DIGITAL

MEDIA

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Course Development

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General Introduction

Aims of the module

- Introduction to the field of digital media from the perspective of humanities and qualitative social media
- Introduction to transformations we experience in respect to the use of media and technology
- Overview over the different media platforms and media practices

The aim of this module is to investigate the ways in which new media are structurally changing contemporary culture. Digital media have been described as being interactive, multimedial, and integrative – as they integrate the older analogue media and are able to simulate them on the basis of the digital code. Their integrative power as well as the possibility of connection and networking opened discussions on their impact on our culture in social and cultural sciences.

Our media culture nowadays is characterized by profound changes in the role of users and producers but also due to the flow of content across multiple media platforms. In this multi-faceted landscape comprising powerful media corporations and individual bloggers, satellites and mobile phones, social media platforms as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram, media are far more entrenched in all domains of everyday life than they ever were and the distinction between media-producers and consumers is gradually dissolving. They all provide facilities and a framework for non-professional users to publish their own content. We will investigate the effect of technological developments in the field of digital media in several domains as social media, digital games, digital literature and art but even more on practices related to the use of digital media as networking, data sharing, remix culture just to name a few.

This course is labeled as a humanities course but the discussion will include literature from qualitative social science research as well as the discussion will not only focus on media and their aesthetics but on user agency and critical topics as privacy and surveillance as well.

Student portal

Be sure to check the student portal regularly for announcements and up-dates. Also check your UM e-mail account regularly as this is the only official source of communication with the course coordinator. You will otherwise miss out on schedule changes, announcement, etc.

Dropbox
All participants will be invited to a specific dropbox folder of this course in which pdf can be added and shared. For access you need to install dropbox: https://www.dropbox.com/home.

Assessment
Your assessment will be based on the following aspects:

- class room presence (compulsory), be aware that **the presence at some of the lectures is also compulsory**, the presence at the viewing is not, however, you are expected to know the movie shown.
- a 10 minute PowerPoint/Prezi presentation in class. Choose one of the assignments of this course and apply the literature discussed there to an example. The presentation will take place before the post discussion, but do not simply summarize the literature all students had to prepare for the post discussion. The task is an application of the literature to an example. Try the presentation at home and check the time you need as an extension of the 10 minutes available will have a negative effect on the grade. If you present an example in a group of 2, you can use 15 minutes (20%).
- A final paper on a topic related to the course can be freely chosen. The paper needs to refer to at least one assignments of this coursebook and take 2 sources discussed into consideration. You will also have to find new sources (at least 4 additional sources have to be chosen. The new sources can also be from the list of references/further references not discussed in class). You may deepen the topic you had chosen for your presentation (min. 3500 - max. 4000 words). (80%):

Peer review session
The last tutorial meeting will be used for a peer review meeting. Students will be grouped and asked to send their topic and research question with a short outline (max. 2 pages) of the final paper to the other 2-3 members of the group and the tutor 3 days before we meet for the peer review session. You will then give feedback to each other and will receive comments by your tutor.
Deadline draft/outline Tuesday, December 5th, 9 am.

Final Paper: Deadline Friday December 15th, 6 PM
(No print out needed. Upload your final paper to safe assignment)

Attendance requirements
The minimum attendance requirement is 85%. As the course will have 12 tutor group meetings plus 2 compulsory lectures this means that you are allowed to miss 2 meetings. If you miss a 3rd meeting, you have to ask for an extra assignment. This will only be possible if there is a plausible reason why you missed class. As the lectures will take place at the same day as one of the tutorial meetings you will easily miss twice in case you are ill or something unexpected happens. Take this into consideration. In case you do not miss more than 30% of the course and you have a good reason for missing you can ask for an extra assignment. This request has to be handed in at the office of student affairs not

later than 10 days after the course is finished. You will have to answer the learning goals of your group in written form for those meetings you missed.

Resit

Students who fulfilled the attendance requirements (or are eligible to do an extra assignment) and did a presentation in class may do a resit in case they fail the final essay. The resit will consist of re-writing the essay, following the comments you received in digital form from your tutor to improve your writing. In case you failed the presentation in class – or did not do one – you cannot do a resit.

