CLASSLESS: ON BEING MIDDLE CLASS IN AMERICA

Joseph V. Brown

Thesis Prepared for the Degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

May 2013

APPROVED:

Eugene Martin, Major Professor
Jason Balas, Committee Member
S. George Larke-Walsh, Committee Member
Alan Albarran, Chair of the Department of
Radio, Television and Film
Mark Wardell, Dean of the Toulouse Graduate
School
Brown, Joseph V. *Classless: On Being Middle Class in America*. Master of Fine Arts (Radio, Television and Film), May 2013, 78 pp. references, 27 titles.

*Classless: On Being Middle Class in America* is a documentary film that explores what it means to be middle class in America. The film combines personal narrative, folksy reporting, and comedy as the film’s director—Joe Brown, tries to reconcile his own status anxiety with everyday understandings of social class. *Classless* takes the form of a journey; the film travels through the American South, Northeast, and the Mountain West while trying to get at the heart of our middle class American Dream. *Classless* forwards three main arguments: (1) the American middle class is not as all-encompassing as seems; (2) Americans are more concerned about inequality than both politicians and the media suggest; and (3) many Americans are not actually middle class, economically speaking.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 1  PROSPECTUS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction and Description</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Matter Research: “The Problem”</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 2  PRE-PRODUCTION RESEARCH</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People, Characters, and Locations</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stylistic and Aesthetic Considerations</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locations</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule and Equipment</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Schedule</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Partners and Funding Organizations</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals of Production</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 3  RECONCEPTUALIZATION BEFORE PRODUCTION</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 4  INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRODUCTION</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theories and Rationales for Use</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Approach</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Reviews: Surveying the Social Class Documentary Landscape</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER 5  PRODUCTION</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crew</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconceptualization during Production</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Releases, Copyright, and Agreements</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 6  POST-PRODUCTION ................................................................................................... 60
  Schedule ................................................................................................................................... 60
  Equipment .................................................................................................................................. 60
  Reconceptualization during Post Production .......................................................................... 61

CHAPTER 7  EVALUATION OF COMPLETED WORK ................................................................. 64
  Pre-Production .......................................................................................................................... 64
  Production ................................................................................................................................. 65
  Post-Production ....................................................................................................................... 67
  Success of Integrating Proposed Theories .............................................................................. 68
  A Final Word, or What it Means to be Middle Class in America ......................................... 70

APPENDIX: ORIGINAL AND FINAL BUDGET ........................................................................ 72

REFERENCES ............................................................................................................................ 77
CHAPTER 1
PROSPECTUS

Note: The first section of this document is the original thesis proposal, corrected for formatting, submitted to, and approved by, the thesis committee in the spring of 2012.

- **Title:** *Classless: On Being Middle Class in America*
- **Length:** 60 minutes
- **Medium:** HD Video / Still Photography / 16mm Film

*The word “class” is fraught with unpleasing associations, so that to linger upon it is apt to be interpreted as the symptom of a perverted mind and a jaundiced spirit.*

R.H. Tawney

*[American] society changes faster than any other on earth, and the American, almost uniquely, can be puzzled about where, in the society, he stands.*

P. Fussell

Introduction and Description

In the United States, no one talks about social class. The topic is taboo. Yet class plays an important role in our lives. It can determine where we live, what type of health care we receive, our influence on societal decision-making, and how our children’s lives will unfold.¹

The United States is purported to be a classless society, but it is obvious that some struggle more than others. Rhetoric about “equal opportunity” gives way to severely “unequal outcomes.” These unequal outcomes are perpetuated and justified by questionable ideologies

---

¹ The New York Time’s book *Class Matters* reports that the upper-middle class lives longer and healthier lives than those below them, that class has become a predictor of who will get into elite colleges, and of who will go to war (pp. ix-xvii). See also, *The American Class Structure in an Age of Growing Inequality* by Dennis Gilbert for more info on “Life Chances” and “Social Class” (p. 2).
and cultural myths. The myth of a classless U.S.A. is amongst the most misleading of these myths; it obscures the negative realities of social stratification.

I believe that the myth of a classless United States is most visible in the ambiguity of America’s middle class ideal. The downplaying of difference prevalent in middle class life perpetuates classism. When everyone thinks they are doing better than they are there is no reason to talk about inequality. *Classless*, the documentary, will give people an opportunity to talk about inequality. It will use the question, “what does it mean to be middle class in ‘America’” as its starting point.

*Classless* will take the form of a “personal documentary.” The film will follow me (Joe), the director, as I grapple with my own insecurity about “where I stand.” *Classless* will take the viewer on a journey that includes stops in factory worker hangouts (bars), old industrial cities, conferences on inequality, and at political debates. Open-ended interviews with people in Joe’s life, as well as people he meets along the way, will make up the documentary segments of the film. These interviews will draw out American attitudes towards class, especially the American middle class, and will culminate in what I hope will be a “rediscovery of class” in the U.S..

Although the open-ended nature of this enquiry prohibits me from making profound thesis statements, I expect that *Classless* will show that:

- The American middle class is not as all encompassing as seems
- Americans are more concerned about inequality than both politicians and the media suggest
- Many Americans are not actually middle class, economically speaking
Again, *Classless* will not make any overt arguments. Instead, it will *reveal* something about the American attitude towards socioeconomic class. Like Tony Buba’s seminal work of personal cinema, *Lightning Over Braddock*, *Classless* will politicize the personal, and personalize the political. *Classless* will allow people to talk about class without the guilt or anxiety that talk of money, "just desert," and merit produces in an up-tight society.

**Subject Matter Research: “The Problem”**

Strangely, there is no consensus on what it means to be middle class. Everyone seems to think they belong to it, but no one can define it. Polls and statistical evidence offer limited clarification. Over 50% of Americans claim to be middle class, including 33% of Americans with family incomes of more than $150,000, and 41% with incomes of less than $20,000 (Pew).\(^2\) While one statistic gets us closer to a definition, another leads us further away. This confusion produces a collective “false consciousness,” or “mass delusion.” In today’s America, people don’t know where they stand.\(^3\) And when you don’t know where you stand, you can’t advocate for yourself at the polls, or otherwise.

The American people’s confusion about where they stand has even influenced U.S. Department of Commerce reports. The department’s January 2010 report *Middle Class In America* (US Dept of Commerce) serves as an example. It claims that “most Americans consider themselves middle class,” and that “many very high and very low income persons report

---

\(^2\) For additional statistical analysis of middle class life consider that: Over 50% of Americans claim to be middle class, but 65+ % of households have incomes of less than 75k, a figure that is generally recognized as “middle class” (Pew Research / Gilbert 80 / Middle class in America 9).

\(^3\) Consider that in 2000, “19 percent of Americans believed themselves to be in the top 1%, and yet another 21 percent believed they would be there in the next 10 years” (Zweig, *Monthly Review* 2006) as additional evidence that Americans don’t understand where they stand.
themselves as middle class.” Instead of offering a true economic definition of what it means to be middle class the report claims that: “social scientists have explained this [phenomenon] by defining ‘middle class’ as a combination of values, expectations, and aspirations, as well as income levels.” For the Department of Commerce, being middle class is a state-of-mind; never mind the fact that those in the upper-middle class have three to five times as much wealth as those of the “lower class.”4 Never mind the tripled and quadrupled chances for opportunities those higher up the ladder enjoy5. And never mind the fact that over 50% of the wealth in the United States is inherited (Hahnel 27).

Scholars also have trouble defining the middle class. Fortunately, they do “get” the issue. Paul Fussell, in his book, Class: A Guide Through the American Status System, points out additional ways people confound the term middle class. He claims:

At the bottom, people tend to believe that class is defined by the amount of money you have. In the middle, people grant that money has something to do with it, but think education and the kind of work you do almost equally important. Nearer the top, people perceive that taste, values, ideas, style, and behavior are indispensible criteria of class, regardless of money or occupation or education. (p. 16)

Fussell understands that the designation middle class is a designation people adopt when validating their own successes and failures. His analysis further suggests that everyone wants to be in the club, no matter the rules, or their eligibility.

In yet another book on social class, Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle class, author Barbara Ehrenreich asserts that, “[…] in our culture, the professional, and largely white, middle class is taken as a social norm— a bland and neutral mainstream— from which every

---

4 If the base line for middle class existence is 50k, then those making 150k are three times wealthier, and those making 250k are 5 times wealthier.

5 Life chances, such as going to college, getting good health care, etc. are all tied to income and wealth. Again, see Gilbert’s The American Class Structure in an Age of Growing Inequality (p. 2).
other class is a kind of deviation” (p.3). Ehrenreich speaks of a “larger tendency to see the middle class as a universal class” (p.4); she points out that: “ideas about gender, and even race, have moved, however haltingly, in the direction of greater tolerance and inclusivity, [while] ideas about class remain mired in prejudice and mythology” (p.7). Her analysis suggests that the struggle for economic equality is as important as any other civil rights issue, but the conversation must continue.

The American people don’t know where they stand. Statistics and polls cannot produce a nuanced understanding of class. My film Classless will tease out these nuances. It will be part of the continuing conversation on class in America, and it will go beyond the “us vs. them” claims of the Occupy Wall Street movement. It will use film as a tool of social enquiry by delving straight into the American peoples’ ambiguity about class.

The following treatment suggests how Classless will deepen the conversation.

Treatment

We open on a black screen. A voice— intimate and heartfelt, but a little self conscious, tells us:

I have a confession to make. I’m obsessed with other people’s money.

How much they have, how much they make, and what they spend it on.

It’s not that I’m jealous; it’s just that people are funny about money. They don’t want to talk about it, but they define themselves by it.

They call themselves things like “working class,” “middle class,” and “upper class.”

These labels tell them “where they stand.”

But I don’t know where I stand.
And lately I’ve been having these dreams.

We cut hard to a sixty something year old woman’s face in extreme close-up. She wears too much makeup. Everything seems oversaturated. She wags a finger at us accusatively. She whines at the camera and says:

Look, Joe! I want a grandchild! You’ve been with my daughter for 10 years. It’s time to get her pregnant, settle down, and live a nice “middle class life.”

A hard audio transition as Joe abruptly starts up out of bed! He sits terrified of the “nightmare” he just had. Then— quickly, he “breaks the 4th wall.” He turns to address the camera and asks:

But what does it mean to be middle class in America?

A map of the United States appears. This will be a journey film. Joe’s voice continues in voiceover. He says:

To find out I’m going on a journey— a journey through my life, and across the country.

Because if I’m confused about where I stand, then I figure a whole bunch of other folks might be too.

The map zooms towards the northeastern quarter of the Unites States and an “X” appears over a city name—Worcester, MA. Joe continues in voiceover:

First stop— Worcester, MA; my home city.

A black and white cityscape fades up replacing the map. The camera moves along as if in a car. Rows and rows of gritty three “decker” houses fill the screen— this is a working class town.
A wide shot of a small house on a hill. A tree lined street stretching out before it. A 60
something woman steps out from the front door as a car pulls up. Joe gets out of the car and
the camera follows him as he greets his mother.

We cut to a small, but typical kitchen. Joe and his mother discuss his obsession with class. Joe
asks: “why do you think I’m obsessed with this topic, how long have I been talking about these
types of things, was there some life event that you think influenced my thinking on this?” Joe
also asks: “what class do you think we belonged to growing up?” His mother and he disagree.
This “interview” plays itself out.

We cut hard to a local pub. Joe meets with a group of individuals. Their conversations indicate
that they are all old friends— high school friends who are now in their thirties (see the
“Characters” list below)... Bar conversations lead to a discussion about growing up, accepting
where one’s at, hopes and dreams. The mismatch between where the group dreamed of being
as kids and where they’re at now emerges as a discussion point. Joe broaches the question of
class. “Where did they expect to be at this point in their life?” “Where do they see themselves
now?” This “interview conversation” plays itself out.

We cut hard to a montage of political clips.

OBAMA: “Hardworking middle class Americans [...] these are the men and the women who
form the backbone of our economy.”
BIDEN: “You can’t have a strong America without a growing middle class.”

