

Undergraduate Research Symposium May 18, 2018 Mary Gates Hall

Online Proceedings

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BLURRED REALITIES, ETHICAL QUESTIONS AND MEDIA CRITIQUES

Session Moderator: Barbara Miller, Art History, Western Washington University

MGH 171

12:30 PM to 2:15 PM

* Note: Titles in order of presentation.

Pokémon GO: A Historical and Analytical Consideration of Big Data in GPS Based Applications

Yurika M Harada, ,

Mary Gates Scholar, UW Honors Program

Mentor: Sarah Elwood, Geography

Mentor: Julian Barr, Geography

Mentor: Josef Eckert, UAA Advising

Digital media and mobile applications used for leisure have become increasingly interwoven into people's daily lives. Although playful mobile applications and their effects on society have been studied from a psychological, business, and computer science perspective, they have not been heavily engaged in the field of geography. Using Pokémon GO as a case study, this work aims to explore the ties between the corporate history and digital data of Niantic (the company that made Pokémon GO) and the effect it imposes on the "real world". It aims to conduct a spatial analysis of pokéstops and pokégyms in King County, Washington. In order to do this, a discourse analysis of online documents from Niantic, newspapers, social media, and fan websites recounting the company's history with previous applications and press interviews was conducted. In addition, a hotspot spatial analysis of Pokémon GO (pokéstops and pokégyms) overlaid on American Community Survey data was created. The purpose of this analysis is to see potential spatial inequalities that the application may have created. The findings show Niantic's lack of ethical consideration by how it deals with users data and privacy and as a result shows how the users have responded to issues in the past. The results also illustrate the skewing of data toward urban tech centers and the relative sparsity in rural areas, rendering use of the app pointless for certain users. Pokémon GO is the first location-based augmented reality mobile application to garner worldwide attention, and many application developers will likely use it as a point of reference when creating their own applications. It is imperative that developers and researchers learn from this application's successes as well as its failures.

Mishka Henner & Google Street View: Modern Surveillance Through New Media Art

Joshua (Josh) Hughes, Junior, Art History, English, Western Washington University

Mentor: Barbara Miller, Art History, Western Washington University, Western Washington University

Mentor: Barbara Miller, Art History, Western Washington University, Western Washington University

Google Street View operates as a global surveillance system. While it periodically gets updated, GSV constantly remains a tool available for any and all individuals with access to the internet. This means that even though photo quality increases, the scope of the database widens, and its various applications multiply. Over the last decade, various new media artists have explored the possibilities that come with GSV's all-encompassing database of images. Artist Mishka Henner has "appropriated" stills from GSV. Turning temporary online data into physical art, Henner subverts the notion that surveillance systems only serve as momentary fragments of information. In his series "No Man's Land", Henner documents roadside prostitutes captured by the GSV camera in rural Italy. His cropped images engage with the notion that as a public surveillance system, GSV captures bits of everyday life and turns them into data. In framing stills from GSV as aesthetic works of photography, Henner toys with concepts of privacy, detachment, and most importantly, modern surveillance. In this project, I explore the ways in which Henner uses Google Street View as a tool to make a commentary on the database system. Focusing on the globalization of public surveillance, Henner addresses worldwide issues of privacy in the internet age. His photography makes us think about the permanence of online data in an ever expanding information system. He suggests that through GSV we become data coded in 0s and 1s, forever part of the database.

Light Artists: A Potential Solution to *The Ecstasy of Communication*

Gabrielle (Gabby) Cagley, Senior, Art History, Western Washington University

Mentor: Barbara Miller, Art History, Western Washington University, Western Washington University

In *The Ecstasy of Communication*, Jean Baudrillard states that the invention of television and internet radically changed the perception of reality. As Baudrillard puts it, we no longer exist in three-dimensional space with clear boundaries separating one another. Reality is now a two dimensional plane, a flat reflective surface, within which boundaries have collapsed and the most intimate parts of our lives are exposed. This is what Baudrillard categorizes as obscene, an oversaturation of information and the all too visible. Many artists address similar concerns in their artistic practices. For example, through his unnerving puppet works and the series, *Eyes*, Tony Oursler explores surveillance. Blatantly exposing the increasing lack of privacy in current society, he highlights the realities of Baudrillard's claims. I contrast artists James Turrell and Olafur Eliasson to Oursler in their use of technology, showing the illuminating nature of electronic communication. Eliasson's *Din blinde passager* and Turrell's *Ganzfeld*, enhance the physical realm through light and color. Reinforcing a three-dimensional awareness, Eliasson and Turrell offer a solution to Baudrillard's obscenity. In comparing these artists, I show technology's ability to critique our society of increased surveillance through self-awareness, as well as demonstrate the potential positive relationships that technology can foster between individuals.

Ethical Media Coverage of Mass Shootings

Jenna Lee Marquez, ,

Mentor: Deborah Macey, Communication

Mass shootings are becoming a common occurrence in the media. Often times, in an effort to cover mass shootings, reporters are putting out information as soon as possible. The coverage often encompasses victims, suspects, death tolls and gruesome details. That practice leaves room for victims to become statistics and leaves many questions unanswered, which may result in insensitivity. The media has a duty to report the facts to the public, but what precautions should be taken when reporting on an issue that requires the lense of ethics? In an effort to better understand the perspective of journalists, a focus group consisting of media personnel was conducted. The focus groups allowed for open conversations between media personnel about the professional requirements of reporters during field reporting and the privacy expectations of victims. The focus group consisted of four media personnel who had been in the industry for several years and came from different backgrounds. The focus group was given five guided questions and the discussion was recorded. This study hopes to open up a discussion about the ethical coverage of

mass shootings. These results could yield future guidelines that pertain to the ethical coverage of mass shootings.

