



University of Technology, Sydney

**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Department of Media Arts, Communication & Information**

50158

NETCULTURES & PRACTICES

Semester 1, 2001

Thursdays, 6pm-9pm

Prerequisites: Undergraduates: MAP 1, MAP 2
Postgraduates: New Media

Credit points: 8

Subject Coordinator:

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION

In this unit, students engage with the diversity of cultures and practices participating within Internet spaces. Students will be exposed to online communities, groups and individuals in the environments of cyberspace and protocols of hypertext. Issues of audience, design, the production process and technical considerations also will be explored through production exercises and a web site project. The unit combines theory and practice, and themes for informed debate will be introduced in each class.

With an emphasis on meaningful interrogation and activism, students will be encouraged to search between the bookmarks and hack the browser battles. Terminology and language will be explored in an attempt to understand and clarify the ever-increasing 'newness' that pervades the contemporary internet revolution. In the progression of this unit students will be encouraged to contribute and discuss informative weekly press (IT SMH, Guardian, RealTime, Icon, etc) and address issues of individual or group interest.

Techniques for incorporating animated and interactive material into web sites will be covered, and issues surrounding the delivery of video and sound on the web will be discussed. Workshops and tutorials will cover the technical challenges of internet delivery, allowing students to produce a small web site project through the course of the unit. Students will familiarise themselves with programs commonly used as tools in web content production, including HTML, Dreamweaver, Photoshop, GifBuilder, Flash, QuickTime, MediaCleaner Pro and Fetch.

OBJECTIVES

1. Extend conceptual skills through investigating the various cultures and communities making use of the Internet.
2. Develop website production skills involving HTML, Flash and Dreamweaver
3. Extend technical and conceptual skills in developing new media projects through producing a prototype website
4. Have an overview of technical issues surrounding the delivery of sound and video over the Internet

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Lectures, tutorials, workshops, discussions, in-class and out of class exercises, concept development, project synopsis presentations, project development.

PROGRAM

Note: This outline may be subject to change based on the availability of guest lecturers or other factors. Also note that the first 15 minutes of class may be used by students to demonstrate interesting works or discuss relevant issues with the rest of the class.

Sem Week	Week commencing	Topic
1	5 March	Subject Introduction/Overview Introduction to course – objectives, week by week outline, technical support and presentation of themes to be addressed in the first five weeks of class. Why the Web What's inNet for me? Discussion of effectiveness, both conceptually and technically, and appropriateness of the Net as a communication tool. A look at the history of

Sem Week	Week commencing	Topic
		both Internet and World Wide Web. Students to begin thinking about their own projects. Guidelines for student project.
2	12 March	<p>Critical Themes 1/2:-Young, Wired and Dangerous/ Napster and the battle over Net Music. Step aside, teenies own the web. A look at the Hi-Tech revolution sweeping youth culture. AND Napster- Sound & Music culture online.</p> <p>Critical Surfing. Discuss/ review websites and issues including Napster (if it's still there), mobile internet revolution, Net education, ZoneLab, ninjatune.net, DNA Lounge, MusicMatch and a host of other cool sites.</p> <p>Web Technical Production 1: Introduction to HTML. Understanding how it works. Hierarchy, layout, screen architecture, and navigation in relation to content. Introduction to BBedit. and Simpletext. Basic Dreamweaver exercises – defining (naming) a site, file structure, controlling type and images, linking pages and previewing in a browser.</p>
3	19 March	<p>Critical Themes 3/4:-Caught in the web of a Candid Camera / Mating Point Behind the scenes of online webcam culture. AND online human interaction. Discovering the moo for you.</p> <p>Critical Surfing. Discuss/review websites and issues including multi user domains (muds), webcam-tv, online hating, dating, mating and leaving sites.</p> <p>Web Technical Production 2: Content design/Navigation & Presentation Layout. Producing basic images for the web using Photoshop Text presentation, Slide shows, Image quality, RGB Hex Colour Chart</p>
4	26 March	<p>Critical Themes 5/6:- The Weird Wide Web – world wide wackos. Websites that Suck! Everything to avoid about going online</p> <p>Critical Surfing. Discuss/review websites and issues including Cranks, UFO Religious movements, Mind control and hate sites.</p> <p>Web Technical Production 3: Browser and platform issues, bandwidth, screen resolution and colour depth. Demonstrate kinds of media which can be embedded in a site – video, animation, sound. Basic animation for the web using Adobe Premiere, and Gifbuilder. Preparing media for the web.</p>
5	2 April	<p>Critical Themes 7/8:- Hackers or Crackers/ Draconian Net Censorship Haekers/crackers-Good guys or bad? What they get up to and how AND Who can do what and why</p> <p>Critical Surfing. Discuss/ review websites and issues including software piracy, PGP encryption, legal and copyright issues, Microsoft & the Internet, AOL</p> <p>Web Technical Production 4: Introduction to Flash. A survey of Flash content on various sites. When and how to use it. Entry pages, interactivity and adding functionality for low and high-end users. When to flash! Quick tour of the program</p>
6	9 April	<p>Critical Theme 9:- Art on the Net - From the Virtual exhibition space to high end multimedia. Where is it, What does it do and How does it work.</p> <p>Critical Surfing. Discuss/ review websites and issues including artist sites, ANAT, Banff, ISEA and Ars Electronica sites</p> <p>Web Technical Production 5: Dual sites. HTML and Flash alternatives. Step by step Flash animation exercise- (to be submitted in week 8)</p>

