

# Assignments | COM 242

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## #1 DIGITAL IMAGING

### “Member of The Tribe”

#### Introduction

“Citizenship” is, in part, about membership in a group that enjoys particular rights, privileges, and duties—whether you are a citizen in a home town or the world. In the U.S., it includes rights to participate in democratic process. Engaged citizenship begins with an understanding of our own identities, life experiences, and world views; it extends to our understanding of the lives of others in our communities; and it leads to civic action that impacts those communities. This assignment begins that journey while introducing a wide range of digital skills.

To some extent, we are all “tribal” beings, belonging to small groups and subgroups with others whose values we share; at the same time, we are all global citizens with urgent needs to cooperate to move forward and solve larger problems. You will learn digital imaging skills to create a surreal self-portrait of yourself as a member of a “tribe” you choose—and blog about the experiences, ideas, and values you communicate in your self-portrait. We all belong to many tribes, and identity is not singular but fluid and multiple. Our “membership” may be in a physical group, a social network, or other form of group. If you’re a Green Bay Packer’s fan, you know how strong a sense of a tribe can be. Or perhaps you identify as a “cat lady?” One idea would be to make a hat of colorful (live) cats to wear on your head. Etc. Are you a swimmer? What creative imagery could you create with water? Did you ever see yourself as an “egghead?” What if your face, in many expressions, were to appear on a dozen eggs in a carton to capture that feeling? Your self-portrait can move beyond the literal to be symbolic, metaphoric, etc. It might not feature your own image at all. Get creative. Also, the portrait does not have to be a positive image—it can explore ostracization you have experienced by other “tribes.” (We have a tendency to “in-group” and “out-group” others for a sense of security.) The tribe may even have destructive effects on yourself and/or others—your awareness of this can result in compelling imagery and narrative.

**Assignment** Using Photoshop, create a surreal self-portrait of yourself as a member of one or more tribes (and/or subtribes) with which you identify. Then, write a blog post that relates to your image and demonstrates lessons from class.

#### Visual Image Specifications

- 1) Create the Photoshop file at 200dpi, approx. 6” x 8”. Retain all layers in your authoring file (.psd document).
- 2) Composite a minimum of three images you find anywhere on the Web (since this is just an exercise).
- 3) Use layer masks in Photoshop to combine images.
- 4) Use image editing tools to make your images appear to be integrated.
- 5) Create a copy of your image that is resized for Web (Image > Image Size) at 72 pixels per inch, approximately 500 pixels wide or tall, RGB color mode.
- 6) Save your web version as a .png.
- 7) Optionally, create an animated .gif out of your image.

**Blog Post Specifications** Write a vivid, engaging blog post that refers to your image, for an audience you identify. The writing may be on any topic you choose and should demonstrate skills from class lessons. Create links in your text to at least two outside resources.

TIPS: If you choose to write about the “tribe(s)” your image references, audience members might also be members of this group. You might want to describe the group in detail, including its shared activities and beliefs, and your participation in it. What key characteristics bond the people of this group, and how do you cultivate your relationships? Do you meet in person? Share online? What aspects of the tribe do you identify with most and least? What benefits and drawbacks have you experienced? Identify some myths that your tribe shares to reinforce its in-group behavior. For example, “Cats are the best pets.” “The Yankees rule.” “Cancer survivors are winning warriors.” Also, what are some myths that other groups share about you? “Cat people are weird?” Fragile? Overly sensitive? When does “out-grouping” become a problem? Cite at least two outside resources on tribes or subgroups using journalistic attribution (create links out of the words to the sources). Refer to class lessons from Copyblogger.com. There is no need to create a web site (yet).

#### Deliverables

- 1) Post your text and image on the class FB group.
- 2) Fill out your submission sheet (see templates at the end of this document).
- 3) Upload your submission sheet to Blackboard and submit hard copy (stapled) in class.

## Introduction

In a recent post to a Facebook group, a woman talked about how she was raised believing her mother was Cherokee Indian. Elaborate family stories told over many generations had carried convincing weight. She participated in Cherokee rituals and identified as part Cherokee, herself. Recently, a DNA test revealed she has no Cherokee blood, yet she now shares Cherokee culture.

