

**Carleton University**  
**Fall 2022**  
**ENGL 5610F/CLMD 6903F**  
**Documentary and Crisis**  
**Thursdays 2:35-5:25 p.m.**  
**201D St. Patrick's Building**  
**Instructor: Franny Nudelman**  
**Email: [franny.nudelman@carleton.ca](mailto:franny.nudelman@carleton.ca)**  
**Office Hours: Thursday 12:30-2 p.m. and by appointment**

**Important note:**

For information on deadlines for withdrawal from courses, please consult the Academic Year section of the University Calendar (<https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>).

This course considers crisis documentary from 1945 to the present. We will study documentary filmmakers, photographers, and writers who respond to the unanticipated and often incomprehensible crises of their age and, in the process, create new forms of documentary expression. Taking an expansive view of the field, we will consider documentary texts that deal with war, forced migration, climate emergency, poverty, gendered violence. We will ask: How do documentarians represent what they cannot yet fully understand? What role does literary and visual culture play in making disruptive change real? How have documentarians helped to define an ethics of witnessing? How are the methods and aims of documentarians transformed by new technologies and alternative forms of collectivity? Throughout, we will explore the power of documentary to respond to catastrophic events and uncharted social conditions as they unfold.

**BOOKS**

Jessica Bruder, *Nomadland: Surviving America in the Twenty-First Century* (2017)

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictee* (1982)

John Hersey, *Hiroshima* (1946)

Books for the course will be available from *Haven Books*. Other materials for the course (film, videos, readings, images) will be available on ARES and/or Brightspace.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION**

**Class Participation**

This seminar will be a workshop where we will hammer out ideas with an emphasis on collaboration and collective inquiry. Please come to class prepared to share your responses, thoughts, and questions about the week's readings. Each of you will on occasion be responsible for developing discussion questions and leading class discussion.

**Reading Journal**

You will write **three** entries in a "reading journal" due on select Fridays during the term (see schedule below). Think of these as a cross between journal writing and a short (2-3 page) essay. Your entries do not need to present a thesis; they can be exploratory, take risks, and make free use of the personal voice. At the same time, they should deal closely

and rigorously with our texts and **work towards** a coherent argument. Each entry should make reference to the work we do in class (lectures and/or discussions) and **two** of your three entries should include reference (with bibliographies) to **two outside sources—one primary and one secondary**. (I am in the process of constructing a list of “recommended” sources for each day on our syllabus. You should also feel free to seek out your own sources, tailored to the focus of your entry.) Your journal entries will be posted to CU Portfolio.

### **Research Essay/Project**

At the end of the term, you will write a final essay that expands a single journal entry through further research in one of two ways: 1) by conducting research that follows from the materials on one of the weeks on our syllabus 2) by building on a theme/idea/problem that has emerged in your journal and holds special interest for you. In either case, your journal writing will serve as early work on an essay that brings additional sources to bear on your subject.

This twelve-page essay is due on Monday, December 12.

### **Grading and Assessment**

My final determination of your grade will be based on the following questions: 1) Did you do the reading/viewing regularly and on time? 2) Did you participate in discussions in a generous and generative way? 3) Did your writing demonstrate engagement, polish, creativity, and independent thought? 4) Did you conduct disciplined and purposeful research using both primary and secondary sources?

With these questions in mind, your final grade will be based on class participation (35%); journal entries (30%); research project (35%). These percentages are, however, not written in stone and when determining your final grade, I will keep individual circumstances in mind. Feel free to check in with me about your grade at any point during the term.

## **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

### **Plagiarism**

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” According to the Department examples of plagiarism include the following:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft. It is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include failure of the assignment, failure of the entire course, or suspension from a program. For more information please go to: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

### **Dean's Statement on Grades and Standing**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

### **Statement on Student Mental Health**

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

**Emergency Resources (on and off campus):** <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

### **Carleton Resources:**

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

### **Off Campus Resources:**

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

### **Information on Pandemic Measures**

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

**Feeling sick?** Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you must follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

**Masks:** Carleton has paused its mandatory mask mandate as of June 25, 2022. Even though masks will no longer be mandatory, we continue to strongly recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. For more information please visit <https://carleton.ca/covid19/policies-and-protocols/mask-policy/>.

