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Ulmer: Ch 1 – Career

- Main Assignment (p. 21) – Career Discourse

Research and write a blog entry or series of blog entries on a founding invention, founding or key person, a key problem, or a key object of analysis in your career or disciplinary domain. At this point focus on gathering material and details that can be connected to your network as you continue to write—through analogical association, chance connections, or switch words. Ulmer’s examples: Einstein’s compass; Eunice Lipton and Alias Olympia; his own examination of the problem of the image and the juxtaposition of spectacle and Emeragency. Focus on your own identification with what you study or a career you are looking toward. The short of it is that writing a mystory “attunes” us to the world, to research, and to a profession. (As with all of the assignments below, one blog entry might branch into

multiple entries. If your writing takes you in multiple directions, go there. If you stall at one entry or exercise, go to another exercise.)

- Exercise (p. 35) – Term Extensions

Write a blog entry on a “craft” related to your career field and extend that term. Anything you do will probably involve craft or technique (*techne*)—an applied, practical, physical practice or process. For English students teaching, writing, speaking, design, et al involves particular techniques that make up their craft. Ulmer’s obvious examples are his etymology of the term culture and his extension of the term text in contrast to Plato and Aristotle’s invention of definition/categories/concepts. He extends these terms into their relations to craft and technique. Think metaphorically and analogically using multiple definitions of the term for the practice you decide to write about. Think in terms of building a bank of multiple meanings for the term. (Again, the purpose is to generate material but also to start practicing the associative strategy or technique that will help build connections among the materials.)

- Exercise (p. 40) – Counter-Dictionary

Gather a series of images related to your career or disciplinary field or practice and post them to your blog as a form of anti-definition. Rather than define your career in the abstract—as a set of essential characteristics ala Plato/Aristotle—use the images to stand for a personal experience or state of mind that your career or discipline evokes in you. Ulmer’s prime example is Bataille’s image of the factory, which counters, questions, or is critical of the way of life or career that it calls him into. Bataille performs his argument using textual images instead of definitions, memories and experiences instead of concepts. Follow this as a relay when writing about what your career might be to you instead of an abstract thing in itself. Use this more personal and image-based approach to your field to connect up to the more historical or literal material gathered in your response to the main assignment.

Ulmer: Ch 2 – Career

- Exercise (p. 46) – Obtuse Meanings

Gather a series of images (they could be anything from the cultural to personal, but try sticking to the theme of the professional) and identify their obtuse or third meanings. Images have 1) literal meanings, 2) associative or analogical meanings, and 3) obtuse or personal meanings when connected to your own experience. These third meanings establish identification. Search

the images for random details that stand out to you for some reason. Ulmer's examples come from Roland Barthes who makes the distinction between the *studium* (cultural meanings or clichés) and *punctum* (personal or associative details that counter the clichéd or cultural meanings). In your blog entry, post the images and write about their cultural and personal meanings. Write about specific details of the images, the feelings they activate, and the connections you find among the random related details. Think about the similar detail in my two Lucille images as one model for doing this. (Ulmer is extending the development of definition here, but is also asking you to practice making associative connections.)

- Exercise (p. 51) – Haiku Design

Find and write about something designed with haiku's sense of brevity or design something of your own with this sensibility—maybe a poster promoting some event within your disciplinary field, either real or imagined. Haiku records the details of an event to evoke a mood rather than define it abstractly. So find or design a “snapshot” that evokes a mood (personal or cultural), one that you associate with your field. Ulmer's examples here are Barthes, wabi-sabi, and Heidegger's state of mind. Following his argument about the shift in apparatus from orality to literacy to electracy, Ulmer is searching for electracy equivalents to literacy's practices, genre, and institutions. Here he is using haiku as a relay (not something to be copied as a model exactly but to be used as a spur to invention) for inventing the electracy equivalent to definition and the paragraph. Use wabi-sabi as model (things, material attributes, atmosphere, feeling, worldview, morality) or just experiment with what a haiku approach to definition might look like in your blog entry. (Again, Ulmer is looking for your identification with a mood that is associated with your field or career, and he's asking you to practice associative logics.)

