The Effect Of Documentary On Our Fast-paced Society

Thinking of the world, our society has changed and advanced dramatically over the past few hundreds of years. But how have we managed to change so much? Without documentary, our world would not be recognizable. From the smallest insignificant photos to the largest complex societies, things in our everyday lives document the truth without even realizing it. “If I could do it, I’d do no writing at all here. It would be photographed; the rest would be fragments of cloth, bits of cotton, lumps of earth, records of speech, pieces of wood and iron, phials of odours, plates of food and excrement. Booksellers would consider it quite a novelty...”(Balson & Peleg, 2016, p. 11) Documentary is greatly influential on society because of all of the intricate and different kinds of the documentary. Advancing from oral tradition to writing and other forms of the documentary have created complex governments, increased knowledge, and changed culture drastically.

Oral tradition was used many centuries ago to exchange messages, stories, knowledge, art, and ideas; however, oral tradition is greatly unreliable. According to Buckland (2014), “The Oxford English Dictionary reveals that, in the past, ‘document’ was used for oral communications, lessons, warnings, and more generally, whatever is concerned with evidence or had an instructive event” (p. 179). Imagine being an elementary student and you play the game telephone. As you pass your message along the line of kids and it finally gets to the end, the message has most likely changed. Similar to oral tradition, the passing of these messages have been changed due to someone not hearing the message correctly, forgetting parts of the message, or even changing that message to become partly their own. The inconsistency of oral tradition led humans to create new ways to document their lives. During prehistoric times, people started to document stories and culture through pictures and paintings. This form of documentation could accurately stand the test of time. For example, Egyptians used hieroglyphics and Native Americans used pictographs, until finally a more modern form of documentation was created, the alphabet. As the alphabet advanced and became widely used it became more accessible to all genders, ages, and classes of society. So how does the creation of the alphabet affect documentation to change our society?

Societies today strive due to the work of our government and other organizations. Not having a structure in society would cause an imbalance. But how did we go from chaos to order? The founders of each successful government, and even some unsuccessful governments, created rules for the people of their domain. In order to make sure people knew and followed the rules, documents were used to express what could or could not be done. If people were required to memorize and follow these laws through oral tradition, most of them would be forgotten or changed. This method would be inefficient and create unease and conflicts within the community. The Constitution, Declaration of Independence, and the Bill of Rights are all great examples of documents that the government uses to keep order and peace. Other documents, such as citizenship documents and the census are very useful because they let the government know how many people are in one region during a given period and gives an estimate of how many people they provide different resources for (C. Ackerson, Phone Interview, 2019).

Not only does documentary affect how society lives, but it also affects the quality of life that we live. The documentary helps share what others have learned to create more advancements in

medicine, technology, and the education system. The knowledge we have today is due to documentaries. In medicine, doctors are now able to take x-rays, CT Scans, MRIs, as well as blood work analysis and other helpful documents to keep track of health. Even the research that was done to create or analyze the data is documentation. We have improved the well-being of lives and created a longer life span for both humans and animals through the use of documents. Being able to produce images, scans, and charts relating to the body increases the likely of finding life-altering problems. For example, pregnant women receive ultrasounds to monitor their unborn baby's health, along with viewing the uterus, ovaries, and other organs. Finding problems sooner increases the likely of it being treatable and not fatal, and sometimes can help prepare for problems in the future. Another example of this would be detecting if a fetus has down syndrome before he or she is born. If the parents are aware, they can prepare by checking to see if there is any chance of complications and if their baby needs to go into surgery or the neonatal intensive care unit. Overall, documentary can increase the well being of lives and can potentially save lives.

In conclusion, the faced-paced society that we live in would not be the same. "Media affect the most expensive real estate of all, that which is inside your head. Documentary is an important reality-shaping communication, because of its claims to truth" (Aufderheide, 2007, p. 5). The truth of life is documented every day in hundreds of different ways. Documentary affects culture and society by communicating billions of people's thoughts, ideas, and knowledge to others around the world or even to keep to themselves. Documentary has developed our society for the better and we continue to advance every day.