AESTHETICS OF HISTORIOPHOTY: THE USES AND AFFECTS OF

VISUAL EFFECTS FOR PHOTOGRAPHY IN

THE HISTORICAL DOCUMENTARY FILM

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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This dissertation examines the origins, applications, and functions of visual

effects in the historical documentary film. This research study investigates how aesthetic

and editorial practices and tools are used for different image forms and as part of the

visual presentation. A research design that implements qualitative interviews, visual

analysis, and focus groups was incorporated to examine visual effects and images at three

specific sites. The pan-and-zoom effect and its variants as well as select titles from the

filmography of Ken Burns were used as case studies for this dissertation. The findings

from the analyses suggest that visual effects for still image forms and the repetition of

these applications and strategies are significant to the content depicted in images, the

scope of the visual presentation, and the capacity for audiences to connect to historical

information in the film.

Keywords: historiophoty, visual effects, photography, documentary, qualitative

interviews, visual analysis, focus groups, Ken Burns

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CHAPTER I

CONTEXT & AVENUES FOR EXPLORATION

Introduction

On September 14, 2014, an estimated 11.7 million viewers in the U.S. tuned in to

the first of six installments of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014a; Byrne,

2014a). Aside from a fervent advertising and marketing campaign from the Public

Broadcasting Service (PBS), the popularity of the initial broadcast of the miniseries could

be attributed to the filmmaker responsible for bringing the former First Family to the

small screen. The writer, director, and executive producer behind *The Roosevelts* was

Ken Burns. For almost four decades, the self-described amateur historian and filmmaker

had become synonymous with the generation of the historical documentary and a specific

aesthetic architecture associated with the genre.

Although criticized for producing deliberately paced films focused on the most

prominent figures and events in U.S. history, Burns has, nonetheless, maintained an

ardent fan base since winning an Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature with

Brooklyn Bridge (1981a).[1] According to Cunningham (2005a), Burns's goal is to use film

as a means to educate the public on significant moments in American history. From

Baseball (1994a) to *Jazz* (2001a), and *The National Parks* (2009a) to *Prohibition* (2011),

Burns has directed twenty-four projects to date on historical subject matter.

Moreover, Burns's cinematic influence across the field of documentary and

especially within the historical documentary subgenre is evident, and is readily witnessed

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[1] More information on criticism targeted at Burns and his films is presented later in this

section.

on programs that populate cable television as well as video streaming services (e.g.,

Netflix, Amazon, iTunes etc.). Nonprofessionals have also mimicked Burns's style of

filmmaking, apparent through numerous audio slideshows currently available in online

networks, such as YouTube and Vimeo. In 2010, Apple, Inc. released a computerized

software function patterned after Burns's pan-and-zoom effect for iMovie, iPhoto, and

Final Cut Pro systems. This built-in application has taken on the moniker, "the Ken Burns

effect."

From a media studies and communication perspective, however, the subject

matter of Burns's films is somewhat secondary to his formal presentation and

particularly, his foregrounding of pan-and-zoom effect for historical images. Although

Jefferson's (2009a) description of Burns's aesthetic as "a series of cliché images…[that]

reinforce certain public memories" is representative of the criticism from historical

scholars, the Ken Burns style of filmmaking has yet to be investigated in media studies

(p. 10). The successes of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014b), *Jackie Robinson*

(2016a), and the early online hype for the forthcoming *The Vietnam War* (2017a),

suggests a filmmaker who remains a viable if overlooked presence in scholarship.[2]

Furthermore, this continued output is all-the-more reason to investigate the usage and

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[2] *Robinson* and the forthcoming, *Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War* (2016a) are several

examples in which Ken Burns serves as first credited or primary co-director. In reviewing

Burns's filmography to-date, the filmmaker has worked in this capacity with Artemis

Joukowsky, Lynn Novick, David McMahon, his first spouse, Amy Stechler (Burns), and

his daughter, Sarah Burns.

repetition of a motion effect and potential consequences for photography's link to the actual.

Although this visual strategy is thought of as part of the creative act of filmmaking – a way of generating visual engagement for entertainment purposes – the implications for such a time-honored and frequently copied aesthetic remain a largely unexamined area of scholarship, as do the implications for the historical documentary as a means of providing credible and informational evidence of historical information. Such ideas and questions will continue to arise throughout this study. To begin, however, this first chapter maps the background of the terrain under examination through the origins of Ken Burns's filmmaking career, his influences in still photography and film, and the approach now commonly referred to as, "the Ken Burns effect."

A.   Historiophoty and the Problem of Visual Effects

Historiophoty is the visual counterpart to the much-debated idea of historiography. With historiography concerned primarily with history presented through verbal or written communication, and knowledge obtained through such accounts, historiophoty is "the representation of history and our thought about it in visual images and filmic discourse" (White, 1988a, p. 1193).3 Historiophoty, therefore, requires imagery and different visual media, particularly photography and film, and the ability of history to be captured through a shared, cultural memory.

These topics, however, might not appear to be new or innovative areas of scholarly exploration. But historiophoty, which would seem most relevant in the digital

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3 White (1988b) defines historiography as "the representation of history in *verbal* images and written discourse" (p. 1193).

age, remains largely ignored and under-researched in historical scholarship, where historiography remains the more contentious area in the field. Historiophoty, however, has yet to be explicated or investigated from the perspective of visual communication or cinema studies, or in similar areas of the arts, social sciences, and humanities, that explore images in relation to culture and society.

According to Rosenstone (in Smyth, 2012), "The visual form of historical thinking cannot be judged by the criteria we apply to what is produced on the page, for it exists in a separate realm – one which relates to, comments upon, and often challenges the world of written history" (p. 184). One of these judging criterion for the few scholars who have explored historiophoty is the credibility or accuracy of the photographic record available or presented, and the ability of photography/film to generate or provide a representative shared understanding of history (e.g., Le Beau, 1997a; Turner, 2012; Dawson & Pickren, 2013). In effect, with photography and film so readily and intimately associated with the past, and the historical documentary film subgenre forever tied to the actual of the historical, the historical documentary subgenre appears to be an ideal point of entry for which to explore the under-investigated arena of historiophoty.

In terms of the historical documentary film, where the subject matter or topic of concern *is* the past, challenges and issues already associated with historiophoty become compounded. According to Le Beau (1997b), "one of [historical] filmmakers' biggest difficulties include[s] presenting more than one version of events;" in effect, documentarians attempting to somehow resurrect historical subjects or issues are forced to place trust and credibility into the abilities of the photographic to bear witness to the lives and happenings of real-world persons and events (p. 153). As Rosenstone (1995a)

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has suggested, "Visual media serve to highlight the conventions and limitations of written history…. Film points to new possibilities for representing the past…that could allow narrative history to recapture the power it once had…" (p. 42).

To be clear, much of the existing literature on the bridging of "film" and "history" focuses on the latter topic in relation to the feature-length fiction (i.e., Hollywood) film. This body of work is also largely concerned with how Hollywood films shape history for better or worse (e.g., Rosenstone, 1995; Carnes, 1996; Hughes-Warrington, 2009; Smyth, 2012, et al.).[4] Rosenstone (in Rosenstone & Parvulescu, 2013) is one of the leading scholars on the subject of or intersections between "film" and "history."[5] The author designates fictional, feature-length films that cover or focus on historical subjects, such as biopics, as "history films," because such films have a longstanding tradition of prompting public discourse on historical subjects.

In one sense, Rosenstone's designation for such films could also be applied to sectors of nonfiction film concerned with the past. Certainly this is true of films such as *The Civil War* (1990a), which sparked or revived a discussion on an event almost 150 years in the past. But the historical documentary film is all-the-more bounded to the historical because it is *not* concerned with fiction in the most literal sense; instead it is heavily reliant or depends upon still and motion picture photography from and of the

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[4] This is only a short list of historians who have written on this subject. Film scholars have also written extensively on "history" and "film."

[5] Much of Rosenstone's work focuses on portrayals of historical persons and events in fiction film.

past. As presented throughout Chapter II, documentary film as historiophoty can shape history, but its visual presentation is consumed with photography of the actual.

With the historical documentary understood as an example or type of historiophoty, it is necessary to justify the selection of Ken Burns as a figure most prominent at the intersection of documentary film and history. Doing so requires a brief discussion on the idea of authorship and film, a contentious area in film criticism and scholarship. In foregrounding Ken Burns as an influential forerunner and overseer of the historical documentary for this study, it is worth addressing the necessity of ascribing a majority of credit to a lone individual for any one film. In a medium ultimately dependent upon teamwork and collaboration, providing Burns with the mantle of "auteur" deserves consideration.

Ideas and concepts associated with auteur theory in the West are credited to film critic Andrew Sarris. Adopting the European conception of auteur theory for Hollywood directors just prior to the New Hollywood revolution and the collapse of the studio system, Sarris put forth several propositions that heightened the status of the director-as-filmmaker in "Notes on the Auteur Theory in 1962" (1962/3; 1999).[6] Among the tenets of Sarris's argument that remain foundational to the core of the theory is the idea that a film's director is the authorial visionary and voice of the film. Sarris and prevailing proponents of auteur theory assign credit to the director as the person most responsible

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[6] See also "Afterward: The Auteur Theory Revisited" (1977; 1996) and Sarris's further writings on the subject, including his influential volume, *The American Cinema: Directors and Directions: 1929-1968*.

for a film throughout all stages in the cycle of conception to exhibition. In effect, this

candidate is also held predominantly accountable for a film's legacy or lack thereof.[7]

With documentary film less reliant upon substantial economic considerations for

survival, and especially those constraints posed by media conglomerates and financial

institutions, many productions tend to be more cost-effective, carried out by relatively

small crews determined to work with limited resources, and overseen by a single

production company. Therefore, at the most fundamental level, Ken Burns fits nicely into

the notion of filmmaker-as-auteur. As far back as *New England*, Burns has been directly

involved with multiple aspects of his filmmaking, including writing, directing, and

producing.

Furthermore, Burns maintains the role of founder and figurehead of the

production company, Florentine Films. Unlike filmmakers hired for purely directorial

purposes, an approach less common in the realm of documentary film, Burns is actively

present for all stages of his projects. Moreover, despite strong financial support from PBS

endowments, Burns is the one responsible for seeking additional sources of funding from

donors; he has claimed to have sought finances for his films as far into filmmaking as

production (e.g., Rose, 2001). His presence is also consequential upon the release of a

film, where he remains in front of the media spotlight to market and publicize his films.

Although financially obligated and professionally conjoined to PBS and its

corporate sponsors, Burns's past successes appear to overshadow a range of possible

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[7] Pauline Kael, the influential and longtime film critic for *The New Yorker*, remains a

prominent example of the film critics and scholars who have argued against the auteur

theory.

limitations other filmmakers are frequently forced to confront. In brief, his decision to only involve himself with subject matter that speaks to his personal and professional interests has served him well over the course of his career (e.g., Cunningham, 2005b).[8] Corner (1996a) asserts that, "Documentary is *authorial* in that it is about creativity and transformation *based on vision* [second emphasis added]" (p. 14). If a vision is to be found in "a Ken Burns film," much less the numerous historical documentary films and television programs that have copied the style of his visual presentation, then Burns's direct involvement with all aspects of documentary filmmaking, including the cumbersome business of the practice and art, must constitute some evidence of an authorial presence.

In connection to this defense of Burns-as-auteur, the primary film text that serves as the case study for this dissertation must also be defended. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1998a; 2003a), choosing a case study for a qualitative analysis is an integral part of the research process, with case study research a longstanding tradition of the field. Stake (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2003), suggests that case studies in qualitative research should be selected as a "bounded system" in which the researcher should be mindful of "cases within a case," as well as of the case study's position within a particular historical and research-oriented context. However, a case study can also be selected and analyzed for its uniqueness or its commonalities and generalizations (pp. 134-164).

To these points, choosing *The Roosevelts* as the primary case study serves multiple purposes. As the twenty-fourth directorial credit for Burns, *The Roosevelts'*

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[8] Burns has addressed his personal involvement with seeking sources for funding in numerous interviews over the years.

chronological position in his filmography allows for a comparative analysis to much of the filmmaker's previous efforts. Its position here also suggests the work of someone well-established in their career, and therefore, with a confident and proven track record.[9]

Burns and Florentine Films have released a more recent feature, *Jackie Robinson* (2016b), and are scheduled to follow with a film Burns co-directed, *Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War* (2016b), in fall 2016. The highly anticipated *The Vietnam War* is slated for release in 2017. Although *Robinson* is readily available through multiple viewing platforms, including VOD and on-demand cable, it poses several challenges for this research project in terms of a case study text. For one, *Robinson* is one of several films that Burns has co-directed throughout his career, and therefore, it is somewhat difficult to decipher how much involvement the filmmaker had in the project. Second, *Robinson* is a two-part film and markedly shorter at four hours' running time than many of Burns's best-known and regarded film titles.

Therefore, the film's shorter running time, which suggests a somewhat limited subject matter or content, makes for an unrepresentative and less intriguing case study than the seven-part *Roosevelts*. Hence, *The Roosevelts* remains Burns's most recent historical documentary that also covers an expansive period of time and broader selection of persons and topics.

In turn, Ken Burns and Burns's filmography serve as the case study for this dissertation and provide a direct point of entry to visual effects, the challenges to historiophoty, and the historical documentary film. Specifically, this research study uses

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[9] For a complete list of nominations and awards, see Burns's entry in the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) (2016a).

pan-and-zoom photography (a.k.a., "the Ken Burns effect") and its variants to explore

lines of inquiry related to these ideas in Burns's own film catalogue, and particularly, *The*

Roosevelts.

Historical documentaries are a classification or subgenre of the documentary

field, and historically, the arena has been confined primarily to television. Bluem's

(1965) influential volume on television documentaries in the U.S. attributes the modern

conception of the form to aspects of still photography – early photo-reportage and

photojournalism – as well as newsreels of the 1930s.[10] Today, the visual architecture of

this relatively broad category relies on the existence of archival visual materials in the

form of still photographs, newsreels, newspapers, maps, illustrations, and so forth.

Interview footage and the use of on- and off-screen narration is also common to the

subgenre.

Since the success of Ken Burns's *The Civil War* (1990b), distribution and

exhibition outlets – from Netflix to iTunes and Amazon, and CNN to PBS, HISTORY,

and The National Geographic Channel – provide VOD and televisual historical

documentary films, miniseries, and one-hour programs. However, the visual style and

form of this growing classification of films is evolving; a spectrum of visual effects is

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[10] While Bluem's research provides a number of ideas related to the evolution of

television documentary and its functions, the author discusses only two primary

contemporary conceptions of television documentaries – the news documentary and the

theme documentary. Neither of these forms adequately describes the historical

documentary, in terms of form or function. Therefore, much of this chapter on

documentary theory also traces the origins of the historical documentary.

now commonly utilized in contemporary variations on the historical documentary. The use of such aesthetic practices, including computerized processes and techniques, appears to challenge the historical photographic record.

Such a complex issue, whereby the use of visual effects calls into question photography's indexical and referential ties to the real world, remains an underexplored area of scholarship in media and cinema studies. Much of the existing literature on visual effects in film focuses on the history and uses of "special effects," now commonly generated through computer-generated imagery (CGI), in Hollywood blockbusters. This body of scholarship is largely concerned with the application of CGI to generate nonexistent visual forms *in place of* live action cinematography or through motion-control cinematography ("special effects" or VFX generated via computer software) (e.g., Sutton, 2007a; Cram, 2012, Prince, 2012, North, Rehak, & Duffy, 2015a, et al.). Although this literature is ultimately focused on CGI that is "invariably used to simulate the occurrence of things that never actually happened in front of the cameras," the commonality here lies in how visual effects "interfere with the truth claims of the medium [e.g., photography/film]" (North, Rehak, & Duffy, 2015b, p. 7). In effect, the application of visual effects now common to documentary film – for example, the familiar practice of pan-and-zoom photography – and the consequences for the past via this rupture in photography remain an underexplored area of scholarship.

The pan-and-zoom technique, historically performed in-camera and on location, can also be described as a physical or mechanical "motion effect" that adds movement and direction to the visual frame. Today, the application itself is routinely performed through the use of keyframes integrated into film and video editing software systems,

which allow the user to control the speed and direction of the movement over the course of time.

Venkatasawmy (2013a) provides a history and thorough explication of "visual effects," and the author's theoretical distinctions were adopted for the concept under analysis in this research study. The author's conception of "visual effects" distinguishes the term into separate categories, with the primarily computer-generated imagery relegated to the designation of "special [visual] effects."[11] According to the author, "visual effects" can refer to an assortment of optical effects – from in-camera and photographic-based physical or mechanical effects to those generated through optical printing and computerized means. Each of these forms of visual effects involves "the *process* of performing a visual manipulation that will have an intended, specific visual *effect* or impact on the movie as well as its viewer" (p. 64).

The pan-and-zoom effect and its variants are classified as "visual effects" for this study because the strategy involves mechanical or physical processes, as well as computerized applications for photography, film, and video, that have the potential to generate what Venkatasawmy (2013b) describes as "film-related trickery or visual illusion" (p. 65). Of course, photographic effects that produce visual illusions are found in CGI, motion-control cinematography, and other "special" effects, but Venkatasawmy differentiates these types of effects by their ability to *add physical content* to the visual frame. The form commonly found in the historical documentary and associated with Burns's aesthetic is something quite different.

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[11] This is the form commonly referred to as VFX in contemporary Hollywood filmmaking.

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The combined pan-and-zoom strategy, sometimes known as pan-and-scan photography or "Ken Burns effect," involves a physical/mechanical or computerized process of panning the camera (on a mounted tripod) while simultaneously zooming the lens. The application is thought to enliven "static" visual source materials, such as still photographs, diary entries, newspaper articles, and similar historical records and documents (Ott, 2011a). It is used to spotlight, reinforce or reveal content-related aspects of the image-frame, thereby shifting the gaze and purported attention of the viewer into a specific area and detail of the image. Although this "visual effect" might appear minor, the repetition of the effect is reported to have fooled spectators into believing they were witnessing a series of *moving* pictures following the release of *The Civil War* (1990c). In 2015, journalists stated that this effect became all-the-more enticing following the digital restoration of the film (i.e., Collins, 2015; Rosenberg, 2015a).

In one respect, the simultaneous pan-and-zoom camera movement can be historically allocated to the "classical" style of Hollywood filmmaking of the 1930s, when filmmakers began shooting with a fluid motion picture camera (Bordwell, 1997).[12] However, contemporary uses of this application are differentiated in practice, and ultimately by a unique ability to produce the appearance or idea of still images in motion, thereby contradicting qualities commonly associated with still images (Hölzl, 2011a). Unlike variations on computer-generated imagery (CGI), and including motion control cinematography, motion capture ("MoCap"), green screen technologies, and digital animation, pan-and-zoom photography and its variants do not generate added *content* to

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[12] Similarities and differences in this regard are taken up in succeeding chapters of this study.

the image-frame. Furthermore, the technique itself is similar to movement and direction that results from a tracking shot or hand-held camera, in that the technique has traditionally been performed in-camera and/or on location through the physical and mechanical processes of simultaneously panning a tripod-mounted camera and zooming the lens.[13]

The presence and availability of visual effects across the field of motion pictures, however, suggests an increase in more "cinematic" visual presentations with the potential to subvert visual information (Sutton, 2007b, p. 18). Ritchin's (1990a) declaration, albeit a quarter-century ago, remains foundational to a wide array of photography, from photojournalism to snapshots that litter social media outlets:

> Despite its various distortions, the popular authority of photography as a transcription from reality has largely persevered. At a basic level, as a chronicle of the 'genuine touches of Nature's pencil,' the photograph still holds a descriptive power that remains convincing and lends strength to its various levels of meaning (p. 7).

This dissertation seeks to explore whether the most basic or fundamental visual effects can shape the public's unyielding belief in such qualities associated with photography. The primary focus here is Ken Burns and the historical documentary, a subgenre that readily relies upon a belief in photography's power to capture and present "truth." Because the focus here is on a filmmaker so presently associated with the shape and form of the contemporary historical documentary, an exploration into the existing

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[13] As suggested, variations can be performed through computerized software editing systems.

literature on Ken Burns must first be considered. What follows in the next sections of this chapter is a thorough review of the existing scholarship on Burns thus far, followed by a brief but necessary biographical portrait of Burns and his early career.

B.   Critical Approaches to the Historical Documentarian

Scholarly interest in Ken Burns and his filmography blossomed following the immense success of *The Civil War* (1990d), which celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary with a remastered cut of the film and PBS's much-publicized rebroadcast in 2015 (Ricciardelli, 2015; Dickey, 2015). According to Rosenberg (2015b), approximately 40 million viewers watched the 1990 broadcast of the nine-part miniseries that "changed Ken Burns's life."[14] Scholars of U.S. history also took notice of *The Civil War* after its initial release, and began producing critical responses to the film and its architect, Ken Burns.

Much of this scholarship neglected to detail or analyze Burns's visual aesthetic, with the majority of the literature that followed finding fault with the filmmaker's attempt to resurrect the past on film. The book-length volume, *Ken Burns's The Civil War: Historians Respond* (Toplin, 1996) is a primary example of the scholarship that surfaced following *Civil War* and that focused on Burns's legitimacy as a historian. Since its release, scholars have presented a number of concerns with Burns's filmic account of the period between 1861 and 1865. Foner (2002) accused Burns of neglecting the era's

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[14] The vast body of scholarship from historians on *The Civil War* may be responsible for the noticeable lack of research on Burns's more recent films. With a few exceptions, such as Ott's (2011b) visual analysis of *The National Parks: America's Best Idea* (2009b), scholars have ignored Ken Burns and much of his contemporary filmography.

strides toward racial justice; Gallagher (1998) questioned the filmmaker's lack of scholarly and more nuanced source materials; Peacock and Moore (1993) charged that the film "democratizes the myth" of the War in terms of a somewhat favorable representation of the South (p. 121).

Some have used *The Civil War* to launch a broader campaign against Burns's professional career. Sharrett (2011) referred to Burns's filmography as a "Cliffs Notes overview" of American history, while Rose and Corley (2003) denounced the filmmaker for short-sighting issues of gender in his films, while also shaping history to meet cinematic standards. Others, such as Jefferson (2009b), have disparaged Burns for lacking in-film reflexivity, suggesting that the filmmaker's approach to a historical event or episode – the Second World War, for example – undermines the collective memories and experiences of those directly involved.

Harlan (2003) provides a summation of the scholarly rhetoric targeted at Burns over the decades:

> His [Burns] films are not, in fact, cinematically or aesthetically innovative in any important way; indeed, many of them are slow, sentimental and downright boring. Moreover, he sometimes gets the facts wrong. And sometimes he leaves out things that should not be left out… (p. 170).

In turn, those who have chosen to address the filmmaker's visual aesthetic have done so in comparing Burns's work to other documentarians, and few if any of these

critics have approached this subject from media or communication studies.[15] These scholars have claimed that Burns is a visual stylist whose work presents one-sided or otherwise problematic accounts of U.S. history. In this regard, Fallon (2013a) addressed Burns in relation to documentarian Errol Morris in a piece devoted to Morris's approach to documentary filmmaking. Fallon's largely favorable view of Morris's digital manipulations of archival materials is contrasted with Burns's techniques. Here, Fallon criticizes the latter for focusing on "archival unity" from little more than the juxtaposition of historical photographs, newspaper articles, diary entries, and political records. Fallon goes on to suggest that Burns's use of music on film is merely for purposes of playing to viewer emotions (p. 28).

Tibbetts (1996a), who dubbed Burns, "The master of motion*less* photography," has argued that the filmmaker's obsession with visual cohesion overpowers the personal experiences and individual reflections of subjects and commentators (p. 121). Breitbart (2007) attacked Burns's use of the pan-and-zoom technique, describing the process as "a slow, sometimes excruciatingly slow, camera move" that Burns "desperately needed to make up for a lack of archival footage of the Civil War" (p. 169). The author also argued that Burns has received too much credit for pan-and-zoom photography.

Several scholars have also taken issue with the longstanding relationship between Burns and PBS. While Burns has maintained that the financing for his projects occurs through personal fundraising and oftentimes during the middle of a film's production,

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[15] Tibbetts (1996b), a scholar of history and film, specifically addressed the lack of scholars who have taken into account "the crucial implications of his [Burns] preoccupation with still photographs" (p. 120).

scholars have questioned outside financiers with political motives (Cunningham, 2005c).

Bullert (1997) states concern with the Burns-PBS team's increasing reliance on corporate

funding, which, the author claims, has created a collective power structure. According to

Bullert, such outside involvement with conservative organizations has led to a general

decline in the quality of documentary (film and television) programming in the U.S. The

author cites the financing provided by General Motors (GM) for both *The Civil War* and

Baseball as examples of films that have culminated out of this relationship.

Similarly, Beattie (2004) argues that the popularity of Burns's films has altered

the "types" of documentaries PBS is willing to finance, particularly in the aftermath of

The Civil War. According to the author, "PBS is abandoning committed and challenging

investigative documentaries in favour of 'safer' forms of programming, including an

increasing reliance on popular drama" (p. 209; see also Ledbetter, 1997). Corner (1996b)

attributes much of the blame for the powerful relationship between Burns and PBS to the

unquestioning attitude of the viewing audience, but also condemns Burns for producing

films that disrespect the investigative and journalistic ideals of documentary.[16]

Burns has responded to such attacks in a number of interviews over the years.

However, the filmmaker typically sidesteps a more nuanced discussion of his filmmaking

practices as well, tending to favor speaking about the topics of his work. During a

promotional tour of *The Central Park Five* (2012a), arguably Burns's most conventional

historical documentary, the filmmaker insisted that his chosen subject matter is born from

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[16] By no means is this an exhaustive account of scholarship and journalistic criticism on

Burns, *The Civil War*, or his filmography. However, the criticism here does reflect the

primary themes found in much of the critical scholarship and journalism on Burns.

competing interests, such as the tensions between race relations throughout U.S. history. Over the years, Burns has cited *The Civil War* (1990e), *Baseball* (1994b)*, and *Jazz* (2001b) as examples of films that tackle these converging issues and lines of inquiry.

The topics most relevant to scholars within the current body of scholarship on Ken Burns – his legitimacy as a historian and his relationship to PBS – are tangential to the primary issues of concern for this study. In terms of Burns-as-historian, the topic is of significance here insofar as it relates to production practices for the historical documentary and the possible consequences or challenges to the historical documentary film as well as a broader spectrum of historiophoty. For now, the purposes of pointing to these issues is to address the body of literature from historians and media critics who have taken issue with Burns and his career. The larger significance of such inquiries here is that Ken Burns remains "the biggest success story for PBS in the past twenty years," and has "changed the way many in America think about documentary, and…historical documentaries" (Ellis & McLane, 2005, p. 299). In remains surprising, however, that a range of scholars from media to film studies have largely overlooked or ignored Ken Burns altogether.

For this study, I begin with an exploration into the origins of Burns's relationship to documentary photography and film. This account includes Burns's education and early professional career. More importantly, the following discussion serves as a practical point of entry into a closer examination of the use of visual effects for the historical documentary.

C.   Making Motion Picture History: The Rise of "The Burns Effect"

Like many children of the post-War era, Ken Burns looked up to his father. An anthropologist and "an obsessive photographer," according to Burns's brother and fellow filmmaker, Ric, it was the senior Burns who spawned his oldest son's interest in the photographic arts (Wadler, 1999). The first time young Ken caught his father crying was "when he was watching a film," and soon thereafter, Burns started to dream of becoming "the next Howard Hawkes or Alfred Hitchcock or, most of all, John Ford, who is my idol" (Cunningham, 2005d, p. 16).

According to one Burns biographer:

Ken's father bought him a super-8 camera when Ken was a teenager and he began taking motion pictures and assembling his first rudimentary documentary films…fueling his dreams of becoming a director" (Edgerton, 2001a, p. 29).

After resisting his father's attempts to entice Ken to apply to the University of Michigan, the senior Burns's alma mater, Ken enrolled in Hampshire College in 1971. It was at Hampshire where Ken was encouraged to study and explore the visual arts. And it was at Hampshire that Burns was introduced to the man who would have the most influence on his interests and career in still and motion picture photography.

Professor Jerome Liebling was a well-respected social documentary still photographer who taught the teenage Burns the tenets of visual storytelling.[17] In retrospect, Liebling's philosophies on the photographic arts were imprinted on Burns through two distinct characteristics of his own career. For one, Liebling's professional

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[17] Burns has also credited photographer and Professor Elaine Mayes, who also taught at Hampshire College during Burns's undergraduate years.

photography was thought to be inspired by the work of Walker Evans and other New

Deal-era documentarians who used their cameras to promote progressive issues for

laborers and migrants.

Second, Edgerton (2001b) characterizes Liebling's work as aesthetically bound to

"[an] almost cinematic quality, revealing a sense of drama and movement within the

frame, often incorporating the grammar of motion pictures with his extreme close-ups

and striking angles" (p. 30). This foregrounding of cinematic aesthetics applied to

depictions of everyday people would materialize in a slightly altered form in later years

through Burns's historical documentaries (Figures 1, 2, and 3, p. 23).

The would-be filmmaker was introduced to such ideas during Liebling's

undergraduate course, "Advanced Film and Photography," in which the former enrolled

multiple times. Decades later, Burns (1995) told an interviewer that the course and his

mentor were so influential because "Filmmakers showed their rushes to photographers,

photographers pinned up their freshly dried prints… and all that time, underneath, was

the quiet bass note of Jerry's [Liebling] careful criticism and commentary" (p. 8).

Liebling would eventually encourage Burns to form his own production company with

several classmates; the company became Hampshire Films.

While obtaining his undergraduate degree in film studies and design at

Hampshire, Burns's professional interests remained divided between still and motion

picture photography. The two areas of visual media, however, finally aligned during his

senior year. As part of his thesis, Burns received an estimated $25,000 from the nearby

living history museum, Old Sturbridge Village, to produce what became his 27-minute

thesis film, *Working in Rural New England* (1976a) (T. Kelleher, personal

communication, September 18, 2015).

Figures 1, 2, and 3: Photographs from Jerome Liebling's archive.

Used with permission from Jerome Liebling

The final cut of *New England*, which eventually played on a loop in the museum's

atrium, is composed of a nonlinear series of filmed sequences in which actors in 19th

century rural attire perform a number of laborious tasks in the village. Burns's first effort

into rephotographing and implementing a pan across a still image is witnessed in one of

film's final scenes. Here, the film transitions somewhat abruptly from live-action

cinematography to a still image of a painting depicting Old Sturbridge Village and its

environs (Figures 4, 5, and 6, below). In Edgerton's (2001c) description of this scene:

> His [Burns's] camera slowly pans across a large sprawling mural of a New
>
> England village from the 1830s, visually spotlighting a number of important
>
> details, including an assortment of people milling about period houses, craft
>
> shops, farm buildings, and rolling fields and rivers (p. 33).

Figures 4, 5, and 6: Sections of a painting from *Working in Rural New England* (1976b). The

scene highlights Burns's first uses of rephotographing and panning across still imagery. In the

film, the camera pans left and across this painting to reveal the expanse and details of the

village. *Used with permission from Old Sturbridge Village*

In later years, Burns would credit his decision to incorporate archival illustrative

materials for *New England* to the visual presentation of *City of Gold* (1957a). *Gold*,

created by filmmakers Wolf Koenig and Colin Low of Canada's distinguished National

Film Board, incorporated still and motion picture photography to recount the struggles of

prospectors during the Klondike gold rush at the close of the 19th century (Figures 7, 8,

and 9, p. 26).[18] Tibbetts (1995a) summarizes *Gold*'s impact on documentary film and

film production:

> *City of Gold* has received more honors and been seen by more people than any
>
> other short documentary film ever made. Its pioneering use of still photographs
>
> became the model for NBC's 'Project Twenty' television series in the early 1960s
>
> and for countless later series for A&E, the Discovery Channel, and other cable
>
> outlets (p. 52).

Tibbetts (1995b) also provides a history of the pan-and-zoom effect and Low's

involvement:

> *City of Gold*'s celebrated camera movements over the picture surfaces were not –
>
> to the surprise of many viewers – achieved by manual manipulations. Low
>
> decided at the outset that the hand-held camera could not rival the degree of
>
> precision and control afforded by the animation stand. These techniques – called
>
> "graphics" at the NFB – had been developed during Low's work with Norman
>
> McLaren. "From the very beginning, in 1945, when I joined McLaren, he was
>
> animating the camera across still images, frame by frame—working out zooms,

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[18] Over the years, Colin Low has received the majority of credit for the research and

production techniques in the film.

Figures 7, 8 and 9 (from top): An example of the pan-and-zoom technique in *City of Gold*. The camera spends several seconds on a portion of the frame (previous page) before panning to the upper-left of the photo and zooming into the image, *revealing* a larger spectrum of prospectors moving up a snowy mountain.
Used with permission from National Film Board

pans, accelerations, decelerations, curves, exponential movements, etc." Low became head of the Animation Department in 1950. He brought in a mathematician, Brian Salt, and a young technical whiz named Roman Kroitor to refine the animation process…it was Kroitor who assisted Low in devising a mechanism by which camera movements could be mechanically calculated and plotted to simulate the inertia and momentum of hand motions (p. 2).

Burns specifically endorsed Low's techniques and the latter's creative advancements in filmmaking as influential to his own career; Low's larger list of achievements in film includes pioneering developments in the motion-graphic arts and animation, as well as the engineering of 3-D IMAX HD (Low, 2015). In Burns's own estimation of *Gold*'s visual presentation, "The camera prowled over the surfaces, moving in and out, so that those dead photos came alive in a way [and] I was impressed by that" (Tibbetts, 1996c, p. 123).

While the use of historic still images and the pan-and-zoom effect in *City of Gold* aided in Burns's desire to "will photographs to come alive," the evolution of the filmmaker's visual aesthetic was no doubt refined through a combination of intersecting ideas and professional experimentations in photography and film (Wilson, 2014a). Included here is Burns's explorations into rephotographing historic illustrative materials, a growing knowledge of equipment and strategies for both still and motion picture photography, a developing interest composing a filmic narrative from archival materials to, and the mentorship and instruction from the faculty and his fellow students at Hampshire College.

And yet, Burns would not direct a historical documentary film until four years after the completion of *New England*. It was, however, the 1980s in which the filmmaker produced six feature-length documentaries and received national acclaim for his aesthetic approach and growing body of work. Edgerton (1997a) summarizes the time between Burns's graduation from Hampshire and the generation of his first feature, the Oscar-nominated *Brooklyn Bridge* (1981b):

He [Burns] and two of his friends started their own production company, Florentine Films, and struggled for a number of years doing freelance assignments and finishing a few short documentaries before beginning work in 1977 on film based on historian David McCullough's book, 'The Great Bridge' (1972) (p. 12).

The comparisons between *City of Gold* and *Brooklyn Bridge* in terms of visual architecture are striking. Not only do both films rely on still images from the mid-to-late 19th century as crucial to the composition of the visual structure, but these historical documentaries are dependent upon a combination of rudimentary camera "effects" – pans, zooms, tilts, cut-ins, and cutaways – that emphasize, direct, reveal, and dramatize.

Koenig and Low's film, which contains motion picture photography for present-day events, uses added movement and direction as part of the visual aesthetic to highlight the harsh realities associated with gold prospectors trekking across snowy and mountainous terrain, their development of small mining communities, and their laborious efforts below the hardened earth. Similarly, Burns uses these elements to emphasize the difficulties of a quest of sorts – one also concerned with scale and size – but this journey marked by the challenges associated with bringing a cumbersome steel structure to life.

One of Koenig and Low's more unique stylistic techniques in *Gold* – a strategy Burns would appropriate later in his career – is to break apart a single photograph into individual frames, and then scan across the image to locate and then zoom in to emphasize certain visual elements. Cumulatively, Figures 10, 11, 12, and 13 below are a particularly strong example of this visual effect or strategy.

Figures 10, 11, 12, and 13: (From top left, clockwise) A single still image from *Gold*, divided into four distinct moments by camera movement. Top left, a medium close-up sets the scene (10); the camera pans left and zooms out to reveal more miners at work (11); the camera zooms into the torso of the miner in the foreground (12); the camera pans down to focus on the contents of the metal pan (13).   *Used with permission from the National Film Board*

Although Burns did not incorporate the strategy for *Bridge*, a lack of available motion picture footage of the Brooklyn Bridge under construction forced Burns to generate an alternative visual approach. Similar to Koenig and Low, the filmmaker stumbled upon a repository of archival photographs and illustrations during pre-production that revived an interest in using such materials to compose a filmic narrative. Hölzl (2010b) describes how Burns achieved the process of making still images "move" at this early stage of his career:

> Using a rostrum camera, the image, lying on a movable table, is passed in front of a camera fastened above it to create a pan effect, or the camera is moved toward the image to create a zoom effect, or the combination of both (pp. 104-105).

In essence, Burns began sculpting a vision of the bridge's history through curated photography, setting a standard for the shape and form of the historical documentary.

Moreover, Burns's decision to follow in the footsteps of Koenig and Low in terms of film form suggests a direct lineage for the use of historic images in documentary film, and the ability of photography to aid in the process of bringing the past to life. Koenig and Low's film showed that historical "still" photographs in tandem with roving camerawork could orchestrate and maintain a cohesive visual narrative.

Although Edgerton (2001d) argues that "this kind of imagery was inherently uncinematic and thus irrelevant to the needs and consideration of most documentarians," Koenig and Low's visual style would greatly influence future conceptions of the historical documentary (p. 35). Moreover, the filmmakers' use of archival photographs into the visual presentation of documentary film confirmed the capacity for still

photographs to serve as the existence or proof of persons or events at precise moments in time.

Second, Burns's use of camera movement in *Bridge* is also understood as a means of experimenting with filmmaking aesthetics to play to emotion. Pans, for instance, are used to dramatize the volume of workers required for the mobilization of steel; zoom outs or "reveals," on the other hand, are mostly incorporated to recognize the expanse of the bridge in relation to people or surroundings; the combined pan-and-zoom effect, meanwhile, is deployed for directional and referential purposes, thereby shifting the viewer's gaze into or away from one indexical point of reference in the image to the another (Figures 14, 15 and 16, p. 32; Figures 17 and 18, p. 33).

Although Burns's implementation of the pan-and-zoom effect remains minimal in this first feature, the camera movement itself calls into question the idea of "film time" by producing the illusion of motion onto still imagery. This subject has drawn some attention from scholars in cinema studies although rarely if ever discussed in relation to contemporary filmmaking practices or visual effects (Doane, 2002). Historically, film time has been manipulated through a number of filmmaking practices – parallel editing or the use of split-screen, for instance – and discussed in relation to the burgeoning number of technological advancements during the Industrial Age (Kern, 2003).

