

Instructor: Roger Whitson

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Office Hours: MWF 10 a.m. -11 a.m. (Deja Brew and Target Copy)

MWF, period 5; Tuesday, periods E1-E3 (occasionally)

Rolfs 105

ENG 1131: Writing Through Media, Writing Through Blake

ENG 1131 is a course designed to introduce students to writing in a myriad of different mediums: television, music, video games, pop literature, and comics to name a few. Students not only analyze and interpret media works but also use “creative” forms and practices to explore the production of meaning. This is not a course in web-design per se, but a course that encourages experimentation in writing THROUGH media.

This particular section will attempt to use commonplaces in the work of the 18th century British poet William Blake to explore reactions to New Media apparatuses. As such, we will not be reading Blake’s poetry for content. We will, on the other hand, look at his poetry as a practical set of interventions that can be used today to become writers of what is called the new media: the proliferation of media *in the wake* of the internet and electronic modes of communication.

Along the way we will use Blake (and some essays by French theorist Roland Barthes) to illustrate various semiotic commonplaces including: enigma, enthymeme, and trope.

Required Books

Roland Barthes. *Image, Music, Text*

J.M. DeMatteis. *The Complet Moonshadow*

Coursepacket of Sources

Internet Sources

“Semiotics for Beginners.”

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/sem02.html>

Introduction to Web Authoring:

<http://www.nwe.ufl.edu/writing/help/web/authoring/>

“Tyger of Wrath: William Blake In the National Gallery of Victoria”

<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/blake/>

“Digital Designs on Blake.” *Romantic Circles*.

<http://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/designsonblake/>

“Once, Only Imagined.” *Romantic Circles*.

<http://www.rc.umd.edu/praxis/blake/>

The William Blake Archive.

<http://www.blakearchive.org/>

Matthew Ritchie. *The Hard Way*.

<http://adaweb.walkerart.org/influx/hardway/>

Nelson Hilton. *The Blake Digital Text Project*.

<http://virtual.park.uga.edu/~wblake/home1.html>

J. Hillis Miller. “Digital Blake.”

<http://dc-mrg.english.ucsb.edu/conference/2000/PANELS/BEssick/jhmiller.html>

Online David Erdman edition of the Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake

<http://www.english.uga.edu/nhilton/Blake/blaketxt1/>

Ron Broglio, Marcel O' Gorman, Bill Ruegg. "Digging Transformation in Blake: What the Mole Knows About the New Millenium."

<http://www.lcc.gatech.edu/~broglio/molar/>

Adam Komisaruk. "Introducing The Blake Model"

<http://www.rochester.edu/college/eng/blake/BlakeModel/text.html>

Class Policies

Attendance

Because class attendance is critical to your understanding of class material, you are only allowed two unexcused absences over the course of a semester. After two unexcused absences, your final grade will be dropped a letter grade for every day missed. An absence due to illness or family crisis may be excused if properly documented to the instructor's satisfaction. In addition, if you participate in a university-sponsored event (athletics, music, theater, field trip), you must provide me with documentation from an appropriate authority, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Whether or not an absence is excused, you are responsible for contacting a classmate or me to find out what material you missed and any work that was assigned. If work is due in class on the day of the absence, the work is due in my mailbox by 4:00 pm that day. No student (including athletes) who misses more than 12 days of class will pass.

Tardies

One or two tardies will be excused if the reasons are acceptable. Otherwise tardiness is not acceptable because it is disruptive, and, beyond any excused tardies, class participation and overall grade will be affected (two tardies equals one absence.)

Format

Most work done in this class will be webbased. I will hand out and present on some web-page conventions that I will expect you to follow for all assignments.

Gordon Rule

All work must be completed for a grade since the work assigned fulfills the Gordon Rule, which stipulates that students are to write a minimum of 6000 words that receive feedback, are graded, and give experience in various types of writing important in the disciplines, workplace, and civic arena. You will attain credit only if you complete all assignments in this course. No person who does not complete all assignments will pass this class.

Plagiarism

All work must be individual. Evidence of collusion (working with another student or tutor not connected with class) and plagiarism (use of another's ideas, data, and/or statements without acknowledgement or with only minimal acknowledgement) will lead to the procedures set up by the University for Academic Dishonesty.

Late Work/Rewrites

Late assignments will drop one letter grade for every class period that it is late. If the assignment is more than one week late, it will receive a zero. See me if you have extenuating circumstances.

Challenging a Grade

Any complaints about separate assignments should be addressed to me and not to the Department. If you have complaints about the final grade, you may see me at the beginning of next term. If you find you still have complaints after our meeting, you may express your complaints on a form (you must include all written work performed during the semester as well

as a record of absences and a review of class participation) in the English Department Office (4012 TURL). The form and accompanying course material will be given to the Director of the Writing Program for further action. A committee of faculty members will review each student's work and decide on the final grade. The committee may decide the grade should remain as it is, be raised, or be lowered; the decision is final.

Disabilities

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting accommodation should contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Peabody 202. That office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

If you have a learning disability, hardship, or other special dispensation that has been approved by the Office of Student Affairs, please meet with me to discuss your requirements as early in the term as possible.

