

MIAS 250. COURSE ACTION.

ACCESS TO MOVING IMAGE COLLECTIONS. (4)
(October 13, 2003)

OFFICIAL CATALOG DESCRIPTION.

Seminar, four hours. Survey and analysis of policies and procedures used to provide access to moving image collections. Letter grading.

PURPOSE. This course examines the frequently controversial issue of public access in relationship to the moving image archive. An archive's stance towards public access, often reveals the practical responsibilities and limitations of that institution as much as its declared mission. This course explores different responses to the question of public access while considering their full practical and ethical implications.

CONTENT AND METHOD OF INSTRUCTION. Through lecture and discussion, three distinct modes of public access will be identified and explored:

1. "Traditional Access:" What are the optimal conditions that allow wide access to archival collections? Which principles allow a reasonable balance between crucial conservation issues and the responsible "use" of a collection? How can an archive address and negotiate the specific needs of its different constituencies? What are the practical and political implications of different forms of access, fee structures and public scheduling?

2. "Public Exhibition": What are the goals and limitations of public programming from the perspective of a moving image archive? What are the optimal conditions and venues for archival programming and how do they differ from commercial exhibition? What constituencies do such programs speak to and what are the cultural goals of presenting archival materials to audiences?

3. "Proactive Access:" How can an archive increase and diversify public access? What are the limits and possibilities of publications, conferences and other collection related productions? What role can be played by new technologies- especially digital tools such as the Internet, DVD, CD-ROM, etc.- to provoke the interest, study and appreciation of an archive's moving image holdings?

REQUIREMENTS. Students are expected to read assigned books and articles, participate in seminar discussion, and design and propose a hypothetical system for increasing public sector access to archival collections.

REQUIRED READING.

“Manual for Access to Film Collections (special issue)” of Journal of Film Preservation (Brussels: International Federation of Film Archives, 1997).

Yee, Martha. "Subject Access to Moving Image Materials in a MARC-Based Online Environment." Beyond the Book: Extending MARC for Subject Access. Ed. Tony Peterson. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1991. 97-116.

Aubert, Michelle and Richard Billeaud. Image and Sound Archiving and Access: The Challenges of the Third Millennium. Bois D'Arcy, France: Centre National de la Cinematographie, 2000.

Adelstein, P.Z. "Permanence of Digital Information." *Access to Information Preservation Issues*. Proc. of 34th Int. Conf. of the Round Table on Archives, 1999.

Adelstein, P.Z. "Update on Standards for Information Preservation." Image and Sound Archiving and Access: The Challenges of the 3rd Millennium. Proc. of the Joint Technical Symposium, May 2000, Paris. CNC: 2000.

Additional journal articles as assigned.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER COURSES. MIAS 250 is one of six core seminars in the Moving Image Archive Studies Program. The course draws on many of the topics described in MIAS 210, 230 and especially 240. It can be viewed as an extension of FTVD 200 “Bibliography and Research Methods in Film and Television.”

SYLLABUS.

MIAS 250: Access to Moving Images
Course Syllabus: Winter 2004
Michael Friend

Overview

For decades, archives have been collecting films, and in the last quarter century, the issue of preservation and related technical matters have come to the fore in public consciousness and archival discourse. Unfortunately, one of the primary goals of archives and film libraries, which can be characterized in the general term access, has always been inadequate and problematic, particularly in the public sector.

This course addresses access to the moving image (film, video and multi-media). There are three main issues we will consider. The first is how traditional access has been carried out. This includes discussion of the philosophy and practical realities of programming, the facilities that have evolved for individual study access (on film and video), conventional avenues of intellectual access to moving image artifacts, and practical issues such as how to assess a collection and create a plan and budget for the migration of data to modern access formats.

