

## **MK 120: COMMUNICATION, MEDIA AND SOCIETY**

**"Whoever controls the media--the images--controls the culture." Allen Ginsberg**



---

### **DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION FALL 2013**

**LECTURE:** Monday 4:00 – 5:45pm, Walker 202

**Discussion Section 01:** Wednesday 4:00 – 5:45 PM Ansin Building 208 (Yelverton)

**Discussion Section 02:** Wednesday 6:00 – 7:45 PM Walker 504 (Yelverton)

**Discussion Section 03:** Friday 2:00 – 3:45 PM Walker 231 (Yelverton)

~

**Lead Instructor: DR. PAUL MIHAILIDIS**

**Phone:** 617-824-3406

**Email:** [paul\\_mihailidis@emerson.edu](mailto:paul_mihailidis@emerson.edu)

**Office:** #907 Walker Building

**Office Hours:** MW 2:00 – 4:00pm & By Appointment

**Discussion Instructor: CAROL YELVERTON**

[carol\\_yelverton@emerson.edu](mailto:carol_yelverton@emerson.edu)

**Office / Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Discussion Instructor: SARA MORGAN**

[Sara\\_morgan@emerson.edu](mailto:Sara_morgan@emerson.edu)

**Office / Office Hours:** By Appointment

---

**Media**, according to Dictionary.com, is the means of communication, as radio and television, newspapers, and magazines, that reach or influence people widely.

**Communication** is defined as the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs.

**Society** is an organized group of persons associated together for religious, benevolent, cultural, scientific, political, patriotic, or other purposes. A body of individuals living as members of a community; community.

“The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses.” **Malcolm X**

“All of us who professionally use the mass media are the shapers of society. We can vulgarize that society. We can brutalize it. Or we can help lift it onto a higher level.” **William Bernbach**

“Cinema, radio, television, magazines are a school of inattention: people look without seeing, listen in without hearing.”  
**Robert Bresson**

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

---

### **DESCRIPTION**

Communication, Media, and Society is designed to help students develop an informed and critical understanding of how media shape and influence society and communication. The course will develop a critical understanding of ideas around media effects, audience and reception analysis, and theories of cultivation, agenda setting, framing, and uses & gratifications. The course will look at the evolution of communication and media industries over time to explore how models for information distribution and reception have facilitated communication in modern society. Finally, the course will explore the future of media systems in a digital age, with a look at the future of marketing communication through the lens of convergence culture and participatory technology.

### **GOALS**

- Students will explore the history of communication and technology to understand its role in shaping society
- Students will investigate past and present media industry models to grasp how they functioned within the constraints of communication
- Students will learn to critically interpret powerful texts and images in the print, mass, and multi-media ages.

- Students will understand media models, audience behaviors, and the role of communication in effective posturing of causes and campaigns over time.
- Students will harness the power of new participatory social media platforms to engage in collaborative analysis of media messages and their influence on audience.
- Students will be empowered and active media and information users, able to harness the multimedia landscape for effective communication techniques and multimedia communication

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn the fundamental paradigm shifts of communication over time.
- Students will develop an understanding of the communication models that have evolved in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.
- Students will trace the ownership and interests of communicators produced by commercial and other large institutions.
- Students will learn about persuasion models and techniques in communication.
- Students will engage in a series of media insight assignments to help them place media's role in their identities, behaviors and habits.
- Students will be producing work in print, audio, image, and video format to help hone their multimedia storytelling skills around the topics under study.
- Students will become media literate—more active in their consumption, production, campaign, and community identities in local, national, and global communities.

