

Syllabus

PS 415/515 Politics and the Media: Cultural Representations of Politics

e-campus: Winter 2014

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Syllabus Version 2.0 – 11/24/2013

(living syllabus / subject to change)

1. Course Introduction

For most citizens, access to politics is primarily mediated through various forms of communication and representation: be they newspapers, radio, television, films, web sites, blogs, facebook, etc.: In order to access political knowledge and to gain knowledge over politics, these media need to be consulted, consciously or subconsciously.

This course analyses various forms of cultural representations of politics in different media. First, we will discuss some theories of media and representation, and then apply these theories to different media examples. Students are provided with a selection of such examples, but are required to find some source materials of their own.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

The course seeks to develop in students...

- an understanding of the central issues relevant to representations of politics in various forms, which includes knowledge in media theory, political science theory and cultural studies, and is measured through coursework (PS Learning Outcomes 2+3; MPP Learning Outcome 2)
- an interdisciplinary outlook, combining methods of political science, media theory and cultural studies, which is measured through coursework (PS Learning Outcomes 1+3; MPP Learning Outcome 4)
- an understanding of the necessity to theorize culture and politics, and to apply different theoretical models to different circumstances, which is measured through coursework
- the ability to present the basic argument of a scholarly text and use it as a resource, which is measured through coursework (PS Learning Outcomes 1+3; MPP Learning Outcome 1)
- the ability to work collaboratively and collegially, which is measured through coursework (PS Learning Outcome 4; MPP Learning Outcomes 5, 7)
- the ability to develop own scholarly approaches to a topic, and to conduct own research and write a response paper based upon what was discussed in class, and the student's own research interest, which is measured through coursework and the public presentation (PS Learning Outcome 4; MPP Learning Outcome 1)
- the ability to hold a presentation in a seminar (PS Learning Outcome 4; MPP Learning Outcome 5)
- the ability conduct serious and original research following ethical guidelines, which is measured through coursework (PS Learning Outcome 4; MPP Learning Outcome 6)

(PS Learning Outcomes: <http://oregonstate.edu/cla/polisci/political-science-learning-outcomes>;
MPP Learning Outcomes: <http://oregonstate.edu/cla/mpp/mpp-learning-outcomes>)

3. Course Policy

- Regular participation in the online discussions and class activities is mandatory. Students should be prepared to log in to participate in the online course on at least two days per week, starting no later than Wednesday each week. They are required to read all course materials, and to also conduct further research on their own.
- A seminar thrives on the regular participation of every single member of the group. You are expected to participate actively in the discussions, and you should feel free to do so. This is a place to learn, not a place to be perfect. You do not need to be intimidated. Everyone is in the same boat.
- Respect your fellow students.
- If somebody makes a mistake, be patient and understanding. Make any criticism about the argument and the issue, not about the person.
- People are indeed able to see things differently, even though they have the same facts.

- During the course there may be some unforeseen circumstances which arise that alter the schedule below. In this case it will be YOUR responsibility to monitor announcements to find out what those adjustments might be.
- This is a living syllabus, it may be subject to change.
- If you are experiencing problems with this course, its content, the readings, my teaching style, I strongly encourage you to raise your concerns at the earliest possible moment. You can do so by visiting me during my office hours. Office hours will be held by appointment in person, by phone, or by Skype. You may also e-mail me about private concerns, though I encourage all students to use the General Discussion forum to post general questions about the course and course content.
- Student Conduct: To fully understand student conduct expectations (definitions and consequences of plagiarism, cheating, etc.), see <http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/regulations/index.php#acdis>.
- The Writing Center provides students with a free consulting service for their writing assignments, see <http://cwl.oregonstate.edu/owl.php>.
- In the case that I feel attendance and reading progress are below reasonable expectations, I reserve the right to do a quiz in order to check on reading progress. These would have 2 questions. If every question is answered correctly, your total point balance will be unaffected. Any question answered wrongly (or not at all) will downgrade your total points by -0.25 points. You can avoid such tests if everybody attends regularly, participates actively, and does their reading.

4. Bibliography of Required Texts

See Blackboard for further reading assignments.

