Communications Studies (COMS) 481, Lecture 01
Advanced Topics in New Media & Society
Winter 2014
Tuesday, 14:00-16:45pm

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Office Hours:	Wednesday, 1pm-3pm or by appointment

Course Description
This course explores the new media landscape through the lens of race, ethnicity and other identity categories. We will study how real-world issues around race (e.g. identity, representation, racism, activism, community, the digital divide) manifest and *matter* on digitally mediated platforms such as blogs, social media sites, video games, mobile technologies and so on. The objectives of this course are to 1) critically examine the ways in which race shapes, and is shaped by, new media and digital technologies 2) uncover hidden norms, values and assumptions imbedded in new communication technologies that impact dominant and minority groups differently 3) expose students to the limits and possibilities of transcending real-life issues around race through the use of digital technology.

Textbooks and Readings
Readings will be posted on blackboard as bibliographical references (to be found on the UofC library database), pdfs, or hyperlinks. All readings are required unless noted as 'optional'.

Evaluation Breakdown

		Requirements for all typed assignments:
Participation	10%	• 12 point, Times New Roman font
Quizzes (3)	35%	• 1" margins
Reading Response	10%	• Include NAME, DATE, and WORD COUNT.
Group Presentation	15%	• Double spaced
Final Paper	30%	• APA style should be used for all in-text and bibliographical citations
TOTAL	100%	• It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment until final grades have been posted.

- **Participation 10%**
  At some point during every class, students will be asked to complete a 5 minute written assignment which must be handed in at the end of class. This assignment might take the form of free writing on a discussion point or reading, a mini-quiz or something else. These assignments will not be graded and will not be handed back; however, they will be used to evaluate attendance and participation.

- **Quizzes 35%**

  Breakdown:

  > **Quiz #1 (5%)   February 4**
  > **Quiz #2 (20%) March 11**
  > **Quiz #3 (10%) April 8**

  Quizzes are meant to evaluate students' knowledge of key concepts covered in the readings and lectures. They will be a mix of multiple choice and short answer, and are cumulative in the sense that they may require students to compare and synthesize new concepts with those covered earlier in the course.

- **Reading Response Paper: 10%**
  o Due anytime **BEFORE the end of class on March 18th, 2014.**
  o 1200-1500 words (approx 4-5pgs)
  o Select one of the class readings indicated with an asterisk (*).
  o A reading response is NOT a summary of the article; do not summarize! This is an opportunity for students to reflect on the article on a personal level (i.e. what it made you think about, how it connected with your experiences and observations, what aspects did you question and so on). Students must also integrate relevant concepts/ideas that have been introduced in class discussions and/or in other readings in order to think more deeply about the article's contribution.

- **Group Presentation 15%**
  o Presentations will begin on March 4th and run through April 8th (to be determined by enrollment).
  o Time requirements: 15 mins *plus* 5-10mins for discussion/questions
  o Working in groups of 3-4, students will choose a new media artifact or phenomena to analyze through the critical framework introduced in the course. The presentation must make clear how issues around race/ethnicity/identity intersect with the digital artifact/phenomena under consideration.
  o **Groups must hand in a written outline at the time of presentation**
    ▪ This 1-2pg document will outline the group's general plan for the presentation. It should clearly state the artifact/phenomena/issue under consideration, the key questions being addressed, the major issues/problematics, the larger social significance of the problem, and the discussion questions

- **Final Research Paper: 30% (2500-3500 words; approx 8-10pgs)**
  DUE March 25th, 2014
  o Option 1: This option requires students to critically engage with a particular artifact/phenomena related to race and new media/digital technology. As a research paper, students must include **at least 5 scholarly sources.** Students must demonstrate understanding, integration, synthesis, and critically thinking about concepts relevant to their argument.
  o Option 2: This option requires students to combine their personal digital biographies with themes they have studied in the course. A good example can be found in Gomez-Pena's "The Virtual Barrio". However, unlike Gomez-Pena's essay, students must include **at least 5 scholarly sources**. Students must demonstrate the ability to think critically about their personal experiences with technology and integrate those experiences with relevant concepts studied in the course.

