Analyzing Emerging Mediums in the Digital Age

Assignment Overview

In this paper, you will apply **Marshall McLuhan's media theories** to a modern technological medium (e.g. laptops, smartphones, AI assistants, social media, VR, AR, etc.). Your analysis should explore how this medium **shapes perception, alters communication, and transforms human experience**. You will also apply McLuhan's **Tetrad of Media Effects** to deepen your critical evaluation. Include any cited works or articles as well as any AI assistants used and prompts used in the creation of this paper.

AI assistant usage is encouraged, don't forget these assignments are a way to get you more comfortable with the tools available to you!

Guidelines and Structure

1. Introduction

- Clearly introduce the **chosen medium** (e.g., smartphones, AI assistants, TikTok, etc.).
- Provide **background information** on the medium's role in contemporary digital culture.
- State your **thesis**: How does this medium influence human perception and communication in a McLuhanesque framework?

2. Hot, Cold, or a Blend?

- Define **McLuhan's concepts of "hot" and "cool" media** with examples.
- Categorize your chosen medium:
    - Is it **hot (high-definition, requiring less user participation)?**
    - Is it **cool (low-definition, requiring high user interaction)?**
    - Is it **a hybrid of both?**
- Provide **evidence and reasoning** for your classification.

3. The Medium's Effect on Perception & Communication

- Discuss how this medium **affects human perception** and alters the **message it transmits**.
- How does it change **the way people process information, interact, or think?**
- Relate your argument to **McLuhan's idea that "the medium is the message."**
- Include real-world examples, studies, or historical parallels.

4. Applying the Tetrad of Media Effects

Analyze the medium through **McLuhan's Tetrad**, answering the following questions with depth and examples:

1. **Enhancement:** What **human ability or social practice does this medium amplify** or improve?
2. **Obsolescence:** What older medium or practice does it **replace, reduce, or make irrelevant**?
3. **Retrieval:** What past medium, form of communication, or cultural practice does it **revive**?
4. **Reversal:** When overused or pushed to its extreme, how does this medium **transform or backfire** into something else?

5. Conclusion

- Summarize your key findings.
- Reflect on whether **your generation's relationship with this medium** aligns with or challenges McLuhan's theories.
- Offer insights on the **future of this medium and its role in shaping society.**

6. Citations

- Include MLA formatted citations of any works, articles or websites referenced in the essay

7. AI Usage

- Include the name and version of the AI assistant you're using (e.g. Anthropic Claude 3.5-Sonnet or OpenAI GPT-4o Mini)
- Include a log of prompts that you used that were particularly helpful or provided exceptional results

Formatting & Submission Requirements

- **Length:** 3 pages maximum, excluding citations and prompts
- **Format:** Single-spaced, 11pt Arial, 1-inch margins
- **Citations:** Use **MLA** citation format for any references
- **Due Date:** 2/2/2025 11:59:59pm
- **Submission:** Upload as a PDF to Blackboard (DO NOT UPLOAD DOC/DOCX!)

Assessment Criteria (Grading Rubric)

Criteria	Excellent (A)	Good (B)	Satisfactory (C)	Needs Improvement (D/F)
Clarity & Organization	Well-structured, logical flow, clear thesis	Mostly clear, minor organization issues	Somewhat unclear, lacks logical transitions	Disorganized, unclear thesis
Depth of Analysis	Insightful, strong application of McLuhan's theories	Solid analysis, minor gaps in depth	Surface-level engagement, lacks depth	Weak, unclear, or missing analysis
Use of Examples	Strong, well-integrated examples	Some good examples, but lacks consistency	Few or weak examples	Little to no relevant examples
Application of Tetrad	Thoughtful, deep engagement with all four effects	Covers all elements but lacks depth in one area	Covers all but weak analysis in two or more areas	Missing key elements or lacks application
Writing & Mechanics	Clear, polished, minimal errors	Minor grammatical or spelling issues	Noticeable errors, affects readability	Poor writing, excessive errors

Citations & Formatting	Proper citation format, well-integrated sources	Mostly correct citation, minor errors	Some formatting/citation errors	Incorrect or missing citations