

# Heidegger & the Media

Polity Books – 2014

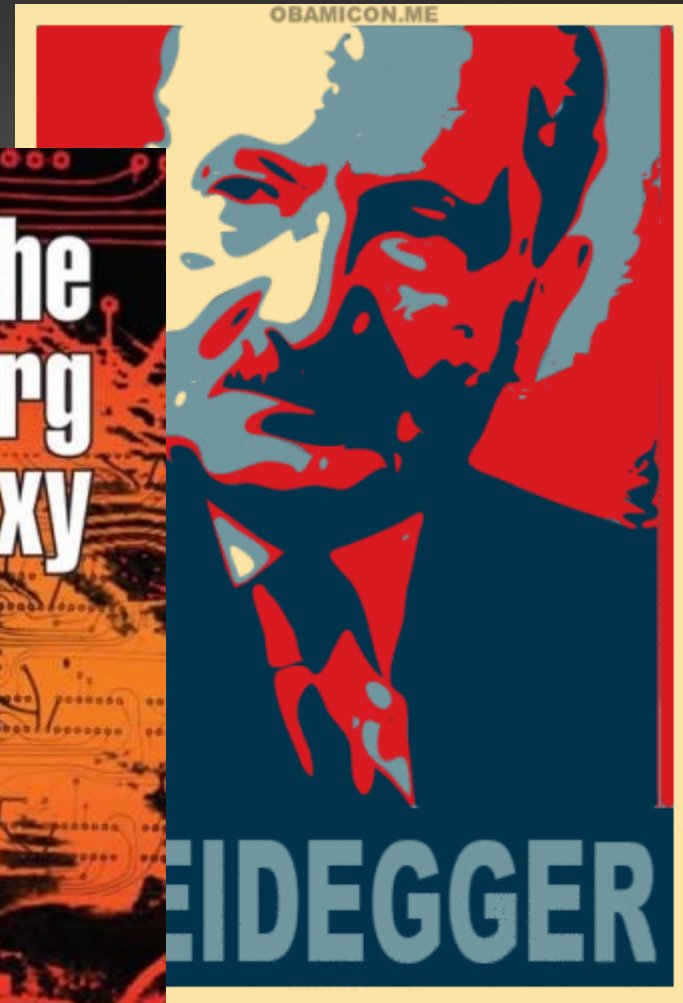
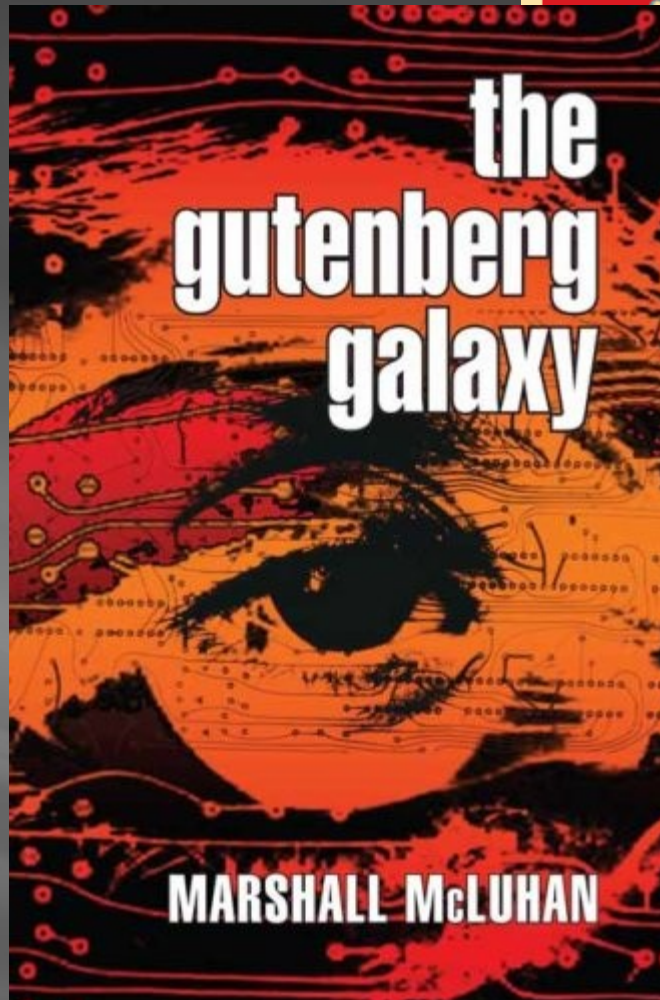
**David J. Gunkel**

