

**VISUALIZING
SAN FRANCISCO:
EXPLORING SIGNAGE
& PUBLIC SPACES** ART 195



Photo by Ma'Keda Habtemariam, Spring 2012

First Year Seminar / Art 195
University of San Francisco
Art + Architecture / Fall 2012
Mondays 11:45 am – 3:25 pm
Lone Mountain 141B

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:45 am – 1:45 pm
Gleeson Library, 4th Floor or by appointment

Visualizing San Francisco: Exploring Signage & Public Spaces

Course Description Signage competes for attention, conveys content, and merges into identity. “Visualizing San Francisco: Exploring Signage & Public Spaces”, is an interdisciplinary seminar for new students at the University of San Francisco. Participants assess their place in public space by investigating the presence of words and images in the urban landscape.

San Francisco, a city of contrasts, dynamic history and cultural flow, is soaked with a unique composition of words and image that comprise signage. All manner of visual communication - directional signage, retail signs, banners, posters, billboards and advertisements strewn about the streets and buildings struggles for attention, purpose, and the creation of urban identity.

“Visualizing San Francisco” is a study of visual culture and its contexts. This course surveys graphic design styles, typographic forms and media found on signage dating from the early days of San Francisco to the present. As new citizens of San Francisco, students tour various neighborhoods and communities of the city, observing, collecting and documenting signage. Reading, writing, and thinking about words and images [signage] as voices in the urban landscape enable participants to interpret who the signage is speaking to and when. Students engage in writing about their discoveries, and in the process learn to navigate a way through their new city.

link to course web site:
http://www.stacyasher.com/Art195_FYS_USF.html

The following San Francisco sites and communities will be researched: USF, the Golden Gate Park, Ocean Beach, Mission, Castro, Baker Beach, Chinatown, Fisherman's Wharf, Sunset, Haight-Ashbury, Pacific Heights, Potrero Hill, China Basin, SOMA, Tenderloin, Financial District, Golden Gate National Parks.

Core F Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate a critical understanding of the political, economic and social underpinnings of visual communications and signage: Students read and respond to theoretical texts that provide political, economic and social frameworks to analyze the production of visual communications and signage.
2. Students will learn to chronologically sequence selected visual communications and signage: Students will read historical texts and learn to identify features of visual communications and signage through field trips of multiple districts throughout San Francisco. Intended audiences will be identified, analyzed and interpreted to gain an understanding of the populations of each district.
3. Students will be able to identify and analyze the growth and development of urban visual communications and signage across various world cities and regions. Students will read texts in conjunction with class lectures and discussions and understanding of how the signage in San Francisco neighborhoods and communities attract specific audiences.
4. Students will learn to use comparative methods to compare and contrast visual communications and signage throughout San Francisco. Students will read the landscape and assigned texts in conjunction with class lectures and discussions. They will develop and understanding of how San Francisco districts and neighborhoods use signage to attract specific audiences.
5. Students will learn to articulate and defend their judgements through a studied, engaged, and informed process of reflection as well as action: Students develop focused research questions and compose substantial arguments in response to those questions, incorporating extensive independent library research, field observations and documentation.

6. Students will learn to approach and appreciate visual communications or signage throughout the San Francisco. They will learn how to read and analyze visual culture using multidisciplinary approaches and how to use critical thinking as a key skill in interpreting their social world. Students will learn to read the city around them and better navigate their way through San Francisco.

Keywords / Themes

Design, Graphic Design, Typography, Visual Communications, Identity, Urban Form, Advertising, Communications, Communities, Urban Planning, San Francisco, Posters, Billboards, Banners, Way finding Systems, Audience and Identity, Diversity, Neighborhoods, Public Space, Private Space, Landscape

Field Trips

Students will visit and carefully study the following districts in San Francisco to observe, document and compare and contrast what types of signage have and are present and who the intended audience is.

The Golden Gate Park, Ocean Beach, Mission, Castro, Baker Beach, Chinatown, Fisherman's Wharf, Sunset, Haight-Ashbury, Pacific Heights, Potrero Hill, China Basin, Bayview / Hunters Point, SOMA, Tenderloin, Financial District, Golden Gate National Parks.

