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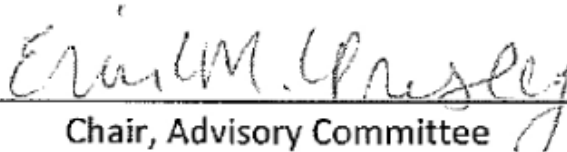
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THE MIND'S EYE: VISUALIZING MONTAGE THEORY

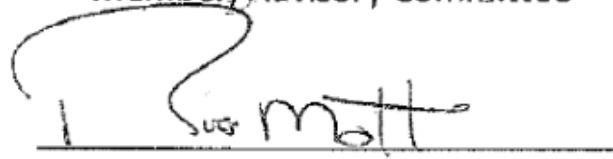
BY

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THE MINDS EYE: VISUALIZING MONTAGE THEORY

BY

ERIC CODY SMOTHERS

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of  
Eastern Kentucky University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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## ABSTRACT

In the age of increasing technology, it is important for writers, teachers, filmmakers and artists to understand how text, images, and graphics can be integrated together within a single medium. By examining multi-media books, hypertext and film, evidence of “montage theory” can be seen through many different mediums, suggesting that composition is an ever evolving, innovative activity which is dependent upon creativity and discovery within the mind of the reader. Students who experience montage theory can therefore be transformed from readers to viewers and designers, who ultimately shape their learning outcomes. Instructors can use artifacts of montage theory in the classroom setting through visual presentations, multi-media websites, and many other forms of multimodal composing. Embracing montage theory bridges the gap between the dominant age of print and the burgeoning technology age.

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## **I. Introduction: Montage Theory as Visual Perception**

Montage theory is the framework by which art, film, and composition studies formulate student and audience reception of texts, bridging the traditional age of print with the expanding age of digital composition. Similar to a collage one might see in an art poster, arranged with images, graphics, and text, montage theory emphasizes stylistic choice and invention. Within any composition, montage theory seeks creativity to evoke meaning. Montage theory is crucial in understanding not only the value of composition for students, but also how existing and emerging technologies can be used to successfully integrate text, graphics, and images into a seamless, coherent platform for students as writers and filmmakers. In their article on visual culture, Garoian and Gaudelius (2004) claim a person's field of vision demonstrates cultural realities between language boundaries, and certain mediums can portray fragmentary similarities (p.308). However, by presenting viewers with alternative expressions in composition, "conjunctions" or connections can be made between one form and another (Garoian and Gaudelius, 2004, p.308). Such a metamorphosis can be achieved through juxtaposing text and image, whether static or dynamic. Montage theory can revolutionize how students and the public interact between print and electronic platforms by examining multi-media texts, film composition, and new media pedagogies, which provide alternative instruction for teachers and provide a model for how writers compose and readers experience meaning in a constantly changing digital age.

Borrowing from many disciplines of study, montage theory is applicable towards a new and transformative understanding of reading and composition. For example, film scholars, Thompson and Bordwell, within *Film Art: An Introduction*,

define intellectual montage as, “The juxtaposition of a series of images to create an abstract idea not present in one image” (2010, p.492). Juxtaposition is a critical feature within montage theory and is paramount in composition instruction, where students must be aware of the value between the integration of text and image together to create another abstract idea, as Thompson and Bordwell assert. Writing now exists in the schizophrenic universe of technology and text, graphics and design, images and ideas, which contribute to ongoing debates within academia concerning the future of proper student education. Kress (2005) is one such compositionist who embraces new ways of thinking about pedagogy and writing. Due to the changes in reception of reading and texts, Kress comments that the meaning of reading has to be reconsidered now for it was constructed in an age where people consented to text being dominant and authoritative, paralleled with the conjoined “constellation” of the book (17). Palmeri in *Remixing Composition: A History of Multimodal Writing Pedagogy* corroborates Kress’ idea of the new age of reading in multimodal forms outside of traditional texts. Lunsford, a compositionist referenced by Palmeri, reflects on the idea of past composition studies being black and white, but today Lunsford says, “writing is in full Technicolor; it is nonlinear and alive with sounds, voices, and images of all kinds” (2012, p. 4-5). The montage blends both images and words into an indirect but compelling medium which can alter and improve traditional learning styles.

Montage in pedagogy examines the literacies of multimodality. When thinking about montage as a way of creating a fusion of images and words, this means choosing to become technologically aware within any discipline. According to the National Council of Teachers of English definition of 21<sup>st</sup> century literacies, a truly literate

person possesses, “a wide range of abilities and competencies, many literacies. These literacies are multiple, dynamic, and malleable” (NCTE position). The cause of this wide diversity needed within pedagogy stems from the advancement of technologies within the literate, educational setting. It is no longer the unquestioned printed text that holds complete authority when so much is published online and visible to the public. Several of the areas of fluency described in the NCTE’s statement involve the understanding of technology, utilizing different kinds of information, and analyzing texts that are multi-media (NCTE position), a change in pedagogy which calls for a great shift in practice. Kress, and many other compositionists, believe in the understanding of these technologies and the importance of adopting different modes and techniques in composing. These “tool-kits” as Kress discusses in a video interview with the Institute of Education, describe how color schemes and paragraphs are just the tools by which meaning is arrived at. Kress argues that “writing may give you meaning beyond what’s going on,” for while multimodal techniques may be embraced, we also must be careful not to lose details and meaning, moving from one technique to the next (Kress, *YouTube*). For instructors to truly embrace montage theory they must examine technologies and tools available to them as Kress and the NCTE statement propose.

The transformation within pedagogy towards montage theory is even more imminent now due to the increase of technology both for instructors and new generations of students. Both teachers and students are impacted by this shift from print to multimodal forms in the classroom and everyday life. Perhaps exterior activities from the class such as blogging, social media, and video uploading sites are showing more potential than what students can learn in the class otherwise. Shipka (2011) addresses

the significance of multimodal compositions in *Towards a Composition Made Whole*. This text suggests instructors need to observe an “embodied activity and co-practice” when engaging the materials and platforms behind creating texts, and that composition must allow the embrace of the extracurricular spaces the students occupy (p. 39). Shifts in pedagogy are within space and online usage as well as text production. A true embrace of the type of “montage” teaching practice is not just in multimodal texts, but the assimilation of instructors into the worlds students engage with outside of class. Alexander and Rhodes (2014) discuss the “prosumer” referring to the professional ability and tools students and the public now possess when working with new media; practitioners can have more at their disposal to engage with the students, whose modes of communication and production before was only available to the highly trained (p.106). In this way, students will not only be able to understand composition better but design it as well. Shipka urges that instructors should not latch on to mere tradition, nostalgia, and an apprehension of change, but instead be willing to adapt to new practices, re-invent what writing, reading and text means, as well as refusing to identify montage theory and multimodality as only expressive, artistic, experimental but instead innovative ways of exploring new modes of composition (2011, p.133). Montage theory does not seek to debunk traditional methods of teaching, but brings an awareness of crucial thinking and discovery on how visuals and technology will impact students.

The elevation of the classroom experience is what multimodal methods and montage are all about: encouraging education through both innovative and familiar systems of communication. Gaining new experiences within multimodality and new media encourages writing which provides alternative stimulation, but embodies the idea

of gaining exterior knowledge and meaning in order to “know differently,” (Alexander & Rhodes, 2014, p.43). We must learn to question the limitations of traditional methods and the broadening possibilities of multimodal approaches, and skepticism should be met with a clear articulation of what our goals are as instructors or educators (Shipka, 2011, p. 136). For instructors especially, montage theory should be used to inform and enlighten academia and the public of the need to make sense of technology and visuals within the world. As Palmeri asserts, montage does not concern itself with the relation of one page or one idea but instead how by looking at a variety of ideas over diverse pages, new compositions can be arrived at (2012, p. 101). By examining the mediums montage theory utilizes, readers and instructors will arrive at a nuanced visual perception and awareness that will embrace a new wave of fully integrated pedagogy.