## COURSE METHOD

Lectures will be held on Mondays from 4:00 – 5:45pm, and Discussion sections on Wednesday and Friday (see above for your specific discussion time). The course format will vary, consisting of lectures, group work, discussion, debate, etc. The course structure combines **theory and applied exploration** into weekly topics. Here's how the days break down:

1. **BIG CLASS (LECTURE)** – The lectures will serve two main purposes. First, you will engage with the “big idea” of the week, around the topic and content developed through readings and assignments. Second, we'll apply that big idea to an active and current case study. This case study could be in the form of a film, an applied activity, dialog, group inquiry, etc. Lectures will also include reading quizzes, and visiting scholars from the Marketing Communication faculty.
2. **SMALL CLASS (DISCUSSIONS)** – The discussion sections will be where you engage in dynamic small group interactive dialog. Here you will be responsible for having the readings ready to discuss in detail (and not through a broader overview that is the lecture). In discussion you will be engaging with the assignments, group work, active exploration, field trips, etc. to help enhance and bring to life the ideas and cases that you engage with in the “big classes” on Mondays.

## CLASS MEDIA

This class is anchored by a series of media platforms, as follows:

1. **Canvas:** The class will be organized through Canvas where you will find a run down of the course, topics covered, readings, assignments and any other necessary information for the course on a weekly basis.
2. **Facebook:** We have a group Facebook page, which you will all be asked to join. This page will be to post course information, announcement and updates, as well as interesting news and information pertinent to the course. It will be a closed group.
3. **Twitter:** The Class will have a hashtag **#mk120**, which can be used during the class to ask questions, make comments, and communicate with peers in class. The hashtag will be used in lecture, and both in and outside of class.

IMPORTANT: It is very important that you visit these spaces on a regular basis, and become familiar with using them. It is where all of your class content, assignments, grades, discussions, chats, etc. will be. And where you will interact with your instructors and classmates.

## READINGS

**All course readings will be available online or handed out by the instructor in class.** Please see below under each date for the online reading that will accompany each day. In addition to the required readings, listed below are some additional books and resources you may want to explore throughout this course.

### *Recommended Texts:*

- **The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to our Brains** by Nicholas Carr, Norton, 2011
- **What's Mine Is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption** by Rachel Botsman and Roo Rodgers, Harper, 2010
- **Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide** by Henry Jenkins, NYU Press, 2006
- **Cheap: The High Cost of Discount Culture** by Ellen Ruppel Shell, Penguin 2009
- **True Enough: Learning to Live in a Post-Fact Society** by Farhad Manjoo, Wiley, 2008
- **Mediated: How the Media Shapes Your World and the Way You Live in It** by Thomas de Zengotita, Bloomsbury, 2005
- **Infotopia: How Many Minds produce Knowledge** by Cass R. Sunstein, Oxford University Press, 2006
- **New Media and the Managed Citizen** by Philip N. Howard, Cambridge University Press, 2008
- **Cognitive Surplus** by Clay Shirky, Penguin, 2010
- **DIY Media: New Literacies and Digital Epistemologies** by Michelle Knoble and Colin Lankshear, Peter Lang, 2011
- **The Net Delusion: The Dark Side of Internet Freedom** by Evgney Morozov, PublicAffairs, 2011
- **Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other** by Shelly Turkle, Basic, 2010
- **The Wisdom of Crowds** by James Surowiecki, Anchor Books, 2005
- **Proofiness: The Dark Arts of Mathematical Deception** by Charles Seif, Penguin, 2010
- **Hamlets Blackberry: A Practical Philosophy for building a good life in the digital age** by William Powers, Harper, 2010.
- **Nudge: Improving Decisions About Happiness, Wealth, and Health** by Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein, Yale, 2008.

