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Editorial

In Memoriam: Hannes Haas

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Issue
This editorial is part of the regular issue of Media and Communication, edited by Professor Bradley Greenberg (Michigan State University, USA) and Professor Elisabeth Klaus (University of Salzburg, Austria).

Hannes Haas (1957–2014)

Regrettably, we announce the sudden death of Prof. Dr. Hannes Haas (aged 57), after a brief illness on March 20th, 2014. Hannes Haas, Editor-in-Chief of Media and Communication, was a Professor at the Institute of Communication Research at the University of Vienna and, alongside a throng of other roles, he served as head of the Institute from 2006–2010.

He was an unusually witty and committed teacher. He was well known in Austria, in the German-speaking countries, as well as worldwide for his scholarly work on media politics and journalism, his interest in the history of communication and his dedication to support quality journalism.

From the beginning he took a great interest in our journal and took major responsibility for the shape and content of its first issue. We lose an extremely knowledgeable, always reliable, friendly and supportive colleague.

Hannes Haas

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Article

Card Stories on YouTube: A New Frame for Online Self-Disclosure

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Abstract
This paper deals with the phenomenon of so-called (note) card stories on YouTube. Card stories can be described as self-disclosing videos or confessions, using a new frame for telling one's own story audio-visually to the public by combining 'old' (hand-written messages) and 'new' media (video, computer mediated communication). In 2012/13, a qualitative and exploratory study with a sample of 25 card story videos on YouTube was conducted. The content and visual analysis revealed (1) that these videos are bound to a very specific frame of presentation, (2) that they deal with specific topics, and (3) that the presenter does not remain (visually) anonymous. These findings question previous research results that stressed a strong correlation between online self-disclosure and (visual) anonymity; further, the findings show that this special frame of textual confessions via video supports deep self-disclosures.

Keywords
anonymity; card story; computer-mediated communication; frame; self-disclosure; video; YouTube

Issue
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1. (Note) Card Stories on YouTube

YouTube is a video-sharing website that was founded in 2005. By November 2007, it was already the most popular entertainment website in Britain (Burgess & Green, 2009) and was bought by Google in 2006 for 1.65 billion USD (Google Blogspot, n.d.).

It is a social-network oriented video platform (Lange, 2007), allowing its users to watch or to upload videos, to share content, to subscribe to channels, to comment or to rate videos. At the beginning, YouTube's slogan 'Your Digital Video Repository' soon changed to 'broadcast yourself'. 'This shift from the idea of the website as a personal storage facility for video content to a platform for public self-expression matches YouTube to the ideas about a user-led revolution that characterizes rhetoric around Web 2.0' (Burgess & Green, 2009). In the meantime, it has become the largest user-generated content video system worldwide (Cha, Kwak, Rodriguez, Ahn & Moon, 2007) and one of the fastest growing and most-used websites. This platform allows the users to 'move seamlessly between traditional mass communication activity of watching mediated content, and interpersonal or social connection activity of sharing it with others' (Haridakis & Hanson, 2009). The videos uploaded on YouTube are divided into different categories: sports, music, entertainment, film, comedy, gaming, and vlogs—just to mention a few. As studies have shown, user-generated content does not seem to be as present as presumed (Kruitbosch & Nack, 2008). Concerning YouTube, we find professional produced and user-generated content.

One part of the user-generated content is the so-called videoblogs (vlogs). Videoblogs can be defined as 'sites where authors post stories and/or information about themselves in the form of video, rather than text, as traditional blogs include. They are public spaces for self-expression where authors control the content published' (Griffith & Papacharissi, 2010). In these videoblogs, the producers present themselves to the public on YouTube—these media products serve one's self-presentation.

The term 'story' (instead of history) used in 'note card story' implies the subjective, narrative description of the presented content; a history would be the objective narration of past events. One of the first and most famous videos of this genre was the video by Jonah Mowry: 'Whats goin on…' uploaded on August 10, 2011 (since then, it has more than 10 million views). The producer of this video talks and writes about his experience with and suffering from mobbing, self-injury, depression, and feelings of loneliness. This visual self-disclosure in the form of a written public confession was followed by numerous other videos using this new frame to reveal very private and intimate information (e.g., mobbing, death of a friend/relative, sexuality (lesbian, gay), depression, eating disorders, self-injury, loneliness, and suicidal thoughts). One of the best-known note card stories was published by 15-year-old Amanda Todd: she disclosed her story about being a bullying victim, having depression, and injuring herself on YouTube. The video was watched more than 1.6 million times within the first week of its online publication. She killed herself in October 2012. Her case generated a groundswell of public anger.

Note card stories are a phenomenon, increasing tremendously within the last year. When the sampling for this study was conducted, 6500 results were found (in December 2012) by using the search term 'note card story'. New research in September 2013 revealed more than 3 million results. This enormously increased number of results illustrates how common the phenomenon of note card stories has become on YouTube (taking into account that not all results are note card stories as defined).

2. Theoretical Frame

2.1. Self-Disclosure

2.1.1. In General

'Talking about our private feelings in public is not always easy' (Petronio, 2002). This statement draws attention to the problems of self-disclosure, which describes the situation where individuals reveal personal and therefore often private and sensitive information to others (Archer, 1980). This process necessarily does not need to be public, and it is an essential precondition that the information disclosed is confidential. Self-disclosure can be differentiated with regard to the truthfulness of the content (Barbour, 2001), and only in the case of truthfulness can we call these phenomena self-disclosures (Misoch, 2013). To reveal information can be conceptualized as a voluntary process (Pearce & Sharp, 1973) when one person tells another person 'things about himself, which the other is unlikely to know or to discover from other sources' (Pearce & Sharp, 1973). Within the act of disclosing, individuals tell others things about themselves, which the others otherwise would not know, and through this process, the individuals make themselves vulnerable because there 'are risks that include making private disclosures to the wrong people, disclosing at a bad time, telling too much about ourselves, or compromising others' (Petronio, 2002).

Self-disclosure only concerns one's own information. It varies in breadth (or amount), intimacy (or depth), and duration (Cozby, 1973). Breadth means the number of details that are revealed; intimacy describes the level of privacy, and duration the time spent on revealing information. In addition to these differentiations, we can distinguish between voluntary and involuntary disclosure of self-related information (Attrill, 2012).

Self-disclosure is a process, normally occurring during social interactions and is important for the development and strengthening of interpersonal relationships (e.g., Derlega, Metts, Petronio & Margulis, 1993). Researchers assume that this phenomenon occurs when relationships develop from not intimate to more and more intimate information exchange (social penetration theory, Altman & Taylor, 1973). Therefore, it is usually a process that occurs incrementally and takes time (e.g., Pearce & Sharp, 1973, summary). There is a lot of research on the relationship between self-disclosure and liking (Berg & Archer, 1983; Chaikin & Derlega, 1974), perceptions of self-disclosures (Kleinke & Kahn, 1980), or its relationship to trust (Wheeless & Grotz, 1977; Vondracek & Marshall, 1971). Self-disclosure is presumed to be a symmetrical process within dyads (e.g., Jourard & Landsman, 1960; Jourard & Resnick, 1970), and is normally characterized by reciprocity (Jourard & Landsman, 1960; Jourard, 1959; Jourard, 1963). Relating to Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT) (Berger & Calabrese, 1975), people use interpersonal communication to reduce uncertainty. In initial interactions, people are driven by the desire to reduce uncertainty and use active, passive, and interactive strategies to serve this goal. Disclosing personal information is one of the key variables within this process and can be described as an active strategy to reduce uncertainty.

This paper focuses on the frame of note card stories, which enhances processes of self-disclosure. To serve this goal, qualitative data is used to develop hypotheses concerning the relationship between visual cues and the willingness to voluntarily disclose information online and furthermore to provide a deep description of the frame of audio-visual 'note card stories'.

2.1.2. Online Self-Disclosure

Regarding the phenomenon of self-disclosure against the background of digitalization and computer-mediated communication, the results of previous studies have shown a clear tendency to the conclusion that the willingness to self-disclose information is significantly higher in the context of computer-mediated communication compared to face-to-face-settings (e.g., Weisband & Kiesler, 1996; Joinson, 2001; Misoch, 2012; Misoch, 2014).

