

ENGL 556 / 756 Digital Literacies

Remediation of Technology Autobiography

Context

According to *Writing Space* by J. David Bolter, **remediation** is the incorporation or representation of one medium in another medium. It is the process whereby computer graphics, virtual reality, and the WWW define themselves by borrowing from and refashioning media such as painting, photography, television, and film.

Remediation can be complete or visible. A film based on a book is remediating the printed story. The film may not provide any reference to the original medium or acknowledgment that it is an adaptation. By attempting to absorb the old medium entirely, the new medium presents itself without any connection to its original source. On the other hand, a medium such as a movie clip can be torn out of context and inserted into a new medium such as music. Bolter describes this as visible remediation because, “The work becomes a mosaic in which we are simultaneously aware of the individual pieces’ and their new, inappropriate setting.”

We will further discuss remediation (and immediacy and hypermediacy) when we read an excerpt from Bolter’s book.

Assignment

In short, remediate your print technology autobiography. This remediation may take one of several different forms:

- An iMovie trailer
- A GarageBand podcast
- A photo essay (visuals with narration using PowerPoint or Prezi)
- Another digital form of your choosing (discuss it with me first, though)

A good remediation of your print technology autobiography will not simply be a retelling of your original assignment. For example, if you choose to create a podcast, you would not simply record yourself reading your original text. Instead, you want to take advantage of the affordances of the new medium. An affordance is a design aspect that suggests how the object should be used—a visual clue to its function and use. An affordance has both actual and perceived properties. The affordance of a ball is its round shape, physical material, bounceability, etc. (its actual properties) as well as the perceived suggestion as to how the ball should be used (its perceived properties). An affordance of writing is that it allows us to make our thoughts visible to ourselves—to note something down on a page. An affordance of print is that it allows us to circulate our thoughts to a much larger readership—to publish, especially a linear narrative. One of the main points of this essay is to discover the affordances of another medium.

So, another way of putting this is to say that your task here is to compose a digital essay in which you do something you could *not* do—or could not do as evocatively or effectively—if you were limited to printing out your work on paper.

For example, let’s say you wrote a technology autobiography that details your fear or love of technology. You could then produce a horror or romance movie trailer using iMovie that would use film, text, pictures, and music to convey this same idea using the affordances of this different medium.

While I don’t have a particular preference for the new medium you choose, I will say that using iMovie in some way will give you a leg up for the final digital writing project.

In addition to the remediated technology autobiography, you should also submit a **one-page reflection** on the project that answers the following questions:

- What new medium(s) did you choose, and why did you choose it / them?
- What are the affordances of these new medium(s), and how did you use them?
- How did you remediate the argument of the print technology autobiography? In other words, how did you use the elements of visual rhetoric we have discussed?
- How effective is your remediation, and what makes it more or less effective?

Submission

The way to submit your remediated technology autobiography will depend upon the medium(s) you select. The submission should be 1 to 2 minutes in length (or an equivalent should you choose a non-timed medium). The class period prior to the due date, we will discuss submission methods. It is due on Thursday, February 13, by 11:59 p.m.

The one-page reflection should be submitted on Canvas. It is due on Tuesday, February 18, by 11:59 p.m.

Assignment Objectives and Grading Criteria

- Recognize and implement common elements of visual rhetoric
- Classify and differentiate among the affordances of various media
- Create a digital essay highlighting the affordances of various media
- Critique the effectiveness of the remediation