This course examines a broad range of theoretical approaches central to the study of media, culture, and communication. The course is organized around four broad and interrelated themes: (1) Media and Communication; (2) Power and Cultural Production; (3) Media and Technology; and (4) The International Frame. We will seek to understand the complex linkages between the social structures of media industries (technological, political, economic), the meaningful cultural objects they produce and distribute (texts, sounds and images), and the interpretations and uses people make of these objects. Students will learn the differences among the major theoretical and methodological approaches, be able to explain the advantages and disadvantages of each, and put them into practice for their own analysis, research, and professional practice.

Readings
There are some books that are central to this course. While it is not mandatory to purchase them, you may want them as general references. All are in print and available through major booksellers, including the NYU bookstore.


M.G. Durham and Dougals Kellner, eds. Media and Cultural Studies: Key Words (Blackwell, 2006) -- entire book is available as PDF on NYU Classes (some readings are available in this PDF, listed below as MCS)

W.J.T. Mitchell & Mark B. Hansen, eds. Critical Terms for Media Studies (U of Chicago, 2010)

All the assigned book excerpts and articles listed on the course schedule will be made available through the New York University Classes system.

I will also occasionally upload audio and video examples. These will also be found on the NYU Classes Site. Any CDs or videos that are placed on reserve will be in the Avery Fisher Center for Music and Media (on the second floor of the Bobst Library). The syllabus is an outline only. Modifications are inevitable.

N.B. There will be no laptop usage in class

Assignments/Expectations

Bi-Weekly Assignments
For many weeks, you will be asked to post a short response paper or a fragment of your research to the “Forums” Section of NYU Classes. These are designed for open access and discussion.
Sound/Video/Web Examples
You will occasionally be expected to upload a visual, sound or web example that illustrates some of the major themes covered in the reading for that particular week. There will be folders for this purpose on the website. Also, insofar as it’s possible, you should bring these examples with you to class.

Research Papers
In addition to the in-class assignments, there will be a research paper due toward the end of the semester on a topic relating to class materials. We will discuss options for these papers during the semester. These papers should range between fifteen to twenty-five 1.5 spaced pages, and will be proofread by two of your colleagues before being handed in to me. The papers will be due before the end of the semester (Date tbd.). You may circulate them earlier if you wish.

MCC’s Writing Program
MCC’s Writing Coach, Dr. Kari Hensley, is here to support grad students in the writing and revising process. You are encouraged to make an appointment with her whether you are interested in refining your voice or are struggling to find it. Through individual sessions, she can work with you on term papers, thesis/dissertations, conference papers, cover letters, and more. For more info and to make an appointment, visit: https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/mcc/masters/writing

Evaluation Standards and Policies

A=Excellent. Outstanding work in all respects. Demonstrates comprehensive and solid understanding of course material, and presents thoughtful interpretations, well focused and original insights, and well reasoned commentary and analysis. Includes skillful use of source materials, illuminating examples and illustrations, fluent expression, and contains no grammatical or typographical errors.

B=Good. This work demonstrates a complete and accurate understanding of course material, presents a reasonable degree of insight and broad levels of analysis. Work reflects competence, but stays at a general or predictable level of understanding. Source materials and examples are used appropriately and articulation/writing is clear. Paper has been carefully proofread.

C=Adequate/fair. This work demonstrates understanding that hits in the ballpark but which remains superficial, incomplete, or expresses some significant errors or weaknesses. Source materials may be used inadequately or inappropriately, and arguments lack concrete, specific examples and illustrations. Writing or articulation may appear vague, hard to follow, or loaded with typos and other technical errors.

D=Unsatisfactory. This work demonstrates a serious lack or error in understanding, and fails to express the most rudimentary aspects of the course. Sources may be used entirely inappropriately or not at all, and writing is deficient.

F=Failed. Work not submitted or attempted.

Grading Rubric

Bi-weekly written online responses (6 at 5 % each – you will be assessed on your five best entries)
Oral presentation (10 %)
Essay paper (45%)
Class participation (20%)

**Grading Policies**

Students with special needs, either with physical and/or learning disabilities, or religious observances, must come talk to me at the beginning of the semester in order to assure any special needs: extra time for papers; access to materials, etc. Any student who needs an accommodation due to a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility and/or learning disability, or is deaf or hard of hearing should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities.

