

9-2014

## JRNL 191.01: The Net Effect

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# **JOUR 191 – *The Net Effect***

**Syllabus – Fall 2014 (subject to change)**

**Scope:** Would you expect that two different people “googling” the same term would get two different sets of results? What are our expectations of privacy and what does the NSA wiretapping scandal tell us about that reality? How does Facebook decide what your “Top News” is? The answers may surprise you. This class will challenge students’ preconceptions of the Internet and social media. Students will read about how the Internet – initially imagined as a way of making all information available to the public (and still thought of by many as a global library open to all) -- has evolved into a media that is both highly filtered but one that also possesses the power to topple governments and empower citizens.

**Grading options:** This course must be taken for a traditional letter-grade. No credit grading is not permitted. The Montana University System’s plus/minus grading system will be used in this class.

**Global Leadership Initiative:** This course fulfills your requirement to take a seminar course during your first year at the University of Montana.

**Class meets** Mondays and Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., in DAH 210.

**Instructor:** Lee Banville, Associate Professor, School of Journalism.

**Office:** Don Anderson Hall 406

**Office phone:** 243-2577.

**My regular e-mail:** [lee.banville@umontana.edu](mailto:lee.banville@umontana.edu)

**Successful Jour 191 students will:**

1. Understand the key technological developments in the growth of the Internet, the World Wide Web and the use of mobile technologies.
2. Critically analyze the role of media and technology in their lives.
3. Consider the effect technology and communication developments have had on key social and political movements.
4. Explore the communication revolution heralded by the decentralization of publishing – blogging, Twitter and other publishing platforms – on the amount of information available to people.
5. Consider the reaction of governments and businesses to these technologies – from journalism to the NSA to Google.
6. Analyze how trends in digital technology – most notably the quest for relevance by web services like Google and Facebook – are changing the types of information people are exposed to online.
8. Analyze the personal implications of digital technologies.

**Course Grading:**

Attendance and Participation .....	20%
Reaction Papers/Court argument (3).....	25%
Media Log/Analysis.....	10%
Group Presentation on Historical moment.....	15%
Final .....	30%

A/A-	90-100%
B+/B/B-	80-89%
C+/C/C-	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	Below 59%

**Office hours** are Mondays 9-10 a.m. and Thursdays 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. I'm also available at other times by appointment.

**Attendance and participation:** This is a seminar class. It is based heavily on discussion and reading reaction. Students who miss more than three classes without a note from Curry/your doctor or alert me ahead of class via phone or email **WILL NOT PASS THE CLASS**.

**Laptop Computers:** DAH210 does not have computers, but feel free to bring your own computer and you should be able to access the network and/or wireless. **Cell phones** must be off or on vibrate while you are in class. Do not answer a call during class unless you discuss this with me before hand. Not obeying these rules is permission for me to make fun of you.

**Academic Honesty**

I expect your honesty in presenting your own work for this course. Academic misconduct at The University of Montana is subject to an academic penalty ranging from failing the assignment to expulsion from the university. Students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>

**Plagiarism**

As defined by "The University of Montana Student Conduct Code" plagiarism is: "Representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own." This is strictly prohibited in this class and any case of plagiarism in this course will be subject to the penalties outlines in the student code of conduct.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities will receive reasonable modifications in this course. Your responsibilities are to request them from me with sufficient advance notice, and to be prepared to provide verification of disability from Disability Services. Please speak with me after class or during my office hours to discuss the details. For more information, visit the Disability Services for Students website at <http://life.umt.edu/dss>.

## Weekly Topics and Assignments

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

### Week One: Media Immersion

The first week of class students will keep a media diary starting Monday in class and running through the end of Tuesday. The diary will track their interaction with media and communication technologies for those days. Students will note number of texts (and times of most texting), videos watched, web content viewed, television watching, etc. The goal of these opening days is to make students consider how much media and communications are part of their daily lives.

Also for Wednesday, read the following articles:

<http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/04/17/us-views-of-technology-and-the-future/>

<http://www.businessinsider.com/10-crazy-facts-from-internet-history-2013-6?op=1>

### Week Two: Tales from the Immersion

On Monday, NO CLASS.

For Wednesday, students will read a recent piece about the Sharing Economy. It's not as lame as it sounds and we will discuss these trends and possible causes and results of their media use.

Story here: <http://www.wired.com/2014/04/trust-in-the-share-economy/>

### Week Three: The Revolution

How did we get here? From scarcity to the flood. Is the Internet the biggest thing since the printing press? We will explore the change that the Internet posed to existing news organizations and why so many of them struggled to embrace the Internet. In the old days much of the news business operated on the idea of scarcity – we knew stuff that other people did not and they had to rely on us to tell them. Wednesday will explore how that has changed.