Grade Breakdown:

1. Build Your Own Website (manifesto; 5 pages; 2 images and explanation page)—This is a basic introduction to .html and used in conjunction with Blake's "manifesto," *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. We will use the website to ask what manifestos are and what place they may have in contemporary electronic discourse. (750-1000 words; 10%)
2. Make Your Own Blake (5 pages; 5 images and explanation page)—Students will be asked to take a Blake poem and "re"-illuminate it electronically on five subsequent pages. After looking at two different ways of interpreting what Blake means: Jim Jarmusch's *Dead Man*, and Matthew Ritchie's *The Hard Way*, students will design their own way of presenting a Blake poem (or one section from a Blake poem) in hypertext. We will also look at how Blake reimagined another literary figure in *Milton*. (about 1250-1500 words; explanation page needs 350 words; 20%)
3. Map of Golgonooza/Jerusalem/Beulah/Eternity (designing a MOO space; 6 rooms)—Finally, I will ask you to take selections from Blake's poetry and create a map of Golgonooza: Blake's Mystical London. The problem is that Golgonooza (or Jerusalem, or Beulah, or Eternity) is, essentially, an unmappable space. So, you will need to be able to visualize something that is individual to each viewer. For this, we will look at a number of ways to map a space: Blake's "London," sections of *Jerusalem*, Steven Guynup's *Crystal Cabinet*, as well as Paul Chan, Joshua Breitbart and the "Friends of William Blake's" methods of creating a utopian map of New York during the 2004 Republican National Convention. (25%)
4. Response Journal (2000 words; 30%)—Responses to readings and discussions. I will check the journal periodically throughout the semester.
5. Attendance and Participation (15% of your grade). Attendance and **regular** participation are required. This means that you ask questions and/or comment frequently. Also I reserve the right to give up to four pop quizzes during the semester if I feel that people are not doing the reading. These will figure into your participation grade.

Tentative Schedule (May change with notice from the instructor; readings are due on the date listed)
Guide: (E)—Erdman’s Poetry and Prose of Blake (also in coursepacket), (A)—The William Blake Archive, (D)—Blake Digital Text Project, (DD)—Digital Designs on Blake

Jan 9-13

M: Introduction to class; NWE
W: Read all NWE help pages; Int to Semiotics
F: Barthes, “From Work to Text.”

Jan 16-20

M: No Classes
(T): Intro to html coding and Dreamweaver
W: Essick, “Blake and the Artistic Machine.”
F: Discussion of and Working on Project 1;
Read Blake, “Descriptive Catalogue (E)

Jan 23-27

M: Barthes, “The Death of the Author”
W: Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*
-first (E), then (A). Compare
F: Continue with *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*;
Discuss Projects

Jan 30-Feb. 3

M: Barthes, “The Third Meaning”
(T): View *Dead Man*
W: Discuss Jarmusch, *Dead Man*
F: Comparison of *Marriage with Dead Man*
First Project Due

Feb 6-10

M: Intro to 2nd Project; Read sec of *Paradise Lost*
(T): Intro to Fireworks; Java
W: Look at first few pages of Blake’s *Milton* (A);

Look at Everlasting Gospel Hypertext (D)
F: First half of Blake’s *Milton* (E)

Feb 13-17

M: Second half of *Milton*
W: Look at Images from *Milton.Comp* (E) & (A)
F: Discuss and work on projects

Feb 20-24

M: Look at the *Victoria Exhibit*
W: Ritchie, *The Hard Way* (find an avatar)
F: No class: projects & go to comics conf.

Feb 27-March 3

M: Blake “A Vision of the Last Judgment” (E)
(T): Watch *Red Dragon: Tatting and “Self-Annihilation”*
W: Barthes, “Rhetoric of the Image,”
F: Broglio et al, “Digging Blake.”
Second Project Due

Mar 6-10

M: Blake, *Jerusalem* 1; “London” (E)
W: Images of *Jerusalem* (A)
F: Miller, “Digital Blake”;

Mar 13-17

SPRING BREAK

Mar 20-24

M: Broglio, “Inside the Poem” (DD)
(T): Introduction to the MOO
W: Work on MOO
F: Baluch, “*Milton* and MOO” (DD)

Mar 27-31

M: Guynup, “Crystal Cabinet” (DD)
(T) MOO Building
W: Explore *Crystal Cabinet*
F: Blake, *Urizen* (E & A)

April 3-7

M: Blake, *Four Zoas*: Night 6 (E)
(T) MOO Building
W: Chan, “Friends of Blake”
F: No Class—Work on Projects

April 11-14

M: Komisaruk, “The Blake Model”
W: Komisaruk, “Virtuality” (DD)
F: Finish up and **Third Project Due**

April 17-21

M: DeMatteis, *Moonshadow*
(T): View *Dangerous Lives*
W: *Moonshadow*
F: *Moonshadow*

April 24-26

M: Final reflections on Blake/Media
W: **Turn in final copy of journal**