

Summer 2016

Perspectives - Emmy Award-winning Producer and Director Thomas Kaufman

James Hagy

New York Law School, james.hagy@nyls.edu

Colin Pearce

New York Law School, colin.pearce@law.nyls.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.nyls.edu/rooftops_project



Part of the [Business Organizations Law Commons](#), [Land Use Law Commons](#), [Legal Education Commons](#), [Organizations Law Commons](#), [Property Law and Real Estate Commons](#), [Social Welfare Law Commons](#), [State and Local Government Law Commons](#), and the [Tax Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hagy, James and Pearce, Colin, "Perspectives - Emmy Award-winning Producer and Director Thomas Kaufman" (2016). *Rooftops Project*. Book 32.

http://digitalcommons.nyls.edu/rooftops_project/32

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Academic Centers and Programs at DigitalCommons@NYLS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Rooftops Project by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@NYLS.

THE ROOFTOPS PROJECT



Perspectives

Emmy Award-winning Producer and Director Thomas Kaufman

What makes an effective message when asking for donations to a capital project using video and streaming media? Professor James Hagy and Rooftops Team member Colin Pearce asked Emmy Award-winning producer and director **Tom Kaufman** after screening his remarkable two-minute video for the Playtime Project, the goal of which was to fund construction of a children's playground for a large homeless shelter in a converted, former general hospital in the District of Columbia.

Tom Kaufman is a producer/director, with more than 35 years of film industry experience. As a cinematographer, his projects range from *NOVA* and *Frontline* on PBS to National Geographic and Discovery Channel specials. He has worked for top Democratic political consultants such as David Axelrod, Frank Greer, Mandy Grunwald, and many others. Tom produced the Emmy Award-winning *See What I'm Saying* (1993), which showed how learning to communicate changes the lives of deaf children and their families. He was cinematographer on *The Holocaust: In Memory of Millions* (1994), a Discovery production hosted by Walter Cronkite, which won an Emmy. He has also shot films for Academy Award winners Charles Guggenheim, Barbara Kopple, and Mark Jonathan Harris. Tom is a published author, and his novels include *Drink the Tea* (2010) and *Steal the Show* (2011), both published by St. Martin's Press. A graduate of the University of Southern California, Tom holds a B.A. and an M.F.A. in Film and Video Production.

Tom's two-minute fundraising video for the Playtime Project may be accessed at: <http://thomaskaufman.com/dp/portfolio/playtime-project/>

RTP: The video you produced for the Playtime Project is compelling. When we screened it at The Rooftops Conference, it was widely admired by our audiences as effective storytelling, particularly since it is for a relatively small

project rather than a grand building campaign for a large institution. How did your involvement begin?

Tom: I was teaching at American University as adjunct faculty, in video production. I get a flood of email. This email crossed my desk from a group I had not heard of, Homeless Children's Playtime Project. They were looking for a student to help them. I contacted them and said I wasn't a student, but I was interested in helping them.

RTP: They had been in the process of raising this money for some time already before you met them. Why were they looking for something new?

Tom: They had produced a video a year or two previously. They suggested I look at it and of course I did. It was twelve minutes long. Basically, it was a pitch video. They want something from the person who is watching it: money to build a playground. They had still pictures of kids floating past briefly, but mostly it was experts talking to you, lecturing you it seemed, on the benefits of play. But no one is going to spend 12 minutes watching a video that is all about talking head experts and nothing about the kids that are going to be the benefactors. Imagine I sat you down and said: "I want you to watch this commercial, it is 12 minutes long." There is no way you are going to watch this.

RTP: What had they used that video for?

Tom: They used it for fundraising. They had an idea, a really good idea, that children needed a playground. And that even homeless children need a playground, or perhaps especially homeless children need a playground. At the DC Shelters there are always between four and six hundred kids living there with no place to play. That was their idea, and it really appealed to me because it was such a finite thing. Their pitch wasn't to end homelessness, it was just "while they're here, let's make it a little bit more tolerable for these kids." Plus, developmentally, it's very important to have a facility for play.