Week.Text# Texts in alphabetical order

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2.03 | Adorno, Theodor W., Anson G. Rabinbach. "Culture Industry Reconsidered." <i>New German Critique</i> 6 (Autumn, 1975): 12-19. |
| 3.02 | Anderson, Benedict. <i>Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism</i> . London, New York: Verso, 1983. 1-46. |
| 2.01 | Assmann, Jan. "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity." <i>New German Critique</i> 65 (Spring/Summer 1995): 125-133. |
| 5.02 | Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." In: <i>Image – Music – Text</i> . Trans. Stephen Heath. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977. 142-148. |
| 6.01 | Baum, Matthew A., Yuri M. Zhukov. "What Determines the News About Foreign Policy? Newspaper Ownership, Crisis Dynamics and the 2011 Libyan Uprising." Paper prepared for 2012 <i>International Studies Association Annual Meeting</i> San Diego, CA, April 4, 2012. |

- 6.03 Baumgartner, Jody C., Jonathan S. Morris. "MyFaceTube Politics: Social Networking Web Sites and Political Engagement of Young Adults." *Social Science Computer Review* 28:24 (2010): 24–44.
- 3.03 Bellah, Robert N. "Civil Religion in America." *Dædalus* 96:1 (Winter 1967): 1-21. Retrieved from: http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm (05/10/2013). and Bill Moyers interview: http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/archives/bellahwoi_flash.html
- 6.04 Bennett, W. Lance. "The Personalization of Politics: Political Identity, Social Media, and Changing Patterns of Participation." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 644: 20 (2012): 20-39.
- 7.02 Beyer, Sandra. "A Utopia for Conservatives and Real Men: Sexual Politics and Gendered Relations in *Star Trek*." In: Antje Dallmann, Reinhard Isensee, Philipp Kneis (Eds.) *Envisioning American Utopias. Fictions of Science and Politics in Literature and Visual Culture*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011. 143–162.
- 7.08 Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1949) – see overviews at <http://web.archive.org/web/20090219134358/http://skepticalfiles.org/atheist2/he-ro.htm>; <http://www.moongadget.com/origins/myth.html> see also: Interviews with Bill Moyers: <http://billmoyers.com/spotlight/download-joseph-campbell-and-the-power-of-myth-audio/>
- 7.10 Chaddha, Anmol, William Julius Wilson. "'Way Down in the Hole': Systemic Urban Inequality and *The Wire*." *Critical Inquiry* 38:1 (2011): 1–23.
- 6.02 Colletta, Lisa. "Political Satire and Postmodern Irony in the Age of Stephen Colbert and Jon Stewart." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 42:5 (2009): 856-874.
- 7.04 Eco, Umberto. "The Myth of Superman: The Amazing Adventures of Superman." *Diacritics* 2.1 (Spring, 1972): 14–22.
- 4.02 Federman, M. "What is the Meaning of the Medium is the Message?" (2004). Retrieved from <http://individual.utoronto.ca/markfederman/MeaningTheMediumistheMessage.pdf>. (05/10/2013).
- 5.03 Habermas, J., Sara Lennox, and Frank Lennox. "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article." *New German Critique* 3 (Autumn, 1974): 49-55.
- 7.01 Hatfield, Elizabeth Fish. "'What it Means to Be a Man': Examining Hegemonic Masculinity in *Two and a Half Men*." *Communication, Culture & Critique* 3 (2010): 526–548.
- 3.04 Kellner, Douglas M., Meenakshi Gigi Durham. "Adventures in Media and Cultural Studies: Introducing the KeyWorks." In: Kellner, Douglas M., Meenakshi Gigi Durham, eds. *Media and Cultural Studies. KeyWorks*. London: Blackwell, 2006. ix-xxxviii.

- 7.06 Kneis, Philipp. "Barbarians at the Gate: (Ig)Noble Savages and Manifest Destiny at the Final Frontier." In: Antje Dallmann, Reinhard Isensee, Philipp Kneis (Eds.) *Envisioning American Utopias. Fictions of Science and Politics in Literature and Visual Culture*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011. 103–128.
- 7.05 Kneis, Philipp. "Finding Atlantis Instead of Utopia: From Plato to Starfleet and Stargate Command." In: Antje Dallmann, Reinhard Isensee, Philipp Kneis (Eds.) *Envisioning American Utopias. Fictions of Science and Politics in Literature and Visual Culture*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011. 79–102.
- 7.07 Kneis, Philipp. "Communicating Democracy: Entering the American Republic through *The West Wing* or the *Commander in Chief*." In: Antje Dallmann, Reinhard Isensee, Philipp Kneis (Eds.) *Picturing America. Trauma, Realism, Politics and Identity in American Visual Culture*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2007. 131–149.
- 4.01 McLuhan, Marshall. "The Playboy Interview." *Playboy Magazine* (March 1969). Retrieved from <http://www.digitallantern.net/mcluhan/mcluhanplayboy.htm> (05/10/2013).
- 7.03 Mizejewski, Linda. "Feminism, Postfeminism, Liz Lemonism. Comedy and Gender Politics on *30 Rock*." *Genders OnLine Journal* 55 (2012). www.genders.org/g55/g55_mizejewski.html (Retrieved 2013/11/24).
- 5.01 Murfin, Ross C., Johanna M. Smith. "What Is Cultural Criticism?" In: Murfin, Ross C., ed. *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism: Heart of Darkness*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1996. Retrieved from <http://www.usask.ca/english/frank/cultint.htm>. (05/10/2013).
- 2.02 Nye, Joseph. "Soft Power." *Foreign Policy* 80 (Autumn 1990): 153-171.
- 5.04 Papacharissi, Zizi. "The Virtual Sphere: The Internet as a Public Sphere." *New Media Society* 4:9 (2002): 9-27.
- 7.09 Penfold-Mounce, Ruth, David Beer, Roger Burrows. "The Wire as Social Science-Fiction?" *Sociology* 45:152 (2011): 152-167.
- 3.01 Plato's Theories of Politics, Media and Representation. Excerpts from the *Republic* and *Phaedrus*.
- 4.04 Poster, Mark. "Global Media and Culture." *New Literary History* 39 (2008): 685-703.
- 4.03 Postman, Neil. "Amusing Ourselves to Death." Address at 1984 Frankfurt Book Fair. Retrieved from <http://www.suu.edu/honors/Amusing%20Ourselves.pdf>. (05/10/2013).
- _____. "The Information Age: A Blessing or a Curse?" *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 9:2 (2004): 3-10.
- _____. "Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change." Talk delivered in Denver Colorado , March 28, 1998.

