Special Topics II:
Electronic Literature

Monday 5:30pm-8:00pm
Anderson Hall 1123
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Course Blog: http://tuelit13.wordpress.com/

This course is an introduction to the contemporary genre of electronic literature—literary writing that is produced on a computer to be read on a computer. Electronic literature is an eclectic and provocative field—by using the tools of the computer and the internet to construct their works, authors of electronic literature take writing beyond the bounds of the printed page, raising all sorts of far-reaching questions about how we read and write: what does it mean, for example, for a poem to incorporate sound and movement as well as text? How do we read a narrative that has no clear beginning and ending, only a nonlinear web of linked pieces of text? What difference does it make when you can change a text by clicking or touching it onscreen? What kinds of creative work become possible when writing and reading take place on mobile devices across the public, collaborative, constantly changing space of the web?

In order to consider these and other questions, we'll study a wide range of electronic and digital works from across the history of this diverse form, from early hypertext fiction to contemporary works that utilize social and mobile media. Along the way, we'll consider how electronic authors have drawn inspiration from earlier print literature, and how recent print literature has attempted to represent and respond to the cultural changes produced by digital technology. We'll also meet with digital writers and artists at and around Temple to learn more about how they produce their cutting-edge works. In keeping with our focus on how technology allows for new forms of literary thought and expression, we'll also experiment with a wide range of written work in this class, from online conversations and collaborative analysis to video recordings of our reading practices and mobile analysis of urban spaces. Our ultimate goal will be to develop a new understanding of the creative possibilities for reading and writing within the digital environment of the twenty-first century.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Shelley Jackson, *Patchwork Girl*
Amaranth Borsuk and Brad Bouse, *Between Page and Screen*
Marc Saporta, *Composition No. 1*
Jason Edward Lewis, *P.o.E.M.M.s Series* (iOS app, selections TBD)
Erik Loyer, *Strange Rain* (iOS app)
Ying Horowitz & Quinn, *The Silent History* (iOS app)
Selected articles and other short readings (marked BB on the syllabus and available on Blackboard)

The first three texts listed above are available at the University Bookstore and on reserve at Paley Library as well as through various online retailers. If you order your texts online, you are responsible for making sure that they arrive in plenty of time for you to be prepared to discuss them in class—do not wait until the last minute to order them. I recommend using [Amazon Student](#) to get your books quickly and affordably. **Note:** *Patchwork Girl* is available in a number of different versions to work with different computer operating systems; I recommend waiting until after our first class meeting to purchase this so that you can plan accordingly and we can adjust as a class if necessary. **See below for more information on texts, medium, accessibility, etc.**

Materials on Blackboard must be printed out and brought to class on the days we will be discussing them. I recommend that you print this material out at the beginning of the semester and keep it all together so that you will have it in hand well before it is due.

COURSE INFORMATION AND POLICIES

Welcome to our course! The following pages explain the course policies and procedures so that you will be able to do your best work, learn as much as possible, and enjoy yourself in our course. If you have any questions, at any time, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Grading Distribution

Participation	15%
Twitter	15%
Course Blog	20%
Read-Through & Close Reading	10%
Recomposition and Reflection	10%
The Silent History Work	15%
Group Presentation	15%

Grading Policies

- You must complete all required assignments in order to pass this course.
- Late work will be marked down one grade level for each class period after the due date (for example, from a B+ to a B for one late day). Extensions will only be granted in the case of an emergency documented by a college dean.

Preparation, Participation, and Class Structure

We will spend our class time each day on a variety of different activities, including but not limited to full-class discussions, small-group discussions, presentations, screenings, and in-class writing. Your active engagement and participation in all of these are an integral part of this course. While I may occasionally give short lectures, the bulk of our time will be spent talking and engaging together with the course material and with each other's ideas in a variety of contexts. In order to do this, it is essential that you come to class prepared to address the day's material. This means completing all reading before class, bringing a copy of the reading to class, including any necessary devices if at all possible, and being prepared to discuss the reading thoughtfully. You should have notes, interpretations, questions, and responses to share with the class, and you should be prepared to offer these and to be called on in our conversation.

The material we will study in this course is different in form from traditional print literature—in many cases, readings will not have clear endings, and it may be difficult to know when you are "done." As a result, you are somewhat more responsible than usual for making sure that you are fully prepared to participate in a rich class discussion. In order to do this, I urge you to spend as much time with each text as possible, even when it seems that a given text is extremely long or extremely short. Re-read, try alternate paths through texts, and pay attention to details and elements that might seem unimportant in a print text. Taking notes and/or brainstorming your thought process and reflections as you explore the texts is another useful way to give yourself as much grasp on the material as possible—our class Twitter feed and blog posts will also help with this.