RTP: Having used the first video, why did they feel they needed something else?

Tom: They were looking for a video because everyone they wanted to show a video to had already seen the older one. They wanted something new they could take around to people. They wanted to revive their fundraising effort, and they thought a new video would help do that.

RTP: The fundraising dollars they needed were relatively modest, compared to many capital campaigns?

Tom: Yes. It is a reachable goal, and it's worthwhile certainly. Those two things are a potent combination to influence someone to give.

RTP: Having watched the video, what did you suggest?

Tom: They asked, "Can you make something eight minutes long?" I said, "I will be happy to do this for you, but it is going to be a short video." Shorter is always better, and concise is always better. It's like a newcomer's mistake. People who've been in the business long enough know that's true. I suggested three minutes, although the final video ended up being a little shorter than two minutes. And I said, "No adults. This playground is for children, let's let them pitch it."

RTP: What is the starting point for organizations embarking on a project like this?

Tom: The first stage is conceptual. You have to figure out how you can say your message in the fewest words possible. And what can you do to present it in a way that has an impact? When the last image fades, will they know what your message was about? Before you get to that point, there isn't a lot anyone can do for you. You can make it beautiful, but it has to have content. Everything else is correlating with that content, or juxtaposing with it. As briefly as you possibly can.

RTP: Give us an example of how that approach is reflected in the opening of the Playtime Project video. Most of the video is kids speaking to the camera. But not at first.

Tom: I shot pictures of the empty park where the playground could be built. You hear children laughing and playing, but you are not seeing them. Then you hear the kids saying that "You may not see us, but we are here." Something that is short, to the point, gets their attention and hopefully holds on to it until the end.

RTP: Would your approach have been different with a larger campaign, or perhaps for cultural arts rather than direct, tangible social services?

Tom: Absolutely. The more generalized the goal is for that organization, whatever it is, the tougher it becomes to put it into concrete terms. The broader the scope of the organization, the more challenging it becomes to make it relatable for people watching the video.

So, if let's say the organization is arts education, how would you do a video about that? What I would do, again, is to take a group of people and talk to

them, have them say to me what about arts education is having a current impact on them? How are they using it? Part of what I believe, and research bears out, is that you don't need to be a practicing artist to benefit from arts education. People in all fields benefit from arts education, because it helps you think in a different way. That is the message I would try to bring across. I would talk to people that were high up in their fields, talk about how arts education when they were young had a profound impact on them even though they're not artists.

RTP: Telling stories about deferred maintenance needs, like a new boiler or a roof replacement, can be hard to tell, too.

Tom: Well, when you describe that to me, right away I thought that I've got an attractive young couple who are going up to the rooftop to smooch and they fall through it....

RTP: That is certainly storytelling!

Tom: The idea behind the example is: I want to tell a story. That's the key to any kind of fundraising or awareness-raising. You've got to put it in human terms. You've got to tell a story somehow. I'm not sure the one I just made up for you about the rooftop would serve the purpose, but a lot of times something like that can. It loosens people up, it puts them in a receptive frame of mind, gets their heads around it. Once you get them to laugh, you can say: "Besides that, there are other reasons this is a good idea."

RTP: As demonstrated by the *Playtime Project* video, you don't seem constrained by a very brief time limitation.

Tom: People often mistakenly think that more is better, that the longer your video is, the more impact it may have. But, actually, the opposite is true. The shorter and more succinct you can be in making your pitch, the better the chances someone will retain whatever you are saying.

Look at what's out there in terms of the Internet, TV, radio. There is something in my business called "signal-to-noise ratio." In all the different videos that are out there, there is a tremendous amount of noise. What you are trying to communicate, that is your signal. You have to break through the noise so that people will pay attention. The duration of your video has a lot to do with that. If someone is cruising around Internet videos and sees that your video is 12-minutes long, and my video is two minutes long, it is much less of an investment of their time to watch one that is two minutes long. Plus, I'll have a much better chance of grabbing their attention than I would if I made a 12-minute video.

