

**IML 340**  
**The Praxis of New Media: Digital Argument**

Spring 2013  
2 units  
Thursdays, 2:00 – 3:50 pm  
IML Blue Lab (EGG A)

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In the networked world, scholarship increasingly includes not only written text, but images, sound, and 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 this iteration, IML 340 is expanding on its model of using a single documentary as a core course text, and will instead ask you to explore many documentaries and visual texts - of varying aesthetic and stylistic approaches, subject matter and points of view - as we explore the issue of representation and how it relates to the Holocaust, World War 2 and to the present day. Indeed, it is your personal reflection and interests that will ground our collective study, tying the present to the past in innovative ways. It is your relationship to this material that will serve as point of departure for the research - historical, theoretical, and artistic - that you will conduct as you produce digital documentaries. Throughout this process, you will develop proficiency with various components of multimedia authorship - text, image manipulation, cinematography, video editing and web work - as you hone in on an area within the complex network of issues surrounding the global ramifications of the Holocaust and World War 2, which still resound loudly today. Although specific authoring platforms will be taught, they will be approached as tools with cultural, social and political significance.

You are encouraged to become an intrepid researcher throughout the digital and analogue domain in addition to working with the extraordinary testimonies, photographs and other materials contained within the Visual History Archive. No question is off-limits. Do not be afraid of your affective response in working with and through this material. Embrace experimentation in terms of your ideas and the forms that your work can take. Know that this work is important, and in creating your projects and putting them into the world, you are making an intervention against hatred, violence, oppression and inhumanity that is as relevant today as it has ever been.

**USC SHOAH FOUNDATION INSTITUTE**

This semester, the focus of our work in IML 340 will be a critical and creative exploration of issues and themes surrounding the Holocaust and its representation. Central to our scholarly investigations will be the video testimonies contained within the Visual History Archive of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education. (<http://college.usc.edu/vhi/>)

**THE VISUAL HISTORY ARCHIVE (VHA)**

Established in 1994, the USC Shoah Foundation Institute has dedicated the last 15 years to collecting, digitizing, indexing, and building the infrastructure and systems to provide access to videotaped testimonies of Holocaust survivors and other witnesses. The Visual History Archive (VHA) is

one of the largest digital libraries in the world, with nearly 52,000 videotaped testimonies, collected in 56 countries and 32 languages. The archive is digitized, fully searchable, and indexed to the minute, allowing you to retrieve both whole testimonies of interest, as well as specific segments within testimonies that relate to your area of interest. The archive is searchable through a set of over 50,000 keywords and keyword phrases, in addition to 1.2 million names. There are over 500,000 images in the archive as well. (<http://libguides.usc.edu/vha/>)

### REQUIRE MATERIALS

- Martin Gilbert, *The Routledge Atlas of the Holocaust, Fourth Edition*. Routledge. Available on Amazon and USC Bookstore (subject to availability), by week 3.
- Individual external hard drive. Size and price can vary (we recommend G-TECH drives). Please purchase by week 3 or sooner.

### RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

- Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, Volume 1: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*. HarperPerennial.
- Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939-1945: The Years of Extermination*. HarperCollins Publishers.
- Allan G. Johnson, *Privilege, Power and Difference, Second Edition*. McGraw-Hill.

Throughout the semester, we will be compiling a list of relevant visual and textual materials that are presented in class, as well as those that emerge through your individual and collective research.

### COMMUNICATION

Please check your email and the class wiki regularly. Emails and wiki posts will include follow-ups to in-class discussions, schedule updates, and meeting management. The wiki may be found by following the IML Portal link at <http://iml.usc.edu>. Feel free to use the wiki and its included blog area to contribute to the class' ongoing discussions.

### ASSIGNMENTS

Attend all classes and be prepared to speak critically about your work, your classmates' work, and ongoing dialogues in Holocaust studies, 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:

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|---|-----|
| • Video Journal 1 (Ideation): Due Week 5                    | 10% |
| • Video Journal 2 (Research): Due Week 9                    | 10% |
| • Video Journal 3 (Assemblage & Aesthetics): Due Week 12    | 10% |
| • Video Journal 4 (Self-Assessment): Due on Final Exam Date | 10% |
| • Final Project Fine Cut: Due Week 15                       | 10% |
| • Final Project: Due on Final Exam Date                     | 20% |
| • Responses, Comments & Peer Review                         | 20% |
| • Participation   | 10% |

## FOUNDATIONAL LITERACIES

- **Digital literacy** refers to the ability to understand the basic aspects of multimedia tools and software, and covers everything from the protocols for compression, back-up and file naming to definitions of terms (frame rate, dpi, etc.) and basic equipment usage.
- **Network literacy** refers to the ability to use networked software for intelligent participation in online communities.
- **Design literacy** refers to the ability to use appropriate design principles for multimedia authoring in a specific context, and the ability to control the relationship between form and content.
- **Argumentation** focuses on the ability to develop, express and defend a persuasive thesis using media, as well as the ability to use evidence and complex thinking in constructing an argument.
- **Research literacy** refers to the ability to perform effective, critical online research; knowledge of academically appropriate protocols for selection, citation and attribution of source materials; and knowledge of fair use and copyright issues.

