

York University – Division of Humanities
AS HUMANITIES 2920 9.0A - 2006-2007
Spreading the Word: Knowledge, Culture and Technology

Lectures: F 12:30-14:30, TEL 0010 -- http://www.yorku.ca/gita/huma2920 Tutorial 01: F 14:30-16:30, FC 117 -- Tutorial 03: F 10:30-12:30, FC 103
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Course Directors:

Jennifer Cypher - <jcypher@yorku.ca> - Office hours and location TBA
Gita Hashemi - <gita@yorku.ca> - Office hours and location TBA

Course Description

This foundations course explores the social, cultural, and political implications of technologies of information and communication in their historical and material contexts with an emphasis on a Humanities approach. It examines the ways that information technologies have shaped a variety of forms of human experience, and conversely, the ways that ideologies and practices have shaped the development of technologies of production and circulation of knowledge. The course also explores some of the wider metaphysical implications of the role of technology in society and studies numerous examples of the social transformations engendered by technological developments. At root the course is designed to equip students for critical reflection, from a variety of perspectives on the role of information and communication technologies in society.

Each week there will be a 2-hour lecture and a 2-hour tutorial. Tutorials allow for dialogue and exploration of key themes in the course and the study material. **TUTORIALS ARE NOT OPTIONAL, i.e. ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED.** Each lecture has a set of associated readings; it is therefore imperative that you read the material before the tutorial.

As a critical reading and writing course, HUMA 2920 requires ongoing reading and weekly writing as assigned by Course Directors and Tutorial Leaders. We encourage you to seek the assistance of York's Academic Writing Centre for supplemental writing and study workshops, and to take advantage of the writing tutors at Bethune College and other York colleges.

Grading/Evaluation

Evaluation will be based on your tutorial participation and performance in course assignments and exams. You are responsible for all course material including all audio/visual material used in lectures and online supplements, as well as lectures and tutorial discussions and activities.

- You must submit all assignments and exams to complete the course.
- All assignments are due at the beginning of lecture or as listed in the schedule.
- Extensions require a signed medical certificate or other valid proof of cause.
- Tutorial attendance is required and will be reflected in the participation grade. You must attend at least 60% of the tutorials to receive a passing grade for attendance and participation.
- York University policies on academic honesty will be enforced. Note policy sheets attached to this syllabus.
- You will receive separate instructions for all major assignments.

Assignment/Grade Breakdown

Module Responses (2 in each term)	10%
Mini Assignments (3)	15%
Term 1 Exam	15%
Term 2 Exam	15%
Attendance	5%
Participation	10%
Research project (3 components)	30%

Texts

HUMA 2920 9.0 Reading Kit (available at the York University Bookstore). Online readings and study materials listed in the schedule and linked to the course website.

COURSE SCHEDULE – FALL TERM

September 08: Course introduction, overview and logistics

MODULE 1: GENERALITIES ON CULTURE, REPRESENTATION AND TECHNOLOGY

September 15: An Introduction to the Study of Culture

Johnson, Richard, et al. "Cultural Studies and the study of culture: disciplines and dialogues." In The Practice of Cultural Studies. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications. 2004. pp. 7-24. (course kit)

September 22: What Is Representation?

Sturken, Marita and Lisa Cartwright. "Practices of Looking: Images, Power and Politics." In Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2001. pp.10-36. (course kit)

****Due at the start of lecture: Mini assignment 1****

September 28: Culture and Technology

Marinetti, F.T. "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism." Online at:
<http://www.unknown.nu/futurism/manifesto.html>

Brecht, Bertolt. "The Radio as an Apparatus of Communication." Online at:
<http://www.tonisant.com/class/2001/fall/brechtradio.htm>

Winner, Langdon. "Techne and Politea." In The Whale and the Reactor. A search for limits in an age of high technology. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986. pp. 40-58. (course kit)

****Due by 9:30 A.M.: Module 1 response****

MODULE 2: THE WORK OF COMMUNICATION

October 06: Orality and Literacy

Plato. Selection from "Pheadrus." In Phaedrus and Letters VII and VIII, Walter Hamilton, trans. 1973. Penguin Books. Pp. 95-99. (course kit)