Northern Illinois University (USA)

**Paul A. Taylor**

University of Leeds (UK)

# Rationale / Purpose



“Reboot Heidegger  
for Media Studies”

# Difficulty / Problem

Inaccessibility

## **Dismissive**

An “exclusive engagement” that marginalize Heidegger's thinking as inconsequential, uninteresting, and even dangerous.

## **True Believers**

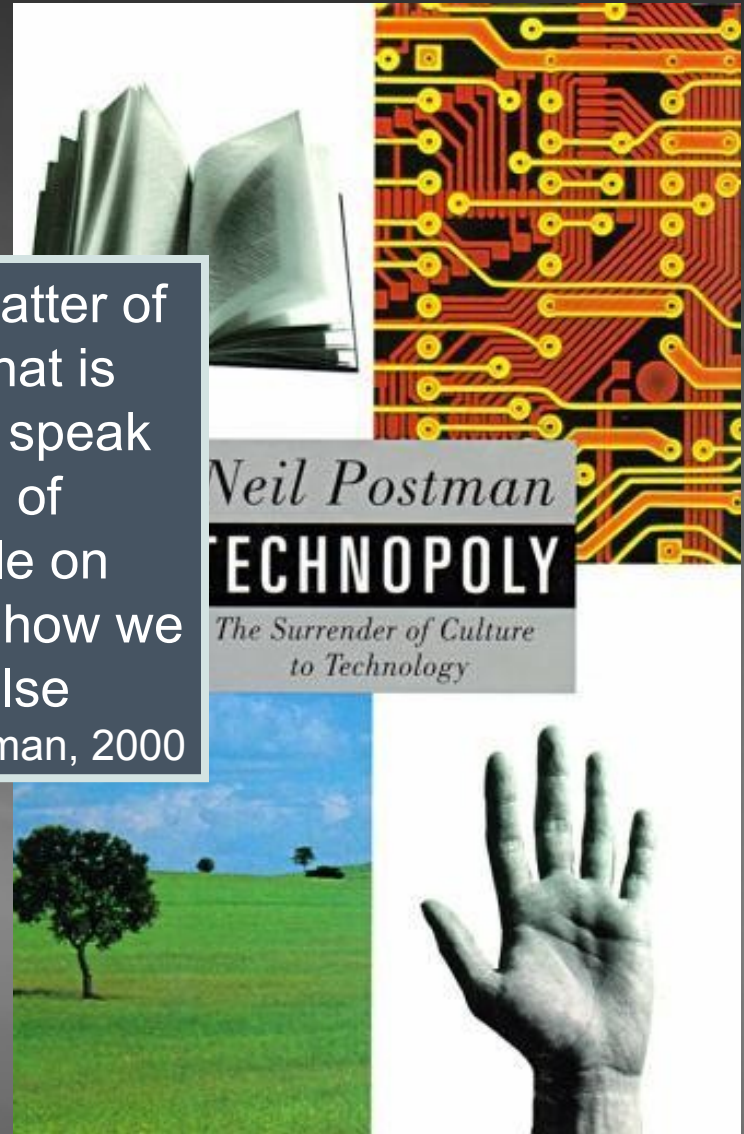
Well meaning efforts by Heideggarians to protect the philosopher's legacy from what they see as potential abuses and misuses.



