Guerrilla Filmmaking 101
for Community Builders – Nick Hector

10:45 - 11:00   The Big Picture: Advocacy Filmmaking & Medium Specificity (Nick Hector)

MY STORY
- Teenage factory worker…the accident
- Personal salvation through film
- Broadcast journalism, the value of shining a light on corruption and injustice.
- Social justice and environmental documentaries. Naomi Klein, Alfonso Cuarón, Jimmy Carter, Steven Lewis, and Rob Stewart.
- Guilt that I didn't shine a light. But you can.

1. HOW TO LEARN FILM

> "The aspect of things that are most important to us
> are hidden because of their simplicity and familiarity."

- We are teaching you something you think you know 1,000 hrs / yr (Richard Wong)
- A typical film student's journey

> "Because the media so closely mimic reality,
> we can apprehend them more easily
> than we can comprehend them."

- Critically engage. It is not a first draft medium. Learn from the iterative spiral inherent in filmmaking

2. ADVOCACY FILM.

- Reverse engineer your film.
- A successful advocacy film must start with a goal and an audience.
- Avoid 'this could be a cool film'.
- Filmmaking is the preferred medium of the lazy. Make sure this is not you.

a. Start with your goal. What am I trying to accomplish?
b. Who is my audience? Not how many but <u>who</u>? Who can create change?
    i. Who has decision-making capacity and authority?
    ii. What is their attitude: proponents, fence-sitters and opponents?
    iii. What is their level of awareness/knowledge?
    iv. What is their level of concern/commitment
    v. How can I reach them?
    vi. What do I want them to do?
    vii. Who is my secondary audience? (those who can put pressure on the primary)
    viii. Social media vs traditional media outlets (not mutually exclusive)

c. Create a SMART plan (see SMART document)
d. Preaching to the choir vs morale building (Billy Bragg)

3. MEDIUM SPECIFICITY

    a. Discussion: strengths and weaknesses of media. A lecture, live radio, a book, etc
    b. What is documentary film good at?
        i. Not information. 3 words/sec @ grade 8 level
        ii. Emotion. Stories.
    c. Lazy filmmaking: an illustrated essay, or a person recounting a past event
    d. Documentary gold: Active present tense of an unfolding story

11:30 - 12:15 Production I: Pre-production, visual language, and production technique (Nick Hector)

1. THE PRODUCTION PROCESS (Nick)
Making a film four times…
    a. Pre-production (production design and planning, proof of concept)
    b. Production (filming)
    c. Post-production (editing, music, writing)
    d. Distribution

2. PRE-PRODUCTION (Nick)
    a. Goal setting (advocacy plan)
    b. Research (Audience & story)
    c. Casting
    d. Character agreement
    e. Contracts. Release (and NDAs?) / Informed consent
    f. Scene assessment
    g. Location scout
    h. Shot Lists
    i. Camera prep
        i. Setting the date and time
        ii. Phone hard drive space
        iii. Security code (no thumbprint or facial ID)
        iv. Set delay
        v. Keep hot
    j. Technical workflow
    k. Security precautions
        i. Know your rights before filming
        ii. Protect your contacts
        iii. Risk assessment
    l. Dress Rehearsal (Proof of Concept)

3. PRODUCTION

The story capturing device.

   a. Documentary Cinematography
      i. Replicating perception *(a miniature audience inside the phone)*
      ii. Point of view. *(Default: Third person)*
      iii. Human dynamics of angle & height
      iv. Lens vs position
          1. The problem with a zoom
          2. Digital zoom artefacts
      v. Basic composition
          1. Rule of thirds
          2. Leading space
          3. Axis
      vi. Visual narrative (coverage)
      vii. Lighting by God (natural and ambient light)
          1. Sun or light source behind you
   b. Filming in teams
      i. Assigning roles (avoiding double coverage)
      ii. Support roles
      iii. Communication
      iv. Rallying point

   c. Common errors and best practices
      i. Common Errors
          1. Portrait mode
          2. 'Hosepiping'
          3. Movements over cuts
          4. Shots are too short
          5. Shots rather than story elements
          6. No story-focus
          7. Entrenched story-focus
          8. Bit players not stars
          9. Over-reliance on technology

      ii. Best Practices
          1. Screen after every shoot
          2. Screen in real time
          3. Safeguard your footage
          4. Stay organized
          5. Reflection
          6. Daily notes

3:15 - 3:30   **Production Ethics (Nick Hector)**

- Misrepresentation of purpose
- Misrepresenting characters or events
- Protecting participants (facial recognition)
- Payment
- Quote out of context
- Question and answer
- Misleading juxtaposition
- Chronology (cause and effect)
- SFX
- Lying the truth
- Are you an observer or participant?
- Copyright
- Contextualizing hateful material
- Preserving dignity of characters
- Violent imagery
- If it feels wrong, it usually is