

COMM 705: Communication and the Social

Spring 2023

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Visitors to the 1939 World's Fair viewing General Motors' model city, "Futurama"

Course Description.

- Communication and the Social is one of three core classes in the Communication PhD program. Along with Communication and the Political and Communication and the Discursive, these classes are designed to introduce students to the rich, varied history of Communication as a discipline. Survey classes have strengths and weaknesses; no class can represent the entirety of the discipline, but we have conceptualized this iteration of 705 to introduce you to perspectives and theories we consider foundational.

- Society is constituted through communication. The field of Communication has interrogated and theorized virtually every social form, including the self, interpersonal relationships, the creation and maintenance of culture, organizations, groups, and publics.
- Both your professors are trained in media and technology studies, and so we consider the mediation of such forms and relationships through broadcast media, social media, and other technologies of mediation, broadly conceived.
- Social science disciplines such as sociology and anthropology have historically neglected, or at least undertheorized, these aspects of society (the nascent subfields of media sociology and media anthropology are fairly minor). As a result, communication scholars are strongly positioned to understand the impact of communication on culture and society, analyze the social aspects of communication, and, especially, interrogate the complex relationship between sociality and mediated technologies.
- Thus, this seminar brings together readings from communication and media studies with other disciplines to ask: What is the relationship between “communication” and the social? How does communication, as a discipline, conceptualize the relationship between communication and society? How do we know what we do about the social? How do we imagine the social? How have other fields and disciplines thought about these concepts?

Participation in this seminar requires regular attendance and participation (20%), writing four 1000-word précis or reflection papers (25%), facilitating class discussions (20%), and a 20–25-page final paper (35%).

University policies.

Community standards in our course and mask use. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill no longer requires students to wear masks, so no one in this class is required to wear a mask. If you feel more comfortable still wearing a mask, you are free to do so. There are many reasons why a person may decide to continue to wear a mask, and we respect that choice. Conversely, according to UNC policy, no one will be penalized if they do not wear a mask in this classroom, given that it is now optional.

Accessibility resources and services. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities. Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email ars@unc.edu.

Title IX resources. Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator (titleixcoordinator@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

University attendance policy. No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

- Authorized University activities
- Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by Accessibility Resources and Service and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC)
- Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators, and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC).

The UNC Honor Code is in full effect for the entirety of this course. The professors reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.

Itinerary.

Week 1. Jan. 12

Introductions and welcome!

Week 2. Jan. 19

Influences

- James Carey (1989). "A cultural approach to communication" in *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society*. Boston: Unwin Hyman.
- John Durham Peters (1997). "Seeing bifocally: Media, place, culture" in Akhil Gupta & James Ferguson (eds.) *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Bruno Latour (2005). "Introduction: How to resume the task of tracing associations" in *Reassembling the Social*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- hooks, bell (1991) "Theory as Liberatory Practice," *Yale Journal of Law & Feminism*: Vol. 4: Iss. 1, Article 2.
- Cameron, Deborah. (2000) "Styling the Worker: Gender and the Commodification of Language in the Globalized Service Economy." *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4(3): 323-347.

Week 3. Jan. 26

"Social" + "Science"

- Max Weber (1994/1897). "The methodological foundations of sociology" in Wolf Heydebrand (ed.) *Max Weber: Sociological Writings*. New York: Continuum.
- Donna Haraway (1988). "Situated knowledges: the science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14(3): 575-599.
- Ian Hacking (1986). "Making up people" in T. C. Heller, M. Sosna, D. E. Wellbery, A. I. Davidson, A. Swidler, & I. Watt (Eds.), *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- John Law and John Urry (2004). "Enacting the social." *Economy & Society* 33(3): 390-410.
- Wendy Hui Kyong Chun (2021). "Homophily, or the swarming of the segregated neighborhood" in *Discriminating Data: Correlation, Neighborhoods, and the New Politics of Recognition*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Week 4. Feb. 2

The Social Construction of Reality

- Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Penguin (Chapters 1-3, pp. 33-61).
- Garfinkel, (1964) "Studies of the Routine Grounds of Everyday Activities" *Social Problems* Vol. 11, No. 3 (Winter, 1964), pp. 225-250

- Emily Martin. (1991). The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles. *Signs*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Spring, 1991), pp. 485-501
- West & Zimmerman (1987). "Doing Gender." *Gender and Society* 1(2): 125-151.

Optional:

- Judith Lorner. (1994). "The Night to His Day: The Social Construction of Gender." From *Paradoxes of Gender*, New Haven: Yale University Press. (Note: This piece has a lot of outdated language around transgender identity.)

Week 5. Feb. 9

Publics and their Others

- Gabriel Tarde (2010/1903). "The public and the crowd" in Terry N. Clark (ed.) *Gabriel Tarde On Communication and Social Influence*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Jürgen Habermas (1969). "Social structures of the public sphere," and parts 8+9 of "Political functions of the public sphere," in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.
- Nancy Fraser (1990). "Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy." *Social Text* 25: 56–80.
- Michael Warner (2002). "Publics and counterpublics." *Public Culture* 14(1): 49–90.

