PROJECT 4: GROUP DIGITAL ADAPTATION OF A RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR A POPULAR AUDIENCE & RELATED REFLECTION PAPER

Rhetorical Purpose: Strong writers are flexible and adaptive. That often means communicating with a wide range of audiences. Today, many researchers communicate their academic work to the larger public through articles, interviews, and videos.

A recent trend among some researchers is to adapt the Kickstarter model of crowdfunding and create online videos (one being experiment.com). Through this work, academics attempt to appeal to a broader audience, not just to communicate their work but also to convince average members of the public to open their wallets and donate to research funding.

In this group collaboration, you will be first composing a video that adapts a group member’s lit review and proposal (Project 3) for a popular audience. You will then consider your process, rhetorical choices, and perhaps what needs more work in a reflection paper (strong reflections look forward). Your audience will be your instructor and your classmates in a very literal way, as you will be presenting and screening your videos during our final exam time.

Research and Evidence: Your evidence in this project will come from sources in Projects 1-3, plus any additional sources your group wishes to add to beef up your proof, including credible popular ones. As you will only be adapting one proposal, that proposal’s sources and research idea should be quite strong. You may not have Project 3 back yet, so you cannot simply choose the project that received the best grade; you will have to use your critical thinking skills to decide which proposal has enough evidence, innovation (finds a research hole), and broader interest to create a pitch for a popular audience.

As you’re creating a video, you will have to think about visual and audio textual evidence as well as verbal (written). You may additionally use media such as music, still images, and video. We will talk in class about finding copyright-free material as well as free use. You are highly encouraged to shoot your own video footage; an iPhone and an editing program such as Windows Movie Maker or iMovie are about all the hardware and software tools you need for this video. See the video technical tip sheet on Moodle to help assuage your technology fears. We will also have a visit from the library digital media support staff. You can do this! You will have lots of guidance if you seek it out.
Just remember, while there are numerous rhetorical choices in this project, it is still a composition attempting to make an argument to a specific audience. Consider your rhetorical situation, and how you can clearly and convincingly convey your purpose.

**Higher Order Concerns (the Big Things):** Your job here is to take one of your group’s academic lit reviews and research proposals, and adapt that project for a popular audience through video. It can accomplish this through video, music, pictures, or voiceover narration; however, it must be relevant and convincing evidence to meet your ultimate goal, which is to receive funding for your project. An adaptation of the lit review will help provide background and context for your viewers. An adaptation of the research proposal will argue why they should give you funding. However, remember rhetorical appeals—what works with one kind of audience might not work with another. How will you adapt this dense and field-specific information for a broader audience?

A compelling and clear thesis can help you accomplish that. Just because your medium in this project is a video does not mean you shouldn’t have a central claim. In fact, most documentary-style videos do—we’ll examine this more. Your thesis should be early in your video. As usual, it should go a step further than the obvious, arguing why your proposal should be funded. Don’t forget the “so what?” for your viewers.

Finally, in the video, cite your sources using a popular documentary style, such as in-text and end credits (we’ll talk more about this in class). You will also upload an APA style References page the day your video is due.

**Lower Order Concerns (the Smaller Things):** Though this project is for a popular audience, your tone should still be reasonable and objective given what you want to accomplish.

It may be a little less formal considering your audience, but keep in mind that your audience will likely look for proof over emotion. You will be asking them to open their wallets. It may also help to define technical or field-specific language for your broader audience.

Finally, don’t forget to proofread your video. A polished final draft will enhance your ethos with your audience.
**Papers Due:**

At the beginning of our final exam time/screenings (location TBA):

Section 099 (3:40 p.m.): May 1, 1-4 p.m.

Section 005 (5:35 p.m.): April 29, 6-9 p.m.

Section 006 (7:30 p.m.): May 1, 6-9 p.m.

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**Suggested Process**

1. **Decide** which lit review and proposal your group will adapt. **Exchange** contact information. **Determine** project goals and deadlines. **Assign** tasks and roles if you wish to.

2. **Everyone in the group:** read the chosen proposal. **Ask** questions of the author if you don’t understand something. **Assess** if this proposal is the right one to adapt, if you need to add sources, or tweak this project.

3. **Freewrite** and **brainstorm** some ideas about your general outline.

4. **Look** for gaps in your research and find supplementary sources. **Read** and **annotate** them. Throw out old sources that aren’t contributing evidence.

5. **Together,** draft/draw a script, outline, or storyboard—or a combination of any of these three.

6. **Only then begin to worry about technology.** **Check** out hardware from library if you need to. **Shoot** video and/or interviews, gather stills and music, and begin to draft in iMovie or Windows Movie Maker. **Divide up** this technical work to use your time efficiently.

7. **Repeat** some or all of this process as needed.

8. **Revise,** using feedback from peers and other readers, including me. **Seek out** more feedback if you feel you need it.

9. **Together,** **draft** your reflection paper. Seek out feedback and revise.

10. **Turn in your video and APA References Sheet via Moodle. Turn in your reflection paper at your video screening.**