

University of Waterloo
Department of Arts, Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business
DEI 615
New Perspectives: Media History and Analysis
Winter 2019
Thursdays 4:00pm-6:50 RM 3022

Instructor Information

Instructor: Laura Fong
Office: DMS 2014
Office Phone: 519-888-4880 x23002
Office Hours: Thursdays 1:00pm-4:00pm, and by appointment
Email: lcfong@uwaterloo.ca

Course Description

In this course we will investigate the history of the “Information Revolution” and the media theory that informed different information revolutions, from a sociological perspective.

The birth of the phonetic alphabet and the invention of the printing press, the dawn of mass communication, media as a form of entertainment, communication as a tool in the home, and the great wild west of the internet can be considered examples of information revolutions. In this course we will examine these eras of drastic influence, the applied media theory that has informed them, and the shared characteristics that will inform the next information revolution(s).

Scholars and media theorists, in addition to Cognitive theory, framing theory, and Agenda-Setting theory provide some of the important critical lenses through which to view current media technologies, research, and the consumption of information. In this course students will engage in critical analysis of current and future media consumption and incorporate the lessons we have learned about the impact of information and technological innovations from the past.

Required Text

- Herman, Edward S, and Noam Chomsky. *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1988. Print.

ISBN-10: 0375714499 ISBN-13: 978-0375714498 **Film:** Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0104810/?ref=adv_li_tt

**Additional readings will be posted on LEARN*

Course Structure

This course consists of writing assignments, essays, lectures, weekly reading assignments, in-class activities, class discussions, and student presentations. We will also work on final group projects that will be graded based on the progress of the project, the final product, and peer evaluations.

Course Expectations

Please read all materials and the textbook carefully and on time - by class time for each week—as they form the basis for our discussions, assignments and quizzes. We will be discussing the assigned text and articles in detail. It is my expectation that you come to class fully prepared, which means that you have read the required articles, you have given them some thought, and you have arrived in class with something relevant to say and write about them, or with questions in mind. Please be on time, and plan to attend every class.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Students will develop an understanding of “culture” and some of the most vital issues facing “digital culture. Students will acquire methodological and conceptual tools to engage in-depth analysis of digital technologies and cultures. Students will understand the complexity of the relationship between digital technologies and the communities of practice that employ those technologies and shape the scale and nature of their diffusion through society.

Students will develop their capacity to think critically and to analyze complex theoretical concepts.

Students will further develop their professional skills (teamwork, oral and written communication, problem solving).

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Develop their capacity to construct analysis and communicate arguments in written and multi-modal form
 - Research and analysis practice
 - Weekly writing assignments
- B. Acquire methodological and conceptual tools to engage in-depth analysis of digital technologies and cultures.
 - Analytical Essay Writing
 - Historical Analysis as a team
- C. Develop their capacity to think critically and to analyze complex theoretical concepts.
 - Summarizing complex readings
 - Leading class discussions
- D. Further develop their professional skills: teamwork, oral and written communication, and problem solving.
 - Final Group Project
 - In-Class team exercises

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Reading Summary and Discussion	As Scheduled	20%
Presentation		33
Discussion		33
One-Page Summary Handout		33
Essay	DUE: March 7	20%
Topic Proposal	Feb 7	10
First Draft	Feb 21	20
Final Draft	March 7	70
Final Group Project	DUE: April 1	30%
Idea Pitch	March 14	10
One-On-One	March 21	20
Final Presentation	April 1	70
Weekly Writing/In-Class Activities/Quizzes	April 4	20%
Participation/Attendance	April 4	10%
Total		100%

**Assignments are to be submitted to LEARN unless otherwise specified. You will also be responsible for checking LEARN online regularly to find new content that is posted regularly.

Assessment 1: Reading Summary & Discussion

Students will choose a particular reading in this class and prepare a one-page summary and set of discussion questions that they will hand out to the rest of the class before their presentation that particular week. Presentations will focus on accurately summarizing the main points of the article or reading, and highlighting additional portions of the article/reading that each presenter feels would stimulate group discussion. Overall, your presentation should be in the range of 30 mins. You will be graded on the quality and relevance of the handout, your presentation and class engagement in discussion.