- Exercise (p. 63) – Illumination

Write a blog entry on a scene around an experience of epiphany or moment of insight from your childhood (or more recently if that is what shows up for you). Detail out the setting, props, people, and related events and the insight you gained. Think about the example of my “earliest rhetorical memory” I gave in class the other day. Ulmer doesn't make the connection to career explicit here but I think that is what he is after. It was probably easier for me to do this in retrospect since I was already on a set career path, but I think Ulmer is asking you to think forward as much as back—search for a moment of insight in your past and think about what career connections it suggests to you. These moments of insight are what he hopes will be activated in you through the process of writing a mystory or widesite. He also wants you to see how these moments of epiphany may counter a default or natural

standpoint in relation to your possible profession or career (or other quadrants of the popcycle).

Ulmer: Ch 3 – Family

- Main Assignment (p. 86) – Family Discourse

Write a blog entry or series of blog entries on a strong memory from your childhood that is emblematic of or reminds you of your family life. Most of the main assignments on quadrants of the popcycle are generated around problems in the domain. Ulmer sets the problem in family up as identifying the default or readymade positions your family establish for you—the ongoing narrative of your parents or familial line that outlines plans, hopes, fears, practices, ideals, and even professions for you to follow. All of the exercises are about generating this material and uncovering these defaults as well as your individual or personal responses to this history or your relationship with these memories.

- Exercise (p. 73) – Home(sick) Page

This exercise is pretty generic. It might simply be finding examples of blogs that you like, making a bulleted list of links in a blog entry, and then writing about what you could use from each as models for the development of your blog. Beyond that Ulmer is really after developing a “puncept” around the concept of home—a series or set of meanings rather than a single concept. So you might gather up a series of things that home means to you, or post images of “home” and write about the feelings that home or these images evoke in you.

However, this doesn’t get all the way into what home means here. In the context of the material around the exercise, Ulmer discusses the standard hero narrative in a way that places the mystoriographer in the position of hero—someone who is on a quest or search and is guided by a sense of nostalgia or feeling of homesickness that is a necessarily part of the re/search. In the standard hero narrative, home is a site of stability, but problems and complications arise there that send the hero on his (or her) quest to solve the problem. After a series or trials and tribulations and help along the way, the hero resolves the problem and returns home, which is never the same when he returns.

Home, in other words, is the site of defaults (the restricted economy of the popcycle institutions) and the quest or move away from home is the practice of discovery (a general economy that disrupts or breaks the boundaries of the popcycle). This is an analog of what he is asking you to do through an

engagement with the popcycle more generally speaking. But for this exercise he is implying that our digital home(page) can serve a similar function. You might write about your main social networking site as the contemporary equivalent of the old website homepage. Go back and think about your first project and write about how your facebook or twitter site functions as your digital home, your individual digital default. This digital home, for Ulmer, is an analog for home in the hero's quest: it is the starting place or default for your Internet re/search to solve a problem. You might write about how your social network, or perhaps more aptly the blog you are writing now, functions to develop your individualized defaults.

Another way to think about is that home institutions of the popcycle establish particular roles for you:

- Family – child or parent
- Community – citizen
- Entertainment – consumer
- Career – professional

Identity is the mix of these roles that is particular to you. Mystory is the search for this identity through (digital) writing. The widesite is the temporary articulation of this identity that forms the basis for invention, action, and problem solving.

- Exercise (p. 76) – Decision Scene

Instead of developing literate concepts, Ulmer is asking you to develop electrated moods. The feeling of “homesickness” becomes a relay here, along with alienation, or boredom: these are moods that many college students feel. Ulmer is asking you to practice noticing the mood or atmosphere around a moment of decision, or between two different memories, or in an everyday activity. Write about one of these types of moments and the mood that it places you in or the atmosphere it builds around you. Then, find a series of images or YouTube videos that evoke this mood. (Anticipating Entertainment, you might think about the music or videos that you regularly consume and their relationship to this kind of mood, atmosphere, or attunement.) Post the writing, images, and video collectively as a blog entry.

