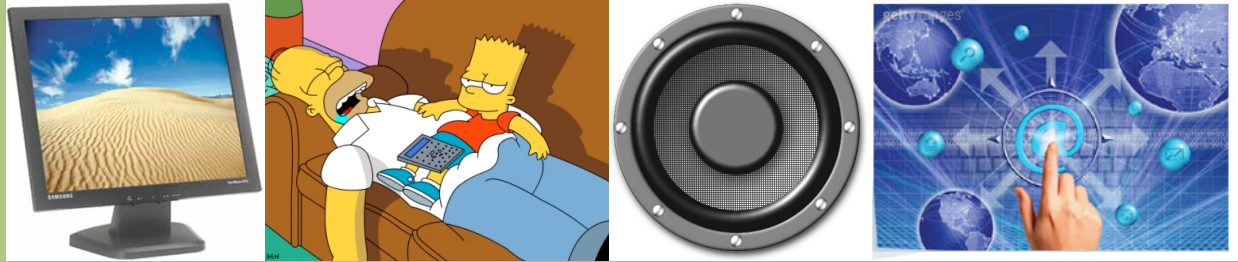


Media Diary & Paper

DUE Mon Sept 17



BCST 110 MEDIA IN SOCIETY, Fall 2007, M. Brown

Uses & Gratifications of Media

The Media Diary assignment requires that you keep a diary of and reflect on your daily media technology use for a total of 4 days (they do not have to be four consecutive days), then write a paper about the experience. For one of those days, you are required to give up your favorite **entertainment** technology (MP3 player, PSP, computer, Radio, Web browsing, Television, Video Game, cell phone, DVDs, etc.).



This assignment is designed to make you aware of the extent to which all types of electronic media are woven into your daily routine. Specifically, the assignment should (a) enhance your awareness of the uses, functions, and gratifications of media technology use, and (b) serve as a vehicle for self-discovery whereby you closely examine taken-for-granted aspects of your personal media technology dependency. **This assignment has 3 phases.**

* **Phase 1** involves recording in a diary format for 2 days how much TV you watch, radio and music (CDs, etc.) you listen to, movies you watch, videos/DVDs you rent, and how much computer use and World Wide Web browsing you do; in short, what is your hour-to-hour media technology use? For each day, your diary should address these aspects of your media use:

(1) What medium did you use? (2) How long did you use it? (3) What did you use the medium for and what was the result (gratification)? (see back page for an example and a list of common gratifications).

* **Phase 2** involves GIVING UP your favorite medium for one whole day. If you normally watch television, try listening to the radio, surfing the Web, or reading print instead. On this day, you are to record in your diary the same information as the first 2 days (everything but your favorite medium) and note if your other media use and social life are affected by giving up your preferred medium.

* **Phase 3** involves writing your Media Diary **Paper**. The paper, 3-4 pages, double-spaced and stapled, should be a thoughtful analysis of the uses and gratifications received from media technologies in your daily life. The concept of media "uses and gratifications" has been discussed in class. It is important that you understand this approach to media and technology use so that you can apply it in your paper.

In your paper you should: (1) provide an overview of your media technology use - which medium is your most preferred? (2) what do you do with media? (ie: listen to music, Web sites, programs, shows, etc.); (3) describe how your preferred medium fits into your overall media use by referring to your diary; (4) address the conditions in which you normally use this medium (alone, with a friend, in a group, etc., and at what times); (5) explain what uses and gratifications you derive from media technology in general and your preferred medium in particular (does it fulfill any needs)? (6) discuss other types of media you replaced your favorite medium with, if any; and, (7) address how difficult it was to give up your favorite medium for a day. Was it harder than you thought it would be? Did the particular days you gave it up matter in any special way? Did not using your favorite medium affect your interpersonal relationships with others? If so, how and why--was it because you felt bored, anxious, out of touch, or something else?

The back page lists common Uses & Gratifications of media for your reference.

For reference, here are some specific Uses and Gratifications of media:

To relax	Escaping from problems and worries
To be entertained	Entering into an imaginary world
To forget about work or other things	Diversion or passing the time
To have something to do with friends	Identifying/empathizing with others
To pass the time, especially when bored	Reducing personal insecurity
To feel excited	Emotional release
To feel less lonely	Substitution for social contact
To get someone to do something for me	Getting information and advice
To communicate with others	Feeling connected with others
To learn things about myself and others	Resolving ambiguity or uncertainty
	Gaining insight into your life
	Finding support for your values

Sample Media Diary Entry:

Day 1 Sunday Sept 2

9am-12pm

- Listened to radio all morning as I got ready and did laundry and other housework.
- Turned on CNN to check on news for a few minutes.
- Played two games of Wii bowling.
- Composed & answered email for a while, searched for an apartment on craigslist.
- Searched online for tickets to concerts.

12pm-6pm

- Got sick of obnoxious radio commercials, so listened to streaming audio for a few hours while I worked on the computer.
- Burned copies of DVD for friends.
- Made a new playlist in iTunes.
- Sent text messages.
- Updated my myspace page.
- Listened to NPR's "This American Life."

6pm-11pm

- Watched TV: evening news, Malcolm in the Middle, King of the Hill, Simpsons, Family Guy.
- Used laptop while I watched TV, writing letters, lesson plans and checking email.
- Read my two favorite political blogs and skimmed other websites.
- Went to bed, listened to NIN while I read.

Assignment Due Sept 17, 2007.