

Balancing ACTs: Work-Play-Health-Happiness

Front-SIDE-BACK STORIES to How We Walk the Tightropes of Modern Life

Nearly all of us constantly teeter with life's balancing acts. How do we manage our WORK with our ESCAPES/PLAY? And how do we manage to be HEALTHY and achieve some sort of HAPPINESS amidst such balancing acts?

This may be one of the most critical questions that we face at nearly ALL stages of our lives.

Frequently, our balancing acts with WORK-ESCAPE-HEALTH-HAPPINESS are in some ways unique to us. They can define us as individuals (similar but also slightly different from everyone else). Over time, such a BALANCING ACTs might start out as survival tactics amidst the pressures of modern society. But they can also take on the form of tradition, ritual, or history. They can often involve interesting forms of WORK, but also CREATIVE OUTLETS, HIDDEN ESCAPES, ATHLETIC ENDEAVORS/GOALS, or FUN-FILLED PASSIONS. MOST IMPORTANTLY, for you, they can also make for interesting stories and engaging short films.

HENCE, your job for this film project is to capture the FRONT-BACK-SIDE STORIES to one person's "balancing acts." That means, you'll need to dig in and show the interiors and exteriors of their WORK-ESCAPE-HEALTH-HAPPINESS DYNAMICS and reveal it in an engaging short film story.

Think BIG! and Creatively. This should NOT be your average talking head sequence of some person telling a run-of-the-mill-Friday-night story. **Just the opposite.** Rather you should aim toward producing a highly stylized cinematic yarn in which you get great interviews, excellent audio, dramatic lighting, and extremely cool close-ups and revealing CUT-AWAYS.

FOCUS-GUIDELINES-REQUIREMENTS:

- 1. Get off campus! For interesting locations and people!** This is the TIME to start telling stories which have nothing to do with SMC or your friends, roommates, or significant others. **Those stories won't be accepted for this project.** Time to step out of the campus safety silos.
- 2. Strong STORY, WRITING and CONCEPTUALIZATION (including shot lists).** Nearly all great films begin with a great script (yes, non-fiction documentaries too). Be creative and descriptive with your writing. Your script should then be complemented by an extensive SHOT LIST of ideal and necessary shots to make your story visually detailed and interesting. **(20% of the project grade).**
- 3. Aesthetic COMPOSITION & LIGHTING.** Creatively stylized look and feel to your story. Solid lighting and visual composition is essential.
- 4. CHARACTER + DETAILS → DEVELOPMENT.** Move beyond "dead-level" story-telling and character development. Breathe LIFE into your "characters" and story progression.
- 5. Strongly composed INTERVIEW footage and AUDIO.**
- 6. Excellent close-ups (CUs) and extreme close-ups (ECUs).**
- 7. Interesting shot angles and superb supporting coverage "B-roll;" (CUT-AWAYS)**
- 8. At least one SET PIECE-MONTAGE SEQUENCE with SLO-MO/FAST-MO footage + creative editing** which helps illustrate and propel the story).
- 9. Crystal Clean Audio**—words, music, sounds, etc.
- 10. Interesting INTRO, LOWER 3rds and ENDING TITLES** which lead into and conclude your story.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Your first role here is to be both a PRODUCER and DIRECTOR. **Be choosy** (One of the first rules of film directing) **in who you film and where/how you film them!** Additionally, you will most likely be working with "REAL PEOPLE" who don't have lots of experience acting. So, your job will be to "coach" and/or direct them for your film.

➔ Due **THURS, Oct 19th**: **PROVOCATIVELY WRITTEN STORY TREATMENT/CONCEPT (1-2 pages single-spaced)** using the readings Mefford's Writing with a FULL Deck, Horowitz's "How to Write a Treatment + 3 ACTS" and Cole's "5 POWER POINTS" Readings as your guides. **NOTE: First** come up with **a minimum of 3 potentials.** Think through **LOGISTICS**, including **ACCESS**, audio, timing, visuals, locations, acting, and legalities **BEFORE** making your final story decision and writing your treatment.

➔ Due **TUES, Oct 24th**: **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNED PLOT DESCRIPTION/PROGRESSION + IDEAL SHOT LISTS (a minimum of 30 shots/act) for 5 acts/scenes (Intro + 3 acts +Conclusion)**

➔ Due **Thurs, NOV. 2ND**: **INTRO + ONE act/scene EDITED** and ready for screening at beginning of class!

🌟 **Due TUES. Nov 7TH: Complete Film Project!**