

Poster Assignments

Promoting Critical Thinking, Design Literacy, and Rhetorical Awareness

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A p r i l 8 , 2 0 1 3

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Poster Assignments: Agenda

Part 1. Cognitive Benefits

What is a poster, and what can we gain from a poster assignment?

Part 2. Sample Assignment

How are posters relevant to the Arts & Humanities? What might an assignment look like?

Part 3. Poster Exhibits

What do we do with the posters when we're done? Why should we exhibit them?

Facilitating American Sign Language Learning for Hearing Parents of Deaf Children via Mobile Devices

Kimberly A. Weaver and Thad Starner

School of Interactive Computing, Georgia Institute of Technology

Problem

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Consequently, these children frequently do not have regular exposure to any language until they reach school age, long past the critical period for language acquisition.

How can we help parents learn a language that is as difficult for an English speaker to learn as Japanese?

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A mother using SMARTSign to help her son complete his math homework.

The system currently has three components developed for the Android OS:

COMPONENT	PURPOSE	SCREENSHOT
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EXPRESS	Enables searching for signs by their English equivalents.	
PRACTICE	Parents watch and perform the sign for a built-in camera.	

Early Evaluation

A preliminary study was carried out to compare people's ability to learn 80 signs using a mobile phone vs. using a computer.



Mobile phone interface



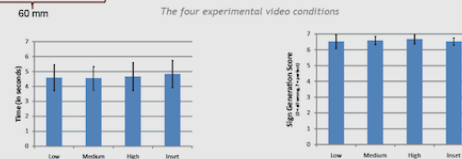
Computer interface

Participants learned more vocabulary on the mobile device, but had difficulty with generative tasks on both platforms.

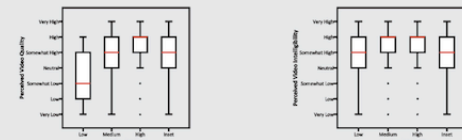
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Ideally a minimum of 5 parents with older children and 5 parents with children in our target audience (birth - 3 years old) will be recruited. Parents with older children will provide valuable insight into what was difficult for them throughout the learning process.

The study is in the form of a semi-structured interview. Question prompts focus on the following three topics:

- Current methods of learning ASL
- Reactions to prototype systems
- Current technology use

Insights gained from the interviews will be used to inform the final design of the SMARTSign system. New components may be created based on parents' reported experiences and difficulties.

Future Work

We have shown the potential of mobile device use for learning to recognize and sign American Sign Language vocabulary.

Through our ongoing parental interviews, we are investigating the challenges faced by parents learning ASL. Understanding these challenges will help to inform the design of our final system.

Future work includes:

- Long-term deployment focusing on vocabulary acquisition
- Develop grammar lesson videos triggered by key vocabulary
- Second deployment focusing on grammar acquisition



A father looks up a sign using SMARTSign



His young son signs MILK to ask for his milk cup

Cognitive Benefits of Poster Assignments

- **Focus and sort** important concepts and details
- **Categorize** concepts according to qualitative characteristics
- **Compare and contrast** categories of information
- **Draw conclusions** from aggregated research
- **Communicate** concepts in linguistic, visual, and spatial modes

Create Emphasis

In a world overwhelmed by **too much information**, you must create **EMPHASIS** in your materials so that you can:

