



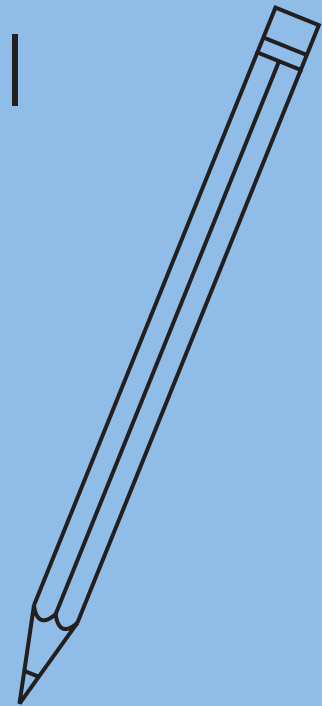
American Justice On Trial + For Love and Legacy

STUDY GUIDE

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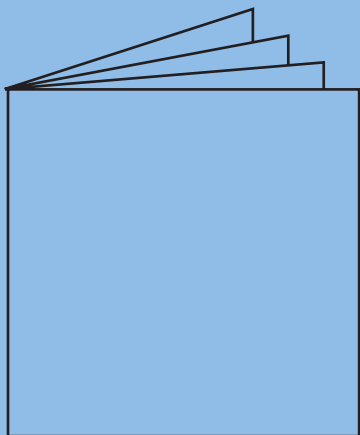
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Index

- 03 Teaching the Film
- 04 Presenter Bios
- 07 Pre-Viewing Topics
- 09 Discussion Questions
- 11 Activities
- 13 Beyond the Classroom
- 14 Documentary Guide
- 15 Common Core Standards
- 16 Media Literacy Resources
- 17 California Media Literacy Standards





About the Films

For Love and Legacy:

A sculptor teams up with Black Panther Party co-founder Huey P. Newton's wife for the collaboration of a lifetime: to rebirth a memory into reality. With Fredrika Newton by her side, Dana King plunges her hands into the clay blocks and uncovers new truths with every draft of the larger-than-life clay head of Huey P. Newton, each more real than the last. Filmed, directed, produced and co-edited by A.K. Sandhu, this story is a soul-stirring, thought-provoking story about extraordinary vulnerability, truthfulness, about art as medicine, and, ultimately, about the undying energy of real love. (Andrew Abrahams & Herb U. Ferrette, II, USA, 40 min)

American Justice On Trial:

This gripping documentary revisits the 1968 Huey Newton trial, one of the most important moments in American judicial history. When Black Panther Party co-founder Huey Newton was arrested for the murder of an Oakland policeman, the trial was bound to be covered by all the major outlets and cause social unrest. What led to his two years in prison is a fascinating trial where racial issues were front and center from the criminal defense to the jury composition. The foreman who headed the jury gives rare insight into what happened during deliberations and how they saved Newton from the death sentence. (A.K. Sandhu, USA, 20 min)

Subject Areas

- **African American Studies**
- **Social Justice**
- **Student Activism**
- **World/Current Affairs**
- **Politics**
- **Social Studies**
- **American History.**

Recommended Grades: 6 - 12



Teaching the Films

After shooting a police officer in self defense in 1967, Black Panther Party co-founder Huey P. Newton is wrongfully convicted of first-degree murder and put on death row. Seeing the amount of press the situation got, Newton used his possibly last moments as an opportunity to expose how flaws of the American judicial system was, both against black people and poor people, and decided to turn the trial into a social movement. Using the courtroom as a classroom, Newton speaks what is whispered and informs the larger public about the deep-rooted problem of racism in America by shedding light on an issue that is still present today: the inequalities of the justice system. Narrated from a variety of perspectives, this film makes clear the real intention of the Black Panther often misconstrued by the history books: organization of the people with results that illustrate the outstanding power of conversation.

Many years later in **For Love and Legacy**, Sculptor Dana King vows to put Huey P. Newton's history right. Because nothing marked his living or his passing, Dana said that she can make a bust of Hewey. But the presence of the sculpture head is larger-than-life. Through a study of human hands and faces rebirth, this is an astounding piece about bringing a concept back to life, bringing love back to life, rebuilding and, ultimately, rebirth. In a grand celebration of fearlessness, both films share a common theme of the processes of uncovering and exposing. Taught in conjunction with this guide, these two short films will inspire deep reflection on art as a method to heal, what it takes for real unity to happen, problem-solving, the importance of conversation, the important of following your dream, and steps that can be taken for real social change to ensue, all through the lens of film education. A screening of this film may complement a curriculum in history, english, or social studies, specifically delving into social justice movements and activism. Recommended for Grades 9-12.

