

Concept Pitch

Title:

"6-12" is a short form documentary that asks and explores the difficult question:

Logline:

What happens when society claims to acknowledge life at the moment a foetus reaches 6-12 weeks, but then fails to ensure a nurturing environment for the children born into it?

Explanation:

The title "6-12" references the arbitrary threshold at which many pro-life advocates argue life begins. Visually paired with an illustration of a pulse before the numbers "6-12", followed by a flatline, this juxtaposition raises the central question:

Tagline:

Does the value of one's life start and end between 6-12 weeks?

Synopsis:

"6-12" delves into the complex intersection of abortion rights and systemic failures. The documentary will explore experiences in the form of case studies, highlighting social issues through an investigative approach that explores how they affect young lives.

This highlights the disconnect between the value placed on life before birth and after. "6-12" challenges viewers to question not only when life begins, but why we fail to protect all of them once they do.

Character & Situation:

This documentary isn't about who we are following but rather what we are following. Through their experiences, we shift from examining the problem to focusing on those affected by it.

Personal Touch:

As an overthinker, I find myself constantly questioning the world around me. When it came to the abortion rights debate, what struck me the most was how no one really referred back to the children that are already here.

Concept Relevance:

This concept is quite relevant given the recent conversations around critical thinking, one of our most valuable life skills as people, but research as of late has shown that it is becoming one of the most endangered. (Well, 2023).

In the wake of such conversations, this documentary aims to move away from polarized thinking. “6-12” wants viewers to be more critical in their thinking as well as their debates.

In all the time spent debating over life or choice, how many young people have lost their lives at the hands of violence or were bullied for being different or didn’t go on an excursion because their wheelchair wasn’t accommodated?

Treatment:

“6-12” is structured into 3 investigative case studies, each following a three-act structure carefully weaving its way between the issue and its effect, exploring a different way society fails young people.

Case Study 1 – Guilty Until Proven Innocent:

FD a young boy was killed by a bullet on a night out. Years later, his case remains unsolved, raising the question: would justice have been served if he wasn’t a person of colour?

Act 1:

FD’s life and dreams are shown through an archival footage sequence, which gradually shifts to a black and white colour grade, reflecting how society drained him of his humanity long before his death.

Act 2:

The impact of his death on his family, his community, and the systemic failures that dismissed him.

Act 3:

Experts analyse the bias in law enforcement, the trauma of/in marginalized communities, and how stereotypes perpetuate racial injustice.

FD wasn't killed by a notorious killer, but a regular young boy, just like him. The question remains: does innocence exist when your skin is brown?

Case Study 2 – Different But Too Different:

KK, was a teenage boy who took his own life after enduring bullying. His story isn't unique as many other children have followed in his tragic footsteps.

Act 1:

KK's journey is captured through an archival footage sequence from being a hopeful child to a victim of cruelty, gradually shifting to a black and white colour grade, reflecting how society drained him of his humanity long before his death.

Act 2:

The impact of his death on his family and his community and the deadly cost of bullying.

Act 3:

Insights from educators and psychologists on how bullying reflects society's rigid standards of acceptance.

This case study shifts the focus from race to social exclusion, posing the same question: if every child's life is sacred, why does their value disappear when they don't fit our expectations?

Case Study 3 – I See You, Sometimes:

MC, a young man whose life changed after a high-speed crash left him differently abled. His story exposes two layers of exclusion, first as a man of colour, then as a disabled person.

Act 1:

MC's journey before the accident, his journey until today is tracked through archival footage and material.

Act 2:

The crash, its aftermath, and the harsh realities of navigating the world as disabled are unpacked.

Act 3:

The bigger picture, how society still sees disability as an inconvenience rather than a reality, through expert insights.

MC's story reveals the fine print: some lives are only valued when they fit the mold, if they don't, they're first ignored, then forgotten.

By weaving these three personal stories into a broader investigation of race, social acceptance, and disability, "6-12" directly challenges the notion that life's value is absolute and unconditional.

Visual Design:

Film grain and muted colour palettes work well to provide a sense of history, while remaining compassionate to the individuals and their experiences, supporting the documentary as it ebbs and flows from issue to impact.

As seen in the stills on this presentation from the documentary "Black Mother" (2018), they root the viewer in the heart of Jamaica as the film unpacks ideas around holy men and prostitutes simultaneously, the vibrancy of Jamaica is maintained, while the purity of the religion is added.

Music:

"6-12" will incorporate Amagwijo, a raw and unfiltered practice where voices unite like instruments. Traditionally sung in groups, Amagwijo metaphorically will represent the voices of those society has silenced, crying out for their mothers.

Feasibility:

The personal connection I have to the case studies will make access to archival footage and material much easier, as much of it consists of their childhood.

Given the sensitive nature of the topics, careful and respectful storytelling is essential. A range of other experiences will be considered for the case studies which will ensure the

documentary presents a more comprehensive and well-rounded exploration of the issues at hand.

External funding may be required to access certain archival news footage of the United States debate and South African news reports that are relevant to the documentary's topics.

Why "6-12":

At its core, "6-12" challenges us to think critically. Society is not an abstract idea, it is us. And if the value of a child's life shouldn't end at conception, then it is up to us, not just policymakers, to ensure that it doesn't.

What I See:

A crime scene where a young man's life was taken. A slow-motion sequence of an empty classroom where a bullied child once sat. A wheelchair left at the bottom of inaccessible stairs. Underscored with an Amagwijo hymn "Askies, I'm sorry mama" (Passions Drives Us, 2017).

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