Case Study Presentation and Essay

This assignment offers you the opportunity to help program our class around the examples and topics that you are most interested in. In week 4, I’ll be curating two sample case studies: the first on the concept of détournement, and the second on the practice of found footage filmmaking. Within each of these larger case studies, we’ll also focus on more specific case studies: the Situationist International, and punk rock in the first case, and the films of Bruce Conner and The Dark Side of Oz in the second. The case study that you choose to work on will be more like these smaller case studies.

This assignment has two components. The first component is the case study presentation and outline, worth 15 points. On the day when you present your case study, you’ll receive feedback from your classmates and I on the presentation itself and on the outline you provide us. You will use this feedback to refine your ideas and to write a 5-6 page essay, worth 20 points.

Choosing a case study

The first step of this assignment is to choose a case study and some research questions. You’ll bring these research questions to class Tuesday of Week 4, when we’ll have a library session to kick off your research.

• Your case study can focus on any of the following (though this list isn’t exhaustive):
  o A genre (dub music, cat memes, machinima)
  o A particular artist or author (Public Enemy, William S. Burroughs, Banksy)
  o An instance of cultural appropriation (blackface performance)
  o A particular text (a political mashup video, a song, a work of collage art)

• Note: while the examples I have given are mostly in the arts, you are welcome to work on a different area, perhaps a topic in the sciences or technology – if you’re not sure whether or not your idea will work, let me know and we can discuss

• Make sure to choose a case study that you are really interested in, so that you’ll enjoy spending some time researching your topic!

The presentation

• While it is up to you to decide how best to present your case study, I recommend that you include the following components:
  o An introduction to the artist, group, genre, or text that you’ll be discussing – think about how to situate your case study historically and, as relevant, theoretically (for instance, does this case study return us to any of the questions we’ve discussed in class thus far?)
  o Pertinent examples (audio or audio-visual clips, samples of writing presented as handouts (I can make copies), visual work presented as power point slides) – these examples will help bring your case study to life for the class
  o A sense of why this case study is a significant one for us to consider – what argument do you want to make about this case study?
  o Some questions to initiate class discussion of your case study
You are welcome to use Power Point or Prezi to build a visual accompaniment for your presentation, though this is not required. If you do use presentation software, think of it as a supplement rather than taking the place of what you have to say, and make sure to practice with it in advance!

Your presentation should be no less than 15 minutes, and no more than 20 minutes including examples.

The outline

While preparing for your presentation, you should also begin work on a thesis and outline for the case study essay, since this will help you prepare for both assignments.

There is no set length or style for the outline, but it should be as specific as possible, since the more specific it is, the more feedback we can give you.

The thesis you include with your outline should be considered a working thesis – you’ll likely refine it based on the feedback you receive (so don’t worry if you’re not completely satisfied with it).

You will email your thesis and outline (as a Word or PDF document) to me by noon the day before you’re scheduled to present, and I will make copies for the class. After your presentation, we will look at your thesis and outline as a class, and give you feedback toward your essay.

The essay

Your essay should make a compelling argument about your case study and should:

- Have a clearly articulated thesis
- Be 5-6 pages, typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins and standard font
- Make meaningful use of at least THREE research sources (e.g. interviews, reviews, scholarly articles, popular/trade press articles, books/book chapters)
- Include detailed analysis of relevant examples
- Use proper MLA-style parenthetical citation with a Works Cited

Due dates

- Your working thesis and outline are due by email at noon the day before your presentation
- Your presentation will be Week 7 or 8 (you will sign up for a presentation time Thurs)
- Your essay is due on Turnitin and in hard copy in my mailbox (Hum 146) by Wednesday of Week 9 (Nov. 25) at noon. If you finish your essay early, you are welcome to turn it in to me before then.
- You can turn your paper in up to one week late with a 1/3 grade penalty for each day late (i.e. a paper turned in by noon on Thursday would go from an A- to a B+).