

After the Internet

Module Outline

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ABOUT

In 2015, Google CEO Eric Schmidt promises that “the Internet will disappear” into our environments, while artist Hito Steyerl—two years prior—has already suggested that the Internet died. Today, how can the Internet be simultaneously everywhere and dead? What exactly is the Internet—and what has it become? This module addresses these simple yet vastly complex questions through the frame of “after the Internet,” meaning both *after* the historical emergence and global reach of the Internet and digital networks but also what technical forms of communication come *after* the Internet’s supposed death. Throughout the term, we will articulate what occurs “after the Internet” in relation to life, technology, politics, activism, aesthetics, art, and critical theory. Structured into four sections, the module commences with a consideration of 1) the histories, material infrastructures, and political impacts of networks and the Internet, followed by 2) the current trend to theorize our contemporary medial present as post-Internet, post-digital, and post-media; 3) critical frustrations and disavowals of the Internet and the network form; and 4) a series of experimental approaches to theorizing and imagining what technologies and techniques come “after the Internet.” We will read works spanning media theory, political philosophy, aesthetic theory, feminist and queer theory, journalism, and artists’ writings, as well as consider artwork by Louis Henderson, Laurel Ptak, micha cárdenas, Critical Art Ensemble, Jennifer Chan, jodi.org, among others.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this module should be able to:

- demonstrate an excellent understanding of theorizations of the Internet and networks—spanning critical theory, media theory, aesthetic theory, feminist and queer theory, political philosophy, journalism, and artists’ writings
- produce original ideas in an interdisciplinary context
- apply your own evaluative and interpretative skills through close reading, textual and visual analysis, and group presentations
- obtain a proficient ability to practice research, individually and with others, in critical and creative ways

ASSESSMENT

Formative

1 x presentation (allocated in the first week of term)

Summative

1 x 3000 word essay

At the end of this document, you will find detailed information on assessment requirements.

GENERAL

Every student is expected to participate in every class. Class discussion and activities are an essential part of this module. It is important that you come to class every day having read the required material and prepared to discuss it.

While students are permitted to use laptops and tablets for the purposes of note taking, computer note-taking should not detract from your active vocal and visual participation in this class. I ask that you respect this regulation, or laptops and tablets will be banned from the classroom.

Students in this class are required to check their Goldsmiths email account at least once a day, in case there are any last-minute announcements or disruptions.

2 x 15 minute tutorials are available for each student during my office hours (RHB 232, Tuesdays from 1:00pm - 3:00pm). Please contact me to schedule a tutorial at z.blas@gold.ac.uk.

I reserve the right to revise the module outline throughout the term, based on class discussions and your interest in the texts.

SCHEDULE

10/1 “Networking the World”: Globalization and Assemblage

Manual Castells, “An Introduction to the Information Age,” *City* (2007), pp. 6 - 16 [reader]
 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, “Rhizome,” *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1987), pp. 3 - 25

Art:

Mark Lombardi, *Global Networks* exhibition, curated by Robert Hobbs (1998 - 2005),
<http://curatorsintl.org/exhibitions/mark-lombardi-global-networks>

Suggested:

Armand Mattelart, *Networking the World, 1794 - 2000* (2000), excerpts: Ch. 1: “Networks of Universalization” pp. 1 - 22, Ch. 6: “Globalization: The Networks of the Postnational Economy” pp. 75 - 96
 Bruno Latour, “Defining at last what a network is,” *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (2005), pp. 128 - 133
 Manual Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (2010, 2nd edition)
 Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (2006)
 Richard Barbrook and Andy Cameron, “The Californian Ideology” (1995)

17/1 Protocol

Alexander R. Galloway, *Protocol, or How Control Exists After Decentralization* (2004), excerpts: “Introduction” pp. 2 - 27, “Physical Media” pp. 28 - 53, “Internet Art” pp. 208 - 239 [reader]

Art:

Electronic Superhighway, curated by Omar Kholeif, Whitechapel Gallery (2016),
<http://www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/electronicsuperhighway/>
 jodi.org, various works, <http://www.jodi.org/>
 MTAA, “Simple Net Art Diagram” (1997),
http://www.mtaa.net/mtaarr/off-line_art/snad.html

Suggested:

Nicole Starosielski, “Introduction: Against Flow,” *The Undersea Network* (2015), pp. 1 - 25
 Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker, “Part 1: Nodes,” *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks* (2007), pp. 23 - 102
 Josephine Bosma, *Nettitudes: Let's Talk Net Art* (2011)

24/1 Infrastructure Space

Keller Easterling, *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space* (2014), excerpts:
 "Introduction" pp. 11 - 23 [reader], Ch. 1: "Zone" pp. 25 - 69 [reader], Ch. 3:
 "Broadband" pp. 95 - 136, Ch. 6: "Extrastatecraft" pp. 211 - 238

