Investigating the origins, ethics, and various forms of the music documentary.

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Abstract

Documentary is an exciting genre. Genres can transport audiences to mystical settings, with narratives populated by unique characters. The music documentary is the focus of this dissertation due to its ability to take audiences to new places *within* reality. There is an aura that surrounds the musical world and the musicians that frequent it. Through their music, artists are able to convey powerful stories, regarding the music itself and societal critique. It could be claimed that music is the perfect accompaniment to the documentary, with both avenues of media harnessing their strengths to create a genre with potential for expansion. The chapters in this dissertation will discuss the landmark points in the genre since its inception. Chapter 1 discusses the origins of the music documentary and its beginnings as the concert film. A key thinker in this chapter is violinist Yehudi Menuhin, whose idea it was to film himself playing a concert, kickstarting the genre. Chapter 2 focuses on direct cinema as an evolution of the films proceeding it. This mode of filmmaking allowed documentarians intimate access to their subjects, drawing attention to the artist's private life. A key thinker in this chapter is Robert Drew whose definition of direct cinema forms the basis of analysis. Chapter 3 investigates the mock-documentary as a response to the documentary genre. Key texts influencing chapter 3 are those written by Roscoe and Hight who detail the different modes of mock-documentary and aid in discussing the films. Chapter 4 deals with experimental music documentary to demonstrate the genre's ability to expand beyond its established conventions. A key author in this chapter is Mark Johnstone whose definition of the experimental documentary initiates discussion around the genre's techniques. By concentrating on these 4 core points within the genre, the aims of the title will be achieved.

Table of Contents

Abbreviations

TW3 – *That Was The Week That Was* (1962)

Introduction

Documentary is an exciting and intriguing genre of film and television. All genres can transport audiences to mystical settings, with fascinating narratives populated by unique characters. The reason why documentary is the focus of this dissertation is its ability to take audiences to new places within reality that they would normally be excluded from. Within the genre of documentary, lies the genre of the music documentary that this dissertation will dedicate specific attention to. There is a distinct aura that surrounds the world of music and the musicians that frequent it. Through their music and their lives, artists are able to convey powerful stories, both regarding the music itself and societal critique. Nichols describes the power of music documentaries and states:

> The best documentaries give us a vivid sense of what it feels like to occupy or consider the world from a different perspective. And few things help us understand what it feels like to be in a particular time or place, in the midst of a specific challenge or situation, better than music. (2016, p.92)

Building on Nichols' statement, it could be claimed that music is the perfect accompaniment for the documentary genre, with both avenues of media harnessing their respective strengths to create a genre with potential for expansion. The 4 chapters in this dissertation will attempt to discuss the various landmark points in the genre since its inception. These are: origins, direct cinema, mock-documentary and experimental.

This dissertation will use terms that will require further context behind the ways they are utilised in order to provide clearer understanding of their uses. Providing this context will allow for a wider discussion regarding the various aims of the research question and how the different genres and issues are tackled within this dissertation. At various points throughout this dissertation there will be a discussion on the concept of ethical issues within the music documentary, particularly within chapter 2 on direct cinema and chapter 4 regarding the experimental music documentary. The word 'ethical' will be used widely in different concepts, such as the exploitation of

documentary subjects as discussed in chapter 2 in relation to Gimme Shelter and their coverage of the murder of concertgoer Meredith Hunter – a pivotal narrative device which could be interpreted as the filmmakers profiting off a death. Chapter 2 will also feature a discussion that could be viewed as an 'ethical' issue in regards to the analysis of Don't Look Back and the personas of Bob Dylan in this film. Whilst not as egregious as the accusation that the filmmakers behind Gimme Shelter could have been profiteering from the death of Meredith Hunter caught by the Maysles' cameras, there is certainly room for an ethical discussion as to whether Dylan's many personas could be viewed as misleading by audiences and go against the aims of the direct cinema genre to present the subjective truth. In the final chapter, this dissertation will turn to the genre of the experimental music documentary to investigate the substantial ways the music documentary has expanded beyond the pre-established codes and conventions in the preceding 3 chapters. The term 'ethical' will once again be used to analyse the issues of consent behind the director's use of found footage in the films Amy and Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck. There is room to enable a discussion on the ethical quandaries of presenting the objective truth, the goal of direct cinema, but the lengths that filmmakers have had to go to achieve this, looking through the subjects personal effects such as tape-recordings, private journals, and art, with the knowledge that the deceased artists can never give their full consent and that these items were never created with the view to being on public display for the foreseeable future.

Chapter 4 will focus on the experimental music documentary and, by analysing the films Amy and Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck, attempt to identify the areas in which both directors expand the codes and conventions of the music documentary. The term 'experimental' is used generally to describe films, within its own genre, as

> any film that experiments with some aspect of the filmmaking process -- e.g., editing of visuals and/or audio, filming techniques, and even the mode of presentation. (Full Spectrum Pictures, 2014)

True experimental films can be unnerving to watch, intended to keep the viewer on edge throughout the running time. Within this dissertation, the term 'experimental'

will be used to refer to music documentaries that expand upon the traditional documentary genre through specific techniques discussed in chapter 4 such as the use of personal found footage and using animation to recreate personal moments in the subject's lives that filmmakers were not around to document. It will follow Johnstone's more specific definition of the experimental music documentary closely which states:

> These films may incorporate essential qualities of traditional documentaries, but they typically question or expand many characteristics that are considered basic documentary traits, and venture into unpredictable—and immensely fruitful—new territory. (2004)

Working directly with Johnstone's definition of the experimental music documentary will allow this dissertation to expand upon the vast genre of the experimental film to analyse closely the new forms of the music documentary that have been created in more recent times (the 2010s). By defining both the use of the terms 'ethical' and 'experimental' within this dissertation, it will allow for greater clarity when these discussions occur and thus creating better insights into the thought process behind this decision. By focusing on the four key areas of the music documentary (origins, direct cinema, mock-documentary and experimental), the aims of the title will be investigated, following a chronology of films best suited to explaining the journey of this genre from 1948-2015.

Chapter 1: The Origins of the Music Documentary

The music documentary, as it is seen in the 21st Century, is incredibly diverse with filmmakers pushing the codes and conventions with each subsequent release that defines the key aspects of what the viewer sees on screen, from the cinematography to its editing and narrative. This chapter will study the years of 1948-1964 and look upon this genre of the documentary in its infancy. Chapter 1 will focus on researching key points regarding the genre, such as the earliest examples of a music documentary, the aims of these films, the defining moments for the genre, the reception of these early attempts and the areas in which filmmakers chose to focus on and their reasons for such choices. In the 21st Century, this genre has adapted and evolved. The advancement of social media is a key example of the many ways that technology allows the everyday person to invade on the privacy of a celebrity or musician, a sentiment that Edgar agrees with and suggests that the newly invasive manner of society is responsible for this. ‘A whole new culture has been created where almost no knowledge about a celebrity’s private life is off limits and where scandal appears normalised and even expected aspect of celebrity narratives.’ (2013, p.16) This sentiment should be kept in mind when comparing music documentaries released in the 21st Century to the time frame laid out earlier (1948-1964) where the music documentary began to rise in popularity. During this era, the function of the genre was simpler than it is today. It was about giving audiences the chance to see a concert if circumstances deemed that they could not afford to see such performances live. The music documentary has now become more focused on giving the viewer a look into the private life of a performer, rather than simply displaying their performance, and allowing that to represent themselves. This is evidenced in the way the music documentary has evolved from its beginnings in 1948 to the direct cinema entries that released in the 1960s that will be the topic of discussion in chapter 2. The music documentary has become a popular genre in the 21st century and has evolved into what audiences recognise today through many thought-provoking entries of the past. As will be seen throughout this chapter, there are many ways in which the music documentary can be interpreted, and all these are accepted and not one is simply its sole legitimate function. This chapter will focus on those films that came earliest in the genre and specifically the films *Concert Magic*

(Gordon, 1948), *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (Stern and Avakian, 1959), *The Cry of Jazz* (Bland, 1959) and *T.A.M.I. Show* (Binder, 1964).

The earliest popular example of a concert film was *Concert Magic* which showed audiences the extremely talented violinist Yehudi Menuhin perform at the peak of his abilities. The film consists of several of Menuhin's performances without any added context or narrative. When discussing the thought process behind making Concert Magic, he stated that his film was 'the idea of making pure music films with no story attached, no text, no extraneous matter.' (Menuhin, 1997) Therefore, his film would have been incredibly unique at the time of release and certainly alien to viewers experiencing this genre of film for the first time. Looking back to the period in which *Concert Magic* was released, the intention of the film was both creative and foreign to the staple of films released at the time. When Menuhin was approached to make *Concert Magic* 'the violinist immediately saw the potential of having some of his performances caught on film for posterity.' (Medici.tv, 2019) The film itself has become its own juxtaposition whereas the film set in motion the trend for concert films which ultimately evolved into the music documentary; however *Concert Magic* could be interpreted as underappreciated by the regular film viewer despite its cultural significance.

Having addressed the groundwork that *Concert Magic* laid down for the future of the music documentary, it is important to discuss the codes and conventions of this (at the time) fledgling genre and the various characteristics that make people recognise the type of film they are watching and also what can be considered a music documentary. A factor that may have contributed towards defining what makes a music documentary was the sheer popularity of those films that went behind the scenes and followed bands, particularly in the genre of rock. Cohen believes the monetary profits that follow releasing a musical documentary also play a part in its success, stating, 'the rock concert film's popularity and relative commercial success make it advantageous to include under the umbrella of documentary.' (2012, p.19) Whilst it is an undeniably lucrative sub-section of film, there are many more reasons that the music documentary should be included within the overall umbrella of the

documentary. Documentaries serve to be informative of their subject of choosing and music documentaries inform the viewers as to what goes into making their music. Seeing an artist go through the motions of creating a song is arguably equally as informative and impressive as with anything else within the genre, to the music aficionado. *Concert Magic* was culturally significant for several reasons, not just due to the infant nature of the genre it was responsible for creating, but also for the newly found accessibility that Menuhin's films brought to live performance. *Concert Magic* allowed people in smaller towns and deprived areas to enjoy live performances whereas they may not have seen any at all without this film. This not only applies to *Concert Magic* but to most documentaries that followed it and certainly those that are analysed in this dissertation. The escapist potential in this particular genre was also a catalyst behind Menuhin creating this film. Menuhin claims 'it's just the pure music and the players. It's a relief [...] from any kind of setting and presentation. It's very simple and very direct.' (1997) Menuhin wanted to create this genre of film to break down the previous codes of most films that precede it, which features narrative driven plots and fleshed out characters, and allow viewers to switch off and enjoy the music; without worrying about these factors. The shots used of the artist in this film are simple, with the top half of Menuhin in picture with a smattering of background performers also in shot. The editing is where the film becomes more exciting, with the change of shots keeping up with Menuhin's frenetic pace. Making the most of what they had available at the time, the filmmakers manage to keep the film diverse and interesting despite only having two cameras available to film with. These are interchanged and moved around regularly to give the impression that more cameras are being used. The editors do a mature job and respect Menuhin's wishes by not having the cinematography or editing distract from the performance, allowing the viewer to be taken in and engrossed in the talented violinist's work. All shots used by the filmmakers are there to show the viewer the various factors involved with playing long and complicated pieces such as the ones that Menuhin plays in Concert Magic. Certain shots highlight the immense concentration that Menuhin is having to keep up in order to hit the notes perfectly - whilst not necessarily showing the viewer the instrument being played fully. Another example is a high shot to show Menuhin's fingers at work, their intense pace of movement and the individuality of the fingers – all working of their own accord despite being so tightly bunched together.

Saffle poses the question: ‘Should [music] documentaries be little or nothing more than sight-plus-sound record keeping, advertisements for ambitious performers?’ (2013, p.48) The music documentary is incredibly flexible, so long as there is music being played at some point during the film – be that a concert, in a recording studio or simply just a jamming session. This on its own does not make for riveting viewing, it is when the genre expands into new ground where the audience become engrossed. It is when the film explores the nuances and perhaps the idiosyncrasies of a peculiar, larger-than-life performer. Through the power of the music documentary, the viewer can be transported backstage to areas cordoned off by security guards, to see the way an artist behaves behind the carefully curated lens they have created for themselves in their public image. However, it could be argued that the backstage persona that the musician gives off in these behind the scenes moments may be as heavily curated as the on-stage personas. The music documentary proves to be one of the most flexible genres in film, with huge avenues to pursue and ways to evolve.

If *Concert Magic* was the first concert film, then one of the earliest examples of the music documentary is *Jazz on a Summer’s Day* directed by Bert Stern. With a team consisting of 5 roaming cameras, his aim was to portray jazz music in a way never seen before, casting aside the stereotypes that had ridden the genre and Appel Jr remarks about the film’s departure from black and white in the films that preceded it, stating, ‘Stern’s use of colour is exciting and there are several stirring musical moments.’ (1960, p.56) While previous showings of jazz music on the big screen showed artists playing in dark, grubby bars and theatres, *Jazz on a Summer’s Day* is shot in colour and shows the artists performing to a sea of onlookers of all races and backgrounds enjoying themselves. The film also had genuine superstars of the jazz world such as Louis Armstrong at the peak of his music career – something that Appel Jr believes may have been a contributing factor in the popularity of the new concert film. ‘Most of the attempts at jazz programming have failed because, bluntly, it is boring to watch a static, frontal shot of musicians playing in a studio.’ (1960, p.56) Stern completely changes up the formula with his entry into the music

documentary genre by having the camera roam around and provide interesting shots that moves the viewer's perspective regularly and invites them closer to see the intense concentration and raw emotions of the performers; similarly seen in Concert Magic.

The film begins, not by immediately showing the Newport Jazz Festival but by showing the America's Cup Races which are taking place nearby and can be seen from the festival. This immediately highlights the different angle from which this film will take, as shots from the festival itself are interspersed with shots of the boat race. As confusing as this can appear, it does reinforce the new image of jazz that Stern is attempting to create, not as a genre of music that is resigned to a darkened, dirty bar, but something that can be played in the middle of summer to a packed, colourful, and excited crowd. From an editing standpoint, *Jazz on a Summer's Day* keeps up with the pace of the performances and frequently speeds up cuts between the artists chaotic and frenetic music and shots of the crowd dancing equally fast or simply head-bobbing, showing that the audience are at one with the music. The shots chosen by the editor appear indecisive but in a good way, constantly changing to focus on the performers who are dominating the song at any given time, highlighting the competitive side of jazz music. When these shots focus on the dominating musician, the shots themselves are never dull and range from tall shots looking down on the performer to highlight the impressive feat of playing their instruments or extreme close-ups which show the artists perspiration from their intense playing or singing.

Jazz on a Summer's Day aims to illustrate the racial tensions of the time and highlights the racial integration in the crowd as well as performers from both races. The tension rises when black artists are performing such as Sonny Stitt as the cameras move to focus on the white attendees in the crowd as the viewer may not be sure whether their blank expressions are that of anger or intense concentration whilst listening to the performance. Watching this film in the 21st Century it is impossible to ignore the era in which the concert is taking place, a world in which the Civil Rights Movement would not gain steam for another half-decade. By focusing on

the reaction of the races in the crowd to their opposite races performing on stage, Stern adds a new layer to this film in a simple fashion. Appel Jr comments on the overall mood that this artistic decision creates by stating, ‘it serves to illustrate that a film about jazz need not be padded [...] and so on – that the intimate low-keyed moments can be as rewarding as the extroverting ones.’ (1960, p.57) Throughout the film there is no narration, except for the brief introduction for each act by the master of ceremonies, therefore it is these intimate low-key moments that highlight the racial tension of the times that make the film much more than a recording of a jazz festival. The crowd being diverse and multi-racial highlights the wealth gap between the white Americans and African Americans at the time without pointing it out literally. Despite their differing fashion appearances, the white attendees being heavily benefitted from society for their race, *Jazz on a Summer’s Day* does appear to be moderately progressive for the time in which it was shot. During a time when African Americans had limited rights, they are allowed to integrate with the white Americans without being segregated or subject to abuse. In spite of appearing to show a concert devoid of any racial tensions, Stern still highlights them either intentionally or unintentionally; such was the state of America at the time. Cohen comments on the matter of race in Stern’s film, claiming, ‘racial discord lies just beneath the patina of harmony in *Jazz on a Summer’s Day*. Even as it attempts to repress the racial tensions staining jazz at that historical moment in American history.’ (2012, p.25) There was no segregation at the Newport Jazz Festival, the two races are seen integrating separately and not mixing fully. However, the African American performers who go on stage to perform are given an equal reception to those performers that are white.

Jazz itself can be considered a very contentious genre. Those artists that were African American were even disadvantaged within the genre itself, which Giola confirms when stating, ‘as African Americans they were outsiders from mainstream society, as musical renegades they were outsiders from mainstream jazz. For many years, they lacked access to concert halls, grants, prestigious commissions, and other symbolic measures of artistic achievement.’ (1997, p.339) The Newport Jazz Festival, being one of the biggest festivals showcasing this genre, is progressive in allowing said African American jazz artists access to this platform. The viewer could be aware of the ongoing arguments regarding the ‘ownership’ of jazz music during

this era and is one of the causes of the underlying racial tension seen in *Jazz on a Summer's Day*. According to Austerlitz, 'African American jazz players often assert black ownership of their art while declaring that it is universal or promoting it as a generically North American form.' (2005, p.10) This argument over who is the real true owner of jazz underlies the entire festival, transforming the festival into a platform, and can be felt through in the shots of the crowd. African Americans may have felt like America had taken so much from themselves and the black generations that proceeded them, that jazz was one of the last things left that was truly created by black musicians and that the African American had true ownership and mastery over. With regard to the racial tensions as shown through the way the film is edited, it is apparent that Stern and his editing team were looking to improve the stigma that accompanied jazz. Cohen disagrees stating:

> The untimely cutaways to the America's Cup yacht race, numerous inserts depicting varying behaviours of whites and blacks in relation to particular musicians and the images of the musicians themselves lend the film an undeniably tendentious editorial perspective. (2012, p.35)

The cutaways to the America's Cup Yacht Race appear to serve their function in simply highlighting that the weather is reflective of that of a hot summer's day – as the title suggests. The behaviours that Cohen is referring to in the statement above do not appear to be in any way harmful to the appearance of either the black or white races in attendance and the viewer could be arguably more likely to be impressed that both races are allowed to integrate considering the era this concert took place in. While there was always going to be underlying racial tensions at the Newport Jazz Festival, these tensions do not appear to be on display on *Jazz on a Summer's Day* and are more deeply linked to the overall racial overtones associated with jazz itself – something that Stern successfully changes in this film. Stern's film stirs up a lively debate on the subject of racial tensions within America at the time and also within the genre of jazz. It is also important to recognise the effect it had on the rest of the music documentary genre and films that followed it. The fact that detailed discussions regarding racial tensions could be had from a music documentary is

ground-breaking within itself – just over 10 years ago, the genre was simply about putting a violin concert on film to show to audiences who could not watch the performance live. Stern achieves this through adding new layers to the concert film so that it could become the music documentary. Even when the performers are being filmed, the shots used are never standard or potentially perceived as boring. According to Appel Jr, Stern 'concentrates on players who are visually interesting; if not eccentric.' (1960, p.57) This concept was new at the time when the frame simply focuses on the band leader no matter what, even if one of the background performers would be more interesting to watch. *Jazz on a Summer's Day* expanded on the traditional concert film and created new concepts and editing styles that can still be seen in music documentaries that premiere more recently. Stern's entry into the genre rewrote the codes and conventions but left the door open for further expansion, as will be seen in subsequent chapters, that proves that the music documentary is an ever-evolving platform of films.