- Exercise (p. 84) – Frederick Douglass

The mystory or widesite is about documenting elements and details of the popcycle in your life and finding links or connections among them. This exercise asks you to identify and write about an associative connection between two of the stories you've writing so far—this could be two different familial memories or something across the career and family quadrants—as practice for making these connections. Ulmer gives a good example: the story of Frederick Douglass and the Zen parable that both involve ox herding. So,

find two blog entries that you've written so far and connect them in a similar manner. Write a new blog entry about this connection and link back to the other two entries.

- Exercise (p. 89) – Family Album

Dig up some family photos, both from your immediate family now and especially past family photos from earlier generations. Post them in a blog entry and write out their moods and associations. Ulmer gives Kuhn as an example here. She asks you to develop a web of associations, reflections, and interpretations from the photo(s) that branch out from personal to historical and cultural connections. Kuhn gives a list of instructions for this memory work (p. 87). In his exercise Ulmer notes that atmosphere emerges out of a network of material and sensory details. Work your photos for the details and write out of them to make the connections Kuhn is asking for.

- Exercise (p. 90) – Memory Glimpse

Write a blog entry about one of your earliest memories. Ulmer asks that you focus on the details of the memory that evoke its mood or meaning for you. He's looking for you to develop private "endocepts" instead of public concepts—formative memories that establish the grounds for your thinking, not unlike Einstein's experience of the compass (the Briggs/Woolfe example is a good one as well). Ulmer is interested in invention, creativity, and insight and how these things are grounded in intuition. So you might think about the exercise in terms of writing about your memory of a moment of intuition. Or, write about an early memory and then try to identify it as a moment of intuition—discuss how it could have set the grounds for later intuitions or attunements.

- Exercise (p. 92) – Micro Scenes

Write two blog entries on anecdotes or micro-narratives from your personal or family life. Follow the heuristic that Ulmer gives you in the exercise. Think about these scenes in terms of epiphany, intuition, default values or ideas, mood, or atmosphere. Find associative or direct connections to other entries you've written so far. Link these blog entries directly back to these other entries and explore those connections. Let them take you where they take you.

Ulmer: Ch 4 – Family

- Exercise (p. 109) – A Cosmogram

Ulmer explicitly asks you to start writing a “cognitive map” with the materials you’ve written so far from the two quadrants of the popcycle: career and family. His primary example is Conwill’s “The New Cakewalk,” which links the author’s personal situation to the history and culture of his identity group. Ulmer’s is asking you to start developing your own “personal sacred”—your own set of places, heroes, and cultural forms that establish the basis for your thinking and writing. As we already discussed, these things don’t simply determine who you are, but set the grounds of possibility for what you will become or could potentially be. Taking an active role in writing and developing them is central, for Ulmer, to the work of electracy. For this exercise, write a “network” map of these elements from your mystory so far. Take the genre or medium of your map as openly as possible as we did for project 1.

- Exercise (p. 110) – Mapping Home

Find or draw a map of your neighborhood, hometown, or home state. Plot the key or significant places on that map from your childhood or experience. What does this diagram look like when taken as an abstract design? What associative connections come to mind from the design? Write out these connections in a blog entry. Find or develop an image based on this design that could function as an emblem or logo for your blog.

- Exercise (p. 113) – Vernacular Genres

Select an activity, practice, or form from your family life and use it to structure or organize the materials from the family quadrant of your mystory. Ulmer’s examples here are the ways Mesa-Bains used the home alter or Conwill used the cakewalk. Mystory, as a genre, has no explicit form for Ulmer—it adopts and remakes other forms as a part of its practice. Did your family play cards or games, play music, watch sports, go to church, watch movies or cheesy sitcoms together? Any practice or genre is fair game. Ulmer asks you to inventory the elements of this activity or genre and then integrate them into your blog either as more details or memories or as an abstract model for other practices in your life or as a analog to your career interests. Look for connections that show up as you write.