Art:

Josh On, *They Rule* (2001 - 2011), <http://www.theyrule.net/>

Suggested:

Tiziana Terranova, *Network Culture: Politics for the Information Age* (2004), excerpts:
 "Network Dynamics" pp. 39 - 72, "Communication Biopower" pp. 131 - 157

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (2000), excerpts: "Network Power: U.S. Sovereignty and the New Empire" pp. 160 - 182, "Network Production" pp. 294 - 297

Geert Lovink, "Introduction: Capturing Web 2.0 Before Its Disappearance," *Networks without a Cause: A Critique of Social Media* (2011), pp. 1 - 23

Tiqqun, "The Cybernetic Hypothesis," *Tiqqun 2* (2001)

Keller Easterling, "An Internet of Things," *e-flux* (2012),
<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/an-internet-of-things/>

31/1 Network Aesthetics

Alexander R. Galloway, "Are Some Things Unrepresentable?" *The Interface Effect* (2012), pp. 78 - 100 [reader]

Patrick Jagoda, "Introduction: Network Aesthetics," *Network Aesthetics* (2015), pp. 1 - 37 [reader]

Suggested:

Anna Munster, *An Aesthesis of Networks: Conjunctive Experience in Art and Technology* (2013), excerpts: "Introduction: Prelude to the Movements of Networks" pp. 1 - 18, Ch. 1: "Networked Diagrammatism: From Map and Model to the Internet as Mechanogram" pp. 19 - 44

Brian Holmes, "Network Maps, Energy Diagrams," *Escape the Overcode: Activist Art in the Control Society* (2007),

<https://brianholmes.wordpress.com/2007/04/27/network-maps-energy-diagrams/>

Jacques Rancière, "Are Some Things Unrepresentable?" *The Future of the Image* (2007), pp. 109 - 138

7/2 "Going Postal": Post-Internet, Post-Digital, Post-Media

Karen Archey and Robin Peckham, "Essay," *Art Post-Internet: Information / Data* (2014), pp. 8 - 24, <http://post-inter.net/>

Omar Kholeif, ed., *You Are Here: Art After the Internet* (2013), excerpts: Omar Kholeif, "Preamble" pp. 10 - 13; Michael Connor, "Post-Internet: What It Is and What It Was" pp. 56 - 65

Florian Cramer, "What is 'Post-Digital'?" *APRJA* (2014), <http://www.aprja.net/?p=1318>

Art:

Jennifer Chan, various works, <http://jennifer-chan.com/>

Katja Novitskova, *Post Internet Survival Guide* (2010),
<http://katjanovi.net/postinternetsurvivalguide.html>

Artie Vierkant, various works, <http://artievierkant.com/>

Petra Cortwright, various works, <http://www.petracortright.com/>
 Yuri Pattison, *user space*, Chisenhale Gallery (2016),
<http://www.chisenhale.org.uk/archive/exhibitions/index.php?id=179>
 Cécile B. Evans, *Hyperlinks or It Didn't Happen* (2014),
<http://cecilebevans.com/index.php/hyperlinks-or-it-didnt-happen/>

Suggested:

Clemens Apprich, Josephine Berry Slater, Anthony Iles, and Oliver Lerone Schultz, eds.,
Provocative Alloys: A Post-Media Anthology (2013), excerpts: Gary Genosko,
 "The Promise of Post-Media" pp. 14 - 25; Félix Guattari, "Towards a Post-Media
 Era" pp. 26 - 27
Private Settings exhibition, curated by Natalia Sielewicz, MoMA Warsaw (2014),
<http://artmuseum.pl/en/wystawy/ustawienia-prywatnosci>
 Domenico Quaranta, *Media, New Media, Postmedia* (2010)

14/2 Reading Week

21/2 "We're Tired of Rhizomes": Beyond the Internet and Networks

Hito Steyerl, "Too Much World: Is the Internet Dead?" *e-flux* (2013),
<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/too-much-world-is-the-internet-dead/>
 Ulises Ali Mejias, "The Outside of Networks as a Method for Acting in the World," *Off the
 Network: Disrupting the Digital World* (2013), pp. 153 - 162 [reader]
 Julieta Aranda, Brian Kuan Wood, and Anton Vidokle, "Introduction," *The Internet Does Not
 Exist / e-flux journal* (2015), pp. 5 - 9

Art:

Louis Henderson, *All That Is Solid* (2014)

Suggested:

