ZUR 393k:
Effects of Mass Media

Kirby, "The Digimodernist Text" & "Digimodernism and Web 2.0"
Wessels, "Exclusion, Inclusion and the Internet" & "Culture, Everyday Life and the Internet"

Outline:

1. reception theory
2. digimodernism vs. postmodernism
3. FIVE characteristics of new media

Reception Theory

- specific to communication/ media studies
- adds CONTEXT to the investigation of meaning: the **site** where reader/text interactions occur

Reception Theory

- we can no longer separate interpersonal and mediated communication

final caution

David Morley:

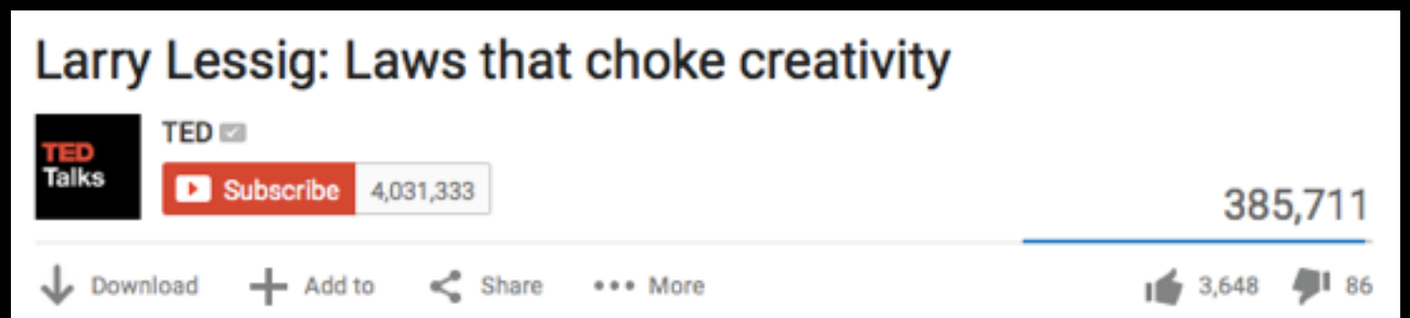
we must keep in mind the distinction between having power over an individual text (as an active reader) and power over the agenda in which the text is produced and presented

David Morley:

"The power of individuals to reinterpret meanings is hardly equivalent to the discursive power of centralized media institutions to construct the texts that the viewer then interprets, and to imagine otherwise is simply foolish" ("Active Audience Theory," 1993, p. 16).

to what extent does new media alter the power dynamic between media producers and consumers (between “writers” and “readers”)?

Lawrence Lessig on Read/Write vs. Read Only Culture



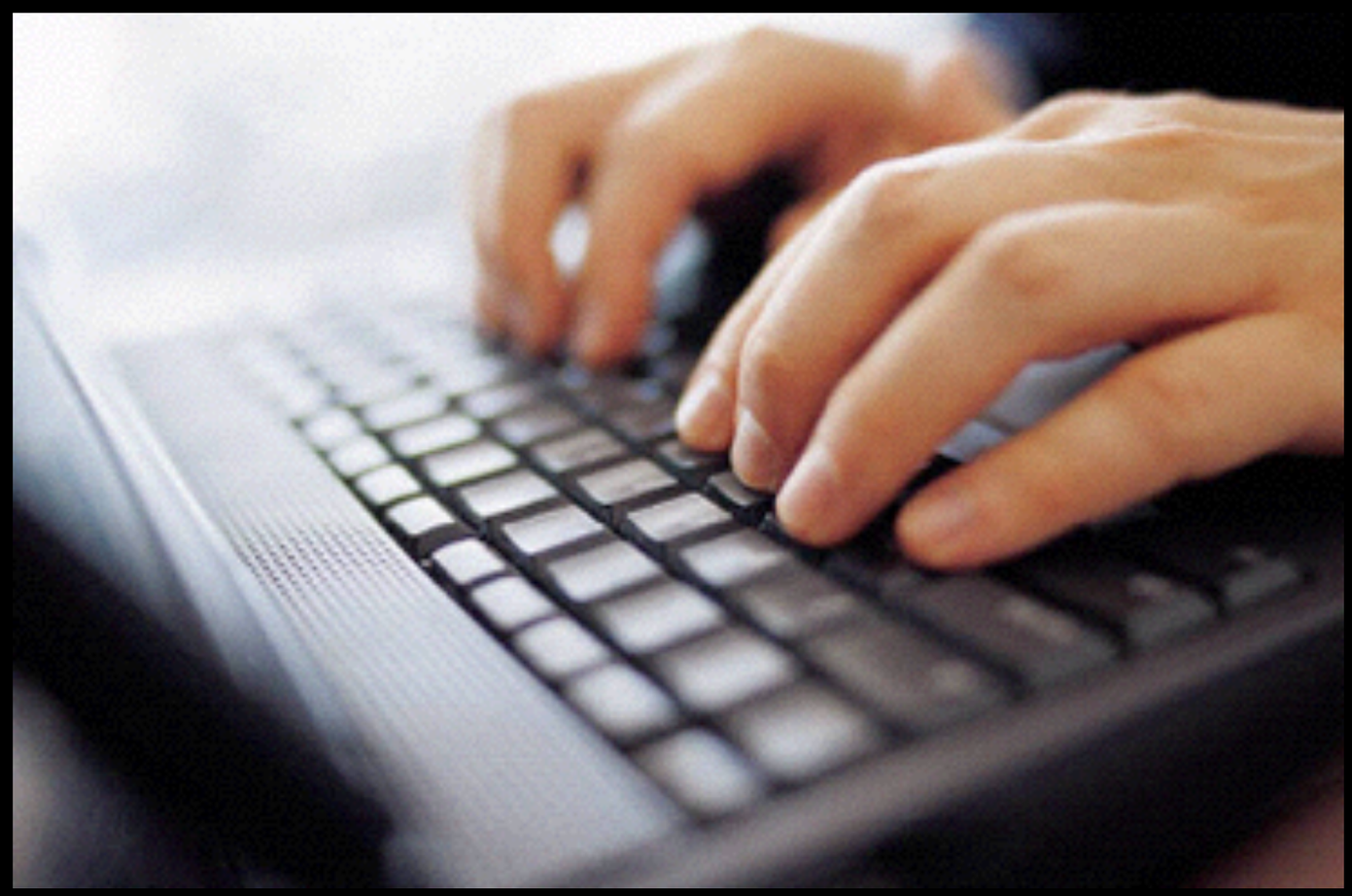
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Q25-S7jzgs

digimodernism

"Since its first appearance in the second half of the 1990s under the impetus of new technologies, digimodernism has decisively displaced postmodernism to establish itself as the 21st century's new cultural paradigm"

(Kirby, p. 1)

- digital modernism
- pun: where digital technology meets textuality and text is (re)formulated by the fingers and thumbs (the digits) in the act of textual elaboration



digimodernism

- "a dominant cultural logic or hegemonic norm" (F. Jameson)
- not a blanket description of all contemporary cultural production, but "the force field in which very different kinds of cultural impulses . . . must make their way" (Jameson, quoted in Kirby, p. 1-2).

digimodernism

- successor to and reaction against postmodernism

"the arguable death of postmodernism"

- postmodernism "born" in the 1950s
- Lyotard: Auschwitz was "the crime opening postmodernity"

Enlightenment Precepts

1. There is a **stable, coherent, knowable self**. This self is conscious, rational, autonomous, and universal—no physical conditions or differences substantially affect how this self operates.

2. This self knows itself and the world through **reason, or rationality**, posited as the highest form of mental functioning, and the only objective form.

3. The mode of knowing produced by the objective rational self is "**science**," which can provide universal truths about the world, regardless of the individual status of the knower.

4. The knowledge produced by science is "**truth**," and **is eternal**.

5. The knowledge/truth produced by science (by the rational objective knowing self) will always lead toward **progress and perfection**. All human institutions and practices can be analyzed by science (reason/objectivity) and improved.

6. Reason is the ultimate judge of what is true, and therefore of what is right, and what is good (what is legal and what is ethical). Freedom consists of **obedience to the laws** that conform to the knowledge discovered by reason.

7. In a world governed by reason, the true will always be the same as the good and the right (and the beautiful); there can be **no conflict between what is true and what is right** (etc.).

8. Science thus stands as the paradigm for any and all socially useful forms of knowledge. **Science is neutral and objective**; scientists, those who produce scientific knowledge through their unbiased rational capacities, must be free to follow the laws of reason, and not be motivated by other concerns (such as money or power).

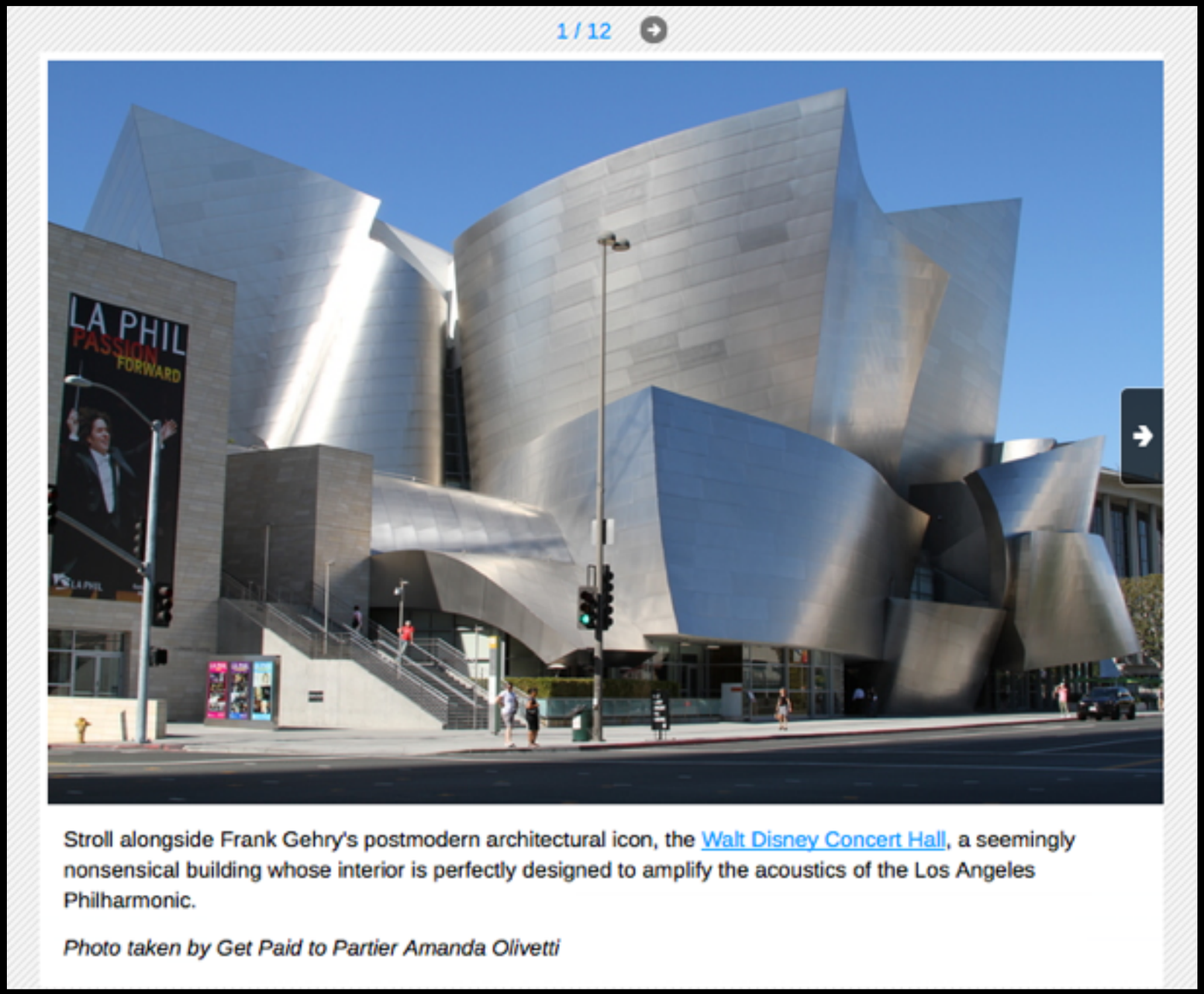
9. Language, or the mode of expression used in producing and disseminating knowledge, must be rational also. To be rational, **language must be transparent**; it must function only to represent the real/perceivable world which the rational mind observes. There must be a firm and objective connection between the objects of perception and the words used to name them (between signifier and signified).

http://www.cla.purdue.edu/english/theory/postmodernism/modules/introduction.html

Characteristics of Postmodernism

- no absolute truth
- questioning of grand narratives
- visuality and simulacrum vs. linearity and temporality
- late capitalism
- irony and parody
- pastiche and bricolage

The Sony Building (formerly AT&T building) in New York City, 1984, by Philip Johnson, illustrating a "Postmodern" spin with the inclusion of a classical broken pediment on the top which diverged from the boxy functional office towers common in Modern Architecture.