**Vaccines:** While proof of vaccination is no longer required as of May 1 to attend campus or in-person activity, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible, and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact [covidinfo@carleton.ca](mailto:covidinfo@carleton.ca).

### **Requests for Academic Accommodation**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details click [here](#).

**Religious obligation:** write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details click [here](#).

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520- 6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

### **Accommodation for Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

### **Weekly Schedule**

#### **September**

8

Sara Blair, Joseph Entin, Franny Nudelman, Introduction to *Remaking Reality: U.S. Documentary Culture after 1945* (2018)

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John Hersey, *Hiroshima* (1946)

Dwight Macdonald, "Hersey's 'Hiroshima'" in *politics* (1946)

Mary McCarthy, "Hiroshima *New Yorker*" in *politics* (1946)

Paul Saint-Amour, "Bombing and the Symptom Traumatic Earliness and the Nuclear Uncanny," *Diacritics* 30.4 (2000), 59-82

22

Lee Miller, selected images

Sharon Sliwinski, "The Artist's Defense: The City in Ruins Dream" (Ch. 4) from *Dreaming in Dark Times: Six Exercises in Political Thought* (2017)

Christian Boltanski, *The Missing House* (1990)

Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Mourning or Melancholia: Christian Boltanski's *Missing House*" (1998)

29

Albert and David Maysles, "Yoko Ono's 'Cut Piece'" (1966)

<https://vimeo.com/106706806>

Julia Bryan-Wilson, "Remembering Yoko Ono's 'Cut Piece,'" *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2003)

Joan Didion, "The White Album" from *The White Album* (1979) and "Pacific Distances" from *After Henry* (1992)

### **Reading Journal #1 due Friday, September 30**

#### **October**

6

Cathy Park Hong, "Portrait of an Artist" from *Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning* (2020)

Theresa Hak Kyung Cha, *Dictee* (1982)

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Finish *Dictee*

Lindokuhle Sobekwa, "I Carry Her Photo With Me"

<https://www.magnumphotos.com/arts-culture/i-carry-her-photo-with-me/>

20

Raoul Peck, "I Am Not Your Negro" (2016)

Catherine Venable Moore, "The Book of the Dead" (2016)

<https://main.oxfordamerican.org/magazine/item/1049-the-book-of-the-dead>

### **Reading Journal #2 due Friday, October 21**

#### **FALL BREAK**

#### **November**

3

No Class

10

Jessica Bruder, *Nomadland: Surviving America in the Twenty-First Century*

Wes Enzinna, "Gimme Shelter" (2019)

<https://harpers.org/archive/2019/12/gimme-shelter-ghost-ship-fire-san-francisco/>

Christopher Wilson, "Immersion Journalism and the Second-Order Narrative" from *The Routledge Companion to American Literary Journalism* (2020)

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Laura Poitras, *Citizenfour* (2014)

Jessica Bruder and Dale Maharidge, "Snowden's Box," *Harper's Magazine* (2017)

<https://harpers.org/archive/2017/05/snowdens-box/>

Edward Snowden, Chs. 25, 26 ("The Boy," "Hong Kong") from *Permanent Record* (2019)

**Reading Journal #3 due Friday, November 18**

24

Rob Nixon, Introduction to *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (2011)

Renzo Martens, “Episode III: Enjoy Poverty” (2008)

“Letter from Lusanga: Can an Artists’ Collective in Africa Repair a Colonial Legacy?” from *The New Yorker*, July 25, 2022**December****1**

Richard Mosse,

“Infra” and “Enclave” (2009-2013)

[https://jackshainman.com/artists/richard\\_mosse](https://jackshainman.com/artists/richard_mosse)“Incoming” (2017) <http://www.richardmosse.com/projects/incoming#home>“‘Incoming’ Artist’s Statement” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1YSbBMBE-s>“Transmigration of Souls” in *Incoming* (2017)**8**

Spike Lee, “When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Parts” (2006)

Barrett Swanson, “Disaster City” from *Lost in Summerland* (2021)**Final Essay due Monday, December 12**