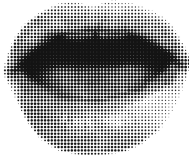


MCC-UE 03
History of Media and Communication
Spring 2016
M/W 11-12:15
GCASL C95



A



B



C



D

Professor Mara Mills
mmills@nyu.edu

Office Hours:
Mondays 4-5 p.m.
and by appointment
8th Floor, 239 Greene St.

TAs:

Sections 002 & 003 - Yoav Halperin, yhr212@nyu.edu
Sections 004 & 005 - Hessa Al-Mohannadi, ham382@nyu.edu
Sections 006 & 007 - Alex Campolo, amc989@nyu.edu
Sections 008 & 009 - Lucy Drummond, lld253@nyu.edu
Sections 010 & 011 - Zachary Loeb, zml218@nyu.edu
Sections 012 & 013 - Victoria Grubbs, vng210@nyu.edu

Course Description

This course explores the emergence, development, and use of different media in relation to particular social, economic, and technological conditions. The course also serves as an introduction to historical analysis and research methods. A variety of mechanisms for media change will be considered, including path-dependence, convergence, technological appropriation, and the social shaping or social construction of technology. In addition to “media causes,” readings will examine “media effects” on perception, culture, and communication. Themes such as *literacy*, *publics*, *reproduction*, and *ideology* will be traced across media systems and/or time periods. At the end of the semester, we will take a comparative look at analog and digital formats for particular media.

Course Requirements

Midterm Exam:	March 9	20%
Final Exam:	May 9	25%

*Header image courtesy of Studio Sport, www.studiosport.in

Historical Research Essay (6-8 pages):

Library/Database Research Assignment	February 5	5%
Topic + Primary Source	February 26	5%
Outline, Thesis, Bibliography	March 28	10%
Final Draft	April 21	25%

Section Attendance and Participation: 10%

Your participation grade, to be determined by your TA, is based on attendance, discussion, readiness (bringing readings/notes to class), and attentiveness.

Grading Policies

This course follows the standard Steinhardt Policies & Procedures for academic integrity and grading (including incompletes):

<http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/procedures>

http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/registration/standards#grading_policies

*Your TAs may grant extensions if given advance notice and adequate reason. Otherwise, late work will be marked down one full grade per week (or fraction thereof) and may not receive written comments.

Accessibility and Accommodations

I want this course to be accessible to all interested students. If you need specific accommodations, please let me and your TA know as soon as possible. To make arrangements for accommodations through NYU, contact the Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980.

Etiquette

While laptops are allowed in lecture, they should not pose a distraction to me, you, or to other students. Other devices should be out of sight & earshot. As a matter of common courtesy, please refrain from walking in and out of the room while class is in session.

Books to Purchase at the NYU Bookstore

Isabel Hofmeyr, *Gandhi's Printing Press: Experiments in Slow Reading* (Harvard)

Minae Mizumura, *The Fall of Language in the Age of English* (Columbia)

Michael Newman, *Video Revolutions: On the History of a Medium* (Columbia)

Books can be borrowed at the Course Reserves desk on Bobst lower level 2. Other readings are available through NYU Classes.

Books Available On-Line

Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *The Medium is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects* (Ginkgo Press, 2006 [1967])

<https://archive.org/details/pdfy-vNiFct6b-L5ucJEa>

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to the Historical Analysis of Media and Communication

Readings: MacKenzie & Wajcman, "Introductory Essay: The Social Shaping of Technology" (skip pp. 18-27; on p. 27 start with section "Case Studies of the Shaping of Technology")
Nakamura, "Media," <http://keywords.nyupress.org/american-cultural-studies/essay/media/>
Shapin, "What Else is New?"

January 25 Course Overview; Why Media History?

