

The Evergreen State College
Fall Syllabus: 1998

Community, Communications, Computers

Meeting Times:

Wednesdays: Fall Quarter 6:00-10:00 p.m. Library 1316
Saturdays: Oct. 3 & Dec. 5 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Library 1612

Field Trips: Oct. 22; Nov. 12,13,16-18 (or to be arranged).



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Our modern world demands that we be well rounded, flexible communicators. This intensive year-long program is for the serious student committed to exploring the relationship of orality and literacy, technology and society. During the year participants will develop skills as creative writers, storytellers and literate technologists. We will weave together strands from many disciplines including performance, literature, writing, media theory, political action, and technology studies. Activities will be designed for both the beginning and advanced student and will encourage both collaborative and individual learning. Each student will be expected to master several critical computer skills, and those with experience in computer technology will be challenged to advance their abilities.

Fall quarter the theme will be "Invent the New Media," in which we will examine the history and theory of communications shifts, various types of mass media, including television and the Internet; how media helps shape society and how people can help shape media. Each student will develop one or more presentations using the Web as the publishing medium. Winter quarter the theme will be "Folk Tales for the Next 999 Years," in which we will concentrate on the idea of stories: what they mean and what people do with them as we enter the 21st Century. Finally, in the spring, we will take up the theme of "Community Action and Communication." What is a community? What role does communication play? What can communities do?

Designed for both beginning and advanced students, activities will encourage collaboration as well as independent learning, identifying strengths and developing new areas of growth. Over the year, students may receive credit in the arts, computer technology, folklore, writing, literature, history, political science, and communications or media theory. Instructional strategies include lectures, workshops, performances, seminars, computer labs, and on-line instruction.

The program has several interrelated objectives.

-Increasing and enriching computer literacy.

- Understanding the challenges and opportunities of modern computing and telecommunications systems within a continuum of human relationships, aspirations, and creativity.
- Developing and exploring innovative uses of communications technology in understanding artistic achievements of the past and challenges of the future.
- Combining and meeting professional and personal development goals & aspirations.

Expectations: Students will be expected to attend and participate fully in all class meetings, read each text faithfully, write reading response papers, and participate in seminars, workshops, performances, and communications projects. Students will be expected to work intensively in groups on workshop activities and on-line group projects for a minimum of sixteen hours outside of class meetings.

Schedule: Class will meet each Wednesday evening from 6:00-10:00, and from 9:00-5:00 on the first and last Saturdays of each quarter, October 3 & December 5.

In addition, a field trip will be arranged. Students will meet with their small groups either in person or on-line for workshops and group publication projects for a minimum of two hours a week (sixteen hours a quarter) outside of class.

Attendance will be taken at each class and workshop meeting. At small group workshops and planning meetings, each group member must turn in weekly responses to document their group participation. Any student missing a class or workshop must do a make-up project or loose credit.

Required Books and Readings: (Available at Evergreen Bookstore)

- Borges, Jorge Luis. *Labyrinths*. New Directions: New York, 1964.
Burke, James & Robert Ornstein. *The Axemaker's Gift*. New York: Putnam, 1997.
Czitrom, Daniel J. *Media & The American Mind*. U. Of N. Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1990.
Schuler, Douglas. *New Community Networks*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1996.

CCC Reader: Course packet of articles & readings.

Supplementary Readings:

Hazen, Don, and Julie Winokur, editors. *We the Media: A Citizen's Guide to Fighting for Media Democracy*. The New Press: New York, 1997.

Other readings will be on reserve in the library or available through the internet.

Class Portfolio:

Each student will be required to keep a class portfolio throughout the quarter. This will be turned in during the fifth week and at the end of the quarter for evaluation conferences. It must contain the following:

- I. Three ring binder (preferably with locking rings) with loose leaf paper and dividers for:
 1. Course syllabus, covenant, and class handouts.
 2. Class lecture and workshops. (Dated and organized chronologically.)
 3. Seminar notes. (Dated and organized chronologically.)
 4. Weekly Reading responses to required texts. (Dated and organized chronologically.)
 5. Weekly workshops. (Titled, dated, and organized chronologically.)
 6. Individual and group project planning and research notes.

Major Projects and Due Dates:

See handouts for details on projects.

Community Media Project:

First draft due: Week 6, Nov. 4th.

Final draft and Group Presentation: Week 10, Dec. 5th.

