We live in incredible times, which this course examines through the lens of issues involving technology — to some degree specifically new media technology — from the perspective of communication and cultural studies. We will explore the new media terrain in both a scholarly and an experiential way.

In addition to trying to understand the changing terrain, we will also try to understand (and challenge) the power of the tools we inherit that shape what we can see. As James Carey once wrote:

"Our models of communication... create what we disingenuously pretend they merely describe."


Thus, we will address a number of philosophical and theoretical questions alongside our scholarly and experiential interrogation of the new media terrain. Some of those questions will be:

✔ What do the dominant theories of communication help us to see - and how do they limit what we can see?
✔ How do new developments and new theories encourage us to rethink new media and new media theory?
✔ What does the concept of "media" help us to see - and how does it limit what we can see? What concept(s) might serve better than "media?"
✔ How does our commitment to "new," as in "new media," shape the terrain?
✔ ETC.

I have in mind a process for introducing you to these issues. However, I feel compelled, to upset this (what I see as an otherwise orderly) process because of a wonderful opportunity: a symposium on intellectual property to be held early this term. So, we are going to go about this a little out of order - beginning with an exploration of intellectual property and the new media environment.
Course Requirements:

Readings:
There are a number of books you should buy or borrow:

- Slack and Wise, *Culture and Technology: A Primer*. New York: Peter Lang, 2005

Articles will be made available to you.

New readings that we all share throughout the term

Media:

Please visit boingboing.net regularly with an eye for issues involving new media.

Please be encouraged to share media finds with the class.

Written Assignments:

Ten 3 page summaries/explorations of some issue that interests you in the readings. No outside sources necessary. You can think of these as coherent musings on a concept, issue, or connections that you see. These are due on the day we discuss the readings. You choose the 10 weeks for your essays.

Formal scholarly paper on a related topic of your choosing - drawing from required and additional readings. The topic must be cleared by me. 15-20 pages plus references.
Grading:

Weekly summaries-explorations (10)  40%
Final paper 40%
Class Participation /preparation 20%

*Regular attendance is required. Beyond two absences will affect your grade.
*All assignments must be completed to pass the class.

Other university policies:

1. Academic integrity. Any instance of academic dishonesty (for example, plagiarism) will result in your being reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. Carefully document any sources you use in your work. Please refer to the MTU Academic Integrity Policy at http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html

2. ADA policy: MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please contact Dean of Students Office (487-2212) or the Office of Affirmative Programs (487-3310), or talk with your advisor or department chair. It is imperative that you take the initiative in this regard, as an instructor is not legally permitted to initiate inquiry about the particular needs of students.

3. Equal Employment Opportunity Policy: In keeping with its responsibilities as an educational institution, Michigan Technological University is committed to a policy of affording equal opportunity to all of its employees, students, applicants for employment, and applicants for admission without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, height and weight, veterans status, marital status, sexual orientation, age, or sex, except where age or sex is a bona fide occupational qualification. The University is also committed to a policy of educating and employing disabled individuals without discrimination. These policies are to be implemented with due regard for the relative qualifications of all involved [MTU Board of Control Policy 3.7]
January 13  Introduction and Overview of the Course

Additional Sources:

January 20  Theories of Communication and Technology: Transmission, Modes, Ritual, Articulation
Slack-Wise, review "Modes" in *Culture and Technology: A Primer*, pp. 141-146
Slack-Wise, review Chapters 10 and 11 in *Culture and Technology: "Agency" and "Articulation and Assemblage."
Additional Sources:


January 27 Intellectual Property: Creativity, Ownership, and Control


AND/OR


Digital Millennium Copyright Act - On Wikipedia.com

Keith Aoki, James Boyle, Jennie Jenkins. "Bound By Law?"

www.law.duke.edu/cpsd/comics/digital.php

In Class: Watch Lessig tedtalks

Additional Sources:


February 3 Convergence

February 10 Organizing (and Reorganizing) Knowledge and Information

February 17 Social Knowing: Swarm Intelligence/Ignorance
Weinberger, Review Chapter 7

February 24 The Audience as Producer
Review Jenkins, Lessig, McLeod
In Class: Audience as Producer Demos

Additional Sources

March 3 Exploring Wikis
Listen: NPR, Fresh Air, "Jimmy Wales on the User Generated Generation"
In Class: WikiScanner and Wikipedia, and Meta
March 10 Spring Break - Read *Rainbows End* by Vernor Vinge.

March 17 New Structures of Control


March 24 Protocol - Control/Freedom

Additional Sources


March 31 Surveillance - Monitoring - Tracking - Selling - Design - Globalization


Explore results of a google search on "giving up facebook"

Additional Sources


April 7 Back to Nuts and Bolts: Media Garbage
Reading to be announced
Watch in Class: Manufactured Landscapes

April 14 Project Presentations

April 21 Project Presentations