January 27 Fundamental Concepts: Communication, Media, Technology
Theories of Media Evolution & Media Effects

Week 2: Spoken Words

Readings: Pinch & Oudshoorn, "How Users and Non-Users Matter" (1-16)
Classic Reading: Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (excerpt)
Peters, "Writing"
Eidsheim, "Voice As Action: Toward a Model for Analyzing the Dynamic Construction of Racialized Voice" (pp. 9-20)

February 1 Historiography II: Use and Re-Use

February 3 Introduction to Library Resources with MCC librarian Katie Boss
Voice, Speech, Orality, Aurality

Week 3: Writing 1: Inscriptions, Pages, Semiotics

Readings: Mizumura, Chs. 2-4
Agarwal-Hollands and Andrews, "From Scroll to Codex and Back Again"
Hassett, ["The Near and Far Future of Emoji"](#)

February 8 Inscriptions, Manuscripts, Paper

February 10 Print, Type, Authorship

Week 4: Writing 2: Imagined Communities and Counterpublics

Readings: Hofmyer: 1-45, 46-103, 153-163

February 15	<i>No Class: President's Day</i>
February 17	Newspapers and Counterpublics <i>The Black Press: Soldiers Without Swords</i> (dir. Stanley Nelson)
Week 5:	Networks
Readings:	Henkin, <i>The Postal Age</i> (excerpt) Thomas, <i>Postal Pleasures: Sex, Scandal, and Victorian Letters</i> (excerpt) Marvin, <i>When Old Technologies Were New</i> (excerpt) Carey, "Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph"
February 22	Mail, Telegraphy, Empire
February 24	Lesbian/Queer Media: Guest Lecture by Jeanne Vaccaro (Indiana University)
Week 6:	Sound Reproduction
Readings:	Martin, "The Culture of the Telephone," "Hello, Central?" <i>Gender, Technology, and Culture in the Formation of Telephone Systems</i> (140-150) Stadler, "Never Heard Such a Thing: Lynching and Phonographic Modernity," <i>Social Text</i> (87-97) Hirschkind, <i>The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics</i> (excerpt)
February 29	Gender and the Telephone
March 2	Phonography and Ideology
Week 7:	Midterm Week
No Readings/Recitation this week.	
March 7	Review
March 9	Online Midterm (NYU Classes)
SPRING BREAK	
Week 8:	Optical Media
Readings:	Sturken and Cartwright, "Visual Technologies, Image Reproduction, and the Copy" Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" Mirzoeff, <i>The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality</i> (excerpt)
March 21	Images and Modernity: Spectacle, Power, Objectivity
March 23	TA meetings to discuss midterms and paper topics (during lecture

& recitation)

Week 9:

Broadcast Media and Mass Culture

Readings:

Spigel, *Make Room for TV* (excerpt)
Horkheimer and Adorno, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" (excerpt)
Wilk, "Television, Time, and the National Imaginary in Belize"
Edmund, "All Platforms Considered: Contemporary Radio and Transmedia Engagement"

March 28

Radio

March 30

Television

Week 10:

Audiovisuality

Readings:

McLuhan, *The Medium is the Message*
Turner, *The Democratic Surround: Multimedia and American Liberalism from World War II to the Psychedelic Sixties* (excerpt, current MCC visiting scholar)

April 4

Cinema

April 6

McLuhan, Multimedia, and American Liberalism

Week 11:

Computing and the Internet

Readings:

Abbate, "'The Most Neglected Element': Users Transform the ARPANET," *Inventing the Internet*
Ensmenger, "Making Programming Masculine"
Mizumura, Ch. 6
Mullaney, "The Moveable Typewriter: How Chinese Typists Developed Predictive Text"

April 11

When Computers Were Women

April 13

Users Construct the Internet

Week 12:

Analog and Digital I: Audio

Readings:

Goggin, "Making Voice Portable: The Early History of the Cell Phone"
Okada, "Youth Culture and the Shaping of Japanese Mobile Media: Personalization and the *Keitai* Internet as Multimedia"
Sterne, *MP3: The Meaning of a Format* (selection)

April 18

Mobile Communication and Convergence

April 20

Digital Audio: Format and Remix Theories

Week 13:

Analog and Digital II: Visual Media

Readings: Newman, *Video Revolutions*
Mills, "What Should We Call Reading?" Flow, <http://flowtv.org/2012/12/what-should-we-call-reading/>

April 25 Digital Images and Video

April 27 Electronic Reading

Week 14: Materials, Labor, and Media Assembly

Readings: Nakamura, "[Indigenous Circuits](#)"
Nest, *Coltan*, Chs. 1 and 4
Parks, "Media Fixes: Thoughts on Repair Cultures"

May 2 Media Supply Chains: Guest Lecture by Matt Hockenberry

May 4 Course Review

Week 15: Conclusion

No Readings/Recitation this week.

May 9 Online Final Exam (NYU Classes)