Optional:

- Aaron Shapiro (2017). "The medium is the mob." *Media, Culture & Society* 39(6): 930–941

Week 6. Feb. 16

Self-Presentation and the Social

- Erving Goffman (1956). "Introduction," "Performance" and "The Art of Impression Management," in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Social Sciences Research Centre.
- E. B. DuBois (1996/1903). "Chapter 1, Of Our Spiritual Strivings," in *The Souls of Black Folk*. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co.
- Esther Newton (1972). "On the Job" and "the Queens," in *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pick one of these secondary readings on Goffman (you are welcome to read them both!):

- Imogen Tyler (2018). "Resituating Erving Goffman: From stigma power to Black power." *The Sociological Review* 66(4): 744–765.
- Heather Love (2014). "Reading the social: Erving Goffman and sexuality studies," in Jason Potts & Daniel Stout (eds) *Theory Aside*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Week 7. Feb. 23

Students present options for final paper topics

Embodiment and Habitus

- Marcel Mauss (1934/1968). “Techniques of the body,” in *Sociologie et Anthropologie*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- George Orwell (1937). “The lower classes smell,” in *The Road to Wigan Pier*.
- Pierre Bourdieu (1990). “Structures, *habitus*, practices” and “Belief and the body,” in *The Logic of Practice* (trans. Richard Nice). Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Judith Butler (1999). “Performativity’s social magic,” in Richard Shusterman (ed.) *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*. New York: Wiley.
- Sarah Ahmed (2002). “Racialized bodies,” in Mary Evans & Ellie Lee (eds.) *Real Bodies: A Sociological Introduction*. New York: Palgrave.

Week 8. Mar. 2

Racial Formations

- Michael Omi and Howard Winant. Chapters 1-4. *Racial Formation in the United States*. (3rd edition, 2015).
- Patricia Hill Collins (2021). Introduction , Chapter 1: Intersectionality as Critical Theory and Chapter 2: What’s Critical about Critical Social Theory? *I*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Week 9. Mar. 9

Outline and extended abstract due

Classification

- Pierre Bourdieu (1984). “Classes and classifications Links to an external site.,” in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (trans. Richard Nice). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Oscar Gandy (1992). [selections] *The Panoptic Sort*
- Bowker & Star
- Fourcade & Healy
- Fourcade Ordinalization

Week 10. Mar. 16

No class—spring break.

Week 11. Mar. 23

Media Effects: Strengths and Weaknesses

- Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno. (1944). “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception.” In *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Amsterdam: Querido.
- Hadley Cantril with Herta Hertzog. (1940). Excerpt from *The Invasion from Mars: A Study in the Psychology of Panic*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Katz, Elihu, and Paul F. Lazarsfeld. “Between Media and Mass” and “The Part Played by People,” in *Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Communication*, pp. 15–25. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1955.
- Todd Gitlin. (1978) “Media Sociology: The Dominant Paradigm.” *Theory and Society* 6: 205-253.
- Edward Herman & Noam Chomsky. (1988). “A Propaganda Model.” from *Manufacturing Consent: The political economy of the mass media*. Pantheon Books

Secondary readings (optional):

- Jefferson D. Pooley and Michael J. Socolow, (2013). “Checking up on *The Invasion From Mars*: Hadley Cantril, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and the Making of a Misremembered Classic.” *International Journal of Communication* 7:1920-1948.
- Kurt Lang & Gladys Lang. (2006). “Personal Influence” and the new paradigm: Some Inadvertent Consequences.” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 608:157-178.
- Pickard, V. (2021). Unseeing propaganda: How communication scholars learned to love commercial media. *Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) Misinformation Review*, 2(2).

Week 12. Mar. 30

The Social Life of Things

- Karl Marx (1976/1867). “The commodity,” in *Capital Vol. 1*. New York: Penguin.
- Igor Kopytoff (1986). “The cultural biography of things: Commoditization as process,” in Arjun Appadurai (ed.) *The Social Life of Things*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bruno Latour (1990). “Technology is society made durable.” *The Sociological Review* 38(1/supplement): 103–131.
- Franck Cochoy (2007). “A sociology of market-things: on tending the garden of choices in mass retailing,” in Callon et al (eds.) *Market Devices*, pp 109–129.
- Fernando Domínguez Rubio (2016). “On the discrepancy between objects and things: An ecological approach.” *Journal of Material Culture* 21(1): 59–86.

Week 13. Apr. 6

No class—wellness day.

Week 14. Apr. 13

What Do People Do With Media?

- Herta Herzog (1944). “What do we really know about daytime serial listeners?” in *Radio Research 1942-1943*, Lazarsfeld and Stanton, Eds. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, pp. 3-33.
- Janice Radway. (1984) Chapter 2: The Readers and their Romances; Chapter 3: The Act of Reading the Romance. *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Fiction*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press
- Correll, S. (1995). The Ethnography of an Electronic Bar: The Lesbian Cafe. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 24(3), 270–298.
- Alice Marwick (2018). “Why Do People Share Fake News? A Sociotechnical Model of Media Effects.” *Georgetown Law Technology Review* 2: 474-512.

Week 15. Apr. 20

Techniques and Technologies of Social Envisioning

- Sarah E. Igo (2007). [Selections] *The Averaged American*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Emmanuel Didier (2020). “Introduction: America’s reflexivity” and Part I: The Decomposition of America, in *America by the Numbers: Quantification, Democracy, and the Birth of National Statistics*
- Colin Koopman (2019). “Introduction: Informational persons and our informational politics” and “Segregating data: The informatics of racialized credit, 1923–1937” in *How We Became Our Data: A Genealogy of the Informational Person*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Week 16. Apr. 27

In-class presentations

Final paper due May 4