More generally, I expect each of you to approach the course with a sense of responsibility and ownership. The more each of you brings your own thinking to the discussion, the more all of us will get out of class—I encourage you to offer perspectives, ideas, examples, oppositions, questions, and other contributions as much as possible. If you are uncomfortable with speaking in class, please let me know or come see me at the beginning of the semester so that we can work together to make things easier for you.

I will schedule time for a break roughly halfway through class. Because our class has a long evening slot, I encourage you to bring food, snacks, drinks, etc., as long as you eat and drink them in a way that does not distract from our work in class.

Although I will lecture rarely, if ever, that does not mean that you should not take notes on what the class has to say about the material we are discussing, just as you would in a lecture course. Even when it seems as if we are "just talking" about a reading, a piece of technology, or something else, you should still be actively thinking and writing—do not let the discussion just pass you by without actively engaging it, even if only as a listener at certain moments. Having a record of the class' comments, opinions, debates, etc., will be extremely valuable to you in preparing to develop topics and areas of inquiry for further research and writing in the course.

Since so much of our course material exists only in electronic format, laptops, tablets, and smartphones are always welcome in class—being able to use these devices to consult the readings, do research, and communicate via Twitter will add a great deal to our work in class. If you have access to one or more of these devices, bring them to class regularly, and if you are willing to share in any capacity with classmates who might not have them, both they and I will be grateful. If you don't have regular access to these, don't worry—we will work out plans to make sure everyone is prepared as we go through the semester (see below for more information).

However, these devices should be used in class ONLY for class-related work. If inappropriate computer or electronic use becomes a problem for some members of the class, I will limit or revoke permission to use them for the class as a whole. If you have questions about whether a certain use of technology is appropriate or not, please don't hesitate to ask me.

Sleeping, texting, listening to music, non-class-related computer use, talking outside of class discussion and other similar behaviors are disrespectful to me and to your classmates and disruptive of our work in class. Students who engage in such behaviors will be asked to leave class and marked absent for the day.

Online Work

Your online work for this course will take two different forms: regular posts to a Twitter feed for our class and weekly posts to a course blog. This work will serve several purposes: firstly (and most immediately), it will give you a chance to think critically about some of the course material both before and after we discuss it in class and to gear our discussion towards issues and questions that are important to you or that you are curious about or confused by. Secondly, it will give us all first-hand experience with several central forms of writing in contemporary culture. Finally, by giving you the opportunity to bring new material and new areas of concern into our conversation, it will help you to generate topics, ideas, and arguments for papers.

Twitter Posting. You should set up a Twitter account if you do not already have one, and start to follow the hashtag #tuelit13, which we will use to mark all of our class-related tweets. As part of your classwork on Twitter, you should post at least six class-related tweets per week using this hashtag (although I encourage you to post more—as many as you find productive or useful—and I imagine that many people will find themselves going over that minimum fairly frequently). As long as they are substantive, I will count tweets during class time towards your overall work on Twitter as well as tweets outside of class, but I encourage you to do some of both so that we can have a consistent level of conversation over the course of each week. For more in-depth information on how to set up and use Twitter for this course and what to post, see the separate handout at the end of the syllabus.

Twitter Grading. Rather than grading every tweet(!) or grading your work on Twitter every week, I will grade it holistically twice over the semester. This means that I will respond to and assess your work once early in the semester (most likely around the time of our Read-Through and Close Reading assignment) and once at the end. The use of Twitter in the university classroom is still a relatively new thing, so our work here will be somewhat experimental. The best way to do well on this ongoing assignment is to take it seriously and to post consistently and substantively, using the hashtag as a way to continue our work outside the classroom in a productive way—be sure not to put yourself in the position of posting lots of "catchup" tweets at the last second before grading.

Blog Posting. Note that the blog is located on our independent course website at http://tuelit13.wordpress.com/, **not on Blackboard** (although we will use Blackboard for email, papers, and other elements of the course). You are not required to register with WordPress in order to post on the blog, but you must subscribe to the blog so that you receive notifications of new material that I post. The most recent main post will appear at the top of the page—click on the comments link for that post to read what others have written and post your response.

Blog Content. Your work on the blog will take different forms at different points in the semester. Sometimes I will post a prompt for you to respond to, while at other times your posts can be more open-ended; sometimes I will ask you to address a particular element from the reading, while at other times I will ask you to think about a broader issue or question that connects several texts. The blog is a space for us as a group to be reflective about the material we are discussing, and to begin to air initial responses, interpretations, and reactions before we pursue them more fully in class discussion. In this spirit, your posting to the blog should be thoughtful and analytical—you should offer interpretations and questions rather than summaries or solely personal responses. Because a blog allows discussion to happen over time, you should always read what has already been posted to the blog on a given week before you make your own post, and you should try to address that material in what you say—thoughtful responses that oppose, expand, rethink, complicate, or otherwise complement what others have written are as helpful and meaningful as "standalone" comments (if not more so). I will participate in conversations as they develop as well as posting opening threads.

