1. ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW

The purpose of this assignment is to understand and explore the possibilities of redesigning your new media artifact to support new forms of "social visual communication," that is, the use of images, and/or moving images to communicate amongst people (individuals and groups) who have (or want to have) a social relationship with one another. Current popular examples would include photo sharing communities like Flickr.com, online dating services like Match.com, and videoblogging sites like vidblogs.com. We want you to redesign your artifact to support new forms of social visual communication that don't exist yet today, but that would be useful to your target user community. Considering your chosen artifact (camera, phone, web, or computer games) and the results of your observations and/or interviews from Assignment 3 and your ideas and insights about making your artifact more programmable from Assignment 4, we ask you to redesign your artifact to enable new forms of social visual communication.

2. REDESIGN YOUR ARTIFACT FOR SOCIAL VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Your redesign work will consist of:

- Describing your (existing and if needed, new) personas, modified and improved based on feedback from your previous assignments and your thoughts about this assignment
- Brainstorming and evaluating new redesigns for your artifact to enable new forms of social visual communication
- Developing and documenting scenarios and storyboards to communicate how the redesigned artifact might be used

This redesign assignment will benefit greatly from your group discussing the readings we have covered in the last few weeks, and will cover during your work on the assignment, on the telephone, the camera, and the web. You should make use of the following intellectual resources to support your sociotechnical understanding and redesign of your artifact to enable new forms of social visual communication: primary and secondary orality ("Speech and Audio as Media"), the interaction of culture and technology in the use of communications technologies ("The Telephone from Bell to Cellphones" and "Social Uses of Mobile Phones"), visual language, communication, and interpretation ("Reading

Before you begin, revisit Assignment 3, Assignment 4, and the midterm and the feedback you received. If you have any questions, make certain to speak with the GSIs or instructors immediately. In this assignment you will think deeply about the population that you want to target and begin the redesign process with that population in mind. Keep their culture, social practices, and values always present in your mind. From their perspective, you will then brainstorm a redesign for your artifact that is intended to make sense for that population in order to make your artifact support new forms of social visual communication. Our goals in this assignment are: to improve the process of your group working together as a design team; to help you to better understand and apply the theories, observations, and technologies you have been reading about and discussing; and to enable you to investigate and help shape the sociotechnical practices and possibilities of New Media for social visual communication.

2.1 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Process:
- Modify and/or develop 1-2 personas that represent your target user population
- Brainstorm artifact redesign ideas for those personas
- Document and evaluate your brainstormed ideas and agree on one to pursue
- Come up with a scenario that explains the usage of your brainstormed redesign idea
- Draw a storyboard illustrating the scenario with explanatory text

Deliverables:
1. Persona description (1-2 pages)
2. List all brainstorming ideas and reasons for selecting or rejecting each
3. Brief description of the redesign idea you selected (1-3 paragraphs)
4. Scenario description (1 page max)
5. Annotated storyboard
6. A write-up (2-4 pages)

Your write-up should include:
- What is your understanding of “social visual communication” (use examples to explain your ideas)?
- How does your redesign enable new forms of social visual communication?
- Describe your intended population, including their social practices, culture, and demographics as relevant to the redesign.
- How do you anticipate your redesign will affect that population?
- What biases do you have in choosing this redesign and population?
- What strengths and limitations does your redesign have?

Be creative with your write-up, but remember that the goal is to think through all of the limitations and implications of your redesign with your population in mind.

2.2 NOTES ON PERSONAS, SCENARIOS AND STORYBOARDS

A **Persona** is a description of a person intended to represent the values, goals, and intentions of a particular population. In other words, based on aggregate findings about a population, construct a prototypical person. Describe that person, their goals, their interests, and what motivates them. While personas are prototypical representatives of groups of users, they are also specific in themselves in order to help us visualize our scenarios. Give your persona a name, gender, race, age, class, a place to live, a regular daily activity, desires, hobbies, desires, goals, *i.e.*, a life—they are like a character in a story. Use a picture if that helps. The persona should help you keep your users in mind during your redesign. **You will need at least two personas since in this redesign your users will be using your redesigned artifact to communicate with others.**

A **Scenario** is a description of a situation where the personas use your redesigned artifact. It is here where you can describe how the redesign will actually be used. For this redesign make sure to think not only about your personas as individuals, but also about how they will use your redesigned artifact *in their social network* which may likely include groups of people as well. Make sure to pay attention to the visual aspects of what is being communicated and how. Are there ways to apply some of the ideas about visual communication we discussed from the readings (e.g., Scott McCloud’s *Understanding Comics*)?

A **Storyboard** is a graphical depiction of the scenario. Think stick figures or collage or anything else that lets you clarify your scenario through depiction. This should take the form a simplified comic book-style depiction of how you expect people will use your redesigned artifact with accompanying captions and textual descriptions. Make sure in this storyboard to depict the images used in the social visual communication—include close up views of what is being communicated in your storyboard.

3. ASSIGNMENT TURN-IN

This assignment should be uploaded to your group webpage. **This assignment is due by Tuesday, April 26, 2005, at 2:00 PM.**
You will be graded on completeness, clarity, and the quality of your insights and descriptions. Finally, remember to have fun as you imagine, explain, and depict your redesign of your artifact to enable new forms of social visual communication.