Trial Context: Newton's attorney Charles Garry began his defense with a systemic assault on the grand jury system. Garry's pretrial motions argued that the Alameda County

grand jury system was unconstitutional, secretive, and prejudiced against minorities and the poor. There is still labeling and typecasting in today's court system, specifically for those with less money, which is always a real legal disadvantage. Today's court system labels people with low income "poor people"—i.e., to get something at a lower cost, you have to apply through a "poor person's application". Those with low income do not get access to resources that the wealthier people get, such as transcripts. It is hard to get good pro bono lawyers, let alone find one. And there is nobody those lawyers have to report back to, creating more possibilities for flimsy representation and unethical behavior.

Huey P. Newton helped create an equal jury, which seated 7 women and 5 men, 4 of who were minorities. This was previously unheard of, and this jury was led by the first Black person to serve as jury foreman in a major murder trial in America, the pioneering Black foreman David Harper who pushed this message to the forefront from an intersectional lens. It's stated in the film that, "Huey wanted to show how unfair the judicial system was." Huey was exposing what was wrong with the court system, what was wrong with the police system, and in a broader sense, what was wrong with this country.



Presenter Bios



A.K. Sandhu is a Director, Producer, Cinematographer, and internationally published Photographer. She is the founder of Re-Prezent Partners, a womxn and BIPOC owned, Oakland-based production company that embraces the expansion of how underrepresented communities are depicted in media. A.K. employs documentary filmmaking and photography to revive absent narratives that have been buried or suppressed. Her work crosses into experimental docu-hybrid modes of storytelling, probing themes such as race, gender, spirituality, and cross-cultural solidarity. She was awarded the 2021 Emerging Artist Award in the State of California. A.K. is a fellow of DocNYC/VC's 2021-2022 Storytelling Incubator and was selected as part of the inaugural cohort for Represent Media's Re-Take Oakland 2019-2021 fellowship for emerging BIPOC filmmakers.

A.K. directed, produced, and filmed her short documentary, **For Love And Legacy**, about the making of the first monument to honor the Black Panther Party. The film premiered on the 2022 film festival circuit during Womxn's History Month. She is also the Co-Director, Producer, and Co-DOP of her first feature documentary, **Sign My Name To Freedom** (in post-production), and in development for her episodic documentary that reveals the neglected stories of womxn and children of the Black Panther Party and their ongoing work to redefine our cultural narrative through the arts.

Inspired by her father's photographs of their family, A.K. exited a career in finance to pursue her love for visual storytelling. She has earned degrees from Columbia University and U.C. Berkeley, and is a member of A-Doc, Brown Girls Doc Mafia, CineFemme, and Collective of Documentary Womxn Cinematographers. She speaks English, Punjabi, and Hindi/Urdu.