- 2.04 White, Hayden. "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality." *Critical Inquiry* 7:1 (Autumn, 1980): 5-27.
- 7.11 Žižek, Slavoj. "Jack Bauer and the Ethics of Urgency." *In These Times* 01/27/2006. http://inthesetimes.com/article/2481/jack_bauer_and_the_ethics_of_urgency (Retrieved 11/24/2013).
- 7.12 Žižek, Slavoj. "The depraved heroes of 24 are the Himmlers of Hollywood." *Guardian* 01/10/2006.

5. Course Assignments and Grading

General Remarks:

- All these assignments are submitted in writing. The two presentations have to be submitted to the entire class via the discussion forum (upload as PDF), the response and research paper are only sent to the instructor via e-mail (if you do not receive a confirmation that I have received it within 2 business days, please tell me).
- You are expected to use correct English. If there too many mistakes, text understanding may suffer, and you may also be downgraded for complexity. Perform a spell-check (not just via the computer!).
- Text formatting for **all** assignments except discussion posts: 12 point Times, 1.5-spaced, 1 in. margins. Include your name, assignment type, and date in the first line, second line title in bold, one free line, then the text, then works cited, such as:

Name, First Name: Text Presentation, MM/DD/YYYY

Title of Your Presentation (either a topical title, or “Presentation on the Text by N.N.”)

Text (of the length specified)

Works Cited

List the works you cited, either APA or MLA style

- Pages have to be numbered.

Researching Articles and Books:

- Any materials you find for use in your own research should be coming from academic journals or books. You may also use original sources (media examples), but need to find 2 research articles minimum.
- Research articles or books are basically distinguished from other materials in that they do not primarily focus on exposition but on analysis, and on commenting on other research. The articles chosen for this class are supposed to serve as examples.
- You can find such materials, for instance, through the use of Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.com>). Library catalogs will be available to you as well.
- News sources and statistics can be used – but only to supplement research articles, not to replace them.
- Internet sources are good if they are of a scholarly nature.
- Wikipedia can be a good starting point for research – it is never its ultimate end!

Explanation of individual assignments:

- 1) **Presentation of an assigned text (5 points / 10%).** In the beginning of the quarter, the texts will be distributed amongst all participants. The presentation should introduce the main arguments of the text and briefly explain the historical background. The length of the presentation should be **approx. 1 page of text**. Presenters will then also be responsible for facilitating the class discourse by being the experts on the text. Whether you are presenting or not, **everybody is required to read all the texts**, unless they are marked as additional.

Additional Guidelines:

- You are the expert on the text. You can assume everyone else has read the text as well (they should). Nevertheless, recap the major arguments of the text.
- None of the texts holds absolute truth. All of them are written from a specific point of view, with which you may agree or disagree. If you voice any such judgment, you need to provide reasons.
- Prepare up to 2 questions for class discussion.
- For general remarks, see the presentation guidelines in Appendix I, page 19.

