VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

School of English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies

MDIA 309
New Media: Theory and Practice

20 Points

TRIMESTER 2 2009
13 July to 15 November 2009

Trimester dates

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October

Study week: 19 to 23 October

Examination/Assessment period: 19 October to 15 November

Last piece of assessment due: 28 October 2009

Names and contact details

Dr. Leon Gurevitch

Email: leon.gurevitch@vuw.ac.nz

Office: Room 112, 44 Kelburn Parade

Office Hours:

Phone: 463 7472

Class times and locations

Lectures:	1x 2 hour lecture
Lecture Time:	2:00 – 4:00pm Tuesday.
Lecture Venue:	HMLT 003
Tutorial Times:	TBA.
Tutorial Venue:	TBA.
Tutorial Weeks:	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Course delivery

The two-hour session on a Tuesday will consist of a lecture as well as whole-class discussion time. The tutorial hour is the forum where you can ask questions about the lecture and reading material as well as essay writing skills, and where you can try out your ideas on others. This is a course designed to provoke critical thinking and therefore active participation in class discussion is expected. Accordingly, bring along your ideas, experiences and opinions (as well as your course reader) to tutorials.

Communication of additional information

Information relevant to this paper including assessment, lecture notes, reading material, supplementary readings and resources will be available on Blackboard and updated regularly. Announcements will also be posted. Check this forum consistently.

NOTE: Any lecture notes posted on Blackboard are only indicative of the content of the lectures and function as a study aid. They are NOT a substitute for your attendance at a lecture due to the interactive nature of this 300 level paper.

Learning objectives

At the end of the course, students passing will be able to:
1. Demonstrate an analytical understanding of emerging theories of new media.

2. Demonstrate an understanding of the complex relationships between new media forms and discourses of new media in contemporary culture.

3. Give a practical demonstration, using new media, of the strengths and shortcomings of an emerging theoretical model analysed on the course.

4. Formulate and complete a research essay on new media.

Expected workload

This course is worth 24 points and expectations are that one point equates to 10 hours of work, spread over the 12-week trimester. Accordingly, you must set time aside (outside of lectures and tutorials) to read the course material and to conduct research for your written assignments. It is also expected that you will write a variety of drafts before submitting any assignment, so set time aside to do this BEFORE the due date of the assignment.

Readings
Essential texts:
There will be a set text course reader for MDIA 309 purchasable from student notes distribution centre and from the VicBooks website.

For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of VicBooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from VicBooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from the shop. Customers will be contacted when they are available.
Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

Course content

Week 1	**Course Introduction: Approaches to New Media and The Information Society** **Readings:** Manovich, Lev, 'What is New Media?' From: *The Language of New Media*, London, MIT Press, 2001, pp. 43-74. Webster, Frank. Introduction and Chapter 1: 'What is an Information Society', From: *Theories of the Information Society*, London: Routledge, 2006, Third Edition, pp. 1-31.
Week 2	**Sociotechnological Geographies of the Information Society** **Readings:** Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities,* Verso, London, 1991, pp. 9-46. Castells, Manuel, 'The Information Technology Revolution', From: *The Rise of the Network Society*, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2000, pp. 28-69.
Week 3	**The Work of Art in the Digital Age** **Readings:** Benjamin, Walter. 'The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducability: Second Version.' From: *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducability and Other Essays*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2008, pp. 19-55. Nichols, Bill. 'The Work of Culture in the Age of Cybernetic Systems', From: *The New Media Reader,* by Mondfort and Wardrip-Fruin (eds),MIT Press, London, 2003, pp. 625-642.
Week 4	**The Algorithm and the Database: Culture in the Digital Age** **Readings:** Manovich, Lev, 'Database Logic', From: *The Language of New Media,* MIT Press, London, 2001, pp. 194-207. Manovich, Lev, 'Introduction: Software or the Engine of Contemporary Societies', From: *Software Takes Command,* Available at: http://lab.softwarestudies.com/2008/11/softbook.html
Week 5	**The Politics of Digitextuality and Convergence in New Media** **Readings:** Jenkins, Henry, '"Worship at the Altar of Convergence": A New Paradigm for Understanding Media Change', From: *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, New York UP, New York, 2008, pp1-25. Rodowick, David, 'Audiovisual Culture and Interdisciplinary Knowledge', *New Literary History: A Journal of Theory and Interpretation*, Volume 26, 1995, pp. 111–121. Everett, Anna, 'Digitextuality and Click Theory: Theses on Convergence Media in the Digital Age', From: *New Media: Theories and Practices of Digitextuality,* by Caldwell & Everett (eds), Routledge, London, 2003, pp. 3–29. **Additional Reading** Miller, Toby. 'Cinema Studies Doesn't Matter; or, I Know What You Did Last Semester', From: *Keyframes: Popular Cinema and Cultural Studies*, by Tinkcom & Villarejo (eds), Routledge, London, 2001, pp. 303-11. Miller, Toby, 'Revising Screen Studies', *Television and New Media*, No. 2 (2001): 91-93. Spielmann, Yvonne, 'Expanding film into digital media', From: *Screen*, 40:2, Summer 1999, 131-145.
Week 6	**Information or Knowledge?** **Readings:** Jenkins, Henry, 'The Work of Theory in the Age of Digital Transformation,' From: *A Companion to Film Theory*, edited by Robert Stam and Toby Miller. Oxford: Blackwell, 1999, pp. 234-261. Harris, Martin, 'Virtual Learning and the Network Society,' From: *Digital Academe: The New Media and Institutions of Higher Education and Learning*, Routledge, London, 2002, pp. 215-231. **Additional Reading** Noll, Michael, 'Technology and the Future of the University: A Sober View,' From: *Digital Academe: The New Media and Institutions of Higher Education and Learning*, Routledge, London, 2002, pp.35-38.

