

MMC 9612: CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF MASS MEDIA
FALL 2022 (CRN 50615 - 3 credit hours)
Thursdays 5:30-8:00 pm (08/22/2022 - 12/14/2022)
Room: AH 1H (MindLab)
Instructor: Professor Tom Jacobson (email: TLJ@TEMPLE.EDU)

Course Description:

This course will focus on critical media theory having its origins in Marxian thought but will cover some other sources of critical theory as well. The first weeks will revisit Karl Marx and then key European Marxists including György Lukacs, Antonio Gramsci, and Louis Althusser. It will also include discussion of Marx sympathetic works widely read in the field of communication including those of Stuart Hall, Herbert Schiller and Robert McChesney and the Frankfurt School, beginning with original members Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer. These reviews, of both more classical Marxian thought and the early Frankfurt School reaction, will serve as preparation for a multi-week reading during the middle of the course of Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action. The final section of the course will discuss postmodern thought and feminist theory serving as critical perspectives on Habermas's work. This will treat the work of Francois Lyotard and Michel Foucault as well as Nany Fraser, Carol Gilligan, and Seyla Benhabib, respectively. Students will be invited to either choose an element of Habermas's theory to dig-into throughout the course or to adopt a theorist with which to criticize his theory. Student interest in specific theorists, or issues such as digital public spheres, can be built into the common readings near the end of the class, or earlier as seems suitable. The course's aim is to cover the historical evolution of this expression of critical theory along with criticism, from the viewpoint of media and communication. It will be a readings course that emphasizes careful examination of key texts on a weekly basis. Throughout, a graphics application will be employed to collectively construct one or more "mindmaps" of critical theorists and relationships among their ideas, including Habermas's work.

Goals:

- a) To help students begin to understand the role of theory in scholarship
- b) Demonstrate a critical understanding of the major theoretical perspectives in this area of specialization.
- c) To increase students' ability to formulate and present ideas within accepted scholarly conventions, both orally and in writing

Covid Statement:

As we continue to live amid the Covid pandemic, we all share in the responsibility to work together to deliver a meaningful learning experience. In keeping with university policy, if you are not yet fully vaccinated, you must be by October 15. Until current conditions change for the better, all of us are also required to wear masks when indoors on campus, including during class. If you suspect you might have Covid, please pursue testing and follow medical/quarantine advice immediately. Finally, be aware that as the situation continues to change, the university may impose different requirements at any moment.

Course Requirements & Expectations:

Reading: Material on the reading list will complement and/or parallel class discussions. Students are expected to have these readings done before the date of related lectures/discussions.

Grading: There will be two short-answer quizzes. There will also be two short written assignments, each related to a reading in class. These can be chosen by the student from among required readings and will be due

on the day the assigned reading is scheduled for discussion. The main deliverable will be a final paper. This will be a 15-20 page paper treating a major Marxian influenced critical theorist, or some element of such a scholar's work, prepared using the APA Publication Manual. Near the end of semester students will also give one or more presentations on the topic of their paper or a related topic.

Assignments will be uploaded to the course canvas page. Grades and comments on the work will be available there.

GRADES: Final grades for this course will be determined in the following manner

Quizzes (2 * 10)	20 points
Short writing assignments (2 * 10)	20 points
Presentation	10 points
Final Paper	40 points
Participation:	10 points
Total	100 points possible

Policies, Practices and Expectations

This is a graduate level course, so students are expected to perform at an advanced level. The course involves the study of sophisticated political and cultural issues and complex organizational arrangements; so, earning a good grade requires that students keep up with readings and assignments. Moreover, as a graduate seminar debate and argumentation on issues covered are important in developing a deeper understanding of the field. Students should come to class prepared to discuss issues related to assigned readings and assignments.