POLITICO 1: “I’m Tom Udall, and I approve this message because it’s time middle class families came first...”

PUNDIT 1: “Why is it that everyone is now talking about the middle class and those struggling to make it?

Romney, Newt Gingrich, and others chime in.

Hard cut to an extreme close up on the face of Joe’s mother-in-law. Oversaturated colors indicate that we are again experiencing a dream. She waves a pregnancy test in front of the camera as if it’s Joe’s face. She barks at him:

What’s wrong with this picture, Joe?! (beat) There’s no double pink line, that’s what’s wrong with this picture!

She then steps back and to the side, revealing a large bathroom counter with a series of pregnancy tests! She picks up each one, frowns, and throws the tests on the ground! She chastises Joe:

Is it that hard? (beat) Maybe it’s for the best! I mean, how are you going to afford a kid on your salary? And would you please buy a new car? I can’t believe you drive my daughter around in that thing.

The scene transitions to Joe by his beat up old car. He gets in, opens up the glove box, and a pile of pregnancy tests fall out! Joe shrinks back in horror!
Another hard transition and Joe is up and out of bed... He grabs a map from his nearby desk and plots out his next move.

We push into the US map. Joe narrates:

*It was great talking to my buddies back home, but I’m still confused about where I stand.*

*It’s time for my next stop— Denver, Colorado. A city I used to live in. A city the Vice President conducted a “middle class town hall” in.*

The map shows a path from Worcester, MA to Denver, CO. A black and white cityscape fades up replacing the map. The camera moves along as if in a car. We see run down parts of Denver. The city montage plays out a bit before Joe begins to narrate:

*I’ve decided to stop in on my best friend, Pete. I haven’t seen him since we filmed together in Worcester a few months back and I’ve yet to see his new house. Besides, he and I have a certain rapport. He’s about the only one who will talk about social class with me.*

Joe’s car pulls up to Pete’s house. Pete stands waiting on the doorstep, cigarette in hand. He’s eager to show Joe the house he bought a few months back. Joe gets out of the car and gets a tour of the house— it seems as if Pete has achieved middle class bliss. The conversation turns to Joe’s film, and his questions about class. Pete volunteers to enlist his work buddies from the Coors brewery in the discussion.
Hard cut to a wide shot of the Coors brewery in Golden, CO— the largest brewery in the world.

We hear a few voices fade up under the image:

*Hey, where we going?*

Hard cut to a crew of rough and tumble men walking down a tree-lined street. Pete, Joe, and an entourage of Coors brewery workers saunter into a local beer garden. But it’s not a Coors establishment— it’s the “Second Largest Brewery in Golden,” otherwise known at the only other brewery in Golden. Craft beers are served from the back window of a Victorian house in a residential neighborhood. The Coors guys sit at picnic tables and drink. Joe explains what’s he’s doing. A general discussion about class ensues. Joe gets to the hard questions: “Well, what do you guys think? You’re all making pretty good money, but you might not get the social prestige you’d get at another job. How’s that all sit with you?” Characters emerge (see the “Characters” section below). The discussion continues until the beer is gone.

Hard cut to a “where I stand” montage. A series of individuals in well-lit interview set-ups stand in front of a black curtain. One by one they tell us what they do (their occupation), how much money they make, and how they “self assign” class. The cuts are quick— we hear from eight or so people. Some we recognize from earlier in the film.

Subject 1: *I work in the Coors brewery. I make 55k a year. I’d call myself middle class.*

Subject 2: *I’m a social worker. I make 70k. I’m middle class.*

Subject 3: *I’m a schoolteacher. I make 40k. I’d say I’m middle class.*

Subject 4: *I’m a computer tech guy. I make 140k a year. I guess I’m middle class.*

Subjects 5-8: Etc, etc, etc.
Again, the map. We remember that we’re in Colorado. Joe narrates:

*I’m beginning to understand that no one really “gets” class. This makes me feel a bit better, but it doesn’t help me understand my place in the economic hierarchy. Being overeducated and underpaid doesn’t do the psyche any good. And since I don’t have much money I can’t keep traveling around like this. (beat) The good thing is, I don’t have to. I’ve sent out a call for virtual participants, and people are chiming in from across the country.*

Eight or so video thumbnails pop up from the US map. Each represents a video contribution from a subject / participant Joe obtained through his website and blog. One of the video thumbnails moves to the center of the screen and grows bigger. We move into it.

Subject / Participant # 1: *I think being middle class in America is...*

After the subject completes their statement we move out from their video to once again reveal the map. A second subject’s video moves center screen and grows bigger as the camera moves into it. This scenario repeats itself as we listen to each subject. Some of the interviews become like confessionals— talk of economic insecurities and economic stereotypes abound.

We hard cut and... Joe’s mother-in-law is back! An extreme close up on her face and oversaturated colors indicate that we’re entering another dream sequence. Joe’s mother-in-law struggles with a large box. She lifts it up so that the camera can see. It’s a box of “Huggies” diapers. She cuts Joe down with her criticism:
Do you know how expensive diapers are? You’ve got to learn to manage your money!

And don’t tell me you’re going to save money by using cloth ones. That’s for hippies and poor people!

Another hard transition and Joe shoots up to a sitting position in his bed... He quickly grabs his laptop and we see him set out a new course on MapQuest— Denver, CO to Madison, WI.

We push into the US map. Joe narrates:

Talking with my buddy Pete and his friends really opened my eyes. But I still feel like something’s missing. I figure it’s time to enlist the so-called “experts,” so I’m headed to a conference about socioeconomic class in Madison, WI.

The map shows a path from Denver, CO to Madison, WI. A black and white cityscape fades up replacing the map. The camera moves along as if in a car. We get a feel for Madison. The city montage plays out a bit before we cut to Joe addressing conference attendees. Joe shows some clips, and explains what he’s doing. He asks the crowd; “how would you go about making a film about being middle class?” The conversation goes where it will with the camera catching the remarks of those who speak up.

We fade up on a road shot. Highway signs emerge as the map reveals that we are traveling back west from Madison. Joe narrates.

Attending the conference in Madison was good. I’m beginning to realize that people self-assign class— they tell themselves that they’re doing better than they actually are. They get angry at the top 1%, but they forget how stratified the other 99% really is.

The map reveals that we are headed towards Denver. Joe continues:
I’m heading back to Denver for the first of the 2012 presidential debates. My buddy Pete, the Coors guys, and I are hoping to crash the party. We want to know where the candidates stand.

Hard cut to the campus of the University of Denver (Joe’s alma mater). Gold plated spires reach towards the sky. People walking on campus can feel confident that they’re “better” than most of the people they meet off campus. Joe, Pete, and the Coors guys show up as the sun sets. The presidential candidates are about to settle into their first debate of the 2012 campaign. Joe and the crew are headed in, with tickets, or without.

This scene plays itself out. Whether the crew gets in or not, archival footage of the debate will be utilized. Joe and the Coors crew will do a “post-mortem” at a local bar, or alternately, on the campus green. A discussion about how many times the candidates used the term “middle class” ensues. We remember some of the Coors guys from the previous sequence. We listen to see how their conceptions have changed, stayed the course, or developed in some other way. This conversation runs its course.

Hard cut to our oppressive mother-in-law. Oversaturation and an eerie soundtrack signify we’re dreaming again. We watch as the mother-in-law stacks boxes of diapers. She speaks in an irritating tone:

Do you know how many diapers a child uses a day? At 50 dollars a box it gets expensive.

Good thing granny’s here to pass on the inheritance early. We’ve got you all stocked up!
(beat) Maybe you can use the money you would have spent on diapers for your kid’s college education? Lord knows I don’t want no red neck child.

Strangely, our mother-in-law seems less agitated. She smiles as if she’s joking, turns to the camera, and her face fills the fame in an extreme close up.

*Now, let me show you how to change a diaper!*

Her voice deepens as she speaks! A maniacal laugh permeates our ears. Joe leaps out of bed and throws the lights on. His wife— Marisa, starts up and asks him “what’s wrong.” Joe stands there catching his breath. Marisa throws the covers off and walks around to calm Joe. We see that she is pregnant.

Cut to Joe sitting on the carpet in a small room decorated for a child. He puts together a crib. The camera focuses on a mobile hanging above the partially constructed crib. Joe narrates:

*I started this film not knowing what it meant to be middle class— not knowing what it meant to be successful. I was always comparing myself to others. Feeling as if I was behind in some way. But lately I’ve come to care less about these things. Don’t get me wrong. I still think about other people’s money. Where they get it, how much they make, and what they spend it on. I just don’t compare myself to them anymore. Now I spend my time worrying about others— the majority of people in this country who aren’t quite making it. The people who tell themselves that they’re doing better than they actually are. And I’m not sure I trust the politicians who claim they can fix it.*

Hard cut to a montage of political bites about the middle class— bites from the 2012 presidential race. The audio fade down and Joe narrates again:
The truth is half of the folks in our country can barely call themselves middle class. But somehow we all think we’re there— that the American Dream is still alive. (beat) I guess I’m not so sure it is. And it certainly seems like we all could be doing better in this, the most prosperous of all nations.

We fade to black and END.

Additional Information About the Treatment

At this point, it should be clear that Classless is not the typical documentary. It is much more personal, and often performative. Like the films of Tony Buba (Lightning Over Braddock), Alan Berliner (The Sweetest Sound), and Ross McElwee (Sherman’s March), Classless personalizes the political. Classless is a documentary, but it conforms to certain narrative devices.

Conflict

Classless is wrought with conflict. Although the film is about social class, it is also about identity. Joe’s own inability to figure out “where he stands” produces a good amount of internal conflict for Joe. Other instances of conflict include the conflict Joe has with other people. His tendency to classify others leads to debate, and these debates produce conflict between Joe and his debaters, the debaters themselves, and so on (few of the participants in the film will share the same opinions). There is also the imagined conflict between Joe and his mother-in-
law. This conflict spurs Joe on; it also showcases the anxiety issues of social class can produce.

Character Arc

Most memorable films feature a character that changes. The change can be significant, or subtle. Personal documentaries often revolve around subtle change, but subtle change can be “big” for the character. Alan Berliner, in his film *The Sweetest Sound*, changes from a man who is bothered by his own insignificance (a man who doesn’t want to share his rather common name with others), to someone who accepts himself as part of a larger community. Ross McElwee, in his film *Sherman’s March*, goes from being a man who is torn by his inability to maintain a meaningful romantic relationship to a more mature individual who is aware of his own shortcomings.

Like these other documentarians of personal cinema I will change in making this film. I will go from being someone who is “obsessed with other people’s money” to someone who is concerned about the problem of social stratification in the United States. As the film progresses I will become more and more educated on the subject. I will come to my own conclusions—conclusions that are different from those I started with. Some of these conclusions have been decided on and may be written into the narration, others will grow out the process of discovery that I expect this film will take me on.
The most compelling documentaries include characters that audiences can endear themselves to. Tony Buba, in his film *Lighting Over Braddock*, provides an example of how one can include a cast of characters in the personal documentary. Buba surrounds himself with the residents of the dying steel town Braddock, PA. He plays up their eccentricities and weaves their story into his own, often returning to them to update us on where they are in their lives. Like Buba, I will introduce characters early in the film and return to them. The following list of characters showcases the types of individuals I will include in my film. Exact decisions about who will become a recurring character will be made after screening dailies.

* A note about the below character descriptions. Each description offers a representation of what each character is like, and “where they might be coming from.” I have taken some liberty in describing my high school friends. They are described in the honest light of old-time friends cast each other in. My intention is to depict each character in my film as authentically as I can without jeopardizing anyone’s dignity. This statement also applies to the Coors brewery workers who will populate my film.

**Worcester, MA Scene**

*Peter M.*: Pete is Joe’s best friend. They grew up together in Massachusetts. Pete currently lives in Denver, Colorado. He works at the Coors brewery in Golden, CO. Pete is the son of a medical doctor. He graduated from Syracuse University but he claims he didn’t know
what class his family belonged to while growing up. He claims he felt like he was “white trash.”