Key moments, Themes, Places

How signage changed, enlivened or promoted action

1900's - The Great Fire and Earthquake, The Victorian Era, WWI

1920's - Prohibition and Bootlegging, Panama Pacific Exposition

1930's - The Great Depression, the Golden Gate International Exposition
49-Mile Scenic Drive, Work Projects Administration; WPA

1940's - World War II, Historic Walking Tour of Fisherman's Wharf

1950's - Freeway Development and Suburbia, Bay Bridge Development

1960's - Haight-Ashbury, Civil Rights, Anti-War and the Summer of Love

1970's - San Francisco Sign Ordinance, Gay Rights, Billboard Liberation Front,

1980's - Vinyl Technologies and the Beginning of the Digital Era

1990's - Dot-Com Boom, Gentrification, Interactive Signage

2000's - New Legislation, Prop G, 2008 Election, New Technologies: the LED
and Kinetic Signage, Signage in the Future

Requirements

All students should have a 6" X 9" or an equivalent size field book / sketch-book with blank pages. This book will serve as a tool to record details about your field trips where you can take field notes, make sketches, adhere found materials. This will be a valuable record of your various excursions into the city. A small digital camera will also be useful. If you don't have one, there are a few cameras that belong to the Art + Architecture Department on loan from the Media Kiosk in Cowell Hall.

Media Studies Equipment Desk:

415-422-6949 / medialabl@usfca.edu / Cowell G12

Every week, a part of the class, even on field trips will be devoted to a discussion of the readings. To participate in these discussions you must come prepared: read the assigned texts, make notes and write your response or thought paper.

Students will be required to acquire a San Francisco Library Card. This will allow access to the photo archives that include many wonderful examples of historical images from specific time periods that will be covered.

Assignments

1. Response / Thought Papers

Every week students will hand in a one-page response paper in relation to the reading that week and field trips or guest presentations. Response papers will be one 8.5" X 11" sheet, 1" margins all around 12 point single-spaced text. Further instructions will be discussed in class.

2. Mid-term proposal

Students will create a proposal on one of the topics they will be researching and writing about through the second half of the semester – Week 09. Further directions will be provided in class.

3. Draft paper

Students will present a draft during class on Week 12. The draft paper should clearly outline research objectives methodology.

4. Final paper / Assignment

Students will present and eight-page, 2000 word final paper and presentation. The paper and presentation will include visual examples and a comprehensive bibliography.

5. Blog / Online Journal

Students will create and maintain an online journal with weekly entries that highlight their discoveries about signage, visual communications and San Francisco. This is also an ideal place to post your thought paper for the week.

6. Image Library / Documentation of signage from each of the districts visited.

Grading

Thought Papers – 20%

Blog / Online Journal – 10%

Image Library – 5%

Mid-term presentation and proposal – 15%

Draft Paper – 10%

Final Presentations and paper – 30%

Class participation – 10%

100 – 94% A, 93 – 90% A-, 89 – 87% B+, 86 – 84% B, 83 – 80% B-,

79 – 77% C+, 76 – 74% C, 73 – 70% C-, 69% and below D

With regard to letter grades: The grade of "C" is satisfactory. It is not poor performance. If a student receives this grade they have put forth a reasonable amount of effort and attained acceptable [average] results. A "B" grade shows the student has pushed beyond the average; they have understood the needs of the project and addressed them; they have employed their learning and have crafted successful solutions to the papers and presentations assigned. Students receiving a "B" have reached a level which clearly exceeds "competency" The "A" is reserved for students who have attained excellence. They have, in fact, exceeded the expectations of the tasks put before them. Additionally, interest, enthusiasm, energy, and passion for the course content and the learning process have been displayed.

Texts

Students in this course are expected to participate by developing a visual awareness of signage and visual communications in San Francisco by reading the landscape and required texts, reviewing outside periodicals and publications. During the field trips, students will develop an awareness to their own spatial orientation, the context of signage and recognize methods of signage production. Readings will be required and supplemental materials will be assigned. Discussion will follow these readings to clarify, pose questions and ensure understanding of the material which relate to signage in San Francisco .

The class will use a reader compiled from various chapters in the texts mentioned in the Course Schedule. The texts deal specifically with the history of the urban development and use of visual communications and signage in San Francisco. The second set of texts, provide theoretical frameworks to understand and analyze the broader political, economic and social forces that shape signage, visual communications and urban landscape.

Academic Honesty

Students will observe and respect the university's policy regarding plagiarism as noted in the college's Academic Honesty Policy. As this policy stipulates, all writing submitted for this course, whether in "draft" form or final form, must not represent the words or ideas of another person without reference or citation. Any student who violates plagiarism standards or any other Academic Integrity standards can expect to receive a failing grade for the project and the course. Failure to abide by this rule will result in failing the course and could result in expulsion from the college.

Students are expected to comply with the USF Student Academic Policy. Refer to the policy at (http://www.usfca.edu/acadserv/catalog/policies_honesty.html) and contact the instructor if you have any questions or concerns. Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism; intentionally or unintentionally representing the words of another person as your own; failure to properly site references; manufacturing references.
- Working with another person when independent work is required.
- Submitting a paper written by another person or obtained from the internet. The penalties for violation of the policy may include a failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade in the course, and / or a referral to the Dean and the Committee on Student Academic Honesty. In addition, a letter will be sent to the Associate Dean for Student Academic Services; the letter will remain in your file for two years after you graduate after which you may petition for its removal.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Student Disability Services, (SDS) 422-6876 as early as possible in the semester.

