

Documentary Film Rhetoric: *Saving Face* and the Public Sphere

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Abstract

This paper will discuss the 2012 Academy Award-winning short documentary *Saving Face* and the social action campaign surrounding the film. In the absence of true investigative journalism, documentary film has become a new discourse community that circumvents institutions and uses the Convergence Culture as a mechanism for education and social action. Documentaries such as *Saving Face* highlight Gerard Hauser's definition of rhetoric – “the use of symbols to induce social action” – and Hauser's re-formation of the public sphere as described by Jürgen Habermas. Hauser views the public sphere as one formulated by ideas – or discourse – rather than the identity of the population engaging in the discussion. In other words, the film, and many other documentaries, form new public spheres that break down social, economic, class, and geographic boundaries. These films encourage global discourse and lead to global action. As Christina Tangora Schlacter notes, the critical component of the public sphere “is the concept of a deliberative democracy: one in which there is critical analysis of democratic decisions and where social issues are based on the collective interest of the public...” (36). Where investigative journalism and democratic processes have failed, documentary film has filled in the gaps.

Documentary film has the power to both inform and induce social action in a globalized society, using the very tools of globalization to formulate public spheres among disconnected publics. This paper will examine the current trend of documentary film as both investigative journalism and social action through a specific example.

Keywords: Social action, activism, documentary, acid attacks, Pakistani women, public sphere, Habermas.

The filmic image can burn an impression into our minds. The most famous example from history may be *Night and Fog*, Alain Resnais' stunning documentary about the Holocaust. The film changed the way the world viewed the Holocaust and the War in general; after seeing the now infamous images, nobody could deny what happened. Only the image could have accomplished such a feat.

Current documentaries, and in particular, short documentaries, have the same ability to burn impressions and enlighten us. In addition, as such films become more prevalent, easier to make, more accessible to see, and provide more opportunities for interaction through web and other multimedia outlets, the films can be stunningly impactful as they form new public spheres. As this essay shows, the lack of real investigative journalism in our current society has opened up avenues for investigation and action through the medium of film. Documentaries can inform, organize, and activate diverse international groups and individuals toward a common purpose. Real social action through film is not only possible, it is already happening.

The 2011 short documentary film *Saving Face* moves along the same track as *Night and Fog*, albeit with a slightly smaller but no less important scope. The film tells the story of UK doctor and Pakistani-native Mohammad Jawad and two of his patients in Pakistan. Dr. Jawad is a London plastic surgeon who works on wealthy English clients, but he also moonlights as a surgeon for acid-throwing victims in his native Pakistan. Once every few months, Dr. Jawad travels to Pakistan where he consults and operates on certain women chosen for surgery. The film follows the stories of two of those patients, Zakia and Rukhsana, as they prepare for and receive surgery. The audience sees and feels the heartbreaking stories and shares in their pain and triumph as Dr. Jawad attempts to give them back a semblance of their former selves. The film was co-directed by Denver-based Daniel Junge and Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, a Pakistani filmmaker. It won the Academy Award in 2012 for Best Documentary Short. The images are shocking, startling, moving, and ultimately, redeeming. The film and the social action campaign also inhabit a space first theorized by Jurgen Habermas: that of the public sphere. The public sphere, for Habermas, was a place where a certain discourse community could come together and discuss issues that could lead to action on a larger societal level.

This paper argues that *Saving Face* and other social-action documentaries not only determine a particular discourse community in a public sphere, it actually *creates* the community. Rather than a group of individuals who share similar homogeneous values previous to the formulation of the community (which was an element of Habermas), the film creates the discourse community by speaking to the values of a wide range of previously-created discourse communities. In other words, the shared values of this community reside *in the film itself*. While many documentaries speak to one discourse community, and oftentimes that community is already very active, this film speaks to multiple communities and includes some that may not be active. The film addresses multiple, global discourse communities and molds them into one public sphere, including the filmmakers from different ends of the world and opposite genders; the disenfranchised, as portrayed by the women in the film; the culture of capitalism, as portrayed by the doctor in the film and the production of the film itself; the political, manifested by the legislative victory in the film; and the socially conscious viewers who see the film and act because of it. The formulation of this sphere is particularly fascinating in that the same economic engine that can produce

much of the inequity in the world (capitalism) also provides relief in Dr. Jawad's successful practice. In addition, the film was independently produced by that same capitalist engine and it brings together a diverse group of interests through this particular public sphere. The hyper-capitalist engine that has roared through the last century into this one is also the same engine that may be able to provide a modicum of relief.

