

Writing
the
for
Internet

ENGL M138.2: Topics in Creative Writing

Professor: Daniel Scott Snelson (danny.snelson@gmail.com)

Meeting Times: TR, 4:00 – 6:05 PM; Public Affairs Building, Room 1343

Office: 203 Humanities | **Hours:** Wednesday by Appointment: dannysnelson.youcanbook.me

This creative writing course explores new genres of writing on the internet. We follow emerging trends in digital poetics to develop new ways of creating works that are equally likely to appear on Instagram, in a PDF, through online videos, in a Twitter feed, or even printed on demand in paper format. Studying digital platforms and formats alongside contemporary art and letters, we'll reimagine experimental writing practices through today's emerging forms. How might Twitter facilitate a serial narrative? What does YouTube demand of poetry? How might we think about writing for the MP3 format, before scripting a single word? Using a collective workshop format, we'll engage in a series of writing experiments that attempt to find some of our own poetic answers to today's technological environment. No previous training in poetry or new media is required.

Required Texts (3)

One Print on Demand (POD) purchase from a selected press.
Two Print on Demand (POD) purchases of your own work.

All other texts, magazines, platforms, recordings, and videos will be freely available online.

Slack Group:
writingfortheinternet.slack.com

Bi-weekly responses on critical and creative work—in the syllabus and by your peers—to the course channels are required. *Every post must respond to at least one preceding post.* General exploration and sharing is encouraged. Posts due at 11:59pm on Mondays & Wednesdays.

Attendance Policy

Absences will cut into your participation percentage. If you *must* miss a class, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with me *both before and after* the absence. This does not necessarily mean the absence will be excused — after one free unexcused absence, each following will drop your grade by half a letter.

Syllabus Info:

v.ht/wfti

As a general outline for the course, take note that these are broad strokes subject to change. This course is interactive, growing and responding to its users. Each week will build on previous weeks, class conversations, and the directions that our study of creative writing happens to follow. The most up-to-date readings and experiments can be found online at the course syllabus link above. The syllabus will only be completed after we finish the course, and all writing (including your own) has been collected.

Collective Production:
[Are.na/write-net-2018](https://are.na/write-net-2018)

This creative writing seminar will double as an online “surf club” that gathers, generates, and comments on writing for the internet. We will use the Are.na platform to post creative works before each session and to gather inspiration from the internet. All work posted must be pseudonymous, operating under an invented avatar. This is simultaneously a creative decision and a means of guarding your privacy to enable experimentation across the internet. We’ll discuss this aspect of the course over the first week, and further revision to the process of posting and sharing may respond to course use patterns as they develop.

Grading Policy

Operating as a workshop, the primary grading consideration will be lively and timely engagement with the writing assignments within a group format. The final grade breakdown will divvy up neatly along these lines:

- Bi-weekly writing assignments: 20%
- Participation IRL (including attendance): 20%
- Participation online: 20%
- Final project and/or collection: 40%

Requirements & Expectations

- Fulfillment of short experiments
- Feedback for your peers online and IRL
- Engaged seminar conversation and experimentation
- A substantial final project or collected portfolio

Learning Outcomes

This seminar will develop critical and creative tactics for writing on the internet. Through a series of experiments and collective productions, a substantial body of digital literary work will be generated. By working in—and on—the internet, this course aims to provide new insight into the creative potentials of contemporary platforms.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

A fair portion of what we explore in this course may constitute some form of fair use, appropriation, or editorial activity. This will be a frequent topic of conversation. In general, smart plagiarism is *obvious* while stupid plagiarism is *malicious*. Avoid stupid plagiarism (which might also be called academic dishonesty, and is, by necessity, reported). We will cover this topic extensively on our first meeting.

Accessibility

If you require academic adjustments based on a disability, you must register with the Center for Accessible Education (CAE). CAE will assess your needs, determine reasonable academic adjustments, and work with you to implement academic adjustments. You may contact the CAE at (310) 825-1501, go to the CAE office at A255 Murphy Hall, or access the CAE website at www.cae.ucla.edu.

Technology

Laptops or commensurate devices (full internet capacity, beyond smartphones) will be necessary for some activities during each class session, for others all technology outside the writing utensils will be banned. I welcome any questions about technology or technical tasks at any point of the quarter.

