

# MDOCS

JOHN B. MOORE DOCUMENTARY STUDIES COLLABORATIVE

Fall 2014, 1.2



October 7, 2014  
A Bi-Weekly Newsletter

## Director's Note



MDOCS celebrated two firsts in the past weeks. Professor Tom Lewis (English, Media and Film Studies) inaugurated our What's Up, Doc? conversations September 24, leading an intent audience of would-be documentarians and colleagues through the art of the interview (p. 2).

On October 2, MDOCS and the Visual Forum celebrated the opening of LI 113, welcoming colleagues and friends into a space to support and serve documentary studies and visual literacy in classes, programming and workshops. LI 113 opens in time to host events for Project Vis' Go-Pro Workshop (10/2) and MDOCS' Sound & Storytelling workshop (10/17) (p. 3).

Thanks are in order for both. MDOCS and Media & Film Studies collaborations are helping build synergies between two new programs.

And it takes a village to create a LI 113. Since the spring, Visual Forum director Deb Hall and I benefited from the skills, talent, generosity and inventiveness of many, including Karen Kellogg, Carol Schnitzer, Jon Howard, Bill Duffy, and Kathy Kinnin, who brainstormed, questioned, nudged, moved HVAC, built and took down walls, and networked and installed computers—creating an incomparable innovation center for us all.

What a start! Together, MDCS, Media and Film Studies, and the Visual Forum will coordinate in a three-year initiative funded by the Andrew F. Mellon Foundation-funded *Project Vis*, guided by John Anzalone (French). Look for great things...and check out Project Vis' resources at <http://www.skidmore.edu/project-vis/>.

Jordana Dym, Interim Director

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## OCTOBER DOC DATES...

*Please join MDOCS for conversations, workshops and presentations on documentary.*

Wednesdays @ 3:30 in LI 113  
(unless otherwise indicated)

*October 8:* MDOCS Planning: Curricular Development: Workshops & add-ons

*October 15:* What's Up Doc? Viviana Rangil, Spanish/FLL, Multimedia, "Comida Latina"



*October 22:* What's Up Doc? Larry Hott and Diane Garey, Florentine Films. Ladd 307. Co-sponsored by MFS.

*October 29:* What's Up Doc? Nicole Coady, "Screenwriting for the Real World"

## RELATED EVENTS...

*October 9* Martin Brückner, American Map Wars: The Rise of Cartography in the Long 19th century Emerson Auditorium, 7pm



## Doc Date: Tom Lewis on the Art of the Interview

On September 26, Tom Lewis discussed the art of the interview during MDOCS' first What's Up, Doc? event with over 20 students, faculty and staff members.

Lewis, a distinguished author, documentary filmmaker, teacher, and lively presenter walked the group through the critical thought processes involved in constructing a successful interview. Lewis drew on clips from student and professional films, inviting audience critique and comment. For Lewis, distinguishing between interview "dross" and interview "gold" was the heart of the matter: what worked and what didn't, from the visuals (framing, lighting) to the setting to the interview technique.

For Jake Musich, '15, a student in Professor Lewis' Documentary Film Writing course, "the talk was an extremely helpful introduction to the aesthetics

of documentary interviewing ... [that] in my case, armed me with the baseline knowledge and confidence to venture out into the world and speak with people."

Lewis began a series of dialogues and a platform to showcase student, faculty, staff and visitors projects and works-in-progress.

See you October 15 for *Comida Latina* with Viviana Rangil and the 22<sup>nd</sup> for Larry Hott and Diane Garey!

*Lewis teaches in Skidmore College's English department and co-directs the Media & Film Studies Minor. He is a researcher, writer and producer in documentary filmmaking. Publications include The Hudson: a History (2005), genesis of the co-curated 2009 Tang Museum exhibit, Lives of the Hudson, & Divided Highways (1997), the basis of a documentary film. (J.H.)*

## FALL 2014 FEATURED EVENTS

### SOUND & STORY WORKSHOP WITH EILEEN MCADAM

October 17 & November 7

This two-part workshop held in LI 113 introduces the work of audio-storytelling: collecting, processing, and preserving stories. Learn basic recording and interviewing techniques and ethics on October 17, then practice skills on community members. On November 7, participants present and workshop their own work.

*Workshop leader Eileen McAdam, is Director and Producer at [the Sound and Story Project of the Hudson Valley](#), and oversaw construction of its portable sound recording studio, **the Cube** (see. photo on p. 1). She fell in love with sound recording about 5 years ago when she first put on a pair of headsets, held a microphone in her hand and pushed that little red record button.*

*Intrigued? Visit the Cube during Celebration Weekend (Oct. 17-18) in front of the Murray-Aikins Dining Hall !*



### SAVE THE DATE! **RAOUL PECK, FATAL ASSISTANCE: FILM SCREENING & CONVERSATION WITH DIRECTOR, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 7PM, DAVIS AUDITORIUM**

Raoul Peck, a notable Haitian filmmaker, teacher and scholar, comes to campus November 6 in collaboration with the Honors Forum Alien Invasions Project, International Affairs Program, Foreign Languages & Literatures Department and Latin American Studies Program.

Peck will meet with students during the day and in the evening screen *Fatal Assistance*, which documents the inside the challenging, contradictory and colossal rebuilding process after the 2010 Haitian earthquake. He takes us on a two-year journey, uncovering the practice, impact and failure of worldwide humanitarian and development aid models. As a Haitian government official asked, "If you can't solve the problems in Haiti, how will you [the international community] do so elsewhere?"



*Open for innovation!*

On October 2, Lucy Scribner Library Room 113 took a bow as the new hub for visual media work and creation.

LI 113 is a workshop and meeting space created to foster visual literacy and documentary skills. 8 amazing MacPro computers, audio recorders, DSLRs & other equipment will put the Skidmore community to work!

MDOCS/Visual Forum student assistants will hold open hours each week, starting October 13. During staffed hours, LI 113 will be open to those conducting visual and doc studies work in the space and to check out equipment.

For hours & equipment info, [www.skidmore.edu/mdocs/resources/ii113.php](http://www.skidmore.edu/mdocs/resources/ii113.php)



*LI 113 Open House, Oct. 2*

## Documentarians on Campus: FEATURING LUCAS WILLARD

Audio alert! Reporter Lucas Willard of WAMC Northeast Public Radio, Saratoga Springs office, visited *Workshopping Documentary* a brainstorming MDOCS class, on September 25, 2014, to discuss the art of audio documentary. Willard, a 2010 graduate of the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies (Portland, Maine), interned with the Sound & Story Project of the Hudson Valley (see inside for MDOCS October 17/18 events) before joining WAMC.



Willard explained his process for making an audio documentary, from picking the story to getting the subject to talk on the record. The class listened to two samples of Willard's audio storytelling, one with voiceover narration and the other solely in the subject's own words. The class dissected the pieces distinct construction, finding they achieved the same goal of telling a story.

Although the final product of an audio story appears seamless, Willard described the time spent waiting around for useable sound clips and then threading many sound clips together to make a meaningful human interest story. Willard believes that everyone has a story to tell--even the most unexpected people. So it is important to master the skill of listening and you never know what you may learn from allowing someone to share their story with you. Listen to Lucas Willard's work here: <https://soundcloud.com/lrwillard> (L.F.)

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## MDOCS

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Scribner Library 113

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