

Sad Iron

Fresh

Tweeting Class Discussions and Notes

English 331 Project Suite

Project #1: Tweeting Class Discussion

Introduction

During the course of this semester, we will engage deeply with literature as conceived by our traditional humanities and English curriculum. This involves developing an awareness and appreciation for our literary heritage, contextualizing and analyzing works of literature within their unique historical moments, and expanding these historical contexts in order to gain insight into our own experiences. Furthermore, when engaging these texts we will work to develop problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, recognize nuance and complexity of meaning, and express our ideas in a clear, organized, and well-reasoned manner.

It is in the expression of our ideas, the form these documents take, that we will shift our emphasis to the digital humanities and the pedagogy of “making” things that are usable by a wider audience. In

short, we are replacing the traditional essay or “response” with a new-media approach to knowledge representation. This project, “Tweeting Class Discussion,” asks you to combine the essential thinking and interpretive skills of the humanities with a digital platform that eventually make our “non-tangible” discussions tangible and usable. By tweeting our class discussions and eventually posting Storify documents of those Tweets on the UWGB Commons for the Digital and Public Humanities, you will allow us to turn oral discussions into usable texts.

The Assignment

Your group is required, for the duration of our class discussions on a given text, to live-tweet the salient points from our class discussion. It doesn’t matter who the speaker is—professor, student, guest—capture the phrases that are memorable to you.

Requirements for Tweeting Class Discussions:

- Obviously, you must have a device that allows you to do this. This will be the only time you will be allowed to actively use phones and laptops in class.
- You need a Twitter account. If you prefer to keep your personal account separate from the work done in this class, simply create a “disposable Twitter account” that you can work from and that uses your school email. (Actually, I would prefer disposable accounts connected to school email.)

- Twitter works most effectively when you follow people and they follow you. For the sake of ease, if you're using a disposable account, simply follow the other people in your group (this will make collecting tweets easier), and eventually the other people in the class. You can also follow me @chuckrybak.
- You must tweet under a hashtag, as that will allow us to search for and archive the tweets. The hashtag we will use this semester is #eng331spr
- Our class sessions are 80 minutes. Obviously, I want you to focus and contribute in other ways as well. I would try to tweet at least five times, but there is no ceiling on the number.
- Don't worry about repeating tweets that others might have posted—these repetitions will simply alert us to the fact that something was worth relaying.
- Keep your devices as quiet as possible—if you're using a phone, turn the ringer off, etc. Also, we're working on trust here. Stay focused and don't drift off to other things.
- You might want to organize, as a group, how you want to organize your work: someone tweets prof, others the students, another handles the Storify document, etc.

Collecting

At the end of every class, I would like someone from the group to archive the tweets into a Storify document. (It may be advantageous to break up responsibility and have one person handle all of the Storify responsibility and not the tweeting.) Here is the key introductory information for Storify.

- Go to the [Storify](#) website
- Login in with a username and password, not through Twitter or Facebook
- Your username: #####
- Your password: #####
- Select the button that says, "Create Story"
- Title your story with the book title and "notes." Example: **House of Leaves Notes**
- Under the Twitter button on the right side media bar, search for the class tweets by their hashtag (or even by user)
- Pull these tweets into the Storify document.
- In Storify, comment on the tweets as you wish, and feel free to expand further on any point raised in class.
- Publish the Storify. You can always return to it, select "edit" and add to the document.

What Should You Tweet?

There is a huge range here, but some things worth tweeting might include:

- General responses to the reading
- Problems that people are having with the reading

- Interesting questions
- Interesting observations
- Stabs at interpretation and meaning
- References to other work
- Etc.

Evaluation and Support

If you have any problems using Twitter, Storify, or The Commons, I will be your main source of technical support.

Your “note tweeting” will be assessed against the requirements listed above—the number of tweets, the quality of the work, and their successful archiving.

When we are done with the novel, we will post the final Storify document in the UWGB Commons.

Reflection

In a document created in The Commons, I would like your group to collaboratively reflect on the following issues:

- How did completing this assignment affect how you read the novel? How so?
- Is there a level of knowledge that was provided uniquely by this assignment, beyond the initial reading itself?
- What was your experience using Twitter? What were the problems and how did you solve them?

- What would you change about this assignment to make it more relevant, informative, enjoyable, challenging, or interesting?
- Do you see this project being helpful for literary study? Why and how?

Final Thoughts

Our Goal is to preserve a portion of our class experience that often escapes us once class is over. I will show our archived/developed notes in class occasionally, and you can visit this any time in our Commons site. Use this to brainstorm ideas for your own interpretations and projects. Also, feel free to treat the Storify as an evolving discussion that you can edit when you have something to contribute.

Credits: The idea for disposable Twitter accounts came from Ryan Cordell's ProfHacker post on that topic, and the "Reflection" portion of this document includes questions from a different digital assignment created by Brian Croxall.

Out There:



Faker Than Yellow #5

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