Organ Harvesting, and the Value of Brown and Black Bodies, and its Portrayal in Modern Media: Analyzing the Film, *Get Out*

Bryan Gregory Barnett, ,

Mentor: Ellen Moore, School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW Tacoma

This research will better illustrate the parallels of melanocyte harvesting as it has been shown in modern media, through the 2017 blockbuster, *Get Out*. Essentially, Melanocyte harvesting is the process in which melanocyte cells are stripped from their host and then distributed for their various benefits. Many benefits of melanocyte harvesting is not only their monetary value, but their medical value. This research is important for the reassurance of the value of the brown and black body in a society designed on dismantling the institutions marginalized peoples represent. The methods of the harvesting initially come post mortem, however, the methodology of why is to be shown through the research. Not only will this research draw parallels with this film, but this research will also address the conversation of value, in regards to brown and black bodies. Using a psychoanalytic approach while analyzing this film, these very connections and parallels will be evident.

You Are What You Eat: Cultivating Conscious Consumption through Informed Consumer Choice

Kathryn C. Kavanagh, ,

Mentor: Kelly Hostetler

Education on the current state of the food system can motivate individuals to create the food systems and generate demand for products they wish to see. With the idea that we are what we eat and how we consume, real food is the best medicine—for individual health, for society, and for the planet. The power of individual freedom does not mean anything goes, but rather informed, responsible choice that transcends to the global aggregate. Thus, respectful and healthy food systems begin with the individual, and have the potential to bring peace to communities and heal human relationships with land and each other, both locally and globally. Knowledge is power, and first starts with attention and awareness. Given the severe lack of transparency and multitude of socioenvironmental externalities within the industrialized food system, there is a need for adequate consumer education on practices and operations. Information on the consequences of these processes can influence attitudes to shift demand and create new vibrant systems. Here, the problem is the solution. To promote holistically healthy and nutritious systems, I created a disruptive advertisement campaign to highlight truths of the industrial system and its social and environmental externalities to inform consumers on cost and value of the prod-

ucts they are purchasing. This project juxtaposed the concepts of "farm to table" versus "firm to table," in addition to the applications of integrative sensory marketing tactics and culinary storytelling. Through the combination of art, music, poetry, and film, I sought to motivate people to think critically about the power of individual choice and what is behind a brand.

Navigating the Traditional and the Modern: Young Professional Women, Korean Dramas and Critical Acumen

Kristy Soojung (Kristy) Kwon, ,

UW Honors Program

Mentor: Deborah Porter, International Studies

South Korea's rapid industrialization and democratization led to policy reforms that allowed women to invest more heavily in their education, career, and leisure beyond the domestic sphere. Consequently, these women became active participants and consumers of the goods and services within their society, as exemplified by their consumption of media. Given that Korean women in their twenties and thirties have embraced strategies to improve their status as citizens who operate in society in ways that transcend traditional normative, restrictive spheres of action, we would expect them to explain their consumption habits in terms of how the cultural objects resonate with their own experiences. Instead, they reveal ambivalence with regards to the value of these dramas as accurate representations of Korean society. Why? I argue that the widespread consumption of Korean dramas replete with mixed messages that call into question these women's self-fashioning aspirations can be explained as a function of their ability to detect and stand apart from the submissive qualities reflected in female characters whose behavior represents a capitulation to traditional gendered norms. Through open-ended interview questions about professional women's viewing habits and career objectives, I demonstrate how the critical distance attendant upon drama consumption is an agentive coping mechanism beyond a passive act of acquiescence to gendered discrimination, and is premised on self-perceptions of critical acumen nurtured by their academic and vocational background. Such knowledge resulting from women's intense focus on education derives from their perception of education as a conduit for the actualization of career aspirations, which equipped them to interrogate gendered power relations that pose challenges to their success. Critical acumen is viewed as the source of their capacity to recognize and distance themselves from popular media's representation of gendered socio-economic inequality and the broader patriarchal discourse in Korea that perpetuates norms of women's submissive position.

Analyzing Gender Representation in STEM Focused PBS Children's Shows

Jade M Selle, ,

Mentor: Cassidy Glass Hastings, College of Education

Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) is using its children's programs to promote STEM career tracks. My research project sought to analyze the representation of male and female identifying characters in PBS science-based programs for children ages 4-10. I collected both quantitative and qualitative data from the following four shows: *Cat in The Hat*, *Magic School Bus*, *Cyber Chase*, and *Wild Kratts*. These 30 minute animated shows are presented as gender neutral and science focused. My research examined the following questions: 1) The number and ways male-identified versus female-identified characters are represented in leading and supportive roles; 2) How STEM fields are presented as future careers for both genders; 3) The number of STEM learning opportunities presented within each episode; and 4) How children view the gender roles and relationships between characters. Data was collected through two processes. First, I watched multiple episodes of each show and gathered quantitative data, for example; how often females are in leadership roles, how often they generate their own ideas, and are viewed as capable of completing a task. I then co-viewed episodes of each show with children in the intended age range. While co-viewing I made observational notes and asked a set of verbal questions used to engage with the child during the show. Through the co-viewing process and dialogue, I gained insight into how children view gender representation within these shows. This research project further examined the messages children receive regarding STEM learning and careers during the critical time when self image is being developed. In addition, this research highlights the opportunity for further research across multiple television networks, analyzing gender representation within STEM fields.