

GSAH 312: Global Digital Cultures

Fall 2018
Section 001
TuTh 10:20-11:40am
314 Ernst Bessey Hall
appt.

Professor A. Sean Pue
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Office Hours: Tu 2-3pm, W 9-10am & by
appt.

Course Description

This course asks the following question: What is the role of digital media and technology in the world, in individual lives, and in communities across distances and inequalities? We first explore the role of media and/in the world. Next, we reflect on how technology is changing what it means to be human. Finally, we consider how global digital media and technology enables and complicates activism and other forms of community.

Course Objectives

To better understand the role of digital media and technology in our global world, their effects on what it means to be human, and how they both hinder and enable the formation of communities.

Required Texts

There are no textbooks for this class. All readings are available on D2L (<https://d2l.msu.edu>). Please read all materials **before** the class they are assigned for on the class schedule.

Course Requirements

You must complete all assignments to pass the course. You are not permitted to “take a zero.”

Class Attendance and Participation

This is a seminar-format class, run around discussion. You must carefully prepare the reading for each class. Your contributions to discussion will be noted on a daily basis. Attendance is required and expected. Although I expect you to notify me if you will miss class, I make no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused absences.” If you get sick and miss two classes in a row, you are expected to develop a plan for making up your coursework. Missing more than four sessions of class will significantly lower your final grade; eight or more absences will cause you to fail the course automatically.

Discussion Questions (10 points)

There will be at least 21 opportunities to turn in discussion questions based on the readings. You are required to submit two questions at least 12 times. In total, these discussion questions are worth 10 points of your final grade. These are really for your benefit, to make sure that I address the questions you have with the reading. Feel free to submit for every class. **It would be most useful for you to note specific page numbers.** These are due before class on the D2L discussion board.

Digital Activities (internet-based research + 2-page paper + presentation) (60 points)

You will complete four digital activities—on piracy, robots, surveillance, and digital communities—over the course of the class. The lowest grade will be dropped, but all assignments must be completed to pass the course. Our inquiries will be crowd sourced. As a class, we come up with a set of questions to ask for

each activity and assign individuals to answer them. You will be responsible for producing a two-page report (double spaced, 11-12 pt font, with proper citations).

Note on internet research. Internet research can be dangerous, and therefore you are required to use a "private"/ "incognito" browser with an anonymizing virtual private network (VPN) and/or the Tor Browser (<https://www.torproject.org>) to protect your privacy during your internet research. You must also not conduct any illegal activities or violate Michigan State University's Acceptable Use Policy for MSU Information Technology Resources (<https://tech.msu.edu/about/guidelines-policies/aup/>).

Final paper (30 points)

A final paper of seven-nine pages in length (double spaced, 11-12 pt font) will be due by the end of the final exam period (Thursday, Dec 13 2018 12:00 pm). This paper will extend on the topics of one or more of the class digital activities. Late papers will not be accepted.

No final exam will be held.

Grading Scale

92-100	4.0
86-91	3.5
80-85	3.0
75-79	2.5
70-74	2.0
65-69	1.5
60-64	1.0
55-59	0.5
<60	0.0

Rules, Regulations, and Further Information

Late Papers. 3 percentage points will be deducted for each day your paper is late. Extensions will be granted for unusual circumstances only. If you want to ask for an extension, do so at least 24 hours before the due date.

Make-up Policy. No make-up or rescheduling of assignments or exams will be allowed without proper documentation and timely action on the part of the student. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. If a conflict arises between your obligation to attend class and an obligation to the University, it is your responsibility to contact me in advance, to hand in all assignments on time, and to make up work missed during your absence.

Academic Honesty. [The Spartan Code of Honor](#) states, "As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do." In addition, Article 2.III.B.2 of the [Student Rights and Responsibilities \(SRR\)](#) states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." The (insert name of unit offering course) adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See [Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide](#) and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.)

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any coursework in this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the [Academic Integrity](#) webpage.)