Course Schedule

Part I: Text

1. August 7

- Study: Syllabus, Slack, on [Are.na](#)
Plagiarism vs. appropriation in art and writing
Communications and platforms
- Input: [Young Hae Chang Heavy Industries](#)
Maya Sol Levy, "[Pockets, Twenty-Twelve](#)"
Lil [Miquela](#).
- Write: Collective Fanzine: v.ht/miquela

2. August 9

- Study: Illya Szilak, "[It's Got a Good Beat and You Can Dance to It](#)"
Paul Slocum, "[Catalog of Internet Artist Clubs](#)" + [Spirit Surfers](#)
Brad Troemel, "[Art After Social Media](#)"
- Input: Lil [Miquela](#) + collected fanzine materials (above)
- Write: Develop Avatar Name with an introduction (any length/format)
Create Slack and Are.na accounts with intros

3. August 14

- Study: Craig Dworkin, "[Introduction](#)" & UbuWeb Anthology of Conceptual Writing (2003)
Sol Lewitt, "[Paragraphs on Conceptual Art](#)" (1967)
+ Kenneth Goldsmith, "[Paragraphs on Conceptual Writing](#)" (2005)
+ Toby Altman, "[Paragraphs on Lyric Poetry](#)" (2013)
Laynie Browne and Caroline Bergvall, intro to [I'll Drown My Book: Conceptual Writing by Women](#) (2012)
- Input: Twitter Concepts:
[Samuel Pepys](#)
[KimKierkegaardashian](#)

[Kurt Schwitters](#)

[Ernest Shackleton](#)

[Speed \(1994\)](#)

Allison Parrish, "[Everyword](#)"

[Pentametron](#) (see also)

[ROM TXT](#)

[@MayorEmanuel](#) See: [Wired article](#)

[@Horse_ebooks](#) and "[Annotated @Horse_ebooks](#)" (Also: "[@Horse_Ebooks Is the Most Successful...](#)")

~ Google for [Twitter Bots](#) ~

Write: Conceptual Twitter feeds

4. August 16

Study: Lisa Samuels and Jerome McGann, "[Deformance and Interpretation](#)" (1999)

Mark Sample, "[Notes Toward a Deformed Humanity](#)" (2012)

Input: Tom Committa, "[First Impressions](#)" (2018) (See [interview](#) at The Believer)

Jennifer & Kevin McCoy, [Every Shot, Every Episode](#) (2001) ([installation](#))

Supercuts: Duncan Robson, [Let's Enhance](#) (2009), Matthew Belinkie, [40 Inspirational Speeches in 2 Minutes](#) (2008), richfofo, [I'm Not Here to Make Friends](#) (2008), skywalkerpotter21, "[No No No NOo](#)"

(2007), Chuck Jones, [Buffies](#) (2007), ShotaFujimori, [DesUltimate - 527 Death Combo](#) (2007),

Owenergy, [Jeff Goldblum Making Noises](#) and [Matthew McConaughey Making Noises](#) (2018)

Rahawa Haile, [Gilmore Blacks](#) (2016)

Dylan Marron, [Every Single Word](#) (2015)

Sam Lavigne, [videogrep](#) (see: [Time in Time](#)) (2015)

Jason Salavon, [All the Ways \(The Simpsons\)](#) (2016)

Wilmer Wilson IV, [Keef-Wulf](#) (2015)

Holly Melgard, [The Making of The Americans](#) (2012)

Cory Arcangel, [Working on My Novel](#) (2014)

Write: Literary Supercut Anthology.

Part II: Image

5. August 21

Study: N. Katherine Hayles, [Writing Machines](#) (2002)
Hito Steyerl, "[In Defense of the Poor Image](#)" (2009)
Tamryn Bennet, "[Comics Poetry: Beyond 'Sequential Art'](#)" (2014)
Input: Gertrude Stein, [Tender Buttons](#) (1914)
Julian Peters Comics, see, for example, [T. S. Eliot](#) and [Yeats](#) (2018)
C.J. & Anka, [Superpose](#) (start [here](#)) (2018-present)
Egypt Urnash, [Decrypting Rita](#) (2012)
Jamal Campbell, [The Immortal Nadia Greene](#) (2016)
Blue Delliquanti, [O Human Star](#) (2012-present)
Daniel Lieski, [The Wormworld Saga](#) (2010-present)
Chuck Collins, [Bounce!](#) (2013-present)
Scout Tran, [Falling Sky](#) (2013-)
UbuWeb: [Visual Poetry](#)
Last VisPo [Anthology](#) (2012)
Mary Ellen Solt, [Concrete Poetry: A World View](#) (1968)

Write: Tender Button Comics. Produce a minimum of five pages using [Comic Life](#). Due 11:59pm, Monday.

6. August 23

Study: Aria Dean, "[Closing the Loop](#)" (2016)
Nora Caplan-Bricker, "[The Instagram Hoax That Became An Art World Sensation](#)" (2016)
Boris Groys, "[From Image to Image File—and Back: Art in the Age of Digitalization](#)" (pp. 83-92) (2008)
Artie Vierkant, "[The Image Object Post-Internet](#)" (2010)
Input: Rosa Menkman, [Glitch Studies Manifesto](#) (2010) and [Glitch Moment\(um\)](#) (2011)
James Bridle, [Dronestagram](#)
Dina Kelberman, [I'm Google](#) and [Go Outside](#)
[GLI.T/CH Reader\[rer\]](#)

Write: Broken Instapoetry (TBA). Use your choice of Glitch [tools](#) or [apps](#). Due 11:59pm, Wednesday.

