UWS 6B-1
Writing from the MakerLab: art, science & innovation

Instructor: Deb Sarlin, PhD
Meeting Time - 5:00pm - 6:30pm
Rooms: Thursdays - Farber 101 and Tuesdays - The Brandeis MakerLab

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1-3 (Lab), Wednesday 11-12 (CTL), or by appointment (calendar link).

All coursework will be submitted at our LATTE course site: http://tinyurl.com/Sarlin6B1
and/or at Scalar: http://scalar.lts.brandeis.edu/

Introduction:
Some claim that we are living through a new industrial revolution as 3D printers, scanners and 3D virtual environments enter the art studio, science lab, and the marketplace at almost the same moment. Unlike other widely hyped new technologies, 3D printers are also swiftly appearing in Libraries and Schools. We can join with astronauts, well-known sculptors, and six-graders working to master these new technologies without great expense. Together we have the outlandish luxury of simultaneously supporting the capacity to learn about, learn how to, and write about these emerging practices for a public. This opportunity grants us the interesting impetus to discover new and distinct voices for describing, explaining, and contextualizing these technologies first to ourselves, and then for others as a resource...

In this class we will explore and write about this new moment in making. We will analyze artwork, read scientific papers, tease apart theoretical texts, and investigate key essays in order to understand how innovations and advances in the arts and sciences are framed, understood and written about; but we will also make things in this writing course. As a class we will produce an online collection of articles on the emergence of 3D design as a new cultural manifestation, and we will also design 3D objects to print in the Brandeis MakerLab. We will get a taste of the processes involved in creating objects in virtual space, and then construct them in the real (as corn-based, non-toxic, plastic things). We will also scan physical objects in order to represent them in virtual space. As a class, we will develop an interactive timeline, and individuals will craft a video essay and a polished final essay. All of the work from the semester will be represented in an online exhibit we will collectively construct.
**Course Objectives**

Students who complete this class will be able to:

- Refine analytical and expository writing skills.
- Analyze the conventions of making either as a young artist or scientist.
- Unpack some of the societal and legal issues involved in the emergence of new art forms or new technologies.
- Read critically - interpret primary documents and theoretical texts focusing on culture and innovation, art and technology.
- Print a 3D object from a computer file.
- Evaluate different tools and select from a number of options to present work online.
- Collaboratively create an exhibit from analytic writing and other forms of making.
- Create an intellectually rigorous oral presentation as a video essay.

**Required Course Texts**


**Write Now!**

The rest of our class materials will be posted to our private course site in Brandeis’ Learning and Teaching Technology Environment (LATTE)

**Primary Essays**


Lisa Gitelman (2006), New Media Publics, from *Always Already New - Media, History, and the Data of Culture*.

Martin Heidegger (1949-1977), *The Question Concerning Technology*.

Additional audio, essays, links and video are posted at our course site on [LATTE](http://writershelp.bedfordstmartins.com/ebooks/helphandbook.php).

**Course Requirements**

**Essay 1**: The close reading essay - In this assignment you will formulate an argument about Making. In the MakerLab are we learning to construct things or objects? Does that distinction vary depending on use, or its position within the world of art or science? As a class we will generate a full list of cultural, ethical, social and legal topics related to Maker Culture. Consider this range of topics as you examine the act of making and why a distinction (based on reading Bill Brown’s essay Thing Theory) between thing and object might matter.
Video Essay or Essay 2: The Lens - Using Walter Benjamin’s essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, make a claim about how a specific construct in Benjamin’s essay may help focus and frame your understanding of the repositories for 3D models we’ve either reviewed, discussed, or used in class. I’m hoping that you will create a short video essay with the easy to use programs (collaaj and ensemble), but you may instead develop a comic book, or if you prefer, you may also write a more formal essay for this assignment.

Essay 3: The Researched Argument. For this assignment choose a topic from our course exploration - either an artistic or scientific practice. You will unpack that specific process, tool, or technology as grounded in the past, a signature of our current moment in history, and also emblematic of a possible future...guided by your own reading of Lisa Gitelman’s work, *New Media Publics*.

Class Portfolio: Throughout our class, you will select pieces of your work to post to our Scalar site. Scalar is a platform for online publishing built by the Alliance for Networking Visual Culture funded by a Digital Humanities Implementation Grant from the Office of Digital Humanities at the National Endowment for the Humanities. As a group, we will create an interactive timeline; a collection of images capturing our 3D scans and prints; and potentially work on a few data visualizations as well. This work will all be published in a space that we will cooperatively develop and design.

Individual Portfolio: Throughout our class you will collect all of your work (including pre-draft assignments, rough drafts, final drafts, and peer review sheets) in the LATTE ePortfolio site. This means that you will need to maintain all your writing and other materials from the semester securely and safely. When that online collection is complete, in order to alert me that your portfolio is assembled, you will submit a formal letter to me reflecting on your writing, describing if and how your understanding of yourself as a writer (and as an artist or scientist) has changed over the semester.

Drafting: Four steps lead up to the final draft of each essay:

- **Pre-draft assignments.** Each essay will be preceded by two or three pre-draft assignments—short pieces of writing designed to help you develop ideas. These assignments will receive either a check or a check minus and will count as part of your overall grade. You can re-submit any work that receives a check minus.

- **First drafts.** You are required to turn in a first draft of each paper. These drafts are important opportunities for you to receive feedback from me and your classmates in peer review. I do not expect these drafts to be polished, but I do expect them to be *complete*—otherwise we won’t be able to give you useful advice.

- **Peer Review.** After the first draft of each paper is due you will form a group with two of your classmates and read each other’s drafts. In class you will give your partners feedback. I will collect your peer review letters and they will count as part of your grade. These activities increase your sense of audience awareness and give you an opportunity to reflect on the concepts we have discussed in class.
● **Conferences.** Each student will hold three twenty-minute conferences with me over the course of the semester - one session to discuss each first draft. Attendance is required, and missing a conference is the equivalent of missing a class. An electronic schedule & sign-up for each cycle (unimaginatively titled *Conference Sign-up*) will be available in our LATTE course site.

**Class participation:** Your consistent participation in class sessions will constitute a significant portion of your grade. Your participation as an active member of our group is probably the most critical component of a successful course. Class participation includes:
- your prompt, prepared, engaged, consistent attendance,
- your completion of reading assignments by the dates listed in our syllabus,
- your involvement in collaborative course projects,
- your thoughtful contributions to our class conversation.

*Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (reading, exploring, researching, writing and rewriting, contributing to projects, etc.).*

**Writing Center**
The University Writing Center, located on the first floor of Goldfarb Library just around the corner from the computer clusters, provides free one-on-one help with your essays. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this service. Writing Center tutors are well trained and will work with you in 45 minute sessions that you can schedule online: [http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/writing/writingcenter/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/writing/writingcenter/index.html). **Students who take advantage of this service will receive a form during their tutorial that will entitle them to a 24-hour extension on a final draft of that essay.** Essays will be due electronically by 4:00 PM of the following day.

**Grades**
Close reading essay: 20%
Lens video essay: 20%
Researched argument: 20%
Lab projects: (clip, print and scan)10%
Class participation: 10%
Scalar participation: 10%
Timeline participation: 5%
Portfolio (includes pre-drafts, and peer reviews): 5%

**Formatting**
All of your essays drafts will be submitted electronically. Appropriate file naming and consistent use of 1 inch margins and 12 point font for legibility will be appreciated. Thoughtful titles, double-spacing, and page numbers will be expected. Pre-drafts will also be submitted in class as hard copies. Please either staple, or secure pages with a paper clip, a 3D printed frog clip, or a clip of your own design.
Late Work, Extensions and Minimum Page Requirements
Extensions, given legitimate reasons, will of course be granted. If catastrophe occurs and you are afraid your work will not be completed in time, please contact me more than 24 hours before the due date to arrange for an extension. If I do not hear from you, late work, including your first drafts, will be penalized by a third of a grade per day (B+→B→B- and so on). Paper are due electronically at 4:00 PM. If you submit your work at 4:01 PM, the LATTE system will note that your work is late. I strongly prefer to set up the assignments in LATTE so that essays and drafts are accepted beyond that strict 4:00 PM deadline. But if wildly late submissions prove to be an issue, I reserve the right to change those settings.

Attendance
Missing class is very strongly discouraged. Please email or text me if you know you will not be able to attend a class session. In the event of an emergency, please do call, text or email me as soon as you are able. A total of two absences for illness or unforeseen circumstance will be excused. For each additional absence your final grade will be penalized by a third of a grade. Sadly, multiple absences could potentially result in a failing grade.

Academic Honesty
You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. The University policy on academic honesty is distributed annually in section 5 of the Rights and Responsibilities handbook. Instances of alleged dishonesty are forwarded to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judicial System. Potential sanctions can include failure in a course and suspension from the University. If you have any questions about my expectations related to academic honesty, please ask.

Accommodations
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have the accommodation recognized, please let me know.

UWS Outcomes
Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing

- Use writing and discussion to work through and interpret complex ideas from readings and other texts (e.g., visual, musical, verbal)
- Critically analyze your own and others' choices regarding language and form (e.g., in student texts or formally published texts)
- Engage in multiple modes of inquiry using text (e.g., field research, library-based inquiry, web searching)
- Incorporate significant research (as above) into writing that engages a question and/or topic and uses it as a central theme for a substantive, research-based essay
- Use writing to support interpretations of text, and to discover multiple possible interpretations of text
Consider and express the relationship of your own ideas to the ideas of others

Processes

- Use written, visual, and/or experience-based texts as tools to develop ideas for writing
- Understand that writing takes place through recurring processes of invention, revision, and editing
- Develop successful, flexible strategies for your own writing through the processes of invention, revision, and editing
- Experience and understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
- Learn to critique your own and others’ work
- Be reflective about your writing processes

Knowledge of Conventions

- Understand the conventions of particular genres of writing
- Use conventions associated with a range of dialects, particularly standardized written English (but not necessarily limited to it)
- Recognize and address patterns in your writing that unintentionally diverge from patterns expected by their audience/s
- Practice using academic systems for citing (MLA, APA, or Chicago depending on your area of interest and future study) and for documenting work

Assignment Details

CLOSE READING ESSAY

In this first unit, we begin our semester-long exploration of essay structure and “close reading” by locating and contemplating tensions within a text. In this first 5-7 page writing adventure, you will tease through the complex and sometime funny piece by Bill Brown titled Thing Theory. Through your “close reading” you will form an argument supported by details and thought-provoking analysis. As we begin to discuss 3D printing and making, it’s interesting and perhaps fitting to consider the things we make from an analytical perspective. What differentiates a thing from an object - and why does this distinction matter?

Locate something in the text that engages you, perplexes you, makes you think – and from that formulate a thesis that explains how that feature works to shape this particular written piece. Your own engaged tinkering with Brown’s essay will lead you to form something interesting and original in your own essay. Take an arguable stance with real stakes, one that requires taking a position.
Review the notes you take while reading the essay. While your initial reaction to a particular word, line, or paragraph may not be immediately paper-worthy, it may launch you toward an excellent thesis. Structure this first essay guided by your argument -- please, avoid structuring your work by detailing a play-by-play recounting of Brown’s essay…

Whether you are writing about art or scientific developments, an essay in which you are able to interpret and draw together evidence to construct broader conclusions is significant and special. An excellent essay is not just a report in which you dump everything you know or all you have learned about a particular subject. Rather, it’s interesting because it offers up your own focused interpretation and your own voice.

Of course, not everyone will agree with your interpretation. But it is your mission to clearly convince us that your interpretation is stronger than other possible interpretations. Learning how to write a strong essay will not only be essential for success at Brandeis -- in every academic discipline or field you might enter, you will almost certainly be required to gather evidence, analyze those materials, and draw conclusions.

Close Reading Assignment Sequence

**Pre-draft 1.1, mini close-reading**
**Due:** Tuesday, September 8th, 4pm

The first step in developing a close reading is to process the vague impressions of your initial encounters with a text and to turn those into a set of coherent observations and questions. This first assignment is designed to help you articulate the things you found most significant, surprising, and worthy of further discussion. The assignment has three parts:

Step One: consider our list of cultural, ethical, social and legal topics related to Maker Culture. Select one that engages you.

Step Two: choose a section of Brown’s essay and write a paragraph on its importance to the topic you selected.

Step Three: Why does it matter whether we describe stuff as things or objects? Reflect in order to explain why this collision of culture and terminology might matter.

