

AN 341

VIRTUAL WORLDS, DIGITAL REALITIES:
SOCIAL IMPACTS OF THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION

Inst: Richard Bordner

Off: Upper (*mauka*) Beh. Science Bldg. #114, MWF 11:30-2, TR 11:30-1 or by app't.

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REQUIRED TEXTS: Boellstorff, Tom 2008. Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press.

Van Dijck, Jose 2013. The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media. London: Oxford Univ. Press.

Storr, Will 2018. Selfie: How We Became So Self-Obsessed and What It's Doing to Us. NY: Overlook Press.

Daniel Miller's Research Site "Why We Post" at [<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/why-we-post>]

Recommended: Gardner, Howard & Katie Davis 2014. The App Generation: How Today's Youth Navigate Identity, Intimacy, and Imagination in a Digital World. Cambridge: Yale Univ. Press.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Individually games, apps, programs and devices modify social behavior. Collectively they have made dramatic changes in collective behavior, social expressions of the self and self-identity. Yet the changes have been so diverse and rapid that social sciences are just now starting to examine some of the consequences of these new technologies. We will look at the current discussions in anthropology, sociology, communications and geography about the social impacts of contemporary digital reality and how we are building predictive models for the near future.

The course will specifically be examining some of the key technologies that by 2020 have changed social interaction and personal identity, along with several that appear poised to make dramatic change in the next 5 years. We will move through different areas of digital reality, initially examining communication technologies in a chronological order including smartphones and tablets. We will then move onto an examination of social media such as Facebook, Shutterfly, Instagram and Twitter, looking at both the apps that mediate social interaction and the diverse ways these have been modified by users. The next area will be that of computer-based social media and structured social environments such as World of

Warcraft, Fortnite and Eve Online. Lastly we will examine current and near-future unstructured virtual worlds such as Second Life, Sansar and Facebook's Horizon. A central theme throughout the course will be the synergistic ways in which these media have modified social behavior and also been modified by different societies.

SKILL COMPETENCIES you must have to take the course:

We will be using Canvas for this course. You will also get an invite to share some of my Google Drive folders that have course materials for your use and reference.

Assignments should be sent to me as e-mail attachments, either as Word docs/rtf/pdf formal files.

- Access to a computer (NOT a tablet or smartphone) You may want to load Second Life on your machine so you must have Administrator privileges, or you can use one of the machines in Sullivan Library that are already configured with SL.
- You should consider getting one or more social media accounts if you don't already have some—BUT BE WARNED that they are very privacy-intrusive and very difficult to actually delete completely

Behavioral Studies Program Student Learning Outcomes for this course:

1. The student will clearly and effectively apply intellectual frameworks and models to interpret and understand social interaction from the Behavioral Studies perspective. [evidence from Capstone Project.]
2. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the complex dynamic relationships between the individual and the group (both ethnic and social). [Fits Marianist Ed. 2c]
3. The student will integrate anthropological and sociological concepts in their understanding of social reality. [Fits Marianist Ed. 2b]
4. The student will assess contemporary social issues through the lens of a diverse group and cross-cultural framework. [Fits Marianist Ed. 4d, CUH 1d]

This course has the following general objectives:

- 1) Increase your awareness of the importance of various digital media in the dynamic changes in contemporary societies;
- 2) Gain some understanding of how patterns of social ritual reinforce social relationships even in digital media;
- 3) To provide you with conceptual the tools you can use to enhance your competency in a complex multicultural world, through understanding the social dynamics present in apparently global digital media;
- 4) To directly address the Marianist goals of building collaborative learning communities and also integrating diverse viewpoints and values, through broadening your horizons as to the motivations and attitudes of individuals from cultural and ethnic backgrounds outside of your own experience.

This course is grounded in the Marianist Values of Chaminade University, which we strive to incorporate into these classes:

- 1) Educate in formation of faith
- 2) Provide an integral quality education
- 3) Educate in family spirit
- 4) Educate for service, justice and peace
- 5) Educate for adaptation and change

GRADING:

- **THOUGHT OF THE WEEK EXERCISES:** You will complete a Thought of The Weeks Exercise for each Module [6 total-see schedule]. At the start of each module I will post some topics you might want to consider, or you can do one based on your own personal interest from the materials in that module—if you want to do your own, you must check with me first to see if it's appropriate.
 - Each TOTW will consist of a **minimum** of 6 paragraphs in a specific format [see below for format details.]
 - Each TOTW is due by the date specified in the syllabus, usually near the end of a specific module
 - The TOTWs count for 70% of your course grade;