Coordinator Contact

Karin Wenz (coordinator)
Hof van Tilly, Grote Gracht 90-92, room E 1.07, 043-3884870,
k.wenz@maastrichtuniversity.nl

Coverpage Assignment

Coursecode:	
Coursetitle:	
Coursecoordinator:	
Academic year:	
Tutorialgroupnumber:	
Name of the Tutor:	
Student ID:	
Studentname:	
Number of words:	
Title assignment:	

Signature Student

Date:	

Schedule 2017:

	Lecture	Tutor group	Tutor Group
Week 1 30.10-3.11	*Lecture* Digital Media: An Introduction	Always already new	Participatory Culture
Week 2 6.11-10.11	*Viewing* Page One: Inside The New York Times	News and Verification	Filter Bubbles
Week 3 13.11-17.11	*Lecture* Digital Games and Gaming Practices	Non-Users	Gamification
Week 4 20.11-24.11	*Lecture (compulsory)* Big Data Ethics and Social Media Research Annika Richterich	Quantified Self	Big Data & Privacy
Week 5 27.11-1.12	*Viewing/Lecture* Hacking	Hacking	Digital Literature & Digital Art
Week 6 4.12.-8.12	*Lecture* Digital Literature & Digital Art	Postdiscussion + evaluation	Meeting: Final paper (peer review session)
Week 7 11.12-15.12			15.12.: deadline final essay 6 PM

transformations

ASSIGNMENT 1

Always already new

What are new media? Does the concept make sense at all? The "new" medium 100 years ago was the radio, 60 years ago it was the television, 15 years ago it was the Internet. Whenever a medium was claimed to be "new" it receives a historical dimension and has to be seen in line with its precursors. If we want to understand what is new about any medium, whether recent or ancient, look to the cultural currency that animates and appreciates it at a given time. Uncovering the disputes, debates, and economies of value that layer a medium's meaning constitutes what Gitelman and a group of European media theorists have recently called "media archeology", a pragmatic approach to unearth the hidden histories of media.

Gitelman (2006, p. 7) proposes that the term *medium* can be understood as encompassing both technological instruments and the "vast clutter of normative rules and default conditions […] which gather and adhere like a nebulous array around" them. Gitelman describes these rules and conditions as protocols. As defined by Gitelman "protocol" is a flexible category encompassing a medium's uses, business models, the forms its content or messages take, the standards and regulations governing its implementation, and even ideas about its cultural meanings. She mentions the example of the standard telephone that comes with protocols so as to say "hello" when you pick it up but also that you pay the bill on a monthly basis. The landline phone also needs the cable to be connected. While its users were very aware of all those preconditions to use it when it was new, we rarely spent a moment to think about it. Protocols have changed with the use of mobile phone. When you call someone you rarely ask first "how are you" but rather "where are you" as the connection to a cable and therefore with a specific place is not needed anymore. Protocols change in response to technological developments, as when the introduction of a new technology prompts the reappraisal and revision of a medium's extant regulations. They may likewise be influenced by a much wider range of "changeable social, economic, and material relationships" (p. 8).

How does the current social media landscape differ from previous media eras? How can social media be distinguished, for example, from mass media such as television, radio and print? A key difference might lie in the new power relations that social media produce. If our media environment was previously controlled by large media companies, today it seems increasingly controlled by us: the user (Jenkins et al. 2013, see next assignment). But is this really the case? Too easily social media are described as participatory and bottom up and older media as inherently top-down regulated and passively consumed.

In reality, the relationships between more traditional media and social media are far more complex.

In her book *The Culture of Connectivity*, José van Dijck (2013) explores this complexity. As she argues: "To some extent, the triumph of users over conventional mass media proved to be justified, as Web 2.0 offered unprecedented tools for empowerment and online self-communication, but outsized expectations nourished a premature winning mood among the web idealists" (2013, p. 11). To which extent does the logic and thereby the protocols of social media differ from that of mass media?

Literature

Gitelman, Lisa
    (2006). Always already new: Media, History and the Data of Culture. Cambridge, MA: MIT, pp. 1-22.
Van Dijck, J.
    (2013). Engineering Sociality in a Culture of Connectivity. In J. van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity. A Critical History of Social Media* (pp. 3-22)*.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

ASSIGNMENT 2

Participatory Culture

The digital media and technology environment, we all are part of and simultaneously are exposed to, comes with lowered barriers for participation. Henry Jenkins describes this phenomenon as participatory culture (Jenkins, 2013). It is spotlighting a shift in media communication. This shift led to transformations of roles such as producers and consumers. Today's participatory culture faces a hazing relationship of consumers and producers, turning media into many-to-many communication channels. This participatory culture is intertwined with a convergence culture, in which, as Jenkins defines, media content flows across multiple media platforms (Jenkins, 2013, 2006, p. 2).

