DOCTORAL CORE SEMINAR I
(THEORY 1)
MCC-GE 3100.001

This course serves as an historically grounded survey of the dominant paradigms and
theoretical debates that much contemporary scholarship in media studies is still in
conversation with.

The schedule is loosely organized as a trajectory from the age of enlightenment to the
modern period. The first section will focus on primary sources in sociology and social theory
in order to strengthen our knowledge of the core paradigms in the field. The second section
will highlight some of the foundational debates in media and communication studies. The
third section will explore particular terms as a means of helping us gain a firm foothold into
the vocabulary of the field.

Required Books
John Durham Peters: Speaking Into the Air
Dan Schiller: Theorizing Communication (listed as TC below)
Marx & Engels: The Communist Manifesto
W.J.T Mitchell and Mark B. Hansen, Eds: Critical Terms for Media Studies (listed as
CTMS below)
Carol Gluck and Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, Eds. Words in Motion: Toward a Global
Lexicon (listed as WM below)
All other readings will be available on class website and/or through email as PDF files.

Helpful Resources
still relevant for helping us all improve our writing.
If you are new to the field and have not read a lot of social theory, an encyclopedia or
dictionary might be of help. For example:
  o The Blackwell Dictionary of Modern Social Thought, William Outhwaite, Ed.
  o online list of key words: http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/navigation.htm
  o Wiley also publishes a series of dictionaries and handbooks that have more
specific focus, which may be helpful as you begin your PhD career in media
studies; see http://www.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-351642.html
RESPONSIBILITIES
I expect that as part of the collective effort towards developing intellectual community we all come to class prepared to do original work. Take the time to read these texts with integrity and purpose. While I cannot recommend enough the independent writing exercise of integrating your thoughts about the readings into small synthetic essays, I’ll not require this from everyone at all times. Instead, we’ll take turns opening these texts for discussion, and here writing will be of some use. You are, of course, always welcome to write weekly or at any other interval and submit your work for feedback if you so wish.
At some point in mid to late November, you will submit two of your own sample syllabi: one for your ideal Doc Sem 1; and another which revolves around your research interests.
In addition, I’ll expect two strong essays to emerge from a take-home exam scenario at the end of the term. You will be given a few essay questions of which you will choose two. These will prepare you for your first exams and be an opportunity to synthesize what you have covered this semester. We will set final due dates together.
All written work should be on par with doctoral level work, demonstrate a close reading of the required materials, and exhibit a methodology of critical analysis.
You are expected to abide by ethical and professional standards.

Numerical Breakdown
15% Class participation and discussion
10% Leading class discussion (at least twice per semester)
10% Written responses (at least twice per semester)
5% Sample Syllabi
60% Final Papers


**SCHEDULE**

**9/5**  
*Introduction to Doc Sem 1*  
Objectives of the course; course plan; discussion of readings and writing over summer; selection of class discussion leaders; agreement on due dates.

**PART 1: ENLIGHTENMENT**

**ROOTS (9/12) Society**  
*primary readings:*  
- Ibn Khaldun, *Al Muqaddima*, excerpts (available at:  
  [http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ik/Muqaddimah/Table_of_Contents.htm](http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ik/Muqaddimah/Table_of_Contents.htm))  
- Max Weber: various, excerpts.  
- Emile Durkheim: various, excerpts.  
- Ferdinand Tonnies: various, excerpts.  
- Georg Simmel: *The Metropolis and Mental Life; The Philosophy of Money* (excerpts)  
- Marx & Engels: various, excerpts.  

**9/19**  
*Dialectics*  
*primary readings:*  
- Plato: *Euthyphro*  
- G.W.F. Hegel: various, excerpts  
- Marx: *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (excerpts)  
- Marx: various, excerpts  
- Mao Tse-Tung, *On Contradiction* (excerpts)

*secondary readings:*  
- David Harvey: *Justice, Nature, and the Geography Of Difference* (excerpt)

**9/26**  
*Exchange*  
*primary readings:*  
- Marx: *Capital Vol.1* (excerpt)  
- Marx & Engels: various, excerpts

*secondary readings:*

*Does not include Summer reading and assignment. Any class schedule is always subject to change!*

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David Harvey: The Limits of Capital (excerpt)

(10/3) **Ideology**

*primary readings:*

Antonio Gramsci: various, excerpts

Louis Althusser: “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses” 1971

Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature, Keywords* (excerpts).

*secondary readings:*

William Everdell: *The First Moderns* (excerpts)

Marshall Berman: *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air* (excerpts)

(10/10) **Space**

*primary readings:*

Marx: Camera Obscura + various, excerpts.

Walter Benjamin: various, excerpts.