RTP: When you were a teenager, you were a performing magician. You mentioned that you sometimes think back on those experiences and your work today.

Tom: Yes, your Professor Hagy and I first became friends through our involvement in magic together in Cleveland. Then, I thought that doing magic tricks made me cool. As an adult, I realized that the trick is really a vehicle for getting people involved in what you are doing. And the way you do that is through a story; the magic trick complements that story. You could make an analogy to what we are talking about today in terms of fundraising. The trick is to get people to open up their wallets. That's the magic trick. We're telling



the story to help enable people to participate. The video is not to show the people watching it what a great filmmaker I am. I don't want them to notice that at all. If I'm doing that well, they won't notice that. If you're doing a sleight-of-hand trick, you don't want them to say "wow, you're really good at doing the French drop [a magician's secret technique], you know I would never have noticed that."

RTP: So do production values, the techniques, matter in this kind of a video production the same way it might if you were producing a documentary?

Tom: I think they do, in the sense that production values and technique help. They are two different things really. Let's talk about technique for a moment. Technique definitely comes into play. Technique translates into storytelling. Again, think about your video competing with all the other videos out there, the millions of videos that are on YouTube right now.

Now, production value, that's very debatable. I saw a film shot about homeless people living in Grand Central Station, abandoned parts of it. They had to shoot everything in available light. Everything is very grainy, hard to make out, because they couldn't go down there and light that. There are people living down there, people who don't want to be seen for the most part. This film had no production value to speak of, and for good reason. But it was totally engrossing.

But, I think that if you have the ability to put production value in, it helps. There is a huge number of videos out there. Extraordinary. I can shoot a video from my cellphone and put it on YouTube and have an instant global audience. Everyone can watch it.

If I'm flipping through the YouTube channels or my TV, and I see something that's eye-catching, my thumb pauses on that channel changer for a moment. So, I want to try and create images that are interesting, that would make people stop and say: "Wait, what is this?" So, in that sense, I think production value is very important, but I don't think you need to have a million dollars to create an interesting image. I think that has more to do with your imagination.

RTP: What about background and lighting, or the old chestnut of advice from forty or fifty years ago that you didn't wear a white shirt on television? Does that still matter today?

Tom: Well, I think it does in one sense. For instance, you talk about a white shirt. The human eye is trained to go to whatever is brightest in the frame first. So, if I'm filming someone and the background is a lot brighter than they are, then, it's going to be harder for whoever is watching that to focus on the person I want them to see. If a person is on-camera and his shirt is blinding white, then again, you're going to have a hard time focusing on the content because your eyes will be drawn to the shirt. So, that's just working with people's perception, with human perception. But there are plenty of videos out there shot perfectly that way, but are totally uninteresting. So that's part of it, but certainly not the most important part.

RTP: How does filming a fundraising video or a documentary differ from your work making political TV spots?

Tom: I'm not really controlling my content in the political spot. I am being hired basically as the technician.

RTP: You've worked with U.S. Presidents, mayors, other high-profile people. Is it helpful in your work that they are accustomed to addressing live audiences, perhaps delivering sound-bites?

Tom: If the person is relaxed in front of the camera, that's one thing. Other people are great at addressing live audiences, but terrible on camera. Some people are vice versa. The great communicators are good at both. Whether you think Reagan was a great President or not, you can't deny the fact that he was excellent at communicating with people.

They also talk about "political retailing" and "political wholesaling." Retailing in politics is one-on-one, shaking someone's hand. You're looking them in the eye as you're talking to them. Wholesale is when you're on TV, you're talking to large groups of people, or you're in a convention addressing a large crowd. Politicians like Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan were both incredible at doing that. Al Gore one-on-one is incredibly charming, witty, a really fun person to talk to and be around. Just, when he was on TV he just was not comfortable. You could see that. He would tell jokes about that: he would say "how can you spot Al Gore in a hoard of Secret Service Agents? He's the stiff and wooden one." So, Gore had a great sense of humor.

