“A machine alone cannot turn an information explosion into a knowledge explosion”
– Noah Wardrip-Fruin

as we continue to digitize our world, the chorus of techno-optimists singing technology’s praises is louder than ever. but...are our expansive networks and digital tools truly enlightening us? or are they in fact working to obscure, impede, and deny us the very things they are said to provide?

this seminar will confront the dark cloud looming over our digital domains. we will examine how advances in information technology have generated a growing set of unintended consequences that hinder our view of the world, and diminish our agency within it.

as citizens and subjects, we will reflect on how we process our relationships with technology and power, complex uncertainty, perpetual surveillance, archival viability, and eroding empathy. selected readings, screenings, assignments, and critiques will map out lines of inquiry for students to consider and apply to their research + studio practices. a significant amount of class time will include faculty mentoring providing students with self-directed inquiries, feedback, conversations, etc.

TEXTS

*The New Dark Age* by James Bridle

24/7 Jonathan Crary

*Digital Preservation in the Artist’s Studio* by Ben Fino-Radin

*Digital Folklore* Edited by Olia Lialina & Dragan Espenschied

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of the Sophomore Seminar course, students will be able to:

1. Present self-motivated work of an iterative nature that demonstrates conceptual focus and technical ability as well as the beginning of a personal direction.

2. Communicate a rationale for a self-designed curricular pathway for the third and fourth year at SAIC as well as a post-graduation goal.
3. Participate in a rigorous critique process in the art and design context that integrates peer-to-peer analysis as well as faculty to student feedback.

4. Demonstrate the ability to think, speak, and write clearly and effectively especially in regards to the developing body of creative work

5. Display an empathetic capacity to respect, understand, and evaluate work made by a wide variety of artists pursuing creative expression in a broad array of disciplines

The Interdisciplinary Sophomore Studio Seminar is focused on FOUR elements:
• MENTORING WITH FACULTY
• DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT’S INDIVIDUAL PRACTICE
• EXPANDING CRITIQUE SKILLS
• DEVELOPING A CURRICULAR PLAN

ASSIGNMENTS

- **Documentation of Practice** - documenting your work is an important step in the artist’s studio practice (unless you’re committed to an ephemeral practice). this process presents certain challenges to artists. throughout the semester we will develop skills + strategies to help you create high-quality documentation of your own work. You will present a selection of your documentation to the class at the end of the semester.

- **Manifesto** - artistic thinking and feeling are often unique sensations that can get lost or deflated when forced into the restrictions of language. the manifesto can be seen as representing successful examples how this feat can be achieved. so now let us take up this challenge: write a manifesto for the world to read.

- **Critiques** - we will use the critique format as a conservatory of critical thinking, language development, and information processing. “cold read” crits on work made outside of class. practice information absorption (aka learning) from the critique process: note-taking during crits, processing feedback + reflecting on feedback, amendments? alternative ways to offer criticism (verbal, written, immediate vs. delayed), and self-reflection on critique’s from students.

- **WEBRECORDER** - using rhizome’s WEBRECORDER tool, create an archival snapshot of your personal internet browsing activities. this project combines archival impulses, screen capture aesthetics, and conceptually driven studio work. you will briefly present a summary of what you archived and why.