

**Race, Gender, and the Internet**  
**ARTH 2010 / AAS 2010 / FGSS 2110 / VISST 2010**  
**Fall 2011**

**Professor Information:**

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**Class Time:** T/Th (8:40-9:55a)  
**Office Hours:** tbd

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*"On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog."*

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**Course Information**

This course asks students to consider how race and gender shapes and are shaped by the uses and design of new Internet and social media technologies such as blogs, Twitter, and Facebook. As social media are becoming an ever more significant part of our social infrastructure and our everyday lives, it is crucial that we understand what norms and values are embedded within the technologies we use every day. How does the Internet and social media impact dominant and minoritized groups differently? How do they reproduce and/or challenge institutional systems of power and knowledge? In short, this course asks students to interrogate the assumptions behind technology's utopian promises of democracy, efficiency, and progress. Examining the Internet as a complex assemblage of technology, technical practices, and people, we will consider the broader social, cultural, and political economic implications of their design, deployment, and use.

**Course Requirements**

**I. Attendance/Class Participation (20%)**

I expect your full and consistent attendance and participation all semester. You should come to every class prepared to discuss the readings. That means that all assignments are to be completed BEFORE, not during class meetings. I notice (and appreciate) when students make good contributions to the course. I also notice when students are routinely late and/or absent. More than 2 absences may result in a grade deduction.

**II. Paper 1 (20%)**

**III. Paper 2 (20%)**

**IV. Online, Interactive Final Project (40%)**

**Required Materials**

Reading assignments will be available online, accessible via URL, Cornell's electronic database, or Blackboard  
A computer with an Internet connection

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Social Media Biographies

Thurs, 8/25

Introductions

Class Business – Discuss Web Project

- Applying the class assignments and discussions, students will choose one of three projects to complete:
  1. An online ethnography (study one online community)
  2. Your own technology community map (consider which community you belong to and what the conditions of access are);
  3. Or a community project (e.g., create a website for a nonprofit organization)
- Creating an online presence
- Posting
- Building your web project – (must launch before our next class meeting)

Class Blog

Tues, 8/30

boyd, d. (2007) "Why Youth (Heart) Social Network Sites: The Role of Networked Publics in Teenage Social Life." *MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Learning – Youth, Identity, and Digital Media Volume* (ed. David Buckingham). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. <http://www.danah.org/papers/WhyYouthHeart.pdf>

**Directed Blog Post** (*Post no later than Sunday, 3p EDT.*)

Social Media Biography, part 1: Introduce yourself and your experiences with regard to the Internet and social media  
Questions you might consider: What do you mostly use the Internet for? Do you access it from a computer or mobile device? How many hours do you spend on the Internet per day? How important is the Internet to you as a student?

Thurs, 9/1

Molloy, H.L. (2003) "The Fan's Desire and Technopower" *Electronic Book Review* (09 Nov.)  
<http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/technocapitalism/fandomized>

**Directed Blog Post** (*Post no later than Wednesday, 8a EDT.*)

Social Media Biography, part 2: Reflect on how your social history and identity (gender, race, class, sexuality, nationality, religion, etc.) affect your use and beliefs in technology. (Saying there's no effect will indicate a lack of critical thinking and therefore constitute a failure of this assignment.)

### What/Where is Internet Studies?

Tues, 9/6

**Directed Blog Post** (*Post no later than Wednesday, 8a EDT.*)

Directed Blog Post: What exactly is the Internet? Is it hardware? Software? People? How do you study it?

Silver, D. (2006) "Where is Internet Studies?" *Critical Cyberculture Studies* (eds. David Silver and Adrienne Massanari) NYU Press: 1-16. <http://www.nyupress.org/webchapters/0814740235intro.pdf>

Schneider, S. and Foot, K. (2004) "The Web as an Object of Study" *New Media & Society* 6.1, 114-122.

