THE 4TH WAVE: MEDIA HISTORIES 1850-2050
DESMA 11A. Design History | LEC 1

Take Home Midterm, Due Tuesday, May 4th at 2:00 PM

Choose three questions from the following five. Please answer in 500 words, i.e. two pages double spaced. Each answer should reference at least three readings, in-class discussions, and four media works we have looked at.

Plagiarism is easier to catch than people think, and will be dealt with severely. Citations, on the other hand, are both welcome and encouraged [n.b. Wikipedia is a place to start, not a source to cite.]

1. Walter Benjamin talks about the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. How does industrialization affect the process of making and understanding art and media?

2. What is the photography effect? Can we discuss a similar “cinematic effect,” and if so, how would you describe it?

3. What does photography take from painting, and what does cinema take from photography? How do older and newer media relate, and in what ways does each new medium relate to and differ from its predecessors?

4 In the incunabula or “swaddling stage” of a medium, certain kinds of conventions are set that later get refined or challenged. Look at photography and/or the cinema and discuss how these media emerged and then found stable forms.

5. André Bazin talks about the photographic image and the cinematic experience as capturing “the real.” Laura Mulvey writes that it is impossible to get at a picture of the real because our perceptions are never “natural.” Is it possible to reconcile these two points of view?