

Bard Class Schedule

Film 335: Human Rights Clinic

Visiting Professor Gillian Caldwell (gillian@witness.org)

The goal for the semester will be to create two “Rights Alert” web broadcasts, along the lines of the five examples we are asking you to review for the first class. You should know that you are participating in an ambitious, first-time experiment, and that the collective success of the semester will depend on your commitment, collaboration, flexibility, and hard work. Please reconsider your enrollment if you are not prepared to commit substantial amounts of time and energy to this course. It will be rewarding, but it will also be quite intensive, and the class is necessarily structured in such a way that each student’s contribution is critical to the successful completion of the semester’s work. I look forward to working with you all, and to our collective endeavor which will hopefully make an important contribution to human rights advocacy.

DRAFT SCHEDULE – SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION

**February 3, 5-8pm:

Assignment for Class: Thoroughly review the WITNESS website (<http://www.witness.org>), and be prepared to discuss the Video, Audio Introduction, Story, Act Now and Links Section for each of the following Rights Alerts broadcasting there : (1) Forgotten People; (2) Refuge; (3) Behind the Labels; (4) The Rule of the Gun in Sugarland; and (5) Expelled. Note: to complete this assignment you will need access to a high speed connection (ie T1 or DSL), Quicktime 4.0, and a computer with speakers.

Reading: “Preparing a Rights Alert,” WITNESS Handout.

Class: This class will be focused on giving students a basic grounding in the WITNESS methodology, through a combination of class discussion and video presentations including the WITNESS training video titled Video For Change. We will also go over the schedule for the semester and define work groups for the two main production projects we will undertake. One will be focused on Burma (B), and the other will be focused on women and psychiatric hospitalization in the US and abroad (W).

During this class, each student will be placed in two work groups for the course of the semester. Work group placement will be determined by the skills and interests of the students in consultation with the faculty. The work groups will be defined as follows:

Phase I: Groups W (Women) and B (Burma)

- (1) research and writing for story, links, and Audio Introduction sections of the webcasts (two students for each project);
- (2) researching and defining the advocacy, outreach and distribution objectives for

the video through the development of a Video Action Plan and the ACT NOW section of the website (two students for each project);

(3) logging and transcribing videotape currently in house and to be shot (four-five students for each project).

Phase II: Groups W & B

(4) video production which includes two to three days of shooting and sound recording for the US-based project, and developing the script for both projects (three students for each project);

(5) video editing, digitizing and encoding for web cast (two students for each project); and

(6) graphics and implementation for the web broadcast NOTE – GROUP MAY BE CANCELLED AND HANDLED VIA WITNESS DEPENDING ON TIME AND STUDENT SKILLS (two students for each project).

Note: Both work groups that students are assigned to should be connected to the same overall project, ie Burma or women and institutionalization. Where possible given skills and interests, students will be located in one work group from Phase I, and one work group from Phase II.

February 8:

Assignment for this class: Thoroughly review your assigned WITNESS partner file and related reading materials, and be prepared to make a presentation in class on it. Read and be prepared to discuss Video for Change: A Practical Guide for Activists, the written manual that accompanies the WITNESS training video viewed in the first class; Creating Video For Advocacy (WITNESS handout), optional readings from Documentary Texts as desired.

Class: Students will present the mission and history of their assigned WITNESS partner groups and we will begin discussions of the plan for the semester's production. We will also watch and discuss videos as background for the semester's work on each project: Diaries of a Mad Woman and Inside Burma: Land of Fear.

February 15

Assignment for the class: Groups 1, 2 and 3 for both W & B should come to this class having begun work on their assigned tasks. They should be prepared for in class presentation and discussion on the work they have completed. Read Video Activists Handbook, Chapters 5-8, 10, 11. Students should also read material from Laura Prescott, one of our partners on the project on Women in Institutions, distributed via email on Feb 8 (not for distribution beyond the class.) Students should also familiarize themselves with the Burma resources from the revised bibliography distributed via email Feb 8 that

includes enhanced materials on the Burma project, including the Burma Humanitarian website, "Village Fire" (an article about the destruction of rural life in Southeastern Burma), "Human Rights Trends in Rural Eastern Burma (June 1999)", and the reports by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

Class: Groups (1) and (2) will present the preliminary findings of their research in preparation for drafting their accompanying materials, and Group (3) will distribute their logs and transcripts and present excerpts of the first two videos they each have logged in preparation for the class. Students will view the completion of Diaries of a Mad Woman.

February 22

Assignment for the class: Groups (1) and (2) should continue their research and complete first drafts of their materials for class discussion. Group (3) should log an additional three videos each.

Class: Group (3) will distribute their logs and transcripts and present excerpts of the three videos they each have logged in preparation for the class. The class will discuss the drafts developed by Groups (1) and (2).

March 1

Assignment for the Class: Groups (1) and (2) should complete and distribute their final drafts for class discussion on email by Thursday February 28. Members of group (3) should log an additional three videos each for presentation. Read Video Activist Handbook Chapter 4 and WITNESS Tips & Techniques Manual.

Class: Review and discussion of the proposed Story, Links, Act Now, Audio Introduction and Video Action Plans for each project. Discussion of the videotape logged and available with an eye towards script development.