Pete is witty, observant, and socially aware. He is Joe’s confidant and will play a large part in the film. Pete will be present in both the early scenes in Joe’s hometown, and in the Coors brewery sequences.

*Nate A.*: Nate is another character Joe grew up with. Nate is a forklift operator at the Norton factory in Worcester, MA. Nate is always performing; he is a caricature of himself, and a bit of a working class hero. Nate will be the first to tell you that he doesn’t care much about politics or money. Joe has not had much contact with Nate in the last 10 years.

*Jeff S.*: Jeff is a janitor at a school in the Worcester, MA area. He attended high school with Joe, and later attended college at the Rochester Institute of Technology. After dropping out of college Jeff worked as a line cook for ten years. He just recently quit the cooking business and took up a job as a custodian. He also recently started a family. Joe has not had much contact with Jeff in the last 5 years.

*Dave D.*: Dave is yet another high school friend of Joe’s. Currently, Dave works as a French teacher in a high school in central Massachusetts. Joe has not had much contact with Dave in the last 10 years.

*Adam B.*: Adam was Joe’s best friend in grammar school. He recently completed an MBA at Clark University in Worcester, MA. His parents are old hippies who attended Woodstock and recently put solar panels on their roof. Joe has had sporadic contact with Adam over the last 5 years.
Coors Brewery Characters

Jason H.: Jason is a 45-year-old Coors brewery employee. He supervises the “can line,” a division of the brewery that manufactures cans for other beer companies. Like many of the Coors employees, Jason works 50+ hours a week to maintain the living standard he is accustomed to. Jason has a college degree, but seems content at Coors. He has two young daughters, is married, and rides his motorcycle frequently. Jason is one of the few “liberal” Coors employees.

Ken R.: Ken is a mid-thirties Coors employee. He’s single, and lives on the isolated ranch he grew up on and inherited after his parents passed. Politically, Ken is a libertarian.

Jason W.: Jason is yet another Coors employee who comes across as reserved until you spend some time with him. He’s in his mid forties, married, and seemingly content. Coors seems to be his life.

Conner M.: Conner is amongst the youngest of the Coors employees on the “can line” crew. At 22, he just landed a permanent job after temping for 3 years. Conner seems content with his new position, but he has mentioned that, “he’s got to do something or risk getting stuck at Coors.”

Eddie E.: Eddie is a stand out character at Coors. He seems to be stuck in the late 1970s (he’s in his late 40s). Often seen in a tie-dye t-shirt, combat boots, and an army jacket, Eddie defies most attempts at categorization. He sings in an Irish band, wears a kilt, and is profoundly conservative.
Stylistic and Aesthetic Considerations

In producing Classless I hope to create an entertaining film that prompts serious questions about social class in the United States. I will employ the following stylistic elements to make Classless fun and appealing.

Element 1: 16 mm Film / Or “Film Look” of City

In making Classless I want to reveal the character or “fabric” of each community I visit. As I enter each city I will establish my location by featuring static cityscapes shot from a wide perspective, moving shots of city neighborhoods, and shots of everyday “street grit.” I plan to feature stark, run down cityscapes and middle class neighborhoods in these sequences. This will create juxtaposition and highlight the severity of social stratification in the United States. These cityscape sequences will be accompanied by music; they will act as breathers that transition us between the documentary’s other elements. They will also contribute to the feeling that we are on a journey.

Element 2: Use of Archival Footage

A variety of archival footage will be used to keep the film visually interesting and to highlight how thinking about social class has changed over the years. One prominent use of archival includes the incorporation of political sound bites about the middle class in America. These bites will come from recognizable American politicians of the last 50 years.

A second major use of archival material will stem from the intercutting of the 1957 McGraw-Hill film Social Class in America now available in the Prelinger Archives (public
domain). *Social Class in America* follows three young men as they grow up with the benefits and hardships of belonging to certain social classes. Although I have not yet identified where this archival material will cut into the film, I expect it will add an extra appealing element to *Classless*.

The following passage offers a sampling of the type of content found in *Social Class In America*. We watch the first minute. Babies sleep in a nursery. The narrator chimes in:

Newborn American babies. Newborn citizens of these United States. Free, and with rights guaranteed by the constitution. But, let's take a closer look. These new arrivals in a typical American town have equal rights, but in class, they are not equal at all. Each has a social status handed on to him by his family— proscribed to him at birth.


---

**Element 3: Filmmaking Apparatus Visible at Times**

*Classless* will include visual elements that continually remind the audience that a film is being constructed. Joe will often be seen with a camera and audio equipment. Although Joe will be present in the film as a narrator, his role as a participant will be mediated (almost downplayed) by his role as one of the film’s camera operators. The main camera operator will be seen much less— perhaps not at all. Joe, as narrator, will use the camera to prod others into discussion. Participants will address the camera as if they are addressing Joe. Like McElwee, Joe will become a human tripod.

**Element 4: Dream Sequences**

Prominent among the film’s most stylized scenes are the “mother-in-law” sequences. These sequences serve as a visual representation of Joe’s inner conflict— they push Joe along in
his journey. As dreams, they will be represented differently than the rest of the film. Dramatic lighting, oversaturation (through color correction), and music will heighten the “other-worldly” feel of these dream sequences. These sequences may also be shot with some sort of “fish-eye” type lens.

*Element 5: Music*

*Classless* will be laden with music. Several of the characters who will participate in the Coors brewery sequences are amateur musicians. Their skills will be employed to liven up a number of the Coors worker sequences. Other types of music will be utilized under the cityscape sequences to help bridge scenes, and to offer “breathing spaces.”

*Element 6: “Middle Class in the USA” Music Video*

Another musical element that may be included is the recent “*Middle Class in the USA*” music video. This video, performed by a group called “The Super Secret” project parodies the popular Miley Cyrus song, “*Party in the USA.*” The video chronicles the downward spiral of middle class families during the economic implosion of 2008 and does a good job of problematizing the idea of America’s middle class.

When (and if) this video is used it will be used sparingly. Performance rights may need to be sought, but a fair use argument may be utilized (*Classless* will use less than 10% of the work, use the work in a way that illustrates a point, and play up the notion of parody, which “takes the heart of the work” out of necessity).
See the “Middle Class in the USA” music video at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSXNU1_bouc

Locations

Shooting for Classless will take place both indoors and outdoors. All shoots will take place in locations that add something to the story. Interviews in Worcester, MA will take place in working class bars. The Golden, CO shoot with Coors brewery employees will take place in an outdoor location with the brewery in the background, or in a bar the workers hang out in after their shifts. Shoots focused on conferences and political debates will take place on university campuses (the 1st of the 2012 Presidential debates will take place at my alma mater— The University of Denver).

To reiterate, locations will support the story. They will be represented as if they are “extensions” of the individuals who inhabit them. A good amount of “b-roll” will be shot at each location so that it can be incorporated into the film. This “b-roll” will be used in conjunction with cityscapes and other geographically relevant shots to create transitions, bridges, and “breathers” in the film. I hope to present each city as its own expression of the “American character,” or as characters themselves. I plan to shoot each cityscape on 16 mm film.

Schedule and Equipment

First, a fundraising campaign (Kickstarter) for Classless will start in early May of 2012. This campaign will be quick; it will end by the 3rd or 4th week in May. Its goal will be to raise a
few thousand dollars to cover the modest travel expenses that are tied to production.

Production of *Classless* will begin during the last week of the fundraising campaign.

*Classless* will be shot between June and October of 2012. Post-production will commence once shooting starts, but go into “full swing” in November and December of 2012. Final editing and polishing of the film will follow early in the spring of 2013, with a target finish date of Feb 2013. However, I will have until March of 2013 to finish the film.

A marketing and outreach effort will run simultaneous to production and post-production. The film’s accompanying blog will offer updates, production stills, and snippets of video to engage audiences throughout the entirety of production. The idea here is that “production is the new promotion.” See the accompanying “Social Media Component” section for more on the *Classless* outreach plan.

Equipment necessary to production will include a Panasonic HPX 500, Arri SR2, and a “back up” DSLR (Canon 7D or 5D). A compact lighting kit will also be used. Crew will consist of the director and 2nd shooters from the various locations the shoots take place in. In one or two cases a 2nd shooter may be flown in to assist.

### Production Schedule

  
  Location scout, shoot cityscape, shoot with Joe’s mother and high school friends.

- **2nd Shoot – Minneapolis, MN: 6/1 – 6/3**
  
  Shoot various “mother-in-law” sequences.

- **3rd Shoot – Golden, CO: 6/8 – 6/10**
Location scout, shoot cityscape, shoot interviews with Coors Brewery workers.

- **4th Shoot – Denver, CO: 10/1 – 10/5**
  Shoot additional sequences with Coors guys, and presidential debate footage.

- **5th Shoot – Madison, WI: 11/16 – 11/17**
  Location scout, attend and shoot “Class Crit V” conference at University of Wisconsin.

- **6th Shoot – Fort Worth, TX: Throughout August**
  Shoot additional stylized sequences as necessary.

Potential Partners and Funding Organizations

A variety of funding strategies will be implemented in order to secure enough money to produce, promote, and distribute Classless. Please see the following list of possible partners, funders, grants, and other financing options.

- **United for a Fair Economy, [http://www.faireconomy.org/](http://www.faireconomy.org/)**
  UFE raises awareness that concentrated wealth and power undermine the economy, corrupt democracy, deepen the racial divide, and tear communities apart. We support and help build social movements for greater equality.

- **Center for Working Class Studies at Youngstown State University, [http://cwcs.ysu.edu/](http://cwcs.ysu.edu/)**
  The Center for Working-Class Studies (CWCS) at Youngstown State University (YSU) was the first academic program in the U.S. to focus on issues of work and class. Our Mission: To increase awareness of and respect for working-class life and culture through education, the arts, media, and research.
IRP is a center for interdisciplinary research into the causes and consequences of poverty and social inequality in the United States. It is nonprofit and nonpartisan. It is based at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. As one of three National Poverty Research Centers sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, it has a particular interest in poverty and family welfare in Wisconsin as well as the nation.

The mission of the Center for Middletown Studies is to build on the scholarship inaugurated by Robert S. and Helen Merrell Lynd in their landmark studies Middletown (1929) and Middletown in Transition (1937). These in-depth accounts of life in Muncie, Indiana, became classic sociological studies and established the community as a barometer of social trends in the United States.

Grants

Pre-Production

Few grant opportunities are available for pre-production; a “Kickstarter” campaign will start things off.

Production

HAA is excited to announce the next round of Individual Artist Grant awards that will
provide funding and support for the creation of new works. Artists working within all artistic disciplines are encouraged to apply. 2012-2013 funding cycle not yet determined.


Historically, $1,000 grants have been awarded. State of grant program currently unknown (seemingly up in the air).

**Post-Production**


  Once a year, AFS awards grants to emerging film and video artists in the state of Texas through our Texas Filmmakers' Production Fund (TFPF). Since 1996 the Austin Film Society has awarded 451 grants, totaling over $1.15 million in cash and over $100 K in goods and services to 351 projects. In addition to grants for production, post-production and distribution, we have disbursed $21,000 in stipends to Texas filmmakers traveling to prestigious film festivals through its Texas Filmmakers' Travel Grant program.

- UFVA Carol Fielding Grant (December 2012), [http://www.ufva.org/grants/fielding](http://www.ufva.org/grants/fielding)

  For over a decade, the Carole Fielding Student Grants have supported work by undergraduate and graduate students in film and video. Each year, more than $4000 is competitively awarded for production proposals in five categories. Up to $1000 is awarded for research projects. Every year, the UFVA allocates money from dues and scholarship donations to fund the entire budget of the Carole Fielding Student Grants.


  The Playboy Foundation is interested in social change documentary film projects that
have nationwide impact and scope. Our grants are modest and range from $1000-$5000. For that reason, our film grants are limited to projects in post-production and distribution. Beginning in 2010, the Foundation will evaluate social change documentary film grant proposals once per calendar year. Submissions can be made from May 1 to June 30 for evaluation in July and August. If you have questions about the program, please do not hesitate to contact the Foundation.

