

Projects 5 and 6 Combined

Project 5: The Longer Graphic Essay: Strategic Storytelling

Compose a 2,500-word essay that analyzes a graphic narrative of your choice (eg., info comic, film, etc) **and/or** builds off your Project 4 synthetic essay. In either case you want to both theorize and practice transmedia thinking in order to theorize (struggle into thought) your analytical and/or synthetic thinking about X (your BIG IDEA). Use at least ten external references, three from our readings and seven from your own research, using the online Library Catalogue's Articles and Full Text search function to find scholarly articles. You must use at least three images, diagrams, and other visuals within your text to demonstrate, illustrate, or explain your theorization. Target specialists in the relevant field. Utilize the MLA or citation style appropriate to your field.

Over the semester you're writing abstracts and short descriptive and analytical essays, as well as your own info comic. In the last part of the class, you'll combine your skills to create a sustained argument or reflection based on an *insight-vision-hunch-revelation-pattern-Eureka-leap-a ha-surprise-flash-idea* about X that you have while studying your info comic/X and its place in the world. The power of writing is ideation and strategic storytelling, and this is your chance to produce and share ideas sparked by your text.

You will need to read your chosen text very closely and take notes to help you describe and understand its form and functions. At the same time, you'll need to use different perspectives, arguments, and concepts from readings to articulate your own *theory or new way of seeing-knowing-doing X* revealed by your information comic or X (or whatever term you think works best) and arguing for its *significance*. Why should your target audience care about the text and your argument?

Continue using Horton as a guide, contrasting old ways and your new way of seeing *comics*, *specialized knowledge*, *knowledge in general*, *education*, *life*—and/or some other way of framing X, the text's significance, its "why" and "what." Shuttle between your info comic and your theory, your theory and other theories, your info comic and traditional articles in your field, your audience and your subject matter, etc.

To generate/refine your thesis (the form your revelation takes in language), carry a notebook or create a Google folder to collect notes, ideas, and other generative materials; try experimenting with Horton's old school note-card method of composition or new school methods, such as *Post-its* and *Sketchnotes* to spatialize ideas on a table or wall in order to define terms, discover relationships, organize arguments, and generate minor and major insights. How do these visual methods connect to others we will learn, such as *battle lines* of oppositions an author uses to make arguments, or *conceptual spreadsheets* gathering and distinguishing different authors' ideas, or *schematic and narrative outlines*, or *sparklines* that embed arguments within an overarching rhetorical narrative, or the *Paramedic Method* of reshaping long, weak, meandering sentences? How might these methods connect to info comics themselves? Is Horton right that having and communicating a *ha!* moments comes down to order? Can this be done in other ways?

Horton describes writing the longer essay as a combination of *mess* (research) and *mystery* (insight), but I add a third process: *massage* (transmediating or shaping your idea in appropriate media). This project requires you to transmediate your idea into a written essay for specialists and a short presentation for non-specialists. Your idea will take slightly different shapes in these media, and you should draw on all materials as tutor texts to create the most professional work you can.

Drafts due: T 11/28 **Presentations due** Th 11/30

Project 6: Micro-PechaKucha: Presenting your Proj 5 research and paper

Compose a 6X20 (2 min) micro-PechaKucha that presents a condensed version of your Project 5 longer essay for an educated general audience.

Final papers due: T 12/5