

English 230
Contemporary Media and Fiction
Fall 2020 | TWF 10:30 – 11:20am

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Course Description

How do we not only *read* stories but also *see*, *hear*, *watch*, and *play* them? This course samples various approaches to engaging audio, images, and text in fiction, which has a long and rich history of storymaking with media, from theatre, oral storytelling, and illustrated novels to comics, animation, and radio drama. We'll examine important works of fiction from the 21st century across numerous formats, including short fiction, graphic novels, podcasts, and games. Along the way, you'll learn how to write about media and fiction for the web and how to integrate a range of modalities into the interpretive process. I'll assume no previous experience with media arts.



Image: Typewriter from the game, Gone Home (2013), by the Fullbright Company

I'll ask you to complete the following assignments:

- Log of short responses to assigned fictions (25% x 2)
- Workshops on interpreting contemporary media and fiction (5% x 4)
- Final exam (30%)

We will study the following works, but I'll ask you to purchase only one of them:

- Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* (2006; graphic novel; required purchase)
- Toby Fox and Temmie Chang, *Undertale* (2015; role-playing game)
- Extremely Ok, *Celeste* (2018; platforming game)
- Fullbright, *Gone Home* (2013; first-person game)
- Nalo Hopkinson, "Message in a Bottle" (2004; short fiction)
- Janina Matthewson and Jeffrey Cranor, *Within the Wires* (2016; dramatic podcast)
- Porpentine and Brenda Neotenomie, *With Those We Love Alive* (2014; interactive fiction)
- Amanda Strong and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *Biidaaban (The Dawn Comes)* (2018; animated short film)
- Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries, *MOOD OF THE MOMENT* (2007; animated text)