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# Film and theatre: Hybridization and the convergence of mediums

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Film and Theatre  
Hybridization and the Convergence of Mediums

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A project presented to  
The Faculty of the Undergraduate  
College of Visual and Performing Arts  
James Madison University

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

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By Rachel Jones  
May 2016

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Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Theatre and Dance, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts.

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## Acknowledgements

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### **Abstract**

This essay explores the ever-changing relationship between theatre and film. I used my expertise in both theatre and film to create a recording of a children's theatre show *Upside Down Fairytales* in order to show how mediated theatre can be created. This essay argues that mediated theatre can be used educationally, dramaturgically, and for entertainment. The uses of mediated theatre can be very effective for those in communities where theatre is not accessible. This essay states that a new medium is created when live performance is recorded and it can have an impact on how theatre will continue to be consumed.

## **Introduction**

Since the beginning of film history there has been a battle royal over which form, theatre or film, will come out on top. As we look forward we must realize that film and theatre instead nourish each other, have always nourished each other, and can continue to nourish each other. My project uses the combination of film and theatre in live theatrical recordings to create a new medium where film and theatre truly collaborate in a marriage of the ages. Neither film nor theatre needs to give up what makes them unique, but rather by collaborating they can become more powerful, more far-reaching. In this paper I will first provide a historical perspective of the coinciding developments of theatre and film as well as scholarly perspectives on the development. Then I will provide a description of my project at length. Finally I will present my ideas as to why and how the fusion of theatre and film can affect the changing landscape of art in the coming years.

## Literature and Performance Review

I will begin by laying out a few case studies of film and theatre convergence, which will aid in the reflection of my paper. We will begin with the early development of film out of pictorial realism. Then move to the introduction of the talkies and the impact on theatre. Finally we will take a look at *cinema verite* and the development of the documentary.

The early development of film at first glance seems to have very little to do with theatre's long history. Film has only been an art form for around 120 years. This form could still be considered in its infancy compared to the several millennia of theatrical history. However, upon closer examination it may be revealed that film history and theatre are intrinsically linked and forever intertwined.

Early film has most of its development in non-narrative filmmaking. Tom Gunning in his essay "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film its Spectator and the Avant-Garde" calls early Cinema "less as a way of telling stories than as a way of presenting a series of views to an audience fascinating because of their illusory power ... [a]nd exoticism" (Gunning 38). No one had ever seen anything like this before. Being able to copy and play back life-like images of the things happening around them was a mid-blowing technological advancement for all people living in the late-nineteenth century. An example of the fascination that grew from these new images can be shown through a piece of early cinema lore. The early film *L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat* or *The Arrival of a Train at La Ciotat Station* (1895) is a 50-second silent film depicting a train pulling into a station and

unloading. It was a single unedited shot illustrating the aspects of daily life. The cinematic urban legend is that when this film was first shown to audiences they were too overwhelmed and confused by the apparent reality of a train coming toward them the audience screamed and ran toward the back of the auditorium. While this particular folktale probably has no basis in actuality, this piece of film history undoubtedly astonished audiences in the late 1890s.

It may seem like an amazing coincidence that the development of early cinema came at the same time realism became the dominant aesthetic form for theatres in the west. Pictorial realism in theatre became the crowning achievement of theatre in the late-1800s. The more realistic the action onstage could be, the more believable it was to the audience. The beginning of modern theatrical realism is said to have begun with the “archaeologically authentic costume production of *King John* by J.R. Planché at Covent Garden, January 19, 1824,” the same year that Peter Mark Roget presented a paper titled “The Persistence of Vision with Regard to Moving Objects” marking the first solid analysis of the illusion of moving pictures (Vardac 31). Vardac postulates that these are both reflections of the social tension, which brought “about aesthetic preference for the visual the graphic the pictorial illusion” (Vardac 31). The developments of realism and film do not stop there; “the moment of the arrival of the motion picture, pictorial realism and romanticism in the related arts had attained a pinnacle” it had reached as far as it could go, and no further (Vardac 33). The stage now was left at a disadvantage, if pictorial realism remained the gold standard. Because of film’s success with realism (in ways that

theatre could never achieve), many believe that the theatre would die a cruel death . As with all art forms, we see that realism is and never was the only mode for the theatre and it continues to evolve into something very different.

Many scholars love to bemoan the imminent death of theatre because of film's adeptness at realism. Eric Bentley in his essay "Realism and the Cinema" begins by admonishing the theatre for sticking to a realistic mode. He explores the relationship between the cinema and its effect on drama by asking himself if the cinema has effectively made the stage obsolete. Allardyce Nicoll in his book *Film and Theater* believes that theatre and film must each have a proper style; the cinema gets realism, theatre non-realism. He asks, "does it not seem likely that theater audiences will become weary of watching shows which, although professing to be 'lifelike' actually are inexorably bound by the restrictions of the stage?" (Nicoll 184). Nicoll believes that if theatre is to continue to pursue naturalism "little hope will remain" (Nicoll 184). Bentley goes on to dispute these claims saying that there is no true difference between illusions of the stage and the screen. No one goes to the movies or theatre and thinks it's real. We are in fact acutely aware what we are seeing is fake. He goes on to say that "slice of life" naturalism in movies and theatre is taken too seriously. If our art is too close to life can it really be considered art? Bentley suggests "there is art only if the material of life is selected and intelligently arranged" (Bentley 107). Art gives form to the formless. He ends the essay by stating the real difference between theatre and film: "the screen has two dimensions and the stage has three, that the screen presents photographs and the stage living

actors” (Bentley 108). As we track the development it is easy to see how film and theatre borrowed from each other.

While realism was the dominant form of highbrow theatre, the theatre of vaudeville would make its mark on cinema in a different way. Unlike the traditional theatre with its desire for greater verisimilitude, greater realism, and rigid fourth wall, the vaudeville stage was anything but rigid. Vaudeville broke the fourth wall with audience address; the structure of the program changed nightly depending on the audience reaction. Vaudeville thrived off its direct link to the audience and the immediate feedback loop it created.

With the advent of the silent film era, many vaudeville performers would transfer to the film medium. Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin, and Harold Lloyd were three of the most famous transfers from vaudeville to silent film. This transfer created a style in early silent film that replicated the feel of vaudeville. As the silent film era progressed the film industry rapidly discovered that narrative films were more cost-effective and reliable. This led the film industry away from the vaudeville style but the transfer was still there, showing the exchange between the two mediums.

