

Chapter 19: Engaging and Amplifying Community Voices: An Interview Assignment Sequence

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Informed Consent Letter to Interviewees

[College/University Letterhead]

[Date]

Humans of Montgomery County, Indiana Letter to Participants

Dear Montgomery County Community Member:

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed by a Wabash College student in my Rhetoric 290/English 210 course, “Audio Rhetoric and Creative Writing,” for a project called “Humans of Montgomery County, Indiana.” My name is [instructor name], and I am an [department/academic discipline] professor at [institution].

Before you begin your interview with the students, I ask that you read this letter that describes the project, our goals, and your rights as a volunteer. Once you’ve read the letter, please sign the “Informed Consent” form on the next page, indicating that the letter is clear and/or that the students answered to your satisfaction any questions you may have had.

The student assigned to interview you will make an audio recording of your interview, and will later edit and submit the interview for a class assignment. The second student accompanying your interviewer will take photographs during the interview.

For the student participant, I have three goals: 1) To practice their interviewing skills; 2) To sharpen their audio-editing technique; and 3) To have a genuine conversation with a resident of Montgomery County, Indiana who is not formally affiliated with Wabash College.

After the students have completed the interview and the photography, there are three ways we anticipate publishing the stories and photographs you share with us:

- The student will edit and submit the interview for credit in the course by [month, year]. (*At this phase, the interview is only shared with the instructors and classmates in the course.*)
- We plan to build a website titled “Humans of Montgomery County, Indiana,” where we will post a photograph and short clip or quotation from the interview. Later, we hope to create an audio/visual display with pictures and sound recordings as a temporary installment at a local library or museum. We will complete this phase in the [season, year].
- As the principal researcher on this project, I may write conference papers or articles about the project (for other teachers) in which I would use portions of the interviews as examples.

Please know that your participation in this project is voluntary. Anyone who agrees to participate may change their mind at any time. You may refuse to answer any questions and/or withdraw from any or all phases of the project if you wish. Additionally, while we recognize Montgomery County is a “small town” where many people know one another, we are happy to withhold your name from any publications of your interview, should you wish it.

There is no compensation for your participation, but we will be happy to provide you with digital copies of your interview and photograph, at your request.

While we cannot predict everything that may happen in the course of the interview, I have instructed students to respect your wishes for the interview and to represent you neither unfairly nor in a way that makes you uncomfortable. With this in mind, should you feel something unusual or unexpected occurs during the interview, please contact me at the phone number or email address below.

Thank you for your participation in this project! Please do not hesitate to email me at [email address] or call me in my office at [office phone] if you have any questions about this project or decide you wish to withdraw from it.

Please keep this letter for your records.

Sincerely,

[Name of Instructor]

[Academic Title]

Principal Investigator