

Georgia Institute of Technology
School of Literature, Media, and Communication

LMC 3314 (Fall 2014)
Technologies of Representation:
Media, Materiality, and Archives
T/Th 1:35-2:55pm, Skiles 314

Professor: Lauren Klein (lauren.klein@lmc.gatech.edu)
Office Hours: T/Th 11am-12pm, Skiles 359 (and by appointment)
Course Website: <http://blogs.iac.gatech.edu/archives14/>

Course Prerequisites

ENGL 1102

Core Area

Humanities

Course Description

This is a course about why people keep things, how people keep things, and the things that, try as they might, people cannot keep at all. From archives of documents to archives of junk, we will explore the concept of “the archive” and how it is transformed in the digital age. We will examine theoretical formulations of– and challenges to– the archive through the lens of literary accounts of archives and artistic representations of archives, as well as examples of archives, both print and digital, from Georgia Tech Archives and the greater Atlanta area. We will interrogate the meaning of the archive in the context of a range of media forms, as well as the issues of materiality that those forms engage. We will explore the social and political forces that underlie archives’ construction. Finally, we will explore current issues and concerns with respect to digital archival design. As a final project, we will work together as a class to design and implement a digital archive of science fiction fanzines from the Bud Foote Science Fiction Collection here at Georgia Tech.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will learn to read, analyze, and interpret not only cultural projects such as film, literature, art, and new media, but also scientific and technical documents;
- They will become familiar with a variety of social, political, and philosophical theories and be able to apply those theories to creative and scientific texts, as well as to their own cultural observations;
- They will create digital artifacts with an awareness of history, audience, and context;
- They will work effectively in teams to accomplish a common goal; and
- They will communicate information and ideas to a range of audiences.

Required Course Materials (available at Engineer’s Bookstore):

Available at Engineer’s Bookstore:

Lev Grossman, *Codex* (Harvest, 2005). ISBN-13: 978-0156028592

Don DeLillo, *Mao II* (Penguin, 1992) ISBN-13: 978-0140152746

Allison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (Mariner, 2007). ISBN-13: 978-0618871711

Tom Phillips, *A Humument* (Thaomes & Hudson, 2012). ISBN-13: 978-500289990
(or iPhone/iPad version available via iTunes)

Additional required readings posted on the course website.

List of Graded Assignments

Your grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

- Participation and quizzes: 12 points
- Blogging assignments: 24 points
- Class Project:
 - Midterm project assignments: 24 points
 - Final project assignments: 36 points
- Floating points/unassigned: 4 points

When calculating final grades, I employ the following numerical conversions:

A = 90-100 B = 80-89 C = 70-79 D = 60-69 F = 0-59

This chart of grading characteristics, adapted from criteria developed by Professor Mark Sample of Davidson College, describes the general rubric I employ when evaluating student work:

GRADE	CHARACTERISTICS
A (10-12 points * multiplier)	Exceptional. The work is focused and coherently integrates examples with explanations or analysis. The work demonstrates awareness of its own limitations or implications, and it considers multiple perspectives when appropriate. The work reflects <i>in-depth</i> engagement with the topic.
B (7-9 points * multiplier)	Satisfactory. The work is reasonably focused, and explanations or analysis are mostly based on examples or other evidence. Fewer connections are made between ideas, and though new insights are offered, they are not fully developed. The work reflects <i>moderate</i> engagement with the topic.
C (4-6 points * multiplier)	Underdeveloped. The work is mostly description or summary, without consideration of alternative perspectives, and few connections are made between ideas. The work reflects <i>passing</i> engagement with the topic.
D (1-3 points * multiplier)	Limited. The work is unfocused, or simply rehashes previous comments, and displays <i>no evidence of student engagement</i> with the topic.
F (0 points)	No Credit. The work is missing or consists of one or two disconnected sentences/scenes/etc.

