

Media Editing – Garrett Burns

When I entered this class, I assumed this would just be a class about editing movies, film, or clips. When people think about “editing”, they commonly think about the medium they edit the most and shut out all of the other media, and my case, this medium was film. I forgot that more than one medium exists, that as a society we can edit more than just what we see in front of us, or what our interests are, and we can learn from those different mediums we ignored before to give us a better glance at our own future. This class taught me almost right away that our future lies on all of these different mediums collectively as well as other mediums that we don’t even know exist yet.

We were challenged right away to formulate our own opinions on what we saw, to express ourselves through very unconventional means. In the first week of class, we were asked to make a piece of art based on a tweet by rapper Kanye West:



This was the piece I made for that assignment, it was inspired not by the actual words Kanye West said, but rather by the whole point behind placing all of your thoughts on the internet for everyone to see. When Kanye West tweets about something, he’s obviously trying to express some kind of point, he has some kind of goal, so in his own image, he’s a scholar

and he knows what he’s talking about. Anyone that doesn’t get what he’s trying to say or simply doesn’t like Kanye West would pass it off as annoying noise. That’s what I wanted with this piece, to express both sides of the spectrum. This falls under “media editing” because I’m taking some sort of idea or subject, and editing the medium with which it fell under to express a point. In this case a tweet by Kanye West and a few extra images.

Image/text editing is just one of the seemingly endless types of media people can edit; this class had 7 modules, which is actually just a codename for 7 different media, which we edited. We covered sound, film, social networks, interfaces, and other means for people to communicate with others, which is what I think the point behind media editing is, changing and challenging the way people communicate with one another. Communication is one of the most important things that humans need to survive, and the whole process of inventing new technology with more technological advancements than what existed a year ago is on the idea that communication between humans still needs to be easier. I think that this class challenges that idea that communication needs to be easy enough to be almost mindless, and it makes the people who look at what is made in the process of media editing think about what the person they're communicating with is trying to say. If they can't figure it out, they come up with their own meaning. This hopefully would happen often, so now there are several different meanings behind one idea, and then the people communicate amongst themselves in a much more mindful manner to come up with a universal meaning behind one piece.

In our film module final assignment (mine can be found [here](#)), we had to address a problem that we found to be important to society, and give our opinion on it. In some cases, like mine, the idea we were against was a political idea and thus could be considered controversial, thus spurring conversation among the people who viewed the piece. This further proves that point of the concept of media editing being a means of challenging the status quo, a means for people to express whatever opinions they have through means other than just outright saying them, so the people have a chance to actually think about what it is they're hearing or seeing.

Media editing asks us to explore ideas that are as of yet very new and unexplored, like our final module, which was about life editing, we had to take data from a life blog that spanned over three years and come up with our own meaning behind this person's data. The concept of life blogging is very new, and what we did as part of this assignment actually contributed to ongoing research on the idea. We had to "scrapbook" what we found interesting in the data and try to come up with a story behind this person's life. This means that even someone's own life can be a medium for people to edit as they see fit, should they have the material to do so. This proves media editing to be an inescapable phenomenon in modern day society, because everyone's always trying to edit things to make it better or to express some kind of point, and when someone's life itself can be edited to do these things, and

it proves that we're literally living in an edited society, where everything is the way it is because it was changed or edited to get to that point.

Maybe this is why some of the best ideas in history came from people or groups that thought beyond the status quo in order to express something, like Elvis and Buddy Holly challenging what music was at the time to make Rock 'n' Roll, Charles Darwin's theory of Natural Selection, or Galileo's notion that not everything revolves around Earth. Because of media editing, we're living in a society that is chockfull of Charles Darwins and Galileos, where everyone constantly challenges the popular ideas that exist in society. This could explain why society has advanced more in the last century than it has in the entirety of human existence, because as [Trevor Paglen](#) said, the world is constantly being re-created by the feedback of each generation, and to the standards of those people that challenge what we see and think. Since those types of people are becoming more and more frequent, the world will keep changing even more quickly than it has in the past century. With all of this in mind, I consider the concept media editing solely responsible for the world we have today, both the good and the bad (Was the Holocaust not an attempt to "edit" society?).

This class was a huge eye-opener, where we were constantly challenged to formulate our own opinions and not really care about the consequences of those ideas, and to think of what ideas we could use to further society even more than it already has. A few of us, myself included, have had ideas in this class that will definitely stretch further in our education as well as our future endeavors. This class has made me much more excited to see how the world progresses, because it would seem that media editing very well could be the most important thing to ever exist.