

Faculty of Human, Social and Political Studies  
Sociology, Part IIB, 2021-22  
SOC 7: Media, Culture and Society

## Overview

### Course Organiser:

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### Supervision Coordinator:

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### Lecturers:

- Mr Rodrigo Arteaga Rojas, [rda29@cam.ac.uk](mailto:rda29@cam.ac.uk)
- Professor Patrick Baert, [pjnb100@cam.ac.uk](mailto:pjnb100@cam.ac.uk)
- Dr Sazana Jayadeva, [sj355@cam.ac.uk](mailto:sj355@cam.ac.uk)
- Dr Mónica Moreno Figueroa, [mm2051@cam.ac.uk](mailto:mm2051@cam.ac.uk)
- Dr Shannon Philip, [sp2008@cam.ac.uk](mailto:sp2008@cam.ac.uk)
- Dr Jorge Saavedra Utman, [jsu21@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jsu21@cam.ac.uk)
- Ms Ayala Panievsky, [ap2034@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ap2034@cam.ac.uk)

### Aims and objectives of the paper:

- To equip students with the analytical skills and the theoretical and empirical knowledge to understand, navigate and change the rapidly-evolving dynamics between media, culture and societies;
- To critically examine approaches that put culture at the centre in our understanding of societies;
- To develop reflexivity around the intersection of power with media and technology as relates to political communication and everyday life;
- To deepen understanding through developing skills in the use of theory to analyse empirical cases and the use of these empirical cases to advance theory;
- To contribute to the decolonising and greening of media studies;
- To reflect critically on the cultural production that occurs in the academy;
- To build argumentation skills through essay writing, group discussions and collaborations.

### Course content:

This paper is concerned with the social analysis of culture, media, symbolic forms and information and communication technologies. This is manifested in a theoretical focus on approaches to the study of media and culture, including their relationships with capitalism; the norms that drive the production and study of media and culture, including technology; cultural production; subcultures; visual culture; race and representation; audiences; and intellectuals. Lectures and accompanying seminars examine key concepts, theories and debates in these areas and apply them in the empirical areas of digital media and everyday life as well as political communication. The variety of SOC 7 topics are research-led and benefit from the range of expertise among the paper's lecturers; reflecting the Department's pedagogical concern with the climate emergency, literature and 'thinking and talking' questions are included to connect topics to the climate emergency. This is an advanced paper which builds on foundations in the study of media, culture and technologies given in Parts I and IIA, particularly SOC 1, SOC 2 and SOC 3 – though these papers are not prerequisites.

### Structure of the paper:

- **Theories and Concepts of Media and Culture**
  - Eight two-hour sessions in Michaelmas, weeks 1-8
  - Lecturers: Dr Saavedra Utman, Dr Moreno Figueroa and Professor Baert
- **Digital Media and Everyday Life**
  - Four two-hour sessions in Lent, weeks 1-4
  - Lecturers: Dr Jayadeva and Dr Philip
- **Political Communication**
  - Four two-hour sessions in Lent, weeks 5-8
  - Lecturers: Ms Panievsky, Dr Jayadeva and Mr Arteaga Rojas
- **Revision**
  - One two-hour Q&A session in Easter, week 1

### Mode of teaching and supervision arrangements:

- The paper will be administered via its **SOC 7 Moodle site**, where resources will be organised according to topic.
- Each topic will consist of a **one-hour lecture** and a **one-hour interactive seminar** that will consist of discussion and learning activities as detailed below in each topic description. This seminar activity will almost always be about applying the theory and concepts to a new empirical case to further our understanding of the case, and then, in turn, about applying this new knowledge to further our understanding of the theory and concepts. It is a space for third year students to exercise independent scholarship collaboratively.
- Students should have **six supervisions** over Michaelmas and Lent terms, of which at least four require students to submit essays. These should be sent by email to **supervisors at least 24 hours in advance of the supervision**. Essays should be **no more than 2,500 words**; this allows students to practice writing to wordcount and supervisors to manage their workloads. Students should answer the relevant supervision question in the paper guide and will receive written feedback on these essays from their supervisors ahead of the supervision.
- The remaining **two supervisions can involve alternative preparation** subject to agreement between supervisor and student; this may include a presentation on an empirical case, an analysis of a media artefact or a 500-word blog piece for the Department website. Students taking this option are particularly encouraged to make connections between the topic and the climate crisis.
- The **reading lists** for each topic are a starting point for students and supervisors. Starred readings are the core literature, but students are encouraged to explore beyond these lists as they form their views on these topics. Students are not expected to cover all of the topics, but rather to make a balanced selection in consultation with their supervisors.
- A **revision Q&A** session and two revision supervisions will occur in the first few weeks of Easter term.
- **Supervision is organised centrally** by the supervision coordinator using an online spreadsheet that will be shared at the start of the academic year.
- Because the paper is research-led, the **topics may change** year to year according to lecturers' expertise. For new topics, the reading lists below will also include a mock exam question.

### Background reading:

The following texts provide an overview of the sociology of media and culture subfields as well as connect them to the Department of Sociology's overarching pedagogical theme of the climate crisis.

- P. du Gay et al. *Doing Cultural Studies: The Story of the Sony Walkman* (SAGE, 1996) [[Introduction](#)]
- R. Maxwell and T. Miller, '[Greening Media Studies](#),' *Media and the Ecological Crisis* (Routledge, 2016)
- J. Thompson, [The Media and Modernity](#) (Polity, 2013) [Introduction]

- D. Thussu, 'Why Internationalize Media Studies and How?' in [Internationalizing Media Studies: Impediments and Imperatives](#) (Taylor & Francis, 2009)
- S. Waisbord, [Media Sociology: A Reappraisal](#) (Polity, 2014) [Introduction]
- R. Williams, '[Culture is Ordinary](#)', in *Studying Culture: An Introductory Reader* (Arnold, 1993)

**Thinking and talking question:** Why has the study of the media so often overlooked connections to the climate crisis, and to what effect?

## Series 1: Theories and Concepts of Media and Culture

Aims of this series:

- To provide students with an introduction to some of the key theoretical approaches and concepts in the study of culture and the media;
- To give students a sense of the value and the fruitfulness of these approaches and concepts, while at the same time alerting them to their shortcomings;
- To introduce students to some of the key debates in the field.

### 1. Culture and capitalism (Saavedra Utman)

**Summary:** One of the longest-standing concerns in this subfield of sociology is the connection between culture and capitalism, both with respect to who owns and controls cultural production – from cinema to social media platforms to app design – and with respect to how cultural products reinforce capitalist ideologies. This lecture introduces this critical approach, while also demonstrating how its emphasis on capitalism is just the first step in a broader understanding of media, culture and power that takes into account multiple axes of inequality. This lecture concludes by exploring decolonial approaches to critical political economy.

**Seminar activity:** Choose a social media platform and analyse it using the concepts and critiques of the culture industry thesis.