- **Attract your intended audience**
- **Make your message heard.**

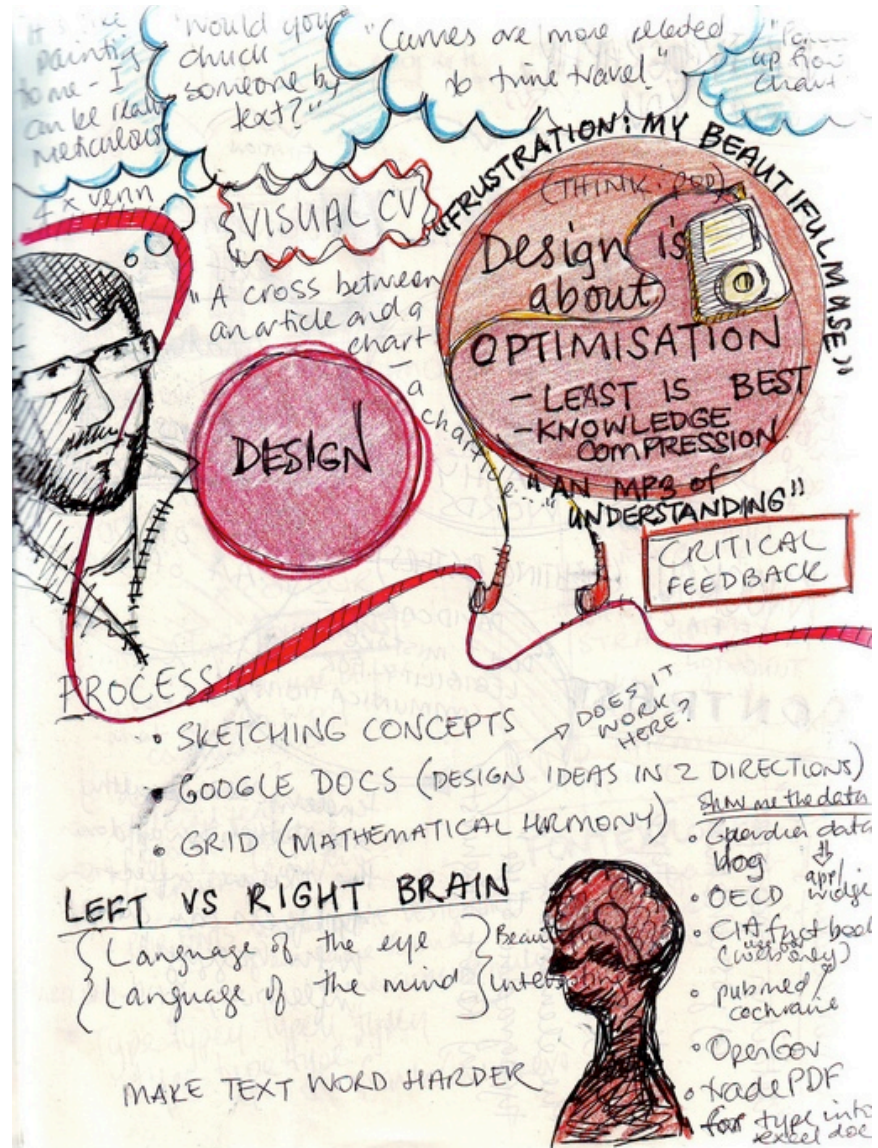


Image: "Information Is Beautiful"

By [jamjar](#) on Flickr Creative Commons

Emphasis: Linguistic Expression

Guitars

Clarissa has many guitars. She likes to play them all. She likes to play the sleek mahogany bass guitar.

1. Clarissa has many guitars.
2. She likes to play them all.
3. She likes to play the sleek mahogany bass guitar.

Special Bass Guitar

Among Clarissa's many guitars, a single one stands out: the sleek mahogany body of her bass guitar.

1. Among Clarissa's many guitars, ↘
2. a single one stands out: ↘
3. the sleek mahogany bass guitar.

Emphasis: Visual Expression



Multimodal Processing

“Trying to capture the movement of a deer on ice in language is clearly a kind of translation. Even when the planning process represents one’s thoughts in words, that representation is unlikely to be in the elaborate syntax of written English. So the writer’s task is to translate a meaning.”

--Linda Flower and John Hayes,
“A Cognitive Process Theory of
Writing” (1981)