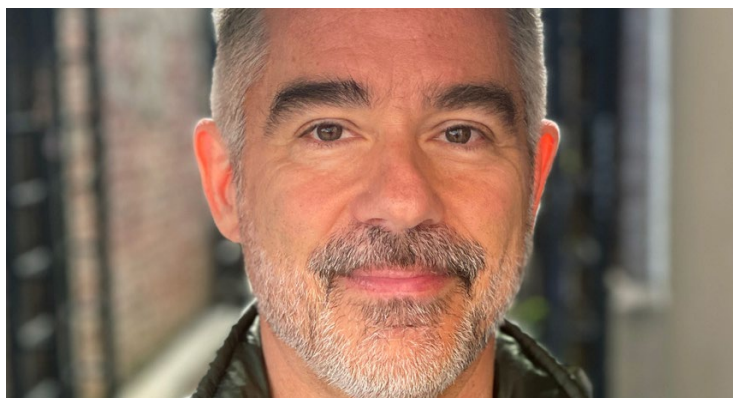
Presenter Bios



Herb Ferrette is an award-winning Black documentary filmmaker and editor with years of experience in the communications industry. He's a seven-time regional Emmy winner and 12-time nominee. He has received National Emmy nominations in the categories of Individual Achievement in a Craft. Herb's editing work has been recognized internationally, including the feature documentary **Stable Life**, awarded Best Feature Documentary at the San Jose Cinequest Festival, Grand Jury Prize at San Antonio Cinefest, a nomination for a regional Emmy, and a national PBS broadcast on America ReFramed. He was honored at Sundance for **The Fight in the Fields** about acclaimed immigration activist Cesar Chavez. He won a Gold Medal at the New York Film Festival with a project for the Discovery Channel, and in the San Diego International Latino Film Festival, **Race Is the Place** won Best Feature Documentary and premiered as the season opener for PBS's **Independent Lens**. Herb recently edited videos on the Black Panthers for the Oakland Museum. He has edited and managed post-production for some of the Bay Area's leading documentary producers whose programs air on national and local PBS, Discovery Channel, MSNBC and WNET's Expose, part of the Bill Moyer's Journal.



Presenter Bios



Founder and president of Open Eye Pictures, **Andrew Abrahams** (also credited as Andy Abrahams Wilson) is an award winning, Oscar-shortlisted and Emmy-nominated producer/director of creative non-fiction films. He also works as a cinematographer and photographer. After enrolling in the Medill School of Journalism, Andrew received a BA in cultural anthropology from Northwestern University and an MA in visual anthropology from the University of Southern California where he also studied at the School of Cinema. Andrew's approach emphasizes visual imagery as a way to bridge disparate parts, peoples and ideas. While his work takes on controversial themes, he uses the filmmaking process as an opportunity to encourage compassion and action. His most recent production **Alfredo's Fire (Il Fuoco Di Alfredo)** premiered at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival and received a CINE Best Independent Documentary jury award. The ITVS-funded film **The Grove** was broadcast nationally on PBS and was awarded Best Documentary at the Seattle Lesbian & Gay Film Festival. Released theatrically, his acclaimed film **Under Our Skin** is the recipient of seven best documentary awards at international film festivals and was an Academy Award semifinalist for Best Documentary Feature. Andrew's previous films have garnered numerous awards and been shown on HBO, PBS, CBC, the Showtime Networks, and in theaters and film festivals worldwide. A recipient of a Pew Charitable Trust Fellowship in Dance/Media, he is the two-time Grand Prize recipient at the

Dance on Camera Film Festival. Andrew is a past budget director of the film distribution cooperative New Day Films, board director of the Jewish Film Institute, and member of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. He has been recognized by the Northern California Marin Arts Council as Outstanding Artist, and by the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences with honors for Outstanding Documentary Achievement. In addition to making films, Andrew teaches unique film and photo workshops, including "Intimacy & Exposure: The Alchemy of Photography" at the renowned Esalen Institute.



Pre-viewing Topics

1. Law Overview

Huey P. Newton believed that it is incredibly powerful to know your rights. He carried around books of law everywhere with him. There are different courts for different purposes, and different sets of applicable laws for different courts.

A trial is a **structured discussion** where the facts of an unresolved situation (the case/charge) are presented to a jury or judge by the petitioner through the form of evidence, and the jury/judge decides if the defendant (the one who defends themselves) is guilty or not guilty of the charge offered.

The first step of a trial is submitting a petition (a type of written motion - motions are paper submissions to the court). Petitions cite certain laws to bring an unresolved situation to the court's attention.

Then comes pre-trial questioning. After case introductions, both parties take turns conducting both a direct examination (where one party asks the other party a series of questions), and a cross examination (where one party questions the other's direct examination with the purpose of weakening their argument). These questions do have to abide by certain rules in law. During these questions, various items can be introduced into evidence (documents, images, etc.), which get added to the case's record.

A case record is a permanent combination of evidence from both parties that establishes the facts of a case. And during this questioning process, the opposing side's attorney is allowed to interrupt the question lines with phrases known as objections - spoken statements pointing out to the judge/jury that a question did not follow a specific rule of law. Thus, to make objections well, it is a huge advantage to know the law well.

Finally, after a few more motions are filed and the parties finish rebuttal, the judge/jury makes a decision based on the proven facts of the case, and both parties receive a copy of the final order in the mail.

2. Filmmaking Overview

There are 3 stages of film production:

- Pre-production (screenwriting, planning, shortlisting)
- Production (filming)
- Post Production (video editing, soundscape, poster design, festivals).

The following is a **filmmaking vocabulary list**. You can refer back to it while reading some of the discussion questions that use these terms multiple times over the course of this guide.