## II. The Physical Montage: Multimedia Texts

To first explore what montage theory can do, readers can easily turn to the emergence of multimedia textbooks from the middle part of the twentieth century when experimentation and creativity were engines by which educators and authors pushed the boundaries as to what a text could truly accomplish. Instead of linear sections, these multi-media texts relied on “anti-sequence,” where the text is concerned more with experiencing, revisiting, and deciphering text, graphics, and images that are often on first glance chaotic and random. Based on observations, more traditional books explained, analyzed and reported findings in a typical, instructive way, point by point, but the multi-media texts demanded attention and participation, synthesis and imagination, in a non-linear way to essentially be classified as an interactive, engaged text (Sego, 1971, p.56-57). A reader or instructor may react strangely to montage theory implemented in a text due to the sequencing of grouped images, text, and graphics. However, these images and messages are signs that the designers behind the text are encouraging the idea of discovery, exploration, and debate concerning what the reader encounters. Ultimately, these multi-media texts demonstrate montage theory by encouraging creative innovation, juxtaposing structure, and mimetic design in order to provoke a reaction from the reader.

Montage theory sparks curiosity through creative innovation. One such early example of a text which captures this element (though curiously spelled) is McLuhan’s (1967) *The Medium is the Massage*. Upon first glance this text seems to be about the distribution of digital information and the effect of technology upon not only composition but how human beings interact with each other, demonstrated through a

curious barrage of text, graphics, and images often ranging from proportionate to disproportionate in size. Montage theory comes into play as the reader or viewer is constantly assaulted by page after page of text and image, which initially may cause a contradictory cognitive reception in the human brain or else arouse suspicion of disorder in order to achieve the desired effect on the reader: discovery and revalidation. McLuhan (1967) affirms the role of the media as the text states that communities at large have been formed more by the media or mediums by which people communicate with than the material of the communication itself. Therefore when children learn the alphabet, they are taught to learn through a print based system, a process of “specialism and detachment,” in which a splintering occurs among the unity between learning and electronic involvement (McLuhan, 1967, p.8). McLuhan is adamant that true social and cultural change cannot be understood without knowing how technology works in society. The power of words and meanings are greatly hinged upon how they are presented through the lens of the media. McLuhan’s text is therefore dedicated to showing how representation of images through a certain medium can create changes in the thought process. On a cultural level, McLuhan’s text also suggests the problems in generational divide involve the youth who socially are more aware of the events taking place in an electronic and digital age (McLuhan, 1967, p. 9). The combination of technological awareness and creativity can be applied to how a text influences and within the classroom this can take the form of a deeper level of student engagement, where the student is not just reading but comprehending and interrogating the text.

These ideas of montage and educational creativity are also explored within Sparke and McKowen’s 1970 text, *Montage: Investigations in Language*. Following the

similar stylistic attributes of *The Medium is the Massage*, Sparke and McKowen's text, incorporates the same use of alternative texts and fonts, with rapid succession of changing images in order to invite the reader further into the text, transforming the reader into a viewer. Both McLuhan, Sparke and McKowen establish an artistically motivated theme to attract the reader but Sparke and McKowen's *Montage* actually functions as an educational textbook as well, complete with sections of text, questions, and even quizzes and matching sections. However, unlike traditional textbooks, this text is different from page to page, on first glance suggesting disorder but then inviting repeated viewings in order to discover or figure out the text. Sparke and McKowen (1970) write, "Words are things and living things too" (p.20). Conceptually, the idea of words being alive evokes the notion of visualization. People naturally think of the idea associated with the word rather than the mechanical counterparts of language formation, sound formation, and syllables. Also the *Montage* text harkens back to many ideas, which purposefully echo McLuhan such as the diagram that states, "All Language is metaphor; I use my statements, not as facts, but as probes; The Medium is the Message" (p. 43). The direct reference to McLuhan easily connects similar ideas between texts as well as the quote, "Let us not look back in anger, nor forward in fear, but around in awareness" (p.83). The awareness within montage theory is what physical and digital images are capable of doing to the viewer, and multi-media texts have much to offer in the realm of creative innovation.

The montage acts as a method of inventing and forming creative connections often in unconventional and unrelated ways. More advanced students may see the intricate attention to visual design presented within *Montage: Investigations in*



*Language*, but the beginning first-year writer will have many questions. As such a student confronts Sparke and McKowen's text they are immediately greeted by the title in neon green and pink print, which is duplicated on the back of the book's front cover like graffiti and flipping through the pages will reveal juxtaposed, often strange images, reversed lettering, upside down text, and a very non-traditional representation of visuals (Sego, 1971, p. 55). Sparke and McKowen offer very little in the way of an explanation except what comes at the beginning of their text. They describe that there is only one method a person arrives at a new idea and that is through the union of multiple ideas he already possesses to arrive at the conclusion that there is a relationship he was unaware of: An idea is an accomplishment of organization (Sparke & McKowen, 1970, p.2). The use of quizzes and questions in Sparke and McKowen's book also creates curiosity as to what constitutes the most successful way of teaching, perhaps through self-engaged interaction.

Multi-media textbooks such as *Montage* allow for different and creative perspectives on how the teaching and learning process should unfold. Palmeri discusses how the idea of the montage can be valuable for the learning process through Sparke and McKowen's book. Other commentators on composition studies also have pointed out the significance of combining images and language to make something new. In an article on multi-media textbooks, Sego offers a theory as to why Sparke and McKowen's book is so influential. The structure is very gripping and the material itself maybe is irrelevant to the true meaning, but what is essential is the proactive discipline it requires of readers as they journey within the pages: the text changes itself and expects the student to change as they study, too (Sego, 1971, p.55). Therefore, it could

be said that the strengths of the montage is the innovation it creates for students, which can enable a unique learning experience. Segó (1971) goes on to say that while traditional instructors will have reservations with it, new teachers in composition fields would be unhappy with anything else (p.55). Perhaps Segó here is aware of the interconnected nature between advanced technology and transformative classrooms as well as the generation gap which could separate cooperation between traditional and nuanced views. But in conversation with Segó about the benefits of multi-media texts, Hasselriis (1992), states that *Montage* is a book that is eye-catching and yet a reader is multi-tasking, reading, looking at something, thinking and because nothing is too lengthy, reflecting and reviewing the material is unavoidable so more time is spent and ultimately the text “invites you in and keeps you there” (p.94). If composition and texts change the overall instructive environment, the teaching and learning processes must adapt to accommodate new ways of thought.

There are many other instances of strange questions and images being used to joggle the mind and promote creativity within *Montage*. For Segó, this is all part of the peculiar learning process of multi-media textbooks that Palmeri discusses. It is Segó though who cites W.J.J. Gordon and his process of generating creativity. This process called “synectics” is where the aim is, “to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar” (Segó, 1971, p.54). A parallel to this is found in Shipka’s (2011) text on composition where she also explores this process of making the known, unknown and vice versa. Shipka comments that while multimodal texts and teaching strategies may seem uncomfortable and inconceivable at first, instructors must work to make such strange and new situations seem less so, reversing the known with the unknown in

educational settings (p.134). It is through creative representation of images and language that teachers might invoke composition studies in more nuanced, inclusive ways that also merge the worlds of creativity and academia.

Multimodality in the classroom embraces other disciplines, which leads to further investigations of montage theory at work in a creative way. What most instructors need to be aware of is that there is more to multimodality than learning technical skills because it also encourages the types of learning outcomes which universities set for their students. Childers, Hobson and Mullen (1998) demonstrate within their book on the verbal and visual that even with print or picture based texts, communication and language isn't just a mechanical process but instead there exists a technique where "exploration, play, and invention" help composers explore what they need to say (p.140). This function spans multiple disciplines outside of the composition classroom to also include how instructors can think about how principles of art, science, and mathematics can be expressed in a multimodal way to embrace audiences who exist outside a concentration of study. The ability of using all kinds of creative images effectively is also seen in McCloud's (2004) multimodal essay "From the Vocabulary of Comics," where in several panels he describes the differences between image classes: the icons and symbols for language, sciences, mathematics and communication and then the pictures which represent the subject (p.198). McCloud's multimodal essay describes the differences among images, symbols, and icons as it relates to multimedia and interactive texts more so than the traditional linguistic approach. Childers et al., also push towards the interaction and energy behind visual art and these factors all

contribute to the creative side of montage theory and multimodal composition. But also more than creative innovation, alternative form and style are also relevant in these texts.