- Princess Grace Award (June 2012), [http://www.pgfusa.com/#q16](http://www.pgfusa.com/#q16)

  National in scope, the Princess Grace Foundation-USA is dedicated to identifying and assisting emerging talent in theater, dance, and film by awarding grants in the form of scholarships, apprenticeships, and fellowships.

- San Francisco Film Society, [http://www.sffs.org/filmmaker360/Grants.aspx](http://www.sffs.org/filmmaker360/Grants.aspx)

  The SFFS Documentary Film Fund will support riveting documentaries in postproduction distinguished by compelling stories, intriguing characters and an innovative visual approach. A total of $100,000 will be disbursed annually between 2011 and 2013 to documentary filmmakers nationwide.

*Other Opportunities for Support*

- Center for Independent Documentary

  The center seeks proposals on an ongoing basis from independent producers for the production of documentaries on contemporary issues. Projects with which CID collaborates are eligible to receive a variety of services and resources. The fee charged to each projects varies.
CID works with each producer to provide services on a sliding scale and may select one or two projects a year to receive services for free. Contact: Center for Independent Documentary

1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 01268 t
Tel: 508.528.7279
e-mail: info@documentaries.org
web: www.documentaries.org

- Dean Film and Video Grants (Roy W.). http://www.fromtheheartproductions.com/

Application deadline: Sept. 30 The Roy W. Dean Grants support film and video projects that are unique and benefit society. The grants primarily provide goods and services donated by companies in the film and video industry. These grants are available for shorts and low budget independents as well as documentary filmmakers (last checked 10/27/11).

Other Funding Plans

Kickstarter (www.kickstarter.com)

“Kickstarter” is a reward based fundraising service that “crowdsources” fundraising initiatives for creative work. “Kickstarter” campaigns are grounded in the idea that audiences want to know about creative work that is in production, so that they can “participate,” “buy in,” and help out. Project directors offer audiences different levels of rewards for their donations. These rewards can range from “Official Thanks” on a website or in a film’s credits, copies of the completed film, to interactions with the filmmaker. I am setting a $2,000 Kickstarter goal, but hope to surpass my goal by 25%. My rewards hierarchy will include the tiers and rewards specified in Table 1.
Table 1

**Kickstarter “Rewards” Hierarchy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTRIBUTION</th>
<th>REWARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1.00 or more</td>
<td>Sincere Thanks &amp; “Backer Only” Updates!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5.00 or more</td>
<td>A Signed Film Postcard (Design TBA), Sincere Thanks &amp; “Backer Only” Updates!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10.00 or more</td>
<td>Your Name in Film Credits &amp; Previous Rewards!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15.00 or more</td>
<td>Signed Film Poster (Design TBA) &amp; Previous Rewards!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20.00 or more</td>
<td>Digital Download of Film &amp; Previous Rewards!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25.00 or more</td>
<td>DVD Copy of Film &amp; Previous Rewards!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30.00 or more</td>
<td>Blu-Ray Copy of Film &amp; Previous Rewards!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50.00 or more</td>
<td>Stars Down to Earth Compilation DVD &amp; Previous Rewards!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100.00 or more (Limited to 15)</td>
<td>Opportunity to Screen Rough Cut of Film &amp; Previous Rewards!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250.00 or more (Limited to 10)</td>
<td>“Contributor” Status in Film Credits &amp; Previous Rewards!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500.00 or more (Limited to 5)</td>
<td>Invite to Festival Premiere w/ Filmmaker* &amp; Previous Rewards!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Film festival ticket included; travel expenses paid by you, the contributor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**House Party**

Another possible fundraising option includes a fundraising oriented “house party” screening at which donations for distribution and marketing will be solicited. This event could take place upon completion of the film, would be an “invite only” occasion, and would be hosted by someone other than myself (a friend of mine). The significant thing here is that I would not be required to make the “ask”– the individual hosting the party would make the “ask” for me.
According to Morrie Warshawski, author of the book *Shaking the Money Tree*, house-parties are good for raising between $3,000 and $7,000.

Although I am not convinced I will employ this strategy, I am keeping it amongst my options.

**DVD Presales**

A final fundraising strategy is a DVD Presale. DVD presales are good for raising money for festival submissions, marketing, and self-distribution costs. After the film has garnered some attention on the festival circuit (after its first 3 fests) I will offer the possibility to pre-order the DVD. DVDs will not be released until a full festival run has been completed.

Please see FULL BUDGET at the end of this proposal.

**Social Media Component**

The documentary *Classless* will be accompanied by a broad social media campaign.

“Production is the new promotion,” and audience building has already commenced.

The following social media tools / devices will be used to create a buzz around *Classless*:

- Facebook – *Classless* will have its own page
- YouTube – a trailer, “outtakes,” and additional relevant video will be shared here during production
- Vimeo – a trailer, “outtakes,” and additional relevant video will be shared here during production
- Twitter – *Classless* will have its own “hashtag” and will send out frequent updates
- Flickr – production stills and other photos will be shared on Flickr
Website – Classless has its own website, complete with a blog, etc.

Additional Web presence – Classless will also be featured on my separate film production company website: www.starsdowntoerathfilms.com

Blog – The Classless blog was launched in August of 2011. It is the main feature of the Classless website at this time. Thus far, content has related to issue of class, movies about class, etc, but will soon shift to production, promotion, etc.

RSS Feed – The Classless blog offers a RSS feed

Email Subscription Option – The Classless blog also offers and email subscription service

The following social media services will be used to promote Classless.

- Digg
- CiteULike
- Reddit
- Stumbleupon
- Delicious
- Newsvine
- Netvibes
- LinkedIn
- Typepad
- Plaxo

Classless will have a presence on the following film specific sites.

- D-Word (http://www.d-word.com)
- Shooting People (https://shootingpeople.org)
- Texas Filmmakers (http://www.texasfilmmakers.org)
Interactivity will be stressed, especially through the *Classless* blog and website.

Interactive features will include:

- The opportunity for audience members to send in video clips / video diaries with thoughts about class for a chance to be featured in the film and on the website.  
  ** This interactive feature will lead to the “crowdsourcing” of one section of the film (as explained in the treatment)

- A Flickr “Quintessentially Middle Class” Photo Contest that will encourage the submission of “playful” photos of items that are “quintessentially middle class”— e.g., Yellow Tail wine, Levis Jeans (not Wrangler or Lucky Brand), Applebee’s Restaurant, etc

- A “Ten Ways to Know You’re Middle Class” contest in which participants send in a list of ten things that they feel identify middle class people— whether it be style, eating habits, neuroses, etc. The best entries will be featured on the website and participants will receive a “yet-to-be determined” reward

- A “Ten Ways to Know You’re Working Class” contest that will track along with, and follow the same guidelines as, the above “Know You’re Middle class” contest

- A “Ten Ways to Know You’re Upper Class” contest that will track along with, and follow the same guidelines as, the above “Know You’re Middle Class” contest

**Distribution, Outreach, and Festivals**

Currently, I plan to distribute *Classless* myself. After a full festival run *Classless* will be tailored for the educational market. I will seek advertisements and reviews in publications / magazines such as *Video Librarian*, the *Library Journal*, and *Documentary*. I hope to sell *Classless* to academic libraries across the country. I will sell *Classless* with a variety of licenses—home use, public performance, and institutional. I am also open to being “picked up” by documentary distributors like “First Run Features” and “Oscilloscope.”
Audience

I have said a little about audience, but I want to be clear about whom *Classless* is for. *Classless* will be tailored for two specific audiences— the documentary film festival circuit, and educators interested in areas such as “race, gender, and class.” After completing its festival run *Classless* will be offered to academic libraries, and specifically, to sociology departments at universities. My distribution plan will be tailored for these two markets. Academic conferences and a self-produced “university tour” will also be included in the distribution plan.

Outreach

The *Classless* outreach plan will be determined by available funding, but will include:

- Social media exposure as outlined in the “Social Media Component” section of this document
- Requests for reviews from prominent political bloggers such as Barbara Ehrenreich, Jamie Johnson, and others
- Advertisements in industry publications such as *Documentary* magazine
- The possibility of a self-produced university tour (sociology departments)
- The possibility of a “Social Class 101 Study Guide” to accompany the film
- The possibility of a one-week New York City theater rental, budget permitting

Festival Plan

I hope to screen *Classless* at significant festivals. My plan is ambitious, but I have experience with the film festival circuit (a few of my films have played lesser festivals across the country). The following festivals represent venues at which I believe *Classless* will receive
important attention or, alternately, are “good fits” for my film. I will begin by submitting to the below festivals—chronologically by submission date, and then move on to “lesser” festivals if I have not achieved the level of success I am seeking. I plan to budget for, and submit to, approximately 100 festivals.

Table 2

Festivals and Submission Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FESTIVAL NAME</th>
<th>SUBMISSION PERIOD OPENS (2013-2014)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh International</td>
<td>Jan – Feb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden International</td>
<td>Feb - March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telluride International</td>
<td>Early April (not through WAB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starz Denver</td>
<td>Late April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mill Valley</td>
<td>Mid May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austin Film Festival</td>
<td>Early June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Sky Film Fest</td>
<td>Early July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Frame Student Film Fest</td>
<td>Early August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundance</td>
<td>Mid August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slamdance</td>
<td>Mid August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doxa</td>
<td>Early October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Frame</td>
<td>Mid October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True False</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berlin</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco International</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SXSW</td>
<td>Early Nov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribeca</td>
<td>Mid November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Docs</td>
<td>Early Dec (not through WAB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silverdocs</td>
<td>Mid January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheffield Doc Fest</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goals of Production

My goals for Classless are many. The first, and most obvious goals are that of getting the film seen by as many people as possible. This will involve festival screenings, an online
presence, and—potentially, distribution. It may also involve a self-produced national tour of university sociology departments.

Less obvious goals for Classless are more personal. In producing Classless I hope to work through my own ideas about class. Originally, I planned to offer an overt argument for more equality in Classless. I planned to indict the American people for turning their eye away from poverty, social stratification, and a plethora of other societal ills I believe inequality causes. The thing is I’m not sure anyone will watch such a film. And, if pushed, I have to admit that I am not sure of how to construct such an argument. I believe that the United States needs to address issues of inequality, but I do not have all the solutions. I hope that talking with others about this issue will help me to better articulate my feelings about social class, and contribute, however modestly, to the national discussion that reemerged with the 2008 stock market crash.

Finally, I expect to use Classless as the centerpiece of a website about social class in America. This website will grow out of my blog, also entitled Classless, and will be constructed in such a way as to encourage audience or user participation (one idea is to host a collection of audience produced videos about class). This website will feature discussions about progressive taxation, worker owned companies, and other methods for growing equality within a system that perpetuates inequality. I hope that the entirety of the Classless project—film and website, will garner the attention of academics, cultural historians, and educators.

Feasibility

I believe that my idea for Classless the documentary is both feasible and, at this point in our country’s history, highly necessary. My desire to produce Classless stems from my own
questions about social class in the United States. I have been interested in issues of equality since I was a young boy, have the passion needed to push through a long documentary project, and am eager to hear what others have to say about this issue. I also believe that our country’s renewed interest in equality, as exhibited by the “Occupy Wall Street” movement, shows how relevant *Classless* really is.

Other factors that contribute to this film’s feasibility are its low budgetary requirements and a wide availability of subjects. The cities I have selected as locations in *Classless* are cities where I have the support of friends and family. I will not have to pay for lodging in any of my locations, and I may even have vehicles at my disposal. A “Kickstarter” campaign should provide the small amount of funding necessary for production, and friends and acquaintances in each location are willing to help me pull together a diverse group of subjects (I have friends currently working in the Coors Brewery, etc). It is also important to note that anyone currently living in the U.S. will have something to offer to this discussion.

