

MCS 146F: MEDIA, MATERIALISM, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

MCS 292 (graduate level)

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What can a substance like dust tell us about the geographies of labor in the digital 21st century? How does the insubstantial language of “the cloud” obscure the massive climatic and geological footprints of digital life? While everything is going virtual, there are off-shored bodies constantly at work--cleaning the internet, programming AI systems, while being surveilled --to make that possible. Where are these bodies and to whom do they belong?

Approaching media studies in relation to elemental matter-- water, geology, dust, waste, clouds, air, bodies, and atmospheres-- opens up alternative media histories, theories and archaeologies. This course addresses these questions by examining the relationship between media, the environment, and the elemental world.

We will develop an awareness of the material and environmental politics and histories of media to build a set of interdisciplinary research methodologies and theoretical frameworks while exploring these connections.

t/th 2:00- 3:20pm

MEDIA AND THE ENVIRONMENT * CONFLICT MINERALS * GEOGRAPHIES of
VR * DIGITAL LABOR: BODIES, LAND, MIND * E-WASTE and DIGITAL DUMPS
* ELEMENTAL METHODS * MEDIA AND ARCHAEOLOGY * POLITICS AND
INFRASTRUCTURE * ALTERNATIVE MEDIA THEORY * ELEMENTAL MEDIA