Week 7	**Structures of Information and the Visual Image** **Readings:** Comolli, Jean-Louis, 'Machines of the Visible', In *The Cinematic Apparatus*, edited by Teresa Lauretis and Stephen Heath, New York, Saint Martin's Press, 1985. pp. 121 – 135. Manovich, Lev, 'The Mapping of Space: Perspective, Radar, and 3-D Computer Graphics', online at http://manovich.net/TEXT/mapping.html.
Week 8	**Consumption and New Media** **Readings:** Friedberg, Anne, 'The Virtual Window'. From: *Rethinking Media Change: The Aesthetics of Transition, London*, edited by Henry Jenkins and David Thorburn, MIT Press, 2003, pp. 337-354. Miller, J. Hillis. 'Virtual Automobility: Two Ways to Get a Life', From: *Against Automobility*, edited by Steffen Bohn, Campbell Jones, Chris Land and Matthew Paterson. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, pp. 193-207. **Additional Reading** Friedberg, Anne, *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern*, California UP, London, 1994, pp. 1-40.
Week 9	**Information Society and Its Discontents** **Readings:** Henwood et al, 'Critical Perspectives on Technologies, In/Equalities and the Information Society', From: *Technology and In/equality: Questioning the Information Society*, edited by Sally Wyatt, Flis Henwood, Nod Miller and Peter Senker. Routledge, London, 2000, pp. 1-18. Freeman, Chris, 'Social Inequality, Technology and Economic Growth', From: *Technology and In/equality: Questioning the Information Society*, edited by Sally Wyatt, Flis Henwood, Nod Miller and Peter Senker. Routledge, London, 2000, pp. 149-171. **Additional Reading** Christensen, Miyase, 'What Price the Information Society?', From: *Towards a Sustainable Information Society*, Edited by Jan Servaes and Nico Carpentier, Intellect Books, Bristol, UK, 2006, pp. 129-150. Norris, Pippa, 'The Digital Divide', From: *The Information Society Reader*, by Frank Webster, Routledge, London, 2003, pp. 273-286.
Week 10	**Information, Surveillance, Protest: News Media and the Information Paradigm** **Readings:** Doane, Mary Ann, 'Information, Crisis, Catastrophe', From: New Media, Old Media: A History and Theory Reader, edited by Wendy Hui Kyong Chun and Thomas Keenan, Routledge, London, 2006, pp. 251 – 264. Rod Allen and Nod Miller, 'Panaceas and Promises of Democratic Participation: Reactions to New Channels, from the Wireless to the World Wide Web', From: *Technology and In/equality: Questioning the Information Society*, edited by Sally Wyatt, Flis Henwood, Nod Miller and Peter Senker. Routledge, London, 2000, pp. 46-60.
Week 11	**Socialisation in the Age of Social Networks** **Readings:** Kinder, Marsha, From: *Playing with Power in Movies, Television and Video Games*. London: University of California Press, 1991, pp. 39-86. Boyd, Danah and Nicole Ellison, 'Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship', From: *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, Volume 13, Issue 1, 2007, available at: http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html **Additional Reading** David Buckingham and Liesbeth de Block, 'Going Global: Childhood in the Age of Global Media', From: *Global Children, Global Media: Migration, Media and Childhood*, Palgrave, London, 2007, pp, 77-93.
Week 12	**Course Summary – New Media and Information Society: Still New?** **Readings:** Manovich, Lev, *Software Takes Command*, Available at: http://lab.softwarestudies.com/2008/11/softbook.html

Recommended Reading:

Benjamin, Walter. *Illuminations*. London: Pimlico, 1999.

Caldwell, John T, and Anna Everett (eds), *New Media: Theories and Practices of Digitextuality*, Afi Film Readers. London: Routledge, 2003.