Do you remember topics that spread almost like a virus on social media? The US elections, Trumps presidency, Beyoncé's pregnancy announcement and more. The Internet-user sees memes as "observable audio-visual content" in the form of comical images or YouTube videos (Shifman, 2014). Most memes are being shared on social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr. The meme hubs they come from are often claimed to be Reddit, Discord and 4Chan. Memes are a good illustration of participation culture. Users are "shaping, sharing, reframing and remixing media content to larger communities and networks all around the world" (Jenkins, 2013, p. 2.). Through memes, norms and values are being shared. Furthermore, memes represent the mind-sets, interest and different cultural practices of various social groups.

"If there's one meme that proved it could endure, it was this one. During Trump's first week in the Oval Office, he made a number of significant decisions, including his personal choice to hold up executive actions he signed for the cameras. People got right down to transforming those images into memes of childhood illustrations like a cat (spelled kat)."

http://time.com/4756946/best-memes-2017-so-far/

Participatory culture has the potential to spread information, to engage users actively and also to make and share content and critically reflect on it.

Literature

Fuchs, C.
  (2014). Social Media as Participatory Culture. In C. Fuchs, *Social Media: A Critical Introduction* (pp. 52-63)*.* London and Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
Jenkins, H., Ito, M., boyd, d.
  (2016). Participatory Culture in a Networked Era. London: Polity Press. (chapter 1)
Vesnić-Alujević, L. & Murru, L.F.
  (2016). Digital Audiences. *Participations* 13.1, 422-430.

Further Readings

Denecke, M., Ganzert, A., Otto, I. & Stock, R.
  (eds.) (2016). ReClaiming Participation. Technology – Mediation – Collectivity. Bielefeld: transcript. (see especially pp. 9-11, 261-286)
Fuchs, C.
  (2011, May 30). Against Henry Jenkins. Remarks on Henry Jenkins ICA Talk 'Spreadable Media'. http://fuchs.uti.at/570/
Jenkins, H.
  Confessions of an ACA Fan: The Official Weblog of Henry Jenkins
  http://www.henryjenkins.org/
Jenkins, H., Ford, S. & Green, J.
  (2013). *Spreadable Media. Creating Value and Meaning in Networked Culture*. New York & London: New York University Press, pp. 1-46. (LRC, UL)
Jenkins, H.
  (2006). *Convergence Culture. Where Old and New Media Collide*, New York & London: New York University Press. pp. 1-24. (LRC)
Jordan. T.
  (2015). *Information Politics. Liberation and Exploitation in the Digital Society*. London: Pluto Press
Milner, R.M.
  (2016). *The world made meme*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Shifman, L.
  (2012). An anatomy of a YouTube meme. *New Media Society*, *14*(2), 187-203.
Shifman, L.
  (2014). *Memes in digital culture.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

ASSIGNMENT 3

News and Verification

Journalists have been using data in their stories for as long as the profession has existed. A revolution in computing in the 20th century created opportunities for data integration into investigations, as journalists began to bring technology into their work. In the 21st century, a revolution in connectivity is leading the media toward new horizons. The Internet, cloud computing, agile development, mobile devices, and open source software have transformed the practice of journalism, leading to the emergence of a new term: data journalism. (Howard 2014)

Data produced by users and networks play an important role in journalism. Some might go as far as Howard (2014) and call it a revolution others more carefully speak about a transformation. The changes we can observe as computer-assisted reporting and the use of apps for journalistic purposes have an impact on the profession and the ways journalists are using data as a source. A convergence between journalism and social media platforms is leading to challenges for journalistic practices. The move from analogue to digital practices has been reinforced by social media and the heavy use of mobile devices to connect to them and read news distributed by those platforms. Platforms have become news distributors but do not follow professional practices expected from journalists as they "incentivize the spread of low quality content […] scale and shareability" (Bell & Owen 2017). They affect how news are spread as their design favors brief and short reports and video material over long, complex news stories. The move to social media platforms also raises new ethical questions about ethical standards, verification of content and the responsibility of platforms for the content they distribute.

Literature

Bell, E. & Owen, T.
    (2017). *The Platform Press. Columbia*, NY: The Tow Center for Digital Journalism. https://towcenter.org/research/the-platform-press-how-silicon-valley-reengineered-journalism/
Howard, A.B.
    (2014*). The Art and Science of Data-Driven Journalism*. Columbia, NY: The Tow Center for Digital Journalism, pp. 1-6, 14-44. http://towcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Tow-Center-Data-Driven-Journalism.pdf

Silverman, C.
(ed.) (2014). *The Verification Handbook.* Maastricht: European Journalism
Center. http://verificationhandbook.com.

