Scriptwriting for Digital Media
Project 2: A Short Teleplay Script

Overview

You have the honor of completing a **short** teleplay. This will be a shorter version of a spec script for a television short film or a single episode of a television program. The running time for this script will be about 15 minutes.

Requirements:

Length: 10-15 single spaced, single sided pages. Remember that there is a lot of white space in a script.

Format: Standard "spec script" format. You are not required to meet the specific guidelines for television writing, but 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

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.

Additional Content:
In addition, you must indicate intended audience for your narrative. To do this, **complete the audience information and ideal time slot worksheet** provided to you. This sheet should be 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.

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.

Once you have completed a draft take at least 2 days to work on something unrelated. Revisit the draft, and *if you have time*, share it with an audience whose opinion would be

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valuable. 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:

It is a good idea to review the grading criteria provided to you in the first week of class.

An "A" script has the following:

- At least one interesting, fresh, or well-crafted scene
- 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

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 a television 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.

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

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