

“Every way of seeing is also a way of not seeing.”

Helen Merrill Lynd

Second Take-home Assignment

From the beginning of the semester we have been looking at the way that print and visual media have served as a battleground between the “official story” and vernacular forms of expression that offer oppositional interpretations and alternative ways of seeing. In order to demonstrate your understanding of how this battleground of ideas functions, for this assignment you will create two stories, using the same visual images for each story. One will uphold an “official story,” which serves the interests of existing structures of power. The other, using the same images—but not necessarily in the same order—will offer a different, non-official way of seeing, one that speaks for a perspective that is rarely heard of seen in mainstream arenas of public expression.

As you select your images you should think about how they might be arranged in order to tell your two different stories. One of these should present a narrative that upholds what you see as an official or mainstream ways of seeing and framing the world you inhabit. The second should offer an alternative, non-traditional interpretation of the world in which we live, one that reflects your own critical or unconventional understanding of a particular “reality.” You are strongly encouraged to present your stories using familiar media forms and formats.

In order to do this assignment, you should take 6-10 pictures (you may also draw your images, or take them from an already existing media source). However you choose your images, you should make sure that they have identifiable characters in them, and include background scenes that will work well for you as you design your project.

Each image in each of your two stories may be accompanied by a small amount of written text in order to more effectively clarify the narrative you are presenting. You should also present your stories in ways that are compelling and entertaining, and have something important to say. You might, for example, put your images together in the form of a comic strip or graphic novel, with word bubbles. You might place short captions beneath each picture as is often seen on the pages of newspapers. You might want to imitate a familiar social media site. If you have video editing skills, you may choose to use 6-10 video clips or shots and edit them (with voice over) to tell your tales. (If you choose this method, limit each of your stories to the length of a 30- to 60-second commercial spot.)

The key here is to be creative and thoughtful. Each pair of stories should address a social, cultural, economic, political or personal issue that is important to you, and your pair should present both the usual ways of seeing that issue, and your own alternative way of seeing it. The idea here is to draw your audience in, combining visual and written materials.

You have the option to double-up in creative teams of two students. This is an option, not a requirement, but doubled-up projects should clearly reflect the work of a creative team, rather than an individual effort. You have three weeks to complete this assignment, use all the time you have to assure that your project will meet a high standard of quality in terms of ideas and creative approach.

Projects must be submitted to your Section Leader by Monday March 26th.