Assessment 2: Chomsky Essay

Chomsky, a scholar of linguistics, co-wrote "Manufacturing Consent." These ideas were considered outlandish or ground-breaking at the time, however, many say his theories have predicted what we see in the current U.S. Media environment.

Chomsky has written and lectured widely on linguistics, philosophy, intellectual history, contemporary issues, international affairs and U.S. foreign policy. He is outspoken, confrontational, and direct about his theories and his approach to the study of linguistics and especially how that relates to the U.S. Media and

his theories of propaganda. Manufacturing Consent provides critical approach to mass media and questions its impact on public opinion in five important ways.

1) Ownership - Media outlets are either large corporations or part of conglomerates which potentially insert bias into the news according to their interests. EX: Rupert Murdoch gave the single largest donation to the Republican Party in 2010

2) The Medium's Funding Sources - Media profit foundation is on advertisement, so interests of advertisers could potentially come before reporting the news. The advertisers may also politically align with audience, therefore focusing on the bottom line. EX: A politically Liberal audience wouldn't benefit from Chevy truck ads. So, subscribers/audience growth is tied to seeking advertising revenue (readership effect)

3) Sourcing - Reliance on certain sources, official statements, or experts basically gives these sources influence over the news outlet. EX: The government creates messages that they believe will serve their best interest, Entman's Cascading Activation model takes it further

4) Flak - discrediting people who don't believe with their views EX: Networks criticizing other networks, public smear campaigns against individuals OR journalists themselves.

5) The Common Enemy - Ideas that exploit public fear and hatred of groups that pose a potential threat, either real, exaggerated, or imagined EX: Viet Cong or Anti-Communist Ideology

You will pick a current news event (in the last six months), and one of Chomsky's five filters of the Propaganda model. Your essay will be a positional essay, where you present a thesis statement and support it with an analysis of three articles/reports from three different news sources or perspectives. Your essay should include the support of scholarly research, Census data, etc. Five pages maximum. You will be graded on the strength and saliency of your arguments, your use of accurate and valid sourcing, and your choice of news articles/reports. APA or Chicago style, grammar and spelling are also important.

Assessment 3: Final Group Project, Information Revolution-What's Next?

Using theoretical grounding, your group will present a medium, a news organization, or some form of technology that you think will significantly influence humanity as critically as the information revolutions of the past have - either positively or negatively. This can be something that is already in use applied in a new way, or something you invent. An example might be a new social media platform, software, mobile app or device. Your final product will be a presentation of your idea that can be in any form you wish. It can be a website, infographic, interactive or an example of this technology. Your presentation will include a written essay, a simple explanation of your idea, your process, and theory behind it. It shall be properly cited and no more than five pages. You will also make a one-page handout summary for the class for your presentation to explain your project and theory simply, and inspire discussion. The goal of this project is to imagine the future through the lens provided by the historical theory and methods we discuss in this course.

Assessment 4: Weekly Writing and In-Class Activities

You will be given a topic for a timed writing exercise. You can hand write or type it, about one page in length. This writing is free-form and can include your opinions and ideas, no matter how extravagant. These will be graded on originality and the concise conveyance of your thoughts and ideas. Spelling and grammar are not graded for these writing exercises. In-Class activities will vary.

Assessment 5: Participation and Attendance

Attendance is required for this class. If you have a good reason to miss class, be sure you email me prior to your absence to let me know you won't be attending class. Keeping me informed will always be to your benefit. If you develop a habit of missing class, it will be reflected in your grade for attendance.

Participation means that you come to class having read the week's readings, ready to express your own ideas and to participate with your other classmates and myself. Attendance is crucial but attendance alone does not count for full participation. If you habitually spend your time in my class on your phone or on your computers instead of participating in class, this will be reflected in both the attendance and participation part of your grade.

Course Outline

The following is an outline of what we will cover from week to week. The instructor reserves the right to make changes during the term depending on the needs of students and the instructor.