Recent research concerning the willingness to disclose information online has revealed three main factors:

1. *(Visual) anonymity*: A relation between the anonymity (in the sense that users are not identifiable) and the users' willingness to self-disclose information online could empirically be shown (Joinson, 2001). This effect seems not to be restricted to online communication because it can also be shown in real life, e.g., when confessing or talking to a crisis line. As Joinson has shown, visual anonymity seems to play a decisive role for this process (Joinson, 2001). Recent studies have shown, however, a differentiated tendency that implies that the factor of visual anonymity seems to be overestimated. These studies (Misoch, 2014) revealed a clear tendency that there are online self-disclosures that are published and are deliberately not anonymous. This is particularly true regarding audio-visual self-disclosures on YouTube, which are subject to special framing conditions (Misoch, 2014).

2. *Social presence*: Social presence is generally defined as 'the degree of salience of the other person in the interaction' and is conceptualized as the 'subjective characteristic of the medium' (Short, Williams & Christie, 1976), measured by subjective ratings. These ratings are based on the feelings of presence, which seem to be related to the number of channels provided by the medium (Short, Williams & Christie, 1976). Following this concept, the ideal type of communication is the face-to-face-interaction with visual perceptibility of all the actors. Therefore, the higher the sensual observable quotient, the higher the degree of social presence. If we adopt this concept to computer-mediated communication, it can be assumed that online (textual) communication has a very low degree of social presence. If we also define social presence as the 'sense of being with another' (Biocca, Harms & Burgoon, 2003) and mutual awareness (Heeter, 1992), we can conclude that this degree is low when it comes to CMC. This has behavioural effects to the users; for example, that others are not felt as socially present, and this lack of social inclusion or social interaction leads to a user's enhanced self-reference, and within this possibly also to a user's heightened willingness to self-disclose information.

3. *Private self-awareness*: An individual can draw his or her attention either outwards or inwards to him- or herself (Duval & Wicklund, 1972). If the attention is drawn inwards, one usually distinguishes between private and public self-awareness. Private self-awareness involves confidential and intimate aspects that are usually not shown (or not likely to be shown) in social contexts: '[…] private self consciousness […] was concerned with attending to one's inner thoughts and feelings […]' (Fenigstein, Scheier & Buss, 1975). In contrast, public self-awareness involves those aspects that are openly presented in social contexts and outline parts of a social identity. Indeed, several studies have shown that computer-mediated communication (CMC) raises private self-awareness, among other things, through the user's physical isolation in front of the screen, and furthermore, lowers one's public self-awareness (Matheson & Zanna, 1988). Other studies report that conditions of CMC lead to a highly reflective experience (Matheson, 1992). This experience of heightened private self-awareness seems to be related to anonymity (e.g., Kiesler, Siegel & McGuire, 1984). Researchers found out that in reciprocal situations, a heightened private self-awareness is associated with an increased salience of one's own feelings (Scheier, 1976). This leads to an increased focus on oneself, which is the basis for processes of self-disclosure. Thus, self-disclosure is the result of self-focusing and orientation on one's standards and needs. Research has shown that a heightened self-awareness leads to more detailed and precise self-reports (concerning psychiatric patients), and decreases the influence of social norms and standards in the sense of social desirability (Joinson, 1999).

2.2. The Concept of Framing

A helpful tool for analysing card stories is the theory of framing, even though frame and frame analysis are neither a clear theoretical paradigm nor a specified methodological approach.

The genuine concept by Goffman (1974), which was inspired by Bateson (1973), states: 'I assume that definitions of a situation are built up in accordance with principles of organization which govern events […] and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify' (Goffman, 1974). In Goffman's view, a frame is a basic cognitive structure that guides our perception and interpretation of reality. Even though frames are not only consciously produced, Goffman differentiates between naturalistic and social frames. A correctly perceived frame helps individuals act within the scope of a specific frame.

Today, the concept of framing is applied to mass media and therefore means a cognitive frame that influences the audience's perception of reality. This new concept of framing in media studies - very different from the more sociological framing concept of Goffman - is based on the assumption that the perception of the audience can be influenced by the manner of information presentation and that the key elements are selection and salience (Entman, 1993; Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

The concept of framing which is used in this paper is that developed by Goffman, which has already been successfully used to analyse YouTube videos (e.g., Lindgren, 2012). In keeping with Goffman's definition , framing is used in a broader understanding as a cognitive concept that is related to the premise: 'The picture frame tells the viewer that he is not to use the same sort of thinking in interpreting the picture that he might use in interpreting the wallpaper outside the frame' (Bateson, 2006). In this understanding, a frame routes the mental and cognitive

understanding of a phenomenon. From this perspective, framing is a concept on a meta-communicative level and 'gives the receiver instructions or aids in his attempt to understand the messages included within the frame' (Bateson, 2006): a frame influences the recipient's expectations regarding the content and its way of interpretation. Thus, the model of framing describes a set of concepts and perspectives that influence the perception of the individual and the organisation of society. In this paper, we refer to this definition by Bateson and Goffman and therefore understand a frame as a structure of expectation.

3. Empirical Investigation

We regard note card stories as a special sub-type of vlogs: these videos do not serve purposes of 'classical' self-presentation; rather, they conduce confessions. The emergence of this new frame for audio-visual disclosures on YouTube can be dated to 2009 because the 'oldest' videos we found were uploaded in 2009 (for example the following video response: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfUB55s41_Y, accessed on 24 November 2012).

These audio-visual stories in note form—mostly confessions—are the main focus of this paper and the core element of the empirical investigation. In order to analyse self-disclosures, the topics of the videos, their framing structure, and the degree of anonymity in card stories, we carried out an empirical study in 2012/13. This qualitative and exploratory study consisted of a sampling of 25 videos. Qualitative methods were used because the field of research is new and there is no pre-existing data. The sample was selected by using a hybrid (Barbour, 2001) of random and purposive sampling strategies. The sampling was carried out by using search terms like 'my story' or 'my note card story', and we used a list with random numbers (principle of contingency) to find the results. These in turn were checked according to the representational nature of the content and, when appropriate, added to the sample. Videos that used the frame of a card story for irony or parody were removed from the sample. The sampling itself was carried out in December 2012 and January 2013. A content analysis (Mayring, 2010) of the videos was carried out, and the final sample was analysed with regard to its topic, the inner (narrative) structure, and the degree of visual anonymity within the self-disclosing videos. The content analysis of the visual and textual material was carried out. The focus of this analysis was to analyse the topics of these videos and the degree of anonymity to finally enable a close description of this new frame. This study was conducted as an exploratory study because there has not been any research until now concerning this new phenomenon, and we would like to gain a deeper understanding of note card stories.

Ethical considerations: The current analysis focuses on videos, in which people disclose private information about themselves to the public on YouTube, often without remaining visually anonymous. Because the producers of note card stories publish their videos on YouTube, accessible to everyone with Internet access, we decided to publish screen shots of selected examples to better illustrate this new phenomenon of online self-disclosure, taking into account that the range of a research paper in a journal is not as large as the range of a digital video published on the Internet.

4. Results

Our sample consisted of 25 selected videos that were selected randomly and according to content validity; 17 produced by women, 6 by men and 2 by transgender/transsexual users, which the latter assigned themselves to both sexes.

4.1. Frame Analysis of Note Card Stories

As described in Section 2.2, we refer to the framing concept developed by Bateson and Goffman. Frames are, in this understanding, structures that guide the perception and function as structures of expectation.

If we adopt this definition to our field of investigation, we can show that (note) card stories follow a quite narrow frame because they are all composed in a very similar manner. The length of the videos varies within our sample between 2:20 min and 8:16 min; the mean value is 5:18 min.

(Note) card stories can be defined by the following characteristics, which are a combination of characteristics of video-communication and special attributes that only occur in note card story videos (see also Misoch, 2014):

1. Classical video characteristics on YouTube:
   a. The video consists of auditory and visual elements;
   b. A certain kind of stage acting, as the user produces a media product by him-/herself and uploads this medium for the public;
   c. Unidirectional situation (presenter is sending his story to the public);
   d. Social interaction is subordinated because it can only develop afterwards;
   e. No symmetrical or reciprocal situation;
   f. Unknown and dispersed public.

