

COREA-AD 46J
Narrative, Media, and Technology
A J-Term Course held in New York for NYUAD undergraduates

M-F 9:30-12:30
19 University Place Room 224

Office Hours:
Tuesday & Wednesday
2:00-3:00

Or by appointment
19 University Place, Room 503

Prof. Eliot Borenstein
Russian & Slavic Studies
19 University Place, Room 210
998-8676 (w)
[**eb7@nyu.edu**](mailto:eb7@nyu.edu)

Skype: eliotb2002

Course Description: Telling stories is a fundamental human activity, but the ways these stories are told depends upon the means in which they are created and transmitted. This course examines the role of technologies ranging from print, cave painting, comics, animation, and film, to hypertext, social media, and viral video. By looking at narratives in terms of the technological means and media that enable them, we remind ourselves that the gap between technology and culture is illusory, and that all artistic creation is technological by its very definition.

Understanding the workings of narrative is crucial, regardless of one's occupation or career path. Virtually all our information about the world comes to us through narrative; comprehension of the inner workings of storytelling allows us to see when and how we are manipulated by the ways in which information is organized.

Learning Outcomes: Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:
Develop a critical vocabulary for analyzing verbal and visual artistic production
Develop new ways of thinking about storytelling in a wide range of media.
Critically examine the connections between form and meaning in a narrative work.
Reflect on the effect of the written word on paper and screen.
Determine the extent to which "new media" have introduced new ways of telling stories.

Course credit: This course is a 4-credit seminar that fulfills the requirement for a core-curricular course at NYU Abu Dhabi. The course falls within the "Art, Technology, and Invention" section of the Core. There are no prerequisites for the course.

NYU Classes and the Internet. NYU Classes, which is accessible through the "Academics" tab of NYU Home, is an important part of course, facilitating announcements and the distribution of course materials.

Please keep in mind that, by default, NYU Classes uses your NYU email account. Many of you may have other email accounts that you use. If so, it is a quite simple matter to arrange for your email from one account to be forwarded automatically to the other. I strongly urge you to do so. It is **your responsibility** to make sure that you are

receiving official email sent to your NYU account.

To access the system:

1. Go to: <http://home.nyu.edu>
2. Log in.
3. Click on the tab labeled "Academics."
4. Log in to NYU Classes. There you'll find a link to the course "Narrative, Media, and Technology"
5. Click on this link.
6. Once you're in the site for the course, click on the tab labeled "Resources."
7. The texts you need will be there.

Course Requirements: No knowledge of any foreign language is expected, as all works will be read and discussed in English. It is essential that you keep up with the reading and viewing assignments and come to class prepared either to make observations or ask questions. Attendance is, of course, mandatory.

Classroom Time. As a matter of convenience, I have scheduled a standard class time (9:30-12). However, on several occasions, we will be going a bit later, due to the combination of overnight reading and in-class viewing.

Assignments:

1) Class participation. Most class periods will be a mix of lecture and discussion; only occasionally will I spend the entire class giving a lecture. Attendance and active participation are mandatory.

2) Discussion Questions. Every time there is an overnight reading or viewing assignment, you must come up with at least three questions to ask about the text. These questions should not be evaluative ("Did you like the story?"), and they should not be about summarizing or providing faculty information. Rather they should be about the repercussions, problems, or ideas that the text raises. These questions must be distributed to the class through NYU Classes by 8 AM.

3) Weekend Writing Assignments. These are 5-6 page analytical essays about any of the texts we've read or viewed the previous week. You are to come up with a topic and a thesis, and run your idea by me by email. The final essay is due on the last day of class.

4) In-Class Free Writing. There will also be in-class, ungraded writing exercises as a tool to help you gather your thoughts.

5) eBook assignment. Using the Sigil program, you will create an eBook with texts and images. (More on this in class).

6) Excursions. Three mandatory excursions are planned: to the Museum of Moving Image, the Museum of Comics Art, and The Moth storytelling theater.

