

This class counts toward the Minor in Interactive Media and the Culture of New Technologies.

COURSE TITLE

Cultures of New Media

INSTRUCTOR

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Smart devices and pervasive connectivity have change how, where and when we communicate. The early days of Web 2.0 -- beginning with blogging in 1999 -- permitted ordinary people to aggregate and filter information, author and publish their own work, and find communities of mutual interest. Sharing ideas (or "content," as it's called on corporate sites) became incredibly simple and cheap to do. A dozen years later, media corporations are still adjusting to the far-reaching implications of the Web 2.0 shift.

Smart phones, popularized by the Blackberry (2002) and particularly by the iPhone (2007), moved the affordances of Web 2.0 off of the laptop to anywhere one's body happens to be. Humans compute more now than would have been conceivable just five years ago. 7.8 trillion SMS messages were sent in 2011. SMS traffic is expected to reach 9.6 trillion in 2012. Text messages are a small fraction of our mobile computing.

The fundamental questions this class prompts us to consider are: "How does ubiquitous computing change personal, corporate, political and cultural communication? What are the implications of an always-on culture? Is multimedia authoring an essential literacy?"

These questions will be canvassed both in our scholarship and in the hands-on work we do making objects in digital platforms. We'll reflect in writing and in authoring media objects on how those modes of learning work in tandem to forge a new form of scholarly endeavor.

OFFICE HOURS

After class & by appointment. I meet face-to-face with each student monthly to discuss your learning and class performance.

Attendance F2F and Virtually This class meets both face-to-face and virtually: I lead 65% of the class sessions from inside a virtual classroom. Students have the option to attend those sessions virtually from wherever they are; or they can meet face-to-face in our regular classroom with other learners, where students engage class both face-to-face and virtually.

35% of the classes meet face-to-face in our assigned classroom. We attend to the differences in embodied and virtual learning. What can we accomplish in the different settings? If the virtual setting is ideal for some tasks, what sort of work is best suited to our embodied time? Students learn the unique affordances and constraints of the

settings. It primes them for knowledge work after graduation, since so much of it happens in virtual and hybrid environments.

Students who do not own a computer or smart phone may use any computer with an Internet connection to participate in class. Adobe Connect loads in a browser.

The software is very easy to use; training and practice take about 10 minutes on the second day of classes.

We collaborate extensively in this class. Our time together is precious. Failure to attend class or participate in required collaborative homework will impact your grade. (For more information about this, see "Graded Events" and "Assessing Collaborative Work" below.)

Learning Outcomes

Students will

- Author arguments in text, image and video; author artifacts for our social media campaigns; author individually and collaboratively;
- Study the strategic uses of various social media platforms including but not limited to Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Google Maps, and Diigo;
- Discuss and analyze important themes such as: privacy, surveillance, "passive surveillance," mobility, participatory culture, "playbor" (in which corporations profit from fan-created content), remix, copyright, brand management, messaging and ubiquitous computing;
- Apply academic reading to the specific context of a social media build;
- Learn how to assess an interface: what is the "usability" of paper, books, post-it notes, whiteboards, face-to-face conversation, video, virtual meeting software, browsers and mobile apps?
- Learn how to meet with clients and take specifications;
- Measure the engagement earned by our social media campaign.

READINGS

Our course materials are five assigned books, many posts by scholars and lead practitioners, and videos featuring scholars presenting their work at conferences or in public lectures. I identify their university affiliations or other credentials in the Weekly Schedule below where I link to the assigned works. I encourage students to read online materials in their original context. I will teach you how to annotate within the bookmarking-and-annotation platform Diigo so that you can conveniently take notes on online material. You can also access help with the Diigo tools [here](#). Bibliography in the order we read the books: Rheingold, Howard. *Net Smart*. (MIT Press, 2012). Bogost, Ian. *How To Do Things With Video Games*. (University of Minnesota Press, 2011). Jenkins,

Henry. *Convergence Culture* (New York University Press, 2006). Farman, Jason. *Mobile Interface Theory* (Routledge, 2011). Davidson, Cathy N. *Now You See It: How The Brain Science of Attention Will Transform The Way We Live, Work and Learn* (Viking, 2011).

