

## **Documentary Films and Festivals, Adult Learning, and Dialogic Imagination**

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The course explores the multifaceted aspects of documentary films and documentary film festivals from critical adult learning perspectives. The course considers the question of an adult and community-engaged pedagogy as an anchoring position when approaching the planning, editing, production of documentary films and the organization of documentary film festivals. As sites and “scenes of address”, documentary films and festivals open up opportunities for new forms of “dialogic imagination” around questions of power, injustice, community, solidarity, and democracy.

The course is grounded in a multidisciplinary approach. It draws - among other - on philosophy, Indigenous knowledge, cultural, media and film studies, art history, history, anthropology, and social studies. It offers participants with an opportunity to rethink their pedagogic commitments in relation to adult learning within various contexts of their practice by interrogating the visual aspects of documentary films and their construction of difference, truth, and solidarity.

The course starts by problematizing the notion of a “documentary film” as media. It unpacks the intersections between cultural, mechanical, technical, and visual elements and their assemblage into modes of representations that reflect visual, cognitive, affective, and collective modes of engagement with one’s life-world and its entanglements. The course will focus more particularly on the visual aesthetics and perspective-laden narratives that underpin the notion of documentary films in ways that open horizons for growth, learning, and eventually political conscientization, civic engagement, and transformation. It will also examine how documentary film festivals re-articulate the intersections between anthropology, ethnography, politics, identity, and adult learning and transformation within distinct sites of practice.

The course will be taught over five Saturdays (each time from 9:00-16:00). This would allow the screening and debating of documentary films, the conduct of creative group work by participants, and the hosting of guest visits by documentary film directors and artists. The course comprises two assignments: the first will include the actual production of 15-minutes documentaries by participants, the organization of a class-based documentary film festival, and its opening to the wider public. The second assignment will include a 3,000 words “post-film festival” reflective essay that examines (a) diverse dynamics of adult learning among members of the public, and (b) discusses these dynamics at the light of the relevant readings listed in the course syllabus.

Readings: Grant, B.K. & Sloniowski, J. (Eds.)(1998). *Documenting the documentary: Close readings of documentary film and video*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Roy, C. (2016). *Documentary film festivals: Transformative learning, community building & solidarity*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.