2. Special characteristics of note card stories on YouTube:
   a. The presenter does not speak within this video (no verbal level);
   b. The auditory elements are background music;
   c. The message is conveyed visually to the public;
   d. The notes are handwritten on cards and held up to the camera;
   e. Sender is often not visually anonymized within the video, and we see her/his face; sometimes

he/she only shows his/her face or parts of it (e.g., chin, forehead) and his/her hands;

f. The videos are normally composed in three acts: (I) opening, (II) the message/ content in a narrow sense, and (III) the farewell.

The dramaturgical structure was analysed by studying the structure of the content within the note card stories and can be described as follows:

I. Opening

The opening often shows the face of the disclosing individual and the first note card with a written welcoming for the unknown viewers and/or brings up the issue of the video (see Figure 1). Some reveal their name and their grade in school at the very beginning of the video.

From our sampling of 25 videos, the analysis revealed that 16 presenters show their face in the opening part of their video. Another 5 videos show the face afterwards (in the main part) but not in the opening part of the video. The opening starts with silence and/or background music. This part has the function of introducing the presenter to his or her viewers, some revealing their name, and furthermore, starting with the story often after having made clear the focus of their vlog (e.g., confession, secrets).

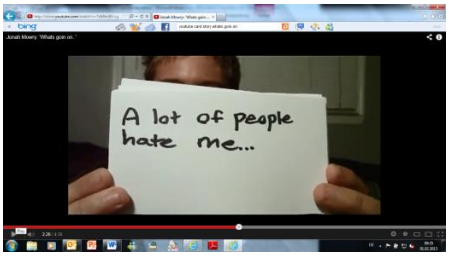
II. Main part of the video

In the main part of the video, the story is being told to the public on YouTube. The card stories analysed in our study deal with different topics, e.g., being a bullying victim, depression, parental divorce, suicidal thoughts; all selected and analysed videos deal with problematic and burdensome issues (see Figure 2). This main part of the video tells the story by showing the central statements (handwritten) on the note cards, which are held to the webcam. In 21 cases, we can see the face of the presenter in the main part, and he/she is therefore visually clearly identifiable.

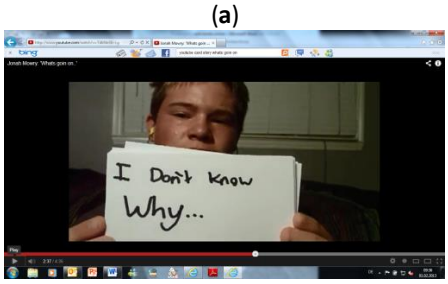
III. Final screenshot and farewell

After having told the story to the unknown public on YouTube, the presenters finalize their video (see Figures 3 and 4). This last part can be seen as a farewell to the viewers. It is quite interesting because this part represents not only the presenter's leave-taking from the unknown audience but also where the producers express their feelings towards the public (e.g., 'I love you'). These emotional messages to the unknown audience can be regarded as an attempt to manipulate the viewers' evaluation of their confession and can be a strategy that uses supplication, self-handicapping, and self-disclosure to influence the perception of both the video and the presenter (see Mummendey, 1995). Others are positively looking ahead in the final part of their video and showing a glimmer of hope at the end. Some only say goodbye, with their video finishing gloomily and without any ray of light.

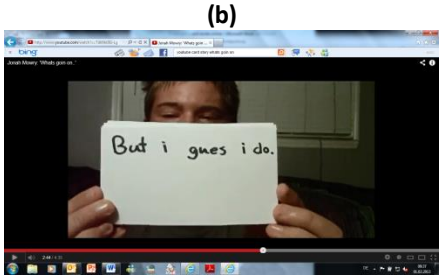
Figure 1. Opening. Source: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4GIENGcZnS4.



(a)



(b)



(c)

(d)

Figure 2 (a–d). Main part of the video. Source: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdkNn3Ei-Lg.

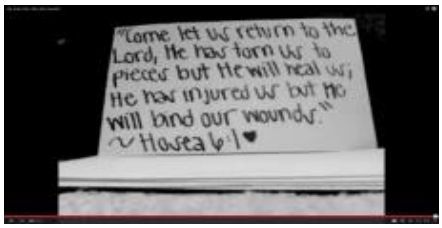


Figure 3. Farewell. Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZbJOVdZstY.

Figure 4. Final screenshot. Source: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gC18_43abYE.

4.2. Topics Dealt with in (Note) Card Stories

Card stories on YouTube deal with very specific topics. Regarding our sample of 25 videos, the content analysis revealed the following topics: depression, suicidal thoughts, death of a parent or beloved ones, mobbing, self-injury, eating disorders, divorce of parents, bi-/transsexualism, cancer, alcoholism, panic attacks, rape, shyness, fears, religion, and loneliness.

Most videos dealt with more than one topic, and depression was the subject most often negotiated.

When we assume that videos with self-referential content can be seen as a specific online genre (Misoch, 2013), we can deduce that note card stories are a subgenre of these self-presentational videos. The frame for these audio-visual self-presentations is quite wide and covers very different forms of videos that deal with oneself—in contrast, the frame for note card stories is very narrow and enhances a strict and specified form of disclosing self-presentation. These presentations are confessions to a dispersed (Maletzke, 1963) and unknown public on YouTube.

4.3. Card Stories and the Role of Visual Anonymity

The analysis of our sample showed that most of the presenters of note card stories used a pseudonym in publishing their story: 23 presenters used a name that is explicitly identifiable as a pseudonym and only 2 used a name that could to be the presenter's real name. This finding allows the conclusion that although anonymity seems to be important to the presenter online, a user must have a username to register on YouTube and to open a channel.

Regarding visual anonymity, the analysis of the sample showed a very clear trend towards not staying visually anonymous: About 21 of the publishers of a card-story showed their face within their video and were therefore completely identifiable on a visual level. Only facial parts (e.g., chin, forehead) were shown by 2 presenters (e.g., chin), and only 2 remained totally anonymous within this condition (because their story only consisted of note cards without showing hands or parts of their faces).

This finding is interesting because it contradicts the previous research on this topic, which stated that people tend to disclose more online when they are (visually) anonymous (Joinson, 2001): 'under the protective cloak of anonymity users can express the way they truly feel and think' (McKenna & Bargh, 2000). This assumption seems to be only partially true for there are several empirical findings that indicate that visual anonymity is not crucial for online self-disclosure (for summary see Misoch, 2014). Characteristics of the media, directionality and synchronicity must be taken into account for this process. These findings of increasing willingness to disclose information indicates that private self-awareness is also heightened in unidirectional situations when communication is not reciprocal. This fact might lead to a higher level of voluntary self-disclosure.

4.4. Writing Instead of Telling

The most important fact concerning this new frame is the obvious one that the presenters do not confess their story verbally (spoken) but in a written manner: the core elements of their story are written (handwritten) on cards, which are then read by the viewer of the video. The auditory channel is therefore not used to speak to the viewers; this channel is solely used for background music, which underlines the video's emotional message.

Regarding letters, Foucault writes: 'to write is thus to "show oneself", to project oneself into view, to make one's own face appear in the other's presence' (Foucault, 1997). This is always the case concerning card stories on YouTube because the presenters write and present their inner feelings to the audience. But the difference consists therein that the written online confession on YouTube is not written to a certain person, and is not part of any communicational exchange. When a letter can be interpreted as '[…] a gaze that one focuses on the addressee (through the missive he receives, he feels looked at) and a way of offering oneself to his gaze by what one tells him about oneself' (Foucault, 1997), the online confessions on YouTube are unilateral, and are only offering the presenter the viewer's view and not vice versa.

As previous studies have shown, disclosing information has positive psychic and physical (immunologic) effects on traumatized individuals (e.g., Pennebaker, 1989; Pennebaker & O'Heeron, 1984). Moreover, studies have shown that there is a significant difference between verbal and written self-disclosures: When talking about trauma—even if they only talk to a tape recorder—most people are intensely and emotionally involved (score 5.3 of 7; and 7 indicates extremely upsetting). This level of unsettlement is significantly lower when disclosing information by writing a text about the traumatic experience (score 2.3 of 7; see Pennebaker, 1989). The data shows that the emotional state differs with respect to the modus of disclosure:

verbal self-disclosure is more upsetting, and therefore leads to more emotional outbursts (like involuntarily crying; Pennebaker, 1989) than written disclosures. To write instead of to tell means having more control over both one's own feelings as well as the disclosed content for the disclosing individual. This is also the case when producing a video. Although videos can be edited and cut before uploading them, the inner distance from one's feelings is significantly higher when writing about the burdening incidences compared to talking about them. This applies even more if the written confessions consist of brief statements in note form: to mention only the most important keywords and events offers a greater distance to the inner feelings than when talking about them in detail (e.g., Pennebaker, 1989).

