

Network Culture – Spring 08 Thursday mornings 9-12

Meets at Mac Lab / Photo Classroom (see syllabus, per date)

Instructor: Cathy Davies [daviesdavies@gmail.com](mailto:daviesdavies@gmail.com)

[www.cathydavies.com/networkculture](http://www.cathydavies.com/networkculture)

## Class Description

NETWORK CULTURE is a core seminar course addressing the theory and history of information, its transfer and dispersal. It is a course that follows the mutations and manipulations of both image and information as it used broadly by artists, libraries, the government, the military, hackers, political groups and pranksters. The course has its roots in the uses of photography and media information distribution and as it is linked to a widening array of applications and strategies. Network Culture connects historical, ideological and conceptual applications of image and information transfer with results as varied as net gaming, popular (official and unofficial, legitimate and suspect) news sites, and information portals that represent the complexity of image and information site and distribution.

NETWORK CULTURE will address computers and networks as tools for visual artists. We'll survey an assortment of movements, theories, tools, and skills affecting communication culture as it evolves right now. The history of the Internet, metatags, gaming, copyright, HDR photography, mashups, net.art, user interface, mobile devices, blogs, viral video, software art, Flash, HTML, CSS, and the humble beauty of the JPEG are just some of the things we'll view, disassemble and recompile. Translation: we'll be looking AND building- understanding why cultural producers engage the network, and learning skills to build it (or hack it) ourselves.

Photography & Media requires one semester of this course before graduation. It is recommended in the first year for MFA and in the third year for BFA students. This course may be repeated.

# Syllabus

February 7 – meets in Mac Lab

Introductions – how this class work will work, and what its goals are.

Live metaphorical Internet demonstration.

Readings for next week:

Click through this slideshow:

<http://historyoftheinternet.org/>

The Internet in 1993, read the two short articles at this link:

[http://w2.eff.org/Net\\_culture/overhearing\\_the\\_internet.article.txt](http://w2.eff.org/Net_culture/overhearing_the_internet.article.txt)

The Internet in 2005:

<http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/13.08/tech.html>

February 14 – meets in Photo Classroom

Lecture: History of the Internet

Government, corporations, populism, many-to-many media

February 21 – meets in Mac Lab

Technical workshop: HTML

Reading for next week

plus bring in an example of a digitally manipulated image

February 28 – meets in Photo Classroom

Lecture: History of Digital Imaging

The index, truthiness, pixels

March 6 – meets in Mac Lab

Technical workshop: Your friend, the JPEG

All about compression, plus HDR photography, using FlickrR

Stuff you should know about in Photoshop CS3

Reading for next week

March 13 – meets in Photo Classroom

Lecture: Early net.art

March 20 – meets in Mac Lab

Technical workshop : Creating a blog, using your Cal Arts web space

Artist blogs, image blogs, Gawker ads

MIDTERMS DUE NEXT SESSION

March 27 - spring break

April 3 - meets in Mac Lab
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Technical workshop: Flash Creating a slideshow MIDTERMS DUE Reading for next week
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April 10 - meets in Photo Classroom
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Lecture: Freeware, gift economy, user interface, usability
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April 17 - meets in Mac Lab
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Technical workshop: Flash 2 Photo batching for web, Flash plus video Reading for next week
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April 24 - meets in Photo Classroom
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Lecture: Connective tissues - Mashups, Metatags, Web 2.0, Open source
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May 1 - meets in Mac Lab
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In class production time to work on your finals Technical demos by request
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May 8 - meets in Photo Classroom
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FINALS PRESENTATIONS
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May 15 - meets in Photo Classroom
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FINALS PRESENTATIONS
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## Midterm – DUE APRIL 3

(Due the first class after spring break ;) )

Five paragraph proposal of your final project. Which option do you plan to take for the final? What will your technical and conceptual hurdles be? See final assignment, below.

## Final – DUE MAY 8 & 15

### OPTION 1:

Create an image-centric blog. Use your Cal Arts web space to create a blog with at least 15 posts. Your blog should have a cohesive theme and point of view, and the posts should work well individually and as a group. This should be either an artist's blog (one that details your process, obsessions, or theories), or it should be a blog that is in itself an artwork.

### OPTION 2:

Create a Mashup. Make a digital artwork that intertwines two or more recognizable appropriated subjects in order to create something new. Suggested formats: video, web page, still image series, or something surprising. Be ready to explain your choices as an artist – what did you choose to mash up, and how do your subjects collide?

### OPTION 3:

Create a series of digital images. These should be images that could not be created without the intervention of a computer. HDR, merged images, morphing, manipulated or collaged imagery are possibilities. Concept is key – what is it about your project that makes it inextricably digital? You may present prints or screen images in class, but your image series will need to be posted to the web in some manner.

BONUS: Create a Gawker Artists banner campaign for your final.  
(Gawker Artists ads will be explained in detail March 20)

### FINALS PRESENTATIONS:

We will present finals projects in the last two classes of the semester. Students can use the projector to present screen-based digital works, or the walls to present prints. We'll critique and discuss as a group.