Figures 14, 15, and 16: (From top) A single photograph from *Brooklyn Bridge* separated into frames. Slowly, the camera zooms out and simultaneously pans right to "reveal" the scope of the bridge and the skyline of New York City. *Used with permission from Florentine Films*

Although the screen time an image occupies is an editorial and aesthetic determinant to fix the viewer's gaze to the image on screen, visual effects such as the pan-and-zoom slowly decrease the size of the original or printed photograph, thereby decreasing the amount of time the viewer has to ponder the content of an image. In scenes where the camera scans or glides over the surface of a photograph, as is the case in *Bridge*, the viewer's eye-line is positioned into supposedly important content.

In addition, "time" is a significant property of photography and film and therefore, the historical documentary. Time is always a component or element of a still photograph's historicity that simultaneously informs and contextualizes; the black-and-whites or sepia tones that make up a photograph, for instance, locate the image in a particular moment in time; on the other hand, the dress and pose of individuals present in the frame or the appearance of physical and geographical spaces locate the photographed

Figures 17 and 18: Key figures in the formation of the Brooklyn Bridge are shown in close-up first, followed by the "reveal," which foregrounds the expanse of the bridge.

Used with permission from Florentine Films

in a certain place and time. Such qualities of photographic or film "time" are no doubt

rendered through aesthetic calculations, but ultimately raise questions for historical

documentary's abilities to educate as well as entertain or suggest an emotive response or

reaction. Thus, the abilities of visual effects to produce illusive characteristics not found

in historical still photography have generated concerns related to the credibility and

accuracy of documentary expression.

More broadly, the significance of such aesthetic techniques and strategies for still

photography correlates with photography's longstanding indexical and referential

qualities. Such a cyclical series of challenges to photography and the historical

documentary raises specific concerns relevant to White's (1988c) afore-defined idea of

historiophoty and as discussed in the later chapters.

Of added importance to this discussion on the role of aesthetics, style,

presentation and visual strategies for the historical documentary is Burns's deflections to

"poetic license" and "emotional truth" as related to his filmmaking and service to the past

(Edgerton, 2001e). Particularly problematic to this defense are the degrees to which

historiophoty as witnessed through visual effects changes or revises an understanding of

the historic. As suggested, Burns's ability to relay historical information and provide

historical credibility to his subject matter is dependent upon the visual materials at his

disposal. But techniques related to his formal approach to filmmaking, especially his

defense of the necessity of "poetic license" and the call for an "emotional truth,"

encroach upon issues detrimental to the arena of historiophoty.

Furthermore, the use of visual effects to deploy said visual records or documents

appears to challenge both photography's informational qualities as well as the historical

documentary's role as a tool for education. These challenges are best approached by returning to the visual analysis and the discussion of Burns's emergence as a historical documentarian. Such ideas are explored in greater detail later in this study.

During the 1980s, Burns served as producer, director, and co-cinematographer on five historical documentaries that were televised and eventually released on home video through PBS (Stubbs, 2002a).[19] His filmography during this most active decade includes *The Shakers: Hands to Work, Hearts to God* (1984a), *Huey Long* (1985a), *Statue of Liberty* (1985a)*, The Congress* (1988), and *Thomas Hart Benton* (1988). Although *The Civil War* (1990f) is largely considered Burns's magnum opus and has received the majority of public and scholarly attention over the years, his earlier films showcase the refinement of a visual presentation and an increasing inclusion of motion picture photography.

The Shakers, Statue of Liberty, and *Huey Long*, for instance, all provide diverse examples of Burns's development of strategies for the visual architecture of historical documentary pre-*Civil War*. In these three films, Burns's utilization of still images and motion picture photography – predominantly in the form of archival newsreel footage – correlates to the type of historical subject matter under observation.

In *The Shakers* (1984b), for instance, the filmmaker implements present-day cinematographic images of the interior of a Shaker household that mimics the frozenness

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[19] PBS has broadcast replays of these films over the years as well, and continues to serve as principle home video and DVD distributor.

of still photography (Figures 19 and 20, p. 37).[20] Here, the *motion* picture photography retains much of the form and function of its stop-action counterpart. Edgerton (1997b) provides a point of reference into Burns's early uses of cinematography:

> [Burns] handl[es] live shots as if they were still photographs. Whether his subject happens to be the Brooklyn Bridge, or the Statue of Liberty, or a Civil War battlefield, his own live footage is characteristically formal and painterly. This emphasis on static composition is particularly effective in evoking the mood and pre-filmic visual vocabulary of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, thus corresponding to the historical eras and topics that he invariably chooses to explore [emphasis added] (p. 14).

Here, and similar to the connection or ties between visual effects and historiophoty, the scholar points to ideas investigated in greater detail later in this research study. For the time being, however, Burns's decision to use cinematography as the primary visual medium in *The Shakers* was likely one of necessity – possibly to make up for a lack of archival, illustrative materials of the hermetic religious sect.

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[20] Burns retains a cinematography credit for each of his films from *Brooklyn Bridge* (1981c) to *Baseball* (1994c). However, he does not receive the same credit for his films post-1994. In addition, from 1981 to 1994, Burns relied on a stable of cinematographers for assistance, primarily his longtime associate and production partner in Florentine Films, Buddy Squires. Squires retains much of the credit for photographing many of the interviews in Burns's catalogue.

Figures 19 and 20: (From top) Motion picture images from *The Shakers*. Here, the

stillness of the motion picture photography mirrors that of still photography.

Used with permission from Florentine Films

Nonetheless, the stillness of the live action footage signifies the reservation of the Shaker lifestyle, including the group's devotion to religious beliefs, solitude, and the rigors of daily manual labor.

In *Statue of Liberty* and *Huey Long*, however, motion picture photography takes on added dimensions with alternative functions. Burns's use of motion picture forms in these two films, televised mere weeks apart in 1985, emphasize divergent aspects or properties of filmic "motion." In *Statue*, swirling, birds-eye vantage points, ostensibly photographed from a helicopter, are sutured into the narrative for 360-degree views of Lady Liberty (Figures 21 and 22, p. 39). In turn, newsreel footage is used to showcase the broad physical gestures of the ebullient Huey Long; the historic motion picture photography here also underscores the former Louisiana governor's larger-than-life personality and political prowess (Figures 23 and 24, p. 39).

More to the point, the cinematographic imagery in *Statue* and *Huey Long* foreground the archival properties of the still visual materials – photographs, paintings, maps, advertorials, newspaper headlines, etc. – as part of each film's visual architecture. With motion picture photography playing to the immediacy or life-like present-ness of the photographed, the still imagery throughout these two films forces the viewer to pause, observe, and reflect. Here, the still image-historiophoty, as part of the film's diegesis, stands apart, encouraging the indexical and self-referential aspects of photography, including the medium's ability to transcend persons, places, and time.

Figures 21 and 22 (top): Contemporary motion picture photography of the Statue of Liberty.

Figures 23 and 24 (bottom): Newsreel footage of Louisiana governor Huey Long.

Used with permission from Florentine Films

Burns would go on to direct and produce two minor and less publicized historical documentaries, *Thomas Hart Benton* (1988b) and *The Congress* (1988b), before tackling the Civil War. Neither film added dimension to the development of Burns's filmmaking aesthetic or visual style, and neither film is particularly significant to the subgenre itself. Post-*Civil War*, Burns would, however, continue to produce and direct multi-part historical documentaries on topical historical subject matter. By the mid-2000s, cable

television entities, such as the History Channel and the National Geographic Channel, were utilizing his approach for hour-long programs on historical subject matter.

And yet, a Burns-backed film in the 2010s maintains a certain status within the historical documentary arena, as witnessed with the popularity of *The Roosevelts* (2014c). As a filmmaker, Burns continues to tower over the historical documentary subgenre while implementing variations on a visual style that he began in the mid-1970s. Certainly, Burns's use of historic still photography, his occasional shift to archival film, and the interplay between still and motion picture forms, provide the viewer with easily discernible entries to the past. But the question of whether the use of these media and the implementation of visual effects raise concerns or present challenges to historiophoty, particularly in terms of photographic credibility and its ability to function as a record of the past, is worthy of continued examination. This is the primary focus of this dissertation.

In turn, the topics most relevant to scholars within the current body of scholarship on Ken Burns – his legitimacy as a historian and his relationship to PBS – are tangential to issues of concern at the forefront of this project, insofar as these issues are relevant to historiophoty and the historical documentary. For instance, the longstanding debate over Burns's approach to historical subject matter is of significance to this research insofar as it relates to his incorporation of visual strategies for purposes of reviving history and/or using visual materials to inform the viewer's knowledge of the past.

As discussed in the next chapter, this topic is also tied to the concerns for the historical documentary in particular because of its longstanding association and ultimate reliance on the factual. The next chapter provides an explication of documentary theory

from a range of scholarship and historical examples on the subject. The purpose of the following chapter, which outlines the tenets and parameters of the conjoining of documentary to the photographic, speaks to the origins and function, as well as longstanding success, of the historical documentary film. What follows is a review of the scholarship on certain parallels between the "idea" of documentary that arose around the turn of the last century through the journalistic photography of the 1930s, and the simultaneous encroachment of early motion pictures or film.

In sum, the theory of documentary outlined in the next chapter serves to structure and support the remainder of this dissertation. The terms identified and defined in Chapter I in addition to the following explication of documentary theory are useful to approaching the research questions presented at the end of Chapter II for this study. The research design and methods for this study are the subjects of Chapter III, followed by the analyses in Chapter IV. The fifth and final chapter of this dissertation concerns the findings from the analyses and relating the findings to the research questions. The concluding section of this dissertation is concerned with future approaches and directions for the primary topics of this research study.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL APPROACHES & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A Theory of Documentary for Historiophoty

Still and motion picture photography in any form naturally aligns with the

historic. After the shutter is closed or the recording halted, the moment before the lens is

instantly relocated to the past. The process of image-capture is followed by storage,

retrieval, playback, and editing, all of which further remove the image and the

photographic moment from the present or "now."

Published visual media termed "documentary" arrive as the aftermath of these

filtration processes, thereby presenting some fractured version of history as part of the

completed product. Because "documentary" photography and film purported to report on

the real or actual, a specific set of issues and challenges to the practice and genre of

documentary are worthy of exploration. Of particular concern to this study is

documentary's longstanding association and ties to the abilities of still and motion picture

photography, and as this relationship is consequential to the present-day conception of

"historical documentary." Taken up in this chapter is an explication of documentary

theory that focuses on the emergence of "documentary" in relation to the evolution of

photography and then film, and the growing trust and belief in "documentary

photography/film" that, however contentious and problematic, sustains a significant

amount of public credibility.

In directing this chapter towards a location for the historical documentary, the

idea of documentary here is first examined from the origins of its root term(s), and then

presented as part of an outgrowth of a series of key events in the evolution of still and

motion picture photography. Moreover, I discuss a number of theoretical elements in the history of "documentary" in connection to the growth of photographic media during the late 19th century and into the first decades of the 20th century. The points of intersection for still and motion picture photography to "documentary" converge during the 1930s, with the socio-cultural and political climate of the era, the photographic unit of the FSA, Griersonian documentary, and significant technological developments across photography at-large. The rise of and involvement with both photographic media in sectors of government, journalism, and the entertainment industries, alongside photography's growing fascination in the public sphere, are key to the direction of documentary theory relevant to an examination of "historical documentary."

To this point, the historical documentary subgenre finds itself forced to balance creative and journalistic concerns, while simultaneously functioning as an entity for utilitarian and entertainment purposes. In sum, the explication of "documentary theory" here situates the origins of "documentary" to the history of still and motion picture forms, and theoretical tenets most particular to "documentary photography" and "documentary film." Furthermore, this theoretical framework provides an approach to the primary case study (film) text under analysis for this dissertation.

Upon a summation of the main tenets of documentary theory for the historical documentary, I conclude this chapter by putting forth the primary research questions for this study. The research questions here serve to prompt an exploration into the ways in which visual effects, including the implementation of aesthetic techniques or strategies, have the potential to subvert key elements of photography and film, thereby shaping our understanding of the past through the visual record.

A.   Part I: Definitions, Origins, and Photography and the Actual

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the noun "document" means, "A piece of written, printed, or electronic matter that provides information or evidence or that serves as an official record." The dictionary describes the verb "document" as synonymous with photography based on the latter's ability to record or provide existence of the factual. Thus, the term "documentary" derives from the root of a word that is most readily traced to the power of photography to substantiate.

According to Musser (2013a):

The early history of documentary requires an exploration into several strands, one of which is the history and etymology of the term itself. The term 'documentary' dates back to the late eighteenth century, where it appeared in a judicial or governmental context…'Documentary' was thus an adjective referring to documents in a legal context (p. 113).

The author notes that "documentary" first associated with photography in relation to the "value" of a photograph, with the frequent usage of "documentary photograph" traced to the 1890s. Three decades elapsed before "documentary" found its association with the motion picture. In 1922, a review of a Pathé news film depicting a horse race described the presentation as "documentary" to distinguish this action from the spectacle of the event.

Similar attempts to place the origins of "documentary" in relation to photography and film have also been undertaken by scholars. Coles (1997a) traces the lineage of "documentary" to the Latin *docere*, which means "to teach," and dates the contemporary definition of the term to 1935 (pp. 19-20). According to Coles:

The word *documentary* certainly suggests an interest in what is actual, what exists, rather than what one brings personally, if not irrationally, to the table of present-day actuality. Documentary evidence substantiates what is otherwise an assertion or hypothesis or claim. A *documentary film* [emphasis added] attempts to portray a particular kind of life realistically; a documentary report offers authentication of what is otherwise speculation (p. 5).

Although Denzin (2009a) suggests that any piece of material evidence for research purposes is embedded with varying degrees of political or ideological associations, and Bezner (1999a) reminds us that "no visual information is neutral; it is always received and manipulated through the viewer's own bias," the immediacy and supposed transparency of photography as a visible trace or material means of "what was" remains an area of contention for scholars (p. 5).[21]

Nonetheless, the most direct interpretation of "documentary photography" or "documentary film" is found in photography's unique ability to capture or record and communicate the factual (e.g., Clarke, 1997a). In effect, scholarship that examines "documentary" in terms of photography and film is generally concerned with the degree(s)to which of the abilities of these visual media are able to provide a credible and accurate record or means of communication that speaks to real-world persons, events, and happenings.

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[21] Denzin (2009b) also suggests a vetting process for material evidence used in research studies. The author argues that researchers should examine the trustworthiness of archival documentation and apply professional ethics or standards to such materials.

Documentary film historians suggest alternate points of inception for the motion picture's alignment with the idea of "documentary." For instance, Musser (2013b) finds a parallel in the illustrated lectures of the mid-1800s, or "audiovisual presentations involving projected images using lantern slides and then film" (p. 120). The author claims that "documentary film" was not a formal designation until the 1920s, when the widespread exhibition of films on nonfiction subject matter first circulated in the West. According to Jacobs (1971), "By 1930, the documentary film had become an acknowledged category and had achieved a secure, if as yet small, niche in the world of film" (p. 14).

Such immediate and foundational characteristics or qualities most particular to the conjoining of "documentary" to photography/film underscore an association with a specific kind or type of visual communication and information. This precise area of inquiry has long fascinated and confounded scholars and critics of "documentary" photography and film. In Rosenstone's (2006) words, "Ostensibly, the documentary directly reflects the world, possessing what has been called an 'indexical' relationship to reality – which means it shows us what once was there, in front of the camera, and in theory, what would have been there anyway were no camera present" (p. 70).

But for too long, Rosenstone's second point – the photographer captured something naturally taking place in the real world – has been the primary area of scrutiny for scholars of documentary. The fact that something *did exist or take place* before the camera, aside from the presence of a photographer or apparatus and concerns related to the dramatization of events before the camera, seems to have dissipated from scholarly explications of documentary.

Nonetheless, the function of "documentary" photography/film is linked, inevitably, to a journalistic association of reportage that, in time, also becomes part of the historic record. This bridging of "documentary" to photography/film, in which the indexical and referential qualities of the latter are foregrounded and provide a societal service, is a relationship instrumental to any form of seemingly credible historical documentation. Documentary photography/film, in other words, exists as part of a system of meaning best understood over time and through contextualization. In addition, this relationship continues to add dimensions to the historic over the progression of real-world time.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Before continuing this discussion, it is important to turn briefly to the theoretical approaches used by many scholars and historians of "documentary" film and photography. This begins with an understanding of components of the theory of (visual) semiotics across communication disciplines for interpreting information from visual materials. In visual semiotics theory, a visual sign addresses or refers to an object found in the real world (Moriarty, 2005a).

Formulated by Ferdinand de Saussure's framework for linguistic interpretation, more recent scholars in the humanities and social sciences have largely adopted Saussure's original "'science of sign systems' or 'signification'" from Charles Sanders Peirce's (1931-1935a) fuller explication of the theory and from Peirce's writings on the subjects. Put simply, in de Saussure's model, a sign could be deconstructed into a signifier (sound or image) and signified (concept or object), with both integrated to "the object in the world that the sign is related to" or the referent, a term incorporated into

semiotics from Peirce (Rose, 2012a, p. 113). For purposes of this study, Saussure's framework is useful to understanding of how photography and film function and can be explicated based on visual properties at a fundamental level.

However, a general understanding of Peirce's work, which is most directly applicable to scholars of photography and film, is required for more complex deconstruction and interpretation of meaning from the image-sign relationship. In Peirce's model, three kinds of [visual] signs exist – the icon, index, and symbol – and work or are understood in relation to one another (i.e., one type of sign always refers to and meaning is made in relation to another type of sign) (e.g., Rose, 2012b; Peirce, 1931-1935b).

This relationship and its inner-workings are essentially the definition of Peirce's syntagmatic sign system. In short, the icon, oftentimes the most common type of sign for all forms of photography, and the index, which relies upon a culturally specific and inherent relationship between signifier and signified, are most useful to the broader syntagmatic system of [visual] signs, in which film and photography are allocated. (e.g., Peirce, 1931-1935; Saussure, 1966).[22] In sum, because [visual] signs in the syntagmatic system of [visual] signs take on meaning in relation to other [visual] signs, sequences of still or moving images can be discussed and understood in terms of iconicity [sign] and

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[22] Peirce's semiotics differs from de Saussure's in several important ways, but most notably in components that best address the function of the (visual) sign. In de Saussure's framework, a sign is composed of both signifier and signified. Peirce's model is slightly more complicated in that the author accounts for more complex (visual) sign systems and their governing codes.

indexicality [sign].[23] Barthes's (1977a) explanation of a sign's ability to describe something, or a sign's denotive qualities, is useful here as well because of the necessity to provide a proper translation from image to text.

Visual communications scholars from competing academic disciplines readily adopted components of semiotics (i.e., semiology) because characteristics of the framework are most useful and applicable for analyzing, reading, and interpreting photographic and illustrative materials. In McQuail's (2000) concise explanation, "A key element of semiology is the idea that any (meaningful) sign (of any kind) has a conceptual element that carries meaning as well as a *physical manifestation* [emphasis added]" (p. 503). Although semiotics has been criticized for attempting to ascribe aspects of a verbal or written language to visual forms, whereby much of the original intent and meaning is potentially lost in the process of translation, proponents of visual semiotics locate the theory's usefulness and value in the processes of decoding encoded visual forms.[24]

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[23] Peirce also formulated the paradigmatic system of signs. However, this system is of less concern to this study because it takes into consideration a range of *non-visual* signs, and the research focus in an analysis of paradigmatic sign systems is "contrasting elements of a cultural domain" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011a, p. 268).

[24] For more on key elements of this theory, see Moriarty (2005b), and especially the author's discussion on photography's iconicity. See also Barthes's (1977b) explication of the connotation and denotation of sign systems and the codes that govern sign systems, as well as Hall's (1980; 1993a) foundational essay on challenges for the reader of the encoding/decoding process.

Thus, visual semiotics for this study provides several interesting challenges to White's (1988d) idea of historiophoty. Do visual effects disrupt photography's iconic, indexical, and referential ties to the real? With the historical documentary remaining one of the few visual media whose form and function are dependent upon the collision and interplay between still and motion picture forms, *as well as* the credibility and historical accuracy of both, what is at stake?[25] As suggested, these queries are explored in this study through the historical documentary subgenre, which provides a direct avenue into this relationship.

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The significance of looking at documentary film in terms of genre and the subgenre aspects of historical documentary is that such designations allow scholars to explore these areas of film as a corpus of (research) texts. In Nichols's (2001a) estimation, the scope of documentaries is classified into genres through aesthetic-driven conventions, "such as organizing logic, evidentiary editing, and a prominent role for speech directed at the viewer" (p. 26; p. 24).

Although much has been written on the idea of film genres, and individual genres explored through "genre studies" as part of cinema or film studies, few scholars provide a full or complete explication of "subgenre." To begin, Kuhn and Westwell (2012a)

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[25] Of course, this is not to suggest that other areas or genres of film have not implemented still images or that still images cannot take on filmic qualities, such as the appearance of movement and direction resulting from the use of a slow shutter speed. Chris Marker's *La Jatée* (1962), for example, is a well-regarded and historically significant fiction film with a visual structure primarily comprised of still photographs.

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characterize film genres as "groups of films classified" as existing as part of three primary research perspectives – textual, industry, or reception foci (P. 194). According to the authors, "…a genre may over time and space generate offspring in the form of subsidiary genres, or subgenres" (p. 195). Although further debate and discussion on the terms "genre" and "subgenre" is useful to a fuller theory of each term and the parallels and distinctions between these concepts, the subgenre is generally understood as an outgrowth or offshoot of the genre. In line with examples provided by Kuhn and Westwell among others, the historical documentary film could be considered the bridging of films classified as "documentary" with other nonfiction titles considered "historical."[26]

From here, Nichols (2001b) suggests that the entirety of the documentary genre is best understood as an evolution of separate periods and movements (modes), which can be further defined in terms of modalities and categories or classifications. The historical documentary film, therefore, is first located through "a series of modes of production that, once in operation, remain a viable way of making a documentary film…" (p. 33). Of the six distinct modes of documentary film identified by Nichols – each born from movements that coincide with the history of film production practices – the historical documentary has characteristics of both *poetic* and *expository* modes.

The historical documentary film – and therefore, the films of Ken Burns – is *poetic* in that it "emphasizes visual associations" and contains a "formal organization"; it

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[26] Further explication follows this general idea of the two terms. An additional way of conceptualizing this discussion, however, is to look at the scholarship on the general subject of documentary film (e.g., Renov, 1993a; Rabiger, 2004a, et. al.) in opposition to scholarship on historical films (e.g., Landy, 2001).

is also *expository* in the sense that it provides "verbal commentary and an argumentative logic" (p. 33). Such terms and descriptors are significant when considering how historiophoty is often discussed in terms of the aesthetics and particularly, the visual architecture and presentation of a film.

It is important to recognize that Nichols (in Rosenthal & Corner, 2005) and Rabiger (2004b) actually locate these poetic and expository modes in early nonfiction films of the 1920s. However, the form and function of the historical documentary do not easily fit into *any* of the modes of operation identified by scholars of the subject. Nonetheless, the characteristics of the poetic and expository modes outlined above are also common to the historical documentary film. In effect, the historical documentary is best understood for this study as a *subgenre* of documentary film that is more easily recognized by its visual aesthetic as well as the content or focus of the film.

This visual aesthetic and form common to the historical documentaries of Ken Burns is functional or utilitarian and therefore, can also be expressed in terms of genres or classifications. Documentary film genres have been discussed in connection to modalities. Rabiger (2004c) provides some direction and guidance from here. The author lists 32 primary genres of nonfiction film in tandem with four modalities of nonfiction film, the latter of which are attributed to Renov (1993b). According to Rabiger, the 18th nonfiction film genre listed is "Historical" and is composed of or functions through three of the four modalities. (pp. 54-55). Following Rabiger's (2004d) table of genres and modalities, the historical nonfiction film is thought to perform or function through these modalities: the historical nonfiction film 1) "records, reveals, or preserves," 2)

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"persuades or promotes," and 3) "analyzes or interrogates" (pp. 54-55; see also Renov, 1993c, p. 21).[27]

Although explications of documentary from Nichols (2001c), Renov (1993d) and Rabiger (2004f) are influential and useful in terms of modes, genres, and modalities, the lack of clarity here becomes quickly problematic in regard to the location and influence of the individual genres and their offspring. The historical documentary film, following aesthetic and form-related conventions shaped by Ken Burns, is no exception. Renov, Rabiger and others further confuse these issues by either speaking directly to the broad spectrum of nonfiction film, or by using the term interchangeably with "documentary."

As addressed in subsequent sections of this chapter, this distinction between "nonfiction" and "documentary" is significant to the role and function of documentary by means of film and photography's relationship to the actual, as well as the relationship between "documentary photography/film" and history. The lack of clarity, therefore, generates issues of concern for historiophoty.

Added problems arise in terms of Rabiger's (2004g) linkages between genre and the modalities of nonfiction film. For instance, Burns's films rarely if ever truly interrogate the topics under observation, and the filmmaker's reliance on historic photography, film, and additional visual materials only complicates the suggestion that

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[27] Rabiger (2004e) states that "it's plain that trying to typify and categorize them [documentary or nonfiction films] is highly arguable" (p. 55). Again, the confusion surrounding the differences between documentary film theory and/or the genre-subgenre aspects from scholars on the subject is a key reason for locating a theory of documentary for this study.

historical nonfiction films are tools for persuading and promoting. Although this might

appear to be a defense of Burns's approach as well as his filmography, these concerns are

more a reflection of the lack of nuanced explication on behalf of the leading scholars of

documentary film.

Furthermore, these concerns with such details continue to expand when taking

into account the present-day position and prominence of the wide arena of visual effects

in documentary film. How well does the historical documentary perform in its function or

mission with the application of visual effects? Again, such queries are among the primary

concerns of this dissertation.

The most recognizable or commonly utilized form of the historical documentary

involves the suturing and interweaving of *both* still and motion picture photography into

a series of cohesive and logical sequences for purposes of achieving a filmic narrative.

Although scholars have discussed the presence of still forms in many areas of motion

picture studies, the subject has largely been ignored in terms of the historical

documentary (e.g., Guido and Lugon, 2012a).[28] The issue of the interplay between still

and motion picture forms affects visual information is, therefore, also a matter of concern

for this dissertation.

Such oversights become consequential when taking into account the historical

documentary's need to present a somewhat faithful rendition of the past. In this regard,

the film form and, particularly, the visual narrative structure, are ultimately reliant upon

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[28] Several essays in Guido and Lugon's (2012b) edited volume are cited throughout this

study. Although a few of these essays touch upon nonfiction film and its relationship to

still photography, none are directly concerned with the historical documentary.

the availability of pre-existing visual content. In effect, filmmakers working in the historical documentary subgenre are forced to rely upon retrievable archival imagery, and then edit such materials into a cohesive film. In other words, aside from interview footage or the occasional photograph or shot depicting present-day events, the subgenre subsists on the presence and accessibility of imagery cultivated *from and of* the past.

Thus, the historical documentarian must confront the challenge of communicating the past through accessible visual records or materials while also maintaining viewer engagement through artistic expression. Such form-related issues, therefore, present the historical documentarian with a number of interesting dilemmas, particularly with regards to the availability and cultivation of historical imagery and photography's ability to serve as documentary evidence of the past. In effect, the authority of *historiophoty*, or, once again, "the representation of history and our thought about it in visual images and filmic discourse," is called into question (White, 1988e, p. 1193).

Such concerns surrounding photography and historiophoty have the potential to affect the accuracy or credibility of the historical documentary as well. Because the historical presentation of the visual materials has the potential to affect credibility, the informational and educational qualities of the archival photographic record are paramount to the success or failure of the entirety of the historical documentary arena. The historical documentary filmmaker is, therefore, similar to a person piecing together a jigsaw puzzle; such a person can only complete the project by working with those components provided by the manufacturer. Any attempt to subvert the given parameters could diminish the credibility of the completed product.

Although documentarians attempt to move past such dilemmas through visual re-enactments or CGI in visualizing the historical, filmmakers such as Ken Burns or those most concerned with presenting a reliable and faithful rendition of history regard archival still and motion picture photography consequential primary source material.[29] Such a strong belief in the primacy of the photographic record foregrounds the power of photography's indexical relationship to the real world and in terms of the historical documentary, the past. Such a dependence on still and motion picture photography of the actual, therefore, helps distinguish the historical documentary from other sub-disciplines of documentary and nonfiction film.

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What follows is a brief review of several such moments in the multifaceted history of documentary's alignment with motion picture photography and film. Although the information here is by no means an attempt to exhaust the scholarly literature on the roots or origins of documentary film, this section serves to further the process of explicating documentary theory through both photography and nonfiction film at a crucial moment in U.S. and world history. Therefore, the literature and information presented is consequential to understanding the inception and significance of the historical documentary, as well as the continuation of documentary photography as an idea across various visual media.

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[29] A number of scholarly works are devoted to the subject of documentary film and historical re-enactments. For example, Fallon's (2013b) essay focuses on documentary filmmaker Errol Morris and his use of re-enactments in documentary.

The remainder of this explication of documentary theory for this study, therefore, contends with 1) ideas most relevant to the historical documentary and 2) intersections between still and motion picture photography's joint relationship to "documentary." The relationship between still *and* motion picture photography to their joint "documentary" origins is, strangely, limited in depth and scope. To this point, "documentary" is thought of as specific to each photographic medium, and each medium routinely confined to discussions in separate academic fields or disciplines. Thus, the bridging of "documentary" to the photographic is examined here from converging technological, socio-cultural and political developments of the 1930s. In considering the intersections between still and motion picture photography with the idea and principles of documentary in Depression-era America, striking parallels are found in the expansion of "documentary" photography and film.

During the 1930s, both arenas of photography were adjoined to "documentary" through individual practitioners and champions as well as movements. Of particular consequence to this research study is the notion that early "documentary" photographers from still and motion picture media held onto a belief in the camera's ability to capture or record the happenings of real-world persons and events, and the power of the photographic record.[30] To this point, still and motion picture photography of the 1930s

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[30] As suggested in the previous section, associations between still and motion picture photography and the term "documentary" did exist prior to the 1930s. As Barnouw (1993a) states in his history of nonfiction film, early actualities produced by Thomas Edison and the Lumiére brothers were referred to by any number of names, including

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deemed "documentary" provides a connection to the indexical and referential (semiotic) qualities of photography/film and a parallel to visual media's ability to contend with the past or historic. In effect, a theory of documentary relevant to "historical documentary" must account for traces or aspects of the history and evolution of still and motion picture photography, including the overlapping and divergent components particular to each.

Therefore, an explication of a theory of documentary that highlights the shape and form of what would eventually transition into the "historical documentary" is necessary here. In doing so, particular moments in photographic history are explored, especially: 1) the growth of the "documentary idea" in still photography movements and in relation to the social and political climate of the 1930s; 2) technological advancements in motion pictures (film); 3) two early and key examples of types of film that speak to the significance of "historical documentary" and its association with journalism or news in connection to entertainment, politics and propaganda; and 4) scholarship that speaks to more recent concerns with the purpose, structure, and function of documentary film, and particularly, potential issues or concerns that arise with using this type of visual media to explain and make sense of history.

Broadly, connections between "documentary" and photography/film are most readily found in technological innovations and movements across photography, as well as in the implementation and acceptance of such in sectors of journalism, government, and education throughout the early 20th century. The following explication presents the bridges these ideas in connection to both content and form-related issues of the period.

"documentaire." However, it wasn't until the 1930s that the term became permanently fixed to photography.

However, with the films of Ken Burns and the influence of his visual aesthetic in the historical documentary of particular consequence to this research study, a theory of documentary here is most immediately concerned with the more formal aspects of photography and filmmaking.

Moreover, it is important to bear in mind that the visual architecture for the primary case study (film) in this research project is composed of historic still photographs and motion picture footage in the form of newsreel film. Although the exact origins of "historical documentary" remain in question, an understanding of the documentary impulses and ideas that shaped photographers and filmmakers of the 1930s offers an avenue toward a theory of documentary suitable for an analysis of the contemporary conception of the historical documentary as historiophoty.

B.   Part II: Documentary and Depression-Era Photography

The historical ties to and parallels between the evolution of "documentary" in the fields of still and motion picture photography during the 1930s are far-reaching and remain influential. In the years between the collapse of Wall Street or Black Friday in 1929 and U.S. involvement in the Second World War (1941), technological advancements in photography and the distribution and circulation or presence of photographs became instrumental in the growing evidentiary power of pictures. During the era, still and motion picture photography found its association with the term "documentary" by using a visual means of communication to inform upon the on the newsworthy and challenge the status quo. But photography's association with such ideas as proof, evidence, and substantiating the actual is linked to the inception of the medium.

Although the precise origins of photography remain somewhat in question, Joseph Nicéphore Niépce is routinely credited with making the first permanent camera image in 1826, with the widespread use of the craft believed to result from the efforts of Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre around 1839, and the ensuing popularity of his daguerreotype process (e.g., Harry Ransom Center, 2015; Sandweiss, 2002; Goldberg, 1991a).[31] The following year, William Henry Fox Talbot generated a process in which images were successfully recorded on paper, and led to Fox Talbot's patenting of what was known as the "calotype" process in 1841 (e.g., Buckland, 1980).[32] According to Goldberg (1991b), "Photography came along when society wanted pictures and proof and was prepared to believe the two were the same" (p. 10).

These first photographs from Niépce, Daguerre, and others who had improved upon the mirroring capabilities of the camera obscura were instrumental to understanding "documentary photography" in that they produced a material copy of the scene in front of the camera. In other words, photography's documentary-ness was already immediately evident through the camera's ability to produce a seemingly realistic version or depiction the material world.

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[31] Niépce's first photograph is currently a part of the permanent exhibition collection at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas-Austin.

[32] Much has been written on early photographic processes, practices for capturing or recording an image, retaining an image onto a physical substance, and those involved with photography's origins and early evolution. However, Niépce, Daguerre, and Fox Talbot are routinely credited for the invention of and sustaining practices for photography.

Daguerreotypes and similar quickly generated images remained a fixture of portraitists until the 1850s, signaling the first wave of popular photographs. By the 1870s, westward migration and the expansion of industrial and economic sectors in the U.S. spawned a ripe environment for technological developments and innovations in photography. During this period, scientists and philosophers began tinkering with optical devices and similar pre-photographic technologies to observe and record the precision and accuracy of biological life forms (e.g., Crary, 1990a). Meanwhile, traveling entrepreneurs and exhibitionists capitalized on the amusement and novelty aspects of optical devices and the more elusive aspects of photography, while portraiture and landscape photography surged in number of practitioners.

This developing interest in various facets of photography at the turn of the century can be attributed to its unique ability to amuse and entertain while simultaneously representing and mirroring. Unlike painting and other supposed predecessors, the inscription of light and shadow onto film via the camera apparatus marveled spectators and viewers *as well as* relayed non-verbal information. Ritchin (1990b) provides an account of this idea, that photography is unique and engaging because of its indexical links or ties to the real world:

> Scenes photographed in a straightforward way are presumed to have contained the people and objects depicted. Unless obviously montaged or otherwise manipulated, the photographic attraction resides in a visceral sense that the image mirrors palpable realities. Should photography's relationship to physical existence become suddenly tenuous, its vocabulary would have to be reconsidered. Our

view of it as relatively unmediating and trustworthy would then become untenable (p. 2).

Of course, photography's association with visual manipulation also dates to its earliest uses. However, as scholars are quick to point out, the presumed credibility or trustworthiness of photography also maintains its interest and fascination; when "photo-fakery" – as Brugioni (1999) terms the direct or purposeful alteration and distortion of photographs – is uncovered, an outcry or backlash against those involved usually follows.[33]

As the 19th century came to a close, sectors of journalism and mass media found great potential in photographic studies on socio-cultural and political issues that, consequently, helped align "documentary photography" with the ideas of change and reform. The impact of Jacob Riis's *How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York* (1890) and subsequent volumes that combined photographs with prose aided in establishing certain the perceived credibility and trustworthiness of photography and photographs as a means of altering politics and legislation. Riis's images of the deteriorating living conditions in tenement housing helped overturn laws for acceptable sheltering environs in urban centers. Riis's work inspired future generations of photographers to take up the camera for purposes of capturing or recording the ills of society and politics, in hopes of reconciling such misconduct and abuse.

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[33] Other aspects of visual manipulation, most notably the ways in which visual effects have the potential to interrupt photography's semiotic qualities, are taken up in subsequent sections of this study.

Lewis Hine's (1977) efforts are also worth mentioning when considering the early

parallels between photography and the idea of documentary at the dawn of the 20th

century. Hine trained his camera on the harsh working conditions for child laborers in

industrial sectors. His photographs aided in modifying workforce policies and practices

of the 1910s, specifically by raising the minimum age of an employable person capable

of performing such tasks (Goldberg, 1991c). According to Newhall (1982a), Hine

publicly characterized his photographs as "'human documents'" because of their "readily

grasped criticisms of the impact of an economic system on the lives of underprivileged

and exploited classes" (p. 235).

Scholars have pointed to the efforts of Riis and Hine as a means to introducing the

concerned or socially conscious photography of the period as "documentary."[34] Beloff

(1985a) discusses the appeal of this era of photography and thus provides yet another

definition for documentary photography:

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[34] Riis's and Hine's work is thought to be heavily informed by their training and

professions; Riis was a police reporter, Hine a sociologist. With neither photographer tied

to an organization concerned with photography, their work is also noteworthy for

carrying out both photographers' interest and engagement with social activism and

reform. According to Bezner (1999), Riis and Hine "believed that images are more

convincing than words" (p. 9).

> Documentary photography has always been… applied to a particular kind of
> 'showing'…Documentary photographs put us in touch with 'reality'. They raise
> our consciousness in a good way (pp. 100-101).[35]

Although photography deemed "documentary" need not maintain or bear a socio-cultural or political purpose, the work of Riis and Hine introduced a new understanding or avenue of engagement for documentary expression.

Another example of the melding of documentary to photography that highlights the *semiotic* connection between the terms is readily grasped in the popularity of the still photography of the deceased that flourished during the late 19th century. In the West, rural families hired portraitists to photograph the bodies of the recently departed, with the resulting photograph(s) serving as a memento or living reminder of the existence of the photographed (e.g., Lesy, 1973). Turn-of-the-century portraiture of the newly deceased existed, therefore, as a physical record or proof of the foregone existence of a human being.[36] Barthes's (1982) famously described this ability of photographs to aid in the process of (familial) reconciliation while simultaneously, providing loved ones a connection to lineage, memory, and history. While Matthew Brady's and Alexander Gardner's photographs of Civil War battlefields strewn with the bodies of fallen soldiers offer compelling visual evidence of mass tragedy, photography's documentary power and

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[35] Stott (1986a) uses FSA photography as a particular example of documentary photography as a genre. Beloff (1985b), Stott, and others contend with this distinction through the form and content or function of documentary (still) photography.

[36] Barthes uses an example of a much-admired photograph of his deceased mother as a means to enter the subject of photography and death.

immediacy is found more easily in the daguerreotypes and tintypes of newborns stricken by disease, illness, and poverty.

