



Jacqueline Rush Lee

MEJO 890.3 / Fall 2018

Seminar in Special Topics in Mass

Communication: Textual Analysis

Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Carroll 338

Dr. Barbara Friedman

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919.843.2099

**Office Hours: Mondays 9:30-11 a.m. & by
appointment**

Course Description & Objectives

Textual analysis refers to *a set of methods and a way of thinking* that focuses on written, visual and spoken language—what it represents and how we use it to make sense of the world and our place in it. Text-based approaches are transdisciplinary, bridging social sciences and humanities by treating media texts as cultural artifacts—material documentary evidence—that contain traces of socially constructed realities. Using the techniques of close reading, qualitative text analysis provides a means to illuminate experiences that might otherwise be inaccessible to empirical research methods. Media “texts” are not limited to printed materials—computer-mediated communication, broadcasts, video games, advertisements and photography can also be subjected to close reading to understand social phenomena. Scholars have focused on the words, themes and ideas in media texts to explore, for example, civil rights, immigration, gender violence, school shootings, reality TV, politics, myth and memory.

In this course, students will:

- gain an understanding and appreciation for documents, broadly construed, as objects of meaning in media studies and for the sociocultural implications of changes in media technology;
- gain exposure to some of the theories and concepts underpinning textual analysis as a form of interpretive inquiry;
- cultivate (or refine) the habit of close reading, “the mindful, disciplined reading of an object with a view to deeper understanding of its meaning” (Brummett, 2018, p. 2);
- become familiar with a range of qualitative research methods associated with text analysis, their technical points and applications;
- read and critique published examples of textual analysis;
- complete original research using methods of textual analysis suitable for scholarly presentation and commensurate with the student’s level of study (e.g., journal article, book chapter, thesis/dissertation chapter).



Required Texts: In addition to reading posted to Sakai or distributed in class, the following three books are required for the course. *Please note that the full text of the Kuckartz book is available via UNC libraries; you needn't purchase a copy.* The others are available at Student Stores, or via online booksellers, possibly for less.

Detail from Karen Diot, "The Paper House"

- Barry Brummett, *Techniques of Close Reading*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2018) ([Available at UNC Student Stores+](#))
- Lisa Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014) ([Full text available via UNC Libraries; UNC Student Stores+](#))
- Udo Kuckartz, *Qualitative Text Analysis: A Guide to Methods, Practice, and Using Software* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2014) ([Full text available via UNC Libraries](#))

On Reserve (Park Library)

- Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2016).

Grading & Grading Policy: This course will be conducted as a graduate seminar. This means that students are expected to attend every class prepared to discuss/critique assigned readings, as well as their own research in progress; to help peers as they develop their research. Each student is expected to produce an original research paper by the end of the semester using methods of textual analysis and suitable for scholarly presentation. The final paper should be suited to the student's level of study (e.g., journal article, book chapter, thesis/dissertation chapter), determined in consultation with the instructor. The components of your grade in this class are as follows:

Attendance/participation (20 percent): Attendance at each class is expected, as is preparation. In addition, students will engage in a series of informal presentations that include leadership of assigned reading. Students (working in groups of 2-3) will sign up for this task in advance, and will lead class discussion related to one or more of the session's assigned readings (and theme). As a discussant, the point is not to summarize the reading but to pose questions that encourage us to dig deeper.

Written assignments (30 percent): Your written assignments consist of written critiques to articles and your final paper 'in progress' (although each assignment you hand in should be carefully edited and polished). Deadlines for your paper in progress are listed on the syllabus; article critiques will be due when you are a reading discussant.

Final paper (50 percent): The completed final paper is likely to be 15-20 pages (~5,000 words) and should correspond to your standing in the program; that is, doctoral students may choose

generate a substantive chapter of their dissertations or proposals, or a scholarly article for conference submission; master's students may want to complete a research proposal, or a chapter of a thesis or thesis proposal. This must be determined prior to week 5 (when your introduction is due) and in consultation with the instructor.

Student grades will be determined this way:

H - Student reads and critically engages with all of the assigned material. Participation in discussion and written assignments exhibit the ability not only to apply the material, but also to extrapolate ideas, expand into new areas, and contribute to the body of scholarship in the area. Reserved for truly outstanding work.

P - Student usually reads and engages critically with the assigned material. Able to apply material and extrapolate ideas. Work is consistent, demonstrates good progress and is completed on deadline.