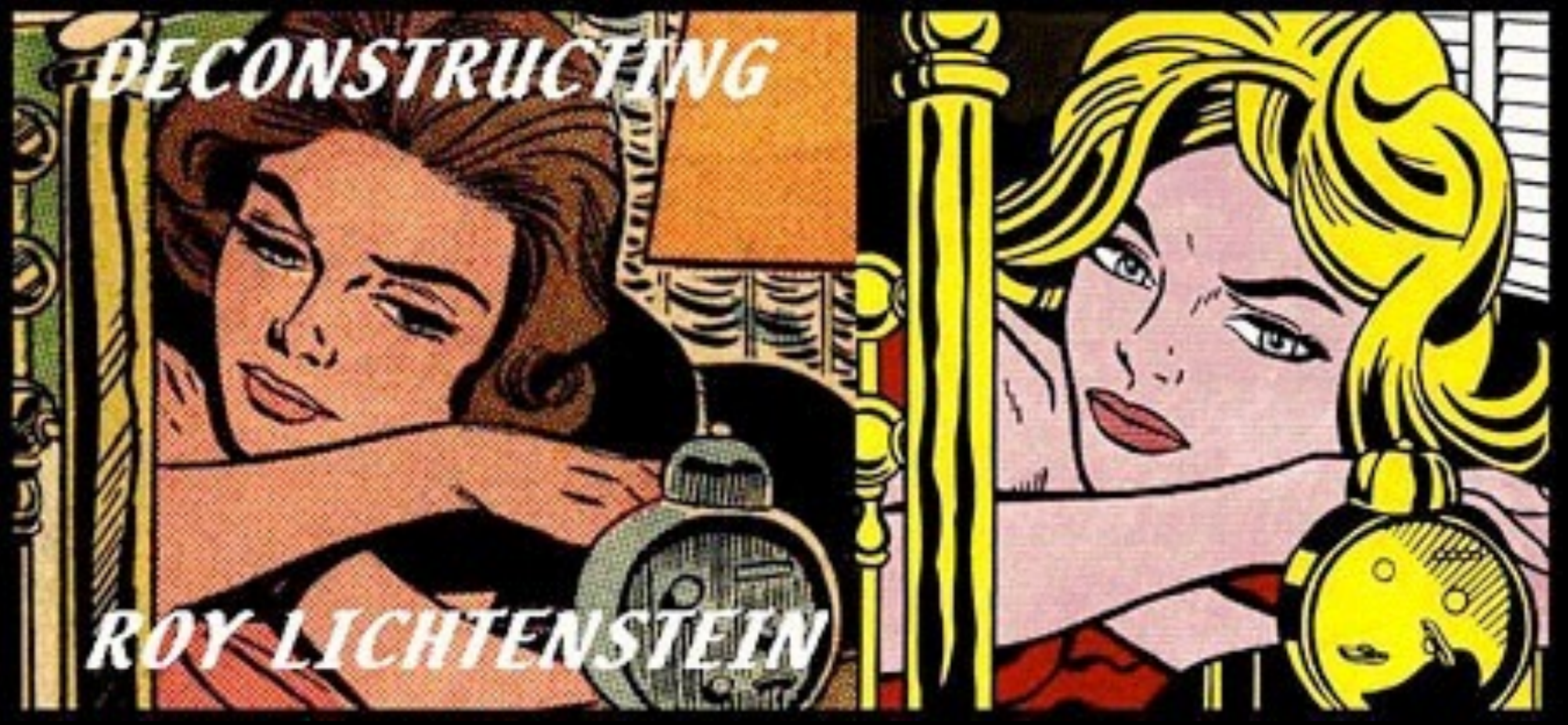
Stroll alongside Frank Gehry's postmodern architectural icon, the Walt Disney Concert Hall, a seemingly nonsensical building whose interior is perfectly designed to amplify the acoustics of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

Photo taken by Get Paid to Partier Amanda Olivetti

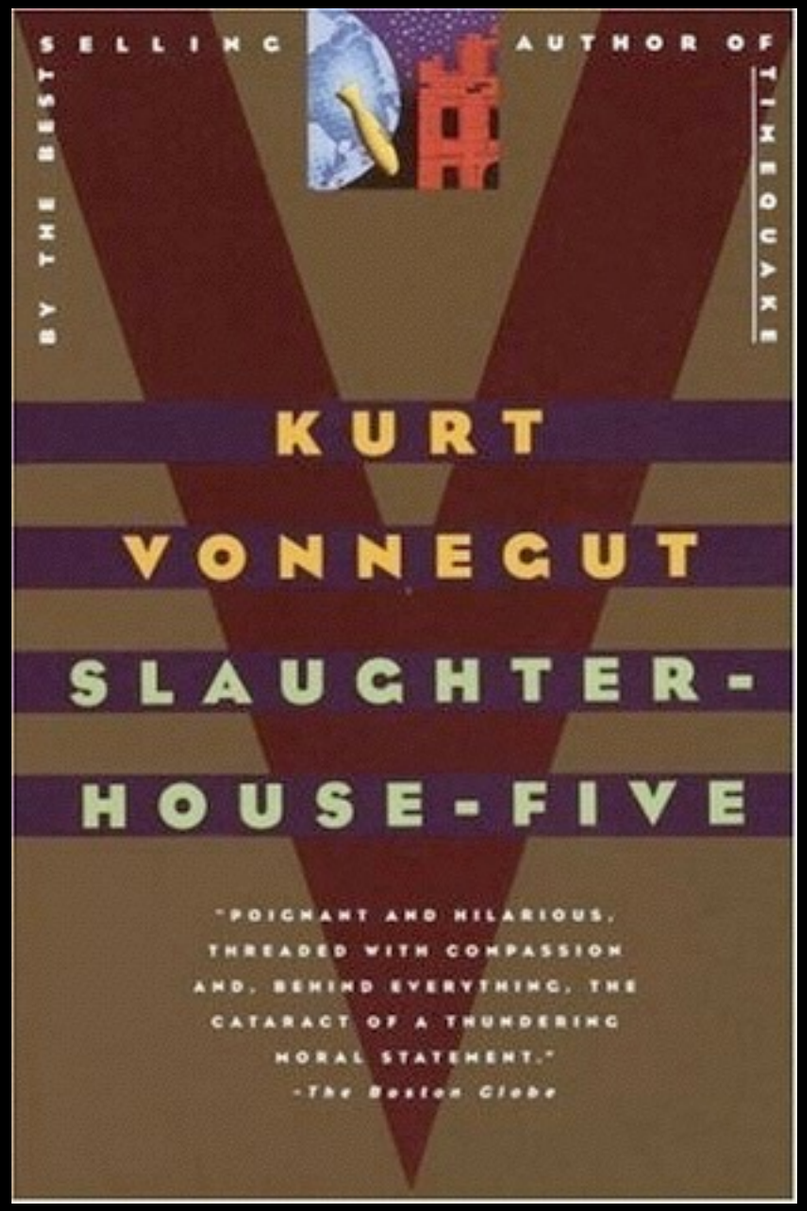
http://www.partyearth.com/articles/architecture-6/

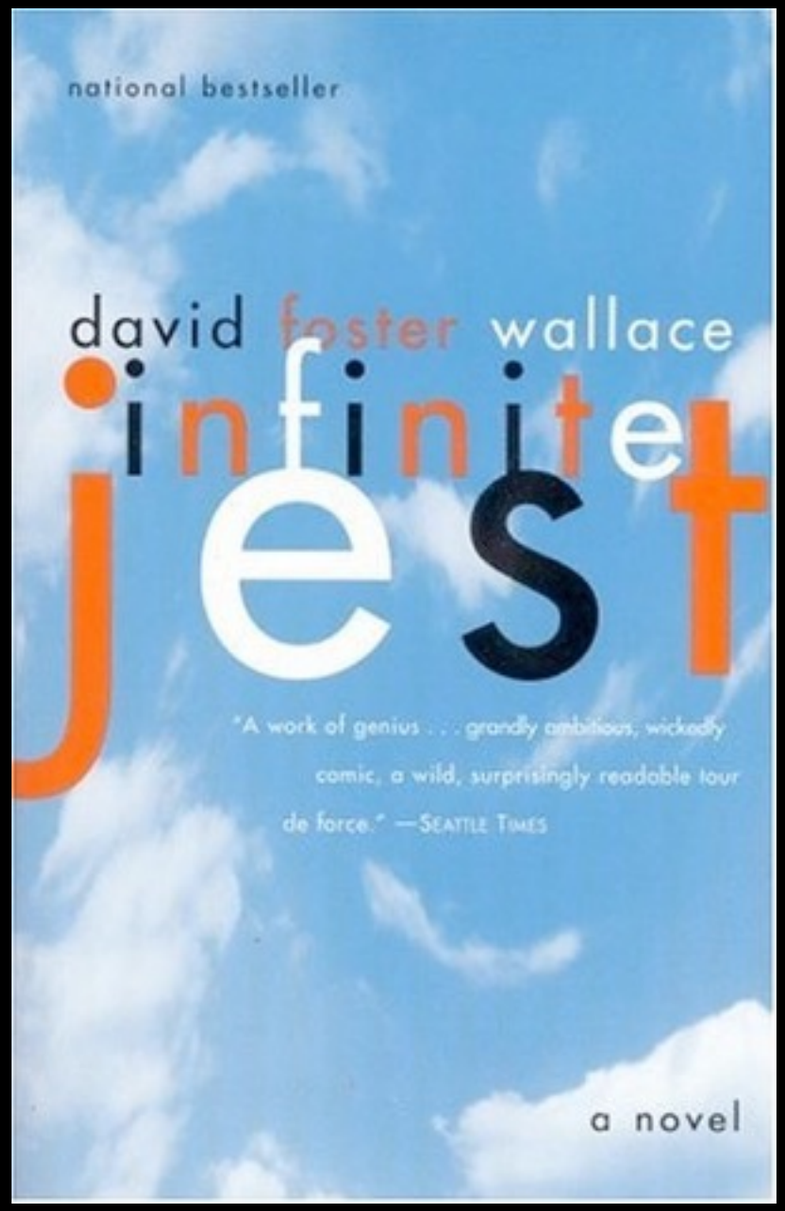
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postmodern_architecture

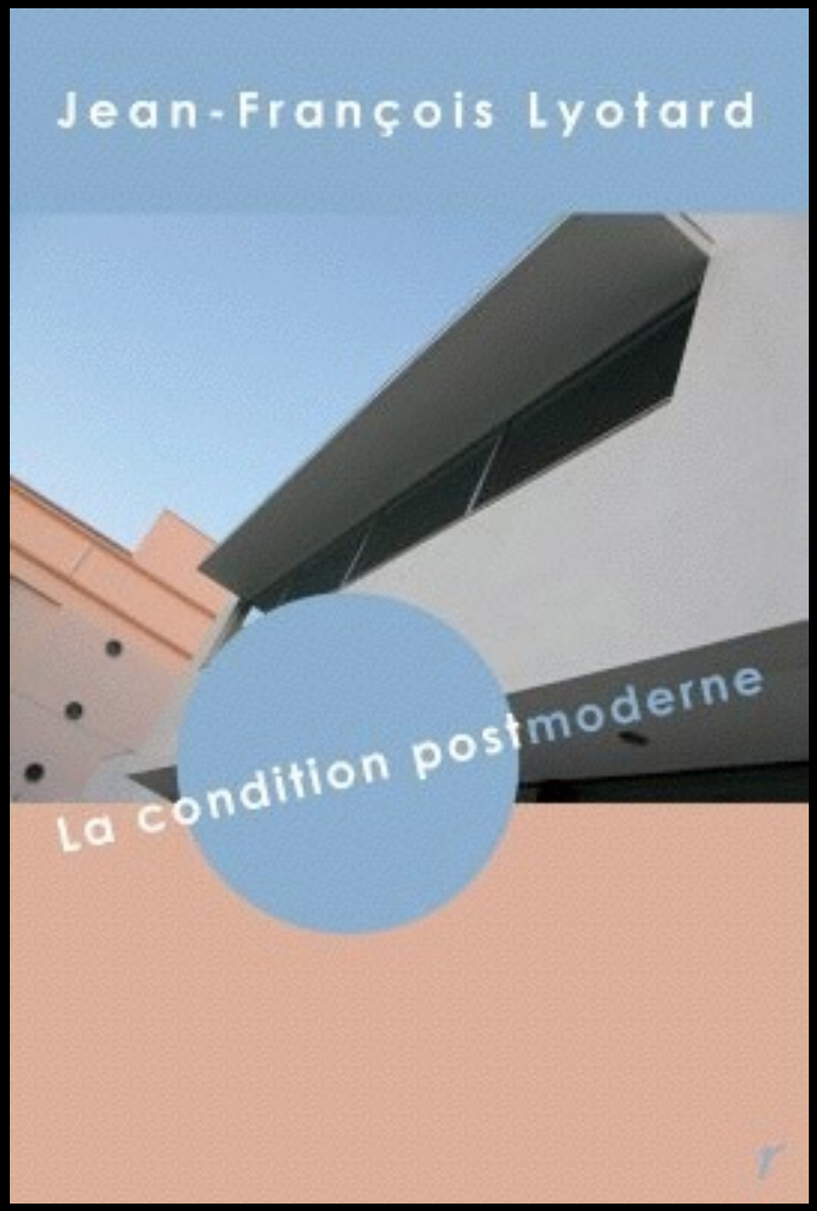
Campbell's
CONDENSED
TOMATO
SOUP


DECONSTRUCTING
ROY LICHTENSTEIN

TARGET
AUDIENCE:
YOUNG ADULTS, MALE/FEMALE
MARKETING
OBJECTIVE:
FOSTER'S ICE
CLAIM:
CONSUMER
TAKEOUT:
- GREAT TASTE -OURS!
APPROACHABLE- IRREVERENT-DANGEROUS


BY THE BEST SELLING AUTHOR OF TIMEQUAKE
KURT VONNEGUT
SLAUGHTER-HOUSE-FIVE
"POIGNANT AND HILARIOUS, THREADED WITH COMPASSION AND, BEHIND EVERYTHING, THE CATARACT OF A THUNDERING MORAL STATEMENT."
-The Boston Globe


national bestseller
david foster wallace
infinite jest
"A work of genius . . . grandly ambitious, wickedly comic, a wild, surprisingly readable tour de force." —Seattle Times
a novel


