

The Importance of Undergraduate Multimedia Transcriptions

Title: *The Importance of Undergraduate Multimedia: An Argument in Seven Acts*

Introduction

Using the Photoshop interface as a design metaphor, and by having multiple actors appear on the "canvas space" of the screen, this introduction proposes two questions that set-up the remaining seven acts. The first question is "What is multimedia?" The second, "What is its value for Undergraduates today?" The juxtaposition of narrative fragments issuing from each actor is intended to mimic the "layered, multiplistic, discontinuous, and even contradictory" responses that both questions are bound to provoke. Its performance is as much of the set-up as the discourse itself.

(Multi-voiced | Actors: Male 1, Male 2, Male 3, Female 1, Female 2)

[No background audio to this clip.]

[0:00] [*Visual Cue: Photoshop interface appears on screen. There is a slight dark-gray to white gradient on the canvas (from top-left to bottom-right). As video plays, actors appear on screen. Additionally, there are named layers to the right of the canvas, which are highlighted by a mouse-arrow indicator as each actor appears on the canvas. NOTE: Multiple actors appear on the screen at various times, indicated below by the multiple actors being listed before the spoken elements*]

[0:02] *Male 1 (AR):* What is multimedia?

[0:03] *Female 1 (MF):* What is multimedia?

[0:04] *Female 2 (TS):* What is its value for our undergraduates today?

[0:07] *Female 2:* These are important questions for a higher-education landscape

[0:09] *Male 1:* immersed in emerging media cultures.

[0:11] *Male 2 (CW):* And how we address these questions,

[0:13] *Male 3 (SN):* which inevitably mirror the tenets of multimedia itself, will be

[0:16] *Male 1 & Female 1:* layered

[0:17] *Female 1:* multiplistic, discontinuous

[0:18] *Female 2:* and even contradictory.

[0:19] *Female 1:* contradictory

[0:19] *Male 3*: contradictory. What follows then are fragments

[0:22] *Female 1*: fragments

[0:23] *Male 1*: fragments in response to this thing we call

[0:25] *Male 1, 2, & Female 2*: multimedia.

[0:26] *Male 2*: to what it does

[0:27] *Female 1*: how it behaves

[0:28] *Male 3*: and even how it

[0:29] *Male 1, 2, 3 & Female 1*: approaches us.

[0:30] *Male 1*: What hopefully emerges from these fragments is an impression or felt sense

[0:34] *Female 2*: as to "The Importance of Undergraduate Multimedia Scholarship"

[0:36] *Female 1*: Multimedia Scholarship

[0:37] *Male 2 (Male 1)*: Multimedia (Multimedia) Scholarship (Scholarship)

[0:39] *Male 3*: Multimedia Scholarship

Complete text:

What is multimedia? What is its value for our undergraduates today? These are important questions for a higher-education landscape immersed in emerging media cultures. And how we address these questions, which will inevitably mirror the tenets of multimedia itself, will be layered, multiplicitic, discontinuous, and even contradictory. What follows, then, are fragments ... fragments in response to this thing we call multimedia, to what it does, how it behaves, and even how it approaches us. What hopefully emerges from these fragments is an impression or felt sense as to The Importance of Undergraduate Multimedia Scholarship.

Act I

Act I argues that although many people today associate multimedia exclusively with the computer, the museum was actually a popular platform for multimedia prior to digitization. The scene first takes the viewer through a virtual museum composed in Google SketchUp, and it concludes by distilling art-objects and sense organs into a three dimensional image of the brain for the purpose of articulating multimedia as a multimodal sensual-to-mental processing.

[0:00] [*Visual Cue: Viewing begins outside of a computer tower and slowly pans around the tower-box while simultaneously moving into the machine. Inside the machine, located on top of the video card or other computer hardware, sits an open-roofed museum. The camera then pans over the space and zooms into and through the museum as the narration continues—showing us well-known paintings and sculptures as well as different types of instruments and technologies (i.e., writing desk, piano, movie camera, and so on)*]

[0:00] [*Aural Cue: Music is fairly up tempo. It is a light, driven sound with solid piano notes. But as the volume increases, there is a digitized interruption into the flow that changes the pacing and the tonality, creating a tension in the piece that is in keeping with the somewhat disjunctive visual flow through the museum.*]

[0:04] *Female Narrator (DDD):* Today I think we automatically associate multimedia with the computer, but the museum was actually a popular multimedia platform prior to digitization.

[0:16] *Female Narrator:* The Biennale, the MoMA, and other major and minor museums consigned art installations that integrated various media content—painting, writing, music, even film—that aimed to address all the senses.

