

introduction: who are we?

HISTORY OF INFORMATION

I n f o 1 0 3 * C o g S c i C 1 0 3 * H i s t C 1 9 2 * M S C 1 0 4 C

who we are

Instructors

Paul Duguid

office hours:

duguid-at-ischool.berkeley.edu

Wed 10:30 - 12 (by appointment)

Geoffrey Nunberg

office hours:

203a South Hall

nunberg-at-ischool

Tuesday 2 - 3 (by appointment)

510 643-3894 (email preferred)

Blake Johnson

office hours:

Free Speech Café

blakej-at-berkeley.edu

Tue & Th 11:15-11:45 (by appt)

510 390 4061 (email preferred)

wait list

wait!

it's not under our control, but under the control of the various departments (cognitive science, history, information, media studies)

usually, all who want one eventually finds a place

if you do not want to continue with the course, **please drop it** so someone can have your place

course web-sites

<http://blogs.ischool.berkeley.edu/i103s12/syllabus/>

[course-requirements/](#)

[about/](#)

[assignments/](#)

requirements

Course Requirements

Reading assignments and class participation (35% of course grade)

Midterm exam or paper (25% of course grade)

Final (40% of course grade)

requirements

Course Requirements

Reading assignments and class participation (35% of course grade):

Participation and lecture attendance are mandatory. Professors will assign up to 5 points for class participation.

There will be **twelve assignments**. These will generally ask you to respond to some of the reading in the syllabus. For the most part, these assignments require short answers of no more than two paragraphs (or two hundred words) to questions about the readings. There are some guidelines for writing responses from a past class [here](#). Responses are worth up to 3 points each. Your two lowest grades will be dropped. Thus, each student can receive up to 30 points for assignments, based on their ten best assignment grades. From time to time you will be called upon to discuss your assignments in class.

Assignments will normally be given on Thursdays and **must be submitted via bspace by 5 pm on Sunday**. No late assignments and no assignments sent by email will be accepted. **You may be called upon to discuss your assignments in class.**

requirements

Midterm exam or paper (25% of course grade) [March 22]

The midterm will be an 80 minute, in-class exam and include three essay questions, two chosen from a list of questions provided in advance.

There will also be short-answer sections asking you to identify quotations, people, dates, images, and other aspects of the course.

We will give out a study guide. Exam questions will be based on material covered in readings, slides, and class discussion. Class slides will normally be posted shortly before each class.

Students can ask to submit a paper instead of a midterm exam. This paper will be a 2000 word essay in response to one of a list of essay questions. We will provide a list of topics on March 1 and, if you wish to write an essay, **you must let us know in writing which one you propose to write by March 8**. We will let you know if you may proceed by March 10. **The paper is due at 9 a.m. on the morning of the midterm (March 22)**. If you do not submit by that time, you should take the midterm exam, which starts at 9:30.

requirements

Final (40% of course grade) [May 9]

Modeled on the midterm, this three-hour exam will ask you to answer five essay questions, at least three of which will be on the study guide. As with the midterm, there will be short-answer questions as well. The final will cover the entire syllabus, but its emphasis will be on the second half of the semester.

Other

From time to time we will give brief homework exercises to be discussed in class. No grade will be assigned for class participation as such, but such exercises and contribution to discussions in general will be taken into account when we assess the grade for class participation.

Syllabus

Week 1

17 Jan: Introduction: Why "History of Information?"

[Geoff's slides](#)

19 Jan: Talking about information

syllabus

Week 2

24 Jan: Technological Determinism

Required reading:

- Heilbroner, Robert L. 1967. "Do Machines Make History?", *Technology and Culture*. 8(3): 335-345.
- Williams, Raymond. 1974. "The Technology and the Society," pp 1-25 in *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*. London: Fontana.

Additional material:

- Marx, Leo. 2010. "Technology: The Emergence of a Hazardous Concept." *Technology & Culture*, 51 (3 July).

26 Jan: The First Technologies of Information: Writing Systems

Required reading:

- Marshack, Alexander. 1999. "The Art and Symbols of Ice-Age Man," in David Crowley, ed. *Communication in History: Technology, Culture, Society*. Allyn & Bacon. Pp. 5-14.
- Robinson, Andrew. 1999. "The Origins of Writing." In David Crowley, ed. *Communication in History: Technology, Culture, Society*. Allyn & Bacon. Pp 36-42.