Writing Skills Statement
Department policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see http://comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support

Research Guidelines
Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see**:**

The Department of Communication and Culture Research Ethics site: http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/ethics **or**

the University of Calgary Research Ethics site: http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb

You do not need to complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in the course.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: NO

Late Assignments: Please hand in assignments directly to your instructor at the specified time. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Policy for Late Assignments: Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence**, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. Also you will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up an assignment or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.**
 For more information see also http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy**.**

Internet and electronic communication device information
Students may use laptops and other electronic communication devices for class-related activities only (i.e. note-taking, referring to readings, group projects etc.). *Any* distracting activity—online or off—is not permitted. Cell phones must be set to silent during class; texting, answering phone calls, using social media sites, browsing the internet, and other non-class related online activities are strictly prohibited. The instructor reserves the right to request all electronic communication to be turned off during certain class activities such as quizzes and group presentations. Failure to adhere to these policies may negatively impact participation grades and may result in the revoking of electronic communication privileges.

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Department of Communication and Culture:

	Grading Scale
A+	96-100
A	90-95.99
A -	85-89.99
B+	80-84.99
B	75-79.99
B-	70-74.99
C+	65-69.99
C	60-64.99
C-	55-59.99
D+	53-54.99
D	50-52.99
F	0-49

Where a grade on a particular assignment is expressed as a letter grade, it will normally be converted to a number using the midpoint of the scale. That is, A- would be converted to 87.5 for calculation purposes. F will be converted to zero.

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (3rd Floor Taylor Family Digital Library, http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Calendar at the following link; http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Student Accessibility Services (220-8237, http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts see http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/governance/elections/home.html

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman's Office see
http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and the assembly points see
http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Schedule of Lectures and *Readings
*All readings will be posted on blackboard either as a PDF or a citation accessible through a library search.

Date	Topics	Deadlines	Readings
January 14	➢Introduction to the course		
January 21	➢Critically thinking about (new) media ➢Utopian visions on the Internet		Ebo, B. (1998). Internet or outernet?. *Cyberghetto or cybertopia*, 1-12. Find on Google scholar/books: http://books.google.ca.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/books?hl=en&lr=&id=HSBJ-geXmNAC&oi=fnd&pg=PA1&dq=bio+internet+race&ots=gUAyAM0vms&sig=wgCJcHxIoflbBrVm6x_NNWMITgM#v=onepage&q=bio%20internet%20race&f=false Turkle, S. (1999). Cyberspace and identity. *Contemporary Sociology*, *28*(6), 643-648 (Find on UofC) Optional: *Winner, L. (1980). Do artifacts have politics? *Daedalus*, *109*(1), 121–136 (Find on UofC) Curran, J., Friedman, D., & Fenton, N. (2012). *Misunderstanding the Internet*. Routledge. Chapter 1: Reinterpreting the internet by James Curran (pp 3-33) (Ebook at UofC)
January 28	➢Identity and the internet ➢Cyber tourism		"Cybertypes: Race, ethnicity and identity on the Internet" by Lisa Nakamura (see blackboard) Nakamura, All Look Same: Mediating Visual Cultures of Race on the Web" " in *East Main Street: Asian American Popular Culture*, edited by Shilpa Dave, LeiLani Nishime, and Tasha G. Oren, 262-272. New York: NYU Press, 2005. (web link) Optional: http://www.hyphenmagazine.com/blog/archive/2011/07/syrian-lesbian-bloggers-fake-geishas-and-attractions-

			identity-tourism *"Room Full of Mirrors: Race, Tourism, and Cyberspace." *Artbyte* (May/June 2000). Found here: http://kalital.com/Text/Articles/artbyte.html
February 4	➤The digital divide	**Quiz #1**	boyd, d. (2011). White flight in networked publics? How race and class shaped American teen engagement with MySpace and Facebook. Web link here: http://www.danah.org/papers/2009/WhiteFlightDraft3.pdf Brock, A. (2012). From the Blackhand Side: Twitter as Cultural Conversation. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *56*(4), 529-549. Optional: boyd reflects on White flight online: http://www.blogher.com/how-racist-language-frames-social-media-and-why-you-should-care
February 11	➤Gaming, race and representation ➤Guest lecture on race and gaming		Everett, A., & Watkins, S. C. (2008). The power of play: The portrayal and performance of race in video games. *The ecology of games: Connecting youth, games, and learning*, 141–64. (UofC) Good, Owen. (2009). Minority Report: The Non White Gamer's Experience. Web link here: http://kotaku.com/5358562/minority-report-the-non+white-gamers-experience Optional: *Leonard, D. (2003). "Live in your world, play in ours": Race, video games, and consuming the other. *SIMILE: Studies In Media & Information Literacy Education*, *3*(4), 1–9.
February 18	READING WEEK NO CLASSES		
February 25	➤Community building; activism ➤In-class prep time for presentations		The Virtual Barrio @ The Other Frontier by Guillermo Gomez-Pena. Found here: http://www.pochanostra.com/antes/jazz_pocha2/mainpages/virtual.htm Parker, D., & Song, M. (2009). New ethnicities and the internet. *Cultural Studies*, *23*, 583–604. doi:10.1080/09502380902951003 (UofC) Optional: *Saucier, P. K. (2009). CVSpace: Musings on Cape Verdean Youth Identity, Technology, and MySpace. *American Communication Journal*, *11*(1). (UofC)
March 4	➤Presentation by groups 1,2,3 ➤Guest lecture on Fandom & Race		Lopez, L. K. (2012). Fan activists and the politics of race in The Last Airbender. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, *15*(5), 431-445. (UofC) Sperb, J. (2010). Reassuring Convergence: Online Fandom, Race, and Disney's Notorious Song of the

			South. *Cinema Journal*, *49*(4), 25-45. (UofC)
March 11	➤Infrastructure ➤Writing Workshop	**Quiz #2**	Brock, A. (2011). Beyond the pale: The Blackbird web browser's critical reception. *New media & society*, *13*(7), 1085-1103. (UofC) Chow-White, P. A. (2008). The informationalization of race: Communication technologies and the human genome in the digital age. *International Journal of Communication*, *2*, 27. (UofC) Optional: *Gandy, O. H. (2003). Data mining and surveillance in the post-9/11 environment. *The Intensification of Surveillance. Crime, Terrorism and Warfare in the Information Era*, 26-41. Web link here: http://www.asc.upenn.edu.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/usr/og andy/iamcrdatamining.pdf
March 18	➤Presentation by groups 4, 5, 6 ➤ Cyber racism	**REMINDER:** *Last day to submit reading response assignment*	*Bostdorff, D. M. (2004). The internet rhetoric of the Ku Klux Klan: A case study in web site community building run amok. *Communication Studies*, *55*(2), 340-361. (UofC) *Daniels, J. (2009). Cloaked websites: propaganda, cyber-racism and epistemology in the digital era. *New Media & Society*, *11*(5), 659-683. (UofC) Optional: http://vimeo.com/48821485nal:
March 25	➤Presentation by groups 7,8,9 ➤Production	**Final paper DUE**	Nakamura, L, "Economies of Digital Production in East Asia: iphone Girl and the Transnational Circuits of Cool" Web link here: http://www.mediafieldsjournal.org/economies-of-digital/ *Wilson, E. & Costanza-Chock, S. (2012) "New Voices on the Net? The Digital journalism divide and the costs of network exclusion. In *Race After the Internet* by L. Nakamura & P. Chow-White (Eds). (see Blackboard)
April 1	➤Presentations by groups 10, 11, 12, 13		TBA
April 8		**Quiz #3**	