Media Effects Doctoral Seminar  
Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach: Fall, 2011

This course addresses selected traditional and “frontier” issues confronting media theorists and researchers. This is a period of massive transformation that effects change in the very definition of “media.” For our purposes, “media” refer to both traditional mass media production forms -- television, radio, newspapers, magazines, books, etc. -- and new Internet-based forms. Also included are the myriad of specialized-audience media or media targeted to particular ethnic, national origin, lifestyle, taste, community, etc. groups. To one degree or another, course thematic issues reflect contemporary struggles to understand how media, society, and audience are changing and what difference it makes for communication theory and research. They all bear, in one way or another, upon issues of community and civil society.

Textbook


All supplementary readings will be available in pdf form/Blackboard

Conduct of Class Sessions

Given that this course is a doctoral seminar, students play an active role in shaping class discussion. To that end, students master the reading assignments associated with each weekly topic and come to class prepared with questions, criticisms, and comments. For each assigned reading, one student will be asked to lead off our discussion by providing a 3-minute critical review.

Components of Course Evaluation

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Participation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Course Paper</td>
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Both the midterm and the final will be take-home exams (each 15-page maximum) where the student selects questions to answer from a larger list that I prepare. For the course paper, each student works with me to work out a paper topic that relates to course subject matter. The course paper will take the student into literatures beyond the assigned course readings. Course readings afford good bibliographies for many topics. Please give me both hard and electronic copies of your exams and papers.
Seminar Topics and Readings

*Week One*

Introduction

*Week Two*

1. Challenges to Iconic Theory and Measures

   1. From Two-Step to One-Step Flow? A Background Debate

      
      
      
      


   2. Measurement Issues: Exposure and Exposure to What?

      
Week Three

II. Theoretical Approaches

1. Traditional Cognitive/Information Processing Approaches


2. Priming and Third-Person Effect


- Perloff, R. M., Mass Media, Social Perception, and the Third Person Effect, Chapter 12 in Bryant and Oliver (2009)


Week Four

3. Parasocial Interaction and Entertainment-Education


*Week Five*

4. Uses and Gratifications, Media System Dependency, and Agenda Setting (Part I)

• Rubin, A., The Uses and Gatifications Perspective of Media Effects, Chapter 8 in Bryant & Oliver (2009).


• Mc Combs, M. & Reynolds, A., News influence on our pictures of the world, Chapter 1 in Bryant and Oliver (2009).

Week Six

5. Agenda Setting: Part II


6. Cultivation and Constructing Social Reality


Week Seven

7. Discursive Construction of Urban Spaces and Framing


*Week Eight* (Midterm Exam Distributed, Covers Weeks 1-7)

**III. Selected Effects Issues in Public Discourse**

1. Violences

• Sparks, G. G & Sparks, C. W., Media Violence, Chapter 13 in Bryant and Oliver (2009).


2. Knowledge Gap


Week Nine  (Midterm Term Exam Due At the Beginning of Class)

3. Public Health Campaigns


4. Entertainment and Videogames re: Violence and Enjoyment


Week Ten (Course Paper Topic Identified)

5. Social Capital and Civic Engagement

  Thinking about social change in America (Ch. 1, pp. 15-28).
  What killed civic engagement? (Ch. 15, pp.277-284).

• Hampton, K. N., Lee, C. & Her, E. J. (2010). How new media affords network diversity: Direct and indirect access to social capital through participation in local settings. *New Media and Society,*


• Of Inteest/Not Required: There are articles in a Special Issue of the *American Behavioral Scientist* 53 (9) that may be of interest.

**Week Eleven**

**IV. Media Audiences: Legacy and “New” Media**


Week Twelve

V. “New” Media: Challenges for Theory, Research, and Practice

1. What’s New?


2. Access Issues


Week Thirteen

3. Issues of Community, Ethnicity, Mobilization and Media Interplay


Week Fourteen

VI. Ethnic Communities and Their Communication Ecologies


  Chapter 1: What are ethnic media?
  Chapter 9: Ethnic media as local media

  Book Prospectus (Optional reading for future reference)

Final Exam and Course Paper Due: December ?, 2010