Course Description
This is a course about why people keep things, how people keep things, and the things that, try as they may, people cannot keep at all. From archives of documents to archives of junk, we will explore the concept of “the archive,” and how it is transformed in the digital age. We will examine theoretical formulations of—and challenges to—the archive through the lens of literary accounts of archives, as well as examples of archives, both print and digital, from the Georgia Tech, Emory, and Atlanta-Fulton Public library systems. We will interrogate the meaning of the archive in the context of a range of media forms, as well as the issues of materiality that those forms engage. We will explore the social, cultural, and political forces that underlie the archive’s construction. Finally, we will explore current issues and concerns with respect to digital archival design. In lieu of a final paper, we will work together as a class to design and implement a digital archive of materials from the Bud Foote Science Fiction Collection here at Georgia Tech.

Course Objectives
• To develop an understanding of the concept of “the archive.”
• To develop an understanding of the issues of media and materiality that “the archive,” necessarily, entails.
• To develop an awareness of the issues of preservation and access, as well as the technical skills that are involved in the construction of a digital archive.
• To create a thoroughly-considered digital archive of selected materials from the Bud Foote Science Fiction Collection.

Required Texts
Available at Engineer’s Bookstore and online:


Additional readings to be posted on course website.
Course Requirements

Reading Assignments
There is a fair amount of reading for this course. Because these readings will inform our classroom discussions—and what you, in particular, have to contribute—it is absolutely essential that you stay on top of these assignments and complete them before the start of each class. Reading assignments are assessed through classroom participation, as well as the occasional quiz.

Writing Assignments
You will be completing seven blog posts of approximately 300-400 words, as specified on the course schedule, in response to prompts provided by the professor. All blog posts will be assessed on an A-F scale, according to the criteria included below. These assignments are designed to allow you to process the reading (or other objects of study) and/or generate new ideas in an open, collaborative setting. Please take advantage of this opportunity and complete each written assignment on time.

- Unless otherwise indicated, blog posts must be posted by 11:59pm on the night BEFORE the due-date indicated on the schedule.

Final Project
Over the course of the semester, you will work in small groups—and, at times, as an entire class—to complete a final project: a digital archive of select issues of a science fiction fanzine from Georgia Tech’s Bud Foote Science Fiction Collection. Your grade for this project will be determined by several components:

- Two group presentations, one midterm and one final, due as indicated on the course schedule.
- Two individual reflections, one midterm and one final, due as indicated on the course schedule.
- The project itself, to be submitted on the date of the final exam: Tuesday, December 11th, at 2:50pm.

Attendance, Punctuality, and Late/Skipped Assignments
You are allowed three excused absences. Beginning with the fourth absence, your overall course grade will be lowered by a full letter grade (e.g. A to B) for each unexcused absence. This means that if you miss more than six classes, you will fail the course.

Please be respectful to your fellow students and arrive on time. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, you will be considered absent for that class. If you absolutely must miss a class meeting, please contact me at least 24 hours in advance in order to make alternate arrangements.

All written assignments are mandatory. Should you submit an assignment after the due date, your grade for that assignment will decrease by a full letter grade for each day that it is late. Should you fail to submit an assignment entirely, you will receive an F on that assignment and, consequently, you will receive a lower grade for the course.
Grading
Your grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

- Participation and quizzes: 10%
- Blog posts: 30%
- Project presentations: 5% each (10% total)
- Project reflections: 10% each (20% total)
- Final project: 30%

All assignments will be graded on an A-F scale.

When calculating final grades, I convert letter grades to a simplified 4.0 scale:

\[
A = 4 \quad B = 3 \quad C = 2 \quad D = 1 \quad F = 0
\]

If you are curious about the criteria I employ when grading blog posts, please refer to this chart developed by Professor Mark Sample of George Mason University:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exceptional.</strong> The blog entry is focused and coherently integrates examples with explanations or analysis. The entry demonstrates awareness of its own limitations or implications, and it considers multiple perspectives when appropriate. The entry reflects in-depth engagement with the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td><strong>Satisfactory.</strong> The blog entry is reasonably focused, and explanations or analysis are mostly based on examples or other evidence. Fewer connections are made between ideas, and though new insights are offered, they are not fully developed. The entry reflects moderate engagement with the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td><strong>Underdeveloped.</strong> The blog entry is mostly description or summary, without consideration of alternative perspectives, and few connections are made between ideas. The entry reflects passing engagement with the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td><strong>Limited.</strong> The blog entry is unfocused, or simply rehashes previous comments, and displays no evidence of student engagement with the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td><strong>No Credit.</strong> The blog entry is missing or consists of one or two disconnected sentence.</td>
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Plagiarism
Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense. Any evidence of plagiarism will result in an F on the assignment and possibly in the course, as well as potential disciplinary action. For more information, please refer to the definition of “academic misconduct” included in the Georgia Tech honor code, available online at:
http://www.honor.gatech.edu/

If you are unsure as to what constitutes plagiarism, please contact me before submitting your assignment.

