

The Practice of Bill Nichols' Documentary Approach in Kirsten Johnsons Cameraperson (2016)

A Prática Da Abordagem Documental de Bill Nichols em Kirsten Johnsons Cameraperson (2016)

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to show how Bill Nichols approach to documentary is practiced in Cameraperson (2016), and autobiographical documentary directed by Kirsten Johnson, a professional documentary cinematographer. Through the thought of Bill Nichols, a film critic concerned documentary and supplemented by relevant literature sourced from journals, books and web articles, this examination found that from his theory of documentary, Nichols' six approaches (Expository, Observational, Participatory, Reflective, Performative and Poetic) are certainly all represented within the scenes of Cameraperson. All these documentary approaches are quantified by scenes of 33 participatory, 20 observational, 9 reflexive, 4 expository, 3 performatives, and poetic can be identified in the associations of pictures that actualize into the spatial juxtaposition style of film structure.

Keywords: Film; Documentary; Cameraperson; Bill Nichol; Kirsten Johnson.

RESUMO

Este artigo tem como objetivo mostrar como a abordagem de Bill Nichols ao documentário é praticada em Cameraperson (2016), um documentário autobiográfico dirigido por Kirsten

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Johnson, uma cineasta profissional de documentários. Por meio do pensamento de Bill Nichols, um crítico de cinema preocupado com o documentário, e complementado pela literatura relevante proveniente de periódicos, livros e artigos da web, este exame constatou que, a partir de sua teoria do documentário, as seis abordagens de Nichols (Expositiva, Observacional, Participativa, Reflexiva, Performática e Poética) certamente estão todas representadas nas cenas de Cameraperson. Todas essas abordagens documentais são quantificadas por cenas de 33 participativas, 20 observacionais, 9 reflexivas, 4 expositivas, 3 performáticas e poéticas, que podem ser identificadas nas associações de imagens que se atualizam no estilo de justaposição espacial da estrutura do filme.

Palavras-chave: Filme; Documentário; Cameraperson; Bill Nichols; Kirsten Johnson.

1. INTRODUCTION

Documentary is a genre of film that has become popular nowadays. Even though it is not as popular as fiction, documentary has distinctive characteristics which are used to evoke social issues or used as a channel to know engaging events and the ins and outs of the lives of public figures.

In “Introduction to Documentary” Bill Nichols (2001) explains that documentary films can be categorized into two domains; documentaries of wish-fulfillment and documentaries of social representation. The first category refers to films known as fiction films, manifesting as a form of expression and imagination of the creators in fulfilling various kinds of hopes and expectations of real life. The second category is known as non-fiction films, as real representations of social reality, such as documentaries.

In a world of documentary film, it puts forward and represents facts of reality. The factual data is then processed into a point of view or ‘partisanship’ that is narrated with certain goals. Explaining what a documentary looks like, Bill Nichols (2001) formulates the dictum “*I speak about them to you*”; ‘I’ as a filmmaker stand for the subjectivity, whether it is directly by taking a participatory role, or indirectly by using a substitute, namely a narrator (voiceover); ‘*Speak about*’ is the attempt of the filmmaker to represent the reference (real-life) that raises a topic or issue, as a way to speak representative-constructively; ‘*Them*’ is a tangible form of data or information, whether in the form of written documents, utterances spoken by social actors, or emotional expressions by those who pronounce them. These elements serve as supporting data because the audience must be made to believe before they can empathize with the issues being filmed; ‘*You*’ is the audience as the final destination of the film being created, in charge of consuming the film and getting an audio-visual experience as a result of interpretation and perception.

The formulation of the Nichols’ documentary theory is classified by how the film was created, and how the audience perceives of the film. Thus, in documentary films,

various approaches are known to identify narrative and cinematic aspects, including: *poetic, expository, observational, participatory, reflexive and performative*.

Cameraperson is the directorial debut of Kirsten Johnson, who has always been known as a professional cinematographer for documentaries and essays. It was officially screened in Sundance Festival on January 26th, 2016. This 102 minute film presents footage that is divided into various locations, locations that are both clearly written on screen or implied. *Cameraperson* includes recordings of Johnson's personal pictures with her family, and footage from 24 documentaries that have involved her as a Camera Person or Director of Photography.