- Exercise (p. 114) – Mapping the Popcycle

Identify places in your hometown that were sites or embodiments of the popcycle’s institutions—family, community, entertainment, career. Write a blog entry that introduces documents, stories, or details for each of these places, or spread this out over 3 or 4 blog entries, one for each quadrant. As always, look for connections to material and blog entries already generated AND think ahead and look for connections or ideas that show up for things to

write about in the other quadrants. Ulmer's big example here is his work with Xanadu. His theoretical rationale comes from the Greek sense of place:

- Topos – the abstract quality of place as a container (abstract definitions or categories);
- Chora – the sacred nature of specific places;
- Kenon – the empty space that is the origin of thought and invention.

The Greek sense of place encompasses all three, and Ulmer is asking you to write about specific places as a function of your own personal sacred space; to see them as the grounds of concepts or ideas you are writing about; and to use them to produce the empty spaces between juxtapositions that are the open spaces of invention and associative connections—the juxtaposition of two images or two stories from two quadrants of the popcycle invite you to write in connections between the two.

Ulmer: Ch 5 – Entertainment

- Assignment (p.127) – Entertainment Discourse

Document the details of a movie or TV narrative that you still remember from childhood or that continues to be important for you now. Ulmer is fond of past memories but really anything that you identify with, even recently, works. Ulmer includes books as well. I'd also include music or games (computer or other wise). Once you have written out the memory, go back and view, read, play or listen to it again. Look for those moments you identify with or those details that stand out to. Also search YouTube for clips, trailers, remixes related to the film, show, album, or game that you can use as examples or riff on in your blog posts. Then, start looking for connections to family and career. Much of the material in the chapter is examples and theoretical elaboration on how mood through images and language through switch words create connections across the popcycle. He's continuing to try and attune you to the associative logic he is asking you to deploy. Check out the extended "puncture" on tables in the chapter as an example of how to develop these connections across the popcycle via a switch word.

A lot of the work in my mystory focused on celebrity icons. Start developing this angle as well. Do an image search for a celebrity icon (person, film, or even music album/song) that you are a fan of (that you fetishize). Build them into a blog page and explain a) what special significance you ascribe to it, and b) how it connects conductively to you, your family, your career, and/or your discipline (if you can juxtapose the celebrity icon to other images from family or career, do so). These images can be iconic (immediately recognizable to anyone in the culture) or personal (triggering personal memories, feeling, or connections through its details).

You might also spend time working current images with Photoshop/GIMP; search the web for some advertising or corporate images and “remake” them in Photoshop, but make sure the remakes connect up to something you’ve already written. Use something from another quadrant of your popcycle and remake an image to fit it. Ulmer writes a lot about remakes in the book. Go back to some of those discussions and use that material to help you write about your remakes. Discuss why remakes are important to Ulmer, and then discuss why your remake is important to you.

- Comment (p. 137) – Structural Self-Portrait

This comment functions like an exercise that remakes the main assignment, making it a little more specific. Ulmer is elaborating on the 2-3 examples before the comment. He casts the examples as relays for thinking about the main assignment—how to write a relationship between a work of literature, art, or popular culture and the life of the viewer or consumer. He prompts you to take the circumstances of a character in the story and use it as a figurative analogy for your own circumstances. The story provides an “image” of your feelings about your circumstances. Pick one of the examples to follow, discuss how it does this for the person doing the analysis in the example, and then try the same strategy yourself with your own cultural object. For example: when I was a kid I remember seeing a movie about the rodeo that really affected me, especially the final montage scene. It didn’t make me want to be a cowboy (obviously) but the final scene created a mood or entire atmosphere around achievement that made me want to strive and excel. This feeling stuck with me through sports, music, and academia. I have no idea what the name of the movie was, but it would be interesting to see it now and incorporate it into my mystory. Think about how your example moves from the literal (I want to be a cowboy) to the affective (the mood or atmosphere of achievement that can cut across community/sports, entertainment/music, career/academia).

