

TETRAD PROJECT

Introduction

This project is the first of two designed to expand your technological imagination and give you an opportunity to explore the significance of a specific technology in more detail than is possible in lecture and discussion. The idea here is that critical achievements gained in these projects are extensible, developing reflective practices relevant to other technologies. In this project you will develop a "tetrad" commentary inspired by McLuhan's interpretive model of the same name from *Laws of Media*. The expressive goal of this project is to present an insightful and creative view of a particular technological object or media form that facilitates new connections and thinking about its use, effects, and cultural value. The pedagogical goal is to practice *critically imagining relations* between specific technologies and their environment (including, but not only, human beings), and to organize and convey your thinking in both visual and textual form.

Details

There are two components to the project:

1. an original image (Tetrad Image), and
2. a text-based commentary (Tetrad Commentary)

Tetrad Image

For the image you will create an original tetrad that uses imagery (pictures, graphics, video) to represent/suggest the specific ideas you formulate for each of the four laws. Be creative here as to how the selected imagery/media relate to the ideas you have for the particular law: they can be *iconic*, representing a key object, process, or system (cultural, social, technical) that is enhanced, retrieved, etc.; they can be *critical*, representing various effects or implications in positive or negative light; they can be *symbolic or metaphorical*, presenting imagery that is not literally representing the objects, processes or systems that are referred to in your actual commentary on the law but instead provide another layer of interpretation. In addition to the imagery for the four laws, you will also need to represent the subject of your tetrad in the center, and some information about structure (the quadrant lines and key - enh/obs/ret/rev). You are free to add your own style and aesthetic strategy to the image, just make sure these components are there:

- ✓ imagery for the laws
- ✓ image for the subject of the tetrad
- ✓ tetrad structure info

Tetrad Commentary

The written component is a document that provides commentary on the image you produce. The commentary will have 5 sections - an overview paragraph and four sections on the laws, each headed by a *keyword or keyphrase* that expresses the central insight you are trying to express for each of the four areas of the tetrad. Please use the template document for this component, downloadable from the website. The template will include instructions for each section, similar to the prospectus.