At the film's opening, the title card, signed by Kirsten Johnson, asks the viewer to accept all the clips as her memoir.

For the past 25 years I've worked as a documentary cinematographer. I originally shot the following the footage for the other films, but here I ask you to see it as my memoir. These are the images that have marked me and leave me wondering still. With love, KJ.

This film's opening text implies that what follows is composed of fragments of footage that Johnson shot while working behind the camera on a number of prominent documentaries – in New York, Missouri, Darfur, Afghanistan, Uganda, Cuba, Wyoming, Washington, Bosnia, Sudan, Nigeria, Liberia, Yaman, Myanmar, etc – as well as personal clips of her family – her parents and her twin children.

Presented as a collage, navigating through continents in no particular order. The clips are all selected from films that involved her as a cinematographer: *Came to Testify* (2011), *Audrie and Daisy* (2016), *Cradle of Champions* (2016), *The Edge of Joy* (2010), *Derrida* (2002), *The Way We Are Living* (2011), *This Very Life* (2011), *Pray The Devil Back to Hell* (2008), *Citizenfour* (2014), *Very Semi-Serious* (2015), *Thrown Down Your Heart* (2008), *The Towns of Jasper* (2002), *The Oath* (2010), *Trapped* (2016), *Happy Valley* (2014), *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), *Buffalo Returns* (2015), *Ladies First* (2004), *Born to Fly: Elizabeth Vs. Gravity* (2014), *Darfur Now* (2007), *Virgin Tales* (2012), *Here One Day* (2012), and *1971* (2014) which can be found in credit titles of *Cameraperson*.

Cinematically, the scenes are structured narratively in an Association Picture Story genre, the encompassing pain and violence form the film's backbone and above all, that endured by women in both times of war and peace. But Johnson does not try to hierarchies this suffering.

Through a series of juxtapositional episodes, Johnson explores the relationship between filmmaker and her subjects, the tension between objectivity and in-camera intervention, and the complex interplay between real reality and artificial narrative. A work that combines documentary, autobiography and ethical questions, *Cameraperson* takes us into the spiritual journey of a filmmaker through Johnson's perspective, as well as an in-depth study of the meaning and purpose of the camera in practice in real life.

The reconstruction of real life recorded by Kirsten Johnson will be analyzed using Bill Nichols' documentary approach to reveal the practice of Johnson's style in her debut documentary. In the end, this research will align Johnson's practice with Nichols' theory and measure the detail with which Johnson articulates the ethics of documentary principle.

2. DOCUMENTARY FILM

The first attempt to define documentary film was made by John Grierson (1966) when he reviewed Robert Flaherty's film *Nanook of the North* (1926). Grierson said that what Flaherty did as a director was "a creative treatment of actuality". The definition then developed in line with the birth of various characters from other documentaries. For example, Steve Blandford, Barry Keith and Jim Hillier argue that documentary film is the making of films whose subjects are people, events or situations that actually occur in the world of reality and outside the world of cinema.

Bill Nichols (1991), as an observer and lecturer of documentary films, wrote in his book *Representing Reality*, that documentary films are an attempt to retell an event or reality by using facts and data. In addition, Edmund F. Penney in *Facts on File Film and Broadcast Terms* (1990) considers that documentary films are a type of film that interprets real subjects and backgrounds. Meanwhile, David Bordwell & Kirstin Thompson said that the essence of documentary film is to present factual information about the world outside the film itself, the difference with fiction films is that in the process of making, there is no engineering, either of the characters or the space and time of the event.

Tanzil, Ariefiansyah and Trimarsanto (2010, p. 20) points out the similarities and differences between the three film formats, namely documentary, fiction film and news film:

Table 1 - Differences Between Documentary, Fiction and News Film

Fiction	Documentary	News
Doesn't always use facts and data to reveal events.	Reveal events using facts and data	Reveal events using facts and data
Might be an element of the filmmaker's imagination	Devoted to facts and data	Devoted to facts and data
Subjective, depends on the filmmaker's perspective	Subjective, depends on the filmmaker's perspective; something in partiality	Objective, comply with the ethics of imparting news in a balanced manner (cover both sides)
Filmmaker addressing a message	Filmmaker addressing a message	Might only report what happened
Storyline is the main element	Storyline as a medium of the message	No storyline or dramatic element required

Font: Authors.