Interlude: IRL Objects

7. August 28

Study: Nick Douglas, "[It's Supposed to Look Like Shit: The Internet Ugly Aesthetic](#)" (2014)
Christopher Glazek, "[Shopkeepers of the World Unite](#)" (2014) on [DISown](#)
Paul Soulellis, "[Search, Compile, Publish](#)" (2016)

Input: TRAUMAWEIN [Zazzle: We Are What We Sell](#) (2014)
Brad Troemel (& Joshua Citarella) [Ultra Violet Production House](#) (2016)
(see also: [Etsy interview](#) and New Yorker "[Troll of Internet Art](#)" profile)
Clement Valla, [Postcards from Google Earth](#) and "[The Universal Texture](#)" (2012)
Silvio Lorusso, [Kickended](#) (2014)

Write: Produce a post-digital object on [Zazzle](#), [Cafepress](#), [Print All Over Me](#), [Aluminyze](#), or similar. Develop and execute a concept for a material object (feel free to use or revise previous work). Order your object. Links to objects due on Are.na 11:59pm, Monday.

Part III: Sound

8. August 30 (**Bring Headphones to class**)

Study: Marit J. MacArthur & Lee M. Miller, [Vocal Deformance & Performative Speech, or In Different Voices!](#) (2016)
DJ Spooky, "[In Through the Out Door: Sampling and the Creative Act](#)" (2008)
Jonathan Sterne, [MP3: The Making of a Format](#) (see "Format Theory") (2012)

Input: Cassandra Gillig, [put me in charge of poetry magazine and i will fuck this country up](#) (2013)
See [Deformance](#) & [Tracie Morris](#) pages
T.S. Eliot, [The Wasteland](#) (download MP3 [here](#)) (see [also](#)) (full [text](#)) (1922)
Alejandro Miguel Justino Crawford, [Wasted](#) (2009)
[Free Music Archive](#) (for samples)

Write: [Audacity](#) remix of T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*. Due Wednesday at 11:59pm.

9. September 4

Study: Craig Dworkin, [A Handbook of Protocols for Literary Listening](#) (2012)
Adalaide Morris, "[Introduction](#)" to *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies* (1997)

Peter Middleton, "[How to Read a Reading of a Written Poem](#)" (2005)
Charles Bernstein, "[Making Audio Visible](#)" (2006)
Input: Keith Aoki, James Boyle, Jennifer Jenkins, [Theft: A History of Music](#) (2017)
Alan Lomax, [Field Recording Database](#) [See [online guide](#)]
[PennSound](#) Archive
UbuWeb [Sound](#)
Write: Freeform audio remix using archival sources. Due Monday at 11:59pm.

Part IV: Movies

10. September 6

Study: Eric Kohn, [Timur Bekmambetov Interview](#) (2018)
Emily Yoshida, [Unfriended Review](#) and Bryan Bishop, [Beyond Unfriended](#) (2015)
Pelle Snickars and Patrick Vonderau, eds., [The YouTube Reader](#) (2009)
Geert Lovink and Sabine Niederer, eds., [Video Vortex Reader](#) (2008)
Input: Kaigan Games, [Simulacra](#) (2017)
People Like Us (Vicki Bennett), [We Edit Life](#) (2002)
Ken Lee, [Transformers: The Premake \(a Desktop Documentary\)](#) (2014)
Hito Steyerl, "[How Not to Be Seen: A Fucking Didactic .MOV File](#)" (2013)
Jordan Scott, [Flub and Utter/Blert \(read excerpt\)](#) (2011)
[Black Poets Speak Out](#)
[Button](#) Poetry
UbuWeb [Film & Video](#)
[Moving](#) Poems

Write: Desktop documentary of your project (private Are.na channel). Due Wednesday at 11:59pm.

Part V: Final Projects & Release Party

11. September 11

Study: Lauren Cornell and Ed Halter, ed. [Mass Effect: Art and the Internet in the 21st Century](#) (2015)

Domenico Quaranta, ed. [Collect the WWWorld: The Artist as Archivist in the Internet Age](#) (2011)
[GLI.TC/H READER\[ROR\] 20111](#)

Write: Introduction and rationale (artist's statement) for your final project. 500 words citing at least five works from the course. (And work on the final!) Post to private Are.na channel. Due Monday at 11:59pm.

12. September 13

Final Project Release Party (&potluck).