[0:28] *Female Narrator:* Wagner's operas were attempting the same thing in the mid-1800s, and his inspiration was ancient Greek theater. The key in each case was to create performances that provoked complex multi-sensory engagement through the convergence of various media content. And the arrival of digitization took it to a whole new level. There's some evidence that the mix of text, images, interaction, audio and video increases a user's ability to integrate large amounts of information, maybe because it requires multi-modal sensual to mental processing—*that's* multimedia.

Complete Text:

Today I think we automatically associate multimedia with the computer, but the museum was actually a popular multimedia platform prior to digitization. The Biennale, the MoMA, and other major and minor museums consigned art installations that integrated various media content—painting, writing, music, even film—that aimed to address all the senses. Wagner's operas were attempting the same thing in the mid-1800s, and his inspiration was ancient Greek theater. The key in each case was to create performances that provoked complex multi-sensory engagement through the convergence of various media content. And the arrival of digitization took it to a whole new level. There's some evidence that the mix of text, images, interaction, audio and video increases a user's ability to integrate large amounts of information, maybe because it requires multi-modal sensual to mental processing—*that's* multimedia.

Act II

Act II argues that undergraduate submissions to *TheJUMP* demonstrate an engaged discourse with an issue or argument. The actors describe the ways in which students use multiple forms of media to express this engagement, and the music, video, and text that appear in scene are gathered entirely from student projects that have been published in the journal.

[0:00] [*Visual Cue: Male (screen left) and Female (screen right) appear in front of a series of screen captures of The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects (TheJUMP). The images behind them switch with frequency. Throughout this video, the actors appear and disappear on screen at corresponding times.*]

[0:00] [*Aural Cue: A catchy, electric organ beat begins. Lingering in the background, clearly at odds with that electric beat, is a deep, synthesized piano sound—not really music as much as a sound that creates an atmosphere. This back sound increases in volume and then fades out. The organ beat continues. The atmospheric sound returns as the organ beat fades out. The atmospheric sound turns into a fairly somber tune, with a female French vocalist (harmonized by other female singers). This plays through one chorus, then fades out as the electric beat returns. (note: these music samples are taken from projects featured in TheJUMP)].*

[0:01] *Male (JH):* As the editors for The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects, [Male fades out]

[0:03] *Female (AKB):* [Overlapping Male] As the editors for The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects, we receive a wide range of multimedia work on a regular basis. [Female fades out]

[0:09] *Male:* [Fades in] The projects that the students submit vary extensively in platform, in media, and in rhetorical and technical levels of sophistication.

[0:13] *Female:* [Fades in quickly] [Overlapping Male] in media and in rhetorical and technical levels of sophistication. But what is consistent and perhaps is most impressive [Fades out]

[0:16] [*Visual Cue: Male fades out. Last screen capture of TheJUMP dissolves, all but the project itself, which is a video that begins playing (without audio). The video floats up to the top right of the screen behind the female speaker as a second video appears in the middle and moves the top left. This pattern repeats with five videos, one in each corner and one in the center. All the videos are time-lapsed (to speed them up a bit) and they continue throughout the rest of this Act—ending in a fade out with the actors and the music.*]

[0:20] *Male:* [Voice over] is that they demonstrate an engaged discourse.

[0:23] *Female*: [Voice over] Whether we publish a project exploring copyright issues, or an oral history narrative,

[0:28] *Male*: [Voice over] or an audio remix drawing attention to a particular pop-culture moment,

[0:32] *Female*: [Voice over] all these creations show students engaging an issue on multiple layers

[0:36] *Male & Female*: [Voice over] within a medium or technology and across media and technologies.

[0:40-0:57] *Male*: [Fades in] This is what multimedia allow, students engage an idea, argument, or issue at varying levels, on varying layers; students work with all those layers rhetorically and aesthetically; students create or compose a multi-sensory and multi - mediated experience.

[0:41-0:43] *Female*: [Fades in] [Overlapping Male] This is what multimedia allow.

[0:51-0:56] *Female*: [Fades in] [Overlapping Male] Rhetorically and aesthetically, students create or compose a multi-sensory and multi-mediated experience.

Complete text:

As the editors for The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects, we receive a wide range of multimedia work on a regular basis. The projects that the students submit vary extensively in platform, in media, and in rhetorical and technical levels of sophistication. But what is consistent and perhaps is most impressive is that they demonstrate an engaged discourse. Whether we publish a project exploring copyright issues, or an oral history narrative, or an audio remix drawing attention to a particular pop-culture moment, all these creations do is allow students to engage an issue on multiple layers within a medium or technology and across media and technologies. This is what multimedia allow: students engage an idea, argument, or issue at varying levels, on varying layers; students work with all those layers rhetorically and aesthetically; students create or compose a multi-sensory and multi-mediated experience.