Late papers will be graded down for every day late. Papers will not be considered once they are more than 4 days late (including weekends and holidays) and will automatically result in an F.

Prompt and regular attendance is required. Your participation grade will be lowered for every absence. Notify me in advance if you are going to miss a class or a deadline. You will need a legitimate excuse (doctor's note, etc.)

You are expected to abide by NYU’s and Steinhardt’s standards of Academic Integrity. Cheating or plagiarizing the work of another will result in an automatic “F” on the assignment. Additionally, departmental and university policy permits harsher actions, if warranted.

**Important Dates**

November 28 (the week after Thanksgiving): Formulation of Paper Drafts. You will also circulate first drafts during the last two weeks of class.

December 14: Final paper due.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION**

Class 1: Introductions [9.5]

Class 2: Philosophy, Sociology, & History of Communication [9.12]
Plato, Phaedrus, p.43 (line 259e1) to p. 69 (line 278b5)
John Durham Peters, Speaking into the Air, 1-32 (and 33-62, optional)
John Thompson, Media and Modernity (10-43)

Further Reading
Daniel Czitrom, Media and the American Mind: From Morse to McLuhan
Gospel According to St. Matthew NKJV.
Aristotle, On Rhetoric.

Class 3: Mediation & Reproducibility [9.19]
Georg Friedrich Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, (opening arguments, only 58-66)
Walter Benjamin, Illuminations, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”
Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as
Further Reading


Friedrich A. Kittler, Grammaphone, Film, Typewriter, “Introduction”


Guy Debord, Society of the Spectacle, “The Commodity as Spectacle”

On standardized details in millennial pop (2016):

On wealth and the media (Gawker case, 2016):

On planned obsolescence at Apple:
http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/03/magazine/why-apple-wants-to-bust-your-iphone.html?_r=0

On legal definitions of technics and their relation to net neutrality:

On the new “Urban” Suburban:
http://www.salon.com/2012/09/22/invasion_of_the_faux_cities/?source=newsletter

On big data and reproducibility:

Class 4: Public Sphere & Imagined Communities [9.26]

Jurgen Habermas “The Public Sphere”

Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities

Andrew Whelan, Cybersounds, “Do U Produce?: Subcultural Capital and Amateur Musicianship in Peer-to-Peer Networks”


Further Reading

humdog, “pandora’s vox: on community in cyberspace”

Howard Rheingold, Virtual Communities

Christopher Kelly, “Geeks, Social Imaginaries, and Recursive Publics”

Michael Warner, Publics and Counterpublics

Craig Calhoun, Habermas and the Public Sphere, 1-50

Howard Rheingold, Virtual Communities

Jurgen Habermas, Theory of Communicative Action

Peter Dahlgren “The Public Sphere and the Net”***


Julian Dibbel, “A Rape in Cyberspace; or How an Evil Clown, a Haitian Trickster Spirit, Two Wizards, and a Cast of Dozens Turned a Database into a Society”***

Andrew Whelan, Cybersounds, “Do U Produce?: Subcultural Capital and Amateur Musicianship in Peer-to-Peer Networks”

POWER AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION

Class 5 a: Communication as Culture: Bodies and Techniques [10.3]

Marcel Maus, “Body Techniques”

Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, “Thick Description” and “Deep Play”
Further Reading
Stuart Hall, “Encoding / Decoding”
Norbert Elias, “On Behavior at the Table”
James Carey, “Mass Communication Research and Cultural Studies: An American View”
Michel de Certeau, “Introduction” and “Making Due: Uses and Tactics” The Practice of Everyday Life
Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, “Thick Description” and “Deep Play”
Mikhail Bakhtin, “The Problem of Speech Genres,” Speech Genres and Other Late Essays
Jacques Ranciere, Aesthetics of Politics (excerpt)*
James Carey, “Mass Communication Research and Cultural Studies: An American View”
Raymond Williams, Television, Technology and Cultural Form, “The Technology and the Society”
Durkheim, Emile. Elementary Forms of Religious Life (ch 1)
Rothenbuhler (excerpt on the Olympic games)
Dayan & Katz, Media Rituals (excerpt on Princess Di Wedding)
Klaus Bruhnn Jensen and Karl Erik Rosengren “Five Traditions in Search of the Audience”
Simon During, Cultural Studies Reader, (Ch. 1)
Goffman presentation of self in every day life