- **Media Literacy: A Reader** by Donaldo Macedo & Shirley R. Steinberg, Eds., Peter Lang Press, 2007
- **Media Literacy: Learning, Literacy, & Contemporary Culture** By David Buckingham, Polity Press, 2003
- **Media Literacy: Keys to Interpreting Media Messages, 3/e.** by Art Silverblatt, Praeger, 2007
- **Consumed: How Markets Corrupt Children, Infantilize Adults & Swallow Citizens Whole** by Benjamin Barber, Norton, 2007
- **Googled** by Ken Auletta, 2008
- **The Wealth of Networks** by Jochai Benkler, 2007
- **Everything is Miscellaneous** by David Weinberger, 2008
- **Journalism Next** by Mark Briggs, 2009
- **Media, Ownership & Democracy in the Digital Information Age** by Mark Cooper, Center for Internet & Society, Stanford Law, 2007.
- **Tuned Out: Why Americans Under 40 Don't Follow the News** by David T.Z. Mindich, Oxford, 2005
- **UnSpun: Finding Facts in a World of Disinformation** by Brooks Jackson & Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Random House, 2007
- **Inventing Reality: The Politics of the News Media** by Michael Parenti, Wadsworth Publishing, London, 2002.
- **Civic Literacy: How Informed Citizens Make Democracy Work**, by Henry Milner, University Press of New England, 2002.
- **New Literacies in Action: Teaching and Learning in Multiple Media**, by William Kist, Teachers Press, Columbia University, 2005.
- **The Problem of the Media: U.S. Communication Politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century** by Robert McChesney, Monthly Review Press, NY, 2006.
- **News: The Politics of Illusion, 5<sup>th</sup> Ed.**, by W. Lance Bennett, Longman, NY, 2003.

## **GRADING**

There will be 4 components of the final grade for this course:

1. MEDIA INSIGHT ASSIGNMENTS – A series of assignments on how media define behavior (300 points, or 30% of total grade)
2. GROUP PROJECT – Marketing Issues to the Public: Media & Persuasion (200 points, or 20% of total grade)
3. MID-TERM EXAM – CMS PART ONE (200 points, or 20% of total grade)
4. FINAL EXAM – CMS PART TWO (200 points, or 20% of total grade)
5. ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION/CONTRIBUTIONS – (100 points, or 10% of total grade)

**TOTAL = 1000 POINTS/10 = Final Grade**

### **Components Overview**

This course will obviously require a substantial amount of writing, requiring both time and personnel management. Media practitioners are required to write and produce quality work under strict deadline. This course is no exception. **Deadlines will be enforced! No project will be accepted after its due date without severe grading penalties.**

**Late work will be marked down a letter grade for every late day.** For example, if you hand in your assessment late and it is marked and you deserve an A for the work, you will receive a B if the assignment was late on the same day that it is due. You will receive a C as the highest possible grade if you are more than a day late. Extensions will only be allowed in special circumstances and with formal documentation.

The instructor of this course uses the following system when grading. The letter grades correspond to the following numerical breakdown:

A 93.45-100	B + 86.45-89.44	C+ 76.45-79.44	D+ 66.45-69.44
A - 89.45-93.44	B 83.45-86.44	C 73.45-76.44	D 59.45-66.44
	B - 79.45-83.44	C - 69.45-73.44	F 59.44 or Below

### Marketing Communication Grading Expectations



*Component Overviews*

**Media Insights (30%)** – Students will complete a series of assignments that explore the role of media in everyday life. These assignments will involve a personal task, a new media technology, and an engagement with the readings. Assignments will involve:

- Going “unplugged” for 24 hours
- Track Your Habit Loops
- Curating Beauty

Students will complete the tasks, reflect on them, and also have to use the readings to further expand on how media and communication models have shaped our relationship to media. The assignments are all composed of two parts. The doing part will involve an active exploration with an

active technology. The second part will involve a reflection that uses the readings in depth. This means more than simply paraphrasing a selection. You must quote, show engagement and analysis, and reflect with the core ideas presented in the readings. Failure to do so will result in a loss of points!

**Group Project – Media Narratives (20%)** – In this project, each group will choose (out of a hat) one media program (TV show, film, or musician/band), and explore how that media has engaged its audience. Groups will deconstruct the main messages of that program, how the program engages audiences, and what people connect to via the program. Like all good media research, your project will start with a larger look at the type of media and its social influence, and then dig down into the specifics. In the end, you will have a detailed report about the show, along with a video that tells about your journey.

**Mid-Term & Final Exams (40%)** – Students will complete mid-term and final exams that will explore themes and concepts in the class. The exam can be completed as a print, audio, or visual assignment.

