechtig	<i>Fed Up</i> , 2014

Leslee Udwin
Nakul Singh Swamy

India's Daughter, 2015
Muzaffarnagar Baaqi Hai, 2015

Module IV:

- a. Production of a very short documentary film (5 to 10 minutes) using digital technology.