

## **The Social and the Subjective Look: Documentaries and reflexive modernity**

Paper presented at the Australian International Documentary Conference, February 2003

By Ib Bondebjerg

Professor, Department of Film and Media Studies, University of Copenhagen, and Director of the Center for Media and Democracy in the Network Society ([www.media.ku.dk](http://www.media.ku.dk) and [www.modinet.dk](http://www.modinet.dk))

European documentaries have, since the mid 1990s, developed new production and distribution formats that cross the line between film, TV and new digital media, and have also resulted in new generic and aesthetic tendencies.

Documentaries in Europe have benefited from new EU programs and national support and from a rising interest in documentaries in cinema, TV and to some degree also new web-TV channels and Internet. Not least has a Trans-European channel like *Arte* and the establishing of EDN (*European Documentary Network*), contributed to heighten the profile of documentaries (Neimann, 2000, Tue Steen Müller, 2002). Documentaries seem to grow in natural ways into the new multimedia environment of the network society and to connect with a new rise in digital, democratic production formats. An example of this was the so called Video-Marathon Project in 2001 and 2002, where the Danish production Company Zentropa, together with TV-stations, The Danish Film Institute and private companies supplied people with technologies and opportunity to shoot their own film and compete for a prize and screening.

But, also new formats that address the more personal, intimate and subjective in a variety of forms appear in independent documentaries, more traditional TV-documentaries and in the new commercial formats of reality-TV (Dovey, 2000). Perhaps, *The video Diary of Ricardo Lopez* (see Agnete Dorph, 2000), with live footage of his suicide was the ultimate form<sup>1</sup>. In addition to this tendency, very experimental interactive documentaries are now being supported by DFI, The Danish Film Institute (Lars Movin, 2001 and Prami Larsen, 2001), combining traditional documentary reportage and story-telling with the possibilities of interactive search and extra information and material available.

In some European countries the development of especially the wave of reality-television seem to have created anxiety about the future of the established documentary tradition. John Corner has for instance talked about the

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Video Diary of Ricardo Lopez*, was made by the Danish director Sami Saif and edited by Janus Billeskov Jansen, based on Ricardo Lopez more than 18 hours of tape, found by the FBI and broadcast in parts by TV-stations all over the world already in 1996. Sami Saif and Janus Billeskov Jansen later cooperated on Saifs on personal film *Family* – in itself a proof of the fine line between TV-exposure in the form of raw reality and the artistic interest for the private and traumatic experiences.

documentary in a potentially "post-documentary age", where the factual contract and the documentary project as part of a larger vision for civic enlightenment and democracy is at stake (see Corner, 2001 and 2002). With the general decline in Europe for a public service sector of television and perhaps a growing competition and pressure on independent documentary film production, this perceived fear of traditional documentaries on TV and documentaries as independent art production is of course a potential danger. However, if the development in a small European nation like Denmark can be taken as an indication of present and potential developments for documentaries, a gloomy and pessimistic scenario is much less likely (see also Emma Tutty, 2000).

First of all, in Denmark the production of independent film documentaries has been increased, and documentaries are returning to the large screen of the cinema. Several Danish and foreign documentaries have had quite a success in art film theaters, and Michael Moore's Cannes winner, *Bowling for Columbine*, just (2003) released in Danish Theatres has gone beyond the art cinema audience. Secondly, the documentary formats on Danish television stations, both public service channels and commercial channels, have increased in both absolute and relative terms. Comparisons of one week of total Danish television in extended prime time (from 6 pm to midnight) in 1992 and 2002 show a more than 100% increase in factual-documentary programming time (from 2.005 min. to 4.705 minutes), and a relative increase by 3%, considering the increase in total programming and number of channels from 20% of total programming in prime time to 23 % (Bondebjerg, 2003 a, forthcoming). The increasing volume is partly due to the sudden rise in national and international formats of reality-TV (docu-soaps, reality-shows and reality-magazines, see Bondebjerg 1996 and 2002) especially on the commercial channels. But, it is not *Big Brother* and *Fear Factor* all over the place. Some of the reality-formats have also been taken up by public service channels, and many of the reality-programs in fact just continue and develop formats that can be found in both the documentary film tradition and the independent film documentary (Bondebjerg 2002).

Third, and finally, the dichotomy between traditional, serious documentary production and reality-TV forms or the overall dominance of reality-TV must not be exaggerated. There is a significant historical conjunction of the interest for the subjective and intimate in art cinema documentaries and in reality-TV, they are two trends in the same historical flow of new tendencies. The docu-soap format, employed by all four of the Danish public service stations (DR1, DR2, TV2 and TV2 Zulu) is in fact a continuation of the very strong tradition for more observational forms of documentaries focusing on ethnographic studies of

everyday life, that has been visible since direct cinema, and especially in the 1990 has been expanded on television and in film production. Despite the development of new forms, the more independent documentary film making and documentary production of public service TV-stations have continued a broader variety of more traditional sub-genres – more journalistic programs on heavy social and political problems, portraits, historical documentaries etc. and a variety of factual, informative programs.

The factual contract between society and the documentary genre thus, still seems to be very much alive. In an analysis of developments of Danish documentaries in the 90s (Bondebjerg, 2002a), I have analyzed the financial structure of the 128 documentaries produced between 1995-1998, and on average all the films have been supported by The Danish Film Institute, a TV-station and 1,5 other private or public organizations. In all in this period 360 different private and public institutions and companies participated in the documentary film production. The so called independent film documentary is not without social importance and society still seems to value documentary formats.

*A false historical conflict: Film documentaries as art – TV-documentaries as journalism*

At least in a Danish context this convergence between television and film in terms of persons moving from one medium to the other, the rise in co-financing between the two sectors and the faster circulation and distribution of programs to television channels is a new and very strong tendency. Since the rise of TV as a mass medium for factual information, journalism and documentary formats in the 1960s and during the increased multi-channel competition of the 80s, where documentaries were clearly selected as prestigious journalistic forms with strong popular appeal, there has virtually been a more or less cold war between film documentaries and TV-documentaries. Whereas TV-documentaries, either in the form of more observational, human interest stories or hard core investigative journalistic stories had massive viewing figures, the film documentary seemed to live a life in silence or to experience an unnoticed popularity in a special public circulation in educational and cultural institutions, overshadowed by the dominant TV-medium. Documentary filmmakers had a tendency to view TV-documentaries as journalism, infotainment and entertainment without artistic values.

The public support for film documentaries in Denmark from 1972 and onward was based on a system much like the one for feature film: independent consultants gave support to films based on artistic evaluations. The ideology

behind documentary film support was very much linked to an art cinema concept. A strong tradition of poetic -reflexive documentaries thus run from the 1960s and until now, as is clearly seen in the case of three of the most prominent documentary film makers of the older generation, Jørgen Leth, Jon Bang Carlsen and Jytte Rex (see interviews in Mette Hjort and Ib Bondebjerg (eds) (2001). They represent three different but all highly poetic and reflexive types of documentaries: Jytte Rex, a kind maze-like lyrical search of mental flows; Jørgen Leth, very cool and pop-art like investigations of everyday life situations, with people and places in staged visual spaces, and Jon Bang Carlsen, with his mixing of symbolic, reconstructions of actual life-situations and persons, and a clear staging of reality in a constructed factual narrative.