Thurs, 9/8

Sterne, J. (2006). "The Historiography of Cyberculture" (eds. David Silver and Adrienne Massanari) NYU Press: 17-28. <http://sternetworks.org/HistoriographyofCyberculture.pdf>

Nakamura, L. (2006) "Cultural Difference, Theory, and Cyberculture Studies: A Case of Mutual Repulsion" *Critical Cyberculture Studies* (eds. David Silver and Adrienne Massanari) NYU Press: 29-36. (BB)

## Technology and Racialization

Tues, 9/13

Adas, M. (1989) "Global Hegemony and the Rise of Technology as the Main Measure of Human Achievement" *Machines as the Measure of Men: Science, Technology, and Ideologies of Dominance*, Cornell UP: 133-198. (BB)

Thurs, 9/15

Winner, L. (1986) "Do Artifacts Have Politics?" *The Whale and the Reactor: A Search for Limits in an Age of High Technology*, University of Chicago Press: 19-39. (BB)

Lerman, N.E. et. al. (2003) "Interrogating Boundaries" *Gender & Technology*, Johns Hopkins UP: 1-9.

Tues, 9/20

Gómez-Peña, G. (1996) "The Virtual Barrio @ the Other Frontier (or the Chicano Internet)," *Clicking In: Hotlinks to a Digital Culture*. Ed. Lynn Hershman-Leeson. Seattle: Bay Press: 173-82.

Also published online: [http://www.pochanostra.com/antes/jazz\\_pocha2/mainpages/virtual.htm](http://www.pochanostra.com/antes/jazz_pocha2/mainpages/virtual.htm)

Nakamura, L. (2002) Introduction. *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet*. Routledge: 1-30. (BB)

Thurs, 9/22

In-class screening: *Copyright Criminals* (2009)

Tues, 9/27

Crane, D. (2000) "In Medias Race: Filmic Representation, Networked Communication, and Racial Intermediation" *Race in Cyberspace* (eds. Beth Kolko, Lisa Nakamura, and Gilbert Rodman) Routledge: 87-116. (BB)

Thurs, 9/29

boyd, d. (2010) "MySpace and Facebook: How Racist Language Frames Social Media (and Why You Should Care)" *Blogher* (21 July) <http://www.blogher.com/how-racist-language-frames-social-media-and-why-you-should-care>

boyd, d. (forthcoming) "White Flight in Networked Publics? How Race and Class Shaped American Teen Engagement with MySpace and Facebook" (DRAFT) *Race After the Internet* (ed. Lisa Nakamura and Peter Chow-White). New York: Routledge. <http://www.danah.org/papers/2009/WhiteFlightDraft3.pdf>

Washington, J. (2011) "For Minorities, New Digital Divide Seen" *USA Today* [http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2011-01-10-minorities-online\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2011-01-10-minorities-online_N.htm)

## Gaming Difference

Tues, 10/4

Eglash, R. (2002) "Race, Sex, and Nerds: From Black Geeks to Asian American hipsters" *Social Text* 20.2: 49-64.

Leonard, D. (2009) "Young, Black (& Brown) and Don't Give a Fuck: Virtual Gangstas in the Era of State Violence" *Cultural Studies* 9.2: 248-272.

### Paper 1 due

Thurs, 10/6

Ketchum, K.E. (2009) "Facegen and the Technovisual Politics of Embodied Surfaces" *Women's Studies Quarterly* 37.Special Issue: Technologies: 183-99.

Gallaway, B (2010) "Brink: No Girls Allowed" [www.kotaku.com/5536297/brink-no-girls-allowed](http://www.kotaku.com/5536297/brink-no-girls-allowed)  
(NB: Read the comments on the Kotaku article)

## Techno-Social Constructions of Identity

Tues, 10/11

Fall Break – no class.

Thurs, 10/13

Bloom, L. (1994) "Constructing Whiteness: Popular Science and National Geographic in the Age of Multiculturalism." *Configurations* 2.1: 15-32.

Wiegman, R. (1999) "Whiteness Studies and the Paradox of Particularity" *boundary* 2 26: 115-150.

Tues, 10/18

Dyer, R. (1997) "The Matter of Whiteness," *White*. Routledge: 1-40 (BB)

<http://stuffwhitepeoplelike.com/>

*Clutch Magazine* (2008) "Stuff Black People Hate" <http://clutchmagonline.com/2008/06/stuff-black-people-hate/>

Thurs, 10/20

Robinson, L. (2007). "The Cyberself: The Self-ing Project Goes Online, Symbolic Interaction in the Digital Age," *New Media & Society* 9.1: 93-110.