The final factor that renders the production of *Classless* possible is my affiliation with the Radio, Television & Film Department at the University of North Texas. As a graduate student I have access to all of the necessary film and sound equipment that I will need for the production, not to mention the invaluable guidance of my thesis committee.
CHAPTER 3

RECONCEPTUALIZATION BEFORE PRODUCTION

All art has its own life. It begins in the artist’s mind, takes shape on the canvas, video screen, or other medium. The artist then responds to their initial creation and makes changes. This process is one of evolution. Classless the documentary, like all works of art, evolved after the initial thesis proposal defense, immediately before production, during production, and in post-production. The two major evolutions that occurred before production began involved: 1.) the film’s approach to social science and demographic statistics about income inequality in the United States, and 2.) reconceptualization that grew out of scheduling conflicts.

Classless the film was conceived as a film that would educate and entertain. The question of how to incorporate statistics into the film required much reflection, and eventually turned into the more direct question of whether to include statistics in the film at all. The possibility of not including any statistics in the film grew out of the realization that the individual, in modern society, is bombarded with so many statistics that the facts and figures of most arguments are lost on them. Put another way, people simply tune out when they hear a statistic about how many people live in poverty in the U.S., or what the average income in a particular state is. With this in mind, the decision to remove most statistics from the film was made. This choice revealed multiple possible benefits. The first benefit is that Classless does not tie itself to a particular year’s demographic data, and therefore should have a longer shelf life than many social issue films that focus too much on the “here and now.” Second, is the possibility that Classless will transcend talk of the particular in favor of discussion about the “general” (e.g.: shared experiences with economic struggle). The decision to remove statistics
from the film was also made with the hope that *Classless* would prompt a discussion about the problematic nature of a society that tolerates inequality rather than the specifics of that inequality.

Other reconceptualization that occurred before production was less philosophical. The logistics of scheduling shoots with selected participants proved to be highly problematic, and a number of participants had to be dropped from the production plan due to scheduling conflicts. The scene most plagued with scheduling issues was the scene in which the director’s hometown buddies were to share their thoughts about social class in an informal interview. When it became clear that the five potential interviewees would not be able to commit to a mutual time, two interviewees were excused. This then lead to a location change, and the final interview was rescheduled to take place in one of the interviewee’s homes rather than in a local restaurant that one of the excused interviewee’s owned. In the end, the choice to move locations during this shoot altered early ideas about shooting interviews in public places but didn’t significantly impact the trajectory of the film.
CHAPTER 4
INTEGRATION OF THEORY AND PRODUCTION

Theories and Rationales for Use

At this point it should be fairly clear that my film Classless is not what the public thinks of when they think of the traditional documentary. Classless will not be expository, or like the films one sees on the History Channel. Instead, it will fall more closely in line with the films of personal cinema, like Tony Buba’s Lighting Over Braddock, or perhaps the films of Alan Berliner (e.g.: The Sweetest Sound). As director I will be involved in the film, appearing on camera at times, but my participation will give way to the subjects of the film. Their voices will be intermingled with mine in order to emphasize a collective subjectivity, and also to document personal feelings about social constructions. But this talk of subjectivity and documentary cannot just be accepted. It must be examined, for to talk in this manner is to challenge the norms of documentary.

Documentary, as a non-fiction medium, has been tied to ideas of objectivity. Non critical consumers of media who are unfamiliar with the history of documentary still expect documentary to comment upon the “(T)truth,” or at least represent reality in some sort of “authentic” way (hence the backlash against the films of Michael Moore). This expectation grows out of a tendency to confuse documentary with journalism, and the longstanding influence of cinema verite. Indeed, documentary has been marked by, “the refusal of the filmmaker to inject himself or herself into the subject matter of the film,” and this has, “heightened the perceived truthfulness of the images captured on film”(Allen, as cited in Lane, 2002, p.16). In a world where nothing is certain, the popular conception of an objective
documentary—a documentary that can educate and relay some sort of final “(T)ruth,” has remained.

My idea for Classless acknowledges the popular history of objective documentary while drawing from the alternate, or less popular, tradition of personal cinema and documentary. The tradition of personal documentary—and its subjectivity, can be said to be like a plant that grew up through the cracks in the “asphalt pavement” of more objective types of documentary. It is not new—indeed, its roots lie in the work of filmmakers like Jonas Mekas, Stan Brakhage, and Edward Pincus, but the masses have never paid it much attention.

Film historians suggest that the emergence of personal documentary tracked along with other, larger, cultural shifts. The most significant of these cultural shifts included the change from a collectivist type thinking to a more individualistic way of seeing the world, and also a shift from a world of more traditional fixed meaning and understanding to a postmodern fluidity. Jim Lane, in his text The Autobiographical Documentary in America, explains that “the inward turn in documentary coincided with social changes that occurred after the American counterculture and New Left collapsed” (p.19). Much had been gained in the Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s but the war in Vietnam, and the failure of countercultural leaders to articulate a new way forward, left large groups of people confused about the nature of progress and the possibility of a truly collectivist future. Lane points out that, “documentary became autobiographical when Americans who were involved in countercultural movements turned to autobiographical discourses as a form of politics” (p.21). The breakdown of the countercultural movement forced people to turn inward. This “inward turn” caused filmmakers to see their own personal struggles as part of a larger more universal cultural or human struggle.
Theoretical Approach

To reiterate, my conception for *Classless* adopts this idea that the personal is political. It draws upon the history of personal cinema, and rejects the criticism that autobiographical films are self-indulgent forms of “navel-gazing.” Like Michael Renov, who wrote that: “the ‘return of the subject’ is not [...] a nostalgia for an unproblematic self-absorption” (p.110), but that “which straddles the received boundaries of documentary and the avant-garde, [and] regards history and subjectivity as mutually defining categories” (p.109), 6 I embrace the idea that we can “know” the world through the subjective experiences of both ourselves, and others.7 Like Laura Rascaroli, who claimed that subjectivity in nonfiction forms of contemporary filmmaking is: “[...] a reflection and consequence of the increased fragmentation of the human experience in the postmodern, globalized world, and of our need and desire to find ways to represent such fragmentation, and to cope with it” (p.4), I believe that personal documentary can reveal just as much about the world we live in as documentary that purports to educate objectively.

Another, and perhaps more practical way to think about my approach in *Classless*, is to place it within the framework of Bill Nichol’s “documentary modes.” These modes, or styles, that documentaries tend to exhibit include the “poetic,” the “expository,” the “observational,”

---

6 This mutual definition of history and subjectivity harkens back to the thought of sociologist C. Wright Mills. Mill’s, in his 1959 *Sociological Imagination*, argued that what society needed was a sociological way of looking at the world— a way for people to “understand the meaning of their epoch for their own lives” (p.5). 20 years later the filmmakers who turned to the personal caught up with Mills; they finally understood that “the life of the individual [and the] history of a society can[not] be understood without understanding both” (p.3).

7 Michael Renov, in his book *The Subject of Documentary*, also explains that: “[...] the representation of the historical world is inextricably bound up with self-inscription. In the films of persona cinema [...] subjectivity is no longer construed as ‘something shameful’; it is the filter through which the real enters discourse, as well as a kind of experiential compass guiding the work towards its goal as embodied knowledge”(p.176). Put more simply, our subjective views are that which allow us to engage with our times.
the “reflexive,” the “participatory,” and the “performative.” And though the case that every
documentary exhibits aspects of each of these modes can be made, I believe that Classless will
track most closely with Nichol’s characterization of the “performative documentary.”

Performative documentaries, according to Nichol’s, set themselves apart from other
documentaries by asking questions about knowledge. They ask:

What counts as understanding or comprehension? What besides factual information
goes into our understanding of the world? Is knowledge best described as abstract and
disembodied, based on generalizations and the typical, in the tradition of Western
philosophy? Or is knowledge better described as concrete and embodied, based on the
specificities of personal experience, in the tradition of poetry, literature, and rhetoric?
(p.130)

Important is the fact that performative documentaries emphasize the personal, or as Nichol’s
puts it: performative documentaries “animate the personal so that it may become our port of
entry to the political” (p.137).

Stylistic elements of performative documentaries include a mixing of “expressive
techniques that give texture and density to fiction (point of view shots, musical scores,
renderings of subjective states of mind, flashbacks and freeze frames, etc) with oratorical
techniques for addressing the social issues that neither science nor reason can resolve” (p.134).

Performative documentaries also set themselves apart by allowing the “we” of the subjects to,
“speak about [themselves/ourselves] to [others]” (or, alternately, “speak about themselves to
themselves”) (p.133).

The performative / personal documentary’s way of questioning knowledge— especially
social constructions, motivates my desire to apply it to questions of class. I believe that this
approach can help us, as a society, “talk about ourselves amongst our selves.” By inserting
myself into my film Classless I will become the individual people can talk “money,” “status,” and
“class” to. I may also become the person who can approach people with questions like; “do we all know, and just not care, that the U.S. is highly classist?” Or, “why do we think that the U.S. is a classless society?” Or even, “how does the belief that the U.S. is classless bring us together or push us apart?”

Central to the idea of the performative documentary is the idea of performance itself, and I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the role “performativity” will play in my film. I have already stressed that my goal in *Classless* is that of “documenting the subjective,” but I also must address the possibility that my presence as a filmmaker, and the presence of the camera, will affect the subjectivity of those I am documenting.

Sticking a camera in peoples’ faces and asking them to talk about their conceptions of class may prompt them to talk about class in general, or in stereotypical ways. It may also cause them to crack jokes about class (I can already hear the “redneck” and “white trash” jokes). Whether or not this type of performativity— speaking in stereotypes, making clichéd jokes, etc, will be a problem for my film, cannot yet be determined. As director, if I feel as if my subjects are not taking my project seriously I will have to rethink my approach. However, this type of performativity may well “make” the documentary. I believe, like Barbara Ehrereich, that “ideas about class remain mired in prejudice and mythology” (p.7), and that clichéd performativity on the part of my subjects will do much to reveal this mythology.

**Film Reviews: Surveying the Social Class Documentary Landscape**

**People Like Us: Social Class In America (2001),**  
*Produced by Louis Alvarez / Andrew Kolher*

*People Like Us* is, quite possibly, the most comprehensive film on the American class
system that I have come across. The film offers a kind of overview of class in the United States, spending time on each of the major classes— the “working class,” the “middle class,” the “upper class,” and the old guard, a.k.a. the overly rich WASPs. The film was produced in association with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and ITVS. Unfortunately, *People Like Us* takes on an overwhelmingly “PBS” like feel, runs just over two hours, and seems as if it is meant solely for educational markets.

*People Like Us* is the film that I plan to set my conception against. Upon coming across *People Like Us* (and I did come across it later in my search) I became disheartened by the thought that this film already did, or does, what I plan to do with my film *Classless*. After watching the film, and contemplating the contribution it makes, I realized that there is a lot *People Like Us* does not do, and that my film can be markedly different.

*People Like Us* does an excellent job explicating the differences between classes in America, but it treats class as if it is a measure of cultural diversity. Where it falls short is in its analysis. The film points out that social classes exist, that class impacts peoples’ lives, but leaves viewers with assertions that “it is possible to become comfortable in your class,” and that “society is like high school,” with its cliques and competitions. Apparently, the makers of *People Like Us* think class is important enough to highlight in a film, but they don’t really seem willing to take it on.

My film, *Classless*, will differ from *People Like Us* in a few key ways. First, it will concentrate mostly on the middle class and not all classes. Second, it will avoid the type of “Voice of God” narration utilized in *People Like Us*. Third, my film *Classless* will not just explain the differences between classes— whether they be defined economically, educationally, or
aesthetically (taste), but will allow its participants to actively question the mythologies that perpetuate social stratification in America. My film will ask, “why do people think America to be classless,” “do people recognize the severity of class distinctions,” and “if they do; do they just not care to challenge them”? 

Although *People Like Us* is an important film, and does some of the things I have thought of doing in a documentary on class, it will be more than 10 years old when I complete *Classless*. This makes *People Like Us* a film from another era. *Classless* will pick up where “*People Like Us*” leaves off.