Ulmer: Ch 6 – Entertainment

- Exercises (p. 165) – Fetiscreen

In a blog post, list and discuss items or objects that function as “fetishes” for you. Ulmer gives a long discussion of fetish in the previous few pages and page or so after. The short of it is, a fetish object is something that you ascribe special significance to beyond its basic functions as an object: a chicken’s foot, charm, or totem in a pagan religion; as shoe or foot as a sexual object; a word or incantation in a magic spell. (These function as “helpers” in the hero narrative. Again, think Einstein’s compass.) On the one hand, in the context of the Entertainment quadrant, Ulmer is suggesting that the culture

we consume produces such media objects—images, celebrity icons, films, songs. On the other, any objects can provide these kinds of special functions for us, not just objects from entertainment. So approach this exercise either beginning with entertainment, or with any objects that you ascribe special significance to. Include images, video, or sound clips of your objects. Utilize conduction and juxtaposition to connect these objects across the popcycle.

- Exercises (p. 168) – Pidgin Sign

This exercise should really be called Pop Syntagms, but Ulmer is trying to establish connections to his discussions of pidgin and creole languages. Rather than think about the series of blog entries that this exercise will likely generate as a grammar, I think it is more helpful to think about it as your pop culture pantheon. Gather up the media icons or celebrities that function as your collective cosmology—we no longer have a single cultural mythology any more, so we are left to build our own cultural networks of meaning. Who are the key figures you admire and why. You might start with a list of figures you already admire (or fetishize) and connect them across the popcycle, or you might start with conductive logic and search for figures that connect to you in some way. For example, two of my celebrity icons in my mystory are Tony Hawk and Ethan Hawke. I chose them for the name connection but then wrote out my identifications with them and developed additional significances for them as I wrote. This is the logic, or rhetoric, of discovery and invention that Ulmer is after with the mystory and widesite.

Ulmer: Ch 7 – Community

- Assignment (p.191) – Community Discourse

Write a blog entry about an exemplary story from your community—which could range from nation, state, or city down to neighborhood, church, or bar. These stories are often about a person, event, or practice from celebrations and festivals to naming practices (streets, buildings, parks) and memorials. These stories establish a default set of values for community members to identify with. They may be official stories recounted in textbooks, archived in libraries, expressed in public rituals, recounted in public memorials, or retold in the “streets” or bars. Ulmer is asking you to pull out the preferred communal point of view from the stories. Again, Ulmer is not asking for what you personally like, necessarily, but to identify a story that you remember or that stuck with you. Examine the story for the problems it sees as central for the community or what historical figures it chooses to venerate. Through the process he wants you to make yourself aware of the values they connote. It doesn’t matter if we unconsciously accept these stories, explicitly reject them, or use them to reorient ourselves in a variety of directions: each one is

a type of response to the defaults. It is also possible to start with the people, problems, stories, or issues that you identify with consciously and value. And subsequent blog entries can do that. But in this assignment, he is asking you to articulate the defaults.

Community in the popcycle may not just identify a location—nation, state, city, church, or bar—but also a conceptual community centered on race, religion, ethnicity, or subculture that we actively identify with. On a larger level this may function through civic mythologies like the founding fathers, but it may also circulate through something as simple as jokes, anecdotes, legends, or even slogans. All of these carry and circulate values—the feeling or mood informed by an idea, a morality, or a metaphysics (a set of beliefs about the world and how it works). The slogan “no new taxes,” for example, is not really a policy claim. It is a sign of a particular value in smaller gov’t that carries with it a particular feeling of activism and opposition. Behind the slogan is a larger narrative (that includes the revolutionary and civil wars) and the community that inhabits this state of mind or value (whether identified explicitly as “American” or “Tea Party” or implicitly as “Southerner” or “Red State”). These narratives and values often provide the basis for action. Ulmer gives the example of an extreme religious fanatic, who carries with him the feeling of righteousness, a belief that the world is the unfolding of God’s will, which grounds and justifies actions taken to realize this will.

The point of focusing on these kinds of community stories is to take these values seriously, not as simple opinion or preference, but as default worldviews that you operate in, with, or against. All of the material about streets and bars as the sites of excluded or marginal values and their movements through the popcycle to become mainstream offsets any deterministic model of institutional discourses. They are always rearticulated and changing. The mystory, again, asks you to articulate and explicitly connect these default values across your own experience to build your own cultural networks.