Jean-François Lyotard
La condition postmoderne

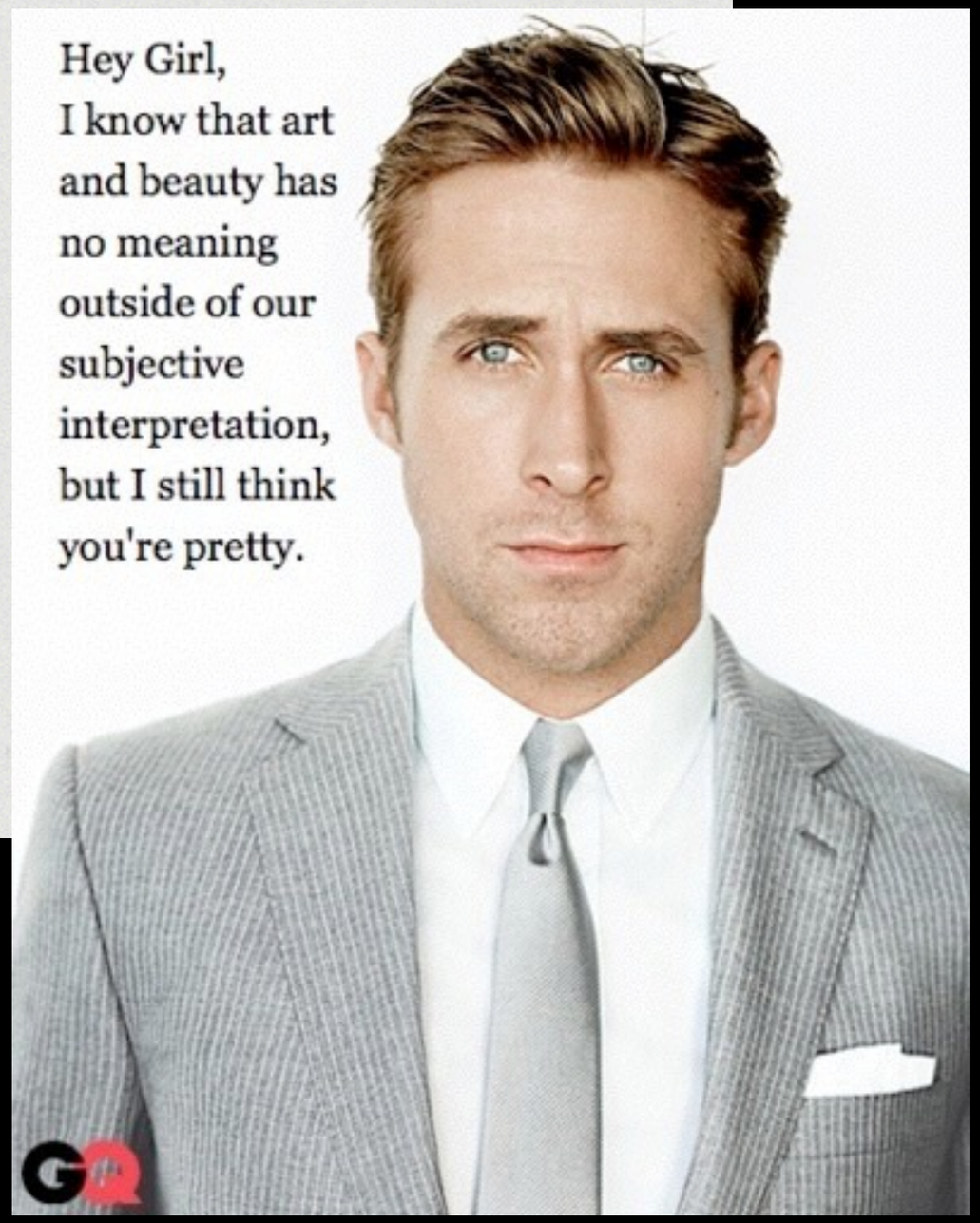
GOSBLR

Everything Gosling, all on one Tumblr | Curated by Jordan Valinsky for www. dailydot.com

POSTMODERN RYAN GOSLING

Go ahead and try to deconstruct our love, Ryan. Bet you can't.

1/16/12 — 12:34am SHORT URL: http://tmblr.co/Zj3AQwErhKpi
FILED UNDER: #ryan gosling #gosblr



http://gosblr.tumblr.com/post/15932935404/postmodern-ryan-gosling

celebrity gossip, academic style

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anne helen petersen

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The Ryan Gosling Meme Has Jumped the Shark

190

Share

Three things happened in Ryan Gosling meta-commentary news this week:

1.) The Ryan Gosling Tumblr-sphere expanded to include "Biostatistics Ryan Gosling." Add it to the pre-existing blogroll of "Medieval History Ryan Gosling," "Public History Ryan Gosling," "Feminist Ryan Gosling," and dozens more discipline-specific Gozes to which I have not even been made aware.

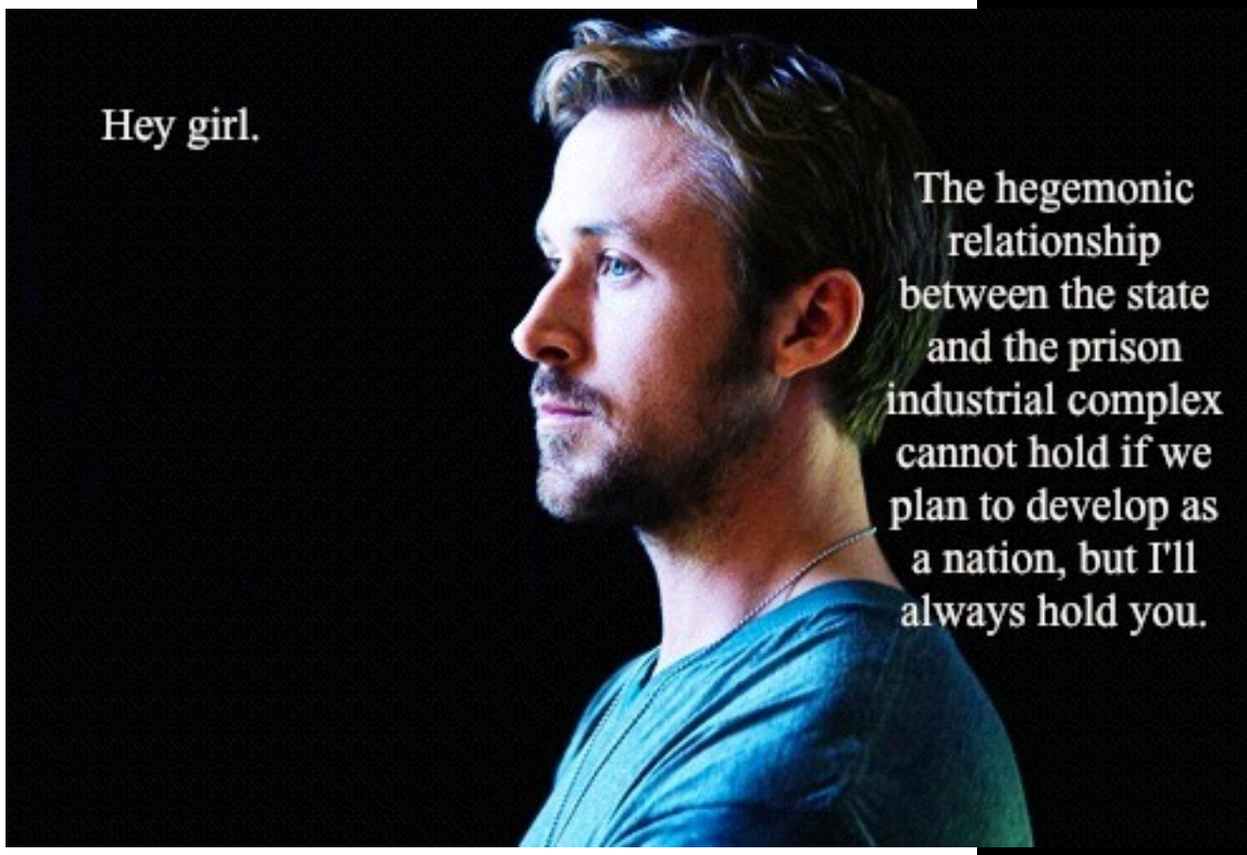
2.) *Inside Higher Ed* published a (brief) thinkpiece on the phenomenon.

3.) Well-known media theorist Nancy Baym tweeted "What's up with this Ryan Gosling tumblr meme thing?

4.) My friend Rebecca, pop culture enthusiast and American Studies dissertator, posited "Don't you think this whole thing has jumped the shark? You need to write about it quick."

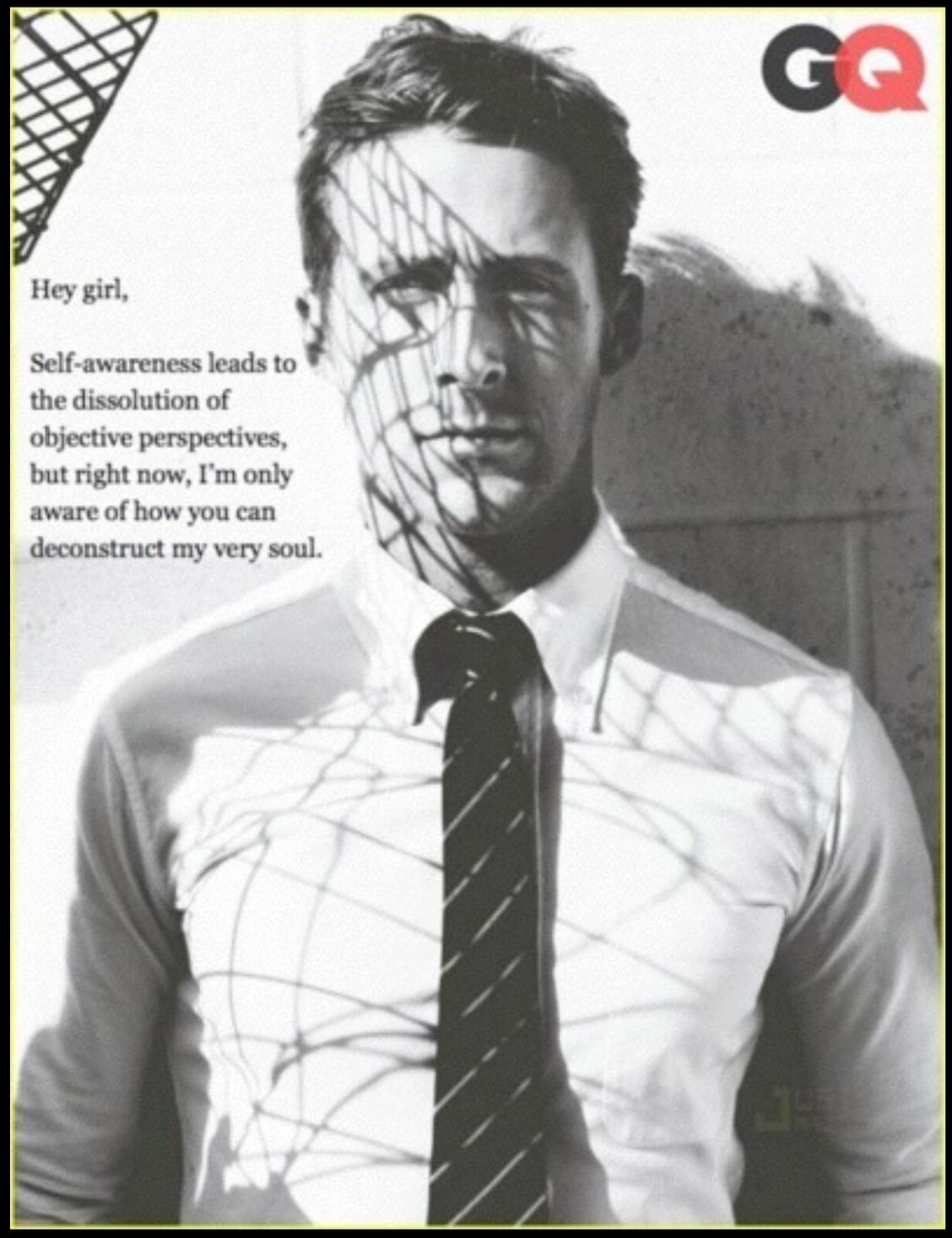
I have to agree. Biostatistics Ryan Gosling is Jumping the Ryan Gosling Tumblr Shark. Not because I don't like Biology, but because it lacks the very thing that made the original Ryan Gosling Tumblr (Hey Girl) work so well: you could actually imagine Ryan Gosling saying the very phrases that adoring bloggers were photoshopping into his mouth.

To be more precise: The reason "Hey Girl" works is because Ryan Gosling's image supports it. You can imagine The Goz saying things like....



http://www.annehelenpetersen/?p=2847

Hey girl.
Gender is a social construct but everyone likes to cuddle.


GQ
Hey girl,
Self-awareness leads to the dissolution of objective perspectives, but right now, I'm only aware of how you can deconstruct my very soul.

"the arguable death of postmodernism"

- contemporary theory (including postmodernism) believes in the local, the pragmatic, the particular. . .
- . . ."but we live in a world where the political right acts globally and the postmodern left thinks locally" (Terry Eagleton, quoted in Kirby, p. 31)

digimodernism and postmodernism

- some of digimodernism's key traits (e.g. earnestness) serve as a repudiation of typical postmodern characteristics

Hey girl. Censorship can ruin a magic moment.

Please, call and write your representative.

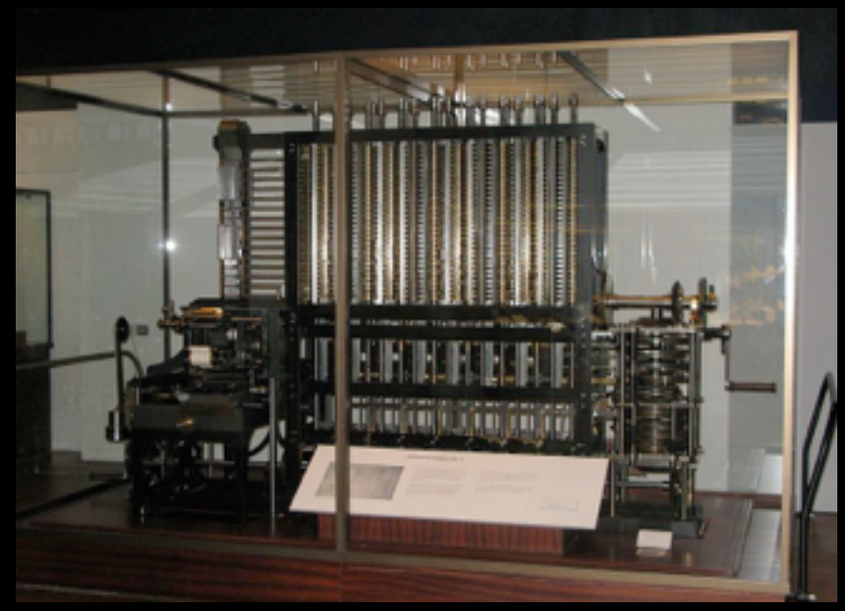
New
Media

new media

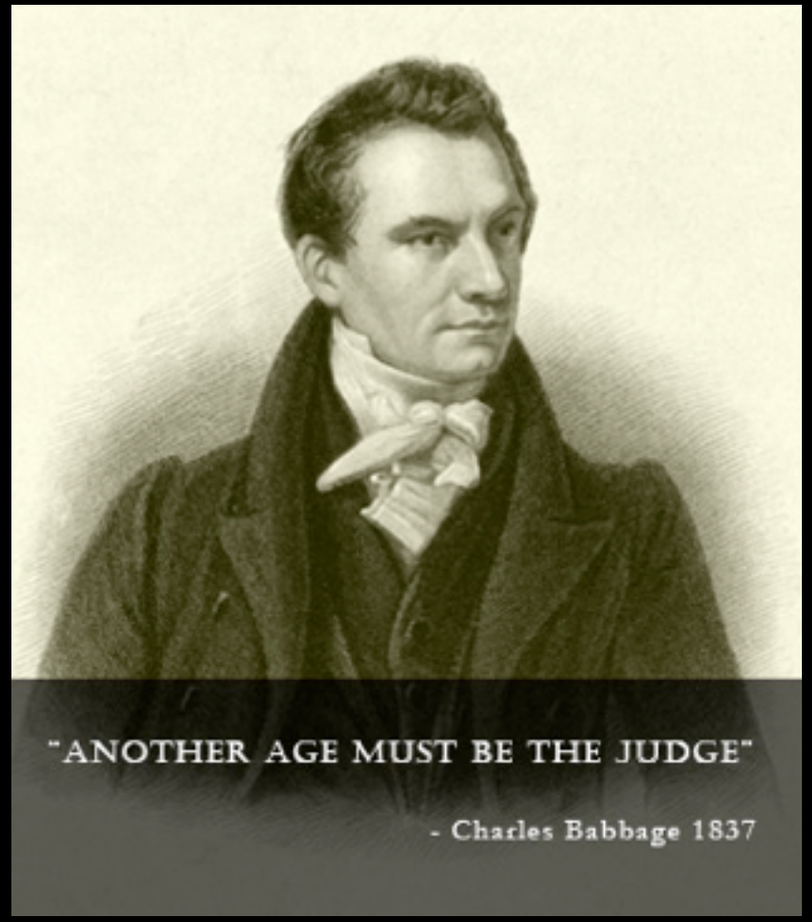
- convergence of two separate historical trajectories (both initiated in the 1830s)

1. Charles Babbage

- first automatic computing engines
    A. difference engine
    B. analytical engine



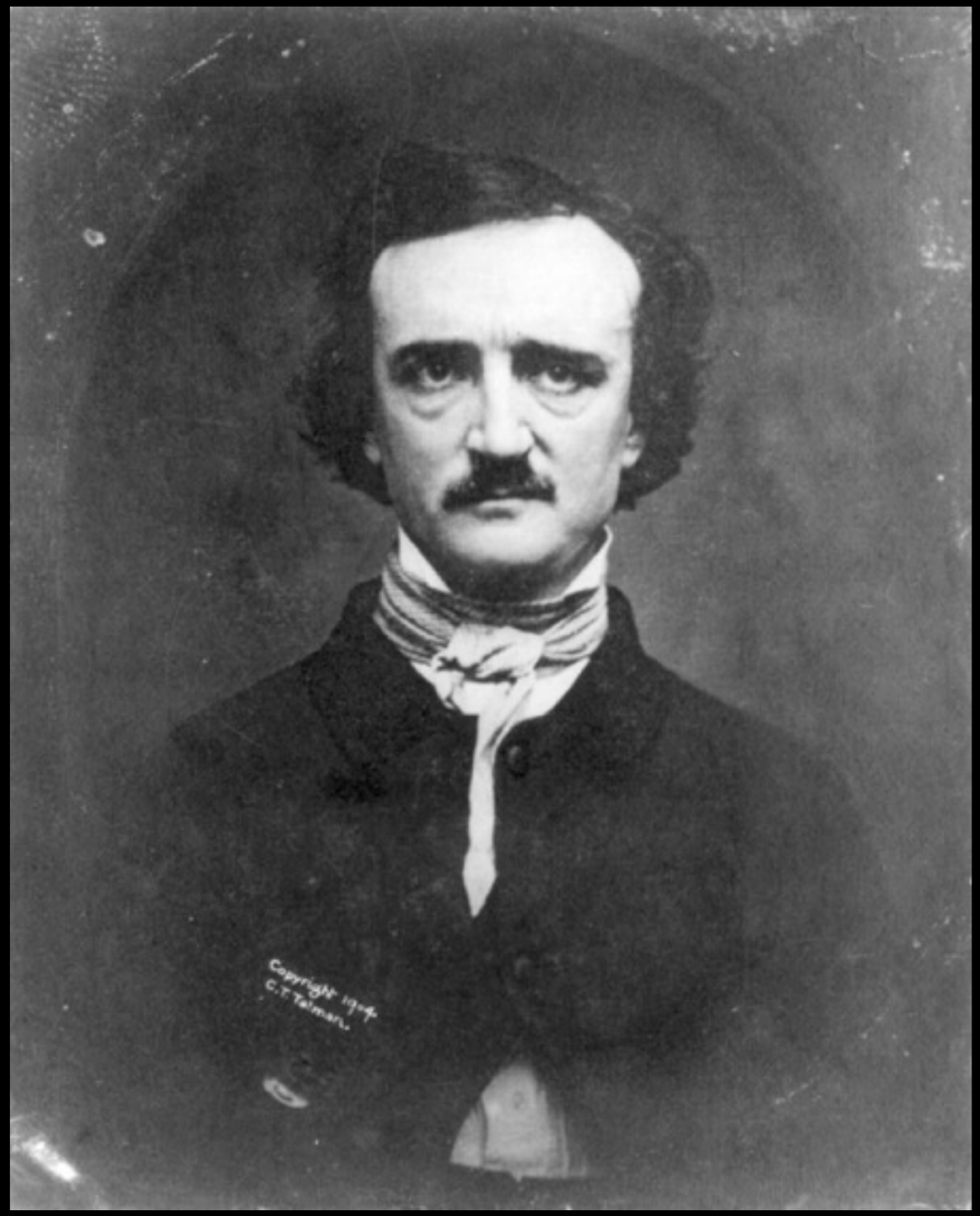
1792-1871



2. Daguerre's daguerreotype

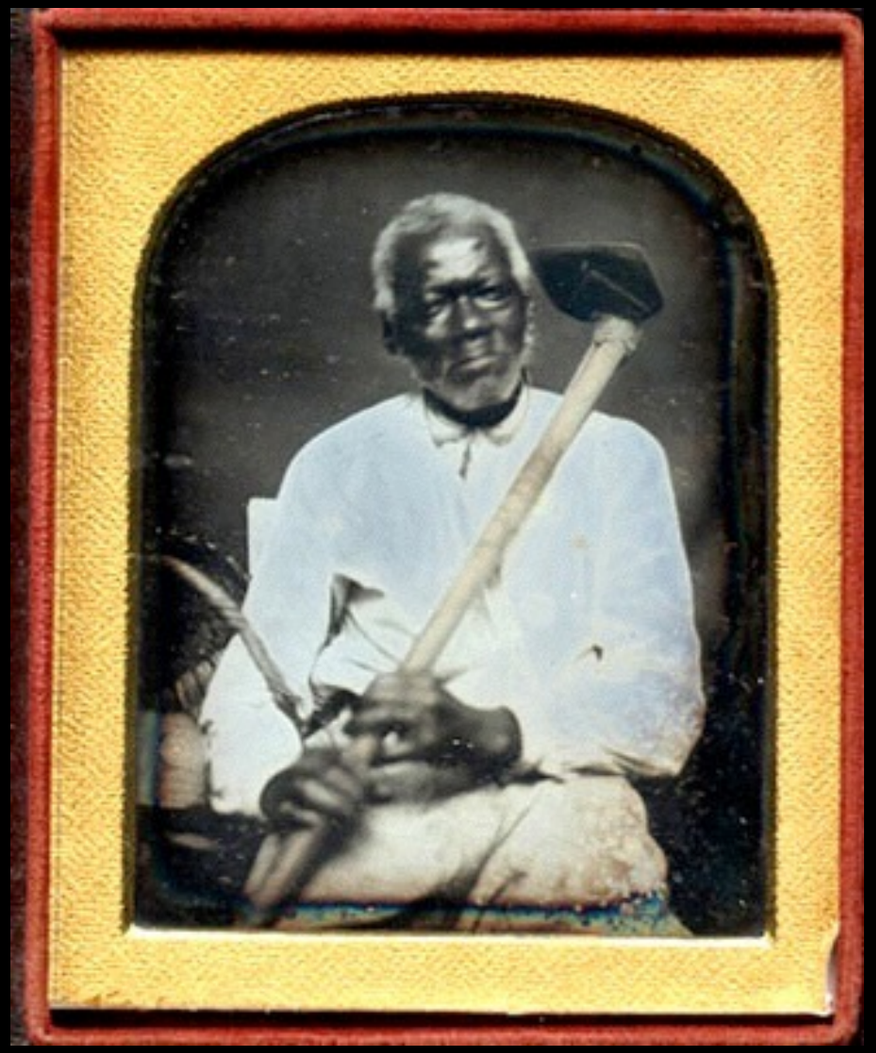
- silver iodide + mercury on copper plates
- single image, not reproducible

Abraham Lincoln



Edgar Allan Poe

ANSON
686
BROADWAY



Daguerreotype, Prague Castle

new media

2 histories intersect in the mid-20th c.

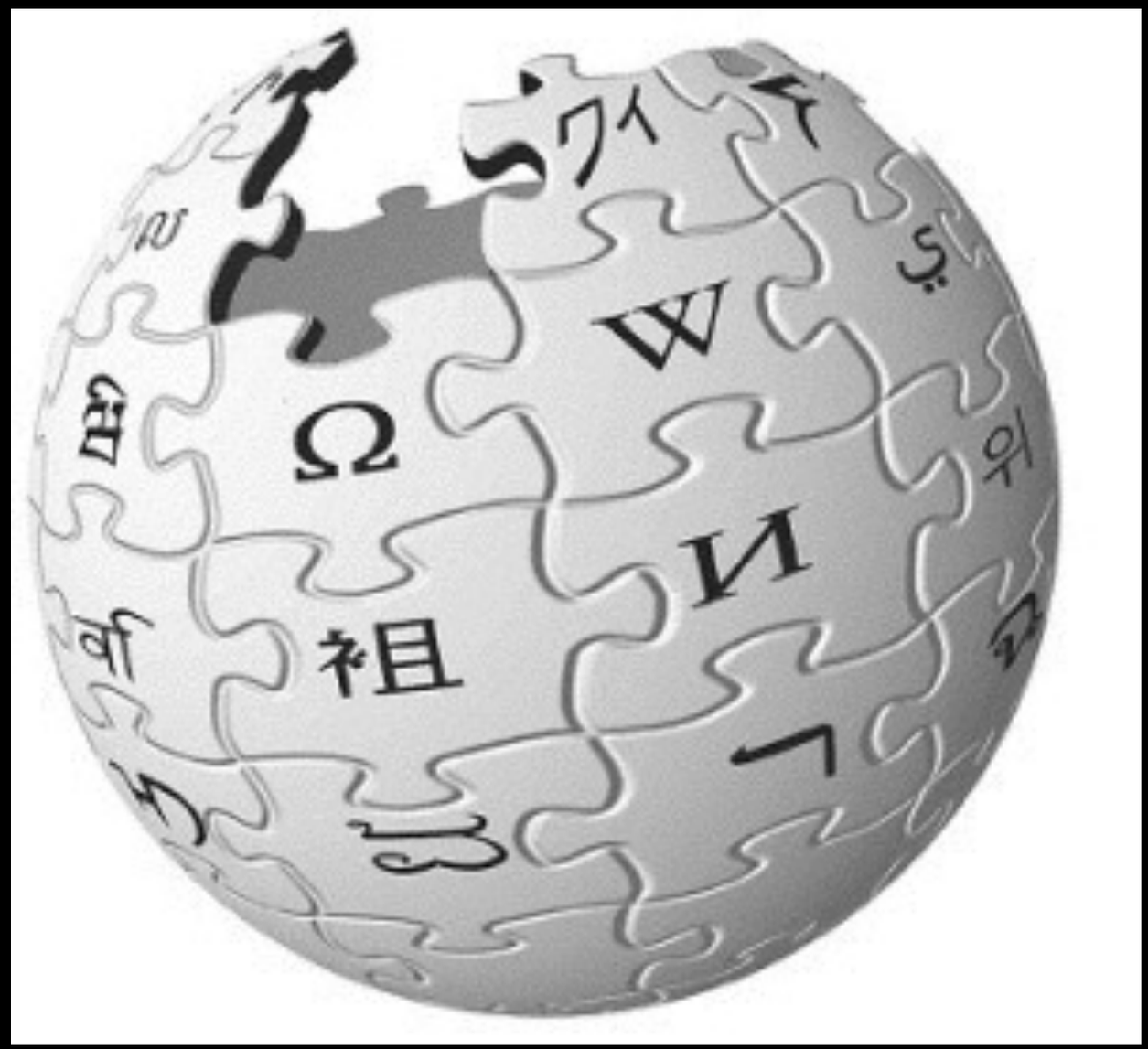
- modern digital computer
- modern media technologies that allow for storage of still & moving images, sounds, and texts using different material forms (photographic plates, film stocks, gramophones, etc.)

internet (Castells)

- born of unlikely intersection of
  - major research institutions (big science)
  - military research
  - ideology: uncompromising defense of individual freedom

architecture of openness

- self-evolving development of technology
- users are key producers



new media

- “new” ≠ “recent”
- origins of computer date back to 1830s (Charles Babbage began designing “the Analytical Engine” in 1833)
- first Internet demonstration: 1972

new media

- “new” ≠ “new use”
- popular definition: use of a computer for distribution and exhibition rather than production
- problem with this definition: blurring of “old” and “new” media content

new media

- “new” ≠ “revolutionary”
- printing press affected one STAGE of cultural communication (distribution)
- photography affected one TYPE of cultural communication (still images)