Act III

Act III questions the value of the term “digital media” in relation to composing practices, suggesting that it is a hangover from print culture which speciously separates out the mode of production. Using a combination of video, animation, and kinetic typography, the scene transitions from a whiteboard transcribing the narration, to a waveform illustrating the narration, to a photograph of a billboard displaying the narration, to a live text message summarizing the narration; it finishes by collapsing these media into neon text, which is different from the words being spoken.

[0:00] *[Visual Cue: A man wearing jeans and a gray, long-sleeved pullover stands in the center of the screen. Only his torso and hips are visible. As the music begins, he gestures with his fingers as if drawing a rectangle. As his fingers move, a small whiteboard unfolds with his gestures. Once the whiteboard is formed, he moves his right hand to center of screen and whiteboard stays. Then, with a gesture downward with his right finger, a red line appears on the whiteboard. As the narration unfolds, images appear to the left and words appear to the right of the line. The words are written representations of the narrated discourse. The images to the left include an ink pen, a lap top, a record player, headphones, and a keyboard. At the 0:17 mark, the red line moves across the words and off the whiteboard. The red line continues along onto a light-blue wave file of the audio being spoken, with the red line indicating the place in the audio file that matches the place in the narration.]*

[0:00] *[Aural Cue: A thick drum beat, paced by two quick, light bass drum taps, drives this piece. The emotive connection of the piece comes from the synthesized piano, which has an airy feeling to it, but which builds in intensity as the piece unfolds.]*

[0:06] *Male Narrator (SM): As we become increasingly comfortable with composing in multiple spaces, be they digital or analog or elsewhere, we'll no longer need to have terms like "digital media" or "analog media" or "print media" because, um,*

[0:23] *[Visual Cue: As wave file continues, the red line stops to the right. With the line staying place, a copy unfolds clockwise. As that unfolds, a copy of the copy unfolds clockwise as well. And a copy of the copy as well, until the now four red lines form a grid. When the last red line is in place and grid is complete, there is a flash of white. As the white fades out, the red grid has now become a white grid that is part of the shot alignment of a viewfinder of a digital camera. The image the "camera" is shooting is a theater billboard and it reads: "(Un)Composing the Constraints of Digital & All Other Media -- Live, Tonight, 7pm". Then, at 0:32, there is another flash, and the image is of a different billboard, this one reading: "Questioning the term 'Digital Media' & TheJUMP Quartet March 3-13".]*

[0:23] *Male Narrator: we'll hopefully just be focusing on what we want to say or what we want to compose rather than the parameters or constraints of the media within which we're telling that story.*

[0:32] *Male Narrator: I would actually question the term "digital media" because it seems to imply a separation between digital media and all other forms of media like print, and seems to me to be a kind of a hangover from print culture. Um, media is media,*

[0:37] *[Visual Cue: A quick zoom out reveal the digital camera viewfinder with the billboard to be an image on an iPhone. As the image fades away, the iPhone turns into place. Once vertical, a text message from Clarenummer appears on screen: "Separating digital media from other media seems like a print-culture hangover."]*

Text message goes away. Another text message appears from Clarenummer: "Media is Media."

[0:50] [*Visual Cue: Man from our opening image appears behind iPhone. Camera pans out as actor opens his hands. While this is happening, we have kept zooming out to reveal the whiteboard, sound wave, digital camera, and iPhone all in a line on the screen, and all situated neatly between actor's open hands. At 0:52, actor brings palms together and smushes all the media between his hands.*]

[0:51] *Male Narrator: and the importance of claiming that for composing*

[0:53] [*Visual Cue: Actor opens hand and neon text fills the space in between his hands where the whiteboard, wave, camera, and iPhone were. Neon text reads: "Because we increasingly compose in multiple spaces, we need to question the separation of digital and print media, and rather become comfortable with composing **within** media culture."*]

[0:53] *Male Narrator: practices today is that we should never separate out the mode of production.*

[1:01] [*Visual Cue: Man swipes left hand across the screen, pushing the neon text off the screen as he does so. This is followed by a slow fade out.*]

Complete Text:

As we become increasingly comfortable with composing in multiple spaces, be they digital or analog or elsewhere, we'll no longer need to have terms like "digital media" or "analog media" or "print media" because, um, we'll hopefully just be focusing on what we want to say or what we want to compose rather than the parameters or constraints of the media within which we're telling that story. I would actually question the term "digital media" because it seems to imply a separation between digital media and all other forms of media like print, and seems to me to be a kind of a hangover from print culture. Um, media is media, and the importance of claiming that for composing practices today is that we should never separate out the mode of production.