The third film to be discussed in this chapter which heralded the beginning of the music documentary is *The Cry of Jazz*. Released in the same year as *Jazz on a Summer's Day*, Ed Bland attempts to create a more traditional documentary on the subject of jazz's origins and its connection to the African American race. As opposed to *Jazz on a Summer's Day*, *The Cry of Jazz* does not attempt to keep the racial tensions that were dominating society subverted or to portray them subtlety. Bland immediately poses the question of who is truly responsible for the birth and continuation of jazz: Blacks or Whites. Upon the release of the film, 'the response was hideous.' (Rogers, 2007, p.84) The obvious and shameless comparisons between the races is the blatant reason for the critics tepid response to the film but it is important to take a deeper dive into *The Cry of Jazz* to fully understand the aims of the film, why such claims were made and the effect it had on the rest of the music documentary genre. The film begins with the main characters, the names of which are not important, but their race quickly becomes so, debating as to who founded the genre of jazz at a jazz appreciation club. The film is broken down into sections: half are centred around conversations between the different members who partake in heated debate and the other half are documentary-style sections narrated by the main character Alex who provides the 'truthful' version to what the characters have

been debating in such a fiery fashion. Commenting on Bland's background with the jazz genre, Rogers claims:

> As the 50s rolled in, Bland spent his days studying, hustling gigs, and spending many long nights debating with friends, black and white, about the state of all things worldly, particularly in jazz. (2007, p.84)

The knowledge of how the director spent his days doing things that appear in the films add a layer of realism to the events and can allow the viewer to sympathise with the arguments being made against Bland and the main character Alex. Alex, the film's main character, argues that 'jazz is merely the negro's cry of joy and suffering', implying that a white person will not be able to understand the genre fully until they have experienced the extreme prejudice that African Americans have. This stance is cemented fully when Alex later claims that 'the negro is the only human'. These claims, although they may seem valid from the director and main characters viewpoints, garner hostility from the white characters on screen and indeed those white viewers watching who may feel victimised and blamed for the pitfall of jazz and the African American. *The Cry of Jazz* becomes the first music documentary to make such forward social commentary and to provoke the outrage of an entire race; a far cry from the original intention of the concert film as something that was intended to put music to screen for the enjoyment of others. The film becomes a polemical essay against the oppression of African Americans, even extending to their music. Such is the flexibility of the music documentary.

During its documentary sequences, Bland attempts to explain the creation of jazz, its current standing in music and the future for the genre. Images of the African American are used to portray them in the light Alex has been explaining since the beginning of *The Cry of Jazz*. Alex states:

> Negro life, as created through jazz, is a contradiction between worship of the present, freedom and joy, and the realisation of the futureless future, restraint, and suffering which the American way of life has bestowed upon the Negro. (Bland, 1959)

This further backs up the claim that the African American is the only true human that can understand the intricacies of jazz music with Rogers going further to remark that:

> *The Cry of Jazz* is a monumental literal and figurative black and white dialect that uses jazz as both a lens and springboard for interpreting America's past, present and future ills (and possibilities). (2007, p.84)

The use of jazz music to represent the woes and trials of the African Americans is especially poignant in *The Cry of Jazz* and links directly into the final point that Alex and Bland make in the conclusion of the film. Alex claims that jazz is dead because the genre cannot evolve beyond what already exists. This is due to the 'restraining' elements of jazz that, according to Alex, dictates that if any changes are made to the form or changes then the spirit of jazz is lost. The claim that jazz is dead and has nowhere to go is one the filmmakers have every right to make but it could be perceived as untrue or misleading. Musicians such as Miles Davis revolutionised the genre in 1959, the year of this film's release, with his album *Kind of Blue* (Davis, 1959) and built a career upon rejuvenating his style and the way he played jazz to remain relevant and at the top of the industry.

The Cry of Jazz is a short film, coming in at 34 minutes running time, but manages to cover a lot of ground and evoke a lot of emotions due to the charged racial tensions that existed at the time; and to some extent, the present day. The arguments that are put forward work well with each other due to the similarities in the racial tensions experienced in both African American life and the genre of jazz. In regard to the argument as to who created and can enjoy jazz, Austerlitz finds an agreeable middle

ground: ‘The major innovators of jazz have been black, but the music is played and enjoyed by U.S. citizens of all backgrounds, and indeed, by people the world over.’ (2005, p.10) The argument that all races cannot possibly appreciate the different faucets of jazz is absurd and goes against the inclusive nature of the genre as a whole. Austerlitz goes on to state:

> As an embodiedness of doubleness, inextricable from both African-influenced traditions and Western modernity, jazz spans barriers, creating a musical consciousness of inclusiveness. (2005, p.25)

African Americans have had many aspects of their past, present and future taken away from them by the racially biased society that America has created. It becomes understandable that some African Americans want to safeguard the genre of jazz from the clutches of the white man. This attitude goes against the values that jazz was built upon and it should be celebrated that all races want to play, listen, and learn about this genre of music. *The Cry of Jazz* angered many people that viewed it at the time of release and in the present day, but the film did make considerable strides in establishing the genre of the music documentary. The film is the first of its kind to tackle societal issues such as racial tensions head on and gives no attempt to hide its stance on the matter. *The Cry of Jazz* becomes the first musical documentary to put the musical aspect to one side and truly focus on another bigger subject; allowing the film to differ from earlier films discussed in this chapter such as *Concert Magic* and *Jazz on a Summer’s Day*. Bland uses jazz but only as a way of advancing his viewpoint and comparing the genre to the mistreatment of African Americans. The director’s hard-line stance on an issue such as this, allowing the viewer to debate the subject and form their own conclusions. Through subsequent interviews that Bland has given, it becomes evident that a lot of the film is based on events that have happened in reality and are based upon arguments that really happened. The frustration carries through the film, showcasing both Bland’s passion for the subject and his anger that the argument should even be necessary. As with the previous films discussed in this opening chapter, *The Cry of Jazz* has had an undeniable influence on the rest of music documentaries that have followed. Bland’s

work has allowed films to use the musical aspect of the film to simply accompany the narrative which is given free rein to tell a bigger and more impactful story. In *The Cry of Jazz*, jazz itself is used as a way of comparing the music to the plight of African Americans. Future films such as *Gimme Shelter* (Maysles, Maysles and Zwerin, 1970), that will be the basis for analysis in chapter 2, also use music but not as the main narrative device, instead using the power of their music and concerts to tell the story of America's floundering counterculture and free love movements.

The final film to look at regarding the early stages of the music documentary is *T.A.M.I. Show* which stood for 'Teenage Awards Music International'. This was the first big rock concert film and features some of the biggest names in rock and roll of the time, including The Rolling Stones, Chuck Berry, Gerry and the Pacemakers and James Brown. Like the previously mentioned *Jazz on a Summer's Day*, this film was a recording of a live concert albeit *T.A.M.I. Show* was performed in front of a crowd of students, however director Steve Binder used some filmmaking techniques that were revolutionary at the time and allowed the film to gain cult status. Contrary to the previous film being released several years earlier and in colour, it was a conscious choice by Binder to shoot *T.A.M.I. Show* in black and white. *T.A.M.I. Show* begins with a pre-show credits sequence that has some documentary elements not seen before on a major picture such as this. The viewer is shown the various acts travelling to the concert hall on different kinds of transport, from the traditional tour bus to skateboards and showing audiences what it is like for a musical artist to live on the road. The director then cuts to show artists such as The Supremes getting into costume and having makeup applied with some additional rehearsal scenes. This was a brief look into the private lives of the performers that was not seen on a film of this scale until the late 1960s and 1970s. Accompanying these behind-the-scenes films, the concert hosts Jan and Dean recorded a special song for the titles: '*(Here They Come) from All Over The World*' (Jan and Dean, 1965) that informs those listening of the names of the artists that will be performing; despite wrongly claiming The Rolling Stones are from Liverpool. When Jan and Dean introduce the first act, Chuck Berry, the crowd becomes the focal point of attention. The audience of loud, excited teenagers can be heard shrieking and screaming as each performer takes the stage and throughout the concert. Richards remarks about the power of

the life audience in *T.A.M.I. Show*, stating, ‘through the inky blacks and cloudy whites crackles a teenage electricity that feels both surreal and timeless.’ (2010) This is a direct opposite of the scenes we see in *Jazz on a Summer’s Day* in which the film is shot in colour and the audience can barely be heard, despite receiving plenty of camera time, and they do not contribute to the overall atmosphere of the concert.

There are two factors which makes *T.A.M.I. Show* a unique entry into the music documentary genre. The first is that the film was recorded live and there were not any second takes – what the audience at the concert saw is what the viewer at home sees. If the performers missed a note or sung out of tune it would not be edited out. The second factor is how the acts integrate with each other and are not separate entities like a festivalgoer would see at a show today. The acts interchange, reappear and interact seamlessly, almost as if they were being blended by a DJ. This is highlighted at the start of the concert when Chuck Berry opens the show, sings two songs and then gives way to Gerry and the Pacemakers, who in turn sing three songs and then give their stage time back to Chuck Berry; all whilst remaining on the stage together throughout. The end of the first third of the show is the greatest example of the artists performing as one entity as Chuck Berry, Gerry and the Pacemakers, Smokey Robinson and The Miracles and Marvin Gaye all join Lesley Gore on the stage for the final song of her set. This represents the importance of coming together regardless of race and gender, during a time when these were contentious societal issues. This is of stark contrast to *Jazz on a Summer’s Day* where the performers perform their songs, leave the stage, and do not return for the rest of the concert.

The editors Bruce Pierce and Kent Mackenzie have a vital role to play in pacing the show and ensuring the film progresses at a speed which matches the performers on stage. This is highlighted by Binder and backed up during the noticeably fast-paced songs such as those sung by James Brown. According to Miles, ‘Binder says that what you want out of a filmed concert is the view from the front-row centre, with no weird angles and edits only when there’s a reason to do so.’ (2010) During the performances from Brown, the editors show raw footage from the set and use hard

cuts between camera angles. This is contrasting from some of the slower songs performed by The Beach Boys in which the editors use slow wipes between changing shots and add a soft lens effect. The difference in frame between figure 1 and figure 2 is stark and displays the editing techniques favoured at the time. The soft lens shot, seen in figure 2, has been used in love scenes before in more conventional films and can be used to highlight the emotion felt by the subject in shot. The cinematography in the *T.A.M.I. Show* features the same styles as those seen in Jazz in a Summer's Day as the camera trains in on the most exciting and enthralling performer at the current moment of their performance. As The Rolling Stones are on stage, Cohen highlights this by stating: 'During the performance of 'It's All Over Now' in the *T.A.M.I. Show*, the camera operator appears unable to determine where to train the lens.' (2012, p.65) This could be interpreted as a negative statement about the cinematography in *T.A.M.I. Show* but instead it speaks volumes about the performances on show and the director's commitment to show the viewer the most interesting and lively moment at all times. An interesting shot, that borders upon visual information overload, is seen in figure 3. All at once, the audience is shown Gerry Marsden, his back-up singer slightly to his right, the big band behind him and two go-go dancers towards the top of the shot. This allows the editor to avoid unnecessary cutaways as all the information is in one shot for the viewer to see.

Having seen the previous two films, *Jazz on a Summer's Day* and *The Cry of Jazz*, try to address the issue of race within society is a head-on manner, *T.A.M.I. Show* addresses the issue in a more subtle fashion. This begins with the line-up of the concert that sees men and women, both black and white, performing together – extremely diverse at the time considering the ongoing Civil Rights Movement. One of the more progressive acts to appear in the film is Lesley Gore who could be seen as a shining beacon for feminism during her set. As she sings her pro-female song 'You Don't Own Me', Enright agrees stating she 'sounds like a proto-feminist, and her bright-eyed performance is utterly convincing.' (2010, p.22) In a time when women were not treated in the same way as men were in American society, seeing Lesley Gore sing such songs would have been incredibly inspiring.

A previous point in this essay discussing the performers integrating with each other as one entity is also important in the films quest to show the music industry in the most enlightened and progressive light. Simply having artists of different races on stage is a sign of changing times. Light agrees and claims: ‘Incredible for the time, not only did black and white artists share the spotlight, but the audience and even the onstage go-go dancers were integrated.’ (2010) Everything regarding *T.A.M.I. Show* is an example of an idyllic American society, with everyone interacting together regardless of race or heritage. This was merely an idyllic fantasy at the time but the concept of discussing how ground-breaking it was for artists of different races to share the stage was, should be evidence of how far society has come since this film’s release. Despite the progress in helping improve the image of America as one of an accepting society, perhaps considered the most memorable aspect of *T.A.M.I. Show* is the performance of James Brown as the concert’s penultimate act. The film regularly cuts to extreme close-ups of Brown during his performance to show immense levels of sweat pouring off his face, highlighting the physical strain of his performance. Miles heaps praise on Brown’s performance, remarking that ‘this wasn’t spontaneous spasms or mere acting. Brown has learned from Southern gospel services, and what he offered was an ecstatic ritual – minutely choreographed but utterly heartfelt.’ (2010) This was the genius of Brown’s performance – to appear chaotic yet organised so that the audience are at odds trying to determine if the routine was pre-planned or spontaneous.

T.A.M.I. Show contributed not just to the music documentary genre but also to the music industry itself. The film announced acts to the world that people had either never heard of or had heard but never seen perform live, as Ouellette agrees with, claiming, ‘the vanguard of youth music had well and truly arrived and popular culture in the sixties and beyond would never be the same.’ (2016, p.12) This is particularly relevant with acts such as The Rolling Stones who had yet to make it big in America but proceeded to be propelled to fame worldwide. The film also pioneered the idea of a diverse line-up and went a step further by integrating them all on stage in a display

of the unified American society that people had been dreaming of. Light comments on the diverse nature of *T.A.M.I. Show* by stating:

> The integrated line-up – superstars, screaming teenagers, bikini girls and all – was a strong statement itself, a year before the passage of the Voting Rights Act. [...] White audiences were listening to black artists at the time [...] but they never really saw them. (2010)

T.A.M.I. Show gave exposure to minority artists who would have never received it before this film. This was achieved by putting artists of different races on stage together without political statements that may have alienated some viewers. This can be considered one of the more subtle, progressive, and enlightened films of the time.

This chapter has delved into four pivotal films within the birth of the concert film and the music documentary; the latter will be discussed further in the next chapter with the birth of direct cinema within the music documentary. What started with simple intentions, to bring music concerts to the screens of people's homes around the world, became bigger with each new entry. The later entries discussed in this opening chapter such as *Jazz on a Summer's Day* and *The Cry of Jazz* have showed that the genre can expand into areas other than simply music performances, with the films touching on societal issues such as racism and class. It is these films that make this genre a fascinating genre to centre a dissertation around as it demonstrates the wide areas it can expand into.

Chapter 2: Direct Cinema

This chapter will focus on direct cinema – its origins, its codes and conventions, the influential people behind important films of the genre and the effect it has had on the music documentary as a whole. Whilst there are many influential films that fall within this section of the music documentary, the two films that will be analysed in this chapter are *Don't Look Back* (Pennebaker, 1967) and *Gimme Shelter* (Maysles, Maysles and Zwerin, 1970). The reasons for selecting these two films above others is their multi-layered nature, neither of these films are merely concert films as both delve deeper into the setting of the time and the stars that appear on screen. To discuss the origins of direct cinema, it is important to discuss what it is about these types of films that appeal to audiences to explain why they were so popular, Saunders believes that the American people have always been fascinated by photography since its invention and responded positively when photographs started to become more frequent in newspapers. Saunders claims, 'photography perfectly complimented the text column.' (2007, p.5) The photographs helped lend an extra visual dimension to the stories being run in these newspapers and when video was made available, the documentaries that accompanied them kept up the level of intrigue and wonder displayed by the population. These photographs and videos could be seen as a way to transport someone to a place or time that they would have otherwise been unable to see.

The concept of direct cinema is relatively simple: to capture reality as it happens, without interference from the filmmaker and to do this as unobtrusively as possible in order to achieve as close to a true representative of the facts as possible. Drew conveys the codes of direct cinema by stating:

> It would be reporting without summary and opinion; it would be the ability to look in on people's lives at crucial times from which you could deduce certain things, and see a kind of truth, that can only be gotten from personal experience. (Drew, cited by Weber, 2014)

This implies that the aim of direct cinema is not for the filmmaker to inform the viewer of what they should take away from a film, but to allow said viewer to form these opinions on their own without guidance; stemming from the ideals that footage in direct cinema should be presented as objectively truthful at all times. Objectively truthful footage captured in direct cinema should be filmed in an 'honest' way. This would be achieved, as Saunders states, 'by using available light, natural sound and locations were to be used whenever possible.' (2007, p.10) By not using artificial means to create a more aesthetically pleasing picture, it presents the footage in a way that is more representative of reality and therefore more believable. Direct cinema also distanced itself from more conventional means of documentary filmmaking. Voguls claims 'Eschewing the authoritative voice-over narrator, didactic scripts […] these filmmakers instead tried to capture life as it happened.' (2005, p.1) The use of a voice-over narrator would be detrimental to the objective truthful aims of direct cinema as it would influence the views of the viewer. Direct cinema was able to thrive in the 1960s due to the advancement of technology which allowed for the development of smaller cameras that were less obtrusive. Voguls states that the Maysles brothers:

> worked fervently on the technological aspects of film, eventually developing an even lighter (thirty-pound) camera and repositioning the viewfinder on the camera so that he had more flexibility to see what he was filming. (2005, p.6)

Smaller and lighter equipment was significant to direct cinema as it allowed filmmakers to capture footage that may have come out less naturally if it were filmed with big, bulky cameras that the subjects would have been more aware of. Saunders outlines a convention of direct cinema claiming, 'the unspoken code of 'candid' direct cinema – that one must not look at the camera – is in effect.' (2007, p.61) Linking back to the point above, the act of not looking at the camera, but being aware it is there, was made easier due to the new compact nature of filming technology. Improvements in technology also ushered in new conventions for documentary filmmaking, as Voguls asserts:

> As part of the new grammar, the camera operators and directors preferred the close-up, scanning the faces of their subjects, frequently holding the shots for long takes, in order to capture their emotions and reactions. (2005, p.1)

These new ways of capturing the subjects allows the viewer to come to their own conclusions about the emotions and journey of the person(s) in frame without being prodded along by a narrator or subtitles.

One of the most important factors of direct cinema documentaries is the subjects of such films. Voguls agrees with this claim and comments, 'the filmmaker must choose a subject whose life might provide conflict-orientated episodes, or the filmmaker must seek out situations in which a crisis is imminent, where a winner-or-loser outcome is inevitable.' (2005, p.2) In the two films selected for analysis in this chapter, it is clear that crisis is imminent (*Gimme Shelter* featuring the famous Altamont Free Concert which was rife with violence and was the site of the murder of Meredith Hunter by a member of Hell's Angels) and 'a winner-or-loser outcome is inevitable' (Dylan in *Don't Look Back* is portrayed as one of life's winners due to his enormous musical success; conflict is also set up through his tour of Britain, his engagement with the press and the musical change that was in the air that would directly affect the artist). In addition to establishing the codes and conventions of direct cinema, it must be noted the difference between two modes of direct cinema and cinema verité. Barnouw uses a succinct definition of the difference between the two styles:

> 'The direct cinema documentarist took his camera to a situation of tension and waited hopefully for a crisis; the Rouch version of cinema verité tried to precipitate one. The direct cinema artist aspired to invisibility; the Rouch cinema verité artist was often an avowed participant…. Direct cinema found its truth in events available to the camera. Cinema verité was committed to a paradox: that artificial circumstances could bring hidden truth to the surface.' (1974, pp. 254-55)

This definition outlines the differences between direct cinema and cinema verité. The difficulty in distinguishing them from one another is that it is not always clear, nor disclosed, if the events occurring in a film are flowing naturally or they are being prodded along by the filmmakers.

