

ASSIGNMENT: Media: A Lasting Impression



WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- A video clip containing multiple famous (highly disseminated) images. Youtube.com has many videos that will work.

WHAT YOU'LL DO BEFORE CLASS:

- Assign each student in the class to bring an 8.5 x 11 photo of themselves to the next class meeting. The photo should be printed on regular paper (no cardstock, glossy family photos, or driver's licenses). Ideally the photo should be a headshot of the student alone.

WHAT YOU'LL DO IN CLASS:

- Before beginning the lecture over Media, ask the students to take out the photo and lay it on their desk.
- Let the students know that they will be watching a video that contains some of the most famous images in history.
- Instruct them to fold their photo each time they feel *a strong emotional reaction to an image seen in the video*. If they laugh, they should fold. If they have to turn away because an image is too graphic, they should fold. Instruct the students to continue this process for the entirety of the video. If they can no longer fold, they should unfold and start again.
- It is also important to encourage them to ignore how often their classmates fold their photos.
- Play the video in silence (to alleviate any extraneous variables).
- At the conclusion of the video, ask students to set the folded photo aside and begin a discussion about what they saw in the video and what they felt.
- Begin your lecture, leaving yourself about 10-15 minutes at the end of class to get back to the folded photos.
- At that time, tell the students that you will give a 100% class grade to any student who can *completely eliminate the folds in the photo*. They will frantically start trying. Soon enough someone will note that it is impossible to remove the folds, that they could be flattened out to some extent or dulled over time, but that the folds will always remain part of the photo.
- This allows for an entrance into the idea that the mediated content we consume does, in fact, have a lasting impression on us.

WHAT'S THE POINT?

- Often times, people are not comfortable with the idea that the media can have such a great influence on us. It makes us feel weak, gullible, & penetrable, so we assume the role of "I'm stronger than that. The media doesn't affect me."
- This assignment allows the student to see the flaw in that type of thinking.....and be OK with it.
- It opens up a space to investigate the conscious and subconscious mind, and the ideological, political, & material effects of media consumption.

CONSIDER THIS: Commercial jingles, pop culture songs, etc.