ENGL 293 Introduction to Digital Media Studies
10:00-11:20 TTh HH 150
Professor Beth Coleman
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office hours Tuesday 11:30-1:30 and by appointment, HH 323

Syllabus fall 2012: Media Systems

In this class, our focus is to analyze several forms of media systems, from McLuhan’s electronic “global village” made possible by the medium of television to the networked engagement we have experienced with the internet as a world wide web. Primarily, we will be working with critical texts from a humanist media studies tradition. Nonetheless, our analysis of media systems will extend past the exclusively theoretical, taking into account technical affordances, cultural standards, and disruptive interventions that affect the formation of a media system. The work produced for the course will be primarily analytical research papers. We will also, though, include creative, speculative, and applied projects. Some of the classes will take place as networked co-present meetings, i.e. we will have some virtual class meetings where we meet via VoIP (voice-over internet protocol). In order to participate in the course, students must read all assigned materials (provided in e-reader), complete writing and media projects, and prepare the network assets to participate in a virtual classroom (we will use the Google suite for this fall). With the exception of week one, all reading assignments are to be completed for the class on the day they are listed. Similarly, assignments are due by 9am the day they are posted on the syllabus. Tuesdays will be lecture days and Thursdays will be structured discussion days; three discussion leaders will be selected for each topic.

Course requirements: attendance is mandatory. Please email Professor Coleman if you will not be able to attend a class meeting. The course is made up of reading, media materials, discussion, short form and long form writing assignments.

Grading:
20% class participation (attendance, discussion, etc.)
65% written work + final project
15% response papers

Academic standards: students are expected to produce high quality, original work and master the materials on the syllabus. If you have any questions about research procedures, issues of plagiarism, or other matters in producing original, critical content, please address them with Professor Coleman.

Assignments: (all assignments to be posted to Google Drive)
Sept 13 media self portraits
Sept 20 500-words industrial versus network city life
Sept 27 500-words key concepts of Wealth of Networks
Oct 4 500-words industrial versus network city life continued
Oct 11 500-words What is media? What does McLuhan mean by the term?
Oct 18 project/paper proposals: 500-word abstract on a research paper or research project
Oct 25 500-words “Trending: The Promises and the Challenges of Big Social Data”
Nov 8 first draft of paper due
Nov 29 paper presentations
Dec 3 Final papers due 12pm
Reading List
“The Man of the Crowd,” Edgar Allan Poe
Wealth of Networks, Yochai Benkler
Invisible Cities, Italo Calvino
Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man, Marshall McLuhan
The Language of New Media, “Trending: The Promises and the Challenges of Big Social Data”
Lev Manovich
“Quentin Tarantino’s Star Wars?: Digital Cinema, Media Convergence, and Participatory Culture”
Henry Jenkins
“Interview with the Virtual Cannibal,” Beth Coleman
“Privacy As Contextual Integrity,” Helen Nissenbaum
One Way Forward, Lawrence Lessig