The camera operator can play their part in attempting to capture events in a manner as objective as possible, but the editor has a powerful role in dictating how those subjects can be portrayed on screen in the final product. Monaco describes the process and claims ‘It is the editing that results in a well-defined structure and point of view.’ (2003, p.205) The editor has a powerful role in any genre, but their role is particularly influential in direct cinema as they have the ability to change audience perceptions of the subjects being recorded with adjustments ranging from cutting out important sequences to choosing to focus on the subject facial expressions with a close up to highlight their emotions and expose any fragility. Audience perception is ever-changing and will be discussed in regard to Bob Dylan later on in this chapter. The editor is capable of adding impartiality to the creative process if they were not directly involved in filming and therefore do not have their feelings towards the subject tainted by preconceptions. Charlotte Zwerin, who directed and edited *Gimme Shelter*, discusses the benefit of the editor in direct cinema by arguing ‘The editor has the advantage of knowing that something either is or is not conveyed on the screen. His immediate reaction isn’t blunted by any personal knowledge.’ (Zwerin, cited by Monaco, 2003, p.205) This argument demonstrates the upside to having an independent editor who is only involved in the production until after the filming is complete. While having the filmmaker edit the film themselves, as was the case in *Gimme Shelter*, can ensure that the directors vision is carried over to the final product, this may add a layer of bias and partiality as their views on the subject may have been swayed during the time spent recording and could damage direct cinema’s goal of objective truthfulness.

Having established the direct cinema genre, its reasons for its use and the films in this genre that will be analysed later in the chapter, it is key to establish why these

films may be appealing to viewers. Erving Goffman writes about human social interactions in his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* and provides theories that could be used to explain why people wish to find out about those that they will probably never meet. Upon meeting a new person, Goffman states 'they will be interested in his general socio-economic status, his conception of self, his attitude towards them, his competence, his trust-worthiness etc.' (1956, p.13) One factor that may be the reason for such a viewpoint is the celebrity status of the subjects in these films. Despite the viewer probably not having met the celebrity personally, they can hold prior knowledge of the subject which they may have heard through the media. Goffman addresses this by claiming:

> If they know, or know of, the individual by virtue of experience prior to the interaction, they can rely on assumptions as to the persistence and generality of psychological traits as a means of predicting his present and future behaviour. (1956, p.13)

The prior knowledge that audiences will know of celebrities via the media is important to consider when watching a direct cinema documentary. This is because the documentary will either validate the views the audience already hold or challenge them, giving them a new outlook on someone they thought they understood.

In the late 1960s, audiences were given an example of how the music documentary could be expanded to illicit new responses to artists and to provide an even deeper level of intimacy between the viewer and the subject. D.A. Pennebaker's *Don't Look Back* is a music documentary which closely follows and documents Bob Dylan's tour of Britain in 1965 and goes behind the scenes, not just at rehearsals but at gatherings so the audience can see his off-stage persona and how it differs from his on-stage persona. Pennebaker did not consider himself a fan of Dylan but explains that his decision to make this film was to create something new. He states, 'the idea of going with a musician on a tour and being able to photograph him – both when he performed and when he didn't perform – that seemed to be an interesting idea.'

(Pennebaker, cited by Bowcock, 2016) It was this ‘interesting idea’ that would influence the music documentary genre for years to come. Pennebaker’s film is shot in the direct cinema style with only one or two handheld cameras being used at any time. This style of filmmaking is heavily pivotal in the film being able to convey its level of access to Bob Dylan, backed up by Fear who claims, ‘you are there in the backrooms as Albert Grossman negotiates deals and in the middle of entourage banter. You are there next to Dylan, getting impatient with reporters, [...] and almost catching up to that thin, mercurial sound he was chasing.’ (2019) Whilst music documentaries that proceed *Don’t Look Back* focus on the performances, Pennebaker chooses to focus on what it was like to accompany Dylan on tour in 1960s Britain. Bachor claims this was a conscious choice after he began filming. ‘Initially thinking that his film would be a concert movie, Pennebaker quickly scraped that idea after spending a few days with Dylan in London. Realising the extent of his access, he decided to make the movie more observational and focus on Dylan’s candid moments.’ (2016) This decision, whilst unplanned, was an important shift away from the traditional concert films and allowed these types of films to change the preconceived perception of artists to the viewer. Bowcock states that the move expanded the codes of films that came before. ‘It’s fly-on-the-wall style flew in the face of contemporary cinematic convention, and its reputation and influence has steadily grown since its release in 1967.’ (2016) It is clear to see the effect this style of filmmaking has had on subsequent releases such as *Gimme Shelter*. *Don’t Look Back* was also shot in black and white for monetary reasons, despite colour picture becoming the norm, - an example being *Jazz on a Summer’s Day*

which was discussed earlier.

The film begins with one of the first ever music videos and features the song *Subterranean Homesick Blues* (Dylan, 1965). It is very basic in form and features Dylan, see figure 4, holding up cue cards for lyrics in his song, shuffling through them as the word is sung on a recording. A lot of the cards feature words that are deliberately misspelled or inaccurate, for example, during the lyric ‘11-dollar bills’, Dylan holds up a card with the number ‘20’ on it. The music video is clearly very human and raw, only one take was needed in the film and the audience can see

Dylan keeping up with the lyrics to begin with but as the song wears on and speeds up, he starts to lag behind. Compared to music videos that are released today, this is a far cry from those. Dylan's *Subterranean Homesick Blues* video is not clean, perfect, nor is it driven by any narrative. This is one of the many aspects of Pennebaker's documentary that has had a clear influence on those films in this genre that follow it.

Don't Look Back shows the musical subject grow over time, Dylan has a narrative-driven character arc between the beginning and the conclusion of the film. The film begins with Dylan being hounded by euphoric fans, similar to the way The Beatles were greeted in Britain at the height of Beatlemania. The viewer is shown Dylan to appear to be nervous by the reception he receives and when asked by a reporter as to why he thinks he is garnering a lot of attention, Dylan simply replies "I don't know." This demonstrates the kind of person Dylan is at the beginning of the film, allowing for a positive audience perception of the artist. Dylan seems welcome to the heavy media scrutiny at first, but as he grows in confidence, his patience seems to wain and the audience are shown his true self as Bowcock states:

> Arriving in England, Dylan is all politeness and charm in the face of a media circus intent on turning him into an easy-to-understand cardboard cut-out. But as the chaotic tour wears on, he becomes increasingly abrasive and angry, mercilessly mocking a backstage interloper and demeaning a reporter from Time magazine. (2016)

Pennebaker's intimate access allows the audience to see Dylan evolve into his apparent true self in *Don't Look Back* and this directly affects the way viewers perceive him. Looking back at how previous concert films and music documentaries show performers in a very narrow light, simply showing them on-stage performing, this is a significant leap for the music documentary genre and one aspect that remained in subsequent entries into the genre. Dylan is shown in *Don't Look Back* to have many disputes with a variety of people – Pennebaker capturing them all in their

entirety. A key instance of this is Dylan arguing with a science student, the reason for the argument is unclear, but the debate becomes heated and, in turn, Dylan becomes hostile. He asks the science student: “Why would I want to get to know you? What would I gain?” This exchange is vital in altering the audience’s perception of Dylan. Ebert claims:

> Those who consider Dylan a lone figure standing up against the phonies will discover [...] they have lost their hero. [...] He is immature, petty, vindictive, lacking a sense of humour, overly impressed with his own importance and not very bright. (1968)

This negative view of Dylan demonstrates the power of filming in a direct cinema style, it is powerful enough to change Ebert’s view on Bob Dylan. Pennebaker has very little influence over the capturing of these moments and simply allows Dylan to act in a natural fashion without realising the cameras are filming constantly. This filmmaking style can be manufactured to portray the subject in a positive light, but only as long as the subject can keep the facade going – something Dylan might be perceived as struggling to maintain in *Don’t Look Back*. The verbal altercations not only occur with journalists or students, but also with members of the public. Such an example is when Dylan and his entourage receives a noise complaint in a hotel regarding his room and instead of agreeing to quieten the noise, Dylan and his manager verbally abuse the hotel manager – someone who appears to ask in a reasonable and polite manner. Ouellette believes this could be seen as an awakening for his fans who believe that Dylan is above this kind of behaviour. ‘Viewers see a man in the final throes of his original incarnation, and Pennebaker catches him out in a raw and revealing succession of scenes away from the limelight, often lashing out verbally against admirers, colleagues, and London’s old-school journalists.’ (2016) It is the fact that Dylan is willing to lash out against even his admirers which tells the audience the most about his true character. This is especially evident when he kicks a supporting musician out from his group of artists on tour for throwing a glass out of the window of a hotel – the very hotel Dylan himself verbally abuses the managerial staff at.

When touching on the subject of Dylan's true character, it is important to note that his true self is a mystery that has fascinated and intrigued fans and academics alike. Fleming comments on his changing constructs stating, 'If you're going to understand Dylan, you need to recognize that everything is mutable in his world, and often inverted.' (2012) This is evidenced in both his musical style which has evolved over the years, notably when he made the switch to playing the electric guitar in the mid-1960s (angering the folk fanbase he had amassed in the process) and also when Dylan began recording gospel music in the follow decade of the 1970s. This chameleon-like quality Dylan possesses could have previously been a factor in him wanting to go in a different artistic direction, but Andrews claims the reasons were different: 'With his voice now diminished into an almost-constant rasp or a sneering snarl, Dylan could easily sound like a caricature of himself. Instead, he's turned it into an expressive tool.' (2018) This may be interpreted as Dylan needing to reinvent himself due to his age but it is evident he has used as a tool to once again flip audience's preconceived notions of the artists into something people possibly were not expecting. It is quite possible that no one, besides his close family, have experienced or witnessed the 'real' Bob Dylan, that name being a pseudonym, as Dylan was born Robert Allen Zimmerman. Fleming confirms the façade by stating 'Dylan had a normal background, pretty humdrum, even, but no interest in leading any kind of a normal life, and so he invented a back story that would make a profligate liar like Huck Finn blanch.' (2012) This raises questions regarding the legitimacy of films such as *Don't Look Back* which were marketed to audiences as an intimate, behind the scenes look at Dylan, but upon further investigation it is perfectly feasible that everything seen on screen could well be a well-executed act to cultivate a fake persona.

While previous entries into the music documentary genre, such as Concert Magic, *Jazz on a Summer's Day* and *T.A.M.I. Show*, established the major codes and conventions, *Don't Look Back* expanded these codes, and pushed the genre beyond pre-established boundaries. This was achieved by being a music documentary that did not solely focus on the music itself (Dylan is only seen performing on stage for

mere minutes in the film's running time) but instead focusing heavily on the artist. Pennebaker used a non-invasive filming technique to expose the true Dylan, behind the onstage persona. Santoro highlights the extra sides of Dylan that Pennebaker shows the audience by stating:

> During the movie, Dylan reveals side after side: the manipulative creep; the defensive master of the counter lunge; the insular and sometimes inarticulate star; the smartass provocateur; the hyperintense performer; the chain-smoking, coffee-drinking, spasmic-twitching composer sitting endlessly at typewriters and pianos. (2001, p.21)

It is these extra sides that makes for interesting analysis of Dylan himself, as it allows the viewer to ponder what is an act and what is not. It is entirely feasible that while the camera is focusing on Dylan off-stage, the codes of direct cinema tell the audience that this must be the subject in their most true and natural form, the entire performance (both on and off stage) is a well curated act. Going back to the work of Goffman regarding the presentation of self, he states:

> Knowing that the individual is likely to present himself in a light that is favourable to him, the others may divide what they witness into two parts: a part that is relatively easy for the individual to manipulate at will, being chiefly his verbal assertions, and a part in regard to which he seems to have little concern or control, being chiefly derived from the expressions he gives off. The others may then use what are considered to be the ungovernable aspects of his expressive behaviour as a check upon the validity of what is conveyed by the governable aspects. (1956, p.18)

Knowing that Dylan is aware of the cameras when he is off-stage and acting 'naturally', it would be to the artist's benefit to keep the act up as to convince the audience that he is what they think he is. As Goffman states above, this will lead the

onlooker to view these scenes in two minds, one optimistic and the other pessimistic; waiting for the subject to slip up and reveal his true self. Pennebaker breaks down the associations that were previously tied to Bob Dylan in his film and allows the viewer to question their presumptions of the artist. His music certainly touched millions and Dylan is a gifted songwriter but *Don't Look Back* highlights that this does not make him an admirable man – a statement that is left to the audience to decide if they side with upon watching the film. Pennebaker created a music documentary that changed audience perceptions of its subject and influenced documentaries to come.

The second film that will be discussed in this chapter is *Gimme Shelter* and follows The Rolling Stones as they tour the United States in 1969 at the height of the counterculture movement. Filmed in the direct cinema style, similar to *Don't Look Back*, the new wave of technology that came through allowed the Maysles' brothers to capture the events surrounding The Rolling Stones' tour in an honest and transparent manner which was especially vital considering how the tour culminated in the disastrous Altamont Free Concert that left one man dead and others injured. As is common knowledge today, the Altamont Free Concert was doomed from the beginning and it is clear that the event was not thought out properly – as shown in *Gimme Shelter*. Ouellette notes this by stating, 'All the last-minute manoeuvring left its mark: a hastily-constructed low stage and little in the way of food, water, toilet facilities, or medical help.' (2016, p.34) If viewers have this knowledge before watching this film, it creates an uneasy feeling as the outcome is known. Before delving deeper into the film, it is important to establish the counterculture and free love movement in order to gain context on the mood of America at the time. The counterculture movement of the 1960s was a phenomenon that had loud anti-establishment tones and sought to promote protests for societal issues such as nuclear weapons, civil rights, and feminism. In regard to the counterculture of the 1960s, the New York Times stated, 'The 60's spawned a new morality-based politics that emphasized the individual's responsibility to speak out against injustice and corruption.' (1994) The era promoted the idea that it was the right thing to do to speak out against matters that were morally wrong and ensure that such issues were not swept under the rug. This turn of events allowed *Gimme Shelter* to pave the way for a new kind of music documentary, similar to the wave of true crime

documentaries that are seen today. Wright also believes this by stating, ‘the undercurrent of negativity associated with Altamont and Hunter’s murder causes *Gimme Shelter* to come to function like a murder mystery – more than just a concert film.’ (2013, p.71) As mentioned at the start of the chapter, this highlights one of the benefits of the direct cinema style of filmmaking as it does not interfere with the events or subjects but allows the narrative to play out organically. It is highly unlikely that the Maysles brothers believed that their film could be used in such a way, but it demonstrates the flexibility of the genre. *Gimme Shelter* had a significant cultural effect and shaped the way music documentaries are approached by directors and filmed to this day. Cohen agrees with this sentiment by stating: ‘I do not mean to overstate the case for the Maysles’ film as a catalyst for establishing rock music as the ubiquitous social phenomenon and massive industry it would become in the 1970s.’ (2012, p.55) In light of this acclaim, it is important to entertain the possibility of whether *Gimme Shelter* would have been as culturally significant if the concert would have played out smoothly and had been organised in a safer, well thought out manner. In support of this statement, Voguls claims:

> Others expressed concern about ethics, hypocrisy, and disclosure. Variety’s reviewer spoke for a widespread point of view in regarding the film’s inclusion of the stabbing-death scene as unethical: “Without the climatic bloody-letting the Maysles would have had little or nothing to peg a documentary.” (2005, p.96)

It would be impossible to speculate on the success of *Gimme Shelter* had the film not captured the murder of Meredith Hunter on camera, and the chaos that preceded it, but it would be a fair statement to make that the film would have been less memorable. This raises an ethical dilemma as to whether it is the right thing to do for the filmmakers to profit off footage of a concertgoer being murdered on camera.

The Maysles’ band of camera operators played a key part in translating to film both the atmosphere and the spirit of those in attendance at the Altamont Free Concert. It

is evident from the first few shots of the concertgoers arriving to Altamont that there is a sense of unease in the crowd. This is achieved by the cinematography being used in such a way to portray the audience tightly packed in, unable to move freely and the Hells Angels patrolling the stage and the crowd to 'keep order'. Wright remarks about the camerawork, stating, '*Gimme Shelter* features few shots that include anything other than crowds in tight frames: a mise-en-scene overloaded with people in both the foregrounds and the backgrounds.' (2013, p.77) As figure 5 demonstrates, the Maysles do an effective job in showing the viewer the extent of the crowds, how close they are packed together and how close they are to the performers on stage. Towards the left of the photo, a member of the Hells Angels stands guard against the droves of people attempting to get closer and using any means necessary to keep the performers safe. Figure 5 is a harrowing scene by today's standards and is a stark comparison to figure 6, which shows Example performing at a similarly crowded concert. Modern concerts have rigorous safety procedures in place ensuring that the crowd do not have a chance to get too close to the stage (safety barriers are also in place so the crowds cannot climb over and cause trouble), professionally trained security guards are used in an attempt to keep the peace and, while the audience is closely packed together, there is little chance of anyone being crushed or injured. Whilst the tragic events that took place at the Altamont Free Concert were horrific to watch and be a part of, a positive of the Maysles' music documentary is the lessons it gave future performers and organisers to identify flaws in an effort to avoid such an occurrence happening again. The claustrophobic cinematography that Wright discusses earlier has several uses: the first being the ability to demonstrate visually the extent of the disorganisation that clearly occurred in the planning (or lack thereof) for the concert and, secondly, *Gimme Shelter* can be viewed as a post-mortem that people can look back upon to analyse. The Altamont Free Concert not only contributed to the end of the 1960s counterculture movement but it also, as Brody suggests, brought about the end of concerts such as these. 'What died at Altamont was the notion of spontaneity, of the sense that things could happen on their own and that benevolent spirits would prevail. What ended was the idea of the unproduced.' (2015) The Altamont Free Concert was a direct response to the Woodstock Festival in New York and The Rolling Stone's desire to recreate a legendary concert and silence the journalists claiming, as suggested by Chiu, that 'the band was previously criticized over

charging high ticket prices for their U.S. tour.' (2019) Such hastiness worked directly against both the band and the organisers.