Although this strong art cinema tradition in film documentaries is in opposition to the main tendencies in the TV-documentary tradition, tendencies that focus on observational or investigative, journalistic forms analyzing reality from more objective points of view, it would be a historical and theoretical mistake to overstate the differences. First of all, the art cinema tendencies are not the only tendencies in film documentaries. There are strong tendencies towards factual information and more traditional documentary genres dealing with social and cultural themes and problems of reality. In fact the vast majority of Danish film documentaries – as already argued - are made on demand, to fulfill a specific purpose of informational, educational purposes, or at least with support from institutions with a special need for factual information.

Secondly, the distinction between TV as factual, objective information and film as art with poetic -reflexive dimensions cannot be defended. The relation between art and journalism, or between subjective expressions with highly developed aesthetic and rhetorical forms, and factual and objective forms with a just functional and invisible aesthetics does not follow lines between media, but are related to specific generic forms with different intentions, form and style. All documentaries are based on selections and choice of rhetorical forms – reality cannot be captured in its purity. In all forms of modern TV-documentaries the ethos of journalism and factual arguments do not exclude the use of narrative, symbolic and rhetorical features, also known from purely fictional forms. Specific aesthetic and stylistic forms cannot in any simple way be connected with either fiction or non-fiction, but the range of freedom in documentaries is of course much more limited.

If we just take a superficial look at some of the recent Danish documentaries on TV it becomes obvious that the distinction between film and TV has for a long time been much more blurred than the debate often indicates, and

the younger generation of documentary makers do not respect traditional distinctions between genres and media. They move freely between formats and between media like film and TV, and often explore possibilities on the border zones, that challenge established hierarchies and aesthetic forms. But even for the more established and best Danish documentary makers on TV, the line between film and TV and between art and journalism is fine.

Especially in the forms that deals with the personal biography, the intimate everyday life - those forms that Dovey (2000) calls first person media discourses, Nichols calls "performative documentaries" (Nichols, 1995) pointing to the loosening of traditional referentiality in favor of an reflexive and almost voyeuristic posing of very emotional and private stories, or Michael Renov has called "domestic ethnography" (1999) – the line between the historical tradition for observational film and TV and the new tendencies in film, observational documentaries and reality-TV is challenged. Anne Jerslev (2002), who has analyzed Danish and international examples of this new trend in what she calls "the intimate documentary" focus on the fact, that the documentary camera in such films no longer turn to the normal understanding of outside reality. She furthermore refers to the staging and creation of the reality represented in these forms, and to the fact that they often have a reflexive play with the creation process and the relation between the director and the director as intimate subject, sometimes including his own family.

Examples of this tendency can be found in a series of documentaries on the Danish public service broadcaster TV2 from Spring 2002 with the common theme "Mine...", where six young Danish documentary film makers presented very personal stories about their family and beloved ones. Or, it can be found in the moving documentary made by Thomas Heurlin *Sentenced to be a father* (2001), where he forces himself to establish a relationship to a daughter, that he first did not know he had, but then was sentenced to be a father for, without wanting to establish a personal relationship with her. Another example is the very strong and emotionally loaded documentary, *Annes Fight* (Lars Høj, 1994), about a very young woman's unsuccessful fight against cancer, a program the TV2 viewers voted the best documentary on TV2 ever in 1998. Both Lars Høj and Thomas Heurlin are fine examples of TV-documentary makers who employ the same strategies we see in independent filmmaking and get close to themes and forms in reality-TV. An essential part of many reality-TV formats is that people expose and invest their very personal lives and identity directly, live on screen, and accept the conditions of playing with their real identity, the role playing and simulated reality.

The tendencies mentioned cannot all be defined as identical documentary forms and sub-genres, there are important differences in aesthetic forms and communicative intentions. But it is still relevant to ask why *Big Brother*, docu-soaps, still-photo-documentaries like Ray Billingham's *Ray's a laugh* (1996) or the documentary film project based on this, *Fishtank* (1998, BBC) and projects like BBC's *Video Nation* and numerous other video-diary projects all occur in the late 1990s in both film and TV? I will offer an explanatory framework in the next section. But it is also worthwhile to remind ourselves of links between these new radical forms of subjectivity and earlier forms of documentary film and television that transformed the more factual and objective forms of journalism towards more open and subjective expressions.

I have already pointed to trends in the more reflexive and poetic film documentary genres that developed in the 1960s and 1970s. But part of the transformation on which the new subjective forms rely are already visible in the late 80s and early 90s, when observational documentaries on Danish TV moved closer to privacy and the everyday life of ordinary people and the backstage of public life and public institutions. The three most, productive and central documentary directors of the 70s, 80s and 90s, that is the older guard, have all been strong in more ethnographic, observational forms, but with an increased tendency to play with everyday life and identity, to stage reality-experiments. These tendencies to use documentary formats to staged reality experiments are, however, not a phenomenon of the reality-TV of the 90s, but a tradition with a much longer history.

The oldest of the three big names in Danish TV-documentary history, Poul Martinsen, worked with this format very early, already in the 60s and 70s in a way that anticipate some of the reality-TV-formats, but with intentions that were more 'scientific' than reality-TV forms. In *Broen* ("The Bridge", 1969) he made a group of hippies and a group of Hells Angels work together on an Island, building a bridge to get back. In *Dagbog fra en Fristad* ("Diary from a free Commune, 1976) a working class family with strong opinions on the social experiment Christiania, a free Commune in Copenhagen, went to live there for a couple of weeks, an experience that completely transformed both the attitudes of the family and those inside the commune. Another famous example of documentary forms that stage social experiments is Poul Martinsen's *Lydighedens dilemma* ("The Dilemma of Obedience", 1978), in which participants are tricked to give electric punishment to persons in a faked educational experiment, and experience how difficult it is for people to say no to and not trust authorities. In 1994 another important figure in the Danish film- and TV-documentary tradition, Lise

Roos created *Familien Danmark* ("The family Denmark") in which two families switched lives for two weeks, thus exposing inner structures and rituals in Danish everyday life and behind two different life styles.

You may call these examples "factual programming as identity lab " (Dovey, 2003), a term he uses to characterize reality-programs like *Big Brother*, *Survivor* etc. But even these early forms certainly have some resemblance to the much more staged, spectacular and commercially 'simulated labs' of reality-games of the late 90s. They expose and challenge other persons in documentary films and TV-programs, the same way the subjective documentaries expose and challenge the directors themselves or their close relatives. However these 'switching lives' documentaries or 'social experiments' with the confrontation between different life styles are only part of the new developments. The subjective intimacy of director's personal film stories are matched by the ever closer move of traditional observational documentaries to deep back stage and privacy areas not covered very much before on either film or television.

