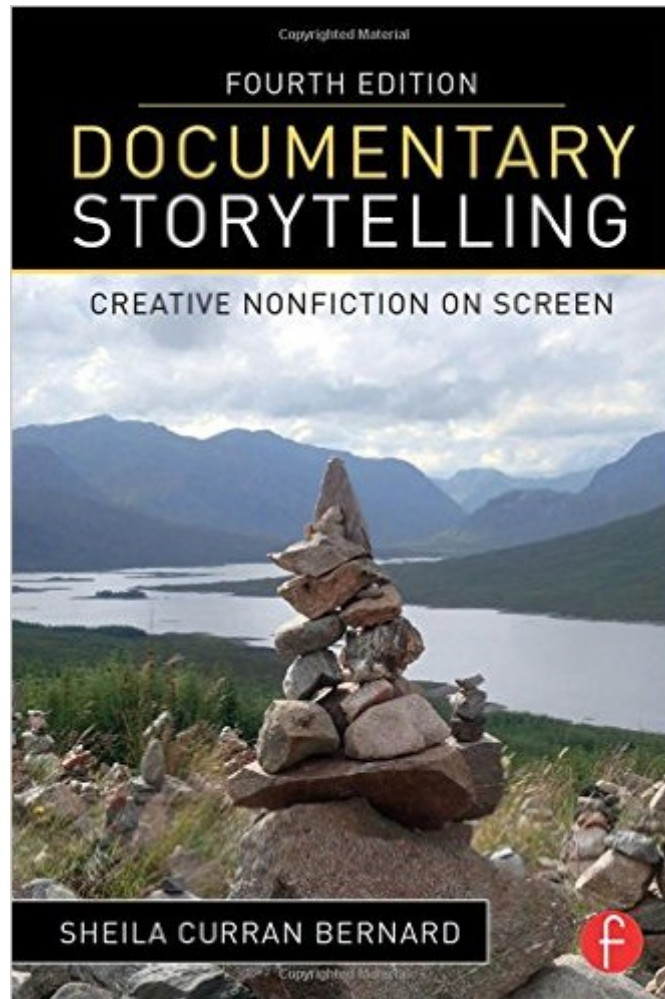


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Documentary Storytelling: Creative Nonfiction On Screen



Synopsis

Documentary Storytelling has reached filmmakers and filmgoers worldwide with its unique focus on the key ingredient for success in the growing global documentary marketplace: storytelling. This practical guide reveals how today's top filmmakers bring the tools of narrative cinema to the world of nonfiction film and video without sacrificing the rigor and truthfulness that give documentaries their power. The book offers practical advice for producers, directors, editors, cinematographers, writers and others seeking to make ethical and effective films that merge the strengths of visual and aural media with the power of narrative storytelling. In this new, updated edition, Emmy Award-winning author Sheila Curran Bernard offers: New strategies for analyzing documentary work New conversations with filmmakers including Stanley Nelson (The Black Panthers), Kazuhiro Soda (Mental), Orlando von Einsiedel (Virunga), and Cara Mertes (JustFilms) Discussions previously held with Susan Kim (Imaginary Witness), Deborah Scranton (The War Tapes), Alex Gibney (Taxi to the Dark Side), and James Marsh (Man on Wire).

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Customer Reviews

Some concept of narrative seems to be creeping into all the arts nowadays but at least in works prepared for the screen it means telling a story. Although it's easy to think that story telling applies mostly to fiction, it is just as relevant to documentary productions. The book is divided into three parts. The first is aimed at explaining just what story is, from the basic idea of a story to an examination of how one can be creative, even in a presentation bound to facts. The second part

discusses some of the elements of developing a documentary story from research to editing. The third part is a series of interviews with the makers of documentaries, emphasizing how they developed the stories in the work, although occasionally spilling off into other areas. I found this last section particularly interesting from the range of documentarians from those who carefully plotted their films to those who actually eschew plotting. To a great extent the author relies upon examples drawn from recent documentaries, including, for example a "close viewing" of Morgan Spurlock's "Supersize Me." The author also provides references to web sites and books that illustrate and explain further details of how particular documentaries tell their stories. (Occasionally some of the references didn't seem very useful, but I don't blame the author for that.) The best way to use the author's instruction is by viewing the actual films and concentrating on how they develop their story line. This is a basic approach to the idea of storytelling. It is written in clear and simple language. I'm not enough of an expert to know if there are important subjects that have not been covered, but what is here rings true and accords with my experience.

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