- **Canvas:** Course documents and announcements will be available on the Temple University MMC 9612 Canvas Web site. All students registered for this class are automatically enrolled in Canvas through the TU Portal. (Students: *Please note. DO NOT turn off notifications in Canvas.*)
- **Assignments.** Assignments will be submitted by uploading them to Canvas. Keep a backup copy of all work you submit. In the case of an emergency that prevents you from turning in an assignment on time, upload the assignment to Canvas as soon as possible, and email to the instructor an explanation of why you were not able to submit the assignment on time. Finally, everything submitted for this class should be typed double-spaced.
- **Missing Deadlines:** Be prompt—Missed assignment deadlines are penalized 1 point per day, which is subtracted from the final grade of your paper. Zero will be recorded for papers not turned in by 4 days after the deadline.
- **Incomplete grades.** Temple University's policy on grades requires that the student requesting an Incomplete and the instructor sign a written agreement, before the end of class, detailing the work remaining to be done to complete the class.
- **Special needs.** At Temple, we want all students to be able to participate fully in class activities, and we will do everything possible to achieve this. Temple University's Disability Resources and Services coordinates accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The DRS office is at 100 Ritter Annex, the phone # is 215-204-1280, and the web page is <http://www.temple.edu/disability/>. All reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate students' needs.

- **Academic Honesty:** Any student who is found violating standards of academic honesty will fail this class. Additionally, a charge may be lodged with the University Disciplinary Committee. Selections from Temple University's policy on academic honesty, from the Undergraduate Bulletin, read as follows: Temple University believes strongly in academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism and academic cheating are, therefore, prohibited. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's labor, another person's ideas, another person's words, or another person's assistance. The penalty for academic dishonesty can vary from receiving a reprimand and a failing grade for a particular assignment, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or expulsion from the University. The penalty varies with the nature of the offense, the individual instructor, the department, and the school or college. If you have questions about plagiarism feel free to discuss them with your instructor.

Readings (available online, via library or class website.)

Text: *Required:* Finlayson, James Gordon (2005). *Habermas: a very short introduction*. Oxford: New York. Oxford University Press, 2005. Temple Online. (Available online through Paley Library.)

Additional Required Reading: Required readings are available either on Canvas or online from the Temple Library.

MMC 9612 WEEKLY SCHEDULE

PART I: Marxism, “Western” Marxism, and the Frankfurt School

Unit 1/Aug. 25 – Introduction and Overview

Topics: Overview of class. Overview of critical theory.

Reading:

Wikipedia, “Critical Theory,”

Melody & Mansell (1983) The Debate over Critical vs. Administrative Research: Circularity or Challenge. *Journal of Communication*, 33(3): 103-116. Temple Online.

Callinicos, Alex, Kouvelakis, Stathis and Pradella, Lucia (2021). Introduction. In *Routledge Handbook of Marxism and Post-Marxism*. Routledge Press. Temple Online.

Unit 2/Sept. 1 – Marx and Marxism

Topics: Introduction to Marx, Marxism

Reading:

Marx: Foundation from Callinicos, Alex, Kouvelakis, Stathis and Pradella, Lucia (Eds.) (2021).

Routledge Handbook of Marxism and Post-Marxism. Temple Online.

Marx, Karl and Engels, Friedrich (1948/2012). *The Communist Manifesto*. In *Marx: later political writings* (Ed.) Terrell Carver. Cambridge University Press. Temple Library Online.

Marx, Karl (1948/2012). The eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. In *Marx: later political writings*. (Ed.) Terrell Carver. Cambridge University Press. Temple Library Online.

Unit 3/Sept. 8 – “Western Marxism,”

Topics: Reification, hegemony, alienation

Reading:

Marx, K. (1832/2012). *Estranged Labor*. In *Economic & philosophic manuscripts of 1844* (pp. 67-84). New York: Start Publishing. Canvas.

Gramsci. from Callinicos, Alex, Kouvelakis, Stathis and Pradella, Lucia (Eds.) (2021). *Routledge Handbook of Marxism and Post-Marxism*. Temple Online.

