COMM 306
Innovation, Entertainment, and the Arts
Prof. Michelle C Forelle
Spring 2017

Monday and Wednesday | 12:00 – 1:50pm in ASC 331

Office hours:
By appointment only
forelle@usc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will map various media industries through the innovations and disruptions that define their history, determine their present, and shape their future. "Innovation" and "disruption" are two of the most celebrated—but perhaps least understood—terms used in the entertainment and arts industries. Rather than take these ideas for granted, this course will cover a number of critical frameworks that can be used to understand them. Then, we will trace the innovations and disruptions that occurred over the course of the history of print, radio, television, film, music, games and marketing. We will examine these changes, so we can go beyond *what* happened and uncover the *how* and the *why*. Students will then be able to take this knowledge and apply it to the development of their own innovations, working together to generate and present new ideas that build off what came before to address something that is needed now (or will be needed soon). Although the focus will be on the American media and communications industries, the end of the course will provide some future-facing and global outlooks on entertainment and the arts.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Wu, Tim. *The Master Switch: The Rise and Fall of Information Empires*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010. Print.

Jenkins, Henry, Sam Ford, and Joshua Benjamin Green. *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture*. New York; London: New York University Press, 2013. Print.

All other texts to be read in this course will be available either in PDF format or as a link to the original piece on Blackboard

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING BREAKDOWN

➔ **10% - Class Participation and Attendance** – Students are expected to make informed contributions to class discussions and in-class activities. Students are expected to attend every lecture and screening. Attendance will be taken. Missing more than *three*

classes will result in an automatic reduction of a full point from the final grade. Missing more than *six* classes will result in an incomplete or failing grade.

➔ **15% - Weekly Blackboard Posts** – Every week you will be required to post on the Blackboard discussion board. These posts should be a reflection on the week's readings, and work to connect the ideas from those readings to some contemporary phenomenon. This could be the release of a new technology or service, an advertising campaign for a movie or television show, an ongoing fan engagement activity, or a news report or thinkpiece on a technological trend. Posts must be minimum 300 words.

➔ **25% - Class Wiki** – Each student will sign up to be responsible for researching and populating a specific page on our class Wiki. Students may work alone on a smaller page, or work in pairs or groups on larger pages. Sign-ups will occur within the first weeks of class. The Wiki will be assessed twice during the course of the semester, and then once again at the end.

➔ **25% - Group Project** – Students will form teams to propose, develop, and present a project in which they collaborate on a new product, process, or service that addresses some current need. This project will be graded in two phases: 5% on a proposal the team puts together and submits, and 20% on the final presentation at the end of the semester.

➔ **25% - Final Paper** – A final paper topic will be given to students in the last few weeks of class. The paper will be due no later than noon on Friday, May 5.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS
The Annenberg School for communication is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course and may be dismissed as a major.

In addition to the formal academic integrity policy, our pedagogical policy is based on mutual respect; all students are encouraged to use the classroom as a space in which to speak and to voice their opinions. Our expectation is that you will respect not only the professors but also your fellow classmates when they are participation in discussion.

Laptop requirement and use
Effective fall 2014, all undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors will be required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes. Please refer to the Annenberg Virtual Commons for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's Information Technology Services website. Annenberg students also have access to the full Adobe Creative Cloud, which provides access to a variety of Adobe apps and products; more information at http://www.annenbergdl.org/tutorials/installing-adobe-creative-cloud/

Nonetheless, it is important to remember that *use of computer in the classroom is a privilege*. You may use a computer in the classroom ONLY for taking notes or for class presentations. If you abuse this privilege by checking email or going on the Internet, updating Facebook profiles,

IMing friends, or playing computer games, you will be marked as absent for that class period. All other electronic devices (smart phones, etc) must be put away during class time. If this kind of activity gets to be a problem, laptop computers will not be allowed in the classroom.

Plagiarism
USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by the instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. Presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is considered plagiarism and is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" https://policy.usc.edu/student/scampus/part-b. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy and Resources
Discrimination, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, and harassment are prohibited by the university. You are encouraged to report all incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity/Title IX Office* http://equity.usc.edu and/or to the *Department of Public Safety* http://dps.usc.edu. This is important for the health and safety of the whole USC community. Faculty and staff must report any information regarding an incident to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide outreach and information to the affected party. The sexual assault resource center webpage http://sarc.usc.edu fully describes reporting options. Relationship and Sexual Violence Services https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp provides 24/7 confidential support.

Stress Management
Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711, open between 8:30am and 5pm on weekdays. The service is confidential, and there is no charge. Student Counseling Services also offers support groups on a variety of topics.

Students with Disabilities
The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://dsp.usc.edu provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 830am – 5pm, Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP: http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, 213-740-0776 (phone), 213-740-6948 (TDD only), 213-740-8216 (fax), ability@usc.edu

Scholarly Support Systems
A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more.

➢ Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* http://ali.usc.edu, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.
➢ The USC Writing Center is free for all students http://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter . The Writing Center offers 25-minute individual sessions with writing consultants who are available to assist students with all the steps of producing a piece of writing, as well as a variety of 50-minute group workshops that focus on specific topics related to writing. This is *not* a proof-reading service, but a center to help students develop and refine their writing skills.
➢ If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* http://emergency.usc.edu will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

SCHEDULE

Week 1 – Introduction to Innovation & Disruption
Jan 9
➔ Introduction & syllabus review

Jan 11
➔ Tim Wu, *The Master Switch* ("Introduction," & Ch.1 "The Disruptive Founder" (PDF on BB)

Week 2 – Intro to Innovation & Disruption, cont'd
~~Jan 16~~ – Martin Luther King Day, no class

