

Thursday, 2:15 PM-3:30 PM

N251

Documentary Research (Session ID: 54)

(Documentary)

This session will be an open forum to discuss opportunities and approaches to original research in documentary scholarship, including publication strategies.

Moderator: Carrie B. Chrisco, McNeese State University

Michael Ogden, Central Washington University

A Discipline of Visual Representation: Approaches to Documentary Publishing

Douglas Ferguson, College of Charleston, Editor, *Journal of Radio Studies*

The Journal Editorial Review Process and Documentary Research Treatments

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Douglas Ferguson

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Association

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Abstract

This paper briefly outlines the editorial process seen through the eyes of a journal editor. Several categories of research are proposed to guide those interested in conducting documentary research.

One might wonder why an editor for a radio journal is offering guidance to documentary researchers, but the fields sometimes intersect. For example, Hogarth (2001) examined radio documentaries in much the same way a film historian would study film documentaries. This paper looks at the editorial process and offers some categories in which documentary research is conducted.

The process of reviewing documentary research is based on the usual "blind" referee process, where manuscripts are submitted to an editor who removes the identity from the paper itself and assigns three reviewers known only to the editor. The participants are blind to one another's identity. Physical copies are rarely circulated, but the editor must take extra care to erase the File Properties screen within Microsoft Word (which typically identifies the author even if the title page is omitted) or create an Adobe Acrobat PDF file (with free software from OpenOffice.org or sometimes Microsoft Word itself).

The most important consideration is the reviewing time. Anything less than a month will offend the reviewer whose claims for time are many. Anything more than a month is wasted, in my opinion, because reviewers fall into two camps: those who want to get it done right away just to get it done and those who create a tickler in their calendar a few days before the review is due. (There is a third camp, but editors are wise to not send many manuscripts to footdraggers, even if it means reordering the editorial board). In either event, researchers cannot afford delays. If so few reviewers are using the middle allotment of time, then the actual duration is arbitrary and capricious. One month seems right to me. See also

<http://fm.iowa.uiowa.edu/fmi/xsl/iowaguide/using.xsl?-db=iowaguide&-view#revpd>

Here are some additional tips that you will seldom hear from editors:

1. Submit simultaneously to paper conferences and journals. Life is short and good research need not marinate while the process unfolds. Comments from conference reviewers and respondents will seldom arrive too late for improving a manuscript.

2. Send your best stuff and offer a student extra credit if they can find any mistakes. Colleagues will never find as many errors as a desperate student.
3. Negotiate and track the review window. Ask the editor when you'll have an answer and pester the editor. Challenge the continued use of a slow or haphazard reviewer. Never assume that the editor will take umbrage at your polite inquiries.
4. Shop the abstract. You cannot multiple-submit articles, but there's no reason you cannot send out duplicate abstracts. Send the article to the editor who wants it most and be upfront about why you have chosen a particular venue.
5. Challenge the authenticity of a reviewer if necessary. If it's brutally obvious that a reviewer knows not of what s/he speaks, ask the editor for a replacement or a reduction in forces. But be careful not to whine about an honest difference of opinion.

The mainstream outlets for refereed research fall into three tiers.

The first-tier outlets

Film & History MLA (blind review unknown)

- Effective use of moving images in the history/social studies classroom.
- Analysis of the history, holdings, and political and financial status of various film and television archives around the country.
- Use of new ways of presenting history in film productions.
- Specific analysis of a single film, or genre, combining use of the latest scholarship, including primary sources, especially film archival collections.
- Reviews of books and video/films and broadcasts addressing particular important themes.

Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/chjfauth.asp>

The second-tier outlets

New Review of Film & Television Studies <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/rftsauth.asp>

Television and New Media Chicago A 10 weeks

Journal of Popular Film & Television MLA 3-4 months (blind review upon request only)

The third-tier outlets

Velvet Light Trap

Spectator: The University of Southern California Journal of Film & Television

Media History Monographs Chicago A 2-3 months

Unrefereed

Filmfax Magazine

- American Cinematographer. Other CUNY Libraries.
- Camera Obscura. Full text: Academic Search Premier.
- Cineaste. Full text: Factiva.
- Cinemaya (on Asian film). NYPL. (The Theatre Collection at Lincoln Center; many other journals are there as well.)
- Cinema Journal. Full text: Academic Search Premier.
- Film Comment. Newman Library.
- Film Criticism. Full text: Literature Resource Center. Use Advanced Search and limit search to full-text journals.
- Film Culture. Other CUNY Libraries.
- Film History. Full text: Academic Search Premier.
- Film Quarterly Full Text: Academic Search Premier. Also Newman Library.
- Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television. Full text: Academic Search Premier.
- Journal of Film and Video. Full text: Academic Search Premier. Also Other CUNY Libraries.
- Journal of Popular Film and Television. Full text: Academic Search

Premier. Also Newman Library.

- Jump Cut; a Review of Contemporary Media. Recent issues available online at <http://www.ejumpcut.org/home.html>. Also Other CUNY Libraries.
- Literature Film Quarterly (LFQ). Full text: Academic Search Premier. Also available in print, see CUNY+.
- Quarterly Review of Film and Video. Full text: Academic Search Premier.
- Screen (UK). Other CUNY Libraries.
- Sight and Sound. Other CUNY Libraries.
- Wide Angle. Other CUNY Libraries.