To understand the issue of documentary films, there are some outlines that indicate the limitations of documentary films when compared to other film genres, including:

3. TELL THE TRUTH

In principle, documentary films are faithful to the facts, so that documentary

films play a role in conveying the truth and presenting the truth in human life, so that documentary film makers are required to dig deeper and thoroughly observe everything related to this issue (Tanzil; Ariefiansyah; Trimarsanto, 2010).

4. CONSTRUCTION OF SUBJECTIVITY

In documentary films, point of view which is considered as subjectivity is an element that cannot be avoided. Simply put, documentary filmmaking is an activity that involves a significant set of choices about what to record, how to record it, what to use, and what to show in front of an audience, not just the incident. The filmmaker will present his or her alignment as an opinion and point of view or it can even be recognized as his or her side. So we need a construction with dynamics and emphasis in accordance with the logic of the maker (Taylor 1997, p. 8).

5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

When watching a documentary with a possible bias from the director's point of view, one of the things that needs to be raised is the source of funding for making the film. No different from fiction films, documentaries of course require funding in the production stage. So, in certain cases, documentary films also go through the process of making as demand, meaning that they are made to order by the funder.

6. ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Conflicts of interest and questionable credibility are not the only standards considered in documentaries. Another element that the documentary filmmaker considers is the use of live subjects and recording them with high accuracy. In this practice, documentary films are considered to be closely related to journalistic work, because in journalistic studies there are several ethical guidelines that must be obeyed. However, documentary films as a product must, of course, take into account storylines and dramatic elements involving factual characters, therefore creative treatment is needed to be able to obtain reliable information and data. For example, from sources considered to need their identity protection in the interest of security.

7. DOCUMENTARY APPROACH

Bill Nichols (2001), in his book entitled *Introduction to Documentary*, classifies documentary film approaches based on the characteristics of documentary films produced by existing documentaries. The classification is an indication of similarities and differences in aspects of drama, visual imagery, auditive imagery, to imagery or

documentary presence in front of the camera. Classifications of Nichols' documentary approaches can be explained as follows:

8. POETIC

The poetic approach is related to the avant-garde modernist movements, namely the montage theory of Soviet filmmakers and the photogenie principle of the French Impressionist cinema movement. One of the pioneers of the poetic approach is Dziga Vertov, expressing this type of approach in the "*Variant of a Manifesto*", and defining the idea of *kinochestvo* (the quality of being cinematic). This idea can be interpreted as the art of rhythmically organizing the important movements of film subjects in their space, in harmony with the material elements and internal rhythms of each subject (Michelson; O'Brien; Vertov, 1984). The poetic style in particular influenced the emergence of alternative forms and ways of conveying information and messages so that they are easy to understand, whether it be in the form of an argument or a point of view, or presenting problems that are interconnected and require solutions. Styles with such a mood and tone are able to give a more affective impression than just presenting information persuasively, in that the rhetorical element is not completely used.

The poetic approach tends to include the authors subjective interpretation of the subjects they record, the subjects in question are not simply people or humans, but also natural phenomena, metaphors for the theme being conveyed. In practice, poetics is closely related to the use of fragmentation and abstract patterns, shapes, colors and images that serve to represent certain themes, to demonstrate the imagination of the filmmaker. The poetic approach ignores the methods of traditional storytelling which tends to use individual characters and events that must be developed. It serves as a functional measure or reference for seeing objects in the film as separate entities, then the filmmaker selects and arranges them into collections and patterns according to their decisions. The presentation of images in poetic documentaries also rejects the continuity of images and the use of locations that are bound to one contemporaneous time and place, and further explores associations and patterns involving temporal rhythm and spatial juxtaposition.

