The Politics of Global Media
Comm 499
Fall 2009
London (Wednesdays, 2-5p**)**

Shawn Powers
e: powers.shawn [at] gmail [dot] com
Office: TBD
Office hours: Tuesdays, 2-5p

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The end of the 20th century witnessed the rise of a new genre of media—the global media—that has had profound and ongoing consequences on political calculations around the globe. The last decade has thus been filled unprecedented change—both in scope and speed—in the global mediascape. New media networks, such as Al-Jazeera and News Corp, have gone from relative obscurity to playing an essential role in international and national politics, often far from their headquarters in Doha and New York. Moreover, the means by which media networks convey messages have changed rapidly, demanding new strategies for engaging with and influencing audiences. Importantly, the emergence of a robust yet fragmented group of global media organizations and networks, accessible from almost anywhere via the World Wide Web, has provided multiple points of comparison, allowing for more effective analysis of the particular politics and agendas of different media actors.

This course examines the politics surrounding the emergence and transformation of the global media ecology, looking at both the ways in which media shape political considerations, but also the ways in which political actors and organizations shape today's global media. Many scholars predicted the emergence of global media would facilitate the creation of a robust global public sphere, where citizens from Omaha to Kuala Lumpur could engage, argue and learn with strangers from afar. Yet, rather than this idealized fora for global communications and deliberation, in many cases we have witnessed the emergence of explicitly political and partisan networks of global media, "narrowcasting" to particular audiences, competing for the attention of and influence with global citizens. Moreover, new media technologies, and mobile devices in particular, are reshaping the environments in which information is distributed and received, adding an additional layer to consider when examining media today. In order to better understand the nuanced and critical relationship between global media and politics, this course highlights the different theories explaining the role of global media in contemporary society, and examines a number of case studies of critical global media networks and organizations.

COURSE RESPONSIBILITIES

(1) Response Papers (25%): For each class session, you will turn in a short response paper (approximately 1-2 pages, double spaced) on a reading you have selected from the syllabus at

the beginning of class. The response paper is not just a brief précis of the argument in the reading, but also a reflection of your understanding of the course material. Students are encouraged to apply the concepts to a real-world example in current events, news, or entertainment in your short piece. In particular, relate what kinds of political or social issues might be at stake (such as ownership, cultural contact/conflict, migration, identity, international politics, etc.). Students are encouraged to draw from their unique position as USC students living and studying in London, the central hub for global media.

(2) Research Paper: The principal assignment for this semester is a research paper, which will include a well-formulated research question, a brief overview of proposed methods, an extensive literature review with bibliography pertinent to the subject of your proposal, a section for your analysis, and a discussion of your findings and conclusions. The assignment consists of 4 parts**.**

- **Research Question and Method:** You will provide a short statement (2-3 pages, double spaced) of your proposed research question. **(5%)**
- **Literature Review:** You will provide a rough draft of your literature during the middle of the course, to indicate your progress on your project and engagement with the literature beyond the scope of the course readings (approximately 8-10 pages in length). **(10%)**
- **Presentation:** You will provide a short (15 minute) presentation to the class about your project and take questions from the class**. (10%)**
- **Final Draft:** At the end of semester, you will turn in a refined final draft reflecting the feedback from the class. Your final draft will be a more focused study and literature review that could be developed into a thesis or journal-article quality research project and write-up**. (25%)**

(3) Final (25%): The final examination will be in essay form, and will ask each student to compare and contrast the different theories and case studies examined throughout the course.

COURSE POLICIES

1. Be prepared to speak in class everyday. **Students are expected to have completed required readings before each class**, and are prepared to discuss key concepts found in the readings.
2. Your written assignments are due at the beginning of class. If you are absent the day of a written assignment due date, you will receive a 10% deduction in assignment grade for each day that the assignment is not turned in.
3. All students are expected to give their undivided attention to the course while in class. Computers are permitted, but email and IM clients should be turned off, as well as any other programs not directly related to the course. If you are found using your laptop during class for non-class related activities, I will ask you to turn off your computer and not bring it to class for the remainder of the semester.
4. Attendance Policy:
    a. You are allowed one absence in the class during the semester, no questions asked. More than one absence will result in your course grade lowered by 1/2 letter grade per additional absence.

       b.   Extended absences are only tolerated if caused by medical emergencies. Written permission from a physician is required. Details of your absence must be promptly communicated to me via email.

