

# **Seymour: In My Shoes**

**Challenging Invisible Power & Bringing a Plurality of Voice to  
Children's Media**

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### Introducing Seymour

*“What is essential is invisible to the eye. It’s not the honors and the prizes and the fancy outsides of life which ultimately nourish our souls. It’s the knowing that we can be trusted, that we never have to fear the truth, that the bedrock of our very being is good stuff.” - Fred Rogers (Collins and Kimmel)*

Growing up one would have been hard pressed to find a television program that did not feature people who looked like me, sounded like me, or expressed values that resonated with the way I was being raised. Since the 90’s, representation in mainstream media has improved with more television characters representative of other cultural groups slowly starting to crop up in minor or secondary roles. Nonetheless, for the most part, heroes are still white, usually male, and American. As a kid, I was well represented in media; I saw myself as a superhero, a police officer, a scientist, a singer, or an artist and was told repeatedly that for me “the sky was the limit”. I grew up loving television and movies, they were my windows to a great world beyond my safe suburb, they were the inspiration for the adventures that I would one day enjoy and my instruction for how to be in the world. Unfortunately, this is not everyone’s experience. I saw my likeness in the faces on the big screen, but for many to see a face or a way of being like their own was a novelty: they were often stereotyped or confined to roles set within a strict set of tropes and boundaries. The media I consumed told me I could be anything I wanted, while it telegraphed to others the dimensions of their cage.

I had the idea for “Seymour: In My Shoes” almost thirteen years ago while I was studying screenwriting as an undergraduate. The idea has stuck with me as I earned my undergraduate degree in anthropology, travelled, and had the great opportunity to work abroad. As my experience with the wider world grew, I began to recognize how small minded some of the stories I had learned growing up had been. After spending two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Malawi and seeing the way large development organizations often treated local communities, I decided I wanted to further my education and work towards greater community-centered advocacy in development work. Through my time in the MACS program I have developed an understanding for collaborative research and for the importance of trusting community knowledge, and I

realized that “Seymour: In My Shoes” could be an important vehicle for increasing representation in mass media and creating sustainable investment for communities at the same time.

The insidious nature of mass media lies in its ability to influence not only the worldview of its audience but potentially their view of themselves as well. The dominating cultures typically in control of media outlets get to define the nature of those groups they choose to represent, usually placing themselves as dynamic and complex at the center of knowledge and understanding while representing the “cultural other” as fixed and unchangeable, “an endlessly repeated element in a given natural order of differences.” (Brown 662) This exercise in invisible power seeks to maintain the status quo, reducing groups excluded by the dominant culture to base stereotypes and transforming relative cultural differences into absolute natural oppositions (Brown 663). When presented with these stereotyped images and characters, especially from a young age, an audience can be influenced to believe these reductionist viewpoints and either accept them about others, for those within the dominant culture, or believe them of themselves, for those in marginalized groups. This in turn grants authority and relevance to the voices, knowledges, and experiences of those in power while stripping it from those who are not, disenfranchising and disempowering them and leaving them at the mercy of the dominant culture to treat them however it sees fit.

Organizations like the Scribe Video Center, Appalshop, the Story Center, and many others actively combat this model by creating access to the tools of media production for local communities around the nation. These projects encourage people to get involved in producing and presenting their own stories and histories to the wider world. Media Makers like Knut Lundby (*Digital Storytelling: Mediatized Stories*), Henry Jenkins, Sangita Shresthova, Llana Gamber-Thompson, Neta Kligler-Vilenchik, Arely Zimmerman (*By Any Media Necessary*), and Bronwen Low, Chloe Brushwood Rose, and Paula Salvia (*Community Based Media Pedagogies*) offer critiques to the current state of representation and access in mass media. These projects and authors present alternatives to mainstream media production methods that work to increase the visibility of all people through community led media projects using the power of mass media for social change, and self representation by particular communities.

This project is about joining the fight to disrupt mass media's invisible power within communities by creating a show, "Seymour: In My Shoes," that opens a platform for kids from typically marginalized groups to be able to share their stories and promote the idea that all voices have value. "Seymour: In My Shoes" attempts to build a community-led media project that seeks to show an audience that "each of us is capable of contributing; that each individual viewer creates his or her own exciting, vital story," (Collins and Kimmel 4) as Fred Rogers so wisely observed.

This project was conceived on the idea that audio/visual media is a powerful tool for representation. A show can have a fundamental impact on the socially conscious development of its audience as well as create a reciprocal and sustaining benefit to its contributors. Through the execution of this project, I have sought to answer three distinct questions; how can audio/visual mass media be used to best represent varied cultures and communities? How can this show avoid objectification and rather act as a mediator creating dialogue between its audience and the communities contributing stories to it? Finally, how can this show be used to ethically amplify the voices of marginalized groups within these contributor communities to create a space for self-advocacy and sustainable change?

Over the summer of 2020 I worked with three groups of Baltimore city high school students to collaboratively create a pitch for "Seymour: In My Shoes" that attempts to accomplish the goals above, inclusive of a treatment for the show, some design ideas for the main character, and a basic storyboard of the pilot episode. Due to the COVID crisis this work had to be done virtually, with each group meeting for one to two hours per day for five days. Over the course of the week, each group learned about the project including our goals, engaged with professionals in the field of media production, and collaborated on interactive assignments designed to produce student generated creativity and stories to the final pitch. Throughout this paper I will reflect on this process, what worked well, what did not, and how I might do it differently going forward. It will also reflect on the ways I had to adapt this project due to the current worldwide pandemic. Finally, I will add a review of the relevant literature highlighting how several major works influenced my motivations for this project and its final outcomes.

As Peter Block writes in *Community: The Structure of Belonging*;

*“Communities are built from the assets and gifts of their citizens, not from the citizens’ needs or deficiencies. Organized, professionalized systems are capable of delivering services, but only associational life is capable of delivering care. Sustainable transformation is constructed in those places where citizens choose to come together to produce a desired future.”*  
(Block 14)

“Seymour: In My Shoes” uses the tools of audio/visual media to offer a pathway to compassion for things one may not understand, and creating a community of viewers committed to mutual learning, sustainable investment, and transformational growth.

### *The Shoes That Got Us Here*

*“For every story that sees the light of day, untold others remain in the shadows, censored and suppressed.”*(Jackson 11)

**How can audio/visual mass media be used to best re-present varied cultures and communities?** G.S. Ageyman in her paper *White Researcher - Black Subjects*, states, “the notion of re-presenting is about giving a voice to marginalized individuals and groups who are often under-represented, whilst representing has a patronising quality of standing in the place of and speaking on behalf of the Other.” (Agyeman 79) Ageyman is examining the position of the researcher from a dominant cultural position studying subjects from a marginalized cultural position and tries to define a method of critical inquiry that firmly positions the researcher acknowledging their limitations and working to re-present their subject in their own words instead of subverting the subjects authority for the researchers. She goes on to point out that re-presentation also takes into account “the intentions and purpose of research and acknowledges that all research of ‘Others’ is essentially a political process which the researcher needs to be critically aware of.”(Agyeman 82) As outsider researchers we are altering the situation simply by conducting research and our own viewpoints will have a natural distorting effect on the data and therefore we must establish our position

to acknowledge our own biases and blind spots when working with communities that are not our own.

To combat this tendency to represent in cultural programming over re-present I turned to Arthur Frank's paper *What is Dialogical Research and Why Should We Do It* (Frank 2005). In this paper Frank looks at the literary critiques of Mikhail Bakhtin for whom "all that is unethical begins and ends when one human being claims to determine all that another is and can be; when one person claims that the other has not, cannot, and will not change, that she or he will die just as she or he always has been." (Frank 966) In other words the stories collected during the research process should never be looked at as definitive of a particular community or even an individual, they can only be a snapshot of a particular moment in time on a greater journey of becoming. Throughout this paper Frank discusses the give-and-take relationship between researcher and subject, that the research process acts as a dialogue with both parties iterating and growing throughout. This is a critical philosophy for the concept of "Seymour: In My Shoes" because instead of trying to describe and define a particular group with each episode I want to instead attempt to spark a discussion between storyteller and audience. The show will attempt to do this in several ways, like when Seymour is on an adventure the audience is seeing through Seymour's perspective so that the storyteller is speaking directly to the audience, at the end of each episode Seymour will pose specific questions directly to camera as well, literally asking that the audience gets involved and finally by creating companion interactive media like a website that will create a community of Seymour fans to discuss each episode and engage with storyteller communities. A dialogical approach to research seeks to engage the participants in their own struggles and triumphs of becoming, focusing on these stories of transformation instead of static themes or lists of characteristics fixing participants in identities that fit pre-determined typologies. (Frank 2005) We want to understand how a person sees themselves within their communities and not simply defined by their communities. Seymour's narrative style is based on this dialogical approach, I want the viewer to walk away with more questions than answers, I want the stories to instigate not satiate.

However, one of the biggest challenges of re-presentation using audio/visual media is the static nature of capturing living culture on film. As Dr. Harold Anderson put it:

*“The act of writing something down, of entextualizing a living moment in a static medium, carries the danger of pinning the moment in a way that robs it of its vitality. When these moments are expressions of a living culture, there is the danger that the ethnographer will silence the voices, the living testimonies of the subject, reify their cultural products, and possibly contribute to the expropriation of these products, by the establishment and substitution of an alien authority for that of the true originators of the products.”(Anderson 1–2)*

Dr. Anderson’s paper *Field Methods: Photographic Data Collection and Re-presentation* offers a creative challenge to a show like “Seymour: In My Shoes”. His work asks how do you create a dynamic and authentic dialogue through moving image media? How do you actively engage an audience as part of the conversation with the storyteller when the story has been recorded and frozen in time? This has been one of the more difficult problems to solve. Drawing inspiration from organizations and projects like the Story Center, and Scribe Video Center of Philadelphia, I realized that the media produced is just the impetus to draw the audience member from passive viewer to contributor and active participant. The Story Center, for example, loans out equipment for listening stations that can be set up in any community to record and share stories (“StoryCenter”), while Scribe offers summer youth programs and regular classes to learn media production skills “as artistic media and as tools for progressive social change” (“Scribe Video Center”). Both of these projects produce media to be shared to a wider audience, and actively engage that audience in their missions to democratize the tools of media towards artistic expression, social justice, and community activism. Seymour stands on the shoulders of projects like these, collaborating with our student partners as storytellers to produce the show and engaging with audiences through social media and an interactive website ([www.seymourinmyshoes.weebly.com](http://www.seymourinmyshoes.weebly.com)) that makes the viewer a distinct part of the adventure.