9. EXPOSITORY

The expository approach was born alongside the development of television mediums and in reaction to dissatisfaction with the type considered too poetic. The reaction is in a form that emphasises presenting images accompanied by an explanation at the same time. The rationale of the expository is to emphasize the content of the film which tends to be rhetorical with the aim of disseminating information in a persuasive manner. In particular, the expository cannot be separated from the voiceover, a narrative element

presented as a third person point of view, so that what is explained is more descriptive and informative. The narration is directed directly at the audience by offering a series of facts and arguments illustrated by the shots that appear. The purpose of using narration is to convey 'abstract' information or that which cannot be represented by mere pictures, so that the narration is tasked with clarifying events or scenes recorded on camera and poorly understood by the audience.

The arguments built by the expository are generally didactic, tend to present information directly to the audience, often even question the pros and cons of a phenomenon based on a certain moral footing, and direct the audience to one conclusion. This expository type is widely used in television shows, because it presents a clear point of view and closes the possibility of different interpretations. Thus, the expository has been criticized a lot because it tends to explain the meaning of the displayed image, the filmmaker seems unsure if the image is able to convey a message, and of course the presence of voiceover tends to limit how the image should be interpreted (Tanzil; Ariefiansyah; Trimarsanto, 2010, p. 8). But in fact, in some films, the use of voiceover and written text also serves as a legitimator of the data or information presented, as well as bridging the movement between locations or topics.

10. OBSERVATIONAL (DIRECT CINEMA)

The observational type is close to the post-World War II Neo-realism movement of Italian filmmakers, which in practice uses actual location settings and inexperienced actors (taken for granted). This style rejects intervention on the existing subject or event, in an attempt to act neutrally without giving a direct assessment of the ongoing subject or event — only as a 'witness'. The main point is the approach to observation, as the practice of observation prioritizes the accuracy of the data rather than the justification of the researcher, so the practice tends to record everything directly. This style rejects the use of voiceover by the narrator or commentator like the expository genre of documentaries. The main observational approach is to record events spontaneously and naturally, thus emphasizing informal shooting activities, without special lighting or other things that have been previously designed. Its strength is precisely in the patience of filmmakers to wait for significant events that take place in front of the camera (Lucien, 1997, p. 22).

Direct cinema aspirants generally come from or learn from ethnologists in an effort to live with their subjects, therefore, in terms of approach, it takes quite a long and intense time to be accepted as part of the subject's life. The result presents an intimate impression between the subject and the audience, characterized by the subjects spontaneity in conveying the problems they face, not only through speech, but also through actions, activities, and conversations with other subjects, such that

the audience is confronted with the realities of actual reality. (Tanzil; Ariefiansyah; Trimarsanto, 2010, p. 10).

11. PARTICIPATORY

The participatory approach is closely related to the observational approach in terms of living with a subject or doing fieldwork like anthropologists and ethnologists, then writing everything down that has been learned. The basic difference between the two approaches is; observational does not allow the audience to recognize their presence because they do not present visual images and sound images by the maker, while participatory acts interactively with the subject and often involves themselves in an event or daily activity, so that the filmmaker gets a subjective experience as a result of their active involvement. The main focus is on constructing a participatory relationship with the subject.

If observational documentaries emphasize persuasion to give the audience an idea of what it's like to be in a certain situation, but don't care what it's like for the filmmaker who is also in the scene, participatory films actually want to give the audience an impression of what the filmmaker experiences in the recorded scene. This approach ultimately provides an overview of the event as being represented by someone, namely the filmmaker, who is actively involved in it. The main point is to ignore the attitude of tacit observation (observational), then reconfigure it poetically (poetic), or argumentatively modify the 'world' in the film (expository).

The main aspect of participatory documentary is interviews, especially with the subjects so that comments and direct responses can be obtained from the sources. Thus, the subjects in the film are authorized to express their opinions and views on the issues raised. However, when in the post-production (editing) stage, the opinions of the interview will be rearranged and involve cutting words, so that they can become an argument for the problems the filmmaker wants to convey. Thus, many observers criticize this approach because it is considered too much manipulation and intervention on the events and subjects recorded.

12. REFLEXIVE

If participatory describes the relationship between the filmmaker and the subject, reflexive is more about the relationship between the filmmaker and the audience through the medium of message delivery, namely film. Reflexive is considered a style that appeals to the audience's affection — its emotional side. This subjective and political style tries to present the reality of the referent to the real reality, in accordance with the perspective of the filmmaker. Thus, the segmentation of the audience is limited by the the basic assumptions or personal perceptions of an audience. Simply put, only those

who have felt, read, listened to or understood the same problem or are close to the same thing will feel the same emotional aspect.