5.   Paper deadlines are final. (See point 2).

6.   Questions about grades should be addressed in a timely manner. There is a 24-hour wait period after receiving a grade. You have one week after the wait period to discuss a grade. All grades after this period are considered final.

7.   **Academic integrity**: The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's academic integrity code. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the academic integrity code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor. The University presumes that you are familiar with its standards and policies; should you be found to have committed a violation, ignorance of these standards and policies will not be accepted as an excuse. You should be familiar with the following resources:

- "Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism" addresses issues of paraphrasing, quotations and citations in written assignments, drawing heavily upon materials used in the university's Writing Program (by Student Judicial Affairs) http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tig.pdf
- "Understanding and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty" addresses more general issues of academic integrity, including guidelines for adhering to standards concerning examinations and unauthorized collaboration (by Student Judicial Affairs) http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/docs/tio.pdf
- The "2006-2007SCampus" (the student handbook) contains the university's Student Conduct Code and other student-related policies. http://www.usc.edu/scampus

REQUIRED READINGS

All of the readings are available online or will be distributed electronically, with three exceptions:

- Kai Hafez, *The Myth of Media Globalization*. Cambridge: Polity, 2007.
- Henry Jenkins, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: NYU Press, 2006.
- Charlie Beckett, *Supermedia: Saving Journalism so it can save the world*. Blackwell Publishing, 2008.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (8/26): Introduction to the Course

- Introductions
- Lecture: Where is the "politics" in global media?
- Outline responsibilities and course policies

Week 2 (9/2): Moving from the Old/New Media to Networked media
- Henry Jenkins. *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide.* New York: NYU Press, 2006, p. 1-24 and 206-260.

Week 3 (9/9): Media & Power—A Review
- Manuel Castells. *Media Power.* 2009. Chapter 1, "Power in the network society."
- Robert Entman. "Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power." *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007): 163-73.

Week 4 (9/16): Media Events & Scandals
- John B. Thompson, "Political Scandal. Power and Visibility in the Media Age", Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000, p. 233-271.
- Elihu Katz and Tamar Liebes, "No More Peace!': How Disaster, Terror and War Have Upstaged Media Events." *International Journal of Communication* 1 (2007): 157-66.
- Simon Cottle. "Mediatized Rituals: Beyond Manufacturing Consent." *Media, Culture & Society* 28:3 (2006): 411-32.

Week 5 (9/23): Media and Foreign Policy: From Propaganda to Public Diplomacy
Research Question & Method Due
- Robin Brown, "Getting to War: Communications and Mobilization in the 2002-03 Iraq Crisis." In *Media and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Phil Seib, New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2005, p. 57-82.
- James Glassman, "U.S. International Broadcasting on the Frontlines of Freedom," Heritage Lecture #1086, May 2008; Kim A. Elliot, "Put the news here, and the propaganda there." *Public Diplomacy Blog,* 11/13/2006.
- Bruce Stanley, "Crafting the Arab Media for Peace Building: Donors, Dialogue and Disasters," in Naomi Sakr (ed) Arab Media and Political Renewal, London: I.B. Tauris, 2007, p. 135-153.
- Review "Freedom of the Press 2008," Freedom House. (Available online here).

Week 6 (Insert date): Media Networks as Independent Actors
- Eytan Gilboa, "Media-Broker Diplomacy: When Journalists Become Mediators." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 22:2 (2005): 99-120.
- Eytan Gilboa, "The Cnn Effect: The Search for a Communication Theory of International Relations." *Political Communication* 22 (2005): 27-44.
- Amelia Arsenault and Manuel Castells, "Switching Power: Rupert Murdoch and the Global Business of Media Politics." *International Sociology* 23, no. 4 (2008): 488-513.

