

Jacob Mayfield  
DSC 294  
MW 2-3:15 p.m.

As a Graphic Designer, I thought I was pretty on top of technology in regards to media editing. For my job, I work with desktop publishing, web design, video and audio editing, using the latest and greatest Adobe products. I was planning on using them in this class, and was a little disappointed to hear we wouldn't be using them, I had grow so accustomed to them.

I thought this class would be more about demonstrating competency on these programs, but when there was a critique, I was more intrigued. When others backed up their work with extensive explanations on their process and concept, I tried to treat this class more as an art class than just a digital media class. I am an artist and musician and like to try to use classes to express those aspects of my life, and this class really helped to train me on free tools I can use to enrich that aspect of my life, as well as help in my career as a graphic designer.

Using a freeware program like gimp really opened me up to the possibilities of photo editing without Photoshop. I do have Photoshop at work and at home, but if I don't have access to those computers I can use Gimp. It is a pretty powerful program for being free. I can try to teach people like some in my family that won't spend the money on Photoshop.

Audacity I was already familiar with and had used a few times at home. I do use it occasionally, but if I am at home I prefer Garageband. It seems much more user friendly, and is much easier to understand visually. I feel like this project was really successful. I ended up spending much more time on this than I thought I was going to spend. I realized that for recording, Garageband was just much easier and less troublesome than Audacity. I feel like the sounds I experimented with turned out quite nice. I really liked the two-minute version of it better. The one-minute limit was limiting. I would use higher-end editing software if I were more involved in creating audio. I really like to visualize the waveforms and stops and starts. Audacity just doesn't work well enough right now for me to use it regularly.

The Video module for me was the most successful and most meaningful for me. I have been trying for a long time to visualize how I am going to create an interesting archive of my grandparents Vaudeville careers. The frustrating part of tracking down video footage of their performances has put a damper on hopes of including that aspect into the archive. I have many images and documentation, but no video. This exercise helped me piece together memories that I didn't directly have. It helped me remember and reminisce on my close relationship with my grandfather and his connection to my obsession with history and archiving it. I feel like through this module, I forced myself to think about this larger project more in depth and try to really problem solve the delays with this project and inspired more drive to see it through. I feel like the final video was very successful and I really enjoyed it. I couldn't stop watching it. It kind of brought me back to a time that I am very connected to, even though I wasn't there.

The Social Networking module was very enlightening to me. Through the exercise I was forced to map out my social network. I realized that there were people that I had no desire to keep in my actual social network and that it was time to remove them from the diagram. I did not include them in the diagram, and don't include them in my actual network either. It also made me realize that I had too many Facebook friends that were taking up too much of my energy, and they were deleted, about 80 actually. Some I didn't even know, and some I didn't want to know anymore. With facebook, I have forgotten some of my actual real-life social network alters, and I am trying to focus on my real networks instead of virtual ones.

The Interfaces assignment really just made me realize that I have a serious love/hate relationship with digital technology. I rely on it for many things, including a paycheck, but fell like it is really masking analog interactions between the natural world and me. I feel like I had a much simpler life when it was analog. Now it has become very complicated. I feel like I rely on the digital world too much. That is why my interface was the Digital Disconnect. I feel like I really need one of those. I actually try to do this on the weekends, except for tv, ipod, and internet. I don't check emails. I don't use my phone or text for business, so this isn't much of a problem for me. I try to leave work at work, and try not to think about it until the next Monday. I need to disconnect from the computer and focus on natural things.

The lecture portion of this class was very informative and really helped to put the possibilities of these modules into perspective. With so much development in technology it is hard to keep track of it all and to know the full spectrum of their current and future possibilities. I learned many new aspects of editing digital media. I thought I had most of it down, with being a Graphic Designer, but I am aware of all the other ways of editing media. I have a new appreciation for free/shareware. I generally take programs for granted and don't think about the development side of them. I expect them to be there and work, but don't think about all the time and money involved in creating them, and to think that there are people creating programs that work, for free is mind-boggling.

I really learned a lot from this class and it has helped me to focus on my own personal work and issues through these assignments. I liked the openness to them and that parameters were set, certain goals needed to be met coherence-wise with the programs, but the content was open to be whatever the student wanted to fill it with. I really think that I produced some interesting, successful pieces, and many in the class did as well. Thank you.