Lukacs. from Callinicos, Alex, Kouvelakis, Stathis and Pradella, Lucia (Eds.) (2021). *Routledge Handbook of Marxism and Post-Marxism*. Temple Online.

Wikipedia on both Gramsci and Lukacs.

Unit 4/Sept. 15 – Marx’s Legacy and Media Theory (Marx and Marxism Quiz)

Topics: Selected instances of communication scholarship drawing on Marxian legacy

Reading:

Fuchs, Christian & Mosco, Vincent (Eds.) (2012). Marx is Back – The Importance of Marxist Theory and Research for Critical Communication Studies Today, *tripleC – Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society* 10 (2): 127-632. Published open access: <https://doi.org/10.31269/triplec.v10i2.427>

Schiller, 1976, *Communication and cultural domination*. Routledge. Preface and Chapter 1. Temple Online.

McChesney, Robert W (2004). *The problem of the media U.S. communication politics in the twenty-first century*. Monthly Review Press. Preface and Chapter 1. Temple Online.

Wikipedia “Stuart Hall (cultural theorist);”

Hall, Stuart (1980). Encoding/decoding, In Book, *Culture, Media, Language* (117-127), Routledge. Temple Online.

Dorfman, Ariel and Mattelart, Armand (1975/2018) *How to read Donald Duck: imperialist ideology in the Disney comic*, OR Books 2018. Temple Online.

Dubord, Guy (1970/1994). *The society of the spectacle*. Zone Books. Temple Online.

The Situationist International, Wikipedia

Unit 5/Sept. 22 – The Frankfurt School

Topics: Original Frankfurt School scholars and themes

Reading:

Finlayson, pp. 1-8 in Chapt. 1

Bronner, Stephen Eric (2017) *Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press. (Chapters 1 & 4)

Horkheimer and Adorno, (1944/2020), The culture industry: Enlightenment as mass deception. In *The dialectic of enlightenment* (pp. 94-136). Max Horkheimer, and Theodore Adorno, Stanford University Press. Canvas

Berendzen, J.C., "Max Horkheimer", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/horkheimer/>>.

Habermas, J. (1970). Technology and science as “ideology.” In Habermas, J. *Towards a rational society: student protest, science, and politics* (pp. 81-122). Beacon Press. Course Reserves being processed

PART II: The Theory of Communicative Action

Unit 6/Sept. 29 – The Public Sphere (Short Writing Assignment #1)

Topics: Basic Theory, Criticism, and More Recent Elaborations

Reading:

Finlayson, *Chapt. 1, pp. 9-15.*

Habermas, Jürgen, Lennox, Sara, and Lennox, Frank (1974) The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964). *New German Critique*, No. 3: 49-55. Canvas.

Habermas, J. (2006, GFMD). The role of the Public Sphere and media independence in Deliberative Politics. Unpublished manuscript. Canvas.

Habermas, J. (2006, JoC). Political communication in media society: Does democracy still enjoy an epistemic status? The impact of normative theory on empirical research. *Communication Theory*, 16(4), 411–426. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00280.x. Canvas & Temple Online.

Jacobson, T. L. (2017). Trending Theory of the Public Sphere. *Annals of the International Communication Association*. 41(1), 70-82. DOI: 10.1080/23808985.2017.1288070. Canvas & Temple Online.

Unit 7/Oct. 6 – Communicative Action

Topics: Validity Basis of Speech, Action Theory

Reading:

Finlayson, *Chapt. 3.*

Habermas, Jürgen, (1998). What is Universal pragmatics?, In *On the pragmatics of communication/Jürgen Habermas (22-103) (Ed.) Maeve Cooke. The MIT Press.* Temple Online.

Chang, L. & Jacobson, T. (2010). Measuring Participation as Communicative Action: A Case Study of Citizen Involvement in and Assessment of a City's Smoking Cessation Policy-Making Process. *Journal of Communication*, 60(4), 660-679. (pp. 664-667). Canvas & Temple Online.