*Born Rich* is a feature length documentary that explores the world of the super rich. The film was produced and directed by Jamie Johnson— heir to the Johnson & Johnson fortune, and features interviews with other young heirs and heiresses. Children of the Trumps, Bloombergs, and Vanderbilts are amongst the interviewees.

*Born Rich* also focuses on Johnson’s own realization that he didn’t do anything to deserve the money he’s inherited. The film explores some of the “baggage” inheritance comes with, including split families, high expectations, and the absence of what might be called “occupation based dignity” (Johnson doesn’t know what it means to be proud of one’s work). When the film isn’t concentrating on Johnson’s insecurities it depicts his wealthy contemporaries as problematic and unproductive members of society. Indeed, the only thing Johnson’s wealthy friends seem concerned with is their relative standing to each other.
This said, Johnson does strive for social relevancy by broaching issues like the estate tax, “just desert,” and the excesses of the rich. The problem is that these progressive conversations are overshadowed by the film’s obsession with celebrity. It is difficult to say whom Johnson intended as the audience for his film—social critics, or those interested in the “Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous.” Johnson’s access to the upper echelons of society may be enviable, especially for those interested in the social analysis of class, but *Born Rich* offers little real commentary about how to address issues of accumulated wealth and a “top heavy” society.

Although attempts to compare the American middle class with those at the height of society are popular, my interest is in comparing “ordinary” people’s conceptions of the middle class. If *Born Rich* contributes anything to the idea of *Classless*, it is validation that audiences like to watch people compare themselves to one another.

*The American Ruling Class (2007)* Directed by John Kirby

*The American Ruling Class* is an hour and a half long “documentary musical” (supposedly the first) written by prominent “Leftist” and Harper’s magazine editor Lewis H. Lapham. The film asks the question; “does America have a ruling class,” and, through the combination of fictionalized and documentary sequences, suggest that such a ruling class does in fact exist.

*The American Ruling Class* sets off to explore class by following two recent Yale graduates as they attempt to make sense of their privilege. Lewis Lapham offers each of the young grads a tour through America’s “ruling class” and introduces the young characters (who are actors) to such luminaries as Kurt Vonnegut, Walter Cronkite, Barbara Ehrenreich, Howard
Zinn, Larry Summers, and a variety of other “influentials” from the New York Times, Bloomberg Index, Department of State, and so on. These “intellectual celebrities” act as experts; each chimes in on their conception of the American ruling class. A few of these interviews take the form of sit-downs, and this, presumably, is where the documentary element comes in.

*The American Ruling Class* does a good job of showing that a “ruling class” can be said to exist. It focuses a fair amount of attention on the debate over whether or not it is better to remain in obscurity while working for a noble cause or ruthlessly pursue wealth, and then, when one attains great fortune, become a philanthropist. At the end of the film the Yale graduates are a bit jaded and choose to try to better the world from within the system; any other option just seems too difficult.

*The American Ruling Class* is a powerful film that accomplishes what it sets out to do—reveal the fact that there is such a thing as a ruling class even if its members deny its existence. The film is quirky and entertaining and feels much more modern than *People Like Us*. Still, the film seems to miss the mark. *Lewis Lapham’s* writing is eloquent, and his analysis complex, but it is almost as if the narration leaps straight from the pages of *Harper’s* magazine. The film does not seem accessible to the average American (let’s face it, most Americans can’t get through a *Harper’s* feature story— they are long.), and comes across as Lapham’s overly intellectualized rant against the powers that be. My conception for *Classless* will be much more “down to earth” and suitable for a broader audience.

Living Broke in Boom Times (2007) A Skylight Pictures Production

*Living Broke in Boom Times: Lessons from the Movement to End Poverty* is yet another
film on issues of class in the United States. The film offers a retrospective look at three earlier Skylight Picture films— Takeover, Poverty Outlaw, and Outliers— while examining social policy and economic history from 1980 on.

Living Broke in Boom Times exhibits a few strengths. First, it offers a succinct history of the efforts to organize a “poor peoples’ movement” by people who are poor themselves, rather than a history of some elite organization with a mission to end poverty. Second, the film gets in the trenches by turning its eye on those who live on the edge of our society— squatters, tent dwellers, and street sleepers. Finally, Living Broke in Boom Times reveals the humanity of the poor by concentrating on the support destitute individuals lend each other.

The problem with Living Broke in Boom Times is that it glosses over some rather big questions. The poor people’s movement to end poverty involves a number of destitute activists who are, or were, homeless themselves. The film reveals just how much effort these activists contribute to their cause but never stops to ask the obvious question; wouldn’t all this effort to organize be better utilized in a job search? Astute watchers might note that these activists are working for those who have even less than themselves, or that their experiences with poverty have motivated them to devote their whole lives to the cause (no matter their own material needs), but the film does not actually suggest this. Without this explicit explanation the film leaves the viewer with the feeling that the movement, as depicted, was, and is, misguided.

Ultimately, Living Broke in Boom Times succeeds in offering another side of the story while faltering in its argument. Significant is the fact that the film leaves out any treatment of middle class America. It is my hope that Classless will fill in the gap between Living Broke in Boom Times and The American Ruling Class.

Kids + Money is a half an hour film that explores the relationship between teenagers and money. The film is shot in a fairly traditional documentary style, features many sit down interviews, and offers a few observational sequences. Kids + Money focuses on children living in Los Angeles, a place that is seemingly obsessed with appearance and status.

Kids + Money stands apart from the other documentaries referenced here as a film exclusively about money. Conversations about class are not the focus, but they do surface frequently. The children in Kids + Money talk about upper class style, looking middle class, and their fear of the label “low class.” They may not fully understand class, or their privilege, but they feel the impact class has on their lives. Some of the film’s participants even exhibit sympathy for their less well off friends when they hear of these friends’ financial struggles.

In the end Kids + Money succeeds at getting to the heart of its participants’ feelings about money. The film is more traditional than I plan for Classless to be, but it does offer a good example of the impact concerted social inquiry can have when executed on film. I hope that Classless approximates the success of Kids + Money. I also think that Kids + Money offers a good “safety template” — if I can’t pull Classless together in a less traditional way I can always put it together in the style of Kids + Money.
CHAPTER 5

PRODUCTION

Overview

The production of *Classless* took place from May to December of 2012. Production lurched along in starts and stops as much of the film required travel, and travel could not be completed in one large chunk (due to family obligations, conferences, etc). Footage was obtained from three main locations: Denver, Colorado; Worcester, MA; and Minneapolis, MN. Four trips were made to Denver, CO; each trip included two long driving days with a car full of lighting equipment, cameras, hard drives, etc. The final Denver, CO segment was filmed during the first presidential debate of the 2012 election at the University of Denver. Principle photography wrapped after a Christmas trip to Minneapolis.

Schedule

The first Denver trip took place from May 24th - 28th. This trip was used to collect video of the Denver skyline, capture traveling scenes, and most importantly, “build trust” between the director and the Coors brewery factory workers identified in the characters section of this document. The second Denver shoot took place between June 21st - 25th. The focus of this second trip was strictly relationship building. The director spent time with four potential subjects, explaining the film, showing clips of his previous work, and engaging in some recreation with the potential subjects (tubing in Boulder Creek!). Upon completion of this trip three subjects had agreed to participate in the next shoot, which was scheduled to take place between August 22nd - 27th, and production was put on pause until this time to allow the
director to travel to the annual University Film and Video (UFVA) conference in Chicago.

While attending the UFVA conference the director planned a barbeque and party to attract more potential subjects to the August Denver shoot. The idea here was that the three “definite” subjects were enough, but that more potential subjects might be needed, especially for the various “where I stand” montages the Classless production plan called for. Party invitations were sent out, and 30 attendees RSVPd.

After the UFVA conference the director traveled to Worcester, MA to shoot scenes with the director’s mother and high school friends. This shoot took place between August the 16th - 20th. Multiple scenes were planned and shot, including scenes at the director’s high school, in various locations the director and his friends spent time as teenagers (mostly the local reservoir), and finally at one of the subject’s homes. Two of the initial subjects included in the Classless production plan had scheduling conflicts and this shoot was completed with the three remaining subjects: Dave Della Cioppa, Neil Felch, and Peter Moore. Two one-on-one interviews between the director and his mother were also completed during this four-day shoot.

Upon returning from the Worcester shoot the director immediately packed the car and traveled to Denver to set about preparing for the party and late August shoot. On the day of the party 20 attendees showed up, and many participated in the “where I stand” montages (which, by this time, had morphed into something slightly different — the “you know you’re middle class when _________” montages), but none of the subjects were interested in completing full interviews concerning their feelings about social class. Footage featuring a number of $100 bill piñatas being smashed was obtained, as was the gathering of Coors brewery workers drinking a
fair amount of beer, but no substantial interviews were conducted. At this point, the academic semester was about to begin and travel back to Fort Worth, TX commenced. The drive back to Fort Worth was the lowest part of the production as the three Denver trips had only produced enough footage for two short montages. However, the thirteen-hour drive allowed for some strategizing (see the “Reconceptualization During Production” section of this document).

The next shoot was yet another Denver, CO shoot. This shoot took place between October 1\textsuperscript{st} and 7\textsuperscript{th} and revolved around the presidential debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney. Initially, the \textit{Classless} production plan had suggested that a handful of the Coors brewery factory workers would attend the debate with the director, but the best-laid plans are often laid to waste, and the director decided to attend the debate on his own. Interviews with debate attendees were planned and twenty vox pops style interviews were obtained along with a good amount of observational footage. It is important to note that the original plan to bring the Coors brewery factory workers to the debate would not have succeeded due to security restrictions at the debate. Pre-production research had included correspondence with the debate venue about the possibility of a film shoot, but press credentials were eventually denied (despite previous assurances), and the director was relegated to a corollary debate event—“Debate Fest,” where backpack style journalism techniques were used to get beyond security.

Additional footage obtained during the October Denver shoot included the “Presidential Debate Beer Drinking Contest” sequence. This sequence was shot the day after the actual presidential debate with two of the director’s Denver friends. This footage was captured in one night, and was intended to replace some of the previously planned Coors brewery factory worker interviews and also push the film more towards satire (again, see the
“Reconceptualization During Production” section of this document).

The next step in the Classless production process involved the logging and editing together of footage obtained up until that point. A sixteen-minute “string-out” was assembled, and some of this footage was presented in a MFA colloquium class. Feedback from this colloquium session was beneficial, and the idea of transforming Classless into a more personal film that used narration to connect a variety of disparate sequences was affirmed. A late October meeting with Eugene Martin, the director’s MFA thesis chair, confirmed this change in direction and lead to the planning of a December shoot in Minneapolis, MN with the director’s mother-in-law.

The final Classless shoot took place between December 21st - 30th in Minneapolis. This shoot involved the capturing of more “road footage” on the thousand-mile drive between Fort Worth, TX and Minneapolis, MN, and an interview with the director’s mother-in-law. This final interview was conducted in a traditional documentary fashion; the decision to present this interview as a “confrontation” came after the interview took place and the footage had been logged and roughed out into a short sequence.

Crew

All production responsibilities for Classless were performed by the film’s director. Shoots were planned to be manageable by one or two individuals, and a few attempts to garner the support of an additional crewmembers were made, but scheduling conflicts prevented potential crewmembers from “signing on” to the Classless project. The fact that Classless was,
by necessity, a one-man production forced a certain kind of technological education upon the
director.

Equipment

Production of *Classless* moved forward with a simple equipment philosophy in mind: cameras, microphones, and other equipment used in the filmmaking process are tools, and the tools used in production are less important than pre-production, efficiency, and story development. This said, each piece of equipment used was used for a reason, and each piece of equipment had its “pros” and “cons.”

