

Technology and Prescription

Introduction to Communication Studies

Date Due: Your paper must be posted at least 24 hours before your conference time on your conference's designated bulletin board and a paper copy is due at the beginning of your conference. We will be happy to provide comments on drafts during office hours but not over email.s

Purpose and Particulars: Please see the assignment sheet entitled "Conference Papers."

Relevant Readings: Williams and Wise and Slack

Background: Both articles help us to understand the ways in which technologies incorporate particular ways of doing things or thinking about the world. They also considerer how technologies are contingent and can be transformed.

Task:

1. Pick a specific media technology. For instance it should be your pair of earbuds and not all earbuds in general.
2. Consider the ways in which that technology encodes or prescribes certain worldviews, modes of behavior, ways of doing things, etc.
3. Consider how the technology is articulated. Where do those values come from? Why does the technology work the way it does?
3. Apply at least one concept, idea or proposition from Williams or Wise and Slack to consider how some aspect of your technology could change, and how that change might affect its political or cultural role.

Tips: The paper doesn't need to go in the order of the assignment. The strongest papers often integrate the discussion of the reading with the discussion of the example.