As we have seen, film and theatre have borrowed from each other since film’s inception. Another example of this convergence between the mediums lies in film as spectacle and popular entertainments. Tom Gunning refers to popular entertainment forms such as the circus, minstrel shows, vaudeville, Wild West shows, burlesque, and amusement parks as theatrical aggregate entertainment. All

of these forms use spectacle as a way of drawing in audience members. The cinema of attractions, argues Gunning, attempts to do the same thing as these theatrical forms in that they “directly solicit spectator attention, inciting visual curiosity, and supply pleasure through an exciting spectacle – a unique event, whether fictional or documentary that is of interest in itself” (Gunning 40). Film even appeared as part of theatrical aggregate forms, as short films would appear in the bill of vaudeville programs surrounded by unrelated acts. An interesting example of an aggregate entertainment form was Barnum’s American Museum. This museum strove to overwhelm its customers with as much diversity as possible in one place. Exhibits, theatres, freak show performers, dioramas, models of famous destinations, etc. could all be found in this museum. Cinema found its way into the form of spectacle as well. Hale’s Tours are an example of this convergence. Hale’s Tours was the largest chain of theatres, an estimated of 500, exclusively showing films before 1906. The audience would enter into what appeared to be a train car with a conductor taking tickets and a movie of a non-narrative sequence would play that had been filmed from a train. Martin Rubin in his essay “Berkeleyesque Traditions” credits aggregate forms with profoundly affecting the development of the American musical: “all musicals bear the mark of the ancestry in nineteenth century aggregate forms, with the musical numbers functioning as a series of self contained highlights that work to weaken the dominance of a homogenous hierarchal narrative continuity” (Rubin 53-54). Film and theatre have irreparably affected the development of each other.

In 1926 Warner Brothers Studio premiered its vitaphone sound-on-disk system with their first feature film with sound, *Don Juan*. The next year *The Jazz Singer* premiered and ‘talkies’ were here to stay. Sound became an integral part of the movie making experience. Al Jolson, the lead of *The Jazz Singer*, was a vaudeville performer turned movie star. Anne Fliotsos in her case study essay “From Vaudeville to Talkies: A Case Study in Our Nation's Capital, Earle Theatre, 1924-1928” reinforces the impact of *The Jazz Singer* on theatres in the late 1920s. She says as to the fall of the vaudeville theatre in DC, “The important benchmark was the opening of the first major “talkie,” *The Jazz Singer*, in late 1927. *The Jazz Singer* was an instant sensation. With the advent of sound John Daly's predictions about the appeal of cinema surpassing that of theatre became a reality... Warner films went quickly from second rate to first rate, overshadowing the live stage productions that were billed with them” (Fliotsos 29). The theatre houses and companies began to get nervous about the new talkies. They were worried that film would overshadow and take over all forms of popular entertainment. The theatres did not take the advent of the talkies in the best way, Fliotsos writes: “The theatre managers of the 1920s scrambled to stay afloat in a sea of entertainment options. Their audiences were fickle, and the theatre managers vacillated in response, trying to please as many patrons as possible by offering cinema, vaudeville, revue, and musical theatre” (Fliotsos 29). Instead of realizing what makes theatre unique and bring people back to the theatre because of that, the theatres panicked and tried to compete with film. Theatre companies did not need to be afraid of the talkie, instead

it pushed them to become better. They had to adapt to this new medium, or else they would have been left in the dust.

*Cinema Verite* is another case study example of film development that would have an impact on the development of film. Cinema verite, observational cinema, and direct cinema were all names for the form of documentary filmmaking that emerged in the 1960s. 16 mm lightweight cameras coupled with synchronous sound allowed for this observational documentary style to emerge. These films allowed for a new look into established organizations. However, with new technology and modes of filming there comes kickback, and “cinema verite became a source of immense contention partly because of the totalizing nature of its supports claims to be truth” (Aufderdieide 51). It is important to acknowledge that just like theatre, documentary making is an art form with the creators giving form to the formless. It cannot be examined as absolute truth, rather a version of the truth that I as a director/editor have chosen to put forth. Just as directors in the theatre shape and inform audience experience and reaction, the directors of documentary films do the same.

## **Project Design**

As soon as I heard about the senior honors project I began to brainstorm ideas about what I would want to accomplish. I knew that I wanted to combine my two majors to create an interdisciplinary project. When I was in high school I had gotten the opportunity to see *Company* (2011) filmed live on Broadway in the local cinema. This was the special production of *Company* starring Neil Patrick Harris that only ran for a week. I appreciated at the time being able to see this production from Maryland, as I would have been unable to see it otherwise, not only because of the distance but it had sold out long before it had even opened. Being able to access shows from small suburban America was something that excited me; when I began to plan my honors project I was immediately drawn to the idea of exploring the filming of theatrical events. Not only would it use my practical media arts and design skills but it would access my passion for theatre as well as my love of the digital age and all its benefits. I decided I would create a mini documentary about the process akin to *Every Little Step* (2008), *The Chorus Line* documentary that also enthralled me as a high school student. I would also film the live production to create a copy of the show as a way to explore the filming of live theatrical performance. I thought it would be simple enough. The first bump in the road came faster than I had expected: the navigation of copyright laws.

Filming productions of theatrical events without consent of the rights holding company is strictly prohibited. I wanted to make sure that everything I was creating for this honors project was strictly obeying procedures. In order to do that,

the spring of my junior year was spent trying to contact the publishing houses or playwrights of the productions that would be in JMU's Studio Theatre in the fall of my senior year. I contacted Annie Baker about filming her play *The Aliens* but received no response. I contacted Martin McDonough about filming his play *The Pillowman* but received no response. I was getting nervous about the legality and feasibility of this project if I was unable to receive permission from a publishing house to film parts of the show. Near the end of my spring semester, an opportunity arose that would be perfect for my thesis and would help me remain inside the confines of the law.

Every summer JMU runs a children's theatre series, Children's Playshop, where they pay undergraduate students to perform in children shows for the community. For the summer of 2015 season, the artistic director Kate Arcchi decided to reach out to the local Harrisonburg community for potential children's plays. Jan Kirby is a local member of the community who wrote a series of short children's plays in order to teach kids about science. JMU contacted her to create an hour-long show using three separate scripts in what would become *Upside Down Fairytales*. The stories involve taking fairytales and flipping them to take a less than traditional approach. For example, instead of the story of Little Red Riding Hood having a big bad wolf, *Upside Down Fairy Tales* features a lost friendly wolf straight from the national zoo looking for a new home. This would be the first time these plays were produced together, and Andrew Morrissey, a composer-pianist that taught at JMU, and Sam St. Ours, a current student, would write and compose the songs to meld

with Kirby's play. This type of collaboration was something I wanted to highlight in my documentary. Not only would this be an interesting collaboration, but also because we had access to the playwright and composers, copyright would not be a problem.