**Reading list:**

- T.W. Adorno, *The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture* (Routledge, 1991) [Chapter 3: '[Culture Industry Reconsidered](#)']
- W. Benjamin, *Illuminations* (Fontana, 1973) [[The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction](#)']
- \*P. Chakravartty and Y. Zhao, '[Introduction: Toward a Transcultural Political Economy of Global Communications](#),' in *Global Communications: Toward a Transcultural Political Economy*, (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007)
- A. Dorfman and A. Mattelart, *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* (I. G. Editions, 1975) ['Conclusion: Power to Donald Duck']
- \*D. Freedman, [The Contradictions of Media Power](#) (Bloomsbury, 2013) [Chapter 1]
- \*M. Horkheimer & T. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Verso, 1979) [[The Culture Industry](#)']
- J. Lewis and T. Boyce, '[Climate Change and the Media: The Scale of the Challenge](#),' in *Climate Change and the Media* (Peter Lang, 2009)
- A. C. Mendes, [Salman Rushdie in the Cultural Marketplace](#) (Routledge, 2016) [first half of Chapter 4: 'Music and the Brown Culture Industry']
- J. Raundalen, 'Tech Support: How Technological Utopianism in the Media Is Driving Consumption,' in [Media and the Ecological Crisis](#) (Routledge, 2014)
- \*A. Saha, [Race and the Cultural Industries](#) (Polity, 2018) [Part 1: Chapters 1 and 2]
- C. Sandvig, '[The Social Industry](#),' *Social Media + Society*, April/June (2015), pp. 1-4
- S. Wagner and M. Fernández-Ardèvol, '[Local Content Production and the Political Economy of the Mobile App Industries in Argentina and Bolivia](#),' *New Media & Society* 18/8 (2016), pp. 1768–86
- F. Yang, '[China's "Fake" Apple Store: Branded Space, Intellectual Property and the Global Culture Industry](#),' *Theory, Culture & Society*, 31/4 (2014), pp. 71–96

**Supervision question:** How can we understand the relationship between capitalism and culture?

**Thinking and talking question:** *How does the ownership and control of the media shape coverage of the climate crisis?*

## 2. Media and morality (Saavedra Utman)

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**Summary:** Morality is inherent not only to the design of media but also to how we as scholars critically assess them. Yet, the norms that underpin our experience and understanding of media are often so normalised that we fail to critically interrogate them. This topic will provide the tools for this interrogation, through understanding norms not only as moral frameworks but also as binaries and discourses and as fundamentally caught up in power and positionality. We will explore this topic through the conceptual case of the public sphere and the empirical case of algorithmic search engines.

**Seminar activity:** Identify a technology you have been relying on during the pandemic and investigate the norms that shape it. Where do you think these norms come from? How are they built into this technology, implicitly and explicitly? Who is included, and who is excluded by these norms? How do these norms compare to your own normative framework?

### Reading list:

- J.C. Alexander, '[The Meaningful Construction of Inequality and the Struggles Against It: A 'Strong Program' Approach to How Social Boundaries Change](#)', *Cultural Sociology*, 1/1 (2007), pp. 23-30.
- F. Banda, '[Negotiating Journalism Ethics in Zambia: Towards a 'Glocal' Ethics](#),' in *Media Ethics Beyond Borders: A Global Perspective* (Routledge, 2010)
- R. Benjamin, *Race after Technology* (Polity, 2019) [Chapter 2: 'Default Discrimination']
- N. Couldry, '[Living Well with and through Media](#),' in N. Couldry, M. Madianou, and A. Pinchevski (eds), *Ethics of Media* (Palgrave Macmillan 2013)
- \*C. D'Ignazio and L Klein, *Data Feminism* (MIT Press Open, 2019) [[Chapter 2: On Rational, Scientific, Objective Viewpoints from Mythical, Imaginary, Impossible Standpoints](#)]
- \*J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (Polity, 1989) [Introduction]
- Held, V. (2006) *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political, and Global*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. [['Introduction'](#)]
- \*J. Landes, '[Women and the Public Sphere: A Modern Perspective](#),' *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice* 15 (1984): pp. 20–31
- R. Mabrook and J. B. Singer (2019) '[Virtual Reality, 360° Video, and Journalism Studies: Conceptual Approaches to Immersive Technologies](#),' *Journalism Studies*, 20/14 (2019), pp. 2096–2112
- E. McPherson, '[Spot News Versus Reportage: Newspaper Models, the Distribution of Newsroom Credibility, and Implications for Democratic Journalism in Mexico](#),' *International Journal of Communication* 6 (2012), pp. 2301–2317
- \*S. U. Noble. *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* (NYU Press, 2018) [Introduction and Conclusion]
- Z. Papacharissi, '[The Virtual Sphere 2.0: The Internet, the Public Sphere, and Beyond](#),' in *Handbook of Internet Politics* (Routledge, 2008)
- G. Pough, *Check It While I Wreck It: Black Womanhood, Hip-Hop Culture, and the Public Sphere* (Northeastern University Press, 2015) [Chapter 2 – 'Bringing Wreck: Theorising Race, Rap, Gender, and the Public Sphere']
- J. Thompson, *The Media and Modernity* (Polity, 1995) [Chapter 2]
- G. Yúdice, 'The Challenges of the New Media Scene for Public Policies' in *The Routledge Handbook of Global Cultural Policy* (Routledge, 2018)

**Supervision question:** *How do norms shape media systems? Illustrate with at least one example.*

**Thinking and talking questions:** *Why has safeguarding the planet not been a core norm of Western societies? Is this changing? If so, why, and to what effect?*

## 3. Cultural production (Saavedra Utman)

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**Summary:** We often see cultural production as something apart – something we hold in awe. Yet, sociologists of cultural production argue that it is no different from the production of any other product intended for

consumption. In this topic, we will demystify cultural production – whether the perceived genius of the art world, the perceived glamour of the modelling industry or the perceived malevolence of the disinformation sector. We will also challenge the naturalised division of high and mass culture, investigating how this division is a social construct. To do so, we will focus on how we can understand all these areas of cultural production through core concepts such as collaboration, competition, convention and capital.

**Seminar activity:** Choose an area of cultural production and analyse it using the analytic lenses of fields and worlds. Compare and contrast these two analytical approaches.

**Reading list:**

- \*H. Becker, *Art Worlds* (California, 2008) [[‘Art Worlds and Collective Activity’](#)]
- G. Born, [‘The Social and the Aesthetic: For a Post-Bourdieuian Theory of Cultural Production’](#), *Cultural Sociology*, 4/2 (2010), 171–208.
- W. Bottero and N. Crossley, [‘Worlds, Fields and Networks: Becker, Bourdieu and the Structures of Social Relations’](#), *Cultural Sociology*, 5/1 (2011), pp. 99–119.
- \*P. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* (Polity, 1992) [[‘The Field of Cultural Production’](#)]
- P. Dimaggio, [‘Cultural Entrepreneurship in Nineteenth Century Boston’](#), *Media, Culture and Society*, 4 (1982), pp. 33–50
- A. Mears, [‘Size Zero High-End Ethnic: Cultural Production and the Reproduction of Culture in Fashion Modeling’](#), *Poetics*, 38/1 (2010), pp. 21–46
- T. Miller, N. Govil, J. McMurria, R. Maxwell and T. Wang, *Global Hollywood 2* (BFI, 2005) [Chapter 2]
- T. Moi, [‘Appropriating Bourdieu: Feminist Theory and Pierre Bourdieu’s Sociology of Culture’](#), *New Literary History*, 22/4 (1991), 1017–1049.
- \*L. Nochlin, [‘Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?’](#), *ARTnews* (2015)
- \*J. C. Ong and J. V. A. Cabañes, [‘When Disinformation Studies Meets Production Studies: Social Identities and Moral Justifications in the Political Trolling Industry’](#), *International Journal of Communication*, 13 (2019), pp. 5771–90
- A. Perris, [‘Music as Propaganda: Art at the Command of Doctrine in the People’s Republic of China’](#), *Ethnomusicology*, 27/1 (1983), pp. 1–28
- R. Peterson and N. Anand, [‘The Production of Culture Perspective’](#), *American Review of Sociology*, 30 (2004), pp. 311–34
- S. Thornton, [‘Seven Days in the Art World’](#) (Granta, 2008) [‘Introduction’]

**Supervision question:** *What role does power play in cultural production?*

**Thinking and talking question:** *How can we better incorporate the materiality of cultural products, with their implications for the environment, into our studies of the production of culture?*

#### 4. Subcultures and cultural studies (Saavedra Utman)

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**Summary:** Building on the approach in cultural studies to seeing culture as ‘ordinary’ (Williams, 1993), this topic turns towards the study of subcultures, focusing in particular on their style and reading style in relation to the concept of resistance. We start with the early studies that understood subcultures as resisting dominant classes, interrogating these studies using standpoint theory to examine how these mechanisms for coping with exclusion might themselves have been exclusionary. We then turn to more contemporary subcultures and ask if we can still read these as sites of resistance in an era of commodification and consumption – or if, by focusing on class, we are overlooking the creativity of these subcultures in imagining alternative power relations.

