

Communication 1-B
Media, Culture and Society
Winter, 2005
Lectures: M/W 11:00-12:15, Bldg. 260, Rm. 113
Sections TBA

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Course Goals:

What are “mass media”? How do they shape culture and social life? How do cultural and structural forces shape them in turn? How should we study these relations?

In this course, we will explore the origin, structure and effects of contemporary mass media with an eye to answering these questions. In addition to examining television, film, and radio, the course will introduce you to empirical and critical methods of media analysis.

Readings:

Readings are available at the bookstore and on line.

At the Bookstore, you should buy:

Course Reader

David Croteau and William Hoynes, *Media/Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences*

Nick Couldry, *Media Rituals: A Critical Approach*

Assignments:

Methods Project 1 (Due February 8):

Does the news reflect reality? To find out, you will design and carry out a content analysis of some news source and report your findings in a 6-8 page paper.

Midterm Exam (In class February 13)

Methods Project 2 (Due March 15):

You will undertake either a textual analysis or an ethnographic study of a situated medium and write a 6-8 page report of your research.

Final Exam (Date TBA)

Expectations:*Participation:*

While formally a lecture course, our class meetings will in fact be quite interactive. You'll need to come to both lecture and section with the reading done and with the ability to participate in a class discussion.

To participate effectively, you should aim to speak in a way that moves a discussion forward and increases the learning for the whole group. Contributions can include questions, insights, and responses to other comments. They can also include provocative mistakes. Being "wrong" but intellectually adventurous can often help jump-start everyone's thinking. One powerful comment or question is worth more than many less powerful remarks.

Projects:

Your projects need to come in on time and should represent your best work at every level. Papers that come in late or with errors of fact, grammar or spelling will be penalized. As ever, the Honor Code applies to all your work.

Grades:

Project 1 = 25%

Project 2 = 25%

Midterm = 20%

Final Exam = 25%

Participation = 5%

Course Schedule:

Note: This schedule is subject to change.

Wk 1: Wednesday, January 11: Introductions (Iyengar and Turner)

No Readings

Wk 2: Monday, January 16: No Class: Martin Luther King Day

Wednesday, January 18: (Turner)

Introduction: What are “mass media” and how should we think about them? Or, How do media matter? Where Did Mass Media Come From? How Have They Changed?:

Readings:

- Sreberny-Mohammadi, "Forms of Media as Ways of Knowing" in Downing, Mohammadi and Sreberny-Mohammadi, eds., *Questioning the Media*, pp.42-54.
- Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” from Benjamin, *Illuminations*, pp. 217-251.
- Lippman, “The World Outside and the Pictures in Our Heads” from Lippman, *Public Opinion*, pp. 3-20.
- Croteau and Hoynes, Chapters 1 & 9

Wk 3: Monday, January 23: Part 2: Media and Institutions (Iyengar)

The American media system in comparative perspective:

Readings:

Hallin and Giles, “Presses and Democracies,” in Overholser and Jamieson, *The Press*, pp. 4-16.

Horwitz, “Communications Regulation in Protecting the Public Interest,” in Overholser and Jamieson, *The Press*, pp. 284-302.

Cook, “Public Policy Toward the Press: What Government Does for the News Media,” in Overholser and Jamieson, *The Press*, pp. 248-262.

Wednesday, January 25:

Market influences on journalism:

Readings:

Bagdikian, "The U.S. Mass Media: Supermarket or Assembly Line?" in Iyengar and Reeves, eds., *Do The Media Govern?*, pp.66-76.

Croteau and Hoynes, Chapter 2

Kalb, "The Rise of the New News: A Case Study of Two Root Causes of the Modern Scandal Coverage", Discussion Paper, October, 1998, Shorenstein Center, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Wk 4: Monday, January 30

Adversarial or deferential journalism?

Readings:

Bennett, "Cracking the News Code," in Iyengar and Reeves, eds., *Do The Media Govern?*, pp. 103-117.

Jensen, "The Military's Media," in McChesney and Scott, eds., *Our Unfree Press*, pp. 430-435.

