This Ph.D. explores the interface between documentary practice and participatory culture by looking at how their practices, discursive fields and histories intersect, but also by looking at how participating in one might mean participating in the other. The research is an examination of participatory culture through the lens of documentary practice and documentary criticism.

A number of ways of conceiving of participation in documentary practice are discussed in this research, but one of the ideas that gives purpose to that investigation is the notion that the participant in contemporary documentary practice is someone who belongs to a participatory culture in particular.

Not only does this mean that those subjects who play a part in a documentary are already informed by their engagement with a range of everyday media practices before the documentary apparatus arrives, the audience for such films are similarly informed and engaged.