Such moments and events in the early days of photography evolved and proliferated throughout the 20th century. What broadened and molded photography's association with documentary here is understood as the consequence of significant turning points in the evolution of photographic technologies, the continuation of photographic reports or studies, and the advancement of images in circulation and distribution channels. By the 1930s, the impetus to use the camera as a tool for bringing about awareness of real-world issues in hopes of reforming such problems reached an apex. With the Depression and Roosevelt's resulting New Deal policies, photography was consistently treated as a testament to hardship and progress in sectors of business, government, and journalism.

For one, competing and overlapping developments in photographic technologies of the time period aided in the generation of individual documentary movements in sectors of still and motion picture photography. Decades after Eastman Kodak popularized and profited from the first of its Brownie series – a lightweight and relatively cost-effective box camera – a number of persons in the working and middle classes continued making snapshots with more refined and practical camera technologies and equipment.[37] Faster film speeds and the single-lens reflex (SLR) camera became available to the public by the mid-1930s. Between 1924 and 1936, the German camera

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[37] The term "snapshot" photography was popularized following the success of the Kodak Brownie.

manufacturer Leica sold an estimated 180,000 still photography camera bodies (Clarke, 1997b).

The introduction of and subsequent mass circulation of color processes for film during this time period are worthy of mention as well; technological advancements that led to color film affected all sectors of photography in its ability to generate added likeness to the photographed. Although experimentations with color applied to film date to photography's inception, the widespread circulation of color film was believed to further enhance photography's mirroring capabilities.

An example is documentary film pioneer Charles Urban, who was among the first to introduce a viable version of color film on the marketplace. Urban's Kinemacolor was a three-color processing system that pre-dated Technicolor; Kinemacolor prided itself for being "the *only process in existence* reproducing actual scenes in living, vivid colors" (McKernan, 2013a, p. 98). Eastman Kodak followed with the influential Kodachrome color film in 1936, signaling the beginnings of a longstanding debate amongst critics and practitioners on the merits and detriments of monochrome and color (film). Advancements in color processing and color film, especially in regards to variations in tonalities, forced practitioners and critics to reconcile with the degree(s) to which the mediums could replicate the variations on hues found in everyday life.

Other photo-related technologies and practices of the 1930s that advanced photography toward documentary included a series of advancements in the mass circulation and distribution of images. On April 3, 1936, for example, the Associated Press (AP) relayed the first photograph across telephone wires from New York, NY to San Francisco. In a trade article detailing the evolution of the electronic transmission of

images, Schnurmacher (1937) describes the arrival of the "sound photo" as "[a] real beginning for the modern battle for speedy transmission of pictures" (p. 394). This lone technological achievement in image-transference, whereby a photograph is sent through electronic circuits via telephone wires, heralded a more rapid mass distribution system of photographs and eventually, the incorporation of various "wire" agencies responsible for sending and receiving images. With the inception of the wire photo, images could bypass national and oceanic borders to reach and communicate information on a global scale. This proliferation of photographs was readily available through a growing number of image-reliant news, entertainment, trade, and business publications.

Newhall (1982b) claims that advancements in the halftone and color reproduction and printing processes fueled the growth of visuals published in newspapers, magazines, and tabloid periodicals. Such daily and weekly publications, influenced by the successes of the European picture press of the 1920s, cemented the public's fascination with and belief in the power of photographs through the publication. Henry Luce began his publishing empire with the debut of *LIFE* magazine in 1936, which relied on storytelling through photographic sequences and picture stories.

The popularity of *LIFE* is witnessed in its countless opportunistic and picture-driven imitators of the period, including *Picture Post* and *Look* (Doss, 2001; Brinkley, 2010a). According to Bezner (1999b), over 1,400 photographs produced by photographers working for the Farm Security Information's (FSA) Historical Section were circulated every month to publications such as *TIME, Fortune, Nation's Business*. The long-term significance of these publications of the 1930s, in which the storytelling abilities of sequential imagery domineered over the written text, remains visible in the

presence and form of journalistic and amateur photographic slideshows and similar audiovisual presentations on the Internet.

In effect, the public's need for and consumption of photographs for communication and entertainment purposes also coincided with the professionalization of photography. More photo-driven periodicals required full-time staff photographers to produce images for news, sports, business, advertising and related areas. The growing publication industries led to the presence of professional photographers at sporting events, parades, celebrations, press conferences, and arts and theater premieres. In essence, an increased number of photographers at countless locales meant more images of persons and events. Such a growth in the number of professionals also meant led to an increasing interest in using camera technologies to bear witness to increasingly harsh realities of Depression-era America (e.g., Goldberg, 1991d).

The single most important factor concerning the alignment of "documentary" for still picture photography developed in the aftermath of the Depression, including the droughts and famine conditions of the Dust Bowl. In 1935, the Roosevelt administration initiated the photographic sector for the Historical Section of the Farm Security Administration (FSA). Led by Roy Stryker, the FSA's photographic unit consisted of professional cameramen charged with making photographic studies on the struggles of the nation's laborers, migrants, assimilated workforces, and others most affected by the Depression (e.g., Stott, 1986b; Hurley, 1972). Although the rationale behind the FSA was to produce photographs for governmental surveying and restructuring efforts, the consequences of the body of work produced by Stryker's team were far-reaching, eventually seeping into the public conscious. The mass circulation and distribution of this

body of work over the decades – republished and repurposed in the picture magazines, as well as posters and billboards of the 1930s – shaped the public's perception of the large-scale impact and aftermath of the nation's needs and desires.

The FSA photographers' utilization of the camera to confront and reform – a bearing witness to the times through photographic means – remained consequential to the large-scale acceptance, recognition, and general understanding of "documentary photography" (Stott, 1986c). Here, the melding of photography and photographer with now-familiar terms, including "socially conscious" and "reform-minded" or "humanitarian," was recognizable and signaled the beginnings of a new genre. Examples of the FSA's contributions include individual photographs and photo-series from Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans, and Margaret Bourke-White. These photographers and others affiliated with the FSA helped promote and cement a belief in the photographic record as true-life document of the hardships and realities of migrants, tenement farmers, and the New Deal workforce across the U.S. Lange's portrait of a woman and her children at a migrant camp in California is routinely considered the most identifiable and consequential documentary photograph of the period (Gordon, 2009).

Evans and journalist James Agee produced *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941), which chronicled the poverty and struggles of those in the rural South and Appalachian regions during the era. Evans's photographs published in the volume consisted of an assimilation of mostly head-and-torso portraits depicting the well-worn faces of the areas inhabitants. In commenting on the documentary-ness of the work, Agee wrote that the images were "not illustrative," but agents that rendered evidence of a

deteriorating social climate in the U.S. (p. 79). In a query to the reader that introduces

Famous Men, Agee asks:

> The problems which confronted the maker of the photographs; and those which
>
> confront me as I try to write of it: the question, Who are you who will read these
>
> words and study these photographs, and through what cause, by what chance, and
>
> for what purpose, and by what right do you qualify to and what will you do about
>
> it [?] (p. 98).

Here, Agee challenges the reader to not only look and regard, but to *take action* against

that which is shown in Evans's photographs. In doing so, the writer puts forth the

documentary mission of the era as it relates to photography, professing a belief in the

power of images to transcend mere visual representation.

A similar line of inquiry is also found in a review of photographs produced by

Margaret Bourke-White for Luce's *Fortune* magazine during the summer of 1936.

Subsequently republished in book form as *Have You Seen Their Faces* (1937), Allred

(2010a) describes Bourke-White's photographs in this "first documentary book" as a

point of reference to documentary photography's transformation from form or expression

to a well-renowned genre. According to the author, Bourke-White's photographic

approach was significant to the documentary idea because of the photographer's

recomposition:

> The ways in which the camera builds channels of association in space, linking
>
> human subjects to the 'wider canvas' of their social contexts, and in time, freezing
>
> moments that draw the photographer and her subjects together… (pp. 62, 64).

Furthermore, Allred's analysis includes a striking parallel between Bourke-White's missionary or reform-minded approach to photography in *Faces*, and that of the title character in Preston Sturges's fiction film, *Sullivan's Travels* (1941). In the film, John L. Sullivan, a motion picture director haunted by the Depression, leaves Hollywood in search of "the real" America. The film's climactic moment takes places when Sullivan, now armed with his mission in life, says of his next film project, "I want this picture to be a *document*. I want to hold a mirror up to life. I want it to be…a true canvas of the suffering of humanity" (Allred, 2010b, p. 59).

Bezner (1999c) maintains that the sustaining influence of FSA photography is witnessed in the attitudes and photography of the Photo League, a group that proliferated in New York City in the 1950s and whose members included Edward Steichen, Minor White, and Robert Frank.[38] Although this latter team of socially conscious photographers never attained the unified status of the FSA, much of the Photo League's mission and resulting imagery also focused on the struggles of Americans.[39] In describing the purpose of the Photo League, Bezner points to a key issue for documentary photography itself:

> Documentary photography's central concern has always been legible content (not form, style, or presentation…) and the image's capacity to arouse viewers'

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[38] See also Maharidge and Williamson (1989). This writer-photographer team produced a volume on the long-term significance and impact of Evans and Agee's *Famous Men*.

[39] Minor White and Robert Frank, in particular, are also considered serious photographic artists of the period. According to Bezner (1999d), a primary reason for the short life and eventual demise of the Photo League was a divide amongst group members over the group's artistic and journalistic or educational concerns and mission.

sympathetic emotions…. In reality, for FSA photographers (or any artists), form is always an extension of content, and vice versa. But historically, documentary photographers emphasize the subject, particularly the human subject…. (p. 5).

The cumulative impact and long-term effects of the photographs made by Lange, Evans, Bourke-White and other members of Stryker's team aided in a decades-long series of mass restructuring efforts and resettlement policies across the U.S. The FSA's use of the camera to document the crises and responses of the period would continue through the next decade, with the rise of Nazi Germany in Europe and the West's entry into the Second World War.

During the 1940s, still photography deemed "documentary" found a more global association with newsworthy events and socio-cultural and political issues. Although its authenticity is now in question, Robert Capa's grainy, black-and-white photograph of a soldier crawling on the beaches of Normandy during D-Day is a much-discussed and well-circulated example of the documentary-ness of the serious photography of the War. Another example is George Strock's photograph of two fallen soldiers on the shores of Buna Beach – "the first [photograph]…depicting dead American troops in any American publication during World War II" (Cosgrove, 2014). Such powerful and affecting imagery witnessed in periodicals circulated across the globe helped solidify photography as a means of capturing and relaying information.

C.   Part III: Technologies and the Documentary-Ness of early Motion Pictures

In Sipe's (in Rosenstone, 1995) words, "Photography laid a base of trust in moving pictures" (p. 184). Moving pictures were born from experimentations with optical devices, many of which were created for purposes of scientific instrumentation or

generating visual illusion. By the late 19th century, visual technologies that played on properties of motion and time were marketed commodities for mass consumption (Crary, 1990b).[40] And yet, such early moving image novelties and pre-photographic devices – from the camera obscura to the stereoscope and beyond – mimicked and mirrored aspects or properties of real-world physical matter (e.g., Kern, 2003).

Although Edison's Kinetoscope and the Lumiére brothers' Cinématographe found favor through amusement, motion picture photography itself found difficulty in successfully escaping similar qualities so successfully manifested by still photography. In other words, motion pictures, like still photography, was also tied to a real-world referent through the recording mechanics of the apparatus. Naturally, these indexical and referential properties of motion pictures were also connected to the historicity of the photographed and the evolution of the photographic image. In turn, the inception of narrative sequential photography, including the projection rate of twenty-four frames per second that grounded film to the physical world, signaled the arrival of an attractive and powerful new medium capable of replication beyond mere representation.

The first connections between motion picture photography and its mirroring qualities or documentary-ness are most readily witnessed in the early motion studies by American portraitist and landscape artist Eadweard Muybridge, and his competitor, French physiologist Etienne Jules Marey. In producing sequential frames of human and animal physical movements, both photographic pioneers realized photography's potential as scientific instrument capable of rendering images detailing the intricacy of certain

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[40] See also Winston's (1996a) *Technologies of seeing: Photography, cinematography and television*.

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processes. For Muybridge, Marey, and their immediate successors, sequential photography's power was its ability to dissect and possibly deconstruct the barely visible and near-visible (e.g., Solnit, 2004; Newhall, 1982c).

By the dawn of the 20th century, the rapidity and continuation of developments in motion picture technologies were mostly recognized in the burgeoning number of fiction films that came to dominate the entertainment landscape. The mass reception for nonfiction film, however, was slower to find such an audience, especially considering the growing popularity of fictional comedic and dramatic narratives. Moreover, whereas still photography of the 1910s was utilized to raise awareness of social concerns, many early nonfiction films, already struggling with acceptance and widespread visibility, focused on less serious or newsworthy subject matter.

Some of the blame in this regard can be attributed to the various entities or participants involved with early nonfiction film. Competing agendas and backgrounds or interests seemed to plague early practitioners and disciples of nonfiction film, many of whom were grounded in varying sectors of industry, including education, journalism, entertainment, and government. In effect, scholarship on early nonfiction film through the first decades of the 20th century points to separate persons or movements with ulterior motives or purposes.

Commonalities amongst such parties, and the inception of "documentary film," however, are found when tracing this lineage to two early categories of nonfiction film most that foregrounded the photographic.[41] Thus, the primary tenets of the documentary

[41] Although scholars have accounted for parallels between still and motion picture photography of this period, the "documentary" qualities and practices of each are

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idea integrate with the unique capabilities of the motion picture, first qualified through the sequential photography of Muybridge and Marey. The actuality and the newsreel most readily foreshadow the dualities at play in the form and function of future documentary film.

Scholars have recorded the evolution and significance of each classification of film, with the actuality traced to the inception and foundation of public cinema (Sorlin, 1980; 2001a). Although a number of such early films were destroyed or have deteriorated over the last century, both categories of motion pictures are key components of cinematic history and a growing body of scholarship. In the 21st century, actualities and newsreels remain an integral part of the ongoing digital preservation and restoration efforts of motion picture libraries as well (e.g., Gracy, 2007; Crofts, 2008). As part of this study, these two types of early nonfiction film provide examples of the roots of documentary film and highlight the belief in the photographic record so fundamental to the present-day "historical documentary."

An attempt to recount or attempt a complete history of the actuality and/or newsreel is unnecessary here. However, several well-documented and prominent efforts in the life cycles of each category of nonfiction film suggest documentary's immediate ties to the motion picture. Aside from the personal politics of filmmakers and the commerce or capital generated from these motion pictures, those responsible for making

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typically discussed separately and each individually understood contributing to the "documentary idea." For more on the uses of early documentary photography in the West, see scholarship by photography historian Vicki Goldberg.

and producing actualities and newsreels were ultimately interested in conjoining motion picture photography to everyday life.

Similar to still photography, all motion pictures, regardless of genre or function, are, to some degree, actualities. The earliest actualities date to the inception of motion picture cameras, when photographers began incorporating such devices to record street scenes and sporting events, concerts and festivals, and the efficiency of practices in business and industry. The designation "actuality" refers to non-narrative "films of brief events" that were oftentimes comprised of a single take or unedited footage. Those exhibited in the form of nickelodeons or in movie parlors of the era found favor with turn-of-the-century audiences, all of whom were captivated by the motion picture's ability to replicate movements and scenes from the physical world (Jacobs, 1979; Barnou, 1993a, et al.). Therefore, the visual contents of many films allocated to the category of actuality, such as the influential *Bucking Bronco* (Edison, 1894) or *Arrival of a Train* (Lumiéres, 1895), are directly reflected in the films' titles.

Numerous arguments for the use of actualities as historical filmic artifact as well as evidence of what took place can be made. According to Warren (1996), the origins of documentary film are easily traced to the actuality because of the latter's commitment to recording and presenting the world "as is" (p. 30). O'Connor (1990) makes a strong argument for actuality footage as historical evidence because of "the specific factual information they contain" (p. 169). In O'Connor's words, "The unique value of film and photographic images is that they sometimes capture details of information which even the cameraman was unaware of – details that may even have been invisible to the human eye" (p. 169). This line of argument also confirms the unique and sometimes precise

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abilities of the camera to serve as a tool for scientific inscription as well as to amaze and awe.

But the lifespan of the actuality, as a classification of film grounded in the factual, was short-lived. The decline of the appeal of these non-narrative one-reel films is traced to 1905, when the Lumiére brothers stopped their production of actualities, with Edison's Biograph Company closing its actuality facility two years later (Israel, 1999; Robinson, 1998). Advancements in photography and film technologies, including cheaper and more readily available camera equipment and processing techniques, helped signal the transition to the more politically motivated newsreels, which could be understood as a logical evolutionary step in the chronology of nonfiction film.

The arrival of multi-reel and edited motion pictures was made possible because of a number of advancements across film and filmmaking during the first decades of the 1900s. For instance, filmmaker Edwin Porter is credited with bringing about more advanced techniques in film editing, including crosscutting and matching action, as witnessed in *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008). The following year, British filmmaker Charles Urban adopted Porter's techniques for a 12-minute nonfiction travelogue, *Everyday London* (1904) (McKernan, 2013b).

Within a decade, lighter and more efficient motion picture cameras had decreased in size and cost. Similar to still cameras of the period, such devices were readily purchased on the consumer market. By the early 1920s, Eastman Kodak (2015) released a series of user-friendly motion picture cameras similar to the company's successful one-shot Brownie series. The company's 16-millimeter Cine Kodak was followed by the less cumbersome and more transportable Cine Kodak Eight (8-millimeter) in 1932.

Parallel to the snapshot photography that flourished upon release of the automatic still camera, cost-effective motion picture cameras allowed for the general public to generate short films in the form of home movies.[42] For professional film production, the release of the fluid motion (head) tripod and the first shoulder-mounted Arriflex camera in 1937 would help shape the successive nonfiction film movements of the era. Such developments in film-related equipment allowed for the presence of motion picture cameras in more confined spaces.

Such was the climate in which the newsreel was introduced to the West. Backed by investors with financial capital and political motivations, media companies such as MGM-Hearst, Paramount Pictures, and TIME, Inc. opened newsreel production houses in the late 1920s and 1930s. For several decades, media corporations controlled the majority of newsreel content and exhibition. And for almost half a century, newsreels were immediately recognizable and popular in the nonfiction film landscape.

Newsreel content itself is an intriguing hybrid of news or visual informational and entertainment film that, in terms of content, certainly lends itself to similarities with the historical documentary film. Newsreels, however, were shot and edited for affect, namely for purposes of stirring nationalism and patriotism (Fielding, 2006a). However, newsreels of the 1930s and 1940s were largely considered a form of motion picture journalism, predating television news and video footage of current events. For example, Henry Luce's successful *The March of TIME* newsreel series, a filmic translation of a once-successful radio program that premiered one year before Luce's *LIFE* magazine (1935/6),

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[42] Kodak credits the Cine Kodak camera series as the impetus for the revolution in home movies.

became a staple of pre-War American motion picture exhibition that blended newsworthy events of the day with personal and corporate politics as well as a healthy revenue stream for Luce's growing company (Allred, 2010c; Brinkley, 2010b).

According to Elson (in Jacobs, 1971), Luce had different ambitions than Louis de Rochemont and Roy Larsen, the two filmmakers most responsible for the development of *The March of TIME*. Luce's goal, similar to other motion picture studios with newsreel departments, was to profit financially from the series. de Rochemont's and Larson's "objective was to revolutionize the newsreel and give it new journalistic purpose... [*The March of TIME*] combined newsreel, documentary, and dramatic presentation in a new form of compelling journalism" (pp. 106-107). These competing concerns between Luce and the filmmakers, or the goal of generating a profitable form of news and entertainment as opposed to a new type of filmed journalism, remains an area of contention in present-day documentary film.

In effect, *The March of TIME* series, typically shown in independent newsreel theaters or, more commonly, prior to a theatrical feature-length fiction film, capitalized on the emotional power of the most prominent journalistic topics of the era, such as the mobilization of the Third Reich across Europe and the Roosevelt administration's Depression-era relief efforts. *The March of TIME* films clearly reflected the Luce's conservative bias as a form of visual propaganda that played on the fears, concerns, and triumphs of the American public. As suggested., the popularity of the series is reflected in

its remaining in theatrical exhibition for more than three decades and therefore,

generating a substantial revenue stream for TIME, Inc. (see Fielding, 2006b).[43]

More to the point, the uniqueness of *The March of TIME* series, which reached its

pinnacle of success during the Second World War before losing notoriety in the 1950s, is

found in the similarities and repetition within the form and function. Each film

incorporated filmed footage depicting mobilizing troops, speechifying politicians, home-

front relief efforts and so forth – complete with voice-of-God narration – to evoke the

powers of government and the military or the dangers of Communism and Nazi

propaganda (Brinkley, 2010c; Fielding, 2006c). On one hand, these films would

exemplify the uneasy alliance between journalism and entertainment via the moving

picture. And yet, *The March of TIME* series remains a recognizable example of the

melding of film with the everyday and journalistic and therefore, the belief that the

photographic was unnecessary for recording the historically significant.

Of additional significance to the motion picture landscape of the newsreel era was

the "classical" style of Hollywood filmmaking of the 1930s. According to Bordwell

(1997a), now-common filmmaking techniques such as continuity editing and camera

movement greatly affected the look and feel of Hollywood films of the period. More

frequent editing and movable camerawork allowed filmmakers to maintain visual interest

by controlling the visual pacing of a film. Although such tactics for cinematography and

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[43] Other types of nonfiction film were produced under *The March of TIME* banner from

the 1940s to the 1960s. These include corporate and government-sponsored films, as well

as nonfiction television specials. HBO archives currently hold the copyright to many of

these titles.

film editing date to the silent era and are rooted in non-Western filmmaking, the acceptance of such practices in Hollywood influenced greater aesthetic diversity across most genres of film. In essence, new technologies and practices that aided in foregrounding the visual and thereby accentuated the possibilities for visual storytelling first embraced by the Hollywood of the 1930s became prominent in nonfiction film sectors as well (see also Bordwell, 1985; Bordwell, 1993; Bordwell, 1997b).

The efforts of independent newsreel units that arose in urban centers in the U.S. are also worth mentioning when considering the origins and significance of film and documentary. Although motion picture studios and journalism-based media organizations oversaw the majority of circulated and exhibited newsreels, independent outlets that backed social causes and political parties or movements were also recognized in sectors of labor and industry. Nichols (1980) chronicled the inner-workings of such a San Francisco unit and its responsibility to leftist political organizations during the 1930s. A more dominant group was The (Workers') Film and Photo League based in New York, NY City during the 1930s. According to McLane (2012a), members of this collective were influential in the production of pro-labor efforts before collapsing due to supposed ties to the Soviet Union via the American Communist party.

The decline of major newsreel divisions of media organizations and the broader movement itself coincided with the oncoming collapse of the Hollywood studio system during the late 1950s in addition to the rise in popularity of television. The longstanding *March of TIME* moved out of theatrical exhibition in 1951. Burdened by increasing financial difficulties, *Paramount News* folded in 1957. *Universal News*, the last

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remaining newsreel division of any motion picture studio, shut down operations one decade later (Barnouw, 1993b, p. 206).

Sorlin (1980; 2001b) discusses the legacy of newsreels as contextual source documentation for research purposes. The author acknowledges that media producers responsible for newsreels incorporated careful audiovisual tactics to propagandize real-world events and therefore, attempt to manipulate the viewing audience. The author also mentions how, in this regard, newsreels are similar to other types of historical (audiovisual) materials in that they reflect the politics and opinions of their authors or creators and owners.

And yet, newsreels are also unique in that, in the present day, they provide a specific version of historical instances on film (Sorlin, 1980; 2001c, p. 33). Of additional significance here and of particular consequence to this study is the degree to which newsreels have the ability to serve as reliable and credible primary and secondary sources of visual and "documentary" evidence of the past. Because the content and most common and frequently realized shape of the newsreel foregrounds basic audiovisual (film) elements of persons and events in the real world, it is arguably a natural extension of the actuality and intriguing predecessor to the historical documentary.

For purposes of this study, the significance of these two early areas of nonfiction film – the actuality and the newsreel – is also found in the primacy of the visual, and the use of motion picture photography to capture or record the newsworthy and every day. Moreover, the form of the actuality and the newsreel closely resembles that of the historical documentary, with any sound track(s) routinely subservient to the visual and visual structure. Furthermore, in both of these areas of nonfiction film, content is reliant

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upon form insofar as the content is *capable* of being photographed and thus exists within the photographic record.

In addition, because of the passage of time and evolution of technologies, the actuality and newsreel are examples of early motion pictures in which the content is *suggested as* historically significant or newsworthy, merely because it *was* photographed. In other words, the lineage from the actuality to the newsreel, and eventually to the historical documentary is traceable by means of photography's immediate indexical and referential qualities. Newsreel footage, in other words, is an early example of the motion picture's iconicity, or film's ability to present content that serves as somewhat symbolic of an idea or persons.[44]

D.   Part IV: The Griersonian Conception of Documentary Film

As with the conjoining of documentary to still photography, the 1930s was the era in which a similar revolution between "documentary" and the motion picture occurred. Although many scholars of "documentary film" locate the origins of the genre to the success of Robert Flaherty's feature-length semi-documentary film, *Nanook of the North* (1922), the influence of documentary film pioneer and philosopher John Grierson around the same time period provides a more enlightening and fruitful point of entry. No discussion on the history and significance of documentary film, much less a substantial theory of documentary, is complete without discussing Grierson's efforts.

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[44] As previously mentioned, Moriarty (2005c) and others have discussed photography in connection to visual semiotics in the context of media studies. Historically, Metz (1974a), Barthes (1977b), and Eco (1979) are prominent examples of scholars that have addressed semiotics in relation to film or cinema studies.

Pre-Grierson, *Nanook* is widely credited for introducing and popularizing "documentary film" in the West, despite Flaherty's use of paid actors, staged scenarios, and constructed sets (see Sherwood, in Jacobs, 1971; Canudo, in Jacobs, 1971). While *Nanook* was receiving notice in the U.S., a creative revolution in film production also blossomed in the state-sponsored cinema of the Soviet Union. Advanced film practices and techniques for film editing were introduced by Sergei Eisenstein in *Battleship Potemkin* (1925); the suturing of newsreel footage with film of fictional scenes is witnessed in Dziga Vertov's quasi-documentary, *The Man with the Movie Camera* (1929).[45] Similar to filmmakers behind the newsreel movements in the West during the next decade, Eisenstein, Vertov, and others believed film capable of both artistic and political expression. For Eisenstein and Vertov, films that explored real-world subject matter could promote cinema as a serious form of art and information for an industrialized Russia.[46]

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[45] Eisenstein and Vertov are among several Soviet-based filmmakers who wrote extensively on advancements in film techniques and the political implications for such strategies.

[46] Scholars of nonfiction film and the evolution of documentary film credit a number of influential filmmakers and titles from this time period when locating the roots or origins of documentary film. However, both Flaherty and Vertov are typically cited as important and influential examples. See Barsam (1976a), Barnouw (1993c), Renov (1993e) and others for more complete histories on the emergence and history of documentary film's origins and influences.

What began with Flaherty in the U.S. and the pioneering efforts of Soviet filmmakers quickly expanded into Great Britain and across Europe. By the mid-1930s, other variations on nonfiction film had spread into academia in the U.S.; early examples of ethnographic films and photography for anthropological purposes rose alongside "documentary" film movements elsewhere. For example, the ethnographic films of Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead, beginning with the duo's work in Bali in the mid-1930s, substantiated film as a methodological tool for observation and analysis and as part of the process of fieldwork for scholarship (Jacknis, 1988a; Sullivan, 1999a). According to Sherman (1998), Mead and Bateson's research films examined the socio-cultural similarities and differences of tribal persons to "reconstruct history for the screen" (p. 4)

Other visual anthropologists, including John Collier, Jr., took up and championed photography for mapping and surveying of geographic areas, and generated a method of using photographs as a means of analysis for the study of indigenous groups and cultures (e.g., Collier, Jr. & Collier, 1986a). The broader goal of such influential experimentations with camera technologies, which rapidly advanced across the social sciences and humanities, was to establish photography/film as a means of data collection that could also be useful in positioning persons and events in a wider socio-cultural context for research purposes.

Furthermore, while many of these still photography studies and nonfiction films were made for research purposes, the photographic approach mirrored techniques found in variations on the actuality and newsreel; Mead and Bateson, for instance, believed in employing an unobtrusive observational camera technique and a non-narrative

storytelling approach. Although Mead and Bateson's work in Bali and elsewhere was edited and exhibited for non-entertainment purposes, their social actors in these films appear unawed and, in some cases, potentially unaware of the camera altogether. Again, similar to the employment of motion picture photography for actualities and newsreels, the practice and point of view in the films of Mead and Bateson allow for a more lifelike and unobtrusive approach that signals a desire to capture subjects in the natural world.

Grierson's efforts, however, are of particular significance because his writings seem to indicate that "documentary" film had educational as well as informational or communicative powers. Grierson's distinguishing of "documentary film," however, was particular in that his interests lie in an insistence on the creation of a realm of film that reported on the serious and newsworthy events of the day.

In 1930, Grierson began an affiliation with British-governmental film units – the E.M.B. followed by the G.P.O. – and began experimenting with new techniques and subject matter. His writings during the decade were equally influential; collectively, Grierson puts forth a grand mission statement for documentary. Through screenings of his own nonfiction films as well as his writings on the subject, Grierson began sculpting a shape and form for a genre and practice. According to Hardy (1966a), "the British documentary example began to have world-wide effect as early as the middle thirties" (p. 24).[47]

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[47] Hardy's volume is a collection of Grierson's writings throughout his career. Hardy addresses Grierson's advancements in documentary production in more detail; the author also suggests that Grierson's efforts greatly influenced the team of filmmakers at the National Film Board of Canada (NFB).

Largely considered the first scholar and champion of the genre, Grierson credits his own influences to the research produced by the political science and sociology departments at the University of Chicago (e.g., "the Chicago School") in the 1920s, as well as the work of journalist and social critic Walter Lippmann. Grierson cites the social scientists at "the Chicago School" and Lippmann as among the first to experiment with nonfiction film for research purposes. Similar to the socially conscious work of Jacob Riis and Lewis Hine, Grierson's efforts in this regard underline photography as a means of scientific inscription capable of contending with matters of the real world.

Grierson himself began his career as a film critic and cited Hollywood directors for sprouting his initial interest in motion pictures. His writings on documentary film and otherwise indicate an interest in journalism and his work was deeply influential to the idea of democracy in the West. Grierson's first application of the term "documentary" to nonfiction film is found in his review of Flaherty's *Moana* (1926) (Woods, 1971). In 1929, he put forth his ideas on what became known as "Griersonian documentary" in an essay entitled, "First Principles of Documentary." Although later criticized for its naïveté and idealism, Grierson's "First Principles" outlines a conception of documentary film that remains relevant to the contemporary historical documentary subgenre, particularly in terms of photography's indexical relationship to the real world and its historic-archival properties (in Hardy, 1966b).

For one, Grierson's insistence that documentary film be concerned with "natural materials" is the author's call for the development of a genre solely concerned with the actual, particularly "original (or native) actor, and the original (or native) scene" and thereby, suggesting a means of preserving the newsworthy and historic on film (pp. 145,

147). Moreover, Grierson claimed that film's curatorial abilities defined its documentary-ness; according to Grierson the photographic is capable of capturing and presenting "the living scene and the living history" (p. 147). In other words, Grierson aligned the capabilities of film with "documentary" because the former could generate a historic artifact of informational and educational value or, a material means of preserving the past.[48]

Even today, this conception of documentary film-as-artifact, its credibility and authoritative position, in addition to photography's ability to bear witness, remains an area of scholarly contention. And yet, in championing of Flaherty's work, or praising of the celebrated actuality, *Berlin: Symphony of a Great City* (1927), or through his efforts in bringing Eisenstein's *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925) to the West, Grierson never fully explicated or placed parameters around his "creative treatment of actuality" or documentary film (in Eitzen, 1995, p. 82). Throughout the remainder of his career, Grierson would be forced to defend aspects of his writings on the principles and mission or goals for documentary film. What Grierson once called "the creative treatment of actuality" (Plantinga, 1997a) was an effort to understand how visual creativity or artistic merit could co-exist with journalistic-style films of record and document (p. 27).

Explications of Griersonian documentary vary, but some general ideas or themes reoccur throughout the vast body of literature on this subject. Rosen (in Renov, 1993a) suggests that Grierson's goal was to locate "an arena of meaning centering on the

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[48] Ethnographic filmmaker Robert Gardner (in Warren, 1996) also championed nonfiction film's historical reportage qualities in an essay entitled, "The Impulse to Preserve," claiming that this was the impetus for his own career.

authority of the real founded in the [photographic] indexical trace…" (p. 66). Thus, Griersonian documentary was founded upon an unshakeable certainty in the believability and credibility of the photographic record. Of equal importance here is that, "For Grierson, the documentary must have a social purpose, educating the masses and enabling them to better understand their place in society and the public institutions that organized their lives," or a form of "realist documentary" (Plantinga, 1997b, p. 27).

In effect, a theory of documentary that points toward visual literacy via the photographic for the historical documentary must acknowledge Griersonian thought. For this study, the significance of Grierson's recognition of documentary film is found in its ability to inform upon the actual, thereby serving as a form of visual reportage. Of added importance is that such qualities of documentary film via photography are also aligned to the visual's ability to serve as historic record or artifact.

Therefore, a theory of documentary that points toward principles that seem naturally aligned to the historical documentary must acknowledge Griersonian thought. For this study, the significance of Grierson's recognition of documentary film is found in its ability to inform upon the actual, thereby serving as a form of visual reportage. Of added importance is that these qualities are associated with visual education or literacy by means of the visual as historic record or artifact. Such elements of Griersonian documentary are of additional importance to evolving modes and sub-disciplines of documentary film as well as contemporary scholarship on the subject.

In "First Principles" and throughout his writings, Grierson is less concerned with positing ideals for the aesthetic practice of documentary film, much less providing any connection to documentary still photography, than identifying general principles and

goals for documentary film.[49] Nonetheless, Griersonian documentary, however, remains the most prominent and natural starting place for more recent scholarship on theoretical approaches to documentary film; regardless of advances in the field and new avenues for documentary approaches, scholars are forced to recognize and contend with Grierson's insight and contributions (e.g., Barsam, 1976b; Guynn, 1990a; Corner, 1996c, et al.).

Scholars and historians have spent decades examining alternatives to Grierson's initial propositions and critiquing his positions. In the last half-century, many contemporary scholars have contributed to explicating documentary film and modes of documentary in an attempt to theorize and explicate the topic. Thus, the final section on documentary theory below speaks to several specific but prominent concerns from theorists of nonfiction film whose arguments are most relevant to the historical documentary. Again, this arena of documentary film is the subgenre in which Ken Burns's films are predominantly allocated. In turn, the final section here looks to theories of documentary film to understand theoretical approaches most relevant for the historical documentary.

E.   Part V: Contemporary Approaches to Documentary Theory and the Historical
        Documentary Film

Scholarly approaches to theorizing and understanding documentary film have flourished in the last half century. This vast and diverse body of scholarship speaks to the

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[49] As suggested, Grierson wrote extensively on documentary film. The topics of his many essays include Soviet filmmakers, experimentation with sound on film, the abilities of documentary film to serve as an educational tool, and documentary film's position in world cinema.

ever-growing number of independent, short, and feature-length documentary productions in mass circulation; those financed and marketed by major studios and their parent conglomerates that occasionally receive theatrical release but oftentimes through VOD; as well as documentary shorts and miniseries specifically made for cable and network television programming.

In effect, much of the more recent scholarship on documentary film and documentary photography, as well as theories of documentary expression, examine the documentary field and individual research texts through a postmodern and/or post-structuralist critique. Much of this literature is focused on the exclusion or representations of subjects and collaborators who serve as social actors in documentary film and photography. A similar body of scholarship, grounded in anthropology and sociology, deals with issues pertaining to filmic reflexivity in tandem with representation (i.e., Ruby, 1982a; Ruby, 2000; Banks & Ruby, 2011). Broadly, the entirety of this scholarship is concerned with issues pertaining to the identity of social actors, the ability of documentary film to credibly or accurately represent lives, in addition to ongoing challenges for variations on documentary in the 21st century (e.g., Winston, 2008a, Rice, 2008).[50, 51]

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[50] Winston is one of the leading and more recent theoreticians of critical scholarship on documentary film.

[51] Rice's essay is a key example of this type of scholarship in that the author questions the abilities of filmic discourse to provide a legitimate version of history, with Ken Burns's *Jazz* (2001) serving as the primary case study. Although Rice adequately addresses ideological concerns associated with the presentation of history as a "static"

Harper (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1998), a visual sociologist, has addressed such issues from postmodern and post-structuralist critiques of documentary photography/film across academic fields. Harper's suggestions are valuable for researchers interested in incorporating or utilizing and analyzing photographic communication, but who have been forced to contend with such contemporary challenges and issues within sectors of the humanities and social sciences. To combat such concerns and dilemmas, Harper stresses that researchers working with photographic forms should *first and foremost* maintain a continual awareness to the practice of making and using images for research purposes, and avoid "creat[ing] visual information that will unconsciously reflect our personal taken-for-granted assumptions…" (p. 142).

Similar to others interested in still and motion picture forms relegated to the field of "documentary," Harper prioritizes an awareness to ethical, moral, and socio-cultural challenges at play in photography. However, the author does not shy away from photographic analyses and interpretive methods; he strongly encourages the investigator(s) to pay close attention to each aspect in "how we move from observation to analysis" (p. 143).

In effect, I want to address several lines of inquiry that reappear throughout much of the more contemporary scholarship on documentary film. Specifically, I want to put forth and challenge several propositions that reoccur in this literature by focusing on and underlining issues most relevant to documentary theory and the historical documentary. In discussing these points, my goal is to 1) emphasize the longstanding and continued

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phenomenon, the author's main point is that *Jazz*, similar to other historical works of nonfiction, perpetuates photography's limitations for representation.

significance of photography/cinematography's semiotic qualities that speak to an ability to inform upon the real world – especially in an age in which photographic-based visual effects are prominent across documentary, and 2) identify factors or elements that clearly distinguish the historical documentary from other facets of the broader documentary field.

The first area of contention that frequently arises in scholarship on documentary film concerns Nichols's influential assertion that documentary film is associated with the serious, and its existence as a field dependent upon photography's ability to provide a "resemblance" of the real. For Nichols (in Gaines, 1999), documentary is a "discourse of sobriety," much like the "serious" scholarly discourses of economics, politics, education, and the law (p. 4; in Cowie, 1999, p. 19). In Nichols's estimation, documentary film is ultimately distinguishable from alternative and the purely fictional forms of cinema, precisely because its function is to address or speak to the concerns, problems, and happenings of real-world persons and events. Documentary's position is further developed by continued engagement with film texts and the discourse that arises from spectators.