Individual Media Project: Due:

Topic Due: Week 3, Oct. 14th.

First Draft: Week 5, Oct. 28th.

Final Draft: Week 8, Nov. 18th.

Weekly Reading Responses:

Reading Responses will be turned in each week and returned the following week. File them chronologically in your portfolio. See handout "Guidelines For Weekly Reading Responses."

Weekly Workshops and Group Project Meetings:

Participants will be completing weekly workshops and meeting in small groups outside of class two hours a week, up to sixteen hours per quarter. Group meetings can be arranged in person or through electronic mediums such as the internet. Students must sign in to document participation at these sessions. Students will get credit for these hours by turning their completed workshop responses each week. They will be returned the following week. File them chronologically in your portfolio.

On-line Workshops and Seminars:

In order to participate in web based and on line collaborative projects, students must have access to these minimum computer requirements.

- 1) TESC e-mail account
- 2) Netscape Navigator or Communicator.
Netscape Communicator (version 4.x) is what we use in the computer center. It is our preference for ease of use.
- 3) Access to a local Internet Service Provider (ISP).
(We recommend getting a local provider. Access though AOL tends to be slow and project work is sometimes disrupted.)

Our program has received a Plato Grant to pilot the use of WebCT and other computer software. Over the year, we will have the opportunity to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of this program for the rest of the campus community. We feel very honored to have you join us in this venture. We will be working closely with Susan Chamberlain and Pete Pietras in Academic Computer Services.

Field Trips:

Option 1: Oct. 22nd. Manuel Castell, evening lecture in Seattle.

Option 2: November 12 & 13. Participatory Design Conference: at the University Of Washington all day.

(<http://www.cpsr.org/conferences/pdc98>)

Option 3: Nov. 16-18. . Computer Supported Cooperative Work, at the University Of Washington all day.

(<http://www.acm.org/sigchi.cscw98>)

Participants are expected to attend one of these events and write a brief reaction paper. However if they have a scheduling conflict, they may arrange to attend another relevant event, do an additional project, or do a supplemental reading. They must and write a response paper.

Staff Support:

Computer Liaison:

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Week One

Appropriate technology reminds us that before we choose our tools and techniques we must choose our dreams and values, for some technologies serve them, while others make them unobtainable.

Tom Bender

Wednesday, September 30

Introductions

Names & Background. (Interest, Experience, & Goals, etc.)

Sign In: Goals, Contracts, Syllabus, Handouts.

In-class workshop: CCC Concept Map

Assignments:

Reading Due: 10-3-98

Forster, E.M. *The Machine Stops* (handout.)

Communications Shifts: *The Oxford Companion To The English Language*. (Handout.)

Burke & Ornstein. *The Axemaker's Gift*. (xii-xviii, 42-52, 59-61, 64-74, 122-127, 280-290, 308-311.)

Saturday, October 3

Location: L 1612

-The history and theory of communications shifts: orality, literacy, and electronic technology.

(Charles Teske & Rebecca Chamberlain)

-The *I Ching*: Ancient Oracle, Hypertext. (Rebecca Chamberlain)

-Workshop 1: Consulting The *I Ching*.

-Introduction: Writing The *I Ching*

-Paper Tiger Video: *No Carrier*

Assignment:

Reading: Due 10-7-98

Axemaker's Gift : Ch. 1-6.

Reading Response One: Due 10-7-98. (Follow format on handout, "Guidelines on Writing Reading Responses.")

Focus Question: Reflect on five different changes in communications technology over time. How has each shift in technology changed community? What is the role of different communications technology in relationship to the individual? In relationship to community?

Workshop 1- Part 2: Writing the *I-Ching* .

Due: 10-7-98

(See handout for details)

Week Two

Any technology tends to create a new human environment.

Marshall McLuhan

Wednesday, October 7

History and Introduction to the Internet (Doug Schuler)

Research Heuristics (Doug Schuler)

Computer Workshop Rotations: (Group A & B Alternate in MAC Lab -7:30-8:45; 8:45-10:00.)

1) The Web and Searching Techniques (Group A).

2) Small Group Planning Meeting: Community Media Projects(Group B).
Wrap up on *I Ching* Writings.

Assignment:

Reading: Due 10-14-98

-*Axemaker's Gift* Ch. 8,10, 11.

-Schuler. *New Community Networks*: (Ch. 1)

Reading Response Two: Due 10-14-98.

