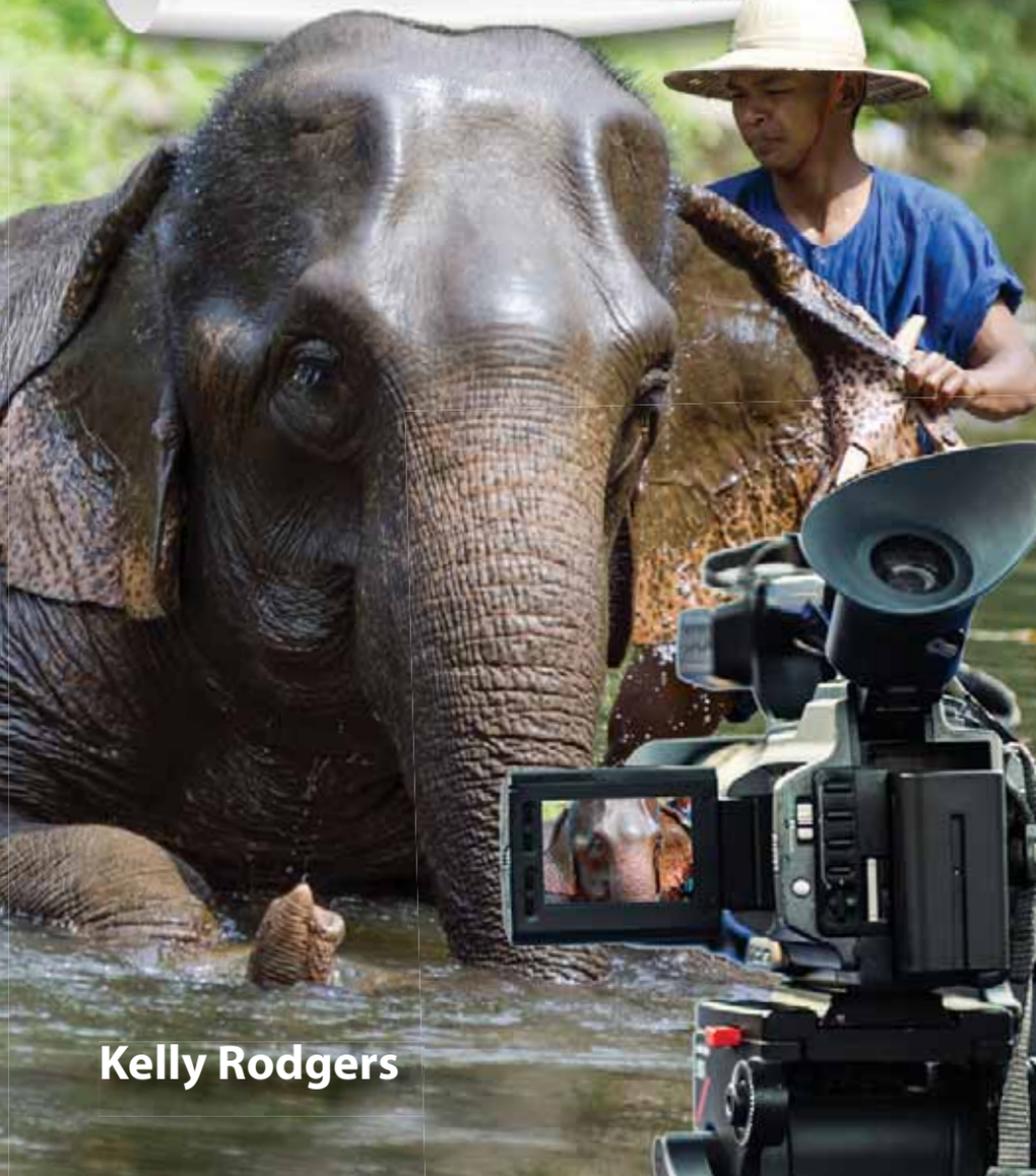


Communicate!

TIME
FOR KIDS

documentaries



Kelly Rodgers

Table of Contents

Playing a Vital Role	4
The Language of Film	6
A Noble Aim	20
The Key Factor	30
A Better Place	40
Glossary	42
Index.....	44
Check It Out!	46
Try It!.....	47
About the Author	48

For teachers' inspection ONLY



Playing a Vital Role

Have you ever watched a film that made you think about the lives of others? Or one that made you want to help solve a problem? If so, the film may have been a documentary. These films tell stories about real people and real events. Sometimes, they focus on nature or life in the past. Often, they focus on rights.