Saving Face

Junge relates that he first heard Dr. Jawad in a BBC interview speaking about the beautiful, aspiring model Katie Piper, herself a victim of an acid attack on the streets of London. Dr. Jawad performed successful surgery on Piper in 2008, and the model's story made international headlines. Junge became interested and subsequently contacted Dr. Jawad about Piper's ordeal, but upon learning about Jawad's work in Pakistan, Junge decided that his story lay with this aspect of the doctor's work rather than the work in London. While Piper's story made international headlines, the stories of hundreds of Pakistani women (and countless others around the world) who are victimized every year go untold. Junge's film gives voice to those women.

Junge is a social action filmmaker based in Denver, Colorado. His first feature-length film, *Chiefs*, won the Grand Jury Prize at the Tribeca Film Festival and was broadcast nationally on PBS. His subsequent feature, *Iron Ladies of Liberia*, premiered at the Toronto Film Festival and aired on over 50 broadcasts worldwide including PBS and the BBC. *They Killed Sister Dorothy*, his third feature film, won the Audience and Grand Jury Prizes at the South by Southwest Film Festival before broadcasting on HBO and earning a 2010 Emmy nomination for Best Investigative Journalism. And his film *The Last Campaign of Governor Booth Gardner* was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary Short in 2010.

Even though he has received accolades as an investigative journalist, Junge does not see himself as such. When asked if he considers himself an investigative journalist, Junge replied,

No, but I certainly didn't turn down the Emmy nomination when I was recognized as such! There is certainly crossover between the worlds of journalists and filmmakers and the distinctions are hazy. But in general journalism is a very specific discipline, with training and ground rules which are unique to that profession. More and more (especially with the decline of print journalism), documentary filmmakers are being asked to act as journalists and many have, admirably. But as filmmakers we're compelled to tell stories and connect our viewers emotionally and viscerally rather than just inform. Furthermore, as filmmakers, we're obliged to play by the rules of filmmakers (getting signed releases from subjects, for instance) while journalists are not. So although there is a confluence between the two professions and will continue to be more and more, it's good to recognize them as distinct. (Pitirro, interview)

The line between investigative journalism and film has thinned, however. Such recent feature-length documentaries as *The Cove* or *Dirty Wars* blurs the line between film

and investigative journalism, blending the art of film and the field of journalism to illuminate controversial topics and act as agents of social change. Junge and his filmmaking partner feed into that dynamic.

Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy is an Emmy and Oscar-award-winning documentary filmmaker who also moves between journalism and filmmaking. She has worked in over ten countries to produce internationally acclaimed films including *Pakistan's Taliban Generation* (2009), the recipient of the Alfred I. DuPont Award and the Association for International Broadcasting Award. Her other films include *Afghanistan Unveiled* (2007) and a series of documentaries for Channel 4 for which she was awarded Broadcast Journalist of the Year by One World Media, UK. She is the first non-American to receive the Livingston Award for International Reporting and is a TED Senior fellow. Both of these filmmakers are well-established and professional social activists, but most never heard of them before the 2012 Oscars.

While those Academy Awards gave recognition and publicity to the filmmakers and the causes of the women, the activism actually started much earlier. Both filmmakers have always included a strong current of social action and social justice in their films while maintaining the integrity of the art form as they approach difficult topics – the trick is how to make the films affecting, appealing, and *important*. When asked about the handling of controversial subjects and if social action is a goal, Junge responds,

I certainly make films from my political position and I'm intending to coerce audiences and effect change. But I don't wake up every morning and think, "How can I make the world a better place?" I'm not that altruistic. Rather, I want to tell stories and I want to viscerally affect my audiences. The stories I cover – stories of injustice – have the biggest stakes in the world. Wherever people are disenfranchised or facing injustice, there are incredible stories that need to be told. That's what compels me to tell these stories, but I certainly sleep better at night knowing my films might make a difference. (Pituro, interview)

The films make a difference because of the film itself, the promotion of the film, the film festivals in which it is shown, the online campaign surrounding the film, and the activism which follows. It is what Henry Jenkins calls the "convergence culture," where old and new media intersect in ways that make active participants out of the consumers. The result is a more socially active consumer who engages with other consumers to produce a final product – real social action through the formulation of a new public sphere.