- Exercise (p. 182) – The Quest Schema

Go back to one of the narratives from your entertainment quadrant and plot out how it utilizes the stages of the traditional hero narrative or initiation quest. He provides Voytilla’s analysis of *The Silence of the Lambs* in the previous page as an example. In your blog entry, you might then discuss how this kind of movement is mirrored in Ulmer’s use of the hero narrative to articulate mystory with the popcycle (as we’ve discussed in class).

- Exercise (p. 191) – On the Premises

The premise is simply the main idea articulated and promoted in a narrative. The story then carries out this idea, providing support for its position, value, or belief. The premise typically has two parts: it formulates the conditions that set actions in motion and the consequences of actions on the basis of those conditions. Ulmer gives a number of examples on the pages around this assignment that identify the central thesis or claim of a narrative and shows how the story details through actions and events the consequences of holding or not holding the values of its main premise.

- Exercise (p.198) – High Concept

High concept is the one-liner caption used to pitch or promote a movie. It is the hook, twist, or gimmick that will create a quick identification with the audience. So, it should be brief and provocative. The tag line for the movie, *The Graduate*, for example, could be “How do you tell the girl you’re in love with that you’re sleeping with her mother?” The exercise asks you to pull narratives from all four quadrants of the popcycle and write one-liner high concepts for them. I would then find still images online that complement your one-liners, exemplifying their moods. “List” them in your blog post: image, one-liner, image, one-liner down the blog post.

Ulmer: Ch 8 – Community

- Exercise (212) – Policy Research

This chapter asks you to focus on the fact that community isn’t necessarily something as large as a nation-state, or abstract as a categorical identification of gender or race. It is often something very direct and local—a specific gathering place like a bar or a local issue that brings people together. His example, which brings the two aspects together, is local drinking laws around a college campus. The exercise asks you to inventory or list drinking laws and etiquette that circulate in the society generally, in your local community, and/or college campus. Include your own anecdote about an experience at a local bar that supports or problematizes the rules or etiquette. This blog entry could then include a list or map of all of these places—all of the bars around the university or all the locales discussed in your anecdote.

I would extend the options for the exercise to any policy issue in your nation, state, city, neighborhood, or local subculture. Use the exercise to generate details about the communities that you are apart of through the issues that it identifies as problems. This will then allow you to articulate the values those communities ask you to inhabit, as the main assignment asks you to do.

- Exercise (223) – Lyric Evaluation

This exercise is about identifying mood. Ulmer asks you to write out the lyrics of one of your favorite songs and discuss how the mood of the music supports the content of the lyrics. For example, whenever Johnny Rotten of the punk band the Sex Pistols blandly asks “you ever feel like you’ve been cheated?” at the end of their final performance, it didn’t just signify his mood, but the cynical mood of the band in the face of government and corporate control. It became a default mood of the punk movement as it was co-opted into the mainstream. Or, when the singer of punk band Refused screams “I’ve got a bone to pick with capitalism, and a few to break” to open their album *The Shape of Punk to Come*, the aggression of the vocal delivery signals how you are expected to feel about the issue and sets the mood for the entire album. For this blog entry, find a video of the song you chose on YouTube, post it with your analysis, and include visual elements of the video. Do the lyrics, music, and images support a similar mood? Do they operate in opposition to each other? If so, is it a rhetorical mistake or a function of irony? Lots of places to go with this exercise, but you can read it as an extension of the main assignment and the location of community values via moods.

- Exercise (241) – Being Singular

Becoming singular is perhaps one of the more theoretical or philosophical exercises Ulmer puts out there for you in an exercise. In many ways, it is the culmination of the popcycle and the mystory. It goes back to, in part, the notion of extimacy, the movement of these default discourses of the popcycle through you to produce an identity. (Extimacy is a kind of intimacy that comes from the exterior discourses.) The movements of extimacy, of course, function differently for Ulmer in the different apparatuses:

