

immediacy

CREATING A MULTIMEDIA ONLINE JOURNAL

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Don't let the name fool you: **immediacy** is profoundly mediated. This online space¹ – a virtual annex to the Media Studies Program's classrooms and labs – offers a place to present and discuss student work in a variety of media formats. In this course we'll revive *immediacy*, rebuilding it, if we so choose, from the ground up. We'll examine several exemplary online media platforms to see what we can learn from them, speak with professionals from the multimedia publishing world, and explore theories from literary criticism and media studies – theories of “the text” and editing – that will inform our work. How will we design the evolutionary process through which this online space is reinvented and reinvigorated?

Immediacy is an “emergent” project, which means that its form and content will not be apparent to us as we begin our work, but will take shape and attain focus as we continue to read, talk, and experiment. Ultimately, *immediacy* might become something more than a *publication*, something other than a static text – perhaps a form better suited for the presentation of current work and debate – a forum for the *immediate*.

We're looking for people with varied skills and interests – branding, graphic design, media management, editing across media, research, curation, programming, digital design, etc. – that can be put into practice as we create and launch the new **immediacy**.

Students will be expected to complete weekly readings, several “occasional assignments,” and jobs specific to their workgroup. Grade distribution is as follows:

Attendance and Participation: 30%. Students will be permitted two excused absences. Late arrivals, any unexcused absences, and any absences in excess of two will negatively impact your grade. Consistent, meaningful contribution to class discussions is also expected.

Presentation: 20%. In the fifth week of class you will be asked to review several exemplary online publications present your analyses in class. Further direction will come later.

Occasional Assignments: 10%. As need arises, I will ask you to complete brief, production-oriented assignments, which may include such tasks as researching mission statements, drafting submission evaluation forms, and critiquing design proposals. I will specify whether these assignments are to be submitted to me or presented in class.

Mid-semester Evaluation: 10%. Please email me before class on Week 7 a **500-word evaluation** of your own and our class's work – both our *process* and what we will have thus far *produced* – and recommendations for improvement in the second half of the semester.

The Publication: 20%. The success of the journal hinges on our participation as individuals and as a group.

Final Evaluation: 10%. At the end of the semester, each of you will be asked to submit to me, via email, a **500-word statement** addressing what you've learned from this experience and what you wish you *would* have learned; what you felt especially well prepared for and what you wish you had been *better* prepared for; and how this experience has contributed, if at all, to your intellectual, professional, or personal growth. In addition, I'd like for you to write a **couple-sentence summary evaluating the contribution of each classmate** with whom you've worked closely – and those whom you haven't seen *at all!* – over the course of the semester. Your assessment of your classmates' contributions will help me to evaluate everyone's performance – and to ensure that everyone gets their due credit.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- George P. Landow, *Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992 / 2006). ~\$27
- Additional readings are available as pdf's.

¹ <http://www.nsu.newschool.edu/immediacy/> -- Archive here: <http://www.nsu.newschool.edu/immediacy/archive.htm> + one missing issue: <http://www.nsu.newschool.edu/Immediacy/Past%20Immediacy/public%5Fhtml/>

WEEK 1: 9/6

introduction & overview

immediacy past & present: reviewing the history and future potential of the online space

establishing an editorial/curatorial vision

theming the upcoming edition and drafting a call for proposals

WEEK 2: 9/13

Guest Speaker: Sina Najafi, Editor-in-Chief, or Jeffrey Kastner, Senior Editor, *Cabinet* magazine (<http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/>)

THEORY

hypertext: its rules and rationale

Do:

- Read Jerome McGann, “The Rationale of HyperText”: <http://www.iath.virginia.edu/public/jjm2f/rationale.html>
See also: The Rossetti Archive: <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/> and Rossetti Archive Resources: <http://www.rossettiarchive.org/resources.html>
 - *How might we learn from examples in scholarly electronic publishing?*
- Read George Landow, “Hypertext: An Introduction,” “Reconfiguring the Text” and “Reconfiguring Writing” in *Hypertext 3.0* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992 / 2006): 1-52; 69-124 (skim 77-93²); 144-214³
 - Optional: “Hypertext and Critical Theory”: 53-68.

PRACTICE

firm up the editorial vision statement, theme, and call for proposals

who’s our audience?

immediacy’s staff: establishing a division of labor

Do:

- Read Jonathan Peelle, “Before You Begin” in *Publishing a Graduate Student Journal* (Creative Commons: September 2005): 1-11.
- Read Morris Eaves, “Electronic Textual Editing: Multimedia Body Plans: A Self-Assessment” Text Encoding Initiative Consortium: <http://www.tei-c.org/Activities/ETE/Preview/eaves.xml> (You’re also encouraged to wander around the TEIC site.)
- Quickly review the publications listed under Week 5, and any other relevant online resources you’re aware of, to get a sense of what “immediacy-like” platforms already exist, what holes we might fill, and what opportunities we should exploit.
- Think About: existing publications, themes for the upcoming edition, CFP copy, and components of the vision/mission statement; your skills and interests and what role you’d like to play in *Immediacy*’s production.