# Media & Truth

Has anyone been discussing the matter of how we can distinguish between what is true and what is false? Those who speak enthusiastically of the great volume of statements about the world available on the Internet do not usually address how we may distinguish the true from the false

Neil Postman, 2000





# Media & Truth

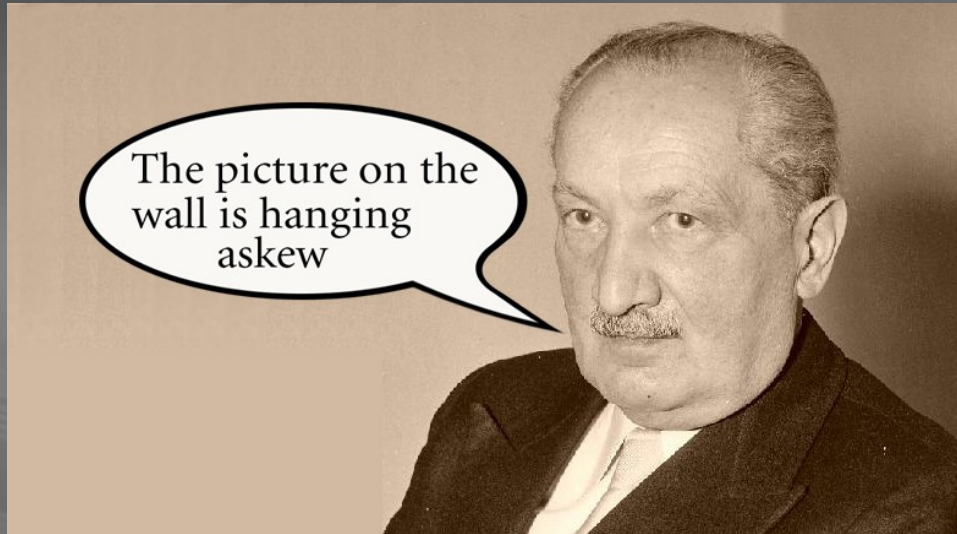


Hi. You sound real cute!!  
How old are you and what  
do you like doing after school?



I am 14 and a bit of a fitness  
fanatic, I often go power lifting  
after school.

# Media & Truth



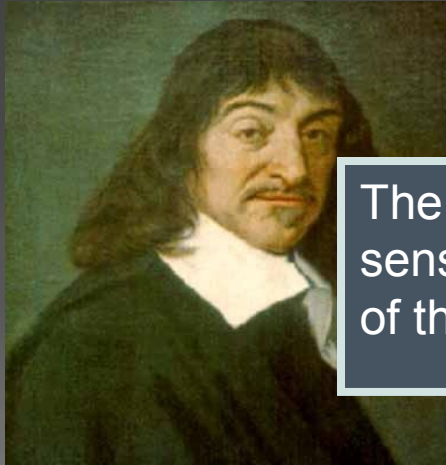
True



False



# Media & Truth



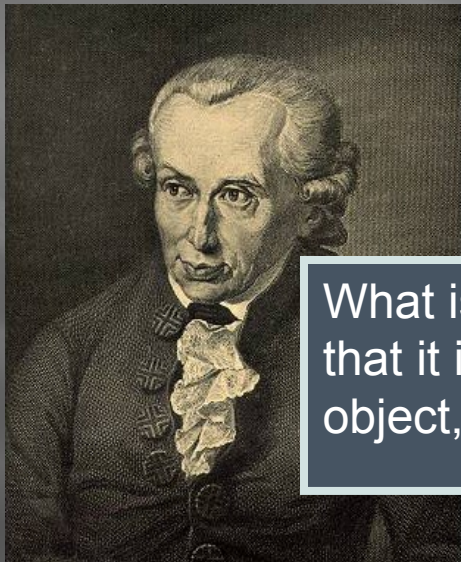
The word 'truth,' in the strict sense, denotes the conformity of thought with its object.