Sem Week	Week commencing	Topic
	16 April	Vice-Chancellor's Week - No classes
7	23 April	Faculty Non-Teaching Week - No classes
8	30 April	Student presentation & submission of synopsis for site. Students describe their planned website project to the class and hand in synopsis. ALSO Students to submit completed Flash exercise Web Technical Production 6: Introduction to Streaming technologies such as QuickTime and mp3 Compression techniques using MediaCleaner Pro and QuickTime.
9	7 May	Guest lecture- to be confirmed ALSO Web Technical Production 7: Audio Online. When and how to use it. Basic Audio production and preparation using SoundEdit 16, Pro Tools, QuickTime and mp3. In class production.
10	14 May	Critical Theme 10:- GPRS – Australians join the mobile internet revolution. Australia online. How we fare as a nation. A survey of Aussie usability, understanding and contribution to the Net. Web Technical Production 6: Adding Functionality to a site. Intermediate Dreamweaver –image maps, rollovers, lists, forms, email. In class production.
11	21 May	Critical Theme 11:- Microsoft needs the Internet but does the Internet need Microsoft? Everything out there from Open Source LINUX to XP and Mac OS 10. Web Technical Production 7: FTP (file transfer protocol) Uploading files to a remote or host server using Fetch or Anarchie. In class production
12	28 May	Systems Testing and Debugging on and off-line. Cross platform functionality. In Class production In-class Production. Students to work on projects during class
13	4 June	Projects DUE: to be demonstrated in classroom. Students demonstrate, discuss and critique individual projects.
14	11 June	(Note: 11 June Queen's Birthday Public Holiday) Revisions, debugging, refinements, user testing and feedback. Students will have the opportunity to use and give feedback on each other's work in lab. Final submission and individual critique with Damian

ASSESSMENT

There are 3 assessment projects for this subject:-

1. FLASH EXERCISE (due week 8)

A basic Flash exercise will be handed out in week 6- to be completed and submitted by week 8

2. PROJECT SYNOPSIS (due week 8)

comprising:-

a . A 250 word synopsis outlining what you are planning to develop within this unit for your website project, which includes a clear description of the underlying motivation of the piece, the intended user experience, and the intended target audience

b. A navigational diagram or flowchart which clearly demonstrates the navigational pathways of the project.

3. WEB PROJECT (due week 13)

Working individually (unless otherwise approved by lecturer) students are to develop a small website which engages in some way with the critical theme(s) raised and investigated by the unit. Websites will be assessed equally in terms of production/technical skills and engagement with cultural/critical themes.