Identity is not singular, but multiple and fluid. How we "story" ourselves—and how others story us—significantly shapes our identit(ies), life experiences, and worldview. For example, the culture and stories you share with your ancestors can have a powerful effect on who you believe you are. Your life experiences—and how you remember and narrate them—become part of your identity. As we revise those narratives, we revise who we are. Geography can be another important part of identity, literally and metaphorically, as influential groups and dominant belief systems can become tied to physical locations. For example, many Rhode Islanders believe they live in "the biggest little state in the union," and indeed, when you're in Rhode Island, there can be the sense it's the center of the universe, even as small as it is. Other identity markers become widely culturally coded, as well, and impact life experience, which, in turn, shape world view. Some of these markers include gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality, ability, etc. For example, a woman's experiences and understanding of her "gender" in one country might be very different from those of a woman in another country, based on cultural norms. Social networks can become part of identity, as well. The "echo chamber" tends to reinforce views we already have rather than opening us up to new ones. How do you open yourself up to new online experiences and exchanges with others? What changes have you experienced in your identity growing up? What "tribes" have you belonged to and left behind?

### Assignment:

Produce a video, in experimental mini-documentary form, that reflects on your origins and how they have shaped your identity, life experiences, worldview. Post the video in your blog, along with a short introduction.

- 1) Recommended video length: 3-7 minutes
- 2) Live motion is required; still imagery may be included; and a voiceover narration is optional.
- 3) Select audio that will set an appropriate mood for the work
- 4) Include some research about your ancestry and place(s) of origins, along with any other important identity markers. This info may be in the video, blog, or both.
- 5) Remember that your story should engage an audience with human interest that moves beyond family and friends.

### Deliverables:

- 1) In the class Facebook group, post a link to your video in YouTube or Vimeo.
- 2) Fill out your submission sheet (see templates at the end of this document).
- 3) Upload your submission sheet to Blackboard and submit hard copy of it in class (stapled if more than one page).



Richard Garcia "The Coming of Me"

## Introduction

What change would you like to see in your world? What problems would you like to see addressed on a local, national, or global level? If you have trouble imagining answers to these questions, consider an emotional approach: What makes you passionate or angry? It might be a campus policy that you believe hinders people's rights in a profound way. It could be a social justice issue such as homelessness, sexual assault, police brutality. It might be a state or federal law (or lack of laws), such as the lack of employment or housing protection for same-sex couples or lack of protection to unborn children (if you are a pro-life activist). It might be a global issue, such as slavery or child brides. Or it might be an issue we don't commonly hear about. It might involve a product you want to bring to market or a nonprofit organization to be developed. Brainstorm a list of issues that compel you and conduct some cursory research to decide which topic to choose for the focus of this project. By the way, you will need ultimately need to be able to interview someone close to this issue, so consider that access in your decision-making about the project.

## Part 1: Digital Project

In a group of three or four, create a website that includes two digital media components (e.g., video, podcast, animated gif, stop-motion animation, slide shows, info graphics, game, tweeted event, Facebook page with cover image, social media posts, or other ideas). tells the story of an event, organization, or brand that has social impact.

- 1) Include digital storytelling that will interest your audience. Parts of the story might include personal narratives, rhetorical arguments, expert interviews, explanations of processes, "How to" information, description of lifestyle or culture.
- 2) If you are working with a controversial issue, show multiple perspectives, even if you are attempting to persuade an audience to support one side or another. Provide cultural and historical context to the issue (how did it develop?) and ideas for possible solutions.
- 3) Include both qualitative and quantitative research, including links to outside supporting resources.

## Some Examples of Digital Storytelling:

8 Million Stories: <https://8ms.com/2013/05/21/6-great-examples-of-digital-storytelling>

## Requirements

- 1) You may use Adobe CC and/or other software such as Canva, Piktochart, Animoto, etc., to assemble your components.
- 2) You may use a content management systems (CMS) such as Wix or WordPress.
- 3) The online media components should not be redundant with one another and instead will tell various parts of a story, appealing to multiple audiences.

## Process

The assignment is broken down into phases:

- 1) web page flow chart
- 2) media writing (web pages, blogging, social media posts, etc.)
- 3) image collection and graphic optimization
- 4) multimedia components

## Deliverables:

- 1) Post a URL of your website on the class FB group
- 2) Fill out your submission sheet (see templates at the end of this document).
- 3) Upload your submission sheet to Blackboard and submit hard copy stapled) in class.

# Project #1 | Submission Sheet

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YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PROJECT HEADLINE: \_\_\_\_\_

INSERT .PNG OF YOUR IMAGE HERE, ALONG WITH YOUR BLOG TEXT:

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## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Access the [.docx version of this document](#) and save this project submission sheet. Remember to include the grading rubrics below in your submission sheet so I can make notes.
- 2) Insert into this document a .png of your Photoshop image and your blog text. Also insert these components in the class Facebook group to share with classmates.