Electronic submission of written assignments. Please do not submit hard copies of your short and long papers; I prefer to receive students' papers electronically. Please send me your assignments by email, as attachments. The preferred format is any version of Word (97 or above, any platform)--such documents usually take the ".doc" extension. Failing that, .rtf files (which can be generated by most word processing programs) are also fine. I can open most other formats as well, including Word Perfect (.wpd), but this requires some extra effort on my part. Please feel free to consult with me about file format questions.

When you submit a paper electronically, please give it a descriptive filename. I have many students, and if all of you send me files called "J-Term Assignment " this will be confusing and frustrating.

The preferred (but not required) format for file names is <Student last name> <Type of assignment> <Assignment number> <Topic >. Examples: if Bonnie Tyler has written a paper on Austin the file should be something like "Tyler Paper 2 (Austin).doc". If Eric Roberts has written a paper on Freud then the file should be something like "Roberts Paper 1 (Freud).doc".

Finally, please note that I have multiple email accounts. Please do not send email to all accounts at once ("cc"); if you do, I will end up with three copies of your message. Any of my accounts will do.

Final Grade. Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Class Participation	15%
Papers (3):	75%
Ebook:	10%

Useful Reference Material:

For writing papers and citation formats (you may choose any citation format so long as you use it consistently):

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

** This site reproduces much of the information located in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* . 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed.

Strunk, William & White, E.B. *The Elements of Style*. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon, 2000)

Williams, Joseph. *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. 8th ed.

Editions: Many of these books come in different editions and different translations, and I understand that you might prefer to buy used copies of these editions to save money. Therefore I am including my recommendations/warnings about the various editions of each of these books.

Required Texts, Part One (NYU Book Store)

Austin, John. *How to Do Things with Words*.
Malcolm, Janet. *The Journalist and the Murderer*.
McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics*.
Mendelsund, Peter. *What We See When We Read*.
Moore, Alan & Dave Gibbons. *Watchmen*.
Ware, Chris. *Building Stories*.
Woodring, Jim. *The Portable Frank*.

Required Texts , Part Two (On NYU Classes)

The rest of the readings for this class will be available on NYU Classes.

Alvarez, Asucion. "Memetics: An Evolutionary Theory of Cultural Transmission." *SORITES* 15 (2004): 24-28.
Doctorow, Cory. "You Do Like Reading Off a Screen."
<http://www.locusmag.com/Features/2007/03/cory-doctorow-you-do-like-reading-off.html>
Freud, Sigmund. *The Joke and Its Relation to the Unconscious* (selections). Chapter 3.1-2. Chapter 5.
Hyman, Ira E. "Going Gaga: Investigating, Creating, and Manipulating the Song Stuck in My Head." *Applied Cognitive Psychology* 27.2 (2013): 204-215.
Jabr, Feris. "Why the Brain Prefers Paper." *Scientific American* 2013.
Kong, Kosal. "In Defence of the eBook." <http://urbantimes.co/2012/01/in-defence-of-the-ebook/>
Larsen, Rief. "The Crying of Page 45."
Lord, Albert. *The Singer of Tales* (selections). 3-17 272-275 (Song of Milman Parry)
Moser, David. "This Is the Title of the Story, Which Is Also Found Several Times in the Story Itself."
Piper, Andrew. "Out of Touch. E-reading Isn't Reading."
http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/culturebox/2012/11/reading_on_a_kindle_is_not_the_same_as_reading_a_book.html
Propp, Vladimir. *Morphology of the Folktale* (selections) Chapter 2 (19-24). Chapter 3 (25-65) (skim)
Schmelling, Sarah. *Ophelia Joined the Group Maidens Who Don't Float: Classic Lit Signs on to Facebook*.
Schmelling, Sarah. "Hamlet (Facebook News Feed Edition)."
<http://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/hamlet-facebook-news-feed-edition>

Schmelling, Sarah. "Edgar Allan Poe's Profile Page."
<http://maidenswhodontfloat.com/edgar-allan-poes-profile-page/>

Schmelling, Sarah. "Oscar Wilde's Profile Page."
<http://maidenswhodontfloat.com/oscar-wildes-profile-page/>

Stefanova, Ana. "Riddles as a Community Psychological Phenomenon in Folklore" *The Electronic Journal of Folklore* (2007).