Anderson’s paper offered a critical eye and gave me pause in thinking how to best bring Seymour to life, but he also notes that film “has the potential to reach a broad



audience - to give them a glimpse of what we saw, and something of the feeling, the empathetic understanding that we gained - to transport and transform them - to engage them as participant-observers, too.” (Anderson 9) Anderson delivers a warning in this paper of the double edged nature of using audio/visual media as a tool for cultural re-presentation. However, by using a dialogical approach and clearly positioning a narrative perspective through the eyes of Seymour, I think there is a productive way to walk this fine line of re-presentation versus representation by collaboratively sharing authority and whenever possible deferring to the expertise of the storyteller instead of an outside narrator.

**How can this show avoid objectification and rather act as a mediator creating dialogue between its audience and the communities contributing stories to the program?** This question is partially addressed by some of the sources provided above, however, I think it moves the conversation from the philosophical to the practical. What are the actual methodological approaches that this project has taken to create dialogue between audience and storyteller?

LaPoe et. al. in their book *Underserved Communities and Digital Discourse* address an issue that was raised by Anderson: how do we preserve dynamism through a static medium like film? Their work focuses on the importance of representation in the media, acknowledging that people tend to gravitate toward others with whom they empathize, creating parasocial relationships with characters with whom they feel a common connection (LaPoe et al.). They define parasocial relationships as the imagined relationships that an audience constructs with media characters, coming to feel as though they know these characters on a deep personal level (LaPoe et al.). This is an important concept to the success of a show like “Seymour: In My Shoes”, because I not only want the audience to be able to see themselves in the place of Seymour but want them to feel a deep humanistic connection with the storytellers they see on screen.

This connection is built in several ways. Seymour is an animated character intentionally designed to be gender and racially non-specific so that any viewer may see themselves in the character. They are designed to be as accessible as possible so that the audience can fill in the blanks with their own circumstances. When Seymour goes on an adventure in the real world, the character is off screen with the camera shooting

from a subjective perspective. This point of view (POV) style puts the audience member in direct conversation with the storyteller; no longer watching as an objective observer, the audience engages directly with the action. These techniques help to create intersubjectivity by elevating the audience's experience to a relational one, as the storyteller refers to them in the second person, and they are asked to participate and join in as much as possible. By having the storyteller speak directly to camera, the audience is more easily able to empathize and see them as equals, allowing for greater connection. Again, this is where Seymour's interactive web presence shines, after an episode audience members can learn more about the storyteller's community and interact with other fans in a sharing of perspectives online. These parasocial relationships open up an intersubjective space where the audience can walk away with questions and a desire to learn more. This focus on the intersubjective relationship was highly influenced by the traditions of oral storytelling, as these traditions are dynamic, with the performance of stories adapted to the audience at hand and space for interpretation left to the listener. Each episode of Seymour is crafted by the communities of each storyteller, meaning each episode will be a unique creation and the show actively asks the viewer to participate in the learning and understanding of the stories told. The goal of this show is to reach beyond its medium and connect deeply with its audience.

In *Life Lessons Through Storytelling*, Donna Eder, explores children's ethical development through the traditions of oral storytelling. In her project she presented elementary students in both rural and urban areas of the US with stories from Kenya and the Navajo to look at how the children responded to ethical dilemmas. Through this work she discusses the philosophy of oral traditions and denotes several major differences between stories learned through books and those learned orally. Primarily, oral storytelling "allows children to come to their own interpretations, interpretations that deepen with each telling of a story." (Eder 13) She contrasts this with western compilations of written stories, like Aesop's fables, which tend to have a summary moral at the end solidifying a particular interpretation and failing to leave room for growth.

The stories presented in Seymour are not meant to illustrate a particular lesson, but rather are meant to be open-ended discussions of personal lived experience from

which each viewer is able to draw their own interpretations. This goal informed how I designed the collaborative activities with my student partners to develop the pilot. Each week the student groups would discuss themes that were impactful to them and then decide collectively which theme they would like to focus on. The second group of students, for instance, decided they should talk about “the everyday struggles with COVID and police brutality”(W2D2\_Group\_ShowDesign) their neighborhoods were facing. Once a theme was established for each group it would direct the type of questions they would design to ask in interviews and what images they would shoot to express that theme. After working with all three groups and collecting their fieldwork, I developed the pilot story as an amalgamation of their work centered around the themes they chose. The open-ended nature of the stories presented also allows for reviewing and reinterpretation as a child gains their own experiences. As LaPoe et. al. discussed above, viewers will tend to develop parasocial relationships with characters with which they empathize. Eder compliments this by showing that even though the stories she used were from cultures about which the children had little knowledge, the rural students could still “relate to the importance of community. For these children, the problems of rural community living and the importance of sharing were common threads, linking them with the Kenyan people.”(Eder 85)

These works show us that a deep personal connection can be created between viewer and storyteller and that dialogue can be sparked through an open-ended oral storytelling presentation. But how can that dialogue be practically carried out through a one way media? In *Community-Based Media Pedagogies* Low et. al. discuss a community based media project called Mapping Memories. Mapping Memories collaborated with a group of refugee students in Canada to tell their stories in several ways; through film, on a bus tour, and at speaking engagements within high schools. The book focuses mainly on how the researchers collaborated with students to create this project, which was a great inspiration to my own work collaborating with the students on Seymour. One of the most important strategies that they used was to be flexible regarding method, namely that they allowed students’ interpretations of the work to drive the direction of the project. For instance when students were first encouraged to draw a map of places that felt like home, one participant interpreted the assignment as

a means to teach the way they tell stories, so they drew pictures of where they were born and how they grew up.(Low et al.) This adaptability on the part of the facilitators does two important things; it mitigates a feeling of hierarchy between facilitator and participant and it allows for a sense of play creating a more open and free flow of ideas and stories.(Low et al.) This is crucial to the goal of creating dialogue between viewer and storyteller because that sense of play, and equality will translate through the way in which the storyteller ultimately communicates their story to the audience allowing a reciprocity for the audience to want to play back. Low et al points out that, “play is contingent upon reciprocity among the players (even if reciprocity is an illusion) and that the playing stops when someone gets dogmatic or when the teacher imposes an interpretation rather than treating the investigation as an open collaborative concern.”(Low et al. 95) In other words the moment that someone defines a position as absolute truth all dialogue ceases.

The Mapping Memories project was able to engage a group of marginalized young people by having them share their stories. This strategy not only engaged them in the means of production creating new opportunities for their own learning, but included them in the knowledge creation of refugee experience for others as well allowing them to fully re-present themselves. The key to their methodology was using a multimodal approach in disseminating what they had created. This is what is needed for a show like Seymour, a multimedia approach to storytelling. In Mapping Memories, they not only recorded their stories but also conducted a bus tour and speaking engagements at high schools so that the storytellers and audience could engage in real time. This multi-modal approach inspired me to create a proposal for a companion website and a social media presence for Seymour. Although these additional pieces were outside of my initial proposal, I have created a mock up design of what this website could like here [www.seymourinmyshoes.weebly.com](http://www.seymourinmyshoes.weebly.com). Through the use of these extra interactive mediums the show could not only provide a way for the viewers to communicate directly with the storytellers, but it also provides a platform for storyteller communities to sustainably make their voices heard and for viewers to get directly involved by sharing their stories too. Combining the philosophies of these three sources; oral storytelling to create parasocial relationships and interactive multimedia platforms

to engage the audience “Seymour: In My Shoes” becomes a new kind of show that can create a real dialogue between storytellers and viewers across any distance of space and time.

Finally, this project asks, **How “Seymour: In My Shoes” can be used to ethically amplify the voices of marginalized groups within these partner communities to create a space for self-advocacy and sustainable change?** This is a critical question for the field of cultural sustainability. In his seminal work *The Politics of Storytelling*, Michael Jackson examines the ways in which storytelling in refugee communities or other traumatized groups has had a deeply meaningful impact in working towards the healing of trauma but also empowering those people to see value in their stories, a value that can be used to change a larger system. He argues that storytelling is vital to the process of their re-empowerment, but that that does not mean “stories themselves have power; rather, it implies that by enabling dialogues that encompass different points of view the act of sharing stories helps us create a world that is more than the sum of its individual parts.”(Jackson 39) He recognizes that telling of stories is a distinctly political act in which a storyteller is actively reworking and reconstituting passive lived experience not only for the audience but for their own imagination as well (Jackson). In other words, telling stories of personal experience is often done with a purpose, to either alter the perception of a particular event in favor of the storyteller or in opposition to the perspective of someone else’s version of it.

“Seymour: In My Shoes” intentionally seeks to portray the stories of the most marginalized groups in society, in particular children from disempowered communities. The show recognizes that by empowering the voices of children to tell their own stories we offer a new perspective on systems of belief while at the same time modeling to the young viewer at home that their experiences and perspectives also have power. Stone-Mediatore compliments the work of Jackson in her book *Reading Across Borders* in which she warns of the danger of overlooking marginalized experience narratives. She says that “when we treat experience-based narratives as mere ideological artifacts, we reinforce the disempowerment of people who have been excluded from official knowledge production, for we deny epistemic value from a central means by which such people can take control over their own representation.”(Stone-Mediatore 2)

By accepting marginalized experience narratives as legitimate we are able to take a more critical look at our own beliefs and institutions which can ultimately help us transform those beliefs and institutions toward the ends of a more just and democratic world on a larger scale.(Stone-Mediatore) Not only can storytelling allow individuals the authority to represent themselves but when the table of knowledge is expanded we are able to see a clearer picture of the greater whole from which we can more easily acknowledge our own biases and cultural blindspots and work to change them.