Students must provide written documentation of the disability in the first two weeks of the course, or provide any changes in due diligence using the semester with a signature from the SDS office.

Deadlines

All Thought Paper Assignments and Blog / Journal entries are due on the day and time given, always at the beginning of class unless otherwise noted. Assignments that are late will not be accepted.

Class Policies and Attendance

Consistent and prompt attendance develops responsible professional behavior and insures that students have access to the full range of experiences and information necessary to complete class assignments and acquire skills and knowledge emphasized in a university education. Consistent with college practice, students are expected to attend all sessions of courses for which they are registered.

Only two unexcused absences will be allowed. The third unexcused absence will lower your final semester grade by one letter. The fourth unexcused absence will lower your final semester grade by two letters. Field trips, outside lectures, and any other special events that take place outside of the classroom during class time will also count towards final attendance.

Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis. Students should be informed that the allotted absences [2] are to accommodate routine illness, weddings, car trouble, etc. doctor appointments, advisor conferences, trips to supply stores and labs, employment, etc., should not be scheduled to conflict with class. Prolonged illness should be verified by a physician and may require the student to withdraw from class if he/she cannot complete work in a comprehensive and timely manner. Tardiness is defined as being ten minutes late for class or departing before class has been formally dismissed by the professor.

Two tardies are counted as one absence. [note: tardiness that exceeds 45 minutes will be counted as an absence] It should be further noted that faculty are frequently called upon to recommend students for professional positions upon graduation and are contacted by potential employers as references. In such instances, reliability is always discussed. Students with a responsible record of attendance are likely to receive favorable recommendations.

If at anytime during the semester you want feedback on your Thought Papers, Final Paper research, Blog/Journal entries or performance, or wish to discuss any issue related to school or the field of design, please make an appointment with instructor during office hours or arrange an other convenient time.

Religious beliefs

You must declare your intention to observe holidays [include name of holiday and dates] in writing within the first two weeks of the semester.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss options with the instructor during the first two weeks of class.

Instructor's Biography

Stacy Asher is an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Art + Architecture where she teaches classes on typography, publication design, and design media. Stacy has an MFA in Design from the California College of the Arts. She has worked as a designer on several large, outdoor signage campaigns for HIV Prevention as well as the promotion of the cultural arts in San Francisco. Stacy is dedicated to creating what she calls social art, which engages the public in assessing and reflecting on how we exist in public space.

Mentoring Component

Mentoring centers on building a relationship between student and faculty and supporting students beyond the classroom. Mentoring offers a transference of information to help students fulfill both academic and career endeavors. At the beginning of the Semester [Week 02] and at Mid-Term [Week 09], each student will schedule individual meetings with faculty to discuss non-course-related issues. The meetings are intended to discuss topics outside of the course contents and offer support to the existing Academic Advising the student is receiving.

Some topics for discussion, goals for the meetings and guidelines:

1. Advising: Talking with students about their interests, other classes, and discussing a 5/10-year plan.
2. Registration: Receiving guidance on how to find appropriate resources for registering, how to find primary advisor and to prepare for that appointment with scheduling, prerequisites and finding course load.

3. Availability: Discussing potential areas of trouble— interests, emotional, physical changes that can be discussed in a professional manner.
4. Community: Discussion of community based activities outside of traditional academic framework. [extra curricular engagement, groups, goals, projects, internships that are available for the student]
5. Resources: Finding and showing students where the campus and community resources are located.
6. Academic: Meeting to discuss academic progress in class at midpoint/mid-term and to also be available to discuss other academic courses.

Specific Texts about Reading the Landscape, Signage, and Navigation

Calori, Chris, *Signage and Wayfinding Design: A Complete Guide to Creating Environmental Graphic Design Systems*

Uebele, Andreas, *Signage Systems and Information Graphics: A Professional Sourcebook*, Thames & Hudson, 2010

David, Gibson, *The Wayfinding Handbook: Information Design for Public*, 2009

Tufte, Edward R., *Envisioning Information*. Cheshire, Connecticut.: Graphics Press, 1990.