5. Discussion

The so-called (note) card stories constitute a new frame for self-disclosing behaviour by using audio-visual channels online. This frame is a combination of old and new media: it uses strategies of traditional offline communication—sheets of paper or note cards with handwritten messages on it—and combines these messages, which the user holds up to the camera, with a multimedia feature—a webcam—to produce a digital video to be published online. This new frame for self-disclosure, which entails showing instead of telling one's story, seems to occur more and more often online, and is used for confessions and disclosures. The topics that are confessed by this kind of vlogs are mostly about psychological problems that are imbedded in our society: depression, deaths in the family, suicidal thoughts, mobbing, eating disorders, self-injury, bi-/transsexualism, cancer, alcoholism, panic attacks, rape, shyness, fears, religion, divorce of parents, and loneliness. Often several of these topics are addressed within the same video.

The most striking point to this new frame of self-disclosure on the Internet is that these online confessions take part without visual anonymity. This fact raises the question, which factors are of decisive importance for self-disclosing behaviour online, whether visual anonymity is not essential.

5.1. Characteristics Related to the Medium and/or Setting which Enhance Self-Disclosure Online

1. *Unidirectionality*: video disclosures are unidirectional and asynchronous, and are presented to an unknown mass audience. Therefore, these disclosures have particular characteristics. They are not developing from a superficial level to a more and more intimate level as stated in the Social Penetration Theory (Altman & Taylor, 1973), and they cannot be interpreted as examples of privacy regulation, according to the Communication Privacy Management theory (CPM) (Petronio, 2002), which takes place between relational actors. When self-disclosures normally occur in dyadic interactions, where people speak and interact with each other, they need to make decisions from time to time about what to disclose. These decisions emerge within the interaction and can therefore be changed. Under such 'normal' circumstances, the situation is reciprocal—with the exception of a therapeutic setting or a religious confession. When we regard self-disclosures on YouTube, they are not integrated in any interaction per se; they are videos that can be watched by others, commented upon, or rated and can be responded to in the form of a video response (for example the following video response: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfUB55s41_Y, accessed on 24 November 2012). They exist independently from other interaction and communication, and therefore the user decides before producing and uploading his/her video what content he/she wants to disclose and whether to upload or not. This is also the case in other similar settings as weblogs (blogs), often characterized by voluntary self-disclosure (Bortree, 2005; Lee, Im & Taylor, 2008; Viegas, 2005; Ko & Kuo, 2009) as well as personal homepages (Misoch, 2007; Stern, 2002) or other self-related media products online (Misoch, 2013; Misoch, 2014). These communicational situations are characterized through asynchronicity and unidirectionality, and it seems that those factors might enhance self-disclosure: 'some people may even experience asynchronous communication as "running away" after posting a message that is personal, emotional, or hostile' (Suler, 2004). This might be explained through the reduced salience of the other social actors within asynchronous settings, and the therefore heightened private self-awareness when the user sits (physically isolated) alone in front of his/her screen. Unidirectionality and asynchronicity seem to enhance processes of self-disclosure (Misoch, 2014) as research revealed concerning unidirectional services for self-presentation, in particular blogs, personal homepages or videos.

2. *Enhanced private self-awareness*: the unidirectional situation of asynchronous computer mediated communication leads to a heightening of private self-awareness (see in detail in Section 2.1.2, point 3). In this condition, users are focused intensely on their inner feelings, their own norms and needs and less on social standards or norms of social desirability. This condition can lead to an intensified willingness to disclose information online as, for example, verified for note card stories.

3. *Social presence:* social presence can be defined as the degree of the salience of other persons in social interactions. Regarding CMC, it was assumed that online communication (textual exchange) has a low

sense of presence and therefore a low awareness of the social others. This condition was linked to an increased willingness to disclose (because of the heightened private self-awareness). Looking at the phenomenon of video confessions on YouTube, it can thus be stated that the condition of producing and uploading a video on YouTube is a situation with low social presence (asynchronous, no direct feedback) even if the result of this process (the video itself) is of high social presence (channel variety).

4. *Stage acting:* unidirectional situations on the Internet, which are used for purposes of self-presentation, can be described through the concept of 'stage acting'. Self-disclosing videos belong to this category of medial self-presentations. Stage acting (Lennox, 1987) is, as the term implies, unidirectional, and other people are, first of all, a passive audience; only in a second step, might others become social interactants. When social (inter-)acting is dependent on reactions from others, stage acting, in contrast, is 'noncontingent upon that feedback and instead depends on predetermined scripts for direction' (Lennox, 1987). This script is the dramaturgical pattern of how users want to present or disclose their information online. This might be realized by telling their own story to the camera, or by writing or showing pictures that illustrate this story, or by writing their sorrows on note cards and presenting them to the camera. This acting is self-centred, and therefore characterized by a heightened self-awareness and self-reflexion because the main goal is to tell others about oneself. This can be realized by hosting a private homepage, writing a blog, posting within a forum, or producing a video as, for example, a note card story about oneself.

5.2. Characteristics of the Frame of Note Card Stories which Enhance Self-Disclosures

1. *Writing*: the modus of writing brief statements on note cards about one's fears and inner feelings instead of talking about them in detail in front of the camera helps the presenter gain a greater inner distance and control over those feelings while confessing. This very special frame might also be appealing and it might be attractive to use the frame of a 'note card story' for the confession of feelings online. To confess within this special frame (and to adhere to the rules) could be an attempt to keep the viewers' attention because this frame might attract more attention by the intertwined structure of visual and textual cues than a video consisting of habitual orality.

2. *Acting within the frame*: producing and uploading a note card story on YouTube can be the acting within a special frame. This frame is provided by the medium and socially constructed by their viewers, who accept this frame as appropriate for self-disclosing. When the user transforms his/her feelings to this media frame and confesses his/her sufferings on YouTube by producing a note card story, he/she is acting within this frame.

3. *Personal motives:* regarding the personal motives, which might lead users to produce and upload a confessional video online, we can only rely on presumptions, since these motives were not part of our exploratory study. Nevertheless, these motives will be mentioned here as concluding hypotheses that need further consideration and should be part of further research in the field of self-disclosing behaviour online.

4. *Trust*: to confess inner feelings in a non-anonymous way can be a strategy to create trust: '[k]nowing a speaker's identity is necessary to better evaluate the truthfulness of the assertions' (Barnes, 1999). Therefore, showing one's identity within online confessions might be a strategy to be more credible online and to be evaluated as authentic by the viewers.

5. *Seeking for contact*: studies concerning blogs revealed that central motives for blogging are purposes of self-presentation, to express one's feelings (e.g., depression), and to find social contact. One study about blogs showed that the more information the blogger disclosed, the more social capital (Bourdieu, 2002) he/she gained (Ko & Kuo, 2009). If we transfer these findings to card stories on YouTube, these confessional videos could have the same goal. Showing one's inner feelings and sufferings can therefore be interpreted against the background of the search for contact, perhaps especially to find contact with others who have the same experiences.

6. *To regain control*: note card videos tell stories about personal experiences of complete loss of control, like being bullied, raped or abused. To produce a video about this experience and to confess this to the audience can be an attempt to cope with this experience and to regain control. Similar to the project "Unbreakable", which aims to increase the awareness to sexual assault and where survivors of sexual assaults hold posters with quotes from their attackers to the camera (http://projectunbreakable.tumblr.com/)[1].

This study clearly shows that a particular frame for asynchronous, audio-visual self-disclosures arose on the internet within the last five years. This frame, which can be dated back to Bon Dylan in 1967[2] is in its current form a mixture of old media (handwritten message) and new media (digital video on the internet).

[1] Thank you to Verena Bläser and Gerrit Fröhlich for this important hint.

[2] The first note card story was presented in 1967 in the music video 'Homesick Subterranean Blues' by Bob Dylan, where the handwritten note cards (called 'cue cards') are presented to the camera which contained central parts of the song text. Available from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=trosB4pa3vg (thank you to one of my anonymous reviewers for this important hint).