The Public Sphere

In other words, *Saving Face*, and many other recent documentaries, form new public spheres out of discourse communities that break down social, economic, class, and geographic boundaries. The film encourages global discourse and leads to global action in an era of instant communication and globalization. In a period when news organizations have diminished in size, stature, and importance, documentary film has become a conduit for informing the public as well as activating the public. The key

concept is the idea of the public sphere, and how that public sphere can lead to social action.

The idea of the public sphere originates with Jürgen Habermas. The public sphere was theorized to be a place where citizens come together to discuss ideas in an (somewhat) informal setting and develop a general course of action based on those ideas; that course of action includes moving the discussion/debate from a small group to a larger societal level, supposedly for the benefit of all. As Habermas described it,

[b]y the “public sphere” we mean first of all a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed.... Citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion – that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions – about matters of general interest... The expression “public opinion” refers to the tasks and criticism of control which a public body of citizens informally practices... vis-à-vis a ruling class.

For Habermas, the notion of the public sphere has its roots in “the Greek *polis*, and more importantly, with the liberal theory and democracy of J.S. Mill and others” (Pusey 88). Habermas was also influenced (as was Marx), by the “advances in political freedom achieved in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century France and the high points of parliamentary government that he dates from 1832 to 1867” (Pusey 88). Examples include British coffeehouses or the French salons of the era. Even the great American experiment of the contemporaneous era lends itself to formulations of the public sphere, although much of the early American lawmaking was still strictly controlled by a select few and in official settings. And therein lies one of the criticisms of the public sphere – by design and in action, it is exclusive, beginning with upper-class fraternities and resulting in self-serving bourgeois practices that would then be legitimized on a larger scale.

Along those lines, Habermas has been revised to include the notion of “counterpublics” and “subaltern publics” as described by Nancy Fraser: “Subaltern counterpublics are parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs” (67). In addition to Fraser’s work, Michael Warner also examines the idea of a public sphere as a counterpublic to include the gay, transgender, and transsexual community and subsequently completely debunks the notion of “a public” because of its inherently exclusive nature. Gerard Hauser takes Habermas a step further and posits the idea of a “rhetorical public sphere,” one in which the ideas, rather than the identity of the population engaged in the discourse, takes precedence. As Hauser notes, “publics may be repressed, distorted, or responsible, but any evaluation of their actual state requires that we inspect the rhetorical environment as well as the rhetorical act out of which they evolved, for these are the conditions that constitute their individual character” (1999: 80-81). Hauser’s formulation, by its very definition, marks off the actions of the public sphere as rhetorical and thereby grants them a purpose – to act. Hauser’s own definition of rhetoric – obviously informed by Kenneth Burke – is “the use of symbols to induce social action” (2002: 3). These revisions/additions to Habermas

attempt to (re)view the public sphere concept as more inclusive, more dynamic, and more attuned to issues rather than demographics.

In addition to these contextual and structural criticisms, the historicity of Habermas' initial formulation is also questionable in that, as Pusey notes, "we are still faced with the somewhat embarrassingly brute fact that its modern development historically coincides with the ugliest period of nineteenth century industrial capitalism" (90). The massive shifts of power that occurred during this time period really only involved the movement of wealth and power from one elite class to the next elite class. Most were still left out of the equation. In addition, the twentieth and twenty-first century advancements of hypercapitalism have exacerbated the idea of exclusionary publics. As Pusey describes, "...we are faced with the unexpected and puzzling coincidence of mass democracy, affluence, and a degradation of the public sphere" (90); in other words, we have become victims of our own success, wherein "mass education, increasing social mobility, and in short the whole process of "modernization and development" brings with it not rationality and emancipation but rather, to Habermas' eye, a deepening irrationality" (90). The ethos of late capitalism began to lay waste to any Enlightenment notion of true democracy and citizen rule. And finally, the rise of globalism in the late 20th century also proved to dilute the influence of media as an agitating force as global media conglomerates increasingly focused on sensationalism and pop culture; the media became another mechanism for perpetuating hypercapitalistic ends in self-serving fashion. Gone are the days of Edward R. Murrow and semiautonomous, hard-hitting investigative journalism in the mass media.