Grading: 5 points total

- complexity of the argument (3 points)
- correct rendition of the text's argument (½ point)
- correct citations (½ point)
- clarity and correctness of writing (½ point)
- handling your responses to questions in the discussion (½ point)

- 2) **Response Paper on the topic of "Politics in the Media" (10 points / 20%).** This is an opinion piece which is based upon the seminar readings and discussions. You are supposed to develop a thesis in the beginning, and then develop arguments in support of the thesis, but also hint at possible counterarguments. You do not need to find additional research articles or books. Standard citation methods apply. The paper should be **approx. 2 pages** of text (12 point Times, 1.5-spaced, 1 in. margins) plus bibliography.

Due Date: Monday, Feb 3, till 8PM PT

Grading: 10 points total

- 5 points for complexity of the argument
- 2 points for correct bibliography and correct citation (choose either MLA or APA, see Appendices II and III, page 21, and stick to one method throughout your paper).
- 1 point for spelling and language
- 1 point for structure
- 1 point for fulfilling formal criteria (formatting, length, etc.)

Penalties for turning it in later:

- Turning in the assignment late: -1 point per day
- if you turn it in on the same day but later, -½ a point

- 3) **Research Presentation (10 points / 20%).** Students will present a topic of their own choice to the entire class. The presentation should be **2 pages of text and a PowerPoint**

(up to 10 slides). The presentation should ideally be a preparation for the final research paper. You are expected to find 3 scholarly sources for your research that are not part of the assigned reading in class.

Additional Guidelines:

- Find your own topic, and discuss it with the instructor in beforehand via e-mail.
- Find a minimum of 3 new scholarly articles for your research.
- Justify why you think your topic is of relevance.
- Put your own topic into its proper historical and/or political context.
- Structure your argument clearly.
- Prepare up to 3 questions for class discussion.
- For general remarks, see the presentation guidelines in Appendix I, page 19.

Grading: 10 points total

- complexity of the argument (5 points)
- correct rendition of the your argument (1 point)
- additional scholarly sources (3 points)
- clarity and correctness of writing (½ point)
- handling your responses to questions in the discussion (½ point)

- 4) **Research Paper on a topic of your own choice (15 points / 30%)**. This research paper can be based on the preceding research presentation. Unlike the response paper, your focus has to be on analysis rather than on opinion. You are supposed to develop a thesis in the beginning, and then develop arguments in support of the thesis, but also hint at possible counterarguments. You need to use at least 2 of the texts discussed throughout the seminar, and to find at least 3 additional scholarly research articles or books. Standard citation methods apply. The paper should be a minimum of **5 pages of text**, no more than 6 (12 point Times, 1.5-spaced, 1 in. margins) plus bibliography in addition to the allotted pages.

Due Date: Monday, Mar 17, 8 PM PT

Grading: 15 points total

- 5 points for complexity of the argument
- 2 points for correct bibliography and correct citation (choose either MLA or APA, see Appendices II and III, page 21, and stick to one method throughout your paper).
- 1 point for spelling and language
- 1 point for structure
- 1 point for fulfilling formal criteria (formatting, length, etc.)
- 1 point per cited article or book that was assigned for class (min. 2 articles or books, max. 2 points)
- 1 point per cited article or book that you individually researched (min. 3 articles or books, max. 3 points)

Penalties for turning it in later:

- Turning in the assignment late: -1 point per day
- if you turn it in on the same day but later, -½ a point

- 5) **Discussion Board (10 points / 20%).** Students will have to participate regularly in the Blackboard discussion board.

Additional Guidelines:

- Introduce yourself initially to Blackboard by saying who you are, what your study interests are, and whatever else you would like people to know about yourself.
- Discussions will be graded in terms of frequency of participation and quality of your contributions. Students need to participate on at least 2-3 days per week, starting no later than Wednesday.
- You then need to write **at least 10 posts for blackboard of substantial length and quality.** Quality posts are those that are substantial in content and indicate that the student is engaged with the course readings and content (i.e. posts are not “off the top of your head,” but rather demonstrate that you have completed and understood the course readings). Such post cannot just be brief responses of twitter length, or a mere link, but have to be contributions for discussion of at least 2 paragraphs of length which open up a possible discussion topic and/or discuss or introduce a topic and/or provide a thoughtful response to a post opened by someone else earlier.
- You are also expected to respond in other ways, by briefly commenting on other people’s comments. These will not be graded, as they are part of the class conversation.