Uebele, Andreas, *Signage Systems & Information Graphics*, Thames & Hudson, 2007

Trulove, Sprague and Colony, *This Way: Signage Design for Public Spaces*, Rockport, 2000

Baines, Phil and Dixon, Catherine, *Signs: Lettering in the Environment*, Laurence, 2002

Henkin, David, *City Reading, Written Words and Public Spaces in Antebellum New York*, Columbia University Press, 1998

Specific Texts about San Francisco and Urban Planning

Rubin, Jasper, *A Negotiated Landscape: The Transformation of San Francisco's Waterfront since 1950*, Center for American Places, 2011

Johnson, William C., *The Politics of Urban Planning*, New York : Paragon House, 1989

Shepard, Susan, *In the Neighborhoods, A Guide to the Joys and Discoveries of San Francisco's Neighborhoods*

Sinclair, Mark, *San Francisco, Cities of Imagination, A Cultural and Literary History* Introduction: Navigating San Francisco,

Robert W. Bowen and Brenda Young Bowen, *San Francisco's China Town* [Post-card History Series], Arcadia Publishing, 2008

Specific Texts about Design, Typography and Visual Communications

de Saussure, Ferdinand, "The Linguistic Sign" in Robert E. Innis, ed., *Semiotics: An Introductory Anthology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985

Dowding, Geoffrey, *The history of printing types: an illustrated summary of the main stages in the development of type design from 1440 up to the present day*. 1961; rep New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 1998.

Dwiggins, William Addison, *Layout in Advertising*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948.

Evans,,Walker, *Signs* (Getty Trust Publications: J. Paul Getty Museum) by Andrei Codres

Fiske, John, "Popular Culture" in Franc Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, eds. *Critical Terms for Literary Study*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Helfand, Jessica, *Screen: Essays on Graphic Design, New Media, and Visual Culture*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001.

Heller, Steven and Louise Fili, *Typology: Type Design from the Victorian Era to the Digital Age*. San Francisco, CA: Chronicle Books. 1999.

Heller, Steven, Elinor Pettit, *Graphic Design Time Line: A Century of Design Milestones*. Allworth Communications, Inc., 2000.

Heller, Steven and Georgette Ballance, eds. *Graphic Design History*. New York: Allworth Communications, Inc., 2001.

Heller, Steven, and Philip B. Meggs, eds. *Texts on Type: Critical Writings on Typography*. New York: Allworth Press, 2001.

Kepes, Gyorgy, *Sign, Symbol, Image*. New York: George Braziller, 1966.

Meggs, Phillip, *The History of Graphic Design*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons. 1998.

Meggs, Philip, and Carter, Rob, *Typographic Specimens: The Great Typefaces*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1993.

Meggs, Philip B., *Type and Image: The Language of Graphic Design*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1989.

Macmillan, Neil, *An A-Z of Type Designers*, Published by Yale University Press, 2006

Nesbitt, Alexander, *The History and Technique of Lettering*. New York: Dover, 1950.

Poynor, Rick, *Designing Pornotopia: Travels in Visual Culture*. Laurence King Publishing, 2006

Poynor, Rick, *No More Rules: Graphic Design and Postmodernism*, Yale University Press, 2003

Poynor, Rick, *Obey the Giant*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2002

Richardson, Margaret, *Type Graphics: The Power of Type in Graphic Design*. Gloucester, MA: Rockport, 2000.

Uppdike, Daniel, *Printing Types: Their History, Forms, and Use*, Volumes I and II. New York: Dover Publications, 1980.

Wallis, Lawrence W., *Modern Encyclopedia of Typefaces: 1960–90*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1990.

Relevant Links

San Francisco Public Library
San Francisco Historical Photograph and Film Collection
<http://sflib1.sfpl.org:82/>

San Francisco City Planning Department
General Advertising Sign Program
<http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=1815>

Up From the Deep - San Francisco Street Photography
Photographic Essays of 6th Street and the Tenderloin
<http://upfromthedeep.com/>

CBS Outdoor Advertising
San Francisco Billboards & Outdoor Advertising Information
<https://www.cbsoutdoor.com/markets/marketsearch/sanfranciscobayarea/sanfranciscobayarea.aspx>

The Billboard Liberation Front
<http://www.billboardliberation.com/>

Women's Marketing Organization
Specifics about San Francisco Billboard Locations
<http://www.billboards.com/billboards/san-francisco-billboards>

American Planning Association
Urban Planning and Development
<http://www.planning.org/research/signs/pdf/chapter1.pdf>

Guest Presentations/ Field Trips / Course Schedule

Guest Presentations / *dates and times to be confirmed and are subject to change*

Patricia Cué / Associate Professor, San Diego State University. In her research, Patricia explores cultural sustainability and ethics in the practice of graphic design. She has developed cultural identity projects for Mexican indigenous populations through the government of Puebla and Mexico City. She is currently working on a book documentation of vernacular wall painting for music in Mexico. Professor Cué has published a book about signage and music in Mexico City. She will share her experience observing, documenting and writing about the signs and messages linked to the variety of art and culture throughout Mexico City.

http://art.sdsu.edu/faculty_and_staff/directory/patricia_cue/

Balz Mueller / Architect / Urban Planning
Southern California Institute of Architecture, <http://www.sciarc.edu/>
California College of the Arts lecturer, faculty
<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2927219-5x2>
Balz Mueller, editor of a text about design and urban planning entitled "5x2: Research and the Making of Architecture" was published by CCA & UC Berkeley in 2006 and is distributed by William Stout Architectural Books. Balz will speak about the role of signage in contemporary culture and how we read the city.