Week 7 (9/30): Media and Terrorism
- Daniel Kimmage "The Al-Qaeda Media Nexus" *RFE/RL Report* March 2008 (available online here).

- Hillel Nossek, Annabelle Sreberry and Prasun Sonwalker, *Media and Political Violence*, Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2007, p. 23-40 and 341-354.

Week 8 (10/7): Media Globalization

- Price, Monroe. (2002) "New Role of the State." In *Media and Sovereignty: The Global Information Revolution and its Challenge to State Power*, chapter 1, p. 3-30.
- Naomi Sakr, *Satellite Realms: Transnational Television, Globalization & the Middle East*, London: IB Tauris, 2001, p. 1-26 and 190-209.
- Volkmer, Ingrid. "The Global Network Society and the Global Public Sphere." *Development* 46:1 (2003): 9-16.

Week 9 (10/14): The Myth of Media Globalization

- Kai Hafez, *The Myth of Media Globalization*. Cambridge: Polity, 2007.
- Kai Hafez, "Arab Satellite Broadcasting: Democracy Without Political Parties?" *Transnational Broadcasting Studies* 15 (2005)

Week 10 (10/21): Media as Capitalism

Literature Review Due

- Edward S. Herman and Robert W. McChesney. *The Global Media: The New Missionaries of Global Capitalism*. Cassell: Washington, D.C, 2004, p. 1-9 and 136-155.
- Thussu, D.K. *Media on the Move: Global flow and contra-flow*. London & New York: Routledge, 2008, p. 1-32.
- Tunstall, Jeremy. *The Media Were American: US Mass Media in Decline*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. xii-33.

Week 11 (10/28): Militarized Media

- James Der Derian, *Virtuous War: Mapping the Military-industrial-media-entertainment Network*. Westview Press, 2003, p. xi-47 and 153-222.
- Dawn R. Gilpin, "Why Israel's Twitter Experiment Flopped." *COMOPS Journal*, Jan 12 2009 (Available online here).
- M. Kolb, "Propaganda 2.0 in the Caucasus." *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 2008.

Week 12 (11/4): Internet Politics

- Araba Sey and Manuel Castells "Networked Politics: Internet and the Political Process" in Manuel Castells (editor) "The Network Society: a Cross-Cultural Perspective", Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2004.
- Bennett, W. Lance. "Communicating Global Activism: Strengths and Vulnerabilities of Networked Politics." *Information, Communication & Society* 6:2 (2003): 143-68.
- Jeff Jarvis, *What Would Google Do?*, Harper Collins, 2009, p. 1-38.

Week 13 (11/11): Networked Politics

- Beckett, Charlie. *Supermedia: Saving Journalism so it can save the world.* Blackwell Publishing, 2008, p. 1-40 and 146-170.
- Zaharna, R.S. (2007) The Soft Power Differential: Network Communication and Mass Communication in Public Diplomacy. *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 2, 213-228.
- Fisher, Ali. "Music for the Jilted Generation: Open-Source Public Diplomacy." *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 3 (2008): 1-24.

Week 14 (11/18): Research Trip to the BBC/AJE
- We will visit the studios of both Al-Jazeera English and the BBC and talk with journalists and editors about their thoughts on the current state of the politics of the news media, as well as where they see their organizations adapting (transforming?) to meet and compete in today's changing and increasingly media-driven society.
- Mohammed el-Nawawy and Shawn Powers, "News Influence and the Global Mediasphere: A Test Case of Al-Jazeera English." In *The Routledge Companion to News and Journalism Studies*, edited by Stuart Allan, London: Routledge, 2009.
- Collins, Richard. "The BBC and the Public Value." *Work Foundation*, 2007 (available online here).

Week 15 (11/25): Meet individually to discuss final papers and prepare for final presentations.

Week 16 (12/2): Individual presentations
- Each student will have 15 minutes to present the findings from their research project. Final research papers are due 3 days after the final class.