Grading: 10 points total

- 1 point per post, but only a maximum of 10 points

6. General Argumentation Rules (for Presentations and Papers)

- If you refer to somebody or a text, always provide a detailed source. Never say “As Aristotle has said, ...” but provide a concrete source. You will find that many quotes are continually misattributed. Do the research.
- Be respectful of others’ opinions and arguments, no matter how harshly you may disagree. Any criticism must be aimed at the argument or subject matter (“*argumentum ad rem*”), not at the person (“*argumentum ad hominem*”).
- If you disagree with a certain position, make sure you represent it accurately in all its scope, and not as a distorted caricature (“straw man argument”).
- Base your argument on a solid database, not just on your own experiences or things you have heard (“anecdotal evidence”).
- Just because a famous or influential person made a certain argument, does not automatically provide it with legitimacy (“argument from authority”).
- Just because something occurs in nature, does not make it good (“naturalistic fallacy”).
- See also: www.fallacyfiles.org

7. Final Grade Distribution

Maximum possible points: 50 points

- Text Presentation: 5 points

- Research Presentation: 10 points
- Response Paper: 10 points
- Research Paper: 15 points
- Longer Posts: 10 points

A	95% to under or equal	100%	47.5 to under or equal	50 points
A-	90% to under	95%	45 to under	47.5 points
B+	87% to under	90%	43.5 to under	45 points
B	83% to under	87%	41.5 to under	43.5 points
B-	80% to under	83%	40 to under	41.5 points
C+	77% to under	80%	38.5 to under	40 points
C	73% to under	77%	36.5 to under	38.5 points
C-	70% to under	73%	35 to under	36.5 points
D+	67% to under	70%	33.5 to under	35 points
D	63% to under	67%	31.5 to under	33.5 points
D-	60% to under	63%	30 to under	31.5 points
F	0% to under	60%	0 to under	30 points

8. Schedule

UNIT 1: MEDIA AND ITS COMPLICATIONS

Politics is usually perceived indirectly, mediated through cultural representations that can take many forms. We will begin our journey with an overview of theories that embed political ideas in culture, and that see culture as eminently political.

Week 1: Theories of Culture, Jan 6-11

Introduction: What is Culture? What are Media? What are Representations?

Introduction to the Seminar, Identification of Key Issues, Initial Discussion

Guiding Discussion Questions:

What is Culture? What is a Representation?

How is politics represented in culture?

Why is it relevant to analyze this?

Activities:

MICRO-LECTURE 0: Major Themes of the Seminar

MICRO-LECTURE 1: Theme 1: Culture and Representations

Select the texts you would like to present

Write your first introductory discussion points

Week 2: Representations as Ideology, Jan 13-18

Guiding Discussion Questions:

How are representations ideological?

Which representations and media are ideological, which are not?

What does ideology mean – what does it do?

Activities:

MICRO-LECTURE 2: Theme 2: Ideology

Text presentations

Continue with the discussion

Texts to be Presented (up to 2 presenters per text, depending on class size):

- 2.01 Assmann, Jan. "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity." *New German Critique* 65 (Spring/Summer 1999): 125-133.
- 2.02 Nye, Joseph. "Soft Power." *Foreign Policy* 80 (Autumn 1990): 153-171.
- 2.03 Adorno, Theodor W., Anson G. Rabinbach. "Culture Industry Reconsidered." *New German Critique* 6 (Autumn, 1975): 12-19.
- 2.04 White, Hayden. "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality." *Critical Inquiry* 7:1 (Autumn, 1980): 5-27.

Week 3: Theories of Media, Jan 20-25

Guiding Discussion Questions:

What are Media?

How can we read them?

Activities:

MICRO-LECTURE 3: Theme 3: Media and Political Rule

Text presentations

Continue with the discussion

Develop thoughts on your response paper on "Reading Culture as Politics" due Week 5

Materials:

Texts to be Presented (up to 2 presenters per text, depending on class size):

- 3.01 Plato's Theories of Politics, Media and Representation. Excerpts from the *Republic* and *Phaedrus*.
- 3.02 Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London, New York: Verso, 1983. 1-46.
- 3.03 Bellah, Robert N. "Civil Religion in America." *Dædalus* 96:1 (Winter 1967): 1-21. Retrieved from: http://www.robertbellah.com/articles_5.htm (05/10/2013).
and Bill Moyers interview:
http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/archives/bellahwoi_flash.html
- 3.04 Kellner, Douglas M., Meenakshi Gigi Durham. "Adventures in Media and Cultural Studies: Introducing the KeyWorks." In: Kellner, Douglas M., Meenakshi Gigi Durham, eds. *Media and Cultural Studies. KeyWorks*. London: Blackwell, 2006. ix- xxxviii.

Week 4: Theories of Media and Technology, Jan 27-Feb 1

Guiding Discussion Questions:

Media discussion will be continued.

How does technology influence media, ideas, and society?