The third important figure in newer Danish TV-documentary history, Lars Engels (see Bondebjerg, 2002 b and 2003, in print), has since the late 1980s drawn huge viewing figures, normally only seen in connection with national TV-fiction, to series of observational documentaries of the victims and outcasts in one of the more rough neighborhoods in central Copenhagen. We have followed drug addicts and prostitutes on "job" and in private (*Pigerne på Halmtrovet*, 1992, "The Girls on Halmtrovet"), insane criminals in protected institutions (*Dømt til behandling*, 1997, "Sentenced to Treatment"), night doctors on duty visiting persons living in utter poverty and loneliness (*Natlæger*, 1990, "Night Doctors", *Orkanens øje*, 1991, "The Centre of a Hurricane"), men and women in prison (*Piger i Vestre fængsel*, 1996, "Girls in Prison" ), and the docu-series in 13 parts, very close to the docu soap format about everyday life on a police stations (*Historier fra en politistation*, 2000-2001, "Stories from a police station") etc. Engels films about everyday life seen through the shadow of hell from the bottom of the welfare state, have shaken the official image of Danish society.

Social pornography and voyeurism has been used as negative terms about these programs. However, these programs have been made through careful research and cooperation with the people involved and have definitely enlarged the image of what it is to be a Dane for a wide audience. The most recent tendencies in traditional observational documentaries and also in more dramatically constructed docu-soaps have been an expansion of increasingly more private and intimate portraits of life forms and identities in an ever more globalized, multi-cultural and heterogeneous society. Now, also the rich and

global elite has been portrayed (*I første række*, 2002-03, "In the front position"), we have followed tragedies and human happiness on a maternal ward (*Fødegangen*, "The maternal Ward"), we have followed a group of babies and their families born in 2000 (*Årgang 0*), we have followed ethnic conflicts in a Danish suburban area (*Drengene fra Vollsmose*, (2001) "The Boys from Vollsmose" Jørgen Flindt Petersen, and *Høje Historier* ("Tall Stories", 1999, Poul Martinsen og Anders Riis Hansen) etc. All these genres and new tendencies in traditional formats, together with the increasing number of more extreme forms of reality-TV seem to converge towards needs created by a social and cultural context often called reflexive modernity in a network society. Traditional roles and forms of community are challenged by more floating forms of communities and identities on the move.

*Reflexive modernity, the politics of identity, everyday life and new documentary forms*

In an article called "Factual hybridity: Games, Documentary and Simulated Spaces" Bernadette Flynn (2002) reveal an interesting observation on the links between reality-TV-series like *Big Brother* and computer-games like for instance *The Sims*. In both forms, says Flynn, certain techniques are used to simulate a reality that acts as a model and laboratory for real life experiences, identity playing and has a rather full, but rule-governed social, psychological and emotional space. Jon Dovey, who has taken this idea further (Dovey, 2003), sees this development not as a move towards simulacrum and postmodern hyper-reality, but as a move from a simple form of factual representation to a more dynamic, complex and interactive relation between simulated documentary worlds the real world they refer to and build on, and the reality of the audience.

As already indicated in Dovey's earlier book *Freakshow* (2000) and in line with my arguments (Bondebjerg, 2002: 160 ff), the development in documentary formats and reality-TV are not just products of increased competition, commercialization and search for cheap formats with the fascination power of both documentary forms and fictional forms. Reality-TV formats certainly also is about finding powerful formats for less money. But tendencies in new documentaries and reality-TV are also in line with the social and cultural dynamics of the reflexive modernity of the evolving network society. It is the result of the increased importance of new relations between private and public life and the roles connected to them, tendencies in politics and culture where the private increasingly invades the public, between local and globally communicated

models of identity, between mediated experience and real life experience and between traditional and stable models of life projects and identities and possibilities of life long transformation of our projects and forms of identity.

There is no need to overstate this transformation from traditional forms of ritualized everyday life and routines to more reflexive and flexible tendencies in identity-politics, life politics and long term trajectories for a normal life. Human nature and social practices do not change over night. On the other hand a strong line of sociologist like Giddens, Beck, Baumann, Castells and John B. Thompson have pointed to new forms of self and networks, the new uncertainties and complexities built into the risk society and the symbolic overload of information connected with the mediation of experience in a more and more globalized multi-media environment.

As John B. Thompson has stated in his book *Media and Modernity* (1995), the modern network society has turned the self into a strongly mediated and symbolic project, where the media expand the representation of social life to more private and mundane aspects of both everyday life and public figures. Through the media we witness a new global intimacy by distance with public figures and representatives of everyday life both in our own national space and in far away places. Catastrophes and sufferings are not just distant stories, but close, personal encounters in a global media sphere. Baumann talks in his books about the move from 'solid modernity' to 'liquid modernity' (Baumann, 2000), from a situation where collective actions in more solid organizations are substituted by more floating and changing networks that may leave the individual with a stronger demand for self-reflection and choice. In Ulrik Becks writings on reflexive modernity (Beck, 1992 and Beck et. Al., 1994) this is further stressed in his analysis of how the individual in liquid modernity becomes a center of its own life project. Our life story is to a large degree no longer decided by tradition but by a multiple complex of influences in a more transnational and mediated context. This creates more possibilities, but at the same time demands a strong capability of making use of this more open space of actions and directions. From a critical perspective this can be seen as a demand for individual solutions to problems that are really part of more large scale social problems. As Beck puts it: The private sphere is not what it seems but "the outside turned inside and made private of conditions and decisions made elsewhere." (Beck, 1992: 133). The strong focus on identity work, lifestyle, the subjective and private, the play with roles and the questioning of traditional representational forms in newer forms of documentary and reality-TV, can be seen as a direct reflection and response to this development.

In a very interesting article "Towards a Network Sociality" (Wittel, 2001), Andreas Wittel has tried to elaborate on this development and the theories behind them as a new form of "network sociality", which can be seen as a change in more traditional forms of 'community'. His concepts draw on among other things Castell's seminal work on the Network society (Castells, 1996), and the basic point is, that whereas the term community can be said to rest on more firmly established social relations, a common history and narrative and a coherence in time and space, network sociality is a not firmly imbedded intersubjectivity, a matrix of social relations, that are fleeting and transient, intense, but under more dynamic processes of construction and deconstruction. Network sociality is connected to the increased importance of communication technologies and the double and contradictory process of individualization and globalisation. This network sociality, Wittel argues, is particularly strong in cultural industries and new media.