**Pre-draft 1.2, introductory paragraph**
**Due:** Thursday, September 17th, 4pm

Having spent additional time considering the ideas in Brown’s essay and the connections you might make to elements of Maker Culture we’ve been discussing, now work to develop a thesis statement for your full-length essay. Additionally, select the specific
sections of the essay and relevant citations that best reflect the chosen topic you wish to analyze in your paper. Review the criteria for a strong thesis statement, then compose a statement for your essay. Aim for a thesis that is arguable and that gets to the heart of the text, but one that can be reasonably discussed within the scope of the essay (5-7 pages).

Essentially, this exercise asks you to plan your essay without actually writing it - to try out some ideas, to settle on the one you like best, and to start making a list of the evidence that you plan to present in support of your argument. Don’t worry about making your work absolutely perfect: these are works in progress. We are going to workshop these thesis statements in class, and you will also be writing additional drafts of your essay. Thesis statements evolve, develop, and change during the writing process.

**Draft of Essay #1 with Draft Cover Letter**
**Due:** Tuesday, September 22nd, 4pm

Bring three hard copies in class, and post one copy to LATTE. In addition to the rough draft of your essay, you are also required to write and submit a draft cover letter addressed to your readers, in which you answer the following questions and present any other concerns that you have.

- What’s the main point of your essay? If you had to summarize the entire paper in one sentence, what would it be?
- What processes, images, tensions, or ideas about maker culture sparked your ideas for this draft?
- If you could ask any question of your reader, what would it be? Is there a part of your essay on which you would particularly like advice?
- What’s your favorite sentence? Least favorite? Why?

**Draft Response, Peer Review**
**Due:** Thursday, September 24th, 4pm

In the worlds of art and science every notable journal is peer reviewed. Giving thoughtful feedback that can help improve and clarify written work is a wonderful skill to deepen. When writing a review, try to make your comments as concrete and specific as possible. Keep in mind that your peer put hard work and energy into writing her or his essay, so a courteous, respectful, and supportive tone is expected. Try to address the following issues as thoroughly as possible:

- Rewrite the author’s thesis sentence exactly and then paraphrase it in your own words so that the author can compare his or her intentions with what you actually understood. Is the thesis sentence toward the end of the first paragraph where it belongs? If you cannot find the thesis sentence, take your best shot at exposing upon what the author is trying to argue.
- Does the thesis make an argument? Does it go beyond stating the obvious? If not, how and why would you recommend improving it?
● What kind of evidence does the author use to prove his or her argument? Be specific.

● Does the author use quotations? Does he or she use too many or too few quotations? Are the quotations relevant, do they actually help support the author’s argument, or are they just there to fill up space?

● Do the paragraphs flow in a logical fashion? Are they well-ordered? Might there be a better arrangement? If so, how would you recommend restructuring the essay?

● Does the reader use active topic sentences or do the topic sentences merely passive restated facts?

● Was there sufficient analysis and explanation? Did the essay seem to restate and simply paraphrase? If so, how could more analysis be added to make the paper more substantial?

● What do you like about this essay and why? Be specific.

● What aspect of the essay do you feel requires the most revision and why? Try to be specific!

**Revision of Essay #1 with Revision Cover Letter**

**Due:** Thursday, October 1st, 4pm

I am anticipating your 5-7 pages with appropriate formatting. Please upload your assignment to our LATTE site, and make sure you keep a copy for your files.

In your cover letter please address the following:

● Has your thesis changed from draft to revision?
● What you are you most happy about in this version?
● What were the most challenging aspects of the revision process?
● Is there a particular concept (thesis, evidence) or a particular skill (like close reading or structure) that you would like to work on more?
● What would you like to discuss more in class or in conference?

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**TEXT AS A LENS**

In this second assignment, you will analyze the following repositories: [123D catch](https://www.123dcatch.com), [Github](https://github.com), [MMDB](https://www.mmediasolutions.com) (or [mips](https://github.com/mips)), Thigaverse (or yeggi), and Tinkercad, (add another collection of your choosing if you review that choice with me) through the lens of Benjamin’s essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. This assignment is structured so you might engage with the scholarship and theoretical rigor of
Benjamin’s work alongside your growing understanding of the world of 3D design and printing. For this assignment you are tasked to either produce a 4-6 minute video essay (created using Collaaj and Ensemble) or to write a 5-6 page essay.

