

COMM 110-01 Communication, Media & Society

Spring Semester 2024

3 credits

Meetings: MWF 09:00-09:50

Location: Petrocelli 113

Instructor: Dr. Martin Roberts

Office hour: F 10:00-11:00

Office: TBA

[Video Library](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

Description

Examines the roles of communication media in society, including the philosophy of mass mediation and the study of media effects on public issues, social values, and cultural tastes. Presents an historical overview of the main technologies of communication and surveys the discipline's most salient theoretical paradigms.

Reading Assignments

Reading assignments will be available either as PDFs via Canvas or online articles (follow links for access). Primary source texts include:

- James W. Carey, *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society* (New York: Routledge, 1992).
- Gabriella Coleman, *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy: The Many Faces of Anonymous* (New York: Verso, 2014).
- Stuart Cunningham and David Craig, eds. *Creator Culture: An Introduction to Global Social Media Entertainment* (New York: New York University Press, 2021).
- Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (Winchester, UK, and Washington, USA: Zero Books, 2009).
- Whitney Phillips and Ryan M. Milner, *You Are Here: A Field Guide for Navigating Polarized Speech, Conspiracy Theories, and Our Polluted Media Landscape* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2021).

- Allissa V. Richardson, *Bearing Witness While Black: African Americans, Smartphones, and the New Protest #Journalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).
 - Kai Strittmatter, *We Have Been Harmonized: Life in China's Surveillance State* (New York: HarperCollins, 2020).
 - Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).
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Assignments and Evaluation

Analysis Essay (based on reading assignments): 45% (3 x 15%)

Final Examination 20%

Discussion forums (20%)

One or more discussion posts per week on reading assignments, submitted anytime during the week of the assignments in question. A minimum of ten weekly posts is required.

Engagement (includes attendance, optional independent research) (15%)

Week 1

Introduction

M 01/15 NO CLASS (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

W 01/17 Introduction

F 01/19 Anonymous [Leila Binder], "[Alienation, Marvelous Pursuits and the New Nomadic Sciences](#)" [[web](#)]

[Module](#) | [Questions](#)

Week 2

Transmission vs. Ritual

James Carey, "[A Cultural Approach to Communication](#)" (PDF)

Benedict Anderson, "[Concepts and Definitions](#)" (excerpt from "Introduction," *Imagined Communities* (1991) (PDF)

Raymond Williams, “[Communication](#)” (in *Keywords*)

[Questions](#)

M 01/22

W 01/24

F 01/26

Week 3

Ideology

Terry Eagleton, “[What Is Ideology?](#)” (from *Ideology: An Introduction*): pp. 28-31 ONLY
(rest of article is optional)

Louis Althusser, “[Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses](#)” (excerpt): pp. 84-87 ONLY

Watch: *A Pervert’s Guide to Ideology*

M 01/29

W 01/31

F 02/02

Week 4

Hegemony

Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks* (selected sections)

M 02/05

W 02/07

F 02/09

Week 5

Control

Gilles Deleuze, "Postscript on the Societies of Control" (PDF)

M 02/12

W 02/14

F 02/16

Week 6

Charisma

Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (selected sections) (PDF)

M 02/19 NO CLASS (President's Day)

W 02/21

F 02/23

Week 7

Cultural Capital

Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction* (selected sections) (PDF)

M 02/26

W 02/28

F 03/01

Week 8

Parasites

Steven D. Brown, "In Praise of the Parasite: The Dark Organizational Theory of Michel Serres"

M 03/04

W 03/06

F 03/08

Week 9

Capitalist Realism

Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism*

M 03/11

W 03/13

F 03/15 NO CLASS (instructor attending conference)

Spring Break

Week 10

Witnessing

Allissa Richardson, *Bearing Witness While Black*

- ch. 1: “Looking As Rebellion: The Concept of Black Witnessing”
- ch. 3: “The New Protest #Journalism: Black Witnessing as Counternarrative”

M 03/25

W 03/27

F 03/29

Week 11

Hashtag Activism

Zeynep Tufekci, *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power of Networked Protest*

- ch. 8: “Signaling Power and Signaling to Power”
- ch. 9: “Governments Strike Back”

M 04/01

W 04/03

F 04/05

Week 12

Surveillance & Citizenship

Kai Strittmatter, *You Have Been Harmonized*

- “The Net: How the Party Learned to Love the Internet”
- “The New Man: How Big Data and a Social Credit System are Meant to Turn People into Good Subjects”

M 04/08

W 04/10

F 04/12

Week 13

Antisocial Media

Gabriella Coleman, *Hacker, Hoaxer, Whistleblower, Spy*

- “Introduction: ‘Now You Have Got Our Attention’ ”
- “On Trolls, Tricksters, and the Lulz”

Watch: [We Are Legion: The Story of the Hacktivists](#) (Brian Knappenberger, 2012) [YouTube, free]

M 04/15

W 04/17

F 04/19

Week 14

Meme Culture

Whitney Phillips and Ryan M. Milner, ch. 2 of *You Are Here: A Field Guide for Navigating Polarized Speech, Conspiracy Theories, and Our Polluted Media Landscape*

Taraneh Azar, “[The Meme Is The Message](#)” (special report)

Watch:

[Feels Good Man](#) (Arthur Jones, 2020) [Amazon, \$2.99 rental]

M 04/22

W 04/24

F 04/26

Week 15

Detoxing: Ecological Literacy

Ryan Milner and Whitney Phillips, *You Are Here*

- ch. 5: “Cultivating Ecological Literacy” (skip opening section in italics)
- ch. 6: “Choose Your Own Ethics Adventure”

M 04/29

W 05/01

F 05/03

T 05/07 Final Exam (Block B): 8:00 a.m.