The public sphere and the media are indelibly tied together, and the success of one depends on the success of the other. The structure of the public sphere for Habermas held a place between civil society and the state, resulting in the creation of public opinion through critical discourse. As Christina Schlacter notes, Habermas called for active participation, not superficial participation, as a critical role in democracy, and the public sphere represented an act of critical communication and discourse rather than superficial discussion. The public sphere and the public interest are tied together: the outputs of these critical debates were not collective opinions, but a shared opinion formed through discussion. The critical component of the public sphere is the concept of a deliberative democracy – one in which there is:

critical analysis of democratic decisions and where social issues are based on the collective interest of the public. But this type of discourse is inherently pluralistic and interactive and the publication of popular or academic journal articles, or the release of a film, hardly represents the full range of information exchanges or collective learning opportunities. Documentaries can, however, fill one gap in the public sphere left by overall cutbacks in investigative and informative journalism, and the part of documentaries in providing relevant information to the public with which they can connect and collaborate on, is critical. (Schlacter 36)

That brings us to documentary film, more specifically for the purposes of this paper, short documentaries, and to *Saving Face*. While Habermas' formulation, and the Hauser's update, of the public sphere have been more recently applied to the digital

age and specifically to the internet (Calhoun), such a discourse includes the same limitations of Habermas' original construction as too exclusive – now referencing those who have access to the Internet. But this paper goes beyond a discussion of solely the Internet and includes *film* as a way to form a public sphere and even further, as a rhetorical device that may lead to social action. *Saving Face* provides a furtive example.

Saving Face, The Public Sphere, and Social Action

The collaboration of many public spheres in the case of the Pakistani women as depicted in *Saving Face*, then, is a positive example of the public's influence on an issue that otherwise may have gone unnoticed or at least buried once noticed. While the issue may at first seem private – only affecting the women in Pakistan – it is much more complicated and not so regionalized as it first may seem. Victims of acid-throwing populate the world, including North America, and the larger issue of women's rights and legislative relief, effects everyone. Add in the enormous financial support the United States and other nations give to countries such as Pakistan, and you have a public that is very much involved in the political side of the issue as well as the very real and heartbreaking human side of the issue. It is very much a public matter, not private. So when Junge spoke with Dr. Jawad and learned of his work inside Pakistan, he knew he found his story.

Junge invited Obaid-Chinoy, whom he calls Pakistan's best filmmaker, to join him in making the film and she readily accepted. Of her involvement, Junge states,

She's an Emmy-winning filmmaker, and having a partner on the ground there, especially a woman who could go and shoot some of the most sensitive stuff without me, was just great – not only for safety concerns but for the comfort of the subjects. I think it gives the film an intimacy in rural Pakistan that I wouldn't have been able to do myself. (Edwards)

For her part, Obaid-Chinoy said she was interested in getting the women's stories out to the international community. While she estimates an average of one hundred incidents of acid-throwing reported every year in Pakistan, she believes the actual numbers are exponentially higher (Edwards). The women are simply too afraid of reporting the incidents – they fear further retribution and retaliation from their attackers and their families. The film therefore not



Figure 1. Dr. Jawad examines Zakia.

only gives voice to some of the victims, it encourages more women to speak out about such acts. Poignantly, it accomplishes all of this with a human touch.

One of the most striking examples comes in the opening images of the film, as we see one of the victims, Zakia, holding pictures of how she looked before she was attacked. The *mise-en-scène*, cinematography, and editing all work together to produce a *logos* and *pathos* that lead us to sympathize with Zakia. She was a beautiful woman, and as she says, she feels bad looking at the pictures because she knows she will never look like that again. The touching image of her current, disfigured face cut against the static photograph of her former self at once tells her heart-wrenching story, but it still provides some hope for a (happier) future in the juxtaposition of static to current (filmic) image. The static image is an artifact of the past, but the current filmic image allows for “editing” and therefore provides hope for her future. The possibility of hope and change through the moving image not only speaks to Zakia’s own presence in the diegesis, but it speaks to the project of social change through film in a meta-cinematic sense. An aesthetic of hope is established from the beginning of the film.

