

Tuesday/Lecture -- Social Sciences 1 rm. 153-- 1:30PM-5:00PM

Thursday/Lab -- Social Sciences Mac Computer Lab rm. 135 -- 3:00PM-5:30PM

Instructor Daniel Rudin

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Office Hours: Tuesday, Kresge 356, 12:00PM-1:15PM

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

“Reality changes; in order to represent it, modes of representation must change.”

- Bertolt Brecht

In this Film and Digital Media critical studies/production course, students will explore the aesthetic, political and ethical dimensions of new and expanded forms of documentary practice including; new media, database-driven, interactive documentary, participatory media, social media and documentation-based art practices, (ie. material and media archives, performances and installations). Students will use methods and tools drawn from new media art practice and theory, to record, reflect and circulate representations of “reality” generally regarded as the concern of social and cinematic documentary.

In *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* Claire Bishop argues that along with the 1989 collapse "actually existing socialism" and of "grand narrative" politics there emerges a tendency towards "art as project" which replaces the discrete art object with "...an open-ended, post-studio, research-based, social process, extending over time and mutable in form."<sup>1</sup> This "expansion" of art practice into various participatory works produces an "emphasis (that) is continually shifted away from the disruptive *specificity* of a given practice and onto a *generalized* set of ethical precepts."<sup>2</sup> Following Bishop, we will take seriously the idea that an "ethical turn" in art appears precisely when a "social project" seems lacking. More specifically, this course will examine ways that documentary artists have navigated contemporary practice by seeking to embed themselves in the social field,<sup>3</sup> producing as a result expanded forms of documentary.

This course identifies three such documentary methodologies—**reenactment, the archive, and the interview**—with a particular emphasis on contemporary media-based documentary works, including interactive documentaries (Anoek Steketee and Eefje Blankevoort), single channel documentary works in complex reflexive interconnection with their subjects (Harun Farocki), iterative and archival documentary video and installation (Carlos Motta), and reenactment (Clio Bernard). That the works in question do not deploy similar documentary methodologies is one indicator of a drift or expansion of the documentary mode beyond the constraints of both cinematic form and film studies debates centered on documentary form and ethics. Rather, the field of critical activity would now seem to encompass broadly differing perspectives on the archival, the participatory, the interactive, the performative and the ethnographic.

During the quarter we will establish an intellectual frame for student projects through reading and discussion—with an emphasis on analysis of examples of “expanded” forms of documentary practice. Students will also participate in technical workshops on new-media production techniques during lab time. Two short audio-visual-textual “sketches” and one major

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<sup>1</sup> Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.

audio-visual project will be developed and critiqued over the course of the quarter.

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

*Assignments 1 and 2: Expansions* – students will produce two short audio-visual-textual documents (3m or less) that expands beyond the form of the student’s current practice in one or more of the following ways:

- The Interview
- Re-enactment
- The Archive

These may take the form of “proof-of-concept” and/or design development documents with accompanying example media. Students will write a 500 word project description for each expansion project.

As an alternative, you may also write a 1500 word formal and textual analysis.

*Assignment 3: Final Project:* production of an “expanded” document (3m or less). Students will write a 500-1000 word proposal/description/explanation of the final expansion project.

As an alternative, you may also write a 2000-3000 word formal and textual analysis of an "expanded" or experimental documentary work.

**Assignment 1 due Thursday, July 6.**

**Assignment 2 due Thursday, July 20**

**Assignment 3 due Thursday, July 27**

## **EXPECTATIONS, COURSE POLICIES, AND GRADING**

- Attendance is mandatory; punctuality is required. Two unexcused absences and/or excessive lateness will result in a NO PASS
- You are expected to inform the Instructor of any emergency situations that require your absence from class
- Late assignments WILL affect your grade
- You are responsible for accessing and reading the required course materials and viewing the required works online.
- In order to receive credit for the class, students must turn in all assignments
- Your final evaluation and grade in the class will be based on the following: Grades and Evaluations will be based primarily on class participation (10%), project descriptions (20%), and visual projects (70%).
- Class participation (10%)
- Project descriptions (20%)
  - Description Proj. 1: 6%, Description Proj. 2: 6%, Description Proj. 3: 8%
- Visual projects (70%)
  - Assignment 1: 20%, Assignment 2: 20%, Assignment 3: 30%
- Class participation includes attendance and contributions to seminar discussion and critique
- (2) short prototype or "proof of concept" projects including both text and image/sound
- The final project will be a non-linear, interactive or participatory documentary based on the student’s topic of choice, drawn from the investigations we will be developing throughout the quarter.

## COURSE POLICIES

### Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty. Acts of academic misconduct during the course, including plagiarism, can and usually do result in failure of the course, at the sole discretion of the instructor of record. Your case will be reported to the College Provost as per the Academic Integrity guidelines found online at [https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic\\_misconduct](https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct). More information about research and information ethics can be found here: <http://unitproj.library.ucla.edu/col/b Bruinsuccess/03/01.cfm>.

### DRC

The University of California, Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to your instructor during office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. We would like to ensure your full participation in the course. All students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services should contact the DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at [drc@ucsc.edu](mailto:drc@ucsc.edu).

### Recording or Distribution of Class Materials

Please note that selling, preparing, or distributing for any purpose lecture notes or video or audio recordings of any course is explicitly forbidden by campus policy, unless authorized by the University *in advance* (for instance, by the Disability Resource Center, which can assign students who need one a note taker with a laptop or other recording device) and unless *explicitly permitted* by the course instructor *in writing*.

<b>I. The Interview (Week 1)</b>	<b>Tuesday, June 27</b>
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#### Agenda

- Introductions, review course materials.
- Discuss readings.
- View documentary work.