Further Readings

See articles under https://towcenter.org/

Viewing

Page One: Inside The New York Times - http://putlocker.ac/watch-page-one-inside-the-
new-york-times-online-free-putlocker.html

ASSIGNMENT 4

Filter Bubbles

As no other generation you have experienced the shift to a life that is increasingly saturated by online activities. In an extremely fast changing and utterly interactive time of Web 2.0 and social media our habits are changing as well. While probably some of us still grab a newspaper in the morning to go with our coffee, it has become just as common to immediately check social media when we wake up. We scroll through our Facebook timeline and see what our friends are up to and what is happening in the world. As a study has shown especially young adults get their daily news from social media such as Facebook or Reddit (Pew Research Center, 2010). However, while reading what appears to be most important news in the morning most of us do not bother reflecting which content we receive. If the content is in-line with our interests we barely doubt whether it is showing the "whole picture". In fact, Facebook does display information that is "interesting" to us – meaning that the content we receive is based on our previous online activities. The decisive actors in this selection of content are algorithms.

The whole phenomenon of algorithmic content tailoring was rather recently termed by Eli Pariser (2011a) as *filter bubble* to call attention to the effects and risks of the extremely increasing personalization of information on the web. Exposing the ways in which algorithms tailor the content we get to see online he laid groundwork for an ever since ongoing debate about how personalization impacts all aspects of our lives (Pariser, 2011a). This filter bubble comes into being when algorithms filter the content we receive according to your previously made choices online. Filtering affects users almost anywhere and anytime. A search on Google.com might lead to two completely different results for the exact same search request based on who is searching and the previous search history. Especially social media collect a lot of personal information to process (Pariser, 2011a, p. 38). The filters calculate and display what is most "relevant" for every single user. Being of high "relevance" means that the content fits the user's previous online activity. Thereby, the algorithms create a bubble of personalized content adjusted to the choices the user has made before. We only get to see what the algorithms calculate to be congruent with our interests, our friends, our activities, and opinions (Pariser, 2011a). As Pariser states our democracy is threatened by "a public sphere sorted and manipulated by algorithms, fragmented by design, and hostile to dialogue" (p.164). The filter bubble not only influences our online life but can affect our whole society since "it distorts our perception of what's important, true, and real" (p. 20).

That the effects of personalization are very present and 'real' has become apparent in the recent elections in the United States. The election of Donald Trump as the new

president of the United States of America on the 9th of November 2016 has caused a lot of controversies and debates about the role and responsibilities of digital media, especially social media, in regard to news coverage. Many people wonder why they did not anticipate his victory in advance and quickly blame social media for their misjudgements. Especially Facebook gets accused to have been of great assistance on Trump's way to become president. Some even allege that the platform is responsible for his win altogether (Lapowsky, 2016). Besides obviously playing its part as a new channel for election campaigning – which Trump's supporters certainly made use of – Facebook is more and more criticized to be showing a one-sided narrative of news and events. By generating a news feed based on numerous algorithms and aiming to provide content with the greatest possible personal relevance the platform filters news and information according to the users' affinities (Baer, 2016; Hosanagar, 2016).

Literature:

Baer, D.
    (2016, November 9). The 'Filter Bubble' Explains Why Trump Won and You Didn't See It Coming. *New York Magazine*.
    http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2016/11/how-facebook-and-the-filter-bubble-pushed-trump-to-victory.html
Hosanagar, K.
    (2016, November 25). Blame the Echo Chamber on Facebook. But Blame Yourself, Too. *Wired.* https://www.wired.com/2016/11/facebook-echo-chamber/
Lapowsky, I.
    (2016, November 15). Here's How Facebook Actually Won Trump the Presidency. *Wired.* Retrieved from https://www.wired.com/2016/11/facebook-won-trump-election-not-just-fake-news/
Pariser, E.
    (2011a). The Filter Bubble. What the Internet Is Hiding from You. London: Penguin Books.

see also:

Pariser, E.
    (2011b, March). *Eli Pariser: Beware online "filter bubbles"*
    https://www.ted.com/talks/eli_pariser_beware_online_filter_bubbles

For those who would like to choose this topic for their final paper:

As most sources above are journalistic you need to embed the discussion into either the academic literature from the assignment on participatory culture or the debate around the public sphere. For the public sphere some sources that might be useful:

Jordan. T.
    (2015). *Information Politics. Liberation and Exploitation in the Digital Society*. London: Pluto Press, pp. 1-63. (LRC, UL)

Garnham, N.
    (2004). The Media and the Public Sphere. In F. Webster (ed.), *The Information Society Reader* (357-365). London: Routledge.

