

Our 21st Century Media Culture

Eight Shifts

Medium: a form of communication—i.e. television, a video game, or a magazine article—that transmits messages, tells stories, structures learning, and constructs a “reality” about the world.

Media Education: an educational approach that seeks to give media users greater **freedom** and **choice** by teaching them how to access, analyze, evaluate and produce media. ACME-style media education emphasizes **knowledge**, **skills**, and **activism!**



- 1. Epistemological shift:** From word to IMAGE (Symbol: TV/screens). **Question:** What are the trade-offs of living in a 21st century media culture dominated by the Image?
- 2. Technological shift:** From analog to DIGITAL (Symbol: Personal Computer). **Question:** What are the trade-offs of living in a 21st century media culture in which most all information can be converted to a binary code of ones and zeros?
- 3. Personal shift:** From mass to PERSONAL/ PARTICIPATORY — NEW media (Symbol: iPods, MySpace/Facebook, Blogs, Web 2.0). **Question:** What are the trade-offs of living in a 21st century media culture that is both personal and participatory?
- 4. Aesthetic shift:** From discrete to CONVERGENCE (Symbol: iTouch and mobile phones as multimedia platforms; TV commercials as “art”). **Question:** What are the trade-offs of living in a 21st century media culture experiencing the convergence of different media technologies and platforms, and the blurring of the lines between “news” and “entertainment,” art and commerce?
- 5. Political shift:** From regulation to DE(RE)REGULATION. (Symbols: 1996 Telecommunication Act; June 2, 2003 FCC decision; “Net Neutrality” debate). **Question:** What are the trade-offs of living in a 21st century media culture in which “de-regulation” is a driving political force?
- 6. Economic shift:** HYPER commercialism and CORPORATE consolidation. (Symbols: MTV and “Googlezon”). **Question:** What are the trade-offs of living in a 21st century media culture driven by hyper-commercialism and corporate consolidation?
- 7. Discursive shift:** From objective to SUBJECTIVE. (Symbols: talk radio; civic journalism; the “blogosphere”). **Question:** What are the trade-offs of living in a 21st century media culture in which first-person subjectivity is challenging third-person objectivity to define the “truth” about things?
- 8. Cultural shift:** From privacy to SURVEILLANCE. (Symbols: MySpace to Homeland Security). **Question:** What are the trade-offs of living in a 21st century media culture in which media user data is increasingly being monitored, collected and analyzed?

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