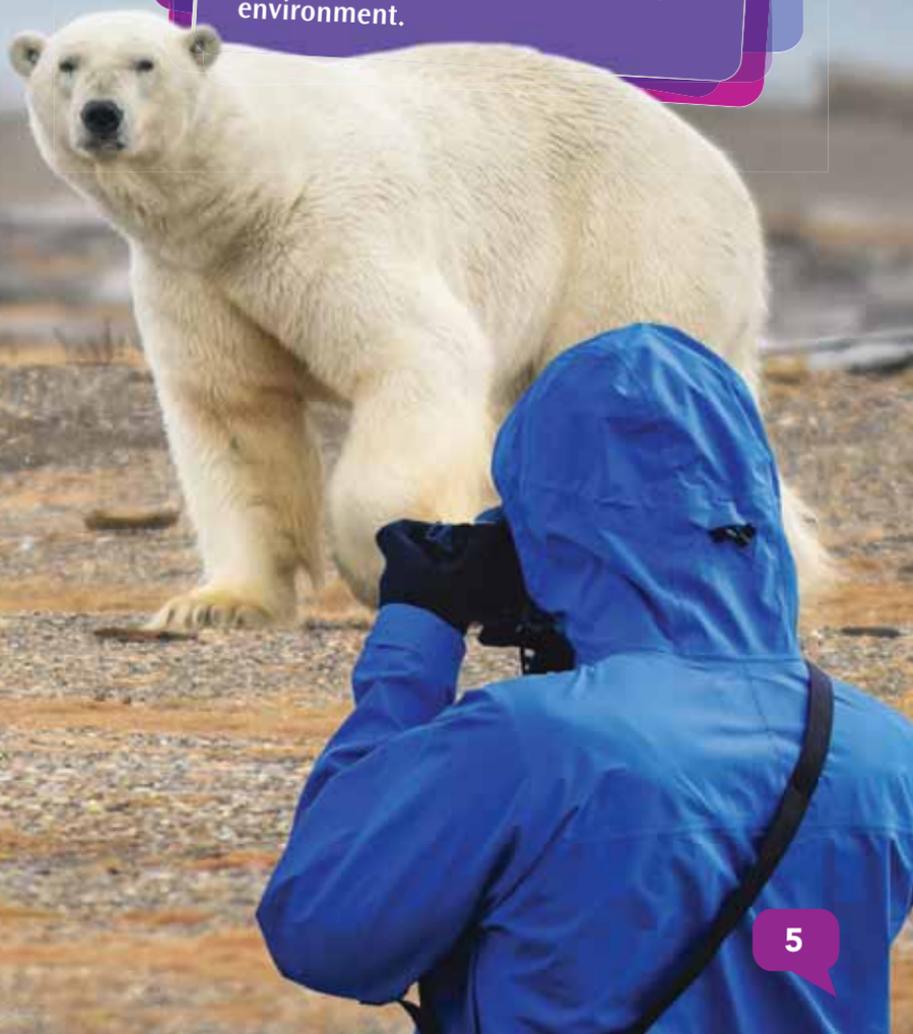
The rights of people and animals are the theme of many documentaries. Every person has rights. These are called *human rights*. Making sure animals receive **humane** treatment is called *animal rights*. Documentary **filmmakers** can play key roles in making sure human rights and animal rights are protected. They educate and inspire viewers. They urge them to take action.

Beneath the Surface

Documentary film writer, producer, and director (*An Inconvenient Truth*, *He Named Me Malala*, *Waiting for Superman*) Davis Guggenheim (shown left) believes that documentaries help viewers think about rights. “That’s the beauty of my job,” he says, “you can go into these places and meet these families that remind you of things you take for granted.”

Popular Truth

An Inconvenient Truth is the most popular documentary film ever made. It fights for the rights of all living creatures by making people aware of **climate change**. The film also inspires people to take care of the environment.