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
1	Jan 10	Introductions & Syllabus Review What is an Information Revolution? -shared characteristics Chomsky- Manufacturing Consent and the five filters	Noam Chomsky "Manufacturing Consent" Irving Fang "The Six Information Revolutions"
2	Jan 17	The Essence of Media -Scholarly prediction -the state of Media today	Marshall McLuhan "The Medium is the Message"
3	Jan 24	The Essence of Art -Art, Identity and progress -Framing, Agenda-Setting and Priming	Elizabeth Eisenstein "The Printing Press as an Agent of Change" Robert Entman "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm"
4	Jan 31	Media and Manipulation -Ethics and Democracy -Cascading Activation	Aldous Huxley "Brave new world (excerpt)"

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
			Bernhard Stiegler - "Prometheus' Liver"
5	Feb 7	Media and Communicating the Self -the selfie -filtering ourselves -the serial selfie	Rettberg "Seeing ourselves through technology (ch.1-3)" George Steiner "Language and Silence (excerpt)"
6	Feb 14	The Body and Technology -What is a Cyborg? -Can machines think?	Sidney Perkowitz "Digital People(excerpt)" Donna Haraway "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist - Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century"
7	Feb 28	The Social Media Phenomenon -	Gardner "The Future Starts here: iPhones" Susan Sontag "Plato's Cave"
8	March 7	The future of AI -The beginnings of Singularity	Hiroshilshii and Brygg Ullmer "Tangible bits: towards seamless interfaces between people, bits and atoms"
9	March 14	Singularity -the body and technology -workshop group project ideas	Chris Harrison, Desney Tan, and Dan Morris "Skinput: appropriating the body as an input surface" Don Ihde "Bodies in Technology"
10	March 21	Singularity -What comes next? -Ethical implications of singularity?	Kurzweil-Singularity is Near

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
11	March 21	What will our role be? -The future of context-aware computing -giving up control	Keith Cheverst, et. Al. "Using Context as a Crystal Ball: Rewards and Pitfalls"
12	March 28	Final Presentations	

Late Work

Late assignments will be penalized 2% per day.

Information on Plagiarism Detection

Plagiarism: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they wish to opt out of Turnitin, so that alternative arrangements can be made. Please send an email with your wish to opt out, by January 31, 2019

Copyright: Any images, footage, sound or music used in your projects must be have a CC or PD license and must be cited in the credits. Be aware that found footage may be used to supplement your projects; however, it can consist of no more than 20% of your material. You will be asked to provide raw files for any suspicious material not cited. Please be advised that copyright infringement is a serious offence and will not be tolerated in this course.

Electronic Device Policy

Students are expected to use classroom, lab, and project time productively. Student use of laptops, mobile phones and tablets for any purpose other than approved coursework during classroom, lab, and project time is prohibited. This includes social media, instant messaging, personal correspondence and surfing for unrelated content. Mobile phones must be turned off during class. Students shall not unduly interfere with the study, work or working environment of their peers. If you spend your time in this class on your phone, or working on something not related to GBDA 202, this will impact your participation grade. For more information, please refer to the 'Stratford Campus Code of Conduct'.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is required and will be taken at the beginning of each class. Students are expected to attend all classes. Failure to do so will result in significant and unrecoverable deductions from

the Participation grade. Absences may be excused in circumstances such as illness or emergency. All requests for exception must be accompanied by appropriate documentation that gives reasonable justification for missed classes. Please also review UW's Policy on Accommodation Due to Illness: <https://uwaterloo.ca/registrar/current-students/accommodation-due-to-illness> and familiarize yourself with UW's Inclement Weather Policy <https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat-general-counsel/policies-procedures-guidelines/guidelines/weather-emergency-closing-guidelines> Please note that it is NOT the job of the professor to 'catch you up' on what you have missed – it is your job to catch up using the course syllabus, readings, and the assistance and support of your peers. If you require further assistance, please make an appointment during office hours or any other mutually agreed upon time and date.

Institutional-required statements for undergraduate course outlines approved by Senate Undergraduate Council, April 14, 2009

Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [Office of Academic Integrity webpage](#) for more information.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

Note for Students with Disabilities

The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (NH 1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

If Using Turnitin in your Course

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. See [guidelines for instructors](#) for more information.

Faculty of Arts-required statements for undergraduate course outlines

Cross-listed Course (if applicable)

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.