Description of Graded Assignments

Reading Assignments

Because a significant learning objective of LMC 3843 is to enhance your understanding of the traditions and conventions of literature, and other art forms, you will be reading a wide range of texts—some written clearly, some more dense; some short, some long. Because these texts will inform our classroom discussions—and what you, in particular, have to contribute—it is absolutely essential that you stay on top of the reading assignments and complete them before the start of each class. Reading assignments are assessed through classroom participation, as well as the occasional quiz.

Blogging Assignments

In effort to stimulate interaction on the course blog, as well as to allow you to introduce new material into classroom discussion, we will employ an innovative format for class blogging. During the second week of the course, I will divide the class into four blogging groups. Each blogging group will rotate through the following roles (also developed by Mark Sample of Denison College):

First Readers: This is akin to the standard blog post assignment: a 200-300 word response to the week's materials. There are a number of ways to approach the "first reader" response: to consider the week's material in relation to its historical or theoretical context; to write about an aspect of the week's material that you don't understand, or that you don't agree with; to formulate an insightful question or two about the material and then attempt to answer your own question; or another line of inquiry of your own choice. First readers are responsible for posting their response to the class blog by noon on the day BEFORE the class meets.

Respondents: Students in this group build upon, disagree with, or clarify the first readers' posts; due at the start of the class meeting.

Searchers: Students in this group find and share at least one relevant online resource (broadly conceived), and are responsible for providing a short evaluation of the resource, highlighting what makes it worthwhile, unusual--or, if appropriate--problematic; due by the start of the class meeting.

The fourth group has the week off.

At the completion of each cycle (i.e. each four weeks), you will receive 0-12 points on the basis of your contributions. At the end of the semester, these points will be averaged to determine your final blogging grade.

Class Project

Over the course of the semester, you will work in small groups—and, at times, as an entire class—to complete a final project: a digital archive and exhibit of a science fiction fanzine. Your grade for this project will be determined by several components:

- Group fanzine archive prototype and individual project analysis (24 points combined)
- Group fanzine exhibit and individual project analysis (36 points combined)

Specific information about each assignment will be distributed no later than two weeks before the due date.

Attendance, Punctuality, and Late/Skipped Assignments

You are allowed three excused absences. Beginning with the fourth absence, your overall course grade will be lowered by a half letter grade (e.g. B to B-) for each unexcused absence.

Please be respectful to your fellow students and arrive on time. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, you will be considered absent for that class. If you absolutely must miss a class meeting, please contact me at least 24 hours in advance in order to make alternate arrangements.

All assignments are mandatory. Should you submit an assignment after the due date, your grade for that assignment will decrease by a half letter grade for each day that it is late (e.g. B becomes B-). Should you fail to submit an assignment entirely, you will receive an F on that assignment and consequently, a lower grade for the course.

ADAPTS Contact Information

Students with disabilities should self-report to ADAPTS at:

Smithgall Student Services Building, Suite 220

Phone: (404) 894-2564 / TTD: (404) 894-1664

Email: adaptsinfo@gatech.edu

<http://adapts.gatech.edu/>

Writing Support

The Georgia Tech communication center, CommLab, provides professional and peer tutors to work with you to improve your writing skills. More information, including instructions for how to set up an appointment via the website, is available here:

Clough Learning Commons

Phone: (404) 894-3805

Email: commmlab@gatech.edu

<http://www.lmc.gatech.edu/writingcomm/commcenter/>

Honor Code Statement

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense. Any evidence of plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment and possibly in the course, as well as potential disciplinary action. For more information, please refer to the definition of “academic misconduct” included in the Georgia Tech honor code, available online at:

<http://www.honor.gatech.edu/>

If you are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism, please contact me before submitting your assignment.