While the Altamont Free Concert could be interpreted as the end of the counterculture movement in America, it should be noted that there was a combination of events that led to the movement's downfall. One of the first factors is the deterioration of Haight-Ashbury, the birthplace of the hippie counterculture movement, due to styles of lives led by said hippies. Harris comments on the condition of Haight-Ashbury claiming, 'the danger grew alarmingly of rats, food poisoning, hepatitis, pulmonary tuberculosis, and of meningitis caused by overcrowded housing.' (1967) This damning statement highlights how unsustainable the hippie way of living was and specifically the living conditions in Haight-Ashbury and could have possibly damaged the reputation of those who engaged in the movement. The gruesome Manson Murders were also a contributing factor to the end of the counterculture movement and tarnished the perception of free love. Charles Manson's organisation of the murders of Hollywood elites such as Sharon Tate laid bare how one man was able to expose the flaws in the counterculture movement. Romano speaks of Manson's ethos by arguing 'he wasn't a product of '60s counterculture — he was a master manipulator of it, one who used the "free love" ethos of the time to prey on a cadre of troubled, abused young women.' (2019) This again points to the unsustainability of the movement and the naivety of some of those who identified with the counterculture and how they could be brainwashed to commit heinous crimes. A final example of a factor that contributed to the death knell of the counterculture free love movement is the Attica Prison Riots which took place between the 9th and 13th September 1971 and resulted in the deaths of 43 people; including inmates and prison guards. What begun as prisoners petitioning for basic rights such as the ability to shower and better living conditions turned into a brutal conflict between the establishment and prisoners. Whilst this conflict began on the pretence of lobbying for better living conditions, the attitudes turned ugly. Gopnik argues that race was an issue behind the events, 'In social terms, what separated the guards from the prisoners was simply skin colour and a gun.' (2016) The Attica Prison Riots exposed the free love counterculture movement as an unattainable utopian way of living that was evidently not feasible to uphold and abide by. The

establishment were always to be in control and, as seen with these riots, were able to bend the truth to paint themselves in a positive light. This may have contributed to the increasing levels of cynicism seen in both American society and its cinema as the country entered the 1970s. It becomes clearer that the Altamont Free Concert wasn't simply a singular catalytic outlier but a combination of different events that led to a boiling point. Pruitt agrees with this sentiment by arguing, 'When combined with other acts of violence, including the gruesome Manson Murders of 1969, […] Altamont brought the free-wheeling attitudes of the "love generation" crashing down into a more sordid reality.' (2019) This explains the open attitude required when investigating the end of the counterculture movement in America to acknowledge that there was no singular explanation for its conclusion.

Building upon the idea of using the footage acquired by the Maysles from Altamont as a way to look back and assess the nature of what happened, another vital aspect of *Gimme Shelter* is the footage of The Rolling Stones watching the footage back in the editing room. The band members had not seen the extent of what had happened in the scuffle that occurred during their song *Under My Thumb* (1966) between the Hells Angels and Meredith Hunter. Brody believes this sequence brings a new layer to the events that happened at the concert, bringing it from simply concert footage to something with more meaning. 'The editing-room sequences render the concert footage archival, making it look like what it is—in effect, found footage of a historical event.' (2015) This is especially important during an age long before smartphones and portable video-cameras – if such an event occurred in modern-day, it is almost certain that there would be several videos available and people would have a much clearer idea of what happened. The editing room scenes in *Gimme Shelter* also provide similarities between the issues of on-stage and off-stage personas that were discussed in the analysis of *Don't Look Back*. Voguls believes the audience are viewing a different side to Jagger in the editing room by claiming, 'When in *Gimme Shelter* members of the Rolling Stones watch footage of the Altamont murder with grim faces – the artists/celebrities even appear vulnerable, quite the opposite of their usual polished presentations of self and art'. (2005, p.7) This scene demonstrates the power of direct cinema in breaking down the subjects it focuses on, through the

unobtrusive nature of the equipment used to film and the filmmaker allowing the scene to play out naturally.

Looking back on *Gimme Shelter* it is clear that it was influential on the music documentary genre and is a pivotal next step in the evolution of these films. What began as the Maysles wanting to document the process behind organising The Rolling Stones' latest concert and the band's desire to create a new Woodstock festival, became something completely unexpected and provides a haunting watch. The film unintentionally captures the beginning of the end of the free-love counterculture movement which was shown to be a completely unsustainable way of thinking and when people are crammed together in such a disorganised manner, things turned ugly. Wright claims, '*Gimme Shelter* exposed this movement's lack of unity and purpose at the close of the 1960s.' (2013, p.78) The lack of unity that Wright discusses is important to look at under the circumstances of the concert at Altamont. It is clear that if the event were organised properly then there could have been less violence and better sense of togetherness amongst the concertgoers. The Maysles brothers and their team of camera men embraced the chaos and, in combination with the new technologies that allowed direct cinema to thrive, created the perfect storm. Ouellette believes the many camera operators at the concert were vital to capturing everything in its entirety. 'All interweaved with the brewing trouble, the Maysles brothers and the camera people they employed gathered together many shots of the audience 'freak scene'.' (2016, p.34) These cameramen being so 'interweaved' with the crowd was vital to establish the true version of events and also became evidence in the ensuing court case that followed. Voguls disagrees with the sentiment that the 'true' version of events was captured by claiming, 'The film provides one possible way of seeing, not the only way of seeing.' (2005, p.83) This is an important debate to be had regarding the ability of direct cinema as a whole to capture an event objectively truthfully. Unless there were thousands of cameras present, it would be impossible to film and create an unbiased version of events. The Maysles had to work with the resources available at their disposal. *Gimme Shelter* was able to document the current state of American society as well as being a 'music documentary'. Through the images caught by the Maysles' photographers, the image of free-love and counterculture was destroyed. Crowd members scuffling with each

other, easily agitated, whilst being policed brutally by the faux police of the Hells Angels ushered in a new era of a more cynical America in the 1970s, as backed up by Voguls:

> *Gimme Shelter* is an important historical artifact, spotlighting a particular and notorious moment in time. Altamont marked for many the event at which the hopefulness of both Woodstock dissolved, replaced by drug-laden cynicism and frequent senseless violence. (2005, p,75)

In *Gimme Shelter*, the musical performance itself is not important. What was important to the Maysles to capture was the commentary on American society that the audience can see when viewing this film. Beyond this picture, the direct cinema musical documentary was able to put music aside and focus on other aspects of the industry and the wider world.

Reflecting on direct cinema, as studied in this chapter, there are points to be made on both ends of the spectrum as to whether the genre achieves its goal of objectively presenting the truth. When the filmmakers focus on a particular subject, despite their best intentions, the performance the subject gives cannot be truly objective because they are aware of the presence of a camera filming their every move. Beattie also believes that the subject's performance is affected stating, 'truth in these terms hinges on the question of behaviour modification, specifically, the degree to which behaviour is altered in the presence of the camera.' (2004, p.84) In light of this, the optimal way to describe direct cinema in its approach to uncovering the truth is that it is the best mode currently available, short of hiding the cameras and filming the subject without their knowledge or consent. The ways in which the genre goes about uncovering the truth has also come under criticism, Voguls recognises both sides of this argument and states:

> At its best, direct cinema illuminated hypocrisy, revealed personality strengths and character blemishes, or uncovered submerged truths. At its worst, it played gotcha with a camera, waiting for the moments when people let their guards down. (2005, p.14)

Both arguments raise valid points, both for and against the journalistic style of direct cinema, and it casts more doubt on the authenticity of the behaviour of the subject as they will always have their guard up to avoid being ‘caught out’; it is vital for these celebrity subjects to maintain a positive image.

Despite these shortcomings on the subject of objective truthfulness, direct cinema has had a positive effect on both the music documentary and the documentary as a whole. This style of filmmaking has proved popular, with direct cinema films still being released in the present day, such as *Free Solo* (Chin and Vasarhelyi, 2018) and *Sofia’s Last Ambulance* (Metev, 2012). The beginnings of direct cinema were helped along by the advances in technology allowing filmmakers to use smaller cameras that were less intrusive, and this trend still exists today. In 2020, smartphones have the ability to shoot high-resolution (up to 8K in some cases) which allow almost anyone to be able to make their own direct cinema style documentaries. This technology is only getting cheaper and more accessible to budding filmmakers and requires very little knowledge of filmmaking to operate. Direct cinema also gave filmmakers new way to profile celebrities that was more intimate and personal. The small cameras and a hands-off approach from the directors brought out raw emotion from the celebrity subjects of the two films analysed in this chapter, normalising them to the public. Bob Dylan and Mick Jagger are names that carry a mysterious air about them, and these films allowed audiences to see new sides to them. Dylan came across as a musical genius in *Don’t Look Back* but also as a man who was aware, he was a genius. Music fans could perceive Jagger as a hugely talented performer on stage, but when the cameras filmed him off stage, he was able to come across relatively normal; especially during the editing room sequence in *Gimme Shelter*. The genre of direct cinema music documentaries is an important faucet to this area of film. Both the Maysles brothers and D.A. Pennebaker proved through

Gimme Shelter and *Don't Look Back* respectively that the music documentary could focus on other issues besides music. Even if the subject of a film is a musician, the film does not have to solely focus on that. Direct cinema demonstrates that musicians have the ability to cross boundaries and venture into other areas of societal critique. The backdrop of the counterculture movement of the 1960s is the perfect accompaniment to these two films, as they perfectly showcase the fragility of the movement and the transition in mood of the world as it entered the 1970s.

Chapter 3: Music and the Mock-Documentary

The music mock-documentary genre is an interesting layered entity within the film and television world. It is interesting because it utilises fictional events and captures them using the traditional documentary style to create a contradiction of both non-fiction and fiction work. This chapter will look to establish what the mock-documentary genre achieves and how it eventually forms a cohesive relationship with the music documentary. The three films that are intrinsic to a discussion on the music mock-documentary are *A Hard Day's Night* (Lester, 1964), *All You Need Is Cash* (Idle and Weis, 1978) and *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* (Taccone and Schaffer, 2016). The first film is important because it is one of the first music mock-documentary films made, using The Beatles as its cast but following them in an alternate fictional reality. The second film is essential to the discussion as *All You Need Is Cash* directly parodies The Beatles in a comedic fashion; a film resembling works by The Monty Python; the link created through Eric Idle who stars in one of the main roles. The third film is just as key as it brings what has already been established in the mock-documentary genre into the present day (2010s), making it important to analyse as a film to understand which conventions are still in use to this day and how technology has evolved such films. This discussion about the mock-documentary and its relationship to the music documentary will also investigate whether the genre is more complex than just to simply parody the documentary genre, as it may appear so at first glance. This chapter will seek to understand if the mock-documentary is more of a commentary on the era the film is either released in or set in and the in-depth levels it parodies, satirises, and mocks. This chapter will also scrutinise the connections between the prominent figures, be them filmmakers, comedic performers and writers or musical artists, behind both the films themselves and the schools of comedy of which they descend from and how these intertwine and occasionally cross trans-Atlantic boundaries between the US and UK schools of comedy.

Mock-documentary is a direct response to the documentary, a possible reason for this is that, according to Roscoe and Hight, 'Documentary holds a privileged position within society, a position maintained by documentary's claim that it can present the

most accurate and truthful portrayal of the socio-historical world. (2001, p.6)

Documentaries enlighten the viewer on a wide manner of subjects and present the facts truthfully. It is this stringent code that makes the mock-documentary both fascinating to analyse and humorous in certain cases. The mock-documentary uses all the codes of documentary, the only significant departure is the narrative – the subject/society/culture it seeks to parody. When it comes to dealing with the subject of music within the mock-documentary, the mythical nature of such subjects leaves much open to interpretation. In relation to the mystery surrounding artists in music documentaries, Roessner states:

> Because of their implicitly mythic narrative structure, such earnest documentaries have spawned a subgenre of parodies. Over the past decade, films lampooning the style and narrative tropes of the documentary form in general have received an increasing amount of scholarly attention. (2013, p.159)

As will be discussed at a later point in this chapter, this can be seen in *This is Spinal Tap* (Reiner, 1984) which uses fictional band members to parody the lifestyles and pretentions of musicians, such as The Rolling Stones and their behaviour in *Gimme Shelter* seen in the previous chapter.

Before moving onto the case studies regarding the three music mock-documentaries that were listed at the start of this chapter, it is important to define the different types of mock-documentary, how they differ from one another and the categories that the films analysed in this chapter fall into. According to Roscoe and Hight, there are three degrees of mock-documentary. The first is ‘parody’ which aims ‘to parody, and implicitly reinforce an aspect of popular culture […] using the benevolent or innocent […] documentary aesthetics.’ The second degree is ‘critique’ which uses ‘the documentary form to engage in a parody or satire of an aspect of popular culture’. The third and final degree is ‘deconstruction’ which seeks ‘to critique an aspect of popular culture’ and ‘examine, subvert and deconstruct its relationship with

documentary codes and conventions.' (2001, p.73) Whilst *A Hard Day's Night* does fall into the category of 'mock-documentary' and is one of the earliest musical entries into this genre, it does not fall into the degree of 'parody' and instead comes under the second degree of 'critique' due to the areas within the film that critique society using The Beatles as its protagonists. The subsequent two films, *All You Need Is Cash* and *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping*, fall into the first category of 'parody' – the former being a direct parody of The Beatles and the latter playing on the behaviour of modern music artists in the 2010s, parodying the pretentious views and behaviours displayed by bands/artists of the times.

In order to fully understand the British output in the mock-documentary genre (and in particular the two British entries analysed subsequently in this chapter), it is important to look deeper into the roots of such comedy, its various schools and how it originated from the satire boom of the 1960s. It becomes important to delve deeper to appreciate the psyche of those that wrote such comedy and the feelings they harboured towards the world and how this then reflected the mood of the nation it was creating satire for. The satire boom in the UK existed between the years of 1960 and 1963 and was dominated by topical sketch shows such as *That Was the Week That Was* (1962) (abbreviated to TW3), presented by David Frost, which sought to mock the current government, a first for the time despite this type of comedy and satire being extremely prevalent to audiences in the modern day with shows such as *Spitting Image* (1984) and *Have I Got News For You* (1990). It is the previously mentioned ability to mock the current government as well as all prominent political figures that heightened the appeal of such comedy. Curran claims that the satire on offer during the early 1960s attracted a particular audience, claiming, 'The broad appeal of this kind of satire – particularly amongst younger fans – was its devotion to taking apart the so-called "establishment". (2014, p.88) It is this younger demographic of fans that were incredibly important to both the popularity of the show and to have them engaged with the current state of politics. These younger people in the United Kingdom may have felt disengaged with the British political system and also with the opposition at the time, thus the satire boom provided genuine opposition to the sitting Conservative government and pointed out the shortcomings and absurd behaviour of high-ranking politicians. This brand-new style of comedy

was incredibly popular across the United Kingdom and this was reflected in the viewing numbers who tuned in in their droves to watch David Frost and company rail against the establishment. According to British Classic Comedy, the show garnered ‘ratings of 3.5 million reaching 10 million viewers by the end of its first season.’ (2017) The popularity of *That Was the Week That Was* and other political satire shows is important to note as with this huge following came a stiff opposition from the establishment that it was so fervent on mocking. The reaction to TW3 was mixed depending on the political views held by the reactionary or the progressive; similar reactions can be seen in modern day society, one that is increasingly divided, with both sides of the political spectrum having polarising views. Miller also believes that the reaction was mixed by claiming ‘Individuals identifying with those institutions and codes were angered by what they perceived as unwarranted attacks; individuals looking for a change in the status quo enjoyed the ridicule.’ (2000, p.121) This confirms that those who harboured right-wing conservative views did not take to this style of comedy as well as those who harboured left-wing liberal views who saw the work of TW3 as active opposition to government to a massive audience every week.

Having made its mark in the United Kingdom throughout the 2 seasons it was on the air for, *That Was the Week That Was* came to an abrupt halt and with it the satire boom of the 1960s. It became evident that the networks that broadcast such shows would not tolerate this new brand of harsh satirical comedy. Miller explains the cancellation of TW3 by stating ‘The actions taken by the BBC and NBC in response to the complaints of political partisans indicate the way in which both networks would allow criticism of organised ideologies only to a point.’ (2000, p.122) The ‘organised ideologies’ that Miller speaks of were the mainstream political beliefs of the UK at the time, the satire boom was created by the progressive and mostly viewed by a progressive audience. The establishment exerted its power and, through the cancellation of TW3, heightened hostility to the older generation who largely made up the establishment. It is this attitude that may go some way to explaining the generation gap that appeared in the 1960s and was used as a narrative device in *A Hard Day’s Night*. The generation gap being a feature of the narrative in this film explains the influence of the satire boom on mock-documentaries, particularly the

ones explored in this chapter and why such films reflected the mood of British society and its contempt towards the powers that be.

Having established the satire boom of the 1960s and its attitudes towards taking on the establishment through comedy, the background behind such writing and performance should be considered in a discussion regarding the 'UK school of comedy'. By reflecting on the UK school of comedy, it provides the ability to determine the influences that the filmmakers in this chapter followed and how the significant members of this school are all intricately linked. There is clearly a link between the founders of the satire boom and those that were heavily influential in the mock-documentary films being discussed in this chapter. As satire and mockery thrived in comedy, it did so in liaison with those it strived to mock. Curran recognises this link between the satirists and their targets. He claims:

> There is an explicit connection between the satirists and the nascent "swinging sixties" trope in London, whereby divergent aspects of the entertainment business coalesced with comedy, literature and politics to (in a sense) produce a sequestered clique of their own. (2014, p.89)

This is evidenced directly though The Beatles' close relationship with members of the Monty Python troop and also with the director of their film *A Hard Day's Night*, Richard Lester. The group took enthusiastically to themselves becoming a punchline to a joke with favours being extended both ways. George Harrison appears as himself in Eric Idle's *All You Need Is Cash* whilst also being one of the biggest financial donors involved with getting *Monty Python's Life of Brian* (Jones, 1979) filmed and released. The members of the UK school of comedy realised that by working closely with those they sought to mock that it would produce a better end-product. However, the belief that these satirists and comedic writers were the 'little guy' taking on the establishment could have been perceived as contradictory. These comedians and their wealthy acquaintances in the entertainment industry exerted a

vast amount of influence and could be considered, themselves, a part of the establishment.

As mentioned previously, the significant players in the films analysed in this chapter can all be linked together and back to the satire boom of the 1960s. One of the most influential figures is the satirist Peter Cook whose stage show *Beyond the Fringe* (1960) could be seen as the precursor to *That Was the Week That Was*. Cook also played a huge part in funding the influential satire magazine Private Eye, demonstrating his links to the members of the UK school of comedy. Curran demonstrates Cook's links to the satire boom and the subsequent films and television shows that were spawned by asserting, 'Cook [...] focused other satirical/absurdist energies into his role as owner of and writer for Private Eye, with his influence extending, most famously, into the more wilfully surreal and zany (and less satirical) late 60s comedy of the Monty Python team.' (2014, p.95) His connections to Monty Python barely scratches the surface on the vast array of links to the rest of the UK school of comedy. Cook shared links with the Monty Python troop, who's member Eric Idle created *All You Need Is Cash* alongside Gary Weis and therefore worked closely with The Beatles, who were directed by Richard Lester for the film *A Hard Day's Night*. Reiter notes the influence of Richard Lester on the UK school of comedy by claiming, 'His work with Sellers and Milligan is often considered to be the direct precursor to Monty Python's television series Monty Python's Flying Circus in the 1960's.' (2008, p.40) The links are tied together with John Cleese of Monty Python and the aforementioned Peter Cook having served as writers for *That Was the Week That Was*. The closely-knit nature of the members of the satire boom clearly transferred into the mock-documentary with a small number of people responsible for a vast amount of the output of films and television entries into the genre. There are examples of the musical world and the satirical world crossing over to combine different modes of comedy into one. At the start of every episode of *That Was the Week That Was*, the theme song was sung by Millicent Martin and combined pre-set lyrics with lyrics that changed weekly to reflect the week's current affairs and the topics of discussion on that particular episode. This demonstrates, from the start of the satire boom, that music and satirical comedy had

room to work closely together and the combination of both proved to be a powerful outlet for comedy.

