

History and Theory of Emerging Media

ATEC 6V81

David Parry

Spring 2009

R 7:00-9:45 ATEC 1.606

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www.outsidethetext.com/arche

Office Number: 1.502

Office Hours: T,R 11:30-12:30

& 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)

Linked, Alberto-Laszlo Barabasi

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:

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.

Participating in the class blog: There is a website for this class (see below). Every week you will need to compose a substantial post, in the form of a comment, to the class site. This gives you a chance to comment on the reading before we get to class, to see what others

have made of the reading, and provides me with some feedback about how the class has approached the material. I will often use this online forum as a place from which to begin our in class discussion. Thus, you should post your comment *no later than midnight on the Monday before class*, and plan on visiting the website sometime on Wednesday to look over what others have written. These posts need not be long essays but rather one or two paragraphs (300-400 words); they should give a sense of what you thought of the material and places where you would like to begin the discussion. Think of these as questions rather than a thesis.

Midterm: There will be a short take-home midterm for this class (1500-1800 words) that will ask you to reformulate and synthesize readings from the first half of the semester.

Final Project: For the final paper you can choose one of two approaches. (Note: If you are pursuing a PhD or plan on pursuing a PhD you must choose the second option.)

- Two short papers each engaging a different topic/issue that we have discussed in class. I will hand out sample topics/ideas after the midterm, but you will be responsible for developing your own specific topic(s). Each paper should be 1,900-2,000 words.
- One academic paper. Your paper should focus on one topic/issue we have discussed in class and be a sustained examination of said issue. I will work with you to develop your topic after the midterm. Your paper should 4,250-4,500 words. The goal here is to produce a draft of what can become a conference paper or journal article.

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 & Thursday 11:30-12:30, or by appointment (as I am frequently on campus). I am always happy to meet with graduate students, so if these times do not work please email me and we can find another time. My office is ATEC 1.502.

Schedule of Readings

Media as Representation

Week One (January 15)

Introduction

Week Two (January 22)

Plato, *Phaedrus* (online)

Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (handout)

Week Three (January 29)

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

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

Week Four (February 5)

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

Media as Technology

Week Five (February 12)

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

Week Six (February 19)

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 (February 26)

Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media*

Media and the Public

Week Eight (March 5)

(Midterms distributed at end of class)

Karl Marx, "The German Ideology" (online)

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

Week Nine (March 12)

(Midterms dues at the beginning of class)

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

Mark Poster, "Cyberdemocracy" (online)

—*Spring Break*—

Week Ten (March 26)

(Paper Proposals Due)

Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody*

Media and Self

Week Eleven (April 2)

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 (April 9)

danah boyd (readings TBA)

Media as Network

Week Thirteen (April 16)

(Working Draft of Paper Due)

Alberto-Laszlo Barabasi, *Linked*

Week Fourteen (April 23)

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

Week Fifteen (April 30)

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

Final Papers Due May 7th at 10:00 AM in my office