McLuhan's text understands juxtaposing structure within montage theory in exploring the relation between media and the learning process. McLuhan was aware of media's influence in 1967, but for contemporary audiences this is even more relevant today with all of the images present in digital platforms. Montage theory seeks to prove that juxtaposition between texts and images affects the cognitive learning process in the human brain which seeks to order chaos. Ultimately, behind every multimedia text is a conscious design with each image, text, and graphic, much like careful design is made in crafting a traditional thesis statement. McLuhan says that *Medium is the Massage* is, "a collide-oscope of interfaced situations" (1967, p. 10). This description and play on words hearkens exactly to the theme within montage theory of meaning being created out of text and images integrated seamlessly without attention being placed more heavily on one or the other. One misconception which can also be eliminated based on McLuhan's text is that montage theory is only applicable to visual learners; with the amount of interactive technology available today, montage theory ultimately encourages discovery through learning which can be valuable to kinesthetic and other types of learning abilities. With technology and forms of media, human communities both physical and digital can be configured in artistic ways, which can bring teaching to its full potential, turning basic perception and learning into discovery (McLuhan, 1967, p. 68). The learning process is very much hinged on the idea of discovery and understanding the importance of effective structuring of texts which both McLuhan and montage theory reinforce.

The power of the montage encourages juxtaposing structure not only within relationships between technology and society but in images and words to create meaning. Palmeri elaborates on many prime examples of the montage being at work in texts and asserts that using montage also seeks to elevate students' receptivity and understanding of the rhetorical aspects of font types and design to promote creative thinking (101). Developing creative thinking would not be achieved if McLuhan and Sparke and Mckowen for instance were not consciously aware of juxtaposition being a key element in the design process. In response to Sparke and McKowen's text, P. Hasselriis claims if used properly, "*Montage* forces an inductive approach to teaching and learning," and the results will show the students learn but in the non-traditional way that the book creates (1992, p.95). It is this text that opposes the norms of what textbooks can deliver in terms of visuals and language, and the evidence is on every page that juxtaposition is important. Awareness of structure can also be seen in how the media interacts and attempts to influence society as well.

McLuhan also suggests the need of educational communities to realize media's impact. While McLuhan's text makes use of montage theory to demonstrate media and technology's impact on society, he also explicitly states the importance of fluency among how students and viewers can best react to media. In a collection of interviews McLuhan gives many valuable answers to the moderator concerning the impact of media on maturity and education. McLuhan suggests that the forces that guide media's influence are strong and persuasive, and that if both young and old can exercise a control and understanding of such influence, there will be a "reasonable ecology" between society and media once the effects and forms of media are taught and people

are brought to an “awareness of the nature of operation” (McLuhan, 2016, Section 3). McLuhan here is referring to the need of education when it comes to making people aware of design principles, media tactics, rhetorical tropes, as well as uses of propaganda that the public may not be aware of. This awareness is also another element within montage theory, where educators should not only make students aware of traditional composition skills but also how to interpret the structure, design elements, and their psychological effect on the mind in a media dominated culture.

Montage theory also plays a role in the structure of McCloud’s (1993) *Understanding Comics*. Because conceptually it is concerned with juxtaposed images and words, the idea of montage works extremely well within paneled composition or the world of comics. Within popular culture comics and graphic novels have been a platform where readers are turned into viewers, experiencing images in detail and also reading what is said through dialogue bubbles as well as what remains unsaid. McCloud makes use of his text, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*, reinforcing what McLuhan, Sparke, and McKowen have already established in that montage theory is explicitly about the power of the medium to impact readers. McLuhan corroborates McCloud by saying that in order to understand invisible forces behind media people must be aware and taught those effects and methods (McLuhan, 2016, section 3). McCloud does just that as each panel depicts a progression towards awareness at how comics can be understood. From the beginning of McCloud’s text there is an attempt to identify different ways of describing what comics are from a composition and theoretical point of view. In a similar way to Thompson and Bordwell’s (2010) definition of “intellectual montage,” and the relationship between images, comics are

referred to as: “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence” (McCloud, 1993, p. 9). Juxtaposition is a concept which montage theory and Sparke and McKowen already employ, and deliberate sequence also is a subject McLuhan addresses concerning linear versus sequential communication within media. McCloud later refers to the medium of comics and the paneled page as “pictures in sequence” which are identified as exceptional methods to create meaning and establish communication but in traditional studies take different forms (McCloud, 1993, p.20). These forms come as diagrams, outlines, or mimetic instructions (student see, student do) used to describe traditional sequences, but perhaps comics are the key to engaging creative diagramming and outlining which can be better understood.

McLuhan also captures the essence of montage theory awareness within the popular culture of “paneled composition” as an important area of visual rhetoric. Throughout *The Medium is the Massage*, McLuhan does not simply combine text and images, but he plays with stylistic choices, breaking expectations of the text, forcing participatory reaction, and demonstrating the significance between the positions humans place themselves in concerning media. Montage theory echoes the idea that seamless integration of visuals and text can exist both as a physical and digital medium which can impact interaction in a variety of ways. Towards the end of the text, McLuhan uses a newspaper comic strip of a younger character sitting on a footstool by an electric guitar, explaining a problematic concept to his dad, an older man sitting in an armchair. The image immediately invokes thoughts of generation gaps as well as society struggling between positions of comfort and privilege and of new ideas and discovery. The panel’s character states that a person’s role in an environment is based on the

mediums created and that depending on how thoughts and actions are presented, television and media are bringing action and communal interaction closer to possibility (McLuhan, 1967, p.157). The panel concludes with a strange statement that takes an anachronism and transforms it into a metaphor for the electronic, digital age: “We again live in a village. Get it?” (McLuhan, 1967, p. 157). McLuhan’s idea, as well as montage theory, creates an interesting social dynamic: the idea of society existing within a digital village, where ideas are now integrated and shared instantaneously through technology. By making use of such structures, montage theory is not only evident within texts but is also a mentality and style that can affect perception as well.

The montage challenges standard and logical arguments in favor of more bizarre and unsynchronized ways of composing through juxtaposition. Palmeri (2012) uses two phrases that add to Sparke and McKowen’s aim in *Montage* by saying that new discoveries are motivated through the conflict between images and words, and that those conflicts can be used as modes of creativity (p.103). For example, in *Montage*, there are instances of authorial injection as well as the strange use of fonts and formats. Sparke and McKowen (1970) write, “Going places seeing things?” (p.59). On the following pages there are questions about travel while on the side of the page scribbled in black charcoal is written, “How is your tour through this book progressing?” (p.61). Some places the curious text even acts as an interrogation for the reader with questions like, “Is the visual world encoded? Who is the cryptographer? Do we have to learn the code? How do we use our eyes as probes?” (p.139). This evolution of composition can stare back from the page. Even when opening a copy of *Montage* by Sparke and McKowen, a reader sees the smiling child actress, Shirley Temple, pointing towards a



glowing light bulb with a slumped orangutan smirking next to her. Palmeri (2012) adds that the power of juxtaposing images and language for students can act as a “strategy for reseeing and reimagining the world in which they live in” (p.111). This “reseeing” has a purpose: to see the world differently through alternating ideas and patterns.

Visual composition can be implemented to engage with popular culture. This is one aspect of visual composition speaking beyond the classroom setting. One such method of visual composition comes from the largely dismissed and misunderstood world of comics and graphic novels. These forms have not been considered a legitimate form of composition in the past but many including Morris and McCloud make a case for comics as visual modes of communicating complex ideas. In G. S. Morris’ article on the composition pedagogy present within comic paneling, he validates this legitimacy: “because of their multimodal nature, comics dictate a critical distance, whether in response to their visual distortion of reality, their collision of words and images, their potential openness in reading, or their static rendering of temporal experience” (p. 38). The value of such a medium is that it links the integration of text and visuals so seamlessly as to create a new dimension of composing.

For the composition classroom, a series of comic book panels might allow for the alternative style of research and the presentation of information that would appeal to some students. Sealey-Morris (2015) also indicates an important point in McCloud’s text in a segment where the character demonstrates an act of communication with a robot in which the robot starts performing actions and the teacher verbalizes what those actions are, in which the question is posed: “We all started like this didn't we? Using words and images interchangeably (p.35). The rhetoric of comics also allows for ways

students can explore issues such as political turmoil, workplace discrimination, social media or other relevant topics in a visual way. Sealey-Morris interjects that the benefits of comic paneling composition broaden the role of the author, place responsibility on the reader, and expand what traditional writing is capable of (2015, p.31). There are often moments where students do not realize how vast composition can be and it is the instructor's job to help students navigate between different mediums and sometimes print mediums point the way to more advanced communication practices.

Montage theory can also be seen as imitative (mimetic) of other forms functioning as a gateway to online hypertexts. While montage theory is used within experimental texts such as McLuhan, and Sparke and McKowen, as well as in creative texts which explore popular culture such as McCloud's, any conversation about the successful use of visuals within a medium will eventually turn to the Internet. However, one text that acts as a gateway between the literary world of print, and the online world of hypertext is Hayles (2002), *Writing Machines*. Upon first glance this book is more text heavy than other examples but the design and overall effect of this text relies on a font and style which appears as futuristic, computer based writing. Turning from page to page often reveals instances where the font is magnified, achieving in print, the effect of a zoom-in or magnification feature found in word processors online. Hayles describes the text as a procedure using a lexicon and pedagogical practice to accumulate the factors and approaches within both print and electronic texts and bringing them into a physical form of representation (Hayles, 2002, p. 6). Therefore this book is yet again an experiment in what montage theory can do, bridging the gap between traditional print texts and the juxtaposed disciplines of learning online hypertext. Hayles' text also

provides the distinction between montage theory, a stylistic integration of images and text to spark creativity no matter the medium, and the realm of multimodality, which suggests a more technological component to text composition.

Hayles' text brings the realization of electronic literature into focus through ultimately choosing a print medium as the vessel for the message. The themes throughout *Writing Machines* therefore are not immediately deciphered from the content, but through the design and layout of the book itself, embracing a cyber-existence. Hayles proposes a call to awareness concerning the digital world's place in how the print text and literature are now interpreted and demonstrates how hypertext is one way in which montage theory is used, causing viewers to juxtapose between links, exposing them to more images and content. Hayles discusses that hypertexts consist of three main factors: "Multiple reading paths, Chunked text, and some kind of linking mechanism," and that because hypertexts suggest the idea of multiple pathways, both print and electronic texts can be considered hypertext, such as how encyclopedias, whether in print or online, are constructed through "a system of cross-references that serve as linking mechanisms" (p.26). Hayles demonstrates the concept of montage theory within the text by focusing on the importance of juxtaposition to create and order meaning. Readers being changed into viewers establishes that meaning must also be transformed in electronic platforms based on the context and situations of words, then reflected effectively through the components of hypertext (p.23, 24). What makes Hayles text important to the study of montage theory is that it likewise does not suggest abandonment of traditional print texts for the sake of technology, but instead a

unification between process and product, words and meanings, and a realization that composition is as much about design and form based on future capabilities.

The irony within Hayles text is that the features represented in print could be more easily duplicated in another medium. Once again a prime feature within montage theory is the ability to imitate and capture an image and use it for a variety of effects. Hayles text imitates a truly online experience, which even literature is embracing as Hayles uses many examples of online texts such as “Lexia to Perplexia, A Humument and Houses of Leaves” throughout the text. Ultimately, Hayles says that through learning the techniques that inscription technologies utilize, all of the writing machines available to us have a way of linking the reader to the interfaces in which an author composes (2002, p. 131). Readers now not only have access to interact with the writer but can occupy the same online writing spaces. From print text, montage theory seeks to evolve into technologies and platforms which are even more expansive.

### III. Navigation and Movement: Hypertext and Film Montage

From multi-media text emerges other forms of composition beyond the written page: the world of websites and moving compositions. Delagrange's *Wunderkammer* and Wysocki's *Monitoring Order* are two important examples of actual online hypertexts that make use out of linking structure and digital literature which Hayles discusses. Within *Wunderkammer*, a visitor to the site is not simply greeted by static text, but with a live, interactive, module that acts as a navigation unit, as the leather bound document opens up to reveal icons the visitor can click on to access more content. All of a sudden, the reader is no longer fixed in a linear system but has the ability to control what content is viewed and how it is experienced, much like traditional dictionaries and encyclopedia offer the same function but in print. Wysocki's *Monitoring Order* follows suit, allowing viewers to experience the content at a pace which places the viewer or reader at the center of the experience.

When examining the importance of hypertext on a visual level, Delagrange emphasizes the importance of navigation as a particular style within online texts. Delagrange discusses the importance throughout *Wunderkammer* that instructors and researchers must be able to represent ideas visually. When designing a visual project, the theories behind multimodality are fully realized where the "pedagogical and textual performance" become one and that through design, instructors accomplish what print is not able to do (2009, Kairos). Certainly when a viewer visits *Wunderkammer* online, the text is immediately inviting as the digital leather bound folder opens up to reveal a series of icons meant to represent some aspect of Delagrange's conceptual process. By clicking on these icons, the viewer enters an interactive online text accompanied by

moving, juxtaposing visuals, as well as audio and video content throughout. The practical application of this text shows that through digital innovation, montage theory moves from traditional print to online interaction with relative ease, showing how technology is best used for combining texts, visuals, and graphics, into a performative and participatory text that an audience, whether student, instructor, or spectator can engage. Delagrange confirms and connects the historical view of “Wunderkammer” as objects that can be used to think with. Through digital innovation, a space can be created in which thinking can be clicked on, and accessed through multiple experiences that encourage activity with the text and “shaping a path to rhetorical action through a technology of wonder” (2009, Kairos). The idea of creating a unique online space to engage with allows for the integration of navigation units as a central part of being able to not only experience but control how a text is viewed.

Hypertexts presented such as Delagrange’s and Wysocki’s show the importance of text manipulation in order to change the speed and outcome of how a reader becomes a viewer and experiences what is on the screen. As Delagrange states knowledge can be created visually using comparisons and similarities among objects which in a digital space can be changed or altered for rhetorical effect (2009, Kairos). Also, Delagrange shows the interpersonal nature of digital spaces in which elements, objects, or images, create an alternative way to process and understand the world around the viewer (2009, Kairos). The use of these online spaces is valuable for montage theory as so much can be altered, manipulated, and controlled by the viewer to gain a more desired outcome. This ability to navigate within a hypertext can also be seen in Wysocki’s *Monitoring Order* which makes similar use out of the viewer’s ability to control the process of

learning. However, this drastic change in tradition has also impacted how students process what they encounter online. Wysocki brings McLuhan back into the equation by saying that some concepts visually are created through “disembodied design” in which the concept of a book’s design has been made translucent and unnecessary within classroom settings, as any creative decisions are ultimately handed over to the publisher (1998, Kairos). By addressing this initial problem with traditional instruction and design process, Wysocki establishes McLuhan’s presence through a space in technology that he so prophetically used as a platform within his 1967 text, *The Medium is the Massage*.

Wysocki also insists on the importance of the communication of images within a digital writing space. Wysocki argues in *Monitoring Order* that there are two levels of meaning making when creating visuals: first that visuals can extend into the cultural and political environments in which they can become invisible to the untrained eye and secondly that visuals are experienced personally by individuals with diverse histories (1998, Kairos). Thus, Wysocki uses many sources to arrive at a point, and discusses McLuhan and Kress concerning the power and use of images and design. A practical application which Wysocki proposes is that students should be made aware of the ploys by which visuals exist within our lives, and it isn’t enough that rules of design are taught but instead, utilized and shown in practice (1998, Kairos). Both Delagrange and Wysocki, as well as other practitioners are making use out of digital spaces to create compositions, but montage theory also is clearly defined within moving images and the world of cinema.

Multimedia texts may capture content and images in a way which integrates montage theory within print and online texts, but in the realm of film, montage theory

involves sometimes shocking, thought provoking editing that uses a collision of images to create elusive, abstract meaning to affect the viewer. Montage itself addresses possibilities for coordinating and assembling shots in moving pictures. However, montage theory includes more than the technical film process and can embody a stylistic choice with deliberate and engaged editing that uses joined images to make meaning and provide awareness for the viewer, which embraces unconventional and non-linear ways of composing. Montage theory is a metamorphosis, not only in print and hypertext, but in film, which can change how people look at traditional plot, narrative, or even structure.

Elements of film form, which includes both narrative system and cinematic style, echo the graphic components within multimedia texts. Thompson and Bordwell's text, *Film Art: An Introduction* (2010), defines both mise-en-scene, known as the "what" of the shot, which includes lighting, sets/props, costume/makeup, and character expressions and movement, and cinematography, known as the "how" of the shot, which includes framing, camera angles, camera distance, and camera mobility, to show the potential for "graphic editing" in the juxtaposition of any shot meant for film assembly (p.226). Therefore, an understanding of mise-en-scene and cinematography correlates to the elements of visual awareness and arrangement within multimedia texts which show montage theory at work. Just as the author or designer chooses how images and text appear on the page, a creative vision should be behind not only what the camera captures but also how each frame should be assembled or arranged during the editing process.



Vertov and Eisenstein, two early Soviet filmmakers in the 1920's, capture the power of montage with visual moving images. The relations between shots, frames, devices and the techniques used to move between each are integral also in the study between text, image and graphic placement within multi-media works. Vertov's claim, though, is at the heart of montage theory: "I am Kino-eye. I am builder. I have placed you... in an extraordinary room which did not exist until just now when I also created it. In this room there are twelve walls, shot by me in various parts of the world; I've managed to arrange the shots in an order that is pleasing (Thompson and Bordwell, 2010, p.231). The "Kino-eye," also known as the cinema eye is invaluable to montage theory as it seeks to show the filmmaker as creator of worlds and progenitor of abstract ideas rather than simply a student or technician transferring screenplay to film. The interactive nature of the "Kino Eye" is also seen in how multi-media texts invite the reader in and encourage multiple viewings to experience the text.

Visual composition not only allows for students to engage in different modes and networks, but also to explore complex ideas that would be difficult to see in print. Following the idea that sight leads to visualizing images from words and vice versa, Cook comments on the impact of how the eye and camera captures meaning differently when film is the "mode" relied on. Cook cites English mathematician W.K Clifford and the connection between the imagination, Euclidean geometry, and differential calculus in order to understand the mechanisms which show visuals as movement; "I imagine all motions... according to the rules of continuity; between the distinct pictures I see, I insert an infinite number of intermediate pictures" (2007, p.82). Here Cook shows Clifford's idea that human perception contains multiple visions of one picture. Such

deductions show the value of visual composition in the classroom, not just applied to English studies but also “Film as Composition.” Cook also shows Vertov’s understanding of the physiological and mechanical variations of the eye through his “theory of the interval.” Cook (2007) explains that for Vertov breaks in different filmstrips represented “intervals” but in “identifying intervals rather than movements as the ‘elements’ of cinematic art,” the theory of the interval started as the technique of editing two shots together in a geometrical way thus the theory was how editing can accomplish linking frames between shots” (p.90). In other words if the process of combining moving images together creates meaning, students likewise must be aware of the tools available to them concerning visual rhetoric: the aesthetics of colors, alignment and proximity of image and the possibility of transforming ideas into moving images.

Eisenstein, a Soviet filmmaker, who like Vertov, developed and wrote montage theory, also practiced this within his films, testing the possibilities of film assembly for audiences. Eisenstein recognized the importance of style and the relationship of shots when editing within film and wrote extensively on the subject within his text of critical essays on film theory, known as *Film Form*, one of the primary theoretical texts on montage. Examining such theorists and examples, such as Vertov and Eisenstein is important when moving into the application of film as a composition form since Eisenstein establishes a clear definition and application of montage. By learning from Eisenstein the editing process can be used to capture relationship between images, students both in Film and English will have a better understanding of how montage is utilized as a form of composition. Within his text *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*,

Eisenstein describes to readers a very potent example of what montage accomplishes, saying, “The shot is by no means an element of montage. The shot is a montage cell. Just as cells in their division form a phenomenon of another order, the organism or embryo, so, on the other side of the dialectical leap from the shot, there is montage” (1977, p.37). In other words, in film, multiple parts exist within a whole and just as Eisenstein demonstrates the division of cells from embryos, the montage exists as an essential function of the transition of meaning much in the same way that paragraphs and sentences do for text. Yet juxtaposing images uses similar techniques practiced in multi-modal texts: images arranged in conflict. It seems as if Eisenstein suggests that montage exists as a discontinuous function within film, a function used initially to spark curiosity, and then wonder. Yet, Eisenstein affirms in *Film Form* that montage achieves a “unity of the highest order” and through this a film achieves a natural encapsulation of one central idea which uses all parts and details of a film work (1977, p.254). Montage might start out as a technical process in filmmaking but, ultimately, Eisenstein explains that montage is a unique process of creation through conflict. His realization demonstrates that anyone with the proper tools can experiment when filmmaking, to arrive at new forms of meaning. However for the classroom, such a focus on experimentation would be important for students practicing composition in new mediums.

The process of montage in film can be used to show unity in design. Understanding a pioneer filmmaker like Eisenstein provides a framework for understanding the importance of how montage first gained its importance and its continual experimentation in contemporary film. As within the creation of multi-media

texts, there needs to be a unity among images regardless of the form. Bordwell (1993) explains that “form” is a process to create art and that while it might aggravate certain norms of traditional editing and narrative structure, the art creates dynamics which causes the viewer to think about the film and the world in a sequential thought structure, showing that true intellectual cinema concerns itself with dialectics (p. 128). Based on Eisenstein’s influential films such as *Strike* (1925), *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925), *October* (1928), *Ivan the Terrible* (1944, 1945) among others, both filmmakers and critics would later recognize how Eisenstein’s use of montage and its ability to manipulate and create an artistic and social force was crucial for the transformation of meaning (Bordwell, 1993, p.260). However, despite the conflict within montage sequences, there is still the need for the audience to understand the meaning of image sequences regardless of the technique used. In composition studies, it would be the use of rhetorical strategies in order to establish meaning that compares with film studies and the use of montage. While Eisenstein explored what the camera can do in the early part of 20<sup>th</sup> century, more contemporary directors use different editing strategies to create a unique and stylistic expression in cinema.

Filmmaking exists as a critical example of composition at work both behind and in front of the camera. By understanding mise-en-scene, cinematography, and film’s editing process, practitioners can also look at how film is applied to composition studies. Within the text, *Double Exposure: Composing through Writing and Film*, Costanzo establishes a lot of the critical theories which help bridge the gap between film and composition studies. Costanzo (1984) writes about the importance of text, film and composition as mental activities which exercise certain processes such as “seeing

patterns, exploring options, and interpreting experience, which draws on basic mental predispositions for representing what is felt or thought in symbolic form, for shaping unexamined, unfamiliar events into meaningful arrangements” (p.169). Costanzo shows the values of filmmaking by showing how much of filmmaking is based on forms of composition and modes of rhetoric such as *Inventio* (discovery and expression of a subject), *Dispositio* (the way the material is ordered into arrangements), *Elocutio* (the style of how someone reaches an audience) (p.171). Costanzo demonstrates the nuances within filmmaking while demonstrating that film is already tied to multiple other disciplines which expands upon montage theory.

