



Secret, by Cara Barer

MEJO 890.2 TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Fall 2020 (Remote)
Dr. Barbara Friedman
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Join: <https://unc.zoom.us/j/99564869637?pwd=cW5mQ0I1T2Z6M3dUQjltZGtDbVM4Zz09>

Password: Text

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, for example, can also be subjected to close reading to understand social phenomena. Scholars have focused on the content and meaning in media texts to explore issues such as civil rights, immigration, violence, reality TV, politics, myth and memory, to name a few.

In this course, you 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).

Reading:

I will draw reading from a range of fields/sources this semester and will provide pdfs or links to the material on Sakai. Some material comes from the following books on interpretive, text-based methods; I encourage you to explore them more thoroughly if you find the selections helpful to your work:

- Barry Brummett, *Techniques of Close Reading*, 2nd ed. (Sage, 2018)
- Kristina Boreus & Goran Bergstrom, *Analyzing Text and Discourse: Eight Approaches for the Social Sciences* (Sage, 2017)
- Udo Kuckartz, *Qualitative Text Analysis: A Guide to Methods, Practice and Using Software* (Sage, 2014)
- Johnny Saldaña, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, 3rd ed. (Sage, 2016).
- Peregrine Schwartz-Shea and Dvora Yanow, *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes* (Routledge, 2012).

Matt Shlian



Grades & Grading Policy: This course will be conducted as a graduate seminar. This means that you are expected to be prepared to discuss/critique assigned readings, as well as your own research in progress; and 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 your level of study (e.g., journal article, book chapter, thesis/dissertation chapter), determined in consultation with the instructor.

Course grades will be determined *using this general scheme*, but let's face it, this is a peculiar semester. What's most important is that you engage with the reading, seek deeper understanding together, accept and incorporate feedback and make relatively steady progress in your writing. I am here to support and encourage your learning, so don't hesitate to ask for assistance when you need it.

<i>Participation (e.g., reading discussion/leadership, presentations)</i>	<i>25 percent</i>
<i>Written assignments (work in progress)</i>	<i>25 percent</i>
<i>Final Paper</i>	<i>50 percent</i>

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. Consistently good work 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.

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.

Honor Code: Students must adhere to the letter and spirit of the [University honor system](#).

AEJMC Values & Competencies: The School'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 [Accessibility Resources & Service](#) (AR&S) at 919-962-8300 or accessibility@unc.edu.

Safe@UNC. The University's [Policy on Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Other Misconduct](#) states that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject by federal law to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources [here](#).

Week-by-Week Schedule: Course reading/instruction/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 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, which may be modified based on students' areas of concentration in the course.



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

Kaleidoscope, by Cara Barer

Week 1, Aug. 13 - Do Texts Talk?

To Read:

- Lockyer, "Textual Analysis," in *Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, ed. Given
- Brummett, chap. 1, "On Noticing What You See and Hear," in *Techniques of Close Reading*
- McKinnon, "Text-Based Approaches to Qualitative Research," in *The International Encyclopedia of Media Studies*, ed. Valdivia
- Peräkylä, "Analyzing Talk and Text," in *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Denzin & Lincoln

To Do:

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

Week 2, Aug. 20 – Theoretical Paradigms

To Read:

- Brummett, “Theories, Methods, Techniques,” chap. 2 in *Techniques of Close Reading*
- Wolfe, “Who’s Gotta Have It? The Ownership of Meaning and Mass Media Texts”
- Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, “Starting From Meaning: Contextuality and its Implications,” chap. 3 in *Interpretive Research Design*

To Do:

- Discuss research ideas
- Discuss theories/concepts that might inform your research in this class

Week 3, Aug. 27 – Research Design (Note: Campus closing due to COVID-19 outbreaks)

To Read:

- Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, “Designing for Trustworthiness,” chap. 6 in *Interpretive Research Design*
- Favaro, Gill & Harvey, “Making Media Data”
- Kuckartz, Qualitative Text Analysis, chaps. 1-3
- Saldaña, “Coding and Analysis Strategies”