- There are three kinds of **camera framing**: Closeups, mediums and wide shots (more for the environment)
- **Framing and composition** - The way the elements inside of a camera frame are set up to lead the eye around and create an emotional effect.
- **Mise en Scène** - the visual arrangement of set decoration to help convey a deeper meaning through the use of metaphor.
- **Soundscape** - the combo of music, sound effects, etc. -think of it like a **landscape of sound**.
- **Diegetic versus non-diegetic sound** - diegetic sound is any sound that happens within the story that the character can hear in the story, while non-diegetic sound is something like music that is outside of the character's world.

While watching **American Justice On Trial** and **For Love and Legacy**, look for different shots you like, and don't like. Ask yourself, why are the filmmakers making the decisions we witness in the film? What would you have done differently?

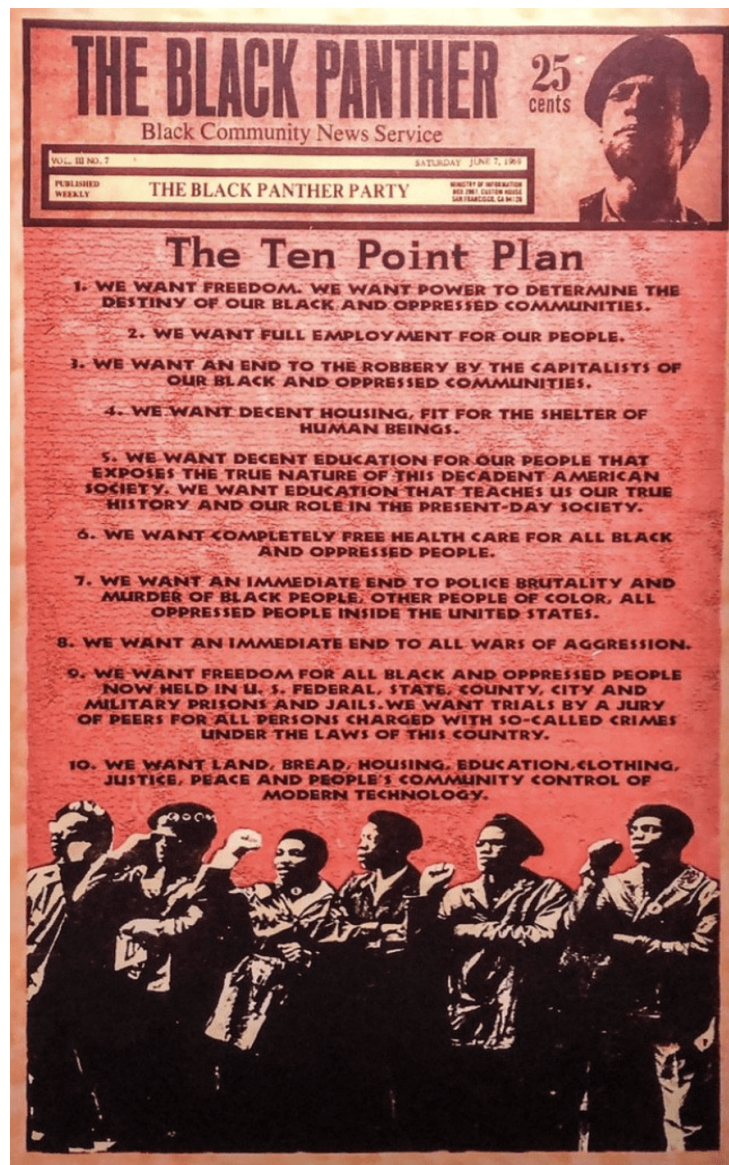


Pre-viewing Topics

3. The Black Panthers 10 Point Program

The Black Panthers had a 10 Point Program illustrated in the original Black Panther newspaper below. Read through it, then follow up with an in-class discussion about the necessities this organization provided to people in need.

- What do you think about the Ten Point Plan?
- What are some stories of unity that you've heard of that had an incredible result?
- What offices to go to in your community to change something that's important to you? What is an actionable first step?
- Newton talks in the movie about the importance of history and politics being taught. In what ways does having knowledge on these topics empower an individual?
- What kinds of new things can you do with that information?
- Can it help you make more informed decisions? Name some example situations where this can come in handy.
- What do the history books usually miss talking about when it comes to the Black Panther movement?
- What makes a leader? What makes a community? The Black Panther movement created newspapers, hosted soup kitchens for those who did not have money, etc.
- What do you think the Black Panther movement was trying to form? What is a necessity? What is equality? Which groups of people does this Ten Point Plan help?