“Seymour: In My Shoes” is only a successful project when measured by the partnerships it creates with the communities that contribute to it. By telling stories from marginalized groups the show seeks to shed light on perspectives commonly overlooked in the wider media, and offer a sustainable platform for those communities to advocate for their own needs. To achieve this, I attempted to form a partnership with the sixteen students who participated with me over the summer along with two media professionals who helped by offering expertise to the process. All of these students identify as Black and come from majority Black neighborhoods in west Baltimore ranging in age from 15 to 19 with one of the professionals hailing from the same neighborhoods and both identifying as part of the Black community as well. The vision of Seymour was always for the students to represent themselves as members of their communities and not as the community itself. In hindsight, had we been in-person for this work, I would have liked to delve much deeper into this partnership moving beyond just myself and the students, approaching their wider communities of friends, families, and local businesses to get involved as well. As it was I did my best to live up to Kurin’s model of a culture broker of whom he says should “intellectually engage those represented in the practice and problematics of the cultural representations, offering the best of their knowledge while recognizing the value of the knowledge of their subjects.”(Kurin 25) Throughout our work together I did my best to encourage the students to think deeply about their own representation and share knowledge, however, as I reflect later on I could have done more to adapt my methodology to engage them further in the discussion of their own visions for the project.

Seymour recognizes the naturally political nature of storytelling. It purposefully seeks out the voices of the historically marginalized in an effort to subvert dominant

seats of knowledge production and elevate the voices of its storytellers to the level of expert ultimately transforming both the viewers perspective of them and the communities perspective of themselves. All of these sources have contributed greatly to the work of creating a pitch for Seymour as well as reflecting on the work that I was able to accomplish over the summer with my student partners.

### Reflecting On The Adventure

*“Accountability is the willingness to acknowledge that we have participated in creating, through commission or omission, the conditions that we wish to see changed. Without this capacity to see ourselves as cause, our efforts become either coercive or wishfully dependent on the transformation of others.”(Block 127)*

“Seymour: In My Shoes” is about the ordinary and the mundane, the commonplace comings and goings of everyday life that become extraordinary when viewed from beyond the pale of one’s own cultural perspective. What could make this show important is its potential to open a window upon an alternate worldview allowing the viewer to step into a seemingly different world that by the end feels incredibly familiar. Fred Rogers said, “every one of us longs to be in touch with honesty. I think we’re really attracted to people who will share some of their real self with us.”(Collins and Kimmel 39) The most radical thing about “Seymour: In My Shoes” could be its ability to serve as a platform for honest and genuine human connection, a way to increase the visibility of storytellers and create space for real dialogue with the viewer. In this section I will look back on the work I was able to accomplish and try to tease out the lessons I have learned.

Where this project is beneficial to furthering the field of cultural sustainability is in finding a creative and engaging way to build a platform for voices of marginalized communities. A platform for these communities to not only be heard in places of power or academic discussions of folklore but in the homes of a large viewing audience. This vision of expanding the platform and increasing the visibility of marginalized stories is one that has been sought by folklorists and others in the field for more than fifty years. This mission has taken great strides with innovators like Bess Lomax Hawes and her

work on the Smithsonian Folklife Festival or David Wishnant examining how public sector folklore can elevate community voices and be used as intervention (Whisnant, 1988), to innovators in the television industry like Jim Henson and Fred Rogers who wanted to respect and educate their audience by meeting them where they were. This project builds on these earlier efforts by attempting to bring together the ideas of these broadcast trailblazers and the scholarly efforts of these folklorists to create a show steeped in cultural education but appealing and engaging for a young audience to create a sustainable passion to learn more.

By amplifying storytellers from around the world to speak honestly about their own lived experience, this show can create the opportunity for intersubjective listening between the storyteller and their audience. Low states that “intersubjective listening calls for the listener and the speaker to listen to themselves, to how culture impacts listening, and to what it means to refuse to listen, and to recognize how listening with judgement or the aim to fix or cure undermines the play of intersubjectivity.” (Low et al. 83) Seymour asks the viewer to think about their own positions as much as that of the storyteller, radically altering the status quo of mass media making a subject of the audience as much as the storyteller. I believe if we can inspire this more reflexive and dialogical mindset in children at an early stage, we greatly increase the chances of a more socially conscious generation who can look at the cultural “other” and their worldviews with a more empathetic eye. Seymour actively steps away from trying to define objective truth and rather offers experienced-based narratives to provide an understanding of specifically human truth. (Stone-Mediatore)

### *The Intentions Behind “Seymour: In My Shoes”*

Three outcomes of the MACS program guide my educational objectives: 1) to exhibit professional and ethical responsibility in managing partnerships that foster community self-determination and empower community efforts; 2) to devise, implement and evaluate actions that support cultural sustainability that align with community practices, and 3) to identify strategies for cultivating a professional network of practitioners and organizations in support of a community of practice. Despite the



challenges that I faced, I see this project as a success at least in the sense that I grew immensely in my understanding of how to approach working with communities and in the ways this work contributes to the field.

Originally, I had planned to recruit four to six students to work with me for a total of thirty hours over the summer to collaboratively build out the pitch for Seymour. With the worsening effects of the global pandemic, I instead partnered with my organization Thread and YouthWorks, a Baltimore City program that employs youth in summer jobs, to become a “worksite” where Thread students could be placed for the three-week program. This meant that students were paid through YouthWorks to participate in this project. I believe this did provide a level of ethical reciprocity; however, I do think it changed the motivations of the students who participated. In my original design the students would not have been paid; the benefit they would have received would have been solely the skills they gained working with the professional partners and learning how to better advocate their own stories through the tools of audio/visual media. I think bringing money into the situation made the project feel more transactional and less collaborative. It ultimately had an effect on who could participate and what their motivations were for doing so. Unfortunately, YouthWorks was my only option with the constraints presented, were I able to do it over I would have left money out of it and found other ways to demonstrate the project's value and reciprocal benefit to my student partners by highlighting jobs and industries where these skills are in demand and working to better connect them with the project's professional collaborators.

This new approach meant that I worked with three groups of students over three weeks. Each group spent one hour a day in interactive zoom meetings with me and one hour completing tasks from the in-person learning. Online interaction is a limiting environment, yet I did my best to include interactive elements in the project. My vision had been to spend a lot of time taking an “I do, we do, you do” approach to skill sharing; in other words, either I or one of the professional guest speakers showing students how to do a particular action, then doing that action with them as they learn the techniques, and finally allowing the students to have at it on their own. I unfortunately turned to a more didactic model, assigning a theme to each day of the week and then creating PowerPoint presentations and worksheets, as needed, around each theme.

The first week of this project attendance was sporadic, with only three students attending initially -- Freddy, Autumn, and Tariq -- and four more students attending only two out of the last three days; Ahmad, Jevon, Aaliyah, and Zaniya. Of that first group, only Aaliyah and Zaniya seemed to show any real interest in the process and turned in all the assigned written work. The second week was far better attended with seven students; Kaheem, Quazier, Ahmad, Dikera, Mikah, Leonard, and Justin all attending consistently more than three days and two more students, Richard and Damontay, attending two days. Finally, the third week only two students attended, Colby and Kileal, though Kileal only attended one day and Colby, though he seemed very engaged, was unfortunately caught up with personal issues and only attended three out of the five days. In total sixteen students participated at some level over the three weeks, however, only four actually turned in all the work that was assigned during that time.

The change to a virtual setting meant that I had limited time with each group and I tried to compensate for this by building and assigning worksheets for the students to complete during their daily hour of work time. The intention of these assignments was to continue our group work beyond our designated time for video calls. All of the assignments were created as google docs and at the beginning of each week I encouraged the students to pick a font color so that they could all work collaboratively on these assignments, building off of each other's ideas. Unfortunately, I overestimated some of the students' comfort with this method and only received a limited amount of work from some and a great deal of confusion from others. In the end, I was too focused on building out a structure for these sessions that I forgot the golden rule of community partnership, to trust my partners. I realize now a better solution, with the drastic changes due to COVID, would have been to collaborate directly with each group around how best to tackle the project. My desire to keep a level of control on the situation hindered their ability to be fully engaged and participate.

Where the students did engage with the work however, I was able to tease out some interesting results. One of the most effective assignments was the "Show Design Worksheet" (Appendix A) which was created for the second session of each week to discuss what the group thought the show should look like, particularly discussing a storytelling theme and who our audience should be and why. I think this assignment's

greatest advantage was that we worked on it together within our zoom meetings. I facilitated, asking the questions and encouraging the students to discuss openly their thoughts, and they all discussed with each other and shared ideas live through the google doc.

One of the pitfalls of this work is creating a sort of “dark tourism”, focusing the stories told only on hardships and challenges faced by the student storytellers. Obviously, these aspects of their lived experiences are important, but oftentimes they are portrayed as definitive of a person instead of as pieces of a larger story. Stone-Mediatore says, “we must not reduce the people whose different perspectives we investigate to ‘victims’ or easily known objects of our analysis, for such approaches only expand our authority while failing to engage the others’ perspectives in their depth and complexity.”(Stone-Mediatore 169) To avoid this and achieve my first learning outcome, I took an asset-based approach when encouraging the students to share their stories. We discussed at length the things they saw as strengths in their communities and through our discussion questions they were encouraged to examine what about themselves they would like to share with the world. Autumn, in her response to why someone should hear her story, wrote:

*“I think people should buy my version because it really relates to them. . .well mostly shy people because we’re always getting picked on the most. It’s special to me because I’ve always been picked on because I wasn’t loud or outgoing like the rest. I think people should watch it because I feel as though they would be really interested in it.” (W1D2\_AWillis\_ShowDesign)*

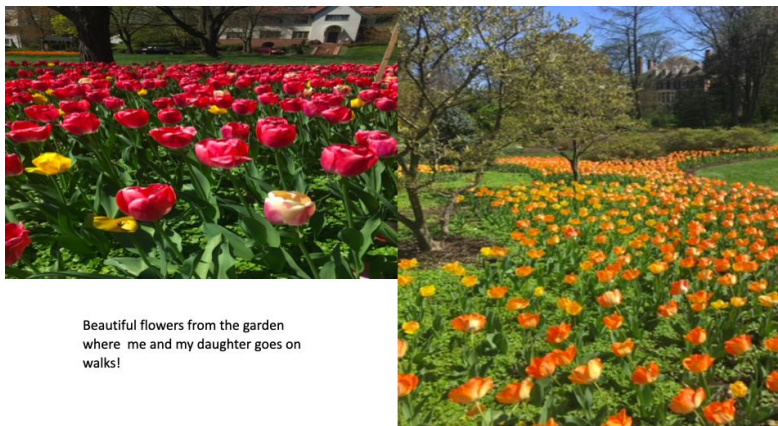
Here she expresses a desire to come out to the world and to show others that may be shy that their voice should be heard too. Autumn resonated with the idea that her voice has value and looked at herself and how she may have devalued her own voice in the past looking to this opportunity as a way to model for others.