Costanzo’s text also shows the application of student use of film to compose. Costanzo says that students need to learn within composition studies and in film, connections between their ideas and arrangement of visuals, seeing how their ideas take shape and ultimately, “the goal is to become an attentive participant in the composing process – by making choices, noticing outcomes, looking for alternatives, connections, patterns – and in this way to gain control over the process” (1984, p.4). Costanzo desires for students to take a proactive approach to filmmaking which is a crucial part of montage theory, being aware of creative design decisions. Costanzo (1984) also makes a valuable connection between the verbal and visual when he describes the process of exploratory writing and filming – “pictures on one side, words on the other – allows writers to shuttle back and forth between visual and verbal modes of thought. Delineating details of a scene from memory or imagination can lead to writing that is sharper, more specific, more exact” (p.19). This idea of application and instruction in

film also leads to the appropriate teaching methods that embrace montage theory and the world of multimodal composition.

Multimodality in the classrooms should not be seen as just a break from traditional texts but an expansion of them. There are many rhetorical and practical situations that should be considered when assigning students multimodal assignments, such as film, and the best ways to consult and eventually grade the overall project. However, many believe such a practice is necessary as Metros points out in an article concerning visual education. Metros describes the relevancy of multimodal studies as instructors observe the technologies that are available to students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, through websites, presentation software, podcasts and video which suggests, “Sight and sound are topics that must be taught alongside traditional literacies” (Metros, 2008, p.107). Even before an instructor decides upon a medium or a student proposes a creative idea to tackle a project with, instructors need to be prepared for tackling these issues from the outset. In the future, instructors at universities need to engage in a required training program which at least initiates and makes aware the value of composing in digital spaces. The National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) likewise elaborate on the many literacies instructors should have as technology becomes ever more present in the classroom. In conversation with the NCTE and Metros on this issue, DigiRhet.org (2006) states that the American Library Association also recognizes this issue and that there is a link between “informational literacy and information technology” and that to truly embrace literacy an instructor must exercise technological “fluency” (p.233). According to Duncum (2004) in an article on multimodality and meaning, student generated film shows dynamic understanding by asking students to

demonstrate how tone, mood, and atmosphere are created, “through camera angles; point of view; length of shots; framing or cropping devices like long shot and close up; editing techniques like fade in/fade out; dissolves or wipes; or ambient sounds such as sound effects created on screen” (p.260). This may seem daunting to some but the call for multimodality isn’t the replacement of text but the remediation and re-examination of print.

The focus on modes of visual rhetoric is not derived from traditional instruction but student engagement. When it comes to students composing presentations using visual software online, crafting an infographic, or filming a video, students wield the technology. As Brooke insists in “New Media Pedagogy,” the knowledge between students and instructors is often unequal and that the center of the classroom should be reconsidered since now information flows from the fingertips of the students’ devices (2014, p.182). In many ways, visual composition is a more engaged composition style as it does not involve only an academic, research based discourse, but instead an interdisciplinary understanding of the functionality of technology in both film and hypertext. Percy (2015) comments that the necessary tasks students encounter when making a film has to do with a critique of quality; if a film has value then unnecessary tools do not keep the focus, but that the purpose of “in-film activities is not to guarantee student interest, but student engagement” (p.42). Percy also addresses the relevancy of students shooting short films as represented by “The Flying Man” in order to engage and as Brooke suggests, placing the center of New Media Pedagogy in the hands of those who will be actively using technology. Bolter (2001) argues, concerning hypertext, there is an importance for the viewer to choose the path to read and while

ancient texts, papyrus and scrolls, represent the most linear of texts, hypertext and electronic writing can demonstrate the inclusion of active participation in the path of what the reader or viewer encounters (p.100-101). This conversation concerning the creation of multimodal hypertexts and film, are also related to proper instruction within the classroom setting.



#### **IV. Montage Theory Application: Pedagogy Awareness**

Currently, making use of student-favored technology is integral to effective communication and embracing montage theory. Often regardless of age or background, students are constantly composing text messages, engaging with blogs, using social media, and interacting with their portable phone screens and tablets. An issue all educational disciplines face, then, is the evolution of the written word: the transformation of print to the dominance of visual composing through multimodal software and online hypertext. Educators must now focus their instructional methods to incorporate computer-based composition, especially how hypertext impacts student engagement. Work such as that by Bernhardt shows that within the multimodality of hypertext, interactivity is necessary for student understanding. Furthermore, through electronic and visual mediums, students become participants who can shape their learning outcomes and performances (Deacon, 2001, p.5). Students are now designers rather than writers, composing visual presentations through online sites or uploading video content to sites that can be viewed and changed. Such use of technology in the classroom is also co-dependent on the educator's implementation process, which is at the heart of New Media Pedagogy and montage theory.

A significant cultural and proactive advantage of montage theory can be seen in the transition from text to visual composition. Academic print text has always been concerned with the fixed development of the thesis, organization of content, source integration and sustaining an argument. While all of these attributes function well within the confines of print text, montage theory suggests that images and visuals could express meaning in the same way and more effectively. Grushka (2010) illustrates this

“visual learning and performative pedagogy,” where the impact on the student is a “socio-cultural” one in which students learn to decipher the meaning behind images in a critical way that provides a deeper connection to life experiences and visuals, allowing for students to engage in a representational analysis of complex subjects (p. 21).

Diverse students can gain unique cultural insights and understandings through familiar online “memes,” icons, or other visual aids which could connect people separated by languages and distance. Images, therefore, are a way of providing meaning, attempting to break cultural barriers, and establishing a set of visual skills that are not present in print-based texts which are frequently obscured by language constraints. While the traditional essay or research paper still provides essential writing strategies, instructors can demonstrate that students gain a better sense of ownership and design when composing visually, aiding in an inclusive and creative academic sphere through the use of montage theory.

Creativity through visual composition enhances student communication, connecting the academic student with the digitally literate public outside. This insight touches on the ideas within Kumpf’s article on “visual metadiscourse,” which argues that visuals ignite a type of cognitive creativity, combining both traditional academic prowess with an attention towards visual design, which can help assess and apply montage theory to actual practice and evaluation. For example, Kumpf (2000) uses a student assignment, a travel brochure, to demonstrate visual effectiveness. The student who creates the assignment, causes visual metadiscourse in three ways for the viewer: first, initial impression and curiosity when the viewer wants to find what is behind the folds of the brochure; second, attraction that invites the viewer further into the visual

brochure by opening it; and, lastly, overall visual engagement where the reader or viewer is changed by one piece of information which builds on the next, creating a transformative experience (p. 414). The public might not have the time to read a long text-based research paper, but if that student's research is translated to an accessible website or eye-catching video, the world of academia becomes more accessible to the digital public. This conversion leads to the conversation of the practical use of multimodality, how such composition can be defined, and what instructors must do to successfully integrate it. Concepts such as visual metadiscourse proactively engage with learning outcomes, suggesting that multimodal texts build upon existing knowledge by not only drawing the reader's attention, but influencing reception of texts, keeping the student in a suspended state of discovery (Kumpf, 2000, p. 401). Montage theory promotes creativity which leads to effective multimodal projects and therefore, utilizes three dominant features—visual, audio and video tools—to engage with the public, which in turn allows academics to reach more people and establish ideas faster.

Multimodal composition is academic creativity, but it also demonstrates digital innovation. Visual composition allows the student to explore alternative mediums to support their arguments or research. For example, a student studying the psychological strategies of the advertisement industry might benefit more from a visual aid or a multimodal project that shows the impact of colors on the human brain. Concerning the promise of digital composing linked to student collaboration, DigiRhet.org (2006) explains that the tools of technology provide a connection among students in order for participation and inter-communication to thrive where it did not exist before, and, because of digital spaces, ideas can now be distributed and understood faster among

diverse groups of people (p. 238). Such rapid circulation of ideas could also be seen if a student performed a research study on the history of radio broadcasts' impact on the general public, which could be more effective by using a series of podcasts rather than the traditional research paper. The ultimate goal in multimodal composition is to develop advanced student discourse practices that allow for creativity while demonstrating the innovative thinking skills students develop when engaging with multimodality, whether visual or audio.