Ong, Walter. Selections from "Orality and Literacy." Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word. Routledge. 2002. pp. 107-114. (course kit)

October 13: Meaning in Communication

Goffman, Erving. "Footing." In Forms of Talk. 1981: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 124-159. (course kit)

Hall, Stuart. "Encoding, Decoding." In the Cultural Studies Reader. New York: Routledge, 1999. Pp. 507-517. (course kit)

October 20: Communication, Subversion, Resistance

Balliger, Robin. "Sounds of Resistance." In Sounding Off: Music as Subversion/Resistance/Revolution. New York: Autonomedia. pp. 13-26. (course kit)

Lovink, Geert. "Interview with Stephen Marshall: Guerrilla News Network's Digital Documentaries." Online at:
<http://amsterdam.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-0312/msg00018.html>

****Due by 9:30 A.M.: Module 2 response****

MODULE 3: TECHNOLOGY, POLITICS AND MEDIA CULTURE

October 27: Medium, Content, Context

Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." Online at:
<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Modules/MC10220/benjamin.html#Top>

****Due at the start of lecture: Mini assignment 2****

November 03: Media Spectacle

Kellner, Douglas. "Media Culture and the Triumph of the Spectacle." In Media Spectacle.
 London: Routledge, 2003. (course kit)

November 10: Corporatization and Globalization of Media

McChesney, Robert and Dan Schiller. "The Political Economy of International Communications: Foundations for the Emerging Global Debate over Media Ownership and Regulation" (read these sections only: Introduction, the Mythology of Freedom of Communications in the United States, the Move to Neo-Liberalism, and the Conclusion). Online at:
http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/httpNetITFrame?ReadForm&parentunid=C9DCBA6C7DB78C2AC1256BDF0049A774&parentdoctype=paper&netitpath=http://www.unrisd.org/unpublished_/tbs_/chesney/content.htm

November 17: The Public Sphere

Habermas, Jurgen. "The Public Sphere." In Jurgen Habermas on Society and Politics: A Reader.
 Beacon Press, 1989. Pp 231-236. (course kit)

Lovink, Geert. "Gated Communities, Themeparks, Youth Revolts: An Interview with Mike Davis." Online at: <http://www.thing.desk.nl/bilwet/Geert/Workspace/DAVIS.INT>

****Due by 9:30 A.M.: Module 3 response****

November 24: Term 1 Review

Term review and debate

****Due at the start of lecture: Mini assignment 3****

December 01: Mid-term exam held in regular lecture time and location.

**--- TERM BREAK --- ENJOY THE HOLIDAZE! --- HAPPY AND SAFE NEW YEAR! ---
 CLASSES START AGAIN ON JANUARY 3, 2007 ---**

COURSE SCHEDULE – WINTER TERM

MODULE 4: TECHNOLOGY AND POWER

January 05: Panopticon and Disciplinary Technologies

Foucault, Michel. “Panopticism.” Excerpts from Discipline and Punish. New York: Vintage Books, 2nd edition, 1995. Pp 200-228. (course kit)

January 12: Transformative Power: The Case of CB Radio

Packer, Jeremy. “Mobile Communications and Governing the Mobile: CBs and Truckers.” The Communication Review. Volume 5, Number 1 / January-March 2002, pp 39 – 57.

Available for download through York University Libraries e-Resources. Go to:

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/ccm/jsp/homepage.jsp>

Follow the instructions from there. Use the Journal title first to locate the online journal, and the volume/issue numbers or article title next to find the article. You need to have a current library card if connecting from home or, alternatively, use computer facilities at York.

January 19: Subversive Power: Hacking

Douglas, Thomas. “Technology and Punishment: The Juridical Construction of the Hacker.”

Chapter 6 in Hacker Culture. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002. Pp 177-219. (course kit)

****Due by 9:30 A.M.: Module 4 Response****

MODULE 5: STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL USES OF TECHNOLOGY

January 26: Tactics and Strategies, the Theory

DeCerteau, Michel. “General Introduction.” Excerpt from The Practice of Everyday Life. Online at: http://ubu.clc.wvu.edu/papers/de_certeau.html

AND

“Making Do.” Excerpt from The Practice of Everyday Life. Rendall, Steven, Translator.