The work of Monty Python clearly had a big influence on the film *All You Need Is Cash*, which will be analysed later in this chapter, as Eric Idle (a member of the Monty Python) starred, directed and wrote the mock-documentary which parodied The Beatles. The writing that appears in Monty Python's work leans into the absurdist and black sub-sections of comedy that relied more on fictional settings and sketches rather than satirising reality and politics. Neale and Krutnik believe that Monty Python veered away from the satire seen in shows previously discussed such as *That Was the Week That Was* by claiming:

> The comedy in the program largely avoided topical satire that named specific names and/or issues; instead, it focused on institutions of authority to both national cultures – the church, the military/police, the legal system, government bureaucracies, and so on. (Neale and Krutnik, cited by Miller, 2001, p.131)

Making the comedic choice to be vague with the targets of its punchlines could show that the writers of Monty Python saw the fate of the cancelled TW3 and decided for the sake of longevity that it was best to leave the heavy-handed specific attacks at the establishment to others. As Neale and Krutnik state, the comedy troop found a way to mock the foundations of society which provides a wide array of material. It could also have allowed a bigger audience of people who enjoyed the show in a way that TW3 was unable to achieve. It becomes interesting to link the philosophy behind the comedy of Monty Python with Idle's work on *All You Need Is Cash* which dramatically veers away from vague generalised comedy and specifically mocks The Beatles and almost every aspect of their careers with unerring accuracy. A possible reason for Idle and Weis deciding to go all in with their parody of The Beatles is that it was done in good faith with the blessing of The Beatles themselves. It could also be taken as a compliment from the group's perspective that their musical history and personal lives had become so iconic that they bordered on artistic cliché and thus

deserved a mock-documentary dedicated entirely to them to demonstrate how absurd their lives had become.

A Hard Day's Night starred The Beatles at the peak of Beatlemania in Britain and the world. It is an important film to focus on as, while it could fall under the umbrella of the musical comedy genre, it does feature documentary codes and conventions. The plot is entirely fictional and scripted meaning *A Hard Day's Night* crosses into the mock-documentary genre at some points and would go on to inspire countless other entries into the genre, such as *All You Need Is Cash*, and *This Is Spinal Tap*. The film broke new ground by featuring the real band members as the main characters instead of caricatures, seen in the two films mentioned in the paragraph above. The film's narrative follows The Beatles in a 36 hour period of their lives on the road, showing exaggerated versions of events that may or may not have happened; such as the band being chased by excited fans, several of the members going missing before performing, and the antics of Paul McCartney's fictional Grandad, who has an entire subplot to himself. This mock-documentary was unique for the times in that the entire film was scripted and steered away from conventional documentary filming techniques such as those seen in the previous chapter on direct cinema and is filmed in the standard cinematic multi-camera style. Roger Ebert states, '*A Hard Day's Night* was a problematic entry in a disreputable form, the rock 'n' roll musical. [...] The movie could not be dismissed: It was so joyous and original that even the early reviews acknowledged it as something special.' (1996) Ebert backs up the argument that *A Hard Day's Night* paved new paths for the genre and allowed it to divert into new and interesting directions, "the movie could not be dismissed" to the point that films were released in the following decades that were directly influenced by Lester's work, an example being the recent musical comedy *Tenacious D in the Pick of Destiny* (Lynch, 2006).

Director Richard Lester evidently sought to reflect the times in which *A Hard Day's Night* is set in by heavily leaning into the hysteria of Beatlemania and socially demonstrating the United Kingdom during the mid-1960s. Despite the film being fictional and almost entirely scripted, editor John Jympson made the choice to splice

real footage of The Beatles, shot in the direct cinema style discussed in the previous chapter, being hounded by delirious fans to demonstrate the huge following the music group had garnered. Wallace comments on the choice to reflect the, at the time, present in the film by stating, '*A Hard Day's Night* was made in the 'now' of Beatlemania, and in this sense shares the immediacy of direct cinema's 'present-tense' engagement with its subject: the film is about Beatlemania as much as it is about The Beatles.' (2018, p.45) This 'immediacy' is what makes the film a reflection of the times despite being a work of fiction, it is not shot in retrospective of past events and the film itself had an incredibly fast production process allowing it to stay relevant compared to a film that would take longer to release.

A Hard Day's Night sought to also represent the disconnect seen between the generations in the UK during the mid-1960s. There is always some form of disconnect between generations, today it could be claimed that the differences include individual beliefs combined with digital natives and digital immigrants attempting to integrate together. In the time of Beatlemania, the differences were based more on a perceived lack of respect for authority. Howe and Strauss believe this is the case and state, 'The old generation gap of the late 1960s and early 1970s featured an incendiary war between college kids and the reigning leaders of great public institutions.' (1992) This generation gap is a major catalyst for propelling the narrative forward in *A Hard Day's Night* and is best demonstrated by the use of the character of Paul McCartney's Grandfather played by Wilfrid Brambell. He consistently clashes with The Beatles both through physical comedy and through his dialogue which shows his differing views from his younger kin. Reiter agrees that the film highlights the generation gap by claiming, 'the way The Beatles deal with authority in *A Hard Day's Night* illustrates the change of social paradigms in Great Britain and introduces the theme of generation gap in a light-hearted manner.' (2008, p.48) The social commentary based on the generation gap is evident on several fronts, from the views of the aforementioned character of the Grandfather, the ways in which the older studio executives treat The Beatles like children and forbid the group from enjoying themselves, to the ways in which the different generations view fashion trends which will be discussed later in the chapter. As well as a gap visible between the generations, there is also social critique regarding the North/South

divide in the UK. Lester highlights the ever-growing diverse nature of the country appearing in the 1960s during a comedic section of the film in which The Beatles are essentially treated like foreigners whilst spending time in London away from their native Liverpool. An important part of reflecting the difference in the northern world of The Beatles and the foreign nature of places they went to perform is seen in the dialogue written by Alun Owen. The script needed to capture their unique styles by leaning into their Liverpudlian accents, even if that meant the possibility of alienating audiences overseas. Carr reflects on the reasons behind choosing Owens to write the script for *A Hard Day's Night* by saying, "Alun Owen is going to spend a lot of time with the boys and create characters for them that reflect their own. We want to put over their non-conformist, slightly anarchist characters. We want to present their almost Goon-like quality." (Carr, cited by Reiter, 2008, p.40) Carr's claims back up the initial findings of this chapter's investigation to see if this film reflects the times, socially, it was produced in and the influence of Alun Owen appears to be vital to highlighting the generation gap as part of its social critique. Carr's reference to giving The Beatles a "Goon-like quality" refers to *The Goon Show* (Milligan, 1951) which was a massive influence in the UK school of comedy.

Richard Lester's film is a hybrid of several genres which helped shape *A Hard Day's Night* into becoming something unique. It could fall into the category of a rock documentary, comedy, a concert film, fiction, and mock-documentary. Ebert also recognises the films' hybridity of genres claiming, 'It was clear from the outset that "*A Hard Day's Night*" was in a different category from the rock musicals that had starred Elvis and his imitators. It was smart, it was irreverent, it didn't take itself seriously.' (1996) Films that had proceeded this one and starred famous musicians, such as Elvis Presley as Ebert states above, for example *Loving You* (Kanter, 1957) have featured these musicians portraying fictional characters which is the direct opposite to the narrative for *A Hard Day's Night* where The Beatles play themselves with a comedic scripted edge.

The film is shot in two distinct styles, the former being a pseudo-documentary style and the latter being in a standard cinematic style – as seen in figure 7 and 8. In

figure 7, the audience sees an example of the closest Richard Lester gets to filming in the direct cinema style that is seen in previous films analysed such as *Don't Look Back*. The scene involves the press asking The Beatles a series of serious questions and the band responding in a sarcastic and humorous fashion. An example being this exchange between a reporter and George Harrison:

> Reporter: "What would you call that hairstyle you're wearing?"
>
> George Harrison: "Arthur."

These comedic lines of dialogue challenge the conventions of direct cinema which, until now, had been used in a serious narrative manner. Lester gives the reason for filming in the direct cinema style by stating: 'I suspect that the documentary style was the most logical, because you didn't particularly want acting classes for the four boys while we were actually filming.' (Lester, cited by Kashner, 2014) Lester's reasoning pulls into question whether the idea to film parts of *A Hard Day's Night* in a direct cinema style was an artistic choice or a force choice due to the questionable acting ability of The Beatles. One matter that is certain is that the aspects of the film that are filmed in a documentary style definitely gives a sense of exaggerated reality and could allow the viewer to question whether the band are genuinely that sarcastic in real life or if it is simply a rouse. Despite colour film being well established for several years at the time of release, Richard Lester chose to film in black and white which may have caused confusion at the time and looking back upon the film from a modern perspective. Reiter gives two reasons for shooting the film in black and white:

> First of all, Richard Lester and Gilbert Taylor, the director of photography, had previously only made black-and-white films. Second, The Beatles themselves had established a black-and-white image of themselves in the media since the release of their second LP With The Beatles. (2008, p.43)

Lester would go on to make direct colour films in a career that would span into the early 1990s but the stylistic choice to match the black and white image that The Beatles were synonymous with demonstrates how the film reflected the times both from a narrative standpoint, as previously discussed, but also from a technical standpoint. The choice to film in black and white could be perceived as allowing the wider population the opportunity to recognise The Beatles more clearly, as they themselves may have seen them in black and white, but the decision not to film in colour could draw questions as to whether the risk to their public image outweighed some perceived benefits of colour film.

As well as attempting to argue the links between the films, filmmakers and writers in this chapter, there is also a link between the direct cinema and cinema verité style of filmmaking that was discussed in the previous chapter, and the mock-documentary which is being discussed in this chapter. The debate which dominates direct cinema centres around the legitimacy of what is appearing on screen and whether it can ever achieve its goal of showing objective truthfulness. Winston writes about the validity of direct cinema and claims ‘the issues of mediation were not removed by the new style. Shots were still framed. Films were still edited. Stories were still created.’ (1999, p.75) It should be clear to see that Winston’s attitude regarding direct cinema is one of scepticism, always keeping his guard up as to not be fully taken in by the possible façade that the genre presents. This presents the filmmakers of such films as being economical with the truth. This attitude towards the truth is carried through to the mock-documentary genre but with no attempt to masquerade as anything other than fiction, it is this heightened self-awareness that allows mock-documentaries its comedic nature to flourish; the audience is in on the act the entire time. Despite the scepticism surrounding direct cinema’s objectiveness, it is viewed as a style of filmmaking that presents ‘the truth’ due to its non-invasive cameras and crew and little interference from the documentary maker. Winston believes it is this reputation that allows it to be at the forefront of objective truthful filmmaking by stating, ‘Direct Cinema not only claimed to offer evidence of the world at heightened levels of objectivity and veracity but it also stridently denied that any other

documentary form could do the same.' (1999, p.73) Winston's beliefs regarding direct cinema can be linked to why this mode of filmmaking is often heavily relied upon when directors seek to produce a mock-documentary. It is, by definition, the simplest way of presenting a fictional narrative with any form of legitimacy; such is the commanding gravitas of direct cinema. The sections that are filmed in a cinematic style, as seen in the chase scene in figure 8, appear to be filmed that way as a matter of preserving the outlandish narrative. The scene in question shows The Beatles being chased by a manic group of fans, all clambering to have a chance to see their heroes. The band then begin to hide in comedic ways, one of them hides behind a broadsheet newspaper whilst others are seen climbing over walls. It is obvious that filming this portion of the film in a direct cinema style would not benefit the film and it would in fact hold back the narrative and result in questionable footage; shot by a camera operator running alongside the group in an attempt to keep pace.

Another creative choice that Lester decides to implement in *A Hard Day's Night* is the decision to focus on the band when they are off-stage for the majority of the film. When a director is given access to the biggest rock and roll band of the time it would have been easy to simply create a concert film and play it safe from a narrative standpoint. Instead, Lester, alongside the screenplay writer Alun Owen, focused on creating a fictional version of events that all occur offstage but at the same time intertwine with events that would occur on-stage. An example of this is when Paul McCartney's fictional Grandad goads Ringo Starr into leaving the group and to see the world outside of the band. This leads to both a comedic sub-plot showing Starr walking around the streets of London and struggling to fit in because he is from the North of England. Everything he touches goes wrong and he ends up being arrested for causing mischief. Kashner believes this sequence also provides a social commentary on what Britain would have been like if The Beatles never existed or were not as popular as they were. 'it's also a glimpse of what Britain might have been like without the Beatles—the dispirited canal, the tired old Turk's Head pub, the bored, joyless faces of adults with hard lives.' (2014) It is evident that the band did their best to brighten up a country that was in desperate need of a moral boost, still in the clutches of the past and trying to find its feet following the second World War.

A Hard Day's Night (1964) is filled with social critique, on top of the commentary mentioned in the paragraph above. Bradshaw believes, 'This film is a fascinating picture of this country in 1964, with the Beatles as our cheerfully anarchic heroes, leading us out of austerity-ear Britain with its stuffiness and complacency.' (2001) There is a heavy emphasis on the difficulties surrounding those from the north of England and those from the South of England integrating together and there almost appears to be a language barrier despite everyone speaking English. Within reality this is less dramatized, but it adds to the comedic aspect of this film. The final key social critique seen in Lester's film is the scene in which George Harrison is mistaken for a male model. In this scene, a man who is high up in the fashion sector wants to find out Harrison's opinions on clothes for teenagers, treating the Beatle as a one-man focus group. When Harrison is shown a future shirt that has yet to be made, he replies: "I wouldn't be seen dead in them, they're dead grotty." The fashion guru, clearly offended snaps back at Harrison saying: "Here's this kid trying to give me his utterly valueless opinion, when I know for a fact that within a month, he'll be suffering from a violent inferiority complex and loss of sleep because he isn't wearing one of these nasty things." Although this sequence of dialogue is used mostly for comedic effect, it is a credible critique on the rampant rise of consumerism within society and predicts the level of vanity that will engulf teenagers of the future and their bid to keep up with the latest fashion trends.

A Hard Day's Night became a financial hit and influenced further films similar to this one to be made because of this success. With a budget of just £189,000 in 1964, the film had grossed $11 million by 1971 (Walker, 2005, p. 241). Adjusted for inflation in 2020, this would bring the box office up to $69,636,000 – demonstrating the profitability of putting The Beatles on film. This success was not expected by the distributer of the film, United Artists, who had ulterior motives for commissioning the release of the film *A Hard Day's Night*. According to Spizer, 'the idea was to produce a low budget flick with the Beatles strictly to obtain the soundtrack.' In even blunter words, Bud Ornstein, European Head of Production at United Artists claimed 'Our record division wants to get the soundtrack album to distribute in the States and what

we lose on the film we'll get back on the disc.' (2011) United Artists recognised The Beatles would become a worldwide success and exposed a contractual loophole in order to get the publishing rights to the soundtrack album, it was merely a happy coincidence that the film became one of the most profitable films of all times when comparing the box office to the initial budget. The soundtrack album was launched before the film was released in cinemas and had 'become one of the fastest selling LPs in the history of the record business. […] and sold and delivered one million copies in just four days.' (Spizer, 2011) This ensured that *A Hard Day's Night* became a rare case of a film that made a profit before it was released in cinemas.

It has been established in this chapter that the mock-documentary genre is a direct reaction to the genre of documentary, mimicking its codes and conventions whilst usually using a fictional narrative to differentiate the two. *All You Need Is Cash* is a direct reaction to both the music documentary and The Beatles, playing on the tropes of these films whilst mocking the pretentiousness surrounding their music. The comedic names given to the fake Beatles signify to the audience that these people on screen must be fictional. 'Ron Nasty' is a parody of John Lennon whilst 'Barry Wom' and 'Stig O'Hara' are parodies of Ringo Starr and George Harrison, respectively. The film does not stop its parody at the main band members, instead creating an alternate world that features parodies of Derek Taylor (known for being The Beatles press officer), Brian Epstein (known for being The Beatles' manager and was also dubbed as the 'fifth Beatle'), Allen Klein (a record label executive known for his aggressive negotiating style). *All You Need Is Cash* also seeks to parody the love interests of the band members, going to the lengths of replacing Yoko Ono, John Lennon's spouse, with a character called Chastity – a Nazi officer "whose father invented World War II". Whilst it may appear that this film was made to mock The Beatles, it was accepted more as a form of praise, that The Beatles were so good that this was a way of honouring them. Paul Simon has been quoting stating "I don't think Eric meant to really make fun of them, it was almost as much of a panegyric as a satire." (Simon, cited by Spitz, 2013) A reason *All You Need Is Cash* was received so well by both the public and people in the music industry was that it did not simply set out to mock The Beatles but also the culture they had created and the codes of traditional documentaries itself.

The film begins by showing footage that is supposed to be set in England in 1964, immediately setting the scene by using vintage cameras and editing techniques to give it an aged look and feel. Whilst everything is indicating to the audience that they are being shown real footage from years gone by, there are some hints that this is all a rouse. For example, the filmmakers parody the longstanding newsreel creators of the era ‘Pathé News’ by changing the name to ‘Pathétique News’. The absurdities continue to blend with normality in the first 5 minutes of *All You Need Is Cash*, with conventions the Monty Python’s used to use being reimagined in a new light. An example is when the narrator (who also sounds like he is plucked straight from a vintage Pathé News segment) is reading credits at the start of the film to the audience, explaining what this ‘documentary’ will be about and the subjects within it. The writing then slowly begins to speed up to levels that the audience may find it hard to keep up with, the narrator having to read it faster and faster so he does not miss anything; the absurdity of the mock-documentary creeping through. The combination of a simple effect created in the editing process to create humour is an example of how important editing is in mock-documentaries and the potential it holds.

All You Need Is Cash seeks to play on the codes and conventions of the traditional documentary and this shines through throughout the film and the behaviour of the presenter is something that the filmmakers picked to mock. Banks-Smith recognises this this second level of mocking by stating ‘it was a parody of the commoner clichés of TV documentaries in which a reporter in a sheep skin jacket stands in middle of the road baying.’ (2017) The concept of having such a person attend the scene of an historical event just so they can claim “I’m standing here at the scene of...” is one that is picked apart, as well as traits that seem absurd when reflected on. One such case is having the presenter walking whilst delivering their piece to camera instead of having them stand in the same spot. Directors Idle and Weis mock this in a scene where the presenter (also played by Idle) is walking whilst discussing origins of The Rutles. Like with the on-screen credits that were seen speeding up, the camera (attached to the back of a car) slowly begins to speed up, to the point where the

presenter has to run to keep up with it before breaking into a sprint and being left behind by the crew. Another way Idle and Weis mocked this code of documentary was by having Idle deliver these pieces to camera in absurd places whilst behaving oblivious to the situation. This can be seen when he is delivering a monologue whilst standing in the sea, his legs submerged in water. Idle playing the presenter of this 'documentary' is a powerful avenue for the mock-documentary to shine and a way of reminding the audience that the film is fictional. Roscoe and Hight recognise this by claiming there 'is a binary dramatic structure which is not consistently held to throughout the film with the presenter engaging in nonsense speech at different points.' (2001, p.101) All the points raised in this paragraph and the point about nonsense speech all come together in an early section of the film when the presenter is discussing 'Rat Keller' – the place where The Rutles stayed in Hamburg. In this section of the film, the presenter is at the location he is talking about to conform to documentary codes and conventions and engages in nonsense speech when elaborating on the band's breakfast. "Here they had bed and breakfast. There's the bed, the breakfast, of course, long since gone. Rodently-chewed. Mouse-masticated. In a word: eaten by rats." (Idle, 1978) The majority of this sentence is nonsense, incorrect grammatically and overly complicated; serving its purpose and is perfect for a mock-documentary of this kind. The scene concludes with the power being cut and the presenter is left in the dark.

