

DWRL WHITE PAPER SERIES

Digital Writing: Ebooks in the DWRL

EMPTY BOOKSHELVES - SEATTLE CENTRAL LIBRARY | IMAGE CREDIT: J BREW

Digital Writing and Research Lab

White Paper Series #130801-1

Digital Writing: Ebooks in the DWRL

Kendall Joy Gerdes, Project Leader

kendalljoy@utexas.edu

The University of Texas at Austin

Jenny Howell

jenny.h.howell@gmail.com

The University of Texas at Austin

Stephanie Odom

stephanie.odom@utexas.edu

The University of Texas at Austin

Cole Wehrle

cwehrle@utexas.edu

The University of Texas at Austin

01 August 2013

Keywords: ebook, ibooks, epub, blog, podcast, archive

Abstract: This white paper, presented in both .ibooks format and .epub format, inventories and demonstrates the capabilities of ebook technology for the Digital Writing and Research Lab project groups and specialists, as well as other DWRL projects including the annual Speaker Series, annual editions of the handbook, and ongoing pedagogy blogs.



Exporting from iBooks Author to a .pdf file has advantages and disadvantages for an ebook. A .pdf file can be opened on a wider range of ereader devices than a .ibooks file. It also retains the text formatting, layout, static images, and most links (internal document links, which require bookmarks or anchors within the document, are lost). Unfortunately, many of the interactive features available in iBooks Author won't work in the .pdf version, including expandable images, galleries, video and audio, quizzes, Keynotes, interactive images, 3D models, pop-overs, scrolling sidebars, and HTML widgets. While the look and feel from iBooks Author remains in tact, much of the functionality is lost in the .pdf version.

Introduction

Chapter 1 introduces this project by first explaining the reason for presenting this research as a white paper, followed by an overview of the technology available for reading and composing ebooks.



Justification

WHY A WHITE PAPER?

1. **Opening inquiry**
2. **Documenting activity**
3. **Inviting response**

Our project group selected the white paper genre as a way of presenting our research on ebooks for several reasons. The **DWRL White Paper Series**, begun in 2003, establishes a semi-formal mode of raising questions, reporting findings, and sustaining the work of a project group beyond a single academic year.

OPENING INQUIRY

Our white paper is designed with the hope of raising questions about the intersections of technological, pedagogical, professional, and theoretical aspects of composing in the ebook format. Our explanation of the ebook format can be a foundation for further research on digital writing.

DOCUMENTING ACTIVITY

Our white paper allows us to document the intellectual and organizational activity of our project group that might otherwise remain invisible. In Chapter 3, Reflections, we offer our experiences of composing in iBooks Author and converting our .ibooks file to an .epub file. These reflections help us show the process of ebook composition as a part of its final products.

INVITING RESPONSE

Above all, our white paper aims to invite response from future DWRL project groups, especially in the form of ebooks as outlined ahead. Chapter 2 is dedicated to outlining and demonstrating the possible uses of ebooks for each current project group. We hope future project groups will incorporate some of these possibilities into their own goals and deliverables.

Overview of Ebook Technology

SUBSECTIONS

1. **iBooks, epubs, and other ebook formats**
2. **Ereaders**
3. **iBooks widgets**
4. **Reading in iBooks**

IBOOKS, EPUBS, AND OTHER EBOOK FORMATS

Ebooks have many advantages over traditional print and online media, including easy dissemination, stability, multimedia content, and interactive features.

However, there is little consensus on a standardized format, and there are several proprietary options that offer a greater range of features at the cost of wider compatibility. Amazon's Kindle primarily uses the .azm file format. These files can support pictures and internal links but have limited color and formatting capability. Apple has developed its own file format, .ibooks, which is composed using Apple's iBooks Author

software. It has a lot of attractive features, but currently can only be read on iPads.

Though they are not optimized for many readers, .pdf files remain a common format because of their portability and versatility. Virtually every ereader can open them. But the only widely cross-platform file format optimized for readers is .epub.

EREADERS

While the iPad is the only ereader device that can display Apple's .ibooks file format, several other companies offer their own proprietary ereader devices and corresponding file formats. Amazon ebooks (.azm) use the Kindle. Before the Kindle Fire was released in 2011, all Kindles used E Ink technology to display text and pictures on a non-LCD screen. The Kindle Fire uses an LCD touch-screen, similar to the iPad. The Kindle's .azm files can be read on other devices if equipped with the Kindle app. Several ereader devices rely on the Linux-based Android software, including Barnes & Noble's Nook. Google, Sony, Samsung, and Acer all manufacture Android devices, too.

Nearly all ereader devices are able to display the .epub file format, although some may require additional software or a file conversion. Likewise, most ereaders can display .pdf files, but the file format is not optimized for ebook use.

The file format chart explains several common ebook file formats in relation to the devices they can be read on, the

tools they require to design, what interactive elements they support, and how difficult they are to create. Tap the chart to view it full screen.

iBOOKS WIDGETS

Format	Compatible Readers	Design Tool	Interactive Elements	Creation Difficulty
epub	Most devices can use with either an add-on or file conversion	Adobe InDesign, QuarkXPress, Scribus, Publisher, Callias, Scribus	Hyperlinks, images, video (some devices)	Text easy, interactive difficult
pdf	All can use, but many are not optimized	Adobe products, and most word processors	Hyperlinks, images, video (some devices)	Text easy, interactive moderate. Some cross-platform trouble
iBooks	Apple devices	iBooks Author	Hyperlinks, images, audio, video, animation	Very easy
azw	Kindle and Kindle App	Any program that can create .pdf or .doc files	Hyperlinks, images, limited audio and video	Depends as if it is a derivative format

File format chart

We chose to design our ebook using iBooks Author. What makes iBooks Author so attractive is its simplicity. The software uses tools called widgets to simplify what would otherwise be many individual design decisions. Widgets can be dropped into your iBook as an interface for images, movies, Keynote presentations, interactive images, 3D images, review questions, inset scrolling, pop-up annotations, and almost any HTML-based widget you can design.

The rest of this section explains and demonstrates each widget type.

Gallery

Galleries contain multiple images in a single set, and readers can swipe to move through the images. Tap a photo to call it out and expand it.

GALLERY 1.1 The DWRL



Computer screens gleam in a DWRL classroom.



Media

Readers can play back and stop audio and video files in the Media widget. Movies can be played in full screen mode.

MOVIE 1.1 Welcome to Rhetorical Peaks!



A short introductory video to the DWRL-created video game, Rhetorical Peaks.

Review

Quiz readers with custom multiple choice questions in the Review widget.

REVIEW 1.1 Quiz

How many widgets can you choose from in iBooks Author?

- A. One
- B. Sixty-five
- C. Infinite
- D. None

Check Answer

Keynote

Embed a Keynote presentation for readers to click through, or set it in Keynote to play back by itself.

INTERACTIVE 1.1 Keynote

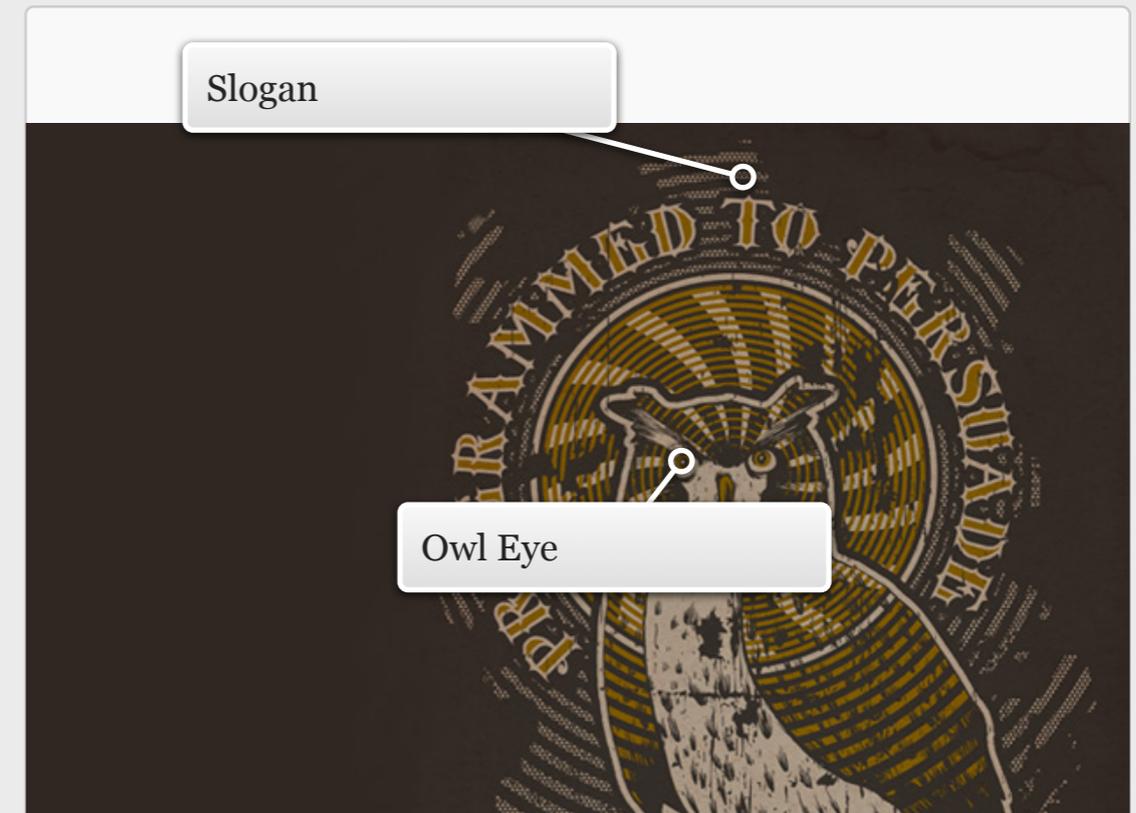


Tap to advance the presentation.

