

## 42/59.249 Presentation #1: Domestic Technologies

On Tuesday, 2/10 and Thursday, 2/12, we'll organize our class time and our class discussion around your presentations on your choice of domestic technologies. I'm using that term to describe a whole range of tools--including those we easily overlook—that are present in our daily lives. These presentations may be done individually, in pairs or in trios. Regardless of how you organize your groups, my expectation is that each member of the class will speak for roughly 5 minutes on his or her topic. In order to give us ample time to ask and answer questions and to engage in discussion, we'll assign a date for each presentation and make sure that no topics are duplicated once you've put yourselves in groups.

For your presentation, your opinions and assessments are primary. Your goals are to inform your audience, to explain and analyze your chosen topic, and to identify the significance of your topic. This presentation and the wiki you will create to go with it are worth 5% of your course grade.

Your main task is to examine carefully how one of those technologies has become a part of our daily lives, how it has impacted us, and how it reflects, shapes, or changes our human, cultural, family, or personal values, and to help your classmates and I to consider your topic in a new light, and to make direct, if speculative, connections between the technology and its impacts on values. Your insights are the most important aspect of what you will present. Be careful to keep that interpretation and analysis at the forefront at all times. Giving a timeline of the development of the telephone, for example, or a bunch of facts and statistics about the use of telephones, does not address this assignment.

Please do not read your presentation from a script. Of course you should have notes with you so that you don't forget what you intended to say, but these presentations are more discussions than formal speaking exercises. Please rehearse. Please time yourself in rehearsal so that the length of your presentation is very close to the five-minute mark on either side. Remember, in a group of three, that means that each group member will talk for five minutes, making the basic presentation 15 minutes long. After you are done speaking, you will offer three questions to the class; these questions should be thoughtful, open-ended (i.e. not yes-or-no), and intended to get your classmates thinking and talking about your topic.

The wiki page you will make for your presentation is due at the time of your presentation. There is no other written assignment for the presentation, so please make this thorough. You might even want to do this as part of your organizational process. You will not need to refer to it extensively during the course of your presentation, but you will need to share your images with the class. You will be able to display these directly from your wiki on our classroom's projection unit; please make sure they are large enough for everyone to see.

At a minimum, your wiki page must include:

- Your name, or the names of all group members
- The name of the technology
- At least one image or representation either of the technology itself or something that suggests the technology to you. This can be literal, symbolic, or even abstract.
- A clear statement of your interpretive thesis (one or a few sentences)
- Brief notes or bullet points to note your most important observations or interesting things you found out
- A list of your questions for the class, at least three
- A complete, MLA-style bibliography of every resource you consulted and every item you included on your wiki

***If you have any questions at all, please ask!***

***I'm happy to conference with you or your group to help you get started or stay on track!***

Some examples of the types of questions you might ask yourself as you think about your topic:

*Keep in mind that rhetorical questions are not a good strategy for organizing a time-limited presentation. Not all of these questions might be relevant to every topic; the list is certainly not exhaustive. Please invest some time in coming up with your own questions to think about, and then be sure to arrive at a declarative, interpretive, and analytical thesis.*

Why did you pick your topic? What does it do? What are its applications? How does it differ from other things used for the same purposes? What made you think it could be a lens through which to consider values? What made you think it was significant enough to discuss? What necessitated its development? Was there a need it filled? Who was responsible for its development? Does it have predecessors? What did it replace or make obsolete? Is the current technology an improvement? Does it have vulnerabilities or drawbacks? What are its consequences? What are its effects, on different levels? Has it changed an industry? Has it changed or challenged the law? Has it raised ethical issues? Has it changed some aspect of the way people live? Has it introduced new possibilities for people? Has it introduced new hazards or dangers? How might it be changed or used in the future? To what will it lead? What ethical questions does it raise? How does this technology reveal values? How does it change values? What values does it appeal to? What values does it support? What values does it weaken? What values does it prioritize over others? How can you tell?