Seminar in Media Studies
COMM502

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Course description
The seminar will survey the major traditions of media studies scholarship with a particular focus on North America. Its purpose is to provide historical context for a nuanced understanding of the field of media and communications research in the 21st century. The seminar will consist primarily of discussions of readings, which will consist mostly of primary documents—pieces of research now considered classic /formational /canonical in the field. Students will be expected to read carefully and participate actively in criticizing, evaluating, and appraising this research.

Course Objectives
Media and communications research is a field composed of incommensurable perspectives, approaches, and traditions. The course begins with the assumption that no grand synthesis or grand narrative of the field will be acceptable to all interested parties, and that any synthesis or narrative, consciously or unconsciously, will be rooted in a particular research tradition. The seminar intends to instil an awareness of the stakes and dynamics of disciplinary histories. At the end of the semester, it is hoped that each student will have arrived at one’s own position on the proper approaches and research traditions of the field.

Reading materials
• Dennis McQuail, McQuail’s Reader in Mass Communication Theory.
• Elihu Katz, John Durham Peters, Tamar Liebes, and Avril Orloff, eds., Canonic Texts in Media Research: Are There Any? Should There Be Any? How About These?

These are available online, used or new through various online vendors. The remainder of the readings will be available on e-reserve or will be distributed by e-mail or handed out in class.

Requirements
Grades for the course will be based on in-class performance and two take-home exams.

Exams
Two exams will be administered during the course of the seminar, both following take home form and on the dates listed on the course schedule. More detail will follow. The first exam will be worth 30% and the second 40% of your grade, totalling 70% of your final grade.

Participation
Your attendance and participation to class discussions is essential and expected. This is a graduate seminar, meant to inform you on this topic but to also teach you to articulate your own opinions with confidence. All
readings should be completed before the assigned date, and you should come to class prepared to talk. You will also prepare discussion questions for a specific topic, to be determined later. A sign up sheet will be circulated. Worth 30% of your grade.

Special Needs
It is our desire that all students participate fully in the curriculum of our department. If you have a disability or special condition that compromises your ability to successfully participate in this class, please notify me as soon as possible and make sure you register with the appropriate University office. All efforts will be made to accommodate your needs.

Honor Code
All students are expected to read and observe the UIC Honor Code Policy concerning academic integrity.

Plagiarizing
When facts or other material are obtained from an outside source, that source should be cited properly in the text and the bibliography/references section of your work. Plagiarism is defined as taking the words or ideas of another person and presenting them as one's own without proper credit. Plagiarizing is considered cheating, and a student who plagiarizes will receive a zero for that assignment and/or a failing grade for the course. If you are not certain that you are citing materials properly, feel free to double check your citations with me.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Reading assignments should be completed prior to the date for which they are assigned. You should come to class prepared to discuss what you have read. This schedule is tentative – you will be advised of changes. Readings will be made available online.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 25</td>
<td>Course overview</td>
<td>• Cooley, Process of Social Change (Peters/Simonson, 21)</td>
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<td>• Addams, House of Dreams (Peters/Simonson, 25)</td>
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<td>• Royce, Provincialism (e-reserve)</td>
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<td>• Park &amp; Burgess, Intro to Science of Soc (Peters/Simonson, 31)</td>
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<td>• George Herbert Mead. Obstacles and Promises in the Development of the Ideal Society, from Mind, Self, and Society. (e-reserve)</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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• Herbert Blumer, “Conclusion,” from *Blumer, Movies and Conduct*. (Peters/Simonson 91)  
• Louis Wirth, Consensus and Mass Communication. (Peters/Simonson, 249)  
• Eric Rothenbuhler, Community and Pluralism in Wirth’s Consensus and Mass Communication (Katz et al., 106)  
• Donald Horton and R. Richard Wohl, Mass Communication and Para-social Interaction: Observations on Intimacy at a Distance (Peters/Simonson, 373)  
• Donald Handelbaum, *Towards the Virtual Encounter* (Katz et al., 137)  
• Harold Lasswell, *The Results of Propaganda* (Peters/Simonson, 47)  
• AM Lee and EB Lee, *The Fine Art of Propaganda* (Peters/Simonson 124)  
• Ernst Kris and Hans Speier, *Nazi Propaganda and Violence* (Peters/Simonson, 182)  
• Edward S. Herman, *The Propaganda Model: A Retrospective* (McQuail, 60)  
| Sep. 22 | The Columbia School | • Edward Sapir, *Communication* (Peters/Simonson, 74)  
• James Rorty, *The Business Nobody Knows* (Peters/Simonson, 106)  
• Hadley Cantril and Gordon Allport, *The Influence of Radio upon Mental and Social Life* (Peters/Simonson, 110)  
• Helen McGill Hughes, *Human Interest Stories and Democracy* (Peters/Simonson, 118)  
• George Gallup and Saul Rae, *A Powerful, Bold, and Unmeasurable Party?* (Peters/Simonson,128)  
• Robert S. Lynd, *Democracy in Reverse* (Peters/Simonson, 134)  
• Gary Brett, "Communication Research, the Rockefeller Foundation, and Mobilization for the War on Words," Journal of Communication, 46(3) 1996. |
### Sep. 29

The Limited Effects Model

- Katz, Elihu, and Daniel Dayan. “The Audience Is a Crowd, the Crowd Is a Public: Latter-Day Thoughts on Lang and Lang’s “MacArthur Day in Chicago.”” (Katz et al., 121)

### Oct. 6

Midterm exam due, no class

### Oct. 13

The Frankfurt School

- Liebes, Tamar. “Herzog’s ‘On Borrowed Experience’: Its Place in the Debate Over the Active Audience.” (Katz et al)


**Oct. 20** The Mass Culture Debates


**Oct. 27** Mainstream Challenges to Limited Effects

• Schramm, Wilbur, and John W. Riley, Jr. “Communication in the Sovietized State, as Demonstrated in Korea.” Public Opinion Quarterly 15.6 (December 1951): 757–66. (Peters/Simonson, 310)
Nov. 3 Cultural Studies


Nov. 10 The Toronto School

- Blondheim, Menahem. “Harold Adams Innis and his Bias of Communication.” K9
- Rita P.M. Watson and Menahem Blondheim, ed., The Toronto School of Communication Theory: Interpretations, Extensions, Applications (University of Toronto Press, 2007).

Nov. 17 Political Economy

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<th>Nov. 24</th>
<th>Globalization And the network Society</th>
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2ND EXAM DUE DECEMBER 1ST