RTP: Does the equipment used, or the digital format, matter in terms of how well the video streams or downloads from the Internet for viewers?

Tom: I don't think so. Typically, you're not downloading it, you're streaming it when you're watching it, unless you want a copy on your hard drive. So I don't think it makes any difference if you're shooting it with your phone, or with a \$60,000 camera. Let's say I shoot something that's in 4k, which is 4 times the resolution of HD. When I'm uploading the file to YouTube, YouTube has its own compression algorithms it uses so it's not hogging a lot of disk space with my video. For the person who's watching it, I don't really think it makes a difference. For the Bernie Sanders' Campaign, they've got a scrappy group of young folks who are using their iPhones to shoot campaign videos and editing them together. It's very low budget, and they're very effective.

RTP: What are the costs that organizations should keep in mind when planning and budgeting a video spot?

Tom: Oh, well, it depends. I think that the cost is flexible. I don't think it's a fixed cost. If you're hiring professionals to do it, shooting a political spot, one day can be anywhere from \$6,000 to \$20,000 per day. And that's just production: it doesn't include planning or editing. You can also do a political spot like they're doing with the Bernie Sanders' campaign: very, very inexpensively, and use volunteers.

We did the Homeless Children's Playtime video, and our local power company here [in the District of Columbia] was a big contributor. Its legal counsel was at the forefront of getting funding and said to me: "What would it cost to make a film about children living in the shelter?" I said that's kind of like asking me the cost to build you a house; it really depends on what you're looking for. Costs relate to what it is you want to do. Do you want to do a 30-second commercial? Are we doing helicopter shots in the Grand Canyon? Or is it tabletop shoot, with toy trucks? You tell me. So, it really depends in terms of cost.



RTP: You are an award-winning professional with a lifetime of experience working and teaching in this field. And yet, even though you wrote and designed, filmed, and directed the Playtime Project video, you had other professionals involved with aspects of editing and production. Why is that?

Tom: I had someone else do sound; bad sound can really sink a project. I've worked on plenty of films where I thought the cinematography was terrific, but the sound was terrible. It can have an overall dampening effect on the whole project. So, I got a person to volunteer to do sound. That way, the kids look great, and they sound great, and that really helps. Then the editing is very helpful for me. First of all, I don't edit professionally, and therefore I'm very slow. But also, because I don't do it all the time, I'm not as good as someone who does. There's an editor that I work with, and I asked him, "would you volunteer to do this?", and he said "sure." So I did some preliminary work, I went through all the raw footage, and said, "These are the parts of this that I like. Here's this kid #1 who says this line really well, and kid #2 says that line really well." So I outlined all that. I did the preliminary work in just selecting takes that I liked, and then the editor put them together and did an incredible job.

The other thing is that, in addition to being better and faster at it, the editor wasn't there when I shot it. A lot of times that's a good thing, because he's not thinking "Here, I labored for an hour to get this one shot, so I attach a certain value to that, because of the time I spent doing it." The editor is under no such obligation, just looking at it objectively, more objectively than I could see it, and saying, "well this is nice, but it really doesn't help us tell the story, does it?"

RTP: So, for two to three minutes of product, of message at the end, how many minutes or hours of film does it take to get to that three minutes of edited content?

Tom: Well, again, it sort of depends on what it is you're doing. If I'm working with actors, it shouldn't take that long to do. We have something called a shooting ratio, which is the amount of footage you shot to the amount of footage you used. I did a film about children who were deaf and exposed to sign language for the first time. The shooting ratio of that film was 180:1. So for every minute of video, there were three hours of video that are rough, raw footage [the finished video was 30 minutes]. It was a huge amount of work. Just keeping track of all that video is a lot of work.