² Skim – not because the themes addressed on these pages are irrelevant or unimportant, but because the author’s discussion of these themes is rather unsatisfying. It may, however, be worth your while to look closer at the examples Landow presents (in italics) on pp. 90 – 93.

³ This chapter, which is conveniently organized into several thematic sections and subsections, lends itself well to skimming. Once you identify the main idea, or take-away message, from each of these subsections, move on to the next.

WEEK 3: 9/20

THEORY

medium-specific analysis: what can hypertext do that other forms can't?: exploiting the unique features of the medium

Do:

- Read N. Kathryn Hayles, "Print Is Flat, Code Is Deep: The Importance of Media-Specific Analysis" *Poetics Today* 25.1 (2004): 67-90.
- Read Theodor H. Nelson, from *Computer Lib / Dream Machines* and "Proposal for a Universal Electronic Publishing System and Archive" from *Literary Machines*, both in Noah Wardrip-Fruin & Nick Montfort, Eds., *The New Media Reader* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003): 301-338, 443-461.
 - *Although his ideas may now seem dated, Nelson was quite an innovator for his time. How might we engage in similarly "convention breaking," "envelope-pushing" thinking with the tools we have available to us today?*
- Read Kevin Kelly, "Scan This Book!" *The New York Times* (May 15, 2006).
- Read Motoko Rich, "Digital Publishing Is Scrambling the Industry's Rules" *The New York Times* (June 5, 2006).
- Visit www.onlyrevolutions.com, <http://www.futureofthebook.org/gamertheory/>
- Visit www.threadless.com -- Think about division of labor, rules of creation, crowdsourcing (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crowdsourcing>)
- Think about the exquisite corpse (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exquisite_corpse) and cut-ups (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cut-up_technique)

PRACTICE

how should immediacy work, and what should it look like?

finalize work group assignments

structure/navigation critique I: alvin

Do:

- Issue CFP.
- Online Discussion: finalize vision/mission statement; audience analysis; think about *immediacy's* multimedia capabilities, aesthetics, layout, navigation, usability.

Outside-of-class Workshop: Rules of Engagement

Select Time: anytime Thursday or Friday afternoon

Carlos Teixeira, Parsons' Design Management

Objectives:

- Analyze existing publication models to understand the editorial process in terms of "rules of engagement"
- Define a set of rules of engagement for publishing Immediacy

Preparation:

- Read Andy Clark, "Global Swarming" In *Natural –Born Cyborgs: Minds, Technologies, and the Future of Human Intelligence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003): 143-165.
- Compare the publication models used by the following:
 - The New York Times (compare sections within the newspaper)
 - Wikipedia
 - Channel 102 (<http://www.channel102.com>)
 - eBay
 - an academic journal
 - Google
 - a blog

Materials:

- Post-its, Markers, Poster Paper, Digital Cameras (for documentation)

Deliverable:

- Publication model(s) outlining a system for content management

WEEK 4: 9/27

THEORY/PRACTICE

developing a strategy for evaluating and learning from existing sites
structure/navigation critique 2

Do:

- Randy Bass, Professor of English at Georgetown, has presented a list of critical questions to ask in evaluating electronic texts: <http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/bassr/511/lexicon.html> What other criteria -- design, navigational, aesthetic, etc -- might we add to this list?
 - Skim the Yale Center for Advanced Instructional Media's *Web Style Guide*, 2nd ed.: <http://www.webstyleguide.com> and attempt to develop a condensed list of criteria by which we can evaluate existing online publications
- Read Jonathan Peelle, "Generating Interest" and "The Selection Process" in *Publishing a Graduate Student Journal* (Creative Commons: September 2005): 13-26.
- Read Genevieve Brown & Beverly J. Irby, "Initiating and Editing an Online Professional Refereed Journal," *Journal of Electronic Publishing* 8.1 (August 2002): <http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/08-01/irby.html>.
- Online Discussion: continue thinking about *immediacy's* multimedia capabilities, aesthetics, layout, navigation, usability
- Design Team: See <http://www.newschool.edu/webstyleguide/> for university style guidelines; begin developing proposals for staff presentation, week 6

WEEK 5: 10/4

evaluating existing sites, continued

Do:

- **Critique:** Please make sketches and jot notes about all of the below and any that you would like to add to the list.
- **Prepare a 5- to 7-minute in-class presentation** addressing any site or sites that have something to teach us, for any reason.

Print on the Screen?