Several points here are worthy of elaboration. Although scholars employing more recent media and communications-related theories to documentary film have attempted to subvert aspects of Nichols's positions, the scholar's much-cited ideas remain prominent across the spectrum of documentary, and are particularly important to understanding documentary as a mode of cinema and an arena in which the credibility the photographic is paramount.

But Nichols's idea of photography/cinematography here is rather flexible in that he asserts that documentary can *only* provide a "resemblance" of the real. In one respect, this statement most literally undermines the making of photographs/films and their most fundamental and foundational qualities. Although the photographer/filmmaker is forced to be selective, to point and direct the camera on a particular person or object and use judgment to frame, compose and expose the photograph, the physical or digital image produced is, most literally, light (and shadow) captured from the photographed (e.g., physical and present being or material) on to film or digital record.

Several important contributions from noteworthy scholars are useful to differentiating and situating the unique power of the photographic image. One of the key points to Bazin's (1967) foundational essay on the subject, "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," is that photography itself was born from a scientific desire to improve upon the representational qualities of the pre-photographic visual arts, such as painting. In this sense, Bazin states that scientific advancement is witnessed in photography's abilities to generate a "duplication of the world outside," an essential component of the author's understanding of photographic realism (p. 11). Similarly, Sontag (in Geimer, 2007) argued that a photograph is "a trace, something directly stenciled off the real, like a footprint or a death mask," a declaration that correlates with Bazin's notion of photo-realism (p. 7).

In other words, the photograph is quite unlike a sketch, a drawing, an illustration or, as I have argued elsewhere, variations on CGI; it is not a pure representation – or its existence does not rest on the generation of a "resemblance," despite its limitations; it is, most precisely, in existence *only* because something literally took place before the

camera and in the material world. CGI, its predecessors, and other non-photographic visual forms do not require the existence of a physical subject.

To be fair, Nichols typically accounts for and addresses elements of both theory and practice throughout his writings on documentary photography/film. Broadly, Nichols's argument and related lines of inquiry throughout much of his scholarship lean on the unique characteristics of the photographic to serve a much-needed and required component of human communication. But here, this lack of explication for the "resemblance" is fundamentally problematic when teased apart. The process by which photographs and motion picture photography/film are rendered rests on the relatively simple but altogether necessary fact that something did appear before the camera, in order for *photography* to take place. Once again, a disruption in the picture making process indicates a growing distrust in the longstanding faith and respect placed in "documentary" photography.

Clearer lines of inquiry in Nichols's discussions on a "discourse of sobriety" deserve further attention if only to reinforce concepts and ideas most relevant to a theory of documentary for the historical documentary. Nichols (2001d) states that documentary films should "give tangible representation to aspects of the world we [human beings] already inhabit and share" (p. 1). In effect, the abilities of the camera to execute and relay a "tangible representation" of *the* actual could almost serve as a declaration of the ideal state for the function of historiophoty and the historical documentary subgenre. Historiophoty, as a visual means of gauging and understanding history, is only concerned with the actual, the occurrences and happenings in the real world, and therefore, is most consequential to the general, formal and content-related characteristics and identifiers of

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the historical documentary. Although the spectrum of documentary film certainly includes facets and subgenres less concerned with the real or actual, and includes areas heavily reliant upon a variety of production techniques to enhance the visual presentation, the historical documentary as a means of historiophoty remains somewhat conservative in this regard.

In turning to visual effects, animation, CGI, and other photographic substitutes, regardless of perceived credibility or believability, tend to draw attention themselves because of their non-photographic or illustrative properties. In film and otherwise, such computerized image forms have a value; in Ritchin's (1990c) estimation, "Computer image-generation is a rapidly growing field, employed by engineers, architects, doctors, and many other professionals," and the uses of such visuals remain linked to their ability to form an image of the non-photographable (pp. 72-73).

To this point, when non-photographic visuals are appropriated for the documentary, the spectator is further distanced from the subject or event at-hand. Although the film-spectator relationship is fundamentally forced to contend with the issue of distancing, visual attractions and the insertion of non-photographic content immediately remove the spectator from the real-world (visual) referent. In this respect, photography/cinematography's unique characteristics and irreplaceable value are found in an ability to generate a material artifact of "the real." This fundamental achievement of the photographic most naturally aligns with Nichols's (2001d) conception of documentary as a "discourse of sobriety," particularly in an arena such as the historical documentary (p. 39).

Ultimately, Nichols's conception of documentary and its possibilities are relevant to this study because the historical documentary rarely deals with alternative visual forms and maintains a preoccupation with the actual or what-once-was. In Corner's (1996d) estimation of historical films, "the 'raw material' for the creative endeavor is provided by 'reality' and it is the address to this, albeit with *transformative intent* [emphasis added], which provides documentary with its claimed superiority…" (p. 14). As a brief aside, the question of whether or not now-standard production techniques (i.e., visual effects) as part of what Grierson (in Eitzen, 1995) once described as "the creative treatment of actuality" affect or play to this "reality" and thereby, challenge historiophoty, is a primary concern of this dissertation (p. 82).[52]

"Across different writers, the most common general recommendation has been for documentary work to become more *reflexive*, to 'show its hand' more openly to its audiences" (Corner, 1996e, p. 25). This argument is repeated throughout much of the more recent scholarship on the subject of documentary, and especially from practitioners and scholars in the fields of sociology and anthropology (e.g., Worth & Adair, 1972; Ruby, 1982b). The general concern here, which can historically be attributed to evolutions in ethnographic film, is the mistreatment or misrepresentation of those who appear before the camera, and particularly persons with little agency (e.g., Tagg, 1993).

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[52] Scholars of visual journalism and photojournalism in particular have written extensively on a related topic, the addition or subtraction of content to the (still) photographic frame, which is a manipulation of the original image as well as an unethical practice that calls into question a belief in and the credibility of photography. See Newton (2001a), Newton (2005), Wheeler (2002) et al.

Is reflexivity a matter of concern or a necessity for the historical documentary? Is any degree of filmic reflexivity applicable here? Although opinions differ across sub-disciplines of nonfiction and documentary film, a few points should be considered in terms of the practice and subgenre under analysis here.

Sorlin (1980; 2001d) argues that "Historical [nonfiction] films are all fictional [because] even if they are based on records, they have to reconstruct in an imaginary way the greater part of what they show" (p. 38). In essence, the development of a visual narrative is a foundational requirement for any documentarian concerned with deceased persons and/or events long passed. Certainly, Ken Burns's insights into his choice of subject matter or his filmmaking practices as revealed thorough a journalistic interview, for example, are a form of reflexivity. From a scholarly perspective, however, some might attribute such a scenario to clever marketing or challenge the value of the revelations provided through such an account. But does a possible alternative exist and if so, is that alternative practical or viable?

For one, it is practically impossible for most subjects or subject matter of a Ken Burns film and historical documentaries in general to appear on film or speak about their involvement with the filmmaker/film; with few exceptions, Burns and the historical documentary sub-discipline require archival visual materials and documents to serve as referents for the deceased and/or events and locales no longer in existence or presently in the desired state. In the example of a film orchestrated and overseen by Ken Burns, live persons are usually only witnessed in on-camera interviews, with such individuals mostly serving as secondary sources of information. These individuals tend to be authors,

historians, and journalists or commentators with varying degrees of expertise on the subject.

A second question pertaining to filmic reflexivity concerns the value of a historical documentarian's appearance on-camera, within the film, and whether or not this practice would somehow provide audiences with a greater understanding of the subject matter or the filmmaking process. This rather strange idea poses several particular problems. From the filmmaker's perspective, such a scenario is a diversion from the primary topic of consideration. With scholars and critics already taking issue with Burns's legitimacy as a historian, an on-camera appearance from the filmmaker has the potential to generate more backlash than fruitful insight.

Furthermore, assuming Burns could provide a telling of his filmmaking process on-camera, or even a "behind-the-scenes" aspect to one or more of his films, the value and necessity of such a practice, particularly in terms of the viewing audience, is questionable in 2016. Although some merit could be attained from such an act of self-reflexivity, the formal aspects of Burns's filmmaking process are so recognizable that information on the subject is unlikely to surprise or add value for the present-day viewer.

Another issue is found in scholarship quick to attack nonfiction photography/film because of an ability to communicate a specific type of information (e.g., audiovisual) and the likelihood that information provided will be less than complete. Similar to other media forms, photography/film undoubtedly have numerous limitations and are, therefore, ultimately unable to provide a complete, entirely accurate, not to mention fully transparent record of any given subject. However, the historical documentary and historiophoty for that matter suggest a visual treatment deemed credible insofar as the

reputation of the filmmaker is of consequence and the discursive and rhetorical acts and texts of history remain incomplete.

Guynn (1990b) provides an interesting parallel between photography/film and history that also speaks to the historical documentary's freedoms from perfection: Cinema offers what seems the perfect medium for historic discourse…. Cinema produces an image whose power of analogy is prodigious and capable of mimicking the chronology of real events by representing the movement of persons and objects through time…. One has the impression that in documentary cinema that the events are figuring themselves forward, that they are "speaking" on their own behalf (p. 14).

Guynn's statements and line of inquiry suggest that the value of documentary film most concerned with history resides in the idea that images are a mediator and capable of relaying visual information unto themselves. Along these lines, White (1978) has suggested that all forms of historical discourse are produced and reproduced in the world through a natural alignment with the storytelling arts. In effect, a primary function of the historical documentary as historiophoty seems to parallel ideas at the heart of Nichols's conception of the documentary field as a "discourse of sobriety" which are inclusive of Grierson's "creative treatment of actuality." Such compelling proposals from scholars confirm the significance of the historical documentary as an avenue in which imagery provides information while also prompting the continuation of discourse on historical subject matter.

Of course, photography/film are only capable of carrying out these charges dependent upon the goals, objectives, and agendas of their creators and their intended use

at any given point in time. Individual historical documentary texts are only as valuable or credible as the filmmaker's process of producing the account. In Pingree's (2007) estimation:

> .... We pay close attention to what is happening – to lives, relationships, beliefs, nations – in the *process* of building a [filmic] account that is in anyway based on those facts. The [filmmaking] process itself is an important history, because…in one way or another, it can instruct us and improve our lives now or in the future (p. 40).

It is such a process, the building and shaping of a visual narrative, from arguably the most prominent working historical documentarian today that remains the primary topic of inquiry for this dissertation.

Newton (2001b) offers the concept of "reasonable truth" for scholars attempting to understand visual images, including those exploring how images are made as well as the messages encoded within and received from visual forms. Newton's suggestions in this regard are useful to this research study because the scholar calls for approaching visual "reasonable truth" from different theoretical approaches and methodological tools and strategies. Accoridng to Williams and Newton (2007):

> If we are genuinely seeking to understand visual images and how they work, we must use different ways to seek that understanding in order to increase the likelihood of determining what is reasonably true (p. 281).

In attributing the competing visual forms in the historical documentary case study film for this research study to Ken Burns, Newton's "reasonable truth" can be applied at different sites of the image. In other words, determining the "reasonable truth" of images

includes an exploration into the original making of and intent for the visuals, as well as their appropriation by Burns and Florentine Films for the historical documentary film(s) under analysis for this dissertation.

The historical documentary film itself occupies a special place in film and television history, and can be considered a continually evolving area of visual media historically aligned to both journalism and cinema. Its origins can rightfully be found in the first uses of photography and film, as well as at the intersection of the burgeoning the idea of "documentary." The photographic powers of inscription and observation are paramount to the entirety of the credibility and maintenance of the documentary field. But the historical documentary's uniqueness and ultimate significance lies in the generation of a visual reflection and mode of literacy of the past, that is simultaneously capable of contributing to the continuation of historical discourse.

The historical documentary subgenre remains influential in the digital age. The most well-regarded and frequented VOD and video sharing outlets – iTunes, Amazon, Netflix, and YouTube – all provide separate sections for and easy access to a number of historical documentary titles. Meanwhile, the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) maintains a running tally of user-rated historical documentary films. Collectively, these titles classified as "historical documentary" are a reflection of the growth and availability of films understood as part of this subgenre.

Although a theory of documentary for the arena of nonfiction film is incomplete and therefore, similar to any conceptual framework for media and cinema studies, the explication here is substantial for the shape and subgenre of the case study under analysis in this dissertation.

By grounding the theory of documentary here in the evolution of photography and film and the primary functions of these media, by identifying the principles and goals of those first classified as visual documentarians, and by understanding how documentary serves as a means of informing upon the past and relating the past to the present, this explication of documentary theory for the historical documentary is of value to scholars and practitioners in diverging fields of study.

F.   Research Questions (A)

The concepts, ideas and theoretical framework outlined in the previous sections serve to frame or contextualize the following research questions (RQs) for this dissertation. In addition, the data or findings related to the RQs are explored in succeeding sections of this study to best serve the goals of this research project:

RQ1:   What is the role of visual effects for documentary photography and film, and especially the historical documentary as historiophoty?

RQ2:   Does the implementation of visual effects as part of the formal presentation affect the understanding or knowledge of visual information as part of documentary expression?[53]

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[53] The final sections of this dissertation are concerned with drawing parallels between the findings from RQ1 and RQ2 and the role(s) of the digitization of visual effects for the future of documentary.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

Qualitative Research and Sites of the image

The research design for this study includes a triangulated qualitative methodology to fully explore the uses and applications of visual effects in the historical documentary film as a key example of historiophoty. Denzin and Lincoln (1998b) have described the qualitative researcher as *bricoleur*, or quilt-maker, and the use of multiple methods for qualitative research (*bricolage*):

> Qualitative research is inherently multimethod in focus. However, the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. Objective reality can never be captured. Triangulation [therefore] is not a tool or strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation…a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, and depth to any investigation (pp. 3-4).

Of interest is to this discussion is the authors' pointing to a filmmaker as analogous to a bricoleur; much like a quilt-maker, a filmmaker "assembles images into montages" to construct a completed film (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a, p. 4).

This *bricolage* of present-day qualitative research exists in what Denzin and Lincoln (2011b) describe as the eighth moment in the history of the qualitative field. According to the authors, "the future (2010-), which is now," requires qualitative researchers to confront critical ideas and discourses through "a wide-range of interconnected interpretive practices" in order to "get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand" (pp. 3-4). Here, the authors advocate for the use of multiple

methods (i.e., triangulation) and an understanding of cross-disciplinary approaches for best practices and thorough qualitative research.

In addition, this eighth historical moment of qualitative research is subdivided into five separate phases of the research process that were adopted for the outline and framework of this dissertation. These five phases incorporated into this study are: 1) The Researcher as a Multicultural Subject, 2) Theoretical Paradigms and Perspectives, 3) Research Strategies, 4) Methods of Collection and Analysis, and 5) The Art of Interpretation and Presentation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011c; see also Denzin & Lincoln, 2003a, pp. 30-39).

The first two phases – the location and role of the researcher and the theoretical outline for this dissertation – were the foci of the first two chapters. This third chapter specifically focuses on Phase 3 as well as the methods for data collection and analysis as part of Phase 4. The remaining chapters of this dissertation are devoted to Phases 4(b) and 5, or the presentation of the data collected, observation, interpretation, analysis, and the findings and discussion.

With the explication of documentary theory here focused on the unique, semiotic characteristics of still and motion picture photography, the following research design was generated to investigate several ways in which visual effects can shape or impact the relationship between historiophoty and still and motion picture photography's connections or ties to the actual. In other words, the research design and triangulated methodology allow for a close, thorough analysis into the potential for visual effects to disrupt or change photography/film's iconicity, its indexical ties to its real-world

referent(s), and our collective understanding of the historical through photography's unique and immediate ties to the past.

This research design follows Rose's (2012c) three-part framework for incorporating and analyzing visual materials as part of a (qualitative) research study. The author suggests that a more complete research framework should explore images at three specific sites in the cycle of media production to consumption:

1. The site of image production.

2. The site of the image itself.

3. The site of the audience.

Each of the three image-sites – image production, the image itself, and the audience – are inherently unique and therefore, should be analyzed independently and with different research methods.[54] All three methods chosen for this study have longstanding ties to qualitative research, with the first two, the one-on-one semi-structured interview and visual methods, specifically identified and discussed in Phase 4 of Denzin and Lincoln's (1998c; 2003b) qualitative research process.

In this chapter, I identify and discuss these three individual research methods in relation to media and cinema studies and in correspondence to each of Rose's image-sites. In effect, the research methods here are implemented to best approach concerns identified in the research questions put forth at the end of the last chapter. To this point,

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[54] The broader research design also takes into account the totality of these methods, including possible similarities and differences in the means of and results from data collection, and the ways in which data collected affects or shapes the findings from the investigation.

each method allows for an exploration into the ways in which visual effects are used for aesthetic and entertainment purposes, and their role in the historical documentary (historiophoty). The methods and their corresponding image-sites are:

1a) *Qualitative interviews* at/for the *site of image production.*

2b) *Visual analysis* at/for the *site of the image itself.*

3c) *Focus groups* at/for the *site of the audience.*

In the first section below, I discuss the significance of qualitative interviews for research purposes, and especially how the use of the method here can provide detailed information from informants/respondents that speaks to the production and implementation of visual effects for the historical documentary.

Second, I provide literature on the method of visual analysis as part of the process of deconstructing images from film texts for research purposes. In this section, I put forth examples of visual analysis in scholarship to explain how images are read or analyzed by means of signs, codes, and symbols. Third, I discuss the importance of focus groups in qualitative research, and the ability of this method to bring forth rich and insightful information through group collaboration and discourse. Finally, I conclude this section by restating the research questions in context with the theoretical framework and research design and methodology for this study.

Once again, *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014d) serves as the primary case study film text under observation and analysis for this dissertation. The film initially aired in seven parts on PBS from September 14, 2014 to September 20, 2014. Each episode is just over or slightly under 110 minutes in length. The entirety of the seven-part miniseries is currently accessible through on-demand cable, as well as a number of film

and video streaming exhibition services, such as Netflix, Amazon, iTunes and similar platforms.

The film's narrative is told in chronological order, covering the mid-to-late 1800s through the mid-20th century. Primary areas or topics covered in the film include Theodore Roosevelt's political challenges with trusts and monopolies, Franklin Roosevelt's slow rise to prominence, the Great Depression, Franklin's New Deal policies, and the U.S.'s entry into World War II among other historically significant moments in the lives of the presidents.

The first and second episodes are primarily concerned with Theodore Roosevelt's childhood through his ascendancy to President of the United States. The births and formative years of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt are presented in these episodes as well. By the third episode, the narrative gives way to Franklin and Eleanor, with Theodore's late and post-presidency life also of concern here. The remaining six episodes of the series focus on Franklin's presidency and Eleanor's simultaneous political and philanthropic efforts. The film also diverts to discuss additional Roosevelt family members, and spends an ample portion of its running time on Franklin's bout with polio and his marital infidelities.

In sum, roughly one-third of the film is devoted to Theodore's life and career, with Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt the primary and secondary subjects, respectively, of the majority of the second half of the miniseries. The linear, chronological storytelling allows for few if any diversions from the Roosevelt family.

Considering the film's formal structure and the visual style of the presentation, as well as the sequential storytelling, *The Roosevelts* serves as a contemporary archetype of

the historical documentary, while also reflecting the traditional but longstanding form and function of the broader spectrum of nonfiction film and television concerned with history. The triangulated methodology thus allows for a more thorough investigation into the role, location, and usage of visual effects in a current and well-recognizable conception of this subgenre as historiophoty. Furthermore, an investigation into these topics by means of *The Roosevelts* and Ken Burns's career speaks to matters of concern across the fields of documentary photography, film, and filmmaking, and the evolution of photography in the digital age.

A.   Method I: Qualitative Interviews in Social Science Research

DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) provide an appropriate summation of the necessity and importance of semi-structured, one-on-one qualitative interviews for research purposes:

Interviews are among the most familiar strategies for collecting qualitative data… They are generally organised around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee∕s. Semi-structured in-depth interviews are the most widely used interviewing format for qualitative research…Most commonly they are only conducted once for an individual or group and take between 30 minutes to several hours to complete. The individual in-depth interview allows the interviewer to delve deeply into social and personal matters (p. 314).

As a longstanding and oft-utilized research method in the social sciences and humanities, the qualitative interview provides first-hand information from one or more sources directly to the researcher. In this regard, one-on-one, interpersonal

communication between researcher and respondent/interviewee is the most direct form of the method. Telephone or webcam interviews, as well as those conducted through email and messaging systems, are common today.

Moreover, different forms of qualitative interview strategies have been integral to more recent research on film, filmmakers, and filmmaking practices. A number of scholarly volumes that include interviews and oral histories with documentary filmmakers and personnel involved with documentary production, marketing, and exhibition have been published in recent years (e.g., Levin, 1971; Tobias, 1998; Stubbs, 2002b; Cunningham, 2005e; Jolliffe & Zinnes, 2012; Edwards & Powers, 2013). Most of these volumes follow a semi-structured interview approach, defined by a series of open-ended questions and answers.

While much has been written on qualitative interviews for social science and humanities-based research, two primary sources on this topic provide information on best approaches and strategies for researchers engaging in this technique: McCracken (1988a) concentrates on techniques for the long-form interview, and Lindlof and Taylor (2011b) devote a lengthy section of their influential volume, *Qualitative Research Methods*, to best practices for one-on-one and group interviews, such as the focus group strategy. Several recommendations from these sources were adopted for this first method as part of this dissertation.

Lindlof and Taylor discuss separate categories of qualitative interviews and explain the various roles taken on by the interviewer and subject-participant or collaborator as part of the interview process. In terms of interview categories, the authors would likely characterize the type of interviewing for this dissertation as "informant-

respondent interviews," because potential interviewees were chosen for their unique professional experiences and valuable insight. In respondent interviews, "interview talk is treated as a stable and valid representation of the individual's perspective," while informants can "inform the researcher about the scene–the scene's history, customs and rituals; the local 'lingo'; the identities and actions of the key players; and so forth" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011c, pp. 179, 177). Thus, respondents and informants, aside from classification, provide first-hand experience or knowledge of the topic under study, are capable of contextualizing the subject matter under analysis, and speaking to matters of current significance on the topics of most concern as well.

To obtain informer-respondent interviewees for this study the researcher first made contact with Chris Darling, Florentine Films staff member and assistant to Ken Burns, via email. This email exchange allowed the researcher to secure the names, titles, and roles of several key members of Burns's production company with longstanding professional ties to the filmmaker.[55] Following initial communication with Darling, the researcher made contact via email with three individuals who are currently involved with and/or employed by Florentine Films, and who have each worked alongside Ken Burns on many projects throughout his career.

Buddy Squires, a cinematographer and along with Burns, one of the founding partners of Florentine Films, agreed to a telephone interview for this research study. Paul

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[55] Darling was instrumental in obtaining respondents for the interviews for this research study. Ken Burns, however, chose not to participate in the interviews because of prior commitments to several film projects that were in various stages of production at the time of the interviews.

Barnes, a longtime film editor at Florentine Films, also agreed to an interview. Susanna

Steisel, the primary photography researcher at Florentine Films, agreed to an interview

for this project as well. As part of the email exchanges between the researcher and

respondent-informants, individual dates and times were scheduled for the interviews, and

the researcher obtained written consent from each interviewee.[56]

Of particular significance here is that each of these persons has long been

associated with Florentine Films and Ken Burns and therefore, has acquired substantial

professional experience with still and motion picture photography, photography research,

and/or production-related practices and strategies for filmmaking, such as manually

performing the pan-and-zoom effect on-location (Squires) or producing variations on the

technique through a nonlinear software for film editing (Barnes). In effect, Squires,

Barnes, and Steisel were instrumental sources of information for professional practices

associated with the uses and retrieval of historic and archival still and motion picture

photography, the application of visual effects as part of historical documentary

production, and for understanding visuals at the site of image production.

With regards to tactics and strategies for one-on-one research interviews,

McCracken (1988b) discusses the importance of finding an obtrusive/unobtrusive balance

between investigator (interviewer) and respondent, noting that this relationship is

ultimately dependent upon the interviewer's careful approach to questions or prompts

during the interview process. The author claims that the role of the interviewer is to

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[56] All required documentation for one-on-one interviews for this dissertation was

submitted to and approved by the Internal Review Board (IRB) at the University of

Oregon prior to the interview process.

"discover how the respondent sees the world," but that the investigator should also be mindful of "draw[ing] out the respondent in precisely the right manner" (p. 21). Hollway and Jefferson (2000) add that the investigator should be mindful of the purpose of the interview and their own objectives, and to avoid discounting the respondent's experiences or abilities to relay such information.

Furthermore, McCracken (1988c) and Lindlof and Taylor (2011d) maintain that interview questions should be open-ended, which allows for the respondent to talk freely on the topic at-hand. In effect, the interviewer should provide prompts for each question and include follow-up questions on topics most relevant to the subject matter of the study.

The researcher took into account each of these ideas throughout the interview process for this dissertation. Prior to each interview, the researcher formulated a series of open-ended questions specific to each respondent's experiences and area(s) of expertise. During the interview, the researcher was mindful of the purpose of the interview, and ultimately, kept discussions on the experiences and expertise of the respondents. Although the researcher allowed respondents to openly discuss their professional experiences in tandem with personal opinions, the time limitation of each interview required the researcher to maintain focus on questions and topics most relevant to this research study.

The interviewer and informant-respondents agreed to one-hour telephone interviews in advance.[57] While telephone interviews do not allow for the researcher to

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[57] The researcher and respondents agreed to telephone interviews as part of this agreement because of the physical distance between the researcher and the interviewees.

generate information on visual elements of the respondent, such as physical features and gestures, Lindlof and Taylor (2011e) argue that "a phone interview can be…intimate and engrossing, and ultimately, just as good at getting full responses, as an in-person interview" (p. 190). Each telephone interview followed the recommended question-and-answer format for semi-structured research interviews. This approach also allowed for the interviewer to "listen for implications and assumptions [during the interview] that will not come to the surface of the conversation by themselves" (McCracken, 1988d, p. 40).

In effect, the semi-structured interview format for this research study allowed for follow-up questions to initial respondent answers as well. As suggested, implementing the semi-structured approach required the interviewer to take on the role of a careful listener. The interviewer, therefore, was able to use this format to maintain focus on the most necessary subject matter, while also allowing the informer-respondent to speak freely on the topic at hand.

Three, individual telephone interviews were conducted with Buddy Squires, Paul Barnes, and Susanna Steisel over a one-month period. Each interview was approximately 60 minutes in length and followed a semi-structured, question-and-answer format. The researcher followed a list of predetermined, open-ended questions during the interview, and made hand-written notes from information provided by the interviewees as part of the data collection process. Topics put forth and covered during the interviews included practices, techniques and/or strategies for animating still photography, archival aspects or

Furthermore, due to the somewhat limited but necessary predetermined amount of time for each interview, the researcher secured consent to follow up with additional questions for respondents at a later date and time, if necessary.

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qualities of still photography and newsreel footage, the collection and inclusion of both still and motion picture photography for the films of Ken Burns, and the philosophy or idea of developing a visual presentation for a Burns-supervised historical documentary film.

The approach to the data analysis from these interviews and the resultant findings are the subject of the first section of the next chapter of this dissertation.

B.   Method II: Using Visual Analysis to Deconstruct and Decode Images

Visual analysis is the second method for this dissertation. This method allows for an exploration into visuals at the site of the image(s) itself. The strategy allows the researcher to investigate the history, production practices, and aesthetic and content-related elements and qualities of visual media.[58] This method is most useful to examining what Hodder (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2003a) characterizes as (visual) documents that exist as part of material culture. According to the author, "Such evidence, unlike the spoken word, endures physically and thus can be separated across space and time from its author, producer, or user" (p. 155).

For this dissertation, visual analysis allows for an examination into areas of the primary case study film from four specific locations within the image(s): 1) individual visual moments (shots, scenes), 2) the combination of shots or sequences, 3) the

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[58] Media studies and mass communication scholars oftentimes refer to aspects of this method as textual analysis, whereby the text of the object under study is one or more visual media. According to McKee (2003), the word "text" refers to written and visual media forms, and is used in scholarship to evaluate an object's production of meaning (p. 4).

cumulative visual presentation of the film, and 4) as relevant or necessary to the idea of historiophoty, which includes the content or subject matter photographed. The method of visual analysis is especially useful here because of its direct applicability to the investigation of photography and film as historical and socio-culturally media artifacts. In effect, analyzing qualities or properties particular to each medium, as well as the interplay between photographic and motion picture forms, also speaks to ideas in the research questions concerning the role or significance of historiophoty in the historical documentary film.

Scholars of visual semiotics in film and media studies discuss this method as part of the scholarly process of interpretation, which provides a means of uncovering coded messages and message-systems inherent in imagery. Scholars in film studies have approached semiotics as an aid in identifying and defining the language of film; media studies scholars incorporating semiotics have largely applied the theory to mass communications research for purposes of making sense of social reality from media-driven messages (e.g., Hall, 1980; 1993b; Lesage in Nichols, 1985a; Monaco, 2009a; Rose, 2012d).[59] Interestingly, both film studies and media studies as academic disciplines

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[59] Both Barthes (1974a; 1977b) and Metz (1974b) wrote seminal works on codes and coded systems found in still photography and film, respectively. Although scholars are quick to point to differences in the descriptions and categorizations of (image/film) codes in the writings of Barthes and Metz, ultimately, the two scholars are seeking a similar goal. However, I argue here that the usefulness of their approach is limited, to some degree, in their lack of providing *actual* examples or images as part of their methodological process. This claim can be dismissed in that both were primarily

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are concerned with analyzing properties and components of photographic media. Therefore, visual semiotics as a research framework is useful to this study for connecting competing types of photographic media under analysis. Specifically, visual semiotics is important for locating and deconstructing visual signs and symbols within a coded system, and then allowing researchers to draw correlations to items and topics at play in the real world (e.g., Penn, 2000a; Rose, in Bauer and Gaskell, 2000a; Moriarty, 2005d).

In recent years, researchers from a variety of disciplines have incorporated a number of visual methods specific to photographic-based media. From the aforementioned use of the camera in the anthropological fieldwork of Mead and Bateson (e.g., Jacknis, 1988b; Sullivan, 1999b), to the calls for photography as research method in the works of Collier, Jr. and Collier (1986b) and Worth (1981), "motion pictures, video, and still photography have been common tools in anthropology for more than 80 years" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011f, p. 106).

The use of camera technologies for recording persons and activities, and for surveying geographic spaces and terrains, remains paramount to visual research in anthropology and sociology. More contemporary methods from media studies and communications scholars include the making and analyzing of photographs, photographic essays, and video diaries or films. Visual methods such as photo elicitation and photo-voice have become prominent in media studies research (e.g., Prosser in Denzin & Lincoln, 2011a). In one respect, such methods are similar to visual analysis in that they

theoreticians/philosophers using images as *examples* of the validity or credibility of their arguments. However, their theoretical limitations are worth mentioning in describing the differences in semiotic film analysis and the method of visual analysis here.

support the inclusion of *both* visuals and the written text as part of the documentation, data analysis, and presentation processes.

However, visual analysis as a research tool maintains certain characteristics for scholars dealing with pre-existing, readily available imagery in the real world. Historians, sociologists, communications scholars, and those from rhetorical criticism have implemented variations on this strategy to interrogate the inter/intra/extra-textual properties of image-reliant media. In effect, visual analysis is remarkable in that it specifically allows for a direct comparison of visual materials from the primary case study under examination *as part of* the research document. In effect, this strategy allows for a form of showing rather than telling, and lends itself to added layers of interpretation and sense-making aspects through the analytic process. O'Connor (in Rosenthal & Corner, 2005a) pinpoints the way in which scholars should approach this method:

> The first step is to look closely at the image. For a moving image, close viewing requires repeated viewing, an awareness of the technical tools developed by specialists…and the ability to apply them where appropriate…. Studying the content of a film involves the identification of the signs it presents and the consideration of how they work together and with the mind of the audience (p. 384).

Similarly, Zettl (2005a) argues that the researcher should navigate from one visual or visual moment to the next, paying close attention to the content and interplay of images, while taking into account the aesthetic qualities of the image(s), and especially, content, framing, composition, color, light, and so forth. Rose (2012e) uses the term "compositional interpretation" to identify several such research practices for an analysis

at the site of the image. Accordingly, researchers can analyze and describe "the content, colour, spatial organisation, mise-en-scéne, montage, light and expressive content of various kinds of still and moving images" (p. 77).

Two key examples from scholarship provide insightful variations on the method for this dissertation. Ott's (2011c) visual critique of Ken Burns's, *The National Parks: America's Best Idea* (2009c) is a close reading of the imagery within the film, with the subject matter of the author's investigation similar to that of this study. Ott draws out and describes the content and aesthetic properties of individual shots and scenes in *The National Parks*, and then provides a comparison of the images in relation to environmental and historical themes and concerns.

Harper's (in Denzin and Lincoln, 2003a) visual analysis, however, more closely mirrors that of the technique for this dissertation. The author provides his own photographs to approach the subject of visual narratives. Harper's analysis first involves a layout and description of a series of his own photographs from a bicycle ride in an urban Italian city. This selection of stills is presented in the form of narrative sequences within the document of the research project, which Harper follows with a written account of the content and aesthetic-related properties of individual photographs and picture combinations.

Here, the author is able to *show* the bustling inner-city by including the visual data made for the study, as well as provide a written interpretive account of elements of the photographs. Furthermore, the reader of the research document is placed in Harper's position while making the photographs – seated on a bicycle, and alongside other bicyclists, as well as bystanders, passersby, automobiles, and the Italian architecture.

In sum, Harper's visual analysis is the more comprehensive of the two and more effective, in that the author provides *a selection of images within the body of the research document*, which allows for a show-tell analysis of the aesthetic and content-related properties of the photographs. In effect, this strategy also allows for a further exploration into a broader analysis and conversation on life in urban Italy.[60] Ultimately, the visual analysis here allows for a more holistic and arguably more credible multilayered approach because the visuals under analysis are presented within the body of the study, thus allowing the reader to more fully grasp the various properties of the imagery.

Aside from Rose's (2012f) useful volume, key works of scholarship on research strategies for visual analysis from Monaco (2009b) and Zettl (2005b; 2017a) speak directly to visual semiotics and visual aesthetics, both of which aid in framing visual analysis. Literature from these authors were, therefore, directly utilized throughout the analyses of this study.

Monaco and Zettl are from competing fields – cinema studies and visual communication, respectively – but both insist upon the bridging of theory and practice for a scholarly investigation and examination of moving images, including film and video. Of particular significance to visual analysis for this dissertation is that Monaco and Zettl

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[60] Rose's (in Bauer and Gaskell, 2000a) also incorporates a variation on visual analysis. The author's concern is, similar to Harper's, visual narratives, and Rose provides a useful coding scheme that was adopted and adapted for this study. However, Rose performs quantitative and qualitative content analyses, which require a rather detailed coding system as part of her methodology. In Rose's study, the author does not provide samples of the visuals as part of the analysis and/or research document.

each provide their own explications of the fundamentals of photography/film "style,"
including separate terminologies, taxonomies, and aesthetic origins and fundamentals, as
well as the transference of these properties into useful scholarly concepts.

Monaco (2009c) speaks of the importance of understanding imagery in relation to
technologies and practice as integral to the process of deconstructing film texts. In other
words, an understanding of the abilities of the camera over time in relation to film and
filmmaking should first be understood prior to breaking down shots, scenes, and
sequences into readable parts. Similarly, Zettl's (2005c; 2017b) aesthetics theory and
methodology begins with a description of effective strategies for making and
understanding moving images, which includes the development of a visual structure and
presentation, a list and description of shot types, an explanation of the rule of thirds, an
overview of depth of field and the y and z-axes, how camera lenses function, and so
forth. According to the author, such aesthetic-related properties of film, video, and other
motion picture forms are detrimental to engaging with the function and language of any
moving image medium.

Both authors ultimately suggest that reading or analyzing film for scholarly
purposes is an endeavor that requires an understanding of how images are made,
properties unique to individual image-units, relationships among shots, and the
construction and progression of sequences that are fundamental to a structured and formal
language of motion pictures. For this dissertation, such ideas and suggestions from
Monaco and Zettl are useful to the method of visual analysis for this study.

Such attributes of film aesthetics and the language or terminology of film are
typically understood as traceable to (visual) semiotics. Thus, the method of visual

analysis or the aesthetics of motion pictures for scholarly purposes must acknowledge and is informed by scholarship on visual semiotics.[61] As discussed in the last chapter, semiotic analysis of visual media depends on cinematic signs and codes inherent in imagery; the extraction of denotative and connotative meanings is useful to generating the production of knowledge or information. For visual media such as photography/film, "people make meaning from images (or signs) by relating them to a series of codes, among them cultural codes, shared artistic codes, and cinematic codes" (O'Connor, in Rosenthal & Corner, 2005b, p. 384).[62]

Rabiger (2008) describes the connotative and denotative meanings of images as significant characteristics of film authorship. "Denotation is what an image is; connotation is what it seems to mean" (p. 53). Making meaning from visual information leads to visual literacy and greater understanding or knowledge of the image and that which is depicted.

Visual semiotics and its variants, therefore, remain an important scholarly area of theories and methodologies for scholars of film and photography, particularly in an era dominated by visual media forms. Decoding imagery (signs), and uncovering meaning in terms of an image's aesthetics is ultimately necessary because "the spatial organization of

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[61] Ideas and concepts associated with visual semiotics were discussed in Chapter II.

[62] Again, the connection between visual semiotics discussed in Chapter II and visual aesthetics (for film/photography) is outlined by Monaco (2009d) and Zettl (2005d; 2017c). Both scholars provide aesthetic translations for image-signs and their governing codes. Ideas and points of reference from both scholars are put forth in later sections of this study.

an image…may also begin to say something about an image's possible effects on a spectator" (Rose, 2012g, p. 77). Naturally, these characteristics are associated with what Beloff (1985b) once characterized as the (public's) pervasive if somewhat naïve belief in photography's ability to capture or present "truth."

In effect, a coding scheme for deconstructing the visual aspects of the historical documentary text under analysis here was generated for the visual analysis, with elements adopted from a similar schematic from Rose (in Bauer and Gaskell, 2000b). In generating this coding framework, several suggestions for coding qualitative materials were also appropriated from Saldaña (2009a). Primary or first-order coding categories were created based on concepts and ideas paramount to this dissertation and put forth or suggested in the RQs.

