

INS101/102: Media Makeover Project

Introduction: This semester we will interrogate the power of storytelling and media. We look at the producers, the stories, the consumers and the devices that carry those stories. The movies we watch, the books we read, the comics we consume, the images we see, all teach us something. Because of this, we need to engage with continued critical analysis of media production and consumption. The media makeover project is a place where you will bring together the theory, skills and ideas from the semester to engage in your own academic analysis of the stories we consume.

Assignment: The media makeover project requires that you choose a story/media text to critically analyze using the tools and theories that we have covered this semester. You will pick a story/media text that has not properly represented a group/culture/person/or place; and present an alternative to some of the problems of representation and storytelling in the piece. There are three parts to the assignment: (1) a proposal where you outline your approach, (2) a reflective paper where you will present an academic analysis; and (3) a creative video where you use visual and audio tools to demonstrate your analysis. The elements of the assignment are detailed below.

NOTE: This is not asking you to be a movie critic and fix an issue with the plot. You need to pick a story/media text that represents a culture, person, or group of people in a specific way; and analyze how/why that representation is false.

Skills Development/Demonstration: To (a) demonstrate understanding of the problems and pitfalls associated with representations of society in the media, (b) apply knowledge of those problems to a media text and offering an argument regarding why the current representation is problematic, (c) offer solutions regarding that text and its representations, (d) use a variety of academic and creative formats to express yourself.

Overview

The Media Makeover Assignment has three parts:

1. **Proposal** is a 200-400 word (roughly 1 double-spaced page) submission outlining a preliminary idea for your project. Your proposal should introduce the story/media text you are addressing; and give a clear explanation of how you think you will make it over to be more progressive/equitable. (Due Week 8)
 - a. The proposal must also include a full annotated bibliographic reference for 1 academic and 1 popular source that you will use to inform your work. This is not included in the word count. For each source in your annotated bibliography you should have: a full citation for the source (APA or MLA), 4-5 sentences

explaining what the source is about, and include three keywords used to classify the source.

2. **Academic Reflective Paper:** Your paper will be 500-600 words in which you discuss the issues of representation in your text/media text; and offer a progressive, empowered version for characters who are otherwise marginalized or stereotyped in the text. The reflection paper should include attention to plot, character development, and stylistic elements of the text (ex. Cinematography, mise-en-scene etc). Be thorough with clear examples-- be sure to explain what was problematic about the original version, and how it could be more progressive and equitable. A bibliography needs to be included with your reflective paper; it is not included in the word count. (Due Week 10)
 - a. Your paper must demonstrate the use of academic theory, and analysis. This is not an opinion piece; we will be looking for the use of course material and your research that was included in the proposal.
3. **Creative Video:** A 5-7 minute creative video of your own making that acts as a companion to your reflective paper. It should explain your ideas and analysis with the use of different mediums like video, images, sound etc. There is no single format for this video; be creative and thoughtful. This should be an original work; do not just slice together movie clips. (Due Week 10)
 - a. Throughout your time in University you will be asked to present your ideas in different formats. This is your opportunity to practice using different audio/visual tools to express your ideas.

Your project MUST include:

- Demonstration that you have engaged with the theoretical material from the class. What is problematic about the story/media text, and how does your plan subvert that, from a theoretical point of view? Use your course material and ideas to help you make your argument.
 - We are actively looking for your use of the appropriate theory, terminology and research. You cannot pass this assignment without the use of academic material.
- Quotes and references to the two sources listed in your proposal. Make clear the titles/authors of the readings when you mention them – name your sources.
 - You do not need to include in-text citations, but you MUST include a bibliography with all of your work.
- Attention to the characteristics and parameters of the format/medium (Hollywood film, independent film, sitcom, etc.). How does the choice of format affect the kinds of representations it contains? Another way of thinking about this question: who is the audience, and how does the target audience affect the content? Remember: not all mediums are created equal, why does this matter to your project?

- The Proposal and Reflective Paper must have proper paragraph formatting, sentence structure, grammar and spelling – pay attention to the presentation of your material.
 - Your proposal and reflective paper must include: a cover page, double-spaced, size 12, an appropriate font, page numbers, a bibliography and be submitted in either word or PDF.
- The Creative Video must be uploaded to Moodle in an appropriate file format (.mp4, .mov etc.). Do not upload a link to a secondary site or shared drive.
 - The video can include audio/visual elements in whatever way you deem appropriate. Please make sure to leave extra time to ensure your file is properly uploaded and when opened, plays the way you would like it too.
 - Do NOT email this file to your instructors, it must be uploaded to Moodle.