

New Media PhD Area Exam

May 2012-Exam 1

This exam consists of THREE sections:

Part A: Core Texts	40%
Part B: [Sub-field 1]	30%
Part C: [Sub-field 2]	30%

Answer ONE question from each section

The exam is four hours long.

Part A: Core Texts

1. The 'posthuman' is a vexed--and fundamental--concept in new media studies. Define the parameters of this concept with reference to at least THREE writers on the Core List, and describe how the iPad might be used as an object-to-think-with about "the posthuman."
2. The term "new media" is a problematic term in contemporary media studies scholarship. With reference to at least THREE writers on the Core List, explain the root of this problem, and discuss whether the Xbox Kinect should or should not be considered as new media.
3. When Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin published the book *Remediation* in 1997, they underscored a concept that was already quite familiar in media studies and that remains common in theorizations of new media. Discuss David Hockney's *Fresh Flowers* exhibition in the context of "remediation," drawing on at least THREE writers on the Core List.

Part B: [Philosophy of Technology]

1. In "Technology or the Discourse of Speed," David Wills draws on Bernard Stiegler's work to suggest that "The upright hominid stance inscribes a definition of the human that is utterly determined by the idea of exteriorization." Drawing on at least THREE writers from the reading lists, including at least TWO Philosophy of Technology list, explain Wills' statement, and discuss its importance for understanding the relationship between the human and technology.
2. Posthumanist philosophers often consider how empathy with other species can lead us to productive phenomenological investigations. Most recently, the prominence of "animal studies" in posthumanist philosophy is being challenged by a turn toward "object-oriented ontology." Making reference to at least THREE writers from the reading lists, including at least TWO from the Philosophy of Technology list, discuss how "object orientation" plays a role in the philosophical investigation of technology.
3. While Paul Virilio, David Wills, and other philosophers view the concept of "speed" as central to understanding contemporary technoculture, the related concept of "space" is equally important. Beginning with a discussion of the term "cyberspace," make reference to at least THREE writers from the reading lists, including at least TWO from the Philosophy of Technology list, while discussing the relationship between technology and space.

Part C: [New Media Theory]

1. Sherry Turkle's 1997 book, *Life on the Screen*, suggests that the Internet has a wide-ranging, and mostly positive, impact on human identity. More recently, Turkle has corrected her enthusiasm in the book *Alone Together*, the title of which speaks for itself. Drawing on at least THREE writers from the reading lists, including at least TWO writers from the New Media Theory list, discuss the relationship between the Internet and identity.
2. Various new media theorists deal with the question of embodiment in their scholarship. Referencing at least at least THREE writers from the reading lists, including at least TWO from the New Media Theory list, discuss how new media theorists have viewed the body's relationship to new media, and explain why the concept of embodiment is central new media theory.

3. Contemporary media technologies have renewed investigations of narrative in literature, games, theatre, scholarship, and other modes of discourse. Drawing on at least THREE writers from the reading lists, including at least TWO from the New Media Theory list, discuss how new technologies have impacted narrative in its various media instantiations.