The primary or first-order coding categories generated for this study were SHOT TYPE and VISUAL EFFECT. Secondary codes were then created from each of these two primary coding categories, which allowed the researcher to distinguish different shot types and visual effects found in the film text (i.e., Saldaña, 2009b).[63] In Rose's (in Bauer and Gaskell, 2000d) coding scheme, the first order coding category was "camera angle," with film shots coded into second-order units of analysis, such as "position of the

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[63] Lindlof and Taylor (2011f) define the terms "[coding] categories" and "codes" for qualitative data analysis. "Categories" is a label given to first-order coding of general phenomenon, while "codes" is a term used to describe more specific content necessary for separating, labeling, compiling, and organizing data. "Codes" are shorthand devices for individual elements that have already been distinguished by one or more categories (pp. 246-248).

camera" and "angle of approach," for data collection and the author's follow-up content analysis (pp. 250-251).

Similarly, the second-order codes developed for the visual analysis in this study were STILL IMAGE, NEWSREEL IMAGES, and LIVE-ACTION FOOTAGE for the first-order category, SHOT TYPE. For first-order coding category, VISUAL EFFECT, the second-order codes developed were PAN-AND-ZOOM, PAN, ZOOM, and OTHER.

Following Saldaña's (2009c) suggestion, a separate area on the coding sheet was reserved for analytic memos to record significant properties of the shots or visual effects in *The Roosevelts* (2014e). According to Saldaña, "Whenever *anything* related to and significant about the coding or analysis of the data comes to mind, stop whatever you're doing and write a memo about it immediately" (p. 33). This section allowed the researcher to keep track of time codes as well as information potentially relevant to the subsequent analysis. Throughout the approximately 770-minute total running time of the miniseries, the researcher coded individual shots and visual effects, while also making short-hand, analytic memos when necessary.

During the analysis, the researcher coded each individual shot and visual effect with an "X" on a coding sheet and in accordance with the primary coding categories and codes for each visual moment or scene in *The Roosevelts*. This form of manual coding of the data is advantageous because it keeps the researcher closer to the research texts, and allows for the researcher to relay micro-level information from the data collected from the text to the macro or structural level (e.g., Lindlof & Taylor, 2011g).

Loizos's (in Bauer & Gaskell, 2000a) suggestion to add time codes were added to the analytic memos section of the coding sheet was also appropriated, especially for

images with the pan-and-zoom effect. The purpose of adding time codes during the analysis was for playback of the film to retrieve shot possibilities for the visual analysis presented in the final research document.

An example of the coding sheet developed by the researcher and used for the visual analysis appears below.[64]

| CODING SHEET FOR THE ROOSEVELTS: AN INTIMATE HISTORY (2014) PART 1: GET ACTION (112 minutes) | | | | | | | | | |
| TYPES OF SHOT | | | | VISUAL EFFECT | | | | | |
STILL IMAGE	NEWSREEL FOOTAGE	ILLUSTRATION	LIVE-ACTION FOOTAGE	PAN-AND-ZOOM	PAN	ZOOM	CUT IN	OTHER	ADDITIONAL NOTES

Figure 25: Example of the coding sheet for visual analysis.

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[64] The sample here is a replica of the sheet formatted for Microsoft Word. The actual coding sheet(s) were generated in Microsoft Excel, and the researcher used a separate coding sheet for each segment of the film, or one sheet per episode for all seven episodes of the miniseries. The researcher made notes when necessary on content or stylistic properties of the image(s) under observation in the MEMOS section on the coding sheets.

Similar to the purpose for Rose's (in Bauer and Gaskell, 2000e) coding scheme, the framework developed for the visual analysis was useful for data collection, management, and the subsequent analyses. The researcher served as the sole coder for the visual analysis. Each of the seven episodes of *The Roosevelts* was coded individually, and the coding process took place on either a computer laptop or on a large-size television screen. The entirety of the coding process took place over the course of several weeks during a one-month period. Playback of individual shots and scenes was required to successfully complete the coding of the entirety of the miniseries.

Following the completion of the coding for each of the seven episodes of *The Roosevelts*, the researcher tallied the data from each first and second-order coding category for each episode of the miniseries. Data from the SHOT TYPE and VISUAL EFFCT categories were also tallied for the entirety of the film for purposes of comparing data. Analytic memos were also analyzed for trends, similarities, or reoccurring themes relevant to the data analysis and ideas from the RQs. The resulting analyses and findings from each segment and the entirety of the miniseries are presented in the second section of the next chapter.

D.   Method III: Focus Groups and Engaging with Visual Information

Focus groups are the third and final research method for this study. Focus groups complete the triangulated methodology as part of the research design, and allow for an examination of images, visual production, technologies, and visual effects (i.e., pan-and-zoom photography) for the historical documentary (i.e., historiophoty) *at the site of the audience*.

Penn (2000b) recommends the addition of focus group interviews to a research design that includes semiotic or interpretive strategies "to assess the extent and use of socially shared cultural knowledges within a given group of people" (p. 242). In Penn's estimation, focus groups are an ideal methodological companion to visual semiotics (analysis) because the former method diverts from the problem of researcher-driven subjectivity and offers a means of gathering extensive data through one-on-one and group interaction.

As an established qualitative strategy and type of group interviewing, focus groups provide a formidable means from which to explore how viewers engage with and understand information from visual media. Of significance are peer discussion and interaction in a predetermined and confined setting.

For this study, focus groups are particularly useful for discerning how those involved with media production and engagement conceptualize the visual architecture or presentation of a moving image medium, as well as the purpose or role of visual techniques and strategies, such as visual effects. In addition, the use of focus groups is useful to discerning the potential for visual effects to impact and/or alter still imagery and image-content, and the ability of visual effects to affect documentary expression and/or historiophoty. Broadly, the foci of the group interview method for this dissertation are the role and responsibility of the historical documentarian, the use of still and moving images for documentary film, as well as the degree(s) to which visual effects are utilized, noticed, and stand apart.

Historically, focus groups have been an integral component of marketing and advertising research in a wide range of sectors, and especially politics and industry.

Scholars have discussed how group talk is a convenient means of collecting detailed data on a specific topic or issue (e.g., Gordon & Langmaid, 1988). In recent years, focus groups have migrated into areas of sociology and media studies research. For the latter group, the strategy has been particularly useful to understanding the reception and perception of still and moving images.

Although the use of focus groups in studies on documentary film is limited, the method has aided scholars in gauging how spectators understand or make meaning from mainstream (i.e., Hollywood), feature-length fiction film. McCool, Cameron, and Petrie (2001; 2003, etc.) have used focus groups in several studies on health-related topics, such as how adolescents perceive of on-screen characters who smoke cigarettes. Wilkins (2009) employed focus groups to examine portrayals of Arab communities in action-adventure films. And Hughey (2014) implemented the method as part of a multimethod analysis on depictions of race in films that incorporate a Caucasian male savior narrative. Although the primary area of concentration in those studies is the representation of fictional characters and themes in narrative film, the rationale for carrying out focus groups is similar to the necessity and function of the method for this study.

In turn, a number of scholars from across disciplines have discussed best practices for focus group construction and makeup, and the importance of focus groups as a distinguished type of group interview method for qualitative research (e.g., Morgan, 1996a; Gaskell, in Bauer & Gaskell, 2000a; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011h; Silverman, 2011a; Morgan, in Gubrium et al., 2012a). Morgan (1996b), a sociologist who has written extensively on this subject, defines the practice as "a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher" (p. 130). The author

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also provides three specific characteristics of focus groups for research purposes: First, focus groups "are a research method devoted to data collection," while "the interaction [takes place] in a group discussion as the source of the data," and "it [focus groups] acknowledges the researcher's active role in creating the group discussion for data collection purposes" (p. 130).

Feedback from respondents through group discussion and interaction is unique and valuable to focus groups. Researchers have described the importance of gathering detailed information from respondents through a targeted group discussion on a specific topic. Gaskell (in Bauer & Gaskell, 2000b) highlights the democratic and participatory nature of this method, describing focus groups as an "ideal public sphere" where issues are presented in the context of "an exchange of views, ideas and experiences …emotionally and illogically expressed…without privileging particular individuals or positions" (p. 49). Fontana and Frey (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a) claim that the advantage of focus groups over other research methods is that the method is "inexpensive, data rich, flexible, stimulating to respondents, recall aiding, and cumulative and elaborative, over and above individual respondents" (p. 55).

Lindlof and Taylor (2011i) provide aid for focus group construction and group makeup. According to the authors, six to 12 persons is the ideal number for a single session, and individual sessions should run "from 30 minutes to two hours, depending on the size of the group and the complexity of the topic" (p. 184). The authors also stress: the importance of a neutral, predetermined location in which the session(s) is to take place; the necessity for audio or video to record the proceedings as well as to aid in data collection, management, and analysis; the role of the moderator (or interviewer) who

oversees the discussion; and the moderator's responsibility to keep the discussion focused on the topic(s) most relevant to the research study.

In addition, Lindlof and Taylor claim that focus groups are greatly aided by a set of predetermined, semi-structured questions on behalf of the moderator's development and posed to all group members throughout the session(s).[65] This allows the moderator to encourage participation by all group members, to "lightly guide the discussion with a list of questions and probes," and also "gently tamp down [the possibility of] a domineering group member" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011j, p. 185). In turn, Fontana and Frey (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b) maintain that "the interviewer must be flexible, objective, empathetic, persuasive, a good listener, and so on," while "simultaneously worry about the script of questions and be sensitive to the evolving patterns of group interaction" (p. 55).

Morgan (1996c) confirms several of these criteria for focus groups, including the need for a strategic and involved moderator, the encouragement of participation from all participants, and the moderator's focus and attention on the interaction and interplay amongst group members. Morgan also encourages a research design that includes focus groups in tandem with other qualitative or quantitative research strategies, a suggestion consistent with the triangulated methodology and design of this study.

The purpose of including focus groups for this dissertation is for an examination of visual media and particularly, documentary film production, at the site of the audience,

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[65] Similar to qualitative (one-on-one) interviews, the semi-structured question-and-answer format allows for the discussion to veer off topic or change course, if necessary and desirable. In contrast, narrative interviewing or the tightly structured, journalistic-style interview are options as well.

thus completing the triangulated methodology. As addressed in the body of literature on

this method, focus groups are particularly useful for obtaining qualitative data from group

interaction and discussion in a semi-structured interview setting. Data collected from

these discussions speaks to several prominent ideas and concerns of this study, and

especially the use of visual effects in documentary film, as well as the uses of different

photographic forms in film production, and the location and purpose of the historical

documentary film as a subgenre of documentary. Thus, data from focus groups for this

study can suggest the significance of the use and application of visual effects *and* visual

types in terms of historiophoty, the aesthetics of film production for (historical)

documentary, as well as the way in which visual aesthetic applications are shaped by film

content and vice versa.

For this study, the procedure for developing and carrying out focus groups was as

follows. First, potential focus group participants were required to meet specific,

predetermined criteria. The purpose of these criteria was to obtain a sample population of

future media professionals, trained in and capable of speaking to techniques for visual

media production. Thus, potential participants for focus group sessions had to meet the

following criteria: 1) undergraduate students in the advanced stages of pursuing a degree

(i.e., B.A. or B.S.) in cinema studies or a communications-related field of study at the

University of Oregon; 2) the area of specialization for the degree must be related to

photography, film, video or multimedia, and 3) participants had to display a professional

interest in or connection to contemporary production practices and techniques for still

photography/film/video or multimedia, such as current enrollment in an advanced media

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production course, membership in a professional organization or student club, or familiarity with editing software.

The researcher first approached potential focus group participants through either an oral in-class announcement(s) and/or via email.[66] Participants were told only that the focus groups were part of a doctoral dissertation conducted solely by the researcher and that the primary foci of the sessions was documentary film and film production practices or strategies. Written consent on behalf of each participants and as part of the email exchange was an additional requirement.[67] While the researcher served as the sole recruiter, potential participants were identified via the assistance of non-participating students, staff, and faculty at the University of Oregon, whose qualifications included aspects of the aforementioned criteria. Diversity among student-participants selected for the focus groups, in terms of age, race, gender, and socio-cultural or economic background, was also taken into consideration as part of the recruitment process.[68]

A total of 9 individuals agreed to participate in one of two focus group sessions. This number of sessions was determined by a near-equal division of the total number of

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[66] The method of reaching out to potential focus group participants depended upon if the participants were *initially* contacted by the researcher or via non-participating student(s), staff, or faculty members at the University of Oregon.

[67] All required documentation for focus group interviews, including a consent form, was submitted to and approved by the Internal Review Board (IRB) at the University of Oregon prior to the recruitment and interview processes.

[68] However, the primary consideration for student participation was the aforementioned criteria.

student-participants. The number of sessions also ensured the accumulation of data necessary to justify focus groups for this study, therefore also allowing for data analysis and comparison amongst groups. In addition, the researcher kept the number of participants to no more than five persons per session, which allowed the moderator to more easily manage or guide individual sessions.

The researcher served as the interviewer/moderator for all focus group sessions. All sessions took place at the ESI Collaboration Studio on the University of Oregon campus over several weeks.[69] A representative from the ESI Collaboration Studio was on-site to video-record the interaction and discussion through a one-way mirror for each focus group session. Informant-respondents were made aware of the presence of the representative as well as the video-recording process prior to the beginning of each focus group session. Video-recordings were edited and sent to the researcher following each session. Hand-written notes or memos were also made by the moderator throughout the sessions and were transcribed by the researcher following the sessions. Both video-recordings and the transcriptions of the memos were used for the subsequent analysis.

Each focus group session was approximately two hours in length. The format of the focus groups was predesigned and carried out by the researcher/moderator based on characteristics of a semi-structured group interview. Following a brief introduction of participants and overview of the format of the session, the researcher screened the same 45-minute segment of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014f) for each group. The researcher pre-screened and chose this segment as representative of the entirety of the

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[69] This facility is a state-of-the-art center, specifically designed and reserved for research-oriented group interviewing. The space is equipped with video-recording technologies.

form, visual style, and content of the film, as well as Ken Burns's filmography. In other words, the chosen segment screened for all participants was primarily composed of still imagery with and without the application of the pan-and-zoom effect, but also included a variety of newsreel and interview footage.

As suggested, the purpose of showing an extended portion of one episode of the miniseries was to maintain the unity of the visual presentation of the film and as a contemporary example of the historical documentary film. In addition, the presentation of different visual media in the segment was also necessary to contextualizing prompts and questions posed by the researcher throughout the focus groups.

With groups presented with the same visual content, the primary focus of the subsequent discussions centered on the visual presentation and production practices of the film, as well as the relationship between the film's aesthetics and content. Individual questions posed to participants included those on the uses of still and moving imagery in the historical documentary (e.g., historiophoty), the application of visual effects (e.g., pan-and-zoom photography and its variants) for still images, and the ways in which the presentation or form spoke to historical subject matter. The format of the focus groups, including the outline of questions, was guided towards comparing and contrasting aspects of these topics and ideas as presented in the film segment.

The data analysis of the focus groups is presented in the third section of Chapter IV.

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Immediately following this chapter are the analysis and findings from this triangulated methodology. Throughout the entirety of the next chapter, I will relate the

physical data from this study to scholarship and literature that speaks to the relationship

between still photography, cinematography, visual effects, and the historical documentary

as historiophoty. The theory of documentary explicated in Chapter II is once again useful

to each section of the analysis in that a fundamental concern of this study is

photography's and film's direct ties to the actual and the possibilities for visual effects to

subvert those longstanding associations. As discussed at some length in this dissertation

on the theoretical and practical components of (visual) semiotics, aesthetic approaches to

and the understanding of visual (photographic) information are useful to the individual

analyses and the comparative analyses in terms of visual effects and the historical

documentary as historiophoty (e.g., Monaco, Zettl et al.).

The broader goal of the cumulative analysis is to explore connections or parallels

between the research data here to visual effects and the present state of photographic

forms common to the historical documentary film as a relevant example of historiophoty.

The concern here is that the insurgence of seemingly inconsequential visual effects, such

as the application now commonly referred to as "the Ken Burns effect" and its variants,

has the potential to shape or direct content, thereby shifting our understanding of the past.

This concern and surrounding questions related to this issue are the primary topics of the

final chapter of this dissertation.

The aim of this project is to enliven an area of scholarship that is likely to gain

more attention across visual communication as the digital age of photography and film

continues to evolve. The value and necessity of this research is the relationship or

connections between production strategies common to still and motion picture

photography termed "documentary" and particularly, the ways in which such types of

applied animation enhance viewer engagement and/or direct and shape information gleaned from visual content. Because visual literacy remains a prominent and growing area of scholarship, the findings here speak to the ways in which understanding and meaning are made through competing forms of photographic communication.

D.   Research Questions (B)

The concepts and ideas, theoretical model(s), and research design and methodology in the preceding chapters and sections serve to frame or contextualize the following research questions (RQs) for this dissertation. In addition, the data or findings related to the RQs are explored in competing sections of this study to best serve the goals of this research project:

RQ1:   What is the role of visual effects for documentary photography and film, and especially the historical documentary as historiophoty?

RQ2:   Does the implementation of visual effects as part of the formal presentation affect the understanding or knowledge of visual information as part of documentary expression? [70, 71]

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[70] The final sections of this dissertation are concerned with drawing parallels between the findings from RQ1 and RQ2 and the role(s) of the digitization of visual effects for the future of documentary.

[71] The research questions for this study were revised after the approval of the dissertation proposal; the research questions were amended and developed after further review of literature for this study.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

A.   Analysis I: Interviews with the Filmmakers

One-on-one, semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with three

persons involved with film production for Ken Burns via Florentine Films. Buddy

Squires, cinematographer and Florentine Films cofounder; Paul Barnes Florentine's chief

film editor; and Susanna Steisel, lead photography researcher for the production

company, were each interviewed individually by the researcher over a two-month time

period.[70] The purpose of these interviews was to explore visual production strategies and

practices for the historical documentary, including preproduction and postproduction

aesthetic approaches related to photography/film, at the site of image production.

As discussed in the last chapter, the filmmakers interviewed for this portion of the

dissertation are experienced professionals with longstanding professional ties to Ken

Burns and the evolution of the historical documentary film. Therefore, their observations,

reflections, and insights are important to research on making and appropriating images as

historiophoty, and the involvement of visual effects as part of this process.

Each interview was approximately one hour in length and followed a semi-

structured, question-and-answer format. This approach allowed for elaboration of some

length from the informant-respondents as well as ample time for putting forth opinions

based on personal experience and as relevant to the topics of discussion. Again, the

format and method here were developed from the literature on qualitative interview

research and carried out solely by the interviewer/researcher. Specifically, a list of

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[70] Barnes and Steisel have also served in producer and assistant producer roles as well.

questions was generated beforehand and posed to each interviewee/respondent. Although most questions were posed to all informant-respondents, some questions addressed their professional experiences and were specific to the individual careers of the interviewees.[71]

Hand-written notes and analytic memos were made throughout these qualitative interviews and, upon completion of the three interviews, these notes were formally transcribed for purposes of data management, organization, and the resulting analysis. Furthermore, these transcriptions of the interviews were organized chronologically, with each interview following a question-and-answer format, and thus appearing in the form of an interpersonal conversation between interviewer and interviewee.

Several suggestions from the literature were incorporated for the following analysis of the interviews. First, McCracken (1988e) advises that qualitative interview analysis should be divided into stages of analysis upon completion of the transcription.[72] According to the author, the first three stages of the researcher's analysis of interview data should include observation and expanded observation techniques. In these preliminary stages, the researcher searches for evidence from the interviews that speaks to general topics or areas of interest to the research study. Here, general comparisons are also made between data from one interview to the next.

These first-order stages of analysis are followed by two more involved analytic stages. In the first of these stages, the researcher directs the findings from the observational stages to themes most relevant to the research study. In the second or

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[71] The core questions for the respondents are included in Appendix A of this dissertation.

[72] Similarly, Saldaña suggests interview analysis in terms of "cycles" rather than stages, with both scholars arguing for an organized and structured means of interview analysis.

subsequent stages (if necessary), the researcher moves from these themes back to the data in search of additional or supporting evidence, and then expands to include topics or ideas most significant to the research study (or RQs) (e.g., McCracken, 1988f, pp. 42-43).

Based on Saldaña's (2011a) suggestions for this type of thematic analysis of interview data, the transcriptions of the interviews were first analyzed for general topics or ideas relevant to this dissertation. Next, these data were compared and analyzed for themes, and then for themes that directly addressed issues raised in the RQs. In the following presentation of this data, themes are grouped individually, with feedback and information from the informant-respondents supporting these themes put forth under appropriate thematic headings. Following McCracken's afore-described (1988f) process for stage analysis of interview data, themes from the interview data were also compared to the RQs. The discussion of this latter area of the analysis is taken up further in a subsequent chapter of this dissertation.

Finally, the credibility and legitimacy of this approach is grounded in Erickson's (1986a; in Saldaña, 2011a) analytic induction process and assertion development for qualitative researchers. In Erickson's (1986b) summation, the researcher embarks upon "an exploration and [making] inferences about the data, based on an examination of the evidence and an accumulation of knowledge" (in Saldaña, 2011b, p. 119). This portion of the analysis leads qualitative researchers dealing with interview data to arrive at the development of assertions, or what Saldaña (2011d) characterizes as "declarative statements of summative sentences, supported by confirming evidence from the data"

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(p. 119).[73] For this research study, the induction process and development of assertions are directly related to the primary themes from these interviews.

Three themes emerged from the multistage analysis of these interviews. Although concepts and ideas found in the analysis occasionally overlap across themes, each informant-respondent spoke at length from personal and professional experiences, thus allowing for the division among specific themes. Furthermore, these themes and the subsequent presentation of data related to each are useful to understanding the interplay between photography/film, visual effects, and the historical documentary at the site of visual production.

Themes:

I)   The Significance and Primacy of Photography

II)   Technologies and Experimentations in "Moving Stills"

III)   Using Visuals to Serve and Respect History

What follows is a presentation of the data relevant to the themes in the form of a structured narrative, and grouped or separated by individual themes.

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[73] Erickson's ideas and conceptual approach are similar to what Silverman (2011a) and others have characterized as conversation analysis (of interview data). In this method, the researcher also searches for themes or topics of importance in the data and presents the findings accordingly.

Theme I: The Significance and Primacy of Photography

Buddy Squires, Paul Barnes, and Susanna Steisel spoke of the development and growth of their careers first in terms of formal or university education as well as professional training in their respective fields. The evolution of their careers is useful to understanding their respective role-related responsibilities, differences in job requirements, and ultimately, the labor that is part of producing a historical documentary in the 2010s. In addition, Squires, Barnes, and Steisel commented on their individual relationships to photography and film for historical purposes (e.g., historiophoty), their experiences with visual effects in this form, and their professional involvement with the now-familiar "Ken Burns style" of filmmaking.

The first theme that surfaced from the analysis of these interviews is *the primacy of the photographic image*. This theme was most often discussed in relation to the *aesthetics of photography* in still and motion picture forms. In addition, these topics were discussed as part of the informant-respondents' formal education and/or training in their respective areas of expertise. Squires, Barnes, and Steisel each described how they became aware of the power of documentary photography and its resulting impact on their professional careers.

Buddy Squires attended Hampshire College with Ken Burns in the 1970s. During his tenure at the school, his instructors "filled us with a sense of importance of the image" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015a). Squires said that all of his instructors at Hampshire were successful still photographers who ingrained in him the importance of documentary photography. The works of Jacob Riis, Walker Evans, and André Kertész were extremely influential during these formative years. Squires's first

endeavors with photography included learning the basic skills of still and motion picture cameras, as well as how to develop and process film. His first official credit as cinematographer for *Brooklyn Bridge* (1981d) would alter his career path as well as his understanding of the ways in which still images can be translated on to film.

Paul Barnes, in turn, attended New York University's prestigious Film School in hopes of a career in feature filmmaking. During this time, Carl Lerner, the film editor of the Oscar-winning *Klute* (1971a), gave a lecture and visual presentation on editing that included a shot-by-shot analysis of the film. According to Barnes, Lerner's presentation taught him the value of photographic composition and the ways in which photography can add dimensions to on-screen characters through aesthetic properties and techniques.

Barnes's desire to edit film was furthered when notable documentary film editor Larry Silk screened *Pumping Iron* (1977) for one of his university courses and used the film to emphasize the development of tension through shots and sequences.[74] Barnes credits Silk's lecture for his understanding of the importance of the ways in which cuts between shots add drama to a film, and how narrative tension is developed through the layering or building of film sequences over a film's running time.

Shortly thereafter, Barnes came to the conclusion that it was easier to break into film editing via documentary, which he said was less reliant upon formal apprenticeships and a hierarchical system of achievement. "You own the candy store…there's less competition," Barnes said of this career decision (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015b).

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[74] Barnes would go on to edit the film's sequel, *Pumping Iron II: The Women* (1985).

From here, both Squires and Barnes spoke to the formal qualities of making and

appropriating images for the historical documentary, with an emphasis on the aesthetics

of the visual. Squires said that the composition of the frame is his first and most

immediate concern during production and that "light is very important when considering

composing the shot" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015b).

For *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014g), Squires chose his compositions

for the outdoor, scene-setting images based on the quality of light, which is a function of

the time of day. In the film, a deep blue or near-purple sky hovering over a dimly lighted

forest photographed near one of the Roosevelt's several retreats, for instance, suggest a

time of peace or reflection for one or more members of the family.

When photographing indoors, and especially lighting for interviews, Squires's

goal is to use the interplay between light and shadow for dramatic purposes,

foregrounding the interviewees. "The shadows, for example, help make a film about the

story you want to tell," Squires said (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4,

2015c). Such statements from Squires confirm support this first theme on the connection

between the aesthetics of cinematography or making images and the visual's ability to

directly inform upon something from the past.

Similarly, Barnes spoke of aesthetic qualities of photography in terms of drama.

In *Klute*, for instance, Barnes was amazed by the degrees of light and shadow at play in

cinematographer Gordon Willis's imagery. According to Barnes, these aesthetic

properties of the photography add layers of complexity to Jane Fonda's character not

directly put forth in the script. In addition, Willis's use of light and shadow here point to

flaws in Donald Sutherland's private eye (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015a).

Susanna Steisel's relationship to the power of photography and the aesthetic qualities that aid in developing photography's aura originated almost by coincidence. In college, Steisel was "more interested in improvisational theater and Indian music than politics or history" (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015a). She was introduced to Ken Burns by mutual friends at this period in her life and by the mid-1980s, was employed as an office assistant for Florentine Films.

Lynn Novick, a producer who has co-directed with Burns on a number of Florentine productions, was one of Steisel's early and most influential mentors. Novick introduced Steisel to the various processes involved with photography research for making a historical documentary film, with Steisel's first major project in this regard Burns's 11-part, 19-hour miniseries, *Baseball* (1994d).

"When I started [at Florentine], I really didn't know what I was doing. It wasn't until I actually worked on film myself that I began to understand photography as an art form," Steisel said (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015b).

Burns followed *Baseball* with *Thomas Jefferson* (1997a), and by that time, Steisel was employed as Florentine's head of photography researcher.[75] On this two-part miniseries, Steisel worked in tandem with an assistant researcher as well as Burns in

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[75] According to the informant-respondents as well as background research for this study, job titles at Florentine Films are somewhat flexible, especially considering that many employees, including Steisel, serve in a number of roles and are oftentimes involved in tasks not necessarily tied to their job requirements.

accumulating an assortment of visual materials. Because Jefferson's life and career pre-dates photography, the team mostly gathered paintings, drawings, and illustrations of the Revolutionary-era politician.

"If you find a good picture, it adds to the script," Steisel said in reference to her research process (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015c). Here, Barnes confirms the influence of photographs on the historical documentary film and particularly, photography's ability to speak for itself rather than merely serve as illustration.

Steisel put forth several examples from her experiences on *Jefferson* that speak to the importance of photography/film for the historical documentary. For one, she said that the discovery of high-quality palladium prints of Jefferson's estate, Monticello, was important to making the story more accessible to the viewing audience. According to Steisel, the beauty of these prints aided or complemented the structure of the film, allowing for more visual variety in terms of the interplay between photography and other illustrative materials.

Steisel also realized that live-action cinematography and specifically, present-day footage of Monticello, was required to fully complete the narrative.[76] The live-action cinematography directed the viewer to the present, showing the estate and its surroundings in vivid colors and through a medium capable of immediately pinpointing

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[76] Of significance here is that the motion picture photography of Monticello in *Jefferson* is akin to the cinematography seen in *The Shakers* (1984c). That is, in both films, cinematography is used to show the interior and exterior architecture, and to present the surroundings of the countryside as it appears in the present.

the size and scale of the grounds. This awareness of different types of visual media and how each contributes to the visual information of the narrative was beneficial to Steisel and the evolution of her career in photographic research.

On the subjects of still photography and aesthetics, Steisel spoke at length about the importance of obtaining high-quality photographs, which remains an integral component of her responsibilities at Florentine Films. For Steisel, the resolution or image quality correlates to the impact photographs can have on the audience in terms of viewer engagement and narrative intrigue. Steisel said that a photograph with a higher resolution is capable of drawing the viewer deeper into the image and therefore, relaying stronger information for the narrative.

Steisel's comments in this regard speak directly to the most noteworthy properties of visual semiotics. A higher resolution photograph, for instance, contains more visual information, thereby suggesting an increase in the photograph's indexical and iconic properties as well. The more the visual information a photograph contains further suggests stronger viewer engagement via the image-quality, thus allowing the viewer to more easily grasp the image-content as well as gaze upon the more intimate and detailed properties of the image-content.

Steisel mentioned that high-quality images are required in an era of HD TVs. With poorer quality photographs, image-information is lost in translation; the processes of digitization and reformatting can result in pictures of that lose important informational and communicative qualities of photography. Therefore, obtaining high-quality scans of historic photographs is also important to Steisel. According to the photography researcher, the filmmakers rarely ask the image-holding archive for scanned photography

that will be edited for the completed film because the latter rarely has the equipment, time, and/or personnel available to perform such tasks.

"We make our initial copies of the photographs we're interested in with small cameras that we take to the archives," Steisel said. "It usually requires two to four team members, who we send to the site, to scan photographs, and we try to obtain about one hundred images a day" (S. Steisel, personal communication, June 23, 2016a).

For *The Roosevelts*, Steisel spoke of image quality in terms of the care or maintenance of archival images, many of which were uncovered in homes and smaller repositories after completion of the film's production. According to Steisel, roughly 20,000 photographs of the Roosevelt family were narrowed or edited to approximately 2,300 images for the final film.[77] Because the archival care of the images correlates to the ability of photography to convey visual information, Steisel stresses the need to seek out and retrieve or access high-quality photographs for the films on historical subjects.

"My job is to complement the scene," Steisel said. "That's when it works…that's when it starts being magic" (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015d).

Theme II: Technologies and Experimentations in "Moving Stills"

A second theme that emerged from the analysis of the qualitative interviews is the significance of *experimentations with photography, film, and other visual materials*, as well as processes associated with digitizing still images as part of the evolution of photography. Experimentations with visual media were routinely discussed as part of the

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[77] This number is Steisel's approximation, and based on the still photographs in *The Roosevelts.*

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informant-respondents' professional experiences in film production and in relation to film-related technologies.

Of interest here is that experimentations with archival still images in the historical documentary subgenre led to the development of Burns's visual aesthetic and particularly, increased use of and reliance on pan-and-zoom photography. Moreover, the informant-respondents also elaborated on how creative aspects of experimenting in their respective areas early on and particularly post-*Civil War* led to Burns's and Florentine's now-familiar reliance on building historical documentaries from the combination of still and motion picture forms.

The analysis of these interviews indicates that both the pan-and-zoom strategy and its variants, as well as the usage and repetition of historic still and motion picture photography, are components of an aesthetic that evolved through experimentation and were, at least initially, implemented for largely practical purposes.

According to Squires, the pan-and-zoom technique was first a matter of necessity, with Burns and his team forced to contend with the challenges of translating still images on to film. Experimentations with enlivening static visual materials emerged several years after Squires and Burns had completed *Working in Rural New England* (1976c). Around 1977, the Florentine Films headquarters was located in an apartment in Amherst, Massachusetts that Squires and Burns were occupying. Along with Roger Sherman, a collaborator and fellow Florentine cofounder, the trio was having difficulty deciding the subject of their next film.

"Ken was reading David McCullough's book on the Brooklyn Bridge at the time," Squires said. "Roger and I joked that our next film should be on the bridge" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015d).

Sometime later, Ken, Buddy, and Roger were contacted about a number of drawings, illustrations, and photographs of the Brooklyn Bridge that had been found in a storage facility near the structure. After sorting through the archives and coming to a realization of the historic and content-related value of the materials, the filmmakers began more seriously considering a film on the historic overpass. Eventually, the team decided to go ahead with the project, and that based on their findings, a film on the Brooklyn Bridge should be divided into two parts. The first segment would focus on the history and construction of the bridge, and the second on its significance as a symbol over time.

According to Squires, it took the trio several years to raise the funding for the project. "The entire thing was a process of problem solving," Squires said matter-of-factly (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015e).

But arguably the most difficult part was determining how to make a historical documentary film from an assortment of still images. According to Squires, Ken was familiar with and influenced by Koenig and Lowe's *City of Gold* (1957c).[78] The challenge, however, was translating two-dimensional materials, mostly prints, into something that resembled the multi-dimensional capabilities of film, while also maintaining the horizontal standards of the film frame. This interconnected issue is what Squires referred to as "a parallax problem" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4,

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[78] Here, Squires confirms a point from the first chapter of this research study.

2015f). Furthermore, some of the illustrations were upwards of 20 feet in length, and due to their size, substantial lighting was needed to capture the clarity of the detail of the imagery. Adding to these challenges is that the bulk of the illustrations and photographs could not be moved from the dark storage vault where they were housed.

"Anything of size became a problem," Squires said. "How do you make the image you want to see [on film]?" he said of the dilemma (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015g).

This set off a serious of experimentations for the team, led by Burns and Squires. At the time, Squires had recently purchased an Arriflex camera and a 75-millimeter zoom lens, which had "a good focal length and no distortion" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015h). Diopters were eventually added to the lens in order to further experiment with depth of field. In order to move and direct the archival materials, an apparatus had to be constructed from a large magnet board.

The device was created by melding together several two-by-fours with a groove down the middle. It was structured so that a camera could be mounted to the structure, which was flexible enough to be carted into the space where the illustrations were archived. According to Squires, the magnet board acted much like a homemade animation table.

Physically moving the camera in one of several directions and altering the focal length of the lens when necessary – while simultaneously manipulating the drawings, illustrations, or photographs on the magnet board by hand – gave the appearance of adding additional dimensions to two-dimensional materials. Eventually, the team had generated a type of rostrum camera affixed to the magnet board, which allowed for

photographing portions or areas of large visuals through the application of manual movement and direction.

"We were shooting about a thousand pieces [photographs, illustrations, etc.] a day," Squires remembers. "We were working really fast" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015i).

Squires also suggested the unintentional consequences of these early experimentations in pan-and-zoom photography, or what the cinematographer referred to as the "hand-crafted technique" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015j). Because of what the team achieved in *Bridge* and the replication of this aesthetic, Squires's present-day cinematography for a Burns production is somewhat limited. With *The Roosevelts*, for example, Squires and Allen Moore, a cinematographer who frequently photographs for Burns and Florentine, were primarily responsible for lighting and shooting the interviews and the limited live-action footage of the interiors and exteriors of the Roosevelts' estates, workplaces, and the accompanying surroundings.[79] Furthermore, Squires claims to have "no real control in editing" a film, while "Ken is always in the editing room" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015k).

The effect of these issues may account for Squires's rather varied résumé, including directing his own documentary features. Nonetheless, Squires openly applauds Burns and Florentine's work, including the digital processes that have altered the historical documentary, and have advanced him toward different aspects of filmmaking. In discussing *The Central Park Five* (2012b), for instance, Squires mentioned that

[79] For more on the cinematography in *The Roosevelts*, see the next section on visual analysis.

different historical subjects require different film styles, and that no one method is

necessarily appropriate for historical documentaries.

However, Squires believes "Ken [is] recreating the form" of the historical

documentary. "Almost every decision is a calculated decision," the cinematographer said.

"Each shot, each word is there for a reason" (B. Squires, personal communication,

2015l).

For Paul Barnes, experimentation in film editing takes place in an editing suite

rather than on location. Speaking to this theme, two early experiences in film editing

allowed Barnes to continue to creatively approaching still photography and film. That

both of these early opportunities proved successful for Barnes suggests the reason for his

longstanding association with Burns and Florentine and his sustaining creativity in his

profession.

As the film editor for Errol Morris's highly influential *The Thin Blue Line* (1988),

Barnes became directly connected to documentary film's ability to overturn errors of the

criminal justice system. The result of Morris's film is that a man wrongly accused of

several murders in Dallas was freed of the charges. *The Thin Blue Line* is mostly

comprised of interview footage and re-enactments of the events of the murders. The

editing itself is noteworthy because of the film's fractured narrative, which doubles back

on itself to present variations on details of the incidents.

Editing *Blue Line* gave Barnes an early opportunity to experiment with advanced

editing techniques for creative and storytelling purposes. Barnes spoke of how his editing

helps develop dramatic tension throughout the narrative. For example, the primary

footage, most memorably the re-enactments, is intercut throughout with that of the

interviewees, who describe their involvement from their respective points of view. The film's primary visual composition, which includes cutting between a-roll and b-roll, would become a reliable approach for Barnes in the ensuring decades.

Barnes had edited Burns's *The Statue of Liberty* (1985b) just prior to Morris's film, and admitted to feeling connected to the types of historical documentaries Burns was making:

> PB: Ken and I both love photography [and] Ken hates fast cutting. When I started working on *The Statue of Liberty*, we had great audio and we wanted to take full advantage of the visual materials we had. So, we said, 'Let's dissect a single image into different parts.' We can make an entire scene by pulling apart one photograph, like we were using different cuts (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015c).

A photograph that exemplifies this technique and that stands out to Barnes in *Statue* is presented within the first few seconds of the film. In the full frame of the image, a group of immigrants with their backs to the camera is positioned on a pier in New York City around the turn of the century. The group, most likely a family, is facing the presumable location of the statue on the opposite shore. The supposed patriarch of this unit has an arm raised and a finger pointed in the direction of an unseen Lady Liberty.

However, the photograph is first presented in extreme close-up, with the focus on the upper torso of the man whose arm is directed towards the right of the frame. The frame slowly zooms out and simultaneously pans toward the right, revealing other members of the party. The combined pan-and-zoom concludes at the edges of the frame of the photograph, with all five persons in this group presented in medium close-up.

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According to Barnes, "This is most certainly an early use of the Burns effect" (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015d).

The Civil War (1990g) was Barnes's next film editing challenge and required that a close familiarity with pan-and-zoom photography. Like others, Barnes's best recollections of the visual strategy are from *Civil War*, which was Barnes's first editing assignment on a miniseries for Burns and Florentine. With no motion picture photography of the period, the film became a hallmark for the repetition of pan-and-zoom photography, and the first for Burns and company in which the effect was produced both on location and as part of the editing process. According to Barnes, the vast quantity of visual materials required for the 11-hour plus film necessitated much experimentation for the editing team.