Films to view outside of class / dates and times TBD

The Sign Painter Movie

The Sign Painter Movie is an independently funded project currently in production as of March 2010, with a projected release date in 2012.

<http://signpaintermovie.blogspot.com/>

Course Schedule

Week 01 - Monday, August 27

Introduce Course Syllabus, Course Structure and Schedule

Review how the course is aligned USF Mission, Vision and Core Values

Review transportation and transit systems in San Francisco

MUNI / BART / Clipper!

San Francisco way finding systems

Review Google Maps, MUNI / BART on line

Mapping Out Course Investigations: using your smart phone as GPS

Introduction to Design and Ethnography, Visual Anthropology

How to Read a Landscape

Setting up your on-line journal / Blog

Students will mark field trips on a printed map, course a travel plan and discuss using public transportation systems.

Mentoring:

Schedule individual meetings with each student during the semester to discuss non-course-related issues. These may include the student's other courses, projected major and minor, intellectual goals and ways to meet them, social and cultural activities and intellectual growth.

Reading:

Cronen, William, *How to Read the Landscape*, University of Wisconsin

<http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/landscapes.htm>

Sinclair, Mark, *San Francisco, Cities of Imagination, A Cultural and Literary History*

Introduction: Navigating San Francisco, pages 1 - 4, Part One, The Instant City, pages 5-21

Thought Paper Assignment:

What do you want to see when touring the neighborhoods of San Francisco.

How is studying signage ethnography or visual anthropology?

Week 02 - Monday, September 03 - No Class / Labor Day**Week 03 - Monday, September 10**

How to Read the Landscape, Site Investigations: Public vs. Private, the Various Types of Signage

What is Public? What is Private?

Commercial Signage: Corporate vs. Small Business

Non-Commercial Signage: Public Service Announcements,

Moveable Signage: Billboards on the Move, Bus Coverings

Signage as Art, Graffiti, Political Propaganda

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper Assignment [30 min]

Field Trip:

Working in pairs will tour the USF neighborhood including Fulton Street between Stanyan and Masonic. Students will document signage with photography and take field notes.

Thought Paper Assignment: Select one image of signage from your photo documentation signage and identify what type of signage it is. Consider when it was designed and who the audience is. Who is the signage communicating to? How does the signage create a sense of place? What do you think it was like around this place 100 years ago? What does it mean to read the landscape?

Reading:

Silverman, Jonathan, Dean Rader, *The World as Text: Writing, Reading, and Thinking about Culture and Its Contexts*, Introduction, pages 1-27

Narrative Archaeology: Reading the Landscape

<http://web.mit.edu/comm-forum/mit4/papers/hight.pdf>

Week 04 - Monday, September 17

Haight-Ashbury and the Upper Haight, The Corner of Haight Street and Ashbury Street: the Famous Street Sign, Sixties Art—Op Art, Pop Art, Psychedelic Graphics and Peace Signs.

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper Assignment [20 min]

*Narrative Archaeology:
Reading the Landscape*

It is possible for the author to select elements of the information about the locations where trigger points are to be placed, the area as a whole, its fit and tension within larger spaces both in geography, cartography, politically demographic shifts, borders, gentrification issues, preservation concerns., navigation and in time and history.

Moving through a space is not a passive exercise as sitting on one world and reading (and actively imagining) in another; it is akin to a conversation. The "conversation" is between the place (streets, buildings, structures), its infrastructure (sidewalks, roadways, streetlight timings and traffic speeds in car and on foot, railway crossing, etc) and the movements chosen by the person walking."

<http://web.mit.edu/comm-forum/mit4/papers/hight.pdf>

Field Trip:

Haight-Ashbury and the Upper Haight, The corner of Haight Street and Ashbury Street. Students will document signage with photography and take field notes, observing tourists and what they document with their cameras.

Thought Paper Assignment:

Why is the street sign at the corner of Haight and Ashbury a destination for tourists? Define: counterculture. Describe a predominant visual language of this area? How does the signage contribute to your understanding of what happened at this site?

During the mid-sixties a phenomenon occurred in San Francisco that was to have a profound effect of America and the rest of the world. It was the emergence of a genuine counterculture; a vast segment of American youth, who openly declared ambitions counter to the prevailing American dream, that is, they stood in opposition to its ideals and the then current war in Vietnam. This counterculture had its focus and apotheosis in an area of San Francisco known as the Haight-Ashbury, the intersection of two streets whose very names soon became synonymous with the movement, and the people themselves.