Project Guidelines:

1. Projects must be compact, creative, original and interactive, rather than linear.
2. Projects must engage with one or more themes introduced in the course outline or a suggested theme approved by the academic.
3. Students should aim for the projects to be as bug-free as possible within the confines of the unit. This does not mean placing pressure on production support staff - you should be responsible for testing and revising your work on an ongoing basis.
4. The project should be tested across both major browsers (Internet Explorer and Netscape 4.0 and higher) as well as on Mac and PC platforms – in an ideal world it will be compatible with both.
5. Projects may only use Flash, Shockwave, mp3 and Quicktime plugins. However, you are not required to include video or animation.
6. Students will be encouraged to create a Flash entry to their site although this is not mandatory.
7. Projects must attempt to use material that is copyright free or cleared and is not defamatory.

4. GRADUATE PROJECT (due week 13)

Graduate students only:

Graduate students are required to complete an additional piece of work. This can take one of two forms:-

- a. Write a 1,500 word critique of a new media project (CD-Rom or Website). You should consider issues of usability, navigation, inventiveness, theoretical or technical complexity, etc.

OR

- b. Be responsible for developing a larger project, or take on a proportionally larger role within a group project.

Important Note:- Students developing websites must take responsibility to attempt to test and debug projects. It is not the responsibility of the lecturer or production support person to assist students to deliver bug free versions of their website which work smoothly on both platforms. All care will be taken, and assistance given, but projects are the responsibility of students, not staff.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Assessment is based on the successful completion of all of the assessment items, as well as attendance and involvement in lectures and tutorials and completion of class exercises. Students who miss more than two classes may fail. Medical certificates should be produced to explain absences. Any student who does not make an equal contribution to a group project may also fail. Should any student feel that they will be unable to complete any part of the assessment, it is their responsibility to contact the lecturer..

EXPECTATIONS ABOUT ASSESSMENT TASKS

- Students will be assigned limited server space for the storage of selected development materials. However, you will also need to save files to ZIP. Please get used to labelling, and carrying around multiple ZIPs!!
- Students must submit either a Zip disk of their final website OR provide a working URL OR indicate clearly where on the server the project is stored.
- All student work will be erased from the server several weeks after the end of semester. Posters on level 3 will advise the date. It is students' responsibility to ensure that projects have been backed up.

FEEDBACK ON ASSESSMENT PROJECTS

Project Synopsis: Students will receive written feedback on their project synopsis in week 9

Website project: Students will receive verbal feedback both from staff as well as from their peers-other students in the class. Initial feedback will occur in week 13. Week 14 is to be used to revise and tweak projects accordingly. Importantly, user testing and further feedback will also occur in Week 14 as students and staff use the projects in the lab.

1,500 word critique: (Graduate students only) Written feedback within 2 weeks of submission.

GRADES

This is an ungraded subject. Active involvement in the subject and a satisfactory performance in all assessment items is required to pass the subject.

STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Assignments provide an opportunity for you to demonstrate your understanding of the content being covered and your achievement of the subject objectives. Your assignments should also demonstrate your personal integrity and respect for scholarship. This means:

5. Acknowledging the sources of your ideas from a range of resources including the Internet
6. Using quotation marks to indicate direct quotes from another work
7. Avoiding excessive paraphrasing even when acknowledging a source

You should familiarise yourself with the University policy on good academic practice. There are a number of acceptable citation methods. A useful site that outlines referencing and citation conventions may be found at <http://www.ddce.cqu.edu.au/refandcitation/home.htm>. If in doubt ask your lecturer as plagiarism is considered an act of academic misconduct for which penalties may be imposed.

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

If you have a disability or ongoing medical condition, you should contact an Academic Liaison Officer (ALO) at the beginning of your course to discuss your requirements for Alternative Assessment. ALO contact details are on the Faculty website. Each semester you should let your Academic Liaison Officer know the subjects in which you are enrolled.

You are encouraged to see the Special Needs Service in the Student Services Unit if you would like a confidential discussion of your circumstances. The Special Needs Service can advise you of the university's services for people with disabilities and the options available for learning and assessment assistance. Phone 9514.1177. An example of an appropriate Alternative Assessment is an oral examination instead of a test or short essay if you are unable to write because of injuries. Please note that Academic Liaison Officers are also the contacts if you need assistance because you have primary care for young children or someone who is chronically ill.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

You may apply for Special Consideration if, because of illness or other circumstances beyond your control (not work related), you have difficulty in completing assessment items or attendance requirements. You must submit a Request for Special Consideration before the assessment item is due.