Gerhards, J., & Schäfer, M. S.
    (2010). Is the internet a better public sphere? Comparing old and new media in the USA and Germany. *New media & society, 12(1)*, 143-160.

Habermas, J., Lennox, S., & Lennox, F.
    (1974). The public sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964). *New German Critique, (3),* 49-55.

Habermas, J.
    (1989). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

practices

ASSIGNMENT 5

(Non-)Users

What are media you, your friends and family use? Can you observe an increase of media use or are there a few you know even rejecting the use of maybe a television, mobile phone, social networking sites such as Facebook? Discuss the reasons why you/they have chosen to use specific media or technologies or avoid them.

Cartoon by Mike Keefe / Courtesy Caglecartoons.com

Non users have often been described as those lacking education, skills, money or access. This can of course be the case especially when developing countries are in the focus and the desire to be connected and participate online cannot be fulfilled because of lack of money and technology. This is not our topic in this assignment but the situation in Western so-called developed countries. We can observe well-educated, privileged middle class citizens deciding to be or become non-users. A more critical standpoint and

user choices do matter, which are not reflected when we follow the euphoric discourses about technological development as progress and improvement.

Literature

Wyatt, S.
    (2003). Non-Users Also Matter: The Construction of Users and Non-Users of the Internet. In Nelly Oudshoorn & Trevor Pinch (eds.), *How Users Matter*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 67-80. (D)
Wyatt, S.
    (2014). Bringing users and non-users into being across methods and disciplines. Paper presented at the CHI conference, Toronto, Canada 2014. http://nonuse.jedbrubaker.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Wyatt_Toronto_April_2014.pdf
Turkle, S.
    (2011). *Alone Together. Why we expect more from technology and less from each other.* Philadelphia: Basic Books, pp. 1-20. (UCM reading room: chapter also accessible via http://books.google.com/books?id=_Dhf5xEZZD0C&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false)

Further Reading

Gehl, R.W. (2013). "'Why I left Facebook': Stubbornly Refusing to Not Exist even After Opting Out of Mark Zuckerberg's Social Graph." In: G. Lovink and M. Rasch (eds.), *Unlike Us Reader. Social Media Monopolies and their Alternatives* (pp. 220-238), Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.

Portwood-Stacer, L. (2012). Media Refusal and Conspicuous Non-Consumption: The Performative and Political Dimensions of Facebook Abstention. *New Media & Society*, 15(7), 1041-1057.

ASSIGNMENT 6

Gamification

Social media make parts of our networks visible by giving information about the number of connections (friends), activities within the networks (status updates, likes, shares). Numbers, ranks and scores are used and structure our online presence. Ranks and numbers and the ability to measure everything are ubiquitous in everyday life and try to motivate us and offer rewards. We know the relevance of ranks and rewards from playing games and their competitive elements have been adopted by social media but also by e-learning platforms, marketing and other fields. They provide the impression that we are the ones in control when we are playing, liking, sharing data and increasing our networks. We playfully experiment with identity, new learning strategies or try out strategies to sell products. This has been described as gamification, the use of game-design elements in non-gaming contexts. The aim is to drive game-like engagement and actions in non-game environments. Gamification suggests that there is no need for the strict distinction between work and play. Rather than separating the two, gamification paints the picture of a workspace where employees are highly motivated, costumers more satisfied and business flourishes. The transformation of our society into an "always-online mentality" pushed by the emergence of the smartphone has widened opportunities for this gamification. Today we can find this new phenomenon in applications and digital services across many fields, including fitness and health, education, science, and human resources. The Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project published a report on gamification on May 18, 2012. The following statement can be found in this report:

Playing beats working. So, if the enjoyment and challenge of playing can be embedded in learning, work, and commerce then gamification will take off. It will help if the personal rewards of the social side of game playing spread to other realms.

"We find our younger employees respond better to 'try to beat your high score,' than 'we need to increase profits.'"

Gamification seems to be in line with participatory culture as those who play do actively participate. Those who understand gamification as revolution of the market are extremely positive about it. Make the user play or approach a product playfully and thereby increase your market share and presence – and of course sell it.