Now that I knew I was going to have something to film, I was excited; however, it was less than a month before I had to shoot so I was nervous as well. I planned to be filming in the fall so I was thrown headfirst into filming months before I thought I would be. I had signed up to take the documentary film class for the next semester to help me with this project but the opportunity to shoot presented itself so I had to go ahead. I had done research on how to shoot a documentary, but I have never done so before and I felt a little out of my element. I wouldn't have anyone helping me shoot this project since it would be filmed over the summer and all my media savvy counterparts had gone home for the summer. In retrospect, I would like to have had another person shooting with me, particularly someone experienced in documentary making. I also should have used different equipment. I borrowed equipment from the School of Media Arts and Design over the summer. I really have to thank them for being so patient and willing to help. The camera I used was a Canon 60D DSLR. Unfortunately it does not have a headphone jack and the device they gave me to use to record audio I have never used or heard of before. Shooting on site and on the fly without being able to hear the audio is something that I would not recommend. It ended up having a definite impact on the final project. This is an example of something I learned the hard way. I do appreciate the

DSLR's rich color palette and the image coloration is something I am very happy with especially when it came to recording the live performance.

When shooting began I felt like a fish out of water. The play's director Mary Ruberry was hesitant about me being there for the whole rehearsal process. A lot of the time I felt like I was in the way or causing a disruption, so I regularly held back. Looking back I realize that I should have done what I could to get into the action, so to speak. I should not have been afraid of getting in the way. The sentiment "do not ask permission, rather beg for forgiveness" would have helped me a lot in this work. I did not go to every single rehearsal because I wanted to give them a break from worrying about me being there. After this work I truly believe that it is a documentarian's job to get in there. It is important not to be scared. This project taught me just how vital charging headfirst into the fray is and it has served me in my other projects since then. The documentary that I worked on in the fall on the refugee population in Harrisonburg had many moments where we just had to do now, apologize later and I can thank my experience with *Upside Down Fairytales* for that insight.

The first few days of filming the rehearsals went really well. I was excited and surrounded by people who were also excited to be a part of this production. Only a few days in, I had been loading all of my footage onto an external hard drive so it could be kept in a centralized location as well as being portable. I knew I would not have enough space on my laptop to store all the footage and I thought the external drive would be the safest place to store my files. However, that was not the case.

Five days into filming, my external drive crashed and I was unable to access any of the files. They all read as corrupted and the drive would not even register with my computer. I was in a panic. For the rest of filming I tried to keep all the files in multiple locations but I was devastated that I had lost those first days. I would not have a documentary without them. My dad and I spent the next month trying every type of software on the Internet to recover the files. Finally after paying entirely too much money, a month later we had recovered as many of the files as was possible. By then I could not trust any external drives so all of my video files were in a scattered mess though my laptop, various SD cards, and flash drives. I still think there is some missing footage out in the cosmos and I just have not been able to find it. That set back aside, filming continued.

The rehearsal process was fast, only a week and a half, so I was onto filming the live production quite quickly. I was excited about the prospects of filming the live production because I knew recording audio was going to be a breeze. I was able to connect directly to the soundboard operated by the sound designer, Justin Burns. He would mix the sound and I would record with a zoom recorder everything that came through the board. When it came time to edit all I would have to do it use Final Cut Pro's synch audio function and it would take care of having to do it myself. The filming of the production went pretty smoothly. I did one master wide shot for all the entrances and exits. I got long shots of full body for most of the dances and silly physical humor, close ups for most of the dialog, and medium shots for everything else. After reviewing the footage I wish I had gotten a lot more shots

from different angles. I had to stick to the shadows and was usually confined to whatever side had the least amount of people for that run. It was a concession that would affect the final product.

At the end of the process I was sad to see *Upside Down Fairytale*s go but happy to be able to take a short break from working on the thesis and pick it back up when I got back to school. The fall semester started and I had been planning on purchasing Final Cut Pro and a professional external drive and start editing. Soon I received an email from the College of Visual and Performing Arts about potential grant money. My fellow honors student, Matt Gurniak, and I both pushed each other to create grant proposals. The process for getting approved was made easy by the department, however it was lengthy. When I finally learned I had received a grant from the college I had set myself back almost two months waiting for the funds to arrive. My bank account would thank me but my conscience would not. After everything had been purchased I started working on amassing the footage, cataloging, synching audio, and planning my edit. I wanted to first tackle the edit of the live production since I already had a script and it would be more like the traditional fiction film editing I was used to. I had not completed the documentary class yet so putting off the documentary edit was a good idea.

I do not like editing. If this project has taught me anything, it has been that I do not want to edit as a job. I am a creative kinesthetic person and spending hours by myself in front of a computer screen is not the type of thing that will inspire me as an artist and creative person. I like the collaborative elements of film and theatre

where I'm working with and challenged by other artists. Editing is lonely. I am glad I realized that editing is not my thing during college rather than after I had gotten my first editing job. However it has also made the edit really hard to get through. I have a hard time getting excited and motivated to do the edit. Thankfully I was never one to give up on a challenge and I have pushed through. Overall I think I would much rather have specialists take on each part of a project than have my hand in every single thing. Collaboration is so ingrained in my character I just did not realize it until I tried to tackle this whole project on my own.

## **Discussion and Analysis of Findings**

In this next section, I will explain the notion in the scholarly community that film and theatre can do one thing better than the other. For film, it is the visual elements, for theatre it is the text. Then I will go on to suggest the future of film and theatre and how we can use these mediums to inspire and inform each other to reach new creative bounds, educate more people, and find audiences in places we never would have expected.

One of the most interesting differences between theatre and film that has all sorts of repercussions on how we view the mediums is what is left behind. For theatre what has been left behind in the past has almost always been scripts. What the playwright chooses to put down on paper is what is left at the end of a play. Sometimes printed scripts can have stage directions from the original production but even these are only words and cannot accurately convey what the audience at those plays saw. The theatrical artifact is the script. This causes a lot of problems in the western theatrical canon. With strict copyright laws among the many hindrances to those of us in the creative industries, the script can sometimes be more binding than our creative sensibilities would like. The western canon treats the playwright and the script as sacrosanct. Sometimes the text is all we have, but when looking at the full essence of theatre we see that the words are only one part of a massive puzzle. Visual elements in the theatre are just as important in telling the story as the words. Theatre is a visual experience. Yet often times we treat cinema as the truly visual experience and make theatre all about the words. This

may have something to do with Aristotle, who in his *Poetics* places plot, character, thought, diction, and melody all over spectacle (referring to the visual elements of the play). Out of six defining features of a “good” play the last is spectacle. Robert Cardullo in his essay “Theater Versus Film: An Historical Introduction” claims that Aristotle shaped the future of how we view theatre in his *Poetics*. He believes Aristotle ranking dramatic elements over theatrical elements “may be due, in part, to the fact that he was writing approximately one hundred years after the great Greek tragedians had authored and produced their plays. May scholars have pointed out that the quality of theatrical production in Aristotle’s time had declined, and for this reason among others he preferred scripts to productions” (Cardullo 5). Aristotle shaped the western belief that the visuals of a play are least important. Shakespeare didn’t seem to want help either. Most of his plays have very little stage direction (*Exit Pursued by Bear* being the notable exception). Most of what Shakespeare does, like the Greeks, is tell us what just happened offstage or tell us what the scenery looks like through the use of spoken décor. Shakespeare was obviously a man of words and the west’s god-like treatment of Shakespeare has elevated his words and our desire for good syntax to new heights. How can we blame the theatrical community? Before the advent of photography and film there was little left of a production after it closed except for the script, besides the few and far between Samuel Pepys of this world. Unfortunately for America and in my opinion for art, we treat the playwright and their original intent as vital to the success of a production. Instead, imagine a world without copyright where artists

are free to explore and interpret a play in any way they see fit. It would immediately begin to diversify the canon and bring new life to many over-done or stale plays. However this is another paper in it of itself. So we must return to the point, the theatrical artifact is the script. What then is the cinematic artifact?

