FILM 35: Digital Media Studies

CONTACT

Prof. Jacob Gaboury   Office Hours: Monday 3-5pm
Email: gaboury@berkeley.edu   https://calendly.com/gaboury/
Tu/Th 12:30-2:00pm   Dwinelle 142

Zoom: https://berkeley.zoom.us/j/91906101546
NOTE: Food and drink are not allowed in Dwinelle 142.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is about digital media: how it came to be, where it is going, and how we can engage with it critically and creatively. Over the course of five units we will trace both the history and theory of contemporary digital media technologies, examining how digital media have come to shape our engagement with contemporary culture with a particular focus on aesthetics, form, and politics.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course has been designed to help you learn how to:

1. Identify, analyze, and describe themes in contemporary media and digital culture.

2. Acquire a conceptual vocabulary necessary for the examination of digital media technology and to understand the advantages and limits of that approach.

3. Understand the influence of digital media technologies on contemporary culture, including digital software, hardware, platforms, and interfaces.

4. Develop the research tools for advanced undergraduate writing on film and media in the area studied in the course

1_Introductions

01/18

Introduction and Syllabus Presentation

01/20

How do we study computational culture?

DIGITAL MEDIA IS…

2_New

01/25

Manovich, Lev. "What is New Media?" *The Language of New Media.* Cambridge, MA. MIT Press (2001) 27-48.

01/27

Galloway, Alexander. "Introduction: The Computer as a Mode of Mediation," *The Interface Effect*. New York: Polity Press (2012) 1-24.

3_Old

02/01

Bush, Vannevar. "As we may think." *The atlantic monthly* 176, no. 1 (1945): 101-108.

02/03

Kay, Alan, and Adele Goldberg. "Personal dynamic media." *Computer* 10, no. 3 (1977): 31-41.

4_Free

02/08

Deleuze, Gilles. "Postscript on the Societies of Control." *October* 59 (1992): 3-7.

02/10

Franklin, Seb. "Cloud control, or the network as medium." *Cultural Politics* 8, no. 3 (2012): 443-464.

5_Science

02/15

Winner, Langdon. "Mythinformation in the high-tech era." *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 4, no. 6 (1984): 582-596.

02/17

Chun, Wendy. "Introduction" *Discriminating Data: Correlation, Neighborhoods, and the New Politics of Recognition.* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2021) 1-28.

6_Neutral

02/22

McPherson, Tara. "US operating systems at mid-century: The intertwining of race and UNIX." In *Race after the Internet.* Routledge (2013) 27-43.

02/24

Nakamura, Lisa. "Indigenous circuits: Navajo women and the racialization of early electronic manufacture." *American Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (2014): 919-941.

7_Personal

03/01

Cheney-Lippold, John. "A new algorithmic identity: Soft biopolitics and the modulation of control." *Theory, Culture & Society* 28, no. 6 (2011): 164-181.

03/03   **In Class Midterm**

8_Interactive

03/08

Jagoda, Patrick. "Videogame Criticism and Games in the Twenty-First Century" *American Literary History*, Volume 29, Issue 1, Spring 2017, Pages 205–218.

Wark, McKenzie. "The Cave" in *Gamer Theory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press (2009).

03/10

Galloway, Alexander. "Gamic Action: Four Moments." *Gaming: Essays on Algorithmic Culture*. Minneapolis: UNM Press (2006): 85-106.

09_Aesthetic

03/15

Quaranta, Domenico. "Between Hype Cycles and the Present Shock: Art at the End of the Future" Nero Editions, 2020.

https://www.neroeditions.com/docs/between-hype-cycles-and-the-present-shock/

03/17

Ryan, Tina Rivers. "Token Gesture: Tina Rivers Ryan on NFTs" *Artforum* (May 2021). https://www.artforum.com/print/202105/token-gesture-85475

Buist, Kevin. "What's their game?" *Outland*. December 9, 2021. https://outland.art/blitmap-loot-ectogames/

10_NO CLASS
SPRING BREAK

11_NO CLASS
SCMS

Society for Cinema and Media Studies Conference
Chicago, IL

12_Connected

04/05

Noble, Safiya Umoja. "A Society, Searching" in *Algorithms of oppression: How search engines reinforce racism*. New York: NYU Press (2018) 15-63.

04/07

Vaidhyanathan, Siva. "The Problem with Facebook is Facebook" in *Antisocial media: How Facebook disconnects us and undermines democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (2018) 1-30.