Interactive Image

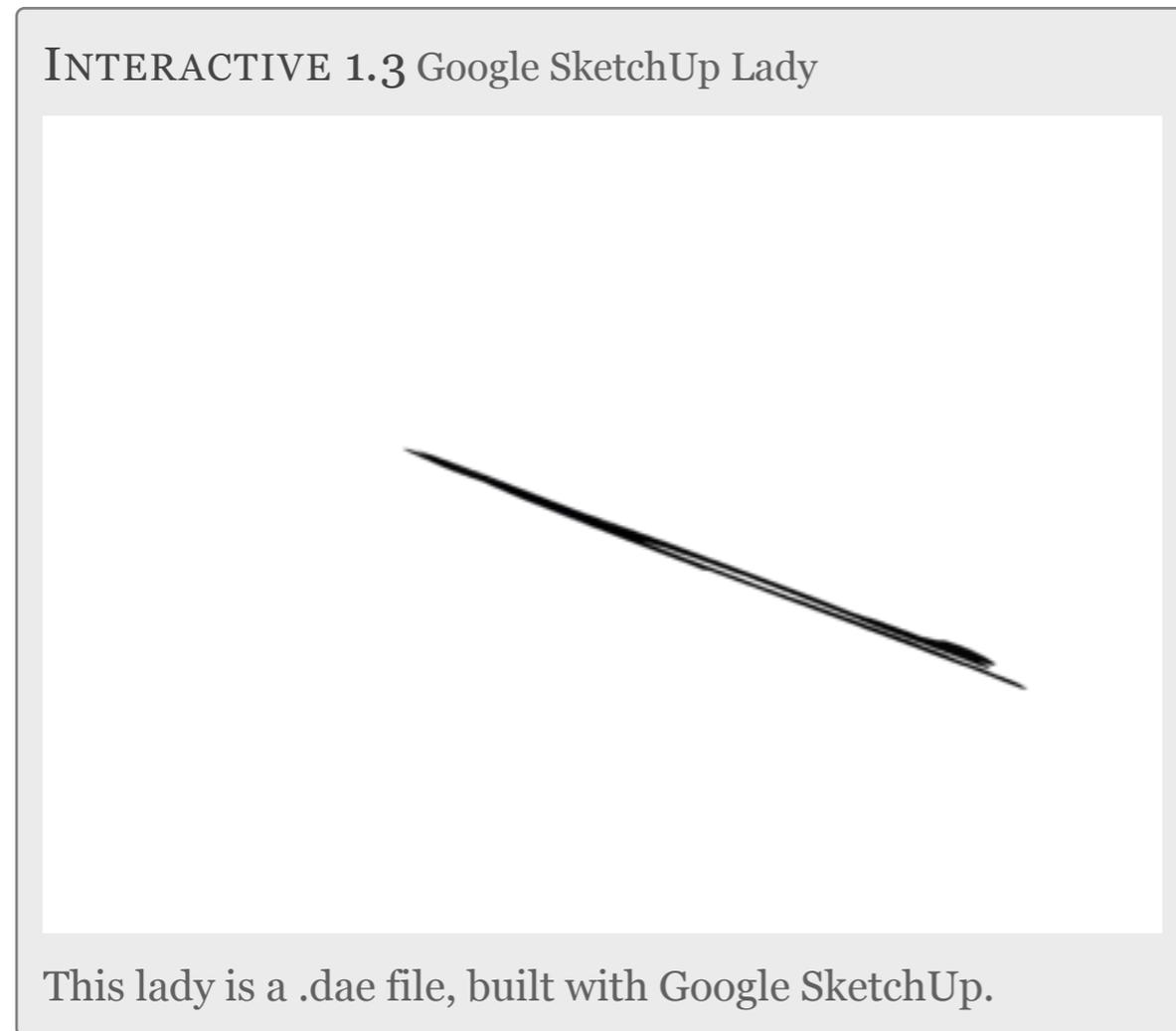
Set the default view of an image, and set points of interest for readers to examine up close (or at a distance).

INTERACTIVE 1.2 Programmed to Persuade Owl



3D

Readers can grab the model to rotate it in 3D.



Scrolling Sidebar

Give your readers some more detailed information, or a series of photos, without taking up extra layout real estate.

If you don't want a big chunk of text to display across several pages, then a scrolling sidebar widget is for you. Here you can also scroll down through the photos of the authors: Kendall, Jenny, Stephanie, and Cole.

Pop-Over

When readers tap a pop-over photo, iBooks shows your annotation.



HTML

The most powerful widget in iBooks Author is the HTML widget, which lets you build your own features, from buttons to apps, into your ebook.

INTERACTIVE 1.4 HTML



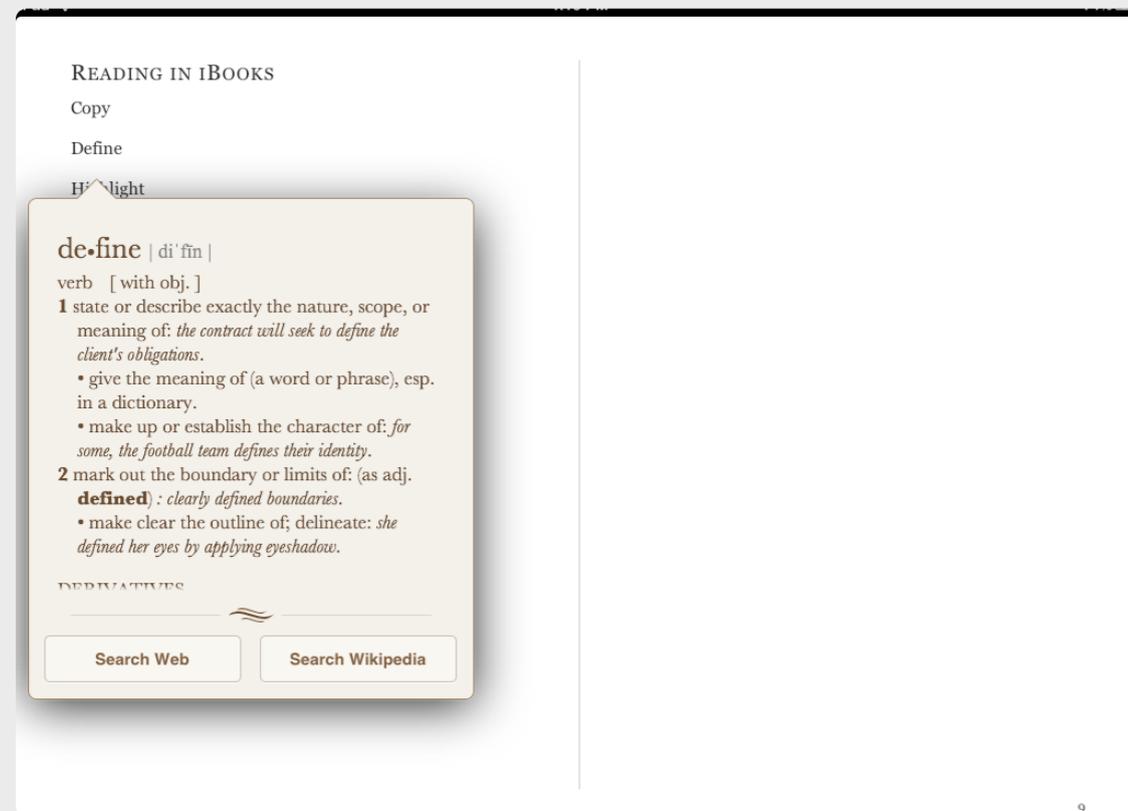
Launch this free Bookry widget by tapping the icon, then color in the ocean scene.

