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**Mass Communication Theory and Research Traditions, JRMC 9010
Fall 2009, Monday 9:05-12:05, JRMC Room 205**

Objectives

The objectives of the course are:

- to familiarize advanced students with some of the more well-accepted literature and social science research traditions in mass communications;
- to illustrate the nature of theory, research and social science and their application to the study of mass communications;
- to provide a framework whereby students develop the ability to analyze and construct critical viewpoints relating to mass communication theory and research traditions;
- to have students be able to locate various theories into an overall conceptual base.

Texts/ Readings

I look forward to teaching this seminar course. Every meeting depends on how well each of you prepares the material and discusses the topics. My job is to frame material, focus discussion, and elaborate on the material.

Four texts are assigned as well as a number of copied articles:

1. Paul D. Reynolds, A Primer on Theory Construction, Allyn & Bacon, April 2006 (paperback).
2. Stanley Baran & Dennis Davis, Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future (5th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2009.
3. Thomas S. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, (3rd Ed.) 1996, University of Chicago
4. Daniel Czitrom, Media and the American Mind, Chapel Hill, North Carolina Press, 1982

5. Readings Packet: Bel-Jean, 103 E. Broad, Downtown, (706) 548-3648

In Class Critiques and Presentations

Every student will prepare two short critiques which will be assigned the first day of class. Each critique will be an *analysis* of the information for the day. The critique must go beyond a summary of the material. Analyze all or part of the material from a theoretical or conceptual point of view. Critiques will be two pages in length and mailed to the course listserv by 9:00 p.m. on the previous day. Additionally, students will make a 5-10 minute presentation on the critique. A very small portion of the time will be used to summarize the material while the preponderance of time will focus on analyzing the material. Class members should be prepared to respond to the critiques by asking questions or offering a review.

You will also critique a scholarly article of your choosing. The article is to be analyzed from a theoretical perspective. You will be asked to do a 5-10 minute presentation.

Theory Analysis Paper

The paper will be a critical review of seminal and/or recent research that is related to a mass communication theory of your choosing. Pick a theory or area in which you are interested. Next find scholarly articles that are related to the theory. The articles may examine or test the theory, expand on or modify the theory or critique the theory. Select only those articles that you feel are most significant and hopefully the most current. The goal is to understand the theory and its status or evolution.

Part of the final paper will be to locate the theory within the larger conceptual areas in the field. Here are a few questions to consider: How was the theory used? Did you find any patterns in the studies you selected? What is the future of the theory? How much does the theory explain? Are the theoretical assumptions of the theory still holding? If the article is a test of the theory, were the methods appropriate? What did the study find and what does it mean for the theory? Why are you interested in the theory? Why should anybody be interested in the theory?

The paper must be well written and have a logical sequence. The goal is to produce a manuscript that can be submitted to a conference of your choice. We need to meet in order to target a conference or journal of your interest. I will meet with you individually throughout the semester to help you develop your work. This is not a project that you can do at the last minute.

The assignment is due December 5. Each student will confer with me to select a topic.

Evaluation

Your grade will be a composite of:

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|------------|
| 1. | Class participation | 10 percent |
| 2. | Critique 1 | 20 percent |
| 3. | Critique 2 | 20 percent |
| 4. | Article Critique | 20 percent |
| 4. | Paper assignment | 30 percent |

General Items

The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

All academic work must meet the standards contained in UGA's "A Culture of Honesty." Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work.

UGA is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in accordance with state and federal laws including the American Disabilities Act.

Basic Concepts

Aug. 17 Introduction

Aug. 24 Theory Construction in the Social Sciences

Reynolds, Chapters 1-3

Norman Denzin, "Sociological Theory," (from The Research Act, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1978).

Thomas Kuhn, Chapter 1-3 (Review 4-5) (from The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, University of Chicago Press, 1970).

Baran & Davis, Chapters 1-2.

August 31 Understanding Social Science as a Process

Kuhn - review 6-13, read postscript.

