

**Department of
Communication and Culture**
Communications Studies (COMS) 601 – Seminar 01
Interdisciplinary Approaches to Communications Studies
Fall 2011
M 18:30 – 21:20

Instructor: Brian Rusted
Office Location: SS-340
Office Phone: 220-7766
E-Mail: rusted@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: *Thurs 13:30-16:00 or by appointment*

Course Description

A foundation seminar including the presentation and discussion of a range of communications theories and topics. Students will receive a broad introduction to the field of communications research through discussion of a variety of research approaches and traditions, encompassing interaction, representation, media, and interpretation in social behaviour.

Objectives of the Course

1) familiarize students with the University's resources for communications and culture research; 2) introduce research traditions in communications and culture research represented in our program; 3) provide a conceptual overview of the field of communications studies through formative debates particularly those related to cultural analysis; 4) initiate students in the process of developing a feasible research agenda for communications and cultural research.

Textbooks and Readings:

There is no required text for this course but you may find that a text such as Hartley's *Key Concepts* or Edgar and Sedgewick might be useful in providing orientation to terms and ideas within the fields of Communications Studies or cultural analysis.

Edgar, Andrew and Peter Sedgewick, eds. (1999). *Key Concepts in Cultural Theory*. New York: Routledge.

Hartley, John, et. al. editors (2002). *Communication, Cultural and Media Studies: The Key Concepts*. New York: Routledge.

Weekly readings as per course outline are either on reserve in the Library or available online.

Assignments and Evaluation

Final grade in the course will be based on the completion of the five following assignments:

Intellectual Introduction 20%
due September 26

This assignment can be thought of as an intellectual biography or introduction. What are the ideas, and who are the writers and researchers that brought you to this point in your intellectual development? What is it about the kind of work they do or the topics they work on that appealed to you. How have they shaped your own intellectual engagement? How do you see their work influencing your work in the near future? Your paper should be approximately 5 typed, double spaced pages with appropriate footnotes, citations and references.

Journal Analysis Project 20%
due October 17

This assignment will familiarize you with the research resources available through the university's library, both online and in the stacks. The assignment calls for students to produce a 5 page, narrative account of the development and contributions of a particular journal in communications and culture (Canadian Journal of Communication, Journal of Communication, European Journal of Communication, Quarterly Journal of Speech, Cultural Studies, Theory Culture and Society, Journal of Visual Culture, Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Topia, etc..). The narrative should discuss the journal's relation to academic associations (Is there a particular association that supports the publication of the journal? How has this shaped the character of research it represents?), the makeup and changes in its editorial board (who are they key players? Over time, how have changes in the board influenced the journal?), its status as a scholarly or commercial venture (is the journal funded by a community of scholars or it is a niche product of a commercial publisher? Does that make any difference?), the quality of debates associated with it, and its overall contribution to the communications and cultural research. The 30th Anniversary issue of Social Text may offer an example (issue 100, 2009 <http://www.socialtextjournal.org/journal/issue100/>).

Thesis critique 20%
Due November 14

This assignment is designed to give you a sense of graduate research conducted in communications and culture at the University of Calgary and elsewhere. Select one or two MA theses or PhD dissertations in an area of your own interest. In 5-7 pages provide a summary and assessment of the project completed by the research. Your discussion should include a clear statement of their research question and objectives, an overview of the theoretical context in which they framed their question, the choice of methods and style of data analysis. You should conclude with evaluating the merits and accomplishments of the author(s) (prefaced with an account of how you chose to evaluate the work).

Seminar Presentation 20%

dates coordinated with weekly topics, to be assigned in class

The due date of this assignment will be based on selecting a reading or author from those assigned in the weekly readings in the course outline. Students will be asked to provide a sense of historical and intellectual context to the work by the particular author they choose. Students should be able to critically evaluate the work of the chosen author and present this material in class on the relevant week. A formal, 6-8 page paper should be submitted following the presentation.