**Participation / Attendance / Contributions (10%)** – The last portion of the course grade is made up of attendance, participation, and general levels of contribution and commitment to the course. This will be evaluated both in lecture and discussion classes. From time to time there will be small assignments to help you prepare for class or other evaluated in-class activities. These may include:

- Constructing visual media identities
- Reading online vs. Reading offline
- Taking a field trip to explore media persuasion

Throughout the course, you will be responsible for a series of online reading and multimedia responses, in which you answer questions on the readings and engage in constructed dialog with discussion sections online and in class. These will be part of your overall contribution grade for the course.

## **ATTENDANCE**

You are **REQUIRED TO ATTEND ALL CLASSES**. Consistent attendance helps you understand the material covered in this course and successfully complete its requirements. We think of attendance as treating this class like it's part of your growing career responsibilities. You need to show employers, mentors, etc. that you are dedicated to show up, do the work, and participate. That starts with being there. And the best way to learn that habit is by coming to class all the time, and on time.

Absences may be excused if you: (1) have an illness or injury precluding you from attending class; (2) observe a religious holiday that prevents you from class attendance; (3) are required to participate in a university activity by a recognized authority; or (4) experience a compelling, verifiable emergency beyond your control.

If you encounter any one of these circumstances, you must contact one of the instructors by telephone, e-mail, or in person to let us know you will be absent during a class session. You must also provide acceptable, written documentation of the reason for your absence. Some examples of

acceptable documentation would be a physician's note, traffic accident report, hospital bill, etc., all of which must be dated and signed. Providing documentation does not guarantee an absence will be excused. Other absences (funerals, weddings, etc.) will be addressed on a case-by-case basis and may not be considered excused.

Class work missed for a known, excused absence must be turned in prior to the absence in order to receive credit. Work missed for an unexcused absence will not be accepted and, thus, will receive no credit. If you come to class late and miss an in-class exercise or assignment, you will not be allowed to make up the work, unless we have made some previous arrangements.

### **TECHNOLOGY IN CLASS POLICY**

You are welcome to bring in and use technology in the classroom, for purposes relevant to the classroom. We'll often be exploring things online, and so it may help to have mobile and web devices handy. However, if it is distracting to the class, or not used for in-class purposes, you may be asked to stop using it.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

It is the responsibility of all Emerson students to know and adhere to the College's policy on plagiarism. If you have any question concerning the Emerson plagiarism policy or about documentation of sources in work you produce in this course, speak to your instructor.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities who are seeking consideration for services or accommodations should contact the Associate Director for Disability Services: (617) 824-8592, [dso@emerson.edu](mailto:dso@emerson.edu), or Disability Services Office, Emerson College, 120 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02116.

## COURSE OUTLINE, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK	LECTURE	DISCUSSION	READINGS / VIEWINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
<b>#1</b> Lecture (none) Discussions 9/4, 9/6	n/a	Introduction / Course Overview / Your Media Identity	n/a	
<b>PART ONE – MEDIA MODELS</b>				
<b>#2</b> Lecture 9/9 Discussions - 9/11, 9/13	Media Literacy in Digital Culture  <b>Case: Love / Hate Media</b>	My Media Identity, How I know what I know	<b>Net Smart</b> by Howard Rheingold	<b>My Media Identity</b>
<b>#3</b> Lecture - 9/16 Discussions - 9/18, 9/20	Visual Culture: How We See the World over Time  <b>Film: LogoRama</b>	The Bechtel Test	<b>The Shallows</b> by David Carr' <b>Listen:</b> <a href="#">Have We Grown too Fond of Technology</a>	
<b>#4</b> Lecture - 9/23 Discussions - 9/25, 9/27	Paradigm Shifts in Media  <b>Case: Gutenberg to Zuckerberg</b>	Kony 2012	<b>The World is Flat</b> by Thomas Friedman <b>Watch – <a href="#">Present Shock</a></b>	<b>Media Insight #1 – Without Media</b>

