

AML4242, Studies in 20th Century American Literature and Culture: Thinking Outside the Book

Section 0223
MTWRF, 3
PUGH 120

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TR, 2 (or by appointment)

Course Description

“The reader [must be] rid at last of the cumbersome book.”
- Bob Brown, *The Readies*

The history of American literature—of all literature—has been bound to the book for centuries, but print is (arguably) “old media” which has been threatened by “new media” for a lot longer than we realize. This course questions how we could reconceive of the tradition and future of modern American letters if we were to *think outside the book*.

As we push the boundary of the book’s claim as sole method of literary expression, we will survey a variety of texts which work within and outside of the page’s parameters to see how the book is actually not dead but literature does not have to be bookbound. As we read and learn from the work of great writers both creative and scholarly, regular classroom participation with their ideas should create the scholarly environment worthy of them. Major assignments will include an oral presentation, a research paper which presents an original argument based upon analysis of multiple texts, and a final multimodal project.

Required Texts

All required print texts for this course will be available through the UF Bookstore in the Reitz Union, or online via www.uf.bkstr.com.

Brown, Bob. *The Readies*. Edited by Craig Saper, Baltimore: Roving Eye Press, 2015. ISBN: 0692388036.

Cha, Theresa Hak Kyung. *Dictee*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California, 2009. ISBN: 0520261291.

Johnson, B.S. *The Unfortunates*. New York City, New York: New Directions, 2009. ISBN: 0811217434.

In addition to these print works, you will need to create a STEAM account at store.steampowered.com to purchase the following digital game we will be discussing at length.

Miller, Robyn and Rand. *Myst*. Cyan, 1993.

All other assigned readings will be made available via Canvas

All born-digital texts we will study in this course are compatible with current versions of macOS and Windows operating systems.

Assignments (see below for Assessment Rubric)

(1000 total points possible)

200 Panel Presentation

You will participate in a class panel with other students, in which you will each compose a **500** word statement about the assigned texts, including one critical and one literary source. You and your fellow panelists will read your statements, followed by you asking each other questions. The panel will then open to the class for questions and comments. Your presentation should be publicly engaging and include visual accompaniment. You do not need to get together with fellow panelists prior to class but are welcome to do so.

300 Research Paper

You will compose a **2000** word research paper that takes up an issue discussed in our critical texts and demonstrated in our literary texts. Your paper should present an original argument that engages larger critical conversations by citing at least *three* theoretical essays assigned in class and at least *three* other scholarly sources found through your own research in its discussion of two or more of our assigned works. Your paper must demonstrate an understanding of and work within the course theme, but should be motivated foremost by your own critical thinking.

300 Multimodal Project

You will create a multimodal project through the hypertext editing software Twine (twinery.org) that *thinks outside the book* to inventively consider how literary media can be “novel.” Your project will take the form of a story you want to tell or idea you want to explore, but should not read like a hypertext essay. It should, more accurately, acknowledge critical and literary considerations broached throughout the semester as it tells its own innovative story through interactive, aesthetically pleasing format.

200 Participation

You must be an active and engaged part of the course to not only receive participation credit but to ensure that our course will be an academically fruitful experience. This grade will be gauged by not only your attendance, but your contribution to in class group activities and larger discussions. Your engagement will further be measured out of class by your thoughtful responses to weekly participation posts. **To guarantee receipt of a full grade, you must contribute within class meaningfully regularly throughout each week.** (To “contribute meaningfully” may include asking questions that clarify or kickstart further discussion.)

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

Week 1:

5/14 Course Introduction

5/15 *The Readies*, “Introduction,” vii-xxv, Craig Saper, 1-40 (1930), Bob Brown

5/16 *The Readies*, 41-52 (1930), Brown; “We Came: A History,” Gertrude Stein; “Readie Pome,” William Carlos Williams

5/17 “The War of the Worlds” (1938), Orson Welles; “The Myth of the *War of the Worlds* Panic,” Jefferson Pooley and Michael J. Socolow

- **Panel Presentation**

5/18 “As We May Think” (1945), Vannevar Bush; “A Future Device for Individual Use” (excerpt), Terry Harpold

- **Panel Presentation**
- **Participation Post 1 DUE**

Week 2:

5/21 “The Cut Up Method” (1963), William S. Burroughs

5/22 *The Unfortunates*, “Introduction,” v-xv, Jonathan Coe, “First,” 8 Chapters out of 25 (1969), B.S. Johnson

5/23 *The Unfortunates*, 9 Chapters out of 25 (1969), Johnson; “Ergodic Literature,” Espen J. Aarseth

- **Panel Presentation**

5/24 *The Unfortunates*, 8 Chapters out of 25, “Last” (1969), Johnson

5/25 *Konfessions of an Elizabethan Fan Dancer* (1973), bpNichol; “Typewriter Concrete Poetry as Activist Media Poetics,” Lori Emerson

- **Participation Post 2 DUE**

Week 3:

5/28 (Memorial Day)

5/29 *Dictee*, vii-60 (1982), Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

5/30 *Dictee*, 60-120 (1982), Cha

5/31 *Dictee*, 120-179 (1982), Cha; “The Remnant is the Whole’: Collage, Serial Self-Representation, and Recovering Fragments in Theresa Hak Kyung Cha’s *Dictee*,” Nicole McDaniel

- **Panel Presentation**

6/1 *Agrippa (A Book of the Dead)* (1992), William Gibson and Dennis Ashbaugh; “The Codex and Computer as Self-Reflexive Machines” (excerpt), Manuel Portela

- **Panel Presentation**

- **Participation Post 3 DUE**

Week 4:

6/4 Oolipo Tutorial

- **Research Paper DUE**

6/5 *Uncle Roger*, “A Party in Woodside” (1986), “‘Uncle Roger,’ an Online Narrabase,” Judy Malloy

6/6 *Uncle Roger*, “The Blue Notebook” (1987), Malloy

6/7 *Uncle Roger*, “Terminals” (1988), Malloy

6/8 “*Ulysses*, Order, and Myth” (1923), T.S. Eliot; *The Jew’s Daughter* (2000), Judd Morrissey and Lori Talley

- **Panel Presentation**

- **Participation Post 4 DUE**

Week 5:

6/11 *Myst* (1993), Robyn and Rand Miller; “The first great works of digital literature are already being written,” Naomi Alderman

6/12 *Myst* (1993), Miller and Miller; “Ex-foliations” (excerpt), Harpold

- **Panel Presentation**

6/13 *Dakota* (2002), Young Hae Chang Heavy Industries; “Watching Textual Screens Then and Now: Text Movies, Electronic Literature, and the Continuum of Countertextual Practice,” Steven Wingate

- **Panel Presentation**

6/14 *Queerskins*, “Missouri,” “Mother,” “Alex” (2012), Illya Szilak

6/15 *Queerskins*, “Carlos,” “End,” “Bathilde” (2012), Szilak

- **Participation Post 5 DUE**

Week 6:

6/18 *Queerskins*, “Jean-Marie,” “Return” (2012), “Towards Minor Literary Forms: Digital Literature and the Art of Failure,” Szilak

- **Panel Presentation**

6/19 *Queerskins: A Love Story* (2018), Szilak and Cyril Tsiboulski

6/20 *Within the Wires*, Episodes 1-5 (2016), Jeffrey Cranor and Janina Matthewson; “Inside the Podcast Brain: Why Do Audio Stories Captivate?”, Tiffanie Wen

6/21 *Within the Wires*, Episode 6-10 (2016), Cranor and Matthewson

6/22 Course Conclusion

- **Multimodal Project DUE**