Visual Studies 295

Media Theory and History

Winter 2006, Wed 4:30-7:30 pm, HIB 220

Professor Mark Poster

Office KH 230  Office Hour Wed 3-4pm  Email: poster@uci.edu

Texts to be Purchased:
- Course Reader (available in the Library)
- Mark Poster, ed., *Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings* (Stanford UP)
- James Der Derian, *The Virilio Reader* (Blackwell)
- John Johnston, ed., *Friedrich Kittler: Essays* (G and B Arts International)
- Wendy Chun and Thomas Keenan, eds., *New Media, Old Media* (Routledge)

Recommended Texts:
- Mark Poster, *What’s the Matter with the Internet?* (Minnesota UP)
- Félix Guattari, “Machinic Heterogenesis,” in Verena Conley, ed., *Rethinking Technologies*, Ch. 2 (Minnesota UP)
- Anna McCarthy, *Ambient Television* (Duke UP)
- Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book* (Chicago UP)
- Raymond Williams, *Television* (Routledge UK)

Readings and Topics:

Week 1 (January 11): Introduction to Media History and Theory
Optional Reading: Mark Poster, *What’s the Matter with the Internet?*, Chapters 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9

Week 2 (January 18): Media as Object of Knowledge
Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media* – Chapters 1, 2, 4, 6, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33
Recommended:

Week 3 (January 25): The Frankfurt School: Media and Society
Theodor Adorno & Max Horkheimer, “The Culture Industry” and “The Culture Industry Revisited” [in Reader]
Presentations: Daniele, Ch.3 Levin; Jessica, Ch. 5 Vismann

Week 4 (February 1)
Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” [in Reader]
Presentations: Yoshi, Ch. 25 Krapp; Garnet, Ch. 6 Ernst

Week 5 (February 8): Media as Culture
Jean Baudrillard: *Selected Writings* Chapters 1, 2, 7, 9, 11
Presentations: Tina, Ch. 14 Manovich; Sami, Ch. 23 Mirzoeff

Week 6 (February 15): Information Machines and Humans
Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto” [in Reader]
Presentations: Tim, Ch. 15 Dibbell; Arden, Ch. 17 Doane

Week 7 (February 22) Text, Software, Machines and Humans
Jack Johnston, *Friedrich Kittler Reader*, Chapters 1, 7, 8
Presentations: Will, Ch. 10 Kittler; David, Ch. 24 Hillis
Week 8 (March 1): Race and Media
Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel, "Popular Art and Mass Culture," from *The Popular Arts* (1964) [in Reader]

Presentations: Sandra, Ch. 26 Wigley; Burcu, Ch. 19 Rajagopal

Week 9 (March 8): Race and Media II
Lisa Nakamura, “The Race in/for Cyberspace” (online at www.hnet.uci.edu/mposter/ click on the “History 182: The Internet” button and you will find it)

Presentations: Janet, Ch. 22 Nakamura; Kim, Ch. 1 Elsaesser

Week 10 (March 15): Media and History
*The Virilio Reader* – Chapters 1, 4, 7, 9, 10, 12

Presentations: Matthew, Ch. 16 Michelsen; Ken, Ch. 7 Dienst

**Student Assignments:**

1. Students will be responsible for the discussion part of each class, coming to class prepared with questions, comments, etc. about the readings.
2. In the fifth week of the quarter, each student will turn in a two page paper proposal, indicating the argument and the content of their project along with a list of 10 references, either articles or books.
3. Starting in the sixth week, each student will present a critical discussion of one or two chapter(s) from the Chun/Keenan reader evaluating how the author treats the problem of theory and history in relation to media.
4. On the basis of the proposal, each student will write a 20 page paper that relates material from the course to their own research project. The papers will be due early in finals week.