Focus Question: How have historic social and political trends been influenced by the change in communications technology?

Workshop 2: Internet Exploration Due: 10-14-98

Week Three

Human beings are the only species with a history. Whether they also have a future is not so obvious. The answer will lie in the prospects for popular movements, with firm roots among all sectors of the populations, dedicated to values that are suppressed or driven to the margins within the existing social and political order: community, solidarity, concern for a fragile environment that will have to sustain future generations, creative work under voluntary control, independent thought, and true democratic participation in varied aspects of life. Noam Chomsky

Wednesday, October 14

Digital Technology: Stochastic Scholasticism & Soothsaying (Doug Schuler)

Introduce Borges: (Rebecca Chamberlain)

Group Rotations: (Group A & B Alternate in MAC Lab - 7:00-8:30; 8:30-10:00)

1) Introduction To WebCT (Group A)

2) Seminar: *Axemaker's Gift, New Community Networks*. (Group B)

Assignment:

-Reading Response Three: Due 8-21-98

Focus Question 3: TBD

Borges, *Labyrinths*. (read p. ix- 51; then choose two additional stories on your own.) For seminar, focus on: "The Library Of Babel," and "The Garden Of Forking Paths."

CCC Reader:

1) Bolter, David Jay. *Writing Space: The Computer, Hypertext, and the History Of Writing.*"
Chapter 6: The Electronic Book." "Chapter 8: Interactive Fiction –skim the chapter and focus on section on Borges."

Workshop 3: Stochastic Scholasticism and Soothsaying Due: 10-21-98

Week Four

In the future there will be so much going on that no one will be able to keep track of it.
David Byrne, *In the Future*

Wednesday, October 21

What Is Media? (Doug Schuler)

Group Rotations: (Group A & B Alternate- 7:30-8:45; 8:45-10:10)

- 1) WebCT or other Computer Workshop (Group A)
- 2) Seminar on Borges (Group B)

Field Trip Option One: Oct. 22nd. Manuel Castell, evening lecture in Seattle.

Assignment:

Reading Response Four: Due: 10-28-98

Focus Question: TBD

Czitrom, Daniel. *Media and the American Mind*. (Chapters 1 -2)

Reading: CCC Reader:

- 2) "Strauss Zelnick," An interview with the president and chief operating officer of Twentieth Century Fox. *Making and Selling Culture*.
- 3) "Local Television News, Chapter 4," in *Making News Local*, Phyllis Kaniss. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1991.
- 4) "Thinking About Media Power: Who Holds It? A Changing View." Chapter 7 of *Culture Inc. The Corporate Takeover of Public Expression*. Herbert Schiller.
- 5) "The Political Context of Alternative Media." Chapter 1. of *Radical Media*.

Prepare Portfolio: Due (10-28-98) for Fifth Week Evaluation Conference.

Workshop 4: Watching The Media Due: 10-28-98

Week Five

Lo! Men have become the tools of their tools.
Henry David Thoreau

Wednesday, October 28

Fifth Week Evaluation Conferences: Portfolios are Due!

Group Rotations: (Group A & B Alternate 6:00-8:00; 8:00-10:00.)

- 1) Films: "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead"
Paper Tiger Video
- 2) Mac Lab: Small Group Work on Community Media Project

Assignment:

-Reading Response Five: Due 11-4-98.

Focus Question: TBD

Czitrom, Daniel. *Media and the American Mind*. (Chapter 5)

Reading: CCC Reader:

- 6) "Why Johnny Can't Dissent." Tom Frank. *Media and Democracy Congress*.
- 7) "Culture Wars and the Liberating Alternative." George Gerbner. *Media and Democracy Congress*.
- 8) "Talking Back." *Media and Democracy Congress*. Susan Nall Bates.

Workshop 5: On Line Seminar: "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead."

What is the role of stochasticism and alternative or parallel realities? Compare to Borges. How do the narratives/images of text and film differ?