## SUPPLEMENTAL LITERACIES

- **Presentation:** The ability to understand and articulate basic strategies for effective presentation using multimedia, as well as how to disseminate these materials to a wide audience.
- **Visual literacy:** The abilities to convey information visually and to understand and control systems of visual signification.
- **Sonic literacy:** The ability to communicate effectively with sound.
- **Interpretation:** The ability to use multimedia to enhance a critical interpretation, and the ability to identify and articulate the cultural, historical and ideological contexts of a media object.
- **Annotation:** Understanding strategies for critical annotation of text, images and media.
- **Collaboration:** The ability to work effectively in a group authoring environment, as well as the ability to lead a team project.
- **Narrative literacy:** Knowledge of basic components and genres of narrative, and the ability to deploy elements of narrative in a critical context.
- **Pedagogical literacy:** Understanding strategies for creating an effective tool for teaching.
- **Interactivity:** The ability to communicate effectively in a non-linear, interactive context, and the ability to design an effective interface or navigational structure.
- **Code literacy:** The ability to understand the basics of how code operates, and the ability to write or use basic code.

## EVALUATION

In general, you will be graded using these criteria:

### Conceptual Core

- The project's controlling idea must be apparent.
- The project must be productively aligned with one or more multimedia genres.
- The project must effectively engage with the primary issue/s of the subject area into which it is intervening.

### Research Component

- The project must display evidence of substantive research and thoughtful engagement with its subject matter.
- The project must use a variety of credible sources and cite them appropriately.
- The project ought to deploy more than one approach to an issue.

### Form and Content

- The project's structural or formal elements must serve the conceptual core.
- The project's design decisions must be deliberate, controlled, and defensible.
- The project's efficacy must be unencumbered by technical problems.

### Creative Realization

- The project must approach the subject in a creative or innovative manner.
- The project must use media and design principles effectively.
- The project must achieve significant goals that could not be realized on paper.

## POLICIES

### Fair Use and Citation Guidelines

We assert that all of our course work is covered under the Doctrine of Fair Use. In order to make this claim, however, 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.

## 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: *Night & Fog* (1955) by Alain Renais  
Screening: *Beanstar: A True Story* (2010) by Mariana Aguilar

*For next week:*

3 Image Assignment ~ Theme Ideation  
Read Johnson, Privilege, Power and Difference, Chapters 1 & 2  
Read Sontag, Regarding the Pain of Others, Chapter 2, pp. 18-39  
Post Response

### **Week 2**

Johnson Reading Discussion | SFI/VHA Introduction  
Screening (excerpts): *Voices from the List* (2009)  
Screening (excerpts): *The Last Days* (1998)  
Screening (excerpts): *One Survivor Remembers* (1995)

*For next week:*

Screen 1 VHA testimony in its entirety  
Select and screen 1 other Holocaust-related video  
Post Response

### **Week 3**

Orientation to the USC Holocaust & Genocide Studies Collection | Visit to SFI  
Discussion and Screening of Testimonies and Videos

*For next week:*

Screen excerpts from 3 VHA testimonies, selected through specific keyword based search  
Select and screen 1 other Holocaust-related video  
Post Response

### **Week 4**

Representation & Subjectivity | The Voice, the Sacred, the Banal and the Extreme

*For next week:*

Prepare Video Journal 1

### **Week 5 – VIDEO JOURNAL 1 DUE**

Presentation & Discussion of Video Journals

*For next week:*

Screen excerpts from 2 VHA testimonies  
Develop draft bibliography of texts and visual media for final project  
Post Response  
Post Comment to assigned partner's Video Journal

### **Week 6**

History, Memory & the Importance of Witnessing | The "Writing" of History  
Screening: *The Ties that Bind* (1985) by Su Friedrich

*For next week:*

Read 1 article, book chapter, etc. from your bibliography  
Screen 1 video from your bibliography  
Post Response

**Week 7**

Trauma, Affect & Art | Speaking the Unspeakable

*For next week:*

Read 1 article, book chapter, etc. from your bibliography

Screen 1 video from your bibliography

Post Response

**Week 8**

Genocide in Comparative Context | Genocide as Strategy | Contemporary Reflections

*For next week:*

Prepare Video Journal 2

**Week 9 – VIDEO JOURNAL 2 DUE.**

Presentation and Discussion of Video Journals

*For next week:*

Refine bibliography and prepare for individual consultations

Post Response

Post Comment to assigned partner's Video Journal

**Week 10**

Screenings TBD | In-Class Workshop

*For next week:*

Complete rough outline/asset management list for final project

**Week 11**

Screenings TBD | In-Class Workshop

*For next week:*

Prepare Video Journal 3

**Week 12 – VIDEO JOURNAL 3 DUE.**

Presentation and Discussion of Video Journals

*For next week:*

Continue to explore resources from your bibliography

Work on Final Project

Post Response

Post Comment to assigned partner's Video Journal

**Week 13**

In-Class Work Time

*For next week:*

Prepare Final Project Fine Cuts

**Week 14**

In-Class Work Time

*For next week:*

Prepare Final Project Fine Cuts

**Week 15 – FINAL PROJECT FINE CUT SCREENINGS**

Presentation and Discussion of Final Project Fine Cuts

*For Final Examination:*

Complete Final Projects

Prepare Video Journal 4: Self-Assessment

**FINAL EXAMINATION**

COMPLETED FINAL PROJECTS + VIDEO JOURNAL 4 (Self-Assessment) DUE