Discussion Questions

American Justice On Trial

1. What was the conflict? How was it resolved? Who was the protagonist in the film? Who was the antagonist?
2. Why would the founding fathers write anti-racism laws that they didn't want to follow?
3. How do you think writing these laws made the founding fathers feel?
4. How did these unfollowed laws affect the country's self-awareness?
5. Did they change the kind of story American citizens told themselves about current events?
6. Why do some people do things that are contradictory to what they say?
7. How do you think the filmmakers were able to respect and protect their subjects' privacy while showing different archival footage and deciding which parts of the interview to keep in?
8. The American Justice On Trial filmmakers got several different kinds of perspectives on the trial through various interview subjects, including a specialist on law equality, a former oakland police officer and a former Black Panther Chief leader who was helping Huey the night he got shot. What does it do when you include varying perspectives and experiences on the same topic in a film?
9. What power can a short film have in comparison to a feature film?
10. What would you have done differently in making these movies? What would you have done the same?
11. If you were the director, what other types of background footage (also referred to as B-roll) would you have chosen to capture in order to tell this story effectively?
12. "We had 5,000 people around the courthouse. Every race you can imagine. The energy was phenomenal." What does the Newton trial represent?
13. Consider legal linguistics, what do you think of the words 'arguments', and Last Name vs. Last Name?
14. How can these labels be harmful or helpful?
15. Do you think legal language can become a barrier for people representing themselves?
16. If so, how do you think the justice system can be made more user friendly?
17. How does having varying points of views help with solving the problems of the world?
18. What does it mean when an action comes from a place of fear?
19. What does it mean when an action comes from a place of trust and love?
20. What are some things that divide us as humans? What happens when people cut themselves off from others with whom they share the same challenges?
21. How does one set aside fear and embrace awe and wonder to promote unity? What are some things that make an organization truly organized? When does good internal organization show in an organization's actions?



Discussion Questions

For Love and Legacy

1. What do you think was the deeper meaning behind the film *For Love and Legacy*?
2. There were many closeups of hands sculpting away at the clay. How did these shots make you feel?
3. Why do you think the filmmaker chose to include that many shots?
4. How could these shots be understood as a metaphor?
5. It was a powerful experience for Fredrika to put her hands on him. She said it's like she's putting her hands on his corpse, because it's cold. How did you feel about the sculpture after hearing this?
6. Dana King then said that Fredrika will have the experience of putting her hands on him when he's warm - because it will be made of bronze, the sun will warm him when he's out in the sunlight. What can this warming, revealing, life-giving sunlight be a metaphor of?
7. While the sculpture was being created, Fredrika said, "This isn't something someone goes through ordinarily. So it's hard to explain how intimate and intense the process is."
8. Fredrika says she is going to visit Huey in her nightgown at night. What was she feeling when she said this?
9. How do you think it changes Fredrika to be able to touch a loved one again?
10. What was the effect of all the closeups of the sculpture's face? How did that make you feel?
11. What was it like, seeing the sculpture at different stages of its process throughout the film? What do you think it was a metaphor for in the film? What role did Huey's wife have in the shaping of the sculpture?
12. Many films focus on a protagonist, or main character, and an antagonist. Who was the protagonist in this film? Who/what was the antagonist?
13. Did the clay bust of Huey count as a character, too?
14. How did the sculpture of Huey affect or even change the characters in the film and the way they acted and behaved?
15. What do you think the experience was like for Fredrika to have these conversations with Dana King about Huey's likeness and see the evolution of the clay sculpture into the likeness of her husband?
16. What can you learn about the character (Dana King) based on the set / her workshop?
17. Because nothing marked his living or his passing, the sculptor said that she can make a bust of Hewey. What was the sculptor's true mission?
18. What does it mean to recreate a memory?
19. In what ways was Dana King trying to change history?
20. Dana King says that every sculpture she makes terrifies her. Have you ever had an art project that terrified you? Why? What can be scary about making art?



Activities

1. Preproduction Film Challenge

Using the cinema terminology in the pre-viewing section of this guide, create an outline that describes an idea you come up with for a movie (documentary or narrative) that can create social change. Model after the 3-act story structure in the beginning of the guide.

