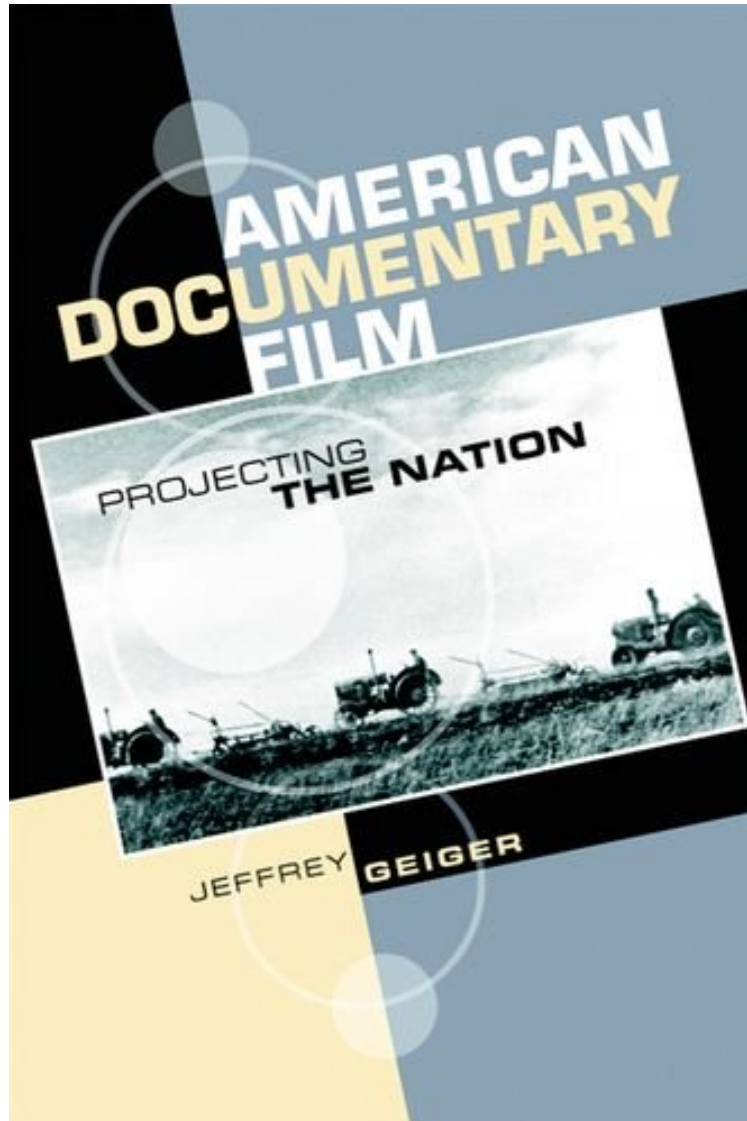


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American Documentary Film: Projecting the Nation

Jeffrey Geiger

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Jeffrey Geiger : American Documentary Film: Projecting the Nation before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised American Documentary Film: Projecting the Nation:

Richard Wall Memorial Award 2012 - Finalist. What key concerns are reflected in documentaries produced in and about the United States? How have documentaries engaged with competing visions of US history, culture, politics, and

national identity? This book examines how documentary films have contributed to the American public sphere - creating a kind of public space, serving as sites for community-building, public expression, and social innovation. Geiger focuses on how documentaries have been significant in forming ideas of the nation, both as an imagined space and a real place. Moving from the dawn of cinema to the present day, this is the first full-length study to focus on the extensive range and history of American non-fiction filmmaking. Combining comprehensive overviews with in-depth case studies, Geiger maps American documentary's intricate histories, examining the impact of pre- and early cinema, travelogues, the avant-garde, 1930s social documentary, propaganda, direct cinema, postmodernism, and 'new' documentary. Offering detailed close analyses and fresh insights, this book provides students and scholars with a stimulating guide to American documentary, reminding us of its important place in cinema history.

In *American Documentary Film*, Jeffrey Geiger examines the role of documentary film in mobilizing, promoting, and even suppressing central myths of U.S. national identity. His brilliant close readings illuminate the relationship between the rhetorical, technical and stylistic elements of specific films and a broader set of contexts and concerns. Rigorous yet accessible, this elegantly-written book will be of great value to the general reader and the specialist alike, and it will transform the way we consider the history, theory, and practice of documentary filmmaking. (Valerie Smith, Princeton University) This is nothing less than a tremendous achievement ... and the new benchmark in concise appreciation of American documentary film history. (Ian Scott, H-net, Humanities and Social Sciences online) ... the richness of Geiger's synthesis will make it an excellent text for courses in the subject and also a resource outside the classroom. The book will be a particularly important acquisition for libraries with limited holdings on documentary film. Highly recommended. All readers. (Ken Nolley, Choice) *American Documentary Film* is well-reasoned and well-written. ... subjects like the relationship between documentary form and New Deal politics with groups like Nykino and the Film and Photo League resonate within his argument for documentary as the coalescence of personal and organizational links between practitioners and theorists, radical politics and aesthetic experience. (Susan Ryan, Cineaste) ... a scholar writing about or teaching the propaganda documentaries made during World War II will surely want to consult chapter 5 ... Similarly, the beginning of any course that deals with the origins of documentary film could do no better than to assign Geiger's first chapter, which explores the cultural climate in the 1890s that was ripe for the introduction of documentary film. (Carl Rollyson, Journal of American Studies) In detailing the myriad ways in which documentaries have reflected and refracted conceptions of nationhood in the USA ... *American Documentary Film* offers a valuable model for rethinking documentary and its potential contribution to debates on American identity and history. (Andrew Utterson, Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television) Simply put, this is one of the definitive texts on the subject, not out of place among the likes of John Grierson, Erik Barnouw, and Bill Nichols. (Douglas MacCleod, Scope) About the Author Jeffrey Geiger is Professor of Film Studies at the University of Essex, where he established its Centre for Film Studies and several film studies degrees. Other books include *Facing the Pacific: Polynesia and the U.S. Imperial Imagination* (2007), the co-edited *Film Analysis: A Norton Reader* (second expanded ed. 2013), and co-edited *Cinematicity in Media History* (2013).