

## Digital Media and Society – Midterm Exam

**You may choose to answer either question #1 or #2. Everyone must answer question #3.** Each response is worth 10 pts. for a total of 20 pts. Responses for each question should be approximately 250 words, or at least one page, typed, doubled spaced. All exams should be in Times New Roman, typeface set at 12pt, with one-inch margins. Please write your name in the header of the document. Make sure your entire response is your own (i.e., **please no quotes**).

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**You may choose either of the two questions below (#1 or #2).**

1. Taylor (2014:31) explains that digital media brings with it new ways of accessing information through “online gateways.” When compared to the institutional players that dominated in the era of broadcasting, explain how these gateways alter our relationship to information. Your response must touch on the concept of “radical openness,” elaborated on in Don Tapscott’s TEDTalk titled, “Four Principles for the Open World” (see Taylor 2014:24) or on the process Clay Shirky refers to as “social production” (see Taylor 2014:46).

2. Taylor argues that copyright has become one of the most controversial issues of our time because cultural content is now “[t]angled in the contradiction between freedom and restraint” (2014:150). How has digital technology upset the equilibrium of access and control that many believe copyright was intended to mediate? Make sure your response includes an explanation of the different positions espoused by the RIAA and MPAA and new media thinkers.

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**Everyone must answer question #3 below.**

3. Taylor argues that, in a networked age, power operates much differently than it did during the era of broadcasting. She (2014:30) writes, “[a]s much as networked technology has dismantled and distributed power in more egalitarian ways, it has also extended and obscured power, making it less visible and, arguably, harder to resist.” “Soon enough,” Taylor (2014:99) stresses, “search engines [will] not only answer questions but tell us what questions to ask.” How does this transformation in “traditional cultural forms” point to the broader transformation of power that Taylor seeks to define?