Class 5 b: Power, Knowledge & Practice [10.10]
Michel Foucault, Discipline & Punish (“The Body of the Condemned,” “Docile Bodies,” and optionally “Panopticism”)
Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus”
Pierre Bourdieu, “Structures and the Habitus”

Further Reading
Dreyfus book on Foucault
Michel Foucault Power/Knowledge
Paul Edwards, Closed World, (Chapter 1)
Suzanne Cusick, “Music as Torture/Music as Weapon”
See, Brian Holmes on Society of Control: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwDR9HLBIJU

Class 6: Ideology, Hegemony & Political Economy [10.10]
Karl Marx “The Values of Commodities” and “The Fetishism of Commodities”
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “The Communist Manifesto”
Raymond Williams. Marxism and Literature, “Hegemony” and “Culture”
Yochai Benkler, The Wealth of Networks, (Chs. 2, 3, and 7)
Tiziana Terranova, “Free Labor”


Further Reading
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Class Struggle”
Marshall Berman, Adventures in Marxism, "All that is Solid Melts into Air: Marx, Modernism and Modernization"
Jaron Lanier, Who Owns the Future?
John Thompson, Ideology and Modern Culture, “The Concept of Ideology”
David Forgacs, “National-Popular: Genealogy of a Concept”
Nicholas Garnham, “Contribution to a Political Economy of Mass-Communication”
Sut Jhally, “The Political Economy of Culture”
Nicholas Garnham, “Political Economy and Cultural Studies: Reconciliation or Divorce?” and
Lawrence Grossberg “Cultural Studies vs. Political Economy: Is Anybody Else Bored with this Debate?” Colloquy, March 1995
Herbert Schiller, Culture, Inc., “The Corporation and the Production of Culture”

NO CLASS ON 10.17

Class 7: Piracy, IP Law, and Paradoxes of Technical Reproducibility (Case Study: Culture Industries in the Age of Digital Networks) [10.24]

Lessig, Lawrence. 2008. Remix: Marking Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy

Larkin, Brian, “Pirate Infrastructures,”
https://www.cairn.info/revue-politique-africaine-2005-4-page-146.htm

Scherzinger, Martin, “Alchemies of Sanctioned Value”

Litman, Jessica, Digital Copyright


Additional Reading:
On the “podcast” patent:
On piracy via Wikimedia in Angola:


Johns, Adrian. Piracy: The Intellectual Copyright Laws from Gutenberg to Gates. Chicago University Press, 2009 (Chapters 1 and 13)


Hyde, Lewis. Common as Air. 2011. Chapters 1 and 2


See also http://www.ephemeraweb.org/journal/index.htm

See also http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/publications/2011/Rethinking_Music

See also http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703727804576017592259031536.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

See also http://futureofmusic.org/blog/2009/10/14/29-streams

See also http://vimeo.com/14912890

See also http://www.carseywolf.ucsb.edu/mip/net-worth-roundtable-3-compensation-and-creative-labor

On SOPA Bill, 2012

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/02/business/media/the-danger-of-an-attack-on-piracy-online.html?_r=1


On fair use and its strategic use (Lessig):


Hilderbrand, Lucas. Inherent Vice: Bootleg Histories of Videotape and Copyright, 2011


http://newmedialix.net/daily/?p=204


Paul K. Saint-Amour, Modernism and Copyright (Oxford University Press, 2010).

Lewis Hyde, Common as Air: Revolution, Art, and Ownership, First Edition. (Farrar, Straus and
Giroux, 2010).

