



Video 4 of 14, Video Journalism Workshop Transcript

[First Segment]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): The objective of this workshop is to get you guys to here (points to writing pad on easel) okay? This whole thing is about story, all right. But how do we get there? I mean, what is this fundamental, the basic unit of visual and aural information that we use to construct the story? What is it? We just talked about it. What does this look like?

Anne: Clips.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): These are clips.

Chad: Clips, 20-second clips.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): These are 20-second clips. You get one channel of ... video, and you have audio one and audio two, okay. These are the bricks that we use to construct the building. These are, you know, every building, you know, has these basic components, the smallest units—this is a brick house so the bricks are about this big. I work at a thing called, "The School of Communication of American University," the fundamental building blocks are pieces of stone, they're about this big, okay.

If the Empire State Building is made of bricks, you know, it's got, I don't know how many stories but they start off with bricks like this, okay.

That's the same way we build a story. So we start with clips there, minimum, when you want to shoot them, 20 seconds long, you probably won't use all of those 20 seconds when you build your final story because it's too boring unless something really is compelling and they're happening in there. If we combine a bunch of clips together, we make what?

Chad?

Chad: A story.



Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Not yet. We're not there yet, man. This is way up here, we got...

Chad: Oh, a sequence.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): We have a sequence.

Chad: Yeah.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): We have a sequence. We got a sequence. If we combine various sequences together, what do we make?

Karen?

Karen: Scenes.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): We make scenes. What we have here, we have a very, very neat finite scene, okay. You know, it goes from that wall over there to this wall, back to that wall to here, back to that wall to here; it goes from the ceiling to the floor. It's a finite, it's a well-defined scene—we've got 12 or 13 people in here, we've got all these elements in here. Our job is to figure out if, again, going back to the analogy. We're going to do a documentary about this workshop, this four-day workshop, okay. We're going to come back to the scene, time and time again; we're going to go out this afternoon, we're going to come back till tomorrow, we're going to show up in the morning, we're going to go out, we're going to come back; so we're going to have versions of the scene over and over again.

But ... if we're going to build a story about this workshop and we're going to use, chapters, if you will, okay, different scenes, right. What do we, where do we start here? Where do we start here? How do we, where do we start shooting? Chad has got a camera. What does he shoot first? Will he shoot an extra close-up of me?

Ann: No, an establishing shot.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Does he do an establishing shot first?

Ann: Uh-hmm.



Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): What does he do second?

Chad: Maybe, a character—figure out who your character is early.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Ooh, you figure out who your characters are, okay. Maybe, it takes a while to do that. It took me several hours to figure out, you know, my guys in "Chain Gang," okay. Along the way, after I figured out who did want to be characters and who's going to punch me in the nose if I try to make them my character, right, or if I try to film them, along the way. I've got to figure out what are the visually defining characteristics of this place, the visually defining characteristics of this place. I've got to deconstruct this scene here so that I can shoot it—those components and I can reconstruct the scene and make it a chapter of the film, okay.

These clips, we can call them "words" if we want to. These sequences we can call them "sentences" if we want to. These scenes we can call them "paragraphs" if we want to. This story is, it could be a book, it could be a magazine piece, it could be a documentary, it could be you know, whatever you want to call it, all right. But this is the progression, from this tiny, little bricks to the big building that we are trying to put together, okay.

So, how do we, or where do we start, though? Along the way to figuring it out who the characters are, we have to shoot what? We got to shoot what? What are the visually defining characteristics of the scene? The instructor? The students? What else?

Kalpana: The location, the place.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): You mean the room?

Kalpana: I mean, the context in which you instruct the character.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): But what's here, what's here? What are we shooting? What do we make pictures of? How do we describe this place visually? When you call a friend or a relative tonight, you're going to say like, "All right, I was in this first day of the workshop," and she's going to say, "Oh really, what did it look like when you were there?" What would you tell her?

Kalpana: The tools that you are using—I mean, the video screen—

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Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): The screen?

Kalpana: ...and the...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): The board I'm writing on?

Kalpana: Yeah.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): What else?

Kalpana: The camera.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): The cameras around. What else?