Wittel's analysis is basically an analysis of actual networking practices in the media and commercial sector, including more everyday social activities, but the concept has wider implications. Wittel refers to Becks points about individualization as " a removal from historically prescribed social forms and commitments, a loss of traditional security with respect to rituals, guiding norms and practical knowledge" (Beck, 1999). Where these forms become flexible, mediated experience and media input become more central to the forming of identities and as a source of information about choices and possibilities – as an "identity lab". The ability to use and function under the forms of the new network sociality is not equally distributed among social segments: network sociality is the product of the global information elite. Studies of the primary audiences for especially reality-TV formats clearly show, that the prototypical audience for especially the game show is the modern, young, individualized segment, whereas more traditional forms of docu-soaps or human interest observational documentaries have a broader audience. The more extreme identity lab programs are thus younger and more 'up beat' than the average documentary program (Hjarvard, 2002 and Hill, 2000)

In a society dominated by tendencies where networks and communities to a larger degree are changing and go beyond the traditional forms of more imbedded communities, the need for increased play with identity and social roles, for simulated interaction with all the aspects of everyday life and its relation to broader issues of identity and life politics become central. The rise of reality-TV forms, but also new forms of observational and/or subjective documentaries based on everyday life of ordinary people in often extreme situations create a

reality-lab. Many different forms compete: the swap-life and change identity and life formats, which I have already mentioned a few Danish examples of, also have many other national forms. Dovey (2003) mentions British examples like *Wife Swap*, Channel4, where husbands and wives change places for a month, *Trading Races* (BBC2, 2002), where the participants changed skin color (!) and life and *Faking it* (Channel 4), where persons are asked to adapt to a new professional identity in just one month. Programs like these are clearly learning labs in reflexive modernity, where the participants provide role-models and simulated experiences for an audience, eager to satisfy their curiosity looking at others, but also learning something about themselves and the challenges everyday life offers.

Another strong trend, already in a way visible in for instance *Big Brother*, is the 'back to basic' tendencies. In a hypermodern, technological society a lot of social fantasy and perspective can be gained by sending people back to primitive circumstances, that contrast modern life and making them develop strategies to cope with that. We have seen historical identity-swaps like BBC's almost educational *1900 House*, in which a family was sent back in time to a Victorian house. We have seen programs build on the concept of creating a society from scratch, like the xxx and xxx. But, in fact all the programs where you see other peoples reality close up or witness how they simulate and play with their life, is an expression of documentaries reflecting new life conditions under reflexive modernity.

Reality-programs are the most spectacular, commercial and extreme programs reflecting this new interest for reality-role-playing. But, as already indicated almost all other documentary main genres are in some way affected by this development. If we define the main documentary formats as *the authoritative, formal genre* (most often informational, journalistic and rhetorical), *the observational, open genre*, *the dramatized documentary*, *the poetic-reflexive genre*, and the *reality genres* (see Bondebjerg, 2002, with reference to Nichols, 1991 and 1995 and Plantinga, 1997), we can point to three direct consequences on existing and new documentary formats:

- ?? The observational and open documentary form develop an increased focus on the ordinary and everyday life, reality and normality under stress and challenge, moving away from the traditional focus on the ordinary and the institutional. This tendency is furthermore supported by the much stronger use of narrative, mise en scene and casting in docu-soaps that represent a hybridization between observational and dramatized documentaries.
- ?? The increased focus on identity politics, role models and role playing, simulations and experimental practices that are strongly represented in

reality-game show formats are also increasingly important in both observational, poetic-reflexive and even authoritative documentaries. This is most obvious through the tendency to focus on the director's own personality and subjective story and broader private life sphere, and through the reflexive dimension on the process of telling and constructing the story.

- ?? Furthermore, the move from traditional modernity to liquid modernity also influences the rhetorical forms of authoritative and journalistic formats. The self evident epistemic authority and voice of truth and referentiality, which is the fundamental basis of this genre, is often stylistically imbedded in a presentation and rhetorical form, where multiple voices and the process of getting at the truth and the facts are represented directly in the voice and aesthetic form and surface of the program. The epistemic authority is no longer linked to a notion of simple authenticity and unquestioned representational forms of factuality, evidence and arguments, but very often imbedded in a reflexive strategy of complex rhetoric and argumentation, and in this sense a more open and hyper-complex notion of truth.

The two Danish films I am going to analyze, in the following, as filmic expressions of some of these tendencies, do not represent and cover the whole field, and I certainly want to stress, that I do not consider traditional documentary forms and arguments out-dated. On the contrary: the factual contract with its reference to reality and arguments concerning the world out there is still the core of what documentary film making is about. But, we are witnessing an expansion of the thematic field of documentaries, covering still broader aspects of reality previously considered taboo and we are witnessing a transformation and hybridization of aesthetic forms and functions of documentaries, of which formats combining interactive features and more linear, narrative and rhetorical features seem to be the most recent development.

*The social and subjective – the investigative and the reflexive: two aesthetic main tendencies*

In the following, taking this general media context as a starting point, I will focus on especially two 'new' generic and aesthetic tendencies, with two recent Danish documentaries as the main examples. The first example is Tomás Gislasons *Maximum Penalty*(2002) representing a new combination of an investigative journalism strategy and poetic-reflexive strategy with heavy use of multi-layered,

'archaeological' montage. The second is Sami Saif's and Phie Ambo's IDFA Amsterdam price winner *Family* (2001), a very subjective, personal story, also with a highly meta-documentary and poetic-reflexive dimension. Gislason's documentary is a strong journalistic unveiling of deep back stage communist Russia and a highly emotional narrative. The film is supported by both Nordic Film and TV Fund, DFI and DR and is thus both in genre, production- and distribution history a good example of the new type of documentary film combining different genres and crossing traditional dividing lines between media and distribution systems.

*Family*, is also a very emotional story, and a search for the hidden truth, but a much more personal truth and story with one of the directors (Saif) in search of his unknown father in Yemen, and with his girl friend, the other director (Ambo) as co-director and off screen dialogic partner. It is a dramatic, subjective, emotionally excessive film, in which the director is forcing himself to pursue the subjective truth, resulting in all kinds of meta-commentaries and moments of doubt and identity crisis. It is a psychological travel back from repression to insight, a filmic voyage that from time to time seems to go into the direction of a very exhibitionistic docu-soap. But, the construction of the film and the development of the story is all the time an integrated and reflexive part of the film. It seems as if on the one hand the film is made, changed and developed in a very spontaneous and non-organized way while it is shot, but at the same time both the director and all the participants are the objects of constant mirroring-effects and interpretations.

Gislason is already famous for his editing of Lars von Trier's debut *The Element of Crime* (1984) and there is a clear link between the multi layered, dirty, dark and mysterious pictures in Trier's universe and Gislason's investigative, documentary style and form. Trier's use of a noir-inspired thriller structure, with persons searching in the dark and deep waters of society, history and the mind, have a clear connection with the general theme of the documentary trilogy, of which *Maximum Penalty* is the last film. As Claus Christensen has noticed in his short portrait of Gislason, "Stronger than Reason" (Christensen, 2000: 3) all three films, however different they are in many aspects, have one element in common: they follow a person (in one of them the director himself) into the dark center of an extreme, political reality, in search of the background for fanaticism, fear, political suppression, violence and lack of respect for human life and dignity, but also with the personal in focus in relation to this external, social history.

