

Brief Definiton

The project is a web based interactive, autobiographical documentary that is about gender roles and gender stereotyping.

Goals and Objectives

The main goal of the project is to realize that gender roles and gender stereotyping are fundamental constituents of our social life including family, love, sexuality, marriage, friendship, education, etc that we cant give it up, although it ruins our and others lives.

Although it doesn't focus on different approaches of people towards gender roles from different economical statuses, it makes possible to hear stories of people from different professioncies and ages which could give a broader view on the issue of gender roles.

My objectives are to create my "family tree" (non-traditional family tree) of gender roles and realize who effected my vision about gender roles in what ways. Indeed it will show that family is not only realted to have a blood relation, the definition of family will be broadened and possibilities to have non-traditional families and issues like gay marriage, child adaption will be discussed. It will challenges the traditional way of defining the family.

Target Audience

The main target audience of the project is educated (low and well) 20-40 years old people and especially people who have concerns about gender roles, stereotyping, identity, women and LGBTQ discrimination and similar issues. Since the documentary is focused on individual life stories and the authors own life, people who make academic researches on gender issues would be interested on the project.

Furthermore the way that documentary is presented, the interviewing technique, the interactivity is there to entertain people while watching the documentary and it make possible to follow the documentary easily. So people, who have no concerns about gender issues before, could watch the documentary to follow the life stories of people which is interesting for them.

The target audience is defined to be able to use internet and different user interfaces. Dividing the project into some sub-topics and categories could be helpful for the audience who work for a specialized field for instance

women or LGBTQ issues. Target audiences are people who can speak in Turkish or in English, which requires subtitles and English/Turkish navigation menu. It is not meant to be a project for children.

Background Information

For my senior year project I would like to make a documentary, because it is a very creative and impressive way of storytelling and showing the actuality. The most important thing for me to choose the documentary as a tool was to be able to tell a story, which is non-fictional and to be able to create an artistic project at the same time. The project required to work with new media. So I made my research on interactive web documentaries. The research showed that the genre web documentary has a lot more option than the regular documentary genre to create an artistic and creative project. The way it uses video, sound, text, photography and other multimedia elements was very open to create something very unique and specified form for the content. And interactivity make possible to create a documentary which allows users to make their own story line, which is a very different way of storytelling.

After I decided to work on web documentary, I tried to find a topic for the content of the documentary. I would like to make a documentary about a group of people who have a shared issue, but have very different individual life stories. This was meant to be a critic on stereotyping, but I couldn't decide on that specific group. I tried to select it from what I am familiar with. So I got the idea of fat people, who goes to a dietician regularly to lose weight, because I had this experience too. Then I would like to make the topic more narrow and add the title identity to the subject. So, transsexuals and people who transform their bodies in order to have an identity became my topic. Identity is an important topic for me, because I always got hard times to avoid the society's norms on the issues like gender identities and roles. But when I go for a research on body transformations, I realized that I am not familiar with that group of people and I wouldn't like to make a documentary on technical issues like how to make aesthetical operations. Therefore I decided to work on a group of people who can tell their stories and destroy the discrimination and society's stereotypes on gender identities; like homosexuals. But I gave up with the idea, because I had no real relationship with any of the LGBTQ organizations and there were no enough time to create it.

At the end I realized that the major connection between all of these mentioned topics were I, myself and my discomfort about the norms of society especially on the issue of gender roles and stereotyping. Therefore I came up with the idea of telling the stories of people who taught me these norms or had been role models for me. I decided to work on my gender stereotyped behaviors or opinions on topics like family, marriage, love, sexuality or friendship that still remains in my mind, although I hardly try to avoid them. That's why I am going to try to tell the stories of my so called "teachers" to create a map of myself and my relationship with

the society's gender norms with the help of my relatives, friends, teachers and neighbors. In order to realize this map I will ask my participants questions which will let them to tell their stories which are somehow related to gender roles in society. Furthermore they will be asked to make comments on how the behavior of a man and woman should be in a family, marriage, friendship, etc. Additionally I do not need a lot time to know the people, because all participants will be from my acquaintance.

My web documentary will be a semi-closed documentary, which means that users can navigate and take their own story line, but not change the content of the project. Similarly there are a lot of semi-closed web documentaries. One of them is Pinepoint <http://interactive.nfb.ca/#/outmywindow>, in which you can start to view the documentary wherever you want and you can look at images you want and navigate the documentary through pages. The other one is Out my window <http://interactive.nfb.ca/#/outmywindow>. These documentary is very similar to what I would like to do, it is again semi- closed and contains the stories of people all around the world who lives in apartments. So it is based on the stories of individuals around a topic.

Detailed Project Description

The project will be a web based interactive documentary, which is autobiographical and tell the stories of participants who have an important role in the life of the author, since they taught him directly or indirectly how to behave in the society as a man. In the documentary there will be two main subdivisions. One of them will be organized according to the participants names and the other one according to the topics like family, marriage, friendship, love, sexuality, manhood, school and etc. Most of the participants will be women who suffer from patriarchal society norms but still keep on recreating this idea of gender roles and man who really reflects the idea of being man in the society and suffer from these norms too.

