Snapshot Essay Assignment Description
Draft for workshop Thursday, March 18th
Final File uploaded to Canvas before class Tuesday, March 23rd

Purpose
We live in a visual culture and, as Berger says, are immersed in "visual language." You could say it is part of our identity. In exploring issues of identity and profile writing in our reading for this unit, this essay is a chance for you to express either something significant and meaningful (to you) about your own **identity** or that of someone else (not necessarily someone you know). This assignment will also emphasize the significant role images play in new media work, as we have been discussing through the form of the video essay. The rhetorical power and subjective interpretation of images will become apparent as you create a narrative based on and around visual images. Moving from integrating visuals into your writing and creating a purely visual narrative in your group, you will now be composing a narrative and reflecting on image in your writing, while visuals also become part of the text. You will also gain experience with software and composing for an electronic medium that will inform both your Google Maps essay in Unit 3 and your hypertext project.

Method
The project steps are as follows:
1. We will start with an in-class free-write on one photograph. You will bring this to class (either a hard or digital copy) and we will work on describing what is in and out of the photo. This doesn't necessarily need to become a part of your essay.
2. You will work both in and outside of class to compose your narrative. This assignment must have the visual and audio component. You are welcome to record and edit video for your essay but this is not a requirement. You have several options for software: iMovie (not available for storage on the classroom computers), MovieMaker, or PhotoStory 3 (Ihttp://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=11132), WeVideo (https://www.wevideo.com/), etc.. Audacity is free audio software that you can use to record (and edit if necessary) your voice over if you are not using software that can record your voice directly. Audio recorders are also available in our Digital Writing Lab (you can check out cameras & tripods too!) The easiest way to import audio into one of these formats is to make an MP3 file. Audio will have to be recorded outside of class. You are also welcome to have background music, although keep in mind that lyrics can sometimes distract or change your message. The visual aspect can take many aesthetic forms, so you are not limited to a visual slideshow or video. You could create a collage (or moving collage), original artwork, a combination of stills and video, a series of images that change position, context, color, etc. Be creative and let the images and medium work for your overall message.
3. Snapshot essays will be workshopped **Thursday, March 18th** and must be posted to Canvas before class on **Tuesday, March 23rd** and will be presented during class. Be prepared to discuss your design and writing choices and possibly answer questions about your essay.

Audience
Your instructor and your classmates. Someone you want to share your message of identity with, particularly someone who does not share your background or experience.

Length & Format
As you may know, it is difficult to count pages when composing or evaluating electronic work. The snapshot essay itself should be at least **5 minutes.** (There is also no image count, but you want a balance between stagnant and distracting). This project is **15% of your overall grade.**