

English 702, Cultures of Theory: Media and Media Theory from the Renaissance through to Romanticism

Section 0101, Wed 3:30-6:00pm, Tawes Hall 3134

Instructors: Scott Trudell (trudell@umd.edu), office hours Wednesdays
11:45-1:45 and by appointment, Tawes 3228

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4:00, Tawes 3240

While the term "media" is usually associated with communication technologies from the late-nineteenth century to the contemporary moment, recent approaches to the early modern period, the eighteenth century, and the Romantic period have profitably considered how media studies might shed light on the social, philosophical, and aesthetic impulses of earlier periods. This co-taught seminar will be a far-ranging, in-depth exploration of the genealogy of contemporary media, studying a wide array of recent media theorists, filmmakers, and artists (e.g. Crary, Derrida, Gitelman, Guillory, Kittler, Mitchell, Ranciere, Siskin and Warner, and Stiegler) alongside writers, artists, and performers c. 1500-1850 (e.g. Sidney, Shakespeare, Milton, Lessing, Rousseau, and Blake). We will consider historically specific forms of media as well as the proposal that media necessarily subtend the notion of history and other categories of human and non-human existence. Our hope is that this course will afford students the opportunity to challenge themselves and interact with others with a wide array of field and period interests: students studying periods pre-1850, certainly, but also those concentrating in modern and contemporary visual culture, philosophy, film, and digital studies.

Books:

- Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*. Ed. Stephen Orgel. Oxford University Press, 2004. ISBN: 9780199535743.
- Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. Ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. Arden Shakespeare, 2016. ISBN: 9781472518385.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein: The Original 1818 Text*. Ed. D. L. MacDonald and Kathleen Scherf. 3rd ed. Broadview, 2012. ISBN: 9781554811038
- Shelley, Jackson. *Patchwork Girl*. Eastgate:
<https://www.eastgate.com/catalog/PatchworkGirl.html>

You may use alternative scholarly editions of *Paradise Lost*, *Hamlet*, and *Frankenstein*, but please make sure that you have hard copies and that you use the 1818 edition of *Frankenstein* (not the 1831 edition, though we will read the Author's Introduction to the 1831 edition).

Check www.bookfinder.com and www.amazon.com for used copies. All additional required reading will be available for download on ELMS course reserves. **You are required to bring hard copies of the readings on the days we discuss them.**

We strongly advise purchasing a printer if you do not already own one.

Writing and presenting:

Please post 500-1000 words each week on our Wordpress site:

<http://english702fall18.wordpress.com>

Focus on the upcoming week's readings. You're welcome to draw connections to other weeks, but please give your sustained attention to a focused issue or line of thought that emerges in readings to be discussed that week. The blog is intended as the basis for class discussion, a place for that discussion to continue outside of class, and a forum for you to develop your seminar paper.

Work on the following over the course of the semester:

- A mixture of close reading and engagement with theory
- At least two posts drawn from your work on your seminar paper
- Regular comments on your peers' posts

Please make sure that your posts are online **by the end day on Monday**. This will give everyone the chance to read and think about what you say. These weekly deadlines are important: we use your blog posts to structure class discussion, so we need to have time to read them.

Your writing on the blog will help you work toward an 18-20pp. seminar paper, **due December 12**. A 5 page precis of this paper will be **due November 12**, en lieu of your blog post for that week. The precis may take the form of a position paper, an extract from your paper in progress or even an outline--the important thing is that it give a concrete sense of where you are headed with the seminar paper.

Please let us know within the first two weeks of the semester if you have a disability that requires accommodation or a hardship that would be helpful to discuss.

Grading:

Your grade will be based on your work on the blog, your participation in class, and your seminar. Make sure to keep up with the blog and participate thoughtfully in every class.

Course schedule:

August 29: **Introductions**

- Sidney, sonnet 1 from *Astrophil and Stella*
- Wordsworth, selection from *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*

September 3: Blog post due by midnight

September 5: **Media History**

- Kittler, selection from *1800/1900*
- Crary, selection from *Techniques of the Observer*
- Siskin and Warner, "This Is Enlightenment: An Invitation in the Form of an Argument"
- Siskin and Warner, "If This is Enlightenment Then What Is Romanticism?"

September 10: Blog post due by midnight

September 12: **Media novelty**

- Bolter and Grusin, selection from *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (20-51)
- Gitelman, selection from *Always Already New* (1-24)
- Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility"

September 17: Blog post due by midnight

September 19: **The Media Concept**

- Guillory, "The Genesis of the Media Concept"
- McLuhan, selection from *Understanding Media*
- Bacon, selection from *The Advancement of Learning*
- Hobbes, selection from *Leviathan*
- Locke, selection from *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*
- Richardson, Preface to *Clarissa* and a selection

Don't miss the *Triumph of Isabella* immersive exhibition at the Clarice:

- September 20th from 2:30-4:00PM
- September 20th from 7:30-9:00PM
- September 23rd from 1:30-3:00PM

