Final Assignment

Please engage with two of the following three questions. Each essay should be four pages (1000 words) in length, and, as with the midterm, engage with our readings, in-class discussions and your own research. Also, each essay should have 5-8 illustrations both from the slides and also from your own research, captioned and credited. Indicate the essay you have chosen by number.

1. Explore the distinctions between the 3rd and 4th Wave as we have been discussing them. Some potential themes include: How does televisuality establish social as well as aesthetic categories? What does television inherit from modernism, contribute to postmodernism, and anticipate in what we have called unimodernism? How do digital networks resemble broadcast networks, and how do they differ? How does the computer function as a culture machine? Gary Copeland, Lynn Spigel, Marshall McLuhan, and Jean Baudrillard would all be useful here.

2. We spent a fair amount of time this quarter talking about media in relation to the aesthetic movements, political histories, and military adventures that coincided with their emergence as the dominant communication forms of their moments. What through lines can you draw from modernism to postmodernism to unimodernism as they relate to the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Waves as we have discussed them? In other words, how can we talk about the technical aspects of media in a way to connect them to the larger worlds of their use and impact? Walter Benjamin, Marshall McLuhan, Jean Baudrillard, and the Secret War manuscript would all be useful here.

3. Studying these media to give us contexts for their use and to appreciate their aesthetics are benefits in and of themselves. But as many in this class self-identify as artists, designers, and makers, the question emerges of how to use this kind of study in a generative way. How can these media be deployed today and tomorrow in the work you yourselves plan to make. This question needs to be answered with the same rigor as 1 and 2, but offers a greater amount of personal expression and forward thinking. Marshall McLuhan, The Secret War, and the Digital Humanities 2.0 Manifesto would all be useful here.