


<p>Professor C. Guertin Office: eCreate Lab, PH 311 Office Hours: MW before class or by appt Email: carolyn.guertin@gmail.com Skype: carolyn_guertin</p>	<p>English 3372-001 PH 310 MW 1:00-2:20 pm Online materials: http://mavspace.uta.edu/guertin/english_3372-08/</p>
<p>English 3372-001: Computers and Fiction Writing</p> <p><i>“What is the use of a book, thought Alice, without pictures or conversations?”</i> ~ Lewis Carroll</p>	

We live in a visual culture, which means that our media are migrating across previously fixed boundaries. Part of this trend is the commingling of low-brow culture (like comics and television) and high-brow forms (fine art, architecture, music, etc). Through an exploration of different forms of visual narrative (including the graphic novel, multimedia adventure games, curiosity cabinets, cutups, film-based montage, music videos, the remix) you will learn how to create your own digital stories.

We will experiment with different ways of speaking the literacy of the new media with HTML, Comic Life, Photoshop and Dreamweaver in order to start writing fiction visually and spatially for an electronic environment. Workshopping ideas based in associational storytelling and the conjunction of image and text in class, we will examine the graphic novel and exemplary literary digital narratives as models for building our own. This course is as an introduction to computer proficiency, typography, web-native design principles, graphic fiction, electronic literature, and the complexities of born-digital texts. For those who are a bit more advanced, it may be taken as an Honors credit.

Course Texts

- Hayles, N. Katherine et al. *Electronic Literature Collection*. Vol 1. Online: <http://collection.eliterature.org/1/>
- Meadows, Mark Stephen. *Pause & Effect: The Art of Interactive Narrative*, Adobe Reader (ISBN 0-321-49182-3). This is an eBook that can be purchased via the Pearson website at peachpit.com using a credit card.

- Miller, Paul D. (DJ Spooky). *Rhythm Science*. Cambridge: Mediaworks/MIT, 2004.
- McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1993.
- Spiegelman, Art. *Maus II: And Here My Troubles Began*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986.
- Blank CDs
- a memory stick (1 gigabyte or more recommended)

Syllabus

Week One: August 25: Intro to Digital Narrative

Introduction: The Interface of Narrative

Reading: Excerpts from Matt Madden's *99 Ways to Tell a Story*

Donna Leishman, "Deviant: The Possession of Christian Shaw":

http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/leishman_deviant_the_possession_of_christian_shaw.html

Introduction to Comic Life software

August 27: McCloud handout: "Writing With Pictures: Clarity: Persuasion & Intensity" 8-57

Marie-Laure Ryan, "Beyond Myth and Metaphor: The Case of Digital Narrative"

<http://www.gamestudies.org/0101/ryan/>

Judd Morrissey, "The Jew's Daughter"

http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/morrissey_the_jews_daughter.html

Giselle Beiguelman, "Code Movie 1":

http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/beiguelman_code_movie_1.html

Week Two: Sept 3: Visual Narrative

Spiegelman, *Maus II: And Here My Troubles Began*.

Week Three: Sept 8-10: Narrative Vocabulary and Syntax

Continue discussion of *Maus II*

Read all of McCloud's *Understanding Comics*, but our discussion will focus on Chapters 1 & 2: "Introduction" and "The Vocabulary of Comics"

Week Four: Sept 15-17: Time in Narrative

McCloud, Chapter 3: "Blood in the Gutter" and Chapter 4: "Time Frames"

Jorge Luis Borges, "Garden of Forking Paths" (PDF)

Week Five: Sept 22-24: Space

McCloud, "Chapter 5, 6 & 7: "Living in Line," "Show and Tell" & "Six Steps"

Darcey Steinke, "Blindspot" <http://adaweb.walkerart.org/project/blindspot/>

MobileGaze (Brad Todd & Valerie Lamontagne), Utopia Parkway

<http://www.mobilegaze.com/utopia/>

William Burroughs Cut-Ups Page: <http://www.lucaspickford.com/burrcutups.htm>

Brion Gysin, Cut-Ups Explained:

<http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/~cantsin/permutations/gysin/cut-up.cgi>

Oct 1st: Project 1 Due: Digital Comic Strip

Week Six: Sept 29-Oct 1: Introduction to Typography and coding in HTML

Chapter 1 from WebType: Expert (Arah): downloadable pdf
In-class exercises

Hand in Assignments 1-3: Due October 8th

Week Seven: October 6-8: Design

Introduction to Dreamweaver
In-class exercises

Hand in Assignments 5-9: Due October 15th

Week Eight: Oct 13-15: Point of View

Mark Stephen Meadows: Chapter One

Excerpts from Madden “99 Ways to Tell A Story”

Shelley Jackson, (warning: adult content): “my body: a Wunderkammer”:

http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/jackson_my_body_a_wunderkammer.html

Dan Waber and Jason Pimble, “I, You, We”:

http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/waber_pimble__i_you_we.html

Aaron A. Reed, “Whom the Telling Changed”:

http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/reed__whom_the_telling_changed.html

Jody Zellen, “Ghost City” <http://www.ghostcity.com/>

Week Nine: October 20: Perspective

Mark Stephen Meadows: Chapter Two

Excerpts from Madden “99 Ways to Tell A Story”

Patrick Lichy, “Sprawl: American Landscape in Transition”

<http://www.americanart.si.edu/helios/newmedia/lichty/index.htm>

Michael Martone, “Flatness” <http://www.bornmagazine.org/projects/theflatness/>

Lance Olsen & Tim Guthrie, (warning: adult content), *10:01*

http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/olsen_guthrie_10_01.html