Rules:

1. Must include a character (protagonist or supporting) that is inspired by a person that you deeply admire (could be an activist or someone else).
2. Make the environment one based off of a personal memory of a place that is extremely important to you.
3. Antagonist must be a problem that you believe is one of the dominant ones in today's society.
4. Part of the story must take place in a courtroom. Use 4 vocabulary words from the trial overview earlier in this guide to describe this part of the story.
5. Encourage students to share what they made.
6. Describe, what kind of shot types would you use? What could be the mise en scene? What would be its color scheme? How about the general soundscape? What kind of score?
7. Draw a poster for this movie.

Students can work alone or in groups. After this activity would be a good time to introduce students to the free filmmaking resources at the end of this guide.



Activities

2. Theatre of the Oppressed

Here's a special form of **improv theater** you can do with your class that can serve as another form of discussion. Both films talk a lot about both the essential importance of open conversations about difficult topics and the critical importance of having a well-organized group of people in order to be able to create positive change in the community. Having everyone's points of views and that nobody's voice is ignored or left out. Theatre of the Oppressed is a new way to utilize improv theater into a structured problem-solving tool that combines art with politics and community organization and the importance of conversation. It was originally developed out of creator Augusto Boal's work with peasant and worker populations and is now used all over the world for social and political activism, conflict resolution, community building, therapy, and government legislation. Inspired by the vision of Paulo Freire and his landmark treatise on education, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Theatre of the Oppressed invites critical thinking. It is about analyzing rather than accepting, questioning rather than giving answers. It is also about "acting" rather than just talking.

In T.O., the audience is not made of spectators but "spect-actors". Through the evocative language of theatre, **everyone is invited to share their opinion on the issues at hand.**

Instructions:

1. Choose a situation/scene setting with the class, as well as the characters in that scene: What is something difficult (a social problem) that students in your school or people in your community often deal with/need to confront? What is a conflict that often takes place between two people? Or what is something someone can do that can often creates conflict? Also, since this kind of improvised acting is discussion-based, there is no physical contact between actors while acting.
2. After the situation is selected, choose a volunteer student who acts out the character having the conflict, and have other students (the audience) freely switch places and volunteer to show what they would do or

say to try and possibly help the struggling character find a solution to that problem. As the problem solvers switch places, the character with the problem stays played by the same person. Students stay in character whenever they are on stage. Your role as the teacher is occasionally pausing the scene, engaging the audience (the students who are currently not on stage) and asking questions that can intrigue them to swap places and show their solution to the problem.

3. The character with the conflict now acts out the problem through improvised movement and speech, and as students volunteer to act out how they might possibly help solve the problem, the character with the problem reacts how they think that kind of person would react in that kind of situation. Remember, this is a non-judgemental zone of open discussion and exploration. There is no wrong answer. Every time someone finishes acting out their solution, everyone can applaud.
4. You can stop the activity once the character with the problem feels like something helped solve it, and shows it by acting it out, and everyone in the audience comes to an agreement once you (the teacher) asks them.



Beyond the Classroom

Here are some useful resources you can share with your class, including free filmmaking resources, Black Panther source documents, the movies' websites, and more ideas on unity.

Five Free Filmmaking Resources:

- StudioBinder for screenwriting
- Smartphone for filming
- Stop Motion Studio app for animation
- Da Vinci Resolve or Avid Media Composer First for industry-standard editing
- Canva for creating movie posters.

Black Panther Party Newspaper:

<https://summerof.love/remembering-the-black-panther-party-newspaper/>

NASA Astronaut Orbital Perspective Concept:

<https://www.rongaran.com/planetary-stewardship/>

Orbital Perspective film Planetary:

<http://weareplanetary.com>

Filmmaking Free Resource Sheet:

<https://bit.ly/filmmakingcheatsheet>

Link to more information regarding the Theatre of the Oppressed:

<https://imagination.org/media/our-methods/theatre-of-the-oppressed-2>

Charles Garry interview on the trial and other archived videos from the Huey P. Newton Trial:

<https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/sfbatv/bundles/220763>



Documentary Guide

What is a documentary?

A documentary is a film whose goal is to capture truth, fact or reality as seen through the lens of the camera. But there are many kinds of documentaries, and not everyone's idea of truth is the same. The Scottish filmmaker John Grierson coined the term "documentary" in 1926 to describe American filmmaker Robert Flaherty's romanticized culture studies, but nonfiction filmmaking dates back to the earliest motion picture reels.

