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Project Proposal:

*Old King Coal* is a documentary project covering the impact of the coal industry in the US delving into the false promises, insecure future, and dangers it holds as an industry. The title is a reference to the caricature used in old political cartoons, but more recently, to the titular song by Kentucky bluegrass and country singer Sturgill Simpson, which talks about the struggles of the disappearing contemporary coal industry.

The project is in the pre-production phase currently, which will last until June, when production will begin. Currently, the goal is finding and securing subjects to interview, locations to use, crew members, and scheduling. I've been reaching out to organizations such as the United Mine Workers of America and Appalachian Citizens Law Center, researching and communicating with them to collaborate on this project. After beginning sometime in June depending on the schedules of subjects, production will last through until roughly late June or early July, covering interviews, sound recording, b-roll across any locations, and of course any pick-up shoots that may be necessary. Finally, post-production will last from July to August, where I will be focusing on editing the project, refining any necessary elements, and of course, distributing the final project in an expansive way, which includes general publication, reaching out to media outlets, and festival applications.

It is always extremely difficult to gauge the production timeline of a documentary, especially one where the funding is rather unclear. The majority of funding will be allocated towards travel expenses, paying for gas to reach interview subjects in proposed locations like Southern Utah, the Navajo Nation, East Wyoming, and possibly others. This could easily cost anywhere between \$200 to \$400 across multiple trips, and this is without lodging expenses. Funding not used for travel expenses will go toward the equipment and providing for the crew with craft services and anything they may need. The majority of essential equipment needs are already covered, but there are always inconveniences that could be lessened with more equipment. That being said, much of the production is dictated by what is affordable, and compromises can always be made. The ideal budgeting of the production would be:

- \$250 for travel expenses.
- \$200 for lodging.
- \$300 for equipment.
- \$150 for the crew.

## Personal Statement:

My name is Calvin Mumm, and I am a first-year student concentrating on filmmaking at Sarah Lawrence. I am originally from Salt Lake City, Utah, where I have been a student and filmmaker. In high school, I participated in many different programs, from Model United Nations to Student Government, and I was a volunteer for the March For Our Lives Utah chapter. Additionally, I participated in the Spy Hop youth media program which helps give students access to opportunities in filmmaking through access to equipment and funding in the community. Through this, I made various short films, video productions, and even episodic programs, all while teaching my skills in film production that I would not have had otherwise. Many of these

In 2018 I started production on my documentary short film, *Sown*. This has been my biggest project to date. The film is a look into the emotional and social impact that gun violence has had on students throughout the US, due to the increasing trends of gun violence and its spread through the media. The film was produced in Spy Hop's Pitchnic program, which provided me with equipment, connections, and a modest budget of \$2,500. I pitched the film to a board of producers and it was selected to be created through the program. As the director, producer, and co-editor, I led the film throughout all phases of production. The film's process came with some issues as any film does, but, through preparing with extensive planning and leadership, by and large, the film went smoothly, and I stayed well under the budget available for the film. The film was a huge teaching experience, and from then on it has informed the process for all of my film productions moving forward.

In November of 2019, *Sown* premiered at the Eccles Theater in downtown Salt Lake City to the various donors who helped produce the film, the Utah film commission, as well as family and friends. The film and the other shorts that premiered alongside it were all acclaimed by local media sources. The films spread throughout the community, and I had the chance to screen my film for a local community center and even a state lawmaker. Soon after, the film screened in festivals across the country, such as the Do It Your Damn Self Film Festival, Colorado International Activism Film Festival, [We] Freedom Film Festival, and the All American High School Film Festival. In October of 2020, *Sown* was accepted to DOC NYC, the largest documentary film festival in the world; the film screened alongside 3 other documentary shorts in the program, "All That Matters," which featured films focusing on important social issues in America.

Now I am working on *Old King Coal*, a documentary project about the impact of the coal industry in America as well as the political environment it has developed. Growing up in Utah I was surrounded by the culture left behind by the coal industry, but I merely saw it in its remains. The state has developed a deep division, as the urban growth continues to expand while rural regions that once reigned as coal country continually suffer year after year. Now the industry is approaching a breaking point and the people who are being most directly impacted are the workers who don't have the voice to resist it. These communities in Wyoming, Pennsylvania, Utah, The Navajo Nation, and the various states of the Appalachian region are among the poorest, least educated, and most environmentally unstable in the nation. Certainly, there are paths toward fighting these issues, like mine reclamation, expanding education for new industries, and expansive federal support to change the economy of these places. I want to amplify those ideas through my experience in documentary filmmaking. By talking to and compiling the voices at the center of this issue I want to showcase why it matters and what the rest of the world can do.