October 22nd: Class Cancelled – Focus on Technology Day

Week Ten: Oct 27-29: Rhetoric of the Medium: Interactivity

Joyce, “Geography of the Word” downloadable pdf

Ed Falco, “Self-Portrait of Child With Father”

http://www.uiowa.edu/~iareview/tirweb/hypermedia/edward_falco/webpages/self_portrait.html

Week Eleven: Nov 3-5: Navigation and Structure

Mark Stephen Meadows: Chapter Three

Robert Kendall, “Faith”

http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/kendall_faith.html

Deena Larsen, "Carving in Possibilities"
http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/larsen__carving_in_possibilities.html
Myst Online Uru: <http://www.gametap.com/home/myst/>

Week Twelve: Nov 17-19: Play

More Myst Online Uru
DJ Spooky (Paul D. Miller), *Rhythm Science*
Wardrip-Fruin et al, Regime Change

Week Thirteen: Nov 24-26

Arnold & Derby, "Kokura" <http://www.eastgate.com/Kokura/>

Thanksgiving: Nov 27th

Major Fiction Project Due: December 3rd

Week Fourteen: Dec 1-3: Presentations

Week Fifteen: Dec 6-12: Exam Review

Assignments, Expectations and Grading

Prerequisites/Skills: Students are expected to be able to use a computer (either Windows or Macintosh) to do basic word processing and email. If you do not have these skills, please contact the library to take a tutorial to bring you up to speed. If you have basic or more advanced computer skills, you will be given the opportunity to fix what might be considered bad habits and learn good basic principles of design, layout and writing for the new media. This course will probably not get you a job at Microsoft, but it will teach you solid writing skills, good foundational principles of Web design, and allow you to expand or build on your creative talents so that they include exemplary Web-native works and sites.

Storage: Your files and creative works can be saved to your MavSpace account (be sure to give the whole class permission to view it), but should also exist as a back up on your home computer, on a memory stick or on a succession of CD-ROMs. Computers are vulnerable, sadly, to viruses and crashes, so be sure that your work is safely stored in a variety of places.

Assignment	Date Due	Weight
First Project – Comic Strip	Oct 1 st	15%
In-Class Work, Attendance	Ongoing	25%
Class Blog	Ongoing	10%
Major Fiction Project + Presentation of it	Nov 29th	25% + 5% (presentation) = 30%
Exam	TBA	20%
		100%

First Project (15%): Using Comic Life software design a remixed digital comic strip with a minimum of 8 pages that retells someone else's story from a new or fresh or startling or different perspective. Due the week of October 1st.

In-Class Assignments, Participation and Attendance (25%): This is a workshop and so you will need to be present. A lot of work will be done in class as we go, including directions for how to use Comic Life, Photoshop, and Dreamweaver and how to code in HTML. This grade includes the Dreamweaver and HTML assignments, asking questions, helping your classmates with problems, and in-class discussion.

Class Blog (10%): will involve ongoing discussion of coding, design and content problems, course materials and reflections on writing for new and old media with your classmates and the professor throughout the term. The best writing comes—not with a lightning bolt and an exclamation of eureka!—but when we constantly apply ourselves. A blog is a good place to practice applying ideas we have discussed in class, posting rough drafts, character sketches and thoughts towards your final project and critiquing other people's work. If you run into programming problems as your text grows in complexity, it also might be a good trail of breadcrumbs to demonstrate what it was that you were trying to do. Quality is generally preferred over quantity in this kind of assignment. Present considered reflections when appropriate, but also don't hesitate to shoot from the hip as required. Registration information TBA.

Major Project (25%) and your presentation of it to class (5%): Create your own online, multimedia digital narrative on the theme of *fracture*. As a major project your work should reflect appropriate complexity and assimilation of concepts that we have discussed in the course. Suggested length is approximately 20 integrated screens, plus a demonstration of good principles of design, layout, typography, colour, linking, the use of images, plus possibly sound and/or animation. You should, by the end of the term, produce a coherent work of Web-native fiction or of poetry. After submitting a mock-up on paper of the project and its interface during the week of October 27th, the finished work and your critique of it is to be presented to class during the last two weeks of the term.

Final Exam: 20%

From the UTA Catalog:

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT. The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 93112 -- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. With the passage of new federal legislation entitled Americans With Disabilities Act - (ADA), pursuant to section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act, there is renewed focus on providing this population with the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens. I will provide "reasonable accommodation" to students with disabilities, so as not to

discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing faculty at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY. It is the philosophy of The University of Texas at Arlington (and every other university that I have ever worked for) that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University.

"Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." (Regents' Rules and Regulations, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22.
Definition of Plagiarism: The intentional or unintentional presentation of another person's ideas or wording as your own will not be tolerated.)

Effective learning can occur only if you are honest about your abilities as a writer. If you choose to ignore this warning and try to deceive your instructor, you may be given an incomplete for the course and be called before the Vice President for Student Affairs for disciplinary action.

See Statement at office for judicial affairs (<http://www2.uta.edu/discipline>) and I suspect scholastic dishonesty (http://www2.uta.edu/discipline/i_suspect_scholastic_dishonesty.htm). Understand that if you engage in academic dishonesty in your work for this course and if I am given the opportunity to assign you a grade (given the rules: see the second link here) I will give you an "F" for the course. It is very easy to catch people who steal!