Anne: The desks.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): The desk we have, what else? What's on the desk?

Karen: Computers, gears.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): We've got loads of computers around, we have bunch of gear.

Leonard, what else are we seeing?

Leonard: Coffee.

[CROSSTALK]

[LAUGHTER]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): All right, right. Yeah, and believe me, we're going to see a lot of it during the workshop. What else?

Kalpana: The people, the students.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): You got people, you got terrific faces here, you know, all kinds of colors and all kinds of ages and so forth.

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You've got ... these arrows, they come from the Amazon, above the back door there; you have a 100-year-old statue of Jesus; you've got ... this stuff from Africa here, you've got wires all over the floor, you know; cases of stuff, you've got all of these stuff, okay. These are the things that you have to make pictures of, these are the things that you saw on "Chain Gang," the ankles, the tightness of you know, the braces around their ankles. You saw the chains being pulled out of the boxes, you saw the chains being dragged across the ground, you saw, you know, the guys' hands hanging out of the bars; you saw all those stuff close up, you saw, you know, the guys lifting weights and so forth.

Once you decide what are the things that are important here are; what are the visually defining characteristics, you make pictures of them, 20 seconds apiece so that we can put them together, and we can paint the scene, we can reconstruct the scene in your final piece, okay.

Let's assume that Kalpana is going to be one of the characters in the film, okay. She's from a different country, she's has a wonderful accent, you know, all of those stuff; she's compelling, she has an interesting story to tell, she wants to be a character. She passed the three-point test—she wants to be a character, she has a compelling story, and she's articulate, okay.

So let's assume that we picked Kalpana to be one of the characters. What we do here, we start ... what clips do we start to build this thing with? And here's where we get to the core of what I want you guys to pay attention to today, when we go out there shooting. And this is called the, "Six-Shot System."

Where is it in your manual?

Karen: Page 40.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Page 40.

Karen: Uh-hmm.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): "The Six-Shot System." You don't have to read that now but let's take a look at what this thing looks like, because the Six-Shot System is going to be a very, very important tool for all of you people who

5

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are heading out to the field to make your documentaries, to make these visual pieces. It's an approach, it's a technique, it's a way, it's a manner and an approach, a design to make sure you generate the material that you need, to be able to put visually compelling stories together, okay.

It's pretty simple, it's one through six and again, you know, these video pieces are all about question and answer, they're all about discussion. It's not just about gathering information but it's about gathering compelling information and having a discussion with you even if the discussion is verbal and implicit as opposed to just gathering information and throwing it at you.

So, what the Six-Shot System is designed to do is designed to help you to generate compelling information so that you can carry on this conversation with your audience. The first shot of this Six-Shot System generally is this ...

(focusing the camera on Kalpana).

... will you pretend that you're writing something? Or in fact, write whatever you want, okay. I want to do this and I'm going to shoot this as see it, minimum, how long?

Chad: Twenty seconds.

Kalpana: Twenty seconds.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): It's going to be 20 seconds; so if I show an audience this, right—and maybe at the beginning, maybe at the middle of the documentary, maybe wherever, there's a question that's implicit here, what am I asking the audience?

Chad: What's she doing? What's going on?

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): What's she doing? What else?

Chad: What's going on? Who is it?



Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): All of those things, right? Okay, so that's the question. And that's the first shot of the Six-Shot System, okay. How do I answer that question?

Anne: Show her face.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): I'll show her face, beautiful, thank you. If I show her face and you know what, and again, I don't want to do everything from this perspective, you know. I don't want to show this, and then this, and then something else. I am going to move around, you know. So if I'm going to show her face, I want them to compose the picture in a compelling way; maybe I want to show it like this and I want to do a close up of her face and maybe I even want to include a piece of the computer because we know that she's writing on the computer, don't we? We saw that she's writing on something so I want to include a little of that and I'll have a couple of layers of information here, and I'll shoot 20 seconds of this.

So we've got two shots here of the six-shot system, okay, one of her hands and one of her face. We assume that the hands that we saw belong to the face that I just showed you. But who knows, maybe not; so just to confirm that they do belong to the same person; because I'm probably not going to show this...then that, right. It doesn't make too much sense. So, I'll show something that looks...here's the answer to that question and it looks like this.