- *Honey Eat Your Salad:* <http://www.honeyeatyoursalad.org/>
- *Humument:* <http://www.rosacordis.com/humument/>
- *Radical Software:* <http://www.radicalsoftware.org/e/>
Website features all issues of the magazine, which existed in print form between 1970 and 1974; how does print translate into digital; are there any design ideas we can borrow from the *print* version?
- *Semiotext(e):* <http://www.semiotexte.com/>
- *This Is a Magazine:* <http://www.thisisamagazine.com/> (download Issue #1)
How are print-based publications' schemes translated into this digital presentation?

Multimedia

- *Southern Spaces:* peer-reviewed journal of work on the “real and imagined spaces and places of the American South”: <http://www.southernspaces.org/>
Browse, but make sure to choose “content” → “browse by publication type” → gateways); consider navigability & functionality of multimedia content
- *Vectors: Journal of Culture and Technology in a Dynamic Vernacular:* <http://www.vectorsjournal.org/>
Both content and presentation are relevant to our project; can we take any design cues from any of the featured projects? Any theme ideas?
- *The Relay Project:* <http://www.therelayproject.com/>
An audio magazine – Consider design and functionality.

Hypertext, Animation – and Other Things You Can't Do On the Printed Page

- *Adaweb:* <http://www.adaweb.com/>
- *Blather:* <http://blather.newdream.net/b/blather.html>
How can we exploit the capabilities of hyperlinking?
- *UbuWeb:* <http://www.ubu.com>
Consider content format, navigation
- *Nobody Here:* <http://nobodyhere.com/justme/me.here>
Consider use of hypertext; could this be adapted to fit our content?
Profile magazine: <http://www.youworkforthem.com/profilemag/>
- *Sodaplay:* <http://www.sodaplay.com/>
Could we integrate animation or wireframes in a way that's not purely gratuitous?

Publications With a Life Off the Screen

- *Journal of Aesthetics & Protest:* <http://www.journalofaestheticsandprotest.org/>
Consider presentation, integration of publication and live events
- *Cabinet:* <http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/>
How are the publication, events, and art integrated on the site?
- *Slought Networks:* <http://slought.org/>

Relevant Content

- *Flow:* “a critical forum on television and media culture”: <http://jot.communication.utexas.edu/flow/>
Relevant content – but does the presentation take full advantage of the web's capabilities?
- *Horizon: digital art + culture in Canada:* <http://www.horizonzero.ca/>
Consider themes, content, presentation
- *Media/Culture:* <http://www.media-culture.org.au/>
Content is relevant – but is presentation effective?
- *C-Theory:* “peer-reviewed journal of theory, technology, and culture...”: <http://www.ctheory.net/home.aspx>
Content is relevant to our project. Consider navigation in the “index” section.
- *Metamute:* “culture and politics after the net”: <http://www.metamute.org/>
Consider navigation, assignment of content to “articles,” “news & analysis,” “images,” etc.

Design Ideas

- *Animal Wildlife:* <http://www.animalnewyork.com/Issue7/>
- *Head magazine:* <http://www.headmagazine.co.uk/>
- *If You Could:* <http://www.ifyoucould.co.uk/>
- *JPG:* <http://jpgmag.com/issue5.html>
- *MagWerk:* <http://www.magwerk.com>
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- Design Team: develop prototypes.
- Editorial Team: begin designing submission review workflow and selection criteria.

WEEK 6: 10/11

Guest Speaker: Dan Nadel, Editor, *The Ganzfeld* (<http://www.theganzfeld.com/>)

(Read an interview here: <http://www.comicsreporter.com/index.php/resources/interviews/3287/>)

THEORY

what constitutes a text?

now that, hopefully, we've addressed the theoretical issues and practical concerns most relevant to the project at hand, we'll spend a short while thinking about some of the broader theoretical issues relevant to our work

Do:

- Read Roland Barthes, "From Work to Text" in *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977): 155-164.
- Read Peter Shillingsburg, "Polymorphic, Polysemic, Protean, Reliable Electronic Texts" in George Bornstein and Ralph Williams, eds. *Palimpsest: Editorial Theory in the Humanities* (Ann Arbor, MI: U of Michigan Press, 1993): 29-43.
- Skim Peter S. Donaldson, "Digital Archive as Expanded Text: Shakespeare and Electronic Textuality" in Kathryn Sutherland, ed., *Electronic Text: Investigations in Method and Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997): 173-197.
- Read Joseph Grigley, "Textuality" in *Textuality: Art, Theory, and Textual Criticism* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of MI Press, 1995): 51-87.

PRACTICE

Do:

- Design Team: show prototypes.
- Editorial Team: practice mock evaluation.

