

ENG 5900

Digital Literacies



Space Critique



An important part of this class is developing the tools to critique and analyze digital spaces. For the Space Critique, you'll be asked to choose a digital space that you use regularly or would like to learn more about. Then, you will break down the elements of the space. The space you choose must be multimodal, active, and social. The space should be small enough that you can follow *all* posts in the space. Consider a Facebook group or page, a small hashtag on Instagram or Twitter, a single small subreddit, or a message board. Based on what we've read in the class to this point, you'll critique the space. Your critique should include analysis of the following:

- **Modes of Communication:** What modes do users use to communicate in addition to alphabetic text (audio, video, images, gestures, emoji, etc.)? How are these modes used and for what purposes?
- **Affordances and Constraints:** In what ways does the space allow for and limit certain ways of doing things, thinking, or being? Try to go beyond obvious affordances and constraints to explore deep social identities that the space encourages or limits.
- **Discourse Systems Used:** What specialized language, images, gestures, etc. are used in the space that may be difficult for outsiders to understand? Consider language and media people new to the space would struggle to understand.
- **Control:** Who can make, edit, or delete content other than the original posters? Are rules about control clear? How is and how often is power exercised?
- **Collaboration:** Do users offer feedback to other users or co-create content with them? Is this collaboration amicable, common, and obvious?

Objectives

- To put tools learned in the class into practice
- To deeply analyze and critique a digital space
- To critique social aspects of digital media

Requirements

- Projects must be between 1500 and 3000 words.
- Projects must include sample content from the space, such as images, video, audio, or links.

Due Dates

- Completion drafts are due Tuesday, February 1st
- Peer response is due Friday, February 4th
- Final drafts are due Tuesday, February 8th

Screen Capture

You are required to use content from your space. You can download copies, include links, or take screen captures. If you are unsure how to take a screen capture on your device, google the device name and "screen capture" (e.g. "iPhone 10 screen capture").

Submitting Content

Please make a document in Google Drive and write your Space Critique there. Your document should be named with your name, the class, and the specific assignment (e.g. “Malcolm Reynolds ENG 5900 Space Critique”). When you have finished your critique, please move the document into your shared folder for the class.

Incorporating Media

When incorporating media, please follow these three guidelines:

- Does the media help us understand points in your critique? If the answer is no, find different media. For example, if you’re critiquing a twitter hashtag, an image of the Twitter logo does not help us understand. Instead, you try to include an image of a tweet that includes the hashtag and represents a point you are making.
- Is the media placed strategically within the critique? You want to control when your readers look at the content. For example, if you want to show a screen capture of a tweet that represents your hashtag, you should include the image immediately after you’ve explained your point. This will allow your reader to understand what they are seeing.
- Is the media referenced in the text? Your reader should know what you want them to notice about media included. Try to guide them to the aspect of the media that you think is important. You can do this in the body of the text (e.g. “As you can see in the image to the right...”) or you can do this by adding a caption that explains what to look for.

Additional media tips:

- To add an image to a Google Drive document, simply drag the image into the document. You can resize the image, change its position, and add captions.
- Please anchor links. I should not see the URL in the body of the text. Instead, select the text you want to link, right click, and select “link” to anchor the URL to your selected text. If you’ve done this correctly, it should look [like this](#).
- Videos and audio cannot be directly incorporated into a Google Drive document. Instead, you can post a link to this content.

Grading

Grading for the Space Critique will be based on how well you meet the following criteria:

Expectations	Exceptional	Met	Not Met
Selection of the Space	You have chosen a space that is multimodal, active, social, and small enough for the assignment.	You have chosen a space that is appropriate for the assignment.	The space chosen is inappropriate for the assignment in one or more of the selection criteria.
Understanding of the Space	You have thoroughly explored the space and are an expert in using features.	You have explored the space and understand how to use features.	Clear understanding of the space is not demonstrated.

Grading (Continued)

Expectations	Exceptional	Met	Not Met
Focus	You have focused only on your space and the five points of analysis.	You have focused on your space and the five points of analysis with only minor sidetracks.	Focus shifts away from the space and/or the five points of analysis regularly.
Exploration of Modes Used	You have an expert understanding of why and when certain modes are used.	You explain why certain modes are used in different contexts.	The modes used and/or why certain modes are used is not explored in depth.
Exploration of Affordances & Constraints	You explore what the space encourages and limits users to do, think, and be. You go beyond obvious affordances and constraints.	You explore what the space encourages and limits users to do, think, and be.	No affordances and constraints or only obvious ones are explored.
Exploration of Discourse	You have explored the discourse of the space, offering specific examples of discourse in use.	You have explored the discourse of the space, offering ways of making meaning that may not be obvious to outsiders.	Only obvious examples of discourse in use are used or what the discourse practices mean is not addressed.
Exploration of Control	You explain the social structure in detail, including who controls the space, how control is exercised, and what that means for users.	You explain the social structure of the space, including who controls the space and how they control it.	Control is not addressed or control only focuses on individual users.
Exploration of Collaboration	You have found unique examples of co-creation of content or feedback.	You have found examples of co-creation of content or feedback. If none are present, you explain why.	Examples of collaboration are not included or a lack of collaboration is not explained.
Use of Media	You have used media to enhance your points. At minimum, you have used 6 pieces of outside content.	You have used media as examples of your points. At minimum, you have used 3 pieces of outside content.	Fewer than 3 pieces of outside content are not included, or content used does not connect with points made.
Organization	You have organized your points in a way that enhances meaning. Media is placed in a way that helps readers to understand.	You have organized your points in a reasonable way. Media is placed appropriately.	Organization impedes understanding. Text and media are organized in a confusing or arbitrary way.

Grading (Continued)

Expectations	Exceptional	Met	Not Met
Manuscript Preparation	You have responded to your peers' comments thoughtfully.	You have responded to your peers' comments.	Peers comments are not responded to or response is minimal.
Attention to Assignment	Your project was within the word limits, was submitted on time, and was submitted with the proper name in your Google Drive shared folder.	Your project is close to the word limits, was submitted on time, and was submitted appropriately in Google Drive.	The project falls well outside the word limits, was submitted late, and/or was not submitted appropriately in Google Drive.

Your grade for the Space Critique will be determined by how many of the criteria you meet or exceed. One "not met" cancels out one "exceptional."

		# Exceptional	# Met	# Not Met
A	100	11-12	0-1	0
	97.5	10	2	0
	95	9	3	0
A-	92.5	7-8	4-5	0
	90	6	6	0
B+	88.5	4-5	7-8	0
	87	3	9	0
B	85	2	10	0
	83	1	11	0
B-	80	0	12	0
C+	78.5	0	11	1
	77	0	10	2
C	75	0	9	3
	73	0	8	4