Jan 18
➔ Jill Lepore, "The Disruption Machine," *The New Yorker* (link on BB)
➔ Laura Bliss, "Innovation is Overrated," *The Atlantic* (link on BB)
  o *Assignments*: Wiki sign-up today

Week 3 – Convergence Culture & the Transmedia Future
Jan 23
➔ Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture*:
  o "Introduction: 'Worship at the Altar of Convergence'"
  o "Conclusion: Democratizing Television? The Politics of Participation" (PDFs on BB)

Jan 25

➔ Charlie Burton and Tom Cheshire, "Transmedia: Entertainment Reimagined," *WIRED* (link on BB)

Week 4 – New Revenue and Distribution Models
Jan 30
➔ Aymar Jean Christian, "Web TV Networks Challenge Linear Business Models" (link on BB)
➔ Ken Auletta, "Outside the Box: Netflix and the future of television" (link on BB)
➔ Jonathan Taplin and Anjuli Bedi, *The Edison Project,* "The New Funding and Business Models" (link on BB)
➔ Patryk Galuszka and Victor Bystrov, "The rise of fanvestors: A study of a crowdfunding community" (link on BB)

Feb 1
➔ Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green, *Spreadable Media*
  o Introduction, "Why Media Spreads"
  o Ch. 3 "The Value of Media Engagement"
  o Ch. 5 "Designing for Spreadability"

Week 5 – Our New Robot Overlords pt. 1: New Tech
Feb 6
➔ Kevin Simtumuang, "Is a Tablet the Only TV You Need?" (PDF on BB)
➔ Amanda D. Lotz, *The Television will be Revolutionized*
  o Ch. 2 "Television Outside the Box: The Technological Revolution of Television" (PDF on BB)

Feb 8
➔ Jonathan Sterne, *The Meaning of a Format*
  o Ch. 4 "Making a Standard" (PDF on BB)
➔ Francesca Marie Smith, *The Edison Project*, "The New Screens" (link on BB)

Week 6 – Our New Robot Overlords pt. 2: Algorithms
Feb 13
➔ Giuseppe Granieri, "Culture now has two audiences: people and machines" (link on BB)
➔ IBM, "A new day in the world of content" (PDF on BB)
  o *Assignments:* Wiki assessment #1 today

Feb 15
➔ Brian Whitman, "How Well Does Music Predict Your Politics" (link on BB)
➔

Week 7 – Virtual vs. Live Experiences
~~**Feb 20**~~ – Presidents' Day, no class

Feb 22
➔ **TBD**

Week 8 – David vs. Goliath: Alternative and Independent Producers
Feb 27
- ➔ Zoe Quinn, BoingBoing, "Punk Games" (link on BB)
- ➔ Rebecca Greenfield, FastCompany, "The (Surprisingly) Profitable Rise of Podcast Networks" (link on BB)

Mar 1
- ➔ John Jurgensen, "The New Producers" (PDF on BB)
- ➔ Richard Brody, The New Yorker, "Our Dated Model of Theatrical Release is Hurting Independent Cinema" (link on BB)
    - o *Assignments:* Group project proposals due today

Week 9 – Started From the Bottom: Pro-am and User-Generated Content
Mar 6
- ➔ Aram Sinnreich, *Mashed Up*, Ch. 3 "The Crisis of Configurability" (PDF on BB)
- ➔ T.L. Stanley, Adweek, "How Vine's Hunky Goofball Logan Paul Plans to Become a Mainstream Superstar" (link on BB)

Mar 8
- ➔ Geoffrey Long, Rachel Joy Victor, Lisa Crawford, Malika Lim, and Juvenal Quiñones, with Ritesh Mehta and Anna Karina Samia, *The Edison Project*, "The New Creators + Makers"

SPRING BREAK, Mar 11 - 19

Week 10 – Interacting with Audiences
Mar 20
- ➔ Jiyoung Cha, "Television use in the 21st century: An exploration of television and social television use in a multiplatform environment" (link on BB)
- ➔ Henry Jenkins, Sam Ford, and Joshua Green, *Spreadable Media*
    - o Ch. 4 "What Constitutes Meaningful Participation"

Mar 22
- ➔ Esther MacCallum-Stewart, "Diggy Holes and Jaffa Cakes: The rise of the elite fan-producer in video-gaming culture" (PDF on BB)

Week 11 – Fair Use and Creative Commons
Mar 27
- ➔ **TBD**

Mar 29
- ➔ Aram Sinnreich, "Copyleft and Copyfights" (PDF on BB)
- ➔ Lawrence Lessig, *Free Culture*, Ch. 12 "Harms" (link on BB)
    - o *Assignments:* Wiki assessment #2 today

Week 12 – Consolidation, Monopolies, and Government Intervention

Apr 3
➔ Tim Wu, *The Master Switch:*
   o Ch. 4 "The Time is not Ripe for Feature Films"
   o Ch. 6 "The Paramount Ideal"

Apr 5
➔ Tim Wu, *The Master Switch*:
   o Ch. 9 "FM Radio"
   o Ch. 10 "We Now Add Sight to Sound"
   o Ch. 11 "The Right Kind of Break-up"

Week 13 – Consolidation, Monopolies, and Government Intervention pt.2
Apr 10
➔ Tim Wu, *The Master Switch*:
   o Part IV Introduction
   o Ch. 17 "Mass Production of the Spirit"

   o *Assignments:* Final paper topic discussed today

Apr 12
➔ Guest speaker: Mark Lloyd
   o Readings TBD

Week 14 – Globalization and Social Change
Apr 17
➔ Tim Wu, *The Master Switch*, Ch. 21 "The Separations Principle"

Apr 19
➔ Manuel Castells, *Networks of Outrage and Hope* ("Opening" & "Changing the World in the Network Society")

Week 15: Group presentations

FINAL DUE FRIDAY MAY 5