READING IN IBOOKS

In addition to using the powerful widgets available in iBooks Author, readers also have several other features at their fingertips that make iBooks an attractive app to read with. Swipe through the gallery to see the features (and pinch open to expand the gallery to full screen).

This iBook is optimized for reading in landscape mode, but you can rotate your iPad to change orientations and view the iBook in portrait mode. Readers should also be advised that links to online content will open in a browser window, and you'll have to return to the iBooks app on your iPad to resume reading.

GALLERY 1.2 Screenshots from reading in iBooks



Select a word and define it inside iBooks.



Project Groups

Chapter 2 lays out some possible uses of ebooks for current DWRL project groups. Our suggestions include some ways that ebooks could be used to further a group's *current goals*, how an ebook from the group could be incorporated into the *classroom*, and how composing an ebook could further the *professionalization* of DWRL staffers.



Visual Rhetoric



Image credit: *viz.*

SUBSECTIONS

1. Group goals
2. In the classroom
3. Professionalization

GROUP GOALS

Converting and compiling *viz.* material could potentially be a straightforward application of ebooks. The material would primarily be text and still images, though embedding video in order to archive it would be an advantage of using the ebook format over the web format for *viz.* Stephanie Odom interviewed the 2012-2013 Visual Rhetoric Project Group Leader, Rachel Schneider, who offered the following ways that she envisioned ebooks working for the visual rhetoric blog.

EDITED COLLECTIONS

The most obvious idea would be to curate topically related *viz.* posts for an edited collection. One example might be bringing together posts on election visual rhetoric from the 2008 and 2012 election cycles. Tags are currently used to describe the topics of the post, and this system theoretically lets users browse by topic, but Rachel said that the tags are not always used consistently and older posts may not be tagged as thoroughly as newer posts. Rachel mentioned that *viz.* alumni might serve as editors of these collections, though current lab members could also certainly perform the role.

The benefits of producing such an ebook would include enhanced credibility for *viz.*, the chance to preserve ephemeral media (such as embedding video clips that get taken off of YouTube or Hulu), and ease of use for classes.

IN THE CLASSROOM

An ebook would have advantages over links to related blog posts online because of the stability of the ebook and the fact that readers do not have to be online to use it. Additionally, the reader's ability to bookmark and annotate the text means that working with an ebook would be more of an interactive experience than passively reading a blog post online and either making notes elsewhere or not at all. And working with tablets and smart phones in class is still a relative novelty; we shouldn't dismiss the "cool" factor of ebooks for students.

In addition to using a *viz.* ebook as a course text, another possibility would be for students to write their own blog posts and publish it as an ebook. They might pair their posts with a *viz.* post that inspired them, or the whole class might take a single post as a jumping-off point and put their own writing in conversation with it. DWRL Instructor Scott Nelson's Fall 2012 class, which collectively authored the ebook **Literature and Video Games**, has shown that students respond positively to publishing an ebook as a final project, so this type of assignment could/should be attempted in other classes, even if digital media is not the focus of the class.

An obvious class in which to use and create *viz.*-related ebooks would be RHE 315, Introduction to Visual Rhetoric. It is hard to imagine a more appropriate anthology of readings for this class than a collection of *viz.* posts and their consistently high quality rhetorical analysis of visual artifacts. One possible option for use in RHE 315 would be creating an

ebook based on the Visual Theory posts currently on *viz.* Such an ebook could function as a collection of theoretical lenses for the students, not only as examples of analysis like the more topical posts would be.

Another class that would be a natural fit would be RHE 309S, Critical Reading and Persuasive Writing, which engages students in public issues and therefore often touches on political issues. The idea for the election-themed collection described above would fit well into such a class, giving students the opportunity to practice critical reading and persuasive writing about visual texts in addition to alphabetic ones. Finally, if an instructor designs a RHE 309K around a topic that has several relevant *viz.* posts already extant, those could be collected into an ebook and used as a topical anthology for that instructor's class.

PROFESSIONALIZATION

The lower-division courses named above are all routinely taught by Assistant Instructors (AIs), and designing, assigning, or creating related ebooks would be excellent professionalization opportunities for instructors. We in the DWRL often take for granted the level of engagement we have with cutting-edge technologies, but hiring committees for academic positions are impressed with how we integrate technology into our teaching and the digital projects we've worked on. DWRL alumni have been successful at marketing themselves for digital rhetoric jobs--Sean McCarthy even published a dissertation using iBooks Author--so the use or

creation of ebooks would augment other digital pedagogical experience AIs currently have. Alternatively, non-academic employers, especially in tech fields, would look positively on instructors' familiarity with ebooks.

Some group members also choose to list *viz.* blog posts on their CVs. Having a post included in an ebook would add a degree of respectability to this type of publication. While it wouldn't count as a peer-reviewed publication, being included in an edited collection is a step above merely posting blog entries on the web site.

As writers, *viz.* bloggers would also benefit from having the chance to revise or extend their original posts to better meet the needs of a student audience. Currently, Rachel describes the imagined audience for *viz.* posts as "popular educative," but not necessarily undergraduates. Blog writers would gain valuable experience by accounting for the different rhetorical situation presented by a pedagogical ebook and revising their posts accordingly.

EXAMPLE *VIZ.* POST

The following section attempts to replicate a *viz.* post.

Example *viz.* Post

Reading *Django Unchained* as Camp

SUBMITTED BY LAURA THAIN ON SAT, 2013-03-02 02:13



Image Credit: [Vanity Fair](#)

Although it's been two months since its initial release, the internet is still abuzz with social critique of Tarantino's newest film *Django Unchained*. [Roxane Gay](#), a staff writer for [Buzzfeed](#), argues that rather than encouraging a national discourse on slavery, slavery is instead "the movie's easily exploited backdrop." The movie functions instead as "a white man's slavery revenge fantasy, and one in which white people

figure heavily and where black people are, largely, incidental." Finally, she concludes, "*Django Unchained* isn't about a black man reclaiming his freedom. It's about a white man working through his own racial demons and white guilt."

Many of *Django*'s critics couch their arguments in similar terms—that is, that while Tarantino claims to reignite a discourse on slavery in *Django Unchained*, he in fact privileges genre over content in a way that dangerously decontextualizes our most central national trauma. I have argued in an early post that [privileging medium over content can function as a form of censorship](#). Here, I want to discuss how the same aesthetic practice can simultaneously suggest and defer engagement with tragedy and trauma.

When *Django Unchained* was in the drafting stage, Tarantino [hinted at his new project](#) to *The Telegraph*'s John Hiscock:

"I want to explore something that really hasn't been done. I want to do movies that deal with America's horrible past with slavery and stuff but do them like spaghetti westerns, not like big issue movies. I want to do them like they're **genre films**, but they deal with everything that America has never dealt with because it's ashamed of it...But I can deal with it all right, and I'm the guy to do it."

In trying to find a way to engage with Tarantino's claims—his claims to authority, his privileging of genre—I found DD's argument on [WhitesEducatingWhites](#) the most provocative. In his article entitled "[Whiteness Unchained: When A National Shame Becomes Camp](#)," the author argues

that although “[the] movie supposedly centered around a slave turned bounty hunter in pursuit of revenge,” it “stars white people with Black people in supporting roles.” Although DD never unpacks his claim that *Django Unchained* is campy, it struck me that reading *Django Unchained* as camp is key to deconstructing some of its problematic relationships to slavery, race, violence, and history. I refer here to Sontag’s seminal essay “[Notes on Camp](#)” for some basic definitions of the form and its mechanisms.

First, “the essence of Camp is its love of the unnatural: of artifice and exaggeration.” Camp depends on hyperbole and in always privileging form above content. Second, camp requires rhetorical distance: “Things are campy, not when they become old - but when we become less involved in them, and can enjoy, instead of be frustrated by, the failure of the attempt.” Third, camp is a comedic form, it “proposes a comic vision of the world. But not a bitter or polemical comedy.” Following this, it requires aesthetic engagement in the act of detachment: “If tragedy is an experience of hyperinvolvement, comedy is an experience of underinvolvement, of detachment.” The aesthetic experience in camp is formed with a sensual engagement with the artifice—the genre, the medium, the act of mediation—itsself, rather than, as in tragic forms, the content of that artifice. And, as Sontag notes, “Detachment is the prerogative of an elite.” Finally, its “essential element is seriousness.” Camp is earnest, even when that seriousness fails. Camp cannot be ironic.