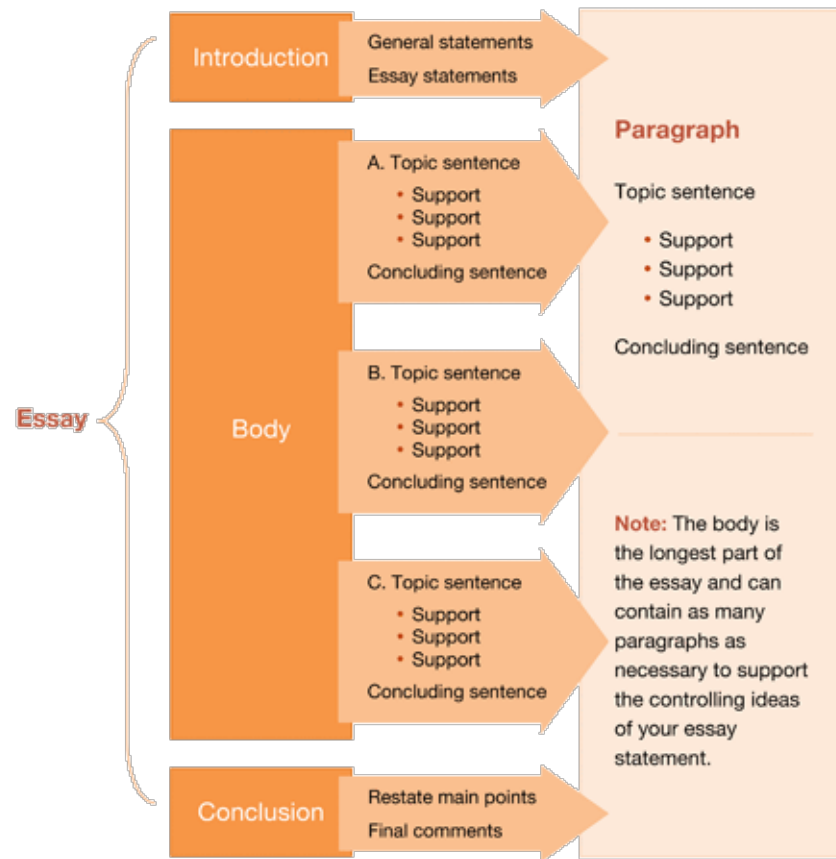
“If we restrict students to word-based planning activities (for generating ideas, for defining rhetorical purpose, for analyzing audience), we may be unduly limiting their ability to think deeply about their rhetorical tasks.”

--Jason Palmeri, *Remixing
Composition: A History of
Multimodal Writing Pedagogy*
(2012)

The Standard Essay

Students shape their ideas into a linguistic mode of expression that has specific expectations:

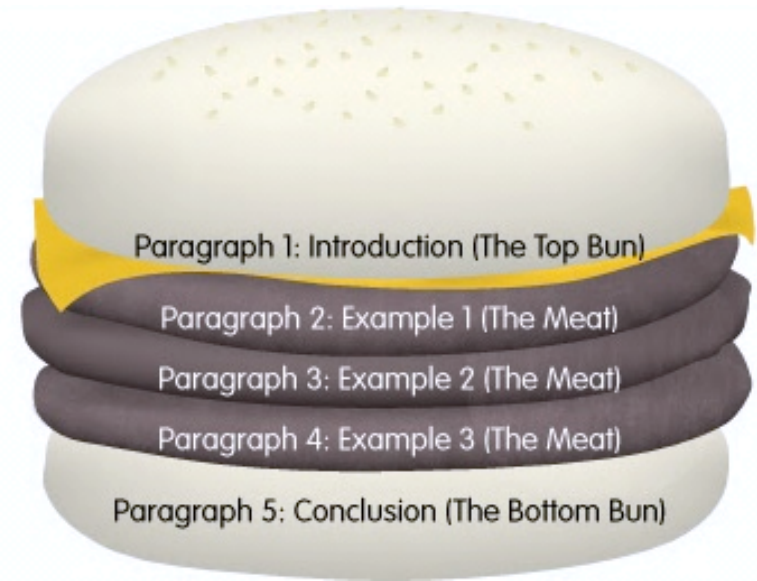
- An introduction that makes an argument and announces the topic.
- Body paragraphs that support the thesis in well-organized individual units
- A conclusion that leaves the reader with a full sense of the supported argument.



Source: [CDU Learn Online](#)

The Burger Essay

Notice how we are using visual and spatial reasoning to teach the standard essay format.