This frame, which can be called 'note card story', is a phenomenon where users publicly reveal their inmost feelings and private traumas to an unknown audience. These stories follow a narrow frame with a clear structure, deal with special topics, and are composed following a three-step dramaturgy. Based on our findings, visual anonymity is not a necessary condition for self-disclosing behaviour online; rather, the characteristics of the medium/mediated setting—as an asynchronous, unidirectional situation, which enhances private self-awareness and a lows social presence—and of the media frame (written message and an acting within the frame) seem to be decisive for self-disclosing behaviour online.

This study is an exploratory study, and we used qualitative methods as content analysis and visual analyses. This means that the conclusions are limited to our sample and to our methodological approach. But by using a qualitative approach, we were able to conduct an in-depth analysis of the frame of the hitherto unknown frame of note card stories. This paper is the first explanatory analysis of this new frame and thus could be the starting point for future research on this emerging phenomenon.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

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Article

Documentary and Cognitive Theory: Narrative, Emotion and Memory

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Abstract
This article deals with the benefits of using cognitive theory in documentary film studies. The article outlines general aspects of cognitive theory in humanities and social science, however the main focus is on the role of narrative, visual style and emotional dimensions of different types of documentaries. Dealing with cognitive theories of film and media and with memory studies, the article analyses how a cognitive approach to documentaries can increase our understanding of how documentaries influence us on a cognitive and emotional level and contribute to the forming of our social and cultural imagination. The article analyses case studies of documentaries dealing with climate change and the environment and documentaries dealing with social history.

Keywords
cognitive theory; documentary and climate change; documentary genres; emotions; historical documentary; memory; narrative; social and cultural imagination

Issue
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1. Introduction

Over the last two decades cognitive studies have moved to a more prominent place in both humanities and social science. There have been studies of creativity in general (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002; Turner, 2006), in literary studies (Turner, 1998), in linguistics (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), philosophy (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999), sociology and political studies (Brothers, 1997; Westen, 2007; Zerubavel, 1999), and in film studies (Grodal, 2009; Plantinga, 2009; Plantinga & Smith 1999). What all these cognitive approaches to social and cultural phenomenon have in common is a fundamental challenge to the social constructivism theory, the attempt to base the analysis of human and social interaction and communication on an embodied understanding of who we are. There is a clear ambition in cognitive theory to try to understand to what extend human phenomena are defined by universal and biological dimensions and how these dimensions interact with and are influenced by social and cultural conditions and historical change.

Cognitive theory is based on the theory of evolution, and evolution clearly shows that we adapt to change over time, but also that some basic features remain fairly stable. Cognitive theory is *not* about eliminating the need for cultural and social research into art, media and communication, it is *not* about substituting culture with nature. On the contrary, as for instance, Brothers has put it (Brothers, 1997, xxi-xii), it is about bridging the 'gulf between biology and culture' between the social and cultural mind and the brain and body as a biological phenomenon. We need to see humans as both biological and cultural creatures, because—besides everything else humans and our brain and body are—we are also very much social and communicative creatures. We are storytelling animals (Gottschall, 2012), we think and speak through highly embodied metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) and our

emotional capacities are extremely central for our cognitive and rational activities and arguments (Damasio, 1994). Society and culture shapes the human mind, but our brain and body—our whole biological structure—comes with structures, dispositions and biological functions and mechanism that also, to a large degree, influence the way we experience reality and communicate about it. Narrative structures are not just cultural and historical constructions, and neither are emotions or the structures of language. Variations however of these very basic elements of our mind and body are incredibly rich and are the result of historical and specific social and cultural circumstances.

2. Film Studies, Cognitive Theory and Documentary

Although film studies in general have been rather strongly influenced by cognitive theory, documentary film theory and film analysis has so far not been very influenced by the cognitive turn. Bordwell and Thompson (2001) have done some work on the more basic genres of documentary, influenced by both formalism and cognitive theory, and Carl Plantinga developed his approach more broadly in his seminal work *Rhetoric and Representation in the Non-fiction Film* (Plantinga, 1997). Also Belinda Smaill has written a useful book on documentary and emotion, although not based on cognitive theory (Smaill, 2010). In this article I want to move the cognitive, theoretical approach to documentary film a bit further, by focusing on some of the basic assumptions already put forward in many cognitive studies on the relation between cognition, emotions, narratives and memory. Since these assumptions are based on very fundamental processes in our biological, cultural and social brain, they have importance for both social and cultural processes in general and for genres of both fiction and non-fiction. If narrative structures and emotions are basic dimensions of the way we understand and communicate about the world, they are also part of documentary genres, even though such genres have a specific relation to reality and to a large degree seem to perform a function, which Bill Nichols has called 'actively making a case or an argument' (Nichols, 2001, p. 4). In many ways we can see documentary as a rhetorical form, as a story with some kind of argument inside. We expect documentary films to tell us something about reality that has a quality of truth, reality and authenticity. But that said, we do know as spectators, and all theories about documentary genres confirm that documentaries use all kinds of communicative strategies and they appeal not only to reason, but also to feelings and the more sensual dimensions of our reality.

Documentary films come, as both Plantinga (1997) and Nichols (2001) have shown, in many shapes and forms, and surely not all of these are mainly rhetorical, but even if they are rhetorical, narrative and emotional structures play an important role in our experience of such films. In the strong tradition of memory studies (see, for instance, van Dijck, 2007; Erll, 2011) we can furthermore see, that our memory is heavily mediated and influenced by our experience with both fiction and non-fiction. The link between narrative, emotion and memory is therefore central for our understanding of who we are, for our understanding of how mediated visual material and forms of representation influence our mind and body. Documentary forms and narratives become embodied visions and experiences in our minds—in line with experiences for ordinary 'real' life.

Documentary filmmakers have without any doubt always been aware that making films about reality in various ways combines factual evidence, arguments, documentation and elements of narrative, audio-visual style and creativity, appeal to imagination, identification etc., in sum a rhetoric of cognition and emotion. We know from theories of narrative (Bordwell, 1987; Gottschall, 2012) and theories of memory (Bluck, 2003; van Dijck, 2007; Erll, 2011) that emotional dimensions play an extremely important role in forming our social and cultural imagination. As cognitive neuroscientists like Antonio Damasio (1994, 1999) have pointed out: 'emotions and feelings are indispensable for rationality (…) Feelings, along with the emotions they come from, are no luxury. They serve as internal guides, and they help us communicate to others signals that can also guide them' (Damasio, 1994, xiii-xv).

Documentary genres are of course very much located in our mind as stories and arguments about affairs in the real world. We expect documentary to deal with real events, real people and actual problems of the world we live in. Fiction can do that as well, but in a more indirect way. When we watch fiction genres we know that we have to translate the fictional world we engage in to a story about something in reality. Fiction is based on a more indirect, metaphorical relation to reality. But even though this is part of the fictional stance towards reality, the actual experience of fiction draws on the same emotional and cognitive structures we use in real life. So fiction in a way is reality with a certain distance and reflexive dimension where we do at the same time react very directly to something in the film as we would to real life and negotiate and evaluate the film world in relation to our real world.

Our relation to documentary on the other hand is very much based on the primary expectation of a more direct relation with the real world. But again, depending on the actual sub-genre of documentary we are talking about, we use many of the same cognitive, emotional and narrative properties when experiencing and understanding the film. Cognitive, emotional and narrative properties cut across the distinction between fiction and non-fiction, they are universal human capacities although they have social and cultural variations in the way they are used and expressed.

3. Narrative and Emotions

Cognitive film theory has pointed out how our minds and bodies are strongly pre-disposed for narrative structures and for certain emotional structures that are triggered when we are confronted with stories, images and human interaction. One might say that the ancient Greeks understood the connection between form, person and emotions when they defined good communication as creating a relation between ethos (personal credibility), logos (the power of arguments) and pathos (the power of emotions). But as many scholars in both cognitive film theory and linguistics have pointed out, the role of emotions—at least from a modern cognitive theoretical point of view—has been neglected in modern film and media theory and linguistics (Grodal, 2009; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Plantinga 1997, 2009; Smith, 1995). In his book, *Moving Viewers,* from 2009, Carl Plantinga formulates it like this:

> Why have effect and emotion in film viewing received relatively little attention in film studies (…) A strong strain of Western thought has considered emotion to be antithetical to reason and an obstacle to (…) critical thinking (…) Emotions are intimately tied to our cognition, inferences, evaluations and all of the other mental activities that accompany the viewing experience. Emotions and affects have implications for ideas (…) they play a role in the creation of both cultural and individual memory (Plantinga*,* 2009, pp. 5-6).