**Seminar activity:** Identify a contemporary subculture and analyse it with the theories and concepts of this topic, paying particular attention to the subculture’s relationship to the idea of resistance.

**Reading list:**

- A. Bennett, [‘Subcultures or Neo-Tribes? Rethinking the Relationship between Youth, Style and Musical Taste’](#), *Sociology* 33/3 (1999): pp. 599–617
- A. Cohen, [‘Youth Gangs, Violence, and Local Culture in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand’](#), *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 47/4 (2018), pp. 484–507
- S. Cohen, [‘Folk Devils and Moral Panics’](#) (Blackwell, 1980) [‘Deviance and Moral Panics’]

- S. Hall, '[Cultural Studies and Its Theoretical Legacies](#),' in *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* (Routledge, 1996)
- \*S. Hall and T. Jefferson (eds), [Resistance through Rituals](#), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Routledge, 2006) [Chapters 1 and 6]
- D. Hebdige, [Subculture: The Meaning of Style](#) (Methuen, 1979) ['One']
- \*S. Q. Jensen, '[Towards a Neo-Birminghamian Conception of Subculture? History, Challenges, and Future Potentials](#),' *Journal of Youth Studies* 21/4 (2018), pp. 405–421
- A. King and D. Smith, '[The Jack Wills Crowd: Towards a Sociology of an Elite Subculture](#),' *The British Journal of Sociology*, 69/1 (2018), pp. 44–66
- \*A. McRobbie, [Feminism and Youth Culture](#) (Palgrave, 1991) ['Settling Accounts with Subculture: A Feminist Critique']
- R. Reguillo, '[The Warrior's Code? Youth, Communication and Social Change](#)' in *Youth Engaging with the World Media, Communication and Social Change* (Nordicom, 2009)
- B. Schiermer, '[Late-Modern Hipsters: New Tendencies in Popular Culture](#),' *Acta Sociologica* 57/2 (2014): pp. 167–81
- S. Thornton, [Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital](#) (Polity, 1995) ['The Distinctions of Culture without Distinction']
- R. Weinzierl and D. Muggleton, [The Post-Subcultures Reader](#) (Berg Publishers, 2003) ['What is Post-subcultural Studies Anyway?']
- R. Williams, '[Culture is Ordinary](#),' in *Studying Culture: An Introductory Reader* (Arnold, 1993)

**Supervision question:** Are youth subcultures forms of resistance to mainstream culture?

**Thinking and talking question:** If we put culture at the centre, how does this help us think about the climate crisis?

## 5. Visual culture (Moreno Figueroa)

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**Summary:** In this topic, we will focus on a particular form of culture – visual culture – and relate it to important aspects of social life, exclusion and organisation. The study of the social history of photography allows us to understand how vision and power play a central role in the control over the bodies of individuals, families, nations and overall social relationships. We will examine the historical and social links between photography (and other forms of images), visual and cultural practices in a variety of contexts. The overall aim is to look for how images circulate and what meanings are inscribed in their trajectories and uses. We will also ask how photographs get 'entangled' through political positions, through 'culture' and the everyday.

**Seminar activity:** Bring two pictures to the class: 1) choose a personal picture that is meaningful to you from your everyday life or your family album, and 2) one picture of your birthday or a family/friends trip. Be prepared to show the image and tell their stories.

### Reading list:

- \*R. Barthes, *Camera Lucida* (Vintage, 2000) [whole book]
- \*J Berger, [Ways of Seeing](#), (BBC and Penguin Books, 1972) [whole book]
- \*R. Coleman, *Transforming Image: Screens, Affect, Futures* (Routledge, 2013) [Introduction, Conclusion and one chapter of your choice]
- J. Evans J & S Hall, *Visual Culture: The Reader* (Sage, 1999) ['What is Visual Culture' (pp. 1-8) and 'Looking and Subjectivity' (pp. 309-314)]
- \*A. Kuhn, *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (Verso, 1995) ['Introduction' and 'She'll Always Be your Little Girl']
- \*S. Lalvani, [Photography, Vision and the Production of Modern Bodies](#) (State University of New York Press, 1996) ['A Theoretical Framework' and one chapter of your choice]
- N. Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader* (Routledge, 2013) [Chapter 1 and explore the reader, especially Section II: 'Plug-in Theory']
- C. Pinney, *Camera Indica* (University of Chicago Press, 1997) [Preface, Prologue and Chapter 1]
- G. Rose, [Doing Family Photography: The Domestic, the Public and the Politics of Sentiment](#) (Ashgate, 2010) [Introduction, Conclusion and Chapter 2]
- \*A. Sekula, (1982) 'On the Invention of Photographic Meaning', in *Thinking Photography* (Macmillan, 1982)
- S. Sontag, [On Photography](#) (Penguin Books, 1979) [whole book]

- J. Spence, *Putting Myself in the Picture: A Political, Personal and Photographic Autobiography* (Camden Press, 1986) [Introduction]

**Supervision question:** What are the challenges of using photographs as evidence?

**Thinking and talking question:** *Studium* and *punctum* are key terms in Barthes' theorization of the photographic image; they help us think about social conventions and creative agency. What are the pros and cons of 'studium' and 'punctum' in the production of visual representations of the environmental crisis?

## 6. Race and representation (Moreno Figueroa)

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**Summary:** Deborah Poole observes in her analysis of the circulation of images between Europe and Andean South America one important element of photographs that is easily dismissed: 'we frequently forget that images are also about the pleasure of looking. Visual images fascinate us. They compel us to look at them, especially when the material they show us is unfamiliar or strange' (Poole 1997, 17). Following on from the previous lecture, this session explores the links between ideas of race and racism with the compelling and seductive production of identities, difference and the cultural politics of representational practices. We will examine the importance of visual culture in the (re)production and experience of contemporary subjectivities. Analysis of the historical coincidence of the emergence of the notion of 'race' and photography will allow us to interrogate the ambiguities of the interpretation of photographs and the pleasures images produce.

**Seminar activity:** Bring two images with contrasting representations of race: one problematic and one critical. Be prepared to discuss.

### Reading list:

- \*L. M. Alcoff, '[Habits of Hostility: On Seeing Race](#)', *Philosophy Today* 44 (2000), pp. 30-40
- D. Apel, '[On Looking: Lynching Photographs and Legacies of Lynching After 9/11](#)', *American Quarterly* 55/3 (2003), pp. 457-478
- \*J. Butler, 'Endangered/Endangering: Schematic Racism and White Paranoia' in *Reading Rodney King/Reading Urban Uprising* (Routledge, 1993)
- R. Dyer, *White* (Routledge, 1997)
- R. Eves, '["Black and White, a Significant Contrast": Race, Humanism and Missionary Photography in the Pacific](#)', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29/4 (2006), pp. 725-748
- F. Fernandez Guerra, '[Social Advertising and Social Change: Campaigns about Racism in Latin America and Mexico](#)', *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture* 15/2 (2020)
- F. Fanon, *Black Skins, White Masks* (Paladin, 1986) ['The Fact of Blackness']
- G. Grandin, '[Can the Subaltern Be Seen? Photography and the Affects of Nationalism](#)', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 84/1 (2004), pp. 83-111
- S. Hall, 'The Spectacle of the "Other"' in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, (Open University Press, 1997), pp. 223-290
- \*S. Hall, 'Introduction: Looking and Subjectivity' in *Visual Culture: The Reader* (Sage & The Open University, 1999)
- P. S. Howard, '[A Laugh for the National Project: Contemporary Canadian Blackface Humour and its Constitution through Canadian Anti-Blackness](#)', *Ethnicities* 18/6 (2018), pp. 843-868
- M. Jay & S. Ramaswamy, (2014) *Empires of Vision: A Reader* (Duke University Press, 2014) [Introduction and Chapter 1]
- C. Knowles, '[Seeing Race through the Lens](#)', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29/3 (2006), pp. 512-529
- P. S. Landau & D. D. Kaspian, *Images and Empires: Visuality in Colonial and Postcolonial Africa* (University of California Press, 2002) [Introduction and Conclusion]
- \*M. Maneri, '[Breaking the Race Taboo in a Besieged Europe: How Photographs of the "Refugee Crisis" Reproduce Racialized Hierarchy](#)', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* (2020), pp. 1-17
- \*M. G. Moreno Figueroa, '[Looking Emotionally: Photography, Racism and Intimacy in Research](#)', *History of the Human Sciences* 21/4 (2008), pp. 66-83
- K. Murji '[Using Racial Stereotypes in Anti-Racist Campaigns](#)', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29/2 (2006), pp. 260-280
- P. Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (Routledge, 1996) ['Broken Symmetries']