ASSISTANCE WITH LEARNING

You should not hesitate to ask your lecturer or subject coordinator for help throughout the semester. Regular consultation times will be advised in the first class. Appointments can also be made by arrangement. You will be provided with comments and suggestions on your assessment tasks throughout the semester.

The UTS:BELL site (www.bell.uts.edu.au) provides an extensive and continually updated range of resources, classes and tutorials to enhance your skills as a learner.

If you need help with assessment preparation (writing, class participation and study skills) contact the ELSSA Centre, Level 18, Tower Building (ph 9514.2327). If personal problems are affecting your university work you should seek assistance from Student Services, Level 6, Building 2 (ph 9514.1171).

TEXTS AND REFERENCES

There will be a number of online references for you to follow. These will be distributed in class on the appropriate day. There will also be a web based resource for class materials and other interesting links. The address for this will be announced in Week 2.

Additional hard copy references include

- M. Golding & D. White, *Web Designer Guide to Colour*, Hayden, 1997
- D. Dinucci, M. Giudice & L. Stiles, *Elements of Web Design*, Peachpit, 1997
- S. Gassaway, G.Davis, C. Gregory. *Designing Multimedia Websites*, Hayden, 1996
- N. Brown et al, *Designing Web Animation*, New Riders, 1996
- L. Weinman, *Deconstructing Web Graphics*, New Riders, 1996
- L. Weinman, *Designing Web Graphics*, New Riders, 1996
- L. Weinman, *Coloring Web Graphics*, New Riders,
- D. Siegel, *Creating Killer Web Sites*, Hayden, 1996

1. Recommended texts:-

Korolenko, M (1997) *Writing for Multimedia: a guide and sourcebook for the digital writer*, Belmont: Integrated Media Group

- Kristof, R. (1995) *Interactivity by Design: creating and communicating with new media*, Mountain View: Adobe (UTS Library)
- Murray, J. (1998) *Hamlet on the Holodeck: the future of narrative in cyberspace* Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Stansberry, D. (1998) *Labyrinths: the art of interactive writing and design*, Belmont: Integrated Media Group

2. Other references available in library

Multimedia texts / instructional / how to develop mm

- Azarmsa, R. (1996) *Multimedia: interactive video production*, Belmont: Integrated Media Group.
- Blattner, M. ed (1992) *Multimedia Interface Design*, Reading: Addison-Wesley.
- Boyle, T (1997) *Design for Multimedia Learning*, New York: Prentice Hall.
- Brennan, G. (1995) *Screen Culture in the Digital Age: multimedia filmmakers, artists and the community*, Melbourne: Open Channel.
- Cotton, B. (1993) *Understanding Hypermedia: from multimedia to virtual reality Interface Design*, London: Phaidon.
- England, E. (1996) *Managing Multimedia*, Harlow: Addison-Wesley.
- (1996) *Ex Machina: Japanese and British Digital Interactive Art*, Newcastle Upon Tyne: Zone Gallery
- Feldman, T. (1997) *An Introduction to Digital Media*, London, NY: Routledge.
- Gardner, P. (1996) *Multimedia: a user's guide to legal issues*, NP: Blueprint.
- Garrand, T (1997) *Writing for Multimedia*, Boston: Focal Press.
- Goldberg, R. (1996) *Multimedia Producer's Bible*, Foster City: IDG Books.
- Josephson, H (1997) *Careers in Multimedia: roles and resources*, Belmont: Integrated Media Group.
- Korolenko, M (1997) *Writing for Multimedia: a guide and sourcebook for the digital writer*, Belmont: Integrated Media Group.
- Kristof, R. (1995) *Interactivity by Design: creating and communicating with new media*, Mountain View: Adobe.
- Laurel, B. (1990) *The Art of Human-Computer Interface Design*, Menlo Park: Addison-Wesley.
- Laurel, B. (1993) *Computers As Theatre*, Menlo Park: Addison-Wesley.
- Lopuck, L. (1996) *Designing Multimedia: a visual guide to multimedia and online graphic design*, Berkeley: Peachpit Press.
- Mok, c. ed (1996) *Graphis New Media: a compilation of new media* New York : Graphis US.
- (1998) *Multi-media: the complete guide*, London: Dorling Kindersley.
- (1995) *The Multimedia Text*, London: Academy Editions.
- Murray, J. (1998) *Hamlet on the Holodeck: the future of narrative in cyberspace* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Penny, S. ed. (1995) *Critical Issues in Electronic Media* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Phillips, R (1997) *The Developers Handbook to Interactive Multimedia: a practical guide for educational applications*, London: Kogan Page.

