

OPTION ONE: POSTMODERN FILM ADAPTATION

Working in groups, you will propose a film treatment (five minutes) of Austen's *Persuasion* that adapts a scene or concept from the novel. In the spirit of postmodern reenactment, feel free to avoid loyalty to the text/period and to explore contemporary or local resonances inspired by Austen's original work. After the proposal stage, your group will film and edit your treatments.

OPTION TWO: DOCUMENTARY FILM

Your group will propose, shoot, and edit a documentary film (five minutes) exploring a theme or issue suggested by *Persuasion* (power, equality, militarization, gender, age, etc.). This documentary should not refer to Austen's work but rather provide a stand-alone look at a small facet of one of the thematic issues, preferably with a local or regional emphasis.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1) Explore a theme from *Persuasion* in a creative way.
- 2) Direct a technically-proficient film that is compelling and thought provoking for a viewing audience.
- 3) Explain what "we need now" about *Persuasion* in a polished Directors' Statement that frames the viewing experience for an audience.

RATIONALE

A key directive of New Commons' nominations is to ask people which "works we need now." This can mean different things to different people, but in general signifies works that speak to our contemporary moment in a significant way. For instance, the nominator of *Persuasion* stated, "I think we need *Persuasion* because it offers us a moral and ethical vision radically different from what's available to us in contemporary public, and especially political, discourse."

In your Film Project, you need not agree with this particular interpretation of *Persuasion*; instead, you should define what is important about *Persuasion* on your own terms. As such, this project allows you two avenues to capture your unique creative vision: a brief adaptive film in which you perform *Persuasion* with a new twist or a documentary film that explores an issue suggested by Austen's novel. An adaptive film should not create an English, early-nineteenth-century atmosphere but rather transplant features of *Persuasion* to a new context. A documentary film can be created through interviews, candid footage, voiceover, etc.

At the end of the sequence, you will screen the film to the class during our course film festival. In this event, you will introduce your films and answer questions from your classmates about your process, creative choices, etc.

REQUIRED ELEMENTS

- 1) You will create a brief proposal (two pages) that outlines your approach to the project.
- 2) You will plan, shoot, and edit a five-minute film that engages a key concept from *Persuasion*.
- 3) You will compose a collaborative Directors' Statement (two to three pages) that introduces your film to a viewing audience and explains the contemporary resonance of *Persuasion*.