Students will read excerpts of *The Master Switch: The Rise and Fall of Information Empires* by Tim Wu.

### Week Four: Popping the Newspaper Bubble

For Monday and Wednesday, we will read excerpts from *Free for All: The Internet's Transformation of Journalism* by Elliot King and parts of Riptide, a series from the Neman Foundation that tracked the early decisions around journalism and the World Wide Web.

### **Week Five: “Page One”**

Monday: Begin viewing “Page One,” the story of The New York Times.

For Wednesday, we will finish the film, discuss in class and receive reaction paper topic. Reaction papers are due the following Monday, printed out and brought to class.

### **Week Six: Game of Thrones (The Online Edition)**

For Monday: Read: <http://www.economist.com/news/21567361-google-apple-facebook-and-amazon-are-each-others-throats-all-sorts-ways-another-game>

We will examine how a handful of companies – some would say four – are battling for control of how you interact with the Internet. This is a war that is often deeply personal and plays out in the stock market as well as in the personal decisions of individuals.

Students will begin by reading a story that ran in the Economist about this battle between Apple, Google, Facebook and Amazon and will be expanded by a look at other more contemporaneous accounts of the business battles between these large companies.

### **Week Seven: Personalization (or some other way to filter all this stuff)**

With this flood of content, how is a poor reader to navigate it all? Tuesday will explore the early years of filtering and personalizing news and other content on the Internet. Read Introduction and first three chapters of *The Filter Bubble* for Monday.

### **Week Eight: The Quest for Relevance**

For Monday, read Chapters from The Facebook Effect posted on Moodle. Also read <https://www.facebook.com/notes/facebook-data-team/rethinking-information-diversity-in-networks/10150503499618859>, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/technology/digital-culture/social-networking/keep-calm-and-carry-on-liking-facebook-makes-you-a-better-person/article2063348/singlepage/#articlecontent> and <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2011/Technology-and-social-networks/Summary.aspx>.

Class on Wednesday will debate the topic: Is Facebook evil? Class will be divided into three teams and each student will prepare a one-page set of bullet points that cites material in the course thus far that defends their position.

### **Week Nine: Data and Privacy**

We will be watching and discussing a documentary about data mining, businesses and the government.

For Wednesday, read this piece from the Post: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/edward-snowden-after-months-of->

[nsa-revelations-says-his-missions-accomplished/2013/12/23/49fc36de-6c1c-11e3-a523-fe73f0ff6b8d\\_story.html](http://nsa-revelations-says-his-missions-accomplished/2013/12/23/49fc36de-6c1c-11e3-a523-fe73f0ff6b8d_story.html)

Reaction papers are due the following Monday, printed out and brought to class.

### **Week Ten: The Society of Social Networks**

Social media have affected the way we as people interact in emerging, yet powerful ways. Students will read excerpts from *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other* by Sheri Turkle and *Bowling Alone* by Robert Putnam to examine the state of our social connection both before social networking and after.

### **Week Eleven: Selfies**

Monday: We'll dive into the more personal side of the Internet by taking a look at taking a look at yourself. The Selfie. Read these articles:

<http://ivc.lib.rochester.edu/portfolio/the-selfie-in-the-age-of-digital-recursion/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/29/arts/the-meanings-of-the-selfie.html>

[http://www.salon.com/2014/04/25/the\\_life\\_and\\_death\\_of\\_the\\_selfie\\_how\\_it\\_transformed\\_pop\\_culture\\_%E2%80%94\\_and\\_then\\_jumped\\_the\\_shark\\_partner/](http://www.salon.com/2014/04/25/the_life_and_death_of_the_selfie_how_it_transformed_pop_culture_%E2%80%94_and_then_jumped_the_shark_partner/)

<http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2013/jul/14/how-selfies-became-a-global-phenomenon>

### **Week Twelve: The End**

Your whole life you generate data that is collected by the Internet. What about the end of you? Is that the end of data? What happens to your presence online when your presence on Earth is over? This week is about death and the Internet.

Read these articles:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/04/grieving-in-public-tragedy-on-social-media/360788/>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/07/shes-still-dying-on-facebook/373904/>

<http://computer.howstuffworks.com/social-networking-death.htm>

<http://www.deadsoci.al/features>

**Week Thirteen: Presentations**

This week we will hear student presentations.

**Week Fourteen: Presentations**

This week we will hear student presentations.

**Week Fifteen: The Future**

Students will spend the last week discussing emerging trends and the evolution of these technologies. Readings will include “The Web is Dead, Long Live the Internet” by Chris Anderson and a report from the Pew Internet and American Life Project about Digital Life in 2025.

**Final: A take-home essay final will be given to you the last week of classes and due by 10 a.m., Friday December 12. (Although you are more than welcome to submit it before that.**