Family Tree: The documentary will be based on the concept of a non-traditional family tree of gender roles and gender stereotyping within society. The norms of the society, how a man and a woman have to behave in a family or in public space that are taught to me are structured on a family tree through specific people who effected my view on specific topics. In family tree there won't be any traditional hierarchical ordering according to the blood relationship, but members will be ordered according to their closeness to me. This family tree will be the main menu of the documentary. Viewer will be able to pick up the person from the menu.

Participants: In the documentary the participants will be people who I know from my childhood or people whom I got close during my school years out of my family. The reason that these participants are part of the documentary is that they are the people who somehow affected my view on gender roles. These people will

tell their own life stories in terms of gender roles and will be questioned to learn about their judgment on some topics related to gender stereotyping within the society. Participants will be my mother, father, sister, cousins, aunt, some other close relatives, friends (from high school to college) and people from outside like neighbors, barber, the guy in the market, etc. Some of these participants will be asked questions for many of the mentioned topics and some of them will only be asked for one or two different topics. So there will be leading characters like mother, sister, best friend and supporting roles like a neighbor or a cousin. There will be 10 to 15 different participants in the documentary.

Me: I will be the main character of the documentary. All participants most important common point will be me and their status within my life story. I won't be showing any visibility during the documentary. I will only be the interviewer. In the documentary the story of my life and especially my conditioning in terms of societies norms will be told by participants.

Topics: There will be some specific topics that the participants will be asked to talk about. The topics are family, marriage, friendship, religion, love, sexuality, school life, business life, division of labor, manhood, womanhood, military service, outside world, etc. Participants will be talking about their experiences about these topics and how they think the best way to survive / behave in some related situation to these topics.

Questions: There will be some questions that will be asked to get essay answers from the participants about their own experiences within the mentioned topics. These questions will be mostly unique questions for each participant, unless there are some really important similarities or opposites between two or more participants. Other than that there will be some basic questions that will be asked participants to get straight short answers which determine their general point of view on the issue of gender roles.

Medium: Video, sound, text, photography, borrowed footage, and illustration will be used in the documentary. All interviews will be recorded in video. Videos, photographs and sound will be edited.

Written life story: All participants will be asked to fill in a form about their life stories. This form will be same for all participants and it will inform the viewer about concrete information about participant's life story like how old s/he is, how close they are to the participant, what is their occupation, etc. These forms could be used as a visual material during the documentary. Since it will contain a lot of personal information and handwriting of the participant, it will add to the meaning of the documentary and help viewer to get know the participant more.

Interactive interface: The documentary will have an interactive interface in which viewer navigate the storyline of the documentary. There will be two subdivisions according to the participants and topics. At the beginning of the documentary there will be a navigation menu which is the above mentioned family tree. The viewer could pick up from where to start. For every participant there will be a section named after the

participants name and once the viewer starts to watch the documentary, the sections will come consecutively. During the documentary, the viewer have chance to go back to the navigation menu or go to other pages of other participants to the related topic.

Dinner table: Dinner tables are for most of the families a symbol for protecting the family values, an event to show off the hierarchical order in family, very important sign for division of labor in family and a place where everything is talked about family members. It has a big significance for family life and therefore social gender roles. Furthermore it says a lot about the economical and marital status of people too.

In the documentary dinner tables will have a big importance too. Every participant will be asked to put on their ordinary dinner tables and make the interviews on that dinner table. Furthermore the image of this well prepared dinner table will be the interface for footage in every section. It will be supported with some other visuals like illustrations.

Scope of the Project

The project contains the interviews, some related documents and photographs of participants. It will be a semi closed web documentary. The user will have the possibility to navigate the documentary and create an individual storyline, but not be able to participate or change the content of the documentary. There will be some illustrations, voice overs or animations.

The interviews will not be used to create a public attention toward to participant or not to blame them for anything they say. It won't be an educational or didactic video project. It only can contain some extra information, references, some other documents if it is needed. There won't be any interviews with the author or any textual comment by the author.

Required know-how and resources

I need to learn the computer coding language HTML, CSS, or any other needed language. I will take the tutorials on the internet. I can use Dreamweaver. I will learn how to use Adobe Flash Professional to create flash animations. I will probably need to use adobe Photoshop, premiere, illustrator, Autodesk Maya.

I need to know how to make interviews. I can work on oral history interview techniques.

I need to have a reading list on the issues of gender roles and stereotyping.

Difficulties and Risks

I will have difficulties on creating the web site, because I don't have any background on coding. I need to take a lot of tutorials. There could be some problems about the interviews or participants. The participants could not want to make interviews with me or the interview could be canceled for unexpected reasons. They cannot tell their stories or they can be overly stressed to talk in a good mood. They can let me interview with them, but they cannot let me to publish it on the internet. That's why I need to improve my interviewing skills.

Criteria of Success:

The criteria to judge the success of the project:

If I can have enough interviews to reflect my idea and create my "family tree" and

If the web documentary works properly.

Phases of the Project

Casting

Schedule

Questions for all

Synopsis, plot

Readings on gender roles

Flash tutorials

First essay-questions

First interviews

Searching for other supporting visual footage

Interface design sample

Second essay questions

Second interviews

Watching and analyzing whole footage

Video editing

Illustrations

Video subtitle

Interface design

Coding

Documenting