How would Benjamin analyze these repositories and the current state of 3D printing? What might he say about these current technologies? What can this use of Benjamin’s work as a lens help us learn about these innovations in relation to media that emerged during Benjamin’s moment in history? What might be missing from this analysis, where might it fall short?

Accurately presenting another theorist’s argument is tremendously important. Close reading here is key. Yet the point of this assignment is not to take a single line or passage and focus solely on that, but rather to understand the entirety of Benjamin’s essay and how his ideas can be utilized in your own analysis.

The point of this exercise is to try and not only understand the object of analysis you will focus on through the use of this lens, but also to find the subtleties of both the texts so as to create your own argument. You do not have to simply agree with what Benjamin would have made of these repositories. In fact, if you can find a place where you think Benjamin’s argument is missing something, that space may allow you a place to find your own voice.

Lens Assignment Sequence

**Pre-draft Assignment 2.1: Pre-draft mini-lens**

**Due:** Thursday, October 8th, 4pm

In order to use any theoretical text to analyze any other object, it is important to fully understand the analytical position of the text and the subtleties of the argument. Carefully read Benjamin’s essay and write a 3-page, double-spaced, outline of the main arguments presented in that work. This is your opportunity to not only pull out some interesting quotations from the text but to also think about what the text really means.

Use the following format:

- **General Summary**
  - 3-4 sentences summarizing the main ideas,
  - define any key terms that are presented in the article.

- **Section 1**
  - 3-4 sentences summarizing the main ideas of the passages.
  - Quotations/General thoughts about specific passages with page numbers indicated which you find important.
  - For every quotation please follow up with 1-2 sentences explaining what about the quote is important or what the quote means.

- **Section 2...**
  - 3-4 sentences summarizing the main ideas of the next passages.
  - Follow the same format through the work...
Print out three copies of your outline and bring it to class.
In addition, upload the assignment to Latte and keep an electronic copy secured.

**Pre-draft Assignment 2.2 Script and Storyboard or Draft**

**Due:** Tuesday, October 13th, 4pm

Whether you will be working on a video essay, comic book or formal essay, you will submit a script and storyboard for this exercise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>• Draw, snip, copy, or reproduce your initial scene or the landing page that might work best as the image for your introductory section. What will your text/audio be?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>• Select a set of pages – part or whole - to represent the repositories you have selected and to ‘picture’ your methodology. Indicate which repositories you have chosen, summarize (though image and text) the type of work found there, the range of work, and the objects in those repositories. Your ability to synthesize will show up here…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>• Do you have any results? Use the outline you made detailing Benjamin’s work, try and find the pictures and details that will enable you to connect some of those individual images/webspaces to your re-articulation of Benjamin’s ideas. Analyze those images through the lens of Benjamin’s work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| A  | • Apply the lens and give voice to your own interpretation in the text area of your storyboard. Remember to include citations in your discussion.  
• Wrap it up in your conclusion – consider what images might work well to support your closing scene. |
| D  | Why |
|    | How |
|    | What |
|    | So what |

Print out 3 copies of your storyboard/script to bring to class, upload a copy to Assignment 2.2 in LATTE, and secure a copy for your own records.

**Reader/Viewer Responses, Peer Review**

**Due:** Thursday, October 15th at 4pm on Latte

Structure your short responses to the script/storyboards based on these questions:

- Was there a strong introduction?
- Did you understand the methodology?
- How well did the images support the analysis?
- Was there an adequate conclusion?

**Draft of Video Essay or Essay #2 with Cover Letter**

**Due:** Tuesday October 20th, 4pm

Please submit work that is ready for your peers to review.

**Draft Responses, Peer Review for Essay #2**

**Due:** Thursday. October 22nd at 4pm on Latte
A strong essay begins with a strong thesis statement. The goal of this assignment is to help you work with your peer reviewers to strengthen thesis statements for your lens either as video essay or written essay. Before you begin, review some criteria for a strong thesis statement. Together, motive and thesis should comprise the opening of your script and will be the basis of your introduction.

Work to compose a thoughtful response to each draft you have received. Answer the following questions respectfully, and honestly. Use the same standards of grammar and tone you would use for an academic essay.

While you are reading, take note of each of the following elements.