Research Proposal 20%

due December 5

The final assignment builds on skills acquired throughout the course. It asks students to develop a feasible research question. Drawing on relevant research traditions in communications and cultural analysis, students should suggest the relevance of their research question to the field, and should show how these traditions provide for an approach to answering the question. If relevant, try to relate your question to the evolution of the field. If appropriate, try to include work of relevant MA/MCS and PhD projects from the program. The final paper should be approximately 10-12 pages and include an annotated bibliography. The bibliography should indicate your familiarity with current journals, cd-rom data bases, dissertation abstracts, citation indices, government documents, and monographs that might be relevant to your topic.

It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of each submitted assignment.

Note: Please hand in your essays directly to your instructor if possible. If it is not possible to do so, a daytime drop box is available in SS320; a date stamp is provided for your use. A night drop box is also available for after-hours submission. Assignments will be removed the following morning, stamped with the previous day's date, and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Registrar-scheduled Final Examination: No

Policy for Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the deadline may be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP). As one consequence, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number. You will be required to provide a piece of picture identification in order to pick up any assignments or look at a final exam from SS320 after classes have ended.

Writing Skills Statement

Department policy directs that all written assignments will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see <http://www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/needtoknow>. Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Grading System

The following grading system is used in the Faculty of Graduate Studies:

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4	Outstanding
A	4	Excellent – superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.7	Very good performance
B+	3.3	Good performance
B	3	Satisfactory performance
		Note: The grade point value (3.0) associated with this grade is the minimum acceptable average that a graduate student must maintain throughout the program as computed at the end of each registration anniversary year of the program.
B-	2.7	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
		Note: A student who receives a B- or lower in two or more courses will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average unless the program recommends otherwise. Individual programs may require a higher minimum passing grade.
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. A student who receives a grade of F will normally be required to withdraw unless the program recommends otherwise.
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	
D	1.0	
F	0.0	

Plagiarism

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university.

You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. This includes assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such sources.

Please consult your instructor or the Writing Centre (MacEwan Student Centre 4th floor, efwr.ucalgary.ca) if you have any questions regarding how to document sources.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and the consequences thereof please see the current University of Calgary Graduate Calendar at the following link:

<http://grad.ucalgary.ca/files/grad/UC%20Graduate%20Calendar%202010-2011%20July%206-10.pdf>

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation, it is your responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre (220-8237) and discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of the course.

Students' Union

For details about the current Students' Union contacts for the Faculty of Arts, see www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/su

Graduate Students' Association

For details on the Graduate Students' Association, please see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/GSA/>

Student Ombudsman

For details on the Student Ombudsman, please see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/GSA/services/ombudsperson.html>

Emergency Evacuation and Assembly Points

For information on the emergency evacuation procedures and assembly points, please see <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

"SAFEWALK" Program -- 220-5333

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night -- call 220-5333 for assistance. Use

any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot booths.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (ie. surveys, interviews, observation) as a part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see:

Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (CFREB)

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/cfreb>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

September 12: Introduction

- Craig, Robert T. (1999). "Communication Theory as a Field" *Communication Theory* 9:2, pp. 119-161.
<http://www3.interscience.wiley.com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/cgi-bin/fulltext/119097460/PDFSTART>
- Peters, John (1999). "Introduction: The Problem of Communication –The Historicity of Communication and the Varied Senses of 'Communication'" *Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication*.
- NCA Publications : Journals : <http://www.natcom.org/Default.aspx?id=421>

September 19: National Traditions of Communication and Culture

- Miller, Toby (2006). What it is and what it isn't, in *A Companion to Cultural Studies*.
http://www.blackwellpublishing.com/content/BPL_Images/Content_store/Sample_chapter/9780631217886/001.pdf
- Robinson, Gertrude (2000) "Remembering Our Past: Reconstructing the Field of Canadian Communication Studies" *Canadian Journal of Communication* 25:1.
- Tate, Eugene (2000). "The Beginnings of Communication Studies in Canada: An Introduction." *CJC* 25:1.
- Genosko, G. And K. Marcellus (2005). Dead Downtown: Writing the Cultural Obituary of the Alternative Press in Border/lines. *Topia* 14.
<http://pi.library.yorku.ca/ojs/index.php/topia/issue/view/52/showToc>
- Carey, James (1975). "Canadian Communication Theory: Extensions and Interpretations of Harold Innis" in Robinson, G. editor, *Studies in Canadian Communications*. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED116255.pdf>
- Salter, Liora (1987). "Taking Stock: Communications Studies in 1987" *Canadian Journal of Communication* Special Issue. December 12:4.