The definition of documentary expanded as filmmakers experimented with technology and the goals of nonfiction. Avant-garde documentarians, like Dziga Vertov in the 1920s, believed that the mechanical eye of the camera gave a truer image of reality than the human eye and pointed his lens at newly industrialized cities. Leni Reifenstahl's propaganda films from Nazi Germany used the nonfiction form to convey a political message, a slanted truth.

The international cinema vérité or observational movements of the 1960s attempted to remove authorship from the documentary. The observational filmmaker hovered like a "fly on the wall" watching the world without commentary. Modern documentaries often seek to raise awareness about a social, environmental or political issue, guiding their audiences toward civic participation and activism.

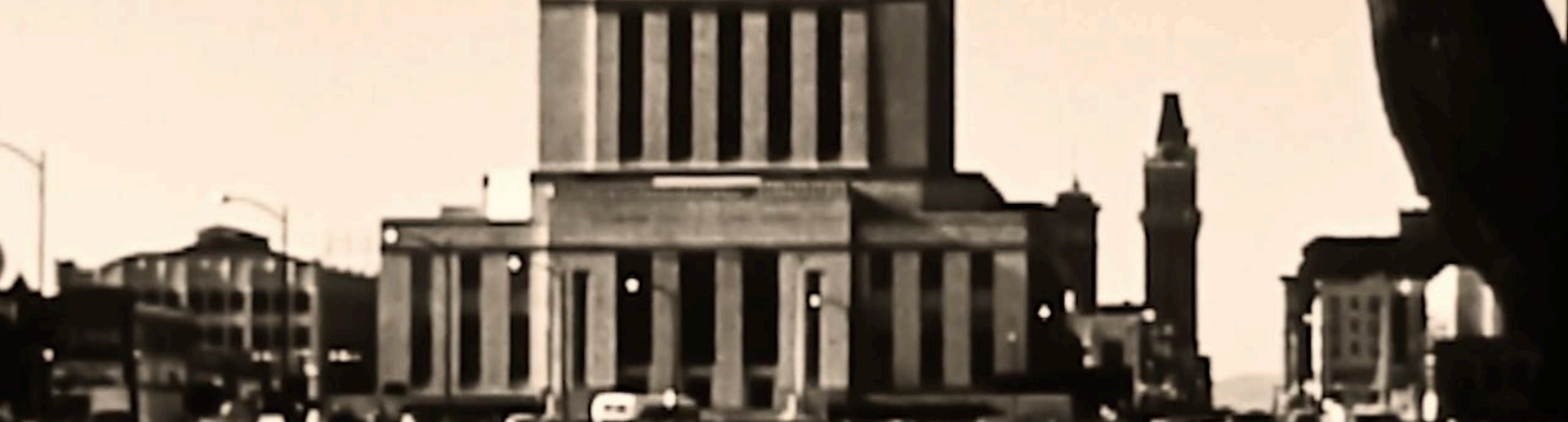
While watching a documentary, it is important to remember the core concepts of media analysis: who made the film, for what audience and why? The nonfiction format can be deceptively subjective, as all filmmaking involves an inherent selection process: in the images that are shot, the music and narration that accompanies them and, most significantly, the way in which they are all edited together. Media literacy means always analyzing a documentary for its message and authorial intent.

Even though they are nonfiction films, most modern documentaries structure their content around a traditional story arc, with a beginning, middle and end, as well as

characters, and a conclusion, theme or thesis to impart to the audience. Documentary filmmakers begin their projects with an idea or an issue that they wish to explore more deeply. Through research and planning, they develop a comprehensive plan before they begin shooting.

A BRIEF TIMELINE OF THE DOCUMENTARY

- 1895 The Lumiere brothers develop the first motion picture film reel, capturing brief unedited clips of life around them called 'actualities.'
- 1900-1920 Travelogue or 'scenic' films become popular showcasing exoticized images from around the globe.
- 1926 Dziga Vertov, with the Soviet Kino Pravda movement, released the experimental nonfiction film, *Man With A Movie Camera*.
- 1939 John Grierson collaborated with the Canadian government to form the National Film Board of Canada, with the initial goal of creating Allied propaganda in the support of war.
- 1960s The 'cinema vérité' movement began in Europe, followed by the 'direct cinema' in the US. Portable cameras and sync sound allowed filmmakers to capture intimate footage with minimal intervention.
- 1968 The Argentine film, *La Hora de los Hornos*, opened the door to activist cinema of the 1970s, using film as a tool to counter capitalist politics in Latin America.
- 1988 Independent Television Service (ITVS) was founded.
- 2000s The widespread use of digital cameras and editing software made the documentary medium more affordable to independent filmmakers.
- Present Day The term 'documentary' comes to encompass a wide range of nonfiction cinema. Contemporary filmmakers continue to push the boundaries of truth in film and to explore new avenues and applications for the medium.



Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.2

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3 Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.7

Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.9

Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail"), including how they address related themes and concepts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.3 Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.5 Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.



Media Literacy Resources: Screening with Meaning

We live in a world where technology mediates a large portion of human interaction and the exchange of information. Every projected image, every word published on a page or a website, and every sound from a speaker reaches its audience through the medium, through the language of the device. The ability to parse the vast array of media messages is an essential skill for young people, particularly in a mainstream commercial culture that targets youth as a vulnerable, impressionable segment of the American marketplace. Most students already have a keen understanding of the languages different media use and the techniques they employ to inspire particular emotions or reactions, but they often lack the skill or awareness to fully deconstruct the messages they continuously receive. Analysis of a media message—or any piece of mass media content—can best be accomplished by first identifying its principal characteristics:

1. **Medium:** the physical means by which it is contained and/or delivered
2. **Author:** the person(s) responsible for its creation and dissemination
3. **Content:** the information, emotions, values or ideas it conveys
4. **Audience:** the target audience to whom it is delivered
5. **Purpose:** the objectives of its authors and the effects of its dissemination.

Students who can readily identify these five core characteristics will be equipped to understand the incentives at work behind media messages, as well as their potential consequences. Media literacy education empowers students to become responsible consumers, active citizens and critical thinkers.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

MEDIUM

All Media Is Constructed.

- What is the message, how is it delivered and in what format?
- What technologies are used to present the message?
- What visual and auditory elements comprise the media content?
- What expectations do you bring to the content, given its medium and format?

AUTHOR

All Media Is Constructed by Someone.

- Who is delivering the message?
- Who originally constructed the message?
- What expectations do you have of the content, given its author(s)?

CONTENT

Media Is A Language For Information.

- What is the subject of the media message?
- What information, values, emotions or ideas are conveyed by the media content?
- What tools does the author employ to engage the viewer and evoke a response?
- To what extent did the content meet your expectations, given the format/author?

AUDIENCE

All Media Messages Reach an Audience.

- Who receives the message?
- For whom is the message intended?
- What is the public reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- What is your reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- How might others perceive this message differently? Why?

PURPOSE

All Media Messages Are Constructed for a Reason.

- Why was the message constructed?
- Who benefits from dissemination of the message? How?
- To what extent does the message achieve its purpose?
- What effect does the message have on the audience it reaches, if any?



California Media Literacy Standards

Analysis and Evaluation of Oral and Media Communications

Grades 9 & 10: Standard 1.14 Identify the aesthetic effects of a media presentation and evaluate the techniques used to create them (e.g., compare Shakespeare's *Henry V* with Kenneth Branagh's 1990 film version).

Grades 11 & 12: Standard 1.14 Analyze the techniques used in media messages for a particular audience and evaluate their effectiveness (e.g., Orson Welles' radio broadcast "War of the Worlds").

Organization and Delivery of Oral Communication

Grades 9 & 10: Standard 1.7 Use props, visual aids, graphs, and electronic media to enhance the appeal and accuracy of presentations.

Grades 11 & 12: Standard 1.10 Evaluate when to use different kinds of effects (e.g., visual, music, sound, graphics) to create effective productions.

Comprehension

Grades 9 & 10: Standard 1.2 Compare and contrast the ways in which media genres (e.g., televised news, news magazines, documentaries, online information) cover the same event.

Grades 11 & 12: Standard 1.1 Recognize **strategies** used by the media to inform, persuade, entertain, and transmit culture (e.g., advertisements; perpetuation of stereotypes; use of visual representations, special effects, language); Standard 1.2 Analyze the impact of the media on the democratic process (e.g., exerting influence on elections, creating images of leaders, shaping attitudes) at the local, state, and national levels; Standard 1.3 Interpret and evaluate the various ways in which events are presented and information is communicated by visual image makers (e.g., graphic artists, documentary filmmakers, illustrators, news photographers).