My expectation is that you will not engage in dishonest acts, including copying or acts of fraud, etc. Plagiarism in writing includes, but is not limited to, (1) the submission of work written by someone else or in collaboration with someone else; (2) the submission of one paper for multiple classes; and (3) the improper citation of quotations or paraphrases of sources. If you have any questions about academic standards for the citation of sources, please do not hesitate to contact me *before the submission of your paper*. Cases of plagiarism will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of University regulations and could result in failure of the assignment, failure of the course, suspension, or dismissal.

Title IX. Michigan State University is committed to fostering a culture of caring and respect that is free of relationship violence and sexual misconduct, and to ensuring that all affected individuals have access to services. For information on reporting options, confidential advocacy and support resources, university policies and procedures, or how to make a difference on campus, visit the Title IX website at www.titleix.msu.edu.

Limits to Confidentiality. Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the [MSU Police Department](#)) if you share it with me:

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the [MSU Counseling Center](#).

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (from the [Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities \(RCPD\)](#)). Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.

Commercialization of Lecture Notes. As members of a learning community, students are expected to respect the intellectual property of course instructors. All course materials presented to students are the copyrighted property of the course instructor and are subject to the following conditions of use:

- Students may not record lectures or any other classroom activities without permission of the course instructor.
- Students may not post the recordings or other course materials online or distribute them to anyone not enrolled in the class without the advance written permission of the course instructor and, if applicable, any students whose voice or image is included in the recordings.
- Any student violating the conditions described above may face academic disciplinary sanctions, including receiving a penalty grade in the course.

Disruptive Behavior. Article 2.III.B.4 of the Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) for students at Michigan State University states: "The student's behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned." Article 2.III.B.10 of the SRR states that "The student and the faculty share the responsibility for maintaining professional relationships based on mutual trust and civility." General Student Regulation 5.02 states: "No student shall . . . interfere with the functions and services of the University (for example, but not limited to, classes . . .) such that the function or service is obstructed or disrupted." Students whose conduct adversely affects the learning environment in this classroom may be subject to disciplinary action.

Etiquette

- Cell phones must be silenced and stowed for the duration of the class.
- No recording devices or commercialization of course materials are permitted.
- Always bring your text and notes to class.
- Laptops, netbooks, tablets, and other electronic devices may be used in class for note taking and in-class assignments only.
- Please feel free to e-mail or come to office hours if you have any concerns, questions, or difficulties. But you should adopt a professional tone when emailing the professor and THINK BEFORE YOU SEND.

Resources for Students

The Writing Center offers students the opportunity to meet one-on-one with a consultant while they are engaged in the process of writing class papers and other documents. It also offers consulting on digital writing projects and a Grammar Hotline. The Writing Center is located in 300 Bessey Hall. For information about appointments and satellite locations, see <http://writing.msu.edu>.

The ESL Writing Lab will assist students with all aspects of their work in this course, including understanding of course readings to be used in writing papers, planning and revising papers, and proofreading. See <https://elc.msu.edu/esl-lab/> for more information and instructions on making appointments.

GSAH 312 COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction

Th 8/30 Course Overview

Unit One: Media and/in the World

Week 2: Media and Global Simultaneity

Tu 9/4 Boris Groys, "From Image to Image File—and Back: Art in the Age of Digitalization"

Th 9/6 Arjun, Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy"

Week 3: Piracy and Inequality (Video in Nigeria)

Tu 9/11 Brian Larkin, "Degraded Images, Distorted Sounds"

Digital Activity (Piracy) Assignment

Th 9/13 **NO CLASS** (Digital activity work time)

Week 4: Piracy and Inequality (Sarai in India)

Tu 9/18 Ravi Sundaram, "Recycling Modernity: Pirate Electronic Cultures in India"

Th 9/20 Kavita Philip, "What is a Technological Author? The Pirate Function and Intellectual Property"

Week 5: Piracy / Jugaad and Critical Making

Tu 9/25 **Digital activity (Piracy) due and discussion**

Th 9/27 Pankaj Sekhsaria, "The making of an indigenous scanning tunneling microscope"