In the field of cognitive linguistics George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have argued convincingly for the role of images, narrative structures and metaphors in our language and communication in general. In *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) they argue against the notion of thoughts and concepts as just abstract entities and for an embodied understanding of the way we think. By showing the role of metaphors in all forms of communication they challenge the 'myth of objectivism and rationality' in Western thought. To understand how we think and reason, we also have to understand our body and emotions, and we have to understand that reason and argument is only one side of the coin in our embodied mind. In his book from 2008 on American politics, *The Political Mind*, Lakoff analyses the fundamental dimensions of political rhetoric, and he points to the often overlooked importance of narratives, metaphors and emotions:

> According to Enlightenment reason was assumed to be conscious, universal, disembodied, logical, unemotional, value neutral, interest based and literal (…) but voters don't behave like that (…) Language gets its power because it is defined relative to frames, prototypes, metaphors, narratives, images and emotions. Part of its power comes from its unconscious aspects (Lakoff, 2008, p. 16)

According to cognitive film and media theory, narratives, emotions and images are not just stylistic dimensions bringing a film's story, characters and content to the front: they are important dimensions in our communication and interaction with the world on all levels. As for instance Plantinga points out: 'art emotions, the emotions and affects elicited by narrative film and other arts, have close affinities with the typical emotions of our extra filmic events' (Plantinga, 2009, p. 62). Not all documentaries have as strong a narrative structure as most mainstream fiction films. However, narrative structures and character identification is still a strong component in rather many documentaries. The point is that even though a film may not offer a very strong narrative structure in itself, spectators will use narrative frames to understand and relate to the film. We are 'storytelling humans' (Gottschall, 2012) and narrative is not just a stylistic feature in films, it is part of our mental toolbox and a way of making sense of what we see and experience.

This is why cognitive theory talks about narratives not just as stories in art and communication, but as part of our mental structure:

> Complex narratives—the kind we find in anyone's life story, as well as in fairy tales, novels and drama—are made up of smaller narratives with very simple structures. Those structures are called "frames" or "scripts". Frames are among the cognitive structures we think with (…) the neural circuitry needed to create frame structures is relatively simple, and so frames tend to structure a huge amount of our thought (…) dramatic event structures are carried out by brain circuitry. The same event structure circuitry can be used to live out an action or narrative, or to understand the actions of others or the structure of the story. In addition, neural binding can create emotional experiences (…) narratives and frames are not just brain structures with intellectual content, but rather with integrated intellectual-emotional content. (Lakoff, 2008, pp. 27-28)

4. Ecological Narratives: Arguments and Emotional Politics

Documentaries are divided into main prototypes that place the viewer differently in relation to the reality described and with regards to the overall rhetorical and narrative structure. I have argued for four such prototypes in my book *Engaging With Reality. Documentary and Globalization* (2014): the authoritative, the observational, the dramatized and the poetic-reflexive (see Table 1). The categorization made here builds on categorizations suggested by for instance Bill

Nichols (2001) and Carl Plantinga (1997). Many documentaries combine elements from different prototypes, but in all of them narrative and emotional dimensions play a crucial role, even though for instance the authoritative prototype is mostly based on arguments and rhetoric, the observational on very loose and sequential structures and the poetic reflexive often on more abstract visual associations and patterns.

But let me illustrate the differences and how narrative and emotional structures nevertheless play and important role in all types of films. In 2006 Davis Guggenheim made the ecological 'disaster'-documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, which turned out to be a global success, and spurred a debate on global warming and other environmental issues that had been difficult to get on the agenda and find consensus about in the global political community. Part of the movie's success was no doubt that it had the political icon Al Gore as its main character and presenter of what in many ways was just a lavishly edited power point lecture. It is clearly an authoritative documentary, much like a public lecture, occasionally with a live audience, or off screen presentation accompanied by different types of visual material. As is usually the case with authoritative documentaries they present an awful lot of facts, either in the form of statistics, graphs, figures etc., by presenting voices of scientists and politicians or by presenting archive material on climate changes or environmental challenges and catastrophes. But the film also uses animation, irony and satire. All in all we have a film where the rhetorical, argumentative dimension is very strong, and where the data and arguments presented are meant to convince, persuade and activate audiences and politicians that may have doubts about the facts.

But even the facts and arguments presented here have powerful emotional dimensions, and the rhetoric and visual side of the film clearly uses that. At the same time Al Gore's personal charisma and credibility as former vice president is also used in an ironic way, when he introduces himself with the words: 'I used to be the next president of the USA'—referring back to the chaotic 2004 presidential election. But the emotional dimensions and the ethos connected to Al Gore as a politician is only one element in the film's use of emotions and in connecting pathos and logos. Throughout the film we see actual family footage from his childhood, his family life and from those places and the nature he experienced back then. Such sequences create a memory track and a particular narrative in audiences. They elicit partly nostalgic emotions and memories of a pre-climate warming situation, of a past, which—true or not—may seem to be idyllic and unproblematic compared to the dramatic images of the consequences of climate change today.

The authoritative narrative of a historical catastrophe scenario, which is the backbone for the arguments and the rhetoric of *An Inconvenient Truth* is thus embedded in a more personal narrative which is again connected to a network of metaphors and images that trigger our long term memory and feeling of loss connected to a more idyllic past, to which the present development is a threat. This personal, emotional narrative is deeply connected to the public agenda of the film, and part of this agenda is also that a more global mentality is called upon, not just in words, but in images of our globe seen over time from space. Al Gore directly comments on the first images of earth from outer space and a series of later images where the changes in the global environment are striking and scary. We see partly the same layers and mechanisms in function in another and rather different climate change film, Franny Armstrong's *The Age of Stupid* (2009). The main prototype used in this film is the dramatized, in the sense that part of the film takes place in 2055 in a fictional Arctic region, where the curator of The Global Archive, played by Pete Postlethwaite, is looking back on the events that led to the catastrophic end of our civilization.

Table 1. Basic Documentary Prototypes (Bondebjerg, 2014).

Authoritative	Observational	Dramatized	Poetic-reflexive
Epistemic authority	Epistemic openness	Epistemic-hypothetical	Epistemic-aesthetic
Explanation-analysis	Observation-identification	Dramatization of factual reality	Reality seen through aesthetic form
Linearity, causality, rhetorical structure	Episodic, mosaic structure, everyday life	Reconstruction, narration, staging (drama-doc, doc-drama, mockumentary)	Symbolic montage, meta-levels, expressive, subjective form
Q & A, interview, witnesses, experts, Authoritative VO	Actor driven, human-institutional life world	Testing borders between reality and fiction	Form driven reality experience, the poetics of reality, framing reality
Information, critique, propaganda	Documentation of lived reality, social ethnology	Narrative drive, reality driven narrative. Media-reflexivity	Challenging reality concepts and traditional doc-forms

On the screen an opening statement of the film says: 'The future climate events portrayed in this film are based on mainstream scientific projections. Everything from the present day and the past is real news and documentary footage'. So the film signals, that the dramatized, semi-fictional future in the film is in fact based on science based predictions, and that all the rest of the film is based on documentary material and actual footage.

The film thus signals a sort of authoritative anchoring in reality, an intention of being taken seriously as documentation of factual events and causes behind these events. But as a whole, the film mixes a dramatized story of a future scenario, albeit told by a curator with direct access to a past reality, observational sequences of past lives, media footage and a very powerful visual construction of the birth and the death of earth. The film in fact starts with a very long and visually compelling sequence of the development of the universe from Big Bang till present day – a visual narrative of the greatest story and mystery ever told. The images are both fascinating and chilling, especially followed by the images of all the catastrophes following human neglect of the environment and its influence on our climate. Clips from news programmes and science documentaries underline this. As in *An Inconvenient Truth* the film creates a connection between an authoritative rhetoric of facts and arguments and a more emotional layer based on images of what this has done to life on this planet. This is very strongly underlined by the human narratives inserted throughout the film as small observational pieces of documentary. They give the film an everyday life dimension where we can identify with different people from different parts of the world that have lived facing the catastrophe the film predicts. Again narrative, facts and arguments are intertwined and in the end the curator destroys the archive and commits suicide. The emotional appeal to action is embedded in this film too, but with other means.