The Language of Film

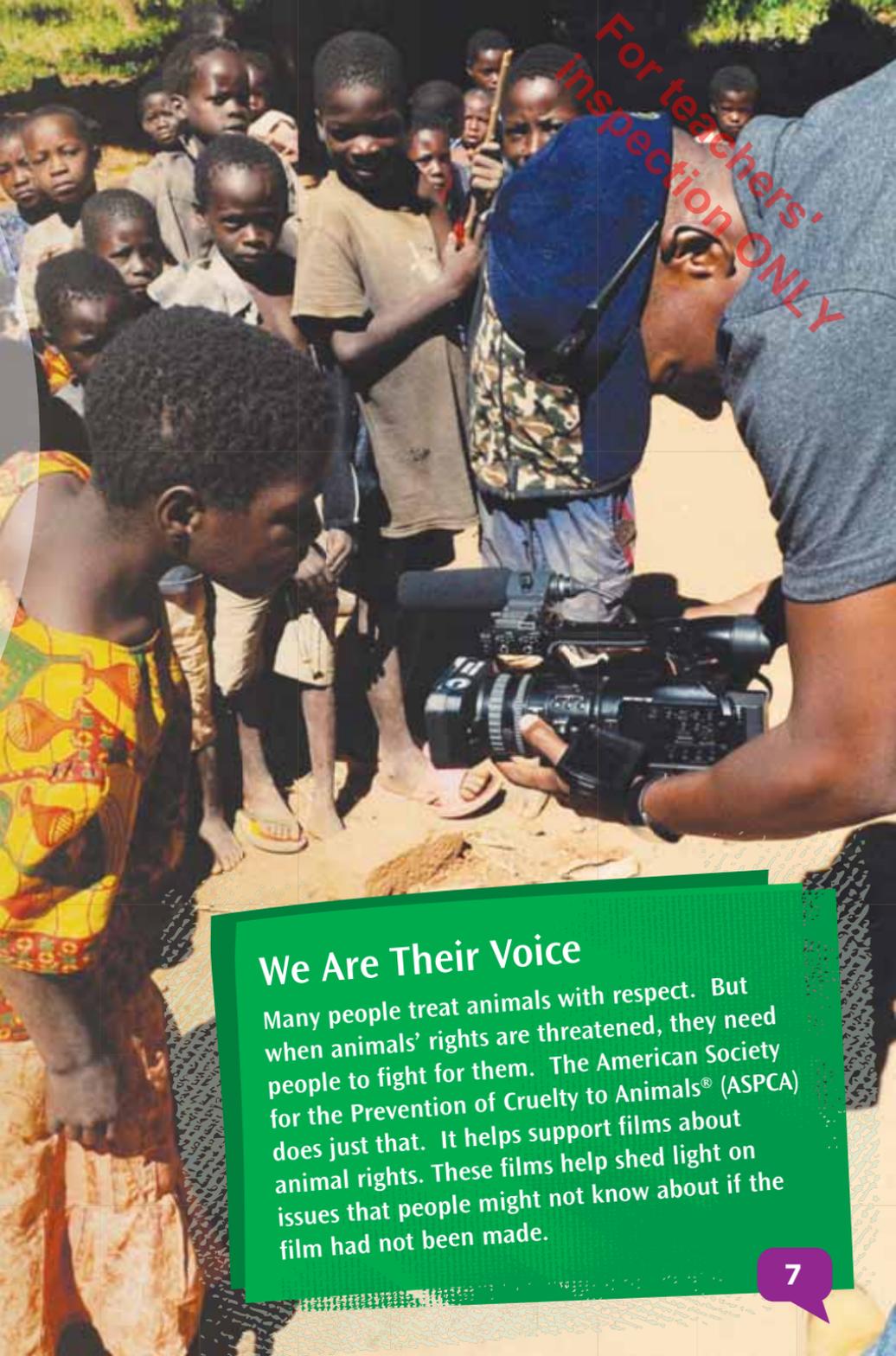
Films are a type of **visual art**. They tell stories through images and film language. Film language is the way all of the sights and sounds of a film impact its overall message. Viewers interpret this language to understand the film's message.

Distinctions

Documentaries, or nonfiction films, are a distinct film **genre**. They record real life. They show real struggles. Films about rights show how humans and animals suffer when their rights are not protected. Humans cannot always stand up for their own rights. Animals cannot speak out for theirs. Documentaries show people how they can help fight for the rights of others.

A Global Declaration

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was released in 1948 by the United Nations. Though old, it is still an important document. It spells out basic rights for all humans. The UDHR states that all people "are born free and equal in dignity and rights." It includes the rights to life, freedom, and equal protection of the law.



For teachers' inspection ONLY

We Are Their Voice

Many people treat animals with respect. But when animals' rights are threatened, they need people to fight for them. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals® (ASPCA) does just that. It helps support films about animal rights. These films help shed light on issues that people might not know about if the film had not been made.

Common Ground

Many documentaries deal with rights. Some films focus on children's rights. These films may focus on bullying in schools or children who have to deal with hunger. Other films shed light on **racism** or **gender discrimination**. And still others show how humans mistreat animals.

Documentaries about rights have certain things in common. They tell stories about people who are fighting to end injustice. They show people who have dealt with these issues firsthand. They show the viewer that anyone can make a difference. And they use film language to **convey** their meanings.

Promoting Love

Lizzie Velasquez (shown left) was born with a disorder that causes her to look different from most people. She was bullied for most of her life. Now, she fights against bullying. Lizzie started her own YouTube channel, which she uses to promote love and hope. The documentary, *A Brave Heart: The Lizzie Velasquez Story*, tells about her life.



BE THE CHANGE

Two Sides of the Story

The Elephant in the Living Room focuses on the problems with keeping wild animals as pets. The film shows the struggle to protect the rights of owners and animals. One image in the film shows a lion named Lambert caged in a horse trailer. Seeing a wild animal trapped in a small area stuck in the minds of many viewers.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Reader's Guide

1. Why do people create documentary films?
2. What are human rights? What are animal rights?
3. How can filmmakers use documentaries to communicate their messages?
4. How do filmmakers use the three main types of appeals in documentaries?