University of California Press, 1984. Pp 29-39. (course kit)

Garcia, David and Geert Lovink. “The ABC of Tactical Media.” Online at:

<http://www.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-l-9705/msg00096.html>

****Due at the start of lecture: Research Proposal****

February 02: Case Study: Cell Phones

Rafael, Vicente L. “The Cell Phone and the Crowd: Messianic Politics in the Contemporary Philippines.” In Public Culture, Vol 15, No 3, Fall 2003. Pp. 399-425. (course kit)

February 09: Case Studies: Broadcasting and Networking

Van Der Zon, Marian. “Broadcasting on Our Own Terms. Temporary Autonomous Radio.” In Autonomous Media: Activating Resistance and Dissent. Montreal: Cumulus Press. 2005. 31-46. (course kit)

Dubois, Frederic. “Networkers Unite! Strengthening Media Solidarity.” In Autonomous Media: Activating Resistance and Dissent. Montreal: Cumulus Press. 2005. 135-150. (course kit)

February 16: READING WEEK. NO CLASSES.

February 23: Internet Journalism

Strangelove, Michael. "Online Journalism and the Subversion of Commercial News." In The Empire of the Mind. Digital Piracy and the Anti-Capitalist Movement. Toronto, Buffalo, London: Toronto University Press. 2005. Pp 162-198. (course kit)

****Due at the start of lecture: Annotated Bibliography****

MODULE 6: MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

March 02: The Internet as Public Sphere

Poster, Mark. "CyberDemocracy: Internet as a Public Sphere?" In What's the Matter with the Internet? Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001. Pp 171-188. (course kit)

****Due by 9:30 A.M.: Module 5 Response****

March 10: Creating Public Spheres

Jordan, Tim. "The Virtual Imaginary." In Cyberpower: The Culture and Politics of Cyberspace and the Internet. New York: Routledge, 1999. Pp 179-207, 226-228. (course kit)

Anderson, Benedict. Excerpt from "The Nation as Imagined Community." Online at:
<http://www.nationalismproject.org/what/anderson.htm>

March 17: Mass Media and Propaganda

Sturken, Marita and Lisa Cartwright. "The Mass Media and the Public Sphere." In Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2001. pp. 151-188. (course kit)

March 24: The Convergence of Ideas

Wilson, Louise. "Cyberwar, God and Television: An interview with Paul Virilio." Online at:
<http://www.unnu.com/unnu/archive/etexts/InterviewPaulVirilio.html>

****Due by 9:30 A.M.: Module 6 Response****

March 31: Final Thoughts and Review

****Final paper due (hand in hard copy at the beginning of lecture)****

Final exam date and location TBA.

York Senate Policy on Academic Honesty

[Selected sections. Full document at <http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm>]

Introduction

Conduct that violates the ethical or legal standards of the University community or of one's programme or specialization may result in serious consequences. The Policy on Academic Honesty is a reaffirmation and clarification for members of the University of the general obligation to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. It outlines the general responsibility of faculty to foster acceptable standards of academic conduct and of the student to be mindful of and abide by such standards.

B. The Role of Faculty Members and Students

A clear sense of academic honesty and responsibility is fundamental to good scholarship. Faculty members should include consideration of academic honesty in both courses and research settings. Such guidance is particularly important for students who assume independent roles as course assistants or begin to conduct their own original work. Every student has a responsibility to abide by these standards and, when in doubt, to consult with faculty members in order to determine a proper course of action.

C. Pressures That May Lead to Academic Misconduct

University education includes demands that might tempt some to violate standards of academic honesty. There are pressures on students to achieve high grades, obtain financial support, meet research or publication deadlines, gain recognition from the scholarly community, and secure employment. Although faculty members can help students to maintain academic honesty despite these pressures, each student has final responsibility for her or his academic honesty.

D. Serious Offences Against the Standards of Academic Honesty

Note. This summary is not exhaustive. In some cases the University regulations on non-academic discipline may apply. Some academic offences constitute offences under the Criminal Code of Canada; a student charged under University regulations may also be subject to criminal charges. Charges may also be laid against York University students for matters which arise at other educational institutions.