Those who are critical show that the essence of gameplay is ignored; there for they fear exploitation of the user. Is gamification "the ultimate weapon of the market to aggregate and control user data"? (Dragona 2014b, 109). It does not come as a surprise that marketing experts try to enforce the positive image of gamification. After all, they are the ones making money of "selling the same bullshit in book,

workshop, platform, or API form over and over again, at limited incremental cost"

as video game designer and researcher Ian Bogost (2011) phrases it. Gamification might actually be beneficial in fields as education and health, imminent threats like

data collection and user exploitation might speak for a different approach towards gamification.

In a blogpost from August 18th 2015 Jesper Juul discusses a recent practice:

You probably heard about the New York Times exposé on work practices at Amazon, where a constant chatter of metrics monitor employees. Yes, this is gamification in practice. Many horror stories about a complete disrespect for the life part of the work/life equation. But there also is a simple design problem inside: *The Anytime Feedback Tool* apparently allows employees to comment on the performance of colleagues without their own identities being revealed to the target of the comment. Combine this with stack ranking, where every group has to rate someone in the group as lowest performing, with potential for being let go.

[…] It is likely much easier to back stab a colleague with the Anytime Feedback Tool, thus dropping them in the ranking, than it is to genuinely improve your own performance. It is plain game design: is there a degenerate strategy? Yes, there is. It *will* be used.

[…] The danger of metrics, and gamification, is that it insulates you from what is going on because you only receive the data you have chosen to receive. There is no substitute for listening to people.

Read the two articles below and have a look at the TEDx video. What is the discourse about in the video?

Literature

Deterding, S.
  (2014). Eudaimonic Design, or: Six Invitations to Rethink Gamification. In Fuchs, M., Fizek, S., Ruffino, P. & Schrape, N. (eds.). *Rethinking Gamification*. Lüneburg: meson press, pp. 305-331.

Dragona, D.
  (2014a). Counter-Gamification. In Fuchs, M., Fizek, S., Ruffino, P. & Schrape, N. (eds.). *Rethinking Gamification*. Lüneburg: meson press, pp. 227-250.

Chou, Y. [TEDx Talks].
  (2014, February 26). *Gamification to improve our world: Yu-kai Chou at TEDxLausanne.* [Video File]. Retrieved from
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v5Qjuegtiyc

Further Reading

Dragona, D.
  (2014b). Can someone pause the counting please? In Friesinger, G. & Herwig, J. (eds). *The Art of Reverse Engineering*. Bielefeld: transcript, pp. 97-114.

Fuchs, M., Fizek, S., Ruffino, P. & Schrape, N. (eds.).
  (2014). *Rethinking Gamification*. Lüneburg: meson press.

Juul, J.
  (2015). Amazon: Terrors of the gamified workplace.
  http://www.jesperjuul.net/ludologist/amazon-terrors-of-the-gamified-workplace

Deterding, S.
  (2011). Meaningful Play. Google Tech Talk.
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZGCPap7GkY

Literature on Digital Games

Juul, J.
  (2016). *Sailing the endless river of games. The case for Historical Design Patterns*. 1st International Joint Conference of DiGRA and FDG 2016. Dundee.
  https://www.jesperjuul.net/text/endlessriverofgames/

Karhulati, V.
  (2015). Defining the Videogame. *Gamestudies* 15.2.
  http://gamestudies.org/1502/articles/karhulahti

ASSIGNMENT 7

The quantified Self

Personal devices connected to the internet have offered new possibilities for care at distance and self-tracking and monitoring our bodies and activities. With the help of apps and mobile sensors, users can register different aspects of their life like their sleep, weight, steps, and mood. This is for example the case in the Netherlands. In a letter ("*kamerbrief*") from July 2nd 2014 from the Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport to the House of Representatives, the government is urged to take an active role in stimulating these transformations and to promote the application of technological innovations in healthcare. Self-tracking is seen as an important pillar in this development. The Ministry promotes more self-measurements, self-tracking and tele-monitoring under patients, with the aim of stimulating "independence, self-determination and self-care" (p.2). The goal of self-tracking technologies is to make body management easier and to control the body through constant monitoring (Abend & Fuchs, 2016). This is done by understanding the body as an entity that can be represented numerically. Numbers that then can be saved, interpreted and transmitted (p.7). So-called "self-tracking" apps are not only popular with consumers but also with governments and institutions in Europe that support and try to integrate self-tracking in national healthcare (Sharon, 2016). In a society in which we are moving towards personalized healthcare in which the use of self-tracking technologies is stimulated in the light of personal responsibility and economic efficacy, it is important to keep an eye on the possible effects of these products.