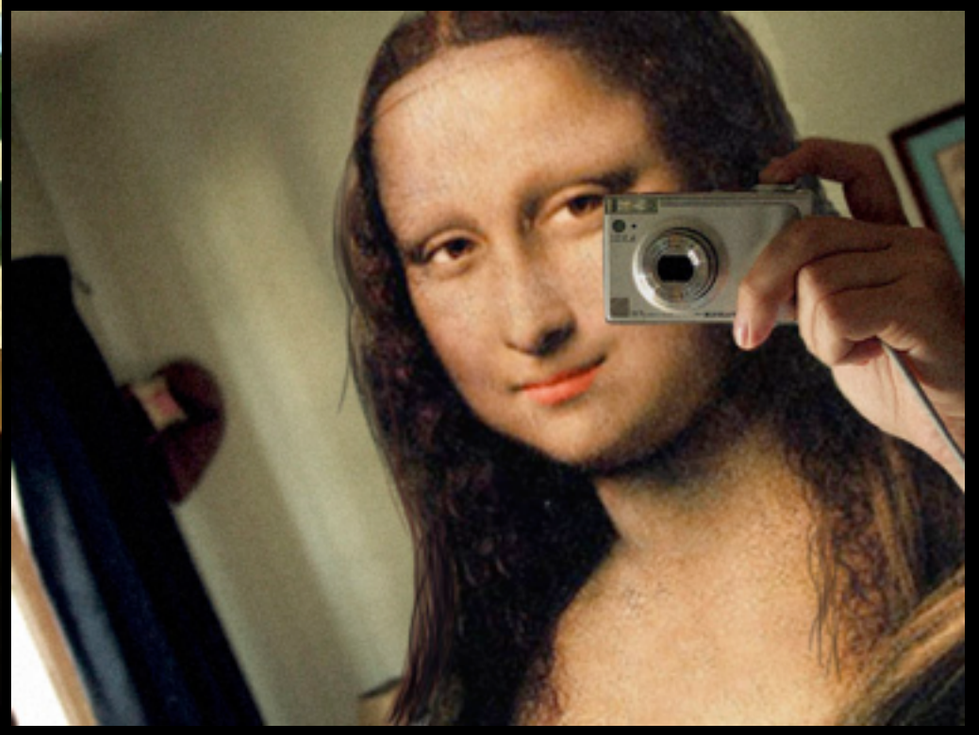
new media

- "new" = scope of change
- computer media affect all STAGES of communication (acquisition, manipulation, storage, and distribution)
- computer media affect all TYPES of cultural communication (still images, moving images, sound & spatial constructions)

"Computerization has changed and will change the text violently and forever, altering its production, consumption, form, content, economics, and value"

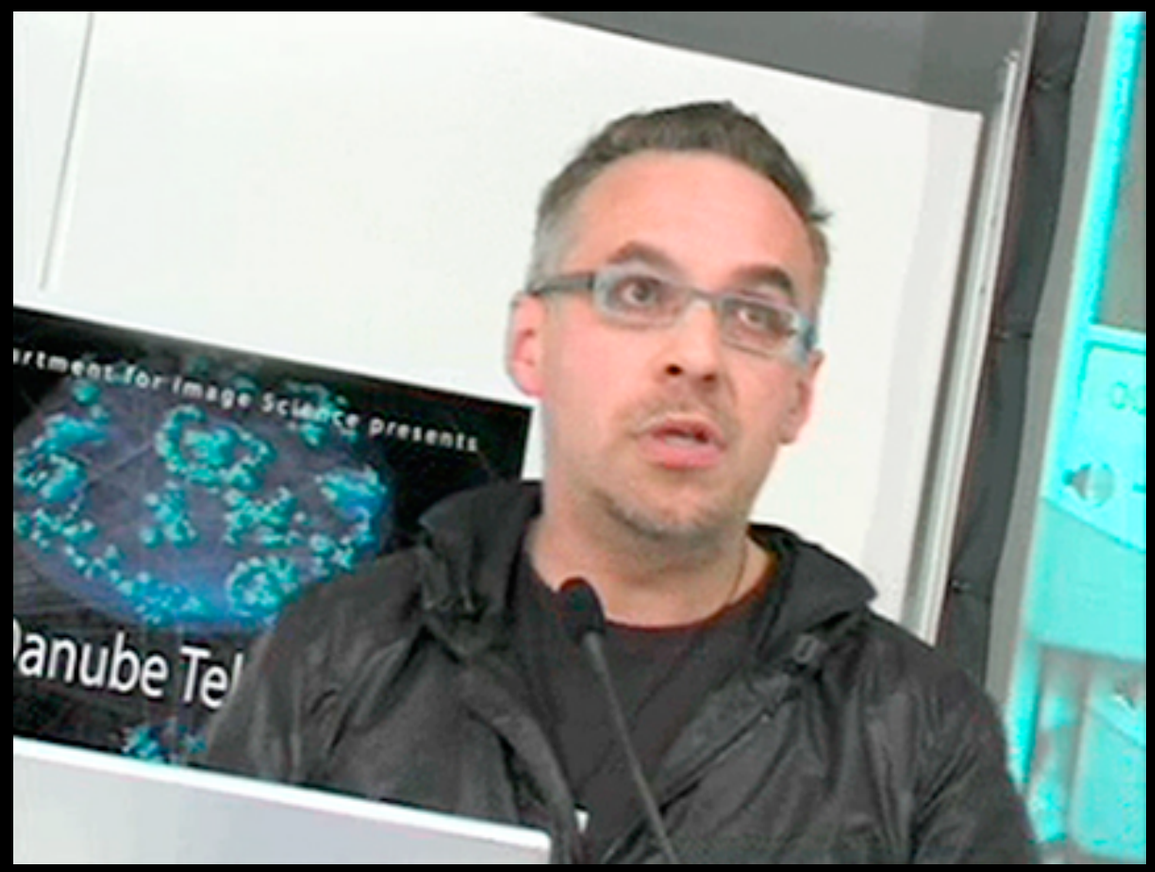
Mona Lisa

If She Was On Facebook



5 principles of new media

(key differences between old and new media)



- Lev Manovich
- not absolute laws, but general tendencies of a culture undergoing computerization

principles of new media

ONE: numerical representation

- all new media objects are composed of digital code

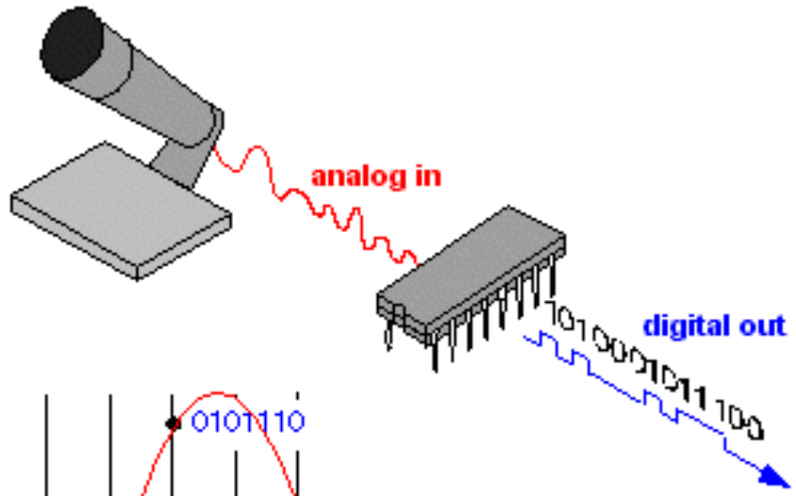
digital code

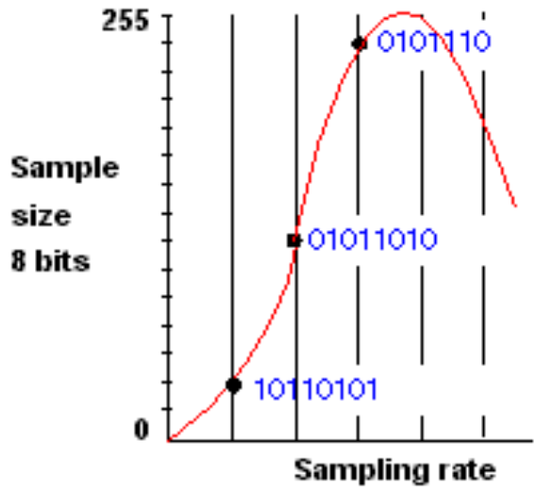
- a new media object can be described formally
- a new media object is subject to algorithmic manipulation

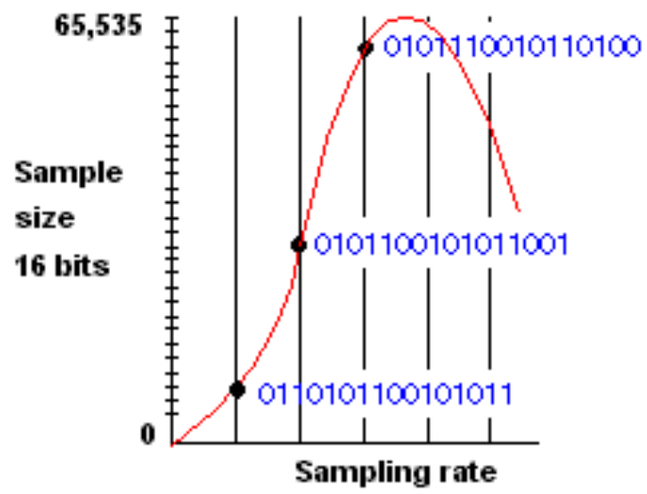
numerical representation

- process of conversion of various forms of old media/analog media = digitization
    - sampling
    - quantification

From Computer Desktop Encyclopedia
© 1998 The Computer Language Co. Inc.