Reynolds, Chapters 4-7

Paul Anderson, "Marketing, Scientific Progress, and Scientific Method," Journal of Marketing, Vol. 47, 1983.

Shelby D. Hunt, "Positivism and Paradigm Dominance in Consumer Research: Toward Pluralism and Rapprochement," Journal of Consumer Research, Vol.

18, 1991.

Sept. 7 Labor Day

Sept. 14 Overviewing the Meaning of Communication and Mass Communication
Developing Criteria for Evaluating Theory

Craig, R. "Communication Theory as a Field" Communication Theory, May 1999,
119-161.

Chaffee and Berger, "What Communication Scientists Do." In C. Berger and S.
Chaffee, eds., Handbook of Communication Science, Sage, 1987.

R. Heath and J. Bryant. "Why Study Communication Theories and Conduct
Research?" In Heath and Bryant, Human Communication Theory and Research,
Erlbaum, 1992.

J. Bryant and D. Miron, Theory and Research in Mass Communication, Journal of
Communication, December 2004

Baran & Davis 1-2 (focus on Chapter 1)

Develop a one page set of criteria on what you think constitutes a theory.

Understanding the Way People are Conceptualized

Sept. 21 Understanding Community and Public, Audiences and Markets
The Rise of Empiricism

Baran & Davis, Chapters 3-4.

Czitrom, Chapters 4- 6

Bauer, R.A. "The Obstinate Audience," American Psychologist, 1964.

James Webster and Patricia F. Phalen, "Victim, Consumer, or Commodity, Audience
Models in Communication Policy," in, Audiencemaking How Media Create
The Audience, Ettema & Webster, Sage, 1994.

Turn in one page set of criteria on what you think constitutes a theory.

The Social Side

Sept. 28 Normative Approaches to Communications Research.
Contemporary Reactions to "New" Media
(No class meeting on Monday 28th. We will by listserv from Tue. – Friday)

Czitrom, Chapters 1-3

Baran & Davis, Chapter 5

Oct. 5 Culture

Carey, James, A Cultural Approach to Communications, From Communication as Culture, Routledge, 1988.

Carey, James, Afterward: The Culture in Question, James Carey A Critical Reader, Edited by Muson and Warren, University of Minnesota Press, 1997

Baran & Davis, Chapter 8

You should be well along on your paperOct. 12 Social Learning and Normalization

Jordan & Woodard "Growing Pains," Annals, American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1998

Bandura "Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication" in Media Effects Bryant & Zillman, Eds. Erlbaum, 2002.

United States of America v. Philip Morris USA, Inc. Final Decision, 2006

Baran & Davis, Chapter 7, (note social learning, social cognition)

How big a theory is Social Learning? Normalization? What are the limits to these explanations? What types of consequence do we focus?

Oct. 19 Functionalism
Cultivation
Agenda Setting

Lazarsfeld, Paul and Merton, Robert (1948) from "Mass Communication, Popular Taste, and Organized Social Action," in Schramm & Roberts. The Process and Effects of Mass Communication, 1971.

Gerbner, et al., "Growing Up with Television: The Cultivation Process," From Media Effects, Advances in Theory and Research, Bryant & Zillman, Eds. Erlbaum, 2002.

McCombs Maxwell E. and Donald L. Shaw, "The Evolution of Agenda Setting Research: Twenty Five Years in the Marketplace of Ideas, Journal of Communication, 1993

Baran & Davis, Chapter 7 (portions on Merton and functionalism), Chapter 10 (portions on agenda setting), Chapter 11 (portions on cultivation)

How big a theory is Functionalism? Cultivation? Agenda Setting?

