# Group Hacktivist Multimodal Project

Project Overview

The readings and assignments in the first half of this course have helped us become more familiar with the ways texts and technologies mediate our identities, behaviors, and thoughts. We've learned how cultural and racial stereotypes are perpetuated in video game environments, and how our own (and others') identities are constructed online in social media networks. Through the process of mediation, texts and technologies shape our selves and how we see the world.
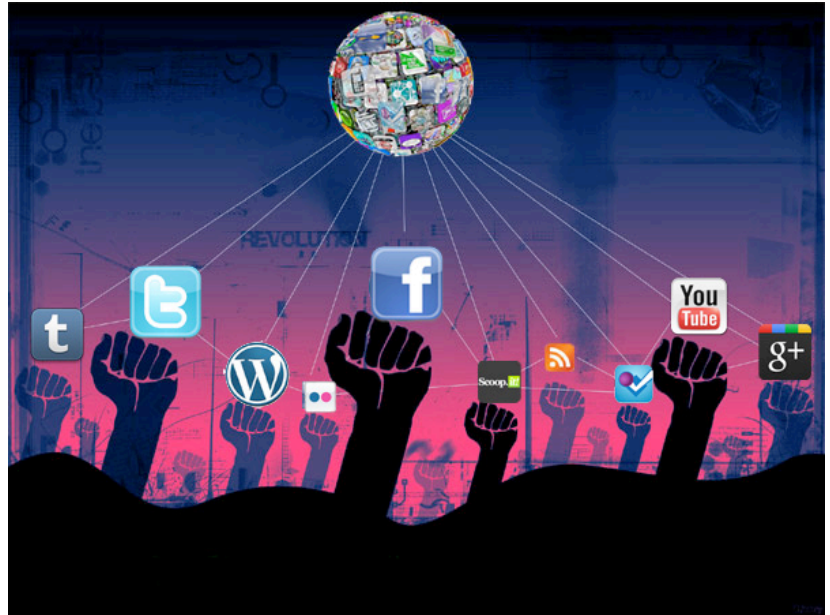
But we are not completely determined by these mediators. We also have the power to exert agency over the media we use by appropriating and adapting them for our own purposes, and by seeing them as tools that we can modify or mix to make them more suitable to our goals.

For this assignment, you will work in teams to appropriate a digital medium, application, or network to forward a social or cultural agenda. In the spirit of experimentation, this project asks that you try on the identity of the "hacktivist." Throw aside any negative connotations you might think of when you hear the term "hacker." Instead, I want you to understand hacking as "taking control of media and appropriating, adapting, modifying or mixing it in creative ways rather than simply going along with the agendas of those who manufactured or control the use or distribution of the media" (*UDL*, 101). The successful hacktivist does all this, but s/he is also

A Hacktivist Agenda Could Be...

*A social media campaign organizing initiatives addressing hunger/povery in Athens County.

*A Wordpress website that raises awareness of an issue regarding digital literacy, or the digital divide.

*An LGBTQ or Sexuality Awareness video posted to Youtube.

*A Twitter campaign that addresses identity and cyber-bullying among middle school students.

attuned to a particular agenda or goal for social or cultural change. We'll look at examples in class, but the purpose of your project will ultimately be collaboratively decided on between you and other members of your group. Whatever you decide to do, it should be something your group is passionate about, something that you feel needs to be addressed, improved, or that is controversial and that you feel people need to be aware of.

Reflective Essay

This project also requires that your group collaboratively draft a Reflective Essay that explains your activist piece. This essay should reflect on the process of brainstorming and creating the project, define your activist goals, and how you worked to appropriate a particular media, social network, or digital application to accomplish those goals. In other words, how did you adapt, subvert or modify the medium to suit your purposes? What is the overall argument or message of your piece? Who is the audience? How well did you reach that audience to accomplish your agenda?

Important Dates

- 2/27 - Introduce assignment and form groups
- 3/11 – Draft Project Proposal in class; proposals due to instructor via course wiki by noon 3/12
- 3/13 - Lab day; groups work on projects
- 3/18 – Define political, cultural, and/or rhetorical goals of project (in-class activity)
- 3/20 – Lab day; groups work on projects and begin drafting reflective essays
- 3/27 – Groups meet during class time to finish project; no whole class meeting
- Due between 3/28 and 3/30

Requirements
- Activist Project Length: 1000-2000 words, depending on medium
- Reflective Essay Length: 600-900 words
- Main project should be embedded or linked to on individual group members' Wordpress blogs;
- Reflective essay should be emailed to instructor

Evaluation Criteria

- Project appropriates/utilizes a digital application, medium or social network (e.g. Wordpress, Twitter, Tumblr, Youtube, Weebly, iMovie)
- Project forwards a social, political or cultural agenda that is agreed upon by group members
- Project is multimodal in design : uses modes other than text – images, video, sound, etc, to accomplish its goals
- Project engages the ethic of hacktivism, appropriating a technology to effect social change
- Project is accompanied by collaboratively written Reflective Essay that details its creation, rhetorical goals, and appropriation of a technology

Resources

- Chapter 7 in UDL explains the main concepts that underpin this project (appropriation, ideology, hacking, etc). Chapter 11 provides strategies and tools for group collaboration. Chapter 4 explains and provides strategies for multimodal design. The reading by metac0m "What is Hacktivism?" is also central to this project. Additional outside resources: 11 Twitter Activists You Should Be Following. Huffpost.com; The 6 Activist Functions of Technology. Meta-activism.org; Intro to Digital Acitivism. Mary Joyce. Youtube.

- My office hours are from 10:00-12:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but I can also be available by appointment if those times don't work for you. I'm more than happy to meet with you to discuss any issues you are having with your project .In addition, I will answer any questions emailed before 8pm that day (with a few exceptions, such as when I am travelling for conferences), and often within an hour or so. I'm here to facilitate your success and welcome your questions and concerns.

- The Writing Center can help with any issues you are having if you prefer to work with them or if you need additional help. They are a great resource, and I have never had a student paper that didn't go up at least a letter grade after working with the peer tutors there. It's best, though, to visit the Writing Center with specific questions or with my feedback on your paper so that they can give you targeted help.