

What is New Media?

Spring 2023

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 130-330 pm or by appointment.

Room: W847

Class Time

Monday and Wednesday: 11:15-12:30

Course Description

This course will explore the fundamentals of new media scholarship. Together, we will review and engage with different theories and histories of emerging media in philosophical, social, cultural, and political contexts. Students will be able to research, think and write critically about some of the central debates in media studies. Classes consist of theoretical readings, seminar discussions, and writing/research workshops.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify key concepts/debates in media studies, and critically analyze challenging theoretical texts both orally and in writing;
- Use these theories to ask engaging questions and explain new media objects, events, and practices they encounter in everyday life;
- Develop a research essay that links media theory with their own design/artistic interests.

Grading Components

20% Participation.

This is a seminar. You must come to class prepared to discuss the readings and actively engage in all class activities.

20% Weekly Discussions. Discussions are due each Sunday at midnight.

Weekly discussions will take place on the forum in Brightspace. Each week students should choose 1 reading and write a short text (no more than ½ a page) to answer the following:

- What is the central thesis of the reading?
- Choose a single sentence that best encapsulates the reading.
- Choose an example of a media object or experience that is relevant to the reading.
- Write one question or comment about the reading.

In addition to our seminar discussions, this class involves **writing a research paper that links media theory with media practice**. All assignments are geared towards this goal. Detailed prompts and expectations of each assignment will be discussed & circulated in class.

15% Reading Analysis: Date Due 03/10.

Write a 500 word essay on a reading we have done in class.

15% Annotated Bibliography: Date Due 04/14.

Choose 5 sources on a subject of your choice. Write 1-2 paragraphs analyzing each reading.

5% Research Paper Outline. Date Due 04/23.

1-2 pages outlining the thesis and structure of your essay. These outlines will form the foundation of in class workshops in Week 12.

25% Final Research Paper Date Due 05/15.

All writing assignments are due on NYU Brightspace **before 11:55PM on the date indicated in the syllabus**. Missed assignments will earn an F. Exceptions can be made ONLY with prior approval from the instructor.

The late penalty for the final paper is one third of a letter grade per day. So, an 'A' project that is one day late will be graded an 'A-', two days late a 'B+', three days late a 'B', etc.

Readings

All readings are available in one of these four places:

1. Links provided in the syllabus;
2. [This](#) google drive folder;
3. Through the 'Course Reserves' on Brightspace
4. As an e-book available through the library.

Class Policies

Absences

An explanation for every absence or late attendance must be submitted in writing to the instructors. Every failure to attend class on time will count against the component of the final grade awarded for attendance and participation, unless an explanation is received and approved at least one day prior to the class in question. Requests for exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis, and typically granted only when related to an illness or other unforeseeable change in circumstance. Students who have been excessively absent will be considered to have unofficially withdrawn and will be given a final grade of F.

Integrity

It is a condition on passing this course that students read and adhere to the NYU Shanghai policy on academic integrity as described in the current [NYU Shanghai Academic Bulletin](#). Breaches of academic integrity could result in failure of an assignment, failure of the course, or other sanctions, as determined by the Academic Affairs office.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the dates and times indicated on this syllabus. The late penalty for the final paper is one component of a letter grade per day (an A becomes an A-, etc.) All other late assignments will receive an F.

Electronic Devices

You may not use mobile devices (phones, tablets or laptops) in class unless otherwise indicated. Unless specifically permitted, use of electronics in class will negatively impact your participation grade.

University Policies

Disability Disclosure Statement

NYU is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. It is NYU Shanghai's policy that no student with a qualified disability be excluded from participating in any NYU Shanghai program or activity, denied the benefits of any NYU Shanghai program or activity, or otherwise subjected to discrimination with regard to any NYU Shanghai program or activity. Any student who needs a reasonable accommodation based on a qualified disability is required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) for assistance. Students can register online through the CSD and can contact the Director of the [Academic Resource Center](#) with questions or for assistance. For more information see [here](#).

Title IX Statement

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs. It protects victims of sexual or gender-based bullying and harassment and survivors of gender-based violence. Protection from the discrimination on the basis of sex includes protection from being retaliated against for filing a complaint of discrimination or harassment. NYU is committed to complying with Title IX and enforcing University policies prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex. Mary Signor, Executive Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, serves as New York University's Title IX Coordinator. The University's Title IX Coordinator is a resource for any questions or concerns about sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct and is available to discuss your rights and judicial options. University policies define prohibited conduct, provide informal and formal procedures for filing a complaint and a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Media as Matter

30 January Introduction

1 February Fiore, Quentin, and Marshall McLuhan. *The Medium is the Massage*. Random House, 1967.

Week 2: Media as Matter

6 February Bill Brown, 'Materiality', in *Critical Terms for Media Studies*. Edited by William John Thomas Mitchell and Mark BN Hansen. University of Chicago Press, 2010, 49-64.