Unit 8/Oct. 13 – Communicative Action and Theory of Society

Topics: System and Lifeworld; Differentiation of Cultural Value Spheres; Theory of Social Evolution

Reading:

Finlayson, Chapt. 4 and 5

Habermas, J. (1973. System and Life-World (pp.1-8). In Habermas, J. *Legitimation Crisis*. Beacon Press. Canvas Course Reserves.

Habermas, J. (1987) The Concept of the Lifeworld and Hermeneutic Idealism of Interpretive Sociology, In *Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and System – A Critique of Functionalist Reason Vol. II* (pp.119-152). Boston: Beacon Press. Canvas Course Reserves.

Habermas, J. (1987) The Uncoupling of System and Lifeworld, In Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and System – A Critique of Functionalist Reason Vol. II (pp.153-97). Boston: Beacon Press. Canvas.

Jacobson, T. and McLaren, J. (2021). Lifeworld Colonization and Alienated Participation. Presented at the International Association of Media and Communication Research, July 11-15, 2021, Beijing/online. Canvas.

Unit 9/Oct. 20 – Justice, Ethics and Human Rights

Topics: The Discourse Ethics

Reading:

Finlayson, Chaps. 6 and 7.

Habermas, J. (1990). Moral consciousness and communicative action, In *Moral consciousness and communicative action* (pp. 116-195). The MIT Press. Canvas. YET TO BE XEROXED

Jacobson, T. (1998). Discourse Ethics and the Right to Communicate. *Gazette*, 60(5), 395-413. Canvas.

Unit 10/Oct. 27 – Politics, Democracy and Law (Communicative Action Quiz)

Topics: “Internal relationships” between politics, democracy and law, and the public sphere.

Reading:

Finlayson, Chapt. 8

Habermas, J. (1994). Three normative models of democracy. *Constellations*, 1(1): 1-10. Canvas.

Habermas, J. (2006, GFMD). The role of the Public Sphere and media independence in Deliberative Politics. Paper prepared for “Media Matters,” conference, Global Fund for Media Development. Canvas.

Chang, L. & Jacobson, T. (2010). Measuring Participation as Communicative Action: A Case Study of Citizen Involvement in and Assessment of a City’s Smoking Cessation Policy-Making Process. *Journal of Communication*, 60(4), 660-679. Canvas.

Unit 11/Nov. 3 – Globalization, Religion

Topics: Global Public Sphere and Global Governance; Post-Secular Society

Reading:

Habermas, J. (2006c). Does the constitutionalization of international law still have a chance? In *The divided west* (pp. 115-193). (Ed.) Habermas. Cambridge: Polity Press. Canvas

Bohman, James (2004). The constitutionalization of international law and politics. In *The Habermas handbook*. (Eds.) Hauke Brunkhorst, Regina Kreide and Cristina LaFont. Columbia University Press. Canvas.

Habermas, J., Blair, Tony, and Debray, Régis (2008). Secularism’s crisis of faith, *NPQ, (Fall): 17-29*. Canvas.

Habermas, J. (2008). Introduction, In *Between naturalism and religion: Philosophical essays*. Polity Press. Canvas.

Review 2 pages of Jacobson, T. L. (2017). Trending Theory of the Public Sphere. *Annals of the international communication association*. 41(1), 70-82. DOI: 10.1080/23808985.2017.1288070, (pp. 75-76). Canvas.

Bloch, Brandon (June 18, 2020). The unfinished project of enlightenment. *Boston Review*, (accessed August 9, 2022). <https://bostonreview.net/articles/brandon-bloch-learning-history/>

PART III: Criticism & Projects/Writing

Unit 12/Nov. 10 – Criticism I - student preferences (Short Writing Assignment 2)

Topics: To be determined by students, with suggestions from Prof. if needed.

Possible Reading:

Fraser, Nancy (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. In (Ed.) Craig Calhoun, *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 107- 142), The MIT Press. Canvas.