GRADE VALUATIONS

1000-point scale Quizzes & Ongoing Assignments (such as links aggregation in Diigo):
100 pts. Corporate Transmedia Storytelling: Presentation & Follow-Up Reflection Paper
150 pts. Social Media campaign Research: 100 pts. Midterm: 150 pts. Social Media Campaign: 200 pts. Final: 200 pts. Participation, Attendance: 100 pts.

*Note: I occasionally give quizzes at the beginning of a class period. If you miss a quiz because you are late or absent, it cannot be made up.

ASSESSING COLLABORATIVE WORK

Your grade for the collaborative social media build, worth 200 points, will be based upon these factors:

- Your skill at defining a specific contribution, and following through with it;
- The quality of the artifacts, workflows, or stories you produce;
- The volume of your contribution to the process and the product;
- Whether you hit deadlines;
- Whether you can change your process to accommodate a new specification from the client, or changing circumstances in real time, demand it.

GRADED EVENTS

- Ongoing Assignments
- Corporate Transmedia Storytelling
- Social Media Market Research
- Midterm
- Social Media Build
- Final

Assignment Specifications Ongoing Assignments

1. Twitter & Diigo activity: acts of curation and publication

2: "Distraction" Log

3. Quizzes

Corporate Transmedia Storytelling We will study the corporate social media branding campaigns of competitors; for fall 12, it was Coke, Pepsi and Red Bull. We are comparing rivals selling nearly identical products. You will break into teams of four. Each individual will take responsibility for assessing the output in a particular platform. You will collaborate to assess how those pieces fit together into a coherent (or not) transmedia endeavor. You will present your findings to the rest of the class about your particular brand; then we as a group will search for patterns that result in engagement or disengagement -- that is -- success and failure. We will apply pressure to the idea of "engagement": this is the gold standard in corporate social media, but does it result in a transaction? We will situate "transactions" on a continuum of investment (of time, of money, of attention) and tally those into a metric, which may end up being more conceptual than numeric..

Due within one week of your team's in-class presentation will be a **personal reflection** about what you learned in the process of collaborating and leading discussion. You may author in a variety (or combination) of formats: text-only; text + image; Prezi, Powerpoint, video. You should choose an authoring platform that lets you reflect a deep aspect of your point-of-view. If your reflection is more ruminative, a text-based argument might be best. If your point is about the dynamic interplay among texts (or among learners), perhaps you want to use Prezi or some animation in pptx. If a first-person reflection ("what this means to me") is your object, perhaps you want video w/ text cards framing your perspective. Use your creativity. In whatever platform you author, your chief objective is to develop an argument. Essays that offer impressionistic fragments without a unifying theme developed with evidence will be marked down.

Social Media Market Research

This element will be specific to whatever client we engage. Using Diigo, you will collectively aggregate information about successful and failing versions of other campaigns on the same subject as ours. You'll use Diigo and Twitter to build and share your knowledge base about these campaigns. By the end of week 2, you'll be trained how to build knowledge in Diigo and Twitter.

You'll summarize and assess your findings in a text-based document, the White Paper component of the Midterm. (See below.)

Midterm: Reading IDs & short answers; summative assessment of your social media research.

Social Media Build

1: *Market Research* (accomplished before midterm)

2: *Communications Plan:* you'll author goals, strategy and tactics; then you'll summarize

them in an "executive summary" positioned at the head of the document. You'll distribute this to the client and seek further input to make sure our apprehension of the goals and theirs matches.

3: *Build*: we will author media artifacts that execute the tactics outlined in our Plan.

4: *Campaign messaging monitoring*: we will track the effects of our campaign; if appropriate, we'll track how our efforts are working in tandem with those of our client.

