

CMST 4344: Media Ecology

Instructor: Dr. Dennis Cali

Face-to-Face Office Hours: Mondays 2:30-4:30 p.m.
(Please email ahead); and by appointment

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IMPORTANT NOTE: I ask that any email correspondence from you be from your UTTyler email address, not your personal or other email. Thanks.

I also ask that you begin any new email with a greeting or salutation (e.g., "Hi, Dr. Cali" or "Good morning, Professor Cali") and end with a courteous closing (e.g., "Thanks for pointing me in the right direction" or simply "Thank you").

Seminar Description

This seminar will examine the influence of media on culture and consciousness. Such media could include traditional ones such as television, radio, print, and writing as well as "new" ones such as email, instant messaging, blogs, Websites, and the like. The focus of the seminar is on the exploration of how media technologies shape how people and cultures think, value, and feel.

Seminar Framework

Microscopic orientation to primary figures in media ecology

Telescopic orientation to media environments and their role in shaping culture and consciousness

"Probes" into New Media

Gestalt analysis of New Media/Research Paper on Media Ecology

Required Readings

Dennis D. Cali. (2017). *Mapping Media Ecology*. New York: Peter Lang, pub.

Nicholas Carr (2021). *Utopia is Creepy: And Other Provocations*. W.W. Norton & Company

A dystopic novel selected from a list:

Children of Men

V for Vendetta

Man in the High Castle (TV Show)

Harrison Bergeron

1984

Brave New World

(See also documents that will be posted on Canvas)

Recommended Readings

Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*. 25th anniversary edition with a new foreword by the author and an afterword by George F. Will. New York: Atheneum, 1987; New York: Vintage, 1992

James W. Carey, *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society*. Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989; Reprint, New York and London: Routledge, 1992.

Edmund Carpenter, *Oh, What a Blow That Phantom Gave Me!* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973 (Out of print, but available online).

Gilles DeLeuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*. Trans. Brian Massumi. London and New York: Continuum, 2004. Vol. 2 of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. 2 vols. 1972-1980. Trans. of *Mille Plateaux*. Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1980.

Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, John Wilkinson, Trans. New York: Knopf, 1984.

Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, Konrad Kellen and Jacques Lerner, Trans. New York: Knopf, 1965.

Jack Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*. Cambridge, England and New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977.

Eric Havelock, *Preface to Plato*. Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap Press of the Harvard Univ. Press, 1963.

Harold Innis, *The Bias of Communication*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1951.

Harold Innis, *Empire and Communications*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950.

Susanne Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957.

Marshall McLuhan. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1994.

Marshall McLuhan. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962.

Marshall McLuhan and Eric McLuhan, *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988.

Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1934; Reprint with a new introduction by the author, New York: Harvest,

Lewis Mumford, *The Myth of the Machine, Vol. I: Technics and Human Development*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967; New York: Harvest, 1971.

Walter J. Ong. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. New York: Methuen, 1982.

Walter J. Ong. *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967.

Camille Paglia, *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson*. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1990; New York: Vintage, 1991.

Neil Postman. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. New York: Viking, 1985; New York: Penguin, 1986.

Neil Postman, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology*. New York: Knopf, 1992; New York: Vintage, 1992.

Benjamin Whorf. *Language, Thought, and Reality*. Cambridge, MA, 1956.

Other Useful Sources:

The Media Ecology Association: <http://www.media-ecology.org/>

Figure-Ground Blog: <http://www.media-ecology.org/>

Marshall McLuhan Speaks: <http://www.marshallmcluhanspeaks.com/>

McLuhan Galaxy: <https://mcluhangalaxy.wordpress.com/>

Thus Spoke the Spectacle: <http://thespectacle.net/synopsis.html>

Other required or suggested readings are available through the library/Interlibrary Loan, on Canvas (check "Course Documents" and "External Links") or by handout.

Student Learning Objectives

This course aims to satisfy the Student Learning Outcome of: **Scholarship Identification** – The student will be able to understand communication from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives. Throughout the writing process, the student will have to identify, access, and comprehend scholarly sources necessary to answer the communication-based research questions and problems.

Toward achieving these objectives, students should:

1. Become familiar with major works in media ecology through reading, presentation, and discussion of these works.
2. Conceptualize media ecology in discussion and in a research paper as a discipline or line of inquiry.

3. Assess in media ecology “probes” how new media enhance, reverse, retrieve, and obsolesce previous media.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

(Guidelines for each of the assignments will be provided at the appropriate time.)

The primary difference between graduate and undergraduate expectations are that graduate students will write a substantial research paper while undergraduate students will write a paper that synthesizes their media probes; grad students and undergrad students read and report on different books, and final exams will be different.

