USC School of Cinematic Arts
of Cinematic Arts
Media Arts + Practice Division

IML 340
The Praxis of New Media: Digital Argument

Spring 2014   Professors: DJ Johnson
2 units   Emails: djohnson@cinema.usc.edu
Thursdays, 2:00 – 3:50 pm   Office Hours TBA
SCI L104

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In the networked world, scholarship increasingly includes not just written text, but also images and sound, as well as interactivity. Further, developments in emergent technologies shift the ways we participate in intellectual and civic life. This intermediate level course investigates the close interrelationships among technology, semiotics and culture in order to form a solid foundation for scholarly multimedia authoring. The class is geared toward students who want greater complexity in disciplinary knowledge as we ask what can be done with "new media" that cannot be done in text alone.

In its third iteration, IML340 is expanding its model of using a single documentary as the core course text, and will instead examine many documentaries and visual texts of varying aesthetic and stylistic strategies, subject matter and points of view. Indeed, it is your personal reflections and interests that will ground and guide our collective study. It is your relationship to the course material that will serve as point of departure for the research - historical, theoretical, and artistic - that you will conduct as you produce digital arguments. Throughout this process, you will develop proficiency in scholarly multimedia authoring across a range of registers - text, image, sound, and interactivity.

You are encouraged to become an intrepid researcher throughout the digital and analogue domains, in addition to working with the extraordinary testimonies, photographs and other materials contained within the Digital Video Library of the Hemispheric Institute for Performance and Politics. In developing your semester projects, please understand that no question is off-limits. Do not be afraid of your affective response in working with and through these materials. Embrace experimentation in terms of your ideas and the forms that your work can take.

ABOUT THE HEMISPHERIC INSTITUTE

The Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics is a collaborative, multilingual and interdisciplinary network of institutions, artists, scholars, and activists throughout the Americas. Working at the intersection of scholarship, artistic expression and politics, the organization explores embodied practice— performance—as a vehicle for the creation of new meaning and the transmission of cultural values, memory and identity. Anchored in its geographical focus on the Americas (thus "hemispheric") and in three working languages (English, Spanish and Portuguese), the Institute's goal is to promote vibrant interactions and collaborations at the level of scholarship, art practice and pedagogy among practitioners interested in the relationship between performance and politics in the hemisphere.

The Hemispheric Institute Digital Video Library, a collaboration between New York University Libraries and NYU's Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics, provides a digital venue for documenting the expression of social and political life through performance in the many cultures and political

landscapes of the Americas. The Hemispheric Institute Digital Video Library brings together in one place materials that have been available only in small, little-known archives that are inaccessible to scholars and that lack the resources to properly care for and provide access to these extraordinary cultural documents. But it is not enough simply to gather the videos together. We have used the resources of digital technology to insure the long-term preservation of this rare material and to make it accessible not just to researchers at NYU but to scholars and artists around the world.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Individual external hard drive
  Size and price can vary (see "SCA Approved and Supported Hard Drives on Student Resources wiki)
- All other readings are either provided as a URL or posted on the course wiki.

ASSIGNMENTS

Attend all classes and be prepared to speak critically about your work, your classmates' work, and ongoing dialogues in new media/digital studies, other disciplines, and critical subjects that interest you. During critiques we will view/read/discuss work produced for the class and in-class engagement is particularly emphasized. Grading will be based on weekly assignments, projects, and participation:

• **Video Journal 1 (Ideation)**	10%
• **Video Journal 2 (Research)**	10%
• **Video Journal 3 (Assemblage and Aesthetics**	10%
• **Final Project Fine Cut**	10%
• **Final Project**	20%
• **Responses, Comments and Peer Reviews**	20%
• **Self-Assessment and Project Archiving**	10%
• **Participation**	10%

POLICIES

Fair Use
Fair use is a legal principle that defines certain limitations on the exclusive rights of copyright holders. The MAP program seeks to apply a reasonable working definition of fair use that will enable students and instructors to develop multimedia projects without seeking authorization for non-commercial, educational uses. In keeping with section 107 of the Copyright Act we recognize four factors that should be considered when determining whether a use is fair: (1) the purpose and character of use, (2) the nature of the copyrighted work, (3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole, and (4) the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. In general, we regard the reproduction of copyrighted works for the purposes of analysis or critique in this class to be covered by the principle of fair use.

Citation Guidelines
All projects will need to include academically appropriate citations in the form of a Works Cited section, which covers all sources, in order to receive a passing grade. The Works Cited is either included in the project or as a separate document, as appropriate to your project. The style we use is APA 5th edition and you may refer to these guidelines: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Statement on Academic Integrity
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/.

Statement for Students with Disabilities
Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Emergency Plan
In the event that classes cannot convene at the university, all IML courses will continue via distance education. Specifically, the IML portal and course wikis will be deployed to enable faculty-student interaction (asynchronously and also via virtual office hours), complete syllabi, course readings and assignments, software tutorials, project assets, parameters and upload instructions, peer review processes and open source alternatives to professional-level software used in the IML curriculum. Further details are available on the course wiki.

Disruptive Student Behavior
Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. A student responsible for disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

The following weekly schedule is subject to change. Please consult the course wiki for the most current information, assignments and due dates.

Week 1
Course Overview & History ~ Syllabus ~ WIKI ~ Introductions
Screening: Past Student Projects

Week 2
3 Image Assignment Discussion ~ Johnson & Sontag Reading Discussion
Introduction to the Hemispheric Institute and the DVL

Week 3
Orientation to the Hemispheric Institute and the DVL ~ Discussion and Screening of Videos

Week 4
Critical Issues of Representation & Subjectivity ~ the Voice, the Sacred, the Banal and the Extreme

Week 5 – VIDEO JOURNAL 1 DUE.
Presentation & Discussion of Video Journals

Week 6
History, Memory & the Importance of Witnessing ~ the "Writing" of History

Week 7
Trauma, Affect & Art ~ Speaking the Unspeakable

Week 8
Contemporary Reflections of Transnationalism, Border Culture and Migration

Week 9 – VIDEO JOURNAL 2 DUE.
Presentation & Discussion of Video Journals

Week 10
Individual Mid-Semester Conferences will be held this week. Class will still meet as scheduled on Thursday at 2 pm.
In-Class Workshop ~ Screenings (TBD)

Week 11
In-Class Workshop ~ Screenings TBD

Week 12 – VIDEO JOURNAL 3 DUE.
Presentation & Discussion of Video Journals

Week 13
Individual Progress Update Conferences will be held this week in preparation for the Fine Cut Presentations. Class will still meet as scheduled on Thursday at 2 pm.
In-Class Workshop

Week 14
In-Class Workshop

Week 15 – FINAL PROJECT FINE CUT DUE.
Presentation & Discussion of Final Project Fine Cuts

FINAL EXAMINATION
COMPLETED FINAL PROJECTS + SELF-ASSESSMENT + PROJECT ARCHIVING DUE