The cinematic artifact is the movie itself. The product is the artifact. What is left for one audience is the same thing that is left for all audiences. Instead of being left to interpret only one part of the whole, the entire experience goes with it. This is why you don't see people making the same movie with different actors. Even the modern day notion of reboots of past blockbusters such as *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* (2009) or *The Hulk* (2003) do not use the exact same script as the original; it is unnecessary. Erwin Panofsky in his 1947 essay "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures" comments on the phenomenon by saying characters in plays "can be played well or badly, and they can be 'interpreted' in one way or another; but they most definitely exist, no matter who plays them or even whether they are played at all. The character in a film, however, lives and dies with the actor" (Panofsky 67). What makes film different from theatre is not only the artifact but also that film is a medium as well as a product. You can film a theatrical event but you can't theatre a movie. As Susan Sontag comments, "cinema is a 'medium' as well as an art, in the sense that it can encapsulate any of the performing arts and render it in a film transcription" (Sontag 135). The cinema is preserved through its digital format in a way that can be replicated and duplicated identically over and over. In the theatre, every performance, every night is going to be different. In the cinema, the film one

person sees in Virginia is the same movie that is playing all over the world.

Cardullo comments that:

Theatre performance, by virtue of its 'liveness', disappears as soon as it is said and done, leaving texts or scripts as the primary record and most widely consumed 'artifact' of the dramatic event. Film performance, in contrast...is kept 'alive' in its original format in a way that even the best-taped theatrical productions, as opposed to their sources or blueprints, dramatic scripts, cannot be. In other words, the theatrical artifact of the text, though subject to exhaustive and occasionally exhausting scholarly debate, should not be confused with the theatrical product. Whereas the cinematic artifact *is* the product (Cardullo 1).

I believe that the recordings of theatrical events can become a new form of theatrical artifact. Yes, it is not the same as being able to experience the 'liveness' of the theatre, but they can provide a new and exciting way into theatre.

This difference between the cinematic artifact versus the theatrical artifact makes one believe that cinema is the visual medium, as it can be visually consumed over and over again as the film itself is identical after it is finished, and the theatre is the textual medium, the script is the thing left to be consumed after the run of a production closes. What if the script was not the only thing left after a production ends? What if instead a filmed live movie version of every single play was recorded? It would change the entire way we consume theatre, the entire way we consume scripts, and how we navigate the worlds of cinema and theatre. In the next few years, we have the power to radically change the way in which we participate in theatre and film on a grand scale.

Sarah Bay-Cheng wrote an essay on mediated theatre entitled "Theatre Squared: Theatre History in the Age of Media." This essay discusses exactly the

type of theatre and film covalence that I am trying to explore. Bay-Cheng uses the term mediated theatre to describe:

any theatrical performance originally created for live performance (that is, live actors in visual proximity to a live audience, although this distinction is rarely absolute) and subsequently recorded onto any visually reproducible medium, including film, videotape, or digital forms, presented as two dimensional moving images on screen (Cheng).

Mediated theatre opens the doors for many more people to have access to theatrical events. These records can be used as teaching tools in classrooms, as “mediated theatre is often the best way to expose students to a range of performance traditions, styles, and genres” (Cheng). Many students, especially those in underprivileged communities do not have the ability to afford attending theatrical performance. Just because they cannot afford this art form does not mean they should not be able to appreciate it. For centuries theatre has been considered highbrow art for the upper class. Mediated theatre can provide an access point for the lower classes to be able to consume theatre in a cheaper and more accessible way. Programs online like *The Digital Theatre Archive* provide stream-able performances of shows from Shakespeare’s Globe or other famous British venues. Students can have access to theatre across the world and can create a global theatre network of intercultural exchange. Mediated theatre can also provide archival records for dramaturgical use as well as research purposes. Being able to access and watch historical productions can provide a wealth of knowledge. Recently I read an online blog post from Kim Powers, a director who is working right now with a group of inmates at Sing Sing Correctional facility to produce William Shakespeare’s

*Twelfth Night*. She writes this blog post about wishing she was able to bring the inmates she is working with to the theatre, saying “ We make do with production photos and the occasional ‘adapted for television.’ Until the cast of *Hamilton* beautifully and powerfully performed their opening number from the stage of the Richard Rodgers Theatre for the Grammy ceremony, and then performed at the White House. Until Lin-Manuel Miranda free-styled in the Rose Garden with President Obama. Which I promptly burned onto a DVD and waited for clearance to bring into the facility” (Powers). Powers used the filmed theatrical recording of *Hamilton* that appeared at the 2016 Grammys in order to inspire and teach her actors about theatre. She was able to not only relate *Hamilton* back to *Twelfth Night*, as both Shakespeare and Lin-Manuel use a bare stage and use rhythm to create their poetry, she was able to show her inmates people who looked like them, creating art. She says that at first during Miranda’s White House poetry jam, people were laughing when he said it was a Hip-Hip musical about treasury secretary Alexander Hamilton. But after opening one of the best selling Broadway musicals, no one is laughing now. These men inside the correctional facility need to be able to see people like them having a voice, being represented on the theatrical stage. Representation matters hugely but if we do not have accessibility then the representation cannot be seen by a lot of the people that need to see it the most. Without the filmed opening number on the Richard Roger’s stage for the Grammys, these men would never have had the access to this monumental piece of theatre.

While mediated theatre cannot only provide an interesting look into past theatrical traditions but it can bring people into a world they never would have experienced otherwise. Granted, we must remember that mediated/filmed theatre is not the actual event. As far as actuality is concerned, “The recording of performance is always a distortion of the live event radically reorganizing space, composition, and time” (Cheng). By acknowledging this distortion created we begin to see a new art form emerge, one that honors the theatrical performance it is capturing while also acknowledging the distortion. It can be neither theatre nor film but an interdisciplinary medium. Paying honor and tribute to the theatrical modes/form while acknowledging the film and how it affects the viewing.