Each post should be at least 250 words—you might write and edit your post in Microsoft Word or a similar program so that you know the length of your post and so that you have a backup of it on your computer. I will often ask you to include images, links, video clips, and other media elements in your posts—this is fairly easy to do and we will discuss it in class at the beginning of the course.

Blog Scheduling. Unless I specify otherwise, there will be a blog post due each week at **midnight on Friday night**, usually covering roughly the first half or ¾ of the reading for the coming Monday's class. This deadline is designed to help you balance the pace of reading over the week between class meetings—one useful way to organize your reading and writing for the course might be to plan some tweeting both before and after your blog post, so that you have a chance to work out some ideas for your post as well as a way to follow from it in conversation with other people in the class. Because of the time-sensitive nature of the blog, late posts will not receive credit.

Blog Grading. I will grade your blog posts on a scale of 1-4 each week. Criteria for each grade are as follows:

Grade	Characteristics
1	The post is missing, late, or severely underdeveloped, consisting of only a few sentences.
2	The post meets all the technical requirements of the assignment (quotation, use of media, length, etc.), but only engages with the material and the issues it raises in a passing or superficial sense.
3	The post uses textual or other material to make analytical claims, and begins to develop them, but those claims or connections are not fully developed or analyzed.
4	The post uses textual or other material to make thoughtful, original analytical claims and/or connections and engages and analyzes the issues it raises in independent, in-depth ways.

Read-Through and Close Reading
As part of our work with the course's first two sections on interactive text and narrative, you will choose one text to explore and analyze in both a taped onscreen read-through and a written close reading. This assignment is intended to give you an opportunity to engage closely with a text in its "natural" electronic environment as well as through more traditional means. I will provide more in-depth instructions for this assignment as the time gets nearer.

Recomposition and Reflection
As part of our work with *Composition No. 1*'s format as both a "book in a box" and a tablet app, you will imagine a sequencing of its pages with a particular intent and write a short reflection explaining and analyzing your version of this book in relation to the digital version.

The Silent History Work
Our final text of the semester, *The Silent History*, incorporates user-generated mobile content within its digital narrative. You will select a location in Philadelphia to add to this narrative, write a "field report" on this location, and write a short analysis/reflection in relation to your work and the novel as a whole. I will provide more in-depth instructions for this assignment as we begin our work on this text.

Group Presentation
At our final class meeting, you will present and discuss a new work of electronic literature (i.e., not already on our syllabus) along with several classmates. We will form groups for this project early in the semester, and I will provide guidelines for how to prepare as the time gets nearer.

Attendance
Consistent attendance, preparation, and participation are crucial to your success in this course. I will expect that you come to class on time and ready to work. This is particularly important given that our class meets once a week instead of two or three times—it's essential that we all come consistently prepared to make the most of every class meeting. **More than two absences will have a negative impact on your final course grade, and more than three absences will result in your failing the course. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences.** Thus these absences are meant to cover illnesses, personal emergencies, job obligations, and any and all other contingencies that might keep you from class. Latenesses and early departures of more than 10 minutes will each be considered equal to half an absence (however, even if you are more than 10 minutes late, or if you will need to leave class more than 10 minutes early, you should still always come to class). If you miss class, it

is your responsibility to keep up with the work—make sure to turn in any written work that was due for the day, and check the course blog and course website on Blackboard or come see me during my office hours to see what you might have missed in class.

Technology and Course Work
In addition to being central to the topic of our course, technology will be a frequent tool in our work together in this course: in addition to posting on Twitter and on the class blog and communicating with me and your classmates via email, you will be handing in papers electronically as well as in hard copy form, and many our readings will be accessible only online in various formats (websites, downloads, apps, etc.). As such, you are responsible for making sure that you have the technological tools and access necessary to keep up with the reading and writing for the course. I will make every effort to insure that most readings are as accessible as possible to as many people as possible. If you do not have the necessary technology for a given week's work, be resourceful in getting your hands on it: the TECH center has many computers with different operating systems, including loaner laptops and iPads, the Library has multiple iPads available to be checked out at both Paley Media Services and the Science and Engineering Library, and borrowing from or sharing with a friend or classmate is always an option.