Required Texts, Part Three: On-Line Sources

Fridersdorf, Conor, Tanya Basu, Katie Kilkenny, and Lenika Cruz. "Has *Serial* Run Out of Intrigue?" *The Atlantic*. December 11, 2014. <http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/12/serial-episode-11-sarah-koenig-savior-or-executioner/383656/>

Green, Jamie. "The Problem with the Problems with *Serial*." November 16, 2014. <http://jaimegreen.net/post/102812521331/the-problem-with-the-problems-with-serial>

King, Jay Caspian. "'Serial' and White Reporter Privilege." *The Awl*. November 13, 2014. <http://www.theawl.com/2014/11/serial-and-white-reporter-privilege>

LaFrance, Adrienne. "Is It Wrong to Be Hooked on *Serial*?" *The Atlantic*. November 8, 2014. <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/11/is-it-wrong-to-be-hooked-on-serial/382500/>

Larson, Sarah. "'Serial': The Podcast We've Been Waiting For." *The New Yorker*. October 9, 2014. <http://www.newyorker.com/culture/sarah-larson/serial-podcast-weve-waiting>

Richman, Darren. "Why *Serial* is the greatest podcast ever made." *The Telegraph*. November 14, 2014. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/the-filter/11230770/Why-Serial-is-the-greatest-podcast-ever-made.html>

Roberts, Soraya . "Thoughts on Race, Journalism, and 'Serial'." *Bitch Magazine*. November 20, 2014. <http://bitchmagazine.org/post/thoughts-on-race-journalism-and-serial>

Shavin, Naomi . "Serial's Greatest Strength Was Also Its Greatest Weakness." *The New Republic*. December 18, 2014. <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/120602/serial-greatest-strength-also-greatest-weakness>

Silman, Anna . "Moderator of 'Serial' subreddit: 'It's terrifying to think how much time I've spent researching this.'" *Salon*. December 18, 2014. http://www.salon.com/2014/12/18/moderator_of_serial_subreddit_its_terrifying_to_think_how_much_time_ive_spent_researching_this/

van Schilt, Stephanie . "Is *Serial* Podcast Problematic?" *Spook*. November 5, 2014. <http://www.spookmagazine.com/is-serial-podcast-problematic/>

Wightman, Catriona . "Serial: Are we enjoying this amazing podcast a bit too much?" *Digital Spy*. November 21, 2014. <http://www.digitalspy.com/celebrity/feature/a610340/serial-are-we-enjoying-this-amazing-podcast-a-bit-too-much.html#~oZLJ4rZNZaC5am>

Wong, Julia Carrie. "The Problem with Serial and the Model Minority Myth." *BuzzFeed*. November 16, 2014. <http://www.buzzfeed.com/juliacarriew/the-problem-with-serial-and-the-model-minority-myth>

Required Texts, Part Four: The eBook Options

Some of you might prefer to read the required texts as eBooks. You should feel free to do so. Many of the books ordered at the NYU bookstore are available as eBooks from various Internet vendors (Amazon, Kobo, iBooks, etc.).

In addition, I have made all of the NYU Classes readings available in the "Resources" tab as eBooks.

I have made them available in two different formats:

- 1) Epub format. This is the format that was designed to be an industry standard. It is the only format read by Apple's iBooks app, and can also be read in Nook and Stanza.
- 2) Mobi format. This is the format that Amazon acquired for the Kindle, and can be read natively by any Kindle application.

Finally, please note that you must **bring the texts with you to class**.

Audio

Kine, Starlee. "Case #2: Britney." *The Mystery Show* 2015.

Koenig, Sarah. *Serial*. Episodes 1-12.

Wolkstein, Diane. *One, My Darling, Come to Mama*. <http://vimeo.com/13350552>

Video

Linklater, Richard (dir.). *Boyhood* (2014)

Lloyd, David (dir.) "Chuckles Bites the Dust." *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. (1975)

Marker, Chris (dir.) *La Jetée*. 1961.

Miyazaki, Hayao. *Howl's Moving Castle* (2006).

Monty Python. "The Funniest Joke in the World." (1969)

Provenza, Paul. (dir.). *The Aristocrats*. 2005 (excerpts)

Sokurov, Alexander (dir.). *Russian Ark*. 2002.