*Classless* was shot with three different cameras: the Panasonic HGX500, Panasonic HVX 200, and Canon T2i DLSR type camera. The majority of early shoots utilized the Panasonic HGX500. This camera was selected for its high quality 2/3” chip sensor and “single system” audio recording capabilities. The Panasonic HGX500 was also selected for its large size-- the camera is a true news style camera that can be kept stable when mounted on one’s shoulder. The HGX500 was abandoned when it became clear that travel with such a large camera was problematic. In order to transport the camera to Worcester, MA the camera had to be disassembled (lens and viewfinder removed from the camera body and packed into two separate carry-on bags). The disassembly of the camera was a bit of a process, but the real trouble came when the camera’s “back focus” was bumped out of place during travel. The back focus of the camera controls all “front focus” elements on the lens; once the back focus goes out it is very difficult to get the lens to register true focus in the camera’s viewfinder. The fact that the HGX500’s back focus was off became apparent during the interview between the
director and his mother. At this point the back focus was readjusted, checked with a star chart, and shooting resumed. Footage of the interview was reviewed “in camera” and determined to be “in focus,” however, the director was not traveling with a laptop computer capable of displaying the footage at this time (due to the cost of such laptops computers) and the footage was not checked on a larger screen. Back focus issues continued to be a worry in every scene the HGX500 was utilized in, until the decision to abandon the HGX500 for the smaller fixed lens HVX200 and Canon T2i was made. Once the HVX200 and Canon T2i were put into use production progressed without problems. The Canon T2i also proved especially useful at the presidential debate shoot; a camera that was any larger would have been cumbersome and may not have made it passed security.

Audio for Classless was recorded in a number of ways. While shooting with the HGX500 and HVX200 all audio was recorded in-camera (“single system”). Sennheiser shotgun and wireless lavalier microphones were used. When shooting with the Canon T2i a “double-system” audio set up was used, with the Zoom H4N recorder acting as the microphone and recording device. The Sennheiser shotgun microphone was also occasionally used in tandem with the H4N’s built-in mic. The narration for Classless was recorded differently. Scratch narration tracks were recorded with the H4N and Sennheiser shotgun mic, whereas the final narration was recorded in the Radio, TV and Film department’s recording studio.

Lighting setups utilized during Classless were simple three point lighting designs. An Arri light kit containing four light fixtures was used. The most frequently used light was the 1,000 watt fixture and soft box. A variety of colored gels, diffusion, and reflectors were used to achieve even light throughout Classless. No lighting was used during the Worcester, MA shoots
due to the cost of flying with, or shipping, the lighting equipment.

Reconceptualization during Production

Additional reconceptualization took place during the making of *Classless* as production difficulties arose. If pre-production can be said to be the “birth” of the film, production the “death” of the film, and post-production the “rebirth” of the film, there was a lot of “death” in *Classless*. Major issues prompting reconceptualization included uncooperative participants or subjects, a smaller than expected “participation” rate in the “crowdsourced” portion of *Classless*, and budget issues that prevented travel to one location.

A large part of the original idea for *Classless* revolved around scenes and interviews with Coors Brewing factory workers in Golden, Colorado. The director’s best friend works in the Coors factory, and had agreed to assemble a crew of workers for interviews, preconceived sequences (attending the presidential debate), and concept material (called “Where I Stand” montages in the thesis proposal), but subjects failed to show up for interview after interview. A large part of this problem stemmed from the distance between the director’s home and the home of the potential subjects (Texas and Colorado, respectively). Despite many trips to Colorado, many pre-shoot meetings, dinners, and “get to know each other” sessions (including multiple rounds of beer at the local bar), subjects just wouldn’t commit, and the director couldn’t “hang around the bar” for weeks on end. Whether the Coors subjects’ reluctance to participate was due to the director’s inability to develop trust with the subjects, or if the subjects just didn’t have anything to say about issues of social class is unclear (they really did seem to be more concerned with Monday night football than documentaries). Whatever the
case, this component of the film eventually had to be reconceptualized. The “re-visioning” that occurred included the addition of a satirical “Presidential Debate Beer Drinking Contest,” and series of vox pops style interviews at the presidential debate itself.

A second component of the film that had to be reconceptualized during production was the “participatory” or “crowdsourced” sequence. Originally, this component of Classless was to incorporate video the director had obtained from audience submissions via Skype and YouTube style video blogs or recordings. A professional “call for participation” video was produced and disseminated on the Internet, but participation levels remained low. This prompted the director to reconsider the inclusion of a crowdsourced sequence in the film, and has lead to bigger questions about engaging audiences, specifically the question of “how to get beyond Facebook,” or one’s own social network, when marketing media projects. The difficulties in getting full participation in this crowdsourced sequence translated into the removal of this sequence from the production plan. No further plans for incorporating this component into the stand alone film exist, however the possibility of re-issuing the “call for participation” remains, and the Classless website may become home to any footage that is obtained this way in the future. It is important to note that the crowdsourced sequence was not removed from production plans solely because of the difficulties inherent to collecting crowdsourced video, but also because it became clear that additional vox pops style content was not necessary. As footage was logged and edited together during production Classless began to feel like it was turning into a serious of sound bites, overflowing with too many “man on the street” type interviews. The decision to drop the crowdsourced sequence was a decision to move away from a “new broadcast” aesthetic.
The third component of *Classless* that can be said to have “died” during production was the Madison, Wisconsin “Socioeconomic Class” conference sequence. The original idea here was that conference attendees would be interviewed and asked how they—themselves, would make a documentary about being middle class in America. Upon registering for this conference a number of unanticipated expenses arose, including a 2,000-dollar repair to the director’s car (which served as the production vehicle for *Classless*), and this expense lead to the cutting of the Madison, Wisconsin sequence.

Releases, Copyright, and Agreements

Permission was sought from all participants of *Classless*. Each subject in *Classless* gives verbal consent in front of the video camera before interviews, etc., take place. Music used throughout the film was purchased through the “royalty free” music website: Audio Jungle (www.audiojungle.com). Performances captured during filming fall under “fair use” clauses.

Budget

The entire budget is provided in the appendix. *Classless* came in under the budget originally proposed in the prospectus. This is largely because the film’s scope and run time were reduced, and also due to the benefit of in-kind funding in the form of equipment rentals, etc. Original plans for 16mm film purchase and processing were scrapped in favor of cost savings.
CHAPTER 6

POST-PRODUCTION

Schedule

The majority of post-production for Classless took place between December 2012 and March of 2013. Some editing also occurred in October as footage was logged and roughed out into a string-out. The post-production schedule is listed below:

- October 9<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup>: log, convert, sync, and triplicate footage
- October 20<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup>: string-out assembly, paper edits
- October 26<sup>th</sup> - November 5<sup>th</sup>: string out presentation in colloquium; string out review with thesis advisor
- December 26<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>: log, convert, sync, and triplicate newly acquired footage
- Jan 1<sup>st</sup> - Jan 9<sup>th</sup>: first cut of film edited
- Jan 10<sup>th</sup>: first cut review with thesis chair
- Jan 19<sup>th</sup>: second cut of film complete
- Jan 28<sup>th</sup>: second cut review with thesis chair
- Feb 4<sup>th</sup>: third cut of film complete
- Feb 5<sup>th</sup>: web based review with thesis chair
- Feb 5<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup>: additional editing
- Feb 26<sup>th</sup>: web based final cut delivered to thesis committee

Equipment

Editing was completed using Final Cut Pro 7. Color correction and audio mastering were
completed in Final Cut Pro 7 as well. Additional editing effects were incorporated into the film with the use of Sapphire Edge editing “plug-ins” for Final Cut Pro. Archival footage was obtained from the Prelinger Archives (www.archive.org); edited footage is a combination of Apple ProRes and Panasonic DVCPro50.

Reconceptualization during Post Production

Final and significant reconceptualization took place during the editing phase of production. To reiterate, editing can be considered the “rebirth” or “renewal” of a film that went through the “death” or “growing pains” of production. Those things that “went wrong” during production were dealt with in post-production, and new elements of the *Classless* story were teased out.

The most important reconceptualization that took place in the post-production phase involved the film’s approach to storytelling. Originally, *Classless* was designed as a film that featured the director as a character traveling around the country talking to a variety of subjects about issues of socioeconomic class. The director’s journey was meant to do two things: give structure to the film, and provide some comic relief (e.g.: the nagging “mother-in-law” dream sequences). The film was not initially designed to be a film about the director’s life, but was instead meant to “give way” to the subjects. However, as subjects began dropping out of *Classless*, an inward turn became more pronounced.

This inward turn lead to deeper reconceptualization. No ending had been written into *Classless* as the director wanted to leave the trajectory of the story partially open. When the Coors brewing factory workers dropped out of the film all together a new way forward had to
be developed. Examination of the film’s central conflict—the struggle between the director and his mother-in-law, lead to the idea that a confrontation between these two characters was necessary. The decision to include a confrontation between these characters tracked with early ideas about *Classless* being a documentary that adhered to a three act dramatic structure. This confrontation was fleshed out in the edit by transforming a sit down interview with the director’s mother-in-law into a contest. Inter-titles and sound effects were used to make the interview seem like a boxing match, with each side administering “verbal blows,” and the director “going on the defense.” This confrontation, which functions as the climax of *Classless*, may not have emerged if the Coors brewing factory workers had come through with their originally planned interviews, and goes to show that a new way forward is always possible. This reconceptualization also allowed the film to “develop” the mother-in-law character in deeper ways, humanize the mother-in-law by the end of the film, and reveal that the true conflict in *Classless* was that of the director’s own internal struggle with his status anxiety. It also allowed the director to indicate that he had undergone some sort of transformation by the end of the film (read: completed a subtle, but significant, character arc). Rather than continue to worry about status anxiety at the end of the film the director becomes concerned with inequality in general, and this change or resolution, may not have presented itself if major story reconceptualization had not been necessary in the edit.

Other important reconceptualization that took place during post-production included a major change to the projected run time or length of the film, the addition of a “middle class history” montage, and the decision to push the film into the realm of satire. *Classless* was originally projected to achieve a run time of one-hour, but now only runs eighteen or so
minutes. The dramatic reduction in duration is attributable to the loss of subjects (again, the Coors brewing factory workers), and the realization that a one-hour run time was an unrealistic goal for this production. In the end, Classless may benefit by being a short film as the film festival circuit is better suited to short films. Classless may also benefit by reconceptualization that pushed the film in the direction of satire. The “middle class beer drinking contest” and animated “middle class history” montage were added in an attempt to tell the story of America’s middle class, and the prevalence of rhetoric surrounding the term, while also being entertaining. The “middle class history” montage was the last addition to the film and was conceived of after all production for Classless had been completed.
CHAPTER 7

EVALUATION OF COMPLETED WORK

Pre-Production

Classless, the film, is a project I have had in my head for a long time. The idea for this film grew out of my overwhelming concern about inequality in the United States. At one point, the difficulty of taking on an issue as large as inequality in a film lead me to think that the making of Classless would “make me, or break me.” I now admit that this type of thinking was overly dramatic (Classless is unlikely to “make me” or “break me”), but feel as if I have fulfilled a major personal ambition by completing the film.

When I consider the development of Classless in its earliest pre-production stages and the completed work that sits before me I can honestly say that my lengthy pre-production period prepared me for the difficulties I faced in the production of Classless. I now think that my pre-production plan was overly ambitious, but also feel as if the Classless project would not have bounced back after the loss of subjects (again, the Coor’s brewery factory workers) if I had not written as extensive of a treatment as I did. Indeed, the treatment contained within my prospectus may not seem like much, but it was the culmination of many previous treatments, included a 25 page treatment written in a “Documentary Writing” class during the spring of 2011.

In preparing my pre-production plan I spent a large amount of time thinking about my “outreach strategy.” I created a blog, Facebook page, and worked to start building an audience with the idea that “production is the new promotion” in mind. I now believe that these efforts were worthwhile, but that the time I spent designing an outreach plan may have been better
spent assembling a team capable of helping me with production, outreach, and engagement initiatives. If production truly is the new promotion one cannot “go it alone.” Making a film and promoting a film are two different things. In the future I will bring on social media assistants to help me “hype” my work as it is being produced.

