Projects 5 and 6 Combined: Longer Essay and Pecha Kucha

Project 5: The Longer Essay: Strategic Storytelling

Compose a 2,500-word essay that analyzes an info comic/graphic novel/theory comix in order to theorize (struggle into thought) how and why it uses images and text, arguments and stories, characters and ideas to reveal X (your/its BIG IDEA). Use at least seven external references, three from our readings and four 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 in your paper. Utilize the MLA citation style, however.

Over the semester you'll write 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 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 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 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.

Project 6: Micro-PechaKucha: Presenting your Ideas about your Info Comic

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

Draft Proj 5 due: Th Nov 21   **Proj 6 Pecha Kucha Presentation:** T Dec 3   **Proj 5 Final Paper due** T Dec 10