And here's the third shot of the six-shot system.

Steinar: You can change angle.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Sorry?

Steinar: You can change the photo view. You don't need to stand on the same...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): No. I mean, what I don't want to do is this. I mean, I think this is really boring. If I'm going to shoot a close up of this and then a close up of that and then a wide shot of this, and then the next shot is going to be...a medium shot of that, rather; then the next shot is going to be a wide shot, you know, all shot from the same point of view is really boring, don't you think?

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[LAUGHTER]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): You know, if I really want this thing to be dynamic, I'm going to do a close up of that; I'm going to shoot a close up of that, I'm going to shoot a medium shot, maybe her eye level or a little bit above her eye level.

Steinar: But it should be on the same side?

Ann: Right, you're not going to move here is what he's saying. [inaudible].

[CROSSTALK]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): No, I don't want to go to the other side because that can get very confusing. And then I'm going to shoot a wide shot of this because if I show the close up then the close up, and the medium shot, the question becomes what? Not the hands that belong to the face; the question becomes what? Where is she, no? Where is she? So to give her some context, I do a wide shot of this, and I include—"Oh, okay, there are other people in the room; I got it and there's a guy with a camera there. It must be some kind of a classroom or something."

So I've got a close up of the hands, close up of the face, medium shot of the person, wide shot of the person; what's next?

Anne: Over the shoulder.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Over the shoulder. Ah.

Chad: Oh, right.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): So I'm going to go over here so all of these start to make sense now, okay.

Chad: Oh, yeah.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): I'll shoot this, I'll shoot this because then we'll see what she's writing, we know it's her writing; maybe we'll see what she's writing on and if I'm really slick, I'll go over this side and I'll shoot over her shoulder—but who's going to be standing there?

8



Chad: You.

Kalpana: You.

Anne: You, introducing the main character.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Me, me or introducing the other central character. I'm going to be the central character, the professor's going to be standing over there and she's going to be shooting up, you know. This person's going to be shooting the character. So all of a sudden, we have her, we've just done a sequence of her but we connected her visually to another character and the way you develop your characters is you get other people to talk about those characters. You include them well, you know, in the same shots so we get a sense of "Okay, these people are interconnected here, there's some kind—they're in the same room, they're doing the same thing, they're together," okay.

So, we have five shots now, what's the last shot?

Anne: The establishing shot.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): It's the establishing shot. So, I'm going over here as far as I can into the corner, maybe I have a wide-angle lens for this thing, maybe I don't. I'll go into this corner and shoot over here, I'll go over to that room over there and shoot this way; especially, I mean, you know, if I can get back there and shoot this way and I could include her and me again in the picture. That marries us together again, okay. That establishing shot establishes that, "Okay, Gentile was here, Kalpana is there," and then after we do another sequence with Chad, we go, "Okay, I got it, all the stuff is in the room."

Chad: But this is you as the professor, not the film guy because you were never in the "Chain Gang." Your picture was never in it.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Right, right. No, no. Yeah, I mean...

Chad: See, what I mean?

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): ...intentionally so.

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Chad: Right.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Yeah. But you heard me in "Chain Gang," and you saw the six-shot system in "Chain Gang" although you didn't recognize me because I didn't include, think of the sequence or the scene, remember in the courtyard? When the guys were out there exercising? You know, there's one guy with a grate and he's pulling it up like this? And then there's another guy with another grate—he's like this? And one of my main characters is talking about doing push-ups and so forth? I did the same Six-Shot sSstem with all those guys but I only used the most powerful shots, okay.

The fact that I had all those material gave me the luxury. I could select only the most powerful images to tell the story. But I did a Six-Shot System on probably three or four people including my main character, one of my main characters, Robby, in that prison yard. Am I answering your question?

Chad: Uh-hmm. Yeah.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Of course, I'm not going to be there because, you know, the story wasn't about me in the "Chain Gang." But the documentary here, certainly is about me with you in this workshop.

Chad: Right.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Makes sense?