Act IV

Act IV defines multimedia as a kind of "footage" that allows the user to gain traction in a text. The scene begins with a filmstrip running through an old projector, and while static images appear on the filmstrip, associative video segments are being projected onto the video screen. When the music transitions, the viewer is taken inside of the video projections, and on the other side of the screen, Bob Dylan begins to shuffle through large videos-cards of projects taken from undergraduate submissions to The Journal for Undergraduate Multimedia Projects.

[0:00] *[Visual Cue: On screen animation of a filmstrip running through an old projector projecting onto a screen. As each filmstrip slide passes through the projector lens, static images appear on the filmstrip while associative images and/or video segments are projected onto the projector screen.]*

[0:00] *[Aural Cue: Heavy moderate beat begins, over-layed by synthesized notes. Moderately deep male voice, with slow pacing, narrates overtop the music.]*

[0:01] *Male Narrator (JT):* As someone who's interested in text, uh, I might think about multimedia in terms of footage, not just in terms of the artifact, but as kind of a way to find my footing, to get traction into a text. And, the reason multimedia is so cool is because it brings textuality alive.

[0:22] *Male Narrator:* Um, I think of like, Howlin' Wolf recording, and to suddenly see him there, um, you know, uh, dancing around and you get a different sense than listening to the recording. Likewise, when you can see all of the facial tics, and really hear the voice of the author come alive.

[0:32] *[Visual Cue: Pan in on projector screen showing a video of Howlin' Wolf playing harmonica on stage. Zoom closer to Howlin' Wolff video until it gives way to a video of Bob Dylan, holding a stack of large placards. One by one he slowly discards the placards. On each placard is a video of a student project from TheJUMP.]*

[0:39] *Male Narrator:* That's where multimedia is important. So, you take a text, and you breathe new life into it when it becomes multimedia. You have not just the words printed on the page, but also the context of sight and sound, and the rich combination of that matrix.

Complete Text:

As someone who's interested in text, uh, I might think about multimedia in terms of footage, not just in terms of the artifact, but as kind of a way to find my footing, to get traction into a text. And, the reason multimedia is so cool is because it brings textuality alive. Um, I think of like, Howlin' Wolf recording, and to suddenly see him there, um, you know, uh, dancing around and you get a different sense than listening to the recording. Likewise, when you can see all of the facial tics, and really hear the voice of the author come alive. That's where multimedia is important. So, you take a text, and you breathe new life into it when it becomes multimedia. You have not just the words printed on the page, but also the context of sight and sound, and the rich combination of that matrix.

Act V

Act V positions multimedia as rhizomatic, arguing that it is a remix of ideas articulated in different media and that its composition involves a trial-and-error process. Kinetic typography transcribes the narration on a spinning record, and

when the music breaks, the record spins its way onto a set of turntables where the silhouette of DJ begins mixing with it.

[0:00] *[Visual Cue: three-fourths of the screen is a gray-green half circle, with flat part of half-circle at top of screen. Outside the gray-green, the screen is black. As the speaker narrators, words, ranging in size, dull yellow-gray in color, fly onto the screen, filling up different segments of the gray-green area.]*

[0:00] *[Aural Cue: Music has a heavy bass drumline, with high hats and snares accompanying to create a generative, near-dance-like pulse. A synthesized piano drives the main aural movement in the sounds.]*

[0:01] *Male Narrator: In terms of the theory that underlies multimedia,*

[0:06] *[Visual Cue: Pan up revealing a light-green half-circle on top of the gray-green one, completing the circle. Outside light-green, screen is still black. As spoken, chocolate-colored words, ranging in size and design, continue to fill the light-green space.]*

[0:06] *Male Narrator: um, I think its kind of rhizomatic.*

[0:08] *[Visual Cue: Pans up while zooming out, so that light-green half-circle is small at bottom and majority of screen is black. As narration continues, words, yellow in color, begin to fill the black area in an arcing pattern. As one segment fills, the screen images rotate and words begin to fill a another section in same arcing pattern, ultimately completing a circle around the smaller light-green/green-gray circle in the center]*

[0:09] *Male Narrator: I mean, I think it's a bunch of different ideas developing in different media, and I think, uh, you take one media as far as you can go with it and maybe you switch to another media, and then you take that medium as far as you can go with it and you switch to another medium.*

