

English 207: Cyberculture Cyberartifact Analysis

Length and Due Date

Length: 1,000-1,250 words

Due Date: Monday, February 11, **by 10:00 p.m.** via Collect It

Assignment

Examine one of the following "cyberartifacts" discussed in class:

- ❖ Artwork or documentation of a performance (one of Manovich's new media works, a selection from Orlan's *Self-Hybridations*, photos and/or video documenting one of Stelarc's "events")
- ❖ Chatbot program
- ❖ Film: *AI*, *Blade Runner*, or *The Matrix*
- ❖ *Neuromancer*

Your analysis should include the following information:

1. Description of the artifact
 - ❖ For art, list dimensions, material, and method of construction or production; for all artifacts, note year of creation
 - ❖ Short description of image/performance, program interface, or plot
 - ❖ Explanation of artifact's framing (content, layout and navigation scheme of web site that presents the artwork or houses the chatbot program; book or DVD cover image and critical testimonials; listing of DVD special features)
2. Analysis of the artifact's content and effects
 - ❖ What type of world does the artifact ask viewers to imagine (physical environment, existing technologies, bodily appearance, social relations, political and economic organization, etc.)?
 - ❖ What sensory, intellectual and/or emotional responses might the artifact provoke?
 - ❖ How does the artifact employ programming, interactivity, dialogue, narrative, language, visual elements, sound and/or other techniques to achieve its effects?
3. Argument regarding how the artifact fits into a larger cultural context
 - ❖ What is the artifact's function, and what are the social values attached to this function?
 - ❖ What ideas, beliefs, values and/or assumptions does the artifact reflect, examine or critique?
 - ❖ What historical conditions might have influenced the artifact's production?
 - ❖ What seems to be the psychological, aesthetic and/or ideological intent of the artifact?

Guidelines

1. Although I have provided questions to guide your analysis of the artifact's content and your discussion of how the artifact addresses a specific cultural context, you should address the questions that best apply to your selected artifact.
2. You may organize your analysis into sections (for example, description, content/effects, and contextual analysis), or you may interweave description and analysis of content and effects, and your argument regarding cultural context.
3. Discussion of the artifact's cultural context will comprise the bulk of your analysis. Allow 100-200 words for description, 300-450 words for examination of content and effects, and 500-600 words for exploration of cultural context.
4. Assertions regarding the artifact's content, effects, and context should be supported by description of images, scenes or cinematic techniques; reference to plot events; summary, paraphrase or quotation of dialogue, narrative passages or chatbot transcripts; and/or screen shots or images.
5. Your analysis must reference pertinent articles from *The Cultural Studies Reader*. Many of the readings will help you examine your artifact's cultural context.
6. Do not forget the discussion that has taken place on the class posting board. You have already written about and received responses to your ideas regarding most of the listed artifacts.
7. Because you're submitting your analysis in electronic format, you have the opportunity to incorporate images, media, and hyperlinks. You may include these materials within a document, or you may compose a Web page. For documents, please title, paginate, type and double-space your submission, using one-inch margins. In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, include your name, the course number and the due date; this information should be single-spaced. For Web sites, include a title, contact information, and a creation date. You may use a 10 or 12 point Arial, Century Schoolbook, Garamond, or Times New Roman font.
8. When citing sources, use MLA format. Please include a list of works cited at the end of your analysis.
9. If you are having difficulty devising an approach to the assignment or you want feedback on your ideas-in-progress, visit my office hours or email me to arrange an appointment.