5: *Clearance*: Designated students will take responsibility for obtaining clearance from the client for everything we publish related to their campaign. The rest of the class will be responsible for funneling accurate information to those designated student liaisons.

6: *Live Installation*: the campaign may or may not involve a live element which we'll record in video, chunk into appropriate sized units, then repurpose in appropriate channels. For example, the fall '12 students filmed people signing t-shirts printed with "be7ieve" (referring to USC QB Matt Barkley). We then edited the raw footage into short videos and posted them on YouTube.

7: *Analytics*: We will assess engagement with our campaign by using Stattracker, BuddyMedia, and Google Analytics. We will also monitor Twitter sentiment by reading the feed and making notes about it.

Final: Reading IDs & Short Answers; appraisal our social media build

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1: Curation, Filtering, Attention F2F in Classroom

Building Knowledge Communities Twitter: #, Lists, Groups, asymmetry, anonymity, following, exemplary accounts Diigo: social bookmarking, tagging, following, annotation, highlighting

Begin your "Distraction" log

Reading: For class discussion Wed. 1/16: Howard Rheingold, *Net Smart*, Chapter 1: "Attention! Why and How to Control Your Mind's Most Powerful Instrument";

Begin building your own knowledge network on Twitter.

On Wednesday, we'll practice with Adobe Connect, the virtual classroom software we'll be using to meet much of the time.

Week 2: Privacy, Datamining, and the Persistence of the Digital Trace via Adobe Connect

For Mon., three articles about data mining:

"How [Google -- and 104 other companies -- Are Tracking me on the Web](#)" by Alex Madrigal

"How [To Get Privacy Right](#)" by Nicholas Thompson

"The [Curious Case of Internet Privacy](#)" by Cory Doctorow For Wed: Rheingold, *Net Smart* chapter 3 "Participation Power"; and Henry Jenkins' 17-min. vid: [Participatory Culture](#).

Week 3: Corporate Transmedia Storytelling Begin Collaborative Work Via Adobe Connect

Corporate Social Media: *you should be researching storytelling specific to your chosen platform and brand. We will allocate some time during each class for you to work together and talk about what you're seeing.*

For Mon., watch [ad:techSF 2011 Keynote address by Wendy Clark](#) (Chief Officer of Integrated Marketing, The Coca-Cola Company), joined on stage by Renny Gleesen (Global Digital Strategies Director for Wieden+Kennedy). Vid is 1 hour.

For Wed: Henry Jenkins on [Transmedia 202: Further Reflections](#) (follow up to his original [Transmedia 101](#) post: read both.)

Also: each person adds at least 5 posts this week to our social media research in Diigo. What are the gaps in our coverage?

In class, we'll discuss the reading and collaborate on analysis of the Coke, Pepsi and Redbull social media campaigns.

Week 4 -- Group Work on Transmedia Corporate Storytelling Via Adobe Connect

Review our curations of the Heisman successes and failures you've gathered in Diigo. Work collaboratively during class on your Coke, Pepsi and Redbull analyses.

Reconvene at the end of the class to apply what we're learning about transmedia corporate storytelling to the context of our social media build. The big picture: we're looking at fully-formed transmedia campaigns in order to learn how to invent our own.

Homework: create presentations of your findings. This will involve working together over the weekend. The presentation can be low-tech: you can speak from an outline or Powerpoint and then play or show us examples.

Each team will present F2F in classroom.

Week 5 -- Corporate Transmedia Storytelling F2F in classroom

In-class presentations Mon. Feb. 11. Begin planning our MB4H campaign Wed. Sept. 27. *Individually-authored reflections about your Red Bull, Pepsi or Coke presentations will be due to me before class on Mon. Feb. 18.*

Week 6 -- Materiality of the Medium: Platforms as Objects Via Adobe Connect

Ian Bogost, *How To Do Things With Video Games* chapters: Art, Empathy, Reverence, Transit, Branding, Electioneering, Textures, Kitsch, Relaxation.

