

NYU Prague

MCC-UE9014P01

Media and Cultural Analyses

Fall 2018

Instructor Information

- Tomáš Trampota, PhD.
- **Email:** tt41@nyu.edu
- **Office hours:** Monday, 10:30- 12:00
- **Telephone:** 420 775 322 374

Course Information

- MCC-UE9014001
- Media and Cultural Analyses
- Mondays – Wednesdays, 9:00-10:20 am
- Kafka room

Course Overview and Goals

This course provides an overview of critical thinking on contemporary media production, media outcomes and media systems. Introduce theoretical approaches and practice used to analyze the content, structure, and context of media in society. We will explore factors shaping media texts, including: politics, economics, technology, and cultural traditions. The dominant critical perspectives that contribute to our understanding of media will be read, discussed, and employed. The course has three broad objectives: 1. Develop a critical awareness of media environments, 2. develop a familiarity with concepts, themes and theoretical approaches of media criticism, and the terms associated with these approaches and 3. develop an ability to adopt and adapt these frameworks in your own analyses of mediated communication.

This is a combination lecture-discussion course, which means your completion of the readings, and viewing of media objects prior to class is vital, and class participation is part of your grade. Please bring texts with you to class, and be prepared to discuss them with your classmates. The required readings for this course are, for the most part, primary theoretical texts, which we will discuss and apply to media objects.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Develop critical awareness of the media environment.
- Learn how to apply traditional methods of media content analyses.
- Develop familiarity with concepts, themes and theoretical approaches of media criticism and the terms associated with these approaches.
- Develop ability to adapt the media criticism concepts and frameworks for own analyses of media communication outcomes.

Course Requirements

Class Participation

Participation in the classes is compulsory. Excused are only absences for health or serious personal reasons.

Midterm Exam

Midterm Exam is the application of semiotic analyses of visual advertisings. Students will write the analyses individually in the class with 80 minutes. They will choose one of 5 visuals preselected by lecturer.

Paper

Paper will be thematically focused on Media and Stereotype issue. Students will choose one social/ethnic/ professional group which is repeatedly misrepresented and stereotyped by US media. Length of the paper is 5 pages single space. Paper is due to 30th of November.

Final exam

Final exam will test understanding of the key concepts of Media studies and Media Analyses. Students will write and define 10 key concepts chosen by lecturer and manifest their understanding. Each concept should be explained within 3 lines.

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

Assignments/Activities	% of Final Grade
Class participation	20 %
In class activity	15 %
Midterm exam	20 %
Paper	15 %
Final exam	30 %

Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Percent
A	92.5% and higher
A-	90.0 – 92.49%
B+	87.5% - 89.99%
B	82.5% - 87.49%
B-	80% - 82.49%
C+	77.5% - 79.99%
C	72.5% - 77.49%
C-	70% - 72.49%
D+	67.5% - 69.99%
D	62.5% - 67.49%

Letter Grade	Percent
D-	Example: 60% - 62.49%
F	Example: 59.99% and lower

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: Excellent knowledge of concepts and issues presented within the semester. Ability to apply theoretical critical frameworks in practical analyses of media outcome. Excellent paper, midterm exam and final exam. Ability to develop own critical ideas on the base of existing critical theories. Exceptional level of accurate, clear and analytical writing.

Grade B: Very good knowledge of concepts and issues presented within the semester. Understanding and ability to explain basic critical theories and approaches learnt during semester. Ability to apply methodology for critical analyses of media outcome. Very good level of written work but falling short of the highest level.

Grade C: Good knowledge of concepts and issues presented within the semester. Ability to reproduce basic methodology for analyses of media contents. Satisfactory and sufficiently accurate written work.

Grade D: Adequate knowledge of concepts and critical approaches. Adequate level of written work but weakly analytical.

Grade F: No understanding of concepts and approaches taught. Poorly presented written work.

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 1 Monday, September 3	Course intro	No readings for this day.	
Session 2 Wednesday, September 5	Media in Cultural Context	Lawrence Grossberg et al, "Media in Context"	Note: What is the difference between direct and media communication?
Session 3 Monday, September 10	The Media Sensorium	Marshall McLuhan, "The Medium Is the Message" + "Media, Hot & Cold"	
Session 4 Wednesday, September 12	Media Ecology	Rowland Atkinson, "Ecology of Sound: The Sonic Order of Urban Space"	Note: Me and consumption of music.
Session 5 Monday, September 17	Critical Theory & Critiques of Mass Culture	Theodor W. Adorno, "Culture Industry Reconsidered"	
Session 6 Wednesday, September 19	Methods and Uses of Political Economy	Robert McChesney, "How Can Political Economy of Communication Help Us Understand the Internet?"	Note: What is my price of „being connected“?
Session 7 Monday, September 24	Alternative Media Economies	Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, "The Long and Winding Road of Alternative Media"	Search for any alternative media online and introduce briefly..