Week 3

31 Jan: Cultural Effects of Writing

Required reading:

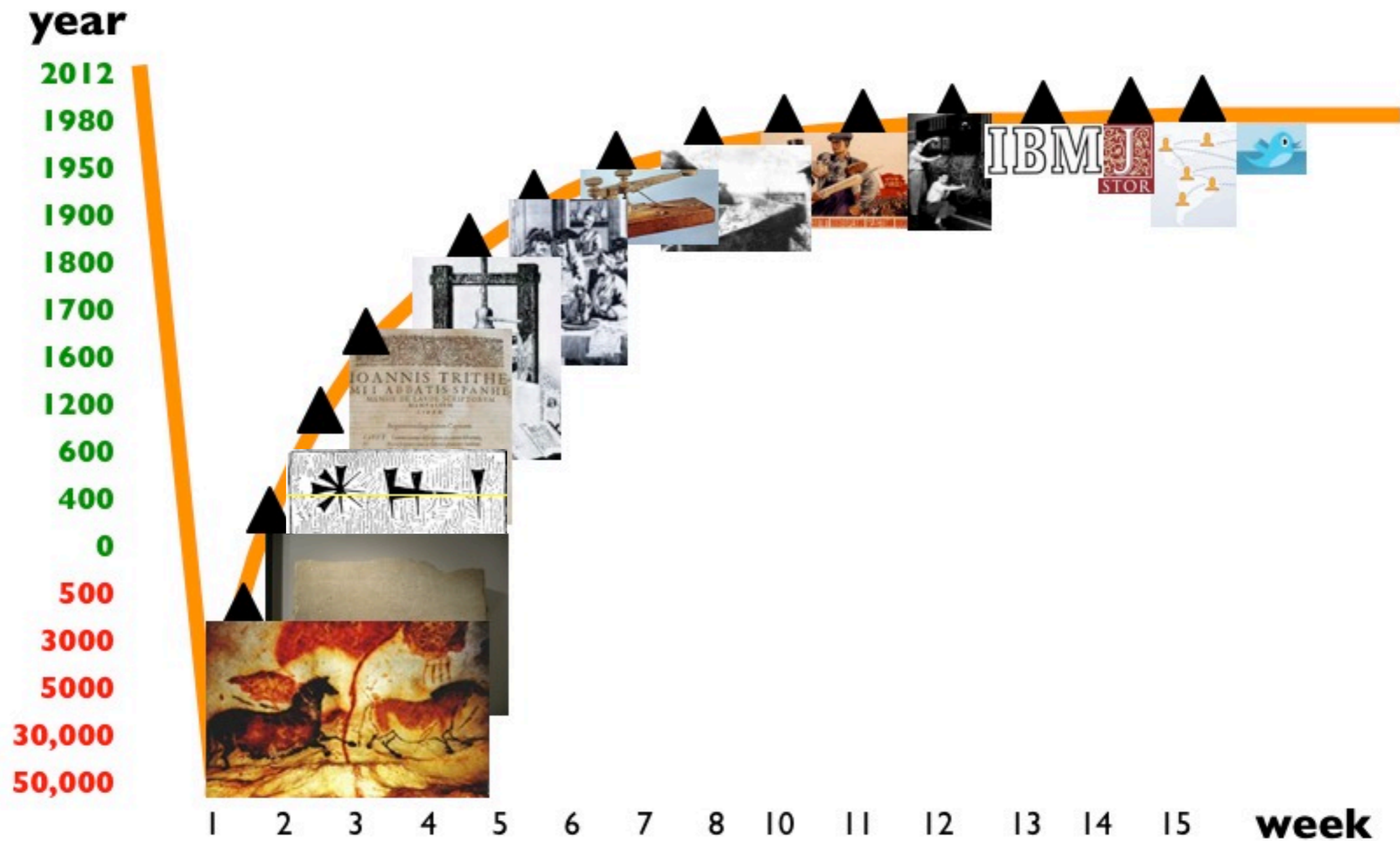
- Havelock, Eric. "The Coming of Literate Communication to Western Culture," in Eugene R. Kintgen, Barry M. Kroll, Mike Rose, eds. *Perspectives on Literacy*. Southern Illinois University, 1988. Pp. 127-134.
- Gough, Kathleen. 1968. [Implications of literacy in traditional China and India](#). In Goody, Jack (ed.). *Literacy in Traditional Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 44-56.