Lyotard, Francois (1979/1984)). Legitimation by paralogy. In *The postmodern condition: A report on the condition of knowledge* (pp. 60-71). University of Minnesoty Press. Canvas.

Others...

Unit 13/Nov. 17 – Criticism II - student preferences

Topics: To be determined by students, with suggestions from Prof. if needed.

Possible Reading:

Cohen, Jean L. (1995). Critical social theory and feminist critiques: The debate with Jürgen Habermas. In Feminists read Habermas: Gendering the subject of discourse (pp. 57-90), Routledge. Temple Online.

Landes, Joan B. (1995). The public and private sphere: A feminist reconsideration. In Feminists read Habermas: Gendering the subject of discourse (pp. 91-116), Routledge. Temple Online.

Others...

Unit 14/Nov. 24 –Thanksgiving Break

Unit 15/Dec. 1 – Presentations & Wrap-up

Final Paper Due – December 10th

Required Reading List (in whole or in part):

- Berendzen, J.C., "Max Horkheimer", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/horkheimer/>>.
- Bohm, James (2004). The constitutionalization of international law and politics. In *The Habermas handbook*. (Eds.) Hauke Brunkhorst, Regina Kreide and Cristina LaFont. Columbia University Press.
- Callinicos, Alex, Kouvelakis, Stathis and Pradella, Lucia (Eds.) (2021). *Routledge Handbook of Marxism and Post-Marxism*. Temple Online.
- Chang, L. & Jacobson, T. (2010). Measuring Participation as Communicative Action: A Case Study of Citizen Involvement in and Assessment of a City's Smoking Cessation Policy-Making Process. *Journal of Communication*, 60(4), 660-679.
- Cohen, Jean L. (1995). Critical social theory and feminist critiques: The debate with Jürgen Habermas. In *Feminists read Habermas: Gendering the subject of discourse* (pp. 57-90), Routledge.
- Dorfman, Ariel and Mattelart, Armand (1975/2018) *How to read Donald Duck: imperialist ideology in the Disney comic*, OR Books 2018.
- Dubord, Guy (1970/1994). *The society of the spectacle*. Zone Books. Temple Online.
- Finlayson, James Gordon (2005). *Habermas: a very short introduction*. Oxford: New York. Oxford University Press, 2005. Temple Online.
- Fraser, Nancy (1990). Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy. *Social Text* (25/26): pp. 56-80.
- Fuchs, Christian, and Mosco, Vincent (Eds.) (2012). Marx is Back – The Importance of Marxist Theory and Research for Critical Communication Studies Today, *tripleC – Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society* 10 (2): 127-632. Published open access: <https://doi.org/10.31269/triplec.v10i2.427>
- Habermas, Jürgen. (1973). System and Life-World (pp.1-8). In Habermas, J. *Legitimation Crisis*. Beacon Press.
- Habermas, Jürgen, Lennox, Sara & Lennox, Frank (1974) The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964). *New German Critique*, No. 3: 49-55.
- Habermas, J. (1987) The Concept of the Lifeworld and Hermeneutic Idealism of Interpretive Sociology, In *The Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and System – A Critique of Functionalist Reason* (pp.119-152). Boston: Beacon Press.
- Habermas, J. (1987) The Uncoupling of System and Lifeworld, In *Theory of Communicative Action: Lifeworld and System – A Critique of Functionalist Reason* (pp.153-97). Boston: Beacon Press.
- Habermas, J. (1990). Moral consciousness and communicative action, In *Moral consciousness and communicative action* (pp. 116-195). The MIT Press. Canvas.

Habermas, Jürgen, (1998). What is Universal pragmatics,” In *On the pragmatics of communication / Jürgen Habermas*. edited by Maeve Cooke. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Habermas, J. (1994). Three normative models of democracy. *Constellations*, 1(1): 1-10.