One might argue, following Richard Grusin (2010) that both films rely on what he calls a strategy of 'premediation', of a somewhat similar nature to fictional catastrophe narratives: affective, dramatized future narratives. Both films try in different ways to visualize a future that is scary and thus combines emotional experience and fact based predictions. But even though this is a special feature of such climate documentaries that try to illustrate abstract data and scientific arguments with personal and concrete experience, the interaction between emotions, personal and everyday experience and memories are always at work in documentaries. It takes a different form depending on the dominant prototype in the film in question. Authoritative, observational, dramatized and poetic forms of documentary offer different cognitive and emotional entry points to the experience of reality and combine narrative, emotion and memory in various ways.

5. Historical Documentary: Memory and the Individual and Collective Dimensions of History

As human beings we are programmed to narrative, narrative is one of the central ways of making sense of the real world and of things we encounter in audio-visual communication. But narratives are also linked to history, to our memory of the past, both our own and the collective past. We therefore see a strong fascination of not just narratives as such, but also for historical narratives. Documentary films about the past come in many forms, but they are often as popular with the audience as historical fiction films. Memory is an important dimension of our interaction with and communication about reality as narrative and emotions: memory is about constructing a coherent narrative about our past. Susan Bluck (2003) talks about the three functions of autobiographical memory: the preservation of the sense of being a coherent person over time; the strengthening of social bonds by being able to share personal memories and the use of past experiences to construct models to understand the inner worlds of self and others. Van Dijck in the book *Mediated Memories in the Digital Age* (2007) puts it like this:

> Remembering is vital to our well-being, because without our autobiographical memories we would have no sense of past or future, and we would lack any sense of continuity. Our image of who we are (…) is never stable but it is subject to constant remodelling because our perceptions of who we are change along with our projections and desires of who we want to be. (p. 3)

Stories of the past play a role on a more personal, everyday level and are connected to stories family tell and share, to photo collections, diaries, memorabilia and today perhaps very much the stories we share on social media like Facebook or the movies we shoot and share on YouTube. Here strong ties are established between factual events and stories and emotions connected to them, but the fact that we often share this with a smaller or larger group of people indicates a broader social dimension of the *personal, individual memory*. But our personal memory is also connected to and influenced by stories about a wider local, national or regional past we are confronted with all the time: in history books, through fiction and non-fiction films, and through television. Historical narratives, and with them also historical documentary narratives, get their strength through their ability to make connections between the personal and the social, between the individual and the collective and between the factual and emotional. Van Dijck (2007) describes the two sides of memory in the following way:

> Personal cultural memory is the acts and products of remembering, in which individuals engage to make sense of their lives in relation to the lives of others and to their surroundings, situating themselves in time and place." (p. 6) "In a sociological sense, collective memory means that people must feel they were somehow part of a communal past, experiencing a connection between what happened in general and how they were involved as individuals. Adjusted to historiographical explanation, social memory constitutes the interface between individual and collective ordering of the past." (p. 10)

Documentary film is important for the shaping of our sense of a historical past and for our personal and collective memory. Like the ecological documentaries analysed above it is of course about getting history right, it is about presenting historical facts and realities. But in order to succeed in doing that the narrative and emotional dimension is important. Making the past visually present is a powerful way of narrating history. By bringing us somehow visually back to how the past looked, how the people then lived, felt and thought both fiction and non-fiction film and television can bring history to life as a both personal and collective narrative. Historical documentaries cannot replace the academic discipline of history, and scientific data and arguments will always be an important background for such film and television. Many of the widely watched historical documentaries are in fact made by historians that have founds ways of popularizing and visualizing history.

This is indeed the case with such television series as Simon Schama's *A History of Britain* (BBC, 2000–2002) or Kenneth Clarke's classic *Civilization* (BBC, 1966). Such series can be found in most national television cultures and they have become immensely popular with a very large audience. In those series we see both a strong presence of an authoritative narrator, but he is often placed in the middle of historical sites and evidences, and often dramatized versions of the past come to life through montage or direct reconstruction. Narrative and rhetorical structures are linked and through this linking and the impact of visuals our emotions and memories are activated and formed. More creative uses of memory and history in recent television have been dramatized formats sending contemporary people back in time in different ways. This is done for instance by recreating life as it was in 1900 in Channel 4's *The 1900 House* (1999), where a family relived life in the past for half a year—all under the instruction of historians. A simpler but very popular form is *Who do you think you are?* (2004-…, BBC) in which rather well known people dig into their past and learning about parts of their family history they did not know before. There is of course a certain element of showbiz to such series, but at the same time they do indicate how central history is for us and how the personal and the collective, the factual and the emotional is intertwined also in these kinds of documentary stories.

6. Cognitive, Narrative and Emotional Dimensions of Historical Documentary

We can summarize what has been said so far by pointing to some of the central elements in memory as a cognitive, narrative and emotional activity. Memory is a cognitive, emotional dimension through which humans combine short-term memory and long-term memory. Memory generally works on several levels and is most strongly activated when 'data' from the past are condensed in narrative images and stories. In the works of Jan Assmann (2006) he distinguishes between *communicative memory,* understood as the everyday interaction between people in a given society involving reflections on their individual or the collective past, and the *cultural memory,* which is more institutionalized and often taken care of by special carriers of tradition, like museums, religions etc. What is not very visible in Assmann's work is however the role of *mediated memories*, the fact that today people are much more exposed to media content that triggers memory and at the same time to a larger degree have become producers of mediated memories through, for instance, social media (van Dijck, 2007). This is also taken up in Erll and Rigney's *Mediation, Remediation and the Dynamics of Cultural Memory* (2009) which argues that media of all sorts 'provide frameworks for shaping both experience and memory' (p. 1) and between the individual and collective dimensions of memory.

There is evidence suggesting that both narrative structures and emotional intensity is important for memory recall and presence in consciousness (Rosenstone, 2006; van Dijck, 2007; Glaser, Garsoffky, & Schwan, 2009). The relation between subjective memory and identity and more general and external memory data is furthermore important for active memory. Cognitive theories of memory (Bluck, 2003) distinguish between '*explicit memory*' (general semantic memory, contextual memory and auto-biographical memory) and '*procedural, implicit memory*' (based on very basic non-conscious mechanisms). The intensity of memories and historical narratives and the amount of either positive emotional feelings or traumatic-negative feelings will influence the status and intensity of memory and historical understanding.

Historical documentaries use different narrative and visual strategies to create this 'feeling' of the historical past, an entry to a both factual understanding and emotional identification. We can identify some of them:

- Voice over narration and information—on screen/off screen: mixture of factual presentation and symbolic, metaphoric use of language;

- Expert testimonies and experience testimonies—interviews;
- Historical film footage;
- On site visual presentation of historical spaces, landmarks, buildings etc.;
- Use of dramatized reconstruction of historical events or persons, including types of programme based on re-enactment with audiences;
- Dramatizing still images of actual historical places, persons and events through visual effects (zooming, panning, montage);
- Drawing parallels between present times and historical event through montage and visual cues or through narrator—reflexive history;
- Use of poetic, narrative, dramatized and emotional aesthetics to position the audience in relation to the past:
  - Marks of authenticity and factuality;
  - Marks of heritage, the sublime, the grand, the tragic, the spectacular;
  - Music and sound with direct emotional and memory effects.

7. Ken Burns and the Narrative, Visual Recreation of World History and Personal Memory

Let us look closer at two different, but still related examples of historical documentaries, Ken Burns and Lynn Novick's spectacular and ground breaking television series *The War* (PBS, 2007, 14 parts) about WW2 seen through the lens of Americans in four typical American cities, and Michael Grigsby's poetic and critical story of post-war Britain, *The Time of Our Lives* (1993), seen via the story of 85 year old Richard Harris and his family. Burns tells the story with the use of a clear, authoritative voice-over and with a combination of historical film footage and present voices representing the four towns. He also uses a clear narrativization technique and a special emotional and visual dramatization. Grigsby uses a basic observational strategy, following the family from the 85 year birthday celebration and into their lives, told by themselves, but he also uses a heavy and metaphorical montage of images and sounds to mix with the more personal stories.