As well as satirising the codes and conventions of the documentary itself, *All You Need Is Cash* also seeks to highlight the costs behind making such a film and sending its presenter all around the world to obtain the "I'm standing here…" shot that was discussed in the paragraph above. This is demonstrated when the film cuts to Eric Idle filming a piece to camera and states: "So, we went to New Orleans to find out just how expensive it is to make these documentaries." (Idle and Weis, 1978) The audience then sees Idle standing outside the wrong banks of the Mississippi, instead standing outside a national bank as opposed to the correct one next to the river, adding humour whilst again demonstrating the absurd nature of some documentaries. With the film mostly taking place in England up until this point, the cost of flying Idle out to the United States for a few lines of dialogue that could have been filmed in England is humorous and shows a lack of financial sensibility that

they claim to be lacking in conventional documentary makers. After following Idle's search in New Orleans to find the origins of 'Rutle' music and seeing him come up empty-handed in his quest, he turns to camera and says "Well, we seem to be rather wasting our time here in New Orleans, despite the expense." (Idle and Weis, 1978) Idle again shines a light on the poor financial management that could be seen in documentary films, the section where he seeks to find the origins of 'Rutle' music could have been conducted over the phone, taking less time and costing less money. Of course, this is entirely fictional and there was no real search taking place, but it does its job in highlighting another trait of documentary filmmaking that may come across as absurd.

All You Need Is Cash not only seeks to parody The Beatles but emphasise the extreme frenzy that surrounded the music group. This entire mock-documentary mocks the notion of the obsession that the country held in obtaining gossip about The Beatles. Roessner backs up this claim by stating that 'the movie challenges the realistic representational style and ridicules our desire for knowledge about The Beatles.' (2013, p.169) Idle demonstrates this desire by the way he behaves as the presenter of *All You Need Is Cash*, constantly seeking to the latest scoop on The Rutles despite the film being a retrospective on the band. This can be seen in the section filmed in New Orleans as mentioned in the paragraph above where he seeks to find the origins of Rutle music and also when Idle interviews the real Mick Jagger and Paul Simon to try and obtain new titbits regarding the band. Having those two real stars feature in *All You Need Is Cash* adds a layer of authenticity to the film and further blurs the lines between the real and the fictional.

Merchandising played a huge part in The Beatles success during their rise to fame and this does not escape the mocking of writers Idle and Weis in *All You Need Is Cash*. According to The Music Network:

> In 1964, a factory in the US was manufacturing 35,000 Beatle wigs per day, a Liverpool bakery sold 100,000 Ringo dolls in two days, and a Blackpool

> company received an order for 10 million sticks of liquorice with the Beatles' name on it. (2015)

This demonstrates the incredible influence The Beatles had at the height of their popularity and also how easy it was to sell items simply by putting The Beatles name/faces on them. It becomes a statement on the state of consumerism in the world during the 1960s. The film spoofs the state of merchandising and the laziness that is shown when it came to releasing Beatle products. Idle states "Leggy was besieged by merchandises." What follows is a businessman showing the Brian Epstein spoof the number of items he has ready to ship: "We have a complete line of Rutle products. The Rutle t-shirt, the Rutle plate, the Rutle cup, the Rutle acne-cream, the Rutle hair-clips – all a complete line of Rutle products." (Idle and Weis, 1978) The clip encapsulates the vast array of merchandise that was available and the list veers into the strange and humorous to further sell how absurd some of the products were. After the salesman lists all the items, Leggy Mountbatten (Epstein's parodic counterpart) is quick to state that they are in business.

Eric Idle and Gary Weis also address the controversies caused by The Beatles, mocking the public outcry perhaps not directly but by changing the facts regarding the situation to show how overblown certain hysterias were. They particularly focus on the controversy in which John Lennon claimed The Beatles were "more popular than Jesus" in an interview in 1966. Whilst the comments did not garner immediate criticism, they eventually picked up steam and were subsequently drew offence across the US Bible Belt. Runtagh summarises the lengths some people, particularly radio DJ's, were willing to go to in order to show outrage and states:

> Some DJs went so far as to actually smash their records live on the air, and Reno's KCBN broadcast an anti-Beatle editorial each hour. Not to be outdone, Charles and Layton, the unofficial spokesmen of the movement, urged listeners to send their Beatles records and paraphernalia to the station to be destroyed with an industrial grade tree-grinding machine. (2016)

The angry reaction was, in part, a reason the group did not tour together again, and it demonstrates how seriously religion was taken in the 1960s by some areas of the world. Despite the outrage, Idle and Weis evidently believed that the uproar was over the top as it became the subject of humour in *All You Need Is Cash* when the film moves on to cover The Rutles' fictional controversies. When narrating about the burning of The Beatles' records, Idle says "many fans burnt their albums, many more burnt their fingers attempting to burn their albums." (Idle and Weis, 1978) This line particularly highlights the futility and pointlessness of people burning their merchandise to display their outrage, particularly if they had already paid for it; the third time the mock-documentary references wasting money. The writers further compound their feelings towards the "more popular than Jesus" scandal by claiming it was simply a misunderstanding and that "Nasty, talking to a slightly deaf journalist had claimed, only, that The Rutles were bigger than Rod. Rod Stewart would not be big for another 8 years." (Idle and Weis, 1978) By simply substituting a letter out, it puts into perspective how overblown some may consider the controversy to be whilst further outlining that what the audience is watching is fictional. Another example of the film mocking a controversy surrounding The Beatles is when Idle and Weis focus on The Beatles' drug abuse shortly after the "more popular than Jesus" segment. They achieve this by inferring that the music group were hooked on marijuana, but instead substitute the drug for tea; comedically associated with the English people. These are good examples of how *All You Need Is Cash* is a reaction to The Beatles, as the mock-documentary is a reaction to the documentary.

As well as satirising The Beatles' controversies, *All You Need Is Cash* also looked to poke fun at the expense of those fans and music aficionados who took their music too seriously for Idle and Weis' liking. Pretension surrounded The Beatles' music, and this is recognised by Roessner claims 'Along with grounding the band's appeal in the body, the film wickedly spoofs the aesthetic value of the music itself and the pretensions of those who would take it seriously.' (2013, p.167) This can been seen in the film when the presenter goes to Oxford University to find out why the London Times had described The Rutles' music as "the best since Schubert" from the

Professor of Music, the Professor walks towards the camera which is pointing at him in his office and he slams the door in Idle's face, demonstrating that there is nothing about The Beatles' or The Rutles' music that is worth studying and looking further into. The film further hammers home the pretentiousness of those who take The Beatles' music too seriously by interviewing 'Stanley J. Krammerhead III, Jr.' who is "an occasional visiting professor of applied narcotics at the University of please-yourself California", possibly hinting to the audience that one would have to be on drugs to read too deeply into the music of The Beatles. Like Idle does in the role of presenter, this interviewee proceeds to talk in nonsense-speech. An example of this speech is his answer when asked the question 'how good, musically, were The Rutles?':

> Listen, looking at it very simply musicology and ethnically, the Rutles were essentially Imperical maleonglece of a rhythmically radical yet verbally passé and temporally transcended lyrically content welded with historically innovative melodical material transposed and transmogrified by the ankus of the Rutland ethic experience which elevated them from essentially alpha exponents of in essence merely beta potential harmonic material into the prime cultural exponents of Aloin condensic comic standard form. (Idle and Weis, 1978)

This elongated speech is a good example of both the nonsense-speech which is prevalent in *All You Need Is Cash* which demonstrates to the viewer that this is a mock-documentary and not a documentary and also validates the point that the pretentiousness surrounding The Beatles' music was unnecessary. The 'professor' himself is not dressed in smart clothing and is dressed more akin to a hippie of the era suggesting that what he is saying is nonsense; Idle closes the segment by responding to this nonsense-speech saying, "he didn't really tell us either."

At the beginning of this chapter, the three degrees of mock-documentary were outlined and *All You Need Is Cash* falls into the first degree and is 'parody' as the film seeks 'to parody, and implicitly reinforce an aspect of popular culture […] using

the benevolent or innocent […] documentary aesthetics.' (Roscoe and Hight, 2001, p.73) The film is multi-layered in its satire and pokes fun at a multitude of faucets of The Beatles whilst masquerading as a documentary. It begins by satirising the documentary genre as a whole, the ways presenters act and talk to the camera and the immense costs that go with it in order to get said presenter to a place something of interest happened. It also mocks the fanfare that surrounded The Beatles at the height of their popularity, the thirst for gossip about the music group, fans willingness to buy any merchandise that had The Beatles on it and the overreaction of certain people to their controversies.

In order to make this chapter on music's relationship with the mock-documentary more relevant, it is important to now link the established films discussed with a modern entry – displaying pre-established theories and techniques and bringing them into the here and now. This chapter will conclude with an analysis of *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* which was directed by Akiva Schaffer and Jorma Taccone (members of the comedy trio, The Lonely Island) and starring Andy Samberg (the third member of The Lonely Island) in the lead role of music artist 'Conner4Real', 'documenting' his rise to fame, the splitting up of the fictional band 'Style Boyz' and the journey the characters go on to find discover their friendship for each other again. Narratively, there are similarities with *This Is Spinal Tap*. A music mock-documentary that proceeded *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* by 38 years but featured a similar story in which a band that thoroughly overestimates its own popularity is driven to breaking up due to a clash of egos and the remainder of the film is devoted to the band attempting to sort their differences and re-form. This similarity is noted, whilst also commenting on the quality of the narrative, by Kenny who states 'the movie's storyline is, truth to tell, a little thin. It's pretty much the same scenario as the aforementioned "*This is Spinal Tap*," with different structural stresses.' (2016) When watching *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping*, it becomes evident, as Kenny claims, that this is *Spinal Tap* for today's generation and the narrative is brought into the 21st Century to reflect that.

As with the UK school of comedy, the US school of comedy should be examined before conducting an analysis of *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* in order to fully understand the differences in satire and parody between the two English-speaking nations, how mock-documentaries in the United States reflect the mood of American society and also to see how well such comedy has been able to cross the Atlantic and become successful in its own right. It is necessary to look at the US school of comedy from a different perspective to the UK school, as it differs greatly from what the previous two films that have been investigated in this chapter are trying to achieve. Popstar is not attacking anyone or parodying any artist specifically and enters the mock-documentary genre taking aim at a generalised target. The target being a generation of celebrities and their attitudes, behaviour and the way other generations perceive them. A solid starting point for looking into the US school of comedy is Saturday Night Live (1975) created by Lorne Michaels which is a weekly sketch show featuring a heavy reliance on parody (usually in the form of impressions) and political humour. Despite this reliance on political humour, the humour itself is not as hard-hitting as that seen in the UK school of comedy in satirical shows such as the previously discussed *That Was the Week That Was*, instead using impressions of those celebrities or politicians without much substance. Jones states a similar point of view by claiming, ‘The central point is that SNL’s skits are relatively harmless because the humour is not really political.’ (2009, p.45) The less brutal parody seen on Saturday Night Live allows the show to reach a wider audience not requiring the viewer to be as up to date on the weeks current affairs as someone who would be viewing a British program of the same ilk. Jones also recognises this fact by adding, ‘The interest for audiences resides less in any expectation of political critique and more in the simple pleasure of resemblance.’ (2009, p.39) The comparison becomes stark when comparing the knowledge required for a viewer to understand a sketch on TW3 (for example the Profumo affair, a complex political controversy, which the show coincided with in the UK) to an SNL sketch which would simply require the viewer to have a basic knowledge of the politicians in power in Washington D.C. and their appearances and mannerisms.

The US and UK schools of comedies are vastly different as has been discussed but there has been room for them to cross boundaries and integrate with one another.

This can be achieved either by having writers from both countries work together, an example being David Frost working on both the British and American versions of *That Was the Week That Was*, or simply exporting shows either side of the Atlantic, another example being Monty Python and its popularity in the United States. Monty Python is an interesting avenue to explore when looking at its popularity on both sides of the Atlantic as it links with *All You Need Is Cash* and can aid in understanding why both productions were popular worldwide. When researching into the reasons for Python's popularity in the United States, Miller claims the 'difference itself – or the varying utterances of otherness – was attractive, especially to an audience angry with or weary of the cultural norms that were the sources of American comedy.' (2000, p.130) Monty Python's brand of absurdist comedy was a breath of fresh air to American audiences, teamed with its wide aim when it came to the targets of its sketches. As noted in the section of this chapter that dealt with the UK school of comedy, Monty Python's comedy rarely took aim at specific people or topical events, instead choosing to mock institutions such as the church or societal norms. This allows the appeal to go beyond its native Great Britain and explains its popularity in American pop culture.

A factor in the success of comedy and satire in the United States is the wide-spread availability of social media and video-hosting websites such as YouTube which allows clips to go viral and reach millions of views in ways that the standard form of television cannot. This has become particularly apt in the digital age of media and is relevant to the discussion to be had later in this chapter regarding *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* which bases a lot of the behaviour of characters on their obsession with social media, the result of having grown up as digital natives. Whilst it explains the attitudes of the characters in Popstar, the ability to go 'viral' is a massive factor in the US side of comedy and can be seen with the sheer amount of views on videos uploaded to YouTube from Saturday Night Live and American Late-Night Talk shows which have steered into political comedy, particularly with the election of President Donald Trump in 2016. When commenting on the combination of satire and the viral accessibility that social media and video-hosting websites allow, Gray et al states, 'The rapid spread of the clip highlights satire's viral quality and cult appeal, along with the technological apparatus that now allows such satire to travel far

beyond the television set almost simultaneously.' (2009, p.4) An example of this in action would be comedian and satirist Stephen Colbert's speech at the White House Correspondent's Dinner. Playing his Conservative alter ego which relied heavily on emulating the type of talking head that a viewer may see on the right-wing Fox News Network, Colbert's speech was described by Cillizza of the Washington Post as an 'an extended tongue-in-cheek defence of George W. Bush's presidency and the media's lack of scrutiny of his claims regarding weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.' (2015) The speech itself was shown on C-SPAN, an American channel dedicated to showing the democratic process, similar to BBC Parliament in the United Kingdom and had low viewing numbers. The video garnered wide-spread attention, going viral online, and demonstrated the new ways in which satirical comedy could be delivered to viewers. This event helped shape the way that people access comedy in the United States and changed the distribution of content on channels these shows reside on, who now cater their content towards online viewing as well as conventional television.

As with *All You Need Is Cash*, discussed previously in this chapter, *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* uses visual cues to pose as a mock-documentary. This is evident from the very start of the film as the Universal Pictures studio logo is edited for humorous effect, replacing the traditional music for a piece that is effectively the same tune as before but with added drum and base undertones to sound similar to a Lonely Island melody. Playing around with the title sequence in a mock-documentary does not break new ground and is seen in *All You Need Is Cash* when the opening credits are sped up for comedic effect. In both films, this is a visual stimulant that indicates to the audience that they should not take seriously the events that are about to transpire on the screen. The comedic visuals continue when the film shows the main character, Conner Friel (AKA Conner4Real), as a musical sensation at the age of 1. The baby is seen playing the drums to an extremely high level which has the effect of possibly fooling the audience into perceiving the main character as a talented musician but also to set up the eventual fall from grace Conner experiences in the film. The similarities with *All You Need Is Cash* continue as *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* parodies their use of real music industry titans to tell their 'stories' of the fictional band. The former used Mick Jagger and Paul Simon to aid

with storytelling but the latter is helped by The Lonely Island's vast connections, hiring a vast selection of music industry artists and figureheads. These people include Mariah Carey, Carrie Underwood, 50 Cent, Ringo Starr and Simon Cowell and add a layer of authenticity to this fictional mock-documentary.

Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping seeks to satirise the very worst perceptions of the behaviour of the millennial generation. Whilst the intention to do this is massive in scope and requires a lot of generalisation, the film needs a more specific figure to mock in order to give the character individual flaws that are unique to him. It was therefore necessary to have the character of Conner4Real based on a real person for narrative and satirical reasons. When interpreting who the character is based on, Spanos claims 'Bieber is the mould Conner4Real is primarily based off of, right down to the white-boy propensity for hip-hop, bad tattoos, couture streetwear style and general cockiness.' (2016) This claim is certainly grounded within reason, the statement above being ample evidence, but the film goes further to parody controversies and life-events exclusive to Bieber himself. Several examples being the video of Conner4Real playing the drums as a baby during the start of the film is mocking a similar video of Bieber as a child, and Popstar directly parodies Bieber's Anne Frank controversy in which the pop star visited her house and wrote in the guest book "Anne was a great girl. Hopefully, she would have been a Belieber." (Bieber, cited by Williams, 2013) It could be interpreted that the writers (Samberg, Schaffer and Taccone) sought to base their main character on Bieber due to him encapsulating the very worst stereotypes of Generation Y, the writers were able to parody an entire generation through one artist. Spanos' claim that the character of Conner4Real is based on Justin Bieber is contradicted by Truffaut-Wong who counter-claims, 'Jorma Taccone, who co-directed with Akiva Schaffer, confirmed that the film was also inspired by Beyoncé, Alicia Keys, Katy Perry, Drake, and Macklemore — something reflected in the track list of the official Popstar soundtrack.' (2016) Despite two claims that contradict each other, it could be interpreted that both statements are true to a point, the main character encapsulates all modern millennial popstars and borrows traits and mannerisms from Bieber and the artists that Truffaut-Wong highlights. It becomes evident that *Popstar: Never*

Stop Never Stopping mocks the millennial generation through parodying some of its most outlandish and controversial musical artists.

Whilst its main function appears to be telling the fictional narrative of the 'Style Boyz' and the members of this band, *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* does not hold back with its social critique. The first example of this is at the start of the film when the audience is introduced to Conner Friel and are shown examples of the characters' over-willingness to share his life on social media, especially the mundane parts of which the average person may not be interested in. The film shows Conner's video blogs which has the title 'Conner Confession: Brushing My Teeth Part 4 (of 16)' and is accompanied by other examples in the suggested section of YouTube such as 'Conner Confession: I Found My Phone' and 'Conner Confession: What is in my eye? F**k. Ouch.' These snippets of Conner's videos serve two purposes: the first is for humour and the second is to highlight the current landscape of music artists who over-share their lives on social media. This can be linked to the section earlier on The Beatles and how *All You Need Is Cash* critiqued the clamour for knowledge about the group and the fan-frenzy that surrounded such music groups. *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* brings this critique into the 21st Century and updates the narrative slightly with the inclusion of social media but the message remains largely the same as it did in the 1960s and 1970s in *A Hard Day's Night* and *All You Need Is Cash* respectively. It has been discussed how American comedy tends to lean towards general social critiques and mocking institutions and this is evident in *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* which takes aim at the Millennial generation that its leading character, Conner4Real, is a member of. Writers Taccone, Samberg and Schaffer decide to play into the stereotypes that Generation Y are often lazily associated with, summarised by Caruso who claims, 'They have been branded lazy, entitled, disloyal, tech-addicted social morons.' (2014, p.143) Whilst this scathing description of an entire generation has little to no basis in reality, Caruso's description does describe Conner4Real's character accurately, as well as most of the supporting roles within Popstar. The writers have leaned towards stereotypes in this mock-documentary in order to bring to life these unrealistic caricatures which does resonate with viewers who could associate such behaviour with Generation Y, either from a serious or comedic point of view. The way in which

the so-called shallowness is demonstrated in the Millennial generation is through the social critique of social media and those that use it. Popstar's main character, Conner4Real, displays signs of an unhealthy obsession with social media and is willing to forego his privacy in order to broadcast minute details of his day to day life. Such extreme behaviour when using social media has a basis in reality and Poh comments on this by claiming that 'the satisfaction comes about when our statuses get acknowledged, or even better, 'approved'. Deep inside, we users know that each time we update our statuses, many of our 'friends' will get to see it and possibly react to it.' (2017) The purpose of social media could be viewed to exist purely to gain the approval of others, be they strangers or known acquaintances, in a vain attempt to show other people that they live a perfect lifestyle or a lifestyle that could be considered as perfect by other's standards. This attitude is prevalent throughout *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* and the film performs social critique on the matter as well as a subliminal warning on the dangers of such addiction.