Continued social media curation in Diigo, Twitter

Week 7 -- Remix, Fair Use, Digital Labor and "Playbor" [Digital Play+Labor] Via Adobe Connect

Create rubrics for evaluating social media successes & failures related to our social media build. What are the specific needs of our client, and how do those integrate with what we've learned about the subject in our research?

Tues: New School University Professor Trebor Scholz "A [Cautionary Note on Social Media](#)" (4 mins); Scholz and Prof. Frank Pasquale (Seton Hall Law School), [Digital Labor in Today's Society](#) (80 mins.); "What [the MySpace Generation Should Know About Working for Free.](#)"

Wed: Harvard Constitutional Law Prof. Larry Lessig on [Remix Culture](#) at TEDxNY (18 mins.); Wikipedia: [Fair Use](#); Andy Baio, "Kind [of Screwed](#)"

Week 8 -- Midterm; Social Media Research Summary Via Adobe Connect

[Note: During weeks 9-13 we will be executing our social media build. This is in addition to discussion of the readings listed below. Please review the steps of the social media build above, on page 5.]

Week 9 -- Develop Communication Plan; Convergence F2F in classroom

Henry Jenkins, chapters 4 &5 of *Convergence Culture* (pp. 131-205)

Week 10 -- **Mobility & Embodiment Via Adobe Connect** Jason Farman, *Mobile Interface Theory* ch 1-3.

Week 11 -- **Mobility & Games Via Adobe Connect** Farman, *Mobile Interface Theory* chapters 4-6.

Week 12 -- Interface Ethics Via Adobe Connect

Evan Selinger, "Impatience [as a Digital Virtue](#)" Ian Bogost, "A [Professor's Impressions of Facebook](#)" B.J. Fogg, Stanford Professor of Experimental Psychology & Founder of the Stanford

Persuasive Technology Lab, "How [Facebook Influences You](#)"; "Why [is Twitter Persuasive?](#)" "The [Future of Mobile Devices as Persuasive Platforms](#)" (altogether these vids add to 15 mins.)

Week 13 -- **Guest Speaker [Fall '12 example: Kevin Doohan, CMO, Machinema & former Digital CMO Red Bull] F2F in classroom** Nov. 20 [Nov. 22 is Thanksgiving Holiday]

Week 14 -- **Classroom 2.0 F2F in classroom** Davidson, *Now You See It*, parts 1 & 2: pp. 1-206

Week 15 -- **Collaboration, Interface: Process as a Conceptual Frame Via Adobe Connect** Course review.

PROFESSOR BIO

Kathi Inman Berens is a lecturer at the University of Southern California's [Annenberg School of Communication](#) and a Fellow at the [Annenberg Innovation Lab](#), where she works on virtual classroom software and embodiment. An award-winning teacher, she is a researcher in two fields: communication interfaces and electronic literature. She publishes about hybrid pedagogy and leads workshops around the U.S. Berens curated the mobile and locative works at the Modern Language Association's [first exhibit of electronic literature](#) January 2012, and returns to co-curate the MLA 13 e- lit exhibit "Avenues of Access." In April 2013 she will co-curate the first ["Electronic Literature Showcase"](#) at the Library of Congress.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication degree program.

It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, fabricating data for a project, submitting a paper to more than one professor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone other than yourself. If you have doubts about any of these practices, confer with a faculty member.

Resources on academic dishonesty can be found on the Student Judicial Affairs Web site (<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS>). "Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism" addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations, and citation in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's writing program; "Understanding and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty" addresses more general issues of academic integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration.

The "2012-2013 SCampus" (<http://www.usc.edu/scampus>) contains the university's student conduct code and other student-related policies.

Specific to This Class: For those assignments which require/allow collaboration, students are *required* to disclose all people who contributed to their process and identify all outside sources they drew upon in developing their answers. Failure to do so will be considered academic dishonesty.

DISABILITIES POLICY

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Monday- Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.