Activities:

MICRO-LECTURE 4: Theme 4: Media and Technology

Text presentations

Continue with the discussion

Texts to be Presented (up to 2 presenters per text, depending on class size):

- 4.01 McLuhan, Marshall. "The Playboy Interview." *Playboy Magazine* (March 1969). Retrieved from <http://www.digitallantern.net/mcluhan/mcluhanplayboy.htm> (05/10/2013).
- 4.02 Federman, M. "What is the Meaning of the Medium is the Message?" (2004). Retrieved from <http://individual.utoronto.ca/markfederman/MeaningTheMediumistheMessage.pdf>. (05/10/2013).
- 4.03 Postman, Neil. "Amusing Ourselves to Death." Address at 1984 Frankfurt Book Fair. Retrieved from <http://www.suu.edu/honors/Amusing%20Ourselves.pdf>. (05/10/2013).
- ___ "The Information Age: A Blessing or a Curse?" *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 9:2 (2004): 3-10.
- ___ "Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change." Talk delivered in Denver Colorado , March 28, 1998.
- 4.04 Poster, Mark. "Global Media and Culture." *New Literary History* 39 (2008): 685-703.

UNIT 2: STUDENT RESEARCH

Now that the theoretical background has become clearer, we will investigate how to read representations as political, and how to read how politics is represented in media. While we will talk about some specific representations, students will identify own examples to analyze.

Week 5: How to "Read" a Representation / Student Research & Discussion, Feb 3-8

Guiding Discussion Questions:

How do we read representations as political?

How do we read how politics is represented in the media?

Activities:

MICRO-LECTURE 5: Theme 5: Culture as Political; Politics as Cultural

Identify examples to discuss and analyze, and share that process online

[Response Paper "Analyzing Media" due Monday, Feb 3, till 8PM PT via e-mail to philipp.kneis@oregonstate.edu](mailto:philipp.kneis@oregonstate.edu)

Continue with the discussion (trying Google Hangouts maybe?)

Texts to be Presented (up to 2 presenters per text, depending on class size):

- 5.01 Murfin, Ross C., Johanna M. Smith. "What Is Cultural Criticism?" In: Murfin, Ross C., ed. *Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism: Heart of Darkness*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1996. Retrieved from <http://www.usask.ca/english/frank/cultint.htm>. (05/10/2013).
- 5.02 Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." In: *Image - Music - Text*. Trans. Stephen Heath. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977. 142-148.
- 5.03 Habermas, J., Sara Lennox, and Frank Lennox. "The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article." *New German Critique* 3 (Autumn, 1974): 49-55.
- 5.04 Papacharissi, Zizi. "The Virtual Sphere: The Internet as a Public Sphere." *New Media Society* 4:9 (2002): 9-27.

Week 6: News Media, Feb 10-15

Guiding Discussion Questions:

How objective can news be?

How has the understanding of news changed in the last decade?

Activities:

Text presentations

Continue with the discussion

Texts to be Presented (up to 2 presenters per text, depending on class size):

- 6.01 Baum, Matthew A., Yuri M. Zhukov. "What Determines the News About Foreign Policy? Newspaper Ownership, Crisis Dynamics and the 2011 Libyan Uprising." Paper prepared for 2012 *International Studies Association* Annual Meeting San Diego, CA, April 4, 2012.
- 6.02 Colletta, Lisa. "Political Satire and Postmodern Irony in the Age of Stephen Colbert and Jon Stewart." *The Journal of Popular Culture* 42:5 (2009): 856-874.
- 6.03 Baumgartner, Jody C., Jonathan S. Morris. "MyFaceTube Politics: Social Networking Web Sites and Political Engagement of Young Adults." *Social Science Computer Review* 28:24 (2010): 24-44.
- 6.04 Bennett, W. Lance. "The Personalization of Politics: Political Identity, Social Media, and Changing Patterns of Participation." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 644: 20 (2012): 20-39.

Week 7: Case Studies, Feb 17-22

Activities:

Read 4 out of the suggested texts

Identify examples (news, film, television, online) to discuss and analyze, and share that process online

Texts (pick 4 to read on your own to get ideas for analysis):

Gender Politics in the Media

- 7.01 Hatfield, Elizabeth Fish. "'What it Means to Be a Man': Examining Hegemonic Masculinity in Two and a Half Men." *Communication, Culture & Critique* 3 (2010): 526-548.
- 7.02 Beyer, Sandra. "A Utopia for Conservatives and Real Men: Sexual Politics and Gendered Relations in *Star Trek*." In: Antje Dallmann, Reinhard Isensee, Philipp Kneis (Eds.) *Envisioning American Utopias. Fictions of Science and Politics in Literature and Visual Culture*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011. 143-162.

- 7.03 Mizejewski, Linda. "Feminism, Postfeminism, Liz Lemonism. Comedy and Gender Politics on *30 Rock*." *Genders OnLine Journal* 55 (2012). www.genders.org/g55/g55_mizejewski.html (Retrieved 2013/11/24).