Class-by-Class Schedule

Introduction and Overview

Tuesday, August 19

- Keri Smith, from *This is Not a Book*

Thursday, August 21

- Sam Dolnick, “In a Hoarder’s Home, Going All Out to Find the Floor”
- John Leland, “Surprise Bounty for Cleanup Artist”
- Jorge Luis Borges, “The Library of Babel”

Tuesday, August 26

- Ryan Clements, “Chain World: Crafting a Religion”
- Jason Fagone, “Chain World Videogame Was Supposed to be a Religion—Not a Holy War”
- Jacques Derrida, from “Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression”

Unit I: Archives

Thursday, August 28

- Lev Grossman, *Codex*, day 1

Tuesday, September 2

- Lev Grossman, *Codex*, day 2
- LAB: MEET AT ARCHIVES

Thursday, September 4

- Lev Grossman, *Codex*, day 3

Tuesday, September 9 – **Blog Week 1**

- Lev Grossman, *Codex*, day 4
- LAB: Intro to Omeka

Unit II: Media

Thursday, September 11

- William Gibson, “Agrippa”
- Matthew Kirschenbaum, “Text Messaging: The Transformations of Agrippa”
- Alan Liu et al., *The Agrippa Files*

Tuesday, September 16 – **Blog Week 2**

- Don DeLillo, *Mao II*, day 1
- TENTATIVE: Visit from Amanda Mills, *Atlanta Zine Library*

Thursday, September 18

- Don DeLillo, *Mao II*, day 2
- LAB: MEET AT ARCHIVES

Tuesday, September 23 – Blog Week 3

- Don DeLillo, *Mao II*, day 3

Thursday, September 25

- Don DeLillo, *Mao II*, day 4

Unit 3: Materiality

Tuesday, September 30 – Blog Week 4

- Bill Brown, “Materiality”
- From Anne Carson, *Nox*

Thursday, October 2 – FIELD TRIP (PROFESSOR AT UMEA UNIVERSITY)

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*, day 1
- TENTATIVE: Visit to Salman Rushdie kiosk at Emory

Tuesday, October 7 – Blog Week 5

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*, day 2

Thursday, October 9

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*, day 3

Tuesday, October 14 – NO CLASS FALL BREAK

Thursday, October 16

In-class Critique with Georgia Tech Archives

- DUE: ARCHIVE PROTOTYPE AND ANALYSIS

Tuesday, October 21

- Ian Bogost and Nick Montfort, “New Media as Material Constraint”
- Download and play *The Stanley Parable* demo (<http://www.stanleyparable.com/>)

Thursday, October 23

- Download and play *Braid* demo (<http://store.steampowered.com/app/26800/>)
- OPTIONAL: Patrick Jagoda, “Fabulously Procedural: Braid, Historical Processing, and the Videogame Sensorium,” in *American Literature* 85.4 (2013).

Unit 4: Making

Tuesday, October 28 – Blog Week 6

- Amaranth Borsuk, from *Between Page and Screen*

- Devon Elliott, Robert MacDougall, and William Turkel, “New Old Things: Fabrication, Physical Computing, and Experiment in Historical Practice”

Thursday, October 30

- FIELD TRIP: Paper-making workshop at Williams Paper Museum

Tuesday, November 4 – **Blog Week 7**

- Watch: Leah Buchley, “Art, Craft, and Technology”
- Review work of High Low Tech (<http://highlowtech.org/>)

Thursday, November 6 – VIRTUAL LAB DAY, PROFESSOR AT CONFERENCE

- LAB: Final Project Brainstorm Session

Tuesday, November 11 – **Blog Week 8**

- Tom Phillips, *A Humument* (print version)
- Frank Mouris, *Frank Film* (in class)

Thursday, November 13

- Tom Phillips, *A Humument* (iPad version)

Tuesday, November 18 – **Bonus Blog Week**

- David Fincher, *Zodiac* (2007) ← watch before class
- In class: *Zodiac* discussion

Thursday, November 20

- Review work of Mark Hansen and Ben Rubin
- Ed Folsom, “Database as Genre: The Epic Transformation of Archives”
- N. Katherine Hayles, “Narrative and Database: Natural Symbionts”

Tuesday, November 25 – NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING

- **DUE: Exhibit page w/ placeholder features**

Thursday, November 27 – NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING

Tuesday, December 2 – WPFE

- LAB: Final Project Work Session

Thursday, December 4 – WPFE

- LAB: Final Project Crit

Thursday, December 11th

- **DUE: FINAL PROJECT AND ANALYSIS**