Viewing
RIP! A Remix Manifesto (dir. Brett Gaylor)
Good Copy, Bad Copy (dir. Andreas Johnsen, et al)

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

Class 8: Medium as Message, Technologies as Actors [10.31]

Martin Heidegger, The Question Concerning Technology
Martin Heidegger, “The Being of Entities Encountered in the Environment”
Gilbert Simondon, “Technical Mentality”
Langdon Winner, The Whale and the Reactor, “Do Artifacts Have Politics?”
Marshall McLuhan, “The Medium is the Message” (excerpt)
Marshall McLuhan, The Playboy Interview
Bruno Latour, We Have Never Been Modern (excerpts)
Neil Postman, Five Things

Further Reading
Louise Meintjes, “The Recording Studio as Fetish”
Mark Katz, “Mix and Scratch”
Lev Manovich, Language of New Media, “What is New Media?”
Marshall McLuhan Gutenberg Galaxy
Harold Innis, The Bias of Communication
Walter Ong, Orality and Literacy
Joshua Meyrowitz, No Sense of Place
Friedrich Kittler, Discourse Networks
Ruth Cowan, Consumption Junction
Bruno Latour, Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory
Bill Brown, “Thing Theory”
Pinch & Bijker, Social Construction of Technology
Boczkowski, Digitizing the News
Reeves and Nass, The Media Equation
Hansen, New Philosophy for New Media

On algorithmic culture today:

On surveillance:
http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/may/22/malware-viruses-companies-preinstall?CMP=EMCNEWEMAIL6619I2

NO CLASS ON 11.7

Class 9: Technics, Networks, Software [11.14]
Alex Galloway, Protocol, Chapter 1 (“Physical Media”), available as e-copy in library
Nicole Starosielski, “Fixed Flow: Undersea Cables as Media Infrastructure”
Frank Pasquale, “Emperor’s New Codes”

Additional Reading  
Alex Galloway, Interface Effect (Chapter 2):  
http://art.yale.edu/file_columns/0000/1404/galloway_alexander_r_-_the_interface_effect.pdf  
Geoff Bowker, Sorting Things Out  
The false hive logics of search: https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/dec/04/google-democracy-truth-internet-search-facebook  
Charlton McIlwain on race and google: http://www.wired.com/2015/05/google-maps-racist/  
Brian Barrett, “Google Maps is Racist because the Internet is Racist:  
Racism of algorithmic sharing culture:  
Anonymous on gender and video games:  
Guardian on Eurocentrism of Wikipedia:  
On data harvesting and user tracking: the FCC ruling on broadband providers, 2016:  
On algorithmic inertia: http://www.wired.com/2014/08/i-liked-everything-i-saw-on-facebook-for-two-days-heres-what-it-did-to-me/  
Rachel N. Weber, “Manufacturing Gender in Military Cockpit Design”  
Andrew Pickering, “Beyond design: Cybernetics, biological computers, and hylozoism”  
James Gibson, Theory of Affordances  

NO CLASSES ON 11.21 [Thanksgiving Break]  
Class 10: Immediacy, Presence, Affect, and its Antithesis [11.28]  
[FORMULATION OF PAPER DRAFTS DUE]  
Brian Massumi, “The Autonomy of Affect”  
http://www.brianmassumi.com/textes/Autonomy%20of%20Affect.PDF  
Carolyn Abatte, Critical Inquiry, “Music: Drastic or Gnostic?’”  
Ruth Leys, “The Turn to Affect: A Critique”  
http://criticalinquiry.uchicago.edu/uploads/pdf/Leys_-_Turn_to_Affect.pdf  
Jacques Derrida, Margins of Philosophy, “Differance”  
Judith Butler, Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire

Further Reading  
Affect Theory Reader:
David Foster Wallace, "Federer as Religious Experience"

Philip Auslander, Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture, "Tryin' to Make it real: live performance, simulation, and the discourse of authenticity in rock culture"

Arthur Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Representation, "On the Metaphysics of Music" (448-451)

Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht and Michael Merrinan, Mapping Benjamin, "Presence" (281-284)

Donna Jean Haraway, "The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others"

Matthew Lombard and Theresa Ditton, "At the Heart of It All: The Concept of Presence"


Roland Barthes on Wrestling

THE INTERNATIONAL FRAME

Class 12: The Post-Colonial Imagination and Critical Race Studies [12.5]

Edward Said, Orientalism (excerpt)

Arjun Appadurai, "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy"

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (excerpt)

Smith, James H. and Jeffrey W. Mantz, "Do Cell Phones Dream of Civil War: The Mystification of Production and the Consequences of Technology Fetishism in the Eastern Congo."