In the portrait of the Danish film documentarist Jørgen Leth, *Heart and Soul* (1994) the focus is on Leth as a normally very strong and self conscious

person, managing to live a life in a global sphere between peaceful Denmark and the dramatic dictatorship in Haiti. In the film however, Gislason clearly get below the surface and into psychic layers of uncertainty, loneliness and fear. Gislason in all his films to some degree always invests his own self in the project, the films are concerned with anxieties, fear and problems that are also the directors own in a very direct sense. In that respect Gislason's films are all in line with the subjective and reflexive tendency in many other documentary films of reflexive modernity. But at the same time his journalistic drive makes him focus on the external reality and even historical dimensions of modern problems. He has said himself that:

I have decided to portray people with whom I can identify and who are struggling with some of the same problems as I am. My strategy has been to try to break my leading characters in order to find the point at which they recognize what it is really all about. This point is familiar in therapy. (Gislason quoted from Christensen, 2000: 4).

This dual strategy of the subjective and the social look is perhaps most strongly expressed in the second film in the trilogy, *The Patriots* (1997), a film in search of the roots of extreme right wing movements and terrorism in US. In this film Gislason is very much at the center of the film. At the beginning of the film in the airport, before leaving for US he reveals the project and the reason for it: his aim is not to make a strongly moral and opinionated film, he wants to get into the heart of the mood and mental framework behind extreme political positions. Gislason wants to capture and understand the fear and anger in himself and in the world, in ordinary peoples lives and among representatives of the terror and violence, that seem to follow the new social conflicts and problems rising from global modernity. Gislason is at the same time in search of his own anxiety, he is the visual and verbal subjective center of his own film, but he is also a journalistic observer in the complicated cyberspace and technologically enhanced reality of the network society.

Throughout the film we hear Gislasons emotional, personal and highly reflexive comments on camera or voice over. But, at the same time the numerous interviews, statements and his whole method of investigation is based on a traditional journalistic strategy. He researches the extreme right wing movements on the Internet, and later seeks the movements out in reality in order to interview key persons. He makes interviews with experts on right wing movements and terrorism. He produces evidence and documentation of their structure, ideology and connections. But at the same time he also gives us an impression of how it is to live inside American media incorporated on-line: We follow live-TV footage from US programs about the Una-bomber from Oklahoma,

the O.J.Simpson case, the dramatic case with the suicidal WACO-sect etc. A very strong moment being used to frame the whole film is the moment caught live on screen and the first reactions from the director and the viewers, when O. J. Simpson is acquitted for the murder of his wife, and later when he is found guilty in the civil law suit.

The way this is done has a strong reflexive element, since the theme of the film is reflected through the media. The film has multiple screens, so to speak: the screen we are watching of the film as such, and the many screens in the film's reality-universe, both computers and TV-screens. So, although the film is basically a traditional, critical, investigative journalistic report, using classical journalistic methods and rhetorical forms, it is also a highly subjective and reflexive film with a very complex and striking aesthetic structure and style. The film has a very rough and granulated texture, indicating a travel into the heart of the darkness of civilization, and the handheld jumpy style and unorthodox use of very extreme close ups makes the film flickering and maze like in structure. But these more 'muddy' and shaky sequences and the frame in frame technique go hand in hand with a more classic style and framing in for instance some of the expert interviews. The aesthetic form underlines the story and theme of the film, the feeling of a complicated problem and a reality that cannot be united into one linear story and simple journalistic conclusion. The film clearly represents the new more reflexive approach to the epistemic authority of earlier journalistic documentaries.

The special combination of journalistic research and a highly complex and multi layered aesthetic form is a very conscious choice by Gislason. He is, as it is clearly stated in the following quotation from an interview, trying to go beyond the rationality and obvious surface of things to deeper levels of emotions, feelings and dreams:

We talk about dreams in the morning; we relate them and we try to analyze them, but at bottom they are the emotion with which we awake. In my films I try to create strata, to get behind waking thoughts, and to leave people with an unformed sense that they have been given new knowledge (...) Different directors have different approaches to the film medium (...) I take form as my starting point, also for my documentaries. I explore the material intuitively. I do not pose intellectual questions during the actual work process. (Gislason, quoted in Christensen, 2000: 3)

As it is always the case with directors commenting on their own productions process, we need to look critically at the statements. In fact, Gislason's films do not seem to be built on intuition and emotions and made without reflection and intellectual strategies. On the contrary, they come out as very emotional and very

rational, as well as very calculated in structure and form. But, what the quotation makes clear is the deliberate attempt to create hybrid forms and to combine many layers of style, expression and narrative and rhetorical strategies.

This is most clearly demonstrated in the most complex of Gislason's documentary films so far, *Maximum Penalty*. The most direct rationale and aim of the film is to go searching in the now open Russian archives for victims of the Stalin Era. The film has a solid base in not just classical, journalistic research, but also in a scientific historical discourse. Gislason's main researcher and storyteller is the historian and former communist, Ole Sohn, who has written a book about the Danish victims of Stalin's terror in the 30s. In this film, Gislason is not present as a person or narrator, but his images, the film's montage and the use of music and other effects give the film a strong emotional and reflexive quality and dimension. At the same time the film uses the basic narrative of a crime - thriller and detective story: it is a search for the truth about an old murder and the context that created both the criminal and the victim. The story is added an extra dimension of tragedy, since the victims and the criminals shared ideology and utopian dreams about a better society, a dream turned into hell, nightmares, fear and large scale surveillance of a nature that is.

The aesthetic structure and very complex and mosaic composition of many of the films sequences and shots is obvious from the very beginning of the film. Here a Soviet army choir is seen and heard singing the praise of Stalin's Soviet Union, inserted as a small frame in a large and very composite picture with vertical and horizontal gridlines: it is like a graphic montage mosaic, where each of the pictures inside the gridlines are commenting each other in an advanced form of dialogic split screen technique, sometimes combined with superimposed and electronically manipulated images of either the main narrator or the witnesses and experts. Fragments of a historical reality with its documents, pictures, sound-bites etc. are thus mixed with the present reality and people looking back or commenting on the past, documenting the research process.

At the same time this highly complex and changing mosaic structure of the screen confronts in a very intense and direct way present reality and historical reality, and gives the viewer the feeling of being there on the spot. Gislason and the editor of the film, Jakob Thuesen, gives the film a striking and dense symbolic surface, that points to the difficulty of truly understanding and reaching the historical truth and authentic reality they are investigating. Even though the archives are beginning to open, the reality behind the general social history and the individual, subjective and emotional history of the persons caught in the

labyrinth of terror is still incomplete and mysterious, and the roads to comprehension difficult to find.

