

## INTRODUCTION TO MASS COMMUNICATION (PART 2)

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Undergraduate, 2 credits

Tues 2:10-4pm

### Course objectives:

In the second part of this course, we continue to study the basic concepts and historical development of mass communication forms, what they do to us and we can do to them, and the many different ways we can look at, understand, investigate and/or change them. As a continuation from the past semester, we will look a little bit more closely at the impact mass media has on society, with our emphasis on its effects and audience reception. As a departure from the past semester, we will also learn a new way of studying communication: semiotics, and how this study of signs, which forms the basis of Structuralism and Cultural Studies, could help us to understand the ways mass communication build “myths” in our societies and change social relations. We will also continue to explore advertising, television and the news, as well as try to expand our scope to include discussion of media regulation, cultural globalization and the internet. Besides studying and presenting on major texts, students are also required to actively research on their media environment using the methods we’ve studied, build a personal blog (for public access) throughout the entire course, and in the end, present this blog to class.

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### Course requirements:

1. Course Reader: There will be a compiled package of all reading materials. Students should make a copy themselves, and finish the assigned readings before class.
2. Students are required to do presentations in class, and submit a blog project by **6 June 2007**. The blog project should be an attempt to organize all your presentations from last term and this term, all your notes (key points, summary, comments and possible findings and applications in daily life) from each week’s reading and class discussion, and a conclusion in the form of a 500-word English essay in the end to summarize “your most memorable moments and arguments” in this course, and present everything to the public. All your writings need to be done in **YOUR OWN WORDS**. If you **QUOTE** any words or images from any sources, including books, magazines, newspapers or websites, you need to provide the full citations (i.e. author, article and/or book title, year, location of publication, publisher and page numbers, or URL, author and date accessed). All copying without citations will be marked as failures. Researching, reading, thinking, analyzing, writing and organizational skills will be the criteria for grading this project.
3. Students are expected to be open-minded in receiving new and/or controversial ideas. A significant amount of attention will be given to discussing the reading materials. Please be active and verbal within classroom.
4. Students who commit any acts of academic dishonesty, including copying each other or from existing sources, will be failed.
5. Students who are absent from class are responsible for catching up with coursework. Class presence and participation will be a crucial factor in grading coursework.

Evaluation:	
Oral Presentations:	40%
Class Participation:	30%
Final Project:	30%

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### Starting All Over Again

Week 1 (Feb 14):

Discussion of last term's final paper.

Copyright and Copyleft

Each student brings one website and one favorite Blog (together with explanation) to share next week.

### Social Impact of Mass Communication

Week 2 (Feb 21): News and Beyond

Neil Postman and Steve Powers, "Chapters 1-3", *How To Watch TV News*, New York and London: Penguin, 1992, 1-39.

Week 3 (Mar 7): Media and Society

Warren K. Agee, Phillip H. Ault, and Edwin Emery "Chapter 2: The Media and Society", *Introduction to Mass Communications*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed., New York: Harper and Row, 1988, 21-32.

### Signs and Representation

Week 4 (Mar 14): Semiotics and signification

Ferdinand de Saussure, "The Linguistic Sign", *Semiotics: An Introductory Reader*, Robert E. Innis ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985

Student presentations: Blogs and websites to share.

Week 5 (Mar 21): Structuralism and mythologies

Roland Barthes, "Myth Today", *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers. UK: Cape, 1972.

Week 6 (Mar 28): Representation and discourse

Stuart Hall, "The Work of Representation", *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, ed. Stuart Hall, London: Open University and Sage, 1997.

Week 7 (Apr 11): Cultural Studies on the Sony Walkman

Paul du Gay, Stuart Hall, Linda Janes, Hugh Mackay and Keith Negus, *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman*, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage, 1997, 8-40.

Week 8 (Apr 18): Representation on Television

John Fiske, "Chapter 1: Some television, some topics and some terminology", *Television Culture*, London and New York: Methuen, 1987, 1-12.

Neil Postman and Steve Powers, "Chapter 8: The Bias of Language, The Bias of Pictures", *How To Watch TV News*, New York and London: Penguin, 1992, 97-114.

### Reception Studies and Media Effects

Week 9 (Apr 25): Survey of Process and Effects

Warren K. Agee, Phillip H. Ault, and Edwin Emery, "Chapter 3: Mass Communication: Process and Effects", *Introduction to Mass Communications*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed., New York: Harper and Row, 1988, 33-53.

Week 10 (May 2): Various Research Methods

Roger D. Wimmer and Joseph R. Dominick "Chapter 16: Research in Media Effects", *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Belmont, CA and London: Wadsworth, 1997. 341-371.  
Elihu Katz and Paul F. Lazarsfeld (1955) "Between Media and Mass/the Part Played by People/the Two-Step Flow of Communication", *Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press. (In reader from last semester)

Week 11 (May 9): Problems

Sonia Livingstone, "On the Continuing Problem of Media Effects", *Mass Media and Society*, James Curran and Michael Gurevitch eds., Second edition, 1997. (In reader from last semester)

Week 12 (May 16): Audience Reception of Television

John Fiske, "Chapter 5: Active audiences", *Television Culture*, London and New York: Methuen, 1987, 63-83.

### International and Intercultural Communication

Week 13 (May 23): Cultural Globalization

John Tomlinson, "Internationalism, Globalization and Cultural Imperialism", *Media and Cultural Regulation*, Kenneth Thompson ed. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage, 1997, 117-153.

Week 14 (May 30): Information Imbalance

Cees J. Hamelink, "Information Imbalance Across the Globe", *Questioning the Media: a Critical Introduction*, John Downing, Ali Mohammadi, and Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi eds., London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage, 1995. (In reader from last semester)

Week 15 (June 6): Presentation and Discussion of Students' Blogs

Week 16 (June 13): Presentation and Discussion of Students' Blogs.  
Final questions and comments.