Bourdieu, P. (1989) "Social Space and Symbolic Power" *Sociological Theory* 7.1: 14-25.

Tues, 10/25

Pacey, A. (1983) *The Culture of Technology* Cambridge MIT Press 1-34. (BB)

Scheurich, J. and Young, M. (1997) "Coloring Epistemologies: Are Our Research Epistemologies Racially Biased?" *Educational Researcher* 26.4: 4-16.

Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. (1980) "Metaphors We Live By" in *Language and Culture* Thousand Oaks Sage: 102-114. (BB)

## Belonging in Digital Space, Belonging in the Digital Age

Thurs, 10/27

No class meeting.

Tues, 11/1

Matei, S. and Ball-Rokeach, S.J. (2002) "Belonging in Ethnic, Geographic, and Internet Spaces" *The Internet in Everyday Life* (eds. B. Wellman and C. Haythornthwaite) Blackwell: 404-430. (BB)

Washington, D. (2005) "Virtual Communities and the Discourse of Blackness in the Afro-Latin Diaspora," AfroGeeks Conference. Santa Barbara, CA. (BB)

Ignacio, E. (2005) Preface and Introduction *Building Diaspora: Filipino Cultural Community Formation on the Internet* Rutgers UP: xvii-27. (BB)

## America/ns Online

Thurs, 11/3

**Directed Blog Post:** How does American identity configure the Internet? What are the default values for American identity? (*Post no later than Sunday, 3p EST.*)

Dinerstein, J. (2006) "Technology and Its Discontents: On the Verge of the Posthuman" *American Quarterly* 58.3: 569-595

Tues, 11/8

Taborn, T. (2007) "Separating Race from Technology: Finding Tomorrow's IT Progress in the Past" (BB)

Sterne, J. (2000) "The Computer Race Goes to Class" *Race in Cyberspace* (eds. Beth Kolko, Lisa Nakamura, and Gilbert Rodman) Routledge: 191-212. <http://sterneworks.org/ComputerRaceGoestoClass.pdf>

## Cybertypes

Thurs, 11/10

Bailey, C. (2001) "Virtual Skin: Articulating Race in Cyberspace" *Reading Digital Culture* (ed. David Trend) Blackwell: 334-346. (BB)

Nakamura, L. (2002) "Menu Driven Identities: Making Race Happen Online" *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet*. Routledge: 101-136. (BB)

Tues, 11/15

Fusco, C. "At Your Service: Latin Women in the Global Information Network," in Fusco, *The Bodies that Were Not Ours: And Other Writings*. (Routledge, 2001), 186-201. (BB)

Gonzalez, V. and Robyn Magalit Rodriguez. "Filipina.com: Wives, Workers, and Whores on the Cyberfrontier" in *Asian America.Net: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Cyberspace*, by Rachel Lee and Sau-ling Cynthia Wong, 215-234. New York: Routledge, 2003. (BB)

## The Digital Future of Difference

Thurs, 11/17

Daniels, J. (2007) "Race, Civil Rights, and Hate Speech in the Digital Era" *Learning Race and Ethnicity: Youth and Digital Media*. (ed. Anna Everett) The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Digital Media and Learning. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2008. 129-154.  
<http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/dmal.9780262550673.129>

Pham, M. (2011) "Blog Ambition: Fashion, Feelings, and the Political Economy of the Digital Raced Body" *Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies* 76 26.1: 1-37.

Tues, 11/22

Malykhina, E. (2010) "Do Social Networks Overlook Latinas?" *AdWeek*.

<http://www.adweek.com/news/technology/do-social-networks-overlook-latinas-102310>

boyd, d. (2008) "The Not-So-Hidden Politics of Class Online" *Personal Democracy Forum*. June 30  
<http://www.danah.org/papers/talks/PDF2009.html>

Boler, M. (2007) "Hypes, Hopes and Actualities: New Digital Cartesianism and Bodies in Cyberspace," *New Media and Society* 9.1: 139-168.

Thurs, 11/24

Thanksgiving Break – no class meeting

## WEEK FIFTEEN:           Wrap-Up

Tues/Thurs, 11/29 and 12/1

**Paper 2 due**