English 693.N01: Digital Literature
Spring 2023
TR 2:10-3:30 PM
Hamilton Smith Digital Writing Studio 336

Instructor

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she/her/hers
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Course Objectives

As literature and literary analysis move into the digital age, we look to apply traditional literary components and analysis, as well as expand and shift these to fit multiple genres of electronic literature and other multimodal texts. This course will bring together theory, analysis, and production through the in-depth study of multimodal literacies, digital rhetoric, and electronic literature. Students will gain an understanding of multimodal affordances, media theory, and the analysis of digital works, including immersive and embodied narrative spaces, such as installation art and augmented and virtual realities. The course will center around the medium as message, and how "born-digital" texts rely on multimodal affordances to convey their meaning; students will discuss and consider how and why author/composers utilize multiple modes, informing their own media choices. This course includes a course blog for responses to the texts we are reading and will provide hands-on exploration of various digital platforms each week, leading to students choosing the medium for their final digital project.

After participation in this course you will be expected to:

- Recognize that "the medium is the message," that the meaning in "born-digital" texts is created through multiple modes, including visuals, audio, & reader interaction
- Demonstrate an understanding of multiple genres of electronic literature
- Participate in formal and informal academic discourse and effectively communicate, verbally and in writing, ideas around digital texts and their multimodal affordances
- Analyze digital literature, applying both traditional narrative concepts, as well as analysis of their design, movement, and interactivity
- Hone creative and critical thinking, literary analysis, presentation, and group-work skills
- Understand the basics of several e-lit authoring tools and software
- Compose a meaningful, in-depth work of electronic literature and situate it historically

Course Texts

Electronic Literature by Scott Rettberg (available in paperback on Amazon, etc.)
All other readings will be available on the course website: http://multimodalmel.com/693

Course blog: https://digitalliterature693.blogspot.com/

You will also need a writing journal for reader response notes, in-class writing, and storyboards, and a UNH box or Google Drive, or a USB for storage.

Assignments

There will be two major multi-part assignments in the course, one at mid-term and one final project and analysis. In addition, there will be (almost) weekly blog posts, "bring it to the table" reading discussions, and (mostly) in-class "play" assignments for exploring technology. Work must be professional and turned in on time. No excuses. I am available for help, but not on the day a paper/project is due. It is difficult (and never a good idea) to procrastinate work that requires technology (this includes printers!). AND ALWAYS BACK UP YOUR FILES.

Electronic literature analysis, presentation, & ELD entry:
You will choose a work of electronic literature from the Electronic Literature Directory list, give a presentation, and compose a literary analysis on the work, and submit an ELD entry for publication. Besides the chapters that should be of help to you, we will be looking at examples of e-lit in class and discussing terms (in addition to traditional lit. analysis) used to analyze multimodal works. In this type of literary analysis, attention must be paid to multimodal affordances—the medium, design, audio, interactivity, etc. In the class presentation, you will show your piece to the class, summarize, provide context, and share some of your analysis. You will have an instructor conference to discuss your draft and receive ELD entry feedback, with polished ELD entries submitted after the paper. This assignment is **25% of your course grade.**

Electronic literature project: The final assignment will be a substantial, original work of electronic literature in any of the genres (and medium of your choice) we've explored throughout the semester. It should express multimodal affordances and how the message needs the medium, similar to other works we have read. There will be technical assistance provided but you may have to research your chosen software as well. This assignment includes a reflective analytical essay, situating your work within the field of electronic literature. This assignment is **25% of your course grade.**

Blog posts, "bring it to the table" discussion, and in-class <play> assignments:
Approximately every week (total of 10), we will have a blog response, "bring it to the table" discussion, and in-class group or individual assignment to explore technology. This is a literature course and readings are not optional. Besides the textbook, course readings will be provided by the instructor and posted to the course website. The readings we will be doing will serve as a theoretical and practical overview of digital rhetoric and electronic literature. You will find them helpful not only for understanding the history and justification for multimodal and electronic

texts, but also a foundation for your own writing and projects. You are responsible for completing readings on time, composing a blog response and responding to your peers in a timely manner, and bringing something to class discussion every Tuesday. Your thoughts and opinions are a vital part of this class. I do not like to lecture and will only do so when absolutely necessary. What I want to know is what you think and what you want to create. Verbal responses to the material in the course are also a vital part of your response grade. In addition, we will explore various technologies every Thursday, corresponding to the chapters and work we are reading/discussing. This will provide you time to "play" with software and create small projects every week. This will sometimes require outside of class time for preparation or completion of the mini projects. These assignments make up **50% of your course grade**.