13_Designed

04/12

Finn, Ed. "House of Cards: The Aesthetics of Abstraction" in *What algorithms want: Imagination in the age of computing.* Cambridge: MIT Press, (2017) 87-112.

04/14

Alexander, Neta. "Rage against the machine: buffering, noise, and perpetual anxiety in the age of connected viewing." *Cinema Journal* 56, no. 2 (2017): 1-24.

14_Immaterial

04/19

> Starosielski, Nicole, "Fixed Flow: Undersea Cables as Media Infrastructure," In Nicole Starosielski and Lisa Parks, Signal Traffic: Critical Studies of Media Infrastructures, 2015.

04/21

> Ensmenger, Nathan. "The Environmental History of Computing." *Technology and culture* 59, no. 5 (2018): S7-S33.

15_Political

04/26

> Roberts, Sarah. "Commercial content moderation: digital laborers' dirty work" in Noble, S. and Tynes, B. (eds.) *The intersectional internet: Race, sex, class and culture online*. New York: Peter Lang (2016) 147-160.

04/28

> Muldoon, James. "Web3 Can't Fix the Internet" *Jacobin Magazine*. January 10, 2022. https://www.jacobinmag.com/2022/01/crypto-blockchain-daos-decentralized-power-capitalism

05/10   **Final Exam**

ASSESSMENT

10% Engagement
10% (5% x [3-1]) Quizzes
20% Exit Tickets
30% Midterm Exam
30% Final Exam

READING

This course will require you to read between 40-60 pages of academic and popular writing per week. These writings are designed to introduce you to new concepts and to provide critical arguments that will drive our class discussion. For this reason it is essential that you give yourself plenty of time to complete the reading before each class so that you can fully participate in our discussions in

class. Depending on your experience with courses in the humanities, this may seem challenging or overwhelming, but it is essential. Stick with the readings and it will get easier over time, and if you are struggling feel free and set up a meeting with me during office hours to discuss strategies to help you succeed.

EXIT TICKET

At the end of each class I will give you five minutes to write an exit ticket, registering your attendance in class. The exit ticket will ask for the following information:

1. Your name
2. One of the following:
    a. An issue we did not address that you would like addressed
    b. A question you have based on today's discussion
    c. A point you still do not understand that you want clarified
    d. A question you wanted to ask but did not

Based on your feedback, will structure the beginning of our next class accordingly. If for whatever reason you cannot make class, you will be allowed two class absences per semester. Beyond these two, any absences will impact your grade. More than four absences will result in your failing the course.

ENGAGEMENT

I expect you to attend and actively engage in class. You will notice that you are being graded not simply on your attendance, but on your engagement with the class. Engagement can mean any number of things, from asking questions in class to engaging course material both in and out of class. I recognize that different students have different learning styles, and may find it challenging to speak up every day in discussion. The important thing is that you find ways to make your engagement legible to me as best you can. If you think you are struggling with this, please meet with me during office hours to discuss.

MIDTERM

In March we will have an "in-class" midterm where you will be tested on the foundational theories and histories of digital media. The exam will consist of concept identification and definition, as well as a long-form essay that engages multiple concepts from the course in the production of an original thesis. The content and form of the midterm will be covered as part of an in-class review the week prior to the exam.

FINAL

On a date to be determined during finals week we will have a final exam that will cover content from the second half of the semester. The exam will consist of concept identification and definition, as well as a long-form essay that engages multiple concepts from the course in the production of an original thesis. The content and form of the final exam will be covered as part of an in-class review the last week of the semester.

QUIZZES

Over the course of the semester I will administer three quizzes based on the reading for that day. They will be administered without advance notice, and cannot be made up. The content of the quizzes will be simple, and is meant to check that you have done the reading for that day. I will drop your lowest quiz grade at the end of the semester when tallying your final grade.

LATE POLICY

I may offer extensions on writing assignments only if you provide me with at least three days' notice and sufficient evidence that you are working on an idea that requires more time. This does not guarantee an extension, but rather is the base requirement for a request. Do not ask for an extension the day before an assignment is due, or if you have not started writing yet. Late assignments will be docked 1/3 a grade for each day they are late (B+ to a B, B to a B-, etc.).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Any suspected instance of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://sa.berkeley.edu/conduct/integrity.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES

If you have a documented physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact the Berkeley Disabled Students Program, 260 César E. Chávez Student Center, #4250, (510) 643-0518. They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.