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Media Editing

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Media's function in society and the way we produce and consume it is currently in an ultimately transformative state. Consumers are now involved as creators, cultivating worldwide audiences through several different means and types of media. Long form media such as books and movies having reign over what an audience sees is giving way to shorter, more involved and interactive pieces. The means of distribution are also much different, creators having a direct line to their audience without a large distributing company making changes to their product in the name of commercial viability. This dramatic overhaul of how media is presented will lead to an interesting generation of diverse creations from people in disparate regions and cultural backgrounds. As Francis Ford Coppola once said, "Suddenly, one day some little fat girl in Ohio is gonna be the new Mozart...and make a beautiful film with her father's little camera-corder, and for once this whole professionalism about movies will be destroyed, forever, and it will really become an art form."

In our first unit, we covered text and graphics and focused on the creation of engaging and interesting pictures in Photoshop. What the project ultimately revealed is the ease of use of this and other programs like it for the common person. While there is a definitive learning curve, it is manageable, and the once impenetrable field of graphic design is now conquerable by any common person with a copy of an application like Photoshop. The media that I created for one of the project had to do with a figure known as Lil B. The image contained a quote from Lil B, as well as his picture over a landscape background. The relevance of this of course is that Lil B uses meme generators to further awareness of his cause. He incorporates his catchphrases and beliefs into funny pictures as a means to introduce people to his music and his ideology, which is a microcosm of how new media is going to reshape the way people discover and create new things.

The audio project was similar. Audacity proved relatively easy to use but a little bit restrictive on the user interface front. Ultimately, I mashed up two works by the musical group Death Grips, which, once again, holds significance with the class.

Death Grips have released most of their music for free and under creative commons, with the exception of their debut major label album *The Money Store*. After releasing their next LP *No Love Deep Web* for free against the wishes of the label, they were promptly dropped. Death Grips uses the internet in interesting ways to promote their work. They have started several ARGs, most notably the one that led to the eventual leak of *No Love Deep Web*. They bait their fans and, with the fans' cooperation, release more material to the world. This type of resourceful, self-starter distribution is key to reforming distribution as a whole into a more innovative and in-touch process.

For the movie-making portion of the class, I was able to make an entirely new piece of film from bits of film and sound that I found under creative commons sources. This ability to mash up media that has been seen by very few to create entirely new media is a growing trend on the Internet. There are piles of stock footage and useable audio on sites like [archive.org](http://archive.org) that haven't seen the light of day for decades that can be reused and repurposed for just about any purpose. Anyone with a low budget can come in and create their own works of art from these resources. It provides an exciting opportunity for media editors everywhere.

The social networks assignment put into perspective how I use social networks both on and off the internet. For the final project, I was forced to recall each and every social platform I had used over the past ten or so years, and it was extremely eye-opening. The way we interact is constantly being changed through newer and more streamlined services that serve to bolster creativity and different methods of creating all types of media and discussion. It gave me new ideas for the creation of services that can even greater increase the creative output of social network users. I asked myself questions like, what separates Livejournal from Twitter? What abilities and restrictions can a website allow a user that helps them create? It was an interesting experiment and a good opportunity to research and rediscover how social networks have shaped me.

Being that I have an interest in graphic design, the unit that focused on interfaces was similarly interesting and thought-provoking. The way we make our services easy to use, understandable, yet nuanced in their technical ability and fully

functional, is something of an art form in itself that should not be ignored. Web designers everywhere struggle to come up with the simplest and most effective way to design something to be used by many different people. Being able to experiment with this problem in the class was an excellent opportunity and necessary, especially as it pertains to the presentation of the media that we were and continue to be tasked to create. A good interface, ideally, can properly present media in an interesting and engaging way, and is therefore of utmost importance.

The spatial interventions unit was also fairly eye opening. Going out into the DC hallway with my group, we were able to come up with several interesting ideas on how to create a more inviting and welcoming space for passersby. Each and every space holds that opportunity and can become more interesting for the user with a bit of ingenuity. I was also able to create a visual representation of a space described to me by a classmate, also an interesting experiment. Being able to capture the essence of someone's major memories and past life experiences was a fun and engaging activity and the whole unit changed my perception of the spaces around me.

The final unit, editing Life, made me think critically about the ways in which I engage with and provide information to social media. My group came up with several examples of how we hand over important information about our lives and activities to the Internet and to major organizations. However, the projects also opened my eyes to the many different physical ways that I engage with my network. There is a vast difference between typing, drawing, and using an iOS device, and some ways in which my information is tracked are done with no interaction between me and my devices, such as location services. Overall, the unit, and the class in general introduced new ways to think about media, ; how it is consumed, produced, and distributed, as well as how to change it for the coming generation of interactivity.