

Ethics of Documentary Filmmaking in Theory and Practice

Professional Project

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The study aimed to look at how documentary filmmakers formulate their professional code of ethics, if they apply journalistic standards and rules while working as independent filmmakers. Specifically, this research sought to understand how they feel about the use of re-staging with the help of their main characters.

To address the research questions, three in-depth interviews were conducted with documentarians who have produced award-winning films within the last five years.

Filmmakers reported that they liberate themselves from the strict rules associated with journalism. Filmmakers make decisions based on situational ethics, evaluating circumstances and possible consequences. They are guided by ethics based on a protective attitude toward their characters and respect for the audience.

Data revealing key principles that guide documentary filmmakers in their ethical decision-making processes when using re-staging would contribute to discourse for the purpose of defining the working code.