Find an example in groups of 2-3 that quantifies the self. This can be a social media platform, an app or a wearable (smart fashion). Discuss how you (or someone you know) use it. What is the effect? Report back to the group afterwards. For next week investigate an example more in depth in relation to the texts to prepare.

Learning goals:

1. What do we know about the development of self-tracking and the quantified self?

2. Describe the different fields in which self-tracking techniques are used. Can you relate those techniques to topics discussed in previous assignment?

3. What is the effect of self-tracking techniques on the subject? What are the ethical questions that arise?

Literature

Abend, P. & Fuchs, M.
   (2016). Introduction. *Digital Culture and Society: Quantified Selves and Statistical Bodies* 2.1, 5-21. (pages 16-18 introducing the other papers of the journal are only relevant for those who want to write a final paper on this topic)

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ASSIGNMENT 8

Big Data and Privacy

With more and more people using the internet and, often providing a lot of personal information on it, one point of concern that has risen is the privacy and safety of peoples' data online. This provision of personal information on online social networks that are in essence visible to everyone can have serious consequences for a user if she is trying to find a job, apply to universities, etc. While it is illegal in most countries to ask, for example, about disabilities, affiliations with social organizations, and family status, certain questions during a job interview, social media profiles as legal grey areas are used as additional sources for decision making by most recruiters (Davison et al., 2011, p.158).
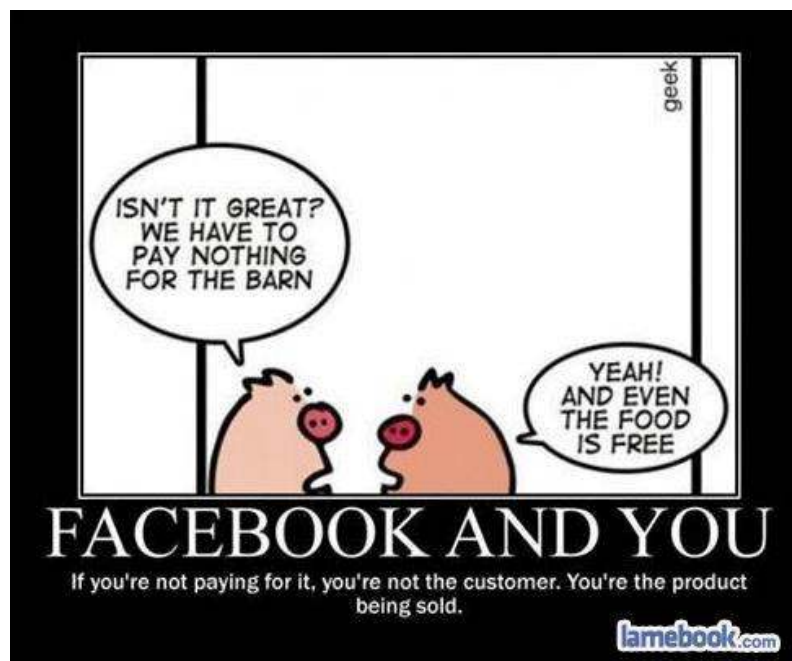
Whenever a new medium is introduced into society it is important that those interacting with it learn how to use it. While more and more people are using 'new' technologies such as social media and participate in online social networks, many are either not aware of what they provide to whom and which unintended consequences this might have, or they simply don't care. Users and their data have turned into social media products themselves. The notion of big data is often used in order to refer to the data which are generated by analysing users' behaviour online. Their messages, clicks on links, likes, re-tweets, search queries, friend requests: all these activities from users worldwide can be effectively turned into large datasets which allow companies to analyse and understand potential customers.

Although the public awareness of privacy issues rose significantly with the 'NSA files' in 2013 (http://www.theguardian.com/world/the-nsa-files), there still seems to be a difference in peoples' attitude and behavior in regard to the information they share and the willingness of people to careful study and apply the necessary information to use those applications carefully.