Political Utopias

- 7.04 Eco, Umberto. "The Myth of Superman: The Amazing Adventures of Superman." *Diacritics* 2.1 (Spring, 1972): 14–22.
- 7.05 Kneis, Philipp. "Finding Atlantis Instead of Utopia: From Plato to Starfleet and Stargate Command." In: Antje Dallmann, Reinhard Isensee, Philipp Kneis (Eds.) *Envisioning American Utopias. Fictions of Science and Politics in Literature and Visual Culture*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011. 79–102.
- 7.06 Kneis, Philipp. "Barbarians at the Gate: (Ig)Noble Savages and Manifest Destiny at the Final Frontier." In: Antje Dallmann, Reinhard Isensee, Philipp Kneis (Eds.) *Envisioning American Utopias. Fictions of Science and Politics in Literature and Visual Culture*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2011. 103–128.
- 7.07 Kneis, Philipp. "Communicating Democracy: Entering the American Republic through *The West Wing* or the *Commander in Chief*." In: Antje Dallmann, Reinhard Isensee, Philipp Kneis (Eds.) *Picturing America. Trauma, Realism, Politics and Identity in American Visual Culture*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2007. 131–149.
- 7.08 Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1949) – see overviews at <http://web.archive.org/web/20090219134358/http://skepticfiles.org/atheist2/hero.htm>; <http://www.moongadget.com/origins/myth.html>
see also: Interviews with Bill Moyers: <http://billmoyers.com/spotlight/download-joseph-campbell-and-the-power-of-myth-audio/>

Social Commentary

- 7.09 Penfold-Mounce, Ruth, David Beer, Roger Burrows. "The Wire as Social Science-Fiction?" *Sociology* 45:152 (2011): 152-167.
- 7.10 Chaddha, Anmol, William Julius Wilson. "'Way Down in the Hole': Systemic Urban Inequality and The Wire." *Critical Inquiry* 38:1 (2011): 1–23.
- 7.11 Žižek, Slavoj. "Jack Bauer and the Ethics of Urgency." *In These Times* 01/27/2006. http://inthesetimes.com/article/2481/jack_bauer_and_the_ethics_of_urgency (Retrieved 11/24/2013).
- 7.12 Žižek, Slavoj. "The depraved heroes of 24 are the Himmlers of Hollywood." *Guardian* 01/10/2006.

Week 8: Student Research & Discussion, Feb 24-28

Activities:

Continue to identify examples to discuss and analyze, and share that process online

Class Discussion (trying Google Hangouts maybe?)

UNIT 3: PRESENTING YOUR RESEARCH

Week 9: Research Presentations, Mar 3-8

Activities:

Present your own research

Continue with the discussion

Week 10: Own Research for Paper, Mar 10-15 (Dead Week)

Activities:

Present your own research

Continue with the discussion

Week 11: Submit your Paper, Mar 17 (Finals Week)

Activity:

[Send in Final Research Paper by Monday, Mar 17, 8 PM PT via e-mail to philipp.kneis@oregonstate.edu](#)

9. Appendix I: Presentation Guidelines

9.1. When Introducing a Text

These questions need not be answered in that order or that directly – but these issues should be addressed or be kept in mind.

- What is it about?
- Who is the author? (relevant if important person of history, but no extended biographies in presentation)
- What is the context?
- How is it written?
- What is the line of argument?
- How was it perceived? What has it achieved? (relevant if this text is a historical source or has had a deep impact on a field of research)
- own evaluations

9.2. WHEN PRESENTING YOUR OWN ANALYSIS OR ARGUMENT

These questions need not be answered in that order or that directly – but these issues should be addressed or be kept in mind.

- Be transparent: name your sources, provide a handout with a bibliography and a structure of your presentation.
- Provide a clear line of argument
- Prefer analysis over opinion and personal experiences
- Be clear about what is your own analysis, and what is someone else's.

9.3. GENERAL PRESENTATION RULES (FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS)

- Everybody is nervous. EVERYBODY.
- Everybody makes mistakes.
- Preparation always helps.
- Practice.
- A seminar presentation is supposed to help you to learn.

CONTENT

- The presentation is not about you.
- It is about the content.

STRUCTURE

- You are *communicating*, not talking at somebody.
- Make sure you do everything to get your message across in the short time you have.
- Tell them what you're about to tell them.
- Tell them.
- Tell them what you've just told them.
- Intelligent redundancy is good.
- Patronizing is bad.

MODES OF PRESENTING

- Do what you feel is most comfortable to you.
- Talk loudly and clearly.
- Make eye contact as much as possible.