March 8

- Class taught by Sam Gregory, WITNESS Program Coordinator with special guest from Burma Humanitarian Mission

Assignment for the Class: Students in group (4) for B should develop an outline for their script based on the logs and transcripts completed to date. Students in group (4) for W will spend the week preparing for their first day of shooting, including scheduling interviews, transportation, equipment, questions for interviewees and a preliminary outline for the script. Students in Group (3) should complete remaining logs for their assigned videotape and liaise with script developers in Group (4) and carefully review the

Story, Links, Act Now, Audio Introduction and Video Action Plan to help define the outline for the script.

Class: In this class, Jeremy Paster from the Burma Humanitarian Mission will be joining us. He will spend 15-20 minutes presenting their work and his vision for the collaborative class project. Any additional time will be spent discussing the script outlines, strategizing logging priority for any remaining videos, and screening Burma Deception.

March 15

- Class Taught By Sam Gregory, WITNESS Program Coordinator

Assignment for Class: Group (3) will log and transcribe any remaining videotape for presentation and discussion in class. Group (4) for Burma will prepare a rough draft of the script for distribution in class. Group (4) for Women in Institutions will plan for their shoot and refine the outline for their script.

Class: Viewing of Tips & Techniques and Video for Change, WITNESS 2000 for a basic introduction to shooting and advocacy video by Sam Gregory. Group (3) will present the logged videotapes. Group (4) will present their scripts, script outlines, and plans for shooting, as appropriate. Groups will watch an additional video. [TBD]

MARCH 18, MARCH 19

NOTE: ADDITIONAL CLASS DATE AND TIME. AS DISCUSSED, BE SURE TO INFORM YOUR PROFESSORS OF THIS FORTHCOMING OBLIGATION NOW AND INQUIRE AS TO HOW YOU CAN MAKE UP THE WORK FOR CLASS.

Group W: Shooting in New York City with Laura Prescott and Gillian Caldwell

March 22:

Assignment for Class: Group (3) will log the video shot by (4)W on their shoot on March 18 and March 19. Group (4)W will develop the rough draft for their script, and group (4)B will finalize their draft of the script. Group (4) for W and B should get comments on the scripts from the relevant WITNESS partners before distributing the scripts or outlines in class. Read Video Activist Handbook, Chapter 9; Digital Video Camerawork, pp 144-170.

Class: Group (3)W will present the tapes and logs they have prepared. Groups (4)B & (4)W will present their proposed scripts for discussion. Class will break into groups B & W following discussion for collaborative work on the scripts, to incorporate the comments to date and prepare the scripts for post-production (editing).

March 29:

Assignment for Class: Group (5) begins digitizing and completes an assembly for productions for B & W. NOTE: this assembly must be outputted to VHS for screening by the class at this session. Groups (1) and (2) review their Story, Links and Act Now to ensure that no additional modifications are necessary given the directions the productions are taking. Reading TBD.

Class: Group (5) presents their video assemblies to the class, for discussion of the basic structure of the script and any necessary modifications or archival needs. Groups B & W meet separately following video presentations to discuss any necessary script modifications.

April 5: Spring Break, No Class

April 8: Mid-Term Grades Due to Registrar

April 12:

- Guest Speaker: Sandrine Isambert, Video Editor, WITNESS

Assignment for Class: Group (6) begins to design the templates for the text-based information, ie the Story, Links and Act Now sections, and to design any graphics elements necessary for the video productions. Group (5) complete their first rough cut. Reading TBD.

Class: Group (5) screen their rough cuts for the class, followed by discussion and further modification to the script as necessary. NOTE: Group 5 should bring a VHS copy of their rough cuts to class for discussion. [Group (6) presents their preliminary designs for the website for comment and review. AS DISCUSSED, THIS MAY BE ELIMINATED]

April 19:

Assignment for Class: Group (5) complete their fine cuts for presentation. Group (6) completes proposed final designs for text-based information, and gets feedback from relevant WITNESS partner groups. Reading on editing, TBD.

Class: Group (5) screen their fine cut for the class, followed by discussion and final comments before sending the tapes for review by the WITNESS partners. NOTE: Group 5 should bring a VHS copy of their rough cuts to class for discussion. Group (6) presents their designs for final comment by the class. Rough cuts of the video are mailed to the WITNESS partners for expedited review.

April 26:

Assignment for Class: Group (5) gets final partner feedback on the videos. Read Making Television Matter (available online, see bibliography).

Class: Group (5) arranges for WITNESS partners to provide feedback via teleconference to the class. Final decisions are made about edits.

May 3:

Assignment for Class: Group (5) B&W complete the final video edits. Reading on advocacy TBD.

Class: Group (5) B&W complete the final video edits.

May 10:

Assignment for Class: Group (6) digitizes and encodes video and audio and completes preliminary testing of all links in the site. Readings on streaming and video on the web TBD.

Class: TBD – Leaving this open to fill in gaps or to accommodate snafus.

May 17: Assignment for the Class: Complete final preparations on your Rights Alert production to ensure that your video broadcast is ready for presentation and discussion in class.

Final Class: Work groups will present their final products, including a viewing of their completed video in webcast format, and a tour and discussion of their Story, Links, Audio Introduction and Act Now sections.

May 20: Senior Grades Due

June 3: All Grades and Crit Sheets Due