Later, when Dr. Jawad meets his other patient, Rukhsana, she relates the story of how she still lives at home with her husband (her attacker) because she needs to be with her children. Her husband threw acid on her, her sister-in-law threw gasoline on her face, and then her mother-in-law lit a match and set her on fire. And yet, she still has to live with them. The film cuts to Dr. Jawad, visibly upset, and he walks out of his office in disbelief after the interview. All the while, we sit and watch the brutally disfigured face of this once beautiful twenty-five year-old woman. The sympathetic response from Dr. Jawad is once again both real and extra-filmic: Dr. Jawad becomes our stand-in and he expresses the sentiments and emotions that we feel as viewers. That sentiment extends from sadness to anger as the viewer ponders the fate of her attackers. What will happen to her husband and family? Probably nothing, we know.



Figure 2. Daniel Junge and Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy shooting the film.

The film then follows Dr. Jawad as he works with Rukhsana (and Zakia) over the course of the next few years. Junge traveled back and forth to Pakistan for over two years to get the full story. About this same time, the Pakistani Parliament passed a landmark law – to give life sentences to those found guilty of acid throwing. The film shows clips of the

arguments being made in the Parliament and the victorious sponsor of the bill after it is passed. Zakia then begins working with a lawyer, an activist for women’s causes, and they bring Zakia’s husband to court. It would be the first test of the new law in all of Pakistan. After many delays and court maneuvering, they finally get a verdict. The court rules in favor of Zakia, and her husband receives two life sentences. The smile on her face is undeniably the first moment of happiness in her life since the attack. The second is the following scene, as she relates the story to an ecstatic Dr. Jawad,

and he congratulates her with a high-five! As important as these scenes are, the stakes are underscored by the interstitial cuts that serve as transitions from one scene to the next: young girls playing in the streets and in the fields. As the film makes beautifully clear: these children are at stake. Our previous identification with Dr. Jawad now becomes a vehicle for social action as we, the viewer, have a mission at the film's end.

The significant aspect of the diegesis is how Zakia's story speaks to multiple public spheres: it speaks to the political process, it speaks to the activist base, but most importantly at this point, it speaks to the women of Pakistan who now have legal recourse if they are unfortunate enough to find themselves in this horrible predicament. This is a crucial aspect of the film: it has *created* the public sphere around these women who may hold some hope that their attackers will actually be punished, and perhaps even the law will act as a deterrent to the men and future perpetrators of this brutal practice. The viewer now has a personal and political stake in the film.

Both Junge and Obaid-Chinoy had such social and political action in mind when they made the film. When asked what he wanted people to take away from the film, Junge states,

First of all, I think that when people hear of the nature of the subject, they think it's all doom and gloom and horror, and of course it is, it's extremely dark subject matter. But I hope that when people watch the film, they see Pakistanis addressing a Pakistani problem, and moreover, they see a Pakistani filmmaker, my partner Sharmeen, documenting Pakistanis addressing this problem. I want viewers to come away with a sense of hope and empowering the institutions which are fomenting change, rather than just think it's an unchangeable situation. (Edwards)

In short, Junge was looking for change. Returning to Gerard Hauser's definition of rhetoric, Hauser believed it was the use of symbols that induced social action. But Junge's quest did not stop with the release of the film nor the Academy Award. He also initiated a very ambitious outreach program that focuses on education and outreach. Several years later, the campaign is still going strong, and according to its website, its goals are three-fold:

- to screen *Saving Face* around the world for leaders representing international agencies, governments, NGOs, academia, hospitals and other institutions positioned to impact policy, capacity, and advocacy on the issue;
- to equip individuals across sectors with SAVING FACE materials and resources – including the film, viewer's guide, and online platform – in order to educate through special screenings, spotlight those working to combat acid violence, and identify ways audience members can get involved;

- to support special projects inspired by the film and designed and led by our NGO partners and other change agents to end acid violence, such as trainings, public awareness efforts, community events, and fundraisers.

The filmmakers not only had specific public spheres in mind when making the film, but they were also able to create new public spheres that continue to grow, outside the political system, while engaging in real social action and enacting real change.