Interaction within composition can easily be associated with aurality and the value of audio compositions. Selfe (2009) emphasizes the power and usage of audio compositions as well as the interaction process within text, and even at certain intervals in the article on aurality, Selfe actually instructs readers to stop and turn their attention to a website link that will connect them to the next section. Discussing an audio poem by Elisa Norris, for example, Selfe (2009) comments that through hearing Norris' voice, the poetic images and the music place listeners in a position to understand and identify with the poet's heritage because the interpersonal dimensions of audio-composing create empathy and subjugate racism and bigotry (p. 626). This view suggests an integration of interactive multimodality within the text that can reach the listener or viewer. However, Selfe reflects that instructors need to practice with online software and resources in order to inform students how they can create multimodal compositions such as podcasts, audio essays, websites, videos, or visual presentations. Even as instructors write and discuss multimodality in print text, they must preferably expand the discussions to digital communication. Instructors need to practice with multimodal platforms in order to understand when strategies work between different mediums.

One innovative way for any field to incorporate multimodal composition in a variety of mediums is with book reviews or interactive compositions. The traditional book review has been seen as an assignment for students to recite main points, research angles, and subject matter; however, the design of multimodality is not to enhance memory skills necessarily, but design skills. Students from all disciplines can take what they read from their class texts and make use of multi-media software or similar tools in order to demonstrate understanding visually. For example, such programs could be used to create an interactive visual of how a cell functions in biology, psychological disorders in children within child development, or even providing a more visual way of understanding a novel or essay. Importantly, as Tulley and Blair (2009) discuss, integrated multimodality does not suggest that only one course or one field should be offered to instruct students, but instead such integration should be used to rethink all genres of studies so students can build critical thinking and writing skills using the technologies they already use from day to day (p. 442). By assuming that students from a multitude of disciplines are engaged with technology, multimodality within English studies, especially in basic first year writing has a further use: the interdisciplinary cross-over within other fields. Using online sites to compose visually will ultimately create better understanding in how students assess the texts they read for class, further aiding in their development.

Another advantage of multimodality outside of the academic setting is the cultivation of more professional students. While the academic essay and research paper function as the traditional way of gauging a student's writing, instructors should also gauge whether a student's research will deliver a valuable skill after a paper has been

finished. If a student becomes familiar with an online software program that allows free access, for example, a student will likely find these programs useful for further assignments in a number of fields. Through audio composing, for example, Selfe (2009) is in clear conversation with Grushka's discussion on multimodality's impact on students' ability to construct texts that transcend social and cultural barriers through interpersonal communication (p. 626). Not only within academic settings, but outside of English courses, such skills will be valuable in other fields as well such as advertisement, video, and business-related careers. The student is a valuable asset to the digital workplace if they are familiar with how to use info-graphic sites to show and represent the data of profits a company gains over a year for example. A student who can navigate, select, and utilize the correct digital site for a project or assignment will be valuable, whether in a group of other students doing a project or at singular office jobs for a company. Instead of only focusing on print essays that students may forget, multimodal sites and projects will remain in a student's active digital toolbox because the skill is constantly reinforced during the course of a day by the student's normal digital usage. Possessing the knowledge of these multimodal sites will allow for an overall reformation of how students look at and tackle their work and also reinforce the NCTE's and New Media Pedagogy's aim at creating multiple and dynamic literacies.

With such mediums of multimodal composition available, the advantage of digital composition allows for deeper reflection and interaction with assignments. Multimodal and visual composition provides great gains for a wide number of reasons, but it is through the instructor that students engage with such modes. Hocks (2003) elaborates on how digital writing environments should be understood by the instructor

as well as the proper way of making sense academically for students. In “Visual Rhetoric within Digital Environments” Hocks explains Wysocki’s uses of digital space “visually challenge the reader’s sense of order and design; the readers of this journal leave this essay having actually experienced a new way of seeing what was previously invisible” (p.638). Wysocki’s *Monitoring Order* uses colors, visual metaphors, and graphic repetitions to offer deep reflection about intuitions, presumptions, and mindsets regarding the visual in relation to text, ultimately turning the reader or viewer into a potential designer (Hocks, 2003, p. 638). Hocks’ analysis of Wysocki shows how students’ work will be much more engaged and reflective once creative aspects are taken into account. Furthermore, digital spaces also will cause students to be aware of their peers as “visitors” as opposed to only fellow writers. This awareness is yet another example of digital composition creating a beneficial and reflective interaction when students provide feedback based on what they see rather than what they feel forced to read. For the instructor, once the benefits are acknowledged, then it becomes a question of how to evaluate such work.

When instructors properly utilize multimodal sites, understand the benefits, and gauge the reactions of the students, they will also have to change the grading process from mere static evaluation to a dynamic range of examination. Essentially, if multimodal assignments are substituted for print texts, then instructors must realize that their grading and feedback to students will also need to be based more on the elements of design. In conversation with this subject, Krause (2004) discusses the awareness of “The Three C’s of Design”—composition (placement, spacing, flow), components (photos, icons, backgrounds), and concept (message, style, theme)—as ways of

providing a framework for analyzing a multimodal assignment's effect (p.10). By carefully examining these principles, instructors can create new rubrics or criteria, asking, for example, if an appropriate color palette is used, is the spacing proportional, and is the overall theme cohesive. New rubrics will have to stress unity—that a design is effective when all of the components, concepts, and composition are working together to attract the correct audience and establish intent (Krause, 2004, p. 11). Understanding these techniques for grading can also be seen in video content as well as visual. In an article on multimodality and meaning, Duncum (2004) also shows this fluency with evaluating student-generated film by suggesting students must understand how ideas and atmospheres are established through the use of the camera, lighting, editing process and techniques, as well as sound which establishes mood for the viewer (p. 260). Instructors, then, must not only be aware of the tools and techniques used in multimodal composition, but also in order to properly evaluate student work and to prevent one of the greatest fears among educators today, falling behind in the eyes of the students; they will have to adjust to new rubrics.

As the digital age is upon us, multimodal practices must be taught now to avoid the problem of anachronism or stagnation in the classroom. Whether with the actual assignment or the grading process, instructors must adapt to practice flexibility, even if the challenge with multimodality is overcoming personal troubles with technology. In discussing the Wysocki hypertext *Monitoring Order*, Hocks (2003) states that the “hybridity” of the web as a medium focuses on the juxtaposition between images and text co-existing in one “constructed, heterogeneous semiotic space,” wherein Wysocki combines different elements in thought-provoking but non-traditional ways (p. 637).



The Wysocki hypertext makes use of buttons and menus to help the visitor navigate through the information. This flexibility of the web is useful because it challenges traditional structures and can lead to new discoveries. Tulley and Blair (2009) harken back to Kumpf's theory when they discuss the connection between hypertext and collaboration in which the reader becomes a participant who can "manipulate the initial author's text, complicating and broadening the notion of authorship" (p. 445). The transformative nature of a text should be the author's purpose and what learning students should strive for through proper instruction.

These modes and components of visual design will cultivate students and allow for the public to better understand the value of montage theory at work in multimodal composition. As technology developed and would become a conceivable reality in the classroom, W. Benjamin forecasted multimodal learning in that the increase of the understanding between relationships of words and images would be needed for a populace engaged with both written and image based modes of communication (as cited in Duncum, 2004, p. 262). Where multimodality focuses on non-print based texts such as what can be seen in websites, hypertexts, film and online presentation programs, visual rhetoric seeks to explore the nuances behind why such presentation aids and programs are beneficial through a knowledgeable understanding of how colors and images can all be used in relation to aesthetic proximity and alignment with one another. One goal for multimodal instructors is the hope that students will learn to create projects where text and images are integrated equally without domination of one over the others. But most importantly, an understanding of visual rhetoric is related to contemporary society with all of the devices and software available.

