6.811
Laboratory: Photo and Film Documentation

Aim:
Learn the basics of film pre-production, production and post-production in documentary making, to prepare for the class video assignment.

Assignment to complete before lab:
1. **Pick a tangible process that you would like to document in your dorm, home or school environment.**
   The process can be as simple as 'How to fry an egg', to as complex as 'How to play the banjo while riding a unicycle through Stata Center'.
2. **Film an interview of someone explaining the process. This is known as "A roll" in documentary making.**
   The total time of the interview should be under 10 min. Questions to answer may include:
   a. *Who performs this process?*
   b. *When does this happen?*
   c. *Why does it happen?* E.g., "I lost a bet and have to make eggs every morning for all my roommates for a month."
   d. *How is this process performed?* What tips or tricks are there? What challenges are there? Look at the questions posed in Prof Miller's User-Centered Design lecture slides. This is the bulk of the interview.
3. *Get footage (and optionally, photographs) of the process and the environment it occurs in. This is known as "B roll" in documentary making.*
   You may want to consider filming a range of wide (kitchen), mid (person frying the egg on the stove) and close-up shots (frying egg in the pan). Wide shots help the viewer to understand the context the process is happening in, mid shots help the viewer understand the action in the process, and the close-up shot help focus on critical details or emotions. You may choose to have a person narrating the process.
4. **Upload the footage into the movie editing software you have on your laptop (iMovie, Windows Movie Maker etc.), and bring it to class on Monday.**

Tips:
- Film in landscape, not portrait. This is a common mistake with camera phone filming.
- If you are using your phone camera to record this interview, try to use the mic on your headphones to record the sound from the person being interviewed or narrating, to get higher audio quality.
- Try to make sure light is coming from behind the camera and onto the subject being shot, NOT from behind the subject being shot.

This assignment should take no longer than 2 hours to complete. It is not graded, but will be necessary for our lab activities on Monday. Have fun!

6.811 Principles and Practice of Assistive Technology
Fall 2014