This course will examine the approaches of various contemporary artists to creating collaborative work. Over the last two decades a growing number of artists have adopted a mode of working that is radically different from the usual modernist model. These artists are working as collaborators with people or groups outside the world of art - with children, senior citizens, sanitation workers, or residents of a particular neighborhood. The artists often create work with, not for a community, and share decision making with people not ordinarily given a place in the world of museums or other art world sites. The results are artworks that express a variety of social and aesthetic positions. In general, the work is intertwined with progressive educational philosophies and radical democratic theory.

Some of the issues examined will be: What is the special attraction for artists of working collaboratively? What are the roles of the artist, community, and audience? How does one attribute quality or success to collaborative projects? What is the relationship between process and product?

This course will examine the work of artists working in various media, including Ewald’s methods for working in photography and Rick Lowe’s transformative practice of working with communities. The students will be exploring the concept of Time/Value as a collaborative art project. They will be exploring with Ewald and Lowe how people from a variety of backgrounds express the value of their time and services outside of the dominant monetary system. Weekly class discussions will provide students the opportunity to reflect upon their own experiences and observations as artists. They will also read about and discuss collaboration, social issues, and alternative economies as it relates to the people they will be working with.

**Collaborative Project**

You should devote at least two hours a week to working in the field, interviewing or working with Amherst community members. When Rick Lowe is here, we’ll have two class meetings. The second to be determined after the semester starts. You will be working on a collaborative art project with the class which will generate various forms of expression to bring the value of time into a creative context. At the end of the semester you will be expected to present a finished document in the medium of your choice and a narrative of the semester long process.

**Leading Class Discussion**

You will be responsible for leading one discussion of the assigned readings. This entails writing a brief summary of the readings as well as coming up with key questions for small group discussion. The readings will be on the web.

**Reflection Papers**

You will be asked to write several one to two page papers about your reflections on the work you are doing and its relationship to the readings.
Lectures and Trips

September 9th

What is Collaboration?

View “kids” documenting differing approaches to the photographic process

Assignment: Look at last years’ projects on course website.
Read: Conversation with Rick Lowe
       NY Times article about Project Row Houses
       “Understanding and Reclaiming Money Creation: Our Experience Creating the North Quabbin Timebank” by Karen Werner

September 16th

Overview: Amherst College Collaborative Projects - Building Community through Listening

View film on Project Row Houses

Bessie Young and Will Bangs talk about Time Bank and New Options projects

Discuss readings

Assignment: Bring supplies to work on newsletter/business page
       Look at NY Times business pages
       Complete exchange survey

September 23rd

Rick Lowe: Planning a Project for the Greater Amherst Community

Two meetings this week with Rick Lowe

1) September 23rd Introduce project: Layout scope of what we want to accomplish. Newspaper workshop in class. Workshop with Get Up, Get Down

2) September 24th, 25th or 26th Workshops with community groups we’ve identified. How do we create a situation in which we can enter a community and incorporate the listening process?

Assignment: Read “The Community Economy” from the Post-Capitalist Society by J. K. Gibson-Graham and interviews

September 30th: Work with Rick Lowe

Two meetings with Rick Lowe this week

1) September 28th and 29th Workshops with Rick and community groups
2) September 30th Discuss reading with Julie Graham and create a newspaper page from Julie’s ideas and interviews.

Create a time Line for the projects.

Assignment: Read interviews in course pack. Follow up with one community member. Complete at least one newspaper page. Look at Myrna’s interviews with community artists and interviews from *Who Am I in This Picture: Amherst College Portraits*.

**October 7th Interviews** Myrna Breitbart

Present one newspaper page and create a page with Myrna

Discuss readings

Assignment: Read interview with Grant Kester and excerpt from *Energy Plan for Western Man: Joseph Beuys in American*

Write a reflection paper about Beuys’ notion of social sculpture and how it relates to Rick Lowe’s work and your ideas for an Amherst project.

Look at the work of Joseph Krupczynski

Continue interviews and articles for newsletter

**October 14th**

Discuss Readings

Look at newsletter in progress with Joseph Krupczynski and brainstorm about public project

Assignment: Read Alternative Economic Spaces and Emily Jacir’s blog. Continue work for newsletter

**October 21st Collaborating with Communities**

Look at the work of Sarah Brown, Steven Willats, and Emily Jacir

Jeremy Deller’s *The Battle of Orgreave*

Discuss reading

Assignment: Bring in completed materials for newsletter

**October 28th Rick Lowe**

**Two meetings with Rick Lowe**

1) October 28th Work on newsletter and its transformation into a public project with Joseph and Rick
2) Work with Amherst Community Television on TV spots

**November 4th  Present Newsletter**

Present Newsletter at Reimagining Marxism conference and/or work at ACTV

Assignment: Read critical response in Dawoud Bey: The Chicago Project

**November 11th Creating Community through Portraiture**

View Dawoud Bey’s Chicago Project and Kutlug Ataman's video installation Kuba

Discuss reading

Assignment: Read intro to Anna Deveare Smith’s Fires in the Mirror. Write a reflection paper addressing how Deveare Smith’s ideas about character relate to your project and the concept of artistic collaboration as it relates to portraiture.

**November 18**

**Anna Deveare Smith:** View Fires in the Mirror

Discuss reading

Assignment: Make appointment for individual meetings to discuss completed project.

**December 2nd Rick Lowe Creating a public project with Joseph Krupczynski**

Tasks will be assigned to work on through the week of construction.

Assignment: Write a two to three page paper about the Amherst project and what you have learned. Include in your essay how your understanding of your collaborators has changed throughout the semester.

Finish editing your documentation. Finish collaborative public project.

**December 9th**

**Rick Lowe Project Exhibition and Review**

Present completed collaborative project in exhibition form