"We were just trying to find a way to remove the empty space and still hold on a photograph," Barnes recalled. "After that film, I was asked where we got the newsreel footage of the battle. I heard from a lot of my colleagues (e.g., film editors) who were really moved by this technique [for *Civil War*]" (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015e). Similar to the information provided by Squires on the subject, the additional motion and direction applied to the still photographs appears to have been utilized for drama and emotion as well as for aesthetic purposes related to maintaining motion throughout the narrative.

Over the last quarter century, Paul Barnes has been perfecting the art of adding motion and direction to still images for Florentine productions, where he has worked on most of Burns's films since 1990. According to Barnes, the Florentine process has evolved over the years, with the visual style of each film driven by the subject matter or

content. For *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014h), Barnes said that it was important to maintain a narrative focus with the significant bulk of visual materials accumulated by the research team. Equally important here was keeping the film historically accurate and incorporating visuals with strong aesthetic qualities, such as composition.

But according to Barnes, the newsreel footage for *The Roosevelts* was of great importance because motion pictures have the ability to show the physical and human characteristics and movements of the subjects of the film. "We really tried to hunt down stock footage for *The Roosevelts* because we felt it could evoke the time and place really well," Barnes said (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015f).[80]

As an office assistant-turned-photography and film researcher, Susanna Steisel began her career by toting film cameras to various locations so that Burns and Squires could film archival photographs and illustrations. "Back then [1980s], I remember having to send the animation stand from Boston [to the filming location] all the time," Steisel recalled (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015e).

Steisel cited *The War* (2007a) – the seven-episode miniseries co-directed by Burns covering World War II – as the first film in which most of the still photographs in the final cut of the film were digitally scanned during production.

"Before that, Ken and Buddy would shoot all that stuff," Steisel said. "But it was fun," Steisel recalls. "You got to meet a lot of people…and there was a lot of just hanging around" (S. Steisel, personal communication, June 23, 2016a). Now, it is her

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[80] Steisel said that Dan White, who also works for Florentine Films, was primarily responsible for gathering the archival newsreel footage for *The Roosevelts*.

responsibility to obtain the still photographs, illustrations, documents, records and so forth necessary to complete a historical documentary film.

Steisel also spoke of the time-consuming aspects of the pre-digital era of photography and how newer technologies have affected her role-related responsibilities. Before digital scanning revolutionized Steisel's job, Florentine would oftentimes send archival photographs to a picture framing store in Newton, Massachusetts, that had an animation studio. If Burns and Squires could not travel to an archive to film or re-photograph on location, which included the manual pans and zooms and combination technique, employees at the frame store could make high-quality copies of the original visual materials, and use the animation stand to add camera movement(s).

With little-to-no formal training, Steisel's evolution into the more creative aspects of filmmaking was slower. It wasn't until after *Thomas Jefferson* (1997b) that she gained first-hand experience in the creative aspects of film production. Although Barnes insisted that actual storyboards are rarely if ever used for a Burns-directed film, Steisel's creative involvement and experimenting begins in pre-production and with previsualizing segments of the film from a lengthy draft of the script. The actual researching of images begins long before the arrival of a final draft of the script, with Steisel and at least one additional assistant or Florentine team member responsible for pouring through hundreds or thousands of images.[81] Here, Steisel is looking for the availability and types of images, as well as the copyright owner(s) and/or archive locations.

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[81] According to Steisel, this process almost always includes interns or production assistants responsible for visiting archives as a team, and then making high-quality copies

"With *The Roosevelts*, we started gathering the images pre-script," Steisel said. "I remember looking through a lot of campaign photos [of Franklin] and early images of Eleanor" (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015f).

Previsualizing the film through a review of the script and an initial sort through the images found and available during the early stages of research helps Steisel and the editors determine the focus of the film and how the images will shape the narrative. "For the *Roosevelts*, we started with around 20,000 images and narrowed it to about 2,300; that's one-tenth of the total," Steisel said in an exasperated tone of voice (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015g).

Once Burns and the producers have agreed to a completed draft of the script, Steisel reviews areas of the script that need or require additional still images, which also includes deciding those segments of the film that might be better served with newsreel footage or live-action cinematography. From here, Steisel is the lone member on Florentine's staff whose primary responsibility is finding and obtaining all of the visual materials for the film.

"There's something about [it] being your responsibility that really sticks with you," Steisel said about the totality of these tasks and job requirements (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015h).

According to Steisel, she and others at Florentine are constantly receiving information about possible photographs on or of the subjects of their films. The *Roosevelts* was no exception; Steisel said that she was contacted about images during and

of the visual materials on location. However, the final decision for the inclusion or exclusion of images is ultimately the responsibility of the film's editor and Burns.

after production was completed, although most of the photographs for that film were retrieved from Houghton Library at Harvard University, Theodore's estate at Sagamore Hill on Long Island (New York), the Library of Congress, and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park, New York.

Once the photographs and other visual materials have been collected, Steisel is involved in another form of creative experimentation, or what she describes as a "picture pass." In this collaborative process, visuals are matched to areas of the script, similar to a storyboard. With *The Roosevelts*, the team went through "nine to ten separate screenings of the film" before agreeing on the photography for the film (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015i).

Upon completion of a film, Steisel said that she puts the project in the back of her mind and moves on to the next; making countless phone calls, running online searches for images, and communicating with archivists is an exhausting process that Steisel prefers not to revisit.

But the researcher said she deeply enjoys having a career that relies on creativity and multitasking. She believes that the key to success as a photography researcher for a historical documentary is "being creative about what you think might work." Experimenting in this regard includes finding and obtaining images that are in some way relatable to the narrative and therefore, to the viewer. "Photographs should help make a leap between what we're talking about and what we want to say," Steisel said (S. Steisel, personal communication, October 27, 2015j).

Theme III: Using Images to Serve and Respect History

A third theme that emerged from the analysis of the interviews was the

connection between *history and photography/film* or, for purposes of this research study,

historiophoty. Of significance to this theme is that each of the interviewees attributed at

least partial credit to Ken Burns for generating and curating their interests in the ability of

still and motion picture photography to inform upon the past.

In Buddy Squires's words: "Ken has always been interested in history…and has

done great work over the years" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015l).

Because Squires has worked with Burns since their days at Hampshire College,

the former's joint interests in history and still and motion picture photograph were

developed alongside his collaborator. Like Burns, Squires also credits Professor Jerome

Liebling for an early interest in the documentary still photography of the 1930s, which

was a means of using visual information to learn about the events of the era.

"At Hampshire, our instructor, Jerome Liebling, would remind us that all these

things [i.e., documentary photographs from the 1930s] are really historical residue to

bring things back to life" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015m).

Squires spoke of how the history of the Brooklyn Bridge became literally

integrated with his profession. Because the home-made animation stand and mounted

camera had to be moved time and again into the storage vault during production of the

film, Squires claims that the totality of time he spent in the vault made him feel

physically and emotionally closer to the historic structure. According to the

cinematographer, photographing the archival materials inside the vault allowed the team

to treat the subject matter as if they were in a "live space" as opposed to distanced or removed from the bridge and its history.

"You have to photograph in a way that speaks to that environment," Squires said. "What we're doing is making a film about these [historical] stories you have to tell" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015n).

Because Squires is constantly moving from one historic locale to the next for purposes of photographing items that speak to the past, he prefers to shoot "as is." In other words, Squires prefers to arrive at a location and, aside from lighting, respect the history that is conjoined to the subject(s). In effect, Squires says that he feels "transported into different worlds" while working on historical documentary films.

"[My experiences] don't translate into words," Squires said. "When I'm shooting, I'm thinking, 'This really happened here'…" (B. Squires, personal communication, May 4, 2015o).

Although Paul Barnes's initial interests in film and filmmaking were founded in feature-length fiction films from the New Hollywood era, his love for still photography is aligned to his boyhood interests in European and American history. Barnes came to believe that "history reads like or is better than fiction…":

> PB: I've been a big history fan since I was 10 years-old…As an editor, I never get bored by my job…I'm seeking images that are as close to historically accurate [as possible] and that can evoke a time and place (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015g).[82]

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[82] For more on how Burns's team at Florentine determines historical accuracy and credibility via photography/film, see Steisel's following comments on processes for

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Barnes's formal training in film editing at NYU, his early career experiences, as well as this interest in history shaped his profession and continued to evolve once he began working with Burns. The latter's passion for history on film became a professional tie between the two collaborators. Barnes believes that a historical documentary film "comes to life" in the editing room (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015h). He and Burns are oftentimes working side-by-side in the editing suite, with Barnes handling the nonlinear film editing system or software (AVID), and Burns making decisions about the content and visual architecture of the film.

> PB: I see myself [and Ken] doing emotional archaeology when editing a film. I'm looking for the emotions behind the events, and I want the audience to *feel* history…History's not dry, it's very emotional and it gains importance over time (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015i).

Interestingly, Barnes's current relationship to historical subject matter is also tied to the pan-and-zoom effect, and the history of his professional involvement with the strategy. For one, the technique is directly connected to certain memories or recollections of history for Barnes, primarily through the ways in which it is appropriated for a specific photograph or illustration in a Burns production. Barnes provided an example from an early scene in *The Civil War* (1990h). In the film, Matthew Brady's famous portrait of President Abraham Lincoln is depicted on-screen, and accompanied by a narrator's reading of the Gettysburg Address. Barnes characterizes what happens next as "a long, long zoom in" towards Lincoln's face and gaze.

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photographic research and history, as well as subsequent sections of the analysis chapter and the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

"We're allowed to focus on his [Lincoln's] face because the picture stays on screen for one and a half minutes," Barnes said. "That long exposure allows us to see how 'active' his eyes are…there's something revealing in his face. It's so compelling. It's like we can read those words into his face" (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015j).

Barnes made similar comments about an early scene in *The Roosevelts* that deals with Franklin's law practice on Wall Street before his success in politics. In this regard, Barnes said that some historical licensing in terms of the photography was necessary to evoke the place and time period.

"We had to search for 'equivalences' for that series of images," Barnes stated. "We had to find stills that were as close to historically accurate as possible and that maintained strong [visual] composition" (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015k).

The historical licensing Barnes refers to also ties to the development of the team's aesthetic, which is carried out by any number of these visual "equivalences." The "equivalences" Barnes cites as examples are still photographs of Wall Street around the early 1900s – the time period in which Franklin Roosevelt's firm was located in the area – in addition to the live-action color cinematography of the interiors of Roosevelt's office. The combination of these visual forms results in an aesthetic that transports the viewer to the Wall Street of the 1930s.

It would be one of the aforementioned responsibilities of Susanna Steisel to find and retrieve these historical "equivalences." Although Steisel's job requirements include the more tedious tasks of locating archives that house images and securing rights for

photographs, her passion for photography is connected to making sense of history through photography and film. Like Burns and similar to Barnes, Steisel speaks of the historicity of photographs in terms of the interplay between accuracy and emotion (e.g., Cunningham, 2005e).

"I'm always looking for a combination of factual and emotional," Steisel said. "I think the 'art' of photo research is understanding how to illustrate a scene" (S. Steisel, personal communication, April 28, 2015k).

For Steisel, most if not all forms of photography are avenues to history. One of Steisel's fears is that digital photography is dislocating personal history, replacing physical photographs of once stored in albums with something less tangible. "Even snapshots inform how we think about history," Steisel said. "I don't think people today really immerse themselves [in photographs] in that way anymore" (S. Steisel, personal communication, April 28, 2015l).

However, Steisel believes that photography is capable of relaying historic information, suggesting that historical documentaries must rely on original still and motion picture photography of the time period to best convey such information. In this regard, the practices associated with Steisel's research process have aided in the development of her knowledge of history. The researcher's routine includes reviewing books on potential topics for films, phoning or visiting libraries and museums, and running Internet searches for photography collectors and agencies who maintain image archives. Such responsibilities keep Steisel continually focused on the intersections between the visual and history.

"It [photography] makes you want to learn more about the subject," Steisel said. "For photography, your appreciation [of the subject] is so much deeper" (S. Steisel, personal communication, April 28, 2015m).

For *The Roosevelts*, Steisel ventured out with the film's producers to the aforementioned Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum in Hyde Park, New York. "We work with each other, check in with each other all the time," Steisel recalled (S. Steisel, personal communication, April 28, 2015n).

The film had a lengthy and detailed script that covered major events over several decades, so Steisel was tasked with finding an abundance of visual materials that could serve a number of functions. She and an assistant, and occasionally Ken and others, sorted through hundreds of photographs of the former First Family.

"You can spend months looking for these photos," Steisel said. (S. Steisel, personal communication, April 28, 2015o).

But Steisel also remembers that "*The Roosevelts* was an easier film to research because most of the photographs were located in a handful of select locations. We found some things [photographs] that hadn't seen the light of day…. We missed some things too. There were things in people's attics…." (S. Steisel, personal communication, April 28, 2015p).

Steisel's latest projects have deeply informed and impacted her relationship to history. She worked on the upcoming Burns-directed historical documentary on the Vietnam War, and is currently in production on a film focused on the history of country music. Steisel said that the latter film has been particularly difficult because of the vast number of locations in which the images are scattered.

"These days, we have to be more selective about the photography because of HD TV," Steisel said. "People expect the photography to look better" (S. Steisel, personal communication, April 28, 2015q).

The Vietnam film, another lengthy miniseries scheduled for release in 2017, has been "life changing," Steisel said. With an ample amount of challenging still photographs of the era interwoven with television and newsreel footage from conflict zones in Southeast Asia, the film has taught her much about the significance and events of the War. "I think this film will allow for an experience of sharing pain and suffering," Steisel recalled. "*The Roosevelts* was accessible, that's why so many people watched it. This one [*Vietnam*]…it alters you" (S. Steisel, personal communication, April 28, 2015r).

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The three themes found from the multistage analysis of the qualitative interviews for this research study are significant to exploring images at the site of visual production. The first theme, in which the interviewees' expressed their appreciation and belief in historic photography, is tied to the unique capabilities of photography as well as the medium's indexical and referential ties to the actual and therefore, the past. The second theme or the processes that led to the development of pan-and-zoom photography in the historical documentary is important to understanding the role of aesthetic-related production practices that encroach upon photography's semiotic qualities. Finally, the third theme, concerned with the use of photography to inform upon the historic, also confirms the role of photography in the historical documentary in terms of its communicative and informative possibilities.

These ideas are further explored in the final chapter of this dissertation.

B.   Analysis II: Visual Analysis of the Case Study Film

The researcher conducted a visual analysis for all seven episodes of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014i). The purpose of the visual analysis was to engage with the visual at the site of the image. This analysis was the second method of the triangulated methodology incorporated for this study.

The visual analysis process included coding every shot in all seven segments of the film. First, shots were coded according to the primary or first-order coding category. First-order coding categories were SHOT TYPE and VISUAL EFFECT. Each individual shot was coded for one of five possible shot types and, where applicable, also coded for one of six possible visual effects, which comprised the second-order coding categories for the analysis (see Figure 25).

As put forth in the previous chapter, all first and second-order coding categories were developed by the researcher prior to the visual analysis of *The Roosevelts*. The processes as part of the visual analysis for this study were derived from scholarship on qualitative methods in mass communication, media and cinema studies. Coding categories were generated from the researcher's prior knowledge of potential or likely types of visual forms in the historical documentary and aesthetic strategies or techniques common to this subgenre and the films of Ken Burns in particular.

Furthermore, the researcher made analytic memos with time codes relevant to the film's content in the section labeled ADDITIONAL NOTES on the coding sheet and as part of the visual analysis. Analytic memos were made on content that spoke to shots or sequences in *The Roosevelts* in relation to a visual effect or aesthetic strategy. An

example of the coding sheet, including the primary and second-order coding categories for the visual analysis is presented below.[83]

To begin the first stages of the analysis, first and second-order coding categories were tallied for each episode of the miniseries. In other words, all data collected from SHOT TYPE and VISUAL EFFCT coding categories were totaled per episode, and then tallied cumulatively for the entirety of the film. Next, the accumulated data collected across first and second-order coding categories per episode was tallied to determine the number of shots with and without the application of one or more visual effects. Following these stages of the visual analysis, the researcher analyzed the data for items of relevance to the RQs.

| CODING SHEET FOR THE ROOSEVELTS: AN INTIMATE HISTORY (2014) PART 1: GET ACTION (112 minutes) | | | | | | | | | |
| TYPES OF SHOT | | | | VISUAL EFFECT | | | | | |
STILL IMAGE	NEWSREEL FOOTAGE	ILLUSTRATION	LIVE-ACTION FOOTAGE	PAN-AND-ZOOM	PAN	ZOOM	CUT IN	OTHER	ADDITIONAL NOTES

Figure 26: Example of the coding sheet for visual analysis.[84]

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[83] This example of the coding sheet created is also presented in the second section of Chapter II, Research Design & Methodology.

Subsequent stages of the analysis included tallying across the second-order coding categories for purposes of obtaining the number of individual shot types in relation to the individual visual effects per episode as well as for the entirety of the film. The analytics memos were also analyzed for reoccurring patterns or themes that spoke to findings from the various stages of the analysis of the first and second-order coding categories. All tallied data from first and second-order coding categories, including cross-analyses of categories, was then transcribed into tables as part of the subsequent data presentation and analysis.

The final stage of the analysis involved an additional screening of each episode of *The Roosevelts* for purposes of retrieving duplicates of images in the film that spoke to the most prominent findings or themes from the analysis. As discussed in the last chapter in the section on the method of visual analysis, these images provide visual components to the data presentation. Simultaneously, the images below are necessary to communicating visual information most relevant to the findings from separate stages of the data analysis.

The following is the presentation and analysis of the data collected and the most significant results and conclusions from the analysis.[85]

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[84] Interview footage was distinguished from other forms of live-action cinematography, such as present-day footage of nature or architecture, and as a second-order coding category during the coding process.

[85] For additional information on this method and the research design for the visual analysis, see the section on visual analysis in the previous chapter.

Tables 1 and 2 below display the tallies from the first stages of the data analysis:

SHOT TOTAL	VISUAL EFFECTS TOTAL
6,055	2,013

Table 1: Total number of shots and total number of visual effects coded for the

entirety of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014k).

SHOT TYPE	TOTALS	VISUAL EFFECT	TOTALS
NEWSREEL	2916	PAN-AND-ZOOM	574
STILL IMAGE[86]	2440	TILT	455
INTERVIEW[87]	251	PAN	343
ILLUSTRATION	240	ZOOM	324
LIVE ACTION	208	CUT IN	289
N/A	N/A	OTHER	28

Table 2: Tallies of second-order coding categories for the entirety of *The Roosevelts.*

Table 3 below presents totals for the number of units coded for STILL IMAGE first-order category in addition to the individual second-order categories for VISUAL

[86] A 1% variation in the total number of still images tabulated is reflected from Tables 2 to 3. This slight variation is credited to a margin of error in analyzing still images with and without visual effects during separate stages of the analysis.

[87] Again, interview footage was distinguished from other forms of live-action cinematography, such as present-day footage of nature or architecture, and as a second-order coding category during the coding process.

EFFECTS for the entirety of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014j). In other words, Table 3 displays totals for different combinations of still photographs that also contained one or more visual effects.

STILL IMAGE AND VISUAL EFFECTS	TOTALS
STILL IMAGE, NO EFFECT[88]	1044
STILL IMAGE, EFFECT[89]	1,422
STILL IMAGE, PAN-AND-ZOOM	523
STILL IMAGE, TILT	334
STILL IMAGE, ZOOM	300
STILL IMAGE, CUT IN	175
STILL IMAGE, PAN	73

Table 3: Totals for combinations of still image and visual effect pairs coded in *The Roosevelts*.

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[88] See footnote 16.

[89] See footnote 16.

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Before shifting to a discussion of this data, a few points of clarification regarding the second-order coding categories and the totals from Table 2 are worthy of elaboration here.

First, for the SHOT TYPE primary coding category, only still photographs were coded in the STILL IMAGE second-order coding category; other types of still images, such as photographed news clippings, letters, and cartoons in the film were coded under the ILLUSTRATION second-order category. It is also important to note that all units of analysis coded in the ILLUSTRATION category could be considered photographed still visual materials either scanned for the film or recorded by live-action cinematography and then edited into the film.

Second, all individual shots coded in the NEWSREEL second-order category were individual shots used from the film in what appeared to be either actual newsreel footage or 8-millimeter footage in the form of nonprofessional motion picture photography (e.g., "home movie" footage). In turn, all shots coded in the INTERVIEW category were scenes recorded for formal interview purposes. Items coded under the LIVE ACTION category were motion picture shots predominantly depicting interior and exterior, present-day settings, and always photographed in color.

For the VISUAL EFFECT first-order category, units of analysis coded under the PAN-AND-ZOOM category had to display characteristics or qualities of both the pan or horizontal camera movement as well as the zoom or motion into or away from content in the frame. Individual shots displaying only one of these effects were coded as either PAN or ZOOM, respectively. The researcher also ran tallies for shots that contained PAN-

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AND-ZOOM and in which the function of the pan-and-zoom was directed toward content in the frame (PAN-AND-ZOOM, IN) or away from content in the frame (PAN-AND-ZOOM, OUT). In addition, total numbers of ZOOM's with towards or away from content in the frame (IN and OUT, respectively) were also recorded.[90]

Next, units coded for the CUT IN second-order category were those displaying this transitional effect for still images or motion picture photography. Although the cut-in strategy is traditionally understood as an editing technique for transitioning between shots, the addition of the code here is because of its functional quality in the film; cut-ins were oftentimes found to replicate an effect similar to the pan-and-zoom.

In addition, the second-order coding category OTHER as part of the VISUAL EFFECT first-order category was restricted to computer-generated, non-photographic "special" effects in the film. Although the total number tallied for OTHER was minimal (28), examples include cross-dissolves that resulted in a layered image or a "flashbulb" transition from one image to another.

Finally, it is also important to note that motion picture photography in which in-film camera motion was used – such as the appearance of a shoulder-mounted roving camera or a camera affixed to tripod and in motion via a moving automobile – were not coded as part of the visual analysis. The rationale for not recording these types of camera movements is that they are not understood as a form of visual effect whereby additional motion was applied to images as part of the production process. In the few scenes where

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[90] Tables 2 and 3, however, do not display the number of PAN-AND-ZOOM's and ZOOM's recorded with the "IN" and "OUT" functions distinguished. Tables 2 and 3 only provide the grand total of found PAN-AND-ZOOM's and ZOOM's.

this occurred, the camera motion was found to be apparently accidental or largely

functional in the sense that it was produced on location and its purpose could not be

determined during the coding process.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

The individual and cross-analyses of Tables 1, 2, and 3 speak directly to several

issues or items of interest to this research study and the RQs. Further elaboration and

discussion on the following points from the analysis below is put forth in the next

chapter.

To begin, Table 1 shows that almost exactly one-third or just under 33% of shots

for all seven episodes of *The Roosevelts* were also coded for one or more visual effects.

From Table 2, still photographs (2,440) only accounted for slightly more than 40% of the

visual presentation of the film (6,055 shots), but 1,422 of the 2,440 still photographs

coded were also coded for one or more visual effects, or slightly more than 58% of the

total number of still images.[91] In other words, although only 40% of the total number of

shots coded were still photographs, the majority of still photographs coded were found to

have also been coded for visual effects (58%).

The analysis of the data also suggests that of the visual effects coded, most were

coded in combination with still images (photographs). Based on a tally of second-order

categories from Table 2, 2,013 visual effects were coded for the entirety of the

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[91] Table 2 also shows that the totals for interview footage, live-action cinematography,

and other still illustrative materials, such as news clippings, letters, diary entries, and

political cartoons, were minimal, with each serving to supplement and contribute to the

primary visual architecture of the miniseries.

miniseries, with 1,422 also coded for still photographs. This indicates that almost 71% of visual effects coded for the entirety of *The Roosevelts* were also coded for still photographs.

Furthermore, when taking into account the data in Table 3, of the 1,422 still images (photographs) coded in tandem with visual effects, 523 of that number or almost 37% of still photographs were coded specifically for the pan-and-zoom effect. Therefore, the pan-and-zoom was the most commonly found visual effect for still images and, as Table 2 indicates, the most common visual effect coded among the second-order categories, with 574 pan-and-zooms for the entirety of *The Roosevelts*. In addition, the total number of units coded for pan-and-zoom as well as still images (523) is 91% of the total number of all pan-and-zooms coded for the miniseries.

Still images with the application of visual effects were also found to maintain a longer screen presence or on-screen running time than still images without visual effects. The longer running time allows the pan-and-zoom to more slowly and theoretically, more effectively, draw the viewer into the image, thereby enhancing the appeal of the content through targeted motion and direction. In other words, because the pan-and-zoom effect is used to direct the viewer toward or away from items in the frame, it oftentimes requires additional screen time than a static still photograph.
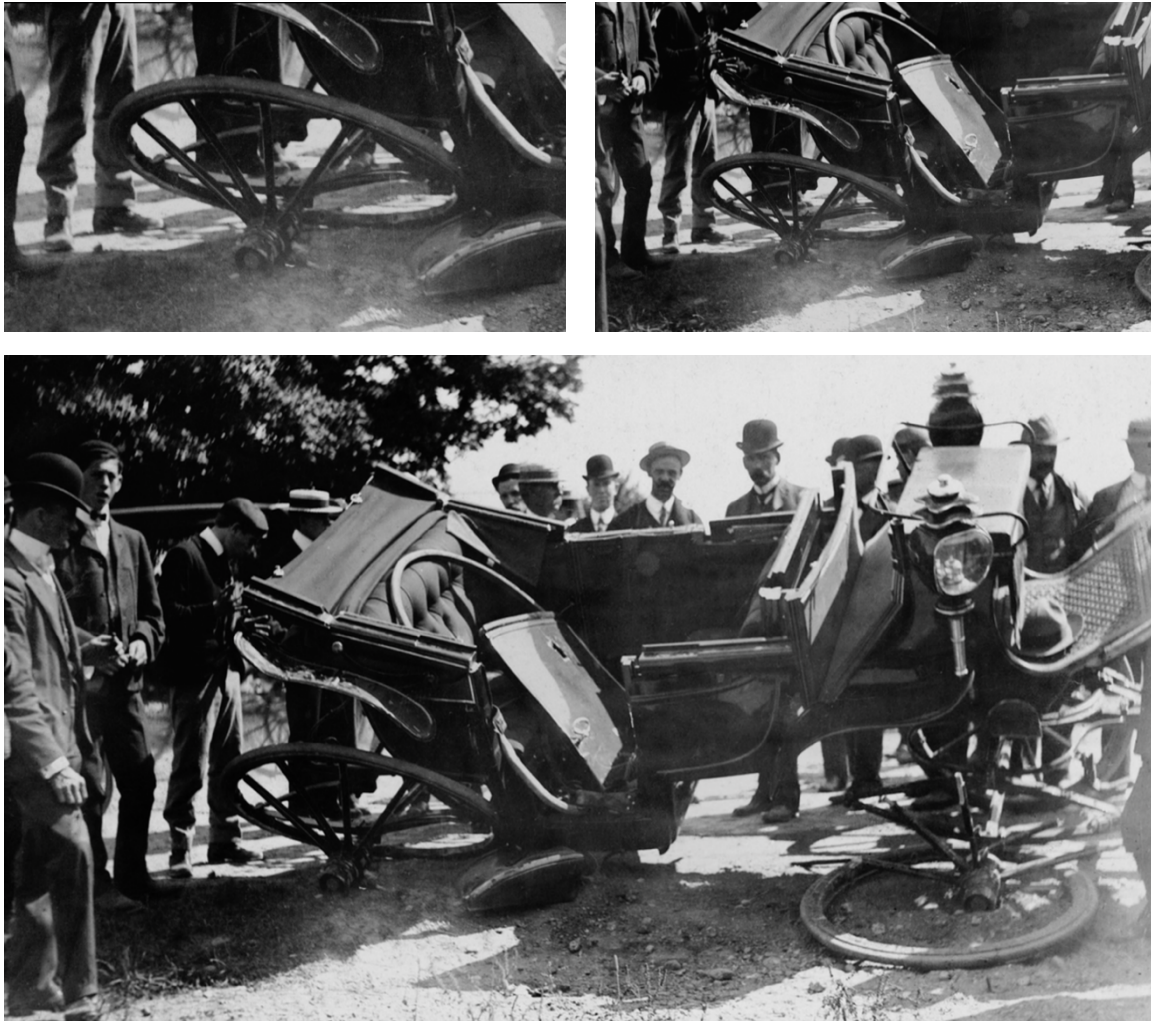
Figures 27, 28, and 29: A sequence of still frames showing the "reveal" when the pan-and-zoom is applied to a single still photograph. (From top left, clockwise) An image from *The Roosevelts* of a broken wheel appears on screen first. As the camera slowly pans left and across the frame and simultaneously zooms out, a crashed automobile is exposed in addition to a number of men who are surrounding the wreckage.   *Used with permission from Florentine Films*

Figures 30 and 31: (From top) A second example of the "reveal" when the pan-and-zoom effect applied to a still photograph in *The Roosevelts*. Here, a close-up image of mostly smiling adolescent girls becomes a symbol of Nazi propaganda as the camera zooms away from the faces of the girls and pans slightly toward the left of the screen, thereby revealing a larger number of young females with flags bearing Nazi insignia. *Used with permission from Florentine Films*

Figures 32, 33, 34, and 35 (above): (From top, clockwise) A third example of the "reveal" from *The Roosevelts* and when the pan-and-zoom effect is applied to a single still photograph. As the camera slowly pans left and zooms out from the cropped, tighter first frame depicted on screen (Figure 32), the content and therefore the focus of the image changes from a mother with two children to a mother with five children, living in poverty-stricken conditions during the height of the Great Depression.

Used with permission from Florentine Films

The visual analysis, however, also indicates that other visual effects frequently coded – tilts and zooms – also required added screen time to perform their necessary functions.[92] Tilting the camera or performing the technique through editing software is used to move from one location in the visual frame to another; zooming the lens, meanwhile is used to target a specific area in the frame or to move away from a detail to reveal a wider array of content.

According to Table 3, over 23% of the total number of visual effects applied to still images were coded as TILT, and slightly more than 21% coded as ZOOM.[93]

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[92] Although fewer cut-ins and standalone pans were coded throughout and in relation to still images, these strategies were also found to enhance the amount of time a single picture remained on screen.

[93] See Table 3 for total numbers of STILL IMAGE, TILT and STILL IMAGE, ZOOM recorded from the analysis of the data.

Figures 36, 37, and 38:

(From top) The most familiar or "classic" example of the pan-and-zoom effect applied to a still photograph. In this portrait of Theodore Roosevelt, the slight pan to the right and zoom in towards the President's face allows the viewer to more readily concentrate on Roosevelt's intense gaze, as well as the detail in his face.

Used with permission from Florentine Films

Therefore, while the most coded visual effect for still photographs was PAN-AND-ZOOM, approximately 44.5% of visual effects for still images were coded as either TILT or ZOOM.

In sum, of the 1,422 still photographs also coded for visual effects, 1,157 or over 81% were specifically incorporated to add movement or direction or both for purposes of shifting the gaze of the viewer from one area of the frame to another and/or towards or away from visual content. As suggested, the visual analysis indicates that the tilts and zooms coded in *The Roosevelts* behave similar to the pan-and-zoom effect. Each pinpoints one or more items in the visual frame or widens or shifts the scope of the frame to reveal additional content.

All visual effects coded for still images were also found to promote the pacing of the narrative. This was determined by two primary factors. The most prominent being the application of motion and direction to the still frame, which provides the still image with movement similar to pans, zooms, and tilts common to motion picture photography. In addition, added motion provides the viewer with the sense that the contents in the frame are, to some extent, moving.

Again, this second factor was reported after the release of *The Civil War*, and confirmed by Paul Barnes in the previous section. Furthermore, increased motion on film, regardless of the regardless of the origination of the photographic or visual type, is commonly thought to quicken the narrative. Of course, the inverse of this is also understood as an aesthetic truth in terms of images on screen.

Figures 39, 40, 41 and 42:

(From top) An example of the tilt camera motion in *The Roosevelts*. Of interest here is that Burns uses the tilt for functional as well as aesthetic purposes. The camera movement or effect from Eleanor Roosevelt (Figure 39) is used to show the First Lady's interaction with a wounded soldier during World War II (Figures 40 and 41), and then the tilt lands on an area of the frame depicting Eleanor's hand comforting the soldier, which also provides the viewer access to more of soldier's body and bedside surroundings.

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Figures 43, 44, 45, and 46 (above): (From top, clockwise) A second example of the tilt in *The Roosevelts*. Again, the effect is used for functional as well as aesthetic purposes. What at first appears to be a candid moment of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt is slowly revealed to be a photograph showing the President gripping support rails on both sides of his body. As the camera motion continues downward, Roosevelt's brace-locked legs appear to be dangling between steps.

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Figures 47, 48, 49, and 50: (From top left, clockwise) Two examples of zooms applied to still photographs in *The Roosevelts*. In the first example, the zoom in provides more detail in the content of the image while also eliminating much of the exterior areas of the visual frame. Here, more of the family and what appears to be ice

cream is conveyed as their surroundings are slowly removed. In the second example,

the young man whose gaze is directed into the camera lens (center) becomes less the

focus of the photograph with the application of the zoom out effect, whereby others

who have also benefitted from the G.I. Bill are present in an urban campus

environment.   *Used with permission from Florentine Films*

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Therefore, the analysis indicates that one reason for keeping the visual narrative

"in motion" in terms of the still images throughout the film is to complement the

overwhelming amount of newsreel footage in the film's second half. In the case of *The*

Roosevelts, a more rapid visual presentation helps guides the viewer through the

chronology of events on screen. In the next section, narrative pacing is also discussed but

in relation to viewer engagement with image-related content and the visual presentation.

Moving forward, Table 2 shows that newsreel footage was the most common

coded visual type in *The Roosevelts*, with 2,916 shots tabulated for this second-order

category. Archival still images (photographs) were the second most commonly found

type of visual, with 2,440 in total. However, because individual newsreel shots and still

photographs were given equal weight throughout the coding process, it is unclear as to

which of the two photographic forms accumulated the majority of screen time.

The visual analysis of *The Roosevelts* does suggest, nonetheless, that individual

newsreel shots occupied minimal screen time – usually one to two seconds – while still

photographs could remain visible on screen for 10 seconds or more. The significance of

screen time per shot or still photograph allows for the viewer to gaze longer at the image

on screen. Although the total number of shots in the film were not individually coded for

screen time, newsreel shots were most commonly found in montages or sequences, and still photographs, particularly those with the application of visual effects, required more screen time than most individual newsreel shots to accomplish the moving from one area or portion of the frame. Because more individual newsreel shots are required for a newsreel sequence, with newsreel shots rarely if ever incorporated independently into a film. Therefore, while the total number of newsreel shots coded is greater than the number of still images coded from the analysis, these totals do not necessarily reflect the amount of screen time given to each photographic form.

The tallies of these second-order categories as well as the aesthetic and editorial practices commonly associated with uses of motion pictures and still images therefore suggest that still photographs occupied the majority of the running time of the miniseries. Most importantly, the total number of still images (photographs) in the film (2,440) was almost 84% of the sum of the film's most dominant visual type (newsreel). When attempting to determine screen time occupied, the difference in total number of these two photographic forms is somewhat negligible, especially considering that individual "still" visuals in the film, including items coded in the ILLUSTRATION category, remained on screen longer with the application of visual effects.

Next, from the individual analyses of Episodes 1, 2, and 4, the total number of still images (1,222) was far greater than the number of newsreel shots (432).[94] This

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[94] These totals are from the analysis of the individual episodes of *The Roosevelts* and therefore, not included in Tables 1, 2, and 3. In addition, the total number of newsreel shots (380) to still photographs (377) for Episode 3 is not included in this tally because the totals are similar and therefore, somewhat irrelevant. The same applies to the final

suggests that the visual presentation of the first few episodes of *The Roosevelts* were found to be substantially more dependent upon archival still photographs of the era. This also indicates that a reliance on still photography at the beginning of the film could be attributed to the time period covered in the first few episodes in particular, an era in which still photography in news and nonprofessional sectors proliferated.

Specifically, Episodes 1 and 2 track the early life and political career of Theodore Roosevelt during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a time when still photography flourished in the U.S. However, nonfiction film in amateur and professional circles – and especially newsreels produced by independent units or major media companies and studios – was limited outside of urban centers, and still in its early stages of mass circulation and exhibition. In terms of *The Roosevelts*, this information indicates that much less newsreel footage of Theodore Roosevelt ever existed and is obtainable in the 2010s.

However, the analysis of the data from the individual episodes does show that a significant shift to favoring newsreel shots and therefore newsreel sequences occurred in the visual presentation beginning in Episode 5 and continuing through Episode 6. In Episode 5, the number of newsreel shots (703) greatly outnumbered still photographs (264) and even more so in Episode 6 (1,059 newsreel shots to 251 still photographs).[95] Similar to the reliance on still images in the first episodes of the miniseries, the visual

episode of the film, Episode 7, in which the total number of newsreel shots (342) was also similar to still photographs (326).

[95] This information is not part of the tables above, which do not include tallies for individual episodes.

Figure 51: A formal portrait of Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders, circa 1898. Burns relies upon posed pictures such as this throughout the first few episodes of *The Roosevelts*, an era prior to the widespread circulation and exhibition of motion picture photography.   *Used with permission from Florentine Films*

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analysis of this part of the miniseries also suggests that the shift from still images to newsreel footage is due to the relationship between the film's content and the history of photography, as well as the editorial and aesthetic decisions on behalf of Burns and his team.

For example, much of the visual presentation in the film's mid-section constitutes newsreel footage of the Great Depression and various aspects of World War II, including Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt's public and private lives and shifting identities. These events take place during the late 1930s through the 1940s, an era when newsreels thrived

in theatrical exhibition (e.g., Fielding, 2006d). Although the memorable still photography of the Depression and World War II is incorporated into Episodes 5 and 6, newsreel footage here shows the actions and gestures of the hungry and unemployed at the height of the Depression, from the front lines of combat zones, Franklin Roosevelt's leadership on the global stage, and the growing presence of Adolph Hitler and Nazi-ism across Europe.

Specifically, newsreel sequences depicting intense action that heightens the drama of the narrative serve two distinct functions in Episodes 5 and 6. First, the capabilities of motion pictures are foregrounded for emotional effect, with the mirroring of the physical and natural movements of persons and objects in real time providing a more immediate point of entry to the events taking place. This indicates that the incorporation of short bursts of newsreel sequences was driven by aesthetically calculated, and deeply affective filmmaking expertise.

Second, unlike still photographs, motion pictures do not necessarily require or rely upon visual effects to instigate or provide action and drama. The visual analysis of *The Roosevelts* indicates that the aforementioned newsreel sequences depicting varying types of content are more likely to favor montage or quick cutting between shots to enhance and engage for affective purposes. Whereas still photographs with or without the application of visual effects were found to provide pause in the narrative, a means to ponder a moment of significance over the course of 10 seconds or more, newsreel shots, rarely on screen for more than a few seconds, require content that complements timed editing for greater affect.