Week 6: Jugaad and Critical Making

Tu 10/2 Ravinder Kaur, "The Innovative Indian: Common Man and the Politics of Jugaad Culture"

Braybrooke and Jordan, "Genealogy, Culture and Technomyth: Decolonizing Western Information Technologies, from Open Source to the Maker Movement"

Th 10/4 Will Hollman, "Makerspace: Towards a New Civic Infrastructure"

(<https://placesjournal.org/article/makerspace-towards-a-new-civic-infrastructure/>);

Daniel Oberhaus, "Doctors Without Orders"

(https://motherboard.vice.com/en_us/article/43pngb/how-to-make-your-own-medicine-four-thieves-vinegar-collective)

Unit Two: The Posthuman

Week 7: Cyborgs and Robots

Tu 10/9 Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the 1980s"

Digital Activity (Robots) Assignment

Th 10/11 **NO CLASS** (Digital activity work time)

Week 8: Cyborgs and Robots

Tu 10/16 Weinstein, "Saying Goodbye to Yang"; N. Katherine Hayles, "

Th 10/18 **Digital activity (Robot Show and Tell) due and discussion**

Week 9: Big Data and the Quantified Self

Tu 10/23 danah boyd, Kate Crawford, "Critical Questions for Big Data: Provocations for a Cultural, Technological, and Scholarly Phenomenon"

Th 10/25 Kate Crawford, Jesse Lingel, Tero Karppi, "Our metrics, Ourselves: A hundred years of self-tracking from the weight scale to the wrist wearable device"

Digital Activity (Surveillance) Assignment

Week 10: Surveillance Society

Tu 10/30 N. Katherine Hayles, "Waking Up to the Surveillance Society"

Watch: Surveillance and the City: Know When You're Being Watched - Transmissions - vice-video (https://video.vice.com/en_us/video/motherboard-city-surveillance-networks-data-privacy-public/5b23f877f1cdb35deb2d7b84)

Th 11/1 Darren Ellis, Ian Tucker and David Harper, "The Affective Atmospheres of Surveillance"

Week 11: Surveillance and the Virtually Human

Tu 11/6 Tom Boellstorff, "Coming of Age in Second Life, ch 1" (Election Day!)

Th 11/8 **Digital activity due and presentation (surveillance)**

Unit Three: Cyberactivism

Week 12: Cyberfeminism

Tu 11/13 Jessie Daniels, "Rethinking Cyberfeminism(s): Race, Gender, and Embodiment"; Radhika Gajalla, "Snapshots from sari trails: cyborgs old and new"

Th 11/15 Gabriela T. Richard, Kishonna L. Gray, "Gendered Play, Racialized Reality: Black Cyberfeminism, Inclusive Communities of Practice, and the Intersections of Learning, Socialization, and Resilience in Online Gaming"

Week 13: Digital Tools and Community Organizing

Tu 11/20 Lance Bennet and Alexander Segerberg, "The Logic of Connective Action"

Digital Activity(Communities) Assignment

Th 11/22: **No Class (Thanksgiving Break)**

Week 14: Digital Tools and Community Organizing

Tu 11/27 Bijan Stephen, "Social Media Helps Black Lives Matter Fight the Power"

<https://www.wired.com/2015/10/how-black-lives-matter-uses-social-media-to-fight-the-power/>

Stewart, Arif, Starbird, "Examining Trolls and Polarization with a Retweet Network"

Sarah J. Jackson, "(Re)Imagining Intersectional Democracy from Black Feminism to Hashtag Activism"

Th 11/29 **Digital activity due and presentation (communities)**

Week 15: Whistleblowers and the Ethics of Wikileaks

Tu 12/4 Tom Sorell, "Human Rights and Hacktivism: The Cases of Wikileaks and Anonymous"

Final Paper Topic due

Th 12/6 Course Wrap-up and Discussion of Final Papers

Th 12/13 **Final paper due**