[0:25] *[Visual Cue: Word image created begins to lay over to reveal that it has formed a music record. At the same time, a DJ booth with a DJ spinning records appears on the right side of the screen. The word-record created floats down onto the DJ's table and he "spins" the record. Meanwhile, in a very artistic font, the remaining spoken words appear as text on the top-left to bottom-left of the screen, flying onto the screen or appearing to be written on the screen as they are spoken.]*

[0:25] *Male Narrator: And then maybe you mix together two or three media, um, and I think there's a sort of trial and error, um, process inherent to working in multimedia.*

Complete text:

In terms of the theory that underlies multimedia, um, I think its kind of rhizomatic. I mean, I think it's a bunch of different ideas developing in different media, and I

think, uh, you take one media as far as you can go with it and maybe you switch to another media, and then you take that medium as far as you can go with it and you switch to another medium. And then maybe you mix together two or three media, um, and I think there's a sort of trial and error, um, process inherent to working in multimedia.

Act VI

Act VI theorizes multimedia as a vehicle that has the potential to open students to different ways of thinking about, experiencing, and ordering the world, and it suggests that the “multi” in multimedia perhaps signifies the composer’s ability to invent multiple, contradictory solutions to any given set of problems. The argument demonstrates this suggestion by opening on a black and white image divided into frames reminiscent of a comic strip. The static, opening shot of the comic itself is part of the conveyance. The video then zooms in on individual frames, and each frame is filled with a video clip relevant to/extending of the narration. At the conclusion of the argument, the argument zooms back out, and the contradictory frames become reconciled in a new image.

[0:00] *[Visual Cue: Image fades up to reveal a hyper-saturated black and white comic book page on a blue, circular-gradient background. The comic consist of four rows. The top row left features a camera LCD viewfinder screen, capturing some printed textual words. The top row right image is of set of patio doors with a figure standing in one of the door ways. The second row is divided into three panels. Second left is white text on black background, reading: Camera. Second middle features a circle with two human figures sitting down inside (reminiscent of the image/view from an 1950s TV production camera. Second right is blank. The third row features two panels, unevenly divided. Third left, the larger panel, features a young girl working at a computer in a computer classroom. Third right is a black panel with white words at the bottom; words read: Archontic Synthome. Fourth row is divide into two uneven panels. Fourth left is blank. Fourth right, the larger of the two, features someone's hand writing on paper.]*

[0:00] *[Aural Cue: Synthesized organ-like music slowly increased in volume. Then as the music gets more intense, a moderate baseline and some upbeat notes join the mix. A male voice narrates over the audio.]*

[0:02] *Male Narrator (JH): Pedagogically speaking, I consider composing multimedia a vehicle by which we might open up different ways of thinking for our students.*

[0:08] *[Visual Cue: Zoom in on top left panel. Inside camera viewfinder, video plays about digital technologies and its relationship to us. As that video plays, a computer appears to form around that video, so that viewers now see, through the viewfinder,*

the video playing on a computer. Then, viewfinder fades out altogether and we are left with just the computer and the video on its screen.]

[0:09] *Male Narrator:* Whether exploring the transformations of text and textuality in a digital world or looking at, say, the shifts in cognitive practices in the age of electracy, producing and consuming multimedia require, if not desire, that we think in different ways.

[0:23] [*Visual Cue: Pan across to top right. Man in patio door starts to move around. At same time, the following words appear on screen left: c'est la vérité négocié. As narration continues, man grabs his keys and comes into view. The man is Jacques Derrida. He heads out his front door (which is accompanied by the captions of "Okay, I've got my keys. Are you going to follow me?"). Then we see Derrida strolling down city street on the side walk, smoking a pipe. As he walks, the following words appear on screen right: Ceci n'est pas une pipe.]*

[0:23] *Male Narrator:* Derrida has talked about this in relation to technology and the archive, Walter Ong in terms of the orality to literacy shift, and Marshall McLuhan in terms of media's extending one's senses, and a slew of others in relation to knowing, to being, to teaching, and to culture, but what remains consistent across theorists and theories is that shifts in mediating technologies do more than simply change the potentialities for expression: they possess the ability to change, often dramatically so, the very ways in which we live, the very ways in which we experience and order our worlds, and thus the very ways in which we think.