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disruptions

ASSIGNMENT 9

Hacking

The Internet may serve traditional social bonds and communities. This is of course true when we investigate the use of the Internet by established political parties, who do exist offline and use the internet as an additional technology. However, there are communities online that depend on the technology, make use of digital data, online networks and the specific characteristics of digital media. These often include digital natives who are growing up with an understanding that sharing (digital) data is essential of how friendships and communities are being built and maintained. The Internet has facilitated and allowed for communities to create, configure and control content. Hacking and Free and Open Source Software communities are examples to investigate user practices, ask about their political agenda and research how knowledge is built and shared. Those communities are strongly technology-mediated and sharing is the basic principle of their foundation. Ethical and social norms of sharing and an extensive culture of open access to archives enable these communities to collaborate and experience collective reflection. Activities and practices (creating code, making tutorials and modifying codes and objects) connect their members. While hacking often is described as "breaking into computers without permission", members of hacking communities highlight that hacking refers to citizens' creative engagement with technologies. Opposing the reduction of hacking to illegal activities, they described hacking as exploration of technological possibilities and boundaries in unforeseen, innovative ways.

Are hackers the technological elites somewhere situated between the experts and forerunners for innovation? Or as in the cases of Assange and Snowden maybe even the Robin Hoods of our digital era? We observe a new buzzword "hacking" that is used in many domains nowadays and seems to have left the unacceptable realm of illegal practices and entered the realm of what is socially acceptable as the hackathon organized by Tate Modern, London, in June 2014 shows:
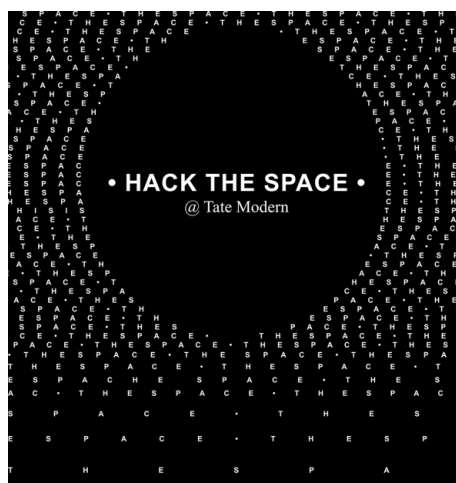
Within the digital elites hacking always was acceptable as the hacker ethics of the MIT in Boston show. Following MITs hacker ethics, hacking is understood as creative, innovative practice, asks for and offers open access to data and is understood as communal production supported by digital media. There are other voices as well of those who understand those practices mainly as destructive and label them as illegal.

For our next meeting prepare a debate on hacking: one group focusing on the innovative, productive potential of hacking (pro) and a second one focusing on its destructive potential (con). Do not only read the academic literature but also have a look at the discourses around hacking as presented in different YouTube videos.

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as preparation for the debate check out Youtube videos on hacking and their comment sections.

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ASSIGNMENT 10

Digital Literature and Art

Nowadays we find a huge range of genres of digital literature making use of our networked possibilities and the options to not only use text but also integrate images, sound and video into a work of literature. Genres include hyperfiction, interactive fiction including game elements, hybrid forms including digital technology and real spaces, and CAVE productions, just to mention a few. The borderline between digital literature and art is not sharp as both forms include multimedial elements, play with language, images and sound.

While the reader's or spectator's position of traditional literature and art was merely defined by the action of reading/viewing and the following act of interpretation, digital literature and art relies on its interactive character. The urge to interpret is substituted by the need to interact. One example is the *Interactive Plant Growing* by Laurent Mignonneau and Christa Sommerer (1993):

This installation asks a user to touch plants in the exhibition room. The touch leads to an electric impulse which is transported to the plant's root. Close to the root sensors have been placed, which react to the impulse and create a visual image on a screen. The image shows the plant growing – the impulse leads to a virtual result while the real plant seems to be "untouched" by it. This installation plays with the distinction between the real and the virtual but also with the possible interaction between nature, human and machine. As most of you probably have not come across (many) examples of digital literature or digital art team up with 2-3 other students in your class and have a look at one of the following examples:

Digital literature:
1. Michael Joyce, Twelve Blue http://www.eastgate.com/TwelveBlue/
2. Mark America, Grammatron http://www.grammatron.com/index2.html
3. Robert Kendall, Clues http://www.wordcircuits.com/clues/

Digital Art:
1. Shinya Takaoka, Aura https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bdf-j6-u5fQ
2. Olia Lialina, Agatha Appears https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8SZJ3haDT1k
3. Ai Weiwei & Olalfur Eliasson, Draw on the Moon
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFqpogR-ki8

Report back next meeting on the example you have looked at and take the literature
into consideration.

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