The Social and Individual Side

- Oct. 26 Diffusion and Innovation
Social Networks
Word of Mouth
 DeFleur and Ball-RoKeach, "Personal Influence: The Two-Step Flow of Communication," from Theories of Mass Communication, Longman, New York, 1981.
 Gunther, et al. "Presumed Influence on Peer Norms: How Mass Media Indirectly Affect Adolescent Smoking", Journal of Communication, 2006
 Rogers and Shoemaker, "Elements in the Diffusion of Innovations," In Communication of Innovations by Rogers and Shoemaker.
 Rogers, "New Product Adoption and Diffusion," Journal of Consumer Research, 1976.
 Robertson, "Innovation in the American Economy," "The Diffusion Process," "The Product Adoption Process," Innovative Behavior and Communication, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, New York, 1971.
 Allsop, Dee T., Bryce Bassett and James Hoskins, "Word of Mouth Research: Principles and Applications," Journal of Advertising Research, December 2007.
 Okazaki, Shintaro, "Social influence model and electronic word of mouth," International Journal of Advertising, No. 3, 2009
 Baran & Davis, Chapter 10 (portion on diffusion).

The Individual Side

- Nov 2 **Limited Effects**
Balance/Dissonance
Congruity/Complexity
Attitude and Attitude Change/ELM
Framing

 Festinger, "An Introduction to the Theory of Dissonance," from A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance, 1957
 Zajonc, "Concepts of Balance, Congruity and Dissonance," Public Opinion Quarterly, 1960, 24.
 Petty, Priester, Brinol, Mass Media Attitude Change: Implications of the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion, Bryant & Zillman, Eds. Erlbaum, 2002.
 Scheufele, Dietram, "Framing as a Theory of Media Effects," Journal of Communications, Winter 1999.
 Baran & Davis, Chapter 6 (see Festinger, attitude change) and 11 (see framing).

Nov. 9 Third Person Effect

Social Cognition/Selective Perception

Perloff, Richard M. (1999), "The Third Person Effect: A Critical Review and Synthesis," *Media Psychology*, 1(4).

Susan T. Fiske, "Social Cognition," In A. Tesser, Advanced Social Psychology, McGraw-Hill, 1995.

Sears and Freedman, "Selective Exposure to Information," In Process and Effects of Mass Communication, Schramm and Roberts.

Mills, "Interest in Supporting and Discrepant Information," Theories of Cognitive Consistency.

Baran and Davis, Chapter 6

Nov. 16 Uses and Gratifications (Uses and Effects), Involvement

Rubin, "Media Uses and Effects: A Uses and Gratifications Perspective," From Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research, Bryant & Zillman, Eds, Erlbaum, 1994

Krugman, Herbert "The Impact of Television Advertising," Public Opinion Quarterly, 29, 1965.

Krugman, Herbert." Memory Without Recall, Exposure Without Perception," Journal of Advertising Research, Vol. 17, 1977.

Baran and Davis Chapter 9

Nov. 23 Television/Audience Viewing, Activity and Consumption

Byron Reeves and Esther Thorson, Watching Television, Experiments on the viewing process. *Communications Research*, 1986

Avery M. Abernethy, Television exposure: Programs vs. Advertising, *Current Issues in Advertising and Research*

Anderson, Lorch, Field, Collins, and Nathan, "Television Viewing at Home: Age Trends in Visual Attention and Time with TV," *Child Development*, 1986.

D. Krugman, Differences in the Consumption of Traditional Broadcast and VCR Movie Rentals, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, Vol. 15, No.2

Levy, "VCR Uses and the Concept of Audience Activity," Communication Quarterly, Vol. 35, No. 3, Summer 1987.

D. Krugman, G. Cameron, and C. White, "Visual Attention to Programming and Commercials: The Use of In-Home Observations," Journal of Advertising, 1995.

Lotz, Amanda, Introduction, *The Television Will be Revolutionized*, 2007, NYU

Baran and Davis Chapter 7 (portions related to television viewing).

What does it mean to view television? Do we have any theories of viewing?

Nov. 30 Trends in Mass Communication Theory

Baran & Davis, Chapter 12.

Dec. 7 Summary

PAPERS DUE