Coherence: Do you lose the thread of the argument at any point? Is there a section of the essay where you feel lost? If so, note this in the margins and then suggest, in your cover letter, how this material might be tied together.

Motive: What is the essay’s motive? Really spend some time on this - try to describe what you gained from reading this paper. What did this essay teach you? Does the essay respond to a genuine question or problem? What is it?

Research context: First, paraphrase the research context the author has selected. What kinds of secondary sources has the author consulted? Secondly, explain how the author is engaging with his or her sources. Does the author primarily agree or disagree with the secondary sources? Has the author clearly distinguished his or her argument from the arguments made by various critics? Are there any points during which you would like to see more of a dialogue between the author of the essay and the authors quoted within the essay?

The essay’s argument: Please note that the essay’s argument does not always match the ideas outlined in the first paragraph. Do the evidence and analysis in the paper prove the thesis statement offered in the introduction? Note any discrepancies between the essay’s thesis statement and the actual body of the paper. Does the introduction set up certain ideas as central claims of the paper, which are then only discussed briefly, with one or two examples?

Structure: Are there any transitions (usually among different pieces of evidence) that feel startling or abrupt? Be specific: mention paragraphs or pages that seem to shift gears too rapidly. Bear in mind that abrupt transitions usually point to a larger problem with argumentation: the author needs to clarify the relationship between Paragraph X and Paragraph Y, showing how one point relates to the next.

The author has detailed his or her intentions for the use of images or has provided screen shots. What feedback do you have to offer? Be prepared not only to review your comments with the author in class but also to point out specific examples and discuss concrete possibilities.
Please bring a copy of each review letter to class to deliver to the author. We may use the Workshop in LATTE, if not - I will ask you to print a copy for me as well. Also keep a copy safe in your own files!

Revision of Video Essay or Essay #2 with Revision Cover Letter
Due: Tuesday, October 27th, 4pm

THE RESEARCH ESSAY

In *New Media Publics*, Gitelman suggest “any new medium could not but emerge according to the practices of older media.” For this assignment choose a topic from our course exploration - either an artistic or scientific practice related to 3D printing or scanning technologies. In a ten (10) page masterpiece, you will unpack that specific process, tool or technology as grounded in particular past practices; a signature of our current moment in history; and also possibly emblematic of what is to come.

Research Assignment Sequence

Pre-draft 3.1, Research Proposal
Due: Tuesday November 10th, 4pm
Crafting a proposal will help you formulate your topic so that you can begin your research with a definite but still flexible goal in mind. Try to be as specific as possible in thinking through your proposal, and yet as open as possible - for topic revising may be needed as you begin your research. For your proposal you will need two research sources as well as a strong understanding of the theoretical “framing” concepts from Gitelman’s writing. You may also consider the usefulness of other concepts in the texts we have read and discussed in class. Other scholarly sources usually included in a bibliography, citations, and footnotes, are often published by university presses. Work with our Librarians to case the joint! The collection holds wonderful resources, and getting to know the range of our academic holdings early in your career is a really smart move.

Please address the following questions in your proposal in paragraph form.
What is the topic you plan to investigate? Remember that your topic should be suited to a 10-page essay, not a master’s thesis.
What is the research question that you wish to frame?
Which of the texts that we have discussed in class will you use to help build a conceptual frame for discussing your topic, or research material? What theoretical material (i.e. terms and concepts) might be helpful? How could you go about using them?
List the bibliographical information for your new sources. What kind of source is it - scholarly or popular, print or electronic, book or article? Why did you choose it?
How do you think it will help you to limit or direct your topic?
What other kinds of sources will you be looking for?
What related questions do you have that may help to focus your topic?
What is your tentative hypothesis or argument?

No draft of the research paper will be read until the proposal and the bibliography have been received and approved!

**Pre-draft 3.2, Annotated bibliography**

**Due: Tuesday, Nov. 17th, 4pm**

A minimum of six potential sources for your essay, in **MLA format**, will form your Annotated Bibliography. Beneath each citation, summarize the source’s main argument thread (or the portion of the argument most useful to you). Explain how the work connects to your research question. This part of your proposal will look something like an expanded *Works Cited* page. Feel free to include direct quotations in your paragraphs, especially sections that you know you want to use in your essay. Be sure to note your research question at the top of the first page.

