COURSE DESCRIPTION

More and more, schools are using computer labs where multimedia projects help in the instruction of math or language or history or science -- at all levels. More and more, businesses are using multimedia projects to train their employees, present their products to their customers, and oversee their inventories. And then there are the games...

Is all of this use of computers and interactivity a good thing? A bad thing? A complex mix of possibilities and choices, some of which make us smart, some of which don’t (and sometimes the same possibilities and choices have both results)?

In this course you will be looking at and making multimedia in order to consider these questions -- and to make the questions be a little less black-and-white. You’ll be doing hands-on analysis -- and reading -- to consider what multimedia is and how its design opens up or closes off possibilities of change we might want.

This is not a course about learning software, although you certainly will acquire some knowledge about software as we go along. Rather, this course is about being attentive to the practices of multimedia design and development in order to think about:

• how different media develop out of and shape our relations to each other and our daily practices.
• how design can work to shape the relationships audiences have with a piece of multimedia (and hence with the designers of the multimedia).

• the kinds of work you can take up after school (or sometimes still in school), using multimedia, in order to make our shared worlds more just and respectful and perhaps even pleasurable.