Rosenzweig, G. (1997) *The Director 6 book: the ultimate handbook for multimedia professionals*., Ventana.

Stansberry, D. (1998) *Labyrinths: the art of interactive writing and design*, Belmont: Wadsworth.

Swearingen, L. (1994) *Macromedia Director Design Guide*, Indianapolis: Hayden Books.

New Media theory/ cyberculture etc

Benedikt, M. (1993a) ed., *Cyberspace: First Steps*, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press

Bukatman, S. (1994) *Terminal Identity: The Virtual Subject in Postmodern Science Fiction*., Durham: Duke University Press.

Bolter, J. (1991) *Writing Space: The Computer, Hypertext and the History of Writing*, Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dery, M. (1994) ed., *Flame Wars: The Discourse of Cyberculture*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Dery, M. (1996) *Escape Velocity: Cyberculture at the End of the Century*, New York: Grove Press.

Holtzman, S. (1994) *Digital Mantras: The Languages of Abstract and Virtual Worlds*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Holtzman, S. (1997) *Digital Mosaics: The Aesthetics of Cyberspace*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

Joyce, M. (1995) *Of Two Minds: hypertext pedagogy and poetics*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Kroker, A. & M. Weinstein (1994) *Data Trash: The Theory of the Virtual Class*, New York: St Martin's Press.

Kroker, A. (1993) *Spasm: Virtual Reality, Android Music and Electric Flesh*, New York: St Martin's Press.

Landow, G. ed (1994) *Hypermedia and literary studies*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Landow, G. (1993) *Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Landow, G. (1994) *Hyper/text/theory: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Marcus, G. (1990) *Lipstick Traces: A Secret History of the Twentieth Century*, London: Secker & Warburg.

Mitchell, W. (1995) *City of Bits: Space, Place and the Infobahn*, Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press.

Morse, M. (1998) *Virtualities: television, media art and cyberculture*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

Negroponte, N. (1995) *Being Digital*, Rydalmere: Hodder & Stoughton.

Nelson, T. (1993) *Literary Machines*, Sausalito: Mindful Press.

Nelson, T. (1987) *Computer Lib/Dream Machines*, Washington: Microsoft Press.

Rheingold, H. (1991) *Virtual Reality*, London: Secker & Warburg.

Rushkoff, D. (1994) *Cyberia: Life in the Trenches of Hyperspace*, London: Harper Collins.

Sinclair, C. (1996) *Netkick: A Smart Girl Guide to the Wired World*, London: Allen & Unwin.

Stone, A. R. (1995) *The War of Desire and Technology at the Close of the Mechanical Age*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Tofts, D. and McKeitch, M. (1998) *Memory Trade: A Prehistory of Cyberspace*, Sydney: Interface

Wark, M. (1994) *Virtual Geography: Living With Global Media Events*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Yates, F. (1996) *The Art of Memory*, London: Pimlico.

CD-ROM's available from UTS library from City Audiovisual Section

Ceremony of Innocence, 808.869 CERE

Cosmology of Kyoto, 952.01 COSM

Cyberflesh GirlMonster 700.205 DEME

Eve, 782.42 GABE

I Am A Singer 702.85 HEYW

Immemory, 154.3 MARK

You Don't Know Jack

Making Multicultural Australia, 305.80094 MAKI

Metabody, Stelarc

Moorditj, 700.89915 MOOR

Myst, 793.730 MILL

Planet of Noise, 700.285 MILL

Postcard from Tunis 916.11 PRYO

Riven, 793.932 MILL

Xplora1 781.63 GABE

Real Wild Child 781.660994

30 Words for the City

Shock In The Ear 780.904 SHOC