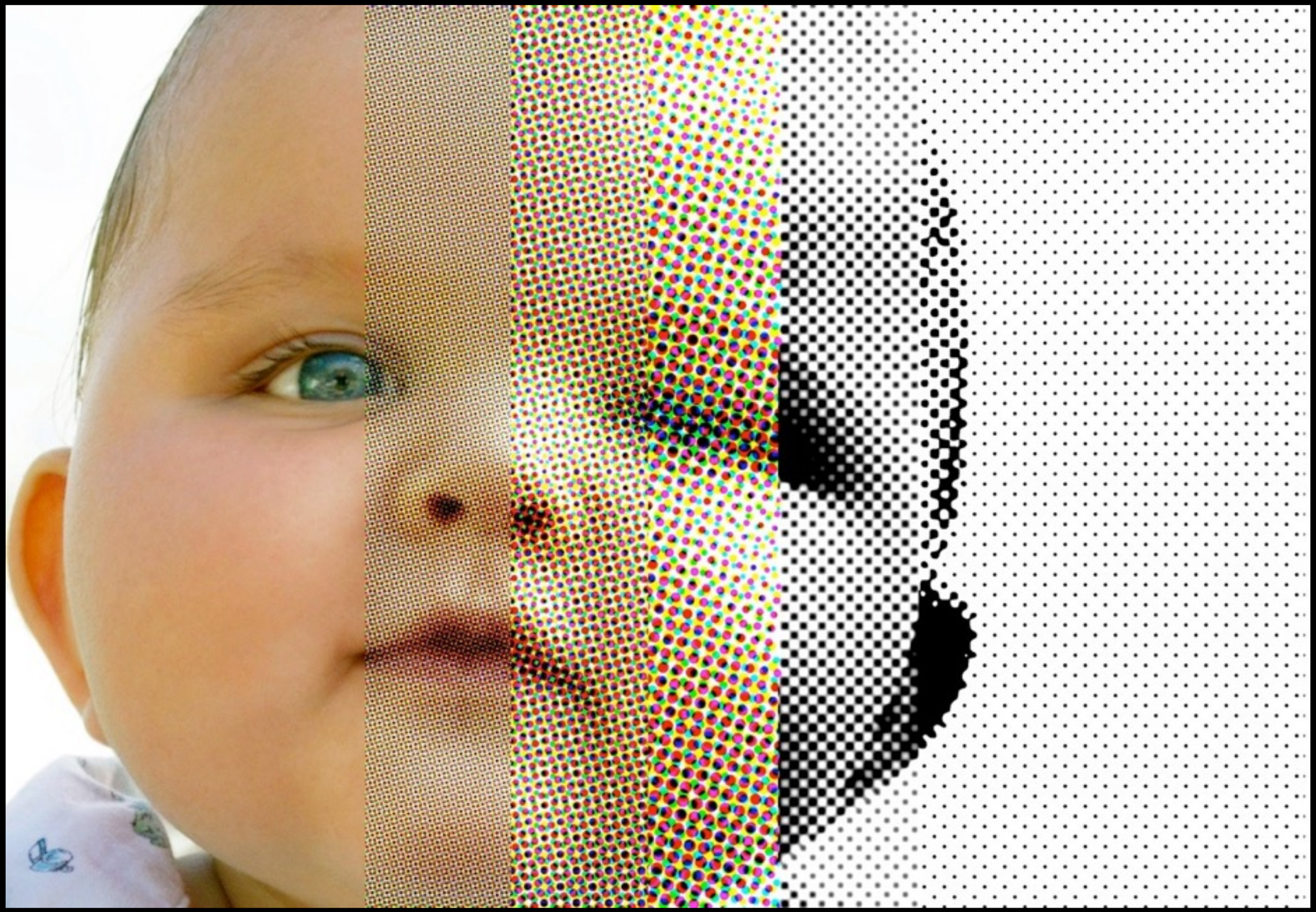




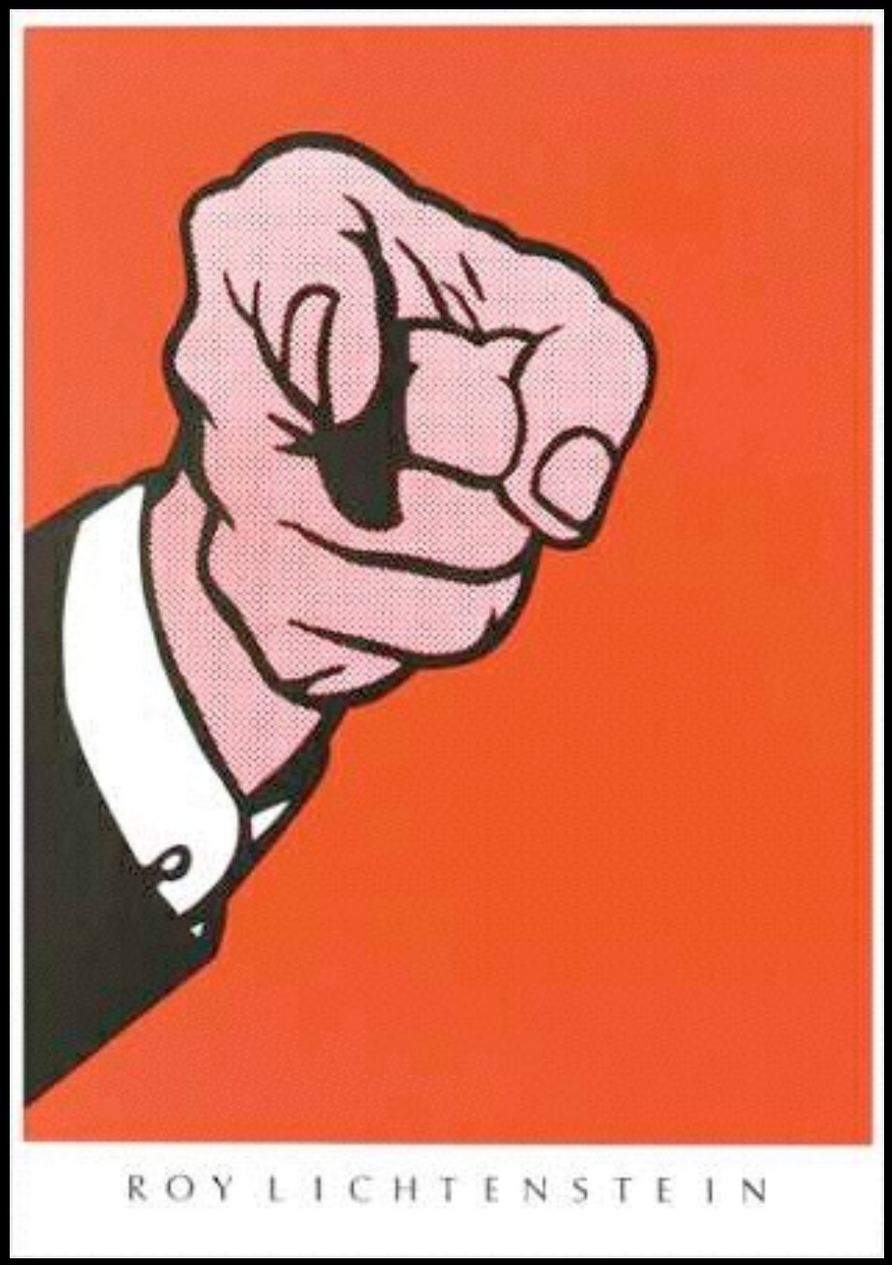
Sampling Sound

The faster the sampling rate and the larger the sample size, the more accurately sound can be digitized. An 8-bit sample breaks the sound wave into 255 increments compared with 65,535 for a 16-bit sample.

digital sampling



Roy Lichtenstein: 1923-1997



principles of new media

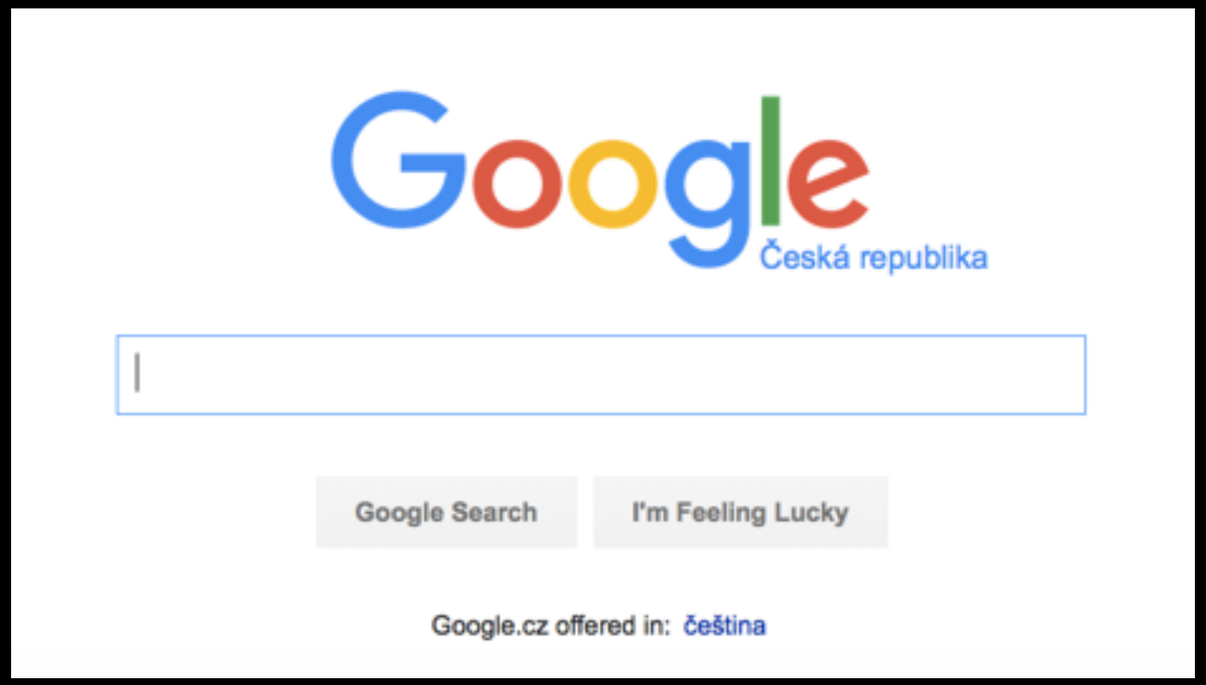
- TWO: modularity
  - the “fractal structure of new media”
  - media elements re-assembled/remixed, but each retains its separate identity

The last three principles are dependent on these first two.

principles of new media

THREE: automation

- numerical coding and the modular structure of a media object allow for the automation of many operations involved in media creation, manipulation, and access.
- human intentionality can be removed from the creative process, at least in part.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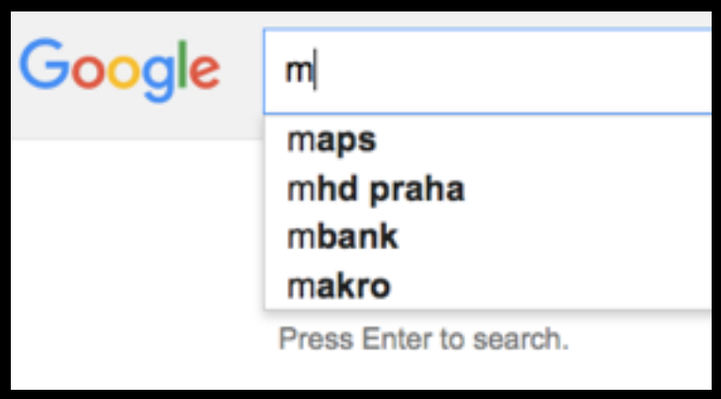
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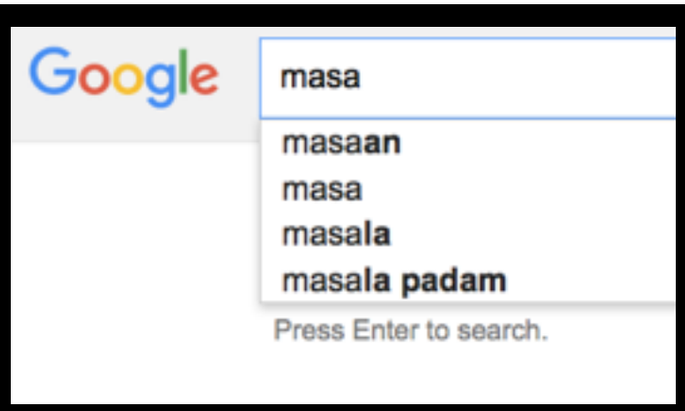
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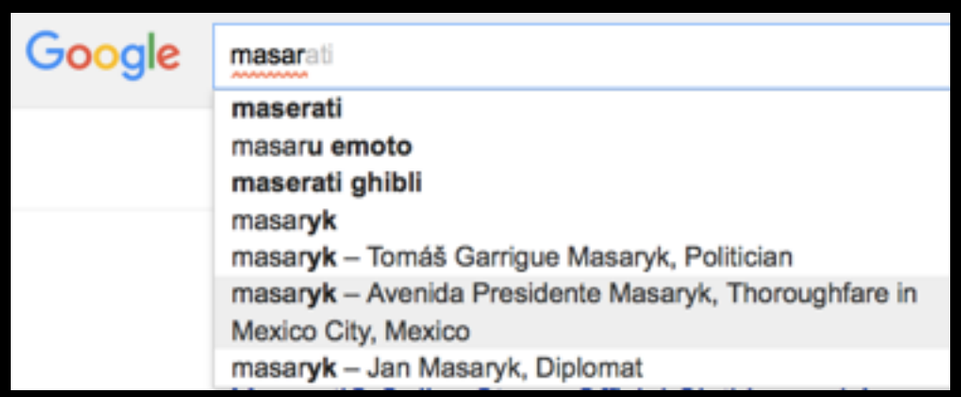
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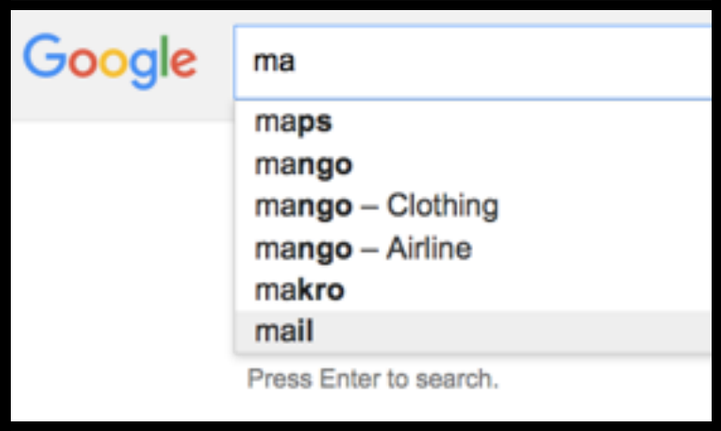
masaryk – Avenida Presidente Masaryk, Thoroughfare in Mexico City, Mexico
masaryk – Jan Masaryk, Diplomat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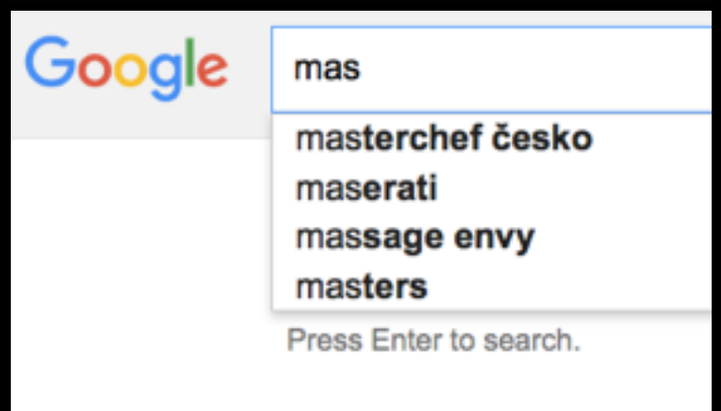
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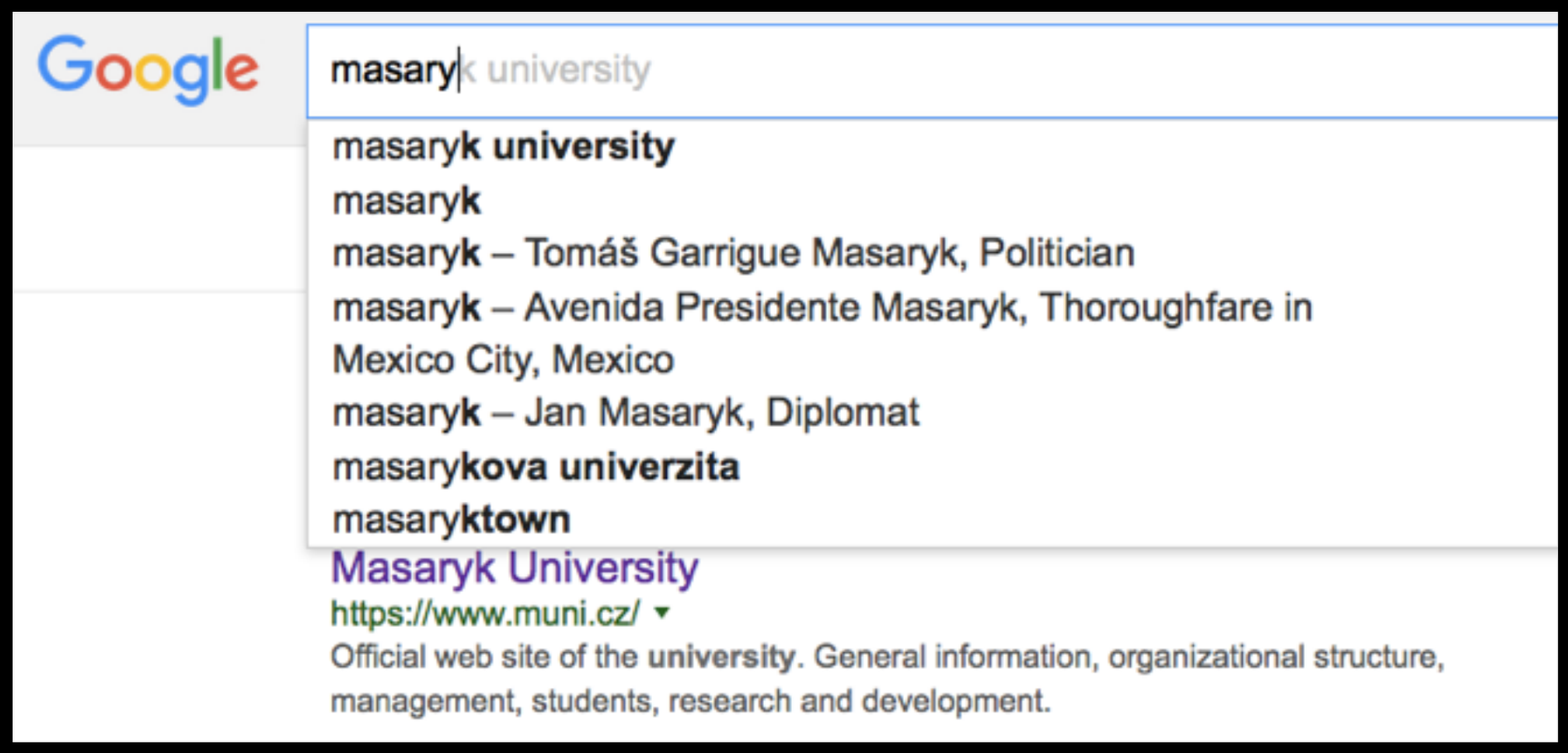
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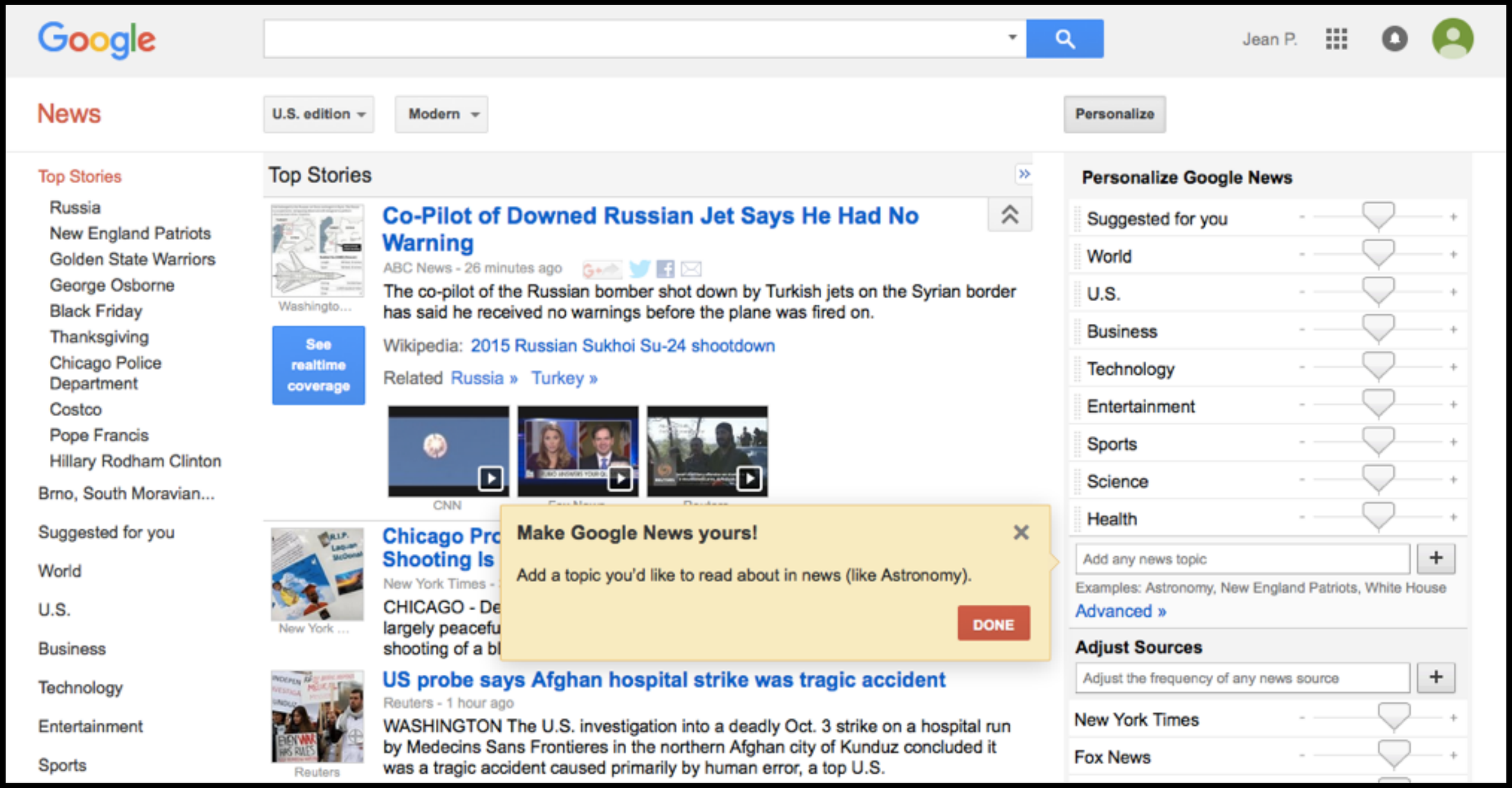
principles of new media

