

Dead Media Research and Poster Session (Online Poster)

Deadline: Sunday April 17 at midnight (Grace period Monday 18 April Midnight)

Format: *Poster format:* You can produce your poster any way you wish but you must submit it in *electronic* form by posting it on your blog. (Post your blog address in the assignment link when you are ready to “submit” your blog post for grading.) If you create your poster on poster paper, take a photo of it or scan it and upload the high-resolution photo to your blog and Moodle. You can easily use Powerpoint if you have that program, or Google Slides if you wish. The free website design [Canva](#) is also really handy for creating easy Infographics/Posters. This is a POSTER session, so your final project should be a **single page**. See Doc McGrail’s example for an idea of how it might look.

This assignment is adapted from Professor Ryan Cordell’s “Technologies of Text” class from 2014. Used by permission. <http://f14tot.ryancordell.org/assignments/dead-media/> Here’s a slightly adapted version of his introduction to the idea of a “dead media poster”:

In “Imagining the New Media Encounter” (one of this week’s readings), Alan Liu suggests that “The *déjà vu* haunting of new by old media is clear enough.” New technologies and new modes of communication draw, both technically and metaphorically, from older modes—including “dead media” that have, to all surface appearances, entirely disappeared.

To better understand this haunting, you will work this week to research a historical media form and/or technology that flourished and then faded from popular view. Some might call this “[media archaeology](#).” These new media might be very old or relatively new: new textual technologies have emerged since the invention of writing, while some popular technologies introduced as recently as a decade ago are already obsolete. When we talk about a definition of “dead media,” think in these terms: it should not be so completely and totally banished from human culture that you can’t find it, but it should not just be passe or “no longer hip.”

You might consider this list from the original [Dead Media Project](#) as you plan your topic.

You will prepare a conference-style poster to present your “dead medium” to your classmates and instructor. If you’ve never created a research poster, consult the references on the “[poster session](#)” [Wikipedia page](#) for writing and design tips.

Here are some questions that you could answer as you explore your dead medium:

1. How did this medium innovate, diverge, or respond to even earlier media? What precisely was new about it when it was the “new media?”
2. What were the cultural effects of this medium during its heyday? Did it produce substantive changes in domestic life, politics, art, or other spheres?
3. Were there competing media that attempted to meet the same needs or fill the same niche as your chosen medium?
4. How and why did your medium decline in importance?

5. What were the lasting effects or products of your medium? Was it a media “dead end” or did new media evolve from it? How does your medium linger in descendants, images, or language?

You should not attempt on your poster to tell us everything that you might say about your chosen medium in a written paper nor explain its every nuance. When designing think CONCISE, INFORMATIVE, and CREATIVE. The idea here is that the form’s restriction (paradoxically) promotes your creativity, as some might argue the formal restrictions of certain poetic forms force the poet toward ever-more-deft feats of language.

Here is an almost comprehensive list of “dead media”: [Dead Media Project](#)

Here are some ideas that other students in Prof. Ryan Cordell’s Class at Northeastern University tried in 2014:

- Human Sacrifice
- Silent Film
- Cinerama
- Laserdisc
- Curse Tablets
- Floriography
- Saved by the Bell
- poster stamps
- Trial by ordeal (bound submersion)
- Automatic Typewriters
- Hit Clips
- Town Crier
- Invisible Ink

Grading Rubric: Your Dead Media Project...

1. Uses a poster format that includes textual as well as visual displays to succinctly, concisely and thoughtfully provide the following. A poster is on a single page (although often larger than 8 ½ X 11. Since we can enlarge online, it’s ok to create something that can be expanded/contracted on the screen.
2. Discusses some of the cultural impacts and effects of this medium during its “life”:
 - a. how the (dead) medium innovated, diverged, or responded to even earlier media; describes precisely what was new about it when it was the “new media.”
 - b. describes the cultural effects of this medium during its heyday;
 - c. describes how it produced substantive changes in domestic life, politics, art, or other spheres.

- d. describes competing media that attempted to meet the same needs or fill the same niche as your chosen medium.
- e. describes how and why your medium declined in importance.
- f. describes the lasting effects or products of your (dead) medium;
- g. describes whether it was a media “dead end” or if new media evolved from it;
- h. discussed whether your (dead) medium lingered in descendants, images, or language.

3. Includes correct citation of sources and credits photos/images used.

All 3 of the above completed with answers to some of 2a-2h ***exceeding expectations*** for originality, design, insight, research, humor or ideas=**grade of A**

All 3 of the above completed with strong answers to 2a-2h =**grade of B**

All 3 of the above completed with some answers to 2a-2h =**grade of C**

All 3 of the above completed with sketchy, incomplete or inadequate answers to 2a-2h completed=**grade of D**

Fewer than the 3 above completed with unsatisfactory answers to any of the questions=**grade of F**

Doc McGrail’s example would receive a grade of B.