

Project 4: The Comparative Essay

Write a **1000-1250-word essay** comparing conceptual arguments about the relation between media and thought as presented by Horton, Edelman et al, Victor, and Stiegler—and using their perspectives to craft your own argument concerning **the direction(s) that education/innovation/IT should take.**

These thinkers all effectively sing the same song (media produces and shapes thought) but do so from different fields with different stakeholders using different concepts: your task becomes creating an argumentative framework that uses comparisons, distinctions, and generalizations/conceptualizations to struggle with **the future of education or innovation or IT.** *You must demonstrate your understanding of authors' specific concepts by using them to make your own argument.*

Working in editing teams, you will collaborate to generate notes, battlelines, **outline, sparkline**, and a conceptual matrix. You should reverse-engineer the outline/argumentative battle lines of different texts, extract key concepts, and construct a conceptual spreadsheet or matrix. **Use the matrix to extrapolate from the texts and think beyond what you and the texts know.**

The matrix (late Middle English [in the sense 'womb']: from Latin, 'breeding female', later 'womb', from *mater*, *matr*- 'mother') enables the recognition (re-cognitize) and generation (gene-ration) of patterns and intuitive flashes, the sparks of ideation. **Play with the matrix.**

Your WHY: future of education/innovation/IT. Your WHAT: relation of media and thought. Your HOW: ?

Western thought, like many cultural traditions, harbors patriarchal, binary, and exclusionary patterns that both enable and limit our engagement with the world. Just as the alphabet allowed Plato to "see" the limits of mythic structures, emerging media reveal the power and limits of conceptual structures. **In short, Plato's Academy is being reformatted, for better and worse. These authors provide concepts and tools for thinking-doing our way forward (is that a metaphor?).**

Most important: Use this project as preparatory research for Project 5 (your longer essay analyzing an info comic or graphic novel) and Project 6 (a mini-PechaKucha presentation based on this essay).

Comparative analyses are fundamental to research and scholarly writing: recall that Horton stresses shuttling between new and old ways of seeing the world; Ken Robinson compares different educational paradigms; and you routinely compare things in your courses. Binary comparisons can sometimes devolve into right and wrong, authentic and inauthentic, etc. Here you will avoid that trap, while also taking care not to define one thinker as "just right" *a la* Goldie Locks.

You will need to **rearticulate** specific questions that drive your comparison and determine the traits you analyze. You will also need to create a conceptual spreadsheet which will help you discover similarities and differences, prioritize your comparison, and organize your essay.

Place drafts in Google folder.

Draft: Tues, 10/26

Final: Thurs, 10/28

	Horton	Edelman, et al	Victor	Stiegler
Field	Rhetoric & composition	Engineering design Design thinking	Interface design Computer science	Continental Philosophy
	Thinking through Writing	Shared media and innovation	Media for thinking the unthinkable	Transindividuation via tertiary traces
	Writing as shared struggle to thought	Media cascade in team collaboration		Hist of technology in human thought
				Pharmakon
	Eureka	Innovation	Thinking the unthinkable	Idiolectic categorization
		Prototype		
				Proletarianization
			Modes of thinking	