

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

LMC 3314/8803 (Spring 2016)
Technologies of Representation: Media, Materiality, and Archives
M/W 1:35-2:55pm, Skiles 370

Professor: Lauren Klein (lauren.klein@lmc.gatech.edu)
Office Hours: Mondays 3-4pm, Skiles 359 (and by appointment)
Course Website: <http://blogs.iac.gatech.edu/archives16/>

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 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. We will also explore current issues and concerns with respect to digital archival design. As a final project, we will work together as a class to create and then re-envision a digital archive of science fiction fanzines from the Bud Foote Science Fiction Collection here at Georgia Tech.

This year, the course will partner with [Murmur Media](#) and the [Atlanta Zine Library](#) as part of Georgia Tech’s [Serve-Learn-Sustain \(SLS\) Initiative](#). The SLS initiative provides students with opportunities inside and outside the classroom designed to help them combine their academic and career interests with their desire to improve the human condition, allowing them to help build healthier, more sustainable communities where people and nature thrive. Visit the [SLS website](#) to sign up for the SLS ListServ and find links to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



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:

Books (available at Engineer's Bookstore):

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

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

Games and other digital materials:

The Stanley Parable (available via Steam)

Braid (available via Steam)

Pry (available via iTunes)

Electronics kit:

Chibitronics Chibi Lights LED Circuit Stickers STEM Starter Kit (available via Amazon)

<http://www.amazon.com/Chibitronics-Lights-Circuit-Stickers-Starter/dp/B00OPSNR94>

Field trip fee:

\$5/student for paper-making workshop.

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

When calculating final grades, I employ the following points-to-letter conversion:

A = 76-100 points (10-12 on 12 point scale)

B = 52-75 points (7-9 on 12 points scale)

C = 28-51 points (4-6 on 12 point scale)

D = 4-27 points (1-3 on 12 point scale)

F = 0-3 points (0 on 12 point scale)

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 and analysis. The work demonstrates awareness of its implications and/or limitations, 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, with explanations and/or analysis that derive from specific examples. Fewer connections are made between ideas, however, and while 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

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 250-500 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 24 hours BEFORE the class meets.

Respondents: Students in this group build upon, disagree with, or clarify the first readers' posts. Respondents are required to comment on at least two posts, in comments of around (or longer than) a short paragraph. Comments are due by midnight on the night BEFORE the class meets.

Searchers: Students in this group find and share at least one relevant online resource (broadly conceived), and are responsible for providing a short (i.e. 250 word) evaluation of the resource, highlighting what makes it relevant to the class. Due by midnight on the night BEFORE the class meets.

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.

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

Monday, January 11

- Keri Smith, from *This is Not a Book*
- OK Go, “The Writing’s on the Wall”

Wednesday, January 13

- Sam Dolnick, “In a Hoarder’s Home, Going All Out to Find the Floor”
- John Leland, “Surprise Bounty for Cleanup Artist”

Monday, January 18 – MLK DAY, NO CLASS

Unit I: Archives

Wednesday, January 20

- Ryan Clements, “Chain World: Crafting a Religion”
- Jason Fagone, “Chain World Videogame Was Supposed to be a Religion—Not a Holy War”
- Trevor Owens, “[What Do You Mean by Archive? Genres of Usage for Digital Preservers](#)” (2014)

Monday, January 25

- Jacques Derrida, from “[Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression](#),” *Diacritics* 25.2 (Summer 1994).
- Lev Grossman, *Codex*, Chapters 1-9

Wednesday, January 27 – **Blog Week 1**

- Lev Grossman, *Codex*, Chapters 10-19
- LAB: Emulators

Monday, February 1

- Lev Grossman, *Codex*, Chapters 20-end

Wednesday, February 3 – **Blog Week 2**

- FIELD TRIP: Visit to GT Archives (zine selection)

Unit II: Media

Monday, February 8

- FIELD TRIP: Visit to Atlanta Zine Library

Wednesday, February 10 – Blog Week 3

- Marhsall McLuhan, from *The Medium is the Message*
- Lev Manovich, “Introduction” to *The Language of New Media*
- Kate Eichorn, “Introduction” to *The Archival Turn in Feminism*

Monday, February 15

- FIELD TRIP: Visit to GT Archives (tour of archives)

Wednesday, February 17 – Blog Week 4

- Anne Gilliland, “Setting the Stage”
- Geoff Nunberg, “Google Books: A Metadata Train Wreck”
- Stanford University Libraries, “Creating Metadata,” Part I and Part II
- LAB: Omeka workshop

Monday, February 22

- Lev Manovich, “What is New Media?” from *The Language of New Media*
- Bolter and Grusin, “Introduction” to *Remediation*
- Alan Liu et al., *The Agrippa Files*
- William Gibson, “Agrippa”

Unit 3: Materiality

Wednesday, February 24 – – Blog Week 5

- FIELD TRIP: Visit to Murmur

Monday, February 29 –

- Bill Brown, “Materiality”
- From Anne Carson, *Nox*
- From Tom Phillips, *A Humument*

Wednesday, March 2 – Blog Week 6

- Frank Mouris, *Frank Film* (in class)
- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (start)

Monday, March 7

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (finish)

Wednesday, March 9

- DUE: FANZINE ARCHIVE PROJECT
- In-class Critique with Georgia Tech Archives

Monday, March 14

- DUE: FANZINE ARCHIVE ANALYSIS (via TSquare)
- FIELD TRIP: Paper making workshop

Wednesday, March 16 – **Blog Week 7**

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

Monday March 21 and Wednesday March 23 – NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK

Unit 4: Digital Materiality

Monday, March 28

- Amaranth Borsuk, from *Between Page and Screen*
- Laura Forlano, “Digital Fabrication and Hybrid Materialities” and “Towards an Integrated Theory of the Cyber-Urban” (focus on “Theoretical Framework” section)

Wednesday, March 30 – **Blog Week 8**

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

Monday, April 4

- Samantha Gorman and Danny Cannizzaro, *Pry* (download and read)

Wednesday, April 6 – **Bonus Blog Week I**

- Field trip to Murmur

Monday, April 11 — NO CLASS, PROFESSOR AT DUKE UNIV.

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

Wednesday, April 13 – **Bonus Blog Week II**

- In class: *Zodiac* discussion

Monday, April 18

- Download and play *Braid*

Wednesday, April 20

- Final project presentations.

Monday, April 25

- Final project presentations.

Monday, May 2nd

- **DUE: FINAL PROJECT AND ANALYSIS**