When the first movies came out, the theatre thought it would make its slow descent into the grave. When people started suggesting the idea of filming live theatrical events and broadcasting them in local cinemas, again the theatre community thought it might be undermined by this art form. However, I believe that instead mediated theatre and recordings of productions can have just the opposite effect. They will inspire a new generation of people to be interested in and able to study theatre. It will provide an outlet for all of the children and adults who could not attend the theatre otherwise. We don't have to be afraid of the cinema having a negative effect of theatre attendance. What makes theatre special is the liveness, is the theatricality, and is the connection between the audience and the performers. Cinema can't replicate or replace those things. What the theatre has to offer is enough to keep people coming back. It has been enough to keep people

coming back for centuries; it's not going to change now. Bentley suggests that 'although the movie industry can threaten the theatre industry, the one art cannot be threatened by the other' (Bentley 108). I believe that this sentiment is incredibly apt in the argument for the filming of live theatrical events. The art of the theatre will not be threatened by the filming of theatrical productions. Not only will the filming of these productions help keep a record of past performances for many different purposes including educational, outreach, advertisement, archival, and dramaturgical to name a few, but it will create a new art form. An art form that is not theatre or film but rather something in between.

This new medium is its own art form and must be critically analyzed in a way separate from theatre and film. While it does have many of the same characteristics of each art form, by referencing it as its own art form it paves the way for an exciting new cultural phenomenon to emerge. My work on this honors thesis as well as my four years at JMU have prepared me to dive head first into this new medium.

It has been an interesting process working on this thesis for the past three semesters because I have been able to track the progress of a specific type of filmed theatrical events that have occurred recently. There has been a reemergence of the TV musical in the past few years that has been of great interest to me as it pertains to this project. It began in 2013 with *The Sound of Music Live* on NBC. This was a three-hour event that broadcast live the musical version of *The Sound of Music* to NBC's at-home audience. It took place on a sound stage with Carrie Underwood starring as Maria. In some respects you could consider this production a success,

with almost 18.5 million views says *The Hollywood Reporter* (O'Connell). The musical theatre purists admonished the production for using Carrie Underwood, someone with no musical theatre experience. All of the Broadway veterans who performed in the event got the best reviews and Audra McDonald's rendition of *Climb Every Mountain* will live on in musical theatre legend. I knew right away that doing theatre for television would be a risky business, but if you cast seasoned Broadway actors who are used to doing eight shows a week, you would have a better shot at making this work. The next live production, *Peter Pan Live* on NBC, failed to stray from *Sound of Music's* ineffective formula. Casting television actor Allison Williams was not a good choice. She lacked the ease with the stage that the Broadway alums ooze. The set was also a 360-degree playground of mess. Losing the proscenium arch lost some of the theatrical qualities of the space and it just did not read as well. The singing and dancing came off as flat and unexciting without the energy of the live audience to feed off. *The Wiz Live*, which premiered this past winter, was far more successful. They returned to the proscenium and boosted the theatricality, something that the audience responded to in a very positive way. Finally this past January Fox decided to get into the action with *Grease Live*. Unlike the previous productions this used a live audience to create a more theatrical feel. They also used mostly seasoned Broadway performers as well as a Broadway director, Tommy Kail, whose recent work on *Hamilton* has been the talk of the town. By adding in and acknowledging the aspects of theatre that make theatre what it is, they make the film productions better. This isn't film, the non-

realist style of musicals can be a hard ticket to sell, but selling what makes them unique can work. Imbuing these events with the spirit of the theatre creates a more experiential aspect to the viewing that the audience at home responds to in a positive way.

## **Conclusion**

Film and theatre owe much to each other. Not only have they developed alongside each other for the last one hundred and fifty years, they have borrowed from, exchanged with, and challenged each other along the way. When theatre figured out something that works, film was not far behind and vice versa. As we continue with the digital age, we are finding new and exciting ways to consume film and theatre. The Internet provides instant access to hours and hours of filmed theatrical events and we have the capacity to create a digital archive of all filmed recordings that will radicalize and revolutionize the educational and dramaturgical aspects of theatre. We can revolutionize how we talk about theatre as not only a medium of words, but that of fully realized productions with visual cues. I continue to use the combination of theatre and film in my daily life. My final school of media arts and design project will use my prowess in the theatre and film hybrid to create a twenty-minute movie musical. I have found ways to integrate technology and videography into the theatre. Being able to see theatre through a new lens has expanded my mind as to what art can be created with this hybrid form. I hope as I graduate to be able to continue to create examples of mediated theatre for consumption as well as be an advocate for the form.

## Bibliography

Aufderheide, Patricia. *Documentary Film: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. Print.

This book gives a dense historical perspective on the emergence of Cinema Verite, a type of documentary film making, in the 1960s. Cinema verite, observational cinema, and direct cinema were all names for the form that emerged because of some new technology. The 16 mm lightweight cameras coupled with the synchronous sound allowed for this observational style to emerge. It became a very useful medium for activists and since post WWII the top down media authority led to distrust among the public. These films allowed for a new look into established organizations through the use of observational footage. However this new medium provided lots of kickback, “cinema verite became a source of immense contention, partly because of the totalizing nature of its supports claims to be truth” (Aufderdeide 51). The ethics of cinema verite became a huge contention with scholars because of cutting live events shapes truth as well as the filmmaker’s relationships with the subjects. Cinema Verite is an interesting concept and can be directly linked to our generation. The use of the Internet and civilian journalists in reporting the news is our generation’s response to the distrust of mass media conglomerates just as the Cinema Verite movement was the response for the generation of the 1960’s.

Bay-Cheng, Sarah. "Theatre Squared: Theatre History In The Age Of Media." *Theatre Topics*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007. Web. 1 April 2016.

Sarah Bay-Cheng’s essay brought a new understanding to my thesis. Her term ‘mediated theatre’ defined as “any theatrical performance originally created for live performance (that is, live actors in visual proximity to a love audience, although this distinction is rarely absolute) and subsequently recorded onto any visually reproducible medium, including film, videotape, or digital forms, presented as two dimensional moving images on screen” provides the framework for how I refer to the theatrical videography that I am so interested in pursuing (Cheng). She goes on to discuss the importance of mediated theatre in the classroom and her essay has supplemented my argument for the importance of live theatrical recordings to educational theatre. She goes on to discuss the distortions that are caused by recording a live performance and how to navigate those distortions when watching mediated theatre.

Bazin, Andre. “Theatre and Cinema”. *Theater and Film*. Ed. Robert Knope. London: Yale University Press, 2005. 110- 133. Print.