reader

reader
Copy Central
2560 Bancroft



where we go from here



Week 1

17 Jan: why "history of information"

19 Jan: talking about information

Week 2

24 Jan: determinism

26 Jan: writing systems

Week 3

31 Jan: cultural effects of writing

2 Feb: manuscript culture

Week 4

7 Feb: print revolution

9 Feb: scientific revolution

Week 5

14 Feb: public sphere

16 Feb: organization of knowledge

Week 6

21 Feb: rise of literacy

23 Feb: popular print

Week 7

28 Feb: time & money

1 March: 19th century public sphere

Week 8

6 March: information as property

8 March: communications revolution

Week 9

13 March: technologies of the image

15 March: politics and propaganda

Week 10

20 March: advertising

22 March: M I D T E R M

Week 11

3 April: broadcast

7 April: computer revolution

Week 12

10 April: storage and search

12 April: visual literacy

Week 13

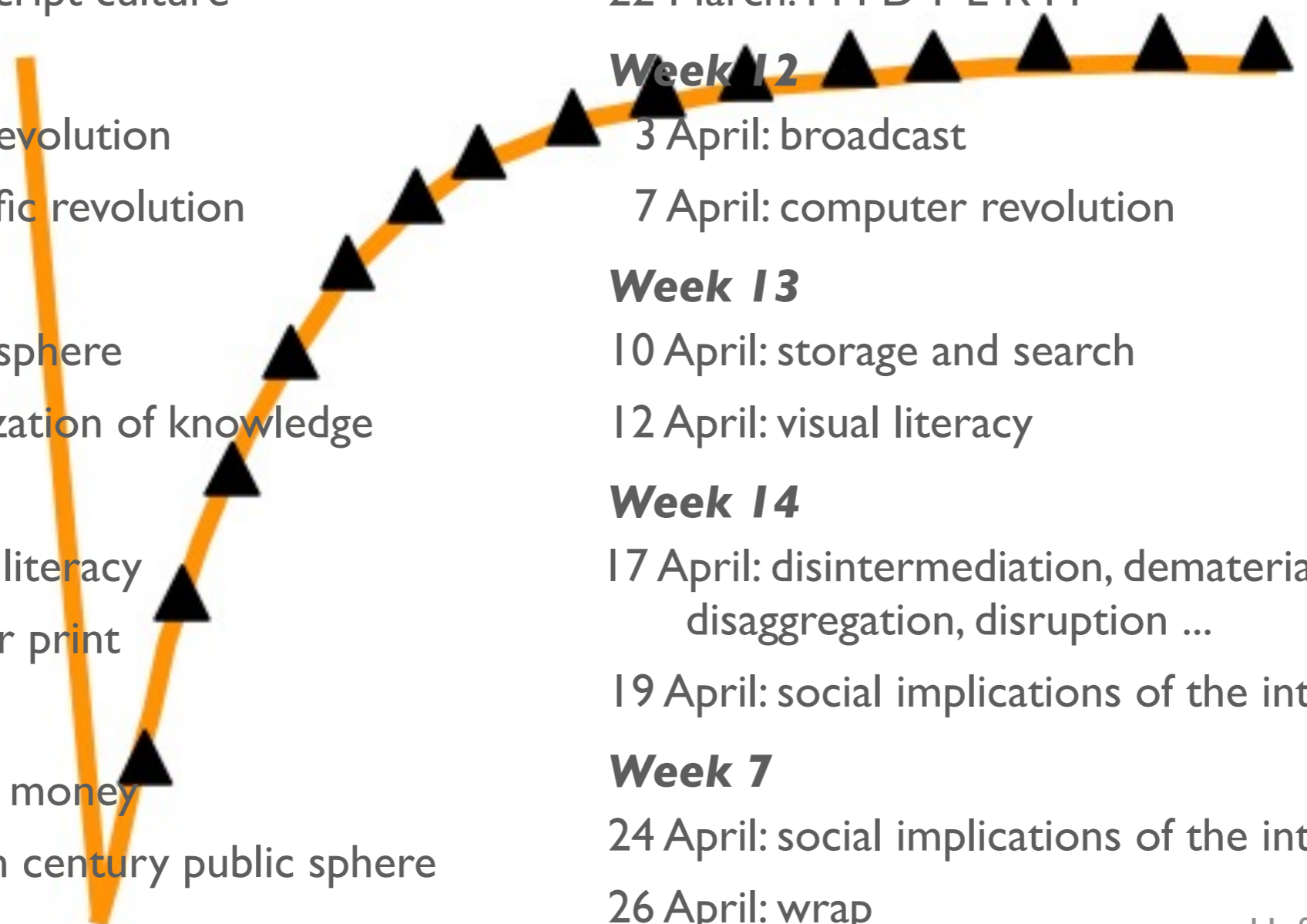
17 April: disintermediation, dematerialization, disaggregation, disruption ...