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Figures 52, 53, and 54 (p. 189): (From top) Examples of newsreel footage in *The Roosevelts*. In each of these scenes, the emphasis is on the capabilities of motion pictures to convey human, animal or mechanical motion in the real world. Unlike still photography, the rate of capture and/or projection of newsreel footage closely mirrors the movements and directions of the contents in each frame.

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Figures 55, 56, 57, and 58 (p. 190): (From top, clockwise) An example of the sequencing of a newsreel montage in *The Roosevelts.* For one, in-film newsreels used in *The Roosevelts* oftentimes appear to be sequentially preserved with the original title image appearing first. In this example, Figures 56, 57, and 58 emphasize the abilities of motion pictures to show human and mechanical motion, but simultaneously, the quick cutting from one scene to the next or montage that also generate feelings of action, danger, and excitement for the viewer. Thus, the content as well as the montage produce an emotive aesthetic. *Used with permission from Florentine Films*

The short individual shot duration paired with intense content, particularly in Episode 5, both speeds the narrative or pacing of the film while also adding emotive intensity for the viewer.

These primary findings from the visual analysis for this study lead to a final item that requires addressing before shifting to the analysis of the focus groups.[95] Table 2 indicates that live-action cinematography (LIVE ACTION) was the least coded of the five possible second-order categories, and therefore, the least incorporated visual type in the film. This finding is also consistent with the literature on Ken Burns and his filmography, as well as the general understanding of the visual forms common to the historical documentary.

However, the live-action cinematography in *The Roosevelts* serves a specific and important purpose. Live-action footage of interior and exterior scenes of various Roosevelt estates or nearby natural environments *as they appear in the present* is periodically implemented throughout the film. Although sparsely incorporated into the visual architecture of *The Roosevelts*, live-action cinematography's function is twofold. First, it serves as an aesthetic complement to the abundance of black-and-white still photography and newsreel footage in the film, providing the visual presentation and narrative with sporadic busts of color. Second, the live-action footage draws the viewer

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[95] The visual analysis also suggests that much of the newsreel sequences throughout *The Roosevelts* were directly lifted from the original newsreels, thus indicating that the footage that made it into the final cut of *The Roosevelts* was specifically chosen by Burns and his team for maximum impact.

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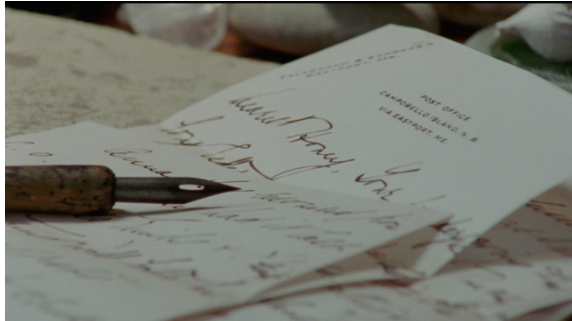
Figures 59, 60, 61, and 62 (above): (From top, clockwise): Examples of live-action cinematography in *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014m). The camera is fixed in most live-action footage, with the stillness signifying the lack of contemporary human (physical) movement. Such static imagery also suggests the historicity of the events on screen, despite the use of color film. In addition, this form of staging present-day items from the past in front of the camera curiously contends with the depictions of these scenes in color.

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away from the historical or toward a time period resembling or consistent with the visible present. This second function of the live-action footage more clearly and understandably indicates the reason for the sparseness of the present-day cinematography in the historical documentary film.

While color film is thought to signify or draw the viewer toward the present or at least, away from the past, its usage in *The Roosevelts* is somewhat contradictory in this regard. The color motion picture photography here depicts remodeled or restored rooms and settings as they were supposedly situated in the early 20th century, but photographed in the 2010s.

Therefore, the viewer sees the content in color but the content – Franklin Roosevelt's bed, his leg braces, his wheelchair, desk, eyeglasses and so forth – is most decidedly emblems of another era. Whereas the black-and-white still photography and newsreel footage clearly locates the photographed in a particular place and time, the color film and content of the live-action cinematography is aesthetically and potentially

editorially useful, while the conjoining of the two navigates toward something resembling historical re-enactment.

Similar to live-action cinematography, interview footage (INTERVIEW) and illustrations (ILLUSTRATION) in the form of news clippings and political cartoons were also found to comprise far less of the total accumulation of shots coded in *The Roosevelts*. Briefly, interview footage provides the face and voice of an authority figure or expert on subjects, with the audio of these monologues adding auditory information to the narrative.

Shots coded for ILLUSTRATION, however, supplement the visual presentation of the film in competing ways. The sparse incorporation of newspaper articles or cartoons removes the viewer from photography's immediacy to persons and events of the past, the predominant staple of the visual structure, but provides the viewer with access to another visual form and outlet to history if not historiophoty. Re-photographed illustrative media

Figures 63, 64, 65, and 66 (above): (From top left, clockwise) A political cartoon in *The Roosevelts* depicting the growing animosity between former political allies, Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. The pan-and-zoom effect is utilized in this scene to guide the viewer from Roosevelt (Figure 58) to his newfound nemesis, lurking in the background. Note that the depiction of Taft only appears on screen after Roosevelt's caricature has been established.

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are mostly incorporated to lampoon a political situation, debate, or policy and law, but their visual differences to the favored forms of photography are immediate and clear.

Burns's decision to maintain significant distance from live-action cinematography, interview footage, and further illustrative forms, including historical re-enactments with actors and CGI, is indicative of his reliance on historical still and motion picture photography to engage with and inform upon the past (historiophoty). This continued trustworthiness in historiophoty as a means of linking the past to the present and vice versa is explored in greater detail in the final chapter of this dissertation.

In concluding this analysis, several findings from the interviews relate to those from the visual analysis. First, the connection between editorial and aesthetic decision-making practices from the focus groups, in terms of the film's visual presentation and style, is evident from the visual analysis. For one, the information from the data collection and analysis as part of the visual analysis indicates that historical films (i.e.,

newsreel footage) and still documentary photography of the period serve as the primary visual sources for the case study of this research study.

More to the point, one-third of the entirety of shots coded in *The Roosevelts* from the visual analysis were also coded for visual effects, with the pan-and-zoom the most frequently coded of the effects taken into consideration. Although still photographs were thought to occupy the majority of screen time – thus confirming Florentine's reliance upon the primacy of photographic information – most still photos were also coded with the pan-and-zoom effect. A parallel, therefore, can be drawn from Burns's and Florentine's reliance on still photography and the team's uses of visual effects to "will photographs to come alive" (Wilson, 2014b). In other words, while the historical documentary filmmakers regard still images as credible and reliable sources of visual information, their emphasis on pairing photography with visual effects indicates some need to subvert the traditional properties of still images. In effect, the still photographs begin to emulate the qualities of motion pictures.

Further parallels between this key finding from the focus groups and visual analysis, and the idea of historiophoty are taken into consideration in the final chapter of this dissertation.

C.   Analysis III: Focus Groups and the Historical Documentary Film

The purpose of the focus group method for this study was to engage with the visual at the site of the audience. Specifically, focus groups were incorporated to explore the significance of historiophoty as part of the aesthetic and editorial practices associated with film production. Two separate focus groups were held to investigate these issues and to fulfill the requirements of the triangulated methodology as part of the research design for this study.[96]

As put forth in the last chapter, both focus group sessions were held at a state-of-the-art research collaboration center on the University of Oregon campus. Focus group participants were recruited from separate university-level courses on media production as related to journalism and film, as well as a media studies survey course on documentary film. The researcher acted as the primary recruiter for these sessions, and also served as the interviewer-moderator for both focus groups. All participants recruited for this study were unique in that their university education, formal training, and professional experiences allowed them to speak knowledgably on topics and ideas from the perspective of burgeoning media professionals. In turn, focus group participants were specifically recruited to obtain a small population trained in and capable of conversing on different visual types or forms common to film, video, and/or multimedia production.

Per advice obtained from the literature on focus groups as a qualitative research method, each focus group was limited to no more than five student-participants. For the

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[96] The researcher attempted to conduct three focus group sessions. However, only 9 students could be successfully recruited and therefore, the number of sessions was reduced from three to two.

first session, five students were recruited and participated, and four students in the second session. Again, students were recruited either via email and based on names obtained from nonparticipating staff and faculty at the University of Oregon, or from in-class announcements about the focus groups and made by the researcher.

Participants were recruited from university courses on documentary film and multimedia or film production courses. Again, students' academic interests and professional media production and analytical qualities were of importance to obtaining focus group participants capable of speaking intelligently on documentary film and filmmaking. Of the nine students who participated, six males and three females gave oral and written consent to take part in one of two focus group sessions. All student-participants recruited were juniors and seniors at the University of Oregon. Student-participants were of different races and ethnicities, although all student-participants were between the ages of 18 and 22. The researcher provided food as the only incentive for student participation.[97]

Each focus group session was approximately two hours in length and followed a semi-structured format predesigned and carried out by the researcher. A representative from the research collaboration center where the sessions were conducted was responsible for video-recording both focus groups as well.

All sessions began with a screening of a 45-minute segment of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014m). The same segment of the film was shown to each group. Following the screening, the researcher-moderator posed individual questions to all

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[97] For additional information on the focus group recruitment process(es), see the section on this method in the previous chapter.

participants.[98] Questions focused on the historical documentary film and related production practices. The screened segment of *The Roosevelts* served as a point of entry to these topics, with the film's content frequently referred to in terms of shots or moments that spoke to film production techniques, still photography, motion picture photography, etc.

Silverman (2011c) states that "more information is available about how to *collect* [focus group] data than how to *analyse* them" (p. 210). Therefore, the author and others suggest that researchers incorporate one of three types of analysis for focus group data, and that the researcher choose the method based on the purpose(s) of the research study.

Following this advice and similar to the procedure for the qualitative interviews, the researcher selected thematic analysis to engage with the individual and collective data from the focus group sessions. Comparable to the method incorporated for the data analysis of the qualitative interviews, the thematic analysis of the focus group data involved multiple stages of analysis for locating primary and secondary patterns or themes.

Two types of research data were collected from the focus group sessions. First, the researcher obtained individual videos of the entirety of both sessions from the representative responsible for video-recording the interaction and discussion from each session, as well as compiling separate digital files of each session. Videos included both audio and visual components of the discussion sections of the focus group sessions. The researcher made a text-based transcript of each upon reviewing the videos individually.

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[98] Appendix B contains a list of sample questions formulated by the researcher for the focus groups.

The researcher then analyzed the transcripts in tandem with segments of these videos for primary and secondary themes from the discussion sections.

The researcher also made transcripts of the hand-written notes or memos initially recorded during the focus group sessions. These transcripts were also analyzed alongside the videos and transcripts of the videos. The videos of both sessions also served as aids in transcribing and analyzing the researcher's notes and memos. In sum, the videos and the transcripts of the videos, both of which served as the primary research data, as well as the transcripts of the notes made during the focus group sessions were used to conduct the thematic analysis.

The thematic analysis of the focus group sessions revealed three primary themes from the group discussion. These primary themes were found to contain sub-themes particular to individual topics or concepts. In turn, each of the themes were found to be relevant to concepts and ideas from the RQs.

Themes:

I)   The Historical Documentary and Knowledge Production

II) The Affects and Effects of Pan-and-Zoom Photography

III) Functions and Properties of Still and Moving Images

<p align="center">***</p>

Theme I: The Historical Documentary and Knowledge Production

A first theme found from the multistage analysis of the focus group data was the historical documentary's ability to serve as a visual teaching aid or access point to engaging with and learning about popular history. When asked about the visual presentation and content of the screened segment of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014n), informant-respondents spoke positively and appreciatively of the film's capacity to relay historic information in an arresting and attractive audiovisual format.[99]

All participants indicated an awareness of or familiarity with historical documentary films and voiced a general understanding of the audiovisual template or format for films of this subgenre. However, the analysis indicates that few informant-respondents watch films in this subgenre, with most agreeing that they are more likely to access a more contemporary documentary film on persons or topics or subject matter most relevant to the present. Nonetheless, several participants spoke of a desire to complete the entirety of *The Roosevelts* on their own time after being informed that the miniseries was readily available on video streaming platforms, such as Netflix.

Most informant-respondents initially spoke in general or vague terms when first describing the screened segment of *The Roosevelts*. Words such as "interesting" and

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[99] Following the literature on focus groups, student-participants are referred to throughout this analysis as informant-respondents or participants. Furthermore, individual informant-respondents were assigned a corresponding number during the analysis. Throughout this section of the analysis, informant-respondents are referred to by the designation "IR" (informant-respondent) along with a corresponding number when quoted in the body of the document.

"engaging" were used to describe the film. One participant stated that he felt as though he "learned a lot" about Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, the stock market crash, and/or the subsequent governmental relief efforts of the 1930s.[100] Another said the segment "makes me want to know what happens next." Yet another described the screened portion of the film as a "good, general concept of the overall topic." One informant-respondent said the segment led to his believing that the miniseries was "a good overview of the subjects":

> IR1: Learning by watching this film is way more effective than a textbook. You see more evidence… and that connects you better to the time period.

> IR2: I've seen [the fiction film] *Hyde Park on Hudson* and it was just interesting to see a more historical perspective and…I really just enjoy watching old movie footage…. I mean, Ken Burns probably has to have a lot of curators for that…to get footage of a bear, at a national park, being shooed away by the CCC.

Such statements on the general reception of the film indicate a cumulatively positive emotive response from the informant-respondents on the film's content.

As the sessions progressed, however, informant-respondents became more specific and detailed when discussing the film. Participants began speaking of the relationship between the visual presentation and the film's ability to inform upon persons or events of the era. A further connection was made between the film's still photography of the 1930s and specific content in the film. In this regard, the visual content and presentation were occasionally spoken of in relation to the personal lives and experiences of the participants.

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[100] These areas were the primary foci of the segment of the film screened for the focus groups.

For example, two of the participants discussed how a series of still photographs depicting families seated at home, near a large radio, and presumably listening to Franklin Roosevelt's "fireside chats," made the events on screen more "present," "comforting," and "accessible." One informant-respondent described this sequence of still photographs as "intimate and personal," and another said, "I felt like it brought you into the [families'] homes." One participant made the following statement, connecting the images in the film with personal experience:

IR3: I was thinking about my grandma…. She lived through the Depression. She used to speak about it sometimes. I guess…I was thinking that I don't really know what she went through…. It makes you wonder what your family went through….

Therefore, the analysis suggests that dialogue and discussion on the usage of still photography in the screened segment of the film was significant to the film's abilities to educate and inform upon the historic, while also engaging with the informant-respondents' emotions as well.

The analysis of the data from the focus group sessions also indicates that the majority of informant-respondents agreed that the film was largely objective with regards to Burns's treatment of the film's multiple subjects. Moreover, the film was described as accurate and trustworthy in terms of the relationship between the audiovisual presentation and the participants' understanding of the events of the era:

IR2: When I was watching this… I was thinking to myself 'You know, if I watch this whole series, I would probably understand everything about the Roosevelts, more so than if I read a bio piece on them or something'…. Watching it – I mean

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I guess I'm just a visual person or something – there's something that registers and it sticks for me….

IR5: Politics was like fuzzy back in the day. I feel like…it flip-flopped a lot. I would like to know what was their – the people running against him [Franklin Roosevelt] – solution? What was like, their approach to the Depression?

IR6: I definitely liked the portrayal of him [Franklin Roosevelt] as a human, rather than just a politician.

This perceived straightforwardness and credibility in Burns's approach to the subjects and topics generated a collective feeling or shared idea among informant-respondents that they had or could obtain(ed) a stronger grasp on or additional knowledge of the Roosevelt family, the stock market crash, and subsequent events of the Depression:

IR4: I thought it was interesting how they [the film] described him [Franklin Roosevelt] as conservative at one point. Like the stuff he was doing…the Glass-Stegall Act…it seems pretty not-conservative. Because he's also like a Democrat…so it was interesting how they [filmmakers] found a balance that struck a chord with everyone…. I just think it's amazing how he [Franklin] pulled it off [closing the banks] and people didn't hate him after that. And people still listened to him [afterwards]; they were like, 'Ok, let's go put our money back in the banks.'

IR3: Even if this [*The Roosevelts*] were seven parts, I would still look up additional information on the subjects. It really peaked my interest to know more about this stuff….

IR7: I would definitely learn more in a week from this [*The Roosevelts*] than

trying to read books consecutively on the subject….

As the sessions progressed, most informant-respondents spoke at length about

specific details or moments in the film that increased their awareness of historical events

or content that invigorated their prior knowledge of the subject matter. Here, the analysis

indicates that the informant-respondents connected the persons and events of the film to

present-day political persons and issues, such as President Barack Obama and the 2016

Democratic and Republican nominees for President of the United States. In this regard,

the visual information from the film was not only thought of as accurate and/or

trustworthy based on the majority of statements on behalf of the informant-respondents,

but also conducive to connecting history to the present. Sometimes this relationship was

specifically linked by photography's ability to revive or recall moments from the

participants' own personal knowledge and/or interests and experiences:

IR7: It's weird to me that [President] Obama is known for such a strong social

media campaign [because] it's not having the effective – nowhere near as the

effect F.D.R's kind of 'social media' campaign at the time had….

IR5: I think this [*The Roosevelts*] is *very* relevant…. The Great Recession was

like, literally less than 10 years ago [Laughs]…. It [*The Roosevelts*] teaches

people about the socialist aspects of like, F.D.R's policies and how…like Bernie

[Sanders] is a candidate who is very on that border with F.D.R, but like,

nowadays, you hear the word 'socialism' and it's like, evil…. So, I think seeing

this would be very educational towards…in our time period for sure.

IR6: Even seeing the footage of him [Franklin Roosevelt] in like different places – like Mount Rushmore – like recognizable places…I was recently in D.C. and I walked around all those buildings – I saw the Congress – and then watching the film I was like, 'Oh my gosh. I was there…. I was in that room.'

IR2: Our generation didn't even grapple with the topic of 'socialism'…. But we [my generation] have that viewpoint. And that might be kind of scary to our parents or grandparents because I think they experienced a different kind of socialism. And so, hearing those buzzwords in a film like this makes it more relevant [to the present]. [For example] With women's rights, you can relate that to like Eleanor Roosevelt because of the work she did many, many years ago. I think everything kind of comes around in history and that's what keeps history relevant….

The cross-analysis of data from both focus group sessions indicates that even when the film was discussed in terms of nostalgia or sentiment, these statements were found to be favorable as well. Few if any participants questioned the film's historical accuracy, especially in terms of Burns's approach to editorial and aesthetic decision-making. Nor did the informant respondents criticize the filmmaker's treatment of the Roosevelts, the information on the consequences of the Depression, or other events depicted in the screened segment:

IR7: So much of what he [Franklin Roosevelt] did was like, so precedent setting. It was so 'right then' and unique to that moment. You know, I can't think of much applicable to how vast amounts of change he [Franklin Roosevelt] created, at least in years after that.

And then I was also thinking…how, if the Fireside Chats, if there was some weird modern equivalent to that…if like, the Internet just played Obama videos for 20 minutes and it was like, you had to watch Obama because that was your only choice…just thinking about how easily he [Franklin] was able to manipulate public opinion. You know, now it would be really difficult to convince like, half the country to buy into a program like that [National Recovery Administration]. IR6: It's funny we're talking about this because I was reading a lot of articles about past presidents today…. I have this friend who shared this entire photo set of the White House photographer's photos of Obama throughout the year, and he captured really intimate moments, and seeing him as like a human and a politician. So, it was interesting to watch this [*The Roosevelts*] and see something similar….

The ability of the historical documentary to serve as a means of visual education was also located in discussions on the merits of black-and-white and color photography and film. The analysis indicates that informant-respondents thought of the combination of black-and-white and color film as having the capacity to draw viewers more deeply into the content, and therefore, the narrative. This subject is taken up in greater detail in the third and final theme of the analysis.

Finally, most of the informant-respondents voiced a familiarity with Ken Burns, his style of filmmaking, and his focus on historical persons and events. This particular finding is not surprising considering the participants' academic and professional interests, experiences, and backgrounds. Although much of this discussion was found to be more relevant to subsequent themes from the analysis, the informant-respondents'

overwhelmingly favorable remarks in this regard does suggest some reputable preconception of Ken Burns and his interest or devotion to history. Therefore, the analysis of the focus group data suggests that Burns's films are thought of as credible vehicles for translating persons and events of the past into the present. In the words of one informant-respondent:

> IR5: It's in the way he's [Burns] telling this story – there's a lot of different forms being combined and that makes it way easier, more entertaining to watch and digest comfortably. I could totally get lost in this….

Theme II: The Affects and Effects of Pan-and-Zoom Photography

A second theme from the multistage analysis of the transcripts and video-recordings of the focus group data concerned the qualities, functions, and potentials of pan-and-zoom photography in the historical documentary. Specifically, the analysis indicates that the discussions on pan-and-zoom photography focused on the strategy's capacity to communicate or pinpoint content presented in still form on screen. In addition, the analysis of the focus group sessions suggests that still images with the application of the pan-and-zoom effect were overwhelmingly favorable and seemingly more memorable to still images without an added visual effect.

To this point, informant-respondents generally spoke favorably of still photographs that included directed or targeted motion in the segment of *The Roosevelts* screened during the focus group sessions, and several participants also voiced approval at the use of similar visual effects for other types of multimedia presentations (e.g., video, audio slideshows).

All focus group participants voiced some formal association or familiarity with the pan-and-zoom effect. Informant-respondents also openly referred to the pan-and-zoom as "the Ken Burns effect." In this regard, any added visual effect for still images and as seen in the segment of *The Roosevelts* was routinely spoken of as directly tied to Ken Burns, and most often as an application incorporated into computerized software programs for film and video editing:

IR2: Thanks Final Cut [for the pan-and-zoom effect]! Yeah, the button literally says 'Ken Burns.' And that's kind of where I first learned it from…. I was on editing programs and I was like, 'What does Ken Burns mean?' You're on iMovie, as like, a seventh grader trying to figure out how to put together this cool picture slideshow…and then you're like, 'Oh it moves! That's so cool! It's like it's a movie, but it's not.'

IR4: When I saw it [pan-and-zoom in *The Roosevelts*], I thought, 'Hey, that's the guy!' Because I knew it was the Ken Burns thing, and I was like, 'He's doing it!'

IR5: I thought it was just called 'the Ken Burns effect'…maybe that was my subconscious [Laughs]…. [But] if I were making a documentary on the Roosevelts, I would hire Ken Burns! [Laughs].

As suggested, informant-respondents rarely if ever distinguished the pan-and-zoom effect or application from similar visual effects, such as those previously discussed for this research study. Even when not referred to as "the Ken Burns effect," the pan-and-zoom effect was commonly explicated by its function or supposed purpose:

IR1: Using it [pan-and-zoom] avoids just having interview mixed with other footage [in the visual presentation].

IR7: He [Burns] uses a lot of cinematic techniques in the way that he displays the photos. He gets really close-up on a real high-quality photo and then he'll pan or zoom in or out or whatever…that…I guess that is 'the Ken Burns thing to do.'

IR9: It [pan-and-zoom] just gives a very powerful feel for the audience.

As the sessions progressed, statements from informant-respondents on pan-and-zoom photography became increasingly precise and thoughtful. The analysis indicates that participants thought of the visual strategy as a logical tool when implementing still images into a film, video, or multimedia project. In addition, the analysis suggests that informant-respondents believe the pan-and-zoom effect is potentially necessary or detrimental to historical documentary films because of the subgenre's reliance upon still image forms.

For *The Roosevelts*, the pan-and-zoom effect was thought of as consequential to highlighting the importance of content or making content in the film stand apart from the interview and newsreel footage. Again, the informant-respondents only spoke of the pan-and-zoom effect in relation to still photography:

IR3: Because of the time period of the film, you need more stills…. It [pan-and-zoom] enhances the visual representation…like for a face [of a person].

IR8: It's [pan-and-zoom] a fundamental tool for documentaries…. It's one of the key techniques, key to presenting information. If you were doing a documentary on something more recent, you would use more action footage.

IR3: The pan with the zoom on a picture gives you the feel of movement. It complements the words [narration] ...makes it [the content] more authentic and goes with the time period [of the content].

Broadly, the primary focus in discussions on pan-and-zoom photography was the technique's usefulness or effectiveness. Informant-respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the pan-and-zoom effect was a practical application for assisting otherwise static visual materials on screen. Furthermore, the analysis indicates that informant-respondents suggested that animating still images in the historical documentary leads to stronger engagement with the visual content or information being presented on screen.

This idea that the technique contains a unique functional power while remaining subtle and much-copied today is emphasized in the following set of quotations:

IR7: I've still always thought of it [pan-and-zoom] in a really simple way…and then, watching this [*The Roosevelts*] reminded me how much range you really have in being able to use that effect, and use it in a really meaningful way. I think the one that I saw the most [in *The Roosevelts*] was starting out with a close-up of F.D.R.'s face or someone's face, and then 'Ken Burns-in out' to the rest of the image, and then…having the full effect of the photo revealed slowly was such a powerful tool that I…. I don't use enough.

IR2: I tend to stay away from 'Ken Burns' [pan-and-zoom]. I feel like, it's [pan-and-zoom effect] so cheesy in some way – (IR7) It's so cheesy! [All participants laugh in agreement] IR2: And I have this preconceived notion that everyone knows what this [pan-and-zoom] is, and they all have a negative connotation with it [Laughs]. I mean, if I can avoid it, I will. Because there are some great tripods that have fluid heads that will do that [pan-and-zoom] for me….

Later in the discussion IR2 continued:

IR2: The movement during those 'Ken Burns effect' photos…made your eyes

draw to one part of the screen or other. So, if your eye is being drawn to the top,

right-hand corner, then your video is going to want to have something in the top,

right-hand corner then that's where your eyes already are. You're not going to

going to want them to like, shift over to the bottom left.

So, that's probably something that he [Ken Burns] thinks about is, he essentially

has full control of where your eye goes in those 'moving' images…the Ken Burns

photos…. So that's a good trick to take, and to notice…that he [Burns] has control

of where and what is being shown in that photograph.

IR7 followed with this response:

IR7: I was so surprised that I liked it [pan-and-zoom] in this [*The Roosevelts*].

This was like the antithesis of what I think of when I think of 'the Ken Burns

effect.' It works for Ken Burns! [Group voices agreement]

Pan-and-zoom photography was also routinely discussed as specific to practices

or techniques associated with film or video editing. Here, the strategy was oftentimes

referred to as directly associated with Ken Burns. In these instances, the pan-and-zoom

was thought of as a "transitional" element useful for cutting from one image to the next

or when shifting from still to moving images and vice versa. Pan-and-zoom photography

here was spoken of as related to a film's "rhythm." In this regard, informant-respondents

vocally agreed that the usage and repetition of the technique aided narrative pacing,

especially when dealing with historical subjects or when implementing both still images

and motion pictures:

IR2: One thing I noticed [in *The* Roosevelts] is, 'How are they [filmmakers] doing that [transitions] so seamlessly?' [Laughs] You know, there is a movement in that still image and they linger on faces for a while, and because you're still listening to the audio, the story still carries throughout that….

IR8: The motion effects help the film give the feeling of seamless movement…. I think that helps when you have so much black-and-white footage. The newsreel and still photos can blend together [on screen] …. It all becomes like a mush. I think the pan-zoom helps with those transitions.

IR7: I just remember there was…a really good rhythm to the way they did it [editing]…You might have a photo and then some movement in the photo and then linger on a photo. And they kind of space it out in a way that it [the film] didn't get repetitive and it had enough methods – they [the filmmakers] could switch between different types of transitions effectively. But definitely the rhythm was such an important thing, and then being able to linger…. I thought was key.

Once again, the analysis indicates that the application was spoken of as an application equivalent to combining motion and direction for still images.

Because the informant-respondents are trained in aspects of media production, many participants had personal stories or professional insights to share on the pan-and-zoom effect across related media platforms. Here, when most informant-respondents discussed pan-and-zoom photography, the strategy was thought of as specific to one or more nonlinear film and video software editing systems. In other words, most of the focus group participants for this study – all of whom identify as part of the Millennial

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generation – spoke of pan-and-zoom photography as a computerized production technique or application as opposed to a visual strategy potentially generated in-camera.

> IR9: When I was in eighth grade, I was a member of an AV club. I remember doing a project on an air car competition…. I made a video with stills…. I think I edited in iMovie. For the stills, I used a slow zoom in to highlight the cars in the air.

> IR4: We just finished making a little documentary thing…it was a little editing exercise. And I used it [pan-and-zoom] somewhat recently…and I panned down [to] my friend holding a BB8 – it starts at her face, and you kind of see part of the BB8 – and it [the effect] goes down, and then it zooms in on the BB8. It's cute!

> IR8: I did a film research project for a creative writing class once…I really screwed up my group's final project, so I had to go back and edit the thing [short film] myself. I used SONY Vegas. I remember that I started to experiment with the raw footage we had…. I had a small photo of a dog in the film, and so I did the pan-and-zoom to make the dog more engaging. I was trying motion effects to give the project seamless movement.

> IR2: Creating the transition between the two [still images and motion pictures], as an editor, has always been something that I've struggled with [Laughs]. It [pan-and-zoom] seems important if you're going to use two different black-and-white forms.

> IR6: [I use the pan-and-zoom] Anytime a photo seems boring and I am lacking audio to go with it…just 'Ken Burns-it.'

IR1: Last term, I was doing a video project from a script…there was a scene where this guy made a racist joke…to make it funnier, I did a quick zoom in on his face in Final Cut Pro to make the joke funnier.

In these statements and at several other times during the discussion, the pan-and-zoom and its variants were discussed in relation to generating an emotional response from the viewer. Here, informant-respondents spoke of applying visual effects to making the visual presentation(s) more engaging or exciting.

Finally, and with regards to the spectrum of pan-and-zoom photography, informant-respondents stated that documentary films on more recent persons or issues are not as dependent on still photographs as part of the visual presentation. Documentary films covering people and topics of the present or recent past were thought of mostly in terms of motion pictures and including video or supplementary footage with the addition of color. Therefore, in the minds of the informant-respondents, still photography, and particularly still images with the pan-and-zoom effect, when appropriated into motion pictures is aligned to a certain conception of history or something belonging to the past. This idea could be considered an alternative explication of White's (1988f) idea of *historiophoty*. Further elaboration on this concept is considered in the analysis section of the third and final theme and of particular significance to the final chapter of this research study.

In sum, focus group participants commonly referred to pan-and-zoom photography as associated with still images, and still photographs in particular. The analysis of the data from the focus group sessions indicates that other traditional visual motion effects – pans, zoom, tilts and so forth – for photography/film/video were not

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considered independent of the pan-and-zoom technique. Because the third and final theme of this analysis concerns the qualities and uses of still photographs as opposed to motion pictures, this finding is also of importance to this research study. The abilities of the pan-and-zoom effect and its variants to align with still images and therefore, mirror the properties of motion pictures, is an idea further explored in the final chapter of this dissertation.

Theme III: Functions and Properties of Still and Moving Images

A third and final theme from the analysis of the data collected from the focus group sessions concerns the competing characteristics and functions of still images and motion pictures. Once again, informant-respondents spoke primarily of the former in terms of still photography. In addition, because the screened segment of *The Roosevelts* contained a significant portion of newsreel footage, most of the participants' comments on motion pictures centered on the sequences of these historical films.

When considering that the films of Ken Burns and historical documentaries in general are thought of as reliant upon the interplay between still and moving image forms, the analysis suggests that informant-respondents thought of still images as important, trustworthy and credible. However, still photography was understood as somewhat subservient to motion pictures when considering production strategies for multimedia presentations, including film and video. The analysis also indicates that informant-respondents understand pan-and-zoom photography or 'the Ken Burns effect' as particularly important to this relationship.

Again, the pan-and-zoom effect was routinely discussed in terms of its ability to heighten or attend to viewer engagement, and its capacity to serve as a necessary

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transitional aid between still and moving images in a predominantly motion picture medium. This suggests that participants consider pan-and-zoom photography and its variants particularly consequential to still photography's ability to communicate and put forth visual information in documentary film and related multimedia presentations.

Furthermore, and as discussed in Theme II, the analysis indicates that informant-respondents believe the pan-and-zoom effect to be a particularly useful transitional aid for the interplay between black-and-white and color images or when shifting from still images to moving pictures in the historical documentary: [101]

> IR9: The topic and time period here [in *The Roosevelts*], moving from video to stills…the key is those transitions. That helps keep things interesting….

> IR1: The transitions are important [in *The Roosevelts*] because just looking at shadows [in black-and-white] increases the difficulty….

From here, several points from the analysis of the focus group sessions emerged on the aesthetic qualities and editorial practices of still photography and motion pictures. First, the analysis suggests that informant-respondents expected historical documentary films to contain still images, especially photographs, as part of the visual presentation. Moreover, participants stated that still images in historical documentary films are preferable to the display or use of still photographs in recent documentary films that focus on present-day persons and events. This finding from the analysis indicates that informant-respondents regard still photography and motion pictures, including newsreel and video, in terms of time period:

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[101] See the analysis and related comments in the second theme of this section that speaks directly to pan-and-zoom photography as a transitional aid or strategy.

IR5: I wouldn't exactly necessarily expect stills in a documentary, say, from the 2000s, as much as historical documentaries.

IR4: I've noticed in more recent documentaries, when they use stills, they repeat them a lot. Like, they use the same image over and over and over again [Laughs]. It's cool to watch this [*The Roosevelts*] because it seems like each picture has a purpose…. With new ones [documentaries] it seems like, 'Let's just throw a picture in there…this one – we already did….

Second, focus group participants also discussed the relationship between still and motion pictures in terms of the qualities of black-and-white and color. Here, the conversations tended to focus on the historicity and aesthetic elements of black-and-white, with the informant-respondents largely regarding monochrome as particular to still photography. As previously discussed in the analysis of Theme II, informant-respondents stated that black-and-white photography is key to connecting with historical content or a time and place as well as aesthetically pleasing in terms of the visual presentation of a historical documentary film:

IR5: For me, when I think of a long time ago, I think more like still image…. In a historical documentary, I expect black-and-white stills…. Video doesn't give you a historical aspect.

I know that when I'm going to watch a historical documentary, I know that there will be stills. I know that there will be stills, and I kind of expect it. And I think it works. Whereas if there were stills in like, a 9/11 documentary, it probably wouldn't work as well as some video footage.

IR3: I just wrote a paper on over-saturation in today's media environment…how over-saturation leads to stimulation, tries to keep you engaged…. But I think old footage keeps you engaged because it's not modern…. [Black-and-white] shows…like, a certain respect for the content.

IR8: Black-and-white demands respect. It's more interesting…. It seems like it somehow connects you to the rarity of the footage.

Although black-and-white still photography was thought of as belonging to the past and therefore, useful to the historical documentary film, several informant-respondents voiced dilemmas with a purely monochromatic visual presentation:

IR3: When you see two [black-and-white] stills next to one another, it's kind of like a mush…. Black-and-white makes it harder to recall [the information or content].

IR8: I feel like…with [a series of] black-and-white [images], I'm not actively engaging with the film.

IR9: [With black-and-white] it can be difficult to discern the sequences. Color helps identify what's going on.

Of significance here is that IR1, IR3, and IR8 among others also said that they would add more color video or cinematography to the visual presentation of *The Roosevelts*. IR3 added that he would "add color to the stills."[102] The analysis suggests

[102] Several key points are worth mentioning here. First, this specific statement from IR3 was the only instance in which a participant in the focus group sessions suggested a known form of visual manipulation to enhance the visual presentation. Moreover, in *The Roosevelts*, only a few color still photographs are used and appear on screen in

that informant-respondents maintained the necessity of black-and-white still images for the visual presentation and credibility of the historical documentary film, but motion pictures in color, including video, were thought of as important to the visual presentation in terms of the interplay between still and moving images. Once again, informant-respondents discussed black-and-white images of historical persons and events as aligned to still photography:

> IR2: I think…there were probably more stills [in *The Roosevelts*] then there were video. And so, I expect there to be a lot more stills than video in it [*The Roosevelts*] …. I think that it actually helps that it's [*The Roosevelts*] in black-and-white, because aesthetically they are the same thing – it's not like you have to color correct one or the other [black-and-white still photography and newsreel footage] [Laughs] – because the time period was all using the same type of film. And so, I think that kind of helps with that transition between photo to video. And he [Ken Burns] also broke it up with interviews sometimes.
>
> IR5: Especially with historical documentaries, I think having stills…or just like looking at powerful still images, just really kind of takes you there. Otherwise, if you see like a more recent documentary, it's mostly just video…and it doesn't really give you that historical aspect…like a still would.

Episodes 5 and 6. The interview and live-action footage from the present is shown in color, but only a few sequences of historic film of the Roosevelts and the events of the era are in color. However, the color still photographs and historical footage in color were not screened for the focus group participants.

IR4: Sometimes when I saw the newsreels, I would get distracted, and be like 'Is this a re-enactment or something?' Just for a second – because, sometimes it [newsreel footage] looked like pretty good quality. I would be like, 'Uh, I don't know – is that [newsreel footage] real?' But with still images, as I was like, 'Well, when would they fake a still image, ever' I just really liked the still images [in *The Roosevelts*]. It was cool.

For the majority of participants who spoke specifically about the sequences of newsreel footage in *The Roosevelts*, the historical films were discussed as useful to the film for several reasons. For one, the newsreel footage aided the visual architecture of the film by providing motion pictures of historical persons and events. In this regard, newsreel footage was considered powerful if somewhat supplementary visual evidence of historical individuals and happenings. Furthermore, the monochromatic newsreel footage in *The Roosevelts* had the capacity of displaying this photographic evidence through motion, thereby mimicking physical action in the real world:

IR5: I choose newsreel [as more effective than stills] because I think, with F.D.R's relationship with everyone, to see newsreel footage of him shaking hands with everyone, and him like, smiling…. They would say that, 'Yeah, he's always upbeat and everything.' And to see him go from straight-face to smile, and just like, interacting with everyone, was pretty effective for me. Yeah, and I think it was like important to see the action of what he was doing….

IR6: Yeah, capturing the action and capturing the emotion [of Franklin Roosevelts]. But also, at the same time, being able to hear the ambient noise…of

what was happening. Just having all that just like, puts you in it [the film]. You kind of get a better feel for what was happening at that time. And how it felt.

IR2: For me, it was interesting because there's like one [newsreel] shot that is still sticking with me, which is, they're [NRA workers] putting up their shovels, and like, all their different tools up in the air [IR7: Yeah!], and it's like this huge army of workers essentially [IR5: That was a great shot.], and I think that just summed up the whole section they were talking about…the WPA, and how he's [Franklin] really trying to get people out of unemployment and people were *proud* to work and excited to work. And I think that shot just captured it [the segment] in one moment, more than some of the photos did….