Dorman, Press Theory and Journalistic Practice: The Case of the Gulf War," in Iyengar and Reeves, eds., *Do The Media Govern?*, pp. 118-125.

The Times and Iraq (<http://www.commondreams.org/headlines04/0526-15.htm>)

Wednesday, February 1:

The rise of media politics:

Readings:

Polsby, "Consequences for Political Parties," Chapter 2 of Polsby, *Consequences of Party Reform*

Wk 5: Monday, February 6:

Campaigning through the media:

Readings:

Ansolabehere and Iyengar, "Winning but losing;"
(<http://pcl.stanford.edu/common/docs/research/iyengar/1996/goingneg.html>)

Media Monitor, "How TV news covered the 2004 general election campaign"
<http://www.cmpa.com/mediaMonitor/documents/novdec04.pdf>

Wednesday, February 8:

PROJECT #1 DUE

Media effects research:

Readings: Hovland, Hovland, C. L. 1959. "Reconciling conflicting results derived from experimental and survey studies of attitude change," American Psychologist, 14: 8-17.

Iyengar, Experimental designs for political communication research
(<http://pcl.stanford.edu/common/docs/research/iyengar/2002/expdes2002.pdf>)

Wk 6: Monday, February 13:

IN-CLASS MIDTERM

Wednesday, February 15: Part 3: Media and Culture (Turner)

What is a "cultural" approach to studying mass media?

In class: Film, "Merchants of Cool," and discussion

Readings:

Croteau and Hoynes, Ch. 5 "Media and Ideology"

James W. Carey, "A Cultural Approach to Communication" from *Communication as Culture*, pp. 13-36

Wk 7: Monday, February 20: No Class: Presidents' Day

Wednesday, February 22: The Power of the Text

How do mass media texts shape our views? What textual dynamics are at work?

Readings:

Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"

Fred Turner, "This is for fighting, this is for fun," in Dines, ed., *Gender, Race and Class in Media*, pp. 642-650

Wk 8: Monday, February 27: Polysemy and Active Audiences

Readings:

Croteau and Hoynes, Ch. 8: Active Audiences and the Construction of Meaning

Hall, "Encoding/Decoding," in During, ed., *The Cultural Studies Reader*, pp. 507-517.

Horace Newcomb and Paul M. Hirsch, "Television as Cultural Forum," in Newcomb, ed., *Television: The Critical View*, pp. 561-573.

Wednesday, March 1: Media as Ritual

Readings:

Couldry, *Media Rituals*, pp. 21-35, 47-53, 95-144

Wk 9: Monday, March 6: Audience Ethnography

Readings:

Couldry, *Media Rituals*, pp. 75-94

Sherry, et al. "Being in the Zone: Staging Retail Theater at ESPN Zone Chicago," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, Vol. 30, No4. August, 2001, pp. 465-510.

Wednesday, March 8: Part 4: The Future of the Mass Media (Turner and Iyengar)

How are digital technologies changing the nature of mass media? (Turner)

Readings:

Lev Manovich, "Models of Authorship in New Media" (2002), <http://www.manovich.net/>
(Download from "Texts")

T.L. Taylor, "Whose Game Is This Anyway?" in F. Mäyrä (ed.), *Computer Games and Digital Cultures Conference Proceedings*. Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2002

Wk 10: Monday, March 13: New Media and Politics (Iyengar)

How are new kinds of media changing political life?

Readings:

Iyengar and McGrady, *Soft News Hard Sell*, Chapter 5.

W. Lance Bennett, "New Media Power: The Internet and Global Activism," in Couldry and Curran, eds., *Contesting Media Power*, pp. 17-37.

Wednesday, March 15: Globalization, Wrap Up – Iyengar and Turner

PROJECT #2 DUE.

What are the consequences of media globalization?

Readings:

Croteau and Hoynes, Chapter 10 "Media in a Changing Global Culture"

Bennett, "Hip Hop am Main: The Localization of Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture," *Media Culture & Society* 1999 21(1).