

DOCUMENTARY THEATRE PROJECT GUIDELINES

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Documentary theatre is theatre that is created by pre-existing source material such as interview transcripts and archival materials. For this project you are creating your own virtual documentary theatre project.

You can present this “live” on Zoom or prerecord your project. While we have discussed some of the aspects of live documentary theatre, because this project is going to be presented online you will need to think about how elements of cinema, film, and new media could be useful in telling your story (including lights and sound). The total length of your piece should be 10-15 minutes. You should think about this as a short documentary play (similar to the ones we have read and discussed in class).

You will:

- Select a topic that you want to explore relating to contemporary socio-political issues. Be specific. If you select something like “coronavirus”, figure out what aspect of coronavirus you will look at (example: the impact on first responders, students during coronavirus, coronavirus in a specific geographic location, etc.) The more specific you are the stronger your piece will be.
- Find people you want to work with in this class to develop the project. (You may work in groups up to 3 people). You may have performers who are not in this class join you for this project.
- Select people you want to interview on the topic (think about people with alternative viewpoints and placing those viewpoints in conversation with each other).
- Think about what story you want to tell and what you want to explore further about the topic – or how documentary theatre might shed light on this issue in a way that hasn’t been done before.
- Interview and transcribe the interviews.
- Edit the text so that it is a fully realized short play with a beginning, middle, end and dramatic tension.
- Your play should include a piece of music, and two sound effects of your choice that can be performed live. Be creative.

Due Dates:

MIDTERM: Monday, October 12th

FINAL: November 16th and November 23rd

Midterm Project Components:

2-4 Page Proposal: In this proposal, you must:

- List the members of the group and what role each individual will be fulfilling (directing, performing, transcribing, interviewing, etc.) Try your best to work collaboratively.
- State the theme your project is exploring.
- State who you will interview (please have 1-2 people confirmed)
- Give an explanation for the concept behind your project.
- Discuss the objectives of this piece. Who is your audience? What are you hoping audiences will walk away with? What resources do you want to offer audiences?
- You must include a list of 5-8 bibliographic citations you will be using for this project. These citations should be in MLA format and should be resources that you are using to help develop your piece. These resources can include statistics, news sources, etc.

Class Presentation: Each group will give a brief presentation of their project to the class. In this presentation, you should:

- Prepare a rehearsed staged reading of the play.
- Include music and sound cues

Written Report: Each student must submit a 3-5 page essay

- Each group member's role was within the project
- What kinds of tasks did the role entail
- How your component of the project fit into the overall presentation
- Your thoughts on the process and the finished product
- How your play fit in with the readings/discussions from the semester
- How your play fits in with the theories discussed in this course

*This is a creative project. I want you to get a chance to experience (and **have fun during**) the creative process that encompasses some aspects of making theatre happen. Please feel free to discuss any aspects of the process with me over the course of your project's development. I look forward to seeing what you come up with!*

Formatting Guidelines for Written Assignments:

Please make sure to adhere to the rules of standard written English. Your proposals/essays should be submitted in **size 12, Times New Roman** font, **double-spaced** with **one-inch margins**. Proposals should be one paragraph long and essays should be no more than two pages. Please also include a **Title** for all assignments. All play titles should be written in *italics*. Please make sure that you include your **name** and **section number** in the top-left corner of the paper.