Contents

Preface		ix
Chapter 1	Some Ways to Think About Documentary Description 1 Definition 3 Intellectual Contexts 4 Pre-documentary Origins 6 Books on Documentary Theory and General Histories of Documentary 9	1
Chapter 2	Beginnings: The Americans and Popular Anthropology, 1922–1929 The Work of Robert Flaherty 12 The Flaherty Way 22 Offshoots from Flaherty 24 Films of the Period 26 Books on the Period 26	12
Chapter 3	Beginnings: The Soviets and Political Indoctrination, 1922–1929 Nonfiction 28 Fiction 38 Films of the Period 42 Books on the Period 42	27
Chapter 4	Beginnings: The European Avant-Gardists and Artistic Experimentation, 1922–1929 Aesthetic Predispositions 44 Avant-Garde and Documentary 45 Three City Symphonies 48 End of the Avant-Garde 53 Films of the Period 55 Books on the Period 56	44

vi CONTENTS

Chapter 5	Institutionalization: Great Britain, 1929–1939 Background and Underpinnings 57 The System 60 The Films 63 Grierson and Flaherty 70 Grierson's Contribution 73 Films of the Period 74 Books on the Period 75		57
Chapter 6	Institutionalization: United States, 1930–1941 Film on the Left 77 The March of Time 78 Government Documentaries 80 Nongovernment Documentaries 92 American and British Differences 97 Denouement 101 An Aside to Conclude 102 Films of the Period 103 Books on the Period 103		77
Chapter 7	Expansion: Great Britain, 1939–1945 Early Days 106 Indoctrination 109 Social Documentary 113 Records of Battle 115 Films of the Period 118 Books on the Period 119		105
Chapter 8	Expansion: Canada, 1939–1945 Founding of the National Film Board 121 Theatrical Series 122 Nontheatrical Films 125 Summary 126 Films of the Period 127 Books on the Period 128		120
Chapter 9	Expansion: United States, 1941–1945 Training 131 Indoctrination 131 Records of Battle 135 Social Documentary 138 Comparisons: Great Britain, Canada, the United States Films of the Period 146 Books on the Period 147	141	130

contents vii

Chapter 10	The Unfulfilled Promise: Postwar Documentary, 1945–1952	148
	Personnel and Leadership 152 Sponsorship 155 Subjects 156 Approaches and Techniques 163 Final Observations 164 Films of the Period 164 Books on the Period 165	
Chapter 11	In Pursuit of Excellence: National Film Board of Canada's Unit B, 1948–1964 Films of the Period 177 Books on the Period 177	167
Chapter 12	A New Channel: Documentary for Television, the "Golden Years," 1951–1971 Historical Background 180 Documentary Series 181 Special Characteristics of Television Documentary 189 Films of the Period 193 Books on the Period 195	179
Chapter 13	British Free Cinema and Social-Realist Features, 1956–1963 Critical Background 197 Free Cinema Films 197 Political and Cultural Context 203 Social-Realist Features 204 Films of the Period 206 Books on the Period 207	196
Chapter 14	Direct Cinema and Cinéma Vérité, 1960–1970 Historical Background 208 New Technology and First Films 210 Direct Cinema vs Cinéma Vérité 215 Effects on Documentary Subjects and Styles 218 Aesthetic and Ethical Considerations 222 Films of the Period 224 Books on the Period 225	208
Chapter 15	English-Language Documentary in the 1970s—Power of the People Veteran Filmmakers 228 New Directions in Vérité 235	227

viii contents

	Social and Political Emphases 242 Historical Documentary 252 Films of the Period 255 Books on the Period 256	
Chapter 16	English-Language Documentary in the 1980s—Video	
	Arrives	258
	Cable and Satellite Technology 260 The Personal Essay Film 262 The Historical Film 265 Strictly Political 270 Racial and Ethnic Minorities 271 Representing Gay and Lesbian Culture 279 Music and Performance 287 Films of the Period 291 Books on the Period 292	
Chapter 17	English-Language Documentary in the 1990s and	
	Beyond—Reality Bytes	293
	Business and Technology: The Bad and the Good American Public Television 297 The Ken Burns Phenomenon 299 Canada Soldiers On 302 Developments in the United Kingdom 304 American Independents 310 Theatrical Documentary 316 Films of the Period 323 Books on the Period 324	
Chapter 18	Some Other Ways to Think About Documentary	326
	Technological Promises 327 Aesthetics and Content 328 Finance 330 Intimate Doings of Reality 332 Newer Theory 334 The Future 335 Conclusion 338 Books on the Period 339	
Appendices		341
••	One: Film Festivals 341 Two: Academy-Award-Winning Documentaries 345 Three: The National Film Registry 351 Four: The Grierson Award 353 Five: The Ida Awards 356	
Index	Tive. The lua /twatus 550	357
	nents from Betsv A. McLane	385