

## **Bodies in Place     Final Project Assignment**

**Final Product Due: Monday, December 8, 3:30-6:30. Please note that this is the time normally scheduled for our final exam. You will present or hand in your project at a multi-media course-wide event. Attendance is mandatory for all students whether you write a paper or not with no exceptions. Please make your travel plans accordingly.**

**Please note the following additional due dates:**

**Important due dates:**

**Proposal**, including a description of the form and topic of your presentation and a detailed description of the content each student involved in group presentations will develop. *Every student must contribute to both the content and form.* **Due: November 8 via email**

**Revised Proposal**, revisions based on instructor response and your group's continued work, including a refined analytical thesis or a sophisticated, subtle idea that you will explore in your presentation. *Be sure to include a list of all technical requirements and whether or not you will bring the necessary equipment with you.* For example, will you bring a laptop or do we need to provide you with one? **Due: November 25 via email**

**Final Product**, a performative artifact plus a three-page paper that you will present to your classmates and other guests at a course-wide event on **December 8<sup>th</sup>**. Again, attendance for all students is mandatory with no exceptions.

**Requirements:**

This final project is intended to provide an opportunity for you to respond to your work in Bodies in Place in a way that differs from earlier writing assignments. You may wish to engage in some creative writing or produce a performance, artifact, or different kind of analysis. By doing so you will not only develop an interesting alternative but consider your project as a way of transcending the influence of traditional analysis and analytical writing. What can your medium convey that cannot be conveyed by traditional written means? You may work singly or in a small group. Whatever form you choose, your grade will depend on the level of engagement with the texts, subtlety and creativity of their use, and excellence of your analysis. Please consider carefully the decision to undertake a creative project since they are more difficult to make or perform with the necessary degree of sophistication.

Art elicits *complex* questions and responses. As in your papers, projects should convey analytical insights which should be presented in an argumentative product focused on a specific, subtle thesis, although it may not be expressed in an argumentative essay. You will have to decide how to express this thesis in the medium you choose. It should raise implicit questions that are not obvious, bringing your audience to think about the assumptions of the course.

**Produce some artifact or performance to be presented to your classmates or displayed. Be sure you include the following elements in your project:**

1. Each student must produce a short, 3-page analysis that follows the usual rules of analytic essays in which you either analyze the engagement of your artifact with the three chosen texts or compare it with three chosen texts. Please include a 1-2 paragraph-long epilogue or a copy of a weblog that discusses the evolution of your specific contribution to both the form and context of your project.
2. If the project is a group project, determine concrete content areas for each student to develop early on. This prevents the artist-technologist-writer split often seen in this sort of project. *Each student must contribute to both form and content and each student will receive an individual grade.*
3. Think about form as well as content. The heart of the multimedia project is the relationship of formal choices to the content represented. Ask "How does the media choice enhance the understanding of a concept, idea or argument about the subject matter?" Please see attached rubric for more details.

### **Creative Project Forms:**

**Try to select a form that is truly appropriate to the topic you address and your particular strengths.**

**1) Literary.** Produce a literary work that engages or displays the themes of the course and engages with three texts, including *Sims*. Here are some **examples** of how the requirements of this option might be satisfied:

a) Write the Pillow Book of an imaginary "Bodies in Place" professor. You must create a professor who would develop concerns differently from our own professors. How might this third professor take notes while listening and responding intellectually to Lenoir's, Saussy's and Shank's lectures on *Sims* and one other text? How would these notes lead to ideas that would frame out his/her own lectures? (All written or audio transcript of this professor's lectures have been lost, but if you are really adventurous you might have found the powerpoint presentations that somehow got saved through digital archiving.) Additionally, how would this professor write up miniature descriptions of faculty meetings, visits, etc? Include a 3-4 page analytical essay as introduction in which you explain the disciplinary bias of the professor and argue for his/her specific contribution to enriching the intellectual discussion of "Bodies in Place." Support your arguments with evidence from the text (that is, from the Pillow Book you have written!)

b) Write a pastiche. A **pastiche** mimics the ideas and style of an author. Produce an analysis of some pre-approved aspect of contemporary life in imitation of Levi-Strauss in *Tristes Tropiques*. Your pastiche must include discussion of two other class texts. Your success will depend on the accuracy and subtlety of your analysis and the mimicry of his style and worldview. Include a 2-3 page discussion of your topic, its relationship to the course, and a list of all the stylistic and thematic characteristics of *Tristes Tropiques* that you seek to imitate.