And also seeing people just, emptying their homes, was super dramatic to me…just throwing their belongings into the front yard because, they need to head out. And seeing that child in the back of the truck – you saw there was like no possessions except for a table, some chairs, and a bed....

In sum, the analysis of the focus group data indicates that key differences between still and moving images were of importance to the participants. Black-and-white imagery was thought of as belonging to still photographs and therefore, still photography apparently had a stronger link to history and the past. Although the majority of informant-respondents preferred the still photographs in the film to the newsreel footage, the latter's ability to show physical motion on screen and simultaneously aid in the film's visual architecture was significant and effective.

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The fifth and final chapter of this research study shifts from the presentation of the data collected and analysis of the case study here to the findings from the broader analyses and how these findings relate to the RQs for this study. The conclusion section in the fifth chapter also relates the findings relevant to the RQs to future directions for several of these topics.

To more successfully direct this research study to the final chapter of this dissertation, the following quote from IR7 serves as an appropriate bridge from the analysis to the findings and conclusions for this research study:

IR7: I was engaged the most by the little anecdotes about history [in *The Roosevelts*] – and Ken Burns is really great at finding those little stories that kind of speak to a bigger picture. I think that's what implants the most in our head and keeps – things that we can talk about at some random point in time – something that you can just be able to spit out at a time when you're talking about something totally different. But it's fun to be able to have those little stories stuck in your head.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

The fifth and concluding chapter of this dissertation contains two primary

sections. Each section has individual and overlapping goals. The first section identifies

the findings from the individual analyses and collective analysis and in relation to the

RQs. Here, the findings are presented in the context of Rose's (2012g) three sites of the

image as previously outlined in this research study. In this regard, the findings are put

forth in relation to the independent methods of analysis and as significant to research

focused on the production, uses, and consumption of visual media.

The second section of this final chapter relates these findings to a broader

spectrum of concerns for key topics or areas of most importance to this dissertation. Here,

the findings are explored in relation to contemporary issues for photography and visual

effects as part of historiophoty. The budding and evolving intersections between these

visual media are of particular significance to the discussion in this section.

Prior to beginning the presentation of the findings and supporting evidence from

the analyses, it is first necessary to restate the two primary research questions for this

dissertation:

RQ1: What is the role of visual effects for documentary photography and film,
and especially the historical documentary as historiophoty?

RQ2: Does the implementation of visual effects as part of the formal
presentation affect the understanding or knowledge of visual information
as part of documentary expression?

A.   Individual and Collective Findings

The separate findings from the individual analyses as part of the triangulated methodology are useful to answering the research questions for this dissertation. The collective findings also provide further evidence that speaks to the research questions as well. These findings are specific and relevant to the sites of the image explored in this dissertation. Although this research study investigated only one case study film text, the case study film was considered representative of Ken Burns's and Florentine Films' body of work, particularly in terms of the subject matter and formal, visual presentation.

Broadly, the themes found from the analyses of the interview and focus groups correlated in several important ways. For one, both interviewees and informant-respondents spoke of the perceived trust and credibility placed in (predominantly) historical still photography, with black-and-white images providing a particular point of entry to the past. Both interviewees and focus group participants similarly described the importance of still photography in documentary films focused on historical subjects, and the need for the implementation of visual effects to maintain viewer engagement. In the case of the focus groups, participants also mentioned that Burns's visual style, including the uses and repetition of visual effects, generated an emotional response in some cases.

The findings from the visual analysis adds greater dimension to these findings from the analyses of the qualitative interviews and focus groups. For one, the visual analysis deconstructs individual scenes in *The Roosevelts*, thereby showing precisely how the uses and repetition of visual effects emphasize photography's semiotic qualities. With the uses and repetition of pan-and-zoom photography, the viewer is immediately pointed to content in the visual frame that is understood as part of actual history or something that once occurred in the real world.

Second, the visual analysis helps confirm the idea that Burns's visual presentation relies on the usage and repetition of the pan-and-zoom and its variants to maintain viewer engagement and help viewers emotionally connect to the content. More to the point, each deconstructed scene from the visual analysis shows how Burns and his team use added motion and direction to the visual frame to highlight or emphasize content deemed most significant or, as in the case of several images, for greater affect. A cumulative analysis of the findings for this dissertation further suggests that visual effects are simultaneously editorially useful to using still images on film as well as perceived as aesthetically complementary to both narrative progression and viewer engagement with the content.

However, a more specific and detailed approach is necessary to answering the RQs for this dissertation. To begin, RQ1 concerns the role of visual effects as defined here at the intersection of historic photography and the historical documentary film as relevant, contemporary examples of historiophoty Several key findings from the analysis suggest that visual effects take on four primary roles as part of the form and function of the contemporary historical documentary film.

From here, the thematic analysis of the qualitative interviews suggests that experimentations in adapting still images and still photographs in particular into a motion picture medium resulted in the revival and widespread recognition of the pan-and-zoom effect for the historical documentary film. In particular, the information provided by cinematographer Buddy Squires and film editor Paul Barnes supports this finding.

In Squires's estimation, he and Burns, influenced by Wolf Koenig and Colin Lowe's visual strategy for *City of Gold* (1957d), decided to affix a lightweight film camera with a mounted zoom lens to a homemade animation stand to generate movement

for still images during production of *Brooklyn Bridge* (1981e). The film's success allowed Burns to continue making and producing historical documentary films comprised primarily of still images and therefore, to continue experimentations with pan-and-zoom photography and its variants.

According to information from photography researcher Susanna Steisel and Barnes, Burns's team at Florentine Films began working with digital images in the mid-1990s. Steisel and fellow photo-researchers started making digital scans of still images from photography repositories in the years between *Baseball* (1994f) and *Thomas Jefferson* (1997c). Because of digitization with still photographs and other physical or print materials, film editors such as Barnes began performing and more easily replicating the pan-and-zoom effect and its variants through postproduction processes.

Following the immediate success of films such as *The Civil War* (1990i) and *Baseball* (1994g), PBS and its affiliates continued providing funding for Burns to oversee multi-part historical documentary films. In turn, Burns and his team were allowed to retain and refine a visual aesthetic that quickly became visibly familiar to audiences. A key element to this now-familiar visual presentation included the usage and repetition of pan-and-zoom photography to enliven still image forms.

Through the duplication or mimicking of Burns's visual approach and related strategies, other filmmakers, including those overseeing cable television network projects, began producing historical documentary films that achieved mainstream success. By the mid-2000s, when the pan-and-zoom effect became a commodified application for film and video editing software systems, professional and nonprofessional visual media creators were readily employing the pan-and-zoom effect for photo-

slideshows, videos, films, and mixed-media projects exhibited on and circulated through online platforms, such as YouTube, Hulu, and Vimeo.

This brief chronology of events is significant because several areas of the thematic analysis of the qualitative interviews support and confirm this evolution. More to the point, the findings from the interviews suggest the evolution of Burns's visual approach began with experimentations in visual strategies for aesthetic and editorial purposes, and resulted in Burns's and his team's longstanding devotion to the interplay between history and photography (historiophoty).

Also, the analysis of the qualitative interviews indicates that the commodification of the pan-and-zoom effect and its variants was the result of these experimentations in using still images for a motion picture presentation. This further indicates that the evolution of certain visual effects that add motion and direction to still images, and which became commonplace for computer software, is traceable through the history of documentary film and filmmaking.[102] In this regard, the findings suggest that parallels exist between the pan-and-zoom effect and its variants and an attempt to reach or connect audiences to historical visual information or content.

The findings from the visual analysis and thematic analysis of the focus groups speak indirectly to these initial findings and conclusions as well. However, the findings from these two methods are more useful to explaining the significance and functions of

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[102] As discussed briefly in Chapter II, a more fluid camera and mechanical or physical visual effects are also properties of the history of fiction film and particularly Hollywood film and filmmaking of the 1920s and 1930s. See Bordwell (1985b; 1997c).

visual effects for still images implemented into or displayed through any number of moving image visual presentations.

The findings from the visual analysis of the case study film add greater dimension to those from the analysis of the qualitative interviews and are specifically relevant to RQ1 in several important ways. Therefore, it is first necessary to outline several of the key findings from the visual analysis that speak specifically to the degree to which visual effects are applied to still photography in the historical documentary film.

To begin, the visual analysis indicates that approximately one-third of the total number of shots coded for *The Roosevelts* were also coded for visual effects. Still images (photographs) were the second most coded type of image in the film, and individual photographs were thought to occupy the majority of the film's running time. Furthermore, the majority of still images (photographs) coded in the film were also coded for one or more visual effects, as were the modest number of archival (still) illustrative materials in the film.[103] From here, the combined pan-and-zoom effect was the most

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[103] Although only 240 of the more than 6,000 shots coded were in the ILLUSTRATION second-order category, the visual analysis also indicates that almost every shot coded for ILLUSTRATION was also coded for one of the six second-order categories within the VISUAL EFFECT primary category. Shots coded for ILLUSTRATION were the only other still image forms incorporated into *The Roosevelts* aside from still photography. If the total number of shots coded for ILLUSTRATION were added to the number coded for STILL IMAGE, this would indicate an even stronger relationship between the pan-and-zoom effect and its variants and the broader spectrum of still image forms from the analysis of the case study film.

commonly coded of the second-order visual effect categories. Most importantly, the pan-and-zoom effect was also found to be the most commonly coded visual effect for still images (photographs) in *The Roosevelts*.

This trail of findings from the first stages of the visual analysis suggests a specific relationship or tie between the pan-and-zoom effect and still photography. With the inclusion of the findings from the qualitative interviews and focus groups for this study, an association between the pan-and-zoom and still photography seems to exists because of an aesthetic and editorial drive to enliven imagery that traditionally is, by nature, considered static or immobile.

Subsequent findings from the visual analysis of the still frames lifted from *The Roosevelts* support this conclusion and dissect this relationship. Several of the sequences of still frames from the film displayed in the previous chapter are key examples of two related primary functions of the pan-and-zoom effect for still photographs.

First, Figures 36, 37, and 38 (p. 180) are a sequence that shows the traditional or most commonly understood function of the pan-and-zoom effect. Here, the visual effect is used to pinpoint or highlight a specific content-related area in the visual frame through the combination of simultaneously panning in one direction and zooming in towards an area of the image. As indicated from the visual analysis and showcased in this particular example, this first function of the pan-and-zoom effect is oftentimes incorporated to emphasize the human face and particularly, the gaze of a prominent individual in the photograph.

Figures 27 to 35 (pp. 176-178) are sequences showing the reverse of this strategy. Here, the combination of panning and zooming out or away from content in the frame

reveals additional content not visible in the initial display of the photograph on screen. In this second instance, the pan-and-zoom effect slowly discloses content in the photograph over time, oftentimes enlarging the scope of the original content shown and therefore, adding greater context to the events depicted in the frame.

In sum, the visual analysis of *The Roosevelts* confirms these individual but related uses of the pan-and-zoom effect as two of the strategy's most basic functions. Additional findings from the visual analysis and focus groups speak to the usage and repetition of the pan-and-zoom and its variants over the film's running time.

The visual analysis in connection with the findings from the thematic analysis of the focus group data also indicates that individual pans, zooms, and tilts were similar in purpose to the combined pan-and-zoom effect. First, when pans, zooms, and tilts are applied to still photographs through film and video editing software, the visual analysis of the stills shows that these effects are employed to spotlight or reveal content in the visual frame similar to the pan-and-zoom (see Figures 39 to 50, pp. 182-184). In this regard, other visual effects for mimicking camera motion applied to still photographs and taken into consideration for this research study were also found to shift from one important item in the visual frame to another.

Moreover, the findings from the thematic analysis of the focus groups suggests that most if not all participants did not distinguish the pan-and-zoom effect from the aforementioned visual effects. In other words, informant-respondents referred to all variations on the pan-and-zoom as "pan-and-zoom" or "the Ken Burns effect." Individual pans, zooms, tilts, and so forth for still images were not identified by name during the discussion sessions following the screening of the segment from *The Roosevelts*.

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That these visual effects perform much like the pan-and-zoom as found from the visual analysis and that focus group participants referred to all visual effects as "pan-and-zoom" or "the Ken Burns effect" suggests the dominance of pan-and-zoom photography as well as two additional primary roles for the broader spectrum of visual effects commonly utilized for still photography in the historical documentary film. In addition, the findings from the visual analysis and focus group sessions indicate that these additional roles for visual effects are advantageous to a wider range of visual media presentations aside from documentary film. In this regard, both of these subsequent qualities of visual effects were found to be editorially and aesthetically useful in terms of relaying content or information and visual appeal.

The thematic analysis of the focus group data indicates that informant-respondents agreed that the pan-and-zoom effect (and its variants) served necessary and important purposes for the visual presentation of the film. Participants stated that still images incorporated into a motion picture presentation should largely maintain fluidity on screen. According to participants, the pan-and-zoom effect adds much-needed movement to the photographic frame and the repetition of visual effects is capable of making still images more engaging on screen. The thematic analysis indicates that the addition of the pan-and-zoom and its variants and the repetition of visual effects are also necessary to sustaining interest in the visual content or information being presented in the film.

From here, informant-respondents were asked to elaborate on the significance of maintaining motion in a visual presentation. The findings indicate that participants believed applying motion to still images in a visual presentation is aesthetically pleasing

and editorially useful for two interrelated reasons. Aside from directing the viewer to specific items or content of significance in the visual frame and with the aid of the sound track(s) or narration, informant-respondents agreed that the addition of motion and direction to still photographs is an aid to progressing the narrative.

These ideas were further confirmed by the findings from the visual analysis of *The Roosevelts*. With the combination of still images with a visual effect (pan-and-zoom) comprising the majority of the film's visual presentation and therefore, running time, the combination and repetition of visual effects most literally produces additional, visible on-screen motion. The motion seen provides the viewer with a sense of the continuation of the progression of the narrative.

These interrelated findings are of further importance because they parallel the idea that Burns and his team are concerned with using still images to duplicate the unique properties of the several motion picture forms in *The Roosevelts*. Over the course of the film's running time, the repetition of pan-and-zoom photography and/or the combination of pan-and-zooms with other visual effects begin to mirror the qualities of motion pictures. Doing so generates motion and direction to the still frame time and again, thereby sustaining a rhythm for the film. This idea is further explored in greater detail and in relation to RQ2 in the next section and in the conclusion of this dissertation.

In sum, the findings from the individual analyses and various cross-analyses indicate that the usages or implementations of the pan-and-zoom effect and its variants for still images, as well as the repetition of these effects, serve four primary roles or functions. These functions are directly applicable to RQ1 and the role of visual effects for

documentary still photography and the historical documentary case study film under analysis in this research study.

The findings suggest that visual effects:

1. Highlight or showcase details or small areas of content in the larger visual frame.

2. Reveal or slowly provide access to previously unnoticed or not easily recognizable content in the visual frame.

3. Serve the visual presentation of the film by adding movement to otherwise still image forms, thereby enhancing viewer engagement through the application of motion. This also includes making the speed of the film's visual presentation faster and therefore, maintaining narrative pacing by complementing the motion picture photography in the film.

4. Mimic or adopt key qualities and capabilities of motion pictures.

In the one-on-one interview for this research study, Paul Barnes said "Ken [Burns] hates fast cutting" (P. Barnes, personal communication, April 28, 2015l). To Barnes's comment, the addition of visual effects in the historical documentary film appears to be a highly calculated and important decision on behalf of Burns and his team. In following, RQ2 is concerned with whether or not the aesthetic decision to implement visual effects and is an editorial strategy useful to relaying visual content and visual information.

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RQ2 concerns the relationship between visual effects and visual information as part of documentary expression in the historical documentary film. Although this connection can be explored through a number of research designs and methods, the

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individual and collective findings from the analyses for this dissertation, and including those relevant to RQ1 above, address the ties between these two elements in several important ways.

The cumulative findings from across the three-part analysis indicate that the incorporation of visual effects as defined in this research study play several important and advantageous or favorable roles in terms of relaying significant visual content or information to audiences via the historical documentary film. Broadly, visual effects applied to still photographs and other still image forms were found to locate, highlight, and/or reveal visual content most significant to the film at any given moment during the film's running time. As part of the overall visual presentation, the use of visual effects was found to enhance the appeal of the presentation, thereby serving as an aid to maintaining viewer engagement with the image-content and therefore, the film's narrative.

Moreover, the findings from the qualitative interviews, visual analysis, and focus groups indicate that the addition of visual effects are as much a strategically implemented editorial strategy as an aesthetic decision, with visual effects serving to help communicate visual information from traditionally still image forms in a predominantly motion picture medium.

To provide evidence from the analyses that supports the most prominent findings relevant to RQ2 above, it is first necessary to discuss several interconnected findings from this research study related to documentary still and motion picture photography and the capacity of these visual media to communicate and inform upon history

(historiophoty). Doing so first is important because photography is the tie or link between visual effects and visual content or information.

To begin, several themes from the analyses of the qualitative interviews and focus groups directly concern the uses and capabilities of documentary photography in the historical documentary film. Collectively, Themes I and III from the qualitative interviews alone indicate that Ken Burns and his team respect and are reliant upon the communicative power of photography as a primary means of visual information in the historical documentary film. These findings as part of the themes suggest that Burns and his documentary filmmaking team are convinced that photographic information is, therefore, a mostly credible and trustworthy means of delivering historical information to audiences.

Moreover, Burns's reliance on primary historical visual source materials aligns with several important factors associated with photography's semiotic qualities or its ties to the real, the actual, and over time, the historic. In turn, Burns's decision to rely primarily on still photographs and newsreel footage as part of his visual architecture indicates an editorial decision to avoid the implementation of more contemporary trends in documentary filmmaking, such as historical re-enactments, CGI, forms or types of animation, etc. Cumulatively, the findings from the qualitative interviews for this research study underline the prestige Burns and Florentine place on historical documentary still and motion picture photography as a means of informing upon, reviving, and lending credence to popular history.

Much of the information provided by Florentine Films' lead photography researcher, Susanna Steisel, supports these findings from the site of visual production. In

the interviews, Steisel detailed the time-consuming and intensive processes associated with locating and retrieving archival still photographs and historical films from repositories prior to and during film production. During these discussions, Steisel spoke of the value and credibility of original or primary source materials, and especially their ability to provide audiences with a more direct means of connecting to content and therefore, historical subject matter.

Similar accounts from Buddy Squires and Paul Barnes also indicate how and why Burns and Florentine have long depended on obtaining access to and incorporating primary visual source materials, especially still photographs, as a means of documentary evidence of the past. Collectively, these accounts speak to documentary photography's unique abilities to serve dual roles, as historic evidentiary artifacts of a time and place, and as a unique medium capable of providing direct access to persons and events of the past.

This correspondence between photography as material (visual) documentary evidence and its abilities to recall history is also supported by several findings from Theme III of the analysis of the focus groups. Here, the participants overwhelmingly agreed that the use of historical documentary photography in *The Roosevelts* was effective because of the respect informant-respondents placed on historic photographs. More specifically, focus group participants agreed that black-and-white historical images, including newsreel footage, maintain prestige due to their visibly aged qualities and are, therefore, thought of as reliable, trustworthy, and accurate. Furthermore, the informant-respondents stated that the segment of the film screened was a mostly objective portrait

of the persons and events depicted, indicating that the visual information from the presentation was thought of as trustworthy.

The totality of these findings from the qualitative interviews and the focus groups indicate an overwhelming favorability towards historical documentary photography and the uses of these image forms in the historical documentary film. This information also speaks directly to the capabilities of documentary photography in several forms to relay visual information on screen.

Therefore, these findings are applicable and of interest to RQ2 because they suggest that the overwhelming presence of visual effects in the historical documentary film is not a distraction and/or does not take away from the content or information being presented. Of additional interest to RQ2 is that the findings from each site of the image or from each research method for this research study acknowledges the presence and/or implementation of visual effects. In other words, although the findings support and are favorable towards documentary photography's capacity to relay historical information, visual effects, and especially the pan-and-zoom, were recognized, discussed, and accepted as well.

From here, the individual and collective findings from the qualitative interviews and focus groups were found to be overwhelmingly supportive of visual effects. The findings from both of these research methods indicate the advantages of applying visual effects to still image forms to better communicate "still" visual content and information in a motion picture medium. These findings suggest that the editorial decision to animate or enliven still image forms is to spotlight or highlight content relevant to the film's narrative at any particular moment in the film's running time.

Specifically, Theme II from the analysis of the qualitative interviews indicates that the range of visual effects taken into consideration for this study – pan-and-zooms, pans, zooms, tilts, cut-ins and so forth – serve several overlapping roles in the filmmaker's editorial and aesthetic decision-making processes. Theme II from the analysis of the qualitative interviews, and particularly the information from Buddy Squires and Paul Barnes, suggests that adding motion to archival or historical still images is thought of as a necessary aid to making the still images as well as the overall visual presentation more engaging. This is the primary reason Burns and Squires especially decided to build an animation stand and affix a lightweight film camera to the structure during the production of *Brooklyn Bridge* (1981f). The analysis of the qualitative interviews as well as the focus groups suggests that what Squires, Burns, and others once had to perform on location and with home-made devices is now readily available and easily utilized through nonlinear film and video editing software systems.[104]

Focus group participants also spoke favorably of the uses of visual effects in the screened segment of the film. Theme II from the analysis of the focus group sessions indicates that adding visual effects to still images and as part of the visual presentation of the historical documentary film allows for a more engaging visual presentation which leads to a stronger connection between the visual content on screen and the audience's recall of the information. Key examples supporting the nuances of this finding are those statements from informant-respondents related to visual effects and specific items or content in the film. Several such examples were presented as part of Theme I. In

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[104] For more specific and detailed examples, see Theme II of the analysis of the thematic analysis of the qualitative interviews in Chapter IV.

Theme II, however, focus group participants described the necessity or rationale for visual effects to still image forms in relation to one or more examples recalled and put forth in the film. From here, the significance of the pan-and-zoom or "Ken Burns effect" was overwhelmingly discussed as important to making historical (black-and-white) photography more relevant and engaging to present-day audiences.[105]

The findings from the visual analysis are also important to the relationship between visual effects and visual information. Specifically, the examples from Chapter IV as part of the visual analysis of *The Roosevelts* show and describe variations on the most commonly utilized visual effects in the film and more precisely, how and why these techniques are implemented as part of the visual presentation. Here, the still frames and visual sequences retrieved from the film and incorporated into this document detail how Burns and his team target, direct, pinpoint, and/or disclose certain visual content through the application of visual effects.

The findings from the data collected and analyzed as part of the visual analysis of *The Roosevelts* also support these conclusions by showing the frequency of visual effects incorporated into the film. These findings are significant to establishing role(s) and presence of visual effects in a Burns-directed film, including the strong relationship between visual effects and still images, and suggest that the former is necessary to the latter. These findings indicate that most still images coded were also coded for visual effects, and that still images likely comprised the majority of the film's running time. These interrelated findings indicate that the case study film as representative of Burns's

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[105] For specific examples, see Themes I and II of the analysis of the focus group sessions in Chapter IV.

filmography relies on the repetition of visual effects for still images as part of the visual presentation.

As discussed in relation to RQ1, the widely used pan-and-zoom effect as well as the other visual effects taken into account for this research study are used as a means of targeting or revealing content present in the full photographic frame. Along with the narration, the movement and direction applied to still photographs function as an aid to keeping the narrative focused on visual content deemed most significant by the filmmaker. What the filmmaker makes visible through the pan-and-zoom and its variants is what the audience or viewer sees; the pan-and-zoom and other visual effects have the unique ability to ignore, overshadow, or dismiss the remainder of visual information through the speed and utilization of motion and direction, over time.

In this sense, the zooming in to the eye-line or gaze of an individual or significant object in the visual frame, such as Theodore Roosevelts intimidating glare or Franklin Roosevelt's legs and feet attached to braces, enlarges the content on screen. Doing so also allows certain items to linger on screen for a set number of seconds, thus giving the viewer time to maintain their visibility on the visual content.

Finally, the findings from the visual analysis and focus groups also indicate that the pan-and-zoom effect and its variants provide motion and direction to still images, allowing these static visual forms to mimic properties of motion pictures. With the historical documentary film understood as a classification of motion pictures, the emphasis on generating motion to stills indicates the forward progression of the narrative, and appears of special interest to historical documentary filmmakers as well as other creators of visually dominant multimedia presentations.

The significance of forcing stills to mirror the capabilities of motion pictures complements the film's visual presentation by reifying the film's unique capacity to show or display physical and mechanical movements similar to those that occur in the real world. This perceived attention to adding motion to stills to enhance the visual architecture of the film and forward the narrative was indicated from across the findings of each of the research methods for this study.

Therefore, the findings for this dissertation indicate that visual effects serve multiple and potentially detrimental roles in relaying visual information to audiences. The applications for adding motion and direction to still image forms were found to be of consequence across the findings from the qualitative interviews, the visual analysis, and the focus groups. The findings suggest that visual effects are detrimental to the abilities of still images presented sequentially and in a motion picture medium to engage with viewers and connect them to historical visual information or content.

B.   Conclusions and Future Avenues of Exploration

The theoretical frameworks, research design, and methodology for this study serve as a scholarly means of approaching and investigating the intersections between visual effects, documentary photography, and the historical documentary film. The research design and triangulated methodology for this study were implemented to investigate these three topics from competing sites of the image. Again, this dissertation looked at Ken Burns's *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* (2014o) as a representative example of his filmography and as a historical documentary film whose visual presentation and style is representative of the subgenre itself.

The findings and the subsequent conclusions provide several answers and directions for the RQs for this research study. More to the point, these findings detail the various uses and functions of visual effects for still images in the historical documentary film. Second, the information from across the analyses speaks to the positive value and level(s) of trust or credibility placed on photography, and its capacity to communicate and inform upon history (historiophoty) in a motion picture medium. Finally, the findings also indicate that the relationship between still photography and the audience engagement or connection to the visual content is aided by the application and repetition of visual effects. This specific conclusion is supported by the findings from the focus group sessions and particularly those that speak to the historical documentary film as a means of generating or adding to knowledge of history.

Broadly, many of the findings presented in the previous section detail the competing and intersecting uses and functions of visual effects. These findings indicate that visual effects, and particularly the combined pan-and-zoom, are strategically implemented for both aesthetic and editorial purposes. Specifically, the variations on the pan-and-zoom effect and the repetition of visual effects for still images in the historical documentary case study film were found to positively or favorably affect 1) the historical contents depicted in the still photography, 2) the overall visual presentation of the historical documentary film, and 3) audience engagement or connection to visual information presented on screen and therefore, the film itself.

Related to each of the above items is that pan-and-zoom photography as a visual production strategy is advantageous, familiar, and immediately recognizable. As suggested, visual motion effects taken into consideration for this study are now readily

available through a growing number and the presence of digital software systems and applications ("apps"). Today, "the Ken Burns effect" now encompasses a range of easily applied visual motion effects for enhancing the appeal of media presentations. This technique and its variants continues to evolve within the historical documentary subgenre and as part of a number of visually dominant multimedia presentations.

These conclusions are supported by the addition of entries on visual effects in recent textbooks and manuals for film and video production. Gitner's (2016a) volume for media professionals wanting to create strategic multimedia presentation provides one example. In the text, the author includes an entry for "the Ken Burns Effect" along with a functional definition of the effect:

> [With *the Ken Burns effect*] images slowly move within the frame as if one's eyes are drifting over them in a photo album or laid out on a table. This effect is done best when the image moves to a point within the frame where the viewer's eye falls naturally on its most significant content (p. 203).

Further indication of the influence and accessibility of the pan-and-zoom and its variants is found in a recently published how-to manual for navigating the most current version of Final Cut Pro (X). Here, Young (2015a) devotes several pages to this application under the heading, "Working with the Ken Burns Effect" (pp. 215-218). The author describes the technique as "easy to achieve," and follows with step-by-step instructions for ways to produce variations on adding simultaneous motion and direction for images. As part of this discussion, Young presents an image of the "Ken Burns" button incorporated into the interface of Final Cut Pro X, which generates the pan-and-zoom effect instantaneously. Of additional importance is that Final Cut Pro X, as well as

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AVID, Sony Vegas Pro, and other nonlinear editing software systems, also gives users the option of applying keyframes that then allows the user to time the movement and direction for images (p. 215).

In considering these examples, the findings from this research study address a range of uses and functions for a spectrum of visual effects. Many of these findings speak to the ways in which aesthetic techniques and strategies are consequential to shaping the roles and content of still image forms and particularly, still photography, as well as the uses of still images in a predominantly motion picture medium. In this regard, the findings from the visual analysis show a number of ways in which the visual effects taken into consideration for this study *reinforce* rather than detract from photography's semiotic qualities.

Specifically, the uses and repetition of the visual effects in this research study further emphasize perceptions associated with photography's ties to the actual and the true. In terms of visual semiotics, visual effects in the historical documentary film, therefore, are aids used to highlight or accentuate photography as a medium capable of directing the viewer to a specific place and moment in time (indexicality), and simultaneously, direct the observer to content capable of being traced to the real world (referentiality).

The enforcing and revealing of certain items in the visual frame, and the repetition of the strategy, directs the viewer to someone or something of significance. In the case of visual effects in the historical documentary film, this someone or something once lived or occurred in the real world. In this sense, this research study suggests that visual effects and the repetition of these techniques are visual aids to better engaging with the

historical. However, future scholarship on visual effects should continue exploring this relationship, and especially the ways in which new visual forms address photography's perceived ties to the real or actual.

Moreover, the "Ken Burns effect" further isolates selected parts of a larger visual frame or a photographed moment in history in support of a narrative determined through historical research. This specific finding is likely the result of the availability of images in tandem with the filmmaker's perceived or chosen version of the story. In effect, aspects of historiophoty in the historical documentary film here are heightened or enforced, while other elements initially deemed important to the original photographer(s) are negated. In other words, historiophoty here is altogether selective and purposeful, ultimately created or generated by the interplay between editorial and aesthetic decisions as part of the process of filmmaking.

Another conclusion from the findings in this research study is that the combination and frequency of visual effects are significant contributors to present-day documentary expression and, as suggested above, evolving conceptions of historiophoty. In the digital era of media and mass communications, still photography and film termed "documentary" are increasingly prevalent across media platforms, including social media channels, and online film and video streaming and sharing websites. Therefore, future scholarship on the changing nature and ideas of documentary expression should take into account a range of documentary forms, and especially the increasingly overlapping subgenres of documentary film.

Moreover, future scholarship on these subjects should also pay attention to and examine the implications for a range of budding visual effects applied to and as

substitutes for still and motion picture forms. The relationship between new visual media forms, and especially CGI and animated or illustrated imagery, and documentary photography and film is consequential to what has long been understood as documentary expression, or still and motion picture photography's perceived abilities to report on the real.

The addition and evolution of visual effects and non-photographic image forms is also a means of questioning photography's longstanding capacities to serve as a historical referent and artifact. Once again, the existence and continual implementation of CGI and its variants are of particular concern to the credibility and trustworthiness of documentary photography as part of the findings of this research study. As Sutton (2007c) and others have mentioned, the increase of more cinematic visual presentations appears to subvert the public's understanding of photography and its semiotic qualities. In turn, a primary concern for visual communication scholars across academic disciplines should be the expanding and changing role(s) of digital photography in the new media landscape.

As suggested, this research study is only one means of engaging with these topics and the relationships or intersections between visual effects, documentary photography, and the historical documentary film. Future scholarship should approach and explore these primary topics of concern for this dissertation through different theoretical lenses and any number of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Therefore, several limitations of this research study should be identified briefly in relation to alternative scholarly avenues of engagement.

First, future scholarship on these areas should account for evolutions and more recent trends and developments. For example, the explication of visual effects for this

study was built on suggestions from Venkatasawmy's (2013c) scholarship on the subject. In this regard, the visual effects investigated for this dissertation are those largely understood or classified as visual motion effects once performed in-camera and on location. Gitner (2016b) refers to this category of digital visual effects as "video filters" as part of computerized nonlinear film and video editing software, including Final Cut Pro (X) and AVID (p. 202).

Thus, visual effects categorized as "special effects" or VFX, including more recent forms of CGI and animation, were not investigated as part of this research study. As discussed, these effects are common to the ever-expanding range of available fiction films and Hollywood or studio-driven filmmaking in particular. Although a range of scholarship on these VFX and its variants continues to expand alongside evolutions in HD film and video as well as digital cinema, the uses and functions of these visual forms and strategies have yet to be fully taken into consideration and investigated. Again, the relationship between these new visual forms and photography's semiotic ties to the real-world and therefore, the consequences for documentary film, is significant to media and communications scholars in the 21st century.

In addition, with still images continually incorporated into audiovisual presentations – from films and videos to photographic slideshows and educational or instructional audiovisual presentations – producers of visual media content should take into account the effects of different aesthetic strategies. More specifically, visual media producers should be aware of how seemingly minor applications, such as the visual effects taken into consideration for this study, are incorporated throughout a presentation, and have the potential to affect the content or information of the presentation.

Meanwhile, documentary film and especially the historical documentary are continually prevalent on cable television and increasingly through online websites devoted to film and video exhibition, including Netflix, iTunes, and Amazon. The visual motion effects explored in this study are increasingly found in documentary films across different subgenres and in relation to different documentary film topics (e.g., sports, true crime, concert films, etc.). Moreover, the degrees to which these films rely on visual effects and other visual strategies that increase the stimulation of the film's pace or narrative, such as rapid editing and montage, should be of particular importance to scholars of documentary film.

There are several limitations for this research study that should be mentioned briefly. First, the researcher served as the sole coder for the visual analysis, although the purpose of coding here served primarily to obtain numerical data capable of speaking to processes associated with historical documentary filmmaking. Although a single coder is standard for most visual analysis and textual analysis in media studies, future studies should explore the coding categories in this research study through multiple coders and through quantitative as well as mixed methods means and perform significance tests on the data collected.

Additional critical and cultural scholars exploring the historical documentary film should also consider analyzing the ideological, socio-cultural, political, and historical aspects of film content as well. In this regard, a critical or cultural study of Burns's discursive strategies across his filmography would greatly complement this research study. Furthermore, quantitative studies could measure the learning and emotive responses from the viewers of the historical documentary films.

In light of these limitations, scholars should also consider further investigating the ways in which visual effects affect the perceived meaning of visual information presented in historiophoty as well as the short and long-term memory of the content depicted in the historical documentary film. Such scholarship would allow for a greater understanding of the place and role of the historical documentary film as a film subgenre understood as combining aspects of traditional journalism with production strategies commonly associated with filmed entertainment.

Several significant contributions of this research study are worth mentioning in concluding this dissertation. First, visual effects such as the pan-and-zoom, indicate the presence and idea of a new visual media type – a form that combines the power and credibility associated with the still image with that of the immediacy and life-likeness of the motion picture. As suggested from previous scholarship on visual effects such as the pan-and-zoom, these motion-driven forms are accessed and implemented for a number of reasons.

One of the primary reasons for these techniques is, as Ken Burns has said elsewhere and Paul Barnes stated in the interview for this study, to emotionally engage with history, with the persons and events of the past. In one of his several volumes on the subjects of film and history Rosenstone (2012) provides an appropriate remark that connects these new visual forms to the historical documentary and the idea of historiophoty in general:

All forms of the documentary [film] contain lots of information about the

past…[and] this is done in a variety of visual and aural ways…. Like the dramatic

film, the documentary wants you to feel and care deeply about the events and people of the past.

Whatever form the historical documentary takes, it inevitably inserts itself into the larger historical discourse, that field of data and debates that surrounds its subject (pp. 83-84).

Another contribution of this dissertation includes the explication of documentary theory, which connects the first uses and purposes of still photography to moments and ideas associated with theories of documentary film. In this regard, the point of intersection is photography's semiotic qualities or the capabilities of the camera to perceivably report on the real. The material or digital document generated is a visual record and, over time, appropriated to the arena of historiophoty.

Moreover, this dissertation, and especially the theories and research design for this study as well as the use of several qualitative methods from competing disciplines, is a bridge in connecting the fields of cinema or film studies and media studies. As discussed several times throughout this research study, points of intersection are increasingly encroaching upon these traditionally separate academic disciplines.

However, the increased presence and usage of computerized and mobile software to produce both journalism and entertainment, and including the implementation of visual effects to accomplish these tasks, indicates the blurring of boundaries between media that purports to report on social reality and that which is created primarily to dramatize fictional worlds. In effect, future scholarship on the primary topics of this dissertation – visual effects, types of historiophoty, and "documentary" – should consider the ways in

which these subjects evolve and transition alongside changes the hybridization of traditional forms of visual media.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

1)   Tell me about your professional background and early training in documentary film. What was your career path?

2)   Explain how your early career experience(s) led to your involvement and association with Ken Burns and Florentine Films.

3)   Once you began collaborating with Burns, how did those experiences shape your professional role and responsibilities in terms of photography or cinematography?

4)   The pan-and-scan approach is commonly (now) referred to as "The Ken Burns Effect." Can you describe your personal/professional experiences with this technique?

5)   Apple, Inc. currently owns the copyright to "The Ken Burns Effect" and has implemented the tool as part of its photo/video editing software programs. Did you play any role in developing or marketing this application for Apple, Inc.?

6)   Do you believe "The Ken Burns Effect" is effective as a visual strategy for documentary film? In other words, is there something about the application that lends itself to documentary storytelling? Why or why not?

7)   More to the point, do you believe this strategy is effective for still images? Explain.

8)   How do you feel about the upsurge in popularity/usage of this application since *The Civil War* in 1990? Do you believe that "The Ken Burns Effect" has a particular benefit for documentary storytellers?

9)   Is there anything more you would like to add?

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUPS

1) What are your initial (general) thoughts about the segment of the film you just viewed?

2) Based on this segment of the film, do you believe this film is effective in terms of its subject matter? Why or why not?

3) Let's discuss the visual presentation and production of this film:

   a) What did you think about the use of still images?

      - Are you familiar with the pan-and-zoom effect?

      - If so, let's discuss your personal experience(s) with this strategy.

   b) What did you think about the newsreel and interview footage?

   c) Did you prefer one or the other forms – still photos or motion picture footage – for this topic/subject?

   d) Do you believe the combination of still and motion picture photography is effective in terms of narrative pacing? In terms of informing the viewer about the subject?

4) Turning to the subject of history on film in documentary for a moment. This film is a historical documentary; would you agree? In terms of the visual presentation that we just discussed, do you feel as though the use of imagery better informed you about the subject? If so, how?

5) Let's say you were assigned to make a film on this topic – a historical documentary on the same subject, in particular:

a)   Would you go about the production process(es) in the same manner as the

filmmaker here? Why or why not?

b)   If not, what revisions would you make or how would you go about making

this film?

6)   Is there anything more you would like to add about the film? About the film

production or visual presentation?

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