Chad: Uh-hmm.

Kalpana: Uh-hmm.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): And the last shot would be the establishing shot in which I showed everybody ... I'm not only going to show you, you and me here but we're going to show Jesus hanging on the wall, we're going to show the fireplace, we're going to show the computers, you know. I might do something like this really cool to show you guys, you know, wow, there are wires running all over the place, you know...it's really...wait until you



see this place Sunday night. If you think this looks confusing, chaotic now, Sunday night it's going to be really, really exciting.

Chad: Yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Does everybody get this progression from clip to sequence, to scene to story? You have to think of this stuff, you have to envision this stuff as this progression from these tiny bits of information to a complete story, okay. Does anybody have any questions? As I go along here, we talk a couple of steps back. I'll get to you in a second, Kalpana.

We talked a couple of steps back about this participatory observation, okay. And to achieve that participatory observation we do it through two ways. We do it through informal interviews and we do it through formal interviews. And it very much depends on the kind of story you're telling. I mean, you know, when I was...I'll show you guys during the course of this workshop a piece that I did in Afghanistan; some of you may have seen it.

I was in Afghanistan with a bunch of marines and I talked to these guys at very, very specific and opportune times, very, very strategic moments and I'd say, you know, "Tell me what's going on here?" And that, you know, they told me that we're going to, you know, "We're doing this; we took some fire from these guys here. I'm sending a platoon of guys down there," and they tell the story to me for you, as we go along.

In some cases, I may want the prison warden to take me around the prison and say, "This is what we do here, this is what we do there, and blah, blah, blah." That's another technique of drawing this thing out. It's all about this participatory observation concept and what I do is I ask people questions either in an informal setting or formal setting. And what I want you guys do today when you go out there, I want you to start engaging people on an informal basis. I don't want you to do sit down interviews today, we're going to cover that tomorrow morning; I'll give you plenty of information and ammunition to be able to do that tomorrow.

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Today, I want you to do informal interviews, which is one way to achieve this participatory observation. An informal interview consists of three questions basically.

And the first question is, "What are you doing?" And this sounds very, very simplistic. I know that. But if I'm doing a sequence on Kalpana, because I know she is going to be one of my characters, I'm going to ask her when she's writing I want to say, "Kalpana, what are you doing?" Then she's going to respond, "Well, I'm writing an e-mail to my boss," or whatever, okay. Or, "I'm taking notes on this workshop about what he's saying here," okay. And that becomes something very, very usable in your final product, you know, you're going to include my question or not but Kalpana turns to the camera and says, "I'm writing something about this workshop, it's really boring to this point, I hope something changes here because if not, I'm going to ask for my money back."

[LAUGHTER]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): That's a hell of a clip, you know what I mean?

Chad: Yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): You know...

Chad: It's also a lot better than his point where you lead, he said it's annoying when you lead the quest...you know, "Hey are you working on a documentary? Are you making that?" You know what I mean?

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): You don't do that. Yeah.

Chad: You don't do it.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Yeah, yeah.

Chad: It is an open-ended question.



Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Right. You just say, "What are you doing?" So, that's one way that I try to engage the audience with what's happening here.

The second question I ask, "What did you just do?" Okay. Maybe she, you know, stops writing then I say, "Kalpana, what did you just do?" "Oh, I'm writing a piece about this workshop; it's really boring and I think I want my money back and I want to go home," you know, and then you could use that, right.

The third question is ... logical now. The third question is what? "What are you going to do?" And that way you can, you know, you can signal something, you know, a change in the piece; what your characters are going to do.

In the Afghanistan piece that I'll show you, I asked a lieutenant, "Lieutenant, you know, what's happening now?" Or, "What are you going to do now?" "We're going to send some people down the road; they're going to do so on and so forth." So you ask these guys, these three questions, "What are you doing? What did you just do? What are you going to do?" They will tell you and your audience the story so you don't have to write the stuff in. You want your characters; you want your subjects to tell the story; you don't want to tell the story yourself.

[Second Segment]

CONTROLLING IDEAS

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Can you articulate your controlling idea, the controlling idea is...do you have a pearl necklace?