Henri Lefebvre: *The Social Production of Space* (excerpt)

*secondary readings:*

David Harvey: TBD (excerpt)

William Everdell: *The First Moderns* (excerpts)

**PART 2: DEBATES**

(10/17) **American Pragmatism and Mass Communication Research**

*primary readings:*

Dewey: *The Public and Its Problems* (excerpts)

Lippman: *Public Opinion* (excerpts)

Lasswell: *The Communication of Ideas* (excerpts)

Schramm: *The Four Theories of the Press* (excerpts)

Paul Lazarsfeld, various, excerpts

George Gerbner, various, excerpts

*secondary readings:*

Schiller: TC Ch. 1, 2

(10/24) **Frankfurt School and Critical Theory**

*primary readings:*
Max Horkheimer & Theodor Adorno: *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (excerpt)
Herbert Marcuse: *One-Dimensional Man* (excerpt)
Walter Benjamin: *Illuminations* (excerpt)

**secondary readings:**
Oskar Negt: “Mass Media: Tools of Domination or Instruments of Liberation?” *New German Critique*, 1978

**10/31 Mass Culture**

**primary readings:**
Max Horkheimer & Adorno: The Dialectic of Enlightenment (excerpt)
Alexis de Tocqueville: “In What Spirit the Americans Cultivate the Arts”
C. W. Mills: *People, Power, Politics* (excerpts)
Raymond Williams: various, excerpts
Leo Lowenthal: *Literature and Mass Culture* (excerpt)
Paul Lazarsfeld & Robert Merton: *Mass Culture* (excerpt)
Frederic Jameson: “Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism” *NLR* 1984

**secondary readings:**
Patrick Brantlinger: *Bread and Circuses: Theories of Mass Culture as Social Decay* (excerpt)
Andreas Huyssen: *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (excerpt)

**11/7 From the (British) Roots of Cultural Studies to the (American) Audience**

**primary readings:**
Richard Hoggart: *The Uses of Literacy* (excerpts)
Raymond Williams: *Marxism and Literature* (excerpts)
Clifford Geertz: *The Interpretation of Cultures* (excerpts), 1973
John Hartley & John Fiske: *Reading Television*
David Morley: *Family Television: Cultural Power and Domestic Leisure*, 1986 (excerpts)
secondary readings:
Schiller: TC Ch. 3
John Thompson: Ideology and Modern Culture (ch. 3: The Concept of Culture)
Sonia Livingstone: “The Rise and Fall of Audience Research”

(11/14) Political Economy
primary readings:
Dallas Smythe: “Radio: Deregulation and the Relation of the Private and Public Sectors”  
Herbert Schiller: Culture, Inc. (excerpt)
Vincent Mosco: The Political Economy of Culture (excerpt)
Armand Mattelart: Mapping World Communication (excerpt)
Nicholas Garnham, Lawrence Grossberg, James Carey & Graham Murdock “Colloquy”  

secondary readings:
Schiller: TC Ch.5

PART 3: CRITICAL

TERMS (11/21) Political

Praxis
Aime Cesaire: various, excerpts.
Franz Fanon: various, excerpts.
WM: Introduction pp.3-17.
WM: Kydau Kiu “Injury”
WM: Vicente Rafael “Conspiracy”
WM: Partha Chatterjee “Terrorism”
WM: Itty Abraham “Security”
WM: Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing “Indigenous”

(12/5) Intangible
CTMS: Johanna Drucker “Art”
CTMS: Bernadette Wegenstein “Body”
CTMS: W.J.T. Mitchell “Image”
CTMS: Bernard Stiegler “Memory”
CTMS: Caroline Jones “Senses”
CTMS: W.J.T. Mitchell and Mark Hansen “Time and Space”

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CTMS: Cary Wolfe “Language”
CTMS: Lydia Liu “Writing”  
WM: Mona Abaza “Custom”  
WM: Carol Gluck “Responsibility”  
WM: Driss Maghraoui “Secularism”  
WM: Alan Tansman “Sublime”  
WM: Claudia Koonz “Headscarf”

**(12/12) Material**  
CTMS: Bill Brown “Materiality”  
CTMS: Eugene Thacker “Biomedia”  
CTMS: Bruce Clarke “Communication”  
CTMS: Katherine Hayles “Cybernetics”  
CTMS: Bruce Clarke “Information”  
CTMS: Mark Hansen “New Media”  
CTMS: Geoffrey Winthrop-Young “Hardware / Software / Wetware”  
CTMS: John Johnston “Technology”  
CTMS: John Durham Peters “Mass Media”  
CTMS: Alexander Galloway “Networks”  
CTMS: David Wellbery “Systems”  
CTMS: Peter Goodrich “Law”