Castells, Manuell, *The Network Society*. Cheltnam, Edward Elgar, 2004.

Elsaesser, Thomas, and Kay Hoffmann (eds), *Cinema Futures: Cain, Abel or Cable? The Screen Arts in the Digital Age*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1998.

Friedberg, Anne. *Window Shopping: Cinema and the Postmodern*. London: California University Press, 1994.

Fuller, Matthew. *Media Ecologies: Materialist Energies in Art and Technoculture*. London, MIT Press, 2005.

Gumbrecht, Hans Ulrich, and Michael Marrinan, eds. *Mapping Benjamin: The Work of Art in the Digital Age*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.

Jenkins, Henry. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. London: New York University Press, 2006.

Jenkins, Henry and David Thorburn. *Democracy and New Media*. London: MIT Press, 2003.

Keenan, Thomas, and Wendy Hui Kyong Chun. *New Media, Old Media: A History and Theory Reader*. London: Routledge, 2006.

Loader, Brian. *Cyberspace Divide: Equality, agency and policy in the information society*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Loader, Brian and William Dutton. *Digital Academe: The New Media and Institutions of Higher Education and Learning*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Ludes, Peter. *Convergence and Fragmentation: Media Technology and the Information Society*. Bristol, Intellect Books, 2008.

Lull, James. *Culture in the Communication Age*. London, Routledge, 2001.

Lunenfeld, Peter. *Snap to Grid: A User's Guide to Digital Arts, Media, and Cultures*. London: The MIT Press, 2001.

Manovich, Lev. *The Language of New Media*. London: The MIT Press, 2001.

Manovich, Lev. *Software Takes Command* (and other essays available to download) http://manovich.net/TEXT/assembling.html.

May, Christopher. *Key Thinkers for the Information Society*. London, Routledge, 2003.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media*. London: Routledge, 2002.

Rodowick, David. *Reading the Figural. Or, Philosophy after the New Media*. Edited by Stanley Fish and Fredric Jameson, Post-Contemporary Interventions. London: Duke University Press, 2001.

Terranova, Tiziana, *Network Culture: Politics for the Information Age*. London: Pluto Press, 2004.

Thorburn, David, and Jenkins, Henry (eds), *Rethinking Media Change: The Aesthetics of Transition*. London, MIT Press, 2004.

Walker, John A. *Art in the Age of Mass Media*. Third ed: Pluto Press, 2001.

Winston, Brian. *Media Technology: A History from the Telegraph to the Internet*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Materials and equipment

The reader available for this course is mandatory. Besides this, students will require regular access to a networked computer in order to complete their new media assignments.

Assessment requirements

In order to pass MDIA 309 you must submit all course assessment.

Internal Assessment: 100%

The assessment for this course is designed on the principle that new media technologies generate and/or require a variety of skills and understandings. The first assignment asks you to address the relationship between theory and practice as signalled in the course title. Your second assignment puts into practice some of the many new media discourses available to us and allows you to engage with some of the issues raised by these discourses. The research essay gives you the room to explore your own new media interests and to demonstrate how well you have not only grasped the theoretical content of the course, but also how you have integrated these (sometimes overly abstract) concepts into a discussion of new media practices.

1. Short Essay   20% (1500words)
    This assessment relates to objectives 1, 2 and 4.

2. New Media Assignment   30% (7mins)
    This assessment relates to objectives 1, 2 and 3.

3. Research Essay   50% (2500-3000words)
    This assessment relates to objectives 1, 2, and 4.

1. Short Essay (1500 Words)   **20%**
Due Week 6 (before 4pm on Wed 19th of August)

Read: Benjamin, Walter. 'The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducability: Second Version.' From: *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducability and Other Essays*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2008, pp. 19-55.

This short essay asks you to respond to an aspect of Benjamin's essay (a brief quote, a central idea or something you find puzzling) and relate this aspect of his writing to one of your own experiences of new media. Benjamin is writing within a different historical context from the new media we experience today, and yet his work remains a touchstone for much new media discourse. Your essay should address this historical disjuncture and or historical continuity (and this issue of sameness or difference should act as the starting point for developing your thesis). Treat this assignment as a testing ground for a key focus of this course; that is to say, your short essay must grapple with the question of how (new) media theory relates to (new) media

practice. Be aware that there is only so much one can say in a 1500 word essay. Draft and redraft your essay before you submit it.