- Orality – In pre-literate cultures, people found out who they were through a vision quest, a communion with nature that helped them identify a spirit animal that gave them an identity. Nature was the outside that spoke through you and instilled in you a kind of spirit. Or, a person understood him or herself through the archetypes provided in the mythologies of the culture. The actions or roles of the gods were outside models for your own actions and roles. Or, more directly, a person had no identity apart from the outside group: hence, exile from the community was a severe punishment. In each case, the emphasis was on the outside rather than an interior self.
- Literacy – In literacy, reading books, engaging in and consuming outside culture through the isolated practice of reading, produced a more individual and interior psyche or

consciousness that we still as a culture assume as a default today. Protestantism asked followers not to blindly follow the roles the Catholic Church laid out for them, but to develop an individual relationship with God through reading scripture. In the Enlightenment, a form of individual critical thinking was deployed against the old myths to produce the feeling of rationality and an individual critical mindset. Much of the value of individualism and the modern emphasis on consciousness, unconsciousness, and individual responsibility for actions, etc. follows from this historical default. One developed identity through a critical engagement with the outside but the emphasis was on the production of an individual self.

- Electracy – Ulmer is of course wondering what the equivalent is in electracy. He notes at one point that when we encounter someone online, we don't really know what race they are, what home culture they are from, what values they really hold. What we get is the image they have constructed for us (anyone seen the MTV show "Catfish"?). For him, this is a kind of singularity rather than individuality. At best, an individual is someone who stands against culture or the outside. But conceptually an individual still a particular example of a unified community as a fixed or default category such as a religion, a profession, or a race. A singularity is a particular, momentary articulation of a person that is not fixed nor representative of a group. All the preceding philosophical discussion of Agamben is searching after this idea: a whatever being is a person articulated out of the random bits of the popcycle at any given moment. It is the chance roll of the dice from the defaults of the popcycle. A person develops singularity through a constant movement between inside and outside, through the syncretism or mixing of their particular experiences and responses to the popcycle's discourses, through becoming image.

For the exercise, Ulmer is asking you to "sort out" your experience at each of these levels. He gives you these prompts:

- Orality: We still experience some of this apparatus in the recognition of a group feeling, feeling associated with a group, or the feeling you get when associated with a particular group. In relation to what groups do you still get these communal feelings?
- Literacy: We get a sense of an inner, private self through a kind of reflective thought about the self, which has been promoted

by religion and science alike—both of which are a function of modern culture on this point. How has your literate education produced this sense of self? Through what practices do you reflect on this self?

- Electracy: Online, we produce, as we have discussed, a kind of distributed identity—we are who our Google search results or online profile says we are. What kind of mood does such a version of your identity create? How do you feel after the entire process of the mystory asks you to produce these articulations?

Write an initial blog entry from these three perspectives, but consider revising it at the end of the semester as your final blog post. As we have noted all along, these aren't three separate apparatuses. They are built out of each other historically and we occupy pieces of all of them today—we are the syncretic product of all three apparatuses operating on us at the same time. How does the widesite project do this work? Make this work show up for you? How does it make you think about this work? Make you feel?

Ulmer: Ch 9 – Emblem

- Assignment (p. 246) – The Wide Emblem

Design an emblem that evokes the look and feel of your widesite. Ulmer gives you very little to go on in the assignment. In the discussion afterward he gives a few possibilities for relays. The emblem, following Daly, is a motto, a picture, and epigram (see my example linked from the syllabus). “The motto introduces the emblem and usually indicates the theme, which is embodied symbolically in the picture that depicts one or more objects, persons, or events. Beneath the picture is the epigram or short prose statement that interprets the picture and elucidates the theme.” The emblem functions like a wide image for your site (think back to Einstein and the compass). In addition to carrying the mood that you associate with yourself or the mood that has emerged from your mystory or that you've tried to cultivate in the mystory, the emblem should connect to as many ideas or entries across the popcycle as possible. (Again, see my example. Also see Ulmer's Marlboro Man example on pages 254-55.)

Alternately, he gives you a list of basic approaches (249-50):

- Naming a thing as a basis for the emblem;
- Choosing a picture and then inventing a motto;
- Choosing a motto and then inventing a picture;

- Illustrating chapters of the Bible (or stories from classical mythology);
- Going through nature and making emblems;
- Choosing suitable sayings from the poets as mottos.

Consider making a blog entry similar to my web page that includes the emblem and discusses how it cuts across the popcycle, making links to the specific entries.