Week Six

Every culture has its official folklore. In ancient times medicine men transformed tribal legends . . . The twentieth century is no different but the high priests who communicate myth . . . now do so through great centralized Machines of communication — newspaper chains, broadcast networks, magazine groups, conglomerate book publishers, and movie studios. Ben Bagdikian (1992)

Wednesday, November 4

-On Line Seminar Etiquette (Doug Schuler)

-Getting along with HTML (Doug Schuler)

Group Rotations: First Draft of Community Media Publication (Group A & B Alternate- 7:30-8:45; 8:45-10:00)

- 1) Small Group Demo. Publish (Group A)
- 2) Seminar on TBA (Group B)

Assignment:

-Reading Response Six: Due: 11-11-98

Focus Question: TBD

Reading: CCC Reader:

- 9) "Electronic Smoke Signals: Native America Radio in the US." Bruce Smith and M. Cornette
- 10) "Indigenous Peoples and Media Ethics in Canada." Valerie Alia.
- 11) "Talking the Talk on Indigenous Radio." Donald Browne.
- 12) "Race and the Media." Mercedes Lynn de Uriarte.
- 13) "Technological Wisdom." Allen D. Kanner. *Revision*.
- 14) "Memoirs of a Token: An Aging Berkeley Feminist Examines Wired." Paulina Borsook.

Workshop 6: TBA

Week Seven

*The Guides, the Wardens of our faculties
And stewards of our labor, watchful men
And skillful in the usury of time,
Sages, who in their prescience would control
All accidents, and to the very road
Which they have fashin'd would confine us down
Like engines . . .*

William Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Book V

Wednesday, November 11

Plato Lecture: Dick Sclove author of *Democracy and Technology*.

All Group Seminar: With Dick Sclove

Assignment:

-Reading Response Seven: Due: 11-18-98

Focus Question: TBD

Reading: CCC Reader:

- 15) "The Gulf Massacre as Paranoid Rationality." Les Levidow.
- 16) "The Hidden side of Television Violence." George Gerbner.
- 17) "AIDS and the Plague Metaphor." Park, Katherine Kimberly Bergalis.

Field Trip: November 12, 13, 16-18

Details: To Be Announced

OR

Workshop 7: TBA

Due: 11-18-98

Write up a brief response of your field trip or project.

Week Eight:

*A community is a group of people united by the common objects of their love that incorporates three elements:
shared values, unity, and intimacy.*

Ed Schwartz (1991)

Wednesday, November 18

Family, Culture, and Community: Techniques for doing oral history interviews. (Rebecca Chamberlain)

Group Rotations: (Group A & B Alternate- 7:00-8:30; 8:30-10:00)

1) WebCT or other Computer Workshop (Group A)

2) Seminar on Readings (Group B)

Assignment:

Reading: CCC Reader:

-Reading Response Eight: Due 12-2-98

Focus Question: TBD

Czitrom, Daniel. *Media and the American Mind*. (Chapters 3, 4, 6)

- 18) Micro-Radio: A Little Static and a Big Stick." Greg Milner.
- 19) "Will the Internet Become the Next Mass Medium?" Frank Beacham.

Workshop 8: Conduct and record an interview. Write summary notes. (See handout.) Due: 12-2-98

Week Nine:

Don't hate the media. Become the media. Jello Biafra

Wednesday, December 2

- Life Imitates Bart: Memory, Rhetoric, Media, and the Language of Advertising (Rebecca Chamberlain)
- Writing A Self Evaluation (Rebecca and Doug)
- Paper Tiger Video:
- Final Group Meeting: Community Media Project: MAC Lab available 8:30-10:00.

Assignment:

Reading Response Nine: Due:12-5-98 (put in portfolio.)

Focus Question: TBD

Reading: CCC Reader:

- 20) "The Internet and the Future of Democracy." Robert McChesney.
- 21) "Media Activism and Radical Democracy." Jesse Drew.
- 22) "Advertising, Community, and Self: A Qualitative Analysis." Mary Gomez, Stephen Leupold, and Matthew Albracht.

Workshop 9: Write a group final evaluation of Community Media Project. Due 12-9-98. Make a copy for each member of your group. Put in portfolio.

Week Ten:

The real heart of the effectiveness of any community network... is learned ability for any given group to work purposely together toward a productive end.

Frank Odasz (1995)

Saturday, December 5

Location: L1612

Student Presentations: Community Media Projects (30 min. per group)
Potluck Lunch

Assignment: Due: 12-9-98

Portfolio
Self Evaluation and Faculty Evaluation
(Three copies on official forms with signature.)

Wednesday, December 9

-Turn In Portfolios and evaluations.
Fall Wrap-up, Winter preview.
Paper Tiger Video
Film: "Until The End Of Time" Wim Wenders

Evaluation Week

Final Evaluation Conferences:

To Be Arranged.

