

Introduction to the Study of Emerging Media and Communications

EMAC 5300

David Parry

Fall 2009

T 7:00-9:45 ATEC 1.606

dparry@utdallas.edu

www.outsidethetext.com/arche

Office Number: 1.502

Office Hours: T 3:45-4:45, R 1:30-2:30

& by appointment

Course Description:

This class is a broad introduction to the theories which have come to influence how we understand the relation of media and culture. In order to understand how “emerging media” or “digital media” are shaping and reshaping our culture it is important to first have a grounding in a range of traditional approaches for theorizing the effects of media. Thus this class is divided between considering some of the canonical texts in this field (Plato, Marx, Foucault, etc.) and works which refigure these approaches based on the rise of digital media (Bolter & Grusin, Shirky, Manovich, etc.).

Required Texts:

(all texts are available at Off-Campus Books)

Six Degrees, Duncan Watts

Remediations, Jay David Bolter & Richard Grusin

Here Comes Everybody, Clay Shirky

The Exploit, Alexander Galloway & Eugene Thacker

The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe, Elizabeth Eisenstein

The Future of the Internet--And How to Stop It, Johnathan Zittrain

The Language of New Media, Lev Manovich

There will be several readings available online or via eReserve, which you will need to print out and bring to class.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Participation (25%): The primary requirement for this course is class participation. To do well in this course you will need to come to class having done the reading for the week prepared to discuss the text at hand. I realize that the reading load for this class is heavy at times, however, we are going to be covering some complex and complicated issues and in order for the class discussion to proceed and for everyone to benefit the most from our time in class it is necessary for every student to have a shared basis from which class discussions can proceed.

Thus for every class it is your responsibility to come to class not only having done the reading, but to have spent time considering the issues that each text raises, ready to engage in a lively discussion about the questions at hand. Missing more than one class can lead to a lower grade. In addition to attendance and participation the following are required for this class.

Blogging (35%): Outside of coming to class and being prepared to discuss the material each student will be required to have his or her own blog dedicated to discussing the material we

cover in class, reflecting on the readings, and engaging the larger issues these emerging technologies raise. I will cover the details of this assignment on the first day of class, but in general you will need to write 800-1000 words each week for your blog.

Contributing to Peers Blogs (15%): One of the things the internet clearly demonstrates is that knowledge is a communal process not an individual product. Thus you will need to also be concerned with engaging what your peers are writing, producing a conversation about emerging media, not just an individual monologue. In addition to your own blog you will need to spend time reading (some not all) of your peers blogs and commenting on those posts.

Final Project (25%): Each student will be responsible for writing a 6-8 page final paper. This should not require substantial outside research. Instead it should be focused on synthesizing one or two of the core issues we have discussed in class incorporating a few of the texts we read, perhaps drawing on something that began as a blog post, and expanding the argument into a more careful, nuanced piece.

Course Website:

The course website for this class can be found at <<http://www.outsidethetext.com/arche>>. You should get in the habit of checking this regularly as I will post suggestions and thoughts about the readings here, as well as links to other things that might interest the class. The syllabus can be found here as well, and any changes to the syllabus will be posted here. If you forget the web address you can always find it from <<http://www.outsidethetext.com>>, an easier url to remember.

How to Reach Me:

The best way to reach me is by email <dparry@utdallas.edu> or you can find me online at <<http://www.outsidethetext.com>>. I check email frequently throughout the day. If you email me and do not receive a response within 48 hours (usually I will get back to you within a day), please feel free to email me again (I might not have received your first one) and give me a reminder. I promise not to consider this harassing.

My office hours are Tuesday 3:45-4:45 and Thursday 1:30-2:30 (or by appointment—I am frequently on campus outside these hours). My office is ATEC 1.502.

Schedule of Readings

Media as Representation

Week One (August 25th)

Introduction

Week Two (September 1)

Plato, *Phaedrus* (online)

http://oll.libertyfund.org/index.php?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php&title=111

Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (handout)

Week Three (September 8)

Walter Ong, "Introduction" & "Writing Restructures Consciousness" (course reserve)

Marshall McLuhan, "Medium is Message" (course reserve), "Playboy Interview" (online)

http://oll.libertyfund.org/index.php?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php&title=111

Week Four (September 15)

Jay David Bolter & Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*

Media as Technology

Week Five (September 22)

Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*

Week Six (September 29)

Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (course reserve)

Bill Nichols, "The Work of Art in the Age of Cybernetic Systems" (course reserve)

Week Seven (October 6)

Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*

Media and the Public

Week Eight (October 13)

Karl Marx, "The German Ideology" (online)

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01.htm>

Stuart Hall, "Encoding/Decoding" (course reserve)

Week Nine (October 20)

Jurgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article" (course reserve)

Pieter Boeder, "Habermas Heritage: the future of the Public Sphere in the Networked Society"

http://131.193.153.231/www/issues/issue10_9/boeder/index.html

Mark Poster, "Cyberdemocracy" (online)

http://ct.kaist.ac.kr/ko/curriculum/download.php?file_name=28.pdf

Week Ten (October 27)

Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody*

Media and Self

Week Eleven (November 3)

Michel Foucault, selection from *Discipline and Punish* (course reserve)

Lisa Nakamura, "Cybertyping and the Work of Race in the Age of Digital Reproduction" (course reserve)

Week Twelve (November 10)

danah boyd, selections from *Taken out of Context*

http://www.zephoris.org/thoughts/archives/2009/01/18/taken_out_of_co.html

Media as Network

Week Thirteen (November 17)

(Working Draft of Paper Due)

Duncan Watts, *Six Degrees: The Science of a Connected Age*

Manuel Castellas, "Why Networks Matter"

<http://www.demos.co.uk/files/File/networklogic17castells.pdf>

Week Fourteen (November 24)

Alexander Galloway & Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks*

Week Fifteen (December 1)

Jonathan Zittrain, *The Future of the Internet--And How to Stop It*

Final Papers Due December 11 at 10:00 AM in my office