Writing Support
As of last year, the Georgia Tech communication center, CommLab, is now open for undergraduate (and graduate) use. At CommLab, professional and peer tutors are available to work with you to improve your writing skills. More information, including instructions for how to set up an appointment via the website, is available here:

Clough Learning Commons
Phone: (404) 894-3805
Email: commlab@gatech.edu
http://www.lmc.gatech.edu/writingcomm/commcenter/

Students with Disabilities
Students with disabilities should self-report to the Access Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students (ADAPTS) at:

Smithgall Student Services Building, Suite 220
Phone: (404) 894-2564
TTD: (404) 894-1664
Email: adaptinfo@gatech.edu
http://adapts.gatech.edu/
Tentative Schedule

Introduction and Overview
• **Monday, August 20th**
  Course introduction
  In class: From Keri Smith, *This is Not a Book*

• **Wednesday, August 22nd**
  Sam Dolnick, “*In a Hoarder’s Home, Going All Out to Find the Floor*”
  John Leland, “*Surprise Bounty for Cleanup Artist*”

• **Friday, August 24th**
  Ryan Clements, “*Chain World: Crafting a Religion*”
  Jason Fagone, “*Chain World Videogame Was Supposed to be a Religion—Not a Holy War*”

Due
**Blog I: Intro**

Unit 1: Archives
• **Monday, August 27th**
  Lev Grossman, *Codex*, Chapters 1-4

• **Wednesday, August 29th**
  *Codex*, Chapters 5-9

  **WEDNESDAY Lab day:** Introduction to the archives. Meet at archives.

• **Friday, August 31st**
  *Codex*, Chapters 10-14

• **Monday, September 3rd** – NO CLASS, Labor Day

• **Wednesday, September 5th**
  *Codex*, Chapters 15-19

• **Friday, September 7th**
  *Codex*, Chapters 20 to end

  Due
  **Blog II: On Codex**

• **Monday, September 10th**
  **MONDAY Lab day:** Second archives session. Meet at archives.
• **Wednesday, September 12**
  Carolyn Steedman, from *Dust* (PDF)

• **Friday, September 14**
  Lab day: Technical training.

### Unit 2: Media

• **Monday, September 17**
  - William Gibson, “*Agrippa*”
  - Matthew Kirschenbaum, “Text Messaging: The Transformissions of Agrippa” (PDF)

• **Wednesday, September 19**
  Alan Liu et al., *The Agrippa Files*

• **Friday, September 21**
  Lab day: Product requirements document.
  Due
  Blog III: Digital archive critique

• **Monday, September 24**
  Don DeLillo, *Mao II*, Chapters 1-3
  **11:05-11:15: Project managers present to U. Vic Digital Humanities class**

• **Wednesday, September 26**
  *Mao II*, Chapters 4-6

• **Friday, September 28**
  *Mao II*, Chapters 8-10
  Lab day: Choose platform.

• **Monday, October 1**
  *Mao II*, Chapters 11-12
  **11:05-11:15: U. Vic Digital Humanities class presents to us**

• **Wednesday, October 3**
  *Mao II*, Chapters 13 to end

• **Friday, October 5**
  Lab day: Begin wire-framing.
  Due
  Blog IV: On *Mao II*
Unit 3: Materiality

- **Monday, October 8th**
  Bill Brown, “Materiality” (PDF)
  N. Katherine Hayles, “Media and Materiality,” and “Material Metaphors, Technotexts and Media-Specific Analysis” (PDF)

- **Wednesday, October 10th**
  Matthew Kirschenbaum, “Every Contact Leaves a Trace” (PDF)

- **Friday, October 12th**
  Lab day: TBD

- **Monday, October 15th** – NO CLASS, Fall Break

- **Wednesday, October 17th**
  WEDNESDAY Lab day: TBD

- **Friday, October 19th**
  Due
  Presentation of archive prototype
  **In class critique with Georgia Tech Archives librarians**

- **Monday, October 22nd**
  Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*, Chapters 1-4

- **Wednesday, October 24th**
  *Fun Home*, Chapters 5 to end

- **Friday, October 26th**
  Lab day: TBD

- **Monday, October 29th**
  Anne Carson, *Nox*, first half

- **Wednesday, October 31st**
  Anne Carson, *Nox*, second half

- **November, November 2nd**
  Lab day: TBD

  Due
  Blog V: On *Fun Home & Nox*
Unit IV: Memory

- **Monday, November 5th**
  Jacques Derrida, from *Archive Fever* (PDF)

- **Wednesday, November 7th**
  **WEDNESDAY Lab day**: TBD

- **Friday, November 9th**
  Michel Rolph Trouillot, from *Silencing the Past* (PDF)

- **Monday, November 12th**
  Mark Danielewski, *House of Leaves*, 1-24

- **Wednesday, November 14th**
  *House of Leaves*, 25-79

- **Friday, November 16th**
  **Lab day**: TBD

  **Due**
  **Blog VI**: TBD

- **Monday, November 19th** – NO CLASS MEETING, Professor out of town
  *House of Leaves*, 80-152

- **Wednesday, November 21st** – NO CLASS MEETING, Professor out of town
  *House of Leaves*, 153-245

- **Friday, November 23rd** – NO CLASS, Thanksgiving

- **Monday, November 26th**
  *House of Leaves*, 246-346

- **Wednesday, November 28th**
  *House of Leaves*, 347-422

  **WEDNESDAY Lab day**: TBD

- **Friday, November 30th**
  *House of Leaves*, 423-528

  **Due**
  **Blog VII**: TBD

- **Monday, December 3th**
  **MONDAY Lab day**: Final tweaking.
Wednesday, December 5th
Presentations

• Friday, December 7th
Presentations

December 11th, 2:50pm - Final archive and reflection due