

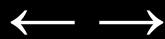
Friedrich Kittler	← →	John Durham Peters
storage	← →	trans mission
geist	← →	natur
distance	← →	time
genetics	as	media?
towards	epi-	aesthetics ?

velocity	← →	position
“Apparatus as the basis, not the corruption, of our world.” (Peters, 29)		
In presenting the thoughts of Kittler, Peters’ suggests he saw media studies as a unified field theory. After McLuhan, Kittler suggests that the “media of study” itself must be contained within media studies, creating a Heisenbergian ouroboros open loop affected through observation. Media studies here is down wind of the problems plaguing Einstein:	1.The development of a unified field theory, the fundamental rules governing the universe that are true across all circumstance, and	2.The problem of probability, of the chance unknowing guessing-ness of the uncertainty principle which declares you cannot know both position and velocity of a particle for the disturbance involved in observation.
Albert’s response to the second point is a refusal to believe that “God plays dice with the universe;” that is, that the fundamental form of reality is chaotic uncertainty. The formal rules governing our reality do not reconcile with the content of observable phenomenon, especially for Einstein in the irreconcilability of Quantum Mechanics and General Relativity.		

storage	← →	transmission
The content of media, for Kittler as for McLuhan, are “epiphenomenon” (Peters, 24) - superstructural ornaments sitting atop the strata of infrastructure that maintain it, the media themselves. <i>Epi</i> from Greek means upon, near to, or in addition to. Wikipedia says:		
<i>An epiphenomenon (plural: epiphenomena) is a secondary phenomenon that occurs alongside or in parallel to a primary phenomenon. The word has two senses: one that connotes known causation and one that connotes absence of causation or reservation of judgment about it.</i>	The sense of the prefix suggests motion, a distance over time (or time over distance), the cascading effects of a cause or lack thereof, indexed to an unfolding. This rings true as well in epigenetics, the study of health determinants rippling the gene pool, definitely down wind of land (distance) and history (time) - and equally mischievous in its evasion of observation as the study of the media of study of media studies.	
“Today images are transmissible; however, over the course of history images, at least in principle, could only be stored. An image had its place...”		place = storage
If content are epiphenomenal to the formal meanings of media, the medium being the message (ontology), then the primary (pre-epi)phenomenon is the medium itself. What we think of as content, the information that is transmuted via whatever media technology, is epiphenomenon smeared across media, loins girded by practices of <i>techné</i>. Like any robust idea-shape contained within a single word, epiphenomenon (in this case meaning the content of a media-form as secondary phenomenon beyond the inherent meaning of the specific medium itself) is a loopy mobius, a path that must be walked in the mind.		

transmission

The affordances of media, especially as formulated by Harold Innis in his dichotomy/binary of time-bias and space-bias, may be characterized as the primary phenomenon. The historic heaviness of a stone tablet or a library, contrasted against the fragile levity of a papyrus or digital file, cascade into differing ontological possibilities - affecting the formation and conception—cognition of subjects. A self immersed in the flow of digital information society is differently formed and cognated than one dominated by the dictum “What is not in the documents is not in the world,” from King Phillip II in the 16th c (posited by Peters as a means of justifying the bureaucratic paper-handling load upon the empire) - although both selves share continuities as well as ruptures. Mainly, the modern algorithmic consumer/producer is their own Phillip II, amassing a vast array of documentation in the form of files, identities marked and recorded across many domains, correspondences, records... all serving to justify a monthly cloud storage fee, that new 5TB harddrive.



storage

Digital- and paper-based society share an expansive, multiplying quality over space, and an anxiety-inducing, grasping, anal-retentive quality over time. The sheer ease in producing more documentation in paper (for a 16th c empire) or via digital technology (for the 21st c subject) suggests an opportunity cost whenever one is not producing documentation; indeed generating data feels like the last access to a commons we can draw value from - perhaps a last ditch value source for empires as well. Once Spain squandered the pillaged riches of colonial spoils on its own overly-expansive imperial tendencies, the production of documentation is all they have left - the inflation of empire is matched by the inflation of documentation. Contrast that multiplicatory affordance against the resultant need to contain and maintain all the fragile forms for the content of documentation, in desertifying cloud databases or mouldering libraries. This speaks to the “Innisian” media quality of the *modern age* conceived of in the expansive terms put forward by Raymond Williams in *The Long Revolution* - the long capitalist moment we are still in is predicated upon media forms with strong qualitative similarities, indeed digital information technology can be said to be direct descendent of the printing-press enabled archival database.

transmission	← →	storage
In the example of the above cell, the “phenomenon” of the media discussed is related to that object’s material existence in space and time - as opposed to the epiphenomenon, which is the data contained within the digital files or paper documents.	A useful contrast in terms of space-biaseness presented in Kittler is the church or temple altar, which generates an “aura” of place-ness that Walter Benjamin sees destroyed in the age of mechanically reproducible images, that is, of transmissible images. The situatedness of an altar generates the architecture around it, as it does the flows of followers and pilgrims.	
The problem of moving images is once again the problem of image transmission, simply because movement as such cannot be stored without media and transmission itself is a type of movement.		
movement = transmission	material = transmission	place = storage
Because movement can’t be painted on a cave wall (only represented)- it requires technological media. Transmission refers to space-bias: a “moving image” here can be the icon of a bull on a scroll of papyrus moving between Upper and Lower kingdoms of Egypt. A moving image can also of course be “moving” its content, but often this is also the case of moving some kind of material around, whether winding frames on a roll of film or refreshing pixels on a phone screen - a transmission of things across space from one place to the next.	Transmission may be the deeper phenomenon at work as an essential, formal aspect of media. Other qualities, like specific technical details or implementations, are therefore epiphenomenal to the underlying phenomenon of transmission, through which the other aspects of a media object can be expressed. The other qualities of media, like material, are down-stream of the fundamental quality of transmission, a genealogy of affects and affordances. A fundamental phenomenon experienced across media is its transmissibility. Does media with low transmissibility have a high time-bias, necessarily?	

transmission	← →	storage
The other value by which aspects of a medium can be measured is storage. Perhaps all the epiphenomenon of the media exist as secondary causes to the fundamental phenomena, storage and transmission.		Space-bias/time-bias may pertain entirely to the question of transmission, if it is indeed the case that a medium with low transmission is necessarily time-biased, as in it will transmit through time - but perhaps it is moreso that transmission is measured along two axes, time and space.

↑ S P A C E B I A S →										
	quantum entanglement		digital/ networked		written language				genetics	
	telephone		film		paper					
	carrier pigeon				painting		musical instruments		oral language	
	fireworks								stone tablet	
	performance						library		cave painting	
	T	I	M	E		B	I	A	S	