[0:47] [*Visual Cue: Pan down to second row middle, with second row left and right viewable as well. In middle, people inside circle begin to move. This is followed by a series of images depicting the broadcast process of analogy TV. At the 0:50 mark, the words "image as light" appear on bottom of second left, and "transmissio" at bottom of second right. Then, in middle, man appears in 1950s home to turn on his old TV set. He sits on couch and we get to see what he is watching. On his TV screen, the video displayed so far in second middle repeats, starting with circle image with two human figures sitting down. At 0:55 mark, text in second left and second right fade out as "camera lucida?" appears in text at top of second left.]*

[0:57] [*Visual Cue: Pan down to third row. Girl at computer begins talking and working with classmates. Then viewers are presented with some video of computer classroom in action. At 1:05 mark, two young girls can be seen setting up a production-level video camera. At the same time, the "Archontic Synthome" words fade out, while the words "Archival Light" fade in at top of third row right.]*

[0:57] *Male narrator:* As such, by working in multimedia, we better prepare students not only for a future ensconced in multimedia discourse, but one in which it will be exceedingly beneficial to know multiple ways to approach and/or think about a set of problems or tensions.

[1:10] *[Visual Cue: Pan down to fourth row. Handwriting begins in fourth right, while the word "Casuistically Stretch" appear at top of fourth left. At 1:15 mark, handwriting footage fades out while footage of someone writing/working on a laptop fades in. At the same time, "Casuistically Stretch" fades out while "Writer & Designers of Multimedia Discourse" appear in middle of fourth left.]*

[1:10] *Male narrator:* Or, to casuistically stretch one of Stuart Selber's ideas, we are entering into a space/time in which students, as writers and designers of multimedia discourse, will be developing multiple contradictory solutions to any given set of problems. This is perhaps the actual meaning behind the "multi" half of the term as multimedia offer us multiple methods of engagement.

[1:24] *[Visual Cue: Zoom out to reveal full comic again. This time, images are different, as they froze on the last frame of each panel as we made our way through them individually. Thus, top left now features a computers with the words "rethink rhetorics" on the computer screen. Top right features profile shot of Derrida smoking a pipe, with the Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe along side the image. Second row left has the words "camera lucida?" Second middle features an image of a man on a couch watching old TV; tv screen itself features a broadcast company's building broadcasting a TV signal. Second right is blank. Third left is an image of two girls setting up a video camera for recording. Third right has the words "Archival Light." Fourth left features the words "Writers and Designers of Multimedia Discourse." While Fourth right features an image of a person working on his laptop, which is sitting on a coffee table. As the music concludes, the entire image fades out.]*

[1:24] *Male narrator:* This is perhaps the actual meaning behind the "multi" half of the term as multimedia offer us multiple methods of engagement.

Complete Text:

Pedagogically speaking, I consider composing multimedia a vehicle by which we might open up different ways of thinking for our students. Whether exploring the transformations of text and textuality in a digital world or looking at, say, the shifts in cognitive practices in the age of electracy, producing and consuming multimedia require, if not desire, that we think in different ways. Derrida has talked about this in relation to technology and the archive, Walter Ong in terms of the orality to literacy shift, and Marshall McLuhan in terms of media's extending one's senses, and a slew of others in relation to knowing, to being, to teaching, and to culture, but what remains consistent across theorists and theories is that shifts in mediating technologies do more than simply change the potentialities for expression: they possess the ability to change, often dramatically so, the very ways in which we live, the very ways in which we experience and order our worlds, and thus the very ways in which we think. As such, by working in multimedia, we better prepare students not only for a future ensconced in multimedia discourse, but one in which it will be exceedingly beneficial to know multiple ways to approach and/or think about a set of problems or tensions. Or, to casuistically stretch one of Stuart Selber's ideas, we are entering into a space/time in which students, as writers and designers of

multimedia discourse, will be developing multiple contradictory solutions to any given set of problems. This is perhaps the actual meaning behind the "multi" half of the term as multimedia offer us multiple methods of engagement.

Act VII

Act VII cedes control of the ontological question to multimedia themselves, and it does so by asking what it is they might want for themselves. The argument takes issue with the notion that human beings are somehow authorized to define multimedia given that we seem to have little control over what they actually do. The hands playing piano at the top of the scene appear to be those of the puppet-master controlling the actors who are performing on the stage below, but chiasmatic shifts in sound and light throughout the argument suggest uncontrollable inversions of the assumed subject and its ostensible predicates.

[Aural Cue: A quiet piano plays a repeating riff with a light but steady electronic drum beat underneath the sound of two male voices in conversation: The first is deeper, with a slight southern accent. The second voice has no clearly discernable accent.]

[Visual Cue: At the top of the screen, a pair of ghostly, blue hands marked by a constantly fluctuating grid pattern move as though playing the piano in synchronization with the music. They continue playing throughout the video. On the bottom right side of the screen is a green silhouette of a seated man. His body is fluctuating with a matrix-like pattern of constantly moving letters. All over the screen, a white matrix pattern fluctuates from the top to the bottom of the screen, like electronic rainfall of letters. (0:00-0:18)]

[0:03] *Male 1 (VV):* I keep thinking, you know, that question. Human beings pondering that question. I wonder what it is that multimedia want for themselves. *[slight pause]*. How do we find out that?