Ann: Yes.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): What holds the pearls together?

Ann: String.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Is it cloth? Nylon? Wire?

Ann: Yes.



Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Just call it "nylon". If someone grabs your necklace and jerks it and breaks that nylon, what happens to the pearls?

Ann: They fall on the floor.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): So the pearl necklace ceases to be a necklace.

Kalpana: Uh-hmm.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): If that wire breaks, they become just a bunch of pearls lying on the floor; it's no longer a necklace, is it? That's what controlling idea does. Your controlling idea holds together these pearls of visual and aural information and they make it into a story with a beginning and a middle, and an end. That's your controlling idea—we're going to talk about a lot of controlling idea, okay. Without the controlling idea, and I've seen pieces like this because some of my students hand them in a lot—they don't have, there's no controlling idea, there's no consistency that's not coherent and there's no structure, okay.

Chad: What was it for the "Chain Gang?" Just the "Chain Gang" concept running through that whole thing?

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Yeah, I think so. The idea was to explain this, you know, this new practice that was adopted by the State of Alabama and how it affects prisoners and the people who keep them in prison, you know. That was the controlling idea.

Chad: Yeah.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): So, I'm always asking these guys, you know, "Is it effective?" "Does it keep them from doing it again?" You know, "What are conditions like here?" You know, asking the guys who run the place, you know, "What's the impact on these prisoners? How is it run?" And all that, okay. That's the controlling idea. What I want to get from you guys today before you go out, I want to get, you know, a sense of your controlling ideas. Okay, what I need from you guys...now, let's continue this conversation, if everybody can give me, you know, I tell my students all the time, "If you can't state or if you can't articulate your controlling idea in one, single declarative sentence, you know, then you've got to do some work on it."

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I always start the sentence off with you know, "My documentary shows..." or, "My documentary explores..." or, "My documentary explains..." and if you can finish that sentence about your project, you're in good shape because you'll know which questions to ask, you'll know what questions not to waste your time on when you're out there, you'll know what images to look for. You've got to have a really clear idea, this controlling idea, otherwise, you will end up you know, as Anne says, "With just the pearls lying on the floor." They might be great, you know pieces of jewelry, great pearls but they're not going to be a necklace. You're not going to come back on the necklace; and I want all of you come back with necklaces.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): So Kalpana, my documentary explores...

Kalpana: My documentary explores how a grocery store, an Afghan grocery store, becomes the anchor of an immigrant and uprooted community.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Terrific, terrific. I mean, you know, you identify a character, you come up with a few characters there, they tell their story about why this place, this market has become a place of community for us, why we come here for all our needs; we can't get you know, Afghan goods or items that we use in Afghanistan anywhere else in the city; we come here, we make friends; I come here I feel at home, all of these things and it builds up you know, the sense of you know, it fortifies your controlling idea. Very good.

So in a sense, the market itself becomes the central character and the other characters are peripheral characters, aren't they?

Kalpana: Uh-hmm.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Good, so you're on to this. Terrific, okay.

Anne?

Ann: A Syrian immigrant and his journey from Arabic instructor to restaurateur; his connection with his homeland and what it means for him to share his culture with America.



Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Okay, it's a little, it's a little...you're spread pretty thin there, but you know, when you go out, and it almost always happens, we'll go out into the field and we'll probe around and we'll ask the questions and so forth. And the idea will crystallize and it will become sharper in focus when you're out there, you know; we're paying attention, we're asking these questions and you know and it begins to really take shape and take form. That's what all this is about. Sometimes you go out there and you find out, "Oh my God," you know, "this isn't the story that I thought it was at all," you know. And sometimes it's pretty much, very much...it's very, very close to what you initially thought it was.

Karen?

Karen: Two people who met during World War II in the Navy; one in the waifs, and one, a submariner; get married and now they are working on, putting together a Maryland Memorial Veterans Museum down in southern Maryland. So it's kind of their story about them coming together; I'm going to try and get them down at the U.S. Navy Memorial, kind of that is the setting and the background, here's the beginning and now their life stories that now they're trying to capture and recognize all veterans.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Okay, we talked about this the other night on the phone when Bruce and I and Brad called you and I think the story...we talked about this thing a love story.

