

# Political Economy of Media



**MIT 2100G**

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# Big Tech

# “Big Tech”

- Companies such as **Google**, Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Microsoft
- Giant digital corporations—in top ten of highest market-valued companies in the world
- Business model on provision of digital services, ads, and data extraction
- New technologies: cloud computing, big data, internet of things, artificial intelligence
- Owners amongst wealthiest people on earth
- Massive social power
- *Exemplify Platform Capitalism*



DO YOU  
REMEMBER? ...

*Political Economy?*

# The Three Ways of Looking at Media

- Cultural Studies: meanings and identities
- Political Economy: money and power
- Technoculture: machines and networks

# Political Economy of Media

- Political Economy of Media deals with the relation between power (politics), wealth (economics) and media.
- who owns and controls media
- how media get revenues and make profits
- the role of advertising and surveillance
- the situation of workers (from stars to interns) in media
- how governments do or do not regulate media
- media as part of capitalism
- how all these factors affect the content of media.

# Corporate and Critical

- **Corporate political economy is concerned with issues of ownership, organization, production, advertising and labour to figure out how to make bigger profits, 'monetizing' media content.**

- **Critical political economy is concerned with all these issues to but with the aim of reforming (e.g. reduce inequalities and ecological devastation) or revolution replacement by another system**

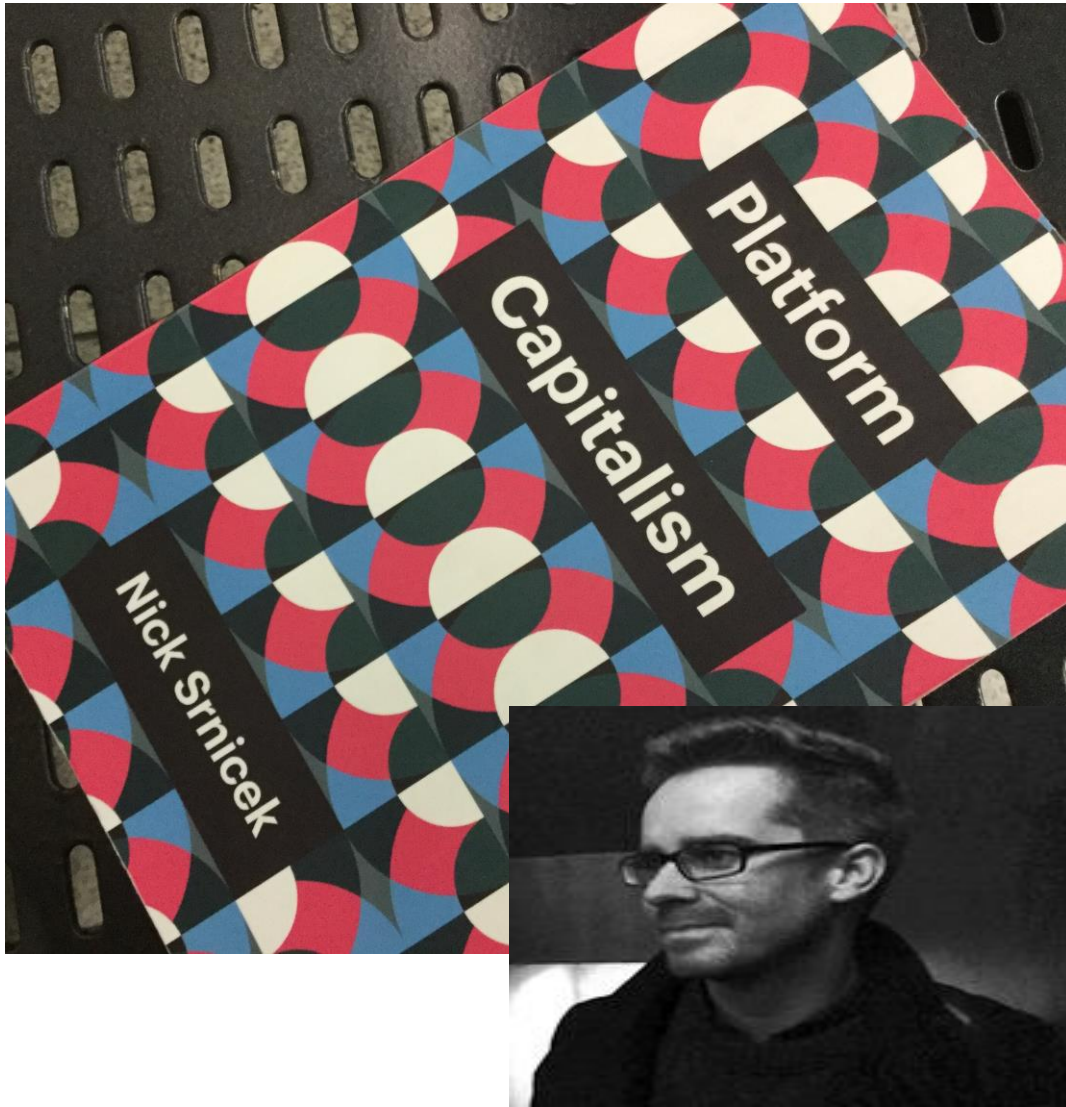
# Big Tech, Big Controversies

- “Techlash” over
- Concentration of wealth and power
- Surveillance and privacy
- Responsibility for ‘fake news’
- Gig-economy work conditions
- Gender gap in high-tech
- Eco-effects of big tech
- Cyberwar and digital militarism
- And much more . . .





# Readings: These 2 Books + short articles on OWL



# Week by Week

- Jan 9 Introduction
- Jan 16 How We Got Here
- Jan 23 Power, Wealth, Tech
- Jan 30 Platform Capitalism
- Feb 6 Platform Wars
- Feb 13 Platform Scandals
- Feb 20 Spring Reading Week.

- Feb 27 Mid-term exam
- Mar 5 Gender Gap
- Mar 12 Gig Economy
- Mar 19 Heavy Bugsplat
- Mar 27 Public Utility?
- April 2 Conclusion & Revision

# Assignments

Assignment	Due Date	Value
<b>Tutorial Participation</b>	Throughout	10%
<b>Essay 1</b>	Feb. 13	20%
<b>Mid-Term</b>	Feb 27	20%
<b>Essay 2</b>	Mar 26	20%
<b>Final exam</b>	TBA	30%

# Other Stuff

- Do the readings: start soon
- Electronic devices: you can use them if you don't abuse them
- Tutorials: start next week
- Final exam: date TBA
- Academic accommodation: talk to Academic Advisors
- We can discuss any relevant issues, respectfully
- Take care of yourself and others
- See you next week!