8 February Parks, Lisa, and Nicole Starosielski. '[Introduction](#)' in *Signal traffic: Critical studies of media infrastructures*. University of Illinois Press 2015, 1-28.

Week 3 From Wires to Wirelessness

13 February Carey, James. '[Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph](#).' *Prospects*, 8, 1983, 303-325.

[Recommended] Peters, John Durham. 'Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph Revisited.' In *Thinking with James Carey: Essays on Communications, Transportation, History*, edited Packer, Jeremy, and Craig Robertson, Peter Lang, 2006.

15 February Jeffrey Sconce. 'Media and Medium' in *Haunted Media Electronic Presence from Telegraphy to Television*. Duke University Press. 2000, 21-58.

Week 4: From Wires to Wirelessness

20 February Xiao Liu '[Information Fantasies](#).' *e-flux Journal*. January 2019

22 February Gabrys, Jennifer. 'Atmospheres of Communication' in *The Wireless Spectrum: The Politics, Practices and Poetics of Mobile Media*, edited by Barbara Crow, Michael Longford and Kim Sawchuk. University of Toronto Press, 2010, 46-59.

[Video Lecture] Hansen, Mark B. N. '[Radio: Triggers. Introducing the Technosphere](#).' 100 Years of Now. The Opening. HKW. 09/10 2015.

Week 5: Language

27 February Flusser, Vilém. Introduction. [Does Writing Have a Future?](#), University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

Hayles, N. Katherine. 'Introducing Postprint.' [Postprint : Books and Becoming Computational](#), Columbia University Press, 2021. 1-40.

1 March Mullaney, Thomas. 'The Moveable Typewriter: How Chinese Typists Developed Predictive Text during the Height of Maoism.' *Technology and Culture* 53, no. 4 2012: 777-814.

Mullaney, Thomas, and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom. '[It's Time to Get Over QWERTY: A Q&A with Tom Mullaney on Alphabets, Chinese Characters, and Computing](#).' *Los Angeles Review of Books* (BLARB) (blog), 5 April 2016.

Week 6: Language

6 March Seabrook, John. '[The next word: Where will predictive text take us?](#)' *The New Yorker* 14, no. 10. 2019.

Fagone, Jason '[He couldn't get over his fiancée's death. So he brought her to life using artificial intelligence](#),' *San Francisco Chronicle*, July 23 2021

8 March Blake Lemoine. [Is LaMDA sentient - an Interview](#). June 11, 2022

Bratton, Benjamin and Blaise Aguera y Arcas. [The Model is the Message](#). Noema. July 12, 2022.

Blaise Aguera y Arcas. [Do Large Language Models Understand Us](#). *Medium* December 17, 2021

Week 7: Control & Escape

13 March Foucault, Michel. 'Panopticism' in [Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison](#). New York: Random House 2012.

Deleuze, Gilles. 'Postscript on Control Societies' in *Negotiations: 1972–1990*. New York: Columbia University Press. 1997 pp. 177–182.

15 March [Film] Xu Bing. [Dragonfly Eyes](#) 2017

Zhang, Ling. "Foreshadowing the Future of Capitalism: Surveillance Technology and Digital Realism in Xu Bing's Dragonfly Eyes." *Comparative Cinema* 8, no. 14 (2020): 62-81.

Week 8: Control & Escape

20 March Turner, Fred. 'Introduction' in [From Counterculture to Cyberculture](#). University of Chicago Press, 2021. 1-10

22 March Yang, Guobin. 'Game of Words' in [The Wuhan Lockdown](#). Columbia University Press, 2022. 135-157

Jing Wang. [Lockdown Sound Diaries](#). *Made in China*. 27 April 2022.

Week 9: Research Workshop & Field Trip

27 March (Sunday March 26) Field Trip

29 March Research Workshop

Week 10. Real & Fake

10 April Baudrillard, Jean. 'The Precession of Simulacra'. In *Simulacra and Simulation*, translated by Sheila Faria Glaser, 33601st edition. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994. 1-42

12 April Byung-Chul Han, 'Shanzhai: Fake' in [Shanzhai: Deconstruction in Chinese](#). 2017. 72-78

Week 11: Real & Fake

17 April Chalmers, David J. 'Introduction and Chapter 1' in *Reality+: Virtual Worlds and the Problems of Philosophy*. Penguin UK, 2022.

19 April [Film] [Web Junkies](#). Directed by 2013.

Week 12. Research Group Workshops

April 23 Due Date: Research Paper Outline

April 24 Group A Workshop

April 26 Group B Workshop

Week 13. Lunchtime Screening

3 May

Week 14: Research Paper Individual Consultations

8 May

10 May