I provided a basic structure for our discussions but allowed the students to interpret the topics of conversation however they liked. This approach ensured that the input we gathered would be self-determined and empowering to the students’ own sense of what they valued in their stories. A great example of this is our second group’s discussion of possible themes; the students agreed that they would like to tell stories

about how their communities are dealing with the COVID crisis and the police brutality protests. Each individual brought their own lens to why this discussion may be important, Ahmad commented, “we should talk about COVID cases continuing to rise because of people not following quarantine rules” (W2D2\_Group\_ShowDesign) while Dikera wanted to focus her attention on “how the world changed since COVID and how it affected everyone.” (W2D2\_Group\_ShowDesign). Other students like Damontay and Mikah focused instead on “how the world is reacting to police brutality during COVID” (W2D2\_Group\_ShowDesign). It was really interesting to see each person's perspective and what they saw as important when discussing these themes and most importantly how they communicated these ideas with each other, building off of the ideas to create a coherent vision for what they wanted their stories to be.

The second outcome aligned well with the original purpose of “Seymour: In My Shoes,” to allow a storyteller and their community complete creative and representational control over the production of each episode. “Complete creative control” to me means teaching the basic skills of using the tools of audio/visual media production and then handing over that equipment to the storyteller to use in their own representation as they will. I want to be able to skill share and then step back acting more in a consulting, supportive capacity. Organizations like Scribe provide great examples of this skill sharing and ongoing support through production. This is still the ultimate goal of the show, however, in practice “complete creative control” shifted to partnership in design of the themes of the pilot episode and the look of the character of Seymour. In this particular case the story that is used to create the pilot episode is pulled from themes and topics that the students wanted to highlight as well as pieces of each of their individual fieldwork.

Other elements incorporated from their work were specific places that Seymour visits and people they meet. During the third session each week we had a professional guest speaker, Tiara Harris, a photographer and



Beautiful flowers from the garden where me and my daughter goes on walks!

videographer for social justice organizations, join our conversations to talk about the use of the tools at hand, typically smartphones. Tiara shared techniques and best practices for making their work look as professional as possible as the students prepared to go out into their communities to shoot images that would highlight the themes they had chosen. Some of those pictures became direct references for locations and set pieces used in the pitch. Two great examples of this are the flower gardens in a park near Aaliyah's house that she went to as a child and that she now takes her daughter to and images from Quazier's neighborhood of business fronts and stoops where he hangs out with his friends.



Along with these visual elements I also wanted to include the people that were important to the students as well. During the fourth session, Tunde Ogunfolagu, a writer and podcaster for The Real News Network, came to share his journalistic expertise. Tunde and I facilitated the session and students filled out the Interview Guide Worksheet (Appendix A), which lists best practices for interviewing and asks them to identify someone in their community they would like to interview and what questions they will ask them. Most of the students picked a family member, like Zaniya who said she would interview her mother because “she would tell me real stories about our family past and she would make sure she wouldn't leave out not one detail, and I like that.” (W1D3\_ZoomTranscript\_0.08.34) or Quazier who wanted to interview his Aunt because she is a nurse working with COVID patients and because he didn't want to “interview no random person.” (W2D4\_ZoomTranscript\_0.12.43). In the pilot, Seymour visits the

flower gardens with Tariq and meets Tariq's sister who is a nurse going to a rally for Black Lives. I tried to bring all of the elements I could from the work the students had done to create a shared vision of Seymour, while also making a number of choices on my own around how to bring these different pieces of story together.

Rory Turner writes that "cultural sustainability invites us to engage with well-being to consider the human condition from an existential vantage point and challenges us to creatively explore the possibilities of human thriving." ([Turner](#)) I think this project did help the students who were interested to more deeply explore their own positionality within their communities, and several talked about how they saw their neighborhoods differently as they did their documentation. The final two assignments each week were the Personal Reflection Worksheet (Appendix A), which encouraged the students to reflect on the fieldwork they had done and the Final Personal Reflection Worksheet (Appendix A) which had the students reflect on the week's experience as a whole. Reflecting on her fieldwork Aaliyah said:

*"I didn't interview many, except one neighbor I actually have never really had a conversation with. She told me she's lived in her house for 12 years and the best thing about living around here is the people. They make her feel welcome and she's made family out of friends! I wish I would've interviewed more people and learned more than I did."* (W1D4\_AJones\_PersonalReflection)

She goes on to say that she really enjoyed going back to the flower gardens she had loved going to as a kid and was determined to bring her daughter there more often to play. While Aaliyah's experience reminded her of what makes her neighborhood special, others like Autumn were left with more questions. In her personal reflection Autumn comments on her interview with her mother:

*"I interviewed my mom. I learned she's lived over West her entire life basically and she said our neighborhood used to be more 'kid friendly' instead of all the violence that goes on now. I wish I could've asked her how all of the houses got boarded up, like what happened to the houses?"*  
(W1D4\_AWillis\_PersonalReflection)

In this quotation you can see a spark igniting that had not been there before. To her, the houses in her neighborhood have always been boarded up, that is just the way it's

always been, but learning from her mother's experience now she asks the most important questions, "why is it like that now? What happened?" She reflects later that she "enjoyed going out to admire certain things that I never really paid attention to in my neighborhood before." (W1D4\_AWillis\_PersonalReflection) Even though I was not able to conduct this project the way I had envisioned, it still helped support the ultimate goals of cultural sustainability, encouraging these students to think more deeply about their lives and how they contribute to the world they inhabit.

One of the greatest successes of this project implementation lends itself well to the accomplishment of my third outcome -- cultivating a professional network in support of community practice. Originally, I had planned to work with two community-based media organizations; Wide Angle Youth Media and Edanime Productions. Unfortunately, one was unresponsive and the other was unavailable; however, this opened a great opportunity to work through my own network and find individual professionals who would be excited to join my effort. I was able to bring in Tunde Ogunfolagu, a journalist and podcaster for The Real News Network, and Tiara Harris, a graphic designer with a background in video production. Both were extremely helpful stepping in as guest speakers discussing their careers and experience, as well as walking the students through the basics of using their cameras and telling stories through audio/visual media. As local Baltimoreans from the same neighborhoods as many of the students, and as professionals who also work in the field of social justice, their input and enthusiasm were vital for making "Seymour" seem like a valuable project towards empowering these young people's voices. Bringing together this community of practitioners, the sixteen student partners and our guest speakers Tunde and Tiara, aligned around Seymour's vision has been incredibly life-giving.

### *Epiphanies & Revelations*

Working on "Seymour: In My Shoes" I was confronted with the question, "Why does representation of marginalized groups in the media matter to me?" I am well represented, this is not an issue that affects me, why should I be doing this? What I have come to realize is that this is a problematic way to look at motivation. I realized

that no one needs some profound or life-altering reason to choose to stand up for the voices of others. It is not important to have experienced trauma to be interested in trying to prevent it. Feeling ashamed to make a choice that upsets the status quo and moves toward greater justice for typically marginalized groups because you do not meet some prerequisite of having experienced the injustice yourself is white supremacy. Dominant culture tells you not to fight when you are on top, you have the power why are you trying to upset that? This is one of the most insidious outcomes of our extractive, and colonizing society, that doing the right thing feels shameful to those who have the power to actually change it. To combat racism you do not need to have experienced it yourself and to work towards greater representation in the media you do not have to be part of an underrepresented group. The greatest self-care that I have done while working on this project has been to recognize my own worthiness in attempting this work of allyship in community-based development at all. In this section I will offer my recommendations on what this strong allyship can look like based on the revelations that I had while working on this project.

**For sustainable community partnership one must trust one's partners, relinquishing control so that a shared vision and approach may flourish.** This project more than any other has forced me to confront my own values and approach to the work that I do. Self-efficacy has always been a very important badge for me. I was raised in a manner that applauded doing for oneself and looked down on asking for help. Our society's devotion to independence and individualism has hobbled us when it comes to working collaboratively, and seeking justice. If we are all trying to be the lone hero none of us can succeed. "Seymour: In My Shoes" is by nature a community effort; it takes all hands and skill sets to create this project. One of the biggest personal challenges I faced was letting go of creative control and reaching out for help when I did not have the expertise to do something myself and was not always successful at it. When I was not able to secure the input of the two organizations I originally hoped to work with I felt at a loss, that I would need to come up with a solution on my own or the project would fail. It never occurred to me to reach out to my own personal networks asking if anyone had skills they could share. It was not until a friend suggested this approach to me that I embarrassedly did finally reach out. I was immediately



overwhelmed by the response I received, with several friends offering their help or suggesting people they knew who could assist. This project has been a humbling experience in so many ways, but learning to give up control and delegate responsibility has been especially challenging.

**My second recommendation has been highly influenced by the core competencies of my organization, Thread; meet all community partners where they are.** When it came to working with the students one of the major lessons that I learned was: that it is incredibly important to provide a clear and explicit structure of what the proposed outcomes are so everyone has a solid understanding of what they are doing. I thought I understood this point as we began with the first group of students. I had created presentations that delved deep into the philosophies of cultural sustainability along with the roots of anthropological research and ethnography. What I quickly realized is that it was absolutely boring the students and overwhelming them with far too much detail. I also failed to realize that collaboration required a group space to work instead of independent work brought together and discussed. In areas where I should have been more explicit, like what the actual product was and what I was asking of the students, I was woefully vague, and in areas that were superfluous to the understanding of the project I was over elaborate. Unfortunately, the result of this was that I got very little usable work from the students that first week and mostly wound up boring or frustrating them. Luckily, I learned this lesson quickly and pared down my presentations to get to the heart of their purpose for being there and used the extra time to create group working space. This alteration seemed to have the desired effect and we had much better discussion and participation from the students over the last two weeks.

**My third recommendation for strong allyship when working alongside community partners is to create authentic consensus by identifying a reciprocal benefit that addresses needs that the community itself has identified aligning with the proposed research or project.** This understanding I unfortunately came to much later than the previous ones. Most of my career I have spent working with different communities, a women's organization in Uganda, as a health advisor in Malawi, and providing tutoring services for homeless students in Los Angeles. However,

this is the first time that I have run a project myself from start to finish. I think one of the biggest challenges of creating a collaborative partnership is thinking you have a really good idea but realizing that it may not necessarily be the idea that seems most relevant to your partnering community. I think this has always been the issue and is a big reason why we often see large development projects fail. “Seymour: In My Shoes” has been a brainchild of mine for a long time and working on its creation with the students over the summer I was more inflexible than I should have been and slow to pivot when necessary. I have lamented the engagement that I was able to achieve with the students and have often blamed it on the COVID crisis and being forced into a virtual world. Looking back on the situation now I wonder if that is not an excuse for my own failure to listen to the needs of my student partners.

