New Media PhD Area Exam

The area exam reading list in New Media comprises a list of Core Texts, which form the basis of study in this field, as well as eight Sub-Field lists, that reflect how the New Media is subdivided into distinct but related areas of research. These sub-fields are:

1. Electronic Text
2. Gaming
3. Information Design
4. Material Culture of New Media
5. New Media Art and Poetics
6. New Media Theory
7. Philosophy of Technology
8. Social Media

Instructions to students:

All students must study the Core Text list.

All students must choose TWO sub-field lists to study, in addition to the Core Texts, and indicate this choice to the exam committee at the time the student registers to write the exam.

All students must supplement the lists of each of the two chosen sub-fields by 8-10 article-length pieces that either focus the readings more precisely on one aspect of the sub-field (e.g., the study of the ‘screen’ as interface within the sub-field of Material Culture of New Media) or which bring the most current research to bear on the general contours of the list (e.g., the most recent journal articles on social network sites for the Social Media sub-field). These additions must be approved by the exam committee FOUR months before the sitting of the exam.

Furthermore, the study of New Media necessarily entails critical literacy of the technologies at issue, ranging from the operating systems of personal computers, to GIS technologies embedded in mobile phones, to e-book readers, and even malware. Students must engage meaningfully with these technologies, as directed in the lists.

All students must specify FOUR potential ‘object texts’ to be subject to critical analysis during the exam: these object texts will be technologies and media artifacts, such as are proposed in the lists below, and may include particular devices (e.g., iPad or Blackberry PlayBook, Nintendo 64), services (e.g., Android Market, Twitter, Match.com), artifacts (e.g.,
afternoon: a story, Ms. PacMan, Shaytards), or interfaces (touch, command line, or graphical interfaces; open source versus proprietary interfaces)
Core Texts: New Media Studies


Possible Technologies Examined:
● networks
● operating systems
● cameras
● sensors
● qr codes
● smart phones
● ebooks
● tablets
● desktop
● memory
● malware
● *others, as determined by student and committee*
Material Culture (History and Devices)


Possible Technologies Examined:
● gramophones, films, typewriters
● stereographs, camera obscurae, still photograph technologies
● inscription devices
● presentation software
● input and output devices (teletype, screen, mouse, finger, printer, etc.)
● historical and contemporary personal computing devices
● others, as determined by the candidate and the committee
PhilTech


Possible Technologies Examined:
- Artificial Intelligence
- Artificial Life
- Genetic Engineering
- Cryogenics
- Wearable Computing
• Virtual Reality
• Augmented Reality
• Androids
• Robots
• Animatronics
• Prosthetics
• Mnemonic devices (broadly construed)
• Digital sensors (motion, light, heat, etc.)
• others, as determined by the candidate and the committee
Electronic Text


Possible Technologies Examined:
- Kindle / Nook / eReader / Kobo / iBook
- hypertext fiction
- fan fiction
- “e-books”
- full-text linguistic and literary corpora
- electronic text archives
- digital editions
- HTML / SGML / XML
- TEI
- interactive fiction / text-based gaming
- *others, as determined by the candidate and the committee*
New Media Theory


Possible technologies Examined:

- the internet
- the www
- popular representations of computing technologies
- others as determined by the candidate and the committee
New Media Art and Poetics


Possible Technologies Examined:

● wearable / implantable computing devices / RFID
● computer poetry
● data visualizations / visualization tools
● conceptual computer art / installations / processes / games
● computer music
● Photoshop
● YouTube
● others, as determined by the candidate and the committee


**Gaming**


**Possible Technologies Examined:**

- consoles contemporary and historical
- arcade gaming hardware
- graphics engines / algorithms
- MODs
- games: PC, console, social, serious, ‘gamification’
- others, as determined by the candidate and the committee
Social Media


Possible Technologies Examined:
- Friendster / Facebook / MySpace / Bebo / Orkut
- Club Penguin
- Match.com / eHarmony
Information Design


Possible technologies to examine:
● typography / book design
● photography / graphic design
● sounds
● the interface of whatever software catches your fancy or makes you rage
● doors
● HCI
• powerpoint
• others, as determined by the candidate and the committee