Image Credit: [Chief Crew](#)

“Campifying” violence and tragedy becomes especially problematic because earnestness is the defining element of camp. There is no room for irony, critique, or satire in camp as a discourse; rather, respect for the artifice or mediation itself is the militant narrative force. If, as Northrup Frye argues, irony is the central discourse of satire, then sincerity has the same function for camp. The moment campiness attempts irony, it becomes satiric. This is why a movie like *The Producers* draws on elements of camp but is not campy itself—it instead implements elements of irony to levy critique against the “producers” of Broadway performances specifically by way of aestheticizing the public’s near-universal disdain for the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany. The moment *The Producers* ridicules Nazism through camp, it becomes satire.

For Tarantino to claim the rhetorical distance that irony provides in addressing the national shame of slavery would be problematic from the onset, but in privileging genre over content, he extinguishes even this possibility. Instead, the film functions to aestheticize a violence so terrible that, as Tarantino notes, we as a nation struggle to “deal with,” especially in filmic depictions. By doing so, he creates rhetorical distance from the content itself. He does not campify the experience of slavery so much as he avoids its portrayal, which exists little outside of highly-mediated (i.e. highly aestheticized) depictions of violence. It is the “campification” of this violence that is so dangerous, because it encourages the reader to indulge in the violent fantasy from all angles—that of the slaver, that of the slave—without interrogating it. In operating on the assumption that slavery is universally rejected by the contemporary American audience, Tarantino defers engaging with violence in an immediate sense. Rather, he hypermediates and hyperaestheticizes violence at the cost of content—and in the case of *Django Unchained*, that content is any substantial character development for the people of color within the film, as well as any depiction of the actual practice of slavery.



Image Credit: [Wondersinthedark](#)

What we receive instead is proto-Klansmen who are humanized through the demotic language that distracts from the intent to commit unspeakable violence. We see women slaves sauntering the plantation grounds or dining aside their masters in the garb of the aristocracy. And we see Django himself executing his first act of revenge in emasculating, Fauntleroy garb. (Sharen Davis, the film's costume designer, [designed the valet "uniform"](#) after Gainsborough's "[The Blue Boy](#)".) The lives of slaves themselves are mythologized—most explicitly, Django and Broomhilda as Siegfried and Brünnhilde in the Nibelungenlied—while the white characters are humanized, individualized, and given complex characteristics. Because of this dynamic, King Schulz leads the film, acting as its primary agent.



Image Credit: [Think Progress](#)

Finally, I would like to suggest that the film's Academy Award nominations serve as further evidence for the dangers of camp and Hollywood's complicitness in this sort of problematic and incomplete engagement with slavery. The film was nominated for a total of five Academy Awards: Best Cinematography, Best Screenplay, Best Picture, Best Sound Editing, and Best Supporting Actor. Best Screenplay and Best Picture are all accolades that belong primarily to Tarantino himself and show the Academy's admiration for Tarantino's vision, and Best Cinematography and Best Sound Editing rely heavily on the film's engagement with the genre of the Spaghetti Western. All of these nominations demonstrate the Academy's deep respect for the bare-bones aesthetic of the film itself. But Christoph Waltz' nomination and win for Best Supporting Actor implies complicitness even with the false premise (of engagement with national trauma, of engagement with

slavery) of the film itself. Although Christoph Waltz has the most lines, the most screen time, and the most character development—criteria that in virtually any other film would qualify him as the “lead”—his nomination for Supporting Actor is necessary to support the films' other Academy-nominated accolades. We must believe that Waltz supports Jamie Foxx as lead to believe in the film. But this is one final fantasy that collapses under scrutiny.

TAGS: AESTHETICS, AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY, CAMP, FILM, GENRE, RACE, SLAVERY

[LAURA THAIN'S BLOG](#) | VISIT *VIZ.* TO [READ](#) AND [ADD](#) COMMENTS

Currents and TheJUMP

CURRENTS
IN ELECTRONIC LITERACY



SUBSECTIONS

1. Group goals
2. In the classroom
3. Professionalization

GROUP GOALS

The ebook format could have some useful applications for the DWRL's two journal projects, *Currents in Electronic Literacy* and *TheJUMP: The Journal for Undergraduate Media Projects*. Jenny Howell describes some of them here.

One option is to fully embrace the ebook format and present each issue as an ebook (or each volume as an ebook, with individual issues as chapters). A benefit of this idea is that in some ways the ebook format would widen accessibility by (1) opening up the possibility for offline reading and (2) granting accessibility to tablet users (often certain video formats, like Flash, don't play on all tablets). Another benefit to presenting an issue in ebook form is that it honors (perhaps more than a website) the traditional sense of a "publication." However, in other ways accessibility would be more limited since downloading an ebook is more burdensome than browsing a webpage.

A second option is to use an ebook to present an edited collection of publications from past issues. This option offers the opportunity for the editing staffs of these two publications to reflect on their group's past work and to present it in a new context. As Stephanie suggested in her section on *viz.*, other benefits include enhanced credibility and ease of use for classes, if instructors wanted to choose publications that were particularly applicable to their topic. An edited collection could also be helpful for lab members in general. For instance, *Currents* might consider gathering together all their publications that specifically address pedagogical practice in an issue tailored for Assistant Instructors (AIs) in the classroom.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Certainly the kind of edited collection suggested above could serve as an anthology or course text for any number of classes offered by the department, including and especially those on digital writing (like RHE 312). The publications in these journals could be instructive as either informative/theoretical texts or as models of the kinds of projects made possible by composing in a digital environment.

In addition to using selected publications as course texts or instructive models, another possibility is for students to use these two journals (and their ebook format) as a model to create their own journal over the course of the semester. They could request entries (from within the class or other classes), choose the best entries, and edit the collection as a group. This kind of project could be a good way to explore the ebook format—what are its limitations and possibilities? What are the advantages (and disadvantages) of composing in this medium? And does it allow for a unique kind of conversation between publications in a single journal?

These are all questions, of course, that can (and should) also be addressed by lab members. The ebook is a relatively unexplored format. Its possibilities for digital interaction among different texts and different kinds of texts are enormous, and producing a journal in an ebook format could go a long way to exploring this new terrain.

Creating an ebook publication could also enhance some of the articles. For instance, in *Currents*, interviews are located on

two different webpages: one contains the transcript, and the other the audio from the interview. The ebook opens up the possibility that these could be experienced simultaneously, along with video and/or graphics.

PROFESSIONALIZATION

Making ebooks for either multimedia-oriented or more print-oriented journals could give project group members additional experience in academic publication. Publishing a journal as an ebook rather than a website could more closely duplicate the finality of traditional publication.

And, as Stephanie argued in her section on Visual Rhetoric, experience with ebooks and with integrating technology in our classrooms may impress hiring committees, in addition to being marketable in non-academic jobs.

EXAMPLE ARTICLE FROM THEJUMP

The following section attempts to replicate an article from *TheJUMP*.

SECTION 4

Example JUMP Article

S.978 Remix - Safety of the Internet

KEVIN REIDY MORTON & ELIE CHAUVET

MOVIE 1.1 S.978 Remix - Safety of the Internet

Originally published in *TheJUMP* v4.1 - Digital Boundaries



Kevin Reidy Morton & Elie Chauvet

DESCRIPTION

This video project was created for Dr. Tanya Rodrigue's **ENG 298: Digital Writing** course at **Wheaton College**. The assignment called for students to compose a remix on a topic related to the course inquiry: how does technology change the way we think about reading, writing, writing processes, and writing practices? The purpose of the assignment was for students to transform and combine various genres and modes to make an argument to a YouTube audience. The students who created this project mixed several voices in an effort to construct an argument about S.978 and the consequences of the proposed bill.

To see the project timeline, assignment, and other information, or to add a comment [click here](#).

Tags: [video](#), [S.978](#), [Internet](#)

TRANSCRIPTIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

1. [Video with Captions](#)
2. [Audio Description](#)
3. [Transcript](#)
4. [Textual Description](#)

VIDEO WITH CAPTIONS

MOVIE 2.1 S.983 Video with Captions



AUDIO DESCRIPTION

AUDIO 2.1 S.
978 Audio
Description



TRANSCRIPT

SXESXEPhil 00:00 - 00:08:

We move on to our main story of the day. That is because I want to talk about a new bill in congress: S. 978.

DarkSidePhil 00:08 - 00:09:

The bill is S. 978

The Gaming Nobodies 00:09 - 00:10:

(Father) S. 978

OopMyDowns 00:10 - 00:13:

S. 978

Husky 00:13 - 00:20:

A new upcoming law that a lot of people are talking about called the S nine seven eight law, or bill, or however politics works.

