

Power is a significant part of a documentary project

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Duration of video clip: 1 minute 46 seconds

You know, the Justine project that we workshopped today here at iDocs, we talked a lot about consent. But consent is only the tip of the iceberg in relationship to an ethical documentary practice.

An ethical documentary practice acknowledges that power is always live, and in fact is a significant part of the documentary project, every documentary project.

You won't ever make power go away and in fact, the movement of power which can be in a flow, in the documentary scene is very interesting. It stands in for the movement of power more broadly in society, but to make it an ethical documentary project, people need to enter knowing, and having some agency in relationship to that. So collaboration, has historically been one choice that ethical documentarians have made - one of many. To begin to share power in the documentary space, and to imagine what it would look like for some of the power which is produced by the documentarian being distanced and far away and different from his subject. What happens if that begins to be shared? So that the camera itself might move, or the voice of the filmmaker might, or the face of the filmmaker that might become present, or people would decide together what is important.