A central theme of this course is an exploration of the social impact of the organization of the media. Our lives today are heavily impacted by the media and also by the technologies that deliver the media to us. For this assignment, you will explore the social impact of one of these technologies. Your final product will be a short paper and a short presentation (10 minutes) given to the class. Your presentation will have three parts:

1. A brief summary of the important parts of your paper, focusing on the social impact
2. Statistics about the use of the technology
3. A demonstration of the most important features of the technology - either a hands-on demonstration or a pictorial presentation

Questions to Explore

1. How would you describe this technology to a neophyte?
2. What are the historical origins of this technology (briefly)?
3. Why is this technology and its use interesting and/or significant?
4. What potential does it have to change our lives for better or for worse?
5. Are some social groups influenced more than others by this technology?
6. In what ways does the technology influence access to information?
7. In what ways does the technology influence our connectedness as a society?
8. Is there any significant social controversy regarding this technology?

Potential Topics

1. Blogging
2. Cell Phones
3. Digital music
4. Digital photography
5. Internet Gaming
6. Cable/satellite TV
7. RSS
8. Online shopping
9. Google
10. Text messaging

DUE WEDNESDAY JAN 10:

A brief one-paragraph typed proposal for this project – what technology you want to explore and your specific focus. The topics above are overly broad and should be narrowed somewhat. Ie: How has shopping online affected tax revenues …

You may propose a topic not listed here. Email me or visit me in my office asap if you want to discuss your ideas. On Thursday, I will present a presentation schedule.

If I have further questions about your proposed topic, we can discuss them once the date for your presentation is set. Presentations will be scheduled for each day beginning Jan 22. Your presentation and paper will be graded on both the quality of the information you present and the quality of the presentation. If you need access to technology other than that already in the classroom, let me know at least a day or two ahead of time.