Week 05 - Monday, September 24

Nature and Signage, the History of San Francisco Recreation and Park Department signage and San Francisco Parks, the value of open space. Walking through the Golden Gate Park

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper Assignment [20 min]

Field Trip:

MacLaren Lodge and the Golden Gate Park, Exteriors of: the Legion of Honor, The Conservatory of Flowers, The Botanical Garden, The Academy of Science, The Tea Garden (We will not go into all of these museums but will study the signage systems on the outsides of each),

Thought Paper Assignment:

Why was signage important to the development of the Golden Gate Park? Compare and contrast the exterior signage of the various museums. How does the visual language of the signage communicate information on what the museum contains?

Reading:

Clary, Raymond, *The Making of Golden Gate Park--the Early Years, 1865-1906*, pages TBD

Week 06 - Monday, October 01

Ocean Beach, The Great Depression and the Work Projects Administration; WPA, 49-Mile Scenic Drive

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper Assignment [20 min]

Field Trip:

We will be taking the N-Judah train or the 5 Muni Line to Ocean Beach, touring the WPA works in the Beach Chalet, documenting signage with photography and taking field notes.

Thought Paper Assignment:

Why is this site historically significant? How did signage create a sense of place at Ocean Beach? How did the WPA contribute to the culture of San Francisco?

Reading:

Walker Evans: *Signs* (Getty Trust Publications: J. Paul Getty Museum) by Andrei Codres, pages TBD

Radio Program / Assigned:

Preserving the WPA's Artistic Legacy
<http://www.kqed.org/a/forum/R201201201000>

"Some San Francisco preservationists are raising an alarm about the decay of WPA murals inside the city's iconic Coit Tower. As they collect signatures to place a measure on the ballot to preserve the 75 to 80-year-old artwork, historians say other WPA projects in the Bay Area and across the nation are similarly threatened by time and neglect. We look at the distinctive artwork, buildings, bridges and other public works from that era."

Week 07 - Monday, October 08 No Class- Fall Break

Week 08 - Monday, October 15

Mentoring:

Schedule individual meetings with each student during the semester to discuss non-course-related issues. These may include the student's other courses, projected major and minor, intellectual goals and ways to meet them, social and cultural activities and intellectual growth.

Proposal for Final Paper Due / Blog - Journal Check Point

Week 09 - Monday, October 22

Union Square, the Fringe of the Tenderloin: Retail signage and the Environment/ Fashioning Consumer Friendly Spaces, Commercial culture and the Power of Persuasion, MUNI / BART Signage and Navigating Throughout the City, San Francisco's Civic Center, Photo Archives at San Francisco Public Library

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper Assignment [20 min]

Reading:

web.mit.edu/comm-forum/mit4/papers/hight.pdf

Narrative Archeology: Reading the Landscape, Jeremy Hight, MIT

Field trip:

We will be taking the MUNI - line 5 to Market Street where we will review BART system and study way finding system for upcoming field trips. We will also visit the San Francisco Main Library Branch Photography Archives. Students will document signage with photography and take field notes.

Thought Paper Assignment:

Discuss who the audience is in each of the two districts. What is the purpose of the majority of signage in the area? Select one image from each of the three districts and compare and contrast who the signage is directed at. Describe a signage from another era, include a visual example of the sign you are referencing

Week 09 - Monday, October 29

San Francisco Tourism, Local Business and the Souvenir;
The Financial District, Chinatown

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper

Assignment [20 min]

Field Trip:

Students will be taking a MUNI line to Market Street then walk through the Financial District, China Town. Students will document signage with photography and take field notes.

Reading:

San Francisco's China Town [Postcard History Series], Robert W. Bowen and Brenda Young Bowen, "New Chinatown" pages 41-64

Thought Paper Assignment:

Describe a brief history of Chinatown. How has signage evolved in this area? How has technology changed the way signage is viewed? Find an image from the past that illustrates your thoughts and concept. (visit the San Francisco Public Library archives online)

Week 10 - Monday, November 05

Identity and the Neighborhood: the Castro District and the Lower Haight, Duboce Park and Harvey Milk

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper Assignment [20 min]

Field Trip:

Students will be taking MUNI - line 5 to Market Street and 16th street then will be walking to Castro and 19th and then up Church Street to Duboce Park and Lower Haight Street. Students will document signage with photography and take field notes.

Thought Paper Assignment:

Discuss who you think the audience is in each of the three districts. Select one image from each of the three districts and compare and contrast who the signage is directed at. How does signage establish an identity for each district?

Identity and the Neighborhood: the Castro District and the Lower Haight, Duboce Park and Harvey Milk

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper Assignment [20 min]

Field Trip:

Students will be taking MUNI - line 5 to Market Street and 16th street then will be walking to Castro and 19th and then up Church Street to Duboce Park and Lower Haight Street. Students will document signage with photography and take field notes.