September 26: Library Field trip

- Library Block, Info Commons
- *Canadian Journal of Communication* vol 29:3/4, 2004 special issue on scholarly publishing
- Hartley, John (2009). "Lament for a Lost Running Order: Obsolescence and Academic Journals", *M/C Journal* 12:3 (<http://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/viewArticle/162>).

October 3: Critical Research and Autoethnography

- Smythe, Dallas and Tran Van Dinh (1983). "On Critical and Administrative Research: A New Critical Analysis" *Journal of Communication* 33:3, Summer.
- Jenkins, Mercilee M. (2010) "Ethnographic Writing Is as Good as Ten Mothers." *Qualitative Inquiry* 16; pp. 83-89.
- Clough, Patricia (2000). "Comments on Setting Criteria for Experimental Writing", *Qualitative Inquiry* 6:2, p.278-291.

Cases:

- Trujillo, Nick (1998). In Search of Nunny's Grave" *Text and Performance Quarterly* 18:4, October.
- Cindy M. Spurlock (2009): Performing and Sustaining (Agri)Culture and Place: The Cultivation of Environmental Subjectivity on the Piedmont Farm Tour, *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 29:1, 5-21.

October 10: Thanksgiving – no class

October 17: Rhetoric and Speech Communication

- *SQ Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 2006, 36:2, Spring. (<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rrsq20/36/2>)
- Bochner, A. and E. Eisenberg in Benson, chapter 15, "Legitimising Speech Communication..." in Benson, Thomas, editor, *Speech Communication in the 20th Century*.

Case:

- Philipsen, G. (1975). Speaking "like a man" in Teamsterville: Culture patterns of role enactment in an urban neighborhood. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61, 13-22.

October 24: Visual Culture

- Bal, Mieke (2003) "Visual Essentialism and the object of visual culture", *Journal of Visual Culture* 2:1, p.5-32.
- Bryson, Elkins, Mirzoeff, etc. (2003). "Responses to Bal", *Journal of Visual Culture* 2:2.

- Griffin, Michael (2002). Sociocultural perspectives on visual communication. *Journal of Visual Literacy* 22:1, 29-52 ([http://www.ohio.edu/visualliteracy/JVL_ISSUE_ARCHIVES/JVL22\(1\)/JVL22\(1\)_pp.29-52.pdf](http://www.ohio.edu/visualliteracy/JVL_ISSUE_ARCHIVES/JVL22(1)/JVL22(1)_pp.29-52.pdf))
- Messaris, Paul (2009). What is visual about visual rhetoric? *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 95:2, May, p. 210-233.

October 31: Memory Studies

- Annette Kuhn, (2010). " Memory Texts and Memory Work: Performances of Memory in and with Visual Media." *Memory Studies* 3/4: 298-313.
- Harbus, Antonina (2011), "Exposure to Life-Writing as an Impact on Autobiographical Memory." *Memory Studies* 4/2: 206-220.
- Zelizer, Barbie (1995). Reading the Past Against the Grain: The Shape of Memory Studies. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 12:2, 214-39.

November 7: Science Communication

- Einsiedel, Edna (2011). Publics and Vaccinomics: Beyond Public Understanding of Science. *OMICS* 15:9, 1-8.
- Rogers, Carol. (2001). Understanding Public Communication of Science and Technology. *Science Communication* 23:2, December.

November 14: Performance Studies

- Jackson, Shannon (2006). "Genealogies of Performance Studies " in Madison and Hamera, editors, *Sage Handbook*, chapter 5.
- Conquergood, Dwight (2002). Performance Studies: Interventions and Radical Research" *The Drama Review* 46:2.

Case:

- Davis, Tracy. (2006). What to do when nuclear war breaks out. *Sage Handbook of Performance Studies*, chapter 8.