Larry Spears speaks to this issue in his paper on servant leadership; “the servant leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps clarify that will. He or she seeks to listen receptively to what is being said (and not said). Listening, coupled with regular periods of reflection, is essential to the growth of the servant leader.” (Spears 3) I believe I failed this test of listening and was therefore unable to adapt and because of this very few of the students turned in the work that had been assigned. I ultimately did pivot away from pushing the idea of a traditional television program towards alternative and social media, however, it was too late. Beyond this lesson the other benefit that came from this was realizing that including an interactive piece to the show, a companion website ([www.seymourinmyshoes.weebly.com](http://www.seymourinmyshoes.weebly.com)) and social media presence, would open a pathway to greater engagement with both the audience and the storytellers. The ultimate benefit of this project is to build capacity with the storyteller communities, as D Watkins put it, ““instead of just taking photos of suffering people, pull one of them aside and teach them how to use your camera. Tell them what a DSLR is, and about aperture and f-stops. Expose them to something they’ve never heard of. Tell them that being an artist is a career option. Then you will be making a difference.” (Watkins 149)

Working on a compressed timeline and in the middle of a worldwide pandemic definitely hindered the work that I was able to do. Letting myself focus on these issues and failing to provide a better process for listening to the needs of my community,

however, was my own fault. I think the takeaway here is that I failed to share ownership, to work in true partnership with this community of students. Had I started with less structure and given more opportunity for open discussion not only around the process of the project but what the project itself should be maybe I would have seen a different level of engagement overall. Acting as manager I believe the process seemed more tedious than I had intended, and the lesson is to be more open and flexible, trusting those you work with to guide the vision instead of dictating it.

My final realization that is worth mentioning here is that this project has the potential to contribute to the fight for social justice. Seymour attempts to combat the invisible power inherent in mass media, but it also offers a pathway toward intersubjectivity through a typically one way medium. I believed early on that this project could be a powerful tool for cultural learning, but through my reading came to realize that it may have the potential to create reflexivity and a way to challenge the audience too. An early inspiration for this work was Mr. Rogers Neighborhood, a show my generation grew up with but one I had never thought more deeply about. When reading about the philosophy of Fred Rogers I realized what a radical he actually was. He did something vastly different than had been done previously, he treated his child audience with respect and as capable of deep understanding. He talked about difficult topics, directly speaking to the audience and leaving long pauses for a child to process and think about what was being said. He acted as if he could hear our responses and when he went on his adventures in the neighborhood, he would always introduce us as his “television neighbors”. At every point we were included, acknowledged, and treated as a collaborator (Collins and Kimmel). Through the simple act of treating the camera as a direct line of communication with his audience he challenged the authority of conversational roles. As Donna Eder points out this is a key aspect of oral storytelling, through the process of storytelling power becomes more equally distributed across all participants, and allows the audience to engage with the storyteller bringing in and learning from their own interpretations and revelations (Eder). Seymour does not just allow a perspective from which to learn about the “cultural Other” but opens a dialogue between a distinct individual and the viewing audience by which they can feel challenged to think critically about their own worldviews.

### Limitations of the Work

*"The chief handicap of the colonized mind is the habit of approaching any subject with readymade ideas of what is worth noticing and knowing." (Goldbard 167)*

To say the least 2020 has been an arduous year for all of us. If asked in March I would have said I drew a terribly unlucky straw to be completing my capstone work during a global pandemic and probably the most divisive presidential campaigns in US history. However, after spending time reflecting on the work that I was able to do, and the lessons I've learned maybe I wasn't so unlucky after all. For all the hardships and disappointment of this insane year I feel that I was able to grow and I am thankful for the progress that I have made in my own life and work. That being said there was a great amount of challenge completing this project and I do want to take a moment to acknowledge those limitations.

As a collaborative community-based media project the original plan for this work counted on a large number of in-person meetings, neighborhood tours, and person to person interviews. Unfortunately, we had to pivot early on into a completely virtual formation instead and as this work was taking place during a heavier lockdown period there was no opportunity to get out into the communities with the young people. The fun of working on Seymour for the students was supposed to be the hands-on nature of the work, getting to collaborate with each other creating storyboards, handling camera equipment, and sharing stories face to face with each other. I think this lack of in-person engagement coupled with the world feeling overwhelming only a small number of students were able to really delve into this project. Ultimately that shifted the biggest revelations I was able to come to from the practical work to the theoretical, and much of my vision for this capstone was shaped by the reading that I did instead of the work with the students. However, of the 4 students who did engage with the work I was able to gain some meaningful insights as discussed in the reflection and their contributions definitely helped create this version of Seymour.

*The Future of Seymour*

*"In a just world, no one should need special authorization in order to have their voice heard."*

*(Stone-Mediatore 176)*

Since I was a child I have been fascinated with stories and storytellers. There is no better way to get to know someone than to listen to the way they tell stories about themselves and the worlds they inhabit. Stories are where I have found my passion in the work that I do. From Uganda to Malawi and Los Angeles to Baltimore my career path has introduced me to dozens of different communities and thousands of different stories. I have found that in any job I have held, active listening and empathy have always been my greatest strengths. Helping others is rarely about doing something for someone else and more about clearing obstacles that clutter the path and supporting someone to recognize the power for change they have within themselves. Moving on from the MACS program I would like to continue this career path into the world of international development.

The village that I called home for two and a half years in the Peace Corps has been constantly on my mind throughout my time in this program. What I saw in that community was a thousand generations of knowledge, a people of good humor, and strong backs. I saw a community that was vital, dynamic, and full of energy and potential. However, I also saw the way they were treated by large NGOs. I saw them problematized and reduced to a number of new HIV cases, average yearly rainfall, and crop yields. Humans made one-dimensional, big organizations would come in for a day and build pit latrines, hold nutritional clinics, or install solar panels. When they left the community would go back about its daily business and oftentimes projects would fail because the community had little to do with why those organizations had come in the first place. I want to change this relationship. I want to act as a broker between communities and these large development organizations helping to ensure space where the community can be heard and training organizations to listen deeply to the communities they intend to help. I think this project, "Seymour: In My Shoes," is the first step on that path. Seymour creates a place for dialogue between communities and a larger public audience, a place to speak and learn together and confront conflicts. Unfortunately, the history of development is deeply entwined with the history of

colonization but telling stories can help to mediate some of this conflict. As Darcy Alexander points out, “this communicative interaction does not necessarily resolve or do away with the conflicts that arise from uncertainty, inequality or identity. Rather, it enables political actors to decide democratically how to act in the face of conflict, and to clarify the nature of the conflict at hand.”(Alexander 44) In other words telling stories and initiating dialogue helps to even the playing field. “Seymour: In My Shoes” may never become the hit television show I have dreamed of, but its method and philosophy may help to forge a new more empathetic type of community development. This project makes the attempt to define a development practice based on active listening that challenges colonial power structures, recognizes the assets inherent in communities, and allows people to define their own needs instead of having them paternalistically defined for them. I do not think that I have quite achieved this ideal, but promising groundwork has been laid and I’m excited to see how I can continue adapting these ideas in the future.

It has been a long journey working through this project. I have been challenged to confront my own blindspots and forced to adapt Seymour in ways I never could have imagined. I was forced to bring my own work under the microscope and recognize my room for growth and I think through this process I have grown. I would still very much like to see “Seymour: In My Shoes” as a broadcast show, but I can also see a future where Seymour helps me to carve out a new place for myself in my continuing career.

“Seymour: In My Shoes” is about creating a more humanistic and equitable media landscape. It’s about passing the mic to individuals who are rarely given the chance to speak on their own behalf, and not just tokenizing their stories but legitimizing for the whole world their lived experience. I believe that if we can use this program to expand children’s worldviews from an early age in a safe and fun environment then we help to create a more socially conscious, engaged, and compassionate public that can learn to see opportunity in opposition, transformation through dialogue, and expansion through knowledge of difference.

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### Appendix A: Learning Materials

#### *Worksheet Templates*

Below are the worksheet templates I created for each day during the week that I met with my student partners. The expectation that each assignment would be finished by the next day for sharing and discussion with the exception of the "Show Design" doc which would be worked on collaboratively during our video conference.

#### **A Shared Vision for "Seymour: In My Shoes"**

##### *Day 1 Assignment*

1. What were 2 of your favorite shows to watch as a kid? Why? My favorite shows as a kid



2. What are you hoping to learn this week?
3. If you had the chance to tell the world something about yourself and where you live, what story would you want to tell? Why?
4. This is your project, this is your chance to tell your own story, if this show were to be produced what do you hope audiences will learn? Why?

### **Show Design Worksheet**

#### *Day 2 Assignment*

Instructions: Think about your favorite shows to watch. What works about them? What is it about those shows that interests you or makes you watch? Remember that just being able to tell your story is not by itself powerful, it is about getting people to respond to your story. Think about who is watching, how are we going to make them want to continue watching? Please briefly answer the following questions.

1. Who is our audience? Who do you think will be watching this show and why? Who do you think would benefit most from learning these stories?
  
2. What story are you trying to tell? You are complex and complicated, there are many stories about you but which one would you like to tell for this show?
  
3. In your own words create a short sales pitch for "Seymour: In My Shoes". Think about your vision for the show and pretend you are trying to sell it to a production executive. Why should they buy your version of this show? What makes it special? Why should we watch it?

### **Interview Guide Worksheet**

#### *Day 3 assignment*

Interviewing is an important skill for ethnography. Remember we are telling our own stories here but we want to create space for more voices, you do not represent your community alone and sometimes there are things we don't even know about our own communities because we can only see from our own perspective. Good interviewing skills help you to tell a story and

better understand the perspectives of others, something that is crucial for good leadership, diplomacy, or generally working with others.

