INTRODUCTION

This semester, we'll examine how new media definitions and value, broadly defined, are being shaped by producers, users, teachers, and theorists. To get at this question, we will be approaching our material through the lens of poetics and aesthetics. First? What is new media? As we explore the central question of "What is new media?" we're going to come at it by way of the impolite and ostensibly impolitic question—"What is good new media?" Poetics, although often loosely used as a synonym for theory, attempts to describe the formal principles and systems that underlie a work of art. How does the making influence the effect? Standards of "taste" and aesthetics place value on certain kinds of new media work. What do they assume about the nature and boundaries of art, the relationship of art to culture, and the relationship of the art work to its producers and consumers. As we work to understand this new territory, we will continually examine these assumptions and the grounds upon which both professional and academic standards are being built.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS


Other articles will also need to be printed from PDF files or photocopied as assigned.
Projects

Each project will have subsidiary due dates for drafts and revision. Late work will not be accepted unless arrangements have been made prior to the due date. The calendar on the course website will contain specific information about assignments, activities and other deadlines.

New media weblog (25%)
The weblog will be a space for reading and response. I want you to use this kind of space in order to grapple with the technological demands of it, as well as to engage new media examples as you write. You will also be responsible for responding to other people's weblog posts, as well. Everyone will be responsible twice for summarizing an article or chapter.

Either two 10-15 page papers or . . .
one paper and one modest media project (with one short reflection statement). (30% each)
Your papers and/or project should engage new media practice with the theoretical issues that we'll be discussing in class. To me, this is more than just picking a theory and applying it to a text. I'd like to see your papers or projects work the other direction as well. What do new media compositions teach us about the assumptions, values, and operations of the theories? If you are inclined, one of these papers or the project may take the form of a manifesto, where you engage the issues by crafting your own philosophical statement about new media. We will have conferences about both these works.

Class presentation (15%)
Once this semester, you will make a presentation to the class where you present a new media composition in light of the work that we're discussing that week.

Help with Writing

I strongly encourage you to use the Writing Center and invite you to come see me as well. No matter how successful you have been as a writer, you will benefit from a chance to discuss your work with more experienced writing coaches.

The Americans with Disabilities Act

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, your department head, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).

And finally . . .
The syllabus and website are meant as a guide to the course. I reserve the right to revise assignments and deadlines, but I will always give you notice and a reason. Generally, such changes will occur in order to help you.