The Poster Essay: Spatial Reasoning

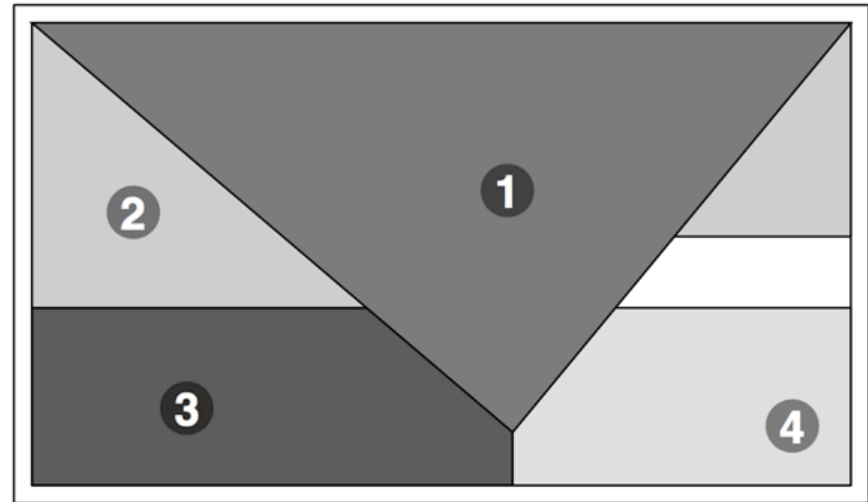
By design, students organize their ideas spatially, categorizing each element of their overall project.

Each area is visually expressive—

the main content is

communicated in an instant—

and any shortcomings in the main argument and supporting areas are quickly revealed.



1

Main Focus Area

Location of research fundamentals: Title, Abstract, Results, Conclusion.

2

Secondary Emphasis

Location of important info: Intro, Results, Summary

3

Supporting Area

Location of supporting info: Methods, Discussion

4

Final Info Area

Location of supplemental info: References, Acknowledgments, Personal information

Publicity poster example, to illustrate (on a micro scale) the cognitive decisions made in academic posters.

Organization of Data

Literature Pedagogy Workshop
Course Design
English Graduate Organization
Spring 2013
Speaker: Dr. Campbell
Speaker: Dr. Irom
Moderator: Dr. Butler
February 22, 2013
12:10-1:00
Bundy Reading Room
All are welcome to attend
Contact information
Website information

Literature Pedagogy

A Spring 2013 Workshop Series
Organized by *The English Graduate Organization*

February 22, 2013

Course Design

Speakers

Dr. Donna Campbell
Dr. Bimbisar Irom

Moderator

Dr. Todd Butler

Bundy Reading Room
12:10-1:00

All graduate students, instructors, faculty, and staff are welcome!
For more information, contact Aree Metz (a.metz@wsu.edu)

Workshop materials and podcasts will be made available at:
<http://litpedagogy.omeka.net>

Publicity poster example, to illustrate (on a micro scale) the cognitive decisions made in academic posters.

Hierarchy of Data

- Level 1: Discussion Topic, Variable
- Level 2: Series Title, Fixed
- Level 3: Featured Speakers
- Level 4: Time and Location
- Level 5: Details

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Workshop Series
Workshop Series Details

Discussion Topic
Featured Speakers

Date
Location and Time

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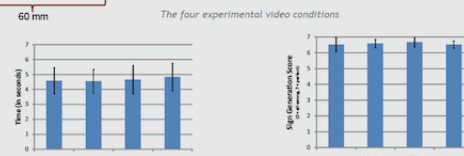
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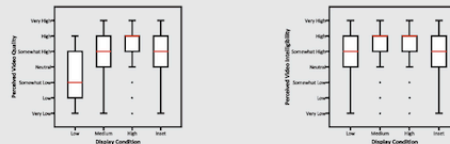
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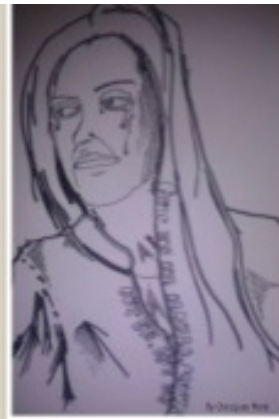
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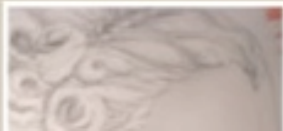


**Contemporary
Perspectives on
Ruin in the
Nineteenth Century**

An interactive poster
presentation hosted by
students in Humanities 303.

**Friday
December 7, 2012**

Bundy Reading Room
Avery Hall



Posters in the Arts and Humanities

Special Considerations



Inspiration

Roger Whitson hosted a poster exhibit during Spring 2009 at Georgia Tech.

His students showcased their research in the Salman Rushdie archives at Emory University.