A second part of the class will examine some of the administrative problems that entangle access, such as ownership and the responsibilities of the archive, copyright and contractual limitations and obligations, and fair use. This section will also consider access that is not strictly speaking academic, such as the creation and provision of materials for commercial use. Since the embedding of archival materials in documentaries and other derivative works represents one of the largest and most efficient ways that archival materials reach their audience, it is important for archives and archivists to understand how to make physical materials available to scholars and producers, how to shape contracts and establish revenue flow from such activities, and how to integrate this form of access into the overall regime of an archive.

A third part of the class is oriented towards the new media that are both artifacts within archives and also the mode of expression in which archival and scholarly work is embodied. We begin here with an examination of the materiality of the media artifact and its subsequent life in a variety of virtual states. At the heart of this discussion are questions of the adequacy of this migration, in terms of authenticity, provenance and documentation and how these issues are further inflected by the specific qualities of the secondary media to which original media forms have been migrated. Finally, there are questions for the archive, film libraries and other media repositories as to how to best use new technology in order to radically expand access and also in order to stimulate or enable new forms of scholarship.

Office Hours: By Appointment

Schedule of Classes:

January 14	Introduction	
January 21	Traditional Access:	What are the optimal conditions that allow wide access to archival collections? Which principles allow a reasonable

		balance between crucial conservation issues and the responsible “use” of a collection? How can an archive address and negotiate the specific needs of its different constituencies?
January 28	Public Exhibition	What are the goals and limitations of public programming from the perspective of a moving image archive? What are the optimal conditions and venues for archival programming and how do they differ from commercial exhibition? What constituencies do such programs speak to and what are the cultural goals of presenting archival materials to audiences?
February 4	Revenue Positive Access	Rental Libraries, Operating Archival and Historical Stock Footage Libraries; Partnering for Multimedia Publication; licensing fees and the market, how to set fees, licensing within a non-profit structure (the issue of non-related business and taxes and non-profit status). Deposits and access: protecting the owner of the physical material, protecting the owner of the intellectual property.
February 11	Building An Archive for Access	Specific access purposes (news and public affairs; home movies as documentation of a community; tailoring the archive to curricular needs); the traditional off-air taping model; Tivo and the “personal digital recorder.” Documentation for research access. Access as a function of institutional practice (legal medical, military and corporate archives).
February 18	Intellectual Property	Copyright, fair use and access to media properties: what is the copyright law? What is fair use; how to copyright a work, how to research copyright, how to research ownership, how to clear works (different uses, different clearances). Media properties as “bundles of rights”; licensing in terms of media, market and term.
February 25	New Technologies for Access	Media types and paradigms; cost factors, cost-benefit analyses, obsolescence and the user base (use equipment and format before obsolescence); what role can be played by new technologies- especially digital tools such as the Internet, DVD, CD-ROM, etc.- to provoke the interest, study and appreciation of an archive’s moving image holdings? Compression, viewable and unviewable formats. Optical disk authoring (CD-ROM; DVD-ROM); Internet (bandwidth issues (digital video archives, LOC?). Digital Asset Management Systems.
Mar 3	The Theory of “Proactive Access”	What responsibilities does the archive have to specific audiences or constituencies in terms of access? How can the archive make a more substantial contribution to media culture through pro-active access policies? How can an archive increase and diversify public access? How can we describe the ideal access situation, and what practical issues

		(cost effectiveness, the existing rights infrastructure, reliable contractual practices, etc.) limit that ideal? What are the limits and possibilities of publications, conferences and other collection related productions? System flow: from archival original to digitized files
March 10	Multimedia Authoring for Access [Practicum]	Scanning, organization of material; authoring contexts, websites, dvds, etc.
March 17	Summary Class and Demonstrations	

Assignments: Two papers (5 pages; 15 pages) Examine and analyze an access situation for an existing collection and design a program for access or upgrade in terms of data migration, equipment and staffing, and metadata generation and capture. Or, pursue a directed project (by consultation with instructor). You are encouraged to design a project around your research interests in the area of access, and to deliver your work in a multimedia format.

Reading: To be assigned. Note that you will be asked to consult various networked resources and to examine multimedia objects (CDs and DVDs) in the course of the quarter.