<b>#5</b> Lecture - 9/30 Discussions - 10/2, 10/4	Models for Media Ownership: <b>Case: Disney &amp; Power</b> <b>Film: LogoRama</b>	Who Owns My Music?	<b>Media, Markets, and the Public Sphere</b> by Croteau & Hoynes <a href="#">Disney's Dolls</a> <a href="#">Quo Vadis Disney?</a>	
<b>PART TWO – MEDIA BEHAVIOR</b>				
WEEK	LECTURE	DISCUSSION	READINGS / VIEWINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
<b>#6</b> Lecture - 10/7 Discussions - 10/9, 10/11	The Power of Habits <b>Case: Target and The Production of Food</b>	Predictable Irrationality	<b>The Power of Habits</b> by Charles Duhigg Watch: <a href="#">The Good Consumer</a>	<b>Media Insight #2 – Habit Loops</b>
<b>#7</b> Lecture - Tues. 10/15 (no classes Monday) Discussions - 10/16, 10/18	Cultivating Untouchable Beauty <b>Case: Blurred Lines</b>	<b>The Codes of Gender</b>	<a href="#">Who Will Fight the Beauty Bias? Happy Body Age?</a> <a href="#">The Scary Reality of a Real-Life Barbie Doll</a> <a href="#">Body Image Concerns More Men than Women, Research Finds</a>	
<b>#8</b> Lecture - 10/21 Discussions - 10/23, 10/25	The High Cost of Discount Culture <b>Case: Walmart vs. Ikea.</b>	Field Trip: We're Going Shopping!	<b>Cheap</b> by Ellen Ruppel Shell	<b>Media Insight #3 – Curating Beauty</b>

<b>#9</b> Lecture - 10/28 Discussions - 10/30, 11/1	<b>Mid-Term Exam</b>	Group Project – Introduction and Work	none	<b>Mid-Term Exam</b>
<b>PART THREE – DIGITAL MEDIA CULTURE</b>				
<b>#10</b> Lecture - 11/4 Discussions - 11/6, 11/8	Connected: Media and the Power of “Us”  <b>Guest Speaker</b>	Participatory Culture: Your social media graph	<b>Connected</b> by Christakis and Fowler <b>Film: RIP Remix A Manifesto</b>	
<b>#11</b> Lecture - none Discussions - 11/13, 11/15	<b>No Lecture /  Columbus Day</b>	Collaborative Consumption  <b>Case: Reputation  Capital</b>	<b>What’s Mine is Yours</b> by Rachel Botsman and Roo Rodgers Watch: <a href="#">The Empathetic Civilization</a>	
<b>#12</b> Lecture - 11/18 Discussions - 11/20, 11/22	Here Comes Everybody: Privacy and Public Life  <b>Film: Us Now</b>	The Engagement Ladder	<a href="#">Who do Online Advertisers think  you are?</a> <a href="#">How Laura Poitras helped Snowden  leak his secrets</a>	

<p><b>#13</b> Lecture - 11/25 Discussions - none</p>	<p><b>Group Presentations</b></p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>none</p>	<p><b>Group Presentations (Project Reports Due)</b></p>
<p><b>#14</b> Lecture - 12/2 Discussions - 12/4, 12/6</p>	<p>The Future of the Mediated World – User Experience(s)  <b>Guest Speaker</b></p>	<p><b>Case: How media literate are you NOW?</b></p>	<p><b>Spreadable Media</b> by Henry Jenkins</p>	
<p><b>#15</b> Lecture - 12/9 Discussions - none</p>	<p>Final Exam Review <b>Film: Connected</b></p>	<p>Reading Day is Wednesday, Dec. 11<sup>th</sup></p>		<p><b>Final Exams will be due during the final block for MK120</b></p>

**ASSIGNMENT SNAPSHOT**

ASSIGMENT	DUE DATE(S)
Media Insight #1	9/25, 9/27
Media Insight #2	10/9, 10/11
Media Insight #3	10/23, 10/25
Mid-Term Exam	10/28
Group Project	11/25
Final Exam	Final Block