Because the characteristics of the reflexive style is very close to participatory, intervening actions and attitudes are of course also present, but they are realized with a more subtle approach, meaning that they do not just give an assessment, at this point Bill Nichols writes “speak nearby” instead of “speak about”. This kind of approach actually makes the audience aware of the presence of the filmmaker in the ongoing scene cannot be avoided by the audience’s attention. The reflexive power is in the ‘film truth’ (kino pravda) which tells of the process of recording daily life is as it is, and the ‘film eye’ (kino glaz) which is the procedure by which film is constructed technically, which usually takes place at the editing table.

13. PERFORMATIVE

This type of documentary is paradoxical, where on the one hand, this type actually distracts the audience from the ‘world’ created in the film. Whilst, on the other hand actually attracting the audience’s attention to the expressive aspect of the film itself. The aim is to represent the ‘world’ in the film indirectly, as well as to create an atmosphere (mood) and feel of filmic ‘tradition’, namely the tradition of creating subjects or events in fiction films. This aspect of creation aims to describe and present a depiction of the subject or event in a more subjective, more expressive, more stylistic, deeper and stronger way. The subjects and events are well made and feel more alive so that the audience can feel the experience of the events that are made. Subjects and events are made much more complete so that the audience can feel the important changes and variations.

The performative approach allows a broader space for creative freedom in the form of visual abstractions, narratives, and so on. Usually, performative is considered to be the opposite of observational because performative confronts aesthetic problems with the audience’s personal acceptance of the truth that is presented.

14. METHODOLOGY

In conducting this research, the author uses the constructivist paradigm. As explained by Morrisson (2009), the constructivist paradigm states that the individual (researcher) interprets and acts according to various conceptual categories in his mind, meaning that the researcher can act as a key instrument. Thus, researchers have the right to map patterns and conduct research using a theoretical approach and data sources that are considered relevant in order to obtain reliable and authentic results. The constructivist paradigm assumes that every human being construct (building “truth”)

and construes (a way of understanding “truth”) differently. Said to be a manifestation of “research about people”, this paradigm becomes attractive for the purposes of research if it recognizes construction and construal (Nikmah, 2014, p. 10).

The type of research used in descriptive qualitative research-interpretative, a method that focuses the researcher as the subject, and the text as the object of their study.

The stages of research that the author undertakes are as follows:

1. The author watches the documentary *Cameraperson* and then does the coding and capturing of all the imagery (writing, ambient, dialogue and image) representing particular documentary approaches.
2. The data that has been collected from this documentation process is then analyzed using the categories of Bill Nichols’ documentary approach, with reference to the six modes that already exist in this documentary approach model.
3. From this analysis, the writer interprets by the comparison of Kirsten Johnson’s practice with Bill Nichol’s documentary approach model.

15. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The representation of Bill Nichols documentary approaches in practice in *Cameraperson* is divided into two broad lines, namely to categorize the scene according to the documentary approach, and describing one by one the categorization of documentary approach.

16. SCENE CATEGORIZATION

The categorization of each scene is done by grouping the location that appears before the scene takes place, then identified through the analysis of Bill Nichols’ documentary approach.

The after mentioned results are as follows:

