

# ACRITICAL RE A DER OF NEW MEDIA

## 02. MEDIA, MEANING, SIGNS



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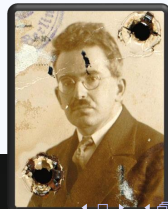
# IN THIS CLASS

- ❑ HOW DO WE DEFINE A MEDIUM?
- ❑ THE MEDIUM IS THE... ~YAWN~
- ❑ SIGNS AND CULTURE

# THE WORK OF ART IN THE AGE OF MECHANICAL REPRODUCTION

So what is TWOAITAOMR about?

1. Aura
2. Capitalism
3. The place of art in society





## Cult and exhibition

- ❖ Art (at least classic art!) is embedded in tradition and the craft of making it as well as the ritual of presentation and admiration of art—art as cult
- ❖ Photography signals the detachment of art as a cult object, turning into an *exhibition* object. Authenticity becomes eroded.

# LET'S TAKE A LOOK

Nadín Ospina, Colombia, 2001



# WHAT IS A MEDIUM

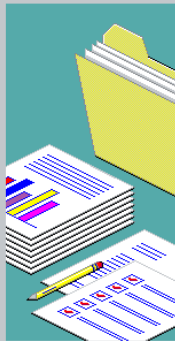
- A means of something
- A channeler of the spirit world
- A physical support of content
- How would you define it?



## MEDIUM, A WORKING DEFINITION

We will treat the concept of medium as *an encompassing container that defines the boundaries of representations expressed through it*

### Windows 95 Setup



#### Get more done

Windows 95 is faster and more efficient. You can do more of what you want to do.

- Windows Explorer is a powerful way to browse and manage your files, drives, and network connections.
- Use drag and drop to move or copy files and folders, or to create shortcuts to programs.
- Click the right mouse button for a quick menu of common commands.

Copying files...

20%

# THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE

OR IS IT?  
DOES IT MATTER  
DO WE CARE?





Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980)

Canadian?!

*Understanding Media*

Culture, advertisement, media ecology

TV personality of sorts

## THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE



woody allen man in white suit

HOW TO



REGISTE

20€ GRATI

Não percas

Inscreve-te

Google Chron

Remove Ads



Meet  
**Christian  
singles**  
now!

**JOIN NOW!**

ING TO MC-L



## MCLUHAN'S MEDIUM

McLuhan has a “technological” view of media in that he considers a medium to be a “new” technology that *mediates* human communication

So what constitutes a technology? Lightbulbs, clocks, money, words, etc.

# THE FOUR EFFECTS OF MEDIA (FROM LAWS OF MEDIA)



WHAT DOES THE  
MEDIUM ENHANCE



WHAT DOES THE MEDIUM  
MAKE OBSOLETE



WHAT DOES THE MEDIUM  
RETRIEVE FROM OBSOLETE  
MEDIA



WHAT DOES THE MEDIUM  
REVERSE INTO WHEN TAKEN TO  
THE EXTREME



## LET'S APPLY THAT AGAIN

Let's grab the following element as a *medium*:

What does it enhance?

What does it make obsolete?

What does it bring back?

What does it reverse into when taken to the extreme?

BUT CAN WE SAY  
SOMETHING FOR  
CERTAIN HERE?

UHM IDK

# WHAT IS THE POINT OF TALKING ABOUT SIGNS

Signs are more discrete units of analysis

However, they are multifarious

Do they give us more certainty when dealing with meaningful objects?



## WHAT IS THIS A SIGN OF?

Let's focus not on the mask as a medium, but on its features: If we treat it as a sign, do we make a novel contribution in understanding anything at all?

Signs need some context, so signs and the analysis of media are compatible

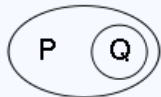
And signs are multifarious, so they don't give us enough certainty about their existence as signs

So what is the point of using signs as part of our analysis?

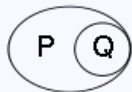


## PQ

a) Conjunction  $P \wedge Q$



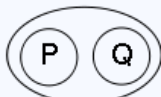
c1) Conditional  $P \rightarrow Q$



c2) Conditional  $P \rightarrow Q$ ,  
alternative notation



b) Negation  $\neg P$



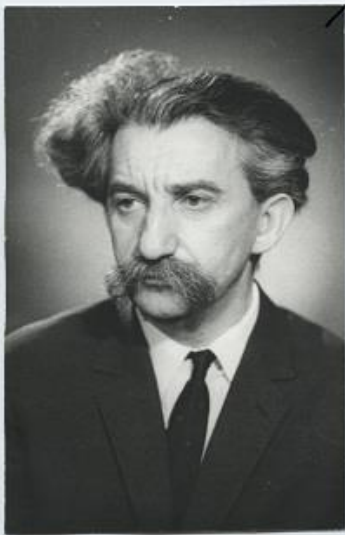
d) Disjunction  $P \vee Q$

## SIGNS

The point of focusing on signs is to have a wider arsenal of theoretical tools

The analysis of context and sign will still leave a bunch of questions open

Being strict about how we use signs enables a tighter position though!



## WHAT ARE THE SEMIOTICS OF CULTURE

- Let's remember a bit of what the semiotics of culture looks like
- *Semiosphere*
- *Explosion*
- *Text*
- *Cultural objects as indicators of cultural meaning*