## 2) Plastic Arts.

**2a)** Create and present a plastic artifact (painting, sculpture, photograph, etc.) that engages or displays the themes of the course and engages with three texts, including *Sims*. on December 8 during our scheduled exam period (3:30-6:30). Here is an **example** of how the requirements of this option might be satisfied:

a) *BMOC: Bodies Manufactured on Campus* A series of five photographic prints of people on Stanford grounds on which the artist has colored meaningful graffiti (images and words) and/or glued very small images from the latest *Victoria's Secret* catalogue. One photograph is really a color print of a *Sims* "photograph." Each photo is accompanied by a quote from *Richard II*. The analytic essay ties the collection together with an argument about the relationship between the contemporary body the photos express those expressed by *Richard II*, *The Pillow Book*, and *The Sims*.

**2b)** The storyboard is a way of engaging with the text and presenting ideas without the traditional constraints of a narrative. Create and present a storyboard that addresses or displays the themes of the course and engages with three texts, including *Sims*, on December 8 during our scheduled exam period (3:30-6:30). Please see the following storyboards for examples:

a) The storyboard for the documentary film *The Thin Blue Line* directed by Errol Morris:

[http://www.errolmorris.com/films.php?film\\_id=4&info\\_id=22](http://www.errolmorris.com/films.php?film_id=4&info_id=22)

b) A sampling of different genre:

<http://www.storyboards-east.com/storybrd.htm>

**2c)** Produce the objects or artifacts of an imaginary culture. Your artifacts must engage or display the themes of the course and engage with three texts, including *Sims*. on December 8 during our scheduled exam period (3:30-6:30). Your artifacts should reflect your analysis of the relationship between artifacts and the culture that produced them.

a) *Lost Worlds of An Alternating Reality*. A weblog that represents the simultaneous presence and absence of respect for material reality, including different entries focuses on time, haptics, references to objects, etc. *Sei Shonagon* and *Richard II* offer different poles of experience concerning the haptics of court life. A slideshow of images stands in place of a picture of the editor so that it is impossible to know which represents the editor. The simultaneous striving to represent but to do so in this form suggests irresolvable tensions in the culture, as in *Tristes Tropiques*.

**3) Performance.** Create and present a performative artifact that engages or displays the themes of the course and engages with three texts, including *Sims*, on December 8 during our scheduled exam period (3:30-6:30). If you need to consider the experience of the live performance in your analysis you may turn in your analysis into your fellow's box by 3:30 December 9. Here are some **examples** of how the requirements of this option might be satisfied:

a) A guitar recital of an original composition that lyrically represents Crito's lament or threnody for Socrates using one of the poetic forms used in the *Pillow Book*. The analysis compares this performative act with the texts from which it drew and with an attempted simulation of that wait in the *Sims* in order to articulate the artist/author's theory of simulation and the body.

b) A performance of the marginalized body through an original spoken word and dance piece incorporating clips from *Madness* (likely a repeating loop of George defecating in exile), a slide show of "photographs" of *Sims* of various body types (perhaps all asleep on the lawn of their homeless lot?), and passages from *Tristes Tropiques*. The analysis develops the definition of the marginalized body as it expressed itself in the three texts used in the performance and in one more text. The essay also distinguishes the marginalized body from and relates it to neighboring bodies like the disciplined and primitive bodies.

**4) Electronic Arts.** Create and present an electronic artifact that engages or displays the themes of the course and engages with three texts, including *Sims*, on December 8th during our scheduled exam period (3:30-6:30). Here is an **example** of a project that would meet the requirements of this option:

In class we have talked about the ways in which the *Sims* presume a social order based on bourgeois domesticity and the quotidian aspects of life. In our Panfora assignment asking you to recreate courtly life in the manner of *The Pillow Book* in *Sims* terms, we asked you to try to fit a very different kind of social order into the pre-existing *Sims* mold. Now we'd like you to take several steps further and imagine that you are a programmer trying to redo the *Sims* (or put in an "Expansion Pack") so that it fit with the values and perspectives of each of the works we have read. How might you re-structure the elements of the game to fit with each of these "temporal topographies"? How might character traits be defined? How might the motive bars be edited and managed differently? What kinds of "bodies" do the characters you manage inhabit? Feel free to illustrate your vision with diagrams, images, edited sim-scenarios, web pages, etc. In order to do this assignment well, note that you will need to begin with a structural analysis of the game as it exists now, perhaps drawing some critical tools from Levi-Strauss to aid in your discussion. Focus on at least 3 texts (2 can be *Sims* and Levi-Strauss) in order to do your analysis.