November 21: Taste and Sensory Communication

- Howes, David (2006). "Charting the Sensorial Revolution". *Senses and Society* 1:1, p113-128.
- Pink, Sarah (2009). *Doing Sensory Ethnography*. Sage. Introduction (http://www.uk.sagepub.com/upm-data/28034_01_Pink_Introduction.pdf) and Chapter 1 (http://www.uk.sagepub.com/upm-data/28035_02_Pink_Ch_01.pdf)

Cases:

- Elliott, Charlene (2008). "Purple Pasts: Color Codification in the Ancient World". *Law and Social Inquiry* 33:1, p. 173-194.

- Elliott, Charlene (2007). "Pink!: Community, Contestation, and the Colour of Breast Cancer". *Canadian Journal of Communication* 32, p. 521-536.

November 28: Communications and the Public Intellectual

- Bennett, Tony (2001). Intellectuals, Culture, Policy: The Practical and the Critical, chapter 20 in *A Companion to Cultural Studies*, ed. Miller.
- Gilbert, Daniel (2005). "The Corporate University and the Public Intellectual". Yale Working Group on Globalization and Culture (retrieved 10 Nov 07, http://research.yale.edu/laborculture/documents/gilbert_corporate_W&C.pdf)
- Giroux, Henri (2006). Higher Education Under Siege: Implications for Public Intellectuals", *Thought and Action*, Fall, p. 63-78.
- Lightman, Alan "The Role of the Public Intellectual". *MIT Communications Forum* (retrieved 10 Sept 07 <http://web.mit.edu/comm-forum/papers/lightman.html>).

December 5: Conclusion

- Discussion and defence of final proposals

RESERVE READINGS

Bal, Mieke (1999). *The Practice of Cultural Analysis: Exposing Interdisciplinary Interpretation*. Stanford University Press. **(Electronic Resource)**

Bal, Mieke (2002). *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*. University of Toronto Press. **(Electronic Resource)**

Baldwin, John et al., eds. (2006). *Redefining Culture: Perspectives from Across the Disciplines*. Lawrence Erlbaum.

Barker, Chris and Galasinski. (2001). *Cultural Studies and Discourse analysis*. Sage **(Electronic Resource)**

Bennett, Tony, ed. (1998). *The Sage Handbook of Cultural Analysis*. Sage.

Benson, Thomas, editor (1985). *Speech Communication in the 20th Century*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press.

Cobley, Paul (2006). *Communication Theories*. Routledge.

Dervin, Brenda et al, editors (1989). *Rethinking Communication, volume 2*. New Brunswick, New Jersey: SAGE.

Edgar, Andrew and Peter Sedgewick, eds. (1999). *Key Concepts in Cultural Theory*. New York: Routledge.

Hartley, John, et. al. editors (2002). *Communication, Cultural and Media Studies: The Key Concepts*. New York: Routledge.

Hills, Matt (2005). *How to do things with cultural theory*. Hodder Arnold.

Lofgren, O. and R. Wilk, eds. (2006). *Off the Edge: Experiments in Cultural Analysis*. University of Copenhagen.

McGuigan, Jim. (2010). *Cultural Analysis*. Sage

Miller, Toby, ed. (2006). *The Companion to Cultural Studies*. Wiley.

King, Sarah, editor (1989). *Human Communication as a Field of Study: Selected Contemporary Views*. Albany: SUNY Press.

Madison, Soyini and Judith Hamera, eds. *The Sage Handbook of Performance Studies*. Sage 2006.

Peters, John Durham (1997). *Speaking into the air : a history of the idea of communication*. State University of New York Press

Rosaldo, Renato (1993). *Culture and Truth: Remaking of Social Analysis*. Routledge.
(Electronic Resource)

Robinson, Gertrude, ed. (1975). *Studies in Canadian Communications*. McGill.
(Electronic Resource)

Wuthnow, Robert. (1984). *Cultural Analysis: The work of Peter L. Berger, Mary Douglas, Michel Foucault, and Jurgen Habermas*. Routledge and Kegan Paul.