Table 2 - Scene Categorization Group by Location

N°	Location	Timecode	Model
1	Foča, Bosnia	00:00:54 – 00:02:47	Participatory
2	Nodaway County, Missouri	00:02:52 – 00:04:13	Reflexive
3	Brooklyn, New York	00:04:15 – 00:05:41	Participatory, Observational
4	Kano, Nigeria	00:05:47 – 00:08:02	Participatory, Reflexive
5	Sarajevo, Bosnia	00:08:05 – 00:10:15	Observational, Expository
6	Manhattan, New York	00:10:16 – 00:11:12	Participatory
7	Following Scene of Manhattan, New York	00:11:12 – 00:12:07	Observational, Reflexive
8	Nakisengi, Uganda	00:12:11 – 00:13:18	Participatory
9	Queens, New York	00:13:23 – 00:13:57	Observational
10	Jasper, Texas	00:14:04 – 00:17:54	Participatory
11	Sana'a, Yemen	00:17:59 – 00:21:03	Participatory
12	My Apartment, New York	00:21:03 – 00:21:44	Participatory
13	Kabul, Afghanistan	00:21:46 – 00:23:58	Reflexive, Participatory, Performative
14	Huntsville, Alabama	00:24:02 – 00:26:56	Participatory, Performative
15	Headquarters Sheep Ranch, Wyoming	00:27:02 – 00:29:13	Participatory, Observational
16	Foča, Bosnia	00:29:15 – 00:34:08	Observational, Participatory, Reflexive
17	Sarajevo, Bosnia	00:34:12 – 00:36:41	Participatory, Performative
18	State College, Pennsylvania	00:36:45 – 00:38:56	Observational, Participatory
19	Guantanamo Bay, Cuba	00:38:59 – 00:40:32	Observational, Participatory
20	Washington, D.C.	00:40:36 – 00:42:51	Participatory
21	[Location withheld]	00:42:54 – 00:43:39	Participatory
22	Austin, Texas	00:43:43 – 00:44:39	Observational, Participatory
23	Foča, Bosnia	00:44:42 – 00:45:44	Observational, Participatory

Nº	Location	Timecode	Model
24	<i>Following Scene of Foča, Bosnia</i>	00:45:45 – 00:49:32	Expository
25	Kabul, Afghanistan	00:49:33 – 00:51:11	Participatory
26	Brooklyn, New York	00:51:14 – 00:52:31	Observational
27	Sarajevo, Bosnia	00:52:35 – 00:55:14	Expository, Participatory
28	Kabul, Afghanistan	00:55:18 – 00:56:33	Participatory
29	Zalingei, Darfur	00:56:37 – 00:59:46	Participatory
30	Foča, Bosnia	00:59:47 – 01:03:07	Participatory
31	Headquarters Sheep Ranch, Wyoming	01:03:08 – 01:04:03	Observational, Reflexive
32	Beaux Arts, Washington (My Childhood Home)	01:04:10 – 01:05:35	Observational
33	Herat, Afghanistan	01:05:36 – 01:06:37	Reflexive
34	Colorado Springs, Colorado	01:06:38 – 01:07:52	Observational
35	Westport, New York	01:07:53 – 01:11:42	01:11:46 – 01:13:49
36	Beaux Arts, Washington	01:11:46 – 01:13:49	01:11:46 – 01:13:49
37	The Bronx, New York	01:13:55 – 01:15:39	Expository, Observational
38	Jasper, Texas	01:15:42 – 01:17:22	Participatory
39	Kano, Nigeria	01:17:28 – 01:21:47	Observational, Participatory, Reflexive
40	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	01:21:49 – 01:24:02	Participatory
41	Kano, Nigeria	01:24:02 – 01:25:12	Observational
42	Brooklyn, New York	01:25:19 – 01:27:57	Observational, Participatory
43	Foča, Bosnia	01:28:03 – 01:32:47	Observational, Participatory, Reflexive
44	Beaux Arts, Washington	01:32:51 – 01:36:02	Participatory
45	Monrovia, Liberia	01:36:05 – 01:38:18	Observational

Font: Authors.

17. DOCUMENTARY APPROACH ANALYSIS

Regarding documentary films, there are particular methods or procedures followed in the production process. Starting at the search for ideas generally adopted from personal or social issues, followed by observation to obtain factual data and information,

then the documentary filmmaker determines the formula for constructing the narrative in the film.

In practice, there are several methods that can be specifically called a documentary approach, used to record scenes that contain various kinds of information, such as location and time settings, characters, and events.

In this research, the writer focuses on how Kirsten Johnson practices documentary approaches from a series of images in *Cameraperson*. The writer presents the results of an analysis of directing style in the framework of Bill Nichols' documentary approach theory, traced through various indicators (signs), including the following:

18. EXPOSITORY

The expository model can be seen initially in the opening text of the film, namely:

For the past 25 years I've worked as a documentary cinematographer. I originally shot the following the footage for the other films, but here I ask you to see it as my memoir. These are the images that have marked me and leave me wondering still. With love, KJ.