2. New Media Assignment (+750 word reflection)   **30%**
Due Relevant Tutorial Week

For this assignment you must give a 5-7 minute audiovisual presentation in tutorials. This presentation is to be based upon one of the readings for that week and should practically demonstrate ONE aspect of new media change considered in a reading. This presentation must not be just a summary of the reading but your own expansion on one of the key ideas contained within it. Presentations will be expected to demonstrate that the student has reflected upon the developing nature of new media culture. Special consideration will be given to presentations best able to practically demonstrate the changing nature of new media and information society. Following the presentation a short report (750 words maximum) on the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation will be written up. Students should include in this report a reflection on how comments and responses in the tutorial helped evaluate the success of their presentation, and how this would shape their approach to the assignment on a second run. This report is intended as a reflective piece which will not be formally graded but will be a mandatory requirement to pass the assignment.

Presentation Assessment Criteria

Structure	Weak				Strong
Clear and succinct introduction	1	2	3	4	5
Students key concerns precisely laid out	1	2	3	4	5
Key terms are highlighted/defined	1	2	3	4	5
Original and creative thought used	1	2	3	4	5

Presentational Skills					
Good delivery	1	2	3	4	5
Good use of visual aids	1	2	3	4	5
Good time management	1	2	3	4	5
Good engagement with audience	1	2	3	4	5

Practical Demonstration					
A key aspect of new media form/content is demonstrated	1	2	3	4	5
New media demonstration is linked to theoretical understanding	1	2	3	4	5

Theoretical Grounding					
A key theoretical understanding is explained	1	2	3	4	5
Reference to broader themes from the lectures/readings made	1	2	3	4	5

Final Grade: **/30**

3. Research Essay (2500-3000 Words)   **50%**
Due Week 14: (before 4pm on Wed 28 October)

The essay should be thoroughly thought-through work that considers a particular new media practice in relation to one or more of the theoretical issues discussed this trimester. Your essay should make reference to MDIA309 course texts, provide a clear method of approach, and present a variety of positions and arguments in a coherent and theorised manner. All essays must include detailed bibliographical material. In devising your research essay you are

encouraged to seek advice from the various lecturers associated with this course as well as the course tutor.

Penalties

Assignments submitted after the deadline without a written extension will be penalised at a rate of 2% (out of a total of 100) per working day. In other words, if you get 50% for an assignment, after one day your grade will drop to 48%, then 46% the following day etc. Late assignments are likely to receive limited feedback. The weekend counts for one day (i.e. an assignment due on Friday that is submitted on Monday will receive a 2% penalty). Please ensure that you are aware of the time that your assignment is due, as well as the date, as this is the cut-off time utilised in calculating lateness penalties.

Extensions

Extensions will be granted only in exceptional and unforeseen circumstances. Issues of workload do not constitute exceptional and unforseen circumstances. If you require an extension, you must complete an extension request form (available on your course Blackboard site) prior to the assignment due date. This must be accompanied by relevant documentation (e.g. a doctor's certificate) where appropriate. Extension requests must be submitted to the Admin Tutor (in MDIA101, 102, 103, and 201), or the Course Co-ordinator (in all other MDIA courses). Tutors cannot grant extensions.

Mandatory course requirements

To gain a pass in this course each student must:
   a) Submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work).
   b) Arrange (with your tutor) and deliver a new media presentation in one of the tutorials.
   c) Attend 80% of tutorials (i.e. 9 out of 11).

Presentation of written work and statement on legibility

You MUST type your essays in 12 point font with 1.5 or double spacing and a reasonable margin left for comments by the person marking. Proofread essays carefully so as to eliminate typing, grammatical and punctuation errors. Students operating at 300-level are expected to be able to write with technical accuracy. Coursework grades may be compromised as a result of a lack of attention to the structure and accuracy of your writing, your referencing of sources through the essay, and your provision of a full bibliography. For details regarding approaches to essay writing and the development of bibliographies, in addition to the correct use of notes, references and citation, please refer to the Essay Writing Guidelines available via Blackboard.

It is the responsibility of the student (rather than of the tutor) to ensure that coursework is completed and submitted/presented on time. Students should observe due dates for all assessments and understand that it is *not possible* to gain course completion for 309 without submitting *all* coursework.

Place a hard copy of your essay in the MDIA essay box in 42-44 KP. Do not give your essay directly to your tutor. You will be required to attach a cover sheet, which you need to sign, indicating that you are aware of the university's policy on plagiarism, and that the assignment is all your own work. Your assignment will not be marked until this cover sheet is signed. It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand what plagiarism is, and what the University's policy on plagiarism is. For more information on this see the text below and follow the link to the University's website. Please do NOT sign the cover sheet if you do not understand these issues.

Students are expected to write clearly. Where work is deemed 'illegible', the options are:

- the student will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) within a specified time frame after which penalties will apply;
- the student will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) and lateness penalties apply;
- if the student does not transcribe it to an acceptable standard, the work will be accepted as 'received' (so any associated mandatory course requirements are met) but not marked.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material
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Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website:
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx

General University Policies and Statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy

The AVC(Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:
http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/Publications.aspx