South Park 00:20 - 00:21:

(Stan) Um sir?

(Detective) Shut up!

S.978 Transcript

TEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

We open with a still shot of a young man named Phillip DeFranco who is wearing a grey shirt and hat sitting directly in front of the camera addressing the his audience. In the background is a living room decorated in a modern style with green and yellow walls. At the bottom of the screen a video caption reads, “SXEPPhil @Youtube.com”

He speaks passionately, “We move on to our main story of the day. That is because I want to talk about a new bill in congress S. 978.”

We quickly cut to a bearded man known as DarkSidePhil wearing a black shirt with his own face on it, reading the word “hate.” He is standing in a dark kitchen surrounded by video games and popular culture paraphernalia. He is directly addressing the camera gesturing with his arms as he speaks.

“The bill is S. 978.”

Cuts to an image of Mickey Mouse ears with a “C” inside them. Under the head is an infinity

We cut back to the same clip of the black and white video of the woman behind bars from the previous Lessig quote. The image disappears and switches to a middle aged man standing up. The words, “Can’t make passive” appear over the man. We switch to the picture of the woman as the words “only ‘pirate’” are added. The woman is being folded into an origami vault. The camera pans around the room, showing a new perspective. The perspective changes the appearance of the vault to that of a train in the foreground with a western style desert in the background. The word “good?” appears over the train. The train starts to roll off screen as the words “age of prohibitions” appears on screen. The background splits showing the same desert on the right half. On the left half, we see the middle-aged man from before looking down and lighting a cigarette. The words “live life” quickly appear on the screen and disappear. A paper horse moves in from the right side of the screen. The man looks up in concern at the horse. The

RESPONSES AND REFLECTIONS

INSTRUCTOR REFLECTION

DR. TANYA K. RODRIGUE

STUDENT REFLECTION

KEVIN MORTON AND ELIE CHAUVET

RESPONSE 1

JESSICA SCHREYER

RESPONSE 2

KRISTI MCDUFFIE

INSTRUCTOR REFLECTION

Sun, 11/18/2012 - 15:06 -- *Tanya Rodrigue*

This 200-level **Digital Writing** course was framed by the following inquiry: how does technology change the way we think about writing, writing processes and writing practices? The overarching course goals were to teach students multimodal composition and literacies and enhance their genre and rhetorical awareness. Students were also challenged to engage in digital and intellectual play and to explore how various modes and media can be combined to achieve communicative acts.

In the first unit, students began to expand the definition of writing from purely textual to multimodal. The exploration and creation of comics helped them learn how linguistic and

visual modes work together to construct meaning. The use of various programs like Comic Life and GIMP introduced them to a vast realm of digital composing tools, and thus broadened their understanding of writing instruments.

Kevin and Elie's project "S.978 Remix—Safety of the Internet" is from the second unit, which focused on remix. Building off of the comic unit, the remix unit encouraged creativity and invention, as students added the audio mode and a different form of the visual mode (video), and more digital composing tools such as iMovie to their digital writing knowledge toolbox. Students also explored what makes digital writing different from print writing via discussions of multimodality, distribution and circulation. Further, students, in this unit, investigated the issues of originality, authorship, and plagiarism in relation to knowledge-production--issues that have gained more attention and relevance in the 21st century.

This assignment specifically asked students to compose a remix that conveys an argument related to a topic, issue or concern we discussed in class—a digital writing assignment about digital writing. To provide students with some guidance, I provided a short list of videos on topics related to the course, and asked them to choose one or more videos to incorporate into their remix. Because **YouTube** was our chosen media to showcase student remixes, we also explored how YouTube functions as a social network and site of participatory culture. Students were able to gain audience awareness as well as think about how they, as YouTube content creators, contribute to participatory culture.

Kevin and Elie's focus on intellectual property rights and the S.978 bill was not a surprise considering they are both active in the YouTube community as both content creators and viewers, and thus the bill could directly affect them. They are also highly motivated and innovative digital natives. Elie and Kevin created a passionate, strong, multimodal argument that speaks to many topics we discussed in class. What I found particularly interesting about their remix is the way it embodies the conceptualization of how many teacher-scholars understand "academic writing:" a social, dialogical meaning-making act. Kevin and Elie quite literally immersed themselves in an ongoing conversation, engaging with voices, perspectives and arguments from multiple genres (cast, cartoons, slide presentation, images) to make an argument of their own. They made deliberate rhetorical choices about how to best work with sources to achieve their purpose and communicate with the YouTube audience. The ability to do this off the page, working with sources that don't look like "academic" sources, and creating something that doesn't look like "academic writing," is impressive and exciting. Their work helps demonstrate the value in teaching multimodal composition in the academy, as students clearly gain the academic skills and abilities needed to write, invent, think, engage and make meaning.

I was also impressed by the way Kevin and Elie handled and synthesized the multimodal elements. The incorporation of many elements could have been overwhelming for them and for viewers, yet they were able to pull it off well. The fast-

paced nature of the remix keeps the audience interested and engaged. Most of the time, the video maintains fluidity and coherence, and as a result, the viewer can easily comprehend Kevin and Elie's explicit argument about the S.978 bill and other arguments about the relationship between creative expression, and capitalism, class, and the law. Their video also argues for remix as a compelling and effective genre of argumentation.

Also, I particularly enjoyed the inclusion of Lawrence Lessig's TED talk, "Laws That Choke Creativity," which was one of the videos from the required video list. Kevin, Elie, their peers, the YouTube content creators, and even the South Park children characters, are the "kids" Lessig refers to in his TED talk--the generation that has been fundamentally changed by technology. The dialogical engagement between generations was a dynamic choice in driving home Kevin and Elie's argument.

STUDENT REFLECTION

Sun, 11/18/2012 - 15:02 -- Kevin Morton

This project is deeply rooted in our interests and hobbies. We are both active members of the online community and have channels on YouTube. We both work with copyrighted material that falls under the category of fair use, such as video game footage. That is how we were first introduced to Bill S. 978. If this bill passed, our channels could be shut down, and we could even be severely fined. Losing our channels would have made it impossible for us to make this remix, and an important medium for exchanging information and opinions on other important issues in the future would have been lost.

For this project, we were assigned to create a digital remix. We initially wanted to create a remix that commented on Scott McCloud, author of *Understanding Comics* and *Reinventing Comics*, and his views on storytelling through the use of text and image. Though, with the rise of concern among the online community surrounding the Bill S.978, it seemed like an appropriate topic to switch to. Bill S.978 (later known as SOPA), at the time of project creation was awaiting approval or rejection in Congress; it was created to enact stricter Copyright laws on the Internet. While many people agree that harsher rules need to be established, the language of this particular bill is vague, and thus allows for an array of lawsuit opportunities. This proposal led to a public outcry against the bill. For this remix, we drew on three members of

the YouTube community who expressed concern about the bill.

Husky Starcraft is an e-sports commentator who analyzes video game footage in daily casts. DarkSide Phil is a video game reviewer, and SXEPhil, who is one of the most subscribed YouTube content creators, runs a daily news show.

In addition to these YouTube content creators, we drew from Lawrence Lessig's TED talk "Laws That Choke Creativity," and our own YouTube channel for the remix. Lessig, who may be considered the father of the copyleft movement, proved to be particularly useful to us because of his unique insight into the world of copyright.

After compiling all of these sources, we began to organize the information, which was an extremely challenging experience. After exploring the material closely, we began to notice trends. The identification of these trends led to us divide the remix into four parts.

Part one addresses the question: What is S.978? We didn't want to include too many opinions, but rather, we wanted to introduce the bill, describing what it entails and how it affects expression on the Internet.

Part two responds to the question: What will the bill do? This exposes the issue related to the bill, who it will effect, and its consequences on expression.

Part three addresses the question: What does this mean? This section tries to bring everything into the larger picture. Part four speaks to the question: What can we do to halt this bill? We wanted to highlight each creator's pleas for the public to take action against the bill. In the end, it was efforts like these that helped stop the bill.

The South Park clips functioned as a way to divide the four sections. The inclusion of comedic clips was a rhetorical effort to make the information easier to process. In the end, we were satisfied with the overall feel of the remix.

RESPONSE 1

Sun, 11/18/2012 - 14:59 -- [Jessica Schreyer](#)

Making a Case for the Remix

The authors of this piece responded to a call to “compose a remix” based on Ferguson’s definition (“to combine and edit existing materials to produce something new.”) The process of composing can be considered a remix in and of itself as we all build upon thoughts we’ve had based on things we’ve seen, heard, and read, and as we incorporate our past experiences into our present understanding. However, remixes, more specifically, often directly incorporate those past pieces into the present work, in a sense paying homage to it or critiquing it. Of course, some may argue that the remixer is simply using work that is not theirs to use.