From the above text, Kirsten Johnson tells the audience frankly that she recorded herself the pictures that appear in the film during a 25-year career as a cinematographer for other films. Her acknowledgment of the value of the images to shape and leave traces of memories demonstrates how important the images are to her.

Afterwards, several conversations with Kirsten Johnson or with other characters accentuate the didactic information, mean they explicitly give information to the audience. Those can be found in the Sarajevo scene (00:08:05 – 00:10:15), when she talks to her crew from behind the camera, discussing the composition of the image. In addition, in another Sarajevo scene (00:52:35 – 00:55:14) when two crew members from Johnson's production team explain what happened after they got involved in the production, that one of them had nightmares from their experience.

Furthermore, writing of the location of each scene has a special influence in limiting the audience's perception of knowing where the scene is taking place.

Quantitatively, the expository model can be found in 4 scenes.

19. PARTICIPATORY

The participatory model is practiced predominantly by Kirsten Johnson through her active involvement in a scene, indicated by the presence of her voice or the movement of the camera seeming to respond to the scene.

We're reminded of Kirsten Johnson's role as a cinematographer, that she has free-

will to speak and move, as well as direct the camera. The 'active involvement' referred to by the researcher is the way Kirsten Johnson's voice comes from behind the camera when responding in conversation between her and the subject in front of the camera.

Kirsten Johnson's active interaction with her subject begins with the first images in the Foca scene (00:00:54 – 00:02:47), when she greets a shepherd on horseback and follows him from behind, she also tries to have a conversation with him even though she doesn't understand the shepherd's language.

From the application of this model, Kirsten Johnson successfully opens this documentary work to the intense feeling of complicated social problems. Her shrewdness in placing herself in relation social subjects when directly interacting shows Kirsten Johnsons foresight and high intellect.

Kirsten Johnson's shrewdness in interrogating the camera's power can be seen in the Manhattan scene (00:10:16 – 00:11:12). When Johnson points the camera at Jaques Derrida, one of the outstanding French philosophers, he refuses to be filmed, she triggers Derrida to warn her as she walks across the highway. Thus, the camera can be seen as a mediator between Kirsten Johnson and Derrida.

Quantitatively, the Participatory model can be found in 33 scenes. As the largest percentage in *Cameraperson*, it can be assessed that Kirsten Johnson's active involvement as a cameraperson also presents herself as a human being, participating and interacting with other humans, making the boundaries between the world outside and inside the camera biased.

This refraction mustn't be seen as a negative thing, but rather be understood as a way of speaking typical for documentary filmmakers that always face challenges and obstacles when responding to events that are happening in front of the camera.

20. OBSERVATIONAL

The observational model can be shown by Kirsten Johnson's passive involvement when placing subjects or objects in frame. An impression of detachment shows Kirsten Johnson's efforts in recording events that occur as they are (taken for granted). In practice, Kirsten Johnson acts as a documentarian who often makes observations without justifying the intervention in the scene, and at the same time, Kirsten Johnson practices journalistic ethics as a hunter of truth—getting to truth with facts.

This observational approach can be clearly remarked when Johnson films various scenes and expressions of the crowd at one of the games in the State College scene (00:36:45 – 00:38:56). The recorded ambience and cheers are arranged into a montage over the hymns sung by various subjects at the end of the scene.

This approach is used to separate the filmmaker from the subjects - without any intervention in the events taking place. As a result, it allows the audience to read the

scenes according to their respective experience. This relates to the subjectivity of each persons consideration of memories and experiences, and tests their loyalty to their own views.

In addition, the scene that clearly shows the practice of observation is in the Headquarters Sheep Ranch scene (01:03:08 – 01:04:03). In this scene, Kirsten Johnson is seen recording her mother, Catherine Joy Johnson, without any interaction or conversation between them. It was written in the previous scene that her mother suffered from Alzheimer's disease, and without Kirsten Johnson's intervention, the audience can interpret the scene. Hers mother is stiff and clumsy, she moves very slowly and holds objects very carefully. Recording her mother's actions observationally, Kirsten Johnson invites the audience to be immersed in the scene with their own interpretations.

Quantitatively, the observational model can be found in 20 scenes.