Karen: Yes, yes.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): So, I think your documentary is more how you know, two people...the love between two people begins during the conflict of World War II and ends with the construction of a monument dedicated to all American veterans, something like that...

Karen: Right, right.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): ...you know, but you're basically telling a love story, aren't you?

Karen: Yes, that's...but you helped me clarify that.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Okay, good, good.



Karen: Having them bring...uh-hmm.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): This is what this is all about, you know, we keep these ideas around and you listen to other people's evaluations of them; as we get into the production and post-production phases, we're going to be looking at the stuff looks and we'll be counting on all of you to contribute to these ideas and critiquing and so forth in constructive ways so that, you know, we are each other's audience here. We're figuring out, you know, what resonates, what makes sense, what doesn't make sense.

Leonard?

Karen: My concern is that I don't have them here today; I have them tomorrow so today it's going to be more capturing those images down there that reflect World War II.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Close ups...

Karen: Yes.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): ...names, you know, any plaques, anything like that; the flag, you know, the building itself, you know. Get all of those close ups, walk up to the place and say, "Okay, what's important here?" And if you pay attention to where your eyes go, your eyes are pretty smart, they will operate by themselves, they're going to look around and first, they're going to gauge, "Okay, this is where I am and this looks safe, I can walk over here I should stay away from this," you know. "Oh, this is interesting." Just listen, pay attention to them and they're going to tell you what you have to shoot. Bring a tripod with you because if you're shooting something that's immobile, you know, like a plaque, like a monument or whatever, it's going to be rock, rock-solid, okay.

Leonard?

Leonard: So I've kind of reformatted since we talked the other night on the phone, and I don't know if I told you guys about it. So, I am actually doing something work-related, it's a...I'm highlighting a program office called the "Historian Project" which if you know anything about TSA, it was actually founded after 9-11. It's not a very popular agency but it's developed a

17



program to better inform its employees about both its inception and also open up lines of communication about its origins but also its future. So it's sort of just highlighting the initiative and its value inside of the structure of the agency.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): What is it? And I'll ask you guys this a lot—what does the piece look like?

[CROSSTALK]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): When we talk about what's going to happen here.

Leonard: Yeah, there's actually, there are some visually supporting elements, there is a large wooden warehouse where they store a lot of archival materials. So, there's some kind of an "Indiana Jones" vibe there with, you know, the big warehouse...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Can you make pictures of that?

Leonard: Yeah, yeah.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Okay.

Leonard: We're going to get that today and they actually have pieces of the World Trade Center...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Wow.

Leonard: ...and the magnetometers that the terrorists walked through on 9-11, so there's that undercurrent there of the, you know, it hearkens back to that very terrible imagery and I don't think we're going to show that but it is something too supportive.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): When you go out there, you know, you guys should...I want you to start jumping into post-production when you're out actually out there shooting. Think about those timelines, okay. The beginning of the piece, you'll always start these pieces with the most powerful visual material that you have. So, you know, you put the most powerful stuff and even if you have to back into the story from there, you've got 8 seconds, 10 seconds, 12 seconds to engage people before they go, "This is boring,

18

ONLINE
Video Journalism
Workshop

with Emmy Award Winner
University Professor
Bill Gentile



I'm out of here," okay. So, you know, think about what's the most powerful stuff, think about what comes at the end of the piece, and think about what it looks like in the middle, you know. You've got to start forming; I want you all have to start thinking visually now, which is a very, very different way of thinking than you know, a text way of thinking or thematic way of thinking.

Rhett, tell me about your project.

Rhett: Yeah, okay. So the, I think the story is kind of a home brewer's dream of starting your own craft brewery and turning it out into a profitable business. You know, what are the, you know, the funny stories, what are the challenges, that sort of thing.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Did you make connections with Brad's colleagues?

Rhett: Actually, Brad did. So I thought, you know, I was going to e-mail to his colleagues or his contacts...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): So, you hooked up with these people?

Rhett: Not yet. He says that they're brewing Friday and he says that they're interested in talking.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): So you're going to go out there today and talk?