19 April: social implications of the internet (1)

Week 14

24 April: social implications of the internet (2)

26 April: wrap



feedback

subject matter

What didn't you like about this course?

feedback

subject matter

What didn't you like about this course?

"history"

feedback

subject matter

What didn't you like about this course?

"history"

"Focus more on Silicon Valley, and the second half of the course"

feedback

readings

"add discussion groups"

"shorter readings. I always put them off until the test, but if they were more concise I would do them before class"

"I want easier reading materials"

"Add more scandalous material"

feedback

assignments

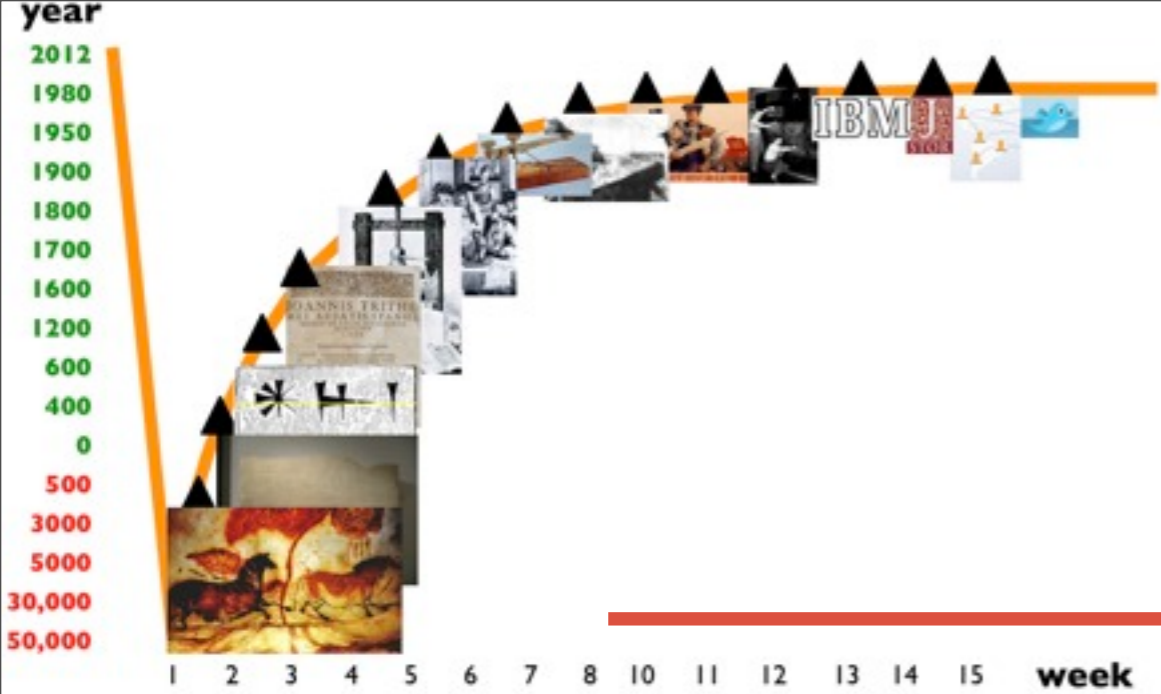
"less assignments"

"perhaps more assignments"

"don't make homework be done Sunday night"

"Friday would be better"

"assignments didn't take long to complete"



leaving early

we have a lot of ground to cover

if you must leave early

leave quietly and from the back of the room

coming up ...

Jan 19:

talking (and singing) about information

Jan 24:

technological determinism

Jan 26:

**the first technologies of information:
writing systems**

Jan 31:

cultural effects of writing