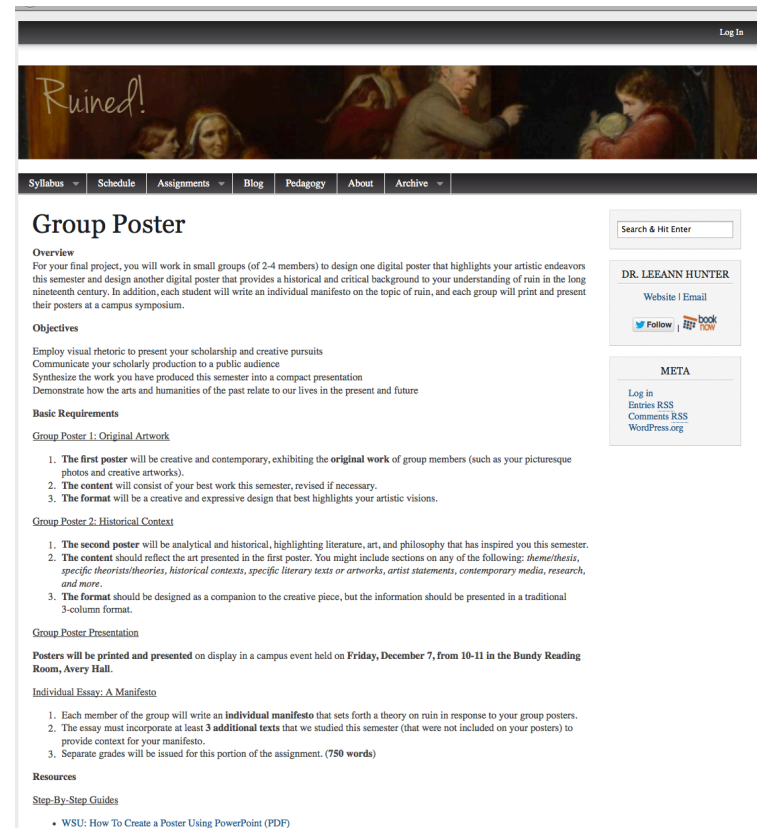


Poster Assignment: Studies in the Humanities

Work in small groups to design two digital posters that represent your perspectives on ruin in the long nineteenth century. One poster will be creative and the other poster will be academic.

Selected Objectives

- Synthesize the work you have produced this semester into a compact visual presentation
- Communicate your scholarly production to a public audience



Log In

Ruined!

Syllabus Schedule Assignments Blog Pedagogy About Archive

Group Poster

Overview
For your final project, you will work in small groups (of 2-4 members) to design one digital poster that highlights your artistic endeavors this semester and design another digital poster that provides a historical and critical background to your understanding of ruin in the long nineteenth century. In addition, each student will write an individual manifesto on the topic of ruin, and each group will print and present their posters at a campus symposium.

Objectives
Employ visual rhetoric to present your scholarship and creative pursuits
Communicate your scholarly production to a public audience
Synthesize the work you have produced this semester into a compact presentation
Demonstrate how the arts and humanities of the past relate to our lives in the present and future

Basic Requirements

Group Poster 1: Original Artwork

1. **The first poster** will be creative and contemporary, exhibiting the **original work** of group members (such as your picturesque photos and creative artworks).
2. **The content** will consist of your best work this semester, revised if necessary.
3. **The format** will be a creative and expressive design that best highlights your artistic visions.

Group Poster 2: Historical Context

1. **The second poster** will be analytical and historical, highlighting literature, art, and philosophy that has inspired you this semester.
2. **The content** should reflect the art presented in the first poster. You might include sections on any of the following: *theme/thesis, specific theorists/theories, historical contexts, specific literary texts or artworks, artist statements, contemporary media, research, and more.*
3. **The format** should be designed as a companion to the creative piece, but the information should be presented in a traditional 3-column format.

Group Poster Presentation
Posters will be printed and presented on display in a campus event held on Friday, December 7, from 10-11 in the Bundy Reading Room, Avery Hall.