- Exercise (p. 248) – Patterning

Ulmer asks that you review the documentation recorded in the previous assignments and exercises and make links connecting any signifiers that repeat between any two or more registers. In many ways, this is what I was asking you to do last class by breaking your blog entries (written and planned) down into the institutions of the popcycle and looking for connections via switch words, image details, and moods. Basically, “pattern” here means puncept—collections of terms, images, and moods that are associatively connected. Finding repetitions of signifiers and details will give you ideas for possible wide images or emblems. In other words, another strategy for developing the main assignment is to go through your mystory documentation, or blog entries, and find connections that can lead to images and text to use for an emblem. Is there a slogan—which could be a quote from a famous person in your discipline, a line from a movie, or a lyric from one of your favorite songs—from any of your materials that can stand for the mood or value of your mystory? Is there an image from your materials that links to that slogan via mood or direct terminology? Ulmer notes that ultimately your wide image can’t be known until the end of your career, but the process of searching for it and articulating it through digital writing is an important part of understanding electracy and developing a particular cultural network. (See Ulmer’s example of the Star from pages 271-76 and how it cuts across his popcycle.)

- Exercise (p. 253) – Automatic Emblems

Ulmer takes Duchamp’s approach to readymades and makes it a process for developing an emblem. Duchamp would find or purchase an object and then inscribe a short sentence or title on it. But instead of functioning like a descriptive title, it was meant to take the spectator elsewhere. In other words, it was meant to produce a juxtaposition between text and image rather than a literal connection. For example, Duchamp bought a shovel and inscribed on it “In Advance of the Broken Arm.” The gap between object and text produced a choric space for the spectator to fill in meaning between the two. Ulmer asks you to produce such a gap with a readymade word-thing by arbitrarily selecting an object from the Family, Entertainment, or Community quadrants of your mystory and a title or phrase from your Career discourse.

Find an image of the object and place it under the title, slogan, or phrase in your blog entry. For the rest of the entry, try to write out connections between the two—fill in the gap of the random juxtaposition. Draw on details from the image and information that contextualizes the title to flesh out the connections and blog entry.

Alternately, I'd be interested in you selecting the **object that you chose for your object documentary**. Give your documentary a title or "high concept"-like tag line drawn from one of the quadrants of your popcycle. Embed your video in the blog entry and write out connections between the object and other blog entries in your mystory. Search for why you chose that object and how it might now connect to your widesite or across your popcycle documentation.

- Exercise (p. 260) – Ad Art

From pages 254-60 Ulmer gives you some good stuff on advertising that a number of you PR and Comm types should probably check out. The Marlboro Man material on 254-55 is a great example of an emblem—motto, picture, epigram, as I noted above, and it shows how the epigram fills in the gap between the motto and image. Ulmer takes this and extends it into other examples of how to take advertising as a model for digital writing. Instead of providing a literate critique of the advertising, pointing out all of the problems and contradictions in an ad like Adbusters would, an electrater response would be to write with image, value, and mood yourself, creating a "new sign value by introducing private themata into the public realm" (255). Remaking the ad and circulating it online disrupts default values through an affirmative and productive response. In other words, we don't just passively accept default cultural values as in orality, or critically reject them as in literacy, but remake and rewrite them through electracy. The mystory and widesite gives you practice at this form of affirmative writing and response.

The exercise (maybe not so directly) asks you to select an advertisement, empty of its commodity value, and use it as a relay for making your own emblem. A first step, Ulmer notes, is to substitute yourself for the commodity and give yourself a motto and epigram. Find an image of yourself to substitute for the Marlboro Man. Write an ad that functions as an emblem for your mystory by articulating its values and moods. Follow any of the examples or discussions he gives as relays—Williamson, Lifestyles, Slotkin, Tarkovsky (check out the template on p. 267-68), Séance.

Ulmer: Ch 10 – Value

- Exercise (p. 278) – Personals
- Exercise (p. 290) – Noticing Default Moods

Ulmer: Conclusion – Syncretism

- Exercise (p. 300) – Testimony
- Exercise (p. 314) – Corporate States of Mind
- Exercise (p. 317) – Mood Spectrum