



MULTIMODAL REMIX ASSIGNMENT

in ENG 2100, as used by a novice

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I came to this project without a clear sense of what I was asking of my students. I'd seen Jason Palmieri's presentation the year before and thought it "looked cool." I copied, literally copied, most of Lisa Blankenship's guidelines to her students; the only change I made was that my Learning Community partner, Kathy Pence, and I decided to allow students to remix any of three projects—a rhetorical analysis of an image, an oral history, or a researched essay. All three were unified by our LC theme, Women at Work around the World.

I came away from this assignment excited to do it again, in composition and other classes. The students did a great job in thinking through what affordances they derived from various platforms.

The assignment:

FINAL ASSIGNMENT: RESEARCH REMIX

The main purpose of this assignment is for you to experiment with different methods of communicating your message to see how meaning and medium¹ interact and how different media offer different *affordances*.² We will consider how *remediation* can be used as a lens to see an argument in new ways.

In this final assignment, I'll ask that you return to an either your oral history or one of your research papers (from ENG or HIS this semester) and recreate it as a multimedia piece. I want you to think of the same argument you made and questions you explored but presented using a variety of semiotic modes (sound, video, audio files, and alphabetic text) and presented in the medium of the Web using whatever technologies you wish to explore. Digital remediation is "re-mediating"—adapting a message from its current page-based medium to some other medium using digital technology. This project asks you to consider the various affordances of the medium: techniques, audiences, language use, etc. that may or may not be available to you in a page-based medium, as well as reflect on what rhetorical knowledge *does* transfer across different media.

Examples

This project is about affordances of different media, especially in terms of interactivity with your audience. You should imagine your audience as extending beyond our class to include (possibly) publication in the English Department's online student intellectual journal, *Refract*. In other words, imagine that you will share this project in a public venue and not just to your peers and professor. Examples include:

- A Prezi, Tumblr, or PowerPoint that *visualizes* the argument in a different way using images and alphabetic text
- A short video using WeVideo or iMovie that illustrates your argument and texts you analyzed and used for support in your previous project

¹ Media are the "tools and material resources" used to produce and disseminate texts (p. 22). Examples of media include books, radio, television, computers, paint brush and canvas, and human voices (227). From Lauer, Claire. "Contending with Terms: "Multimodal" and "Multimedia" in the Academic and Public Spheres." *Computers and Composition* 26 (2009) 225-239.

² An affordance is the unique representational ability of a mode. Modes are semiotic or symbol systems used to create meaning (images, alphabetic text, sound, graphic design/layout).

- A “mashup” or “remix” (where you take images, videos, audio, etc. from other sources and represent them in new, creative ways to conceptualize your research project argument)

Production & Assessment

Multimodal Research-Based Argument (60% of project grade)

In your Remediation Project, you should:

- **Basic Assignment:** Revise your research-based argument paper for a different audience (public), genre (of your choosing) and medium (print to web).
- **Thesis/Argument:** Convey the argument in your Research-Based Argument project in a new way, using other modes of creation besides strictly alphabetic text. Your audience should not have to guess what your argument is: your argument in your creative project should be clear as a “stand alone piece” to an audience outside our class who knows nothing about your work.
- **Creativity/originality in making your argument:** Be creative. Your goal is to create a piece that engages the audience you’re envisioning (most immediately our class but also beyond) in your argument and research. You can do this in a number of ways: by appeals to logic (logos) using alphabetic text/numbers/research. You can use images and video clips to appeals to emotion (pathos). How well do you select interesting images or video clips? How well do you arrange them to tell a story?
- **Sources:** You should use Creative Commons source material if at all possible and should give credit to the creator/source in your project. Use list of Works Cited if your project does not lend itself to a credits screen.
- **Proofreading/Grammar:** If you use alphabetic text, your writing style is concise and compelling, and you carefully edit and proofread your final draft so that your writing contains no errors in spelling or grammar (unless you do so intentionally to make a point).
- **Length:** The final version should be long enough to convey an argument but not longer than 3:00 minutes.

Reflection & Production Rationale (2-3 pages, 40% of project grade):

Your written, extended Writer’s Reflective Letter will comprise 40% of your grade for this project. Keep in mind this is a writing class. You will not be graded on your use of technology as much as your resourcefulness: how did you find images, choose the tech, get help, and write about your rhetorical choices, successes, and failures in your reflective essay?

Excellent Reflective and Production Rationale Papers will reflect the following learning outcomes. In this “extended writer’s letter” you should:

- Demonstrate that you understand the importance of rhetorical considerations for any communicative act: the audience, purpose, genre, medium, and explain your thinking about your rhetorical situation and choices for this project.
- Discuss your choice of mode and medium to use depending on your rhetorical situation. Here are some terms to help you frame your discussion:
 1. mode = a way of creating and communicating using signs and symbol systems such as sound, photography, video and film, illustrations, art, and alphabetic text
 2. multimodal = creating and communicating using a combination of modes

3. media = ways of creating, delivering, and consuming multimodal symbol systems

- Demonstrate an understanding of the particular affordances you gained by remediating your previous project into a multimedia format.
- Discuss affordances and constraints of various technologies and media you choose (i.e. the time involved with learning new technologies, the glitches often involved with open source platforms, privacy issues with sharing your work online, and copyright issues and affordances of Creative Commons).
- Demonstrate an understanding of the implications of sharing your work in a public venue beyond the classroom. Where would you publish or share it? Is it ready for public view? How do you know? Is it not ready? Explain your production and revision process and what revisions you would want or need to make before publishing or sharing this piece with a wider audience.

Process and Due Dates

- Your final project with a revised Extended Writer's Letter is due by our class Finals meeting (when you'll present your work): **Monday, December 19th, 10:30-12:30.**
- **This final project will comprise 10% of your total course grade and consists of your project itself, your Extended Writer's Reflective Letter, and your participation in the screenings of projects on 12/19.**

The submissions I got were of varying quality, but a number of them BLEW ME AWAY! I'll share a couple different types of remixes.

Some used other familiar digital formats to their own ends:

Blogs:

<http://academicbbb.blogspot.com/>

Powerpoint:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1PD-0UrLjAawnyr3s4cQ5hw32ajlXYqC3ztUAT72UNSQ/present#slide=id.p4>

One of the more inventive uses of everyday technology was from my student Radhika



