What is media editing? To answer this question, one must first ask what is meant by the word "media"? According to dictionary.com media is "the means of communication, as radio and television, newspapers, and magazines, that reach or influence people widely". Since media relates to communicating to people, it is already easy to realize how broad of a word it is since there are so many ways that people communicate with each other. However, these forms of communication can be broken into two main categories: spoken and written word.

Both of these categories are involved in so many different mediums that we use today. A medium is "a means or agency for communicating or diffusing information, news, etc, to the public." In the case of spoken word, several mediums are used. Television, movies, phone calls, and music all fall into this category of spoken word to some degree because they use the human voice somehow. In written word, we have mediums such as social networking, books, texting, and final exam papers. These are not the only mediums that exist, but they are good examples of some of the popular mediums of the day. It is also important to note that sometimes a medium can be found within a medium. For example, I use the computer as a medium for Facebook, but Facebook is also a medium for posting statuses and chatting with friends. So, in the end, anything we use for communication is a medium of some kind.

Of course, by now it must be noted that the only forms of media that have been described are those that deal with actual words and language. If media only consisted of words, then we wouldn't have many of the forms of entertainment that we have today. There is a saying that a picture is worth a thousand words, and it is true that media does not just involve words but also pictures. Many people use art as a form of communication. This is evident in how advertisement is so prominent in America. Yes, many advertisements involve words, however, there is a huge design element that goes into it. After all, who would want to read a brochure that only contained text scrawled into uninteresting paragraphs? The use of color and shape draws our eyes and it communicates a certain subconscious message to us. As a designer, I know that when I am designing anything, I need to pay attention to the colors I use as well as the layout. Say I used the color red for a relaxing spa, I'm not necessarily portraying the correct image because reds are considered loud whereas blues are more quiet.

Another form of media that is outside the literal word is music. In America, music is a huge cultural center. There are so many different genres that have their different styles

and keys. But why is music a form of media if it needs to communicate a message? Well, the most obvious answer is that music has lyrics that are trying to convey some sort of emotion or moral. However, if we turn to classical music where no words are ever spoken, we can also say that a message is being portrayed. Any musician can testify to the power of a piece without words. There is something about the melodies and harmonies, the dissonance and sweeter tones that speak deeply to the soul. The tension of a chord can cause an uncomfortable feeling and the release of that tension into more flowing tones are just one example of how music communicates. Most music is also written with a story in mind, so it is easy to see images whilst listening. There is also evidence that music can be used to heal others as shown by the practice of music therapy.

In all, media editing to me is based heavily in communication. Sometimes media is put forth without a message at all, but more often than not, media is meant to put forth some idea. This has been drilled into me through graphic design. When creating a logo or picture of any kind, it needs to have meaning and communicate a message otherwise it loses its appeal. This became even more evident to me through my Photoshop projects, specifically my final Photoshop project in module one (http://mediaediting.wikispaces.asu.edu/Victoria+Janacek). Most of the references I used were obscure enough that the message didn't come across and thus, it was not interesting. However, once I explained all of the elements, people became interested. This alone shows why the message of media is extremely important.

Of course, media does not have to have a serious message. Sometimes the most memorable pieces are those that employ parody. This also brings about the idea that, when editing media, the purpose of the project should be kept in mind. If the project is meant to make someone laugh, the path to get there will be much different from a project that is meant to make someone cry. When I worked with my group to make a video, I had no direction or purpose. Consequently, the video did not have the effect that it could have when the audience watched people burst out into laughter. While this video did not fall on the most positive note, I rectified that error through my final video project. In my final video project I knew I wanted a serious tone, so I wrote a script beforehand to make sure that my point came across. Then, when the audio had been recorded, I found videos that would help further my point. Consequently, my final video was much more successful than my former video.

Speaking of purpose, sometimes it is also important to pay attention to whether or not the media project is practical or not. Before even starting on my interface projects, I had decided then and there if my idea was going to be practical. Once I had that aspect planned, I could continue with my projects. That is why my car interfaces turned out as well as they did. Without thinking about my premise for the design, I would not have arrived at my final conclusion. In fact, I would have been lost.

However, while my process usually consists of planning, some people choose to create media without a premise. Personally, I cannot understand how someone can arrive at a coherent conclusion without planning, but I know that it can be done. Most people that I have spoken to though have a plan. During class, my group would talk to each other about our ideas, and we would always know what we were doing before working. There were a couple times when we didn't have any ideas though, and the end result reflected that lack of direction.

Overall, media editing is directly tied to communication. Sometimes a picture can communicate a message more than writing can. Many times though it takes planning in order to make a successful media project. The success of a project depends so much on its purpose that it's hard to not have a process going into it. Finally, media is essential in today's world. From advertising to movies, we survive on media every day. That is why it is important to understand media and the ideas and processes behind it.