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 8 Wednesday, September 26	Production Cultures	John Caldwell, "Industrial Reflexivity and Common Sense"	Search for any movie critically reflecting movie production.
Session 9 Monday, October 1	Transmedia Production	Stuart Cunningham, "Emergent Innovation through the Coevolution of Informal and Formal Media Economies"	
Session 10 Wednesday, October 3	Field Trip: Czech TV		
Session 11 Monday, October 8	Semiotics of the Image	Roland Barthes, "Myth Today"	Note: What are core mythologies of US society?
Session 12 Wednesday, October 10	Making Sense of Media Narrative	Andrew Burn, "Potter-Literacy: From Book to Game and Back Again"	Note: What is Your favorite media genre and what are its rules?
Fall Break October 13-21	Fall Break		
Session 13 Monday, October 22	Psychoanalysis & Gender Representation	Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure & Narrative Cinema"	
Session 14 Wednesday, October 24	Midterm exam – semiotic analyses	In class application of the analyses.	
Session 15 Monday, October 29	Network media and communication	Dijk, J. Network society. Social aspects of New Media. pp. 6-17, 32-37	Note: Me and my usage of network media. Brief note.
Session 16 Wednesday, October 31	Digital gap and participation in communication.	Dijk, J. Deepening Divide. SAGE Publications. pp. 9-23	Note: Weak users of digital media around me and their sociodemocratic characterisation.
Session 17 Monday, November 5	Negative effects of New media	Small, G., Vorgan, G.: iBrain. Surviving the technological Alteration of the Modern Mind. pp. 4-23	
Session 18 Wednesday, November 7	PR. Democracy	Dinan, Miller, Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy. Corporate P.R. and the Assault on Democracy. pp. 11-33	Search for news You think were staged by PR industry.
Make-up Day Friday, November 9 (9am-5pm)	Make-up day for missed classes		
Session 19 Monday, November 12	Global Media in Cultural Context	Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy"	Note: What are most globalised media culture product You have consumed?

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 20 Wednesday, November 14	Localizing Global Media Products	Denise Bielby & C. Lee Harrington, "Managing Television's Cultural Properties"	
Session 21 Monday, November 19	Media Events	Daniel Dayan & Elihu Katz, "Defining Media Events: High Holidays of Mass Communication"	Note: What were the most important media events of Your life?
Session 22 Wednesday, November 21	Transformations in Audience Research	Nick Couldry, "The Necessary Future of the Audience . . . and How to Research It"	Create a questionnaire analysing media audience (10 questions, 5 closed, 5 opened).
Session 23 Monday, November 26	Audiences as Cocreatives	Hanna Wirman, "On Productivity & Game Fandom"	Watch the TV news and note Your ideas, feelings and emotions triggered by each news (diary).
Session 24 Wednesday, November 28	Media & the Public Sphere	Pieter Boeder, "Habermas's Heritage: The Future of the Public Sphere in the Network Society"	
Session 25 Monday, December 3	Media system perspective	Selected reading from Hallin and Mancini	Visit any newstand in Prague and search for „anomalities“.
Session 26 Wednesday, December 5	Czech media landscape in European Comparison		
Session 27 Monday, December 10	Privatized Listening & Sonic Bubbles	Michael Bull, "Soundscapes of the Car: A Critical Study of Automobile Habitation"	Note: When and how I disconnect myself from sound surroundings?
Session 28 Wednesday, December 12 (last day of classes)	Mobile Media & Tethered Selves	Sherry Turkle, "Always-On/Always-on-You: The Tethered Self"	
Session 29 Monday, December 17	Summary lessons		
Session 30 Wednesday, December 19	Final exam	10 key concepts of the subject to be explained	

Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials

Adorno, Theodor W. "Culture Industry Reconsidered," *New German Critique* 6 (Fall 1975): 12-19.
 Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." In *Lenin and Philosophy and Other*

Essays. Ed. and trans. Ben Brewster. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972.

Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.

Atkinson, Rowland. "Ecology of Sound: The Sonic Order of Urban Space," *Urban Studies* 44.10 (Sept 2007): 1906-17.