Thought Paper Assignment:

Discuss who you think the audience is in each of the three districts. Select one image from each of the three districts and compare and contrast who the signage is directed at. How does signage establish an identity for each district?

Week 11 - Monday, November 12

North Beach, The Graphic Language of Restaurants, History of North Beach

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper Assignment [20 min]

North Beach is a neighborhood in the northeast of San Francisco adjacent to Chinatown, Fisherman's Wharf and Russian Hill. The neighborhood is San Francisco's Little Italy, and has historically been home to a large Italian American population. It still holds many Italian restaurants today, though many other ethnic groups currently live in the neighborhood. It was also the historic center of the beatnik subculture. Today, North Beach is one of San Francisco's main red light and nightlife districts as well as a residential neighborhood populated by a mix of young urban professionals, families and Chinese immigrants connected to the adjacent Chinatown.

Thought Paper Assignment:

How does the graphic language of the signage of the restaurants and night clubs compete for your attention? How does the signage reveal what type of establishment is represented? How does signage convince you to go in or try a particular place? How does the signage reveal the history of North Beach? What is the history of North Beach?

Week 12 - Monday, November 19

More San Francisco Tourism: Fisherman's Wharf, the Embarcadero, the Piers and Ferry Terminal, The Golden Gate International Exposition (1939 and 1940)

The Golden Gate International Exposition (1939 and 1940), held at San Fran-

cisco, California's Treasure Island, was a World's Fair that celebrated, among other things, the city's two newly-built bridges, The San Francisco – Oakland Bay Bridge (1936) and the Golden Gate Bridge (1937)

Discussion of previous week's field trip, readings, and Thought Paper Assignment, Viewing of historical film, Trip Down Market Street In San Francisco Before the Fire, (1905) [45 min]
<http://www.archive.org/details/TripDown1905>

This gorgeous film pictures San Francisco's main thoroughfare as seen from the front window of a moving Market Street cable car, before the downtown area was destroyed in the 1906 earthquake and fire. This unusual record has been called the first "structural film" because it follows exactly the externally imposed structure of the car ride.

Field Trip:

We will be taking MUNI line 21 to Market Street then walking down Market to Fisherman's Wharf then along the Embarcadero. Students will document signage with photography and take field notes.

Thought Paper Assignment:

How does signage in the Fisherman's Wharf direct people to various tourist attractions? Is the signage effective? Describe what you imagine it was like to visit this area in 1906? How did San Francisco visitors and residents [in 1939] find the Golden Gate International Exposition?

Reading

Rubin, Jasper, *A Negotiated Landscape: The Transformation of San Francisco's Waterfront since 1950*, Center for American Places, 2011

Week 13 - Monday, November 26

The Mission District, Special Guest, Patricia Cué, *Signage and Music in Mexico City*. The evolution of the Mission: Gentrification and the Dot-Com boom.

Field Trip:

We will be taking the MUNI line 33 at Haight Street and Cole. We will explore Mission Street between 19th and 16th. Documenting signage and taking field notes.

The Mission District, also commonly called “The Mission”, is a neighborhood in San Francisco, California, USA, originally known as “the Mission lands”[2] meaning the lands belonging to the sixth Alta California mission, Mission San Francisco de Asis. This mission, San Francisco's oldest standing building, is located in the neighborhood between 16th and 17th at Dolores.

Thought Paper Assignment:

How does the signage reveal stories of the history of the Mission District?

How does the signage “tell” who lives there?

Week 12 - Monday, December 03

Presentation of Final Papers, On-line Journals / Blogs

Sketchbooks

Student Commitment

Course Structure + General Policies

Having read the Course Syllabus, you are now aware of the importance of responsible attendance, class preparation, policies and procedures. Please complete the information below and sign, acknowledging that you fully understand what you have read.

Date_____ 2012

Signature _____

Print Name_____

Address _____

Phone_____

email _____

Why are you interested in this course on San Francisco signage?

What do you expect to achieve from this course?

What are your academic strengths?

What are your personal strengths?

What would you enjoying doing and seeing during the course field trips?

Is there anywhere in particular you would like to go?

The Do's and Don't's of Writing Research Papers

<http://voices.yahoo.com/the-dos-donts-writing-research-10562407.html?cat=4>

Every researcher wants to submit an excellent research paper at the termination of their research. Your piece of writing is the only medium that conveys your hard work to the readers. Whether you write an abstract, a research paper, research proposals or thesis, your ways of presenting the data and your writing style all together create a holistic picture of you. Owing to the utter significance of a research paper, here are some tips that can ease the complicated process of writing.

The following is a list of do's and don'ts to remember as you begin to pen down your work:

The Do's

Communicate your work clearly and precisely. Remember you are presenting a novel work done; you don't have to write stories.

Spotlight the ideas and methodologies involved. Discuss specific reasons to justify your research.