Andre Bazin in his essay “Theater and Cinema” begins with the concept of presence as a theatrical mode. The presence of the actor in front of an audience makes theatre its own special medium. He goes on to argue that theatre “stands in the way of any collective representation in the psychological sense, since theatre calls for an active individual consciousness while the film requires only a passive adhesion” (pg. 113). Bazin specifically references filmed theatre and believes that it is a precarious road to travel. It can be of great success or it can completely undermine both the art of theatre and of the cinema. He says, “straightforward animated photography of theatre is a childish error recognized as such these thirty years on which there is no point in insisting further... ‘filmed theater’ [is] justly condemned as the sin against the spirit of cinema. The true solution, revealed at last, consists in realizing that it is not a matter of transferring to the screen the dramatic element... of theatrical work, but inversely the theatrical quality of the drama” (pg. 124). He believes that theatre and cinema can work together in three ways. 1. Filmed theatre as an aid to cinema. It works to enrich and elevate cinema. 2. Cinema will save theatre by bringing back the popular masses to the filmed theatre and thus educate a public. 3. Cinematographic theatre must emerge as a new way of telling stories.

Bentley, Eric. “Realism and the Cinema”. *Theater and Film*. Ed. Robert Knope. London: Yale University Press, 2005. 103-109. Print.

Eric Bentley in his essay “Realism and the Cinema” refutes the idea that realism is the death of the theatre because cinema can do it better. He begins by quoting Allardyce Nicoll from his book *Film and Theatre*, “does it not seem likely that theatre audiences will become weary of watching shows which, although professing to be ‘life like’ actually are inexorably bound by the restrictions of the stage” (pg. 104). Nicoll is a realist to a fault. Bentley believes that Nicoll’s takes the ‘slice of life’ theory too seriously, “if we want life, we have it without making works of art... there is art only if the material of life is selected and intelligently arranged” (pg. 107). No one is fooled when they go to the theatre or the cinema into thinking what they are seeing is absolute truth. These two forms are different because “the screen has two dimensions and the stage has three, ... the screen presents photographs and the stage living actors” (pg. 108). Bentley believes in the power of art to survive, “although the movie industry can threaten the theatre industry, the one *art* cannot be threatened by the other” (pg. 108). This directly relates to the new idea of filming live theatre. More people will be able to access and see the art of the stage on the screen. However, the art will not suffer as a result of this new tactic.

Bernard, Sheila Curran. *Documentary Storytelling: Creative Nonfiction On Screen*. Boston: Focal Press, 2011. Print.

In this book, *Documentary Storytelling* I specifically looked at chapter 3 which is titled “Finding the Story”. This chapter looked at choosing a topic and

evaluating what about the topic can be shaped and used for your story. It emphasizes the value of proper planning and being able to look critically at your work. I have seen too many students unable to let go of their work and end up with a bad product because they were too stubborn. Open and honest collaboration needs to happen in order to create a better product. The first step is being open and honest about the story we want to tell. One of the most interesting parts about this chapter was the section on advocacy. It suggests that even though you are filming from a specific point of view and with a specific message, it is important to remain open to new and conflicting information, whether or not it ends up in the film.

*Brave Miss World*. Dir. Cecilia Peck. Netflix, 2013. Film.

The documentary film *Brave Miss World* by Cecilia Peck, follows the story of Linor Abargil, and her journey as an advocate for rape and sexual assault victims. In 1998, just seven weeks before being titled Miss World, Linor Abargil was raped. As a young model and Miss Israel winner she traveled to Milan to participate in modeling. On her way back to Israel she hired a travel agent who instead of driving her to the train station took her to a secluded countryside, raped and beat her. This documentary begins nearly ten years after the horrific incident, when Linor has decided to speak out against sexual assault and rape. Linor is an advocate around the world for victims of sexual assault and rape. She encourages everyone to speak out about it, for that is the only way she believes that people will heal and raise awareness that this is a global epidemic. Linor travels all over the world including South Africa where girls are statistically more likely to be raped in their life than educated. She also travels to college campuses around the US urging victims and the administration to speak out against rape and violence. This documentary is a character piece. It uses Linor and her struggles to come to terms with the possibility of her rapist being released on parole. The documentary interviews friends and family of Linor in order to get a better understanding of who she is. Linor herself does most of the interviews, with her acting as a nice guide for the audience. By focusing on the individual story of Linor, the audience can connect to and bond with her over the course of the documentary. This documentary provides another story framework that I can consider when filming my documentary.

Cardullo, Robert. "Theater Versus Film: An Historical Introduction". *Theater and Cinema*. Ed. Robert Cardullo. Palo Alto: Academica Press, LLC, 2011. 1-17. Print.

The historical introduction by Robert Cardullo is a wonderful resource for the history of both theatre and film and its development. One of the things this resource emphasizes that others have not are the similarities between theatre and film specifically, "the two media share a lot in common, not the least of which is that their predominant end has been storytelling" (pg. 1). A lot of times we forget that both of these mediums are used to tell a story and the most important thing is how

does theatre or film enhance the story telling elements. It all comes back to whether or not the message comes across successfully to the audience. One of the other things that this essay emphasizes is something I have been struggling with throughout this project. Which is that the text of the theatre is glorified over all else, while film is thought it be a more visual medium. This essay goes through the historical context of why it's a playwright's theatre including Aristotle's Poetics and Greek texts as reasons this is the case. The author wants the audience to remember that "the theatrical artifact of the text, though subject to exhaustive and occasionally exhausting scholarly debate, should not be confused with the theatrical product, whereas the cinematic artifact is the product" (pg. 1). This essay takes a subjective stance, glorifying cinema over theatre but overall it's not a bad essay.

*Death Metal Angola*. Dir. Jeremy Xido. The Vladar Company, 2012. Film.

The documentary film *Death Metal Angola* by Jeremy Xido tracks the creation of the first ever, national rock concert in Angola. Angola is a country in southern Africa with a population of 21.47million as of 2013. Since 1975 Angola has experienced a devastating civil war that lead to death and poverty racking this country. This documentary follows the story of Sonia Ferreira and boyfriend, Wilker Flores. Sonia runs the Okutiuka orphanage located in Huambo, which is home to more than 55 boys who have lost their parents as a result of the tumultuous nature of the country. Her boyfriend, Wilker is a death metal guitarist who brings music into the lives of the 55 boys who they look after. The rock concert brings together musicians from all over the country, creating an environment for cultural exchange and connections. Through perseverance and general enthusiasm, these two unsung heroes create a festival that has continued every year since. This documentary is a character piece that focuses on Sonia and Wilker, two wonderful human beings as a way to anchor the western audience to this place probably many of us have never heard of. It also uses the festival as a framing device by tracking the weeks linearly up until the day of the festival. This gives the movie a driving force that allows the audience to know where we're heading. It also gives a direct and complete picture of the climax of the story. The concert will be the climax and we know that right from the beginning.

Fliotsos, Anne. "From Vaudeville to Talkies: A Case Study in Our Nation's Capital, Earle Theatre, 1924-1928." *Theatre Studies* 42 (1997): 21-32. Web April 1 2016.

