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(Skillfully) Wielding the World-Wide Web in the Classroom: “I’m NOT Gonna Be That Creepy Guy”

Across three different English classes, I encourage the use of critical thinking in my students’ web life. Because students are already out there, my work with the widely known and used apps Instagram, Twitter, and Vine creates a space for the web to be more than mere entertainment.

I used to share with my classes that ebooks are outselling books, and like the music industry, the book market is now digital. While the record business has shifted in profound ways with the rise of digital technology, the book press is still in flux. Digital book sales over the past couple of years have been fluctuating around book sales. This Wall Street Journal article by Jeffrey A. Trachtenberg (2015) suggests why. As a professor of English literature, how do I take this digital experience into account? What sort of changes have I made in my pedagogy to better serve my (digital) students?

I was teaching high school English in the late 1990s when I decided to go back to school and try and teach at the college level. The impetus for such a move was to earn more income and a stable position, so as to start a family. From the time I entered graduate school, however, in 2000, education has been in flux. As I write this, I have completed that Ph.D., married and had a child, taught in Seoul, South Korea and Hawaii, where I am currently, and gotten a divorce. So much is changing, especially in technology. What this means for me is that my own experience as a student is different from that of my students today. How might my pedagogy address these new students and processes?

In 2011, U.S. News & World Report indicated that online courses had been increasing for nine straight years in a row. Or, the online presence has been continuously growing since roughly the turn of the century. The Online Learning Consortium just published a report on online learning for 2015, from which we can the pervasiveness of the online classroom: “More than one in four students (28%) now take at least one distance education course (a total of 5,828,826 students, a year-to-year increase of 217,275)” (Online Report Card). Here at Chaminade, many of us are teaching both in brick and mortar classrooms and online as overloads. Online, I am not trying to replicate what I do in my brick and mortar classes. The brick and mortar experience translates badly, and the online experience is always already different. Nonetheless, I want to try and get at how we might improve our teaching, in both spaces, by strengthening the ways by which we employ Appropriate, Relevant, and Meaningful technology. My intention is thus to move critical thinking, writing, editing, and representation out into the digital realm.

Here then, using the three sites to illustrate, are some examples.
Instagram
Building out of Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*, Instagram (yourself in?) an Early Modern humour (yellow bile, black bile, phlegm, or blood) using our hashtag - #BACEN25616.
Tweet a passage of importance from Willa Cather’s *My Mortal Enemy*, including parenthetical citation, and the proper hashtag: #BACEN10216, #BACEN102216, or #BACEN102916.

Amy @amy_siperly 1/29/16
"He came into the room without taking off his overcoat and went directly up to his wife, who rose and kissed him." (6). #BACEN102916

Cirena Aiwohi @caiwohi21 1/24/16
"'I'll never forget the sight of her, coming down that walk and leaving a great fortune behind her,' said Aunt Lydia" (14). #BACEN102916

Toru Matthew @matthew_toru 1/24/16
"I've done with them. A man never is justified, but if ever a man was..." (29) #BACEN102916

Alisha @CUHAlishaBrown 1/24/16
"She had wanted to leave without taking anything but the clothes she wore" (13). #BACEN102916

Toru Matthew @matthew_toru 1/22/16
Lol, I use an ebook bt the page number is 6 #BACEN102916

Athena @unicornanomaly 1/22/16
"I thought of the place as being under a spell, like the Sleeping Beauty's palace;... trance... " (15) #BACEN102916

Bonita @BoLovesEnglish 1/22/16
"She stood markedly and pointedly still, with her shoulders back and her hair lifted..." (Page 5) #BACEN102916
Tweet a passage of importance from *The Day of the Locust*, using proper parenthetical citation, and the hashtag - #BACEN10216, #BACEN102216, or #BACEN102916.

Niacion Anderson @nacyanderson 2d
"All their lives they had slaved ... saving their pennies and dreaming of the leisure that would be theirs ..." (177). #BACEN102916

Amy @amy_siperly 2d
"'Let it go,'" (160). #BACEN102916

Kianamae @kiiswright 2d
"Only those who still have hope can benefit from tears. When they finish, they feel better" (103). #BACEN102916

Maria Edralin @maria_edralin 2d
"When the days passed and he couldn't forget Faye, he began to grow frightened... he would be destroyed (Chapter 12)." #BACEN102916

Nick Fuller @nick_fuller808 2d
#BACEN102916

Masquerades were people of a different sort, bought from mail-order houses. With masks and cocktail bars, they loitered on sidewalks and stared at everyone who walked by, filled with hatred. At this time Tod knew he must leave California to die. (60)
Vine – click on the links to access the Vines…


Vine your claim. Vine your claim.