PROJECT REBIRTH

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About Project Rebirth

Project Rebirth is a chronicle of the strength of the human spirit coping with disaster: the aftermath of September 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center.

Founder: Director Jim Whitaker
Board Chairman: Brian Rafferty, CAS ’79

Project Rebirth records the minute-by-minute redevelopment of the WTC site and represents the first long-term film record of ten people dealing with grief and trauma. It is a film and a Center for victims of and first responders to events of traumatic loss.

The GUWLI Project

GUWLI Research Team has been granted access to the video archives of Project Rebirth at Columbia University.

Our goal is to analyze these archives in order to document gender differences (if any) in the ways that speakers respond to grief and loss.

This analysis will help leaders become more sensitive to the ways that individuals experience and talk about risk and loss.

This research has direct application to risk communication, public health policy, & public response to both natural and man-made disasters.

Research Question

When individuals reflect upon a crisis, how do their gestures represent authentic emotion or cognition?

For the producer?

For the interviewer?

Do actions speak louder than words?

Project Phases

1. Literature Review

2. Gesture Cataloguing

3. Qualitative Analysis

1. Literature Review

- Communication is a multimodal phenomenon. Both gesture and language contribute to the message delivered and the message received. (McNeill, 1992)

- Gestural viewpoint plays an important role in the interpretation of meaning in gesture i.e. as a speaker or as an audience member. (Sauer, 2002)

- Speakers can represent features of manner and motion not possible in speech alone (Sauer, 2003)

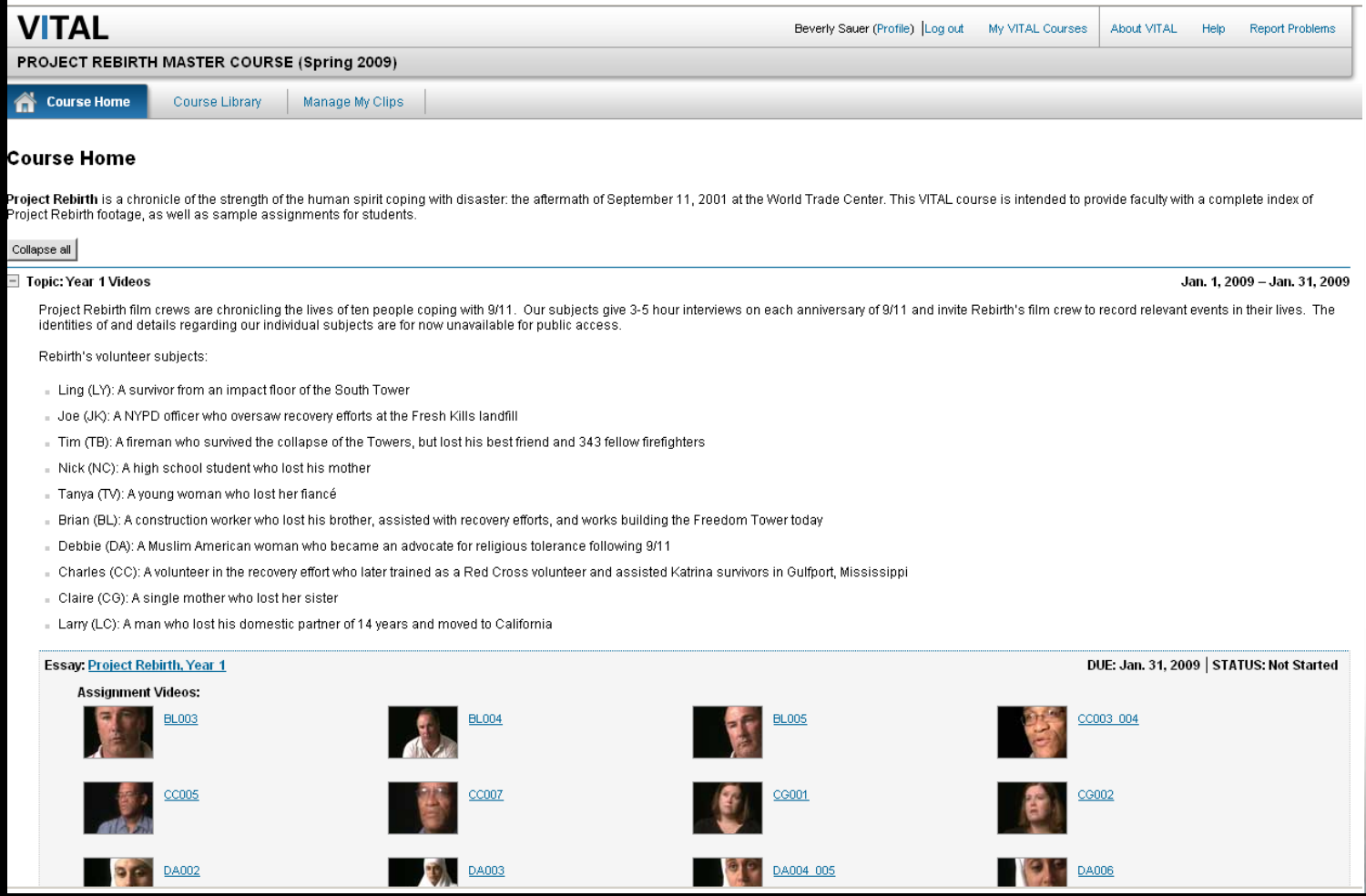
- Gestural meanings are not naturally evident, but subconsciously interpreted. (Tannen, 1996)