L - Student reads and engages critically with only some of the assigned material. Able to apply the material and extrapolate ideas in only some instances. Quality of work is uneven and student misses deadlines.

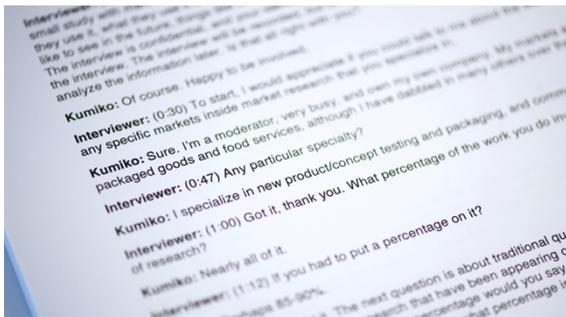
F - Student occasionally misses class, does not always read the material, fails to critically engage with it, and is unable or unwilling to apply the material. Written work is below par and student disregards deadlines.

Honor Code: Students must adhere to the letter and spirit of the [University honor system](#). Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated – this includes plagiarism, cheating or any false means of obtaining a grade – and may result in failure of the course, and suspension or expulsion from the university. If I suspect academic dishonesty, I have a duty to report it to the School's Associate Dean, the Student Attorney General, or the judicial programs officer in the Dean of Students' office for further action.

AEJMC Values & Competencies: The School of Media & Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values that our majors should be aware of, and competencies our majors should be able to demonstrate by the time they graduate from our program. You can learn more about them at the following link, under the heading "Professional Values & Competencies."
<http://www.journalism.ku.edu/acejmc-professional-values-competencies>

Special Needs: If you have any disability or other special situation that may make it difficult to meet the requirements described above, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. If you have not done so already, you should also contact the Department of Accessibility Resources & Service (AR&S) at 919-962-8300 or accessibility@unc.edu.

Safe@UNC. The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community that is free from discrimination, harassment, and related misconduct. See the UNC [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](#) and related resources [here](#).



Week-By-Week Schedule:

Course reading, instruction and participation will move through foundations and concepts to approaches and techniques, with each unit including examples of the approach under discussion. Students will read about and discuss the foundations of textual analysis and its uses in the field of media/journalism studies (and to a degree, others), the application and techniques of

textual analysis, and complete original research suitable for scholarly presentation. Students will take responsibility for leading discussions of the reading and of their work in progress. Be sure to check Sakai for changes to our schedule and, importantly, to reading assignments (beyond required texts), which may be modified based on students' areas of concentration in the course.

PART I: Thinking in Texts, or, Concepts and Foundations

Week 1 Aug. 22 Do Texts Talk?

To Read:

- Brummett, chap. 1, "On Noticing What You See and Hear" (Sakai)
- McKinnon, "Text-Based Approaches to Qualitative Research," in *The International Encyclopedia of Media Studies*, ed. Valdivia (Sakai)
- Garvey, "'facts and FACTS': Abolitionists' Database Innovations," in *Raw Data is an Oxymoron*, ed. Gitelman (Sakai)

To Do:

- Prepare a list of 6-10 phenomena you'd like to study (bring to class week 2)

Week 2 Aug. 29 Theoretical Paradigms

To Read:

- Brummett, chap. 2, "Theories, Methods, Techniques"
- Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, "Starting From Meaning: Contextuality and Its Implications," chap. 3, *Interpretive Research Design* (Sakai)
- McIntosh & Cuklanz, "Feminist Media Research," in Hesse-Biber, ed., *Feminist Research Practice* (Sakai)
- Steiner, " 'Wrestling with the Angels': Stuart Hall's Theory and Method" (Sakai)

To Do:

- Discuss research ideas (from your list of 6-10 phenomena)
- Discuss theories that might inform them
- Choose and bring in next week a sample text/data that you might use in your research

Week 3 Sept. 5 Document Forms

To Read:

- Gitelman, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (in its entirety)

To Do:

- Present and discuss your sample text for research

Week 4 Sept. 12 Research Design for Textual Analysis

To Read:

- Kucartz, chapters 1-3
- Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, "Designing for Trustworthiness," chap. 6, *Interpretive Research Design* (Sakai)
- Favaro, Gill, and Harvey, "Making Media Data," chap. 6 in *Collecting Qualitative Data*, ed. Braun, Clarke, and Gray (Sakai)

To Do:

- Be working on your introduction (due next week)