Presentation: (Undergrad students): <i>Utopia is Creepy: And Other Provocations</i> (Grad Students): Byung-Chul Han (2015). <i>The Transparent Society</i> and Byung-Chul Han (2018). <i>The Expulsion of the Other</i>.	10%
(Undergrad students): Presentation of Major Media Ecologist (Grad students): Class Lecture on Canonical Figures and/or Concepts	20%
Media Probe (1) Oral and Written	10%
Media (Probe 2) Written	10%
Anti-Environment/Dystopia Group Report	10%
(Undergrad students): “Gestalt” Analysis (Undergraduates): Probe 1+2+3 (Grad students): Research Paper	20%
Final Exam (For Undergrads): Objective Exam (For Grad Students): Essay Exam	20%
TOTAL:	100%

The category of “Participation” has not been given a percentage value. This is because active engagement in class proceedings is expected both in graded assignments and in preparations and discussions. It refers to class presentations, such as chapter reports, discussion in class, and attendance. Failure to participate actively in class proceedings and absences can result in the class grade being lowered, up to the point of failing the class, even if the student’s score were passing on all graded assignments.

For each graded assignment, students will receive an A, B, C, D, or F. Each of these letter grades corresponds with a number value: an A carries a numeric value of 4, a B is worth 3, C is worth 2, D is worth 1, and F is worth 0. To calculate your grade, multiply 4, 3, 2, 1, or 0 that corresponds with your letter grade by the percentage value (above) of a given exercise. For example, if you receive a B for the “Presentation of Major Media Ecologist,” you would multiply 3—which corresponds with a B—by 20% and you would get a .60 for that assignment. At the end of the semester, to calculate your final grade, you would add each of the scores and divide by 100. Final grades will be awarded as follows:

Numeric Value of Grades

A	=	4
B	=	3
C	=	2
D	=	1
F	=	0

If your grade falls between two numbers (e.g., between a 3 and a 2), you will receive the grade corresponding with the lower number (in this case, a C, corresponding with 2) since technically you will not have achieved a B (a 3.0)

Seminar Policies and Procedures

Attendance: Students are permitted to miss three class hours throughout the semester without any consequence to their semester grade. Beyond 3, except under the most extenuating circumstance at the instructor's discretion, the student's seminar grade will be affected. Proof for excused absences must be documented within two weeks of the absence and must clearly state that the emergency required that the student miss the course on the date and at the time of the absence. Participation in Reading Reflections also counts as attendance.

Course Format

This course consists of lectures, essays ("probes"), discussion, individual presentations, and a final paper.

Course Assignments (Expectations of particular assignments will be provided at the announcement of each respective assignment).

Please see the brief video on the UT-Tyler Honor Code: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmKsbYwtrco>

Regarding Late Work: I DO NOT ACCEPT UNEXCUSED LATE WORK. Since one of the primary objectives expressed in the University's mission statement is that students "will act with honesty and integrity," I will enforce rigorous standards of honesty and personal responsibility. Work is considered late if work is not presented on the date assigned. Unexcused work receives a "O." Any exceptions to this policy—which would be very rare!—would be at my discretion; in this case, the student:

- must submit to me a written petition requesting that his/her absence be excused
- must show official documentation verifying the basis for absence
- must be prepared to present the missed work at the very first opportunity I make available after the student's return
- must provide appropriate documentation that his/her failure to complete the assignment on the assigned date was unavoidable
- may be penalized for failure to present work as assigned.

If you know in advance that you will not be able to be present on a particular date on which work has been assigned, please let me know. I will try to schedule your assignment accordingly.

Use of Cell Phone or Other Electronic Devices: Any use of cell telephones, pagers, Ipads, and all other electronic devices during class time is forbidden. It is the students' responsibility to make sure that their telephones or pagers do not ring, vibrate, or otherwise create the possibility of a class disruption. **A student whose telephone rings, vibrates, or otherwise creates a distraction during class will be counted as absent for that class period. A student using any electronic device during testing without prior approval shall be subject the policy on academic integrity.**

Laptops or Ipads. The use of laptops in class for any purpose other than taking notes (e.g., instant-messaging, emailing, surfing the Internet, playing Solitaire) is strictly forbidden. Students caught engaging in any forbidden laptop activity shall be counted as absent that day.

Audio/Video Recording of class lectures is prohibited without prior approval. However, on occasion the instructor may arrange recording for instructional purposes.

Oral and Written Work: Assignments may have an oral and/or written components. Especially since this is a communication class, grading of oral and written work will consider quality and thoroughness of analysis, style, adherence to format, and proper mechanics (grammar, spelling, organization, clarity, cohesiveness). All work submitted to me should be typed and double-spaced. All work should be stapled (Please! NO PLASTIC REPORT COVERS WITH SPINES, NO DOG EARS, NO FOLDED CORNERS, AND NO PAPER CLIPS! PLEASE STAPLE PAGES!) The quality of both your written and oral work will figure into your grade for the assignment.

Reading Assignments: In class lectures, I will ordinarily highlight portions—not the entirety—of the chapters assigned in your readings. However, you are responsible for the entire contents of all chapters and may be tested on any portions of those readings.

“Outside” Participation: Because much of what this course teaches is learned in personal reflection and application, some activities or preparation for in-class activities take place outside of class.