### 1) GRADING RUBRIC: Photoshop Project

Criteria	PTS	Above Average	Average	Below Average
Creativity	10	Project demonstrates exceptional originality (“rarity,” risk-taking), elaboration (complexity, imaginative development), fluidity (volume of idea-generation).	Project demonstrates an engaging concept, even if it could be more original, imaginative, complex, or fluid.	Much more experimentation, imagination, and complexity are needed. Project may seem commonplace, overly derivative, or cliché.
Effective Communication	20	The purpose of the image is clear (e.g., photojournalism, persuasion, fine art, etc.). The project engages attention and demonstrates highly effective, meaningful communication to an intended audience that is wider than family, friends, and classmates.	The purpose of the image is clear. The project would be somewhat meaningful to a wide intended audience and communicates fairly effectively.	Project demonstrates ineffective communication to intended audience or seems to lack meaning for a wide enough audience.
Application of Aesthetic Principles See <a href="#">Formal Elements checklist here for 2D.</a>	10	The formal elements and principles of the project support the content and intended meaning. The project demonstrates effective application of aesthetic principles appropriate for the medium—or breaks the rules with effective results.	Project applies many of the aesthetic principles appropriate for the medium and consistent with the content and intended meaning. Some exceptions may weaken the work.	The formal elements and principles of the project seem to be inconsistent with the content and intended meaning and/or the project demonstrates insufficient application of aesthetic principles appropriate for the medium.
Production Values	10	Techniques and output of production demonstrate high quality.	All instructions were followed. Techniques and output of production demonstrate average quality.	Techniques and output of production demonstrate below-average quality.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>			

## 2) GRADING RUBRIC: Blog

CRITERIA	PTS	ABOVE AVERAGE	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE
Engagement	5	The work is highly engaging and economical for the intended audience and format; it would grab attention and sustain reading. The work has a descriptive, attention-grabbing title.	The work is solid and would get attention, though it could be more engaging and perhaps more economical.	The work needs to be substantially more engaging.
Content, Clarity, Coherency	5	The work offers content of value to its audience. Ideas are clearly developed and thoroughly explained. One idea flows eloquently to the next, with clear transitions as needed. The paper stays on topic.	Content, clarity, and coherency are solid.	Content clarity, and coherency need substantially more work.
Structure & Organization	5	The writing adopts the proper structure and organization. It's easy to follow.	The writing could be more structured/organized.	The writing needs substantially more structure/organization
Language, Style, Grammar & Spelling A.P. Style	5	The writing is flawless in its grammar, mechanics, and spelling. Language is precise, concise, vivid, engaging. Sentence structures are varied and eloquent. Adept use of vocabulary is evident. A.P. Style is used and any outside sources are cited using journalistic attribution.	Grammar, style, mechanics, and/or spelling are solid but could use some improvement.	The paper reflects substantial need for improvement in style, grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>			

# Project #2 | Submission Sheet

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YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

VIDEO TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_ LINK TO VIDEO (YouTube or Vimeo): \_\_\_\_\_

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Access the [.docx version of this document](#) and save this project submission sheet.  
Remember to include the grading rubrics below in your submission sheet so I can make notes.
- 2) Upload this document to Blackboard and then print it out to hand in hard copy.

## 1) GRADING RUBRIC: Video

CRITERIA	PTS	ABOVE AVERAGE	AVERAGE	BELOW AVERAGE
Creativity & Engagement	5	The work is highly engaging for the intended audience and format; it would grab and sustain attention. The project demonstrates exceptional originality (“rarity,” risk-taking), elaboration (complexity, imaginative development), fluidity (volume of idea-generation).	Project demonstrates an engaging concept, even if it could be more compelling, original, imaginative, complex, or fluid.	The work needs to be substantially more engaging. Project may seem overly derivative, common, or cliché.
Content, Scripting, & Sense of Purpose	20	The work has a strong sense of purpose and offers insightful, emotionally compelling content of value to its audience. Entertaining elements are compelling and coherent. The content fulfills the purpose of the project. The work pushes dialogue beyond predictable fare and could be interesting to larger audiences. If the work is scripted, then the script adheres to best practices in writing for the medium, including adept, economical use of language, grammar, and style.	The work has a strong sense of purpose and the content offers some value to its audience. The work could perhaps be more emotionally compelling, insightful, entertaining, and/or informative, but it fulfill the purpose of the project. Some language, grammar, and style might be improved.	The content needs to offer substantially more value to its audience—for example, more insight, emotional connection, information, entertainment, etc., to fulfill the purpose of the project. It could perhaps improve in grammar, language, and style.
Shooting & Editing:  Application of Aesthetic Principles	10	The visual elements and principles of the project (for example, light color, motion, positioning of subject to camera, positioning of subjects to one another, and other considerations of mise en scene) support the content and intended meaning. The camera angles, pacing, variety of images, and continuity result in engaging, coherent visual story-telling. The project demonstrates effective techniques appropriate for the medium—or breaks the rules with effective results.	Project applies many of the aesthetic principles appropriate for the medium and consistent with the content and intended meaning. Some exceptions may weaken the work. For example, common issues that arise include pacing, continuity, unplanned use of lighting or color, etc.	The formal elements and principles of the project seem to be inconsistent with the content and intended meaning and/or the project demonstrates insufficient application of aesthetic principles appropriate for the medium.
Effective Communication: Clarity, Organization, Flow	10	The project demonstrates highly effective, meaningful communication to an intended audience that is wider than family, friends, and classmates. Messages are clear. The video is well paced and organized. It flows.	The project would be somewhat meaningful to a wide intended audience and communicates somewhat effectively in terms of clarity, organization, and flow.	Project needs more effective communication with the intended audience, including messages that would engage with wide audiences.
Technical Issues: Production Values	5	Techniques and output of production demonstrate high quality. Images and audio are clear. The proper resolution has been chosen. Etc.	All instructions were followed. Techniques and output of production demonstrate average quality.	Techniques and output of production demonstrate below-average quality.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>			