Expect that you will have technological problems at some point in the semester, and plan accordingly—rather than being exceptions or excuses, these moments are part of life in a technological world, and you should be prepared to avoid them and work around them when they do come up. I recommend that you do this in a few ways: make plans for device access and printing out readings ahead of time, save your papers frequently, back up your work on OWLbox as well as a USB drive, make sure you have access to alternate computers and printers (a friend's or roommate's, a lab in the library or TECH Center, etc.), and leave yourself time to use these backup resources rather than relying on everything working perfectly at the last second. If you have questions about how to use any of these resources (or anything else technology-related), don't hesitate to come ask me.

Office Hours and Additional Help:
I want each of you to be successful in this class. Helping each of you develop as readers, writers, and thinkers is important to me, and I want to do what I can to help you achieve those goals and succeed in my class. More importantly, I have a lot of interest in the material we will be working on this semester, and I would love for you to get the same enjoyment from it that I do. If you have any questions, problems, or things you want to discuss—about the course, the readings, writing assignments or paper ideas, life at Temple, future academic or career plans, or anything else at all—or if you simply want to talk more about what we're doing in class, please come see me. My office hours are Mondays from 1:30-5:00p.m. in Anderson Hall 1127—this time is set aside for us to talk and for me to help you and work with you. If you aren't free during that time, get in touch with me before or after class or by email and we can set up a time that is more convenient—I'm also happy to talk via Google Chat, Skype, or other means. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you are having trouble or feel you need help, or for any other reason at all.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity
Independent thinking is a crucial component of your work in this course. **If you plagiarize, you will fail the course.** If you are uncertain about anything, ask **before** you hand in the work. The following rules cover several basic concerns involving plagiarism. If you are in any way uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, do not hesitate to consult me.
a) The language in your paper must be either your own or a direct quote from the original author.
b) Changing a few words or phrases from another writer's work is not enough to make the writing your own. The writing is either your own or the other person's; there are no in-betweens.
c) In-text citation and an accurate bibliography acknowledge that the fact or opinion expressed comes from another writer. If the language comes from another writer, quotation marks are necessary, in addition to a correct citation.

Disability Statement
This course is open to all students who met the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Statement on Academic Freedom
Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has adopted a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy # 03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02 .

COURSE SCHEDULE
The schedule below may change over the course of the semester. I will announce any changes in class and/or via email. It is your responsibility to keep abreast of these changes by attending class, checking your email and the class blog regularly, and contacting me or coming to my office if you have any questions.

Section One: Text	
Monday, August 26	Course Introduction Alan Bigelow, *This Is Not a Poem* (in class) **Introductory Tweet and Blog Post Due by Midnight, Wednesday, August 28**
Monday, September 2	**No Class: Labor Day** **First Blog Post Due Friday, August 30**
Monday, September 9	Young-hae Chang Heavy Industries: *Dakota*, *Artist's Statement N0. 45,730,944: The Perfect Artistic Web Site*, *Resumé I* Ezra Pound, *Canto 1* (BB) Brian Kim Stefans, Star Wars *One Letter at a Time* Christine Wilks, *Out of Touch* N. Katherine Hayles, "Print Is Flat, Code is Deep: The Importance of Media-Specific Analysis" (BB)
Monday, September 16	Stephanie Strickland, *Slippingglimpse* Erik Loyer, *Strange Rain*
Section Two: Narrative	
Monday, September 23	Shelley Jackson, *Patchwork Girl* Jorge Luis Borges, "The Garden of Forking Paths" (BB)
Monday, September 30	Michael Joyce, *Twelve Blue* **Class Visit by media artist Laura Zaylea, Temple MSP Faculty (Texts TBA)**
Section Three: Book	
Monday, October 7	**Class Visit by digital poet Dan Waber (Texts TBA)** **Read-Through and Close Reading Due This Week**
Monday, October 14	William Gibson, *Agrippa* (BB) *The Agrippa Files* Website Matthew Kirschenbaum, "Text Messaging: The Transformissions of 'Agrippa'" (BB) Amaranth Borsuk and Brad Bouse, *Between Page and Screen*
Monday, October 21	Marc Saporta, *Composition No. 1*
Monday, October 28	Marc Saporta, *Composition No. 1*

Section Five: Database and Network	
Monday, November 4	Jonathan Harris and Sep Kamvar, *We Feel Fine* Jonathan Harris, *The Whale Hunt* Jonathan Harris, *Word Count* Raymond Queneau, *A Hundred Thousand Billion Poems* Lev Manovich, "Database as a Genre of New Media" (BB) Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author" (BB) Other articles TBD (Burroughs/Gysin?) **Recomposition and Reflection Due This Week**
Monday, November 11	Gretchen Henderson, *Galerie de Difformité*
Monday, November 18	Gretchen Henderson, *Galerie de Difformité*
Monday, November 25	TBD
Monday, December 2	Conclusions **Group Presentations in Class** **Deformations Due in Class**