These authors took various pop culture references, videos, and pictures to compose a response to a proposed bill that would limit the ability to use copyrighted material to create remixes like this one. Generally, the authors have done an excellent job setting up why the bill proposed will hinder the creative process. Their argument mirrors Lessig’s (2008), who framed a compelling set of questions about whether there truly was a necessity for the remix; He asked,

“But why, as I’m asked over and over again, can’t the remixer simply make his own content? Why is it important to select a drumbeat from a certain Beatles

recording? Or a Warhol image? Why not simply record your own drumbeat? Or paint your own painting? The answer to these questions is not hard if we focus again upon why these tokens have meaning. Their meaning comes not from the content of what they say; it comes from the reference, which is expressible only if it is the original that gets used. Images or sounds collected from real-world examples become “paint on a palette” (p. 74).

The important of the reference, then, is crucial. This remix makes reference to a variety of other creations--including South Park, which will appeal to the demographic the video seems to target – young people wanting to compose remixes. The faux newscast format makes this topic feel particularly current and important. In fact, building on this theme even further through more “staging” opportunities – like the chosen backdrops, clothing and more would have added to this effect. While the authors made use of a variety of effective persuasive techniques, and, in particular, cinematic effects throughout the video, in future remixes, they may want to consider the backdrop of the videos they selected, as, at times, the message is somewhat distracted from due to the scenery or clothing choices.

The composers were particularly adept at demonstrating what will happen if legal sanctions take away the right to remix. It seems the authors would like young people to be more vocal

in their support of the right to use other work, and that they will take action to contact their lawmakers. Perhaps a call to contact their lawmakers through crafty remixes would be in order as well. Limits to remixing will no doubt take away creative options for composers. In our test-focused culture, we may face a continued decline in creative options in education, and remixing is an area that students readily and openly engage in. Let's hope that lawmakers can distinguish between stealing copyrighted material and remixing it to make new creations, and that artists and authors of all kinds would support this movement. Lessig points out that remixes benefit society through the creation of community and education. This remix, in particular, attempts to build on both of these points. While this remix has strong arguments, they are at times conflated by talking about remixing various media in the same breath as arguing for the right to download content (music in particular) without paying for it. Perhaps maintaining focus on what will emerge through remixing would be more successful than arguing for free content or chastising wealthy artists.

When we remix, we ignite our imaginations, we challenge our intellect, and we create new visions for others. This video can help others see just how important that is.

Lessig, L. (2008). *Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy*. New York: Penguin Books.

RESPONSE 2

Sun, 11/18/2012 - 15:00 -- [Kristi McDuffie](#)

“S.978 Remix” is a video argument against the proposed U.S. senate bill that wants to make it a felony to stream copyrighted material on the web. The remix uses clips primarily from vloggers (video bloggers) who are protesting the bill, along with clips from South Park, old movies, and more. The remix uses these clips to weave a narrative about the bill, explaining what it is and its predicted effects. The remix is an indictment of the bill, and the vloggers contained within declare that it infringes on fair use, freedom of speech, freedom of information, and technological advancement.. Some vloggers focus on the detriment to YouTube, which will be “annihilated,” and video gaming specifically.

The vloggers articulate that the bill is targeted at kids who are supposedly the majority of YouTube users. In contrast, the lawmakers proposing this bill are an out of touch “old generation.” The authors of this remix are thus arguing and motivating a young audience of YouTube users, rather than the lawmakers themselves. There is also an argument here that this is part of a bigger effort to control and constrict young people. The remix ends with a call to action by showing a progression of clips asking viewers to sign a petition against the bill and/or contact their congresspeople directly and to spread the word to friends.

The genre of the remix strikes me as particularly useful in employing multimodal elements to enhance the argument;

specifically, using YouTube videos to fight for the rights of YouTube users is an implicit argument about the utility and importance of the freedom of expression that YouTube facilitates. Using videos this way, especially to the extent that any are copyrighted, is also a form of resistance against the bill.

There are limitations of this genre, of course. I found the beginning of the video confusing without a frame or audio overlay introducing the piece. Another limitation of only using clips is that the composers are limited to the information contained in the clips. Thus, I actually found more details about the bill and varied opinions on how dire the bill would be from a simple web search. Adding original content, such as original audio or screen shots or the details of the bill, would have enhanced this message, but may have been outside the scope of the project.

Overall, the video is successful in creating awareness and encouraging action about this bill. I immediately wanted to know more about the bill and found out that not much has happened with it since it was introduced in 2011, perhaps because of the wide outcry from the online community. I hope that in addition to JUMP, this video also ends up on YouTube so that it can contribute to the discussion happening there on this important topic.

Audio Visual Research Group



SUBSECTIONS

1. Group goals
2. In the classroom
3. Professionalization

Cole Wehrle interviewed 2012-2013 AV Research Group member Axel Bohmann and Project Group Leader Eric Detweiler about ideas for using ebooks in the AV Group's recording projects, particularly podcasts. Podcasts already have fantastic distribution networks and it is unlikely that a ebook would be a useful way to disseminate the recordings. However, they can offer a stable platform and provide a place for other secondary materials. Here are a few general strategies for taking advantage of the ebook platform.

GROUP GOALS

APPROACH 1: THE BOX SET

As noted previously, ebooks allow for new compilations and presentations of older material for archival use, and give the material a new sheen. Since both .epub and .ibooks formats support audio, a very similar approach can be used in the case of podcasts. Essentially, an ebook could contain a full season along with supplemental materials like transcripts, extra interviews, and visual media. Depending on compression rates, it is possible for these files to be modestly sized.

APPROACH 2: THE COFFEE TABLE BOOK

We could also use the ebook format to host just the supplemental material. This would be especially useful for both institutional history and providing a place for the group to transmit instructions and resources for future group members. Audio could also be cut up into smaller, more digestible bits and used to showcase the group. This would be

especially useful for building retrospectives that could feature in job portfolios.

APPROACH 3: THE INSTALLMENT

Finally, and perhaps most usefully, shorter ebooks could be issued with every new podcast. These individual “issues” would contain transcripts and other materials which might otherwise be prepared for the podcast website. There may be some subscription services which could be used to disseminate the ebooks along with the podcast, and they could also be easily “bound” together at the end of the season. They would also be smaller and therefore much more portable.

IN THE CLASSROOM

An ebook that archives tutorials for making a podcast could easily be adapted to instruct undergraduates. Undergrads could also present their own work in this format. While ebooks are not the standard method for podcast dissemination, an ebook could be a useful “binder,” especially if audio files were paired with work in other media.

PROFESSIONALIZATION

All of these forms remediate podcasts in a way that could extend their digital distribution. They also provide a way to frame podcast content in a way that would perhaps be more digestible than a website. An ebook could also provide a finished archive of ephemeral files.

Similar work could go into using an ebook to showcase a DWRL member's work in the lab, providing selected samples of audio or video files and links to extended or online versions.

EXAMPLE ZEUGMA PODCAST

The following section attempts to replicate a Zeugma podcast.

Example Podcast

Episode 6: "CCCCing"



AUDIO 2.2 Zeugma Episode 6:
"CCCCing"

This week's episode comes to you from the 2013 Conference on College Composition and Communication in Las Vegas, NV. Zeugma team members and guest contributors sit down to interview four scholars and conference attendees doing remarkable work at the intersections of rhetoric, composition, and technology. Those interviewees: Drs. Jim Brown, Ron Brooks, Jenny Rice, and Kathleen Blake Yancey.

The episode can be streamed via the player below or downloaded via [iTunes](#) and our [LibSyn profile](#).

Episode Producer: Eric Detweiler

EPISODE DESCRIPTION

The 2013 [Conference on College Composition and Communication](#) (CCCC) took place from March 13-16 in Las Vegas, Nevada. While attending the conference, Zeugma team members and other guest contributors from the Digital Writing and Research Lab interviewed four scholars in rhetoric and composition doing remarkable work at the intersections of rhet/comp, pedagogy, and technology.

First, Eric Detweiler talks with [Kathleen Blake Yancey](#), an English professor at Florida State University and editor of the journal [College Composition and Communication](#). Dr. Yancey talks about her current work with "everyday writing," focusing especially on the "[Crusaders](#)," a group of young Japanese-American women who--among many other things--wrote copiously to Japanese-American servicemen during World War II.

Follow [@ZeugmaPodcast](#) on Twitter!

