Scriptwriting for Digital Media
Project 3: Final Project Script
DUE: Day 1 of Week 11 (12/12/05)

Overview

The final project is your opportunity to complete a polished script. You may choose to write one of the following:

- A complete 30-minute narrative for television
- A complete 30-minute narrative for web broadcast, judged competition or other "less regulated audience."
- Two complete 15 minute episodes
- Four complete 7 minute episodes

The situation and content are of your choosing. The format will be spec script style.

The evaluation for this script is largely based on your level of polish, attention to audience, and your ability to deftly execute the artistic techniques of writing. Like the visual arts, polish is achieved through an initial attention to structure (form). On subsequent passes, you should add the nuances (color) that emphasize your characters and themes.

Requirements:

The final project may include a revised version of your script. Revisions must be significant and substantial. Please seriously consider the comments provided. If you choose to use the project 2 scripts as part of your final project, it must be exceptionally well polished. If you received an A on project 2, it does not mean that you are headed for an A in the final project. The scripts will be evaluated much more critically.

Length: 25 – 35 single spaced, single sided pages. Remember that there is a lot of white space in a script.

Subject: The subject is of your choosing, but we have spent significant time in class evaluating ideas. Use that research to your benefit. Your chosen story must be scripted, complete and employ a narrative structure that demonstrates an understanding of this course's content.

Format: Standard "spec script" format. You must follow the requirements for a spec script. These are outlined in the first third of Book III as "spec script" format. As mentioned in class requirements include:

- Courier / Courier New type
- Title page
- Page numbers
- Scene Headings / Slug lines
- Dialogue

Please note that the above list is a minimum.

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Additional Content:

The final project script must contain the following additional items. If you do not provide the following additional content, the instructor reserves the right to give an automatic F.

- Audience demographics worksheet
- Pitch worksheet
- Plot structure outline worksheet

These sheets should be permanently attached to the back of your script. Please complete the worksheet to the best of your ability, but remember that the primary focus of this assignment is your spec script. A well-researched script is not better than a completed script.

These worksheets allow you to explain your writing objectives. They assure that the instructor evaluates your script accurately and appropriately.

Recommendations:

Do not try to write this project in one sitting. Since you have an outline of the major events, you should be focusing largely on writing the dialogue, not the action. If you followed the plans outlined in class, you should have a rough concept, treatment and at least one major situation around which your narrative will focus. If you completed these assignments, you should be able to write comfortably at a pace of 10-20 minutes per page.   Please budget your time accordingly.

You do not have to write the action, dialogue etc. in order. Write it as it comes to you, but give yourself enough time to interweave the scenes you have created.

Once you have completed a draft take at least 2 days to work on something unrelated. Over the next week, keep a pen and small notebook handy. Some good ideas are likely to strike you when you are not sitting in front of computer trying to write.

Add the formatting after you have written the rough draft. Don't trouble your creative mind with format mechanics.

If you have been reading The Screenwriter's Bible, this process should be familiar to you.

Grading:

Instructor Evaluation:

It is a good idea to review the grading criteria provided to you in the first week of class. This is also available for download at http://AII.LGrace.com.

An "A" script has the following:

- At least **two** interesting, fresh, or well-crafted scenes

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- An evident character arc or clear hero's journey
- A set of original characters, or familiar characters in an original situation
- At least one moment of emotional content, that engages the audience, or situational content that appeals to audience curiosity or intellect.

In general, these things automatically prevent a great idea from getting full credit:

- Script is too short
- Script has many grammatical errors
- Script is poorly or inconsistently formatted

Peer Evaluation:

Each script will be evaluated by a peer. On the final day of class, you will bring a copy of your script. 2-3 Students will read (or act) your script and complete a peer evaluation form. This peer evaluation form will help inform the final grade decision.

A Few Strong Suggestions:

Do not indicate camera direction unless necessary. This is a spec script.

Do not procrastinate. For most people the myth of working better under pressure is truly a myth. If you need some pressure, make up something. ☺

Do remember that this can be used as part of your **final portfolio**. Keep the language and situations reasonable. You are writing for an audience. Do not be afraid to take risks, but do not alienate potential employers.

A script with four characters will be easier to script than one with 12. However, if you are seriously considering several "episodes," four characters may be a challenge to sustain for more than 30 minutes.

The in-class analysis of film is meant to help you understand how other authors accomplish specific goals. If you were taking notes, reviewing those notes might help you find solutions.

Make at least 2 good copies of the final project. You will need to hand one in 48 hours before the peer review. You will need another copy for the peer review. Ideally you would have a third copy that will go in a file cabinet for future interviews, the portfolio show, or to mail for contests.

Consider binding the script at Kinkos or other copy shop. This will add a professional flare, at the presentation polish that proves you but care into this project. If you do so you may be able to file your copy and until it needs to be used.

Feel free to **ask me** specific questions about your scripts and writing solutions. That's why I'm here. ☺