The Playtime Project video has a very low shooting ratio, maybe 2:1 or 3:1, because it was scripted. We knew what we wanted the kids to say. We went through it all in a day. It was very quick, and it had to be; it was all volunteered. I didn't want to stretch it out. I wanted to do it as simply as I could. It really depends on what it is you're doing. Unfortunately, there's no hard and fast rule about it.

RTP: You work on documentaries, political campaign spots, lots of commercial projects with high visibility. How do not-for-profit video projects compare? And how do you fit them into your schedule?

Tom: I've done lots of not-for-profit stuff. I love doing it. In Washington D.C. [and of course, around the country], there are lots of not-for-profits. I've worked for lots of them, continue to do so, and I'd like to keep doing it. I timed the Playtime Project for a January shoot, because I'm often slower in January. It worked out really well.

RTP: Do the techniques that you use and the aesthetic approach you take to the political work transfer at all to the not-for-profit work? Obviously they both have the purpose of advocacy. Is the advocacy different in any major way?

Tom: Yes. At this point, I've been shooting political spots for decades, and I've worked with people who are really good and people who are not so good. You want to try and cherry-pick those techniques and see which ones are going to work for you. Not everything works in every situation. You can't walk into it thinking "I'm going to do it THIS way", because that situation may require something else.

RTP: Did you coach the Playtime Project kids the same way you would in a political feature?

Tom: Getting kids on-camera is really difficult. I was walking into a situation where we had a bunch of kids and I had to get all of them in one day. I wanted the kids to look into the camera lens. I decided to use one of the techniques I had come across shooting the political ads. We set up two teleprompters, and I had the child that I was talking to sitting on-camera, and then I also had that child's mother or father or best friend or volunteer on the other side. So, I'd say "Hey, look, you're mom's on TV, look at that!" And they'd look, they'd giggle, they'd laugh, and they would wave at their Mom, and their Mom would wave back at them. And I'd say "Your mom's on her own TV show, isn't that something?" they'd smile and say "Yeah, that's really cool." I'd say "I've got some lines, I'm wondering if you can say this to your mom, alright?" And some of the kids could say anything. Some, though young, were really good at this, and others weren't. We had to select in editing the ones we wanted to use. I had professionals in the video business come up to me and say, "These kids are so relaxed on camera, and it feels so natural. How in the world did you do it?" I was using a technique from shooting political ads.

Another technique that you can see in the Playtime Project video is using repetition. I've got one kid saying "thank you," and another kid saying "thank you," and a third kid saying "thank you." I've got one kid saying "I want a place to play for me and my friends" and another kid says "my friends," and a third kid says "my friends." Using that kind of repetition is also something I learned from political ads.

RTP: With other organizations with which you work, could it be that the person that an organization most wants to speak is not the person you would pick?

Tom: Oh, yes. Sometimes the person who is the logical choice is not very good on camera. And nothing you're going to do is going to make them good on camera. And then you ask "Do we really want this person or not?" I've faced that a number of times. Sometimes the client is really adamant and says "No, it's got to be this person." Sometimes the client is that person; they want to be on camera, and you're not going to dissuade them, no matter how terrible they are on camera. They've decided that they're going to be the spokesperson. You just have to roll with it.

RTP: What can help in that situation?

Tom: You may say "Look, no one's expecting you to be Rock Hudson here, just get out there and say what you want to say." And you try to make them as comfortable and relaxed as possible. Give them lots of time, don't rush them.



Part of what I do when I'm working with people is to try to get them to relax. I don't want them to feel any pressure. I don't just show up and start filming them. I sit down with them; we might go out to dinner the night before. When it comes time to do the filming we've got some kind of rapport. There's a little bit of trust there; they know I'm not out there to make them look foolish, just the opposite. I want to make them look as good as they can. If they're working from a script, we really, really hone it, so that they're coming across as being sincere. These people are sincere to start out with, but that doesn't mean necessarily you perceive them that way

RTP: Might the approach be different with a professional, say an actor doing the sound bite for the organization?

