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# From "Primary" to "The Contenders" VR : Do Technological Advances in Images tend to more Transparency ?

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## Abstract

In 1960, *Primary* (Robert Drew) revolutionized the documentary field. The use of lighter sound equipment, a camera lighter than before helped to create a new approach. As Direct Cinema does, *Primary* wanted to offer a new way of filming reality, to capture life " directly ", without the distortion of a complex technical system, to be like a " fly on the wall ". It also introduced a new proximity to politicians, a sense of being " behind the curtain " and a chance to see how things really work from the " inside ", a real feeling of transparency (showing every details of this campaign). As Guy Gauthier and Gilles Marsolais explained, Direct Cinema came from the meeting of economic, technical, aesthetic and ethical issues. 56 years later, New York Times founds *The Contenders*, about the 2016 primary in which there were Hillary Clinton, Ted Cruz, Donald Trump or Bernie Sanders. But this time, the 2016 primary is filmed in 360° and shown in virtual reality (VR). The Contenders VR allows the audience to " experience the presidential campaign ", as claimed by the New York Times website, and to be literally inside the crowd waiting for their contender to appear. With VR, everything is visible, as the apparatus is totally transparent. This immersion creates a strange feeling of " being there " and offers a new way of filming. Does this technic really achieves, in a way, the purposes of Direct Cinema, if it's still cinema ? How can this device be useful to analyze a situation ? Wouldn't it be more precise to evoke an illusion of transparency, despite the first impression of " being there " ? This presentation would like to analyze those two ways of filming politicians, and to question those two devices. Putting aside economic issues, could virtual reality become an interesting way of conducting an inquiry, not only as a journalist but also in sociology ?

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