Production

The production phase of *Classless* was the most challenging. Scheduling issues, the loss of subjects, and a limited budget caused the film to shrink in scope and running time, but I still feel as if I met many of my production goals. My most significant production accomplishments include the production of a film on a shoestring budget, the production of a film that didn’t require the use of experts (it’s amazing what you can do within your own circle of friends, family, and acquaintances), and the refinement of my own technical and storytelling skills.

As *Classless* became more personal I wondered if the film would seem self-indulgent. I had decided to avoid using experts, and shunned the idea of using statistics, but was not quite sure that the film would be able to carry itself without these traditional documentary tropes. These worries plagued me throughout production, but as the project moved forward I began to see that the treatment I wrote in pre-production was a good roadmap, even if some of the original plan could not be seen through. I also started to see that the footage I was amassing was more than enough to tell the story I wanted to tell. It is also significant to note that my pre-written treatment helped me keep my shooting-ratio low. I knew what I needed to get as far as shots and sequences were concerned, and this prevented me from shooting too much footage or having to “carve a story out in post.”
One unforeseen challenge that arose from the personal cinema approach *Classless* took had to do with personal motivation. I was very motivated to produce the film, but the fact that the film relied heavily upon my friends, family, and my own performance made it difficult for me to feel as if I was actually in production. Other films that I have produced have required the development of formal relationships with subjects, strict schedules, and a certain level of professionalism. *Classless* differed from these films in that my subjects were informal with me, did not always take me seriously, and wanted the production to fit into their schedule. Halfway through the *Classless* production I had to remind myself that “production was on,” and that I could make a film using people who were close to me like other practitioners of personal cinema, but that I had to cultivate a balance between film director and family member, or producer and friend. I also had to be careful to avoid the type of over vigilance that would have angered my family, friends, and other familiar subjects.

The final major challenge of production during *Classless* stemmed from the technical challenges of shooting, lighting, and capturing sound. I consider myself a production generalist who is adept at doing the technical work of film production, but I do not necessarily consider myself an expert technician in any one-production specialty (post-production withstanding). The three years I have spent refining my skills in production classes prepared me to do the work of production, but I often times felt the pressure of having to produce, direct, shoot, light, and record sound on my own. However, working as the sole technician on a shoot (no matter how small) forces one to become a better technician in all areas, and I do feel as if I developed my technical skills while producing *Classless*. I made a number of mistakes while producing *Classless*—incorrectly adjusting back focus on the HGX500 camera, framing some shots in an
awkward way, and forgetting to get “room tone” during some shoots, but I will not make these mistakes again. I also feel as if I will approach my next set of productions with a much higher technical competency and confidence.

Post-Production

Post-production for Classless was the most pleasurable of all the production stages. Editing is my favorite aspect of filmmaking; I feel as if the editing process is where the film really comes alive. As stated earlier, Classless went through some major production related growing pains, but once these struggles were overcome the “renewal” of the edit made the production process fun again. Significant accomplishments during post-production include a low shooting-ratio, appropriate pacing, and the creative transformation of traditional documentary footage into a film that entertains, educates, and “quits while it’s ahead.”

Many documentary filmmakers shoot huge amounts of footage and spend months logging footage, assessing, footage, and “finding” a story. Shooting ratios (the amount of footage shot, to the amount of footage used in the final film) run particularly high when this approach is taken. Some documentary filmmakers shoot 100 to 200 times more footage than they use. Classless, by adhering to a pre-conceived treatment, was produced with a shooting ratio of about 60:1 (20 hours of footage for a twenty minute film). This relatively low shooting ratio helped speed up the edit, allowed me to get straight to the story, and made the editing process less grueling than was initially anticipated.

The fact that the Classless story was teased out early left a lot of time for questions of pacing, special effects, and the complex problem of run time. Having extra time to edit helped
me develop a fast editorial style, and I believe that the fast paced editing exhibited in Classless puts the film in a different category than most “academic” documentaries. Indeed, I have never edited a film like Classless together, and feel as if my biggest achievement with Classless may be in the film’s pacing. I also believe that my low shooting ratio allowed me to move on to the most difficult stages of editing earlier than I expected and that the early completion of a fine cut gave me time to “fall out of love” with my film. “Falling out of love” with particular sequences in my film allowed me to cut scenes that were redundant, question the value of each scene, and reduce the run time of the film by 25% between the second to last, and final cut. This honest cutting helped me wrap Classless up at a run time of 18 minutes, and this is why I say the film “quits while it’s ahead.”

Success of Integrating Proposed Theories

In the end, Classless adhered more closely to the ideas I had forwarded in my prospectus than I had expected it to. Before beginning production I wrote that:

[…] it should be fairly clear that my film Classless is not what the public thinks of when they think of the traditional documentary. Classless will not be expository, or like the films one sees on the History Channel. Instead, it will fall more closely in line with the films of personal cinema, like Tony Buba’s Lighting Over Braddock, or perhaps the films of Alan Berliner (e.g.: The Sweetest Sound). As director I will be involved in the film, appearing on camera at times, but my participation will give way to the subjects of the film. Their voices will be intermingled with mine in order to emphasize a collective subjectivity, and also to document personal feelings about social constructions.

Looking back at this statement now I am pleased to say the Classless is not the type of film you would find on the History Channel, or the type of film most audiences would think of when they think of documentaries. I am also surprised to see how close Classless tracks along with the filmic styles of Tony Buba and Alan Berliner. Whereas I formerly lumped all works of personal
cinema together (e.g.: the films of Ross McElwee, Tony Buba, Agnes Varda, Alan Berliner, and Doug Block) I now distinguish between them. Indeed, the films of Buba and Berliner are much more performative than those of McElwee, Varda, and Block, and when one thinks on the difference long enough it is possible to break personal cinema down into subgenres or niches of its own. The fact that I aligned the proposed style for *Classless* with Buba and Berliner at such an early stage in the production process shows that I was thinking in terms of these niches without really knowing it.

I am also struck by my previous statement that, “my participation will give way to the subjects of the film.” For this was the original plan, but as I have explained elsewhere in this document, *Classless* actually turned more inward as my subjects became less cooperative. My original goal of documenting a “collective subjectivity” may not have been completely met, but my goal of “documenting the subjective” was fulfilled by interviewing my family, friends, and—to some extent, myself (I consider the narration I produced to be close to the answers I would give if someone were to interview me for a documentary about social class). *Classless* may never be played in a middle school civics course, but it does provide an “everyday person’s” explication of social class at a particular point of time in our country’s history.

Finally, I claimed that *Classless* would suggest that; one, “The American middle class is not as all encompassing as seems;” two, “Americans are more concerned about inequality than both politicians and the media suggest;” and three, “many Americans are not actually middle class, economically speaking;” and believe that *Classless* succeeds in articulating these points. *Classless* may not change the world, but I do think those who view the film will be more inclined to question their assumptions about social class in the United States.
A Final Word, or What it Means to be Middle Class in America

*Classless* starts with the anxiety-ridden question, *what does it mean to be middle class*, and ends with the suggestion that severe inequality (and the status anxiety it produces) is damaging to society as a whole. The film does not forward a final definition of the middle class, but instead problematizes the idea of “middle classness,” and reveals the extent to which Americans misunderstand class. If *Classless* can be said to have a message, it is that a definition of the middle class is less useful than an explication of the meaning, or lived experience, of class. As Paul Fussell stated in his text, *Class: A Guide Through the American Status System*, “[...] the whole class system is more a recognition of the value of freedom than a proclamation of the value of sheer cash” (48). Indeed, economic freedom enables personal freedom, and personal freedom can be best explained in terms of *life chances*.

Those who are lucky enough to attain middle class status in the United States are more likely to enjoy good health, own a home, and attend college. Dennis Gilbert, in his text *The American Class Structure in an Age of Growing Inequality*, reports that “people in the bottom 25% [of the income bracket] are less likely to be in good health, more likely to find life boring, less likely to have Internet access, and more likely to be victims of violent crime” (2). Gilbert also reports that 62% of individuals with incomes in the middle 50% own a house, while only 35% of those with incomes in the lowest 25% are able to afford a home. Similarly, 52% of those in the middle-income brackets are able to attend college, while only 30% of those in the lower bracket can afford college (2).

These statistics are revealing; they offer a clear indication of the affect social class has on an individual’s life chances. To be middle class is not just to own a nice car, take a vacation...
once a year, or feel as if you are on equal footing with your neighbors. To be middle class is to be relatively healthy, to be free from the fear of violent crime, to be less likely to suffer from depression, to have an optimistic outlook on life, and to be able to afford those things that allow for continued prosperity. In fact, discussions of social class might be best placed within the context of public health, and there is a growing movement to do just this. The 2010 book *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger* provides detailed evidence that issues of inequality can be linked to issues of public health. The book is also currently being adapted into documentary form and is slated for release late in 2013 (http://thespiritleveldocumentary.com).

Although *Classless* never intended to treat the issue of social class as a public health issue, I now believe that this is where discussions about social class must go. Luckily, *The Spirit Level* documentary is poised to do this (as is another new documentary— *Inequality for All*), and *Classless* remains unique in its personal, value driven, and sometimes satirical, approach.
APPENDIX

ORIGINAL AND FINAL BUDGET
### Classless Budget (Original included in Proposal)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Section Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worcester</strong></td>
<td>Airfare*</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food*</td>
<td>50 p/day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lodging</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Car</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minneapolis</strong></td>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local gas</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Airfare</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food*</td>
<td>50 p/day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lodging*</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Car</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1050</strong></td>
<td><strong>1050</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denver</strong></td>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local gas</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food*</td>
<td>50 p/day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lodging*</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Car</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Return Gas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1050</strong></td>
<td><strong>1050</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DFW</strong></td>
<td>Crew Gas</td>
<td>$15 p/day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joe Gas</td>
<td>$10 p/day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food (crew)</td>
<td>$40 p/day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food (Joe)</td>
<td>$30 p/day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lodging</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Car</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>285</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Madison</strong></td>
<td>Crew Gas</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joe Gas</td>
<td>$10 p/day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food (crew)</td>
<td>$40 p/day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food (Joe)</td>
<td>$30 p/day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lodging</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Car</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>200</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Joe + 1 crewmember

| **Total** | **3585** |
### Production Misc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Section Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All locations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera pack.</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>UNT In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound pack.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>UNT In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light pack.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>UNT In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16mm film</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2-3 reels</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>225</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaff Tape</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spare Bulbs</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>275</strong></td>
<td><strong>275</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Section Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edit</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist Edit</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animation</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Drives</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival</td>
<td>Public Domain</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16mm transfer</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4450</strong></td>
<td><strong>4450</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Admin, Misc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Section Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logo</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36 months</td>
<td>540</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>780</strong></td>
<td><strong>780</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Market / Dist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Section Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Festival Fees</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fest Travel</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster Design</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters/cards</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mag adverts</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVDs</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1000 DVDs</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>14500</strong></td>
<td><strong>14500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Final Totals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>3585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production misc.</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Production</td>
<td>4450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin, misc.</td>
<td>780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing, dist.</td>
<td>14500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>23590</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Final Total: 23590**
## Classless Budget (FINAL 2_20_2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Section Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Production</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worcester</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airfare*</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food*</td>
<td>50 p/day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minneapolis</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local gas</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food*</td>
<td>50 p/day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging*</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denver</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>4 (round trips)</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local gas</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food*</td>
<td>50 p/day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging*</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3850</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Joe and subject Peter Moore

## Production Misc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Section Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All locations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera pack.</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>UNT In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound pack.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>UNT In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light pack.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>UNT In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaff Tape</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spare Bulbs</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Days</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Section Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Edit</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Drives</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>UNT In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival</td>
<td>Public Domain</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>In-kind</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Admin, Misc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>In-kind?</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36 months</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>780</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Market / Dist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Festival Fees</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fest Travel</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster Design</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters/cards</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7500</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Final Totals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>3850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production misc.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Production</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin, Misc.</td>
<td>780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing, dist.</td>
<td>7500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12705</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: **12705**
REFERENCES

Books


Films