Barthes, Roland. *Mythologies*. Trans. Annette Lavers. New York: Hill and Wang, 1972.

Bielby, Denise and C. Lee Harrington. *Global TV: Exporting Television and Culture in the World Market*. New York: New York University Press, 2008.

Boeder, Pieter. "Habermas's Heritage: The Future of the Public Sphere in the Network Society." [First Monday](http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm) 10.9 (September 5, 2005), <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm>.

Bull, Michael. "Soundscapes of the Car: A Critical Study of Automobile Habitation." In *The Auditory Culture Reader*. Ed. Michael Bull and Les Back. New York: Berg, 2003.

Burn, Andrew. *Making New Media: Creative Production and Digital Literacies*. New York: Peter Lang, 2009.

Caldwell, John T. *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Couldry, Nick. "The Necessary Future of the Audience . . . and How to Research It." In *The Handbook of Media Audiences*. Ed. Virginia Nightingale. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

Cunningham, Stuart. "Emergent Innovation through the Coevolution of Informal and Formal Media Economies," *Television & New Media* 13.5 (2012): 415-30.

Dagron, Alfonso Gumucio. "The Long and Winding Road of Alternative Media." In *The Sage Handbook of Media Studies*. Ed. John D. H. Downing et al. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2004.

Dayan, Daniel and Elihu Katz. *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

Dijk, J. Network society. Social aspects of New Media. SAGE. 2001. ISBN 1-4129-0867-1 pp.6-17, pp. 32-37

Dijk, J. Deepening Divide. SAGE Publications. ISBN 1-4129-0402-1. pp. 9-23

Dinan, Miller, Thinker, Faker, Spinner, Spy. Corporate P.R. and the Assault on Democracy. Pluto Press. 2007. ISBN 978-0-7453-2445-6. pp. 11-33

Grossberg, Lawrence et al. *Media Making: Mass Media in a Popular Culture*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2006.

Hooks, Bell. *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. Boston: South End Press, 1992.

Kohnen, Melanie. "'You Want Me to Be Anderson Cooper': Negotiating Queer Visibility on *Husbands*." *Antenna: Responses to Media and Culture*, August 23, 2012.

McChesney, Robert W. *Digital Disconnect: How Capitalism Is Turning the Internet Against Democracy*. New York: New Press, 2013.

McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964.

Metz, Christian. *The Imaginary Signifier: Psychoanalysis and the Cinema*. Trans Celia Britton et al. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982.

Turkle, Sherry. "Always-On/Always-On-You: The Tethered Self." In *Handbook of Mobile Communication Studies*. Ed. James Katz. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008, pp. 121-137.

Small, G., Vorgan, G.: iBrain. Surviving the technological Alteration of the Modern Mind. Harper Collins Publisher. 2008. ISBN 978-0-06-134-033-8. pp. 4- 23

Wirman, Hanna. "[On Productivity & Game Fandom](http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/145/115)," *Transformative Works and Cultures* 3 (2009), <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/145/115>

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Absences only for medical reasons and for religious observance will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor's note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). To be excused for religious observance, you must contact the instructor and the Academic Director via e-mail one week in advance of the holiday. Your absence is excused for the holiday only and does not include days of travel associated with the

holiday. Unexcused absences will be penalized with a 2% percent deduction from your final course grade for every week of classes missed.

Please note that Friday, November 9 (9am – 5pm) is reserved as a make-up day for missed classes. Do not schedule any trips for this day.

Late Submission of Work

Late submission of the paper will be perceived as not meeting the requirement and results in failure of the class.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

According to the Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook, plagiarism is defined as follows:

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as though it were one's own. More specifically plagiarism is to present as one's own a sequence of words quoted without quotation marks from another writer, a paraphrased passage from another writer's work; facts or ideas gathered, organized and reported by someone else, orally and/or in writing. Since plagiarism is a matter of fact, not of the student's intention, it is crucial that acknowledgment of the sources be accurate and complete. Even where there is no conscious intention to deceive, the failure to make appropriate acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

The College of Arts and Science's Academic Handbook defines plagiarism similarly and also specifies the following:

“presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else's idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both teachers have given their permission in advance).

Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating – and so is giving that help – unless expressly permitted by the teacher (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is give credit where it is due, take credit only for original ideas, and ask your teacher or advisor when in doubt.”

“Penalties for plagiarism range from failure for a paper, failure for the course or dismissal from the university.” **(Liberal Studies Program Student Handbook)**

Classroom Etiquette

No usage of mobile phones and online services during the class by students.

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.