FOUR: variability

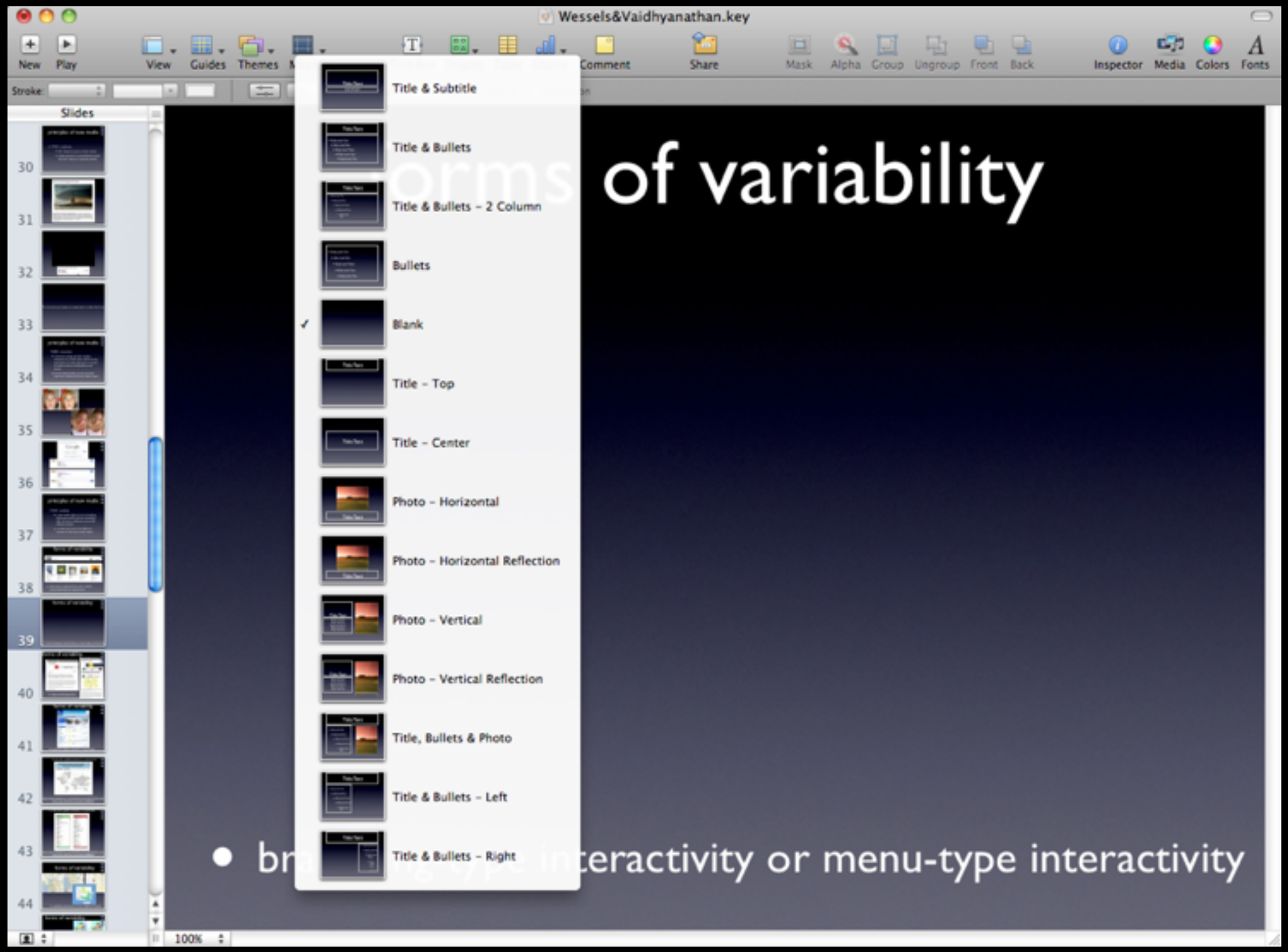
- a new media object is not something fixed once and for all, but something that can exist in different, potentially infinite versions
- not identical copies, but different versions of the same media object

forms of variability



- information obtained from user creates customized web site experiences

forms of variability



- branching-type interactivity or menu-type interactivity

forms of variability

Jihadists using migrant crisis as cover—Czech president

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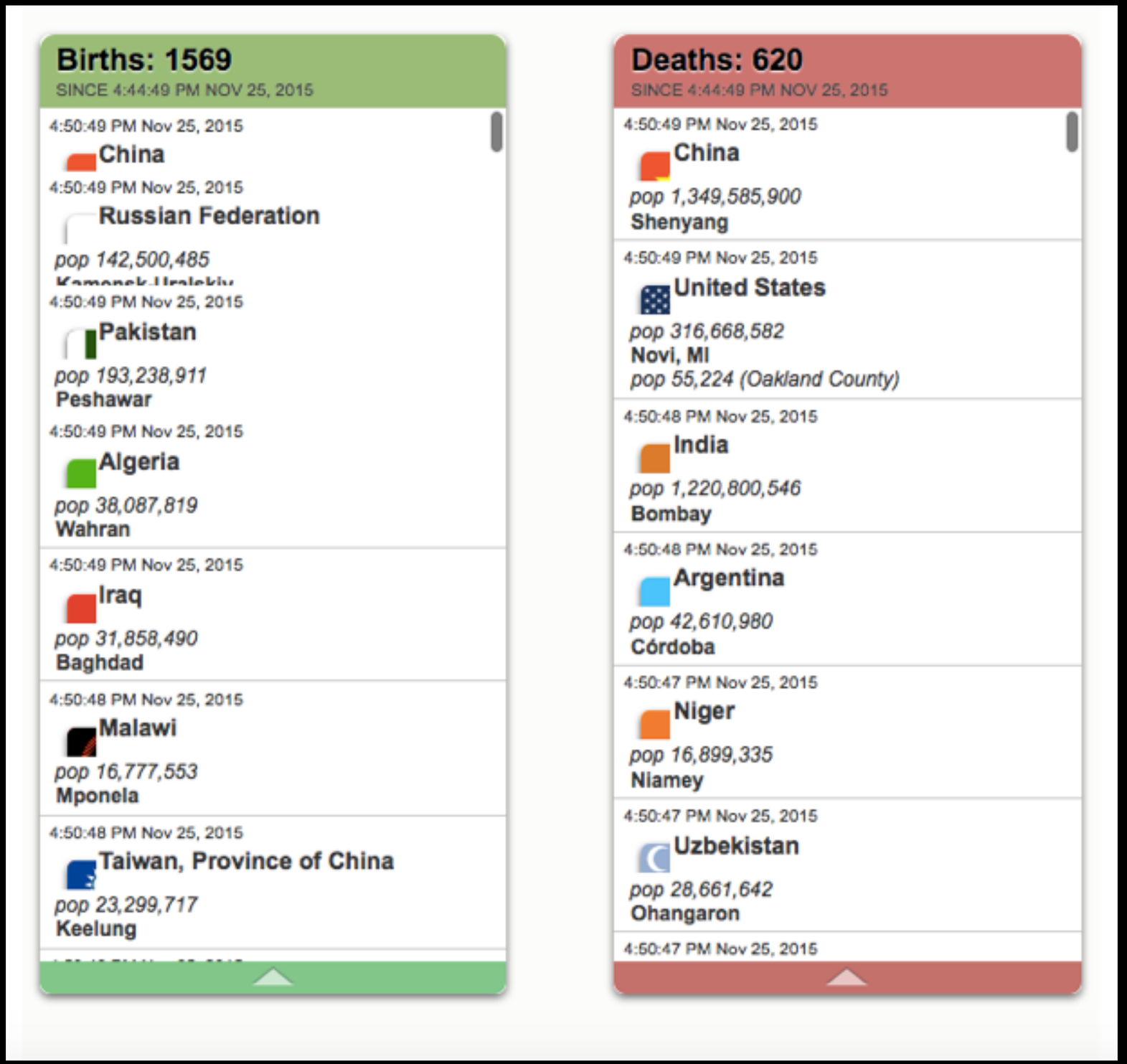

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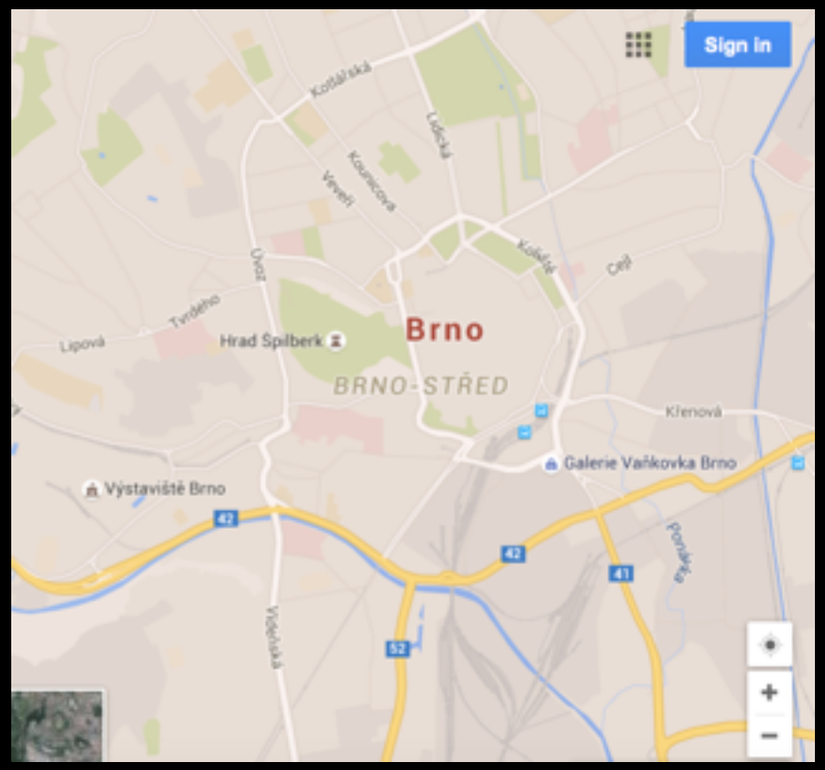