To Do:

- Discuss/show sample texts that might figure in your research



PART II: Approaches and Techniques

Cara Barer, 2005

Week 4, Sept. 3 – Genre Study

To Read:

- (Read one or all of these if genre study is new to you:)
 - Smith, “Genre, Shmenre”
 - Brummett, “Genre”
 - Stokes, “Genre Study”
- (Read these three articles:)
- Ketchum, “The Essence of Cooking Shows”
- Shugart, “Sumptuous Texts”
- Swenson, “Domestic Divo?”

To Do:

- Be working on your introduction

Week 5, Sept. 10 – Discourse Analysis

To Read:

- *Read one or both of these if discourse analysis is new to you:*

- Paltridge, [“What is Discourse Analysis,”](#) chap. 1 of *Discourse Analysis: An Introduction*, 2nd ed.
- Stokes, “Discourse Analysis”
- **Or, read this if discourse analysis is familiar to you:**
 - Wodak, [“Introduction: Discourse Studies-Important Concepts and Terms,”](#) in *Qualitative Discourse Analysis in the Social Sciences*
- **Read all of these articles:**
- Steele, “Black Bloggers and Their Varied Publics”
- Macmillan and Edwards, “Who Killed the Princess?”
- Meyers, “African American Women and Violence”

> **DUE:** Introduction to research paper (or equivalent material)

Week 6, Sept. 17 – Ideological and Argumentation Analysis

To Read:

- Brummett, “Ideology and Argument,” chap. 4 in *Techniques of Close Reading*
- Boreus, “Argumentation Analysis,” chap. 3 in *Analyzing Text and Discourse*
- Fowler, “Attitudes to Power,” in *Language in the News*
- Bishop, “The Professional Protester”
- DeFoster, “American Gun culture, School Shootings and a ‘Frontier Mentality’”

To Do:

- Be working on your literature review

Week 7, Sept. 24 – No class; Individual meetings with instructor (sign up on Sakai)

Week 8, Oct. 1 – Rhetorical Analysis or, When You Say Nothing At All

To Read:

- Chidester, “May the Circle Stay Unbroken”
- Sweeney, “Listening Rhetorically to Textual Silence”

> **DUE:** Literature review (or equivalent material)

Week 9, Oct. 8 – Interviews as Text

To Read:

- Robertson, “Narrative Analysis,” in *Analyzing Text and Discourse*, ed. Boreus & Bergstrom
- Abell & Myers, “Analyzing Research Interviews”
- Singer, “Border Patrol”
- Chen et al., “‘You Really Have to Have Thick Skin’”

To Do:

- Be working on methods section (or equivalent writing)

Week 10, Oct. 15 - Audience Reception***To Read:***

- Stokes, “Researching Audiences”
- Hall, “Encoding and Decoding”
- Peters, “Pink Dollars, White Collars”
- Radway, “Women Read the Romance: The Interaction of Text and Context”

> ***DUE:*** Method section (or equivalent writing)

Week 11, Oct. 22 – Visual Analysis***To Read:***

- Sturken & Cartwright, “Images, Power, and Politics,” chap.1 in *Practices of Looking*
- Pegler-Gordon, “First Impressions” and “Photographic Paper Sons,” chaps. 1-2 in *In Sight of America*

To Do:

- Be working on analysis of your project (or equivalent material)

Week 12, Oct. 29 – Work on papers; instructor available for consultation

Week 13, Nov. 5 – Work on papers; instructor available for consultation



Week 14, Nov. 12 – Presentation of final projects

To Do:

- Please prepare a brief (10 mins., excluding Q&A) presentation of your research or research-in-progress with visuals, appropriate for conference or roundtable.

Cara Barer

Final Exam Period – Saturday, Nov. 21

> ***DUE:*** Final papers to Sakai 9 a.m.