

## Project 1: CAT/UX Analysis of Activist Group

Role-playing as a critical design firm, analyze a contemporary activist group using the CAT and UX design frames. Your client is a local cultural organization interested in funding a humanities museum dedicated to social activism and tactical media. At this stage, they are gathering ideas, and your firm has been hired to research and analyze one possible activist group. If your group is selected, you may later propose a transmedia installation based on your analysis.

Name and brand your firm. Your deliverables are a 2,500-3,500-word *illustrated proposal*, a *map of the group's core experience design*, a 15-minute *presentation*, and a *website* archiving and presenting your firm's work. In addition, each group will give a 5-minute *preliminary presentation* introducing your firm's mission, team, and tutor group. *See description of deliverables below.* You'll train in WordPress and InDesign and get support from DesignLab.

Approach your UX analysis as a close reading, an approach to literature that stresses careful interpretation of specific textual passages; with activist groups, such interpretation extends to specific actions, images, and media. Your activist group thus also functions as a *tutor text*, one that can help your client understand social activism and tactical media.

The goal of Project 1 is to begin learning to remix, mash-up, and digitally design,, both learning how your tutor group mixes social activism and tactical media and then how to represent its work across the media of your proposal, map, presentation, and website. Your proposal must contain:

- Overview of firm's design approach
- General overview of activist group using CAT frame
- UX analysis of its user experience, including the xD, iA, and iD developed by the group
- Summary of group's approach to social activism and tactical media
- Preliminary approaches to representing activist group as an exhibition

Groups such as ACT-UP provide our entrance into critical design, as they mash-up up media making and political critique to become an activist organization. Use concepts and models from Deleuze, Critical Art Ensemble, djreadies and other readings to both contextualize and analyze your tutor group—and as models for your own organization and process. *Your critical design firm is itself an intimate bureaucracy.*

At the same time, allow your tutor group to guide your exploration of UX, as well as digital design and remix culture more generally. Use these explorations to shape how your firm might approach staging the group's work as an exhibition. Project 1 will form the preliminary work for Project 2's actual installation proposal.

Evaluation – Projects will be evaluated on their conceptual, aesthetic, technical, and organizational merit. Organizational merit refers to the collaborative dimension behind the project. Students will contribute to the evaluative process in two ways: by assessing the presentations of all groups, and by assessing the contribution of your own group's members.

DATES: 2/10 - STS: InDesign 2/24 - Preliminary Pitch 3/16 - Project Due

## **Project 1 Deliverables**

### **Preliminary presentation**

- introduce firm

### **Illustrated, written analysis**

- sections on CAT, UX, and social activism/tactical media
- use design concepts to describe and interpret activist group
- create in InDesign, Word

### **Comprehensive map or model**

- primary visual representation of activist group's UX
- eg, Photoshop images, Illustrator diagram, SketchUp fly-thru, physical model, etc
- map/model should appear in proposal and presentation and as stand alone

### **Presentation**

- live presentation of analysis
- use images, words, and performance to connect analysis with live audience
- use UX concepts to approach presentation itself

### **Web archive**

- online archive with pdf of proposal, map/model, presentation