- **PRESENTATION/BLOG POST:**
 - You do this by yourself [solo]—NO GROUP WORK
 - The Presentation/Blog will be based on a specific concept or topic from the course materials
 - We have two Service Learning Projects which you may do instead of this assignment—School Tutoring (Palolo) and St. Louis/CUH Planting Project, both through the SL Office
 - Do NOT just repeat the material presented in the course PowerPoints—this must be your own material
 - Your goal is a presentation that would be useful for your classmates
 - Your presentation can be as a PowerPoint, blog post or website (your choice) and cover your topic in detail. For length estimate 5-7 PowerPoint slides or a 7-10 paragraph blog post as the minimum.
 - It must include: 1) clarification of any technical terms and explanation; 2) examples that clarify the question; 3) one or two final thoughts that show the importance of the issue; 4) cites and sources.
 - The Presentation will be worth 20% of the course grade

- **REACTION PAPERS and LEARNING ASSIGNMENTS [as required]:**
 - You will write a number of reaction papers based on assigned videos
 - Questions will be posed for you to react to
 - You will not be graded on grammar
 - They will be from 1-2 pages in length
 - There will also be a number of learning assignments. You will be graded on the completion of the assignments.
 - Reaction Papers/Learning Assignments count for 5% of the course grade

- **ATTENDANCE:**
 - o Participation is mandatory in all CUH courses
 - o Participation (completing course material on time) counts for 5% of your course grade

TOTW exercises (6).....	70%	A= 90-100	D= 60-69
Presentation/Blog.....	20%	B= 80-89	F= -60
Reaction/Learning Assign.....	5%	C= 70-79	
Participation.....	5%		

THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF EXTRA-CREDIT WORK IN THIS CLASS

Thought of the Week (TOTW) Exercise Format 1/20

TOTW FORMAT:

4 Parts [THIS IS THE MINIMUM]:

- 1) Concept or topic covered—specify and define [1 PARAGRAPH]
- 2) Put into a context—what is it's importance w/in course material [1-2 PARAGRAPH]
- 3) Go into detail on 1-2 specific aspects of the concept/topic NOT covered in the class materials—you can use your course readings but you must also have at least 1 source outside of the course materials [4-6 PARAGRAPHS]
- 4) Discuss the context/relevance of this concept to you (personal), to us (Hawai'i), and to us (global) [1-2 PARAGRAPHS]
- 5) Citations and Bibliography—you must show your sources and these must be more than just course materials [APA format preferred]

RULES:

PARAGRAPH= defined as having 2 or more sentences.

CITATIONS= You must show where you got your material from. You MUST support your material with citations.

WAYS TO LOSE POINTS:

1 Use internet/generic definition rather than discipline [course] specific definition= 1 grade down

Logic= If you can't remember that the course is within a discipline, which has specific definitions attached to terms, then you're not engaging in the class. Also if you forget this rule, you need to be reminded to focus on task.

2 Merely repeating class [powerpoint/talks] materials= 1 grade down minimum

Logic= If you can't be organized time-wise to look for outside sources, then you're not completing the assignment—you're merely repeating my materials back to me.

3 Opinion-Only Writing= If your writing only shows your opinion on the concept/topic; no citations= 1 grade down minimum

Logic= No one really cares about opinions—they want proof to back up your assertions/analyses so that you are more convincing. If you really need to vent, that’s what social media is for.

4 Working on exercises with others= minimum 1 grade down

Logic= Sharing material means either you’re putting in ½ the effort, or, more likely, one member is doing all the work and the other are entertaining (hopefully) parasites.

5 Bogus citations/sources= 1 grade down minimum

Logic= If you only pull your sources from the immediate [Wikipedia-only for example] then just as with the generic definition, you’re not engaging with the material and showing any effort to process the class materials.