[0:18] *[Visual Cue: As soon as the second voice is heard, the green silhouette at the right of the screen disappears and new green silhouette in the shape of an inclining head appears at the screen's bottom left. Like the first figure, it is composed of a matrix-like pattern of fluctuating letters.]*

[0:18] *Male 2 (AC):* Maybe they want multiple people (:20), *[slight pause]* multiple users.

[0:23] *[Visual cue: As soon as the first voice begins again, the second silhouette disappears and the first silhouette reappears in blue. At 0:25, the blue figure becomes green again.]*

[0:23] *Male 1:* They want to use us, yeah. I wonder what it is that multi-media desire. From us. What do they want us to do? I think that's an angle that we need to take into consideration.

[0:38] [*Visual Cue: The blue figure on the left side of the screen reappears as the figure on the right disappears.*]

[0:38] *Male 2:* But if we talk about what multimedia want, don't have to define it?

[0:42] [*Visual Cue: The blue figure on the left side of the screen disappears as the figure on the right appears, this time in blue.*]

[0:42] *Male 1:* No. Unh uh. Let them define themselves. As they use us. (:49)

[0:49] [*Visual Cue: The blue figure on the left side of the screen disappears as the figure on the right appears, this time in green.*]

[0:49] *Male 2:* That reminds me of something you said, I think, in a book. (:52)

[0:51] [*Visual Cue: The figure on the right side of the screen reappears for moment as the figure on the right briefly disappears. Then the figure on the left appears again when the second voice continues speaking.*]

[0:51] *Male 1:* What's that?

[0:52] *Male 2:* Multimedia is allowing us to throw ourselves into light, and into sound.

[0:57] [*Visual Cue: The green figure on the left side of the screen disappears as the figure on the right appears, this time in green.*]

[0:57] *Male 1:* Light and sound and all the other things that seem to come with it, seem to precede us. And they have an effect on us (1:07).

[1:07] [*Visual Cue: The green figure on the right side of the screen turns blue.*]

[1:07] *Male 1 (contd.):* Now, you know, you've got a camera. You pick up the camera, you push the button. Who's in control? For the most part, when I push the button, I find out the camera's in charge of me. I think I'm shooting something, and something else comes out. The camera has produced something else. (1:24)

[1:25] [*Visual Cue: The figure on the right disappears and the figure on the left appears in green.*]

[1:25] *Male 2:* So we use the camera to compose, but the camera composes us.

[1:28] [*Visual Cue: The figure on the left disappears and the figure on the right appears in green.*]

[1:28] *Male 1*: That's right. Multimedia – it's our daily, uh, illusion.

[1:33] [*Aural cue: Slight hiccup as the audio track starts over with two, juxtaposed clips from the beginning of the interview.*]

[1:33] [*Visual Cue: The green and blue silhouettes of the figures on both sides of the screens all appear simultaneously.*]

[1:32] *Male 1*: I keep thinking, you know, that question: I wonder what it is that multi-media desire. From us. I think that's an angle that we need to take into consideration.

[1:37-1:48] [*Visual Cue: The green and blue silhouettes of the figures on both sides of the screens, the white, matrix-like rainfall of letters and the piano-hands at the top of the screen all fade gradually to black.*]

Conclusion

The Conclusion to this project functions much like the introduction. It uses the same Photoshop interface as a design metaphor, and has the same actors appear on the "canvas space" of the screen. But it differs by grounding the work just experienced as a series of fragments. Each actor, discontinuous and continuous at the same time, helps to provide a discourse that asks us to consider the potentiality of working in multimedia, of what it means to produce multimedia, and, in fact, the larger question that guides this work: "What is multimedia?" As in the introduction, the juxtaposition of narrative fragments issuing from each actor is intended to mimic the "layered, multiplistic, discontinuous, and even contradictory" nature of the element under consideration in this entire production.

[No background audio to this clip.]

(Multi-voiced | Actors: Male 1, Male 2, Male 3, Female 1, Female 2)

[0:00] [*Visual Cue: Photoshop interface appears on screen. There is a slight dark-gray to white gradient on the canvas (from top-left to bottom-right). As video plays, actors appear on screen. Additionally, there are named layers to the right of the canvas, which are highlighted by a mouse-arrow indicator as each actor appears on the canvas. NOTE: Multiple actors appear on the screen at various times, indicated below by the multiple actors being listed before the spoken elements*]

[0:02] *Male 3 (SN)*: Fragments *Female 1 & 2*: Fragments

[0:03] *Male 2 (CW) & Male 3*: Connected fragments.