### **5 Golden Rules To Creating a Good Interview**

1. **Always be prepared**, know what topic generally that you want to cover before writing down any questions.
2. **Make your interviewee feel comfortable**, this is not an interrogation. You want to show genuine interest in this person. Create a warm atmosphere like you are talking with a friend or family member.
3. **Ask open ended questions**. Open ended questions like “what do you think about blank?” allow a person to say more than just a few words. Ask for stories not answers. Yes or no questions are good for clarity but not good for allowing a story to flow.
4. **Be flexible** and let curiosity lead. If you try to stick to a rigid set of questions you will miss the opportunity to dig deeper into what the person is saying. Actively listen to them and ask follow up questions helping them to tell a deeper, richer story.
5. **Take notes**, even if you are recording or filming the conversation make sure to have a notebook with you to jot down thoughts or a subject's reactions or body language that you notice. Sometimes what is not spoken says a lot.

### **Choosing an Interviewee**

For “Seymour: In My Shoes” we are telling our own stories about where we come from. It is important to gather more than one perspective because everyone experiences their social environment differently. For this project when choosing who you will interview, think about people you know in the neighborhood, who would be willing to talk with you? Who tells good stories and likes to share? Who can I learn something from that I didn't know before or think of?

1. Pick someone you know, a friend or family member.
2. Think about what you want to learn and pick someone who may know. (i.e. the history of the neighborhood, what do they like about living there, etc.)
3. Make sure the person you choose has the time to meet with you so they are comfortable and not rushed.
4. Thank them for participating and helping you out with your project.

**Who have you chosen to interview? Why?**

**What do I want to ask them about?** *(create a brief outline of topics you want to ask about, interviews should be at least 10mins long, you can choose to record audio on your phone, take a video, or note down what questions you ask and the interviewees answers)*

### **Personal Reflection Worksheet**

#### *Assignment Day 4*

**Instructions:** Using the guiding questions below, reflect on what you have learned so far and the work that you have done for this project. Be as honest as you can and speak openly, there are no right or wrong answers here. For this assignment you can either film yourself, record yourself or write down your reflections.

1. How did it feel documenting your own neighbourhood?

2. Who did you interview? What was something you learned about that person and what do you wish you would have been able to ask them about?
3. What (if anything) about this project have you enjoyed? What about have you not enjoyed or would do differently?
4. What (if anything) have you learned so far this week?
5. What (if anything) are you hoping to take away from this experience?

**Final Personal Reflection Worksheet**

*Assignment Day 5*

**Instructions:** Using the guiding questions below, reflect on what you have learned so far and the work that you have done for this project. Be as honest as you can and speak openly, there are no right or wrong answers here. For this assignment you can either film yourself, record yourself or write down your reflections.

1. What would you say you are proudest of about your work on this project?
2. In a perfect world if this show was produced, what would you hope that people who watch it say about it?

3. What was your favorite thing you got to do this week? What was your least favorite thing that you got to do?
4. What (if anything) have you learned about yourself or your community this week?
5. After working on this project for a week what (if anything) would you like to learn more about?

### *Cited Responses*

Here are the specific student responses cited in the reflection and the literature review. All student responses have been saved, however, for the sake of saving space here only those cited in the body of the paper appear in this appendix.

### **Show Design Worksheet (W1D2\_AWillis\_ShowDesign)**

#### *Day 2 Assignment*

Instructions: Think about your favorite shows to watch. What works about them? What is it about those shows that interests you or makes you watch? Remember that just being able to tell your story is not by itself powerful, it is about getting people to respond to your story. Think about

who is watching, how are we going to make them want to continue watching? Please briefly answer the following questions.

1. Who is our audience? Who do you think will be watching this show and why? Who do you think would benefit most from learning these stories?

The audience are teenagers, preferably teenagers around my age range. I think they would be interested in this because it's eye catching and it's not like every other show that's out right now.

2. What story are you trying to tell? You are complex and complicated, there are many stories about you but which one would you like to tell for this show?

I would like to tell the story of a shy girl that has a dream of becoming a famous dancer.

3. In your own words create a short sales pitch for "Seymour: In My Shoes". Think about your vision for the show and pretend you are trying to sell it to a production executive. Why should they buy your version of this show? What makes it special? Why should we watch it?

"Growing up people always thought I was a shy girl but they always felt as though I was hiding something deep down".. I think people should buy my version because it really relates to them..well mostly shy people because we're always getting picked on the most. It's special to me because I've always been picked on because I wasn't loud or outgoing like the rest. I think people should watch it because I feel as though they would be really interested in it.

### **Show Design Worksheet (W2D2\_Group\_ShowDesign)**

#### *Day 2 Assignment*

Instructions: Think about your favorite shows to watch. What works about them? What is it about those shows that interests you or makes you watch? Remember that just being able to tell your story is not by itself powerful, it is about getting people to respond to your story. Think about who is watching, how are we going to make them want to continue watching? Please briefly answer the following questions. Cody Reed, **ahmad mikah**

1. Who is our audience? Who do you think will be watching this show and why? Who do you think would benefit most from learning these stories?

**Our audiences is anyone effected by COVID or police brutality**

**Kahiem**

**Dikera**

**Damontay**

**Quzier**

i think that people that haven't really been affected by police brutality and covid-19 should benefit more from our story so they could have a better understanding of what's going on .

Our audience should be people who was effected by COVID and police brutality

Our audience should be the whole world.

### Quzier

2. What story are you trying to tell? You are complex and complicated, there are many stories about you but which one would you like to tell for this show?

We should talk the everyday COVID struggle and police brutality

I'm good with it

we should talk about how covid cases continue to go up because of people not following quarantine rules.

we should talk about how the world is reacting to police brutality during covid-19.

We should talk about how the world changed since COVID and how it effected everyone

In your own words create a short sales pitch for "Seymour: In My Shoes". Think about your vision for the show and pretend you are trying to sell it to a production executive. Why should they buy your version of this show? What makes its special? Why should we watch it?

I think people should watch this show to see the impacts that covid and police brutality did to different communities around the world.

i think people should watch this show because some people may not know the how the rest of the world takes the issue in the world today and how it effects a certain community and why racist insensitive comments have such a impact on many people today.

I think people should watch my show to see how these things effect people around the world. Also some places might not have the same resources as you

m.



I think people should watch this because it will help those who aren't really effected by COVID or police brutality watch and see how it really effects people that's deals with police brutality and deals with COVID

### **Personal Reflection Worksheet (W1D4\_AWillis\_PersonalReflection)**

#### *Assignment Day 4*

**Instructions:** Using the guiding questions below, reflect on what you have learned so far and the work that you have done for this project. Be as honest as you can and speak openly, there are no right or wrong answers here. For this assignment you can either film yourself, record yourself or write down your reflections.

1. How did it feel documenting your own neighbourhood?

It was kind of boring, there's nothing really exciting about my neighborhood

2. Who did you interview? What was something you learned about that person and what do you wish you would have been able to ask them about?

I interviewed my mom. I learned that she's lived over west her entire life basically and she said my our neighborhood used to be more "kid friendly" instead of all the violence that goes on now. I wish I could've asked her how all of the houses got boarded up, like what happened to the house.

3. What (if anything) about this project have you enjoyed? What about have you not enjoyed or would do differently?

I enjoyed going out to admire certain things that I never really payed attention to in my neighborhood.

4. What (if anything) have you learned so far this week? I've learned that I can do anything I can if I just believe in myself

5. What (if anything) are you hoping to take away from this experience?

What I've took from this experience is that there is always more to the things we may a lot of the times over look. Like I've never really payed attention to the amount of people that just come out to sit on their steps to just look around and talk to each other.

### **Personal Reflection Worksheet**

*Assignment Day 4*

**Instructions:** Using the guiding questions below, reflect on what you have learned so far and the work that you have done for this project. Be as honest as you can and speak openly, there are no right or wrong answers here. For this assignment you can either film yourself, record yourself or write down your reflections.

1. How did it feel documenting your own neighbourhood?

It felt good , actually having an assignment to go out and actually learn about my neighborhood!

2. Who did you interview? What was something you learned about that person and what do you wish you would have been able to ask them about?

I didn't interview many , except one neighbor I actually have never really had a conversation with. She told me she's lived in her house for 12 years and the best thing about living around here is the people they make her feel welcome and she's made family out of friends! I wish I would have asked, If she chose to leave and could go anywhere else where would it be ?

3. What (if anything) about this project have you enjoyed? What about have you not enjoyed or would do differently?

I enjoyed going out to the garden again , I do every now and then not as much as I would like and I'm going to try to go as much as I used to. I wish I would've interviewed more people and learned more than I did .

4. What (if anything) have you learned so far this week?

I've learned that I can persevere through anything if I keep going , don't give up no matter how hard or confusing things may seem.

- 
5. What (if anything) are you hoping to take away from this experience?

What I've took from this experience is that there is always more to the things we may a lot of the times over look. I say that because this assignment just showed we live in these neighborhoods , doesn't matter how long we never take time to really look and see the value , the history , the people .

(W1D4\_AJones\_PersonalReflection)

## Appendix B

### *Zoom Meeting Transcripts*

Below is the edited transcripts for zoom meetings cited within the body of the paper.  
 Edited transcripts of each days zoom meetings available [here](#)

Week 1 Day 3

7/23/20

**0:08:24.5 Cody:** Nice. How about you, Zania? Who's a favorite storyteller for you? Whether that's a friend, family member, author... Whoever in your life.

**0:08:34.4 Zania:** I would say my mom, because she would tell me real stories about our family past and she would make sure she wouldn't leave out not one detail, and I like that.

**0:08:49.9 Cody:** Okay. Nice.

**0:08:51.5 Zania:** Because it... It would make me learn more about my family members, even the ones that I didn't get to meet because they died before I was born eight years.

**0:09:00.1 Cody:** I like that. Nice. Okay. How about Freddy or Leonard? Either of you guys got a favorite storyteller that... In your life or someone that you've read or anything like that?

**0:09:10.1 Freddy:** Yeah, I was gonna say my mother too.

**0:09:13.2 Cody:** Okay.

**0:09:14.2 Freddy:** Whenever she says stories, I know she cappin', but it's still just funny that... That she just tells me the story.

**0:09:18.3 Cody:** That's awesome. So she... She exaggerates a little bit and stuff and...

**0:09:22.6 Freddy:** Yeah.

**0:09:24.0 Cody:** I like that. Yeah, that's how my grandpa was too. He had my dad convinced, for years, that cows had two legs shorter on one side of their body and two legs longer on the other side, 'cause they could stand on a hill and look like they're standing out straight. My dad's a smart man, mind you. So it's pretty impressive that he could get that guy going. And Leonard, if you can hear us. Do you wanna share somebody? Yeah, I'm not sure if he's around his computer right now... Alright, how about Darlene? You got anybody in you wanna share about?

