**Documentary Film – Structure**

Concept: The big revolution in documentary filmmaking in the past ten years has been the advent of narrative structure. In the past, documentaries tended to just deliver information and facts. Now, however, **documentaries tell stories**. As a result of this drive to tell stories, **structure** has become just as important, if not more important in documentaries, than narrative films. Unstructured documentary films feel slow, boring, and repetitive.

Types of Documentary **Structure**:

* **Linear** – the film tells story from beginning to end.
* **Circular** – the film begins at the end, then “goes back” and explains what events led up to the beginning of the film. These types of documentaries usually begin with a big event.
* **Narrative** – the film employs the traditional three act structure seen in most narrative films. The documentary has a beginning, middle, and end. There defined act breaks. The film leads to a climatic event.

**Characters**: Do the real-life people being presented or examined in the documentary feel like they could be characters in a narrative film?

* Do they have defined goals?
* Do they have to overcome both internal and external obstacles?
* Do they suffer from internal character dilemmas?

**Assignment**: Select a documentary that is offered on your streaming service. Screen the documentary. Then, in a two-page write-up explain how the documentary was **structured.** Then, examine and analyze the **people** who are presented in the documentary. Refer to the above questions to help you in the “character” analysis. I realize this assignment is not as defined as the first two assignments in our Documentary Unit. Simply do your best. Structure is critically important in documentary filmmaking. You need to understand it in order to make your own documentary films. Email me the assignment as a google doc or a word doc. PLEASE PUT YOUR NAME ON THE ASSIGNMENT!!!! I beg of you!!!! It is due 4/8/20.