Your innovative ideas and methodologies can be followed by future researchers, therefore, doubly verify the accuracy and correctness of the data you present.

Your presented materials should give a thorough conception of the topic and all its aspects.

Refer diverse sources of research for trustworthy and most up-to-date information.

Do scrutinize your research stuff and information for reliability and present it with ample analysis and logic to show how it conveys and supports your research.

Provide solid evidences and sufficient supporting arguments to reinforce your findings.

Fill your paper with scientific terminologies. Write your paper with only enough detail about the research work.

Maintain a track of the bibliography and references. Sort data by source or mark your notes so as to remember where individual facts came from.

Proof read the paper several times. Do not hesitate to take help of your friends/peers/colleagues/professional editors in proof reading and fine tuning the paper.

And the Don'ts

Do not misrepresent yourself. Be honest to the readers.

Don't include anything that doesn't answer the questions. It won't lead to any new conclusion about your work.

Don't lengthen your paper unnecessarily. Relevant and to the point data is sufficient to frame your work and make your point.

Don't reveal incomplete or absurd reasons for doing the research.

Don't exceed the recommended word limits. This gives an impression that you don't know how to follow guidelines, manage within limitations or systematize your findings.

Don't make too many generalizations. A paper full of overviews gives an impression that you do not have anything to say.

Don't write in a vacuum. Make sure that each of your findings support the cause.

Don't forget to reference any supporting material or related research done by other prominent researchers- it augments and complements the research paper.

Don't cite Wikipedia. Rather find an absolutely reliable source for your citations.

Don't plagiarize and always proof read your work before submission.

date _____

Savannah Armer _____

Luis Camacho _____

Zachary Cecil _____

Morgan Clarke _____

Eva Dunn _____

Madeline Hauptert _____

Linda Hoang _____

Shiloh Johnston _____

Megan Lewis _____

Bailey McDaniel _____

Madeline Nicolaus _____

Shelby Orta _____

Kira Lorianne Scott _____

Kendall Steele _____

John Warda _____

Nicole Wianecki _____

Visualizing San Francisco: Exploring Signage & Public Spaces

Final paper / Assignment

Students will present and eight-page, 2000 word final paper and presentation. The paper and presentation will include visual examples and a comprehensive bibliography.

Course Grading

Thought Papers – 20%

Blog / Online Journal – 10%

Image Library – 5%

Mid-term presentation and proposal – 15%

Draft Paper – 10%

Final Presentations and paper – 30%

Class participation – 10%

100 – 94% A, 93 – 90% A-, 89 – 87% B+, 86 – 84% B, 83 – 80% B-,
79 – 77% C+, 76 – 74% C, 73 – 70% C-, 69% and below D

With regard to letter grades: The grade of "C" is satisfactory. It is not poor performance. If a student receives this grade they have put forth a reasonable amount of effort and attained acceptable [average] results. A "B" grade shows the student has pushed beyond the average; they have understood the needs of the project and addressed them; they have employed their learning and have crafted successful solutions to the papers and presentations assigned. Students receiving a "B" have reached a level which clearly exceeds "competency."

The "A" is reserved for students who have attained excellence. They have, in fact, exceeded the expectations of the tasks put before them. Additionally, interest, enthusiasm, energy, and passion for the course content and the learning process have been displayed.

name _____

FINAL PAPER / EVALUATION

Visualizing San Francisco: Exploring Signage & Public Spaces

Desmonstrated how to use comparative methods to compare and contrast visual communications and signage throughout San Francisco.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Developed an understanding of the intended audiences for the signage. Discussed, identified, analyzed and interpreted the public space to gain an understanding of the history, culture and population that exists there today.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Demonstrated evidence of critical thinking as a key skill in interpreting the social world and how it relates to the topic. [learned how to read and analyze visual culture using multidisciplinary approaches]

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Developed focused research questions and composed substantial arguments in response to those questions by incorporating extensive independent library research, field observations and documentation.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Demonstrated a good grasp of the topic chosen to present. Final paper gives a clear and logical explanation of ideas using supporting materials. Articulated and defended judgements through a studied, engaged, and informed process of reflection and quality research.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Written paper shows an understanding of the political, economic and social underpinnings of visual communications and signage. Revealed that you have read historical and theoretical texts and demonstrated how to identify features of visual communications and signage and its intended audience.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PRESENTATION

Demonstrated knowledge of topic presented and responded effectively to class questions with explanations and elaboration.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Effectively used graphics that relate, explain and reinforce text. Included visual examples and relevant key points that addressed the impact that signage / visual culture has on society.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Presentation is free of misspellings or grammatical errors. Readings and research is properly cited and included in a bibliography.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Effectively used a clear voice and correct, precise pronunciation of terms so that all audience members could effectively hear presentation and engage in the content.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

total _____ / 100 _____