Documentary film has the power to do both, and a film such as *Saving Face* is able to provide hope and relief to many suffering and disenfranchised women throughout the world. There are other recent examples of similarly successful films: the short documentary *Sun Come Up* (2011), which detailed the plight of Carteret Islanders in the South Pacific, for example. Some of the world's first environmental refugees, the islanders must leave their homeland as the seas rise and threaten to infect their water tables and flood their islands. The campaign surrounding the film has brought much needed attention and funds to the islanders. Another recent short documentary, *Open Heart* (2013), tells the story of African children in need of life-threatening heart surgery and their journey to the one hospital in sub-Saharan Africa that performs such surgeries. The hospital is funded by an Italian NGO and by Sudanese dictator Omar al-Bashir. When al-Bashir threatened to withhold funding for the hospital, director Kief Davidson told al-Bashir that he was going on a press tour with the film (recently nominated for an Academy Award), and Davidson would announce to the world that the Sudanese leader was not funding a hospital that would save hundreds of children's lives. Al-Bashir immediately funded the hospital, saving countless lives. A follow-up study on such films could investigate how the films translate to direct social action.

Other recent examples include such powerful feature films as *Super Size Me* (2004), *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), *Food Inc.* (2008), and *The Cove* (2009). The possibilities of other documentaries creating new public spheres with a goal of social action are endless, and the images of these films searing into our collective psyches can serve to initiate change along the lines of "Night and Fog," with the help and understanding of an informed and activated public. As Dr. Jawad says at the close of the film, "I am doing my bit, but there is only so much I can do. Come join the party."¹

¹ *Saving Face* may be purchased from Women Make Movies. All proceeds go directly to help the women.

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Appendix

The complete interview with *Saving Face* director Daniel Junge.

Q: As a documentary filmmaker, do you also consider yourself an investigative journalist?

JUNGE: No, but I certainly didn't turn down the Emmy nomination when I was recognized as such! There is certainly crossover between the worlds of journalists and filmmakers and the distinctions are hazy. But in general journalism is a very specific discipline, with training and ground rules which are unique to that profession. More and more (especially with the decline of print journalism), documentary filmmakers are being asked to act as journalists and many have, admirably. But as filmmakers we're compelled to tell stories and connect our viewers emotionally and viscerally rather than just inform. Furthermore, as filmmakers, we're obliged to play by the rules of filmmakers (getting signed releases from subjects, for instance) while journalists are not. So although there is a confluence between the two professions and will continue to be more and more, it's good to recognize them as distinct.

Q: Your films deal with controversial subjects. Is social action a goal of yours? If so, why?

JUNGE: I certainly make films from my political position and I'm intending to coerce audiences and effect change. But I don't wake up every morning and think, "How can I make the world a better place?" I'm not that altruistic. Rather, I want to tell stories and I want to viscerally affect my audiences. The stories I cover – stories of injustice – have the biggest stakes in the world. Wherever people are disenfranchised or facing injustice, there are incredible stories that need to be told. That's what compels me to tell these stories, but I certainly sleep better at night knowing my films might make a difference.

Q: How do you think you can bring about change through your films?

JUNGE: In some cases, it's very specific – like when my films have been used to help convict a killer or have been cited in voting for a Nobel laureate. Other times it's more general – like how my film *Chiefs* has been shown so many times for young Native Americans around the country. But perhaps the biggest affect is less tangible. Through a successful film that gets wide distribution, you can change the conversation. For instance, acid violence is most certainly more known and discussed by virtue of our film *Saving Face*. Although the results may not be easy to quantify, it's hard to argue that a successful documentary doesn't change the conversation around issues.

Q: What challenges do you face in trying to bring about social change?

JUNGE: There's a Woody Allen line, from *Stardust Memories*, "Do you want to make the world better? Make funnier movies." That's instructive. I can't get consumed with how my films will affect social change. My role is simply to make the films as well as I can and hopefully they have a chance of affecting change. All too often, documentary filmmakers feel entitled to their audiences by virtue of the

importance of their subject rather than the quality of their filmmaking. On the contrary, the onus to make our films as compelling as possible to reach the widest audience in the most powerful way to possibly affect change.