The course will focus on both reading, experimenting, and composing in an electronic medium. More detailed assignment descriptions will be provided online and when assignments are introduced. Paper and project proposals, in-class work, workshop, conference, and presentations will be counted in the final percentage for that specific assignment.

Due dates and percentage breakdowns are as follows:

Blog & bring it (read & discuss)	Weekly blog posts & "bring it to the table" discussion	Ongoing	30%
\<Play\> (explore & practice)	A series of small, mostly in-class assignments to explore technology. Group & individual	Ongoing	20%
Respond & write (Lit. analysis but different)	Analysis presentation, paper & ELD entry	March 21st/ March 28th	25%
Compose & create (& situate)	Substantial work of electronic literature & accompanying analysis	May 2nd/ May 5th	25%
Total			**100%**

Formatting

Format all non-electronic essays with the following specifications:

- 12 point font
- 1 inch margins
- Double spaced
- Black ink
- Left margin justified
- Documentation done in MLA

In addition: All files for electronic projects will be easily accessible (and instructions provided if applicable).

Course & University Policies

(NEW) Covid-related policies (University-wide)

The health and safety of the UNH community (students, employees, contractors and guests) while fulfilling the UNH mission is the highest priority. The most challenging part of COVID protocols and recommendations for Fall 2022 is the fluidity of the factors that determine our community's health: vaccination rate, infection rate and variant characteristics. However, the proven testing protocols of last year, along with other indicators such as regional and state data, CDC guidance, vaccination data, and wastewater testing in Durham, give us the tools needed to adjust protocols and successfully support our mission while minimizing the health risk to individuals. This fluidity means that instructors and students will need to be aware of any changes in protocols, such as masking or testing requirements. When any university- or campus-wide protocol is changed, the RAVE alert system (also used for weather cancellations) will notify the impacted community through text and email. Canvas notifications will also be used. Any updates to instructional guidance will be provided through the provost's office and college offices.

A valid Wildcat Pass remains a requirement to be on any campus as part of ensuring that anyone who is infectious or may be infectious is adhering to isolation and quarantine requirements. Instructors and university officials have the right to ask to see a valid Wildcat Pass of anyone on campus. The Wildcat Pass will be linked to Health and Wellness information on required isolation and quarantine dates for all campuses, as well as baseline (arrival and/or first 2 weeks) testing requirements at the start of the semester for the Durham campus.

It is a reality that both students and employees will have different personal risk tolerances. It is important that all members of the community make sure that everyone feels comfortable wearing a mask in any situation that they wish to do so, even if a mask mandate is not in effect. Instructors have a special role to play to make sure all students are comfortable in their learning environment, and the example of instructors to ensure that students are welcomed to wear masks even without a mandate is a powerful message. Any instructor, employee or student also has the right to request that masks be worn by others in close contact in an indoor setting even if a mask mandate is not in place. We expect members of our community to comply with a mask wearing request, if at all possible, per President Dean's message. A best practice is to post signage on an office door or in a classroom requesting that masks be worn inside. If masks or sanitizer is needed for a classroom, meeting room, or office, please complete a PPE Order form or contact: Ron O'Keefe at ronald.o'keefe@unh.edu. Contact tracing will be used as in prior semesters and supervised through Health and Wellness.

Course disruptions

Turn off all cell phones, pagers, or other noise-making items before coming to class. These devices are not to be used in a classroom setting. If your cell phone rings you will be asked to leave class. **Texting,** instant messaging, e-mail checking, and web surfing are also not allowed during class time. In order to avoid disrupting other students in class, **you will lose a unit point** each time you are seen texting, etc. without verbal warning.