The aesthetic form and montage of the film, the mosaic of voices and realities has a rational and journalistic purpose and an emotional, dramatic quality, but it is at the same time used with reference to both historical and very modern, contemporary stylistic forms. The visual style in modern film and television, both mainstream and avantgarde formats, is increasingly influenced by the possibilities of electronic manipulation with color and texture in post production and editing, and to a larger degree than earlier use montage of historical footage and new footage in one and the same frame. These possibilities are used in a brilliant poetic-reflexive way in this film, but not as an empty, formal device. First of all, it is part of a deliberate, journalistic strategy of questioning the too easy notions of epistemic authority in investigative journalism. Secondly, the film's form and montage directly and indirectly make a number of references to the Soviet avantgarde documentary and feature film tradition, especially Eisenstein and Vertovs films (see also Christensen, 2000: 4), a tradition known for its expressive use of very symbolic and emotional montage and complex visual style. These films are not exactly quoted and shown in traditional clips, but inserted in Gislason's own very complex montage as comments and reflexive part commenting the present story and its form.

In *Maximum Penalty* an unusual high number of sources are combined and used in the film. The main material is the travel to Moscow and contemporary Russia and the archives and historical places leading us back to the fate of Danish Communists in the Stalin-era. The journalistic search brings us into the archives and close to the so far hidden documents. We talk to experts, eyewitnesses, and survivors from that period, and we get close to relatives and family members in both Denmark and Russia. An emotional peak in the film is when the team finds the daughter of one of those that died in Stalin's concentration camps (Claus Jensen) and she is told about her almost unknown father's story and death. The living witnesses and the documents that are brought to life are the core of the documentary story, the prime value of it's journalistic authority and new knowledge. But the film's portrait of this period, its mood, historical tendencies and the lives of representatives of the past is much richer and denser than the documentary value in itself.

As already indicated, the visual montage is very dense and complex, and the emotional and dramatic layers are multiple. This density and complexity is not just created through the quotations and clips from contemporary films and archive material, but also through careful on spot inspection and reconstruction of

events and scenes from the Stalin era. One example, is careful and detailed reconstruction of an arrest and the interrogation by the secret police, others are the reconstruction of conditions of life in a crowded prison cell in one of the Moscow prisons and in one of the camps. The authentic recreation of the mentality and the emotional strains and dramatic events bring the film closer to a fictional narrative, and the use of rhetorical forms and words, visual effects and music is heavily emotional and symbolic. One of the reoccurring effects is the ironic, critical contrasting of pompous military hymns and communist songs and the grim reality. *Maximum Penalty* follows and fulfills all necessary requirements for being a journalistic, historical and journalistic investigation with high information value and documentation. But, it is also a film with a strong poetic and emotional dimension, and with a demanding reflexive aesthetic and rhetorical structure that undermines naïve objectivity and straight forward epistemic authority and voice. It is a mixture of a social look on reality, a project of truth, and it is a subjective and poetic look on identities emotions and experiences behind the historical reality.

*The dramatic and narrative quality of the subjective documentary*

“Drama is fundamental, it is part of life. Man is drama. Hey, drama is practically a biological quantity” (Saif & Ambo, quoted in Christensen, 2001: 4). These words by the two directors of *Family* point to the cognitive theories on the status of the canonical narrative (Bordwell, 1985) and the fact that whether we watch a documentary film or a fictional film, we try to use narrative schemas in the construction of actions, character motivation etc. This was also the case in Gislason’s films, where a basic thriller-detective plot often runs through the journalistic research story. The basic narrative mechanisms bot appear on the macro level of the total film, and in connection with micro level of separate sequences and sub-stories. The narrative behind *Family*, which clearly is not a fictional film, is a strong master-narrative of finding your identity and your roots – the confrontation with the suppressed and unknown past, a confrontation which is not just a travel in known reality and in the present, but also a travel to a foreign and exotic culture and back in time and memory.

The general closeness of drama, narrative and reality, is also indicated in an interview with the well-known Danish editor of the film, Janus Billeskov Jansen. Jansen is the main editor of Bille August’s fictional films and in one of his comments on *Family* says:

I’ve been amazed to hear several people say that they think *Family* is a brand new way of putting a documentary across. But I personally didn’t do anything on this

film that I haven't been doing for the last thirty years! I tell a story. I try to give the audience the right amalgam of information and emotion, and at the beginning of the film I push a few doors ajar so the viewer senses that there is something on the other side that will be revealed later. (Janus Billeskov Jansen, in Christensen, 2001 a: 6)

This essential line between narratives and drama in documentary and fictional films however, should not lead to the conclusion that there is no major dividing line in aesthetic and ethical sense, or to avoid a moral, normative stance, between the factual contract and production code of documentaries and the fictional production code and the way narratives are grounded and unfolded. Jansen and Saif both retain the right to edit without following the chronology of shooting and occurrence of events and the right to fill in gaps and holes by swapping sequences or using other bridging devices. But, Saif does not accept the invention of whole scenes or the use of actors, for instance to play the father we only hear and never see in the film. So for Saif as documentarist, the dramatic moments in a documentary film must be based on true documentary material, of actual reality drama. This is also clearly stated by Jansen in his reflections on the moral responsibility of the documentary film editor:

If we say that we have made a documentary, people must be able to take our word for it. They must not be in any doubt. And even when we tell stories we mustn't forget we are dealing with real human beings who go out into the world in flesh and blood, and who will be looked at differently due to the way film portrays them. In a feature you can credit a character to appear to be a real bastard without any qualms, but in a documentary you are interpreting real life, and your interpretation must be a true one. The people whom we ask to reveal their lives to us must be treated with respect. (Janus Billeskov Jansen, in Christensen, 2001 a: 6)

At a certain level then, documentaries and feature films can use the same dramatic and narrative strategies in order to reach the same kind of balance between narrative information and emotional expression and identification. But the two kinds of film reach this from completely different angles and with generally different intentions, although especially the sub-genre of dramatized documentaries (docu-drama) is very close to fiction films. Billeskov Jansen and Saif both express a claim concerning the authenticity of the documentary films: in fictions films the reality is scripted as condensed fictional stories based on some kind of general reality or fictionally disguised and transformed real events; the documentary film cannot control reality to the same degree. In the documentary the dramatic effect usually has to be constructed afterwards in the editing of the available material and through the adding of aesthetic and rhetorical effects that do not contradict the reality-dimension of the narrative. Even the purest documentary film will take liberties and make necessary choices, and thus

transform and interpret reality. But it is done with reference to a more or less firm factual contract – following the frames and expectations of different documentary sub-genres.

Saif and Ambo's very subjective documentary, with the director's own story and identity at stake, allows the director greater freedom, than the investigative, journalistic style. However, compared to other subjective documentaries *Family* is not extreme, neither in the penetration of deep back stage of Saif's own private life or his family. The research is partly emotionally grounded in the fact that Saif's brother has committed suicide, but this is actually dealt with very discretely as a sensitive, traumatic event, compared to the often very voyeuristic openness in many reality-programs. Although the film has symbolic layers and scenes Saif's poetic style never go as far as for instance Jon bang Carlsen who makes his persons act in scripted, fictional and symbolic scenes that point to a mental dimension that cannot otherwise be reached by verbal or visual documentation.