Evgeny Morozov, "The Nonsense of 'the Internet' —and How to Stop It," *To Save
 Everything, Click Here: The Folly of Technological Solutionism* (2014), pp. 17 - 62
 Evgeny Morozov, *The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom* (2011)
 Alexander R. Galloway and David Berry, "A Network is a Network is a Network:
 Reflections on the Computational and the Societies of Control," *Theory, Culture,
 & Society* (2015), pp. 1 - 22
 Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, "Imagined Networks, Affective Connections" (2013),
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KnqZBlv_Zn4
 Tim Dean, "Cruising as a Way of Life," *Unlimited Intimacy: Reflections on the Subculture
 of Barebacking* (2009), pp. 176 - 212

28/2 Antiweb 1: Postcapitalist Politics

Alexander R. Galloway and Eugene Thacker, "Prolegomenon: 'We're Tired of Trees,'" *The Exploit: A Theory of Networks* (2007), pp. 22 (last paragraph only) [reader]

J. K. Gibson-Graham, "Strategies," *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy* (1996), pp. 1 - 23 [reader]

Suggested:

J. K. Gibson-Graham, *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy* (1996), excerpts: Ch. 11: "Waiting for the Revolution . . ." pp. 251 - 265

J. K. Gibson-Graham, "Introduction: A Politics of Economic Possibility," *A Postcapitalist Politics* (2006), pp. xix - xxxvii

7/3 Antiweb 2: Contra-

Paul B. Preciado, "The Contra-Sexual Manifesto," *Total Art Journal* (2011), <http://totalartjournal.com/archives/1402/the-contra-sexual-manifesto/>

Zach Blas, "Contra-Internet Aesthetics," *You Are Here: Art After the Internet* (2013), pp. 84 - 95

Zach Blas, "Contra-Internet," *e-flux* (2016), <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/contra-internet/>

Art:

Zach Blas, *Contra-Internet* (2014 - present), <http://www.zachblas.info/projects/contra-internet/>

14/3 Antiweb 3: Utopianism

José Esteban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (2009), excerpts: "Introduction: Feeling Utopia" pp. 1 - 18 [reader], Ch. 1: "Queerness as Horizon: Utopian Hermeneutics in the Face of Gay Pragmatism" pp. 19 - 32

Critical Art Ensemble, "Utopian Plagiarism, Hypertextuality, and Electronic Cultural Production," *The Electronic Disturbance* (1994), pp. 83 - 109 [reader]

Art:

Laurel Ptak, *Wages for Facebook* (2014), <http://wagesforfacebook.com/>
Wu Tsang, *A Day in the Life of Bliss* (2014)

Suggested:

Silvia Federici, "Wages against Housework" (1975)

21/3 Antiweb 4: Militancy and Organization (Cryptography, Dark Nets, and Mesh Networks)

Colectivo Situaciones, "On the Researcher-Militant," *eipcp* (2003), <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0406/colectivosituaciones/en>

Micha Cárdenas, "Local Autonomy Networks: Post-Digital Networks, Post-Corporate Communications," *Media-N* (2013), <http://median.newmediacaucus.org/caa-conference-edition-2013/local-autonomy-networks-post-digital-networks-post-corporate-communications/>

Elise Hu, "How Hong Kong Protestors Are Connecting, Without Cell or Wi-Fi Networks," *NPR* (2014), <http://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2014/09/29/352476454/how-hong-kong-protesters-are-connecting-without-cell-or-wi-fi-networks>

Dan Phiffer, "Occupy.here: A tiny, self-contained darknet," *Rhizome* (2013), <http://rhizome.org/editorial/2013/oct/1/tiny-self-contained-darknet/>

Orit Gat, "Data Roaming," *Frieze* (2016), <https://frieze.com/article/data-roaming>

Art:

Micha Cárdenas, *Local Autonomy Networks* (2012 - present), <http://autonets.org/>
 Deep Lab, various works, <http://www.deeplab.net/#home>

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

1 x presentation

All students will co-facilitate a 25 - 30 minute presentation on a selected required reading, highlighting core arguments and themes. At the start of the term, students will have an opportunity to choose the week they are most interested in facilitating. A presentation includes a critical overview of 1 assigned reading, as well as fostering class discussion. Please notify Zach 1 week prior to your presentation what text you will be focusing on. To contextualize the text presented, you are encouraged to integrate artwork listed on the module outline, current events, and/or historical circumstances. In addition, it is advisable to prepare a list of discussion points for engaging the class. On the day of your presentation, bring a PowerPoint, Keynote, or PDF file on a thumb drive, or make other arrangements with Zach in advance.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

1 x 3000 word essay

At the module's end, you will submit a 3000 word essay on a topic related to the theme of "After the Internet." While there are no set questions or prompts, you must substantially engage with material studied in the module. You are free to write a creative or scholarly essay. All essays, however, must have a bibliography and references, which are not included in the word count.

Deadline: Your essay must be received by the official Goldsmiths summative deadline. More information will be provided during the term.

Submission details: Upload a digital copy of your essay at the appropriate summative submission website, as well as submit a printed copy on due date. The deadline is non-negotiable.