René Descartes (1641)



Adaequatio intellectus et rei

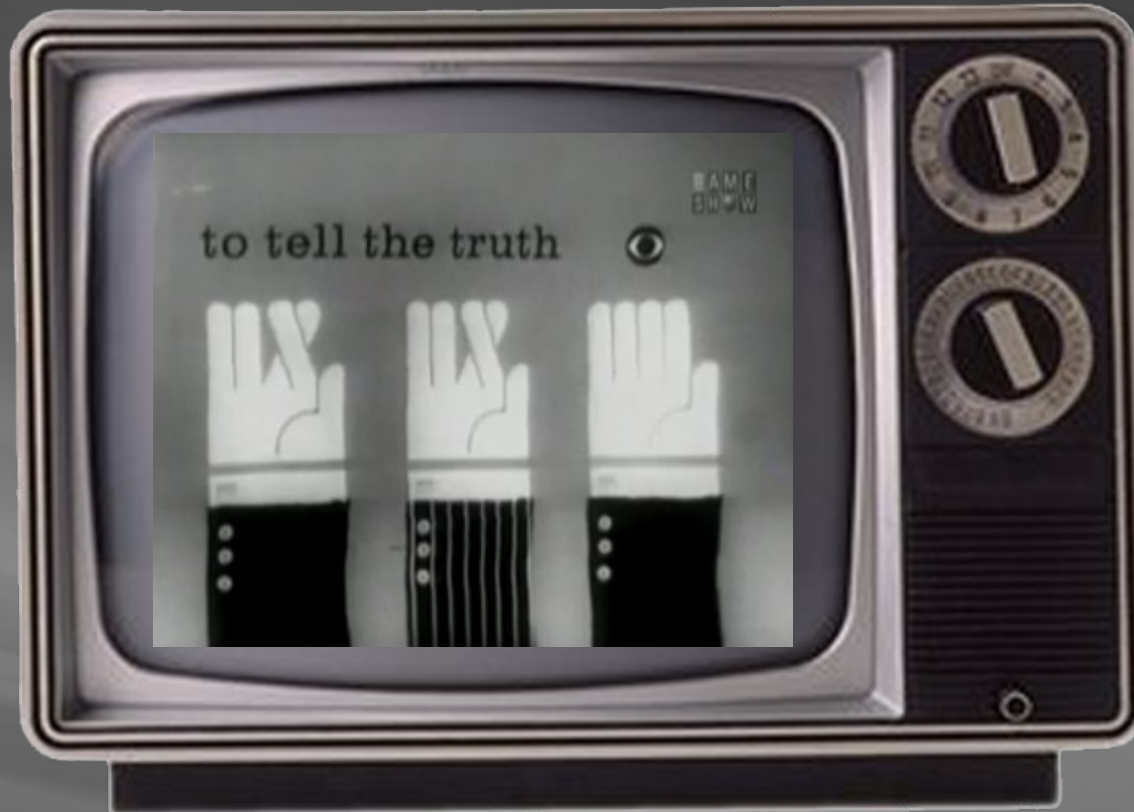
St. Thomas Aquinas (1270)



What is truth? The nominal definition of truth, that it is the agreement of knowledge with its object, is assumed as granted.

Immanuel Kant (1781)

# Media & Truth



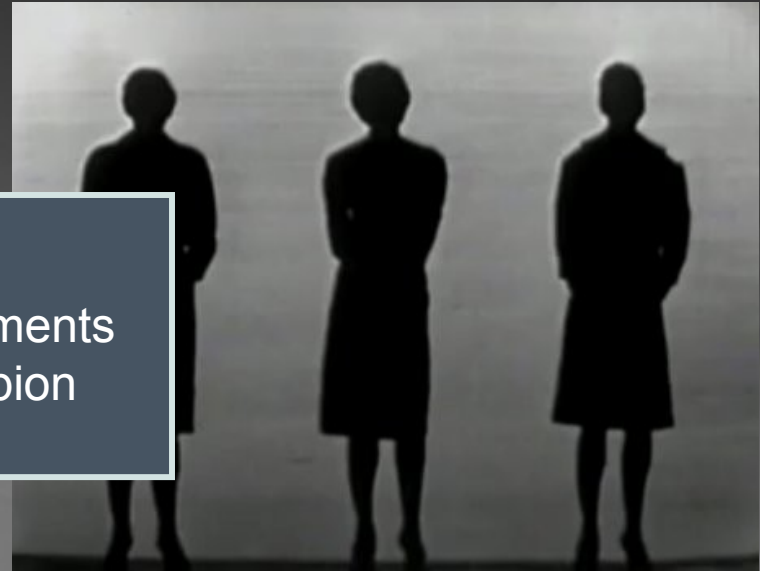
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSdSa2O48zg>



