

RHET 3317

Project #1 Self-Assessment

Link to Project: <https://jmckenziehansen.com/nonfiction-project-1/>

**1. Discuss your intended audience for this project. Why did you select this audience?**

My intended audience for this project is newly married couples or couples who are about to get married. After my conference with Dr. Robertson, I am also including any married couple as part of my audience, as well as parents.

I selected this audience because my project is about learning how to become part of another family and that you will encounter obstacles that you never thought would happen.

**2. What rhetorical situation did you respond to as you developed this project? Why did you select this situation?**

The rhetorical situation I responded to for this project is using my experiences joining my husband's family to help other couples prepare or reflect on the challenges of becoming one family.

As I prepared to get married I received so much advice for how to build and grow my relationship with BJ, as well as how to discuss things like money, household responsibilities, children, etc. No one prepared me or offered me advice for learning how to become part of his family. I know it is something that can't be taught, but it can be something that someone should try to help prepare you for.

**3. What do you hope readers gain from reading your piece?**

I hope my readers who are newlyweds or are about to be married gain knowledge and understanding for the obstacles that come with marrying into a family. For my readers that have been married for a while, I hope that they reflect on their past and if they are parents, have insight on what it is like to feel like an outsider.

**4. Why did you select the genre and medium for this piece? How does your genre and medium meet the needs of your audience and purpose?**

My initial plan was to create a podcast where you could hear my voice as I talked about my experiences. However, after receiving feedback from my team, I switched it to a diary.

During my conference with Dr. Robertson, she made a good point about how a diary probably wouldn't be the best medium because it is personal. Since I had formatted my work as a diary, it also works well for a blog post, which is what I decided to do.

Blogs are very popular and can reach a wide range of people. Being able to access my information online will reach my audience.

**5. How did you strengthen your writerly skills as a result of the work you've produced in this project?**

This was a very personal and emotional piece for me to write and I believe I articulated my feelings and thoughts very well in the project. I don't like writing about myself, so I overcame that awkwardness of sharing my personal feelings and experiences so that it may help someone else.

**6. If you could do this project over again, what would you change?**

I would start out with the diary / journal style from the beginning. It was very difficult going from a "script" of what I wanted to say in my podcast to a diary style.

**7. If you had one more day to work on this project, what would you do different?**

If I had one more day to work on this project, I think that I would dive deeper into some of the issues and obstacles that arose while BJ and I were dating or use the extension to reflect on how I could have handled things differently.

**8. What is your favorite part? What is your favorite line?**

My favorite part of my project would be the ending when we are all in Florida. Everything went so well while we were down there, and it was a great way for me to spend quality time with my in-laws.

My favorite line in my project would be “But I guess he counted the 2 AM Waffle House trip, coming over and watching all four seasons of American Horror Story on Netflix, and the countless number of lunches and coffee runs together as dates, too.” I like that line because it sums up the beginning of mine and BJ’s friendship and relationship. And we still do lunch and coffee dates together every day.

**9. How, if any, did the texts provide support for your project #1 development?**

Our textbook, chapter 14: Writing about yourself, was very helpful. Specifically, the last line of the chapter, “The best gift you have to offer when you write personal history is the gift of yourself. Give yourself permission to write about yourself, and have a good time doing it.” I opened up with this project and wrote about something very personal and emotional for me. I allowed myself to open up and write. I am happy I chose this topic for this project because of how personal it is.

**10. Discuss how you met the following learning outcomes:**

- Exploring strategies and stages within your writing process as they apply to nonfiction genres.
  - a. Using the advice in chapter 14 of our textbook, I was able to write freely and open up for this project. I changed my genre and medium two times before deciding on a blog format and grew a lot while outlining, planning, and writing my drafts.
- Considering how ethics informs the process and product of nonfiction writing.
  - a. I kept ethics and feelings in mind as I was developing my plan and while I was writing this project. This topic, while it is emotional and personal to me, could also affect my family as well. I did my best to keep the memories and stories as factual as possible without depicting my family as evil monsters. While my project was driven by emotion, I remained ethical and true to how I remember the events that took place. I believe if my family were to read this that they wouldn’t get angry or upset but would want to discuss my feelings and potentially resolve the issues that may still be relevant today.

- Composing in an intentional genre of nonfiction writing for a selected audience.
  - a. I wrote a blog post for an audience that includes married couples, engaged couples, and parents.
- Providing constructive peer feedback and applying feedback to your own writing.
  - a. I believe I offered constructive feedback to my partners for this project. Their work was not complete, but good, and I gave them my honest opinions about how I believe they should move forward by offering multiple options.
  - b. I applied their feedback, as well as my instructor's to my work. Because of their feedback and suggestions, I was able to broaden my target audience and find a medium and genre that would allow me to reach that audience.
- Reflecting on intentional decisions made as a writer.
  - a. Based on the feedback I received, I was able to choose which suggestions I wanted to listen to. I carefully decided which comments were crucial for me to listen to, as well as which ones were there to give me something to think about. As a writer I want my work to be my own and it is great to receive feedback and collaborate with others, but it is also important to make your own decisions about your writing. After all, especially in this case, it is my story that I want to tell.