PART II: Approaches and Techniques

Week 5 Sept. 19 Narrative & Genre Analysis

To Read:

- Brummett, chap. 3
- Stokes, "Genre Study," pp. 149-156 in *How to Do Media and Cultural Studies*, 2nd ed (Sakai)
- Shugart, "Sumptuous Texts: Consuming 'Otherness' in the Food Film Genre" (Sakai)
- Ketchum, "The Essence of Cooking Shows: How the Food Network Constructs Consumer Fantasies" (Sakai)
- Meyers, "Crack Mothers in the News: A Narrative of Paternalistic Racism" (Sakai)

- **DUE:** Introduction to final paper

Week 6 Sept. 26 Form: Discourse Analysis

To Read:

- Stokes, "Discourse Analysis," pp. 143-149 in *How to Do Media and Cultural Studies*, 2nd ed. (Sakai)
- Steele, "Black Bloggers and Their Varied Publics: The Everyday Politics of Black Discourse Online" (Sakai)
- Stiles & Kitch, "'Redemption for Our Anguished Racial History': Race and the National Narrative in Commemorative Journalism About Barack Obama" (Sakai)

- Abell and Myers, “Analyzing Research Interviews,” chap. 7 in Wodak & Krzyzanowski, eds., *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences* (Sakai)

Week 7 Oct. 3 Ideological & Argumentation Analysis

To Read:

- Brummett, chap. 4
- Boreus, “Argumentation Analysis,” chap. 3 in *Analyzing Text and Discourse*, ed. Boreus & Bergstrom (Sakai)
- Bishop, “The Professional Protester” (Sakai)
- DeFoster, “American Gun Culture, School Shootings, and a ‘Frontier Mentality’” (Sakai)

➤ **DUE:** Literature Review

Week 8 Oct. 10 Collecting and Coding Data

To Read:

- Kuckartz, chap. 4
- Saldana, chaps. 1-2, and chap. 3 selection (on reserve at Park Library)

To Do:

- Choose a coding method from Saldana chap. 3 to present and discuss

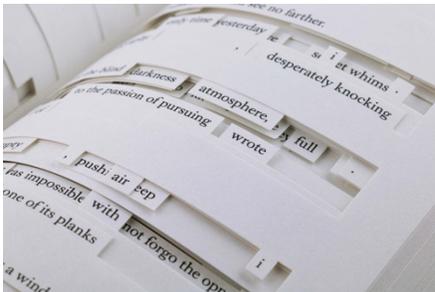
Week 9 Oct. 17 Coding and Analyzing Data Using Software – MAXQDA demo session

To Read:

- Kuckartz, chap. 5
- Seror, “Computers and Qualitative Data Analysis: Papers, Pens, and Highlighters vs. Screen, Mouse, and Keyboard” (Sakai)

To Do:

- MAXQDA demo session w/Paul Mihaus, Odum Institute (Location: TBD)



**Fall Break begins 5 p.m. Oct. 17;
classes resume 8 a.m. Monday, Oct. 22**

Nina Jua Klein, Tree of Codes,

Week 10 Oct. 24 One-on-One Meetings

To Do:

- Meet individually with instructor (sign-up on Sakai)
- **DUE:** Methods section (and, optionally, revised intro and lit review)

Week 11 Nov. 7 Audiences and Texts**To Read:**

- Stokes, “Researching Audiences: Who Uses Media & Culture? How & Why?,” chap. 6 in *How to Do Media and Cultural Studies* (Sakai)
- Radway, “Women Read the Romance: The Interaction of Text and Context” (Sakai)
- Wolfe, “Who’s Gotta Have It? The Ownership of Meaning and Mass Media Texts” (Sakai)

Week 12 Nov. 14 Visual Analysis - Guest Speaker: Dr. Berkley Hudson, University of Missouri**To Read:**

- Sturken & Cartwright, “Images, Power, and Politics,” chap. 1 in *Practices of Looking* (Sakai)
- Additional readings TBA (check Sakai)

**No class Wednesday, Nov. 21 (Thanksgiving recess);
classes resume 8 a.m. Monday, Nov. 26**

**Week 13 Nov. 28 Peer Presentation & Feedback****To Do:**

Brief oral presentations of projects

Week 14 Dec. 5 Peer Presentation & Feedback**To Do:**

Brief oral presentations of projects



Saturday, December 8 – Final papers due via Sakai by 8 a.m.