Individual Essay: A Manifesto

1. Each member of the group will write an **individual manifesto** that sets forth a theory on ruin in response to your group posters.
2. The essay must incorporate at least **3 additional texts** that we studied this semester (that were not included on your posters) to provide context for your manifesto.
3. Separate grades will be issued for this portion of the assignment. (750 words)

Resources
Step-By-Step Guides

- WSU: How To Create a Poster Using PowerPoint (PDF)

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Poster 1: Creative

- **Genre:** creative and contemporary, exhibiting the original work of group members.
- **Content:** your best creative work this semester, revised if necessary.
- **Format:** a creative and expressive design that best highlights your artistic visions.



Destitution, Prostitution

By Students at Washington State University

Reflecting Her Shadows



“Another girl dies of starvation and cold after both mother and older brother uncover the horrendous truth.”

Bos Taurus



“After spending a few hours at the lake watching pedestrians pass by, not to mention several Winchester Geese, I waltz about town sifting through fruit markets and the like until dawn arrives.”

Decay



“Taking the usual path across ten yards of weeded sidewalk, I notice orange and crumpled leaves lining both sides of the wet concrete.”



From Rags
to Riches

Poster 2: Academic


- **Genre:** analytical and historical, highlighting literature, art, and philosophy that has inspired you this semester.
- **Content:** critical reflections on the art presented in Poster 1.
- **Format:** designed as a companion to the creative piece, but the information should be presented in a traditional 3-column format.

Reflecting Her Shadows

Artist's Statement
Reflecting Her Shadows is an interpretive sketch of gender roles in the 21st century. The drawing depicts a young woman standing in front of a multi-way mirror, with each mirror reflecting a different role she is expected to play as a modern woman.

Oscar Wilde, "The Harlot's House"
In Wilde's poem, "The Harlot's House," the narrator and his lover are outside of the house, observing and listening to the goings on inside. The prostitutes and patrons inside are described as lifeless puppets and haunting shadows. The narrator is in complete disgust with the prostitutes, but his lover is intrigued. She sees them having fun and she then "passed into the house of lust."


Gender Roles
In the Victorian period, women were expected to be virtuous and chaste. They were supposed to become dutiful and obedient wives. The viewpoint on prostitution in "The Harlot's House" exemplifies these beliefs about women's roles in the 19th century. The roles depicted in *Reflecting Her Shadows* and "The Harlot's House" show not a contrast, but rather that the expectations of women have only been increasing with time. We have progressed from a very traditional, conformist culture to one that expects nothing less from women than independence and flexibility.



Works Cited
Wilde, Oscar. "The Harlot's House." The Victorian Web. 27 April 2010. Web. 1 Dec. 2012.

Bos Taurus

Artist's Statement
In the past, simple scenes were portrayed in a field. This image represents a lifestyle that is off the beaten path.



Thomas Hardy, "The Ruined Maid" (1895)
"Tired of digging potatoes, and spudding
line of many in which Hardy describes the
"The Ruined Maid." O'melia, like many
period, was raised on a farm, presumably
long hours, with nothing to show for it
and the food on their table. In a tragic turn
own fate, she turns to prostitution to escape
her tattered rags for rich gowns and pearls.

Life in the Fields
Like the ruined maid of Hardy's poem, the
struggle to maintain their dedication to the
beautiful moments like the one captured
struggle becomes sublime; for though farming
breaking and sometimes dangerous life
one, and it is this blend of pain and beauty
exquisite sublime existence.

Works Cited
Hardy, Thomas. "The Ruined Maid." Victorian Web.
2006. Web. 2 Dec. 2012.

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Thomas Hardy, "The Harlot's House"

In the poem, "The Harlot's House," the narrator and his friends are outside of the house, observing and listening to the activities inside. The prostitutes and patrons inside are depicted as lifeless puppets and haunting shadows. The narrator expresses complete disgust with the prostitutes, but is also intrigued. She sees them having a life of their own, then "passed into the shadows."



Roles

In the Victorian period, women were expected to be virtuous and chaste. They were expected to become dutiful and obedient wives. The viewpoint on prostitution in "The Harlot's House" exemplifies these beliefs about women's roles in the 19th century. The roles depicted in *Reflecting Her Shadows* and "The Harlot's House" show not a contrast, but a continuation of the expectations of women that have only been increasing over time. We have progressed from a very traditional, rigid culture to one that expects nothing less from women in terms of independence and flexibility.