- Service economies are predicated upon relationships between professionals and clients. Communication is integral to workplace outcomes. (Miller & Kaoeten, 2008)

2. Gesture Cataloguing

- Definition of gesture
- Features of gesture
- Archival review in VITAL

VITAL Interface



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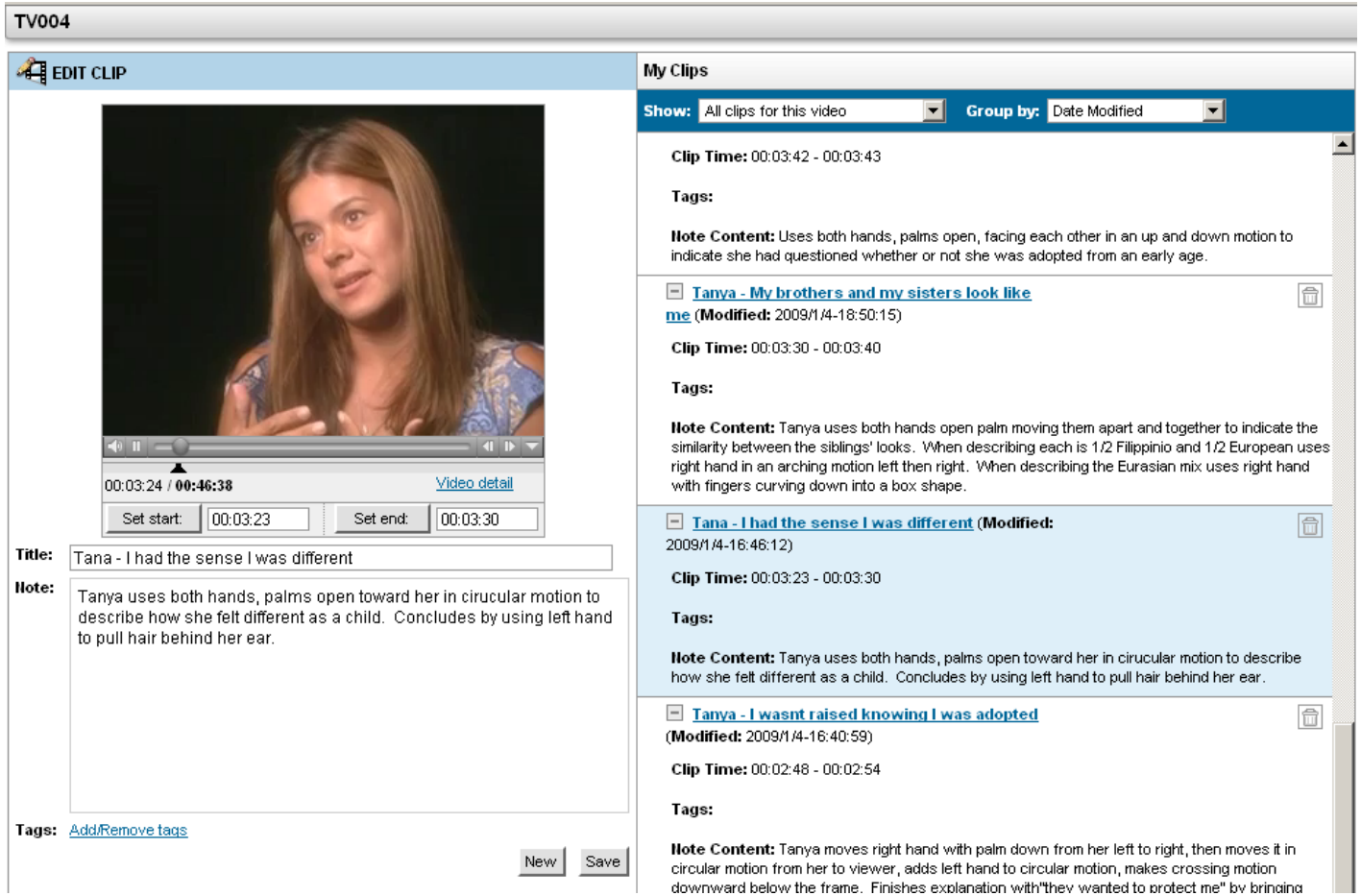