# Media & Truth

## Assertion

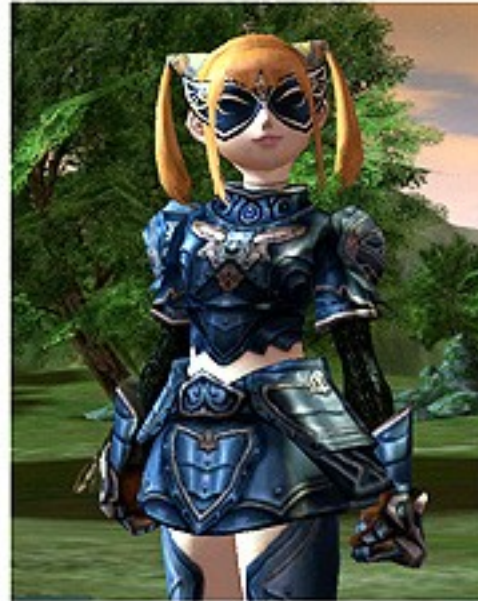
Three individuals make statements claiming to be Olympic champion Wilma Rudolph



## Demonstration

The real Wilma Rudolph stands up and show herself as such. The truth is demonstrated by having access to the real thing.

# Media & Truth



## Unconcealment - *ἀλήθεια*

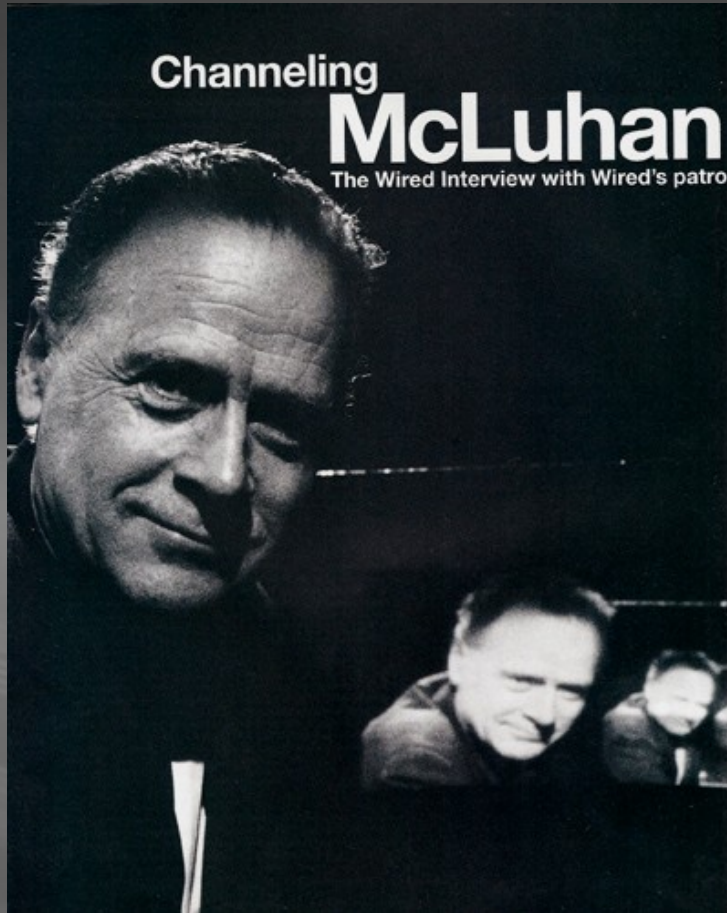
To say that a statement '*is true*,' signifies that it uncovers the entity in itself. Such a statement, points out, 'lets' the entity 'be seen' in its uncoveredness. The *Being-true* (*truth*) of the statement must be understood as *Being-uncovered*. Thus truth has by no means the structure of an agreement between knowing and the object in the sense of a likening of one entity (the subject) to another (the object).