# Project #3 | Submission Sheet

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YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STORY TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_ LINK TO PROJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

INSERT SCREEN GRAB & FEATURE STORY TEXT BELOW:

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Access the [.docx version of this document](#) and save this project submission sheet.  
Remember to include the grading rubrics below in your submission sheet so I can make notes.
- 2) Insert a screen grab of your website pages in this document and copy/past the feature story text.
- 2) Upload this document to Blackboard and print it out to submit in hard copy (stapled).

Criteria	Points	Above Average	Average	Below Average
<b>General Content Specifications</b>	5	The digital story will engage multiple audiences and contain at a variety of media components--examples: web page, mini-doc, game, still images, interviews, info graphics, Facebook page, Tweeted event, blog, podcast, webcast, etc. (See examples at <a href="#">8 Million Stories</a> .) Each component clearly and effectively tells a different aspect of the story that could stand alone and does not contain redundant content. At the same time, the story becomes integrated and more resonant when components are viewed together on the website. Multiple sides of the story are included. There is also a platform that delivers all of the components in one place (e.g., a Facebook page, a website, a news story, a blog, etc.). Each component of the work has a descriptive, attention-grabbing title.	Minimum assignment specifications have been met, though the content could be more fully developed to more fully tell the "story" on the website.	Content is absent, incomplete, or unfocused.
<b>Engagement &amp; Creativity</b>	10	The digital story is presented in a highly unique, original, and creative ways. It catches the viewers' attention and holds their interest.	The story is presented in way that are fairly engaging.	The story needs to be presented in more original or creative ways.
<b>Detail, Research &amp; Information</b>	10	The project is detailed, highly informative, and well researched with sufficient evidence to give a complete account of the event. Both qualitative and quantitative research are featured.	Project is fairly detailed, informative, and researched, but could be more thoroughly developed.	Project needs to be substantially more detailed, informative, and/or researched.
<b>Organization, Integration Coherency, Flow</b>	5	The digital components are organized and economical and flow. The material is easy to comprehend, is well integrated, and sets a distinct mood.	Organization, integration, flow, and coherency are fairly strong.	Project needs substantial improvements in organization, integration, flow, and/or coherency.
<b>Feature Story</b>	20	Each component of the work will be graded based on its corresponding rubric	(See relevant rubrics.)	(See relevant rubrics.)
<b>Video</b>	20	Each component of the work will be graded based on its corresponding rubric	(See relevant rubrics.)	(See relevant rubrics.)
<b>Component of Choice</b>	10	Each component of the work will be graded based on its corresponding rubric. Let your instructor know if you need a rubric and feedback for a kind of work not featured here.	(See relevant rubrics.)	(See relevant rubrics.)
<b>Component of Choice</b>	10	Each component of the work will be graded based on its corresponding rubric. Let your instructor know if you need a rubric and feedback for a kind of work not featured here.	(See relevant rubrics.)	(See relevant rubrics.)
<b>Production Values &amp; Aesthetics</b>	5	The digital work demonstrates high production values, adept use of software, varied imagery, and strong aesthetics. Output is high quality, appropriate for the delivery platform (example: low resolution for web use; high resolution for theater screenings; etc.).	The digital work demonstrates good production values and aesthetics.	The digital work needs substantial improvement in production values and/or aesthetics.
<b>TOTAL</b>	100			