Games



SUBSECTIONS

1. Group goals
2. In the classroom
3. Professionalization

GROUP GOALS

GAMING PEDAGOGY

An ebook could be used to archive the 2012-2013 Gaming Group resources. Although the "Gaming Pedagogy" group of 2012-2013 did not end up focusing exclusively on games, we

did produce a good deal of material that could be used in a Gaming Pedagogy ebook. This material, currently housed on the DWRL Project Groups wiki, includes:

- introductions to gaming pedagogy written by Fall project group members,
- a proposal that defines the scope of a project on rhetoric and gaming pedagogy,
- a glossary of gaming pedagogy related terms,
- an annotated bibliography of resources related to gaming pedagogy, including scholarship, popular articles, websites, and blogs (note: this wiki page also includes links to bibliographies assembled by previous DWRL games groups),
- a wishlist of the modes of interaction possible with an ebook,
- and a plan for organizing the ebook around "nodes" in a video game metaphor (perhaps levels or locations) instead of chapters.

GAMES BY DWRL PROJECT GROUPS

Another idea for a DWRL games ebook would be one that assembles and showcases the work of previous DWRL games groups. Its purpose could be either to summarize and present the work behind such games as *Rhetorical Peaks* and *Battle Lines* or to archive the games and the design materials that went into their production. This ebook could benefit the DWRL if it were made available for free as an advertisement for the DWRL's work, or if it had a home on the DWRL

website as an archive and a history of the work of previous project groups.

IN THE CLASSROOM

An ebook on the design process of DWRL games could be useful to instructors teaching undergraduates about game design or about the rhetoric of games.

An ebook on gaming pedagogy could make a useful introduction for instructors in the DWRL and elsewhere who might be interested in using games to teach but not sure about where to begin learning about what games to use or how. Such an ebook could also review debates in the field such as whether educational games should (and do) constitute play or work, whether and how games in the classroom should be evaluated, and whether the "gamification" of learning objectives is a desirable or effective process. A more specific focus on games in rhetoric and composition pedagogy could accompany these introductory materials.

PROFESSIONALIZATION

An ebook on past or future games produced by the DWRL could give project group members a simple and visual way to discuss their contribution to the collaboratively authored and executed final product of a game, especially on the job market.

An ebook that archived DWRL games could help future groups imagine the kinds of games they would like to design by building on what has already been done.

An ebook on gaming and pedagogy could potentially be submitted for publication to an online journal like *Kairos* or *Enculturation*, although ebook submissions to such journals may require a proposal contextualizing the reason for this format. Or, an ebook could structure and accompany a conference presentation at Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) or Computers and Writing. The audience could download the ebook to experience the presentation's multimodal and interactive components.

EXAMPLE GAMES ARCHIVE

The following section demonstrates an archive of material from the DWRL game *Rhetorical Peaks*.

Example Games Archive



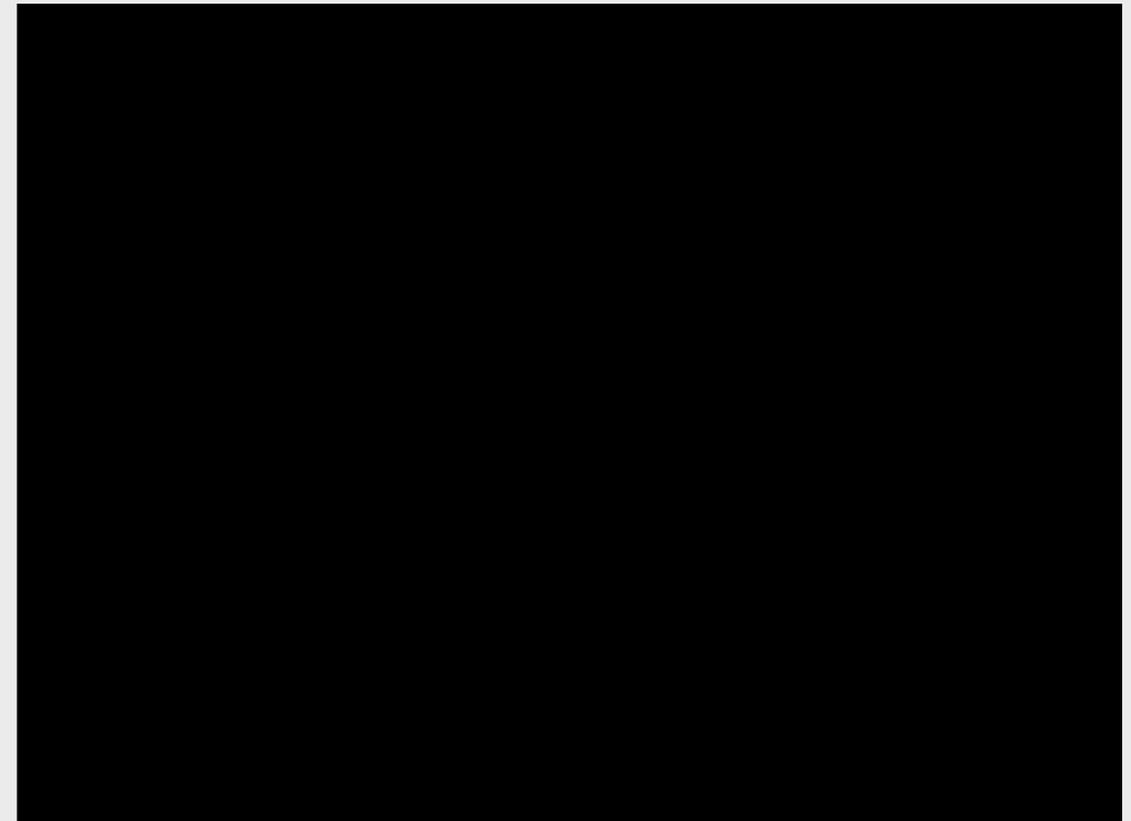
Rhetorical Peaks is an interactive video game for rhetoric and writing instruction developed by DWRL members from 2006-2010. *Rhetorical Peaks* was incarnated in several different gaming platforms, including Flash, Unity, and Second Life.

When students stumble upon the town of Rhetorical Peaks, they find themselves confronted with the mysterious death of Lisa Sophist, the best speaker in a town dedicated to rhetoric. Winning the game won't be easy—is it a matter of identifying the killer or helping the town to recover from this tragedy? Can any of us ever definitively win in the game of rhetoric, or do we just keep on playing?

Follow the link to [play *Rhetorical Peaks* online!](#)

For history, teaching resources, and a list of publications on Rhetorical Peaks, visit the [DWRL Research Project Archive](#).

MOVIE 2.2 Introduction to Rhetorical Peaks



Follow the link to read "[Remapping Rhetorical Peaks: A Video Game for First Year Writing](#)" by Matt King, webtext prepared by Matt King and John Jones, in *Computers and Composition Online* (Fall 2008).



Other DWRL Projects

SUBSECTIONS

1. Specialists
2. Lesson Plans and Blogging Pedagogy
3. Speaker Series
4. Handbook

In addition to project groups, the DWRL has several other projects that might be able to use ebooks.

SPECIALISTS

Specialists in the lab, like those held by former Accessibility Specialist Stephanie Rosen or by Visual Media Specialist Scott Nelson, could create an ebook in the course of a semester or year that gathers and presents the expertise of their position, a kind of beginner's guide to their specialty for future DWRL members. Their ebooks could outline the best practices and point out other useful resources in an area.

LESSON PLANS AND BLOGGING PEDAGOGY



Either of these DWRL websites could put out an ebook as a kind of collected edition of the best blog posts or best lesson plans. Or, an ebook could combine lesson plans with blog posts related to a theme, such as a common classroom challenge or pedagogical issue. An ebook would be especially useful for combining Blogging Pedagogy and Lesson Plans, since many DWRL AIs write both posts in a semester about similar or related issues.

SPEAKER SERIES



An ebook could be assembled after each year's Speaker Series that collects relevant materials such as interviews, scripts,

slides, live tweets, or other responses, then published as a recap of the event.

ORIENTATION/HANDBOOK



The DWRL Handbook is already available online—it is possible that we could eliminate the printed versions by releasing updated versions as an ebook. While a website would perhaps be quicker to access for the most current version, releasing each year's Handbook as an ebook would allow the DWRL to keep archived copies of previous versions available.

DWRL WHITE PAPER SERIES

The DWRL White Paper Series is currently housed online as webpages with downloadable .pdf files. Creating future white papers as ebooks rather than primarily textual .pdf files could encourage authors to experiment with multimodal composition and to display more kinds of media than a .pdf file would allow.

Reflections

Chapter 3 summarizes our experiences composing in iBooks Author, then translating our ebook to other digital formats, especially converting to .epub format using Adobe InDesign.



