

## **LMC-8000-JB: Proseminar in Media Theory**

Instructor: Jay David Bolter ([jay.bolter@lmc.gatech.edu](mailto:jay.bolter@lmc.gatech.edu))

Meeting: Thursday (12:30-3:15pm)

In this seminar students will explore the key traditions of disciplinary and theoretical inquiry that contribute to the study of Digital Media, including design theory, literary-critical theory, visual culture and the cultural studies of media, communications theory, and performance studies. Students will examine key texts in each of these areas and explore their application to representative digital artifacts.

### **Course objectives**

By the end of the course students will be able to

1. articulate the assumptions and methodologies characteristic of the multiple approaches to theory as listed above.
2. express their mastery of the theoretical texts by successfully completing the DM qualifying examination.

### **Course work**

In addition to writing a research paper, students will take turns leading the discussion on various texts that we read. (These readings will be drawn almost exclusively from the Ph.D. reading list.)

### **Assignment**

The principal assignment for the semester is to write an article or essay that engages with some topic in Media Theory, Media Studies, Science Studies (in relation to Media), and so on. We will discuss the details in class. The final product should be a substantial piece of written work (4000 words or more) with a bibliography. The length and exact nature of the writing will depend on the target audience for your article/essay: e.g. a particular research community, a particular journal in that community, a conference, etc.

There are 4 milestones:

- September 19: Preliminary paragraph and outline of your paper (1-page). Brief class presentation.
- September 26: Revision of paragraph and outline based on (class) feedback
- November 7: Substantial rough draft of paper.
- Dec 9: Final paper due

Readings will be drawn principally from the following list:

AUTHOR	TITLE
Adorno and Horkheimer	"The Culture Industry"
<i>Brock, A.</i>	Distributed Blackness: African American Cybercultures
Brock, André	"Critical Technocultural Discourse Analysis"
Browne, Simone	Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness
Auslander, Liveness	Liveness
Bazin, André,	"The Ontology of the Photographic Image"
Bazin, André,	"The Myth of Total Cinema"
Benjamin, Walter	"Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"
Bogost, Ian	Persuasive Games
Bolter, Jay & Grusin, Richard	Remediation: Understanding New Media.
Bordwell, David	"Post Theory"
boyd, danah	It's Complicated
Chun, Wendy Hui Kyong	<i>Discriminating Data</i>
Debord, Guy	<i>Society of Spectacle (also the film version on YouTube)</i>
Dick Higgins	"Intermedia"
Geertz, Clifford	The Interpretation of Cultures
Gillespie,	Media Technologies
Greenberg, Clement	"Avant-garde and Kitsch" and "Modernist Painting"
Hayles, N. K.	How We Think: Digital Media and Contemporary Technogenesis.
<i>Herman, D.</i>	Story Logic: Problems and Possibilities of Narrative
Hu, Tung-Hui	A Prehistory of the Cloud
<i>Huizinga, J.</i>	Homo Ludens; a Study of the Play-Element in Culture.
Jameson, Fredric	Postmodernism
Jenkins, Henry	Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide.
Kay and Goldberg	"Personal Dynamic Media"
Lakoff and Johnson,	Metaphors We Live By
Manovich, Lev	The Language of New Media
McLuhan, Marshall	Understanding Media: The Extensions of man
Mitchell, W. J. T.	Picture Theory
Mulvey, Laura	"Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"
Murray, Janet	Hamlet on the Holodeck
Nelson, Ted	Computer Lib/Dream machines (excerpts)
Raymond Williams	"The technology and the society"
Schechner, Richard	Performance Studies, Chapter 2
<i>Sutton-Smith, B. (1997).</i>	The Ambiguity of Play
Turkle, S. (1995).	Life on the Screen
Vannevar Bush, "How We May Think"	"How We May Think"