**0:10:00.1 Darlene:** Yes, I had two. One would be my mother just like Freddy said, my mom's really dramatic, especially 'cause she's African too. So it's like the dramatics just come out. And then another person would be a YouTuber called Moses LDN, he lives in London, but his stories are wild. And then it's just amazing how over the screen he's able to captivate me and like, "What happened next? What happened next?" So...

**0:10:22.1 Cody:** Yeah, yeah.

**0:26:42.5 Cody:** I know there's some creative thought out here, especially... Because remember what we're gonna be doing, right, we're gonna go out into your own communities, your own neighborhoods, and you're taking pictures of stuff and you're trying to show from your own perspective what it... What your story is in that context. Who you are, how this neighborhood is your neighborhood and all those sorts of things. So, think about what it is you wanna show and that's kinda how you can frame your questions and stuff, right. What questions do you have to help you do that better, I guess.

**0:27:19.1 TH:** And if it's helpful for you guys, I can put all of this information into a one-pager and then you can have it just for reference when you're out shooting.

**0:27:28.3 Cody:** Yeah, definitely. That'd be great.

**0:27:30.6 TH:** Okay, cool.

**0:27:31.6 Cody:** That'd be great. Freddy, I know you're a creative guy, I know you do your drawings and stuff, do you ever do photography and everything, or are you just kinda sticking with pen and ink?

**0:27:41.0 Freddy:** I be taking my brother pictures sometimes.

**0:27:43.6 Cody:** Okay, does that mean like anything that's here, kinda share there. Is there anything you're already kinda trying or is there anything you're like, "Oh yeah, that's actually a really good idea, I should get a better shot."

**0:27:52.6 Freddy:** Yeah, probably just the lighting.

**0:27:54.1 Cody:** Okay.

**0:27:56.1 Freddy:** I don't have any light stuff. So, I just be like... When we outside, I just gotta tell him where to stand.

**0:28:05.1 Cody:** For sure. How about you Zania, how's this gonna help your selfie game?

**0:28:14.8 Zania:** Well, I don't really know about that, but like, all I know is when I was younger, my grandmother used to take me places like, for example, Washington DC, and I used to take pictures of my surroundings so I could remember that I went there. So, I guess I kinda have experience, but not a lot.

**0:28:39.4 Cody:** Okay. So, for what we're gonna be doing starting tomorrow, we're actually gonna go out and actually start taking pictures and footage and stuff within your neighborhoods and everything. If you have any questions like... So, maybe some advice on like what do you think... Obviously you're gonna get to decide what you wanna shoot and what's important to you, and all those kinds of things, but... Tiara, do you have any advice on where to maybe start with that kind of part of the project? Maybe how to know what to go for first or what's important, or do you think it's just like, take as much as possible so you can edit it down to what you need.

**0:29:11.8 TH:** I think that it can vary. I think that's very dependent on a person, but I will say, I think that is very important, what Zania just said, is shooting what you wanna remember. I think that was a very, very important and poignant statement. So, I think when you go out there, shoot what you wanna remember 'cause I'm sure that someone else wants to remember it too, and they will never get the chance to see it, but now they can see it through your eyes because they get to see what you remember.

**0:29:39.5 Cody:** Yeah, yeah.

**0:29:40.5 TH:** And I think that's a really dope way to put it.

**0:29:45.3 Cody:** Yeah, and I think you mentioned earlier too, something about when you talk about angles and stuff, take multiple angles so there's multiple shots of the same thing. When you find something that's important or you wanna remember, take multiple shots of it because it's gonna tell a different story depending on where you're looking from a lot of the time, right?

**0:30:02.9 TH:** Yeah, I can't tell you how many times I've taken a picture standing up and then I've gotten down low and how much more I was able to capture just because I got down a few inches lower.

**0:30:13.4 Cody:** Right.

**0:30:13.9 TH:** So, yeah, definitely. As much as you can fit on your phone, but also that you're gonna trim a lot of them, so it doesn't matter if you have a lot of them because you're gonna narrow them down to the ones that you like the best.

**0:36:00.0 Cody:** So what we're gonna look at right now though... And any questions about any of that? Everybody good? Okay, alright, is this the right one? No, I went with the wrong one up. Oh. So this is the worksheet from me yesterday, make sure we get that done. Alright, so this is the one we're gonna look at today. So this is our interview guide worksheet. So we kinda just talked about the picture footage taking part of it, and now I wanna talk a little bit about how we're gonna come up with interview questions, what to ask, those sort of things, and who to ask. So this has a lot of instructions on and there's only two questions I want you to fill out for this one. And you can fill out this one, like we did the one yesterday. So if you wanna just do it on the same page, that's fine. You don't have to make a copy for yourself. Just make sure, Freddy, if you choose blue for your text on the old one, on the first one, just use blue on here too, so I know that blue is Freddy. Zania, you can stay black since you already did yours in the regular text, that's fine, I'll know it's yours. And Leonard, the same thing, just pick a different color, and then when I share this out with you, you can answer the questions in your own color ink. Alright, so have any

of you guys done for a class or anything, have you ever done an interview before? Either giving or answering questions?

**0:37:14.0 Zania:** Yes.

**0:37:15.5 Cody:** Yeah? What was it for?

**0:37:18.4 Zania:** It was for a health class, I believe.

**0:37:21.4 Cody:** Okay.

**0:37:21.8 Zania:** And we had to ask our parents about the college they went to and why they chose to go there and all of that stuff.

**0:37:30.9 Cody:** Cool. Alright, how did you feel it went? Did you feel confident? Did you enjoy doing it?

**0:37:35.7 Zania:** Yeah, I enjoyed doing it because it helped me think about if I wanted to go to that college as well.

**0:41:13.6 Cody:** And the next thing, of course, is asking open-ended questions. So does everybody know what an open-ended question is? I'm gonna take your silence for yes. Freddy, what's an open-ended question? Give me an example.

**0:41:30.9 Freddy:** What did you say?

**0:41:31.8 Cody:** Give me an example of what an open-ended question is.

**0:41:36.1 Freddy:** Open-ended question.

**0:41:37.5 Cody:** Open-ended. Sorry. Yeah, if you... If you know what it is, yeah.

**0:41:44.1 Freddy:** Is there no answer to it? There's a lot of answer.

**0:41:47.6 Cody:** Exactly. Right, it's more than a yes or no. If I asked you, "Is your name Freddy?" You'd say yes. That's the end of that conversation, right? But if I ask something like, "Tell me about a time that you helped a friend out." You couldn't answer with yes or no, you'd have to actually tell me a story, right? And that's what we wanna get kinda to. So open-ended questions are gonna be asking for a story, it's gonna be things like, "Tell me about a time that blah, blah, blah," or, "I know you like playing basketball, so tell me about that. Where did you get interested in basketball from?" And again, it really encourages somebody to talk more. And then the interview, it's really more about what the other person is saying, less about your questions. You wanna spark off a conversation, you wanna spark off their talking. So the moment you ask a question, don't try and just follow it up with another question, let them talk it out a little bit, let them really take some time so they explain to you what's going on and what their thoughts are and everything, and then you actively listen, right?

**0:45:04.1 Cody:** Okay. Alright. So the other thing is about how to choose your interviewee. Who do you guys think? Just off the top of your heads, do you already have an idea of who you think you wanna do an interview with? You guys are being quiet today. Zania, any thoughts on who you think you might wanna interview for this project?

**0:45:39.9 Zania:** Either my mom or my grandmother on my mother's side.

**0:45:44.0 Cody:** Okay. Why do you think... Why do you think they would be a good... So we already know your mom's a good story teller, but why else? Is there any other reason that you'd choose them?

**0:45:58.4 Zania:** I don't know.

[chuckle]

**0:46:00.9 Zania:** I just think I'm just closer with them two than most. That's really why I wanna interview them.

**0:46:06.9 Cody:** Yeah, definitely. No, that's a good reason. It's fun to get to learn something about somebody, especially somebody you're already close to, right? Somebody you get to learn even more about them, and kinda go a little bit deeper and have a really good conversation, absolutely. How about you, Freddy? Any idea of who you're thinking about?

**0:46:24.8 Freddy:** Yeah, I'm just probably gonna ask my mom.

**0:46:28.0 Cody:** Okay. And again, she's a good storyteller, but then I'm sure it'll be a good interview, so you know no problem there. Just some things to keep in mind then, so even if you guys already decided, and that's totally fine if that's what you're gonna go with. Remember, we're telling our own stories about where you come from, so it's important to gather more than one perspective about that, because everyone's experienced their social environment differently.

Week 2 Day 4

7/30/20

**0:11:54.9 CR:** So, I really, really appreciate that. I think you guys have done some good work so far. Hopefully, you guys were able to do the worksheet we that we did yesterday and get that filled out, so you're ready to go for today. If you haven't turned that in yet or haven't sent that, shared that in with me yet, just make sure you share me on it today. But what I wanna do first is welcome you, get you settled, and ask who have you chosen to interview and why? So, we did that worksheet yesterday where we talked about how you choose an interviewee and some of the golden rules about it. Who have you guys chosen to do your interviews with? And why that person for this topic?

**0:12:39.3 Quazir:** I'm gonna interview my aunt.



**0:12:40.9 CR:** Okay. And why did you chose your aunt?

**0:12:43.6 Quazir:** 'Cause I don't wanna interview no random person.

[chuckle]

**0:12:47.6 CR:** Fair enough. Why do you think she's a good one to talk to about this particular topic, or do you think she's just a good story teller so you'll be able to really give you a good conversation with her?

**0:12:58.3 Quazir:** Yeah, she's a nurse.

**0:13:00.9 CR:** Oh okay. There you go. Yeah, that's a great one. Okay. Yeah. Definitely. Where does she work? What hospital is she at?

**0:13:08.2 Quazir:** Sinai Hospital.

**0:13:09.4 CR:** Okay. Right on. Yeah, I bet she's definitely dealing with this in a really, real impactful way more than a lot of us. Alright. Thank you Quazir. Who else has got one? Who else has... Who have you chosen to interview? Who are you going with? And remember, you can put it in the chat, or you can say it out loud. We would love to hear your voices when we can. Kaheem who have you chosen? Who are you gonna do an interview with?