Rhett: Going to try to; I actually have a potential interview at 2:30 with another successful brewer. I am going to try and get from him kind of like, the trial and tribulations and what did it take to make it to where he is, which is very, very stable, very profitable you know; and maybe use him as a, you know, "This is the voice of someone who's successful, these guys are very passionate, they're making it..."

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Okay.

Rhett: ...you know, hopefully they'll get to this point where there, you know.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Okay. What do we see at the beginning of the piece?



Rhett: Possibly, one of the brewers looking in one of the kettles that's steaming or something like that. You know, it's kind of like there's a scaffolding typically between like a mash and a brewing kettle. It's kind of called the "altar"...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Uh-huh.

Rhett: ...of any brewing house and typically, they'll be up there either adding hops to, you know, or watching how the, you know, the whirlpool is going or they're watching how the production is going.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Yeah. You know, I free associate a lot and listening to your explanation of the piece, you know, it occurs to me that it might be a fun way to get into the piece—show us some guy in a bar, you know, drinking, you know, his first gulp of a beer and, you know, we hear somebody say, you say, your narration say, "It's a long way from the brewery to here, it's a long way from a brewer's dream to this place." You know what I mean?

Chad: Uh-hmm.

Rhett: Yeah, yeah.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): And then we back into the piece, you know...

Rhett: Okay.

[CROSSTALK]

Rhett: That's a good idea, thank you.

Leonard: But you need somebody to...

Rhett: Okay, so that's a volunteer for drinking beer.

[CROSSTALK]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Okay. You got to buy for the whole group, okay.

Rhett: Right, okay.

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Leonard: All right, well, let's pack and wait.

[LAUGHTER]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): I mean, there are number of ways to get into it...but, I mean, again, this is how things come up. You know, you talk about this, you kick ideas on all the people you free associate.

Ivan? Go ahead, what's your story about.

Ivan: Okay, my story is about ethnic foods in El Salvador, the most popular food is the...are the pupusas, you know, which are stuffed tortillas, you know...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Right.

Ivan: They are stuffed with cheese or pork...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Right.

Ivan: ...I mean, meat and some other mixes. And it happens that in the U.S. the Hispanic community is composed by several groups from several countries.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Yeah.

Ivan: So the Salvadorans are like the third biggest group inside the Hispanic community.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): That's right.

Evan: So pupusas, you know, in big cities you know, like Washington, New York, you know, Los Angeles, you know, are becoming very popular like tacos, you know, like Mexican tacos.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Right.

Ivan: And it happens that in here, in Washington, you know, among the Hispanics, the biggest community are the Salvadorans; so how, you know,



their pupusa from El Salvador, you know, are becoming popular in the U.S.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): So, you've contacted one guy here who runs his own pupuseria, right?

Ivan: Yeah, and it seems that he is one of the guys that because he puts a lot of effort, you know, in making them delicious...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Yeah.

Ivan: ...not just for traditional Salvadoran taste...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Right.

Ivan: ...but you know, making them like vegetarian for example, for the vegetarians here, right.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): So he's adapted to the American market.

Ivan: Yeah. So there are smaller ethnic communities that go to eat pupusas, you know.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): How much of the history of the Salvadorans' journey from there to here, you're got to include in this piece because it's all about the civil war there which was partly funded by the United States, very much supported by the Reagan administration, that's why Salvadorans are here, because of the war.

Ivan: Yeah. You know, that's the part that has to be included you know, because a big part of the immigration, you know, from El Salvador was because of that.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Yeah, and then the Contra war in Nicaragua, as well. Okay, good.

Anne?

Ann: You did.



Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): We got you; who we're missing here? Chad?

Chad: Yeah.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): And I think that's it, right?

Ann: Uh-hmm.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Just Chad, okay. Go ahead.

Chad: I've got two that I've been pursuing and trying to nail down here. One is a friend that has organized this online community for the Obama campaign opposing the...or trying to avoid the fiscal cliff, the fight between the President and the Congress now, and how they've organized these army of volunteers across the country just using digital media, not even knowing the people in Washington downtown; they've organized it. So that's one.