WEEK 7: 10/18 (Yom Kippur: class will meet from 3 to 4)

THEORY

more about the multimodal, "polysemic," "protean" text – and how one goes about *editing* it

Do:

- Read excerpts from Nicholas Zurbrugg, ed., *The Multimedia Text*, Art & Design Profile 45 (special issue), 1995.
 - Read Introduction, "Henri Chopin," "The Movement of Shadows," "Multiplying the Text," "Ian Hamilton Finlay" and "Narrative and the World Wide Web" (6, 21-31, 39-41, 43-45, 47-55, 82-91) and other chapters of personal interest.
- Read Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author" in *Image, Music, Text* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977): 142-148.
 - See also George Landow, "Reconfiguring the Author," "Reconfiguring Writing," and "The Politics of Hypertext: Who Controls the Text?" in *Hypertext 3.0* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992 / 2006): 125-214, 321-376.
- Read John Bryant, "Editing the Fluid Text" in *The Fluid Text: A Theory of Editing and Revision for Book and Screen* (Ann Arbor: U of MI Press, 2002): 141-172.

PRACTICE

selecting a design

designing an editing process

Do:

- Design Team: design development.
- Editorial Team: design submission evaluation forms.

Workshop 2 : Designing the Structure & Interaction

Select Time: anytime Thursday or Friday afternoon

Carlos Teixeira

Objective:

- Develop an understanding of navigation and structure
- Develop the Information Architecture and Interface Design for Immediacy

Materials:

- Post-its, Markers, Blank Poster Paper, Digital Cameras (for documentation)

Deliverables:

- Paper Prototypes
- Navigation Maps

WEEK 8: 10/25 (Shannon in Sweden)

PRACTICE

editorial guidelines, rules & ethics
collecting and reviewing submissions

Do:

- Skim *Journal of Electronic Publishing*: <http://www.hti.umich.edu/iejep/>
- Skim Modern Language Association, "Guidelines for Editors of Scholarly Editions" (November 15, 2005): http://www.mla.org/cse_guidelines
- Skim Stanford, "Copyright & Fair Use": <http://fairuse.stanford.edu/>
- Design Team: develop design.
- Editorial Team: begin reviewing submissions.

Week 9: 11/1

production

Week 10: 11/8

production

Week 11: 11/15

production
publicizing the launch

Week 12: 11/22 – No class: Thanksgiving

production & testing
publicizing the launch

Week 13: 11/29

production & testing
publicizing the launch

Week 14: 12/6

immediacy launch
critique and troubleshooting

Week 15: 12/13

wrap-up
final review due: discuss in class

Supplemental Reading:

What Is a Text?:

- Gunter Martens, "What Is a Text? Attempts at Defining a Central Concept in Editorial Theory" in George Bornstein, Hans W. Gabler & Gilliam B. Pierce, eds., *Contemporary German Editorial Theory* (Ann Arbor: U of MI Press, 1995): 209-231.
- Anna Gunder, "Forming the Text, Performing the Work - Aspects of Media, Navigation, and Linking," *Human IT* 5:2-3, 2001, 81-206: <http://www.hb.se/bhs/ith/23-01/ag.htm>.
- Peter Shillingsburg, "Theory" in *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age: Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed. (Ann Arbor, MI: U of MI Press, 1996): 9-100.
- Joseph Grigley, "The Textual Event" and "Textual Space" in *Textuality: Art, Theory, and Textual Criticism* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of MI Press, 1995).
- Julia Flanders, "The Body Encoded: Questions of Gender and the Electronic Text" In Kathryn Sutherland, ed. *Electronic Text: Investigations in Method and Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
- Richard J. Finneran, ed. *The Literary Text in the Digital Age*. Editorial Theory and Literary Criticism. Ann Arbor: U of MI Press, 1996.
- Elizabeth Bergmann Loizeaux & Neil Fraistat, Eds., *Reimagining Textuality: Textual Studies in the Late Age of Print* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002).

Editing Theory:

- Henning Boetius, "Preliminary Reflections on a Generative Theory of Editing" in George Bornstein, Hans W. Gabler & Gilliam B. Pierce, eds., *Contemporary German Editorial Theory* (Ann Arbor: U of MI Press, 1995): 153-169.

Scholarly Digital Resources:

- Jerome McGann, "The Rossetti Archive and Image-Based Electronic Editing" in Richard J. Finneran, Ed., *The Literary Text in the Digital Age* (Ann Arbor: U of MI Press, 1996).
 - Michael Best, "The Internet Shakespeare Editions: History and Vision" Internet Shakespeare Editions (January 5, 2005): <http://ise.uvic.ca/Foyer/ISEoverview.html>
 - Peter M. Robinson, "New Directions in Critical Editing" in Kathryn Sutherland, ed., *Electronic Text: Investigations in Method and Theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997): 145-171.
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- George Bornstein, *Representing Modernist Texts: Editing as Interpretation* (Ann Arbor: U of MI Press, 1991)
 - Jerome McGann, *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).
 - Journal of Computer Mediated Communication: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/>