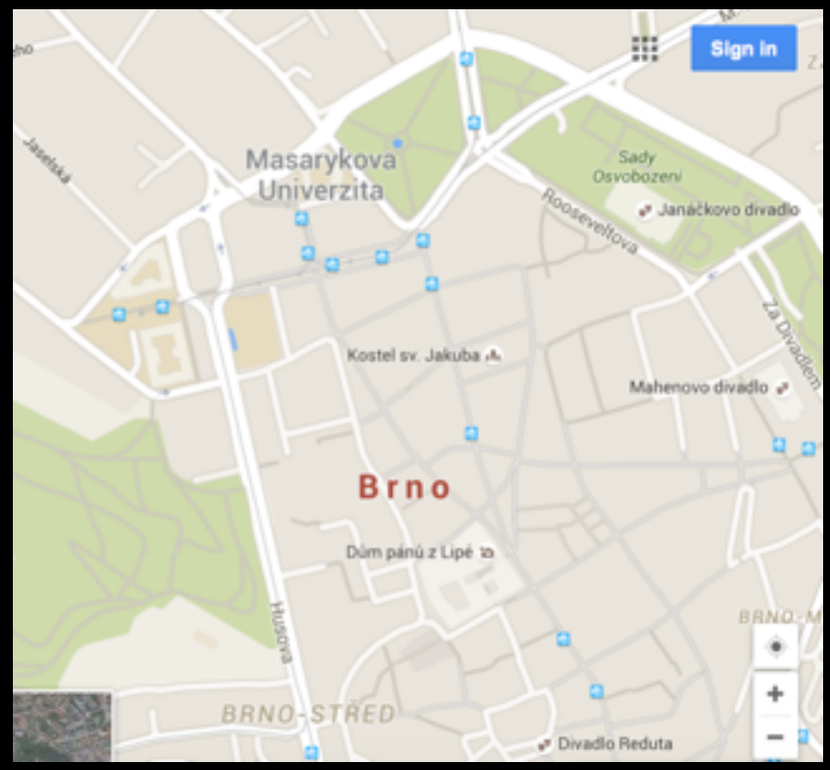

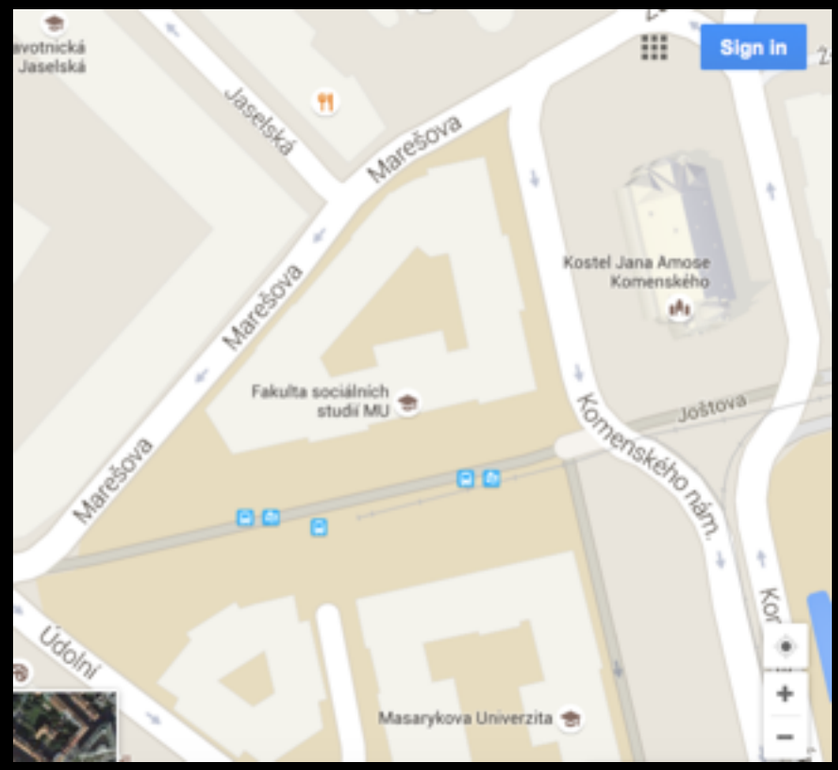

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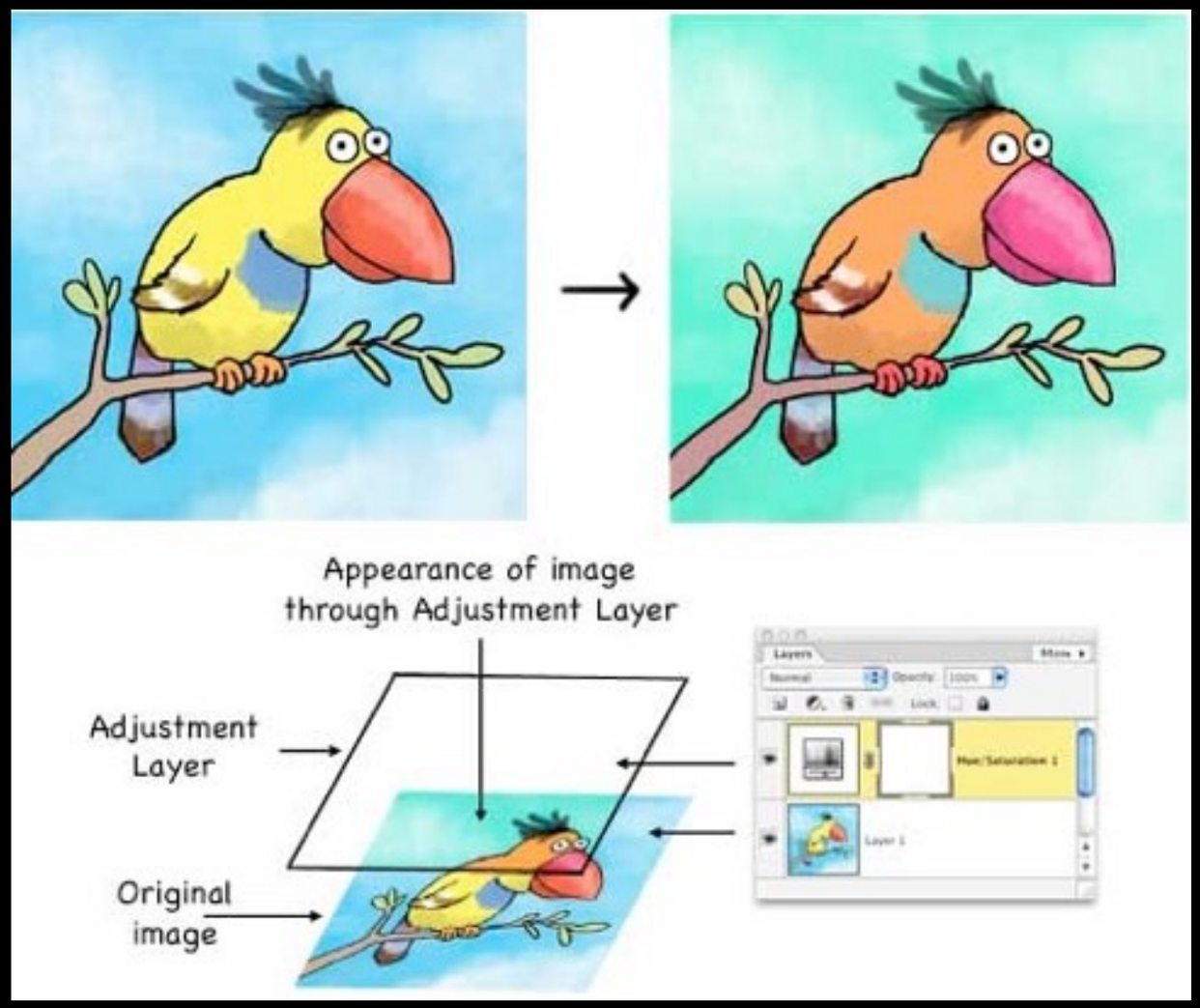
forms of variability



- adjustments

Meet the woman behind THAT Photoshop makeover: Model in time-lapse video showing radical effect of the airbrush reveals why she is proud to be imperfect

By TAMARA ABRAHAM

PUBLISHED: 11:43 EST, 4 November 2013 | **UPDATED:** 14:10 EST, 4 November 2013

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The model who featured in the viral Photoshop video that stormed the interned last week has said that she is proud to be imperfect.

Speaking about why she agreed to pose in just a pair of red bikini briefs, Sally Gifford Piper, from New York City, told **Entertainment Tonight** that she is determined to fight for more varied role models in the media.

'I feel really angry about the pressure on women and the reality is that most of us don't look like these perfect women,' she said.

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Time lapse video shows radical effect of Photoshop on model's

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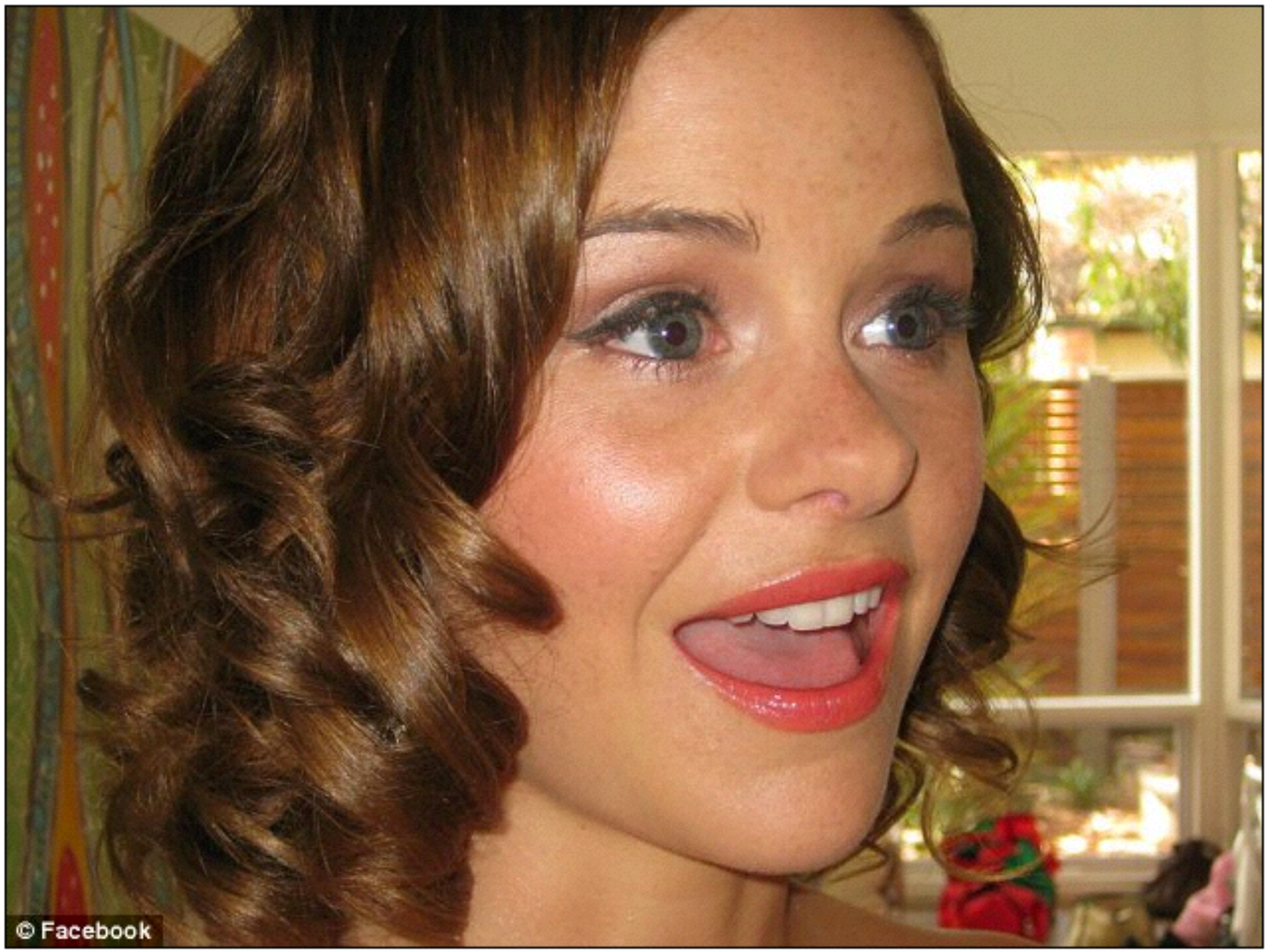

Natural beauty: Sally Gifford Piper has been revealed to be the woman featured in last week's viral video showing the powerful effect of Photoshop on a model

'I think there needs to be a celebration of all different shapes and sizes. And we need to see more variety and I'm determined to fight for that.'

The 36-second clip, made by Mrs Gifford Piper's director husband, Tim Piper, for GlobalDemocracy.com, attracted worldwide attention for their cause, which is demanding mandatory disclaimers on all photos of airbrushed models.

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2487211/Meet-woman-THAT-Photoshop-time-lapse-video-makeover.html

principles of new media

FIVE: cultural transcoding

- new media consist of two layers

- cultural layer

- computer layer