The other is a guy who made a documentary on Len Bias for ESPN and how he persevered for years to get this thing done, what drew him to the story, how he did it, and...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Tell us about Len Bias, please.

Chad: Len Bias was a rival of Michael Jordan, he died at age 22 over 20 years ago and his death still provokes a lot of emotion in people. It basically says that "One mistake can destroy your life," he overdosed with cocaine after being drafted from the University of Maryland to the Boston Celtics, and this was the time when the Lakers dominated everything and Red Auerbach, the owner of the Celtics was going to build the whole team around Len Bias. And this guy's only dream in life, Len Bias, was to make the pros and he made it and then he OD'd on cocaine.

This was the time in our country when people were doing cocaine and didn't know how damaging it was in the '80s. And it drastically reformed our drug laws, making them extra harsh, mandatory sentencing which was terrible for society. Anyways, those are...I feel like my two controlling ideas need focus, having a general idea but both of these characters have been hard rabbits to catch in a way because of their tricky schedules. Even this morning, I got this thing moved back, I had the documentarian



this afternoon, he pushed it to tomorrow. Anyways, I need to focus it, but those are two controlling...

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): Thoughts, thoughts; anybody? What do you think? What does he do?

[CROSSTALK]

Leonard: Go with the people that you can walk out or you just, to get to practice if you're going to learn the most to get the project done.

Chad: Yeah.

Leonard: Go with the political people that you know ... and get story out of them.

Chad: Yeah, yeah.

Leonard: But you can get to them and move around...

Chad: Yeah.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): You know, what I'm interested in is that you guys learn the process. You know, you could learn the process, I can take you to a barber shop in Silver Spring where there's a really cool guy from West Africa and, you know, I send the students there all the time. His name is Oscar; he's very talkative; his place is full with West Africans. He's very cool and Obama pictures all over the place, all the guys come and speak different languages, you know. They're straight out of Africa and you know, Oscar's always there, the barber shop never goes any places, always get people in there.

You know, the story changes a little bit on Fridays and Saturdays, kids are getting ready for you know, the next week or for going out on dates and so forth. You know, when big holidays come up where everybody's getting all shined up, you know, for the holidays. There's a sign on the front door, it says, you know, "Come in ugly, leave beautiful," you know what I mean, stuff like this, you know. [LAUGHS].

[LAUGHTER]



Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): That's where you go to learn the process, you know. You know it's going to be there all the time, you know that they're going to welcome you, you know that there are going to be characters there all the time, you know. You don't have to like think, you know, organize an interview five days in advance and then have somebody cut you off. Oscar doesn't do that; he wants you to come in, he wants to be on YouTube. He wants to be on Vimeo...

[LAUGHTER]

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): ...he wants all this stuff—he does, you know. He can't buy this kind of advertisement, so you got to go with the safest thing that allows you to learn this process.

That's what I'm concerned about. You want to go back and do a documentary on this guy, whether it be a five-hour documentary, go for it, but learn the process first. So, I agree with Bruce; I mean, you should just take you know, grab the secure thing now and learn the process. That's what I would do.

Chad: Uh-hmm.

Speaker (Prof. Bill Gentile): What I want you to do today is I want you to go out and I want you to build the visual foundation for your piece, okay. Whether it's the brewery you go to, whether the office with these six people are hanging around doing their thing, whether it's the monument—whatever it is, or the market, walk up to the place, figure out what the visually defining characteristics, shoot them; start to fish for characters. Some of you already know who your characters are going to be, some of you—in your case, you don't know who your character is going to be. Start to fish around for characters; find people through whose experience, you know, you can tell the story, okay.

Don't do sit down formal interviews yet. We're going to cover that tomorrow morning. We'll cover lighting, we'll cover all of that stuff; just, you know, do informal interviews; if in fact, you know, people around the market, you can talk to them but you know, come back at five o'clock today with enough visual material to be able to explain, "This is what the place looks like; this is what they do here; this is a person who I think is going to be a character; I like this person to be a character." Give me a

25

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sense of what your story is about. Tomorrow we'll build them on top of that.

[END]