[0:04] *Male 3*: Digital snippets

[0:05] *Female 1* (MF): intended to open avenues

[0:06] *Female 2* (TS): by which we might situate the value of multimedia for

[0:09] *Female 1 & Male 1*(AR): for an undergraduate's educational experience.

[0:11] *Male 2*: A series of discontinuous elements

[0:13] *Male 3*: providing ways for multimedia composers

[0:15] *Female 2 & Male 1*: teachers and students alike

[0:16] *Male 2*: to think about their relationships with multimedia,

[0:19] *Female 2*: with multiple mediation,

[0:20] *Female 1*: and with technology in general . . .

[0:22] *Male 1*: an often internalize dynamic.

[0:24] *Female 2*: For how rare is it that we ask:

[0:25] *Male 2 & 3*: "What is my relationship with multimedia?"

[0:27] *Female 1*: Thus, by helping students throw themselves and their rhetorical practices

[0:31] *Female 2*: into realms of light,

[0:32] *Male 2*: and image,

[0:33] *Male 1*: and sound,

[0:34] *Male 3*: and interactivity,

[0:35] *Female 1*: we open an opportunity to situate our practices

[0:37] *Male 2*: not only on the creative or compositional aspects of multimedia—

[0:40] *Male 3*: that is, how do I "make" with this apparatus—

[0:44] *Male 1*: but also on the critical,

[0:45] *Female 2*: cultural,

[0:46] *Male 3*: and epistemic values

[0:47] *Female 2*: intrinsic to all media

[0:48] *Male 2*: multiple or otherwise.

[0:49] *Female 2*: This is the potentiality of working in multimedia,

[0:52] *Male 3*: and thus the importance of an inquiry like:

[0:54] *Male 1*: "What is multimedia?"

[0:56] *Male 2*: "What is multimedia?"

[0:57] *Male 3*: "What is multimedia?"

[0:58] *Female 2*: "What is multimedia?"

Complete text:

Fragments. Connected fragments. Digital snippets intended to open avenues by which we might situate the value of multimedia for an undergraduate's educational experience. A series of discontinuous elements providing ways for multimedia composers—teachers and students alike—to think about their relationships with multimedia, with multiple mediation, and with technology in general. . . an often internalized dynamic. For how rare it is that we ask: "What is my relationship with multimedia?" Thus, by helping students throw themselves and their rhetorical practices into the realms of light, and image, and sound, and interactivity, we open an opportunity to situate our practices not only on the creative or compositional aspects of multimedia—that is, how do I "make" with this apparatus—but also on the critical, cultural, and epistemic values intrinsic to all media (multiple or otherwise). This is the potentiality of working in multimedia, and thus the importance of an inquiry like "What is multimedia?"

Credits

The Credits occur in two parts. The first part is a series of static text-on-screen credits, as is standard for most video production. The second part is rolling text. The first part includes the producers, and the people, institutions, and groups who contributed to the development of this project. The second part is a list of all the resources we have used/utilized in this production. It is not a traditional reference/credits "roll." As such, it is broken down by video, image, music, fonts, websites, and 3D modeling elements.

[0:00-0:25] [*Aural Cue: Techno-type piano sound, looped, begins and resides at a volume level just below the voiced narration. The narration unfolds as if a one-person monologue, but occurs from fragments from a series of individual speakers. As the fragments are small enough that some occur within the same time-stamp marker, they are presented here without time-stamps. The last narrated words occur right before*

the main beat of the audio kicks in, which is immediately accompanied by additional musical elements moving us away from the simplicity of the single techno-piano sound to a richer musical sense. Additionally, the music builds in volume and tone as the remaining credits roll. Half-way through the credits, the initial music ends and gives way to a more somber instrumental.]

Male (SM) & Male (WB): What is multimedia?

Female (LN): I think

Male (WB): ecosystems,

Male (SM): a story,

Female (TS): a way of being in the world,

Male (JT): footage,

Male (WB): tinkering

Female (LN): things moving and dancing,

Male (SM): composing in multiple spaces.

Male (JT): So, there's obviously no one definition for multimedia.

Male (SM): Media is media.

Male (JT): Multiplicity of text.

Male (WB): Lots of multiplicity.

Male (JT): It brings textuality alive.

Female (CB): It's really fun, basically.

Complete text:

What is multimedia? I think: ecosystems, a story, a way of being in the world, footage, tinkering, things moving and dancing, composing in multiple spaces. So, there's obviously no one definition for multimedia. Media is media. Multiplicity of text. Lot's of multiplicity. It brings textuality alive. It's really fun, basically.