

Prior Knowledge:

You have completed your introduction to Film Studies and are familiar with the five key elements of **Film Form**

EDUQAS A LEVEL FILM STUDIES, COMPONENT 2: DOCUMENTARY

Future Learning:

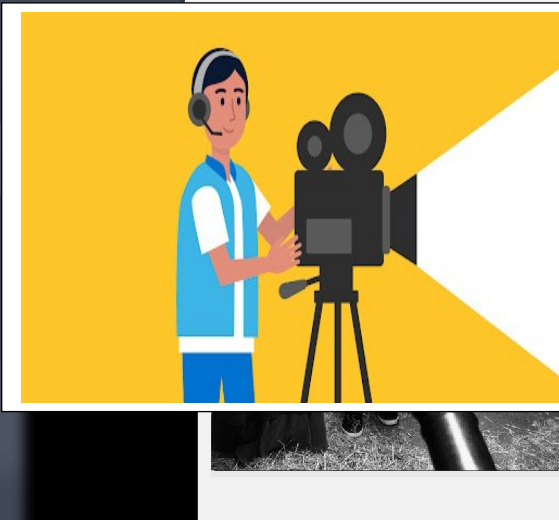
American Film since 2005;
Moonlight and **La La Land**.



ASIF KAPADIA



NICK BROOMFIELD



- **Observational mode:** Longinotto is absent from the screen filming life as it happens, without interference. She is not a 'fly-on-the-wall' filmmaker though and detests the term, and its unethical implications. Her presence is not hidden on the set (the cameras she uses are very large), but her absence from the screen helps us focus on the narrative without distractions.
- **Feminist solidarity:** Longinotto focuses on the stories of women from all over the world, who have been victimised by brutal patriarchal societies. However, her films are not about passive victims and their suffering, but about survivors who actively confront their oppressors with the help of other women.
- **Quote:** *'I don't think of films as documents or records of things. I try to make them as like the experience of watching a fiction film as possible, though, of course, nothing is ever set up.'*

- **Signature Style:** With Amy, Kapadia consolidates his signature style, established with Senna, of creating documentaries from existing material depicting the lives of celebrities considered to be outsiders. The truthful nature of the documentary was called into question by Amy's father, Mitch Winehouse, who objected to the way that he was represented.
- **Digital Technology:** The film is reliant on the existence of digital technology both for the footage and the editing. The use of text on the screen in colourful and informal fonts creates a connection between the young, vibrant Amy and the viewer. This intimacy is enticing, but the film also explores the negative aspects of technology: the intrusive cameras of the paparazzi, and the voyeuristic nature of them in the wrong hands (particularly the shots of a fragile, ill Amy which are uncomfortable to watch).
- **Quote:** *'I'm a director and I think actually they are not that different-dramas and docs aren't that different'*

- Although he has made films in various documentary modes, Broomfield is most renowned for his participatory/performative titles. He puts himself in front of the camera and directly mediates the narrative, so his films are as much about their subjects as they are about Broomfield's own journey to unearth the truth.

- **Investigative:** Broomfield is an expert interviewer and fearless when asking hard questions, even in situations where his own safety can be at stake. His 'chaotic' filming style with use of handheld, unsteady camerawork, oblique angles and other unusual techniques is often made necessary by the controversial nature of his unauthorised biographies. This would often be with subjects less than willing to contribute.
- **Quote:** *'If you're making a film, it's more honest to make your presence felt than to hang back furtively on the other side of the room, because no-one really benefits from that. That approach really is, to use the dread word, voyeuristic. You're there with all your equipment but pretending you're not there.'*

Specialist Studies: You will be required to approach documentary film in terms of two specialist studies

1. **Critical debate:** The significance of digital technology in film The degree of the impact the digital has had on film since the 1990s is a developing debate. Some film commentators argue that, although digital technology could potentially transform cinema, so far films, especially narrative films designed for cinema release, have changed very little from pre-digital times. Others consider that the impact of digital filmmaking is only beginning to emerge, both in high concept Hollywood filmmaking and in much lower budget experimental work.
2. **Filmmaker's Theories:** The documentary film will be explored in relation to key filmmakers from the genre. The documentary film studied may either directly embody aspects of these theories or work in a way that strongly challenges these theories. In either case, the theories will provide a means of exploring different approaches to documentary film and filmmaking