Composing in iBooks

Author

SUBSECTIONS

1. **Visual Rhetoric**
2. ***Currents and TheJUMP***
3. **AV Research Group**
4. **Games**
5. **Other DWRL Projects**

Stephanie Odom put together the first draft of our ebook, and Kendall Gerdes made revisions. They offer their reflections on their composing processes, by section, here.

VISUAL RHETORIC

Stephanie:

It was easy to copy the text from the web and paste it into this new section. I had to save the images individually and then drag and drop them into their proper places above the image credits. I'm not sure about how the images should be sized with regard to

margins, so I'm open to suggestions about how to make those more consistent or coming up with style guidelines for the whole ebook. The process of copying the post and placing it here took about 10 minutes.

The images looked better with captions and a background, so I had to add those to each image using the inspector. Using captions and a background also made the images show up in portrait view on the iPad, whereas without the caption and background, the images had only appeared in landscape view.

Kendall:

I learned the most about text styles while working on this section. I want to make the layout of the example post as much like the viz. website as possible, so I learned how to make the hyperlinks show up in the same color that viz. uses online. I also used styles to make the tags, links to comments, and link to the author's blog show up in all caps, sized to fit the end of the text's layout. One problem with links is that you can't add a hyperlink to an image's caption. I worked around this by adding identical text in a new textbox (including a hyperlink) on top of the caption.

I also figured out how to add a background color in this section—make a shape the size of the whole page in the desired color, and select it, and right click to “Send to Back” (so that the object doesn’t obscure the text). I also added a color bar across the top of the page to imitate viz.’s menu bar.

CURRENTS AND THEJUMP

Stephanie:

I got the .mov file for this article from TheJUMP editor Steven Lemieux and easily dropped it into the page. I had also used MacX YouTube Downloader to grab the editor’s introduction video, but decided to focus on the one article. Such a program is necessary for downloading video from the web. The video took at least 30 minutes to be optimized, and iBooks Author tried to do it multiple times, but the video ultimately works fine on the iPad.

Kendall:

One limitation of the ebook format is the difficulty it poses to replicating the hyperlink connections between webpages. For example, in TheJUMP example section, the main video is accompanied by multiple accessibility

documents, including a captioned video, an audio description, a transcript, and a textual description. Although we laid out our example in the more conventional serial page format ebooks tend to favor, other layouts more similar to webpages are conceivable.

Accessibility files, in the example mentioned, could be located in an appendix at the end of the book, but hyperlinked to the main pages of the book, rather than following the main pages serially. The same could be done with Responses and Reflections. Ideally, captions should be an option the reader may choose to turn on or off. iBooks Author doesn't currently support this function. While the scrolling sidebar function seemed great for putting the Textual Description with the video, the widget has a limited capacity to display characters, so we ended up using two widgets to include all the text.

AV RESEARCH GROUP

Kendall:

Because the central interactive media of the podcast section is an audio file, the main design choices are about layout. iBooks Author allows you to choose to display audio files using a scrubber bar, a button, or an

image. I used a scrolling sidebar widget to keep the episode description on a single page. An ebook could accommodate lots of extra material, like illustrative images, photos and bios of interviewers/interviewees, transcripts, or even outtakes.

GAMES

Kendall:

The Games section tried my patience while I learned to place banner images inline rather than as floating objects or as anchored objects. The advantage of using inline images is that they stay in the text layout even when reading in portrait mode.

OTHER DWRL PROJECTS

Kendall:

Getting the banner images to appear in text posed pretty much the same problem as the example Games section. This section also taught me the secret of getting text (such as subsection headers) to fall into place in landscape mode without adding hard returns (and thus extra space when reading in portrait mode): adjusting the size of the linked text boxes.

Converting to .epub

SUBSECTIONS

1. [Starting with iBooks](#)
2. [Advantages of .epub](#)
3. [Understanding .epub](#)
4. [Adapting the iBook](#)
5. [Learning InDesign](#)

Cole Wehrle undertook the major task of converting the first draft of our ebook from its layout in iBooks Author to .epub file format, using the program Adobe InDesign. Kendall and Cole explain their processes in this section.

STARTING WITH IBOOKS

We wanted to create our white paper in iBooks Author because of the whiz-bang advertisement Apple put out for the program: we wanted to try out all the widgets and see what was possible. You can also publish your iBook through iTunes for free (by contrast, .azm files released on Amazon must be priced at a minimum of 99 cents).

But iBooks Author has some frustrating limitations. A finished iBook can be exported as an .ibooks file, but .ibooks files can only be viewed on iPads. It is possible to export your iBook as a .pdf file or a plain text (.txt) file, but you will lose some of the interactivity. Some of the interactive components (video, sound, even 3D) could be rebuilt into a .pdf file using Adobe Acrobat, but not the HTML widgets. Also, because the iBooks Author software only runs on the newest operating system, it can be a challenge to compose in the program.

ADVANTAGES OF .EPUB

In a market filled with proprietary devices and file types, the .epub file format has remained one of the few industry standards. Like .pdf files, .epub files can be viewed on virtually any device. However, because the .pdf format emphasizes stable/static formatting usually set for print, the file type can be very hard to read on devices with small screens or limited processing power. On the other hand, the .epub format is built with ereader devices in mind, and their layout adapts to whatever device views them.

UNDERSTANDING .EPUB

An .epub file is basically a compiled website built around a single stream of text. It contains XML and CSS code, which it uses to adapt the text of the book to the device that is viewing it in the same way a browser adapts a website to the device that accesses it. Because it is an open source file format, any user can add the .zip file extension to the file name and extract all of the information contained in the file, including the style

sheets, pictures, text, and general code. Like any website, .epub files rely on tags which can apply all sorts of attributes, from formatting to chapter anchors to blocks of text (technically called “paragraphs”).

ADAPTING THE IBOOK

Cole:

I began by extracting the text and clearing it of any formatting. I did this in Microsoft Word, though any word processor (or even Adobe InDesign) will work. Then, in InDesign, I constructed a simple template that would provide a single stream of text on each page. I also built a set of styles that somewhat mirrored the styles used in our iBook. To do this, I simply went through the iBook and mapped out the number and hierarchy of the different headers and body styles. I also created text styles that would apply formatting to the different images that were built into the iBook. Once these styles had been incorporated into my template I pasted the text into InDesign and began applying the styles. After applying the styles I used the program’s layout wizard to generate a Table of Contents. At this point, the .epub was ready to be compiled with InDesign’s Export function. Once exported, I loaded the .epub on several browsers and devices to view the layout and made minor formatting adjustments in InDesign accordingly.

Kendall:

Because my revision involved a lot of formatting changes, I decided against replicating Cole’s work with Adobe InDesign in order to convert our .ibooks to .epub. iBooks Author gives you three options for exporting your file: .ibooks, .pdf, and .txt. While no official way of exporting to .epub or converting from .ibooks exists, I did some research on workarounds, including changing the file extension, or exporting from Windows-compatible ereader software like Calibre. I had the most success converting from .pdf and .txt to epub rather than converting from .ibooks directly.

LEARNING INDESIGN

Like any professional program, InDesign presents a very steep learning curve. Even basic operations like pasting a large quantity of text require the user to learn about text frames and threading. Fortunately, Adobe offers a huge array of instructional videos and forums which, with supplemental lessons from Lynda.com, can provide a pretty thorough crash course in InDesign. Make sure to budget plenty of time to become familiar with InDesign.

Resources

The final chapter credits the media use in this ebook and cites some useful resources for ebook design.



MEDIA CREDITS

All media not otherwise credited appears courtesy of the DWRL.

3D Model -- Google [SketchUp](#)

HTML Widget -- [Bookry](#)

Chapter 2: Project Groups -- © 2011 Anastasia Drabicky

Images credited and licensed under Creative Commons:

Book Title -- [J Brew](#)

Front Matter -- [Joel Penner](#)

Chapter 1: Introduction -- [Aaron Parecki](#)

Chapter 3: Reflections -- [Sébastien Wiertz](#)

Chapter 4: Resources -- [Steve Garfield](#)

USEFUL RESOURCES

Websites

[Apple Support](#)

[Apple Support Communities](#)

[One Thousand "Blogged" Dreams](#)

[Quora](#)

[Stack Overflow](#)

[The Unofficial Apple Weblog](#)

Tutorials

[Adobe InDesign Help](#)

[iBooks Author for Dummies](#)

[Lynda.com](#)

Software

[Adobe Digital Editions](#)

[Adobe InDesign](#)

[Calibre](#)

[EPUBReader Firefox add-on](#)

[Google SketchUp](#)

[iBooks Author](#)

[iBooks \(for iPad\)](#)