Martin Heidegger, 1926

BEING  
AND  
TIME

Martin  
Heidegger

# Media & Truth



Scholars agree that Marshall McLuhan's earliest books were written by him, but there is mystery and uncertainty about who really wrote his subsequent works. McLuhan would lie on a couch, head on a pillow, and spout ideas, for hours. Sometimes assistants would transcribe as McLuhan dictated, sometimes they would later write down what McLuhan had said, and sometimes they would write down what they thought McLuhan had said. Somehow books were assembled from these notes and recollections, and then McLuhan signed his name to them. This indefinite manner of creation was never a problem for McLuhan, who often insisted that facts were not as important as fallacies.

The fallacies of this interview with McLuhan are as follows: About a year ago, someone calling himself Marshall McLuhan began posting anonymously

About a year ago, someone calling himself Marshall McLuhan began posting anonymously on a popular mailing list called Zone ([zone@wired.com](mailto:zone@wired.com)). Gary Wolf began a correspondence with the poster via a chain of anonymous remailers (Wolf 1996, 129).

Wired: D

becau  
audier

Do you watch much TV, and what do you watch when you do?

The only good TV is live TV. I had three ideas for live TV shows. My first idea came back in the early '70s. It was called *Up Against the Wall*, and was almost produced. Contestants were to have explained to the audience how they got into a financial pickle. The more entangled their financial disaster, the more energetically the audience would applaud. At the end of every episode, a check would be issued to the

Gary Wolf ([gary@wired.com](mailto:gary@wired.com)) is the executive editor of *HotWired*. He and Michael Stein are the authors of *Feather Madness: An Off-Beat Guide to the Online World*.