Multimodality, then, provides the answer to educational lapses and seeks to enhance education and professional development for all who engage with it. More training programs should be available and potentially required of faculty across the disciplines to develop at least a general understanding of multimodal usage, as the need for it will increase in years to come. Metros (2008) affirms that education involving the Internet and multimedia will enhance visual composition and will create a more dynamic purpose that will reach a multitude of audiences, accelerating and affecting learning outcomes and behaviors (p.106). The future of composition studies and composition in other fields greatly hinges on the ability for instructors to at least demonstrate minimal fluency with technology options available as students continue to express themselves in multimodal forms. Perhaps educational institutions can converge with students' private online composing spaces to develop new academic writing environments as well. New Media Pedagogy and multimodality are not critical of print texts, but promote practices that expand students' abilities to reach their audiences in a variety of new and malleable ways within the shifting nature of academia.

## **V. Conclusion: Multimodal Montage – Lasting Impact**

Montage theory is embraced across multiple disciplines and is evident in many artifacts from print texts, to reels of film and essays of film theory, to the pedagogy practices within the classroom that are already in existence. Montage theory adds onto the existing conversation of multimodality, by saying that students need to be consciously aware of visual design in the multimodal projects they create as well as how writing itself can be a visual process. Montage theory does not exist solely within Composition studies but is in intimate tandem with Film, Art and Technology studies to better reach audiences and create communicators who are effective at the creation of breathing and living compositions.

In looking at how pedagogy, textbooks, and film successfully use montage as a way of conveying meaning, there are two differences in the word. When referring to the small concept “montage,” it refers to the technical processes. Within film, montage can refer to sequencing of frames, the coordination of shot to shot, and other editing techniques, while in text, montage is simply the alignment, juxtaposition, and process of merging images and text into meaning within a page. Within pedagogy, embracing montage practices is adopting a fluid and adaptable approach. But when referring to film, “Montage,” in the large, conceptual sense can be understood as a design feature – a stylistic choice – that involves complex editing to maximize the emotional and intellectual experience for the viewer. For textbooks, “Montage” is multi-media genres and for Pedagogy it refers not to mere multimodality but “multimodal juxtaposition.” Kress (2005) affirms in his article concerning semiotics and the relations to learning that the understanding of forms, must be “transformative” for the world, society,

resources, the self and a person's willingness to adapt to their conception of "self" (p.21). Even montage itself can be adapted and reformatted in order to facilitate the learning process for the classrooms.

Perspectives in teaching and composing allow for people to see the phenomenon of montage theory in a different light. The montage acts as a powerful vessel by which students, teachers, writers, and filmmakers can join creativity and writing together through image and language. Palmeri reaches the ultimate conclusion in stating that through a re-examination of the world using different modes, students will be better able to reverse the injustices inflicted upon cultures divided by boundaries, so that a revolutionary transformation in society, fueled by multimodal composing, will have no other choice but to occur (2012, p.159). As Kress states in his article on multimodality, "The materiality of the different modes – sound for speech, light for image, body for dance – means that not everything can be realized in every mode with equal facility, and that we cannot transport mode-specific theories from one mode to another without producing severe distortions" (2004, p.39). Such a statement reveals instructors must be mindful of the different ways students compose and that meaning cannot always be transferred the same way, from an image, to a word, to a sound. Within visual composition, different modes exist to transmit meaning between the creator and the viewer in an effort to bridge societal gaps, communicate complicated concepts, and actively engage with multimodal tools in the classroom and the public sphere.

The educational use of multimodal tools allows for students to choose their learning path but also crafts a new awareness for credibility. The student must thoughtfully consider the most rhetorically effective technique for a multimodal

assignment. Metros (2008) states that “students also must learn to address ethical issues by asking if an image is accurate, true to its purpose, and factual. It is human nature to believe what we see and not question the source or context in which an image or video was shot” (p.106). To quote American photographer Richard Avedon, “All photographs are accurate. None of them is the truth.” (Metros, 2008, p.106). Metros’ article “The Educator’s Role in Preparing Visually Literate Learners,” discusses that an instructor must consciously be aware of the power of visual composition within the classroom setting as a way of transforming or remediating learners (103). Multimodality is therefore expressed not just as applicable to the student but also in furthering instructors’ professional development as well.

There are different applications to the choice of visual rhetoric modes. While an author’s credibility and audience awareness is one angle of how hypertext can be understood, many visual texts exist in a series of frameworks. C. Kostelnick, a proponent of rhetorical components defines four levels by which to understand hypertexts: “intra-textual”, the look and shape of an individual page or screen, “inter-textual,” the visual relation between categories such as headings, bullets and numbers, “extra-textual,” the realm of semiotic expression of symbols, signs and captions, and “supra-textual” the universal organization and overall flow of the document (Deacon, 2001, p.2). The many levels which Kostelnick imposes upon visual rhetoric allow for readers and viewers to navigate hypertexts, websites, and other visual presentations. Therefore, an analysis of a visual composition is anything but a simple appreciation of aesthetics but of authentic creative production. Thus, a major concern in visual culture is how digital sites/pictures impact the personal and social in that visual imagery is

more than just images; it is visual context, production and experience within the inter-related viewer and composer sphere (Duncum, 2004, p.254). In the language of multimodality, the modes are merely the tools used to express visual communication. The applications to visual rhetoric consist of an understanding of Kostelnick's proposed textual layers. Visual composing also brings into question the idea of discernment concerning whether a source is credible, as well as how those layers can impact people perhaps more than print text's limited orientation.

The visual can communicate and elicit acceptance and understanding in ways traditionally unexplored. The problem within language as a mode of communication is that it seemingly reinforces boundaries among cultures and hinders the learning process. Visuals, on the other hand, have the potential to transcend those barriers whether through pictures, images, or icons. The value of visual composition and instruction is that it engages the mind in a way text cannot. Essentially, while a word such as "cloud" can be read, visually such a word can be expressed as a photograph or picture, uploaded as an image on the internet but then also condensed into a symbol or icon that can represent all visual variations that concept can take. Percy also demonstrates the power of visual media within film that triggers different responses in students. The information and assumptions depicted in film can be easily accepted by students who assume that visual craftsmanship is equivalent to relevant accuracy, in which if a visual production appears of great value than allegedly any inaccuracies or discrepancies would have been stopped (Percy, 2015, p.42). Visual media reinforces the power and influence of such composing styles that need to be reexamined aside from traditional assumptions.

Montage theory began as a conceptual framework to express creativity within emerging multi-media texts, but eventually grew into the hypertexts and multimodal sites instructors and students would embrace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Montage within film would soon become more than moving images, but moving compositions recognized as having both creative and academic merit. Montage theory therefore spans a lengthy history and continues to become more prevalent as technology is integrated further into both student composition and private online space. By understanding the intricate relationships between text and images, montage theory stands as an invaluable tool for instructors and society to better grasp how communication works and how traditional instruction can learn and gain from visual and embodied pedagogical practice.

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## **APPENDICES**

[Appendix A: Montage Alive]

## **Appendix A: Montage Alive**

*Montage Alive*, which I created with the website builder known as *Wix*, is a multimedia text which keeps with the practice of montage theory by taking the information, sources, and theories of this text and applying it to a more interactive experience.

*Montage Alive* encourages exploration and discovery much like many of these sources discuss the value behind creative multimodal texts. *Montage Alive* is my website which showcases the actual representation of montage theory at work in a multimodal platform and provides an alternative experience to encountering the sources and content. The digital images within the site I also photographed and arranged in a specific way to imitate the design of multi-media texts. The goal is that this website will be adapted and updated to act as an artifact of montage theory, and fitted to embrace education, art, film, and all manner of composition studies. Be transformed from a reader to a viewer and visitor!

Go to link:

[ericsmothers.wixsite.com/montagealiveproj](https://ericsmothers.wixsite.com/montagealiveproj)