"The Harlot's House." The Victorian Web. 27 April 2010. Web. 1

Bos Taurus



Artist's Statement

In the pastoral piece, *Bos Taurus*, a simple scene of the country is portrayed as cows graze together in a field. This picture is a single image representing the sublime lifestyle that is inherent to living off the land.

Thomas Hardy, "The Ruined Maid" (1866)

"Tired of digging potatoes, and spudding up docks" is just one line of many in which Hardy describes the heroine of the poem, "The Ruined Maid." O'melia, like many lower class youth of the period, was raised on a farm, presumably, toiling in the dirt for long hours, with nothing to show for it but the dust on her dress and the food on their table. In a tragic taking-control of her own fate, she turns to prostitution to escape this life, trading in her tattered rags for rich gowns and peacock feathers.

Life in the Fields

Like the ruined maid of Hardy's poem, even today agriculturists struggle to maintain their dedication to farming, and it is in these beautiful moments like the one captured in that field that the struggle becomes sublime; for though farming is often a back-breaking and sometimes dangerous life to lead, it is a beautiful one, and it is this blend of pain and beauty that creates a most exquisite sublime existence.

Works Cited

Hardy, Thomas. "The Ruined Maid." Victorian Web. Victorian Web. 24 January 2006. Web. 2 Dec. 2012.

Decay

Artist's Statement

In *Decay*, the rotting apples represent moral decay. An apple is used to symbolize the common idea of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden.

Augustus Leopold Egg, *Past and Present 1* (1858)

Egg's painting demonstrates the evangelical downfalls of infidelity and the decay of virtue. The symbolism in this painting captivates viewers to look deeper into the scene and interpret each symbol in their own perspective. The most influential symbol is the half cut apple lying on the floor which carries religious symbolism in relation to the forbidden fruit. It lies next to the wife on the floor and the other half of the apple which has been stabbed to the core as a metaphorical representation of her husband getting stabbed in the back.



Loss of Innocence

The idea of an apple rotting can be seen as a representation of the contemporary view of religion and can also be seen as one's innocence rotting through the eyes of society.

Work Cited



Egg, Augustus Leopold. *Past and Present No. 1*. 1858. Oil on canvas. T. Agnew & Sons, London.

Sample Content Areas in the Arts and Humanities

- Argument or thesis
- Theoretical framework
- Methodology
- Research
- Historical events
- Texts or artworks
- Artist statements
- Contemporary media

From Rags to Riches

Washington State University, Humanities

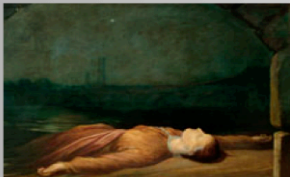
<h3>Class Text</h3> <p>Characteristics present in the visual image correlated to the oil on canvas, <i>Found Drowned</i> by George Fredric Watts. The woman presented in <i>Found Drowned</i> is shown as a frail and delicate figure, when in fact, the image being conveyed by the artist is very dark. The darkness correlates well to the darkness of the barren twigs and dark skies of the visual image. However, the variety of colors in the visual image leads to a more delicate and graceful light; similar to the gracefulness of the woman in <i>Found Drowned</i>.</p> 	<h3>Theories</h3> <p>Picturesque: inhabits appreciation for honest beauty. This mainly includes landscapes. An object is simply beautiful when it is unaltered to show its true flaws. This type of art is straightforward and honest to its representation.</p> <p>Sublime: a darkness surrounding the art that is awe-inspiring. Life would not be seen as precious as it is without representing and acknowledging the bad. This is how sublime art is represented.</p> <p>Ruin: a destroyed and defiled form of art that is accepted and appreciated. This can be a type of person or even a landscape.</p> 
<h3>Artist's Statements</h3> <p>In the making of our visual image, we decided to create a collage of images. These images would show how we each individually interpreted and thought of what the tree would represent for each of us. To create the collage, the images were placed together like puzzle pieces to form an overall tree and how we viewed the tree. We moved the images and shifted them to create the shape of a tree and the final image was created.</p>	<h3>Contemporary Media</h3> <p>Our poster specifically relates to contemporary media in the fact that everyone will always have their own opinions and interpretations of things around them. Each one of the pictures that make up the tree represent our own interpretations of the tree and in media it's often the same concept. What one person sees as being rebellious could be seen as empowering to another. The poster helps to show that even in these times, originality and interpretation are ideas that are taken seriously.</p>