**0:13:51.0 Kaheem:** I'd probably interview my cousin.

**0:13:53.0 CR:** Your cousin? Okay, why your cousin?

**0:13:57.0 Kaheem:** Because like, he's older and he understands what's going on [0:14:04.2]  .

**0:14:05.7 CR:** Gotcha, so he's a little bit older than you and you can get some different perspective there.

**0:14:11.8 Kaheem:** Yeah.

**0:14:12.6 CR:** Yeah, like he knows what's going on. Okay, yeah definitely. That's a good choice. Absolutely. Ahmad or Leonard, any of you guys... Who did you choose to do an interview with? Or who are you choosing to do an interview with? Okay, we're being shy, that's alright. Go ahead and throw it up in the chat. There we go, Ahmad's got it. Okay, I chose my brother because he knows a lot about Black Lives Matter stuff. Okay, right on. Yeah, absolutely. Is he like kinda been involved in the protests and stuff Ahmad or is he just kinda like knowledgeable in general? And Leonard, we haven't heard from you yet man. Who are you choosing to do an interview with? Knowledgeable in general, okay yeah, definitely. Right on.

**0:20:54.9 MT:** Anybody, anybody come on. Don't be shy, don't be shy. Alright, alright. Well, let me phrase it this way, what do you guys like to... And then I think this question might've been posed to you already through by worksheets, but what do you guys actually like to watch, what do you like to interact

with? Whether it's stuff on YouTube, whether it shows, whether it's movies, what is it that you guys mess with as far as just like content, what do you guys like? I'm sure you guys got something along those lines, we all do. Well, maybe I should start with saying what I like to watch right now in this whole quarantine thing, I've been... As I sort of work in, as I edit and do all that stuff, I like to have on in the background pretty much always is '90s wrestling. I've been obsessed with going back and watching a lot of the stuff from the '90s as far as pro wrestling goes. And it's been a weird experience going back to watch some of that old stuff that I watched as a kid, so I've really been into that as of late. What have you guys in watching and quarantine or been looking at? Come on my guys. Don't be shy. Come on.

**0:22:31.5 CR:** I can go just get the mood roll in a little bit. I'll share mine. I've been watching... I don't know if I'd be as to see it yet, but I just watch all the Unsolved Mysteries they just put up on Netflix. In the very first episode actually blew me away 'cause it all takes place here in Baltimore at the Belvedere Hotel. So it's weird, that it's all places that you know and stuff when you're watching the show. But that one's been really good. And I've been rewatching Parks and Rec all the time. All the time, always.

**0:22:58.2 MT:** Yeah, that's a must. Between the Office and Parks and Rec, I think.

**0:23:05.1 CR:** You go back and forth between the two really.

**0:23:08.7 MT:** Yeah.

**0:23:10.7 CR:** What have you been watching Kaheem? I know you watched some stuff.

**0:23:12.9 Kaheem:** I've been watching 60 Days In.

**0:23:22.1 MT:** Say it one more sir.

**0:23:23.3 Kaheem:** I've been watching 60 Days In.

**0:23:25.7 MT:** 60 Days In. What's that about?

**0:23:26.5 Kaheem:** It's people volunteer to go to jail for 60 days for different reasons.

**0:23:38.9 MT:** What's it been like to watch that? I'm sure that's an interesting show.

**0:23:41.4 Kaheem:** I've been seeing people willing to give up their freedom to see how they family was living when they was in jail. Or sometime they do to see how people living in jail. Trying to make the system better.

**0:24:04.6 MT:** And what made you wanna pick that up as far as just watching it, was it... Or what keeps you into it in terms of watching it? Is it the stories...

**0:24:14.4 Kaheem:** It's very interesting because in the jail system it do need change. [0:24:26.9]   my voice can have an affect on change in jail system.

**0:24:37.3 MT:** That's real tough., man. That's real tough. How about anybody else? Is it Quazir? What are you watching man?

**0:24:57.3 Quazir:** I be watching shows like The Flash.

**0:25:01.4 MT:** Okay, okay. Do you like the whole Arrow verse?

**0:25:09.3 Quazir:** Oh yeah, I be watching all of 'em. I be watching Legends of Tomorrow, all that.

**0:25:14.1 MT:** Okay, okay. Yeah I'm not gonna lie to you I watched a few episodes of Green Arrow like a while ago, and I just couldn't... I was like, "Eh, I don't know if this for me." I'm an old Smallville...

**0:25:27.9 Quazir:** I ain't gonna lie the Green Arrow one that one take whack. You gotta watch the other ones though, they way better.

**0:25:32.6 MT:** Okay. How about Super Girl, how do you feel about that one?

**0:25:36.8 Quazir:** Oh yeah, Super Girl, yeah I'll be watching all of that.

**0:25:39.0 CR:** Is there a new one right now? Isn't there a Bat Woman one or something, or is that only [0:25:42.3]       ?

**0:25:43.2 Quazir:** I like that one too, but it's like whack though.

[laughter]

**0:25:46.1 MT:** Well, I don't know, It might change. I know they just changed out the lead actress, Ruby Rose isn't gonna be doing it anymore, it's gonna be somebody else. I forget her name. It's like Juliana or something like that. They're gonna have as the lead actress, that's dope. What attracts you to those shows?

**0:26:04.8 Quazir:** I just like superheros for real.

**0:26:09.9 MT:** Do you like the powers or do you like their stories, like the back... Are you more of like here, where they come from, how they get their powers or how they got to be heroes? Or do you like seeing 'em do dope stuff with their powers?

**0:26:25.8 Quazir:** Yeah, flying around and running real fast and stuff...

**0:26:28.5 MT:** Yeah. Okay, anybody else? Okay. Alright, so the reason why I was asking that is because that knowing what you like sort of informs how you can go about doing... How you can go about telling your own stories and how you can go about what styles you might wanna go after for when you're trying to... Whether it's with pictures or whether it's video, it helps you sort of understand where you're coming from and what you like.

*Student Photos*

All collected documentation provided by students.



W2D4\_QHighsmith\_Image1





W2D4\_QHighsmith\_Image2



W2D4\_QHighsmith\_Image3





W2D4\_QHighsmith\_Image4



W2D4\_QHighsmith\_Image5





**Houses in my neighborhood!**

W1D4\_AJones\_Image1



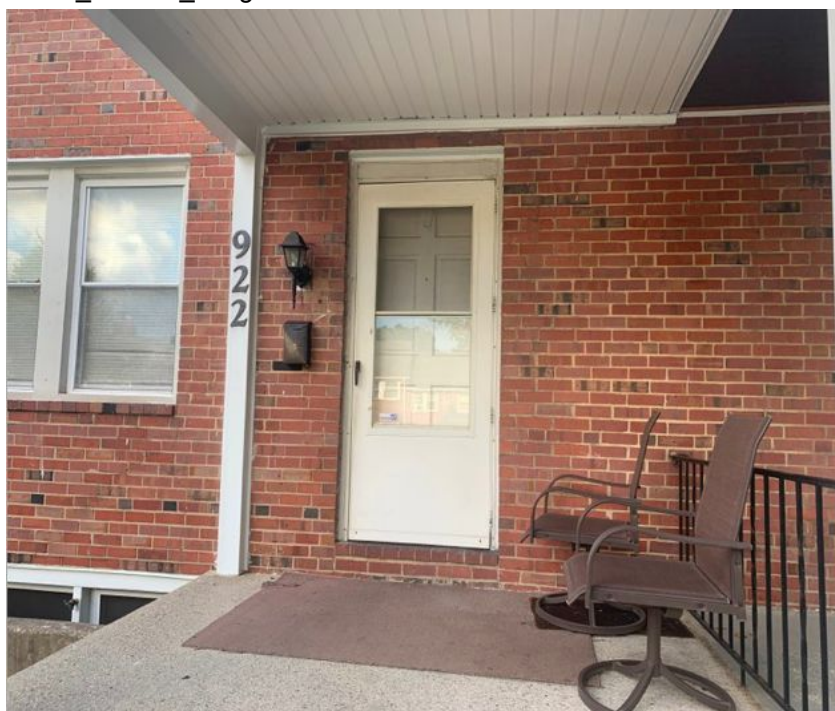
More houses from the neighborhood!

W1D4\_AJones\_Image2



An old house from my neighborhood!

W1D4\_AJones\_Image3



My house that I've lived in for 5 and a half years!

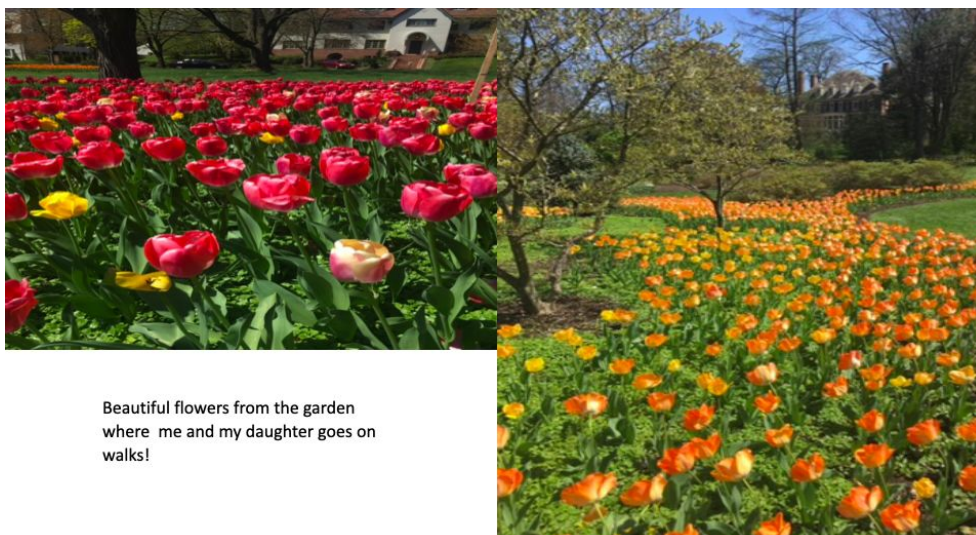


W1D4\_AJones\_Image4



My neighborhood market!

W1D4\_AJones\_Image5



Beautiful flowers from the garden  
where me and my daughter goes on  
walks!

W1D5\_AJones\_Image6