#### Readings

- Foster, Hal. "The Artist as Ethnographer?" In *Return of the Real: Art and Theory at the End of the Century*, 171-204. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996.

#### Viewings

- *Komsomol – Sponsor of Electrification*. Film, 1932. Directed by Esfir Shub. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Broadcast & Media Center, 2010. DVD, 56 min.
- *Mouths of Ash*. Directed by Juan Manuel Echavarría. Video, 2005, 20 min.
- *Capturing Reality: The Art of Documentary Film*. Pepita Ferrari. Interactive web documentary. Montreal: NFB/interactive, 2008. <<http://films.nfb.ca/capturing-reality/>>
- *The Good Life*. Carlos Motta. Bogotá: La Fundación Alzate Avendaño, 2009. <<http://la-buena-vida.info/>> and <<https://vimeo.com/7737665>>

<b>II. The Interview (Week 1)</b>	<b>Thursday, June 29</b>
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## Agenda

- Workshop on Final Cut Pro X
- Basic vocabulary of montage
- View documentary work.

## Readings

- Eisenstein, Sergei. "Methods of Montage." In *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, 72-83. New York: Harcourt, 1949.

## Viewing

- *GazaSderot: life in spite of everything*. Khalil al Muzayyen and Robby Elmaliahz. Interactive web documentary. Isy-les-Moulineaux: Arte.tv, 2009. <<http://gaza-sderot.arte.tv/>>
- *I love your work*. Jonathan Harris. Interactive web documentary, 2013. <<http://iloveyourwork.net/>>
- *Oil to Die For*. Directed by Todd Melby. Interactive web documentary, 2013, 2015. <<http://blackgoldboom.com/oil-to-die-for/intro>>
- *Question Bridge*. Directed by Hank Willis Thomas, Bayeté Ross Smith, Kamal Sinclair, Chris Johnson. Interactive web documentary, 2012. <<http://questionbridge.com/>>
- *Love radio*. Aniek Steketee and Eefje Blankevoort. Interactive web documentary. Utrecht: Kummer & Herrman, 2014. <<http://www.loveradio-rwanda.org/>>

## Tuesday July 4 -- No Class (National Holiday)

<b>I. Reenactment (Week II)</b>	<b>Thursday, July 6</b>
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## Agenda

- Assignment: *Expansion I* critique.

<b>II. Reenactment (Week III)</b>	<b>Tuesday, July 11</b>
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## Agenda

- Discuss readings.
- View documentary work.

## Readings

- Bishop, Claire. "The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents." In *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, 11-40. New York: Verso, 2012.

## Viewing

- *The Battle of Ogreave*. Directed by Mike Figgis. Video, 2003. London: Artangel Media, 2006. DVD, 63 min.
- *The Arbor*. Directed by Clio Bernard. Film, 2010. Culver City: Strand Releasing, 2011. DVD, 94 min.

<b>III. Reenactment (Week III)</b>	<b>Thursday, July 13</b>
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## Agenda

- View documentary work.
- Discuss projects.
- Workshop on Korsakow
- Lab time.

## Viewing

- *Inside the Distance*. Sharon Daniel. Installation and interactive web documentary, 2013. <insidethedistance.net>

<b>I. The Archive (Week IV)</b>	<b>Tuesday, July 18</b>
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## Agenda

- Discuss readings.
- View documentary work.

## Readings

- Daniel, Sharon. "On Politics and aesthetics: A case study of 'Public Secrets' and 'Blood Sugar,' *Studies in Documentary Film*, 6:2, 215-227.
- Prelinger, Rick. "The Appearance of the Archives." In *The YouTube Reader*, edited by Pelle Snickars and Patrick Vonderau. Stockholm: National Library of Sweden, 2010.

## Viewings

- *Videograms of a Revolution*. Directed by Harun Farocki. Video, 1992. Chicago: Facets Video, 2006. DVD, 106 min.
- *Blood Sugar*. Sharon Daniel. Interactive Documentary, 2010. <<http://bloodandsugar.net/>>
- *Public Secrets*. Sharon Daniel. Interactive Documentary, 2007. <<http://vectors.usc.edu/issues/4/publicsecrets/>>

<b>II. The Archive (Week IV)</b>	<b>Thursday, July 20</b>
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## Agenda

- Assignment: *Expansion II* critique.

<b>III. The Archive (Week V)</b>	<b>Tuesday, July 25</b>
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## Agenda

- Discuss readings.
- View documentary work.

## Readings

- Manovich, Lev. "Database as a symbolic form." In *Database Aesthetics: Art in the Age of Information Overflow*, edited by Victoria Vesna, 39-60. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.

## Viewings

- *Reconstruction*. Directed by Irene Lustzig. Video, 2001. New York: Women Make Movies, 2001. DVD, 90 min.
- *Planet Galeta*. Florian Thalhofer and Berke Bas. Interactive web documentary. Berlin: Kloos and Co., 2010. <<http://planetgalata.com/>>
- *Godslake*. Kevin Lee Burton and Alicia Smith. Interactive web documentary. Montreal: NFB/interactive, 2011 <<http://godslake.nfb.ca/#/godslake>>
- *The wait we carry*. IAVA. Interactive web documentary. *Periscope* and *Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America*, 2013. <<http://www.thewaitwecarry.org/>>

<b>IV. The Archive (Week IV)</b>	<b>Thursday, July 27</b>
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**FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE**

**viewing, reading, and critique at Social Sciences 1 rm. 153-- 1:30PM-5:00PM**  
**\*\*Final Project critique \*\***