Reading out a written text:

- pro: safety, you tend to forget less, you can formulate better
- contra: inflexible, less communicative

Speaking freely (without notes):

- pro: flexible, can adapt to audience quickly, communicative
- contra: needs experience, you may forget things, imperfect formulations
- you may compensate with a handout

Speaking freely with notes

- best of both worlds
- you may even write an introduction & a closing to read out

TIME

- Time yourself. You have limited time allotted. Test out your presentation beforehand; then add 2-3 minutes. You will always take longer than planned.
- Provide a handout collating your most important findings, central quotes, a bibliography, and your contact information. If you forget to say something important in the presentation, it'll be there.

TECHNOLOGY

- Use technology only if necessary.
- Only use technology that you know how to handle.
- Be sure to have reliable equipment. If possible, bring your own computer. Apple computer owners: bring an adapter cable for VGA.
- Make backups of your presentation. Make a backup of the backup.
- Be only as fancy as absolutely necessary. Anything flashy that distracts from your message can go.
- Sometimes, a blackboard is enough.
- A paper handout may substitute or supplement a visual presentation. It gives people something to take away.
- Be prepared for tech to break down.

ATTIRE

- Look professional. This is work, it should look like that.
- Respect your audience.
- There will always be a question from the audience you won't like. Be cordial. Admit if you don't know something, promise to get back with more information.
- Know how to react: "Never answer the question that is asked of you. Answer the question that you wish had been asked of you." (Robert S. McNamara, *The Fog of War*, 87:11-87:19)

REMEMBER MURPHY'S LAW

- Nothing is as easy as it seems.
Everything takes longer than expected.
And if something can go wrong it will,
at the worst possible moment.
- Well, hopefully not. But be prepared anyway. Good luck!

10. Appendix II: Citation Guide MLA

You can use MLA or APA style for citations, see: owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01. The major rules are summarized here, as follows:

Page/font format:

- Font Size 12 pt (use a normal system font like Times New Roman, Arial, Cambria, etc.)
- Line spacing 1.5
- Footnotes: 10 pt, Line spacing 1
- Indent quotations longer than 3 lines, with 10 pt size font
- Mark omitted parts of a quotation with squared brackets to distinguish them from possible (round) brackets within the quotation:

"Falling Down is a smart film, but it struggles [...] to convince viewers that [the hero] represents an ultimately (mythologically) redundant model of white masculinity." (Kennedy 2000: 122)

Bibliographical reference in parentheses (Author Year: Page):

Blabla blabla (Soja 1989: 37).

When Works Cited holds more than one title of the same author and from the same year, specify text by adding letters to the publication date:

Blabla blabla (Soja 1989a: 37).
Blabla blabla (Soja 1989b: 1).

Footnotes should be used only for further comments, not as bibliographical reference.

The **Works Cited** appears at the end of your paper. The format is the following:

For articles in collective volumes:

Name, First Name. "Article". In: Name, First Name, ed. *Larger Volume*. Publishing Place: Publishing House, Year. Pages.

e.g. Kennedy, Liam. "Paranoid Spatiality: Postmodern Urbanism and American Cinema." In: Balshaw Maria, Liam Kennedy, eds. *Urban Space and Representation*. London: Pluto, 2000. 116-30.

(use ed. for one Editor, eds. for multiple Editors)

For articles in journals or magazines:

Name, First Name. "Article". Name, First Name. *Magazine Title*. Magazine Number (Year): Pages.

e.g. Foucault, Michel. "Of Other Spaces." *Diacritics* 16.1 (1986): 22-27.

For monographs:

Name, First Name. *Larger Volume*. Publishing Place: Publishing House, Year. Pages.

e.g. Soja, Edward. *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*. London: Verso, 1989.

For internet articles: Name, First Name. "Article." *Main Web Site Title*. URL. Retrieved MM/DD/YYYY.

(or variations, such as organization name or alias in the first place, depending on nature of the web site)

e.g. Edmunds, R. David. "The US-Mexican War: A Major Watershed." *PBS*. pbs.org/kera/usmexicanwar/war/major_watershed.html. Retrieved 09/01/2009.

e.g. World Health Organization (WHO). *Active Ageing: A Policy Framework*. Geneva: WHO, 2002. who.int/ageing/publications/active/en. Retrieved 08/25/2011.

11. Appendix III: Citation Guide APA

You can also use APA style for citations, see:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01>

<http://www2.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/workshop/citapa.htm>

12. Students with Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible (use email for this class), no later than the first week of the term. In order to arrange alternative testing the student should make the request at least one week in advance of the test. Students seeking accommodations should be registered with the Office of Services for Students with disabilities.