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### Rhetorical Analysis of a Documentary Film: The Machine that Made Us

The rhetoric that is mostly applied by Fry in the documentary “The Machine that made us” is the use of anecdotes. There are several instances in the documentary where the anecdote is significantly employed (Fogg 168). The anecdotes are used to describe the diverse situations that took place before and after the invention of the printing press. The anecdotes that are used by Fry are used to be able to provide the background information and also establish an informal and personal relationship between the viewers and the documentary. The anecdotes that are used are also used to be able to capture the imaginations of the different people who are found in the audience of the film. Stephen Fry and the documentary present the idea of the printing press as a revolutionary idea and invention as a rather linear story. There are no jumps between time periods, but instead the audience follows Stephen through a step by step process, in which he demonstrates the power of the press. Fry did not indicate the construction of the machine as this would greatly be boring to the audience. The history of the printing press is shown especially the evolutions that have taken place over the years. The invention of the printing press has made it easy to be able to disseminate the desirable knowledge and information. Throughout human civilization, man has always been a quest for knowledge. It doesn't matter how educated an individual or their background, as they are always going to have questions regarding how something works. It is simply human nature, and as Stephen Fry

indicates, the print press and subsequently the books that come out of it, did help fuel this drive and passion of individuals.

It is important for Stephen to demonstrate the actual construction of the print press though. For the audience to understand exactly what the print press meant, it is essential for them to see exactly what it takes to build such a device (Kostelnick 2). By simply looking at a print press, it doesn't look like much at all. An individual without the basic understanding of the tools available at the time probably wouldn't have thought of much of anything when looking at the object. After all, as the introduction of the documentary shows off, even modern children's toys are able to do exactly what the print press did. However, by viewing the construction demonstration, it becomes possible to actually understand how much work it took to produce the print press and the overall genius of Guttenberg.

Fry also makes use of contrasts to be able to bring to the fore the ideas that he want to communicate to the different people. There are many different inventions over the ages that have drastically gone on to improve human life significantly for the better. However, very few have had as much of an influence as the book and the print press. Every invention comes from a previous invention, and almost all modern inventions today are able to draw directly on the importance of the book and the print press. With the introduction and demonstration of Stephen Fry, it is that much more possible for the audience to comprehend the sheer brilliance of the invention and what it truly means for every individual currently and in the future living on the planet (Perelman 5). The different technologies are significantly contrasted and this clearly shows the important role that the new technology that was developed plays.

Sir Rowland Hill and his significance to the topic

Sir Rowland Hill was born in Worcestershire, England in 1795. He was a British educator and administrator. He is important and relevant to the communication in history due to the fact that he was the originator of the penny postage as well as the postal service which was later adopted by the different countries of the world. Hill made proposals that were geared towards the reformation of the postal services that were used in the country. He formulated the proposals between 1835 and 1837 (Crowley, and Heyer 298). The reforms were based on his views that the tax revenues in a country should be able to increase in tandem with the growth in the population as well as the national prosperity. Hill made the proposal that lower taxes should be levied on letters as higher taxes would lead to a reduction in the mail volumes and thus the revenues from the letters and the mail would be significantly hurt. The other proposals that were made is the uniform rate for postage for all letters regardless of the distance as diverse rates for letters going to different locations would lead to an increase in the accounting expenses that are incurred and finally that all the mail should be prepaid. Hill was responsible for the invention of the postage stamp.

Montgomery Blair and why is he at all relevant to our topic

Montgomery Blair was born in 1813 and died in 1883. He was born in Franklin County in Kentucky and died in Silver Spring, Maryland. Montgomery served in the Abraham Lincoln's government as the postmaster general. Blair was not satisfied with the position that Lincoln gave him as he had been promised the position of the Secretary of War (Crowley, and Heyer 298). However, the appointment to the position of the postmaster general did not dampen his spirit as he embarked on a number of reforms in the

mail sector. During his service as the postmaster general, Blair was instrumental in the creation of the standard postal rates for southern states, the introduction of the money orders. Finally, he also made significant contribution with regards to the keeping of the open routes for the southern post offices that continued with the Union.

Heinrich von Stephan and why is he at all relevant to our topic

Heinrich von Stephan was born in 1831 and died in 1897. He was the German Empire general post director. He made the first formal recognition of the German postal Service and was very instrumental in the 1874 formation of the Universal Postal Union and telephone introduction into Germany in 1877 (Crowley, and Heyer 286). He worked towards the creation of uniform rates of postage to facilitate ease of mailing and also spearheaded the combination of the postal and telegraphs service in the country. He was also instrumental in the introduction of the Postcard. He made a great impact on the standardization of mail service worldwide. His proposal for Siemens to manufacture telephones led to the development of the telephone manufacture segment of the large German firm.

Significance of the 1874 Treaty of Bern

The Treaty of Bern led to the formation of the Universal Postal Union - previously the General Postal Union. The treat allowed for the international free exchange of mail through the unification of the postal services in the different countries (Crowley, and Heyer 298).

William H. Russell and why is he at all relevant to our topic

Sir William H Russell was born in 1820. Russell was a journalist who was dispatched to many war zones (Crowley, and Heyer 294). He made his news dispatches

through the use of telegraph. William was able to bring the realities of the wars to the people who were watching at home thus significantly diminishing the distance between the remote battle fields and the home fronts.

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