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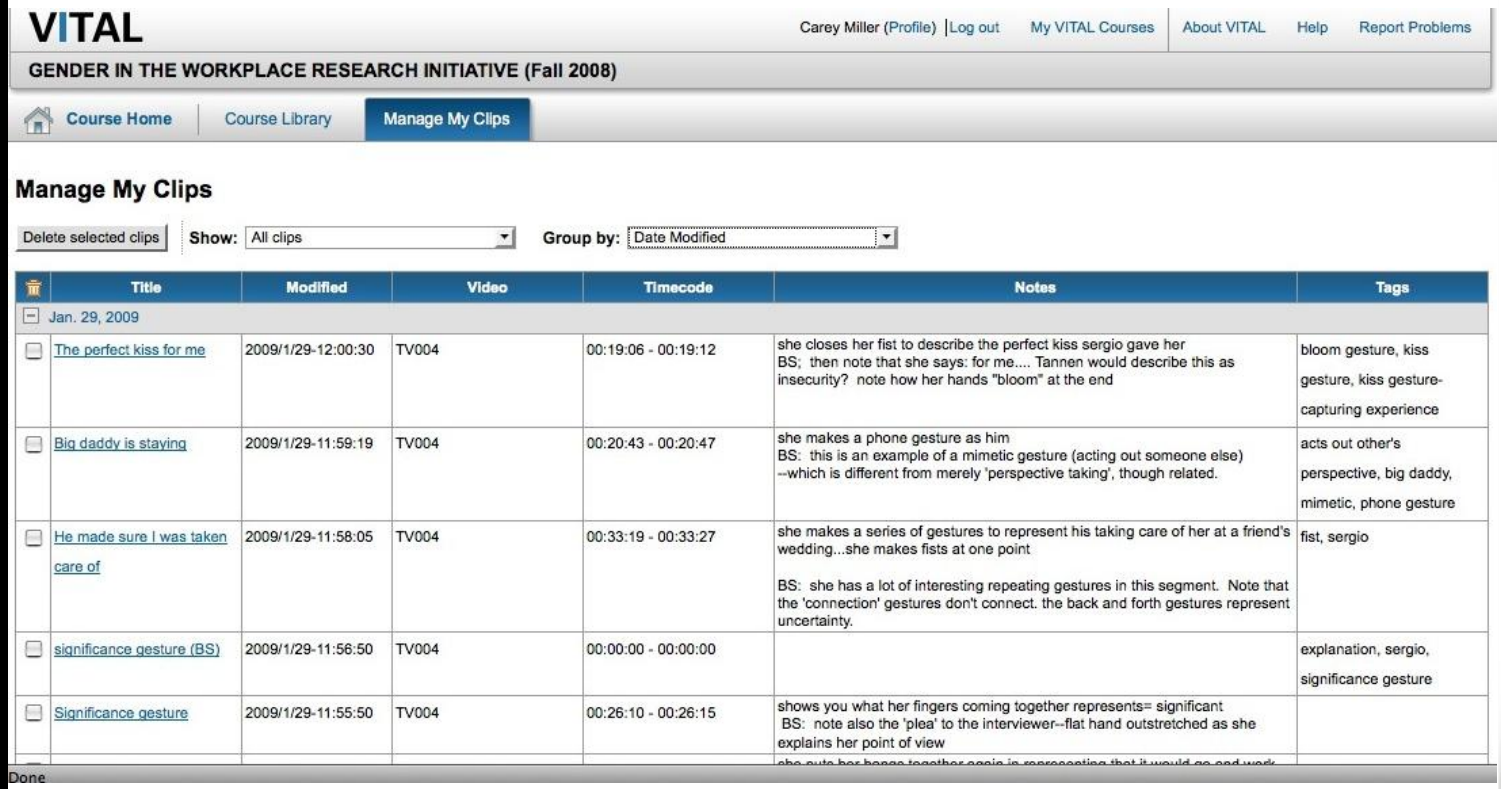