COURSE SCHEDULE FOR AN341 DIGITAL REALITIES

MODULE	DATES	TOPICS COVERED	ASSIGNMENTS
I	Jan. 13-24	Intro / Definitions / Short History	Read: Boellstorff Ch. 1; van Dijck Ch. 1; Module 1
II	Jan. 27-Feb. 7	Theory-Method / Continuum of Realities	Read: Boellstorff Ch. 3; van Dijck Ch. 2-8 /Module 2, B1-2 / TOTW 1 DUE
III	Feb. 10-14	Mobile- Smartphones	Read MODULE 3 / TOTW 2 DUE
IV	Feb. 17-21	Application World-Big Data	Read Storr ALL; MODULE 4
V	Feb. 24-28	Social Media- Impacts	Read MODULE 5 / TOTW 3 DUE
VI	March 2-13	Internet / Web 1.0-3.0	Read MODULE 6 / TOTW 4 DUE
VII	March 16-Ap. 3 (3/23-27 Spring Break)	Virtual Worlds- Second Life- MMORPGs	Read: Boellstorff Ch. 2, 4-9; Read MODULE 7 / TOTW 5 DUE
VIII	Ap. 6-17	Multiple Modes to Reality	Read MODULE 8
IX	Ap. 20-May 1	Education / Learning / Cognition Impacts	Read MODULE 9 / TOTW 5 DUE / Present-Blog DUE

We comply with all federal laws and guidelines including Title 9.

Chaminade University of Honolulu recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. Sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse will NOT be tolerated at CUH. If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, we encourage you to report this matter promptly. As a faculty member, I am interested in promoting a safe and healthy environment, and should I learn of any sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, I must report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you want to speak to a confidential source you may contact the following:

- Chaminade Counseling Center | [808 735-4845](tel:8087354845).
- Any priest serving as a sacramental confessor or any ordained religious leader serving in the sacred confidence role.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an essential aspect of all learning, scholarship, and research. It is one of the values regarded most highly by academic communities throughout the world. Violations of the principle of academic honesty are extremely serious and will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for promoting academic honesty at Chaminade by not participating in any act of dishonesty and by reporting any incidence of academic dishonesty to an instructor or to a University official. Academic dishonesty may include theft of records or examinations, alteration of grades, and plagiarism.

Questions of academic dishonesty in a particular class are first reviewed by the instructor, who must make a report with recommendations to the Dean of the Academic Division. Punishment for academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor and the Dean of the Academic Division and may range from an 'F' grade for the work in question to an 'F' for the course to suspension or dismissal from the University.

SCIENTIFIC METHOD DEFINITIONS

The **METHODS OF SCIENCE** are only tools, tools that we use to obtain knowledge about phenomena.

The **SCIENTIFIC METHOD** is a set of assumptions and rules about collecting and evaluating data. The explicitly stated assumptions and rules enable a standard, systematic method of investigation that is designed to reduce bias as much as possible. Central to the scientific method is the collection of data, which allows investigators to put their ideas to an empirical test, outside of or apart from their personal

biases. In essence, stripped of all its glamour, scientific inquiry is nothing more **THAN A WAY OF LIMITING FALSE CONCLUSIONS ABOUT NATURAL EVENTS.**

Knowledge of which the credibility of a profession is based must be objective and verifiable (testable) rather than subjective and untestable.

SCIENCE is a mode of controlled inquiry to develop an objective, effective, and credible way of knowing.

The assumptions one makes regarding the basic qualities of human nature (that is, cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological processes) affect how one conceptualizes human behavior.

The two basic functions of scientific approach are 1) advance knowledge, to make discoveries, and to learn facts in order to improve some aspect of the world, and 2) to establish relations among events, develop theories, and this helps professionals to make predictions of future events.

Research Design And Counseling

Heppner, Kivlighan, and Wampold

A **THEORY** is a large body of interconnected propositions about how some portion of the world operates; a **HYPOTHESIS** is a smaller body of propositions. **HYPOTHESES** are smaller versions of theories. Some are derived or born from theories. Others begin as researchers' hunches and develop into theories.

The **PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE** decrees we can only falsify, not verify (prove), theories because we can never be sure that any given theory provides the best explanation for a set of observations.

Research Method In Social Relations

Kidder

THEORIES are not themselves directly proved or disproved by research. Even **HYPOTHESES** cannot be proved or disproved directly. Rather, research may either support or fail to support a particular hypothesis derived from a theory.

Scientific research has four general goals: (1) to describe behavior, (2) to predict behavior, (3) to determine the causes of behavior, and (4) to understand or explain behavior.

Methods In Behavioral Research; Cozby

In order to verify the reliability and validity of scientific research it is important to replicate the results. It is the preponderance of evidence that establishes/supports the theory.

<http://allpsych.com/researchmethods/replication.html>