In *Family* almost all the scenes are edited and dramatized versions of real time documentary situations and footage, and the narrative logic basically follows the chronological time space order. The montage clearly shifts between functional and informational sequences, presenting actual events and meetings between the main character and the world he is confronted with, very dramatic and intense, emotional moments where his search reaches a climax, and sequences where the process and filming or the project itself is in focus, creating a reflexive poetic dimension and a psychological identity play. This is where the film reflects general tendencies in reflexive modernity. One important and salient expression of this poetic-reflexive dimension is the apparently non-functional images of cloud formations, desert landscapes, interior details and other emotional and symbolic marks and signs that bridge and divide the film's external, social side from its deeper psychological and existential layers.

The dramatic and aesthetic qualities of *Family* are obvious from the very beginning of the film. The first image is an extreme close up on Saif's face and eyes, with a melancholy musical underscore, as he seems to reflect on his fate and identity, and shortly after followed by images of stormy black clouds. It is almost like the start of a social film melodrama: Nature is used as a melodramatic, symbolic signifier of existential crisis and emotional stress. These interludes with extreme close ups of faces, especially Saif's face, and of symbolic nature elements or other cultural things (in the intro, paintings, photos, interior furniture and props, posters etc) keep appearing all through the film: they function as psychological messages from the subjective dimension of the film. At

certain points they are combined into montage sequences from several parts and layers of the film's universe. The second dimension of this intro is just as essential: Saif talks to himself, to Ambo, and to the camera, and struggles with himself to go on with the project and the search. It is a search he has been planning to undertake for four years, he says, but which is finally prompted by his older brother's death. Saif and Ambo are in direct fight in front of the camera at the beginning of the film, where she tries to push him into action. The third dimension of the intro is the reflections on this brother and his death and a visit to his grave and going through the stuff he left behind. This is the form of the personal search, which is the narrative and documentary backbone of the film's project. These scenes are linked directly to the more social interaction sequences, where Saif meets persons related to his search, his friend or his family.

The visual documentation of the past is not just stills, but also live amateur films. The film's own focus on the visual documentation and the focus on the construction process is partly mirrored in the scrutinizing and close ups and discussions of these visual pieces and fragments of the past. The dramatic development enters a new stage after about 25 minutes, where the very scattered search suddenly gets concrete and he makes contact with an uncle in Yemen. The phone call establishing this contact is a dramatic and emotional climax, captured live and directly, and Saif ends up in tears, when he can almost feel his father at the end of the line and when he finds out that he has a huge family in Yemen. Another second emotional climax is when Saif finds his cousin and has to tell that his elder brother is dead. The 'journalistic' search is thus also a very personal and dramatic search back to an emotional breakthrough, uncovering an identity and creating a new history and network between different cultures.

In that sense the film is part of a subjective trend in new documentaries, combining the subjective and the global, another dimension of reflexive modernization. This is the symbolic note on which the film ends. We hear Saif's cousin tell about his dream, we see the same montage of images as earlier in the film, but organized in such a way, that it becomes a symbol of the family of man, moving between western and Arab cultures. The film ends on a happy note, with Saif talking on the phone with his dad in South America – in both English and Danish. The film is a strong artistic combination of larger social themes and very personal identity themes, combining many of the elements to be found in both journalistic and subjective documentaries and in reality-formats, but with a clear poetic-reflexive dimension.

*Back to basics: Trier's "Dogumentary" 2001 manifesto and code*

In 2000 the Danish feature film director Lars von Trier and his production company, Zentropa, created a new company, called Zentropa Real. The foundation of the company was announced with yet another one of Lars von Triers manifestos, this time a manifesto called *The Documentary manifesto*. The manifesto was, as everything Trier communicates formulated in very provocative terms, and was launched as more or less an attack on contemporary tendencies in documentary films, blocking the line to reality. It was an outcry for a return to factual purity in documentary film making. A very central part of the manifesto goes as follows:

"We are searching for something that is between fact and fiction. As fiction is lilted by our imagination and facts by our insight, the part of the world that we portray cannot be contained by a "story", neither can it be perceived from a "point of view". What we are looking for can be found in the real world, from where the creators of fiction draw their inspiration, the reality journalists attempt to describe but cannot. They cannot show us true reality, as they are blinded by their technology. Neither do they want to, as technology has become a goal unto itself, contents has become secondary." (Lars von Trier, 2002, quoted from *Film*, no. 19, November 2001: 29, Journal published by the Danish Film Institute).

There is no doubt what so ever, that the inspiration for this new documentary manifesto is related to the huge national and international success and 'branding qualities' of the Dogme 95 manifesto for feature films. Technological simplicity and purity, the aim for realistic qualities, focus on the story, the content and the acting, rather than the enormous film apparatus of spectacle, were also central elements in this feature film manifesto and its demand for 'the real' and for 'authenticity' in visual form and story. Here the provocation really worked, and the aesthetic formulation of rules seemed productive and liberating in many ways. Many of the resulting films were not just art cinema phenomenon, but also able to compete with mainstream narrative cinema in popularity and box office<sup>2</sup>.

This link to the Dogme 95 manifesto and strategy became clearer in 2001 when Lars von Trier and Zentropa real published the *Dogumentary 2001* manifesto and code of documentary production for films (both published in *Film*, no. 19:29, 2001). The so called content manifesto, which starts with the quotation above goes on to define "dogumentarism" as a genre which:

- ?? Return to the pure, the objective and the credible, the essence of our existence, without manipulation and "filters"
- ?? Guarantee content by at least seven people, companies and organizations that are vital for the context of the film

---

<sup>2</sup> For a general overview of the Dogme 95 manifesto and the resulting films, see the forthcoming volume *Purity and Provocation*, edited by t MacKenzie, Scott and Mette Hjort, BFI, (2003).

?? Will restore the public's faith by showing the world raw, in focus and defocus and thus present a real choice for those who want something real

The more general aims of this new more authentic documentary film is furthermore founded in 9 specific production rules:

1. All locations must be revealed (This is to be done by text inserted in the image, This constitutes an exception of rule no. 5. All the text must be legible).
2. The beginning of the film must outline the goals and ideas of the director – this must be shown to the films actors and technicians before filming begins
3. The end of the film must consist of two minutes of free speaking time by the film's "victims". This "victim" alone shall advise regarding the content and must approve this part of the finished film. If there is no opposition by any of the collaborators, there will be no "victim" or "victims". To explain this, there will be text inserted at the end of the film.
4. All clips must be marked with 6-12 frames black (unless they are clip in real time, that is a direct clip in a multi-camera filming situation).
5. Manipulation of the sound and/or images must not take place. Filtering, creative lighting and/or optical effects are strictly forbidden.
6. The sound must never be produced exclusive of the original filming or vice versa. That is, extra sound tracks like music or dialogue must not be mixed later.
7. Reconstruction of the concept or the directing of actors is not acceptable. Adding elements as with scenography is forbidden.
8. All use of hidden cameras is forbidden.
9. There must never be used archived images or footage that has been taken from other programs.