Guide to Uploading Video in Canvas Studio:

Here is a guide for students on how to turn in a Canvas Studio video to an assignment -

<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Studio/How-do-I-submit-Canvas-Studio-media-as-a-File-Upload-assignment/ta-p/1677>

Guide on how to upload videos to Studio - <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Studio/How-do-I-upload-media-files-in-my-Canvas-Studio-account/ta-p/1705>

The Use of Artificial Intelligence:

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

In this course, any use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT must be appropriately acknowledged and cited, following the guidelines established by the APA/MLA/Chicago Style Guide, including the specific version

the tool used. The submitted work should include the exact prompt you used to generate the content and the AI's complete response as an appendix. Because AI-generated content is not necessarily accurate or appropriate, you must assess the validity and applicability of any submitted AI output. You will not earn full credit if inaccurate, invalid, or inappropriate information is found in your work. APA Style Citation Information MLA Style Citation Information Chicago Style Citation Information. If AI is used but not acknowledged, you will not receive credit for the assignment.

Other Information regarding University Policies and Information is found in the Syllabus Module within Canvas.

Tentative Schedule

Class Meeting	Class Topic	Readings																						
Jan. 14	Orientation to Seminar; Prelude to Media Ecology: Carpenter Documentary; <i>Assignment: Chapter Reports, Shallows & Alone Together; Assignment: Report on Primary Theorists</i> <i>Show Carpenter’s documentary: “Oh What a Blow...” as a sample of media ecology</i> <i>Show History of # 2 Pencil (in Amazon Prime): Video Watchlist, Movies</i>																							
Jan. 21	Media Ecology as a Field of Study; Levinson Interview (link on “External Links” in Bb: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqZNGYit3kY&feature=youtu.be) (It’s about 23 minutes) <i>Review upcoming assignment;</i> <i>38” video of American Roads</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVVcQxxENE4): Identify media ecology themes <i>Assignment: Research Paper/Gestalt Analysis</i>	Cali Essay on Canvas; Strate Essay on Canvas; Cali, MME, Chs. 1-3																						
Jan. 28	Discussion, Utopia is Creepy and <i>Byung Chul Han’s books</i>																							
Feb. 4	Canonical Figures in Media Ecology	Cali, MME 3-6																						
Feb. 11	Orality-Literacy Studies: Havelock, Goody, Eisenstein Technology Studies: Mumford, Postman, and Borgmann Cultural Studies: Carey, Carpenter, and Paglia <i>Assignments: Media Probe; Media Anti-Environment Analysis</i>	Cali, MME 7-8																						
Feb. 18	Bias Studies: Innis, Boorstin and Baudrillard Language Studies: Korzybski, Langer, and Whorf New Media Ecologists (for grad students): J. J. Gibson, Eric McLuhan, Sherry Turkle	Cali, MME 9-11																						
Feb. 25	<i>Assignment: Media Probes (Sample topics):</i> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Facebook</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Skype/Google+</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Facebook Social Games</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Instagram</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Twitter</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Pinterest</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">YouTube</td> <td style="text-align: center;">LinkedIn</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Wikipedia</td> <td style="text-align: center;">eHarmony</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Blogging (WordPress)</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Flickr</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Digg</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Podcasts (iTunes)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Kindle</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Hulu</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Canvas LMS</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Smule</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Facial Recognition</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Cloud Storage</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Google Hangout</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Drones</td> </tr> </table> MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS: Documentary “Space Times Square”; <i>Group Assignment on Anti-Environments in Dystopian Novels and Films</i>	Facebook	Skype/Google+	Facebook Social Games	Instagram	Twitter	Pinterest	YouTube	LinkedIn	Wikipedia	eHarmony	Blogging (WordPress)	Flickr	Digg	Podcasts (iTunes)	Kindle	Hulu	Canvas LMS	Smule	Facial Recognition	Cloud Storage	Google Hangout	Drones	
Facebook	Skype/Google+																							
Facebook Social Games	Instagram																							
Twitter	Pinterest																							
YouTube	LinkedIn																							
Wikipedia	eHarmony																							
Blogging (WordPress)	Flickr																							
Digg	Podcasts (iTunes)																							
Kindle	Hulu																							
Canvas LMS	Smule																							
Facial Recognition	Cloud Storage																							
Google Hangout	Drones																							
Mar. 4	Media Probe Presentations (oral and written) Preparations: Group Assignment on Media Environments; <i>Assignment: Probe 2</i>																							
Mar. 11	Dystopic Novel and Film Presentation Film 1																							
Mar. 18	SPRING BREAK																							
Mar. 25	Dystopic Novel and Film 2																							

Apr. 1	Dystopic Novel and Film 3	
Apr. 8	Workshop on Final Paper (“Gestalt Analysis” or Research Paper)	
Apr. 15	Presentations of Final Paper	
Apr. 22	Review for Final Exam	
Apr. 29	Final Exam	