

Jennifer Linhart Wood
Novel/Traveling Objects

I would like especially to share with the members of the SAA the fact that I used Google Docs as a way for my seminar participants to share their papers and comments in a format everyone could see. (I had heard of disastrous consequences with Dropbox, including permanent deletion of all seminar papers in a friend's seminar last year, so I sought another method to avoid that issue.) Although not all of my group members were familiar with googledocs, many were and those who were not picked it up very quickly. I would be more than happy to share any information about this process, if the SAA would find it helpful.

Dear Participants,

I am delighted to welcome you to the “Novel/Traveling Objects” SAA seminar. We have a full seminar of sixteen participants meeting next spring in New Orleans, so the SAA has asked leaders to generate a list of due dates and to enforce them strictly. To that end, I include in this letter a list of due dates for a short biography, a planned topic and purpose statement, an abstract, and, finally, a paper.

I am sending this initial letter to you via electronic mail, but soon we will start using Google Docs to exchange documents efficiently (many of you will already use this free and secure cloud-computing service, but you can watch a video about how to share, upload, and comment on documents here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tzftoXrNn0Q>). You do not necessarily need a google email account to be able to use Google Docs; I am happy to assist--to the best of my ability--with any questions about this that you all might have. Check your email soon for the invitation to join the folder “Novel/Traveling Objects”; once you join, you will be able to view each other’s abstracts and bios, contribute to the shared “Reading List,” upload your papers, and comment on each other’s papers before our conference meeting. If you don’t receive the invitation to join our shared file within a week, check your junk mail in case it ended up there. If you still don’t find it, let me know via email, and I’ll re-send the invitation.

When you access our shared Google Docs folder, you’ll see a copy of this letter, our seminar description, a calendar, a “Reading List” document, a list of participants, and a list of participants’ email addresses. You are welcome to add a short biography into the “Bios” sub-folder at any time between now and December 1. Since we are a large group, it will be helpful to learn something about each other before the meeting. I’d appreciate having your short biography by December 1, 2015. SAA requires all participants to have completed their papers for the seminar by February 15, 2016; those who have not will not be listed on the program (and, it’s implied, will not be able to participate in the seminar). I will therefore be asking you to adhere to the following due dates:

December 1, 2015: Short professional biography due

December 1, 2015: Statement of topic and purpose due

December 15, 2015: Three items for a shared reading-list due (please contribute directly to the “Reading List” document in Google Docs).

January 15, 2016: Abstract of paper due

February 10, 2016: Final paper of 3000-7500 words due

February 15, 2016: Jennifer Wood sends final list of participants who have completed all required assignments to SAA so that participants' names can be included on the program

March 15, 2016: Please have read and commented on essays in your affinity group (Because we are such a large seminar, these smaller affinity groups will be assigned after Abstracts are received. Your group will be no more than four members large for which you are asked to supply comments; however, you are strongly encouraged to read all participants' papers and are free to share comments with all participants as well).

Thank you all once more for your willingness to share your work, and to share comments with each other.

Some questions that might guide our thinking as we move toward our seminar meeting:

- * What were early modern theories of objects? How do they relate to current theories of objects?
- * When do we perceive objects as mobile? How do they move? Is it only when they are acted upon by humans that they become travelers, or are other processes at work? What might this suggest? Do objects in motion really stay in motion?
- * What does the introduction of new objects do to the network into which they are introduced? How do these kinds of objects draw attention to themselves? What happens that ceases to make them new?
- * What are some different ways to contextualize the relationship between objects and subjects? Do objects need subjects in the ways that subjects need objects or is something different happening in these kinds of relationships? Is thinking about the relationship between both categories of subject and object still necessary? Why or why not?
- * Our seminar differs from many studies of objects in that it considers objects as dynamic and mobile, as opposed to fixed and static. Why is this approach crucial for our field?

Thank you all again for your interest in this area of inquiry. I'm looking forward very much to meeting all of you in person in our seminar and hope that we can also schedule a more informal conversation over drinks or dinner at some point during the conference.

Sincerely Yours,
Jennifer

Jennifer Linhart Wood, Ph.D.
Shakespeare Quarterly
Folger Shakespeare Library

Hello All,

First, I'd like to thank you all for your alacrity and attention to the December 1 due date for the bibliography and for the statement of topic and purpose. I have very much enjoyed reading about your research interests over the past couple weeks.

