Example

Nonfiction Media from Film to VR

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Keyword Documentary and Peer Review

Assignment: Students will create a short, 5-minute maximum nonfiction video or immersive/interactive project that explores one theoretical concept integral to the critical assessment and understanding of nonfiction media from film to VR. In groups of three, students will be assigned a theoretical keyword/concept around which they will either shoot a nonfiction video or design an interactive documentary *enacting* the assigned term. In a designated class period preceding the final due date for the assignment, the group will present their work for the whole class. As a class we will discuss what they've shot already (when applicable), their media-making tools of choice, their design parameters, and their project's theoretical impetus.

In this peer review time, students are asked to constructively assess the project and offer insight into how it might best be shaped to reflect its conceptual purpose. How will this documentary communicate its message? What is it telling us? What is interesting about it? What would improve it/make its message clearer? What would X-theorist say about it? What about Y-filmmaker? How would this project be received in a given era in the history of nonfiction? Found footage is permitted in the final version but as a general rule must consist of less than 50 percent of the final product. Students will also submit an individually prepared **4-5 page paper** that presents their research and analysis of their own documentary. For the sake of fairness, this write-up will be due at the end of the semester along with the final version of the documentary.

Intent: The goal of this project is to aid in building a media literate understanding of nonfiction media. Media literate in this instance can be defined as the critically informed *enactment* of conceptual materials via available semiotic registers such as video, text, and interactive media. Just as we are able to put in to written form the meanings of a visual documentary, so too can we

put in to visual-multimedia form the meanings of written texts. Students will practice the multimedia production skills necessary for complex, critical media scholarship. Students will also conduct peer review in a controlled, analytical environment where they might foster a collaborative and socially aware attitude toward their work.

Due: --

Part 1: Contextualization
➢   After being assigned a group and keyword/concept, use class discussion, readings, as well as your own research to gain a working knowledge and vocabulary based on your topic
➢   Before choosing how to enact your keyword, strategize with your group:
--How will you approach your topic visually? Will you use interactive or immersive techniques to communicate your idea? If so, what platforms/tools will you use and what will be the difficulties in using them to express your concept? Remember to be realistic about what you can accomplish before starting your project.
--What author, critic, documentarist, or tradition of thought will you be exploring or applying in your video/experience?
--How do you imagine the end product to be? How much will post-production (editing, adding sound and other images, including text) factor into the message of your film?
--Will your film have a story or characters?
➢   **Storyboards or other pre-production visualizations are highly recommended**

Part 2: Create
➢   Design a rough "shooting schedule", or divide responsibilities among your team members according to everyone's strengths
--Are you going to shoot new content? What are you planning to shoot?
--Where?
--When?
--In what order?
--What function will each of your group members perform and when?
➢   Shoot your footage, and/or access the applications necessary for your project
--Although you may shoot as much footage as you want, for editing purposes it is advised that you shoot **no more than 1 hour of footage**

Part 3: Peer Review
➢   Be prepared to screen existing footage, or describe and display your interactive concept and which application you'll be using to accomplish what you need to

➢   During peer review, your group will have the opportunity to explain its reasoning and choices regarding the design of its project as well as its plans moving forward in light of what you've produced thus far

Part 4: Edit
➢   Create a rough post-production strategy
--What combination of sounds, images, text, and edits will best communicate your keyword/concept?
--What sounds, images, texts, or interactive procedures will you need throughout the process? How will you get them?
--Which jobs will each group member perform at any given interval? i.e. first draft, second draft, third draft
➢   Work with your group and the footage you shot/interaction you've designed to best display or *enact* your keyword/concept via text, image, sound, gesture, and the relationships they form when put together
➢   **Videos must not exceed 5 minutes**
➢   **Your final draft must include a works cited**

Part 5: Theorization
➢   As individuals, write **a 4-5 page companion document** to your project
➢   This document will build from and reflect on the theoretical work you've accomplished in your documentary
➢   Some questions to consider when writing this document:
--How does your conceptualization differ from the end product? Is this difference significant in some way?
--What does it mean to "theorize" one's own work?
--How does a written analysis/theorization such as this document differ from the multimedia analysis/theorization of your keyword documentary?
--How well did your group *enact* your given keyword/concept? What kind of message might your keyword documentary send to someone who is unaware of your original concept?