Habermas, J. (2006, Epistemic). Political communication in media society: Does democracy still enjoy an epistemic status? The impact of normative theory on empirical research. *Communication Theory*, 16(4), 411–426. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2885.2006.00280.x

Habermas, J. (2006b). Does the constitutionalization of international law still have a chance? *The divided west* (pp. 115-193). Cambridge: Polity Press. Canvas.

Habermas, J. (2006, GFMD). The role of the Public Sphere and media independence in Deliberative Politics. Paper prepared for *Media Matters*, Global Fund for Media Development.

Habermas, J. (2008). Introduction, In *Between naturalism and religion: Philosophical essays*. Polity Press. Canvas.

Habermas, J., Blair, Tony, and Debray, Régis (2008). Secularism’s crisis of faith, *NPQ, (Fall): 17-29*. Canvas.

Hall, Stuart (1980). Encoding/decoding, In, *Culture, Media, Language* (117-127),_Routledge

Horkheimer and Adorno, (1944/2020), The culture industry: Enlightenment as mass deception. In, *The dialectic of enlightenment*. Max Horkheimer, and Theodore Adorno, Stanford University Press.

Jacobson, T. (1998). Discourse Ethics and the Right to Communicate. *Gazette*, 60(5), 395-413.

Jacobson, T. and McLaren, J. (2021). Lifeworld Colonization and Alienated Participation. Presented at the International Association of Media and Communication Research, July 11-15, 2021,

Jacobson, T. L. (2017). Trending Theory of the Public Sphere. *Annals of the International Communication Association*. 41(1), 70-82. DOI: 10.1080/23808985.2017.1288070

Landes, Joan B. (1995). The public and private sphere: A feminist reconsideration. In *Feminists read Habermas: Gendering the subject of discourse* (pp. 91-116), Routledge.

Lyotard, Francois (1979/1984)). Legitimation by paralogy. In *The postmodern condition: A report on the condition of knowledge* (pp. 60-71). University of Minnesota Press.

Marx, K. (1832/2012). *Economic & philosophic manuscripts of 1844*. New York: Start Publishing.

Marx, Karl and Engels, Friedrich (1948/2012) *The Communist manifesto* /; edited and with an introduction by Jeffrey C. Isaac; with essays by Steven Lukes [and others. New Haven: Yale University Press, ©2012. Temple Library Online.

McChesney, Robert W. (2004). Preface and Chapter 1. *The problem of the media U.S. communication politics in the twenty-first century*. Monthly Review Press, c2004. Temple Online.

Melody, William & Mansell, Robin. (1983) The Debate over Critical vs. Administrative Research: Circularity or Challenge. *Journal of Communication*. 33(3): 103-116.

Schiller, 1976, *Communication and cultural domination*. Routledge. Preface and Chapter 1.

Recommended and Additional Reading:

Bloch, Brandon (June 18, 2020). The unfinished project of enlightenment. *Boston Review*, (accessed August 9, 2022). <https://bostonreview.net/articles/brandon-bloch-learning-history/>

Dahlgren, Peter (1995). *Television and the Public Sphere: Citizenship, Democracy and the Media*. Sage Publications.

Fuchs, Christian (2021). *Marxist Humanism and Communication Theory: Media, Communication and Society*. Routledge. Temple Online

Cherem, Max (2022). Jürgen Habermas, *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://iep.utm.edu/habermas/> Accessed August 20, 2022.)

Gunaratne, S. (2006). The Public Sphere and Communicative Rationality: Interrogating Habermas's Eurocentricism. *Journalism & Communication Monographs*, 8(2).

Mendieta, Eduardo and Allen, Amy (Eds.) (2019). *The Cambridge Habermas lexicon*. Cambridge University Press.

Tyson, Lois (2006). *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*. New York: Routledge.

Vial, Matt, Smith, Toni, Rotta, Tomás and Prew, Paul (Eds) (2019). *The Oxford Handbook of Karl Marx*. Oxford University Press.