The film's other big social critique that dominates a section of the narrative regards privacy in modern times and sees Conner Friel sign a deal which will upload his latest album onto all kitchen appliances across the world without consent and causing a nationwide electrical blackout in the process. In the process of signing the deal, the band questions the ethical side of this PR move but Conner is too impressed with the technology that no further questions are asked. The comedic nature of having an album uploaded to kitchen appliances such as washing machines and refrigerators aside, this is an important ethical critique that draws similarities to the U2 album *Songs of Innocence* (2014) and its controversial release by Apple onto 500 million devices without consent. The release sparked controversy with users angry that something could be thrust upon them without permission and drew further questions about what the company could do in the future and where the moral line is. Assar comments on the privacy concerns regarding the release of the album by stating 'Songs of Innocence is not a well-intentioned gift from a dorky uncle with poor taste, it is another example of how Big Brother can intrude on our lives.' (2014) The comparison between reality and the humorous fiction is there to highlight how absurd the release of U2's album was and how justified the outrage that followed was. *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* twists the non-fiction to

emphasise a critique the film is conveying, this was also highlighted during the section that takes aim at ‘prank culture’ which has become rife on social media and draws criticism when it is taken too far by popular YouTubers.

Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping is clearly informed by previous mock-documentaries but also by real music artists, their personas, and the contributions they have made to the music documentary (as discussed above). Nayman agrees with this point and states ‘The Lonely Island both recognise and respect the parody tradition they're working, including its responsibility to reflect the mainstream's best and worst tendencies back at itself.’ (2016, p84-85) The comparisons to recent music documentaries, which could be interpreted as staged are displayed throughout this film. This links back to a previous point made in chapter 2 with regards to on-stage and off-stage personas in the direct cinema genre and again sparks debate as to how much the audience sees is the artist behaving normally and how much is playing up to the camera. The link between this film and recently released music documentaries is noted by Mandell who states ‘Recent popdocs such as Justin Bieber's Believe, Katy Perry's Part of Me or Beyoncé’s Life Is But a Dream are glossy to the point of parody, leaving the space ripe for the Lonely Island's mockumentary.’ (2016) This showcases the different layers to *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* which not only seeks to be a comedy film but also demonstrates absurdities in the aforementioned social critique but also in artists ‘documentaries’ and questions their legitimacy.

Much like *A Hard Day’s Night* which was discussed at the beginning of this chapter, *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping* has a fluid filmic style and does not commit to one particular style of filming technique as opposed to *Don’t Look Back*. The fluid style of filming allows the technique to change depending on what is happening on screen and displays versatility. For example, at the opening of the film the footage is filmed in a direct cinema fashion with handheld cameras of both professional and home quality to capture the back story of Conner Friel in a more intimate manner. When the film veers into action scenes (seen when a pack of wolves attack the singer Seal during the wedding proposal scene), the footage is clearer and more

stable whilst being edited faster, reminiscent of what audiences see in action films. An example of when this occurs in *A Hard Day's Night* is how the footage of The Beatles being interviewed are filmed in a direct cinema style but when they are being chased by frenetic fans, the style changes to adapt to the situation. The fluidity of the filmic style is further enhanced by the editing which seeks to follow the codes and conventions of similar real-life music documentaries. Unlike *All You Need Is Cash*, there is no narrator present to move the narrative along and provide humour, instead the storyline is told through on-screen text and the actors being interviewed; their answers providing the context for the visual cues. The editing is also able to blur the line between fact and fiction by blending real footage with the fake to create a bizarre 'reality' for humorous effect. This can been seen when news footage of Barack Obama is edited so that it claims he called Conner Friel 'a real dumbf**k' on national television after he causes a nationwide electrical blackout and also at the music awards ceremony (closely meant to resemble the Grammy Awards) where the editors weave together real footage of music artists reacting to performances with the Style Boyz' songs creating realism. This is commented on by Nayman who claims, 'The leap of faith that audiences have to make with Popstar's faux-documentary format is that the songs sung by Samberg's Conner4Real would stand a chance in the mainstream marketplace.' (2016, p84-85) The blending of the real and fake is a comment on the current state of mainstream music, the fact that the band behind the film (The Lonely Island) are a successful band who release songs similar to those that feature in this film confirms that these songs would stand a chance in the mainstream marketplace.

Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping brings the music mock-documentary into the modern day, specifically the 2010s, and proves that the formula for such a film still works despite how much the world has advanced since the days of *A Hard Day's Night* and *All You Need Is Cash*. The intent behind creating such a film has remained as positive as it was since the days of Eric Idle and Gary Weis in 1978 and comes from an area of love for the industry. Semley backs up this by stating, 'Popstar, far from a mean-spirited takedown, springs from the group's bona fide love of commercial hip-hop and bubblegum pop.' (2016, p.54) The effort that has clearly gone into the writing and producing of the songs for this film confirms that this is the

case, along with the star-studded list of celebrity cameos who may not have taken part if the film went on a more attacking front towards the music industry. There is a clear evolution with the music mock-documentary from its roots in the 1960s to its state in the 2010s-present day. The blueprints of the genre remain similar to what was laid down decades ago, but music mock-documentaries have evolved to display advancements in technology and also tackle issues that are present in 2020 that did not exist in 1964 such as social media. This means that the mock-documentary in relation to the music documentary is as relevant as ever, allowing filmmakers to tackle issues as well as music. The mock-documentary will always be a reaction to the documentary as much it is a reaction to reality, always there to poke fun or parody an event or person that the filmmaker deems absurd or relevant at the time and it will remain a mainstay of the music film landscape for years to come.

Chapter 4: The Experimental Music Documentary

The previous chapters in this research dissertation have sought to investigate the origins and the evolution of the music documentary. From the foundations of the concert film in the 1940s, to the breakthrough of direct cinema in the 1960s and early 1970s, to the emergence of the mock-documentary as a direct response to those documentary films that came before it. It is evident that the music documentary has evolved far from its original form seen decades ago and previous chapters have argued that as a genre, perhaps, it has the most room to manoeuvre, forming new codes and conventions with every new release. The aim of this chapter is to investigate the experimental music documentary, a genre that seeks to push boundaries and, as the title suggests, 'experiment' with new techniques to create something unique. When defining experimental documentaries, Johnstone states:

> These films may incorporate essential qualities of traditional documentaries, but they typically question or expand many characteristics that are considered basic documentary traits, and venture into unpredictable—and immensely fruitful—new territory. (2004)

The films that will be analysed in this chapter are *Amy* (Kapadia, 2015) and *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck* (Morgen, 2015), the former documenting the life of deceased musical artist Amy Winehouse and the latter doing the same with Nirvana lead band member Kurt Cobain. These films could be interpreted as the best examples of experimental music documentaries, using 'basic documentary traits' such as the conventional talking head interview techniques but they also 'venture into unpredictable new territory' with the use of animation for re-enactment (seen in *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck*) and the lack of talking head interviews (seen, or not, in *Amy*). Daniels comments further on the intentions of experimental documentaries by stating, 'experimental documentary films do not generally intend to provide the last word on a particular subject but make a contribution to its exploration.' (2017, p.73) This is highly apparent with the two aforementioned films, both delve deep into the lives of two titans of the music industry whilst recognising that the pair's stories are already in the public eye and a good amount of their audience will be aware of

the rough backstory; the use of personal found footage in each demonstrates the director's intent to make a 'contribution' to the narrative and displays the experimental side of collecting footage for these documentaries. An ever-present theme throughout this dissertation is the role of the editor in the music documentary who, as discussed, wields an immense amount of power, and can shape audience perceptions of subjects. This theme continues in the experimental documentary, particularly with the presence of more found footage that has not been filmed directly by those involved in the making of such films. Sobchack and Sobchack comment on the new-found role of the filmmaker in experimental documentaries, stating, 'The filmmaker may never use the camera, functioning primarily as an editor, presenting and analysing new footage (made by others for other purposes) through juxtaposition and ordering of material in the editing process.' (1987, p.355) Both *Amy* and *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck* rely heavily on found footage and, with only the latter featuring footage filmed by the director himself with talking head interviews. This immense power wielded by the editors allow them to shape the narrative significantly, however, their influence is still limited in documentaries that seek to chronicle the lives of those who have passed away or an event that took place in the past. Bernard comments further on this aspect, stating, 'Even verité projects, which are significantly crafted in the editing room, are generally begun with a sense of the story and its potential development.' (2007, p.35) Historical events are largely set in stone, with those closely involved or those who take great interest being aware of the facts. It is therefore extremely difficult, as well as highly unethical, for the editor to attempt to manipulate events beyond reality.

Both *Amy* and *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck* seek to explore events that occurred years prior to release and the titular subjects of both documentaries are deceased. This presents challenges to filmmakers who cannot simply go out and film their subjects, the solutions to these challenges could be considered 'experimental'. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, found footage is incredibly important to experimental documentaries and has various positive outcomes in these films. Achieving 'objective truthfulness' is one of the goals of direct cinema, a goal the creators of such documentaries fell short of succeeding in due to the process still requiring a film crew to be present with a subject; the subject is always aware of

filming and may adjust their behaviour to reflect this. Linton discusses the problems that may arise with filming a subject directly for a documentary, ‘once the subject has granted the filmmaker permission to film him [...] he has relinquished all control over his image. In this way, the subject becomes a performer for, rather than co-participant with, the filmmaker in the creative process.’ (1976, p.20) Linton’s viewpoint on the documentary is not a prevalent issue with experimental documentaries that use found footage as the subjects are usually unaware that such recordings will be used beyond anything recreational. Through the use of found footage in experimental documentaries, the audience may be witnessing the closest attempt at attaining objective truthfulness since direct cinema and thus illustrates the effects of this type of filmmaking. As with editing in experimental films, the use of personal archival footage does raise ethical quandaries with the filmmakers using footage that, whilst permitted to use by the relevant estates, was never intended for public viewing. The authenticity of found footage, especially when the footage is personal to the subject, serves more purposes than to simply invade on the private life of said subject. It can be used to provoke reflection on previously held misconceptions. Rodgers describes the use of found footage claiming they invite ‘audience members not only to construct coherence between newly contextualised images, but also to generate critical readings of the original, deconstructed texts.’ (2017, p.185) Both Amy Winehouse and Kurt Cobain had been subject to intense media scrutiny throughout their lives with much of their private lives transferred, in some cases unwillingly, to the public domain. Experimental documentary and the found footage that it incorporates is an example of the positive effect of these entries into the genre, allowing famous figures of popular culture the chance to be exonerated of ‘charges’ levelled at them by the press and media.

Having established the aims of experimental documentary cinema, it is important to analyse the two films mentioned above (*Amy* and *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck*) in order to understand the different new techniques that allow the film to be labelled ‘experimental’. *Amy* is a cinematic documentary that endeavours to tell the life story of jazz singer Amy Winehouse, from her youth and upbringing, to her meteoric rise and subsequent death. The film’s director, Asif Kapadia, not only deals with the musical aspect of Winehouse’s career but also her tragic battle with alcoholism,

bulimia, drug-abuse, unreliable family members and love-interests which contributed to her death caused by alcohol poisoning. As the film begins, it is evident that there is a wealth of home footage shot of Winehouse for Kapadia to fall back upon. Featuring clips of the musician as a teenager in 1990s North London, the singer and her friends document small events which do not appear significant at first but serve the purpose of normalising Winehouse and deconstructing the narrative drawn up by the British Press and influencing public opinion of the singer. Muir comments on the footage shot by Winehouse and her friends, stating that, 'conveniently for Kapadia, Winehouse grew up in the selfie generation in which no moment went unfilmed, and hand-held footage from friends' mobile phones and family videos provides intimate material.' (2015) Whilst Muir's claim that Winehouse grew up in the 'selfie generation' is not entirely correct ('selfies' as the audience knows them today became popular in the 2010s through the rise of social networking applications such as snapchat), there is foundation to the comment that these home footage videos did indeed provide 'intimate material'. The accessibility of such intimate material can be credited to the advancement and availability of modern technology such as mobile phones and home video-recorders. Schenkel remarks on advancing technology aiding documentary filmmaking, especially experimental documentary:

> Throughout all of documentary history, but increasingly since technology has become cheap and user-friendly, filmmakers have experimented with different and creative ways of representing their subjects. (2014, p.73)

The cheapening nature of technology has clearly affected *Amy* and other experimental documentaries, however, Schenkel's claim can be dated back and demonstrates similarities with the rise of direct cinema which was discussed in Chapter 2. Direct cinema spawned from the advent of smaller filming equipment, allowing filmmakers to film subjects in a less invasive manner in the hope of capturing objective truthfulness. It is perhaps when the filmmaker is removed from the location of the subject altogether that this aim can be fully realised.

Kapadia further experiments with the established conventions of documentary filmmaking by choosing not to use ‘talking head interviews’ that have become synonymous with the genre. The director does interview people close to Amy Winehouse but forgoes displaying the interview visually and interrupting the pictures on screen; instead, choosing to simply play the audio from these exchanges in the background. Pattison explains the presentation of the interviews, stating, ‘this means that the imagery unfolds in what feels like the present, only haunted by the dreadful ramifications of her death with interviewees referring to Winehouse in the past tense.’ (2015) Relegating the interviews to audio allows the words to combine with the visuals on screen and transcends the meaning whilst also providing extra context, as if the interviewees are annotating what is being displayed on-screen and therefore giving the ‘illusion’ that they are commenting on the present, as Pattison claims. Electing to free up the visual side of the documentary by playing the audio from such interviews also allows the airing of multiple points of view should a conflict occur in the narrative. Beattie states, ‘the two discourses – archival footage and oral testimony – speak of the events within a process in which the two sources are contrasted and counterpointed.’ (2004, p.138) The ‘contrasting’ of arguments with the use of oral testimony and archival footage is used heavily by Kapadia in *Amy*, an example being the focus on Winehouse’s relationship with her father, Mitch Winehouse, who himself paints a picture that he is a good influence on his daughter through his oral interviews. Kapadia displays a counterargument to this claim visually alongside the audio, presenting footage of Mitch inviting a film crew to film Amy Winehouse on a private holiday following her public battle with drug abuse. Spence and Narvarro remark about contrasting arguments in documentaries by claiming:

> They are sometimes used to provide different opinions on a subject or both sides of an argument, so that the documentary appears to be impartial. But simply giving different sides of an argument does not mean that both sides are received equally. (2011, p.174)

Despite presenting both sides of the argument on several topics in *Amy*, Kapadia clearly leaves his own thoughts and opinions on various matters imprinted in this

film, damaging the ‘impartiality’ that some viewers may prefer in a documentary. This allows the audience to decide for themselves who they want to believe and invites a level of interactivity with the film. The viewing of previous footage alongside oral testimony adds further complexity and reveals new context.

The use of animation has proven to be a powerful narrative aid within the experimental documentary and is used extensively in both *Amy* and *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck*. Compared with its use in the latter, *Amy* uses animation sparingly – with the majority of the effects being used to bring Winehouse’s lyrics to the screen during her performances. Commenting on the animation of lyrics, Kermode states ‘in the absence of narration, Winehouse’s lyrics tell the story, floating onscreen in a handwritten font that creates the illusion of a coherent diary, from childhood to stardom.’ (2015) It is the act of using Winehouse’s handwritten personal font, as Kermode states, that lends an extra sense of relatability to the artist as well as adding further meaning to her lyrics. This is starkly evident during the section of the film that covers the artist’s battle with drug addiction and the debate surrounding whether Winehouse should enter a drug rehabilitation centre. The audience hears her close friends state that they believe Winehouse should go to rehab which directly contrasts with her father who is quoted stating that he does not believe this is the right move for her daughter. The combination of oral testimony with home footage is used again by Kapadia, as the viewer is shown clips of the artist clearly in need of professional help. The lyrics to Winehouse’s song ‘*Rehab*’ are animated on-screen with particular focus on the lines: ‘I ain't got the time, And if my daddy thinks I'm fine. He’s tried to make me go to rehab, I won’t go go go.’ (2006) Linking the lyrics with the life event is a powerful product of this experimental documentary, but it also suggests, like many aspects of Winehouse’s life and career, that her music was a cry for help which went unanswered until it was too late. Cook comments on the blend of music and picture by stating, ‘music can complement the image by bringing to light certain emotional or narrative aspects; [...] and it can provide a contrast to the image by working against it.’ (1998) The experimental documentary seeks to push the boundaries of the regular conventions of the genre, by using Winehouse’s music to ‘work against the image’, it evolves the genre beyond what has been established before and furthers the context behind both the pictures and the music, allowing the

audience to become more invested in the film, even being sub-consciously encouraged to take sides by the director.

With *Amy*'s experimental traits laid out, it is key to recognise the purpose in which they were deployed by Kapadia, otherwise it would be experimentation for experiment's sake. It becomes clear that weaved amongst the tapestry of this documentary is a layer of brutal social critique and Kapadia pulls no punches in highlighting the roles of the British press and media in Winehouse's downfall, as well as the influence of her father and love interests. Mossman recognises this and states, '*Amy* teaches you two things: that Winehouse was in trouble long before you thought she was and that the people around her were even worse than you remember.' (2015, p.45) Kapadia's clear social critique brings the discussion back to a previous point made by Daniels in that, through the use of home footage, animation of lyrics alongside key life events and the lack of talking heads, the film makes a 'contribution' to 'the exploration' of Winehouse. Kermode explores the use of footage to condemn the behaviour of the paparazzi claiming, 'montages of paparazzi mobs create a hellish portrait of life lived through a grubby lens, though Kapadia himself is not above using images clearly obtained while the singer was in a state of distress' (2015) Ethical claims are raised here which is a critique within itself, an ethical claim that also has two sides to it. On one hand, the footage that Kapadia 'is not above using' was taken without Winehouse's consent and her permission to use said footage could never have been attained, but the main counterpoint to this argument being that it is important to show such footage to make the viewer aware of the ordeal that Winehouse had to endure on a daily basis. A clear characteristic of this experimental music documentary is to take the viewer out of their comfort zone, through the conventions discussed earlier in this chapter, in order to influence audience perceptions of a person or an event. Viewers have seen their perceptions changed on artists through the behaviour of such subjects, notably in direct cinema entries *Don't Look Back* and *Gimme Shelter* analysed in chapter 2, however the experimental documentary clearly displays the director's increased influence on the film's overall statement.

Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck is a music documentary about the tragic life and death of the Nirvana frontman that falls into the genre of 'experimental'. As with *Amy*, this music documentary was created and released posthumously, requiring an in-depth collection of found footage which could not have been shot by the director, Brett Morgen. The film covers the life of Cobain extensively, from childhood to becoming the 'voice of his generation' as his music propelled him to stardom and the issues that came with such responsibility and fame. Morgen seeks to contribute to Cobain's story even if there was no one around to document it, a distinct departure from *Amy* which only covered events that were captured via home footage by friends and family. In order to achieve this, Morgen veers into experimental territory by using a blend of animation and stock footage to recreate a director's impression of Cobain's childhood and the physical and mental health problems he faced on a daily basis. Meija comments on the use of stock footage in Montage of Heck, stating 'dripping footage of intestines emphasizing Cobain's well-documented stomach pains—which he self-medicated with heroin—add a grotesquely visceral quality to the portrayal of his struggles.' (2015, p.56) The use of graphic stock footage of intestines by Morgen serves several experimental purposes. The first is, like Kapadia aimed to achieve in *Amy*, to take viewers out of their comfort zones to experience the harsh realities of the subject's struggles, and secondly, as a visual narrative aid. As well as detailing struggles with his health, Morgen uses stock footage at the beginning of the documentary to detail Cobain's childhood upbringing; painting a picture of American suburbia in the 1970s and 1980s. Being the lead member of what could be considered the biggest band in the world at their peak, there is certainly a wealth of footage for Morgen to use in order to tell Cobain's life story. In order to satisfy audience's thirst to see 'the real Kurt Cobain', it would require more personal footage such as the kind of videos seen in *Amy*. Guerrasio details Morgen's collection of personal Cobain footage claiming, 'in 2013, he was granted access to a storage space where Cobain's most intimate materials — journals he wrote and paintings he created — are kept.' (2015) The displaying of such exclusive intimate footage, journals and artwork allow the director to shape audience perceptions of Cobain, painting a picture of a troubled soul; a stark departure from the image curated by the media and the worldwide press. As raised with *Amy*, whilst the use of archival home personal footage is a positive factor for documentary creators and

viewers alike, it does raise ethical concerns on the moral dilemma of using footage that the subject could not give consent for following their deaths.

Unlike in *Amy*, where animation was used sparingly to bring Winehouse's lyrics to life, *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck* uses animation heavily to fully visualise aspects of Cobain's life that no one was around to document. The basis of these recreations was formed upon Brett Morgen's findings amongst Cobain's personal belongings that he was given access to. Morgen states, "one of the things that would change the direction of the film was a box that I found that said, 'cassettes,'" (Morgen, cited by Guerrasio, 2015) These cassettes provide the basis for the narrative direction in which these animated segments take, as well as taking inspiration from Cobain's drawings and extensive notes and lyrics. Fry comments on this, stating, 'the documentary conveys this doubled sense of always-impending disaster [...] through remarkable animated segments, in which Cobain's journal writings [...] are jitteringly brought to life.' (2015, p.79) The power of using the artwork and journal writings of Cobain does reinforce the 'impending disaster' that Fry refers to, the filmmakers implying that, perhaps, if these were made public during his life then more could have been done to help the artist with his mental health. These sequences, which were created by Stefan Nadelman and the Hisko Hulsing Studio, attempt to set the mood of Cobain's teenage years by focusing specifically on the town he grew up in (Aberdeen, Washington) and using a drab and depressing colour palette featuring greys and browns. Nashawaty describes the effect of using Cobain's journals for the basis of animated re-enactments, stating, 'we start to sympathize with the loneliness that eventually led him to form the band that would become his surrogate family.' (2015, p.46) Whilst this could be interpreted as a possible reaction from audience to the haunting animation created by Nadelman, it is the combination of the visual aesthetic alongside the personal recordings of Cobain narrating his darker moments, such as a suicide attempt during his teenage years, that invoke such a response and demonstrate the power of such unconventional and experimental documentary making. It was emphasised at the start of this chapter that it was important to study the experimental documentary in order to note if the genre still has room for expansion as much as it did in the 1960s and 1970s. Animation within documentaries is proof that this is still the case with advancing technology allowing

codes and conventions to be extended. Kraemer discusses the use of animation in experimental documentary and states it ‘reflected the hybrid nature of this emerging subgenre of the animated documentary and the growing acceptance within the industry of wilful blurring of once-strict borders between genres and techniques.’ (2015, p.57) Kraemer’s claims suggest that documentary has moved away from its conventional scrupulous rules that required its filmmakers to tell the truth by recording the truth for its audiences to bear witness to. *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck* displays a new state of documentary story-telling emerging in which a director is given carte blanche to put the narrative onto film by any means necessary.

The concept of using animation in documentaries to ‘capture’ what no person other than the subject was there to witness can be considered ‘experimental’. However, it could simply be viewed as an extension of the traditional re-enactment which is a conventional technique used to portray events that happened without a camera present at the scene. Nichols refers to this process as a cause for apprehension, claiming that:

> Documenting the undocumentable becomes both a practical and a philosophical concern, directly challenging myths, not only about the knowability in the world, but also about cinema’s capacity to represent it. (Nichols, cited by DelGaudio, 1997, p.193)

Posthumous re-enactments of events are always going to arouse concern regarding ‘cinema’s capacity to represent it’ truthfully as the animator has very little to work on in order to be as objective as possible. Nichols states that ‘re-enactments are clearly a view rather than the view from which the past yields up its truth.’ (2008, p.80) In the case of *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck*, Morgen has guidance on how events may have played out through the artists self-narration of his own life events, there is still areas for interpretation and even room to have a discussion on the legitimacy of the events he describes in general.

Morgen employs experimental, unconventional techniques when dealing with events that were captured on camera to add layers of context for audiences to read into. This is evident during the build-up to the release of Nirvana's second studio album *Nevermind* (1991) which catapulted the band to stardom and heralded a new popularity for grunge music. Cobain's Mother is interviewed and recalls the time she was first played the song *Smells Like Teen Spirit* (1991) by her son but speaks with sadness in her voice as she realises that his new-found fame from the success of this song could be a death sentence. The overall tone is compounded by the artistic choice to use behind the scenes footage of the music video for *Smells Like Teen Spirit* and replace Cobain's voice and the original musical instruments with that of a choir and a piano, respectively. This simple change strips away any complexity in reading into Nirvana and Cobain's lyrics or state of mind whilst creating an impending sense of disaster – a fact that could be in the back of viewers minds, particularly those who are aware of his death only 3 years after the release of *Nevermind*. The impending sense of tragedy that is generated through the oral and visual factors in Montage of Heck can be directly compared to *Gimme Shelter* (discussed in chapter 2) with the horrifying events that took place at the Altamont Free Festival. Although it is an aspect of filmmaking that requires the audience to have prior knowledge of the events about to unfold on screen, it is no less powerful to those who may not be aware of what is coming. As the film draws to a close, Morgen focuses on the last few weeks of Cobain's troubled life and through archival footage, conflates videos of the artist enjoying time with his young daughter and his wife, Courtney Love, with news footage of the artist in hospital as the result of a drug overdose. Cobain was found dead days later. The abruptness of such an event was reflected in the film's conclusion, Morgen choosing to dedicate title cards (using understated white writing on a black background) to convey the passing of Cobain. This could be interpreted as signifying the sudden and unforeseen circumstances that surrounded the death of the musician and contrasts heavily with the way Amy Winehouse's death is dealt with in *Amy*, which displayed footage of Winehouse's corpse being taken under wraps to the morgue. Whether or not Morgen would have used such footage of Cobain post-death if it were available is an open-ended discussion that audiences could partake in.

Both *Amy* and *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck* are powerful examples of experimental music documentaries, due to their ability to take the established codes and conventions and expand them whilst still retaining the core spirit of what makes a music documentary successful; both commercially and narratively. This chapter sought to investigate whether there is still room to innovate in a genre of film that has a storied and rigid framework. *Amy* demonstrates the significance of found footage storytelling, allowing for more intimate material which invites viewers to reassess their pre-established beliefs regarding a particular subject. Fleming interprets the experimental documentary and its effects on audience perceptions, stating:

> During its running time, a film builds up a distinctive evaluative attitude towards a given subject using formal devices and framing techniques. Thereafter we might concern ourselves with how such a film encourages an individual (or collective) to adopt its attitude or perspective upon that subject, object or event. (2017, p.30)

The important aspect of these remarks to emphasise is how a documentary could cause its viewer to ‘adopt its attitude or perspective upon that subject’, indicating that the director and/or editor of any given documentary will leave their biases on a film, however intentional it comes across in the final product. *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck* signifies the potential of new techniques in documentaries through advancements in technology, specifically with animation. Director Brett Morgen and animator Stefan Nadelman use such techniques to place the viewer at the scene of an event that was never captured on camera, expanding on the tradition convention of the re-enactment in documentaries. It is evident that the experimental music documentary utilises codes discussed in this chapter that have not been recognised in previous eras and films specific to this research dissertation. However, visible to the viewer throughout this chapter are traits and techniques that are recognisable. Ethical discussions surrounding documentaries remain and intensify as the line becomes blurred between effective, emotional storytelling and the issues of consent around using footage to achieve this. The concept of a documentary altering a viewer’s perception of documentary subjects is not new to the genre, *Don’t Look*

Back is a previously discussed example of direct cinema attaining this in the 1960s. However, unlike *Don't Look Back* which allowed the subject (Bob Dylan) to leave his impression on audiences without prompt and interference from the director, modern examples, such as those discussed in this chapter, are more heavily influenced by those responsible for their creation. Re-enactments, not commonly found within the music documentary, are seen in the experimental documentary, demonstrating the genre's ability to scalp techniques from the wider codes if it suits the situation. The experimental music documentary is evidence that the boundaries of the traditional music documentary still have the capability to be widened and expanded upon. It's only limit, perhaps, being the technology, responsible for many of the advancements discussed in this chapter and the extent of the availability of archival footage and personal effects of the subject under scrutiny.

Conclusion

The aims of this dissertation were to investigate the origins, ethics, various forms of the music documentary. In order to complete this investigation, it was necessary to focus on 4 main time-periods within the genre: the origins of the music documentary, direct cinema, the mock-documentary and, finally, the experimental documentary. Upon re-examination of the previous 4 chapters, it is evident that each of these sub-sections represent milestones within the music documentary, as visualised in figure 9 below.

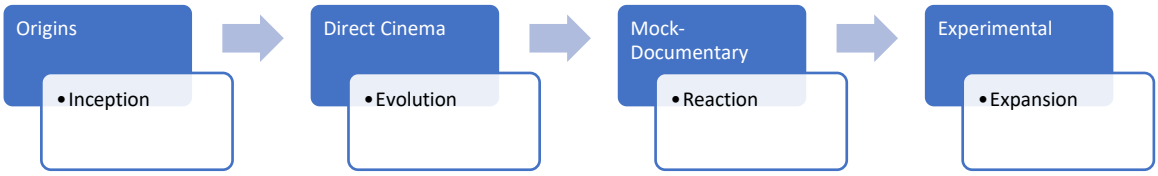

Figure 9 – A chart demonstrating the various points in the music documentary and their representations.

The opening chapter concerning the origins of the music documentary explored the foundations of the genre, its roots being set in early concert films. Despite the simplicity of such films, *Concert Magic* being the key example from chapter 1, subsequent concert films and music documentaries analysed later in the chapter demonstrated that there is potential and scope for the genre to explore wider themes besides the music itself. *Jazz on a Summer's Day* and *The Cry of Jazz* dissects 1950s America with particular focus on race and societal issues of the era, using the jazz genre of music to complement, enhance and move-along such discussions of a heavy subject. Both films vary in their levels of subtlety when covering such matters, the former invites the audience to interpret its deeper messages whilst the latter is much more brazen in its approach, utilising a narrator to inform its audience of the director's views.

The second chapter covered the era of direct cinema within the music documentary and represents an evolution of the genre, ushered along by advances in technology

and a change of focus from key filmmakers such as the Maysles brothers and D.A. Pennebaker. Compact film equipment allowed directors to record their subjects in a less invasive manner and began the quest to achieve objective truthfulness in documentaries. As is evident from the discussions surrounding the two films in this chapter, *Don't Look Back* and *Gimme Shelter*, achieving objective truthfulness is a task that appeared to elude both the Maysles brothers and D.A. Pennebaker, with the subjects being able to cultivate their 'off-stage' personas into behaviour which would enhance their images and uphold positive public perceptions of them. Despite these shortcomings, this era of the music documentary illustrates the genre beginning to widen its scope, the filmmakers craving more than just the artist's music. There is a clear shift of focus from the music to the musician with audiences being granted a look into the private lives of their musical idols.

The mock-documentary was the basis for the third chapter in this dissertation and signals a period of reaction to the initial genre of the music documentary. The movement has deep links within the US and UK schools of comedy, depending on where the films originated and it was illustrated that a relatively small number of people are behind such a huge genre of films, all taking inspiration from one another and leaning into their satirical roots. The mock-documentary relies on humour to convey social critique which has juxtaposing qualities similar to the films in chapter 1. Chapter 2 focused on several entries into the genre: *A Hard Day's Night*, *All You Need Is Cash*, and *Popstar: Never Stop Never Stopping*, which attempt to respond to the codes and conventions of the films that they drew inspiration from, pointing out absurdities in both the films themselves and their settings. The comedic elements in mock-documentaries require a less thorough interpretation than previous films in this dissertation such as *Jazz on a Summer's Day* which could explain the genre's popularity. The mock-documentary secures the regular documentary's legitimacy and legacy as a colossal force within film and television; the imitation of the established body of work being interpreted as a positive and flattering milestone for the genre.

The final chapter of this dissertation sought to focus on the experimental music documentary as a means of bringing the research into modernity, whilst seeking to investigate the expansion of the genre as it morphs into something beyond the codes set and discussed in the previous 3 chapters. Including chapter 4, this dissertation has focused on music documentaries from between the years 1948-2015 – a 67 year period in which there is an overwhelming sense that everything that had proceeded it within the genre has been building up to the two entries which formed the basis for analysis in this final chapter, Amy and *Kurt Cobain: Montage of Heck*. The experimental music documentary showcases new techniques of collection to provide the audience with more intimate and legitimate footage, readdressing chapter 2's discussion surrounding the dilemma of objective truthfulness in the music documentary. Experimental documentarians sought to break down the strict boundaries that had been established decades prior, a key example is the traditional re-enactment scenes (not normally found in music documentaries) being replaced by animated re-enactments to encapsulate events that a camera was not present to capture. This is a creative workaround for the documentary genre but one which has the potential to open a Pandora's box of ethical quandaries and could jeopardise the documentary's aim of portraying the truth. The experimental documentary demonstrates that the desire for the objective truthfulness, which direct cinema strived for, is still present decades later. However, the lines are becoming more blurred as the genre grows ever lenient; it has become a case of portraying 'the truth' by any means necessary. Beyond the 67 years of the music documentary that has been covered in this dissertation, to accurately predict where the genre goes beyond this point in the future is an impossible task. Using the areas from each chapter as a guide, however, it is evident that the next generation of the music documentary will be heavily influenced by the advancements of technology, the subjects themselves and the availability of material such as found archival footage. The passion shown for the music documentary by filmmakers, subjects and audiences alike does not seem to have an expiration date. The future of the genre is unknown - an immensely exciting prospect.

Appendix

Figure 1- The Beach Boys performing a fast-paced song

Figure 2- The editing effects used when The Beach Boys are performing a slower-paced song

Figure 3 - A busy shot featuring Gerry Ramsden, a backup singer, the band behind them and two go-go dancers

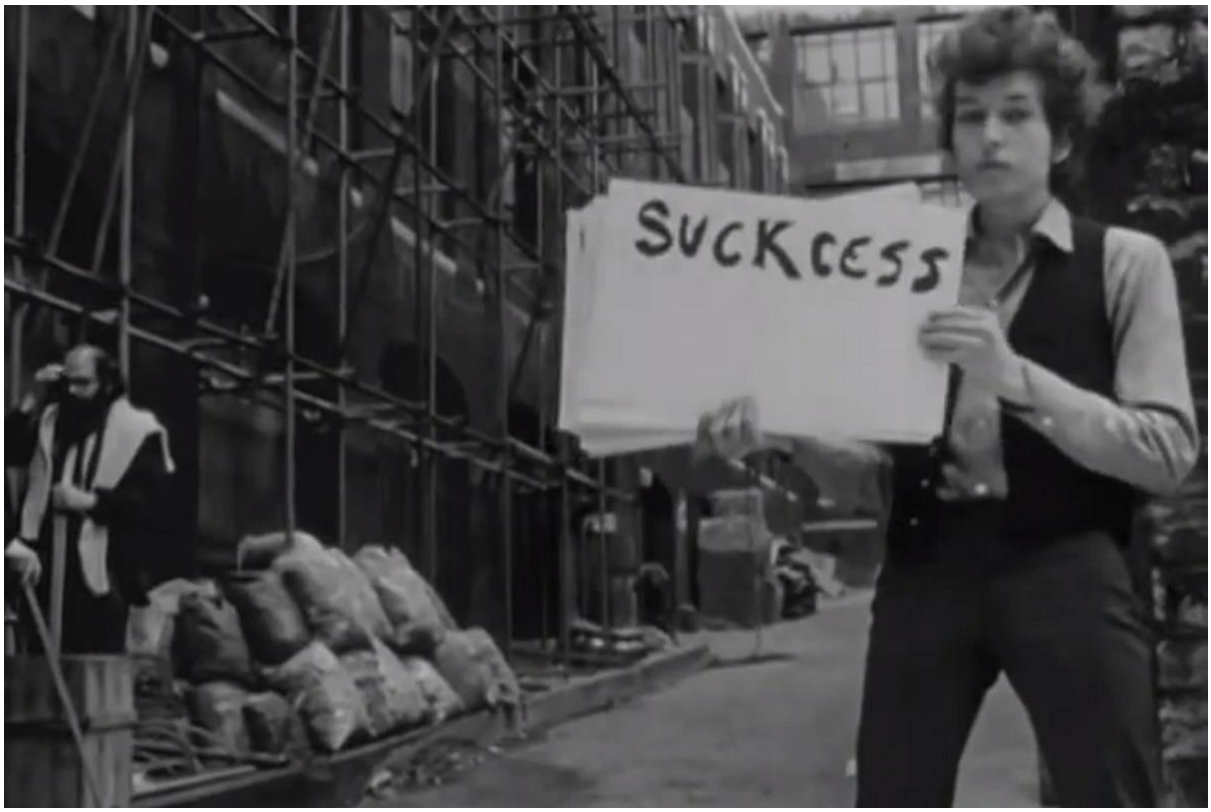

Figure 4 - Dylan holding up a deliberately misspelled card in the music video for Subterranean Homesick Blues (1965)

Figure 5 - Mick Jagger performing for the crowd at the Altamont Free Concert, the concertgoers crammed in and very close to the stage.

Figure 6- Example performing at a modern-day concert, demonstrating the safety procedures now in place, compared to the lack of safety seen in concerts such as the Altamont Free Concert.

Figure 7 - A frame from A Hard Day's Night (1964) that is filmed in a documentary style

Figure 8 - A frame from A Hard Day's Night that is filmed in a more cinematic fashion.

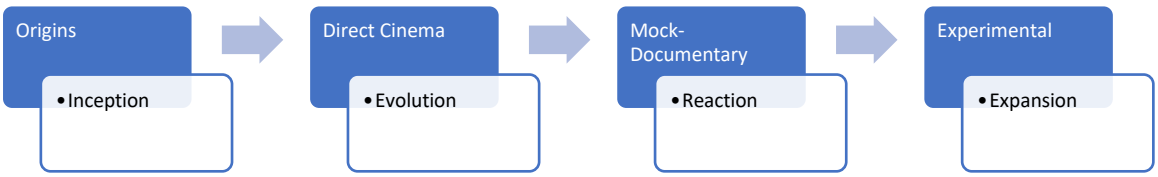

Figure 9 - A chart demonstrating the various points in the music documentary and their representations.

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- *Beyond the Fringe* by Alan Bennett, Peter Cook, Johnathan Miller, and Dudley Moore. Directed by Johnathan Miller. [Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh]

Figure Table – Chapter 1

- Figure 1 – The Beach Boys performing a fast-paced song. (Binder, 1964)
- Figure 2 – The editing effects used when The Beach Boys are performing a slower paced song. (Binder, 1964)
- Figure 3 – A busy shot featuring Gerry Ramsden, a backup singer, the band behind them and two go-go dancers. (Binder, 1964)

Figure Table – Chapter 2

Figure Table – Conclusion