Vertov, Dziga (dir.). *Man with a Movie Camera*. 1923.

CLASS SCHEDULE

January 4 (M) Introduction 2:00-4:00

January 5 (T) Word of Mouth: The Technologies of Oral Traditions

❖ **In Class:**

Serial Episode 1

Lord, "The Song of Milman Parry" (272-

275)

Mama

Gross, *One, My Darling, Come to*

◆ **For Today:**

☺ Read Propp Chapter 2, Skim Chapter

3

☺ Read Lord (3-17)

January 6 (W) Jokes and Riddles, or, How to Surprise People with What They Already Know

❖ **In Class:**

The Aristocrats

The Mary Tyler Moore Show

Serial Episode 2

◆ **For Today:**

☺ Read Freud Ch. 3.1-2, 5

☺ Read Stefanova "

January 7 (Th) Of Words and Memes

❖ **In Class:**

Serial Episode 3

◆ **For Today:**

☺ Read Austin Ch. 1, 2, 4, 8

☺ Read Alvarez

☺ Read Hyman

☺ Read Larson (on-line)

January 8 (F) Paper, Screen, Sound: What Is a Book?

❖ **In Class:**

Serial Episode 4

☺ Read Doctorow

☺ Read Jabr

☺ Read Kong

☺ Read Larsen

☺ Read Piper

☺ Read Mendelsund (through "Co-Creation)

January 11 (M) Moving Pictures: Film as a Strange Technology

❖ **In Class:**

La Jetée

Serial Episode 5

◆ **For Today:**

☺ First Essay Due

Afternoon: (2:00-4:00)

Man with a Camera

January 12 (T) Film and Time

❖ **In Class:**

Russian Ark

Serial Episode 6

◆ **For Today:**

January 12 (Tuesday) The Moth Evening Field Trip

January 13 (W) The Camera Never Lies?

❖ **In Class:**

Boyhood

Serial Episode 7

◆ **For Today:**

☺ Read Malcolm (1-56)

☺ Read van Schilt (on-line)

January 14 (Th) Animation; Pictures Come to Life

❖ **In Class:**

Selected Works of Winsor McKay

Serial Episode 8

Anime inspired by Jim Woodring's *Frank*

◆ **For Today:**

☺ Read Woodring

☺ Read LaFrance (on-line)

☺ Listen to *Mystery Show*

Afternoon 2-4

Guest Presentation by Starlee Kine

January 15 (F) Transnational Transmedia

❖ **In Class:**

Serial Episode 9

◆ **For Today:**

Howl's Moving Castle

- ☺ Read Green (on0line)
- ☺ Read King (on-line)
- ☺ Read Richman (on-line)
- ☺ Read Wong (on-line)

January 1 (Sat) 12-3
Afternoon Field Trip to the Museum of the Moving Image

January 18 (M) Martin Luther King Day

January 19 (T) Words and Pictures

❖ **In Class:**

Serial Episode 10

▼ **For Today:**

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| | ☺ Read |
| McCloud, <i>Understanding Comics</i> | ☺ Read Roberts |
| (on-line) | ☺ Read |
| Wightman (on-line) | ☺ Second Essay |
| Due | |

January 20 (W) Storytelling from Two to Four Dimensions

❖ **In Class:**

Serial Episode 11

◆ **For Today:**

- ☺ Read Moore & Gibbons, *Watchmen*
- ☺ Read Roberts (on-line)
- ☺ Read Fridersdroft et al. (on-line)

Afternoon (2:00-3:30)

- ☺ Guest Lecture be Ken Fisher

January 21 (Th) Building Stories

◆ **For Today:**

❖ **In Class:**

Serial Episode 12

- ☺ Read Ware, *Building Stories*

January 22 (F) New Media, Same Old Story

❖ **In Class:**

Selected viral videos

Pussy Riot Videos

Moody, Rick. "Some Contemporary Characters"

◆ **For Today:**

- ☺ Read Baudrillard, "The Ecstasy of Communication"
- ★ Read Schmelling
- ☺ Read Shavin (on-line)
- ☺ Read Shilman(on-line)

☺ Final Essay Due.