**Draft of Essay #3 with Cover letter**

**Due: Thursday, Nov. 19th, 4pm**

In addition to a rough draft of your research essay, please compose a cover letter that addresses the following questions:

- What is your thesis or main idea?
- What is your motive?
- How well do you feel you have used sources in this paper?
- Which sources work best? Which feel like they need more work? Why?
- What’s the primary concern you have about your essay – thesis, structure, use of evidence, persuasiveness, etc. — what would you like your readers to focus on or address?
- When you revise, where do you plan to focus your attention?
- Has writing the research essay felt different from writing the close reading or the lens essays? In what way?

**Draft Response Assignment, Peer Review for Essay #3**

**Due: Tuesday, Nov. 24th, 4pm**

Compose a thoughtful response to each draft you have received. Answer the following questions respectfully and honestly. Use the same standards of grammar and tone you would use for an academic essay.

While you are reading, take note of each of the Following elements.

Coherence: Do you lose the thread of the argument at any point? Is there a section of the essay where you feel lost? If so, note this in the margins and then suggest, in your cover letter, how this material might be tied together.
Motive: What is the essay’s motive? Really spend some time on this - try to describe what you gained from reading this paper. What did this essay teach you? Does the essay respond to a genuine question or problem? What is it?

Research context: First, paraphrase the research context the author has selected. What kinds of secondary sources has the author consulted? Secondly, explain how the author is engaging with his or her sources. Does the author primarily agree or disagree with the secondary sources? Has the author clearly distinguished his or her argument from the arguments made by various critics? Are there any points during which you would like to see more of a dialogue between the author of the essay and the authors quoted within the essay?

The essay’s argument: Please note that the essay’s argument does not always match the ideas outlined in the first paragraph. Do the evidence and analysis in the paper prove the thesis statement offered in the introduction? Note any discrepancies between the essay’s thesis statement and the actual body of the paper. Does the introduction set up certain ideas as central claims of the paper, which are then only discussed briefly, with one or two examples?

Structure: Are there any transitions (usually among different pieces of evidence) that feel startling or abrupt? Be specific: mention paragraphs or pages that seem to shift gears too rapidly. Bear in mind that abrupt transitions usually point to a larger problem with argumentation: the author needs to clarify the relationship between Paragraph X and Paragraph Y, showing how one point relates to the next.

The writer: The author has outlined his or her concerns and goals for the essay in the cover letter. What feedback do you have to offer? Be prepared not only to review your comments with the author in class but also to point out specific examples and discuss concrete revision possibilities.

Please bring a copy of each review letter to class to deliver to the author. We may use the Workshop in LATTE, if not - I will ask you to print a copy for me as well. Also keep a copy for your own files!

Pre-Draft 3.3, Reverse Outline
Due: Tuesday, December 1, 4pm
One of the most difficult tasks you face in writing an argumentative research essay is developing a coherent, convincing, and suspenseful structure. These research projects are, to varying degrees, your own wild creation. Your structure will likely be idiosyncratic as well. For this assignment, you will create an outline of the paper that you’ve already completed. Re-read your essay, writing down the central claim of each paragraph. Place these claims in a formal outline that groups them according to your essay’s larger movements or claims. (You may find it helpful to recall our discussion of thesis statements versus local claims.)
The purpose of this exercise is to help you see where your argument proceeds based on some sort of coherent logic and where there are still gaps, repetitions, digressions, or just general confusion. Once you have written a reverse outline of your essay, scan for the problems: the places where your paper wanders, repeats, or attempts to string together too much information without a clear purpose. Then write a few sentences that identify these problems and consider how the issues you’ve located might be addressed in the final draft.

Revision of Essay #3 with Revision Cover Letter
Writing Portfolio with Portfolio Cover Letter
Due: Tuesday, December 8th, 4pm
I am anticipating your 10 pages with appropriate formatting. Please upload your assignment to our LATTE site, and make sure you keep a copy for your files.
In your cover letter please address the following:

- Has your work changed from draft to revision?
- What you are you most happy about having accomplished?
- What were the most challenging aspects of our process?
- Is there a particular concept or a particular skill that you would like to continue to work on or to strengthen?
- What would you like me to know that we were not able to discuss or address in class or in conference?