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GENDER IN THE WORKPLACE RESEARCH INITIATIVE (Fall 2008)

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Title	Modified	Video	Timecode	Notes	Tags
Jan. 29, 2009					
The perfect kiss for me	2009/1/29-12:00:30	TV004	00:19:06 - 00:19:12	she closes her fist to describe the perfect kiss sergio gave her BS; then note that she says: for me.... Tannen would describe this as insecurity? note how her hands "bloom" at the end	bloom gesture, kiss gesture, kiss gesture-capturing experience
Big daddy is staying	2009/1/29-11:59:19	TV004	00:20:43 - 00:20:47	she makes a phone gesture as him BS: this is an example of a mimetic gesture (acting out someone else) --which is different from merely 'perspective taking', though related.	acts out other's perspective, big daddy, mimetic, phone gesture
He made sure I was taken care of	2009/1/29-11:58:05	TV004	00:33:19 - 00:33:27	she makes a series of gestures to represent his taking care of her at a friend's wedding...she makes fists at one point BS: she has a lot of interesting repeating gestures in this segment. Note that the 'connection' gestures don't connect. the back and forth gestures represent uncertainty.	fist, sergio
significance gesture (BS)	2009/1/29-11:56:50	TV004	00:00:00 - 00:00:00		explanation, sergio, significance gesture
Significance gesture	2009/1/29-11:55:50	TV004	00:26:10 - 00:26:15	shows you what her fingers coming together represents= significant BS: note also the 'plea' to the interviewer--flat hand outstretched as she explains her point of view	

Done

3. Qualitative Analysis

- Gestures enable speakers to represent space more accurately than language alone.

- The three-dimensional nature of gesture provides the capability of representing space and viewpoint.

Character Viewpoint Anticipatory Gestures

Observer Viewpoint

Mimetic vs. Analytic

Speech Gesture Mismatch

Boxes and Circles

Conclusions and Implications

- Gestures have meaning and reinforce language.

- Speech-gesture mismatch creates confusion for the audience.

- Speakers who have a greater frequency of speech-gesture mismatch are perceived to be less authentic, or more disingenuous.

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