Goals:

We begin with the understanding that as media technologies change, they radically restructure our experience of time. And because we are living through such a restructuring now, we also believe that time provides a powerful heuristic lens through which to study media today. We want to ask how time, media and human experience interact at various scales: from the moment-by-moment encounter of the individual with a computer screen to the work done by clocks and books and stories to imagine and structure the progress of centuries. And at the end of the day, we want to see if we can rejoin the study of media and psychological development to the study of media and social change in ways that might reshape our understanding of each.

This course is an experiment, a chance to think across subfields rarely joined and to do it in good company. As we work together to explore this area, we hope you will encounter new literatures, develop new questions for further research, and identify new methods you can bring to bear on that work.

Readings:

At your favorite independent bookstore or online you should buy:


Other readings, and all of those from the psychological sciences, are journal articles and book chapters, and will be available on Canvas and the Web.

Assignments and Grading:
Your first and most important assignment is to come to each class session well prepared to discuss the texts with your colleagues. The other assignments are designed to help you put different perspectives in conversation with each other and with media in the world.

“Opening” a Text for Class Discussion: Due Date TBA (10%)

At some point in the course, you will be asked to “open” a text or texts for class discussion. This is a more formal proposition than it may sound. You will be the primary discussion leader. To do it effectively, you will need to be able to summarize the key arguments of the text and suggest how they connect to themes in our ongoing discussion in a brief presentation. You will also need to identify and propose key questions for subsequent discussion. Finally, you will need to bring a “media object” with which to help the group think through the issues raised by the readings.

Analysis Papers (15% each):

You will be asked to write three brief analyses of the readings across the quarter, due in class in weeks 3, 5 and 7. In each paper, you will choose a media object that is important to you. You will then choose two readings from the preceding weeks written on a similar theme from different methodological or analytical perspectives. Compare and contrast the goals of these papers, their methods and their findings. Then bring them to bear on your media object. What does the individual application of each paper’s frameworks gain you? What might the study of your object gain if you could somehow bring the two papers approaches together?

Papers should be 4-5 pages long (1200-1500 words), double-spaced.

Final Paper: The Day in the Life Project (25%):

You will be asked to work with a new and one-of-a-kind record of a single person’s digital media use. The record you will review is from a large project that is capturing screenshots of smartphone and laptop use from people around the country and the world. We have collected about 25 million screenshots from about 400 people, one screenshot for every five seconds that the devices are turned on. We will make available one person’s record of screenshots for a single day (this will be thousands of images that you can view on a computer). More on how we will access the images when we meet in class.

You will be asked to bring together a subset of required and recommended readings in order to write an 8-10 page analysis of that media use. You will be asked to give a short presentation about your analysis at the last class meeting. The final paper is due on [date].
Participation (20%): We’re going to be relying on each other a lot as we adventure here. That means everybody needs to come to class prepared to ask good questions, build on one another’s contributions, and help move discussions forward.

**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1: January 10 -- Scale**

What is Time? And how can it help us think about media?

**Required:**


**Week 2: January 17 – Temporality**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 3: January 24 -- Duration**

**Required:**


*Recommended:*


**Week 4: January 31 Time domains**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 5: February 7 -- Acceleration/deceleration**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


F.T. Marinetti, “The Futurist Manifesto” (1909)


**Week 6: February 14 -- Rhythms and synchronicity**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 7: February 21 -- Sequence**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


Wang, Z., & Lang, A. (2012). Reconceptualizing excitation transfer as motivational activation changes and a test of the television program context effects. *Media Psychology, 15*(1), 68-92. (sequence effects)


**Week 8: February 28 -- Fragmentation**

**Required:**


Reeves, B., et al. (2017). Screenomics: A framework to capture and analyze personal life experiences and the ways that technology shapes them. (Submitted for publication). (read first third and look at examples in second half).


**Recommended:**
Yeykelis, Leo, James J. Cummings, and Byron Reeves (2014). Multitasking on a single device: Arousal and the frequency, anticipation, and prediction of switching between media content on a computer. *Journal of Communication, 64.1*: 167-192.


**Week 9: March 7 -- Aging and development/Lifecycle**

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


**Week 10: DATE TBA – PRESENTATIONS OF FINAL PAPERS**