Planning the Documentary
1. What is the focus - What makes it worth doing?

- Triggering People, Issue, or Event
- requires research
- Because of (people, issue, event), this project will............
  - demonstrate...
  - provide information........explain.....get inside minds.......
  - entertain..
  - motivate audience to .................

- communications need, other directed
  - convincing whom........educating whom....entertaining whom....sell what to whom.....
2. The audience

Who is the audience--who will be interested
   identify them

What are they like
   describe them
   • what should they learn
   • what do they know
   • what will motivate them
   • what are existing attitudes
   • cultural specifics
   • media sophistication

● describe one (typical) member--a persona--best way to reach
3. Communication Objective

What is the essence of the piece:
  brief
  evocative

“Jazz is love”
“Arab Americans are caught in a crossfire”
4. Competitive Analysis

- What else is out there
- Cost
- Content
- Characteristics
- Success
- Considering competition
  - Changes?
  - Continue?
5. What is the program content

- define specific content
- research
- Gather everything you can find
  - Web
  - Print
  - Film
  - Experts
- Can be massive amount of information out there
6. Program content

- Narrow the focus, Deepen the film (Rabiger p210)
- Tight focus is better than broad scope
- Seek the center of the film (com objective)
- List the points you must make
  - Themes
  - Expository information
7. Program content

- Sift for what is essential
  - Issues
    - How illustrate
    - How make understandable
  - People
    - Who are the central characters?
    - Why?
    - How present them effectively?
    - Do they really fit/belong
  - Events
    - Complex?
    - How cover
8. What Will happen on Screen

- How will you treat the content?
  - Interviews
    - Settings
    - Setups?
  - Action sequences
  - Illustration
    - Graphic
  - Need narration?
    - Complex information
    - Can’t shoot
    - Bridge gaps
9. What are the program elements

- how to deliver the content
- Setting
- music
- narrator
- cast
- story elements
- graphic elements
- Style/feel
10. How/where will program be used

- Distribution--how do you reach the audience
  - Television
  - web

- Equipment implications

- packaging--container/labeling

- promotion--audience awareness
11. Financial Needs

- costs

Budget
- Above the line
- below the line
- out of pocket
- in-kind

- source of money
- profits go where
12. Equipment and technology

- tape format
- studio or remote
- edited or live
- multimedia or video
- stereo/surround sound
- Computer/programing needs
13. Locations

- travel
- exotic location
- Appropriate to content
- Shootable
  - Light
  - Sound
  - Space
  - interference
14. Personnel

- people/positions required
- unions
- pay rates
- ability
15. Scheduling and timetable

- Master schedule--overview
- rehearsal
- Shooting/production schedule
- Editing/programming
- Marketing and distribution
16. Evaluation

- calls and letters - tend to be skewed.
- Ratings -
  - How many people are watching?
  - How many people are actively watching? Looks at households only.
  - Does not include institutions.
- Reviews
- Call in shows
- Awards
- Evaluative research