21. REFLEXIVE

The reflexive model can be seen in Kirsten Johnson's responsiveness to a given scene, predominantly with the presence of her voice behind the camera. This action builds affection for the audience, and allows the audience to feel immersed in the event. In addition, this responsive action implies how a cameraperson works, on the one hand as a camera operator, and on the other hand a human being with an instinctive intensity, responding to events in front of her.

Beautifully, Kirsten Johnson is able to 'play' the mysteries of cinema, one of which is the relationship between the audience and the filmmaker. *Cameraperson* is a representation of Kirsten Johnson's ability to express various emotions within her point of view.

The presence of Kirsten Johnson's voice behind the camera maintains the intimacy of an event, and in particular, 'forces' the audience not to forget who the person behind the camera is. This method is very political and subjective, but has become considered a successful alternative discourse in documentary practice.

The presence of Kirsten Johnson's voice can be characterized as vividly reflective, such as in the Nodaway County scene (00:02:52 – 00:04:13). In this frame, Kirsten Johnson's surprised voice can be clearly heard after a sudden lightning strike in the sky. Additionally, the sound of sneezing and camera shaking indicate that the reflexive model is being practiced unconsciously. In this context, it is understood that the audience would most likely do the same thing if lightning were to suddenly flash in the sky, that they would be shocked and shaken for a moment.

Quantitatively, the reflexive model can be found in 9 scenes.

22. PERFORMATIVE

The performative model can be seen in Kirsten Johnsons practice of not disclosing the identities various characters—according to journalistic ethics—in order to maintain the privacy of confidential sources of information.

Amongst the various subjects in the film, some are presented without showing their faces, only writing their names anonymously. Namely, the teenage girl in the Huntsville scene (00:24:02 – 00:26:56), who expresses regret over the birth of her baby from sexual relations outside of marriage for the second time. Additionally, another source is a woman, described as a victim of the tragedy of the Bosnian civil war (00:34:12 – 00:36:41), who tells her story as a victim of rape during the ethnic conflicts.

In these scenes, Kirsten Johnson practices the work of journalists who consider whether it is appropriate for the identity of the subject to be presented in public or not. This practice can be characterized as the performative model, because it is as if Kirsten Johnson intervened in a scene with a framing that prioritizes body language that helps the audience feel the pain and engage with their stories rather than presume truth from identity.

Quantitatively, the observational model can be found in 3 scenes.

23. POETIC

The poetic model can be seen in a discontinuous array of associated images. The continuity of the picture does not have a significant impact. In the process of assembling images in this way, *Cameraperson* prioritizes the exploration of association and patterns that involve rhythm and time. The films narrative structure uses non-linear patterns and prioritizes spatial juxtaposition, which can be seen in the locations name being written before the scene takes place, appearing alternately or returning to the same location.

This also relates to the opening text of the film which asks the audience to see this series of pictures as a memoir. So, throughout the film, the series of images are analogous to memories, or memories and experiences that are constructed as narrative structures.

The poetic model becomes the backbone of *Cameraperson*'s narrative structure, presenting the variety of social problems that she has documented as 'burdens' borne by the world and by Kirsten Johnsons memories.

A camera shot can demonstrate how to 'fumble' and can perform integrated reframing like a confident painter constructing a painting on canvas with brushstrokes and splashes of color.

The process of editing the series of images that make up *Cameraperson* takes its cue from an astrophysicist in the Austin scene (00:43:43 – 00:44:39). From the explanation of one of the characters, it can be understood that time and space cannot always be understood literally, that recorded reality can be rearranged to suit the memories and imagination of the audience, therefore, the only technique that can be used is free associational editing.

24. CONCLUSION

The practice of a documentarian is always intertextualized via their cognition, experience, social context, background, etc. All of Bill Nichols' documentary approaches can be found in *Cameraperson*, proof of Kirsten Johnson's intellectuality in presenting social issues and the intimate relationship she has with her family, demonstrating her foresight and her courage in revealing her memories as important things to be displayed to the public.

The approach taken on the subject of film is fundamental in obtaining data and information, and from *Cameraperson*, we can see various treatments used differently depending on the situations and contexts faced by Kirsten Johnson.

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