This essay uses an example of a theatre in the late 1920's that was affected by the development of cinema and 'talkies'. The Earle Theatre had to completely change the way it operated after the advent of the 'talkie'. I used this essay to speak on the impact of talkies on the theatre community. In order to compete with film, theatres diversified and tried to include everything they could to draw in an

audience. I instead suggest that theatre should have stuck to what made it special, the liveness and actors, in order to draw in an audience.

Gunning, Tom. "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator, and the Avant-Garde". *Theater and Film*. Ed. Robert Knope. London: Yale University Press, 2005. 37-45. Print.

Tom Gunning's essay "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, Its Spectator, and the Avant Garde" is a historical account of the early motion pictures and its non-narrative structure. Before the narrative became the dominant form for cinema in 1906, Gunning argues that the cinema was cinema of attractions. The cinema of attractions has an "ability to *show* something...this is an exhibitionist cinema" (pg. 39). It had a Coney Island feel, where the point of the movie was not to tell a story, but rather to amaze and excite the audience. The spectators of attractions have a different relationship to the cinema, "exhibitionist confrontation rather than diegetic absorption" (pg. 41). Audience members were expected to engage in the cinema rather than just be passive observers. This is a very theatrical mode of thinking and the early cinema relates more to vaudeville than its highbrow theatre counterparts.

Kauffmann, Stanley. "Notes on Theater-and-Film". *Theater and Film*. Ed. Robert Knope. London: Yale University Press, 2005. 152-161. Print.

Stanley Kauffmann in his essay "Notes on Theater-and-Film" discusses the differences between theatre and film that he has observed. He begins with the idea of attention arguing that film directs your attention to where it wants it; theatre on the other hand has to earn your attention in the right place. Time is another instance where they diverge, "film can juggle the present, past, and future effortlessly and can repeat the moment" (pg. 153). While a strength of the theatre is that you can "feel and see time passing" (pg. 153). Kauffmann goes on to comment that the feat of performing the entire story in one night is lost in film. I would argue that filming live theatre allows this feat of performance to be kept alive. Another interesting difference noted between theatre and film is the use of the actor. For a "film role has no separate existence, most theatre roles are apprehensible as entities" (pg. 160). Finally the author notes an interesting dynamic between theatre and film. Theatre had its beginnings in ancient ritual, while film was born in a crude time. The author urges, "the theater's struggle is not to forget it's past. The film's struggle is not to be afraid of it's future" (pg. 161). Film should not be patronized for trying to create art and forging ahead in this new medium.

Kirby, Micheal. "The Uses of Film in the New Theatre". *Theater and Cinema*. Ed. Robert Cardullo. Palo Alto: Academica Press, LLC, 2011. 221-234. Print.

This essay by Micheal Kirby ended up not being as helpful as I thought it would. It focused too much on the specifics of projections and film in theatrical settings in the 1960s. Had it been a contemporary article it would have been incredibly useful but it was too outdated and all the references to work happening at the time went over my head. It did point me in the direction of checking out Farkas Molnar's U-Theatre. Andreas Weininger's Spherical Theatre, and Walter Gropius' Total Theatre. I worry that this is an entirely separate research project where I would study the use of film throughout the history of theatre. While an interesting and I'm sure helpful direction, I don't think this paper will have the scope to go deep into this subject. I would rather focus on new film and theatre collaborations such as NBC's live broadcasts of theatre.

Knopf, Robert. "Buster Keaton in the Context of Stage Vaudeville and Silent Film Comedy". *Theater and Film*. Ed. Robert Knope. London: Yale University Press, 2005. 59-72. Print.

Robert Knopf in his essay "Buster Keaton in the Context of Stage Vaudeville and Silent Film Comedy" explores the silent films of Buster Keaton, a Vaudeville entertainer turned movie actor/director. Knopf believes that Keaton's films have a strong basis in his Vaudeville training. The improvisations as well as the long shot of Keaton's films come from this Vaudeville background. The traditional theatre was moving towards greater verisimilitude, realism, and the rise of the director. Vaudeville on the other hand reveled in audience address and the immediacy of audience reactions. Keaton was not the only Vaudeville actor turned filmmaker; he joins the ranks of Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd to name a few. While these director/actors had their own style, they all have their training in the Vaudeville style, which affected the development of comedy in cinema.

Nicoll, Allardyve. *Film and Theatre*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. 1936. Print.

This book by Allardyce Nicoll is on film and theatre and explores how film and theatre must react to the new mediums. I specifically use the section in which Nicoll is admonishing the theatre for not adapting to the impact of cinema. He says that theatre must not stick to the naturalistic mode, as cinema does it better. He insists that the theatre is not life-like and to claim it is, is a huge injustice to the craft. It is an old source, but still an interesting perspective from someone who was experiencing the changing landscape first hand.

O'Connell, Michael. "TV Ratings: NBC's 'Sound of Music Live' Sings With 18.5 Million Viewers". *The Hollywood Reporter* 06 Dec 2013. Web. 1 April 2016.

This source provided data as to the amount of people that watched NBC's "The Sound of Music Live". It compared it to the other shows that were on at that

time, and spoke on the relative success of the broadcast. The large number of viewers for this program, allowed NBC to continue to create live musicals for television because of the apparent success of this production.

*Out in the Night*. Dir. Blair Doroshwalther. 2014. Film.

The documentary film *Out in the Night* by Blair Doroshwalther, explores the lives of four young African-American lesbians whose lives were changed after being violently and sexually threatened by a man on the street. In 2006, after a night on the town in New York City, a group of seven African American lesbians were harassed on the street by a man. This led to a violent altercation where the man was stabbed by a small knife, all seven of the women were arrested and jailed. This film follows the New Jersey 4, Venice Brown, Terrain Dandridge, Renata Hill and Patreese Johnson, the four women who refused to plead guilty for this crime. After claiming self-defense all four of the women lost their cases and were jailed for many years. This film uses these four women's stories to explore the injustice in the American criminal justice system where self-defense is only a good excuse for rich white men, and not for African American lesbian women. The director, Doroshwalther, tries to point to the problems in our court system and the prejudice that follows any African American woman around wherever she goes. Truly a character piece this documentary uses the crime as a framing device but uses the beautiful interviews with these strong, funny, and caring women to anchor this movie for the audience. It is almost impossible to not like these women and the piece is effective because of the character stories we get to connect with on a one-on-one level. It is important to think critically about this piece however. The director came in with an obvious bias towards these women's stories. While the director did contact and interview the other side of the trial, these interviews were not in the film. While I am not attacking the validity of this documentary it is important to acknowledge bias and look at this piece with a critical eye.

Panofsky, Erwin. "Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures". *Theatre and Cinema*, Ed. Robert Cardullo. Palo Alto, CA: Academia Press, 2011. 53-72. Print.