Second, this is just a friendly reminder that suggestions for our collective bibliography are due tomorrow, December 15th. While it is unrealistic to expect everyone to have read the complete list of works by our meeting in the spring, I do hope that you are able to carve out some time to take a look at titles that you find especially intriguing!

Again, thank you for the productive contributions thus far; they indicate some very generative papers and discussions in our future!

With all best wishes for you and yours this holiday season,
Jennifer

Dear SAA seminar participants,

Many thanks to those of you who have already submitted your essays to our "Seminar Papers" folder.

If you have not yet had a chance to upload your paper, please do so as soon as you can, but no later than midnight on Sunday, February 14. I **must** submit the names of all of the participants who have fulfilled our seminar requirements by Monday, February 15.

If the googledocs pose any problems for you, please don't hesitate to let me know (I have already heard from a few of you and am currently working on some of the formatting issues to which you have alerted me). You are also welcome to email me your paper directly by Sunday night, and I would be happy to upload it.

Many thanks to all of you for the excellent work that you have already completed. I will be back in touch next week with information about your smaller affinity groups and instructions for responding to your fellow group members.

With all best wishes,
Jennifer

Just for fun:

the "Shakespeare in 100 Objects" online

archive: <http://findingshakespeare.co.uk/category/shakespeares-100>

the "Shakespeare Documented" online exhibitions of material documents relating to Shakespeare's life: www.shakespearedocumented.org

Dear All,

This is just a quick note to confirm that you have all completed the requirements thus far for our SAA seminar. I have already written the SAA Office to ensure that your names and affiliations will appear in the program. Thank you for the excellent work already and I am very much looking forward to reading your papers.

Over the next week, I am going to work on formatting several papers that were sent to me via email; after I complete that, I will send another email about the affinity groups.

Our “Seminar Papers” folder is available again and should be visible to everyone (please shoot me a quick email to let me know if it is not and I will work to correct this). Although certainly not perfect, one of the benefits of googledocs is that we can all read each other’s work prior to our meeting on March 26. Should an accident, like a folder or paper deletion happen, please just let me know and I can restore the file or folder.

Again, thank you all for your hard work and for sharing such exciting scholarship. I will be back in touch very soon.

All best,
Jennifer

Dear All,

Thank you for your patience as I worked to format some of your brilliant seminar papers in Google docs. I believe that now your essays and images are presented more closely to what you’d like; however, please do not hesitate to contact me if you notice a discrepancy or would like me to make a specific change. You are welcome to make minor corrections and additions to your papers over the next few weeks. Please feel free to go right into the Google doc version of your paper to do this, or contact me if I may be of assistance in modifications.

Your affinity group assignments are listed below. In these smaller groups, please read your group members’ papers carefully and supply a short response. This response (of a few pithy paragraphs) can be appended to the end of the seminar paper through the “comments” function, or pasted directly at the end of the document. Please see the “Novel/Traveling Objects Description” document in our folder for information and an example of how the comment function works. Please note: you are strongly encouraged to read all participants’ papers and are welcome to share comments with all participants as well. Comments are due to your affinity group members by **March 15**.

I chose to organize the affinity groups based on the objects of study. As you will see below, there are some incredibly interesting overlaps and resonances between your papers, and among the different affinity groups, that are certain to ignite several engaging discussions.

Again, thank you so very much for your hard work! I am very much looking forward to continuing these exciting conversations electronically for now, and acoustically in the near future.

Jennifer

Group 1: Textiles

James M. Bromley
Anna Riehl Bertolet
Naomi Howell

Group 2: Stage(d) Properties

Sarah Williams
Maria Shmygol
Cristina Leon Alfar

Group 3: Substances Within/Without the Body

Edward McLean Test
Josie Schoel
Victoria Ann Jackson

Group 4: Writing Objects*

Emily Russell
Chris Barrett
Stephen Merriam Foley
Erika Mary Boeckeler

*Group 4: Because your group has four members instead of three, please respond to the following papers:

Emily responds to Chris and Stephen
Chris responds to Stephen and Erika
Stephen responds to Erika and Emily
Erika responds to Emily and Chris

Each group member should receive two responses and write two responses.