Tom: Yes. Someone I know was doing a public service announcement for a not-for-profit and they had a big star... someone who, if I said his name, you would say "Of course. This guy, he's all over the place." The director had an idea in mind of what was going to happen. But the actor was really having a hard time with the concept. The director was really pushing the actor, and the actor was really unhappy about it. They finally got something that might be halfway usable and the day was mostly over. Then, the director says to the actor "How would you do this differently?" and the actor says "I would do it like this." The director says "Well fine, let's do it that way." They do it that way, and they get it in two takes, it's perfect. So here's an example where a director wasn't really very sensitive to the actor. The director might have taken a step back earlier in the day and said "Wait a second, this guy's doing this for free, and he's very uncomfortable with what I'm asking him to do. Let's stop for a second and talk, and see what we can do to make it better for this guy."

RTP: How can an organization make it easy to respond with a donation at the end of the video clip?

Tom: The best situation is if you can drive someone to your website, and have that video front-and-center, and a donate button nearby. A friend of mine does website design, and he says "When I get to your website, don't make me think, don't make me have to scratch my head about how to navigate your website. Make it easy for me." We want to make it easy for people to donate. They have a good feeling from watching your video. They shouldn't have to hunt around for a way to make a positive contribution; that should be right at their fingertips, so if they want to do it, they can. The ideal situation would be that the video was on that organization's website or on some sort of social media platform. Your potential donors have been guided to your site. So, right below the window that's playing that video there's perhaps a PayPal button or a donate button.

RTP: What is a normal cycle time for a project like the Playtime Project? And by planning ahead, can I save money by being flexible with the professional team in order to allow them to work for me when they are not committed to bigger projects?

Tom: Definitely. I think having that lead time is a great way of saving money, if you can plan ahead. And one of the things we know from working in the film business is that the time when you save money is before you start filming anything. When you start filming, your chances of saving any money are pretty much gone. At that point, things are going to cost the same, or more, than you thought they would. The planning part is critical if you're interested in saving

money on the project, and that means looking ahead. A lot of times in our business, the opposite happens, and then the people wind up spending much more than they would otherwise. Looking ahead, planning, financially, that's a very smart thing to do.

It's a question of focus. I've had clients who are doing lots of other things, too. They're not focusing on the project that I'm working on. So they're a little bit vague, and they're not really sure, because they haven't really had a chance to think about it. As their deadlines start to get closer, they start to think about it more and more. In the ideal situation, you come up with a concept that they like and by the time you're delivering the project, they still like the initial concept. But sometimes factors outside the organization's control will change, through no fault of their own. The message has to change too to reflect that.

RTP: That might mean writing or re-writing the message in the field?

Tom: That's right, and possibly even getting new footage. You see this all the time with political campaigns, where you go in with a message, and your opponent says something about you. In some situations, it's not the fault of the organization that it may have to change or adapt its message to changed circumstances.

RTP: What if I had a goal like the Playtime Project and I wanted to have a video. I had not contacted you yet, hadn't interviewed or hired you yet, and hadn't crafted my message yet. How far in advance ideally should I be thinking about contacting you?

Tom: Again it depends on what the project is. Some projects will require a number of videos. If the concept is that we're going to have 10 videos on your website, of 10 people who've benefited from your organization, that is going to require more time and planning. You're going to spend a lot of time researching who are the 10 people you're going to select. Something like that is going to require a lot more time than if your concept is a short video where you got three people and each person is talking for 30 or 40 seconds. Concept drives the timeline in terms of research, the pre-production planning, the filming, and the editing.

RTP: When does it make sense for not-for-profits to develop their own production facilities and equipment, if they're going to do continuing amounts of media or events?