The first thought that comes to mind, when reading this manifesto is, that it is a major attack on recent developments in both film and TV-documentaries, where the tendency has clearly been to develop more reflexive, poetic and subjective forms, to use staging and acting in different forms, reconstructions and also to make use of new digital forms of image manipulation to create a rich, dense and very constructed image and montage. The two films in focus as main examples here would certainly fail in passing the dogumentary code. *Family*, by Sami Saif and Phie Ambo, is much to manipulated and narrated to be pure and real, and to an even higher degree Tomas Gislason's *Maximum Penalty* fail on all the rules of the code. It is in fact hard to imagine any new documentary from the last 5 years that would meet the criteria set up by Zentropa Real and Lars von Trier.

However, much skepticism also met the Dogme 95 and maybe it is wise to wait and see what the results will be. Danish Television, The Danish Film Institute, The Nordic Film and TV Fund and Scandinavian Broadcasters have already supported the first six films based on this concept. The films have been commissioned on the basis of the Dogumentary concept alone and give total freedom to the directors concerning content. The plan is to expand the production from Scandinavia, the rest of Europe, and to USA. One of the directors planning to make a dogumentary is Sami Faif (Høgel, 2002). It is not clear by now, whether this manifesto will have any major influence on the developments of new documentary formats. One can doubt that – but on the other hand the Dogme 95 was a return to some of the ideas behind the new wave realism of the 60s, just

as Documentary is in many ways a return to the beliefs in objectivity and unmediated reality in Direct cinema of the 60s. The move thus runs counter to the present developments, but this counter move may prove to be useful not just for a new type of a more 'pure' documentary contract with the audience, and maybe not least for the debate on the boundaries of the documentary genre.

## References:

- Baumann, Zygmunt (2000): *Liquid Modernity*. London: Polity Press.
- Beck, Ulrich (1992): *Risk Society. Towards a New Modernity*. London: Sage.
- Beck, Ulrich, et al. (1994). *Reflexive Modernisation*. London: Polity Press.
- Beck, Ulrich. (1999): *Individualization*. London: Polity Press.
- Bondebjerg, Ib (1996): Public Discourse/private fascination: hybridization in 'true-life-story' genres. (in *Media, Culture & Society*, Vol 18:1, 1996, p. 27-45, reprinted in Horace Newcombe: *Television. The Critical View. 6. edition.*, 2000, Oxford, Oxford University Press).
- Bondebjerg, Ib (2002): The Mediation of Everyday Life: Spectacle, Discourse and Genre in Reality-TV. In Anne Jerslev (ed): *Realism and 'Reality' in Film and TV*. Northern Lights. Film and Media Studies Yearbook 2002, p. 159-193. Museum Tusculanum Press.
- Bondebjerg, Ib (2002 a): Det sociale og det poetiske blik. Tendenser i nyere dansk dokumentarfilm. (i *Kosmorama*, nr. 229, Sommer 2002, p. 18-40).
- Bondebjerg, Ib (2002 b): Med politiet i virkeligheden: om 'reality-tv og kriminalitet. (i *Mediekultur*, nr. 34, 2002).
- Bondebjerg, Ib (2003, in print): Verden ifølge Lars Engels. Tendenser i 80'ernes og 90'ernes danske tv-dokumentarisme. (i Jens F. Jensen (ed): *TV-analyser*, Medusa, in print).
- Bondebjerg, Ib (2003 a): Uge 46 – en komparativ, historisk medieanalyse (Working Paper, MODINET, work in progress)
- Bordwell, David (1985): *Narration in the Fiction Film*. Madison: University of Madison Wisconsin Press.
- Castells; Manuel. 1996/2000. *The rise of the network society*. 2.ed. London: Blackwell.
- Christensen, Claus (2000): Stronger than Reason. (in *Film*, no. 12, November 2000, p. 3-4).
- Christensen, Claus (2001): Drama, a biological quality. (in *Film*, no. 19, 2001, p. 3ff).
- Christensen, Claus, (2001 a): Sharing the essence. (in *Film*, no. 19, 2001, p. 6ff).
- Christensen, Claus (2001 b): Documentary gets the Dogme treatment (in *Film*, no. 19, 2001, p. 28ff)
- Corner, John. (2000). "Documentary in a Post-Documentary Culture. A note on Forms and their Functions". Webpublication: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/research/changing.media/index.html>
- Corner, John. (2001). "Documentary Values". In Jerslev (ed): *Realism and Reality in Film and TV*. Northern Lights. Film and Media Studies Yearbook. 2002. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press).
- Dovey, Jon (2000): *Freakshow. First Person Media and Factual Television*. London: Pluto Press.
- Dovey, Jon (2003): Reality Television Game Shows and the Orders of Simulation. (Paper for the Stirling Conference on "Staging Reality", January 2003).
- Flynn, Bernadette (2002): Factual Hybridity: Games, Documentary and Simulated Spaces. (in *Media International Australia*, no. 104, Summer, 2002.
- Hill, Annette. (2000). "Fearful and safe: Audience response to British Reality Programming". In *From Grierson to Docu-Soap*, edited by Izod, et all, 131-145. Luton. University of Luton Press.
- Hjarvard, Stig. (2002). Seernes reality. (In *Mediekultur*. No. 34, april 2002: p. 92ff).
- Hjort, Mette & Ib Bondebjerg (eds). 2001. *The Danish Directors. Dialogues on a Contemporary National Cinema*. London: Intellect Press.
- Høgel, Jacob (2002): Decency, Debate and Dogumentary. (in *Film*, no. 25, November 2002, p. 28 ff)
- Jerslev, Anne (2002): Den intime dokumentar. (in *Kosmorama*, no. 229, p. 40-69)
- Larsen, Prami (2001): Intervening in Reality. (in *Film*. No. 19, p. 32-33).
- MacKenzie, Scott & Mette Hjort (2003, in print): *Purity and Provocation*. (London: BFI).
- Movin, Lars (2001): Scenes from Villar del Cobo. Interactive Documentary. (in *Film*, no. 19, p. 31)
- Müller, Tue Steen (2002): Reality Pics. A new golden era in European documentarism. (in *Film*, no. 25, November 2002, p. 16ff)
- Neimann, Susanne (2000): Match making. (in *Film*, no. 25, November 2002, p. 16ff)
- Nichols, Bill (1991): *Representing Reality*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Nichols, Bill (1995): At the limits of Reality (TV). (In *Blurred Boundaries*, p. 43-63 Indiana University Press.

- Plantinga, Carl (1997): *Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Renov, Michael (1999): The subject in History. (in *Afterimage*)
- Stjernfelt, Agnethe Dorph (2000): The Video Diary of Ricardo Lopez (in *Film*, no. 12, 2000, p. 8 ff).
- Stjernfelt, Agnethe Dorph (2001): The five obstructions. (in *Film*, no. 19, 2001, p. 26ff).
- Thompson, John B. (1995). *Media and Modernity*. London: Polity Press.
- Tutty, Emma (2000): State of a Nation. (in *Film*, no. 12, 2000: 14ff, reprinted from *Dox*, no. 31, October 2000)
- Wittel, Andreas (2001): Toward a Network Sociality. (in *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 18 (6): 51-76.