This essay by Erwin Panofsky was written in 1934 and revised in 1947. It explores the development of film in the time period during which film was still in its infancy. It provides an interesting looking into how the people of the time viewed the development of the film. It can be seen as an interesting historical primary source. I specifically used the section on playwriting versus screenwriting. Panofsky compares the characters of a play that are so specific and real outside of the individual production, to the film characters who are intrinsically linked to the actors that play them. This compares the mediums of film and theatre and why play scripts are treated as more flexible and malleable than film scripts.

Powers, Kate. "He struggled and kept his guard up': Hamilton in the Big House".

*Plainkate*. Kate Powers, 1 April 2016. Web. 4 April 2016.

This blog post by Kate Powers, tells of her work with inmates at Sing Sing Correctional Facility on William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. The inmates were able, through mediated theatre, view part of Lin Manuel-Miranda's *Hamilton* when it was broadcast at the 2016 Grammy awards from its home at the Richard Roger's Theatre in New York City. This mediated theatre experience brought education and arts outreach to a community that would not have been able to experience *Hamilton* otherwise. This type of experience is exactly the type of thing that can occur with filming live theatrical events and is a wonderful case study as to the success of these recordings.

*Purgatorio: A Journey Into the Heart of the Border*. Dir. Rodrigo Reyes. Matson Films, 2014. Film

The documentary film *Purgatorio: A Journey into the Heart of the Border* by Rodrigo Reyes, explores the border between the United States and Mexico. This documentary used a journey based framing in order to take the audience on a survey of the area around the border. Reyes interviews many different people on both sides of the issue including but not limited to, two men trying to cross the border, a Mexican politician, an animal control specialist, an American hindering the crossing of immigrants over the border, as well as an American helping the immigrants survive once they have already crossed. The story is sporadic and lacks a narrative through line, instead it uses bleak and in some cases horrifying images to create a vivid picture of the political and social turmoil that the border creates. In a post-screening interview the director of the piece stated his desire to create a languid atmosphere for the piece, "almost like you dreamt being there" (Reyes). Reyes believes that the border shows the naked spirit of both countries, both good and bad. He didn't want to create a political piece; rather he just wants the audience to "feel the amazing power of this place" (Reyes). This documentary is an example of what a journey documentary might look like. It uses the pace of the piece to create a dream-like atmosphere. The long shots of the beautiful and horrifying images of the border and surrounding terrain made for a visually stunning piece. This documentary showed how to use these beautiful environmental shots that helped the audience connect so well to the place where this documentary was created.

Rabiger, Micheal. *Directing The Documentary*. Burlington, MA: Focal Press, 2014. Print.

In Micheal Rabiger's book *Directing The Documentary* I specifically looked at chapter 15 titled "Directing Participants". This chapter specifically discusses how to direct participants in a documentary. Normality is a hard thing to achieve when the participants are aware they are being watched and recoded. One of the ways

suggested in which to get the participants out of their heads is to make sure your actors have plenty to do. Showing people being active and *doing* something in their own setting is not only more interesting than a basic interview, but it also gets the actors out of their heads. I found during my shoot that a lot of times, people would try to act, or perform in front of the camera and it made the scene seem false and fabricated. I had trouble keeping the participants focused on what they were originally doing instead they would get incredibly self-conscious. It is good to hear that this is a problem that most people have while shooting a documentary and it is great to have tips of ways to get the participants out of their heads. I think one of the things I want to stress as one of my practical tips is don't be afraid to get in there. I think I was so focused on the actors and how comfortable they were with the camera, I lost a lot of opportunity to film really cool things. I just needed to take charge, film, and apologize later.

Rubin, Martin. "Berkeleyesque Traditions". *Theater and Film*. Ed. Robert Knope. London: Yale University Press, 2005. 46-58. Print.

Martin Rubin's essay "Berkeleyesque Traditions" is a historical account of what he terms 'aggregate' entertainment. Musical theatre history tends to elevate the accomplishments of the integration of music and narrative in the changing landscape of musical theatre in the 1940s with *Show Boat* and *Oklahoma!*. Since the integration of narrative and music, many have called it a more sophisticated form. Rubin argues that narrative-dominated forms have not been the dominant force in entertainment throughout history. The history of the musical lies in aggregate forms such as Barnum's American Museum, the circus, minstrel shows, vaudeville, burlesque, amusement parks, etc. He argues "all musicals bear the mark of their ancestry in nineteenth century aggregate forms, with the musical numbers functioning as a series of self-contained highlights that work to weaken the dominance of a homogeneous hierarchical narrative continuity" (pg. 53-54). The modern day musical is still a holdover between the two allegedly opposed entertainment forms, "in a state of unresolved suspension between aggregative and conventional narrative impulses" (pg. 54).

Sontag, Susan. "Film and Theatre". *Theater and Film*. Ed. Robert Knope. London: Yale University Press, 2005. 134-151. Print.

Susan Sontag in her essay "Film and Theatre" explores how theatre and cinema are two divergent types of art. She begins by citing the recent discussion of theatre and film as, "distinct and even antithetical arts, each giving rise to its own standards of judgment and canons of form". (pg. 134). Sontag would disagree with this sentiment however she works to discuss what the specific differences are between theatre and film. First, "cinema is a 'medium' as well as an art, in the sense that it can encapsulate any of the performing arts and render it in a film transcription" she goes on to say, "theatre is never a 'medium'" (pg. 135). Sontag

comments on how film is usually seen as the visual experience, while theatre is confined to an oral experience. The words are the most important part of a play. Sontag also compares theatre and films use of space, “theatre is confined to a logical or *continuous* use of space. Cinema... has access to an alogical or *discontinuous* use of space” (pg. 141). Next she cites the ambiguity of point of view in the cinema as a difference. In the theatre we are the point of view, in the cinema we take on the view of the camera. Finally she speaks on theatre as ‘total art’, which encompasses all other art forms. All other forms of art can be used in the creation of theatre. Sontag ends her essay with a call to action from the audience, “we need a new idea. It will probably be a very simple one. Will we be able to recognize it?” (pg. 151). She believes theatre and film need a new push.

Vardac, A. Nicholas. “Realism, Romance, and the Development of the Motion Picture”. *Theater and Film*. Ed. Robert Knope. London: Yale University Press, 2005. 27-36. Print.

A. Nicholas Vardac’s essay “Realism, Romance, and the Development of the Motion Picture” is a historical account of the development of the early motion picture. It tracks the development of the motion picture alongside that of pictorial realism in the theatre. The author specifically references the romantic, pictorial realism of David Garrick as the artist who pushed the theatre to this more realistic version and attained the pinnacle of the form. The author claims that cinema developed because of a social tension and desire for a more realistic pictorial style. The cinema then developed coincidentally alongside the development of pictorial realism onstage so that when the stage could go no further, the cinema could pick up where it left off,

When, however, realism and romanticism had, toward the end of the century attained real leaves, beaves, and ships, the stage could go no further. But the need for pictorial realism on an ever-greater scale remained. Only the motion picture with its reproduction of reality could carry on the cycle (34).