From Rags to Riches

Washington State University, Humanities 303

Class Text

Characteristics present in the visual image can be traced to the oil on canvas, *Found Drowned* by George Frederic Watts. The woman presented in the painting is shown as a pale and delicate figure, when in fact, the message being conveyed by the artist is very dark. The woman's dress correlates well to the darkness within the barren twigs and dark skies of the image. However, the variety of colors in the visual image is a more subtle light; similar to the softness of the *Found Drowned*.



Artist's Statements

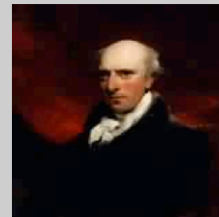
In the making of our visual image, we decided to create a collage of images. These images would be viewed by each of us individually interpreted and then we decided what the tree would represent for each of us. To create the collage, the images were cut out and put together like puzzle pieces to form an image of a tree and how we viewed the tree. We then took the images and shifted them to create the final image of a tree and the final image was

Theories

Picturesque: inhabits appreciation for honest beauty. This mainly includes landscapes. An object is simply beautiful when it is unaltered to show its true flaws. This type of art is straightforward and honest to its representation.

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Themes

The three major themes that are present in these posters and throughout class, are picturesque, sublime, and ruin. The visual image is picturesque through how it is a landscape image. The tree itself exhibits qualities of sublimity through being a very dark and gloomy image. The colors are dark and the tree represents a dark side of nature. It has a sense of awe and the sky is dark and gloomy in most of the images. However, there does seem to be a sense of life present in the tree through the green leaves and the brighter outside sky. The heart of the trunk represents a new life and a possibility for something new or a continuation of something great. The brighter sky alludes to a better life to come. The heart of the tree is still dark however.



References

Watts, George Frederic. *Found Drowned*. 1848 - 1850. Oil on Canvas. Watts Gallery Artists Profiles from Google Images.

Poster Exhibits



Poster Presentation: Nonverbal

1. **Dress professionally**, arrive early, and clear your area of excess personal items.
2. **Focus your attention on visitors** to the exhibit: invite and welcome them to view your display. Smile, shake hands, and introduce yourself.
3. **Take turns conversing with visitors** about different sections of your posters. One member of the group should not dominate the conversation, no matter how eloquent they are.
4. **Encourage visitors to ask questions**, so that your conversation is more interactive than one-sided.

Poster Presentation: Oral

1. **Before you start**, ask your visitors about their familiarity with the exhibit's topic and your specific poster content. Avoid making assumptions about your listeners' knowledge.
2. Present what is **common** about your subject matter before presenting your unique perspective on it (how will they know it's unique if they don't know what's common?).
3. Move back and forth between your **big ideas** and your **small examples**. Details are important, but only if they fit into a larger context, and a big idea can only make an impact if you illustrate it with specific details.
4. **Observe your audience** while you are speaking—do they seem to be following along? are they showing genuine interest in your work? Change the direction of your conversation if something doesn't seem to be going well.

Poster Printing

- **Poster Dimensions:** 20 inches x 30 inches (landscape or portrait)
- **Print Quality:** Matte (@\$18 for a 20×30 poster)
- **Display Options:** Foam core w/ easels or Bulletin boards w/ pins
- **WSU Printer Locations:**
[Biomedical Communications Unit \(BCU\)](#)
[School of Mechanical and Materials Engineering](#)

Poster Design Resources

Available Online

- [WSU: How To Create a Poster Using PowerPoint \(PDF\)](#)
- [U of North Colorado: How to Create an Academic Poster \(YouTube\)](#)
- [C.R.A.P. Design Principles \(Contrast, Repetition, Alignment, Proximity\)](#)

For Purchase

- [ix: Visualizing Composition 2.0](#)
- [The Non-Designer's Design Book](#)

Discussion

- How do you use posters in your discipline?
- When thinking about adding posters to your syllabus, what challenges do you anticipate?
- How do posters meet general learning outcomes in similar or different ways from traditional essays?
- At what point and to what extent should we educate students in visual rhetoric and design?