<http://tdps.umd.edu/event/2018-2019/triumph-isabella-exploration-performance-through-art-and-art-through-performance>

September 24: Blog post due by midnight

September 26: **The Media of Poetry**

- Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*
- Blake, Introduction to the *Songs of Innocence*
- Blake, Introduction to the *Songs of Experience*
- Blake, *Earth's Answer in Experience*
- Langan and McLane, "The Medium of Romantic Poetry"

Recommended:

- Dryden, *Of Dramatick Poesie: An Essay*
- Thomas Love Peacock, selection from "The Four Ages of Poetry"
- Shelley, *A Defense of Poetry*

October 1: Blog post due by midnight

October 3: **Medium Specificity**

- Shakespeare, *Hamlet*
- De Grazia and Stallybrass, "The Materiality of the Shakespearean Text"
- Lamb, Excerpt from "On the Tragedies of Shakespeare" and "Detached Books and Reading"
- Lessing, Excerpt from the *Laocoön*

October 8: Blog post due by midnight

October 10: **Against Medium Specificity**

- Derrida selection from *Of Grammatology*
- Rousseau, *Essay on the Origins of Language*
- Rousseau, Excerpt from *Confessions*
- Wordsworth, Excerpt from *The Prelude*
- Dolar, selection from *A Voice and Nothing More*

October 15: Blog post due by midnight

October 17: **Mass Mediation I**

- Milton, *Areopagitica*
- Habermas, selection from *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*
- Addison and Steele, selection from *The Spectator*

October 22: Blog post due by midnight

October 24: **Mass Mediation II**

- Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*
- Blake, *The Book of Urizen*
- Mitchell, "Visible Language: Blake's Wond'rous Art of Writing"
- Mike Goode, "Blakespotting"

October 29: Blog post due by midnight

October 31: **Elemental Media**

- Milton, *Paradise Lost*, books IV and IX
- Peters, selection from *The Marvelous Clouds*

November 5: Blog post due by midnight

November 7: **Frankenstein Mediated**

- M. Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818 ed., with 1831 introduction)
- Peake, *Presumption; or, the Fate of Frankenstein* (RC Editions)
- Whale, *Frankenstein* (1931)
- Redfield, "Frankenstein's Cinematic Dream" (RC Praxis)
- Neel, "Still Life in Frankenstein"

November 12: Blog post due by midnight

November 14: **Pre- and Proto-Histories of Media**

- Chandler, selection from *An Archaeology of Sympathy: the Sentimental Mode in Literature and Cinema*
- Sterne, excerpt from *Tristram Shandy*
- P.B. Shelley, "To a Skylark"
- Pyle, "Skylark Image"
- Deleuze, Excerpt from *Cinema 2: The Time Image*
- Vitale, "Guide to Reading Deleuze's Cinema II":
<https://networkologies.wordpress.com/2011/04/29/tips-for->

Thanksgiving Break!

November 26: Blog post due by midnight

November 28: **Media Collage I**

- Isabella Whitney, *A Sweet Nosegay*
- Whitney Trettien, "Isabella Whitney's Slips"

December 3: Blog post due by midnight

December 5: **Media Collage II**

- Shelley Jackson, *Patchwork Girl*

December 12

- **Seminar paper due: upload to ELMS by midnight**

Recommended:

- Altick, Richard D., *Shows of London* (Harvard, 1978)
- Boyle, Jen, *Anamorphosis in Early Modern Literature: Mediation and Affect* (Routledge, 2010)
- Broglio, Ron, ed., *Digital Designs on Blake*, RC Praxis Volume
- Burkett, Andrew, *Romantic Mediations: Media Theory and British Romanticism* (SUNY, 2016)
- Burkett, Andrew, and James Brooke-Smith, eds., *Multi-Media Romanticism* (Intro), RC Praxis Volume
- Galperin, William, *The Return of the Visible in British Romanticism* (Johns Hopkins, 1993)
- Mannoni, Laurent, *Great Art of Light and Shadow* (Exeter, 2000)
- Marcus, Leah, *Unediting the Renaissance* (Routledge, 1996)
- Miles, Robert, ed. *Gothic Technologies*, RC Praxis Volume
- Parikka, Jussi, *What Is Media Archaeology?* (Polity, 2012)
- Felluga, Dino Franco, ed., "Romanticism on the Net," special issue of *Érudit*
- Rowe, Katherine, ed., special issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly* on "Shakespeare and New Media," vol. 61, no. 3 (Fall 2010)
- Siskin, Clifford, and William Warner, eds., *This Is Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2010)
- Trudell, Scott A., "The Mediation of Poesie: Ophelia's Orphic Song," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 63, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 46-76
- Trudell, Scott A., ed., special issue of *Restoration* on "The Intermedia Restoration" (forthcoming, fall 2018)
- Wang, Orrin N.C., *Romantic Sobriety* (Johns Hopkins, 2011)
- Wood, Gillen D'Arcy, *The Shock of the Real: Romanticism and Visual Culture* (Palgrave, 2001)