Netiquette Guidelines (from UNH Academic Technologies)
Netiquette is the socially and professionally acceptable way to communicate on the Internet. We are all expected to abide by these guidelines of "netiquette" when using online communication tools with your classmates and instructor. Guidelines can be found through the Faculty Resource Hub and at this Academic Technology resource. More general guidance can be found here.

Deadlines
All due dates are listed in this syllabus. You will be reminded of due dates well in advance. Assignments are always due at the beginning of class. I do not accept late work. I will return your graded papers/projects within two weeks of receiving them.

Participation
Be advised that a good portion of your grade for each unit is dependent upon on your attendance, participation, and compliance with work schedule. Reading and discussions are what make an interesting learning environment. Your thoughts and opinions are a large part of this course. Also, most projects will have work time and workshop during class time. That means that you must be present every day in both body and mind.

Resources
Online tutorials will be posted to the course website, but you will be expected to research and learn some software for your particular needs by finding tutorials and resources on the web. Books will also be made available to you by the instructor if applicable. You may also make appointments for individual or group conferences for any project or software concern.

Under student-use, images and/or text found on the web is available to you without copyright restrictions. Be aware, however, that this does not hold true if you want your work published outside an academic environment. Creative Commons also has resources available for fair use. **Always acknowledge your sources.**

The Connors Writing Center is now located in the library (behind the reference desk). I encourage each of you to visit at least once during the semester to obtain help or advice with anything from brainstorming topics to grammar and punctuation. Appointments are preferred and can be made by telephone or in person. (http://www.unh.edu/writing/cwc; 862-3272; 329 Dimond Library).

All software that we have in the lab is available on the library cluster computers. The Parker Media Lab (a MAC lab) is also located in the library. You can sign up for lab time to work on

projects, receive help with projects, and check out equipment here (microphones, cameras, video cameras). (Dimond 237; 862-1747; https://www.unh.edu/it/media-collaboration-services).

Attendance

Attendance is required as this is a discussion and workshop-based course. Missing more than three class periods will impact your course grade. Each student is allowed to miss up to three meetings (classes or conferences) regardless of the reason; there is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. **Each additional absence beyond the three deductibles may lower your final grade by one-third letter grade.** (For example, if you earned a B but missed five classes, your final grade will be a C+.) Missing a scheduled conference or more than 50% of a class meeting also counts as an absence. Exceptions will not be made unless extenuating circumstances can be documented for all absences.

Academic Integrity

Academic Honesty is a core value at the University of New Hampshire. The Student Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities handbook defines academic honesty both inside and outside the classroom. The handbook specifically defines plagiarism in article 09.3:

Plagiarism

The unattributed use of the ideas, evidence, or words of another person, or the conveying of the false impression that the arguments and writing in a paper are the student's own. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. The acquisition by purchase or otherwise of a part or the whole of a piece of work which is represented as the student's own;
2. The representation of the ideas, data, or writing of another person as the student's own work, even though some wording, methods of citation, or arrangement of evidence, ideas, or arguments have been altered;
3. Concealment of the true sources of information, ideas, or argument in any piece of work."

The penalties for plagiarism can be stiff: from an "F" for an assignment to an "F" for a course, or, in some cases, expulsion from the University. It is in your best interest to make sure you understand the UNH policy. Please take a moment to complete the UNH Plagiarism tutorial: http://www.unh.edu/liberal-arts/plagiarism/tutorial.cfm

Confidentiality & mandatory reporting

Because you may be sharing some very personal information with me in your essays or in conferences, please be aware of the following: in some circumstances in which you mention crimes/harm committed against you/by you or even secondhand in your writing or in a conference, I will have to share what you revealed. For example, **as a faculty member, I am required to report any disclosure of sexual harassment, sexual assault, unwanted sexual contact, domestic violence, relationship abuse, dating violence, and stalking to UNH police**

and university administrators. Consider carefully what you share with me, and if you do not want this information reported, seek the assistance of the non-mandatory reporters available at Health Services and SHARPP (Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program). Note that SHARPP is available to you 24 hours a day should you seek advice or just want to talk (Crisis Line: 862-7233).