Tom: I think that's a cost question. How many events, what's the need, and how often are you going to do it? If it's something that's happening a lot, then you might want to have your own facility. I guess it makes sense to have your own facility and your own people on staff to operate it if you're doing a whole lot of work. But, if you do one project a year, then I wouldn't think you'd want to do that.

You've got to keep in mind that video is evolving. Up until about a year or two ago, high definition was the bee's knees. And now it's 4K, which is 4 times the resolution of high definition. Almost everything I'm doing now is in 4K. This technology is evolving. You don't want to be in the position where you've invested a huge amount of money in a technology that two years from now is going to be somewhat obsolete. The downside of having your own facility is that you could get caught that way. You could say "Wow, we just spent all this money on something that now we can't really use."



A friend of mine freelances for a foundation that, in terms of operating expense and projects, is one of the top ten foundations in the United States. And they do everything out-of-house. As far as I know, they don't have any in-house video production facility. They're doing a lot of production and hiring it all outside. I don't know exactly why they're doing it that way, but, it could be that they feel that the people they're going to get outside are going to be better at it.

But, I also think that to an extent, you don't have to be on the cutting-edge to get your story across. And you don't have to shoot 4K to explain a situation. If you think that your story is what really matters the most, and the idea behind it, and the technique you use to put it together really doesn't have to be the best in the world. All it needs to do is be adequate. As long as the technique doesn't detract from and get in the way of your message, then you're fine. If your footage is in-focus, properly exposed, then you can let that technique get the story across. The story is the most important thing.

RTP: How else can not-for-profit organizations be prepared and effective in working with video production professionals?

Tom: I work in the communications business, and it's always surprising to me how little communication takes place in that business among the people who are making the video. Let's talk to each other; let's be sensitive to each other and see what's going on so that we can all be as happy as possible with what we're doing.



Colin Pearce (Class of 2017) is a second year student at New York Law School with a focus in taxation and transactional practice. He is an entrepreneur, photographer, and philosophy enthusiast. Originally from Braintree, Massachusetts, he is delighted to have lived in Astoria, NYC since 2009.



James Hagy is Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Law at New York Law School. He also founded and directs The Rooftops Project at New York Law School's Center for Real Estate Studies. More information about The Rooftops Project and Professor Hagy may be found at www.nyls.edu/rooftops.

Copyright © 2016 Rooftops Group LLC. All rights reserved. These materials may not be quoted, copied, referenced, or reproduced in any way, in whole or in part, whether in printed or electronic format, without express written permission, which may be given or withheld in the sole discretion of Rooftops Group LLC.

The author and copyright holder may be contacted at james.hagy@nyls.edu.

Important Note:

This publication is not intended and should not be construed as legal, tax, investment, or professional advice. It does not purport to be a complete or exhaustive treatment of the topics addressed. The information and views expressed may not apply to individual readers or to their organizations or to any particular facts and circumstances. Sending or receipt of this publication does not create any attorney-client relationship. Engagement and consultation with appropriately qualified, experienced, and licensed professionals should always be sought with respect to planned transactions, investments, and projects.

Views expressed by persons or organizations interviewed or quoted by The Rooftops Project are not necessarily those of New York Law School, its faculty, staff, or students.

Neither New York Law School nor its faculty or staff evaluate, rate, review, or recommend products, services, or suppliers whatsoever. Any particular products, services, or suppliers mentioned are used as examples to illustrate concepts and are for general information only.

No representations or warranties are given whatsoever, express or implied, with respect to information contained in this publication or to its accuracy. Any representations or warranties that might otherwise exist, whether by statute, common law, or otherwise, are expressly excluded and disclaimed.

New York Law School, its faculty, and the authors, editors, and copyright holder of this publication expressly disclaim and do not accept any liability for any loss resulting from errors or omissions contained in, or for following or applying principles or views expressed in, this publication, including without limitation any liability for direct, indirect, consequential, exemplary, or punitive damages or for loss of profits or business opportunity, whether by tort, negligence, breach of contract, or otherwise.