Cheating: Cheating is the attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation. Among the forms this kind of dishonesty can take are: obtaining a copy of an examination before it is officially available or learning an examination question before it is officially available; copying another person's answer to an examination question; consulting an unauthorized source during an examination; obtaining assistance by means of documentary, electronic or other aids which are not approved by the instructor; or changing a score or a record of an examination result.

It is also improper to submit the work one has done for one class or project to a second class, or as a second project, without getting the informed consent of the relevant instructors. Acceptance of one piece of work that is submitted for two classes must be arranged beforehand. It is understood that students may wish to build on previous research in the preparation of a paper but students must also be aware that such a practice may run afoul of the intention of the assignment. In all such cases the student must discuss the matter with the instructors and receive written permission beforehand.

Impersonation: It is a breach of academic honesty to have someone impersonate one's self in class, in a test or examination, or in connection with any other type of assignment in a course. Both the impersonator and the individual impersonated may be charged.

Plagiarism and other misappropriation of the work of another: Plagiarism is the representation of another person's ideas or writing as one's own. The most obvious form of this kind of dishonesty is the presentation of all or part of another person's published work as something one has written. However, paraphrasing another's writing without proper acknowledgement may also be considered plagiarism. It is also a violation of academic honesty to represent another's artistic or technical work or creation as one's own. Just as there are standards to which one must adhere in the preparation and publication of written works, there are standards to which one must adhere in the creation and presentation of music, drawings, designs, dance, photography and other artistic and technical works. In

different forms, these constitute a theft of someone else's work. This is not to say that students should not use the work of others with the proper acknowledgement.

Improper research practices: Many academic activities may involve the collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and publishing of information or data obtained in the scientific laboratory or in the field. Opportunities to deviate from acceptable standards may be more numerous in research than in the classroom, as research activities may be supervised less closely. Forms of improper research practices include the dishonest reporting of investigative results either through fabrication or falsification, taking or using the research results of others without permission or due acknowledgment, misrepresentation of research results or the methods used, the selective reporting or omission of conflicting information or data to support a particular notion or hypothesis. Furthermore, all researchers have a responsibility to refrain from practices that may unfairly inhibit the research of others now or later. This responsibility extends to York University students in other institutions or countries.

Premature oral or written dissemination of information: Information or experimental data that was collected with a member of the faculty or another student, and other works that involved the participation of a faculty member or another student should not be submitted for publication prematurely, without appropriate permission.

Falsification or unauthorized modification of an academic record: It is a breach of academic honesty to falsify, fabricate or in any other way modify a

- * student examination
- * transcript
- * grade
- * letter of recommendation or
- * related document.

Other breaches of academic honesty include:

- * making false claims or statements
- * submitting false information
- * altering official documents or records
- * attempting or causing others to do or attempt any of the above with intent to mislead an:
 - i. instructor
 - ii. an academic unit
 - iii. programme
 - iv. office or
 - v. committee

as to a student's academic status, qualifications, actions or preparation.

Obstruction of the academic activities of another: It is a violation of academic honesty to interfere with the scholarly activities of another in order to harass or gain unfair academic advantage. This includes interference or tampering with experimental data, with a human or animal subject, with a written or other creation (e.g., a painting, sculpture or film), with a chemical used for scientific study, or with any other object of study.

Aiding or abetting academic misconduct: Knowingly aiding or abetting anyone in a breach of academic honesty shall itself be considered misconduct. This may include assisting others in the preparation of work submitted for appraisal or offering for sale essays or other assignments with the intention that these works would be submitted for appraisal.

E. Sanctions for Academic Misconduct

When verified, a violation of academic honesty may lead to the following penalties:

- (a) oral or written disciplinary warning or reprimand;
- (b) a make-up assignment or examination
- (c) lower grade or failure on assignment or examination
- (d) failure in the course;
- (e) suspension from the University for a definite period (1);
- (f) notation on transcript (2);
- (g) withholding or rescinding a York degree, diploma or certificate (3);