Services

Student Accessibility Services (SAS). If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course, please register with SAS in developing a plan to address your academic needs. I will be unable to make any accommodations without a letter from SAS (201 Smith Hall; 2-2607). I cannot provide retroactive accommodations.

Psychological and Counseling Services (PACS). Your academic success in this course is very important to me. If, during the semester, you find you are experiencing emotional or mental health issues, please contact the University's (PACS) **(3rd floor, Smith Hall; 603-862-2090/TTY: 7-1-1)** which provides counseling appointments and other mental health services. If urgent, students may call PACS M-F, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., and schedule an Urgent Same-Day Appointment.

Additional Services. Military & Veterans Services (862-0643; 3rd floor of Thompson Hall). Center for Academic Resources (2nd floor, Smith Hall; 2-3698). IT Help via Phone (2-4242). IT Help in Person: Academic Technology Support Center (ATSC) (Dimond Library, Level 3).

And…

I am dedicated to your learning, but you must be dedicated as well. Come to class prepared, complete your assignments, participate in class discussions and group work, be respectful to your peers and their ideas and you will succeed academically. Discriminatory behavior based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or age will not be tolerated. I am committed to your success and hope this class helps you to become a better writer, thinker and academic.

I will be available in class, during office hours, and by appointment to answer any questions that you may have. If you are having any problems, please talk to me before due dates, etc. Please feel free to e-mail me or to call me to arrange an appointment. E-mail is usually the best way to contact me. As a general rule, please allow me at least **24 hours** to acknowledge and/or respond to your queries.

The following schedule is tentative and subject to changes depending on class dynamics and instructor mood. ☺

Schedule

"Never forget that. Always remember the fun." -Robert Coover

Introductions all around

Tuesday, January 24th
Introduction to the class & each other
Show your neighbor your neighborhood…
Read: syllabus & course website, post an intro/image to the course blog

Thursday, January 26th
Situating electronic literature
Class planning: blog & discussion assignments
Read: *Electronic Literature* Chapter 1 & "electronic literature: what is it?" by N. Katherine Hayles

Electronic literature form & genres: how did we get here?

Tuesday, January 31st
"bring it to the table": What is e-lit? Why should we read it? Write it?
Multimodal affordances & Medium is the message
Read: "The Medium is the Message" by Marshall McLuhan & Multiliteracies, The New London Group

Thursday, February 2nd
Play: How do we read this thing? Interactive art (potential art museum visit)
Read: EL Chp. 2 & *Cent Mille milliards de poems* (Hundred thousand billion poems) by Raymond Queneau & ELD entry (& assemble your own poem)

Tuesday, February 7th
"bring it to the table": combinatory poetics (& AI)
Exquisite corpse about you (& all of us)
Read: "Storyland" by Nanette Wylde (in class), "Taroko Gorge" by Nick Montfort, & "Sentiment: A lab notebook" by Kyle Booten

Thursday, February 9th
Play: Dada & Oulipo
Collage & Blackout Poetry & "the Infinite Woman" by Katie Schaag
Read: EL Chp. 3 & "The Garden of Forking Paths" by Jorge Luis Borges

Down the rabbit hole… hypertext & games & how things work

Tuesday, February 14ᵗʰ
"bring it to the table": POMO to e-lit
Read *afternoon, a story* or *Patchwork Girl* (in-class)
Read: "Strachey's nineteen-fifties love machine" by Siobhan Roberts, "An Account of Randomness in Literary Computing" by Mark Sample, & "The Poetry Machine"

Thursday, February 16ᵗʰ
Play: Generative poems
Read: *Entre Ville* by JR Carpenter, My Body a Wunderkammer by Shelley Jackson, & "A Cyborg Manifesto" by Donna Haraway