Kofi Agawu, Representing African Music, "The Invention of African Rhythm"

Robin D.G. Kelley on Black Study, Black Struggle: https://www.bostonreview.net/forum/robin-d-g-kelley-black-study-black-struggle

Michelle Alexander, The New Jim Crow (Two Extracts); see also: Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes by Byron Hurt

Radha Hegde and Shome, "Postcolonial Approaches to Communication"

Gary Younge on white America

Further Reading
Homi Bhabha "DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation"

Partha Chatterjee, The Nation and its Fragments (excerpt)


Jesus Martín-Barbero The Processes: From Nationalisms to Transnationalisms’

Annabelle Sreberny The Global and the Local in International Communications’

Jan Nederveen Pieters ‘Globalization as Hybridization’ Background:

Joseph Straubhaar (Re)Asserting National Television and National Identity Against the Global, Regional, and Local Levels of World Television’

Ernest Renan, Joseph Stalin, various (very!) short readings on definitions of nation/alism

Franz Fanon, Black Skin, White Masks (excerpt)

Helpful Additional Background Readings

Janice Radway, Reading the Romance Novel**

Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses"

Hanno Hardt, Critical Communication Studies: Communication, History and Theory in America

Raymond Williams, Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society

Dominic Strinati, An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture

Michael Gurevitch (ed.), Culture, Society and the Media

Tim O'Sullivan, John Hartley, Danny Saunders, Martin Montgomery, John Fiske (Eds), Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies

William Outhwaite & Tom Bottomore (eds.), The Blackwell Dictionary of Twentieth Century Social
Option A: Feminism & Queer Theory

Denise Riley, Am I that Name? Feminism and the Category of ‘Women’ in History (excerpt)*
Michael Warner, The Trouble with Normal: Sex, Politics and the Ethics of Queer Life (excerpt)*
Eve Sedgwick, Epistemology of the Closet (excerpt)
Gayle Salomon, Assuming a Body (excerpt)
Judith Butler, Undoing Gender (excerpt)

Further Reading
Joan Wallach Scott, The Politics of the Veil (excerpt)
Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses”
bell hooks, “Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance”
Donna Haraway, “A Manifesto for Cyborgs”
Janice Radway, Reading the Romance Novel*

Option B: Sound Studies, Noise & Music

Murray Shafer, “Open Ears,” in Audible Culture Reader (ed. Michael Bull and Les Black)
Lisa Gitelman, “Media, Materiality, and the Measure of the Digital” (optional)
Sterne, Jonathan. “Urban Media and the Politics of Sound Space,” in Sound Art and Culture, special issue of Open: Cahier on Art and the Public Domain #9, Fall 2005, 6-15
http://www.skor.nl/article-2853-en.html

Further Reading
Murray Shafer, Auditory Culture Reader “Open Ears”
Fink, Robert. “Beethoven at the 7-Eleven: Classical Music, Negative Ambience, and Defensible Space”

Option C: Visual Cultures, Screens & Space

Nicholas Mirzoeff, “On Visuality”
Susan Buck-Morss, “Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin’s Artwork Essay Reconsidered”
Zaloom, Caitlin. “Markets and Machines: Work in the Technological Sensoryscapes of Finance”
Further Reading
Susan Sontag, On Photography, “In Plato’s Cave” and “The Image-World”
Laura Mulvey “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”

More on Rhetoric, Influence, & Information
Kant, Immanuel, Critique of Judgment, “Comparison of the Aesthetic Value of the Various Fine Arts”
C. Wright Mills, People, Power, Politics, “The Cultural Apparatus” and “Mass Media and Public Opinion”
Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld, Personal Influence, (only 1-47)
Jacques Ellul, Propaganda, (only 3-32 and 61-87)

See also
Aristotle, On Rhetoric
Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky, “A Propaganda Model”
Walter Lippman, Public Opinion

FINAL DRAFT OF PAPERS DUE ON DECEMBER 14