

"Digital Divide" | November 1st—December 8th, 2004

Assignment 3: "Digital Divide" Assignment

This assignment complements Part III of the course, "Life In and With Cybercultures." Students will learn how to research and write a paper about, and make a policy recommendation regarding, an element of the digital divide in the community. The steps are as follows (please see below for due dates):

3.1: Identify a group in our community affected by a digital divide issue. We will discuss possible communities or groups in tutorial, but they could include such groups as the students in your dorm, or your family, or a local school, local business, or community center. The expression "digital divide" can be interpreted widely: it can imply that some members of the group have access and others have no access or have diminished access, or that the whole group has diminished access; it could imply that some people use digital media in very different ways from others; it could also imply that the group in question uses the internet to include some people in its group membership, and / or to exclude or target others. Deliverable: make a new website for your Digital divide project and post a 100-word narrative of your process identifying a community affected by or producing a digital divide. This website will remain private until the very end of the assignment.

3.2: Establish contact with the group you have identified and, if necessary, set up appointment to interview or observe at the site. Carry out interview / observation of the group you have chosen. You will be given guidance on how to collect this data in tutorial. Deliverable: A 200-word narrative describing some of the things you found when observing your group as well as one quantified observation in table or graph format, posted on your Digital Divide website.

3.3: Collect and research information about the history and context of your group or related groups. Deliverable: i) annotated bibliography of three secondary sources; ii) primary document citation (by linking, scanning in, or referencing) and primary document analysis), posted on your Digital Divide website. You will learn how to do this in lab section.

3.4: Analysis of data collected in 3.2 in the light of information unearthed in 3.3. Deliverable: A 250-word analysis of insights gained from observing your group including comparisons between your findings and the references you collected in 3.3, posted on your Digital Divide website.

3.5: Produce a conclusion to your project that i) highlights the strengths you found in the use of digital technology in your site, and ii) contains a policy recommendation summarizing your ideas about how to overcome any problematic aspects of the digital divide in question. Deliverable: 250-word conclusion posted on your Digital Divide website.

Part III: Life In and With Cyber-cultures

Monday November 1: Lecture: Online dating—who does it, and who do they pick? (Niemeyer and Thompson).

Reading: Visit at least 8 online dating sites and take brief notes on: who they are for (race, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, etc.), and what they say about themselves (do they offer tips or advice; do they use the language of romance, marriage, dating? Etc.).

Tutorial, week 10: Introduce Assignment 3; View *Synthetic Pleasures*

Discussion section, week 10: Discussion of how to choose a digital divide project and help making digital Divide website.

Wednesday November 3: Lecture: Pornography online. Guest lecture: Zabet Patterson.

Reading: TBA

Monday November 8: Lecture: the Role of Digital Media in Violence and War

Reading: *Cyborg Citizens*, pp. 39-68; "Violent Video Battles Proliferate, available at <http://www.wired.com/news/games/0,2101,58179,00.html>

Assignment 3.1 (Digital Divide website) due

Tutorial, week 11: collecting observational and/or interview data; presenting ethnographic data

Discussion section, week 11: discussion of texts and problem shooting for Digital Divide assignment

Wednesday November 10: Lecture: Security, Cryptology, Electronic Commerce, and Electronic Voting: Guest lecture: Professor Matt Franklin, UC Davis.

Reading: http://chaum.com/articles/Achieving_Electronic_Privacy.htm

Monday November 15: Lecture: Privacy (Niemeyer and Thompson)

Reading: *The New Media Reader*, 737-760. (Agre, Philip, "Surveillance and Capture: Two Models of Privacy").

Tutorial, week 12: primary document analysis; secondary literature search and annotated bibliography

Discussion section, week 12: discussion of readings; help with annotated bibliography

Wednesday November 17: Lecture: the Open Source movement (Niemeyer)

Reading: TBA

Assignment 3.2 (observational data) due

Monday November 22: Lecture: Knowledge and Belief Online: Religion and Education go Digital (Thompson)

Reading: Pew Internet and American Life "Cyber-faith"; "the Internet and Education," and "The Digital Disconnect,"

www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/53/report_display.asp
www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/53/report_display.asp
www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/67/report_display.asp

Tutorial, week 13: no tutorials this week

Discussion section, week 13: no discussion section this week

Wednesday November 24 - Class cancelled. Prof. Thompson will hold office hours during class time to answer questions about Assignment #3.

—*Thanksgiving Holiday*—

Monday November 29: Lecture: Shopping and Consuming Online (Thompson)

Reading: View web pages for American Girl (doll company); a clothing line of your choice; and a sports equipment site; and a game site, and compare gender, race, etc.

Assignment 3.3 (document analysis and annotated bibliography) due

Tutorial, week 14: Interpreting data and making an argument and recommendations

Discussion section, week 14: Discussion of readings; help with Assignment 3 as needed

Wednesday December 1: Lecture: Laboring with the New Media: Freedom or Oppression? (Thompson)

Reading: *Technicolor*, pp. 34-63; 76-87; Kumar, Amitava, "Temporary Access: The Indian H-1B Worker in the United States," and Hossfeld, Karen, "Their Logic Against Them" Contradictions in Sex, Race, and Class in Silicon Valley."

Monday December 6: Lecture: Transcendence, Creativity, and Social Change (Niemeyer)

Reading: *The New Media Reader*, pp. 781-790. (Critical Art Ensemble, "Nomadic Power and Cultural Resistance").
View Niemeyer's digital art

Assignment 3.4 (interpretation of your data) due

Tutorial, week 15: Interact with the artist

Wednesday December 8: Lecture: Re-conceptualizing Digital Divides (Niemeyer and Thompson).

Reading: no reading

Assignment 3.5 (conclusions and recommendations) due