Tuesday, February 21ˢᵗ
"bring it to the table": hypertext
Lexia to Perplexia & preservation of "old media" (ELMCIP & Traversals)
Introduce midterm analysis essay/presentation ELD entries
Sign-up for ThingLink
Read: "How to Rob a Bank" by Alan Bigelow & "Hana Feels" by Gavin Inglis, & "Vocable Code" by Winnie Soon

Thursday, February 23ʳᵈ
PLAY: hypertext
Optional proposal conferences
Read: EL Chp. 4, "Good literature can come in digital forms – just look to the world of video games" by James O'Sullivan, Zork & "The Enduring Legacy of Zork"

Tuesday, February 28ᵗʰ
"bring it to the table": Games or literature?
Play The Bafflement Fires, DWTD, & The Stanley Parable (other "games" TBA) (in class)
Proposals due
Read: "The Vast and Lonely Desert" by Davis G. See, "Depression Quest" by Zoe Quinn,"Twine Game Narrative and discussion about LGBTQ representation" by , Luiza C. Braganca, Rosilane R. Mota, and Eduardo P.C. Fantini (Download Twine2 & look at Twine cookbook)

Thursday, March 2ⁿᵈ
Play: Twine
Read: EL Chp. 5 & *i love you)last night* by e.e. cummings, & *dear e.e.* by Lori Janis and Ingrid Ankerson (video)

Tuesday, March 7ᵗʰ
Draft conferences this week
"bring it to the table": the medium is the metaphor
Cruising & *ii in the white darkness* &… the death of Flash

Read: "The Dreamlife of Letters" & Star Wars One Letter at a Time (video) by Brian Kim Stefans,"Lotus Blossom" byYoung-Hae Chang Heavy Industries, & "Forgotten Nights by Peter Hebden"

Thursday, March 9th
Play: Movement
Workshop/revisions on analysis/presentations

March 13th -17th Spring break

Respond: Lit. analysis (but different)

Tuesday, March 21st
E-lit presentations due!

Thursday, March 23rd
Presentations continued
Workshop/ revisions on analysis/ELD entries
Read: EL chp. 6 & *Poems about Trees* by K. Silem Mohammad & "Flight Paths" by Kate Pullinger & Chris Joseph

Here's where things start to get weird… collaborative & immersive spaces

Tuesday, March 28th
"bring it to the table": collaboration & networks
Final E-lit analysis essays & ELD entries due/submitted!
Read: *The Unknown* by Scott Rettberg & co. & Occupy MLA, We Feel Fine info. & gallery & "Yesterday, Today, & Tomorrow," "Exposed" by Sharon Daniel, & Netprov TBA

Thursday, March 30th
Play: Collaboration
Read: EL chp. 7, *Text Rain* by Camille Utterback, *Strange Rain &* Bubble (both on phone), & "The Trajectory Cabinet" & "The Wonders of Lost Trajectories" by Jason Nelson (start Motto (on phone) indoors)

Tuesday, April 4th
"bring it to the table": mobile & touch & immersive spaces
Read *Pearl* in class or outside of class & VR/AR TBA
Introduce final projects
Look at Scene & Google Earth (& revisit ThingLink) for 360
Read: Motto

Thursday, April 6th
Play: Virtual
Read: "VR is the ultimate empathy machine" by Chris Milk & *Queerskins: A Love Story* by Illya Szilak and Cyril Tsiboulski (& Stanford VHIL) & other VR TBA

Tuesday, April 11th
"bring it to the table": VR & empathy
Complications of embodied narratives: Let it Brain's This is Not Private & Stanford VHIL 1000 Cut Journey & Becoming Homeless (& news story on 1000 Cut Journey)
Proposals due

Thursday, April 13th
Multimodal affordances
Play: technology review
Project planning

Compose & create: "Never forget that. Always remember the fun." -Robert Coover

Tuesday, April 18th
"bring it to the table": Your project/technology

Thursday, April 20th
Play: learning your medium
Worktime

Tuesday, April 25th
Worktime

Thursday, April 27th
Workshop final projects

Tuesday, May 2nd
E-lit project drafts due!
Project presentations!

Thursday, May 4th
Last day of class!
Project presentations continued!
Revisions

Final project revisions/analysis due Friday, May 5th