- \*C. Pinney, 'The Parallel Histories of Anthropology and Photography' in *Anthropology and Photography, 1860-1920* (Yale University Press, 1992)
- R. Pérez, '[Brownface Minstrelsy: "José Jiménez," the Civil Rights Movement, and the Legacy of Racist Comedy](#)', *Ethnicities* 16/1 (2016), pp. 40-67
- D. Poole, *Vision, Race, and Modernity: A Visual Economy of the Andean Image World* (Princeton University Press, 1997)
- \*D. Poole, '[An Image of "Our Indian": Type Photographs and Racial Sentiments in Oaxaca, 1920-1940](#)', *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84/1 (2004), pp. 37-82
- D. Poole, '[An Excess of Description: Ethnography, Race and Visual Technologies](#)', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34 (2005), pp. 159-79
- J. Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire* (University of Chicago Press, 1997)
- F. W. Twine, '[Visual Ethnography and Racial Theory: Family Photographs as Archives of Interracial Intimacies](#)', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29/3 (2006), pp. 487-511
- C. J. Williams, *Framing the West. Race, Gender, and the Photographic Frontier in the Pacific Northwest* (Oxford University Press, 2003) [Introduction, Chapter 5 and Conclusion]

**Supervision question:** What is the role of the visual in racialization processes? Answer with reference to specific contexts.

**Thinking and talking question:** Hall argues that seeing is a cultural practice. What is the implication of this statement to how we see nature and the environment in the midst of the environmental crisis?

## 7. Audiences (Saavedra Utman)

**Summary:** This topic covers how the understanding of audiences has evolved in media sociology, from passive to active – the latter including the digital age's prosumer or producing consumer. We will look at the relevance for scholarship's evolving views of audiences of research context, funding and methodology as well as the nature and political economy of prevailing media technologies. Throughout, we will focus on how the question of audiences relates to broader sociological questions around agency and structure, and we will consider the relationship between audience research, on the one hand, and commercial and political power, on the other.

**Seminar activity:** Find some media coverage of the phenomenon of fake news. Which understanding of the audience is represented? Why?

### Reading list:

- \*I. Ang, '[On the Politics of Empirical Audience Studies](#)', in *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords* (Wiley-Blackwell 2006)
- \*S.E. Bird, '[Are We all Producers Now? Convergence and Media Audience Practices](#)', *Cultural Studies*, 25/ 4-5 (2011), pp. 502-516
- \*R. Butsch '[Agency, Social Interaction, and Audience Studies](#)', in *Media Sociology: A Reappraisal* (Polity, 2014)
- N. Couldry, '[Theorising Media as Practice](#)', *Social Semiotics* 14/2 (2004): pp. 115-32.
- R. Crilley, M. Gillespie & A. Willis, '[Tweeting the Russian Revolution: RT's #1917LIVE and Social Media Re-Enactments as Public Diplomacy](#)', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 23/3 (2020), pp. 354-373
- J. Elridge, J. Kitzinger and K. Williams, *The Mass Media Power in Modern Britain* (Oxford University Press, 1997) [Chapters 10-13]
- S. Gunster, '[Engaging Climate Communication](#)', in *Journalism and Climate Crisis: Public Engagement, Media Alternatives*. (Routledge, 2017)
- \*S. Hall, '[Encoding/Decoding](#)' in *Culture, Media, Language* (Hutchinson, 1980)
- S. Livingstone, '[Relationships between Media and Audiences: Prospects for Audience Reception Studies](#)', in *Media, Ritual and Identity: Essays in Honor of Elihu Katz* (Routledge, 1998)
- S. L. Nielsen & P. Sheets (2019) '[Virtual Hype Meets Reality: Users' Perception of Immersive Journalism](#)', *Journalism*, pp. 1-17
- J. Shively, '[Cowboys and Indians: Perceptions of Western Films among American Indians and Anglos](#)', *American Sociological Review*, 57 (1992), pp. 725-34



- D. Smythe, '[On the Audience Commodity and Its Work](#),' in *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords* (Wiley-Blackwell 2006)
- S. Srinivasan & S. Diepeveen, '[The Power of the "Audience-Public": Interactive Radio in Africa](#),' *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, 23/3 (2018), pp. 389–412
- S. S. Sundar and A. M. Limperos, '[Uses and Grats 2.0: New Gratifications for New Media](#),' *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 57/4 (2013): pp. 504–25
- J. Vega & C. Rodríguez, '[Citizens' Media as Political Subjects: The Case of Community Media in Colombia](#),' in *Internationalizing Media Studies: Impediments and Imperatives* (Taylor & Francis, 2009)

**Supervision question:** Does the active audience approach advance our understanding of media reception?

**Thinking and talking question:** How does how audiences are understood impact how we communicate climate change?

## 8. The sociology of intellectuals (Baert)

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**Summary:** This topic introduces the sociology of intellectual life. In the first section, we compare the main theories and methodologies for the study of intellectuals. In the second, we explore how intellectual life has evolved since the beginning of the 20th century and assess its current status today.

### Reading list:

#### 1. The sociological study of intellectual life

- J. Alexander, '[Dramatic Intellectuals](#),' *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 29/4 (2016), pp. 341–358
- \*P. Baert, [The Existentialist Moment: The Rise of Sartre as a Public Intellectual](#) (Polity Press, 2015) ['Explaining Intellectuals: A Proposal']
- P. Baert & M. Morgan, '[A Performative Framework for the Study of Intellectual Life](#),' *European Journal of Social Theory* 21/3 (2018), pp. 322-339
- \*P. Bourdieu, '[Intellectual Field and Creative Project](#),' *Social Science Information* 8 (1969), pp. 89-119
- C. Camic & N. Gross '[The New Sociology of Ideas](#),' in *Blackwell Companion to Sociology* (John Wiley, 2001)
- \*R. Collins, [Sociology of Philosophies: Global Theory of Intellectual Change](#) (Harvard University Press, 1998)
- G. Eyal & L. Buchholz (2010) '[From the Sociology of Intellectuals to the Sociology of Interventions](#),' *The Annual Review of Sociology* 36 (2010), pp. 117-137
- R. Eyerman, (2011) '[Intellectuals and Cultural Trauma](#),' *European Journal of Social Theory* 14/4 (2011), pp. 453–467
- R. Eyerman, *Between Culture and Politics: Intellectuals in Modern Society* (Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- \*N. Gross, [Richard Rorty: The Making of an American Philosopher](#) (University of Chicago Press, 2008)
- M. Lamont, '[How to Become a Dominant French Philosopher: The Case of Jacques Derrida](#),' *American Journal of Sociology* 93/3 (1998), pp. 584-622
- M. Lamont, [How Professors Think: Inside the Curious World of Academic Judgement](#) (Harvard University Press, 2009)
- \*T. Medvetz, 'Bourdieu and the Sociology of Intellectual Life', in [The Oxford Handbook of Bourdieu](#) (Oxford University Press, 2018)
- S. Ponzanesi & A. J. Habeb (eds.), *Postcolonial Intellectuals in Europe: Critics, Artists, Movements, and their Publics* (Rowan & Littlefield, 2018)
- D. Swartz, *Symbolic Power, Politics, and Intellectuals: The Political Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (University of Chicago Press, 2013)

#### 2. The changing nature of intellectual life

- P. Baert, (2015) [The Existentialist Moment: The Rise of Sartre as a Public Intellectual](#) (Polity Press, 2015) [pp. 184-189]
- Z. Bauman, (1991) *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Postmodernity, and Intellectuals* (Polity, 1991)
- \*M. C. Desch (ed.), [Public Intellectuals in the Global Arena](#) (University of Notre Dame Press, 2016)

- \*D. Drezner, [\*The Ideas Industry: How Pessimists, Partisans and Plutocrats Are Transforming the Marketplace of Ideas\*](#) (Oxford University Press, 2017)
- G. Eyal, *The Crisis of Expertise* (Polity, 2019)
- R. Jacobs & E. Townsley, '[Media Meta-Commentary and the Performance of Expertise](#)', *European Journal of Social Theory* 21/3 (2018), pp. 340–356
- B. Misztal, [\*Intellectuals and the Public Good: Creativity and Civil Outrage\*](#) (Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- \*T. Nichols, [\*The Death of Expertise: The Campaign Against Established Knowledge and Why It Matters\*](#) (Oxford University Press, 2017)
- R. Posner, [\*Public Intellectual: A Study of Decline\*](#) (Harvard University Press, 2001)
- P. Thijsen, W. Weyns and S. Mels, [\*New Public Spheres: Recontextualising the Intellectual\*](#) (Routledge, 2016) ['The Intellectual in the Public Sphere']

**Supervision question:** *How useful is positioning theory for explaining intellectual innovations and their reception?*

## Series 2: Digital Media and Everyday Life

### Aims of this series:

- To further students' understanding of the ways in which digital media affect different aspects of people's everyday lives, from the conduct of interpersonal relationships to surveillance by states and corporations;
- To support students in their abilities to describe, compare and evaluate some of the main concepts and theories that have been used to study digital media and everyday life;
- To help students use relevant theories of culture and the media to assess how digital media can be empowering as well as disempowering for people in their everyday lives;
- To encourage students to critically assess the opportunities and threats that arise from digital media for people's everyday lives.

### 1. Digital media, everyday life and inequality (Jayadeva)

**Summary:** Commencing with an introduction to the sociology of everyday life, this topic will go on to explore the relation between digital media, everyday life and social inequality. Using the concept of 'labour' as a lens for critical investigation, we will examine how labour is distributed in and through digital media and will scrutinise how this distribution intersects with old and new inequalities.

**Seminar activity:** In small groups, pick a social media platform from your everyday life and discuss the labour that your use of this app/platform generates, for whom, and how this labour might feed off/into social inequalities.

### Reading list:

- C. Archer, '[Social Media Influencers, Post-Feminism and Neoliberalism: How Mum Bloggers' 'Playbour' is Reshaping Public Relations](#)', *Public Relations Inquiry*, 8/2 (2019), pp. 149–166
- d. boyd, '[Inequality: Can Social Media Resolve Social Divisions?](#)', in *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens* (Yale University Press, 2014)
- d. boyd, '[Introduction](#)', in *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens* (Yale University Press, 2014)
- d. boyd, '[Social Media: A Phenomenon to be Analyzed](#)', *Social Media + Society*, 1/1 (2015), pp. 1-2
- N. Couldry and U. A. Mejias, '[Data Colonialism: Rethinking Big Data's Relation to the Contemporary Subject](#)', *Television & New Media*, 20/4 (2019), pp. 336-349
- \*C. Fuchs & S. Sevignani, '[What Is Digital Labour? What is Digital Work? What's their Difference? And Why Do These Questions Matter for Understanding Social Media?](#)', *tripleC*, 11/2, pp. 237-293
- M. Graham, I. Hjorth & V. Lehdonvirta, '[Digital Labour and Development: Impacts of Global Digital Labour Platforms and the Gig Economy on Worker Livelihoods](#)', *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research* 23/2 (2017), pp. 135–162
- L. Hjorth, '[Ambient and Soft Play: Play, Labour and the Digital in Everyday Life](#)', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 21/1 (2018), pp. 3–12
- J. Kücklich, '[Precarious Playbour: Modders and the Digital Games Industry](#)', *The Fibreculture Journal* 5 (2005)
- \*U. A. Mejias, '[The Privatization of Social Life](#)', in *Off the Network: Disrupting the Digital World* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013)
- \*P. Sztompka, '[The Focus on Everyday Life: a New Turn in Sociology](#)', *European Review* 16/1 (2008), pp. 23–37
- J. van Dijck & T. Poell, '[Understanding Social Media Logic](#)', *Media and Communication* 1/1 (2013), pp. 2–14
- J. Wajcman, '[How Silicon Valley Sets Time](#)', *New Media and Society*, 21/6 (2019), pp. 1272-1289
- A. J. Wood, M. Graham, V. Lehdonvirta & I. Hjorth, '[Good Gig, Bad Gig: Autonomy and Algorithmic Control in the Global Gig Economy](#)', *Work, Employment and Society* 33/1 (2019), pp. 56-75
- A. J. Wood, M. Graham, V. Lehdonvirta & I. Hjorth, '[Networked but Commodified: The \(Dis\)Embeddedness of Digital Labour in the Gig Economy](#)', *Sociology* 53/5 (2019), pp. 931–950

**Supervision question:** What implications do the new forms of labour generated by the digital age have for social inequality? Discuss using examples.

**Thinking and talking question:** Have digital media created new connections between our everyday lives and the climate crises? Discuss.

## 2. Mediated intimacy (Philip)

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**Summary:** This topic explores the increasing incorporation of digital media into our intimate lives and practices. We will examine how digital media affect practices and experiences of interpersonal closeness and address the opportunities and obstacles to intimacy that these create.

**Seminar activity:** Choose an app or digital platform that can be used for intimacy and think about how such use of this app/platform can influence how we understand and do intimacy. Think about how inequalities might get reproduced or challenged on the app in novel ways.

### Reading list:

- R. Amundsen, "'A Male Dominance Kind of Vibe": Approaching Unsolicited Dick Pics as Sexism', *New Media & Society* (2020), pp. 1–16
- J. Archambault, 'Love and Deceit' in *Mobile Secrets: Youth, Intimacy, and the Politics of Pretense in Mozambique* (University of Chicago Press, 2017)
- \*F. Attwood, J. Hakim & A. Winch, 'Mediated Intimacies: Bodies, Technologies and Relationships', *Journal of Gender Studies*, 26/3 (2017), pp. 249–253
- D. Chambers, 'Introduction' in *Social Media and Personal Relationships: Online Intimacies and Networked Friendship* (Palgrave Macmillan 2013)
- D. Chambers, 'Technologically Mediated Personal Relationships' in *Social Media and Personal Relationships: Online Intimacies and Networked Friendship* (Palgrave Macmillan 2013)
- J. Hakim, 'The Celebrity Male Nude Leak: Value Creation, Precarity and the Naked Male Body' in *Work That Body: Male Bodies in Digital Culture* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers 2019)
- M. Hobbs, S. Owen & L. Gerber, 'Liquid Love? Dating Apps, Sex, Relationships and the Digital Transformation of Intimacy', *Journal of Sociology*, 53/2 (2017), pp. 271–284
- C. E. Lawson, 'Platform Vulnerabilities: Harassment and Misogynoir in the Digital Attack on Leslie Jones', *Information, Communication & Society* 21/6 (2018), pp. 818–833
- S. Livingstone, 'On the Mediation of Everything', *Journal of Communication*, 59/1 (2009), pp. 1–18
- A. Massanari, '#Gamergate and The Fapping: How Reddit's Algorithm, Governance, and Culture Support Toxic Technocultures', *New Media & Society* 19/3 (2017), pp. 329–346
- \*S. McGlotten, 'Introduction' in *Virtual Intimacies: Media, Affect, and Queer Sociality* (State University of New York Press, 2013)
- \*M. Niesen, 'Love, Inc.: Toward Structural Intersectional Analysis of Online Dating Sites and Applications', in *The Intersectional Internet: Race, Sex, Class, and Culture Online* (Peter Lang Publishing 2016)
- S. Paasonen, 'Infrastructures of intimacy' in *Mediated Intimacies: Connectivities, Relationalities and Proximities* (Routledge 2018)
- S. Paasonen, B. Light B & K. Jarrett, 'The Dick Pic: Harassment, Curation, and Desire', *Social Media + Society* 5/2 (2019), pp. 1–10
- M. N. Petersen, K. Harrison, T. Raun et al., 'Introduction: Mediated Intimacies' in *Mediated Intimacies: Connectivities, Relationalities and Proximities* (Routledge 2018)
- S. Philip, 2018. 'Youth and ICTs in a "New" India: Exploring Changing Gendered Online Relationships Among Young Urban Men and Women', *Gender & Development*, 26/2 (2018), pp.313-24
- J. Ringrose and M. Naezer, 'Adventure, Intimacy, Identity and Knowledge: How Social Media are Shaping and Transforming Youth Sexuality', in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sexual Development: Childhood and Adolescence* (Cambridge University Press, 2019)

**Supervision question:** Who benefits from the expansion of digital technologies into the intimate sphere?

**Thinking and talking question:** How does our turn towards digital media for intimacy relate to consumerism and fast-fashion?

### 3. The quantified self (Jayadeva)

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**Summary:** Starting with the concept of the 'quantified self' and its commercial history, this lecture is focused on the use of digital technology for self-tracking and to enhance self-knowledge. Returning to the classic sociological balance between structure and agency, we will first look at self-tracking technologies as a site of control by focusing both on their relationship with surveillance capitalism and on their normalisation of normative structures around neoliberalism, gender and able-bodiedness. By drawing on literature that takes a more ethnographic approach, we will then explore a more ambivalent view of power in the relationship between technologies and users, one which uncovers opportunities for resistance and new imaginaries.

**Seminar activity:** In small groups, decide on an app or digital platform that can be used for self-tracking and think about how using this app can inform how we think about ourselves and others.

#### Reading list:

- V. Barassi, '[BabyVeillance? Expecting Parents, Online Surveillance and the Cultural Specificity of Pregnancy Apps](#)', *Social Media + Society* 3/2 (2017), pp. 1–10
- K. Barta & G. Neff, '[Technologies for Sharing: Lessons from Quantified Self about the Political Economy of Platforms](#)', *Information, Communication & Society* 19/4 (2016), pp. 518–531
- N. Couldry & A. Powell, '[Big Data from the Bottom Up](#)', *Big Data & Society*, (2014), pp. 1-5
- \*K. Crawford, J. Lingel & T. Karppi, '[Our Metrics, Ourselves: A Hundred Years of Self-Tracking from the Weight Scale to the Wrist Wearable Device](#)', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 18 (2015), pp. 4–5
- A. S. Elias & R. Gill, '[Beauty Surveillance: The Digital Self-Monitoring Cultures of Neoliberalism](#)', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 21/1 (2018), pp. 59-87
- \*J. P. Elman, '["Find Your Fit": Wearable Technology and the Cultural Politics of Disability](#)', *New Media & Society* 20/10 (2018), pp. 3760–3777
- D. Lupton, '[Quantified Sex: A Critical Analysis of Sexual and Reproductive Self-Tracking Using Apps](#)', *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 17/4 (2015), pp. 440–453
- D. Lupton, '[Australian Women's Use of Health and Fitness Apps and Wearable Devices: A Feminist New Materialism Analysis](#)', *Feminist Media Studies* (2019), pp. 1–16
- D. Nafus & J. Sherman, '[This One Does Not Go Up to 11: The Quantified Self Movement as an Alternative Big Data Practice](#)', *International Journal of Communication*, 8 (2014), pp. 1784–1794
- G. Neff & D. Nafus, '[Self-tracking and the Technology Industry](#)', in *Self-Tracking* (MIT Press 2016)
- \*M. Ruckenstein & N. D. Schüll, '[The Datafication of Health](#)', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 46/1 (2017), pp. 261–278
- \*R. Sanders, '[Self-Tracking in the Digital Era: Biopower, Patriarchy, and the New Biometric Body Projects](#)', *Body & Society* 23/1 (2017), pp. 36-63
- B. Williamson, '[Algorithmic Skin: Health-Tracking Technologies, Personal Analytics and the Biopedagogies of Digitized Health and Physical Education](#)', *Sport, Education and Society* 20/1 (2015), pp. 133–151

**Supervision question:** What can we learn about the self and society from self-tracking and big data? Discuss using examples.

**Thinking and talking question:** What is the relationship between quantification and the climate crisis?

### 4. Surveillance and privacy (Jayadeva)

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**Summary:** This lecture takes a critical approach to our understandings and experiences of surveillance and privacy by showing how these are intricately linked to capitalism and inequality. We will begin with theoretical approaches to surveillance that allow us to unpack its power and consequences, focusing on two manifestations of contemporary surveillance: the intersection of surveillance and big data as well as the rise of social surveillance. We go on to explore the flip side of surveillance – namely privacy – as a discourse, demonstrating how orthodox Western understandings of privacy are caught up in individualism. The consequence is uneven experiences of privacy inflected by axes of inequality (we will focus on class and race). In this lecture, we will also consider alternative conceptualisations of privacy, ones which understand it as a social good and use it to challenge power relations.

**Seminar activity:** Pick an organisation that advocates for privacy or a piece of legislation on privacy. In small groups, surface which discourses around technology and privacy inform this organisation/legislation, where these discourses come from, and why?

#### Reading List:

- J. Bossewitch & A. Sinnreich, '[The End of Forgetting: Strategic Agency Beyond the Panopticon](#)', *New Media & Society*, 15/2 (2013), pp. 224–242
- G. Canella, '[Racialized Surveillance: Activist Media and the Policing of Black Bodies](#)', *Communication, Culture and Critique*, 11/3 (2018), pp. 378–398
- J. W. DeCew, '[The Feminist Critique of Privacy: Past Arguments and New Social Understandings](#)', in *Social Dimensions of Privacy: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Cambridge University Press, 2015)
- \*C. Fuchs, '[Towards an Alternative Concept of Privacy](#)', *Journal of Information, Communication and Ethics in Society*, 9/4 (2011), pp. 220–237
- \*S. P. Gangadharan, '[The Downside of Digital Inclusion: Expectations and Experiences of Privacy and Surveillance among Marginal Internet Users](#)', *New Media & Society* 19/4 (2017), pp. 597–615
- \*O. Gandy, 'Coming to Terms with the Panoptic Sort', in *Computers, Surveillance, and Privacy* (University of Minnesota Press, 1996)
- D. Lupton, '[Digital Risk Society](#)', in *Routledge Handbook of Risk Studies* (Routledge, 2016)
- D. Lyon, '[Surveillance, Snowden, and Big Data: Capacities, Consequences, Critique](#)', *Big Data & Society* 1/2 (2014), pp. 1–13
- \*A. Marwick, '[The Public Domain: Surveillance in Everyday Life](#)', *Surveillance & Society* 9/4 (2012), pp. 378–393
- A. E. Marwick and d. boyd, '[Understanding Privacy at the Margins](#)', *International Journal of Communication* 12 (2018), pp. 1157–1165
- H. F. Nissenbaum, '[Keeping Track and Watching Over Us](#)', in *Privacy in Context: Technology, Policy, and the Integrity of Social Life* (Stanford Law Books 2010).
- K. Raynes-Goldie, '[Aliases, Creeping, and Wall Cleaning: Understanding Privacy in the Age of Facebook](#)', *First Monday* 15/1 (2010)
- D. J. Solove, "'[I've Got Nothing to Hide](#)' and Other Misunderstandings of Privacy", *San Diego Law Review* 44 (2007), pp. 745–772
- A. Viseu, A. Clement and J. Aspinall, '[Situating Privacy Online](#)', *Information, Communication & Society* 7/1, (2004), pp. 92–114
- S. Zuboff, '[Big Other: Surveillance Capitalism and the Prospect of Information Civilization](#)', *Journal of Information Technology*, 30 (2015), pp. 75-89

**Supervision question:** 'Privacy is a privilege.' Discuss.

**Thinking and talking question:** What implications do the new visibilities of the digital age have for the environment?

### Series 3: Political Communication

#### Aims of this series:

- To introduce students to some of the key concepts, theories, and debates about political communication;
- To encourage students to argue with and apply these concepts, theories, and debates;
- To inspire students to think critically about media, technologies, democracy, power and their own citizenship.

#### 1. Populism, media and democracy (Panievsky)

**Summary:** This topic introduces the complex and disputed relationship between media, populism and democracy. Drawing on interdisciplinary literature, it presents the dominant (and contested) definitions of populism and reviews several popular claims regarding news media, social media and populism. Finally, it looks into different approaches to the role of media and populism within democratic societies. A variety of global

cases will be used to demonstrate the challenges and opportunities that populism poses to contemporary societies, including populism by the media, through the media, and against the media.

**Seminar activity:** Choose a case of populism which you are familiar with (a politician, a movement, a news organisation, etc.) and analyse its relationship with media. What are the potential implications/opportunities for democracy?

**Reading list:**

- P. Chakravartty and S. Roy, '[Mediatized Populisms: Inter-Asian Lineages](#),' *International Journal of Communication* 11 (2017), pp. 4073–92
- C. Cimaglio, '[“A Tiny and Closed Fraternity of Privileged Men”: The Nixon-Agnew Anti-Media Campaign and the Liberal Roots of the U.S. Conservative “Liberal Media” Critique](#),' *International Journal of Communication* 10 (2016), pp. 1-19
- F. Esser, A. Stepinska and D. N. Hopmann, '[Populism and the Media: Cross-National Findings and Perspectives](#),' in *Populist Political Communication in Europe* (Routledge, 2016)
- P. G. Estella, '[Digital Populism, Digital Newswork and the Concept of Journalistic Competence: the Philippine Condition](#),' *Media International Australia* 179/1 (2021), pp. 80–95
- P. Gerbaudo, '[Social Media and Populism: An Elective Affinity?](#)' *Media Culture & Society* 40/5 (2018), pp. 745-753
- B. Krämer, '[Populism, Media and the Form of Society](#),' *Communication Theory* 24/1 (2014), pp. 42-60
- G. Mazzoleni, *Twenty-First Century Populism: The Spectre of Western European Democracy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008) [[Populism and the Media](#)']
- B. Ohm, '[Organizing Popular Discourse with and against the Media: Notes on the Making of Narendra Modi and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as Leaders-without-Alternative](#),' *Television & New Media*, 16/4 (2015), pp. 370–7
- A. Panievsky, '[Covering Populist Media Criticism: When Journalists' Professional Norms Turn Against Them](#),' *International Journal of Communication* 15 (2021), pp. 2136–55
- \* V. Pickard, *Democracy Without Journalism?* (Oxford University Press, 2020) [[Introduction: When Commercialism Trumps Democracy](#)']
- S. Rao, '[Making of Selfie Nationalism: Narendra Modi, the Paradigm Shift to Social Media Governance, and Crisis of Democracy](#),' *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 42/2 (2018), pp. 166–83
- H. Van den Bulck and A. Hyzen, '[Of Lizards and Ideological Entrepreneurs: Alex Jones and Infowars in the Relationship Between Populist Nationalism and the Post-Global Media Ecology](#),' *International Communication Gazette* 82/1 (2020) 42–59
- S. Waisbord, '[Democracy, Journalism, and Latin American Populism](#),' *Journalism* 14/4 (2013), pp. 504-21
- \* S. Waisbord, '[Why Populism is Troubling for Democratic Communication](#),' *Communication, Culture and Critique* 11/1 (2018), pp. 21–34
- \* R. Wodak, *The Politics of Fear* (Sage, 2015) [[Populism and Politics: Transgressing Norms and Taboos](#)']

**Supervision question:** How can media logic (and social media logic) help us understand the relationship between media, populism and democracy?

**Thinking and talking question:** Is Extinction Rebellion a populist movement? [See: M. Beeson, '[Can environmental populism save the planet?](#)' *The Conversation*, 21 August 2019]

## 2. Visibility (Jayadeva)

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**Summary:** Mediation has always afforded opportunities for visibility, but these opportunities are also always embedded in power relations that inflect who is seen by whom. In this topic, we will follow the concept of visibility in media sociology as the subdiscipline moves from considering the mass media to thinking about new visibilities in the era of social media and machine learning; we will theorise beyond visibility to think about invisibility and hypervisibility and how these relate to inequality. In so doing, we will not only look at how the status quo vis-à-vis visibility is maintained, including through considering the perils of visibility, but we will also look at how it is being challenged.

**Seminar activity:** Choose a struggle over mediated visibility from current events and investigate the relationships between visibility and power that characterise it, using the concepts and arguments from the topic.

**Reading List:**

- \*R. Benjamin, *Race after Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code* (Polity, 2019) [[‘Coded Exposure: Is Visibility a Trap?’](#)]
- S. Browne, *Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness* (Duke University Press, 2015) [‘Introduction, and Other Dark Matters’]
- M. D. Clark, [‘White Folks’ Work: Digital Allyship Praxis in the #BlackLivesMatter Movement](#), *Social Movement Studies* 18/5 (2019), pp. 519-34
- S. Duguay, [‘Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer Visibility Through Selfies: Comparing Platform Mediators Across Ruby Rose’s Instagram and Vine Presence’](#), *Social Media + Society* April-June (2016), pp. 1-12
- R. B. Eagle, [‘Loitering, Lingerin, Hashtagging: Women Reclaiming Public Space Via #BoardtheBus, #StopStreetHarassment, and the #EverydaySexism Project’](#), *Feminist Media Studies*, 15/2 (2013), pp. 350-3
- S. Hall et al, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (Macmillan, 1978) [[‘The Social Production of News’](#)]
- E. McPherson, [‘Risk and the Pluralism of Digital Human Rights Fact-Finding and Advocacy’](#), in *New Technologies for Human Rights Law and Practice* (Cambridge University Press, 2018)
- E. McPherson, [‘Spot News versus Reportage: Newspaper Models, the Distribution of Newsroom Credibility, and Implications for Democratic Journalism in Mexico’](#), *International Journal of Communication* (2012)
- \*K. Mendes, J. Ringrose and J. Keller, [‘#MeToo and the Promise and Pitfalls of Challenging Rape Culture through Digital Feminist Activism’](#), *European Journal of Women’s Studies*, 25/2 (2018), pp. 236-46
- J. Nummi, C. Jennings & J. Feagin, [‘#BlackLivesMatter: Innovative Black Resistance’](#), *Sociological Forum*, 34/S1 (2019), pp. 1042-64
- K. Ott, [‘Social Media and Feminist Values: Aligned or Maligned?’](#), *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 39/1 (2018), pp. 93-111
- J. Penney, [‘Social Media and Symbolic Action: Exploring Participation in the Facebook Red Equal Sign Profile Picture Campaign’](#), *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 20/1 (2015), pp. 52-66
- T. A. Thrall, D. Stecula, and D. Sweet, [‘May We Have Your Attention Please? Human-Rights NGOs and the Problem of Global Communication’](#), *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 19/2 (2014), pp. 135-59
- \*J. B. Thompson, [‘The New Visibility’](#), *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22/6 (2005), pp. 31-51
- J. B. Thompson, [‘Mediated Interaction in the Digital Age’](#), *Theory, Culture & Society*, 37/1 (2018), pp. 3-28
- D. Zarkov and K. Davis, [‘Ambiguities and Dilemmas around #MeToo: #ForHowLong and #WhereTo?’](#) *European Journal of Women’s Studies* 25/1 (2018), pp. 3-9

**Supervision question:** *Who benefits from the new politics of visibility in the digital age?*

**Thinking and talking question:** *How has who and what are visible as concerns the climate crisis changed in recent years? Why?*

### 3. Witnessing (Jayadeva)

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**Summary:** In this topic, we will build on the concept of mediation to take a closer look at the mediated practice of witnessing – a counterpart to the practices around visibility we considered last week. We will consider the kinds of moral engagement and power dynamics that mediated witnessing involves through examining case studies of a range of witnessing in the digital age, including livestream and virtual reality witnessing. We will focus in particular on the epistemological and ethical dimensions of witnessing practice, which influence whom we believe and what actions we take (or do not take) as a result of witnessing.

*Content note: The reading list and lecture contain references to incidents of human rights violations and conflict.*

**Seminar activity:** We will critically reflect on this topic through engaging with two projects developed at the University of Cambridge’s Department of Sociology and Centre of Governance and Human Rights. In pairs, and with an eye to the concepts and arguments of this topic, play the [‘Social Life of Data’](#) game and check out the [End Everyday Racism](#) reporting platform.

**Reading list:**

- M. Ananny, [‘Creating Proper Distance through Networked Infrastructure: Examining Google Glass for Evidence of Moral, Journalistic Witnessing’](#) in *Boundaries of Journalism* (Routledge, 2015)



- \*L. Chouliaraki, '[Digital Witnessing in Conflict Zones: The Politics of Remediation](#)', *Information, Communication & Society* 18/11 (2015): pp. 1362–77
- S. Engle Merry, *The Seductions of Quantification: Measuring Human Rights, Gender Violence and Sex Trafficking* (The University of Chicago Press, 2016) [[Introduction: 'A World of Quantification'](#)]
- N. Farrell & S. Allan, '[Redrawing Boundaries: WITNESS and the Politics of Citizen Videos](#)', *Global Media and Communication*, 11/3 (2015), pp. 237–253
- P. Frosh & A. Pinchevski '[Media Witnessing and the Ripeness of Time](#)', *Cultural Studies*, 28/4 (2014), pp. 594–610
- J. Gray, '[Data Witnessing: Attending to Injustice with Data in Amnesty International's Decoders Project](#)', *Information, Communication & Society*, 22/7 (2019), pp. 971–991
- S. Gregory, '[Ubiquitous Witnesses: Who Creates the Evidence and the Live\(d\) Experience of Human Rights Violations?](#)', *Information, Communication & Society*, 18/11 (2015), pp. 1378–1392
- M. Kyriakidou, '[Media Witnessing: Exploring the Audience of Distant Suffering](#)', *Media, Culture & Society* 37/2 (2014), pp. 215–231
- E. McPherson, '[Advocacy Organizations' Evaluation of Social Media Information for NGO Journalism: The Evidence and Engagement Models](#),' *American Behavioral Scientist* 59/1 (2015): pp. 124–48
- E. McPherson, '[Digital Human Rights Reporting by Civilian Witnesses: Surmounting the Verification Barrier](#)' in *Producing Theory in a Digital World 2.0: The Intersection of Audiences and Production in Contemporary Theory* (Peter Lang Publishing, 2015)
- M. Mortensen, '[Connective Witnessing: Reconfiguring the Relationship Between the Individual and the Collective](#)', *Information, Communication & Society*, 18/11 (2015), pp. 1393–1406
- K. Nash, '[Virtual Reality Witness: Exploring the Ethics of Mediated Presence](#)', *Studies in Documentary Film*, 12/2 (2018), pp. 119–131
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- \*J. D. Peters, '[Witnessing](#)', *Media, Culture & Society*, 23/6 (2001), pp. 707–723.
- S. Ristovska, '[Strategic Witnessing in an Age of Video Activism](#)', *Media, Culture & Society*, 38/7 (2016), pp. 1034–1047

**Supervision question:** *What does the changing nature of witnessing tell us about the role of media in holding power to account?*

**Thinking and talking question:** *What role has witnessing played in recent developments in the climate crisis?*

#### 4. The future of journalism (Arteaga Rojas)

**Summary:** In this topic, we will critically examine the knowledge controversies and discursive battles over framing the diagnosis and solution to journalism's converging 'crises'. Drawing on historical sociology in the Global South (mostly Latin America), we will put current narratives of emergency and risk in context, by re-examining the formation of the neoliberal doctrines of 'free flow of information' and 'free market of ideas', which still frame global debates on the protection and professionalization of journalists in individual, private and depoliticised terms. In order to denaturalize the values of 'liberal journalism' and 'freedom of speech', particular attention will be paid to recent movements for media reform and public service regulation in the UK. These articulate a conceptual repertoire that is often absent in media industry 'futurism' and research on 'journalistic roles and identity': media ownership concentration, public media, effective statutory regulators, taxing of tech oligopolies, redistributive subsidies, empowering of media workers and victims of press abuse.

**Seminar activity:** Learn about and compare two reports, '[Who Owns the UK Media? 2021](#)' by the Media Reform Coalition and '[More Important, But Less Robust?](#)' by the Oxford Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, which frame the future of journalism in very different terms. In what ways do their diagnoses and solutions differ or coincide? Who are the main actors responsible for the problems addressed and who are the main of agents of change according to both discourses?

#### **Reading list:**

- J. C. Alexander, '[Journalism, Democratic Culture, and Creative Reconstruction](#)' in *The Crisis of Journalism Reconsidered: Democratic Culture, Professional Codes, Digital Future* (Cambridge University Press, 2016)

- R. Arnaldo González & F. V. Rodelo, '[Double-Edged Knife: Practices and Perceptions of Technology and Digital Security among Mexican Journalists in Violent Contexts](#)', *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society*, (2020), pp. 1–21
- \*N. Fenton, '[Media Activism, Media Change?](#)' in *The Routledge Companion To Media And Activism* (Routledge, 2018)
- \*V. Freije, '[The “Emancipation of Media”: Latin American Advocacy for a New International Information Order in the 1970s](#)', *Journal of Global History*, 14/2 (2019), pp. 301-320
- C. González de Bustamante & J. E. Relly, '[Professionalism Under Threat of Violence: Journalism, Reflexivity, and the Potential for Collective Professional Autonomy in Northern Mexico](#)', *Journalism Studies*, 17/6 (2016), pp. 684–702
- N. Lemann, '[Can Journalism Be Saved?](#)', *The New York Review of Books* (2020)
- B. McNair, '[After Objectivity? Schudson’s Sociology of Journalism in the Era of Post-Factuality](#)', *Journalism Studies*, 18/10 (2017), pp. 1318–33
- E. McPherson, I. Guenette Thornton and M. Mahmoudi, '[Open Source Investigations and the Technology-Driven Knowledge Controversy in Human Rights Fact-Finding](#)', in *Digital Witness: Using Open Source Information for Human Rights Investigation, Documentation and Accountability* (OUP, 2020)
- C. Mellado et al. '[Comparing Journalism Cultures in Latin America: The Case of Chile, Brazil and Mexico](#)', *International Communication Gazette*, 74/1 (2012), pp. 60–77
- T. Mills, *The BBC: Myth of a Public Service* (Verso, 2016) [Introduction, Ch. 6 and Conclusion]
- B. Mutsvauro, '[Challenges Facing Development of Data Journalism in Non-Western Societies](#)', *Digital Journalism*, 7/9 (2019), pp. 1289–94
- N. Roudakova '[Ethics and Accountability in Soviet Journalism](#)', *Center for Media at Risk* (2019)
- N. Roudakova, *Losing Pravda: Ethics and The Press in Post-Truth Russia* (Cambridge University Press, 2017) ['Introduction']
- L. Steiner, '[Solving Journalism’s Post-Truth Crisis with Feminist Standpoint Epistemology](#)', *Journalism Studies* 19/13 (2018): pp. 1854–65
- \*P. Wragg, *A Free and Regulated Press: Defending Coercive Independent Press Regulation* (Hart, 2020) [Preface and Preamble]

**Supervision question:** *Is effective public regulation of the press possible?*

**Thinking and talking question:** *What elements of media reform are a priority for addressing the climate crisis and issues of environmental justice?*