In an explanation of his strategy, Ken Burns has said:

> We chose to explore *the impact of the war on the lives of people living in four American towns*—Mobile, Alabama; Sacramento, California; Waterbury, Connecticut; and Luverne, Minnesota. Over the course of the film's nearly fifteen hours more than forty *men and women opened their hearts* to us about the war they knew—and which we, their inheritors, could only imagine. Above all, we wanted to honour the *experiences of those who lived through* the greatest cataclysm in human history by providing the opportunity for them *to bear witness to their own history*. Our film is therefore an attempt to *describe, through their eyewitness testimony***,** what the war was actually like for those who served on the front lines, in the places where the killing and the dying took place, and equally what it was like for their loved ones back home. We have done our best not to sentimentalize, glorify or aestheticize the war, but instead have tried simply to *tell the stories* of those who did the fighting—and of their families. In so doing, we have tried *to illuminate the intimate, human dimensions* of a global catastrophe that took the lives of between 50 and 60 million people—of whom more than 400,000 were Americans. Through the eyes of our witnesses, it is possible to see *the universal in the particular*, to understand how the whole country got caught in the war; how the four towns and their people were permanently transformed; how those who remained at home worked and worried and grieved in the face of the struggle; and in the end, how innocent young men who had been turned into professional killers eventually learned to live in a world without war (Ken Burns quoted from http://www.pbs.org/thewar/about_letter_from_producers.htm).

The quote clearly spells out the narrative strategy of Burns and his co-director, the way in which he combines micro history and macro history, the way in which he wants to combine collective historical facts and events with personal, subjective stories and points of view. He wants to speak to our memory through emotion and narrative and he is aware that the story he is telling is at the same time nationally specific—even local specific—and universal. If we take a closer look at Burns' documentary strategy we find that unlike most WW2 documentary narratives, there is no use of historical experts or high ranking military and political witnesses. The series clearly follows two main rhetorical strands:

- The authoritative voice-over narrator—combining all levels of the narrative and historical representation forms;
- Voices of the live witnesses—the men from the four American towns who fought in and survived WW2.

Underneath this special use of rhetorical voices, Burns furthermore uses a series of narrative and dramatic strategies:

- Recreating local everyday life through narrative and dramatic combination of still photos and/or original film footage;

- Recreation of war events, battles etc. through narrative and dramatic combination of still photos and/or original film footage;
- Use of montage and cuts between past and present through persons and places in the local communities and the historical events.

By using these strategies the series is already speaking to us from a past that comes alive, not just through the voices of soldiers and family members that have a still living memory of how it was, but also by in fact bringing past footage alive in a more dense and dramatic way. In the very first sequences of part one, for instance, we are told the story of one of the survivors who—drunk and jealous—smashes into a bar to take revenge and then flees to enlist in the army. This story is told in voice-over by the main narrator speaking over still images from this past real spot that come alive by montage, image effects and music and sound effects—a piece of personal memory and history coming alive with all sorts of emotional cues.

This brings us to a third level of the series, the *Visual and aesthetic strategies*, some of which we have already dealt with in the above description of the opening sequence of the series, where the past comes alive as narrative and emotional space. The most important elements used are:

- Strong use of musical cues: original musical score (nostalgic-tragic) and popular period music to create memory of past;
- Factual authenticity of still photo and original film footage, mixed with dramatic and visual manipulation of images;
- New footage in colour with strong symbolic effects.

Burns is known for his ability to create drama, narrative and emotional structures in his documentary series, based on a creative use of montage and visual effects. Reconstructions and dramatizations are not made with the use of actors and contemporary settings and material, but by blowing life into historical material and combining it with live witnesses. His witnesses are not historical experts in the academic sense of the word, they are experts of everyday life history, they have lived the history told.

8. Grigsby and the Narratives and Memories of Everyday Life

The English filmmaker Michael Grigsby is also very much focused on ordinary people, their lives and their history. As a member of the British free cinema movement from the late 1950s he was, so to speak, born with a special interest in social and everyday life history. With his approach to documentary he wanted to combine social themes and the poetics of the everyday life. Unlike Burns he is at the same time a very classical, observational filmmaker. In all his films he lets reality and people speak for themselves, and he has explicitly turned against a tendency he sees in British film and television documentary to swamp everything with questions and commentary. In his documentaries he wants to create a reality space, where the viewers can experience and feel for themselves. At the same time he is very active in his editing of the film, in the montage of people, observations, talk and images so that they form a powerful social critique and symbol of society and history. In his comments to *The Time of Our Lives* (1993) he indicates his intention with the film like this: "Right from the start I wanted to make a film about the betrayal of the post-war dream. For all its impressionistic structure (…) there is a deep sense of the betrayals of the compassionate, caring society promised in 1945" (Grigsby as cited in Corner, 1996, pp. 123-124).

The film tells the post-1945 history of Britain through a network of family and friends surrounding the birthday of 85 year-old Richard Harris, it is in fact a kind of observational montage of family voices and stories. The film doesn't follow a linear chronological story; on the contrary, we start in the present day and keep moving back and forth in the life of Harris and his family and a broader historical context. The family stories are combined with the social and cultural history of Britain since 1945, and these two strands of stories and history comment on each other and are intertwined. Harris represents the traditional British working class, and we follow his story as a migrant from poor Ireland to the richer English industrial centre. But his family story at the same time covers younger generations with upward mobility and new life styles.

But underneath the observational stories of Richard and other family members Grigsby uses contemporary and historical montage of music, radio, television and film to contextualize the family story. He mixes public and private history—collective history resonating in individual history. In this way he does in a very powerful way address the viewer's memory, by linking personal and public history elements and layers. The combination creates a double narrative, which not only makes the viewer reflect on the link and combination of macro and micro history, but also establishing specific emotional qualities to both dimensions of history.

This is strongly underlined and supported by the audio-visual strategies of Grigsby, the way in which he reconstructs and manipulates the contemporary or historical footage he uses. He is highly symbolic in his visual sequences using dramatization of both sound and images and thus creating a space for living historical memory. In, for instance, a rather dramatic sequence filmed inside St. Paul's Cathedral, we hear texts read aloud, speeches and sounds of war, illustrating the his-

tory of WW2. Other instances involve use of radio interviews with politicians or others, pointing towards contrasting promises made with the realities that followed. In his efforts to speak to both the viewer's hearts and minds, Grigsby puts the ordinary lives and voices of British working class people at the centre of his films. At the same time he uses all the narrative, visual, poetic and dramatic forms to speak to our memory and emotions, to create a rich documentary space of identification with a past coming alive in front of us.

9. Concluding Perspectives

Humans are genetically, biologically and socially storytelling animals: narrative structures are a fundamental way of experiencing, exploring and thinking about reality. Stories come to us with invitation to both cognitive and emotional responses and activities and those two dimensions are linked intimately in real life, fiction and documentary forms. Non-fiction genres have different variations of rhetorical and narrative structures and they follow patterns of social and psychological involvement that are also used in real life experience and interaction. Emotions cannot be separated from reason and rationality, although emotions can of course have a negative impact on communication and reasoning.

Emotional layers in documentaries appear through narrative structures, through character identification, through audio-visual effects, but they are also directly connected to content and themes with links to real life, to our decisions to act directly or indirectly when confronted with human and social problems. As Plantinga puts it:

> In movie spectatorship as in the rest of life, the repetition of elicited emotions and judgements may solidify ways of thinking and feeling. It is through the elicitation of emotion in relation to moral and ideological judgement that a film may have its most significant ideological force.' (Plantinga, 2009, p. 203)

The role of narrative, emotion and memory in different forms of documentary film and television is important for further studies. Even though emotion and memory theories have played a certain role in documentary theory already, there is a need to expand this kind of approach and include cognitive studies of narrative, emotion and memory. As for instance van Dijck has pointed out, mediated memories have a widespread function in our culture and society, and we both have *embodied* aspects of narrative, emotion and memory and *embedded* aspects. Documentary narratives speak both to our private memory and story bank, to those structures through which we have narrative and emotional dispositions, and which help us construct a feeling of continuity between our past, present and future. But this personal and private memory is at the same time embedded in a media culture of a public and collective kind.

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