From my causal standpoint, there appear to be several categories of documentary research, judging from a glance through the prominent journals.

Case study approach (movie review)

Genre surveys

Archives

Social movements

Historical era

Auteur studies (e.g. Maysles Brothers)

Propaganda studies

War

Politics and government

Public relations

Hollywood

PBS

Commerical television

[Wildlife documentaries: from classical forms to reality TV](#). By: Horak, Jan-Christopher. *Film History*, 2006, Vol. 18 Issue 4, p459-475, 17p;

[Introduction: Documentary Before Verité](#). By: Musser, Charles. *Film History*, 2006, Vol. 18 Issue 4, p355-360, 6p;

[Land of Liberty in the World of Tomorrow](#). By: Levavy, Sara Beth. *Film History*, 2006, Vol. 18 Issue 4, p440-458, 19p;

[Michael Moore: Cinematic Historian or Propagandist?](#) By: O'Connor, John E.; Toplin, Robert Brent; Mintz, Steven; Briley, Ron; Nolley, Ken. *Film & History* (03603695), Sep2005, Vol. 35 Issue 2, p7-16, 10p;

[Endless Summer \(1964\): Consuming Waves and Surfing the Frontier](#). By: Ormrod, Joan. *Film & History* (03603695), May2005, Vol. 35 Issue 1, p39-51, 13p;

[Posttraumatic Cinema and the Holocaust Documentary](#). By: Hirsch, Joshua. *Film & History* (03603695), May2002, Vol. 32 Issue 1, p9-21, 13p;

[On Why We Fight: History, Documentation, and the Newsreel \(1946\)](#). By: Bazin, André. *Film & History* (03603695), May2001, Vol. 31 Issue 1, p60-62, 3p;

[Representing Truth and History in Native American Documentary: Indigenous Efforts to Counter Mass Media Stereotypes](#). By: Leuthold, Steven. *Film & History* (03603695), Feb-Dec1996, Vol. 26 Issue 1-4, p30-39, 10p;

[Adventures in Reporting: John Kennedy and the Cinema Verité Television Documentaries of Drew Associates](#). By: Watson, Mary Ann. *Film & History* (03603695), May1989, Vol. 19 Issue 2, p26-43, 18p;

[A Mirror for Fascism. How Mussolini Used Cinema to Advertise his Person and Regime.](#) By: Sorlin, Pierre. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television*, Mar2007, Vol. 27 Issue 1, p111-117, 7p

[Jean Renoir's salut à la France : documentary film production, distribution, and reception in France, 1944-1945.](#) By: Bowles, Brett. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television*, Mar2006, Vol. 26 Issue 1, p57-86, 30p

[German newsreel propaganda in France, 1940-1944.](#) By: Bowles, Brett. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television*, Mar2004, Vol. 24 Issue 1, p45-67, 23p

[How British Television Inserted the Holocaust into Britain's War Memory in 1995.](#) By: Petersen, Judith. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television*, Aug2001, Vol. 21 Issue 3, p255-272, 18p

[The Other Documentary Tradition: early radio documentaries in Canada.](#) By: Hogarth, David. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television*, Jun2001, Vol. 21 Issue 2, p123-135, 13p

[Images of Regeneration: film propaganda and the British slum clearance campaign, 1933-1938.](#) By: Crothall, Geoffrey. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television*, Aug99, Vol. 19 Issue 3, p339-358, 20p

[A filmography of oppositional politics and culture in the Vietnam era, 1963-1974.](#) By: Klein, Michael. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio & Television*, 1991, Vol. 11 Issue 1, p59, 14p

[THE SOURCE-PATH-GOAL SCHEMA IN THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL JOURNEY DOCUMENTARY.](#) By: Forceville, Charles. *New Review of Film & Television Studies*, Dec2006, Vol. 4 Issue 3, p241-261, 21p

[Narrating Injustice: British Cultural Studies and Its Media.](#) By: Singh, Bhri Gupta. *Television & New Media*, May2006, Vol. 7 Issue 2, p135-153, 19p

[Exorcizing/Exercising Treachery: Robust Subjectivity in Lourdes Portillo's *The Devil Never Sleeps*](#). By: Torres, Mónica F. *Velvet Light Trap: A Critical Journal of Film & Television*, Spring2006 Issue 57, p76-85, 10p

[Not a Stupid White Man: The Democratic Context of Michael Moore's *Documentaries*](#). By: Misiak, Anna. *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, Fall2005, Vol. 33 Issue 3, p160-168, 9p

[A Critical Examination of Punitive Damage](#). By: Goldson, Annie. *Spectator: The University of Southern California Journal of Film & Television*, Fall2004, Vol. 24 Issue 2, p50-60, 11p

[The "photographer-adventurers": forgotten heroes of the silent screen](#). By: Mould, David H.; Veeder, Gerry. *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, 1988, Vol. 16 Issue 3, p118-129, 12p

[Shades of Black on Homicide: Life on the Street Advances and Retreats in Portrayals of African American Women](#). By: *Mascaro*, Thomas A.. *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, Summer2005, Vol. 33 Issue 2, p56-67, 12p