Wired

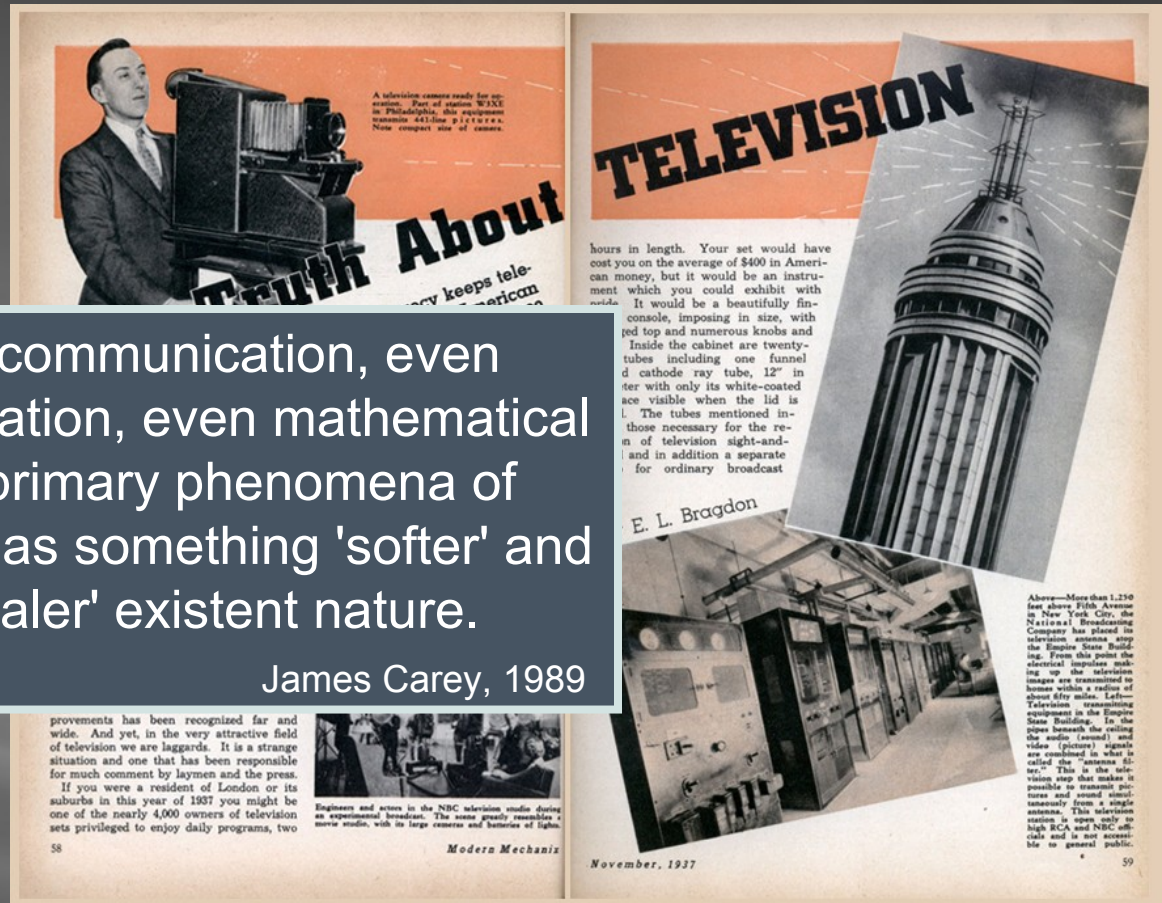
WIRED JANUARY 1998



# Media & Truth

One must examine communication, even scientific communication, even mathematical expression, as the primary phenomena of experience and not as something 'softer' and derivative from a 'realer' existent nature.

James Carey, 1989

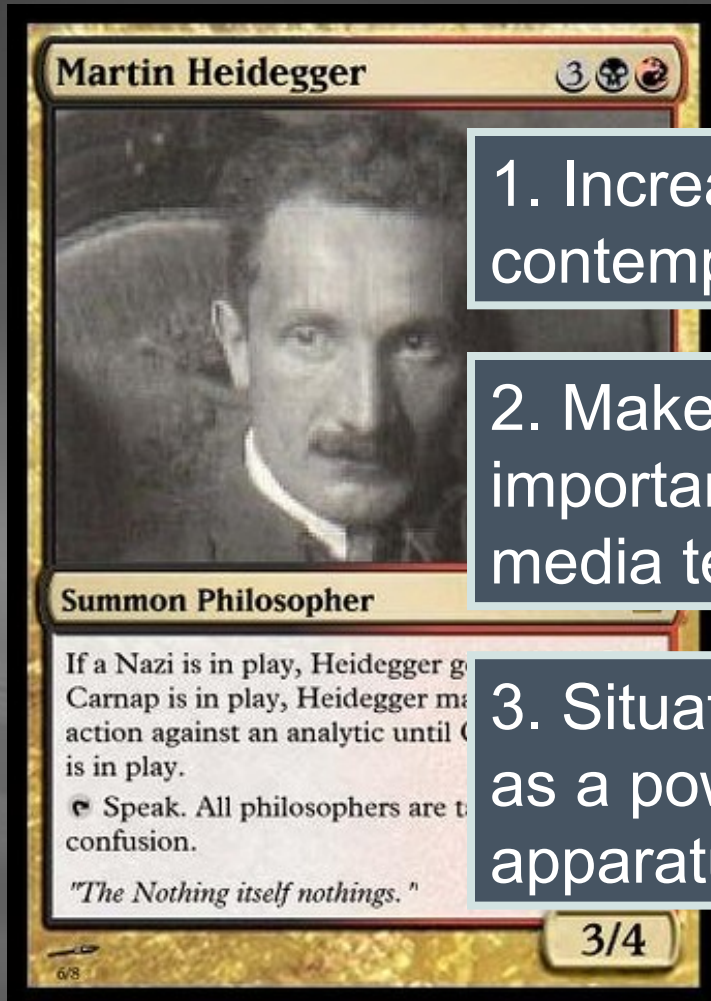


# Conclusion

## More Information:

dgunkel@niu.edu

<http://gunkelweb.com>



1. Increase accessibility through contemporary media examples

2. Make a case for Heidegger's importance for understanding media technology and systems

3. Situate Heidegger's thought as a powerful conceptual apparatus for media studies