

Eavesdropping Worksheet

Goal: To understand how we talk about technologies in everyday life. To identify whether our conversations fit into the patterns identified by Baym (33-44) or any of the academic theories about technology we will discuss in this class.

Directions: For the next week, eavesdrop when people are having conversations about tech. This can be as simple as two people talking about something posted online, or as complex as a debate over self-driving cars. *Note: the best results will come from people talking about a technology, e.g. talking about Netflix rather than talking about a TV show they watched on Netflix or about streaming music rather than a song they heard on Spotify.*

When you hear a discussion, take notes. Who is talking? What are they talking about? What value judgments are they making? What presumptions are they making about technology? Do they voice any fears, hopes, anxieties? Try to listen to 4-5 conversations in the next week.

Then, pick the two best examples from your notes and fill out the “worksheet.” Each example should be about a page, single-spaced.

Worksheet:

Describe: Include as much detail as possible!

Analyze: What are the underlying themes of the discussion? What social anxieties, values, fears, or hopes appear in the conversation?

Synthesize: Does anything in the discussion fit one of the patterns that Baym talks about in Chapter Two? What does this conversation reveal about how people are thinking about technology in 2018?

Instructions:

Please turn this in as a Word doc or PDF via Sakai by 11am on Tuesday, February 6, 2018.

Email Prof. Marwick (amarwick@unc.edu) or Emily (ecbrenn@live.unc.edu) with questions.

Rubric:

The worksheet will be graded on each part – is the example appropriate for the assignment and described well? Is the analysis insightful? Does the student tie the discussion back to the themes of technology discussed in Chapter 2?

Eavesdropping Worksheet Example

Student Name

Conversation 1: [Summary, example “Authenticity on Instagram”]

Description:

Analysis:

Synthesis: