

## **DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR**

### **SO 3225 SOCIOLOGY OF MASS MEDIA**

**-Level 5  
UK CREDITS: 15**

**PREREQUISITES:** SO 1000 Introduction to Sociology or SO1001 Sociology of Modern Life, plus any additional course in Sociology

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** The media in the global age: From television (i.e news, media events, reality shows) to the internet (i.e. facebook, wikipedia, blogs). Emphasis on popular culture,(un)reality constructions, audiences,celebrity industry, media power, the rise of a global public sphere.Media criticism, from mass society theories and the Frankfurt School to Postman,Baudrillard, and others to recent theorizing on alternative media and convergence culture.

**RATIONALE:** Using an interdisciplinary approach based on sociology, media and cultural studies, this basic level module, aims to provide a multi-faceted understanding of the role of global media in our post-modern society. Focusing on the presentation and analysis of relevant to the “media and society” dialectic phenomena, it intends to analyze them through the lenses of empirical and theoretical works within the socio-cultural context of our time. Communication is seen as the prime moving force of the media which,from television to the latest forms of interactive new media, along with their technological infrastructure, has (re)shaped identity, relationships, groups, societies and globality. The course aims to broaden its appeal to students majoring in the social sciences, humanities, business and communications studies, enhancing at the same time their opportunities for graduate specialization in the media as well as their professional careers.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** As a result of taking this course, the students could be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of theoretical approaches and criticism in the study of the media
2. Exhibit a solid understanding of key media debates
3. Apply the theoretical perspectives and their conceptual schemes to the study of particular media phenomena
4. Comprehend and critically assess the role of the media (old and new) and their socio-cultural implications for transforming society at large

### **METHOD OF TEACHING**

**AND LEARNING:** In congruence with the learning and teaching strategy of the college, the following tools are used:

- Classes consist of lectures, class discussions based on course readings and screenings audio-visual material
- Office hours: students are encouraged to make full use of the office hours of their lecturer, where they can address issues pertinent to the course material, ask questions and seek guidance on their research paper.
- Use of a blackboard site, where instructors post lecture notes, assignment instructions, timely announcements, as well as additional resources.

**ASSESSMENT:**

One take-home assignment, "diagnostic" - <b>formative</b>	0%	Apply the theoretical analysis and/ or key debates to the study a media phenomenon
A midterm exam – <b>summative</b>	40%	essay –type questions combination (choice: 2 out of 4)
Final examination (2-hour, comprehensive) - <b>summative</b>	60%	Seen essay –type questions (choice of 2)

The formative take- home assignment, which aims to prepare the students for the exams, tests learning Outcomes 2,3

The summative formative midterm exam tests learning outcomes 1,2,4

The final examination tests learning outcomes 1,2,4

**READING LIST:**

**Required material:**

Thornham, S. and Bassett and Marris P. eds ( 2009) *Media Studies : A Reader*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Edinbrugh:Edinbrugh University Press.

**Indicative List of Further Reading:**

Additional readings to supplement the basic material covered in the core text will be assigned from books on reserve status in the JSB Library :

1. Creeber, G. and Martin, R. eds ( 2009) *Digital Cultures: Understanding New Media*, Maldenhead, EUK: McGroaw Hill (ch.1,2,7).
  2. Couldry, N. and Curran, J. eds (2003) *Contesting Media Power: Alternative Media in a Networked World*, Rowman & Littlefield. (ch.2,3,14 )
  3. Dayan, D. & Katz, E. (1992) “ Why Study Media Events” in *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History*, Cambridge,MA: Harvard University Press.
  4. Jensen,J.(1990) “*Redeeming Modernity: Contraditions in Media Criticism*, London: Sage.
  5. Long, P. and Wall,T. (2009) *Media Studies: Texts, Production and Context*, Essex,UK: Pearson.
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6. Marshall, D. (2006) *The Celebrity Culture Reader*, Routledge.
7. McNair, B. ( 1998 ) *The Sociology of Journalism*, London: Arnold.
8. Strinati, D. (2000) “ TV Audiences” *An Introduction to Studying Popular Culture*, London:Routledge
9. Strinati, Dominic. (1995) “ The Frankfurt School and the Culture Industry”, *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*, London: Routledge.
10. Tumber, H. ed. (1999) *News: A Reader*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

### **Recommended material:**

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Andrejevic, M. (2004) *Reality TV: The Work of Being Watched*, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.

Atton, C. (2002) *Alternative Media*, London: Sage.

Bailey, O. Cammaerts, B. and Carpentier.N. (2008) *Understanding Alternative Media*, Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press.

Burgess, J. and Green, J. (2009) *Youtube: Digital Media and Society Series*, Cambridge,UK: Polity.

Castells, M. (2003). *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Creeber, G. and Martin, R. eds ( 2009) *Digital Cultures: Understanding New Media*, Maldenhead, EUK: McGroaw Hill.

Couldry, N. and Curran, J. eds (2003) *Contesting Media Power: Alternative Media in a Networked World*, Rowman & Littlefield.

Gauntlett, D. and Horsley, R. (eds) (2004). *Web.Studies*. 2nd ed. London: Arnold. Also available at <http://www.newmediastudies.com/intro2004.htm>

Gillmor, D. (2004). *We the Media: Grassroots Journalism by the People, for the People*. Farnham: O'Reilly. (Also available st <http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/wemedia/book/>)

Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York, NY: New York University Press.

Jong, W. Shaw, M.and Stammers, N. ( 2005) *Global Activism and Global Media*, London: Pluto Press. (esp. chapters 1, 2 )

King, E. (2010) *Free for All: The Internet's Transformation of Journalism*, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

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Meenanski G. D. And Kellner, D.M. (2006) *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*.

Mitroff, I, I, and Bennis, W. (1989) *The Unreality Industry: The Deliberate Manufacturing of Falsehood and What it is Doing to our Lives*, Oxford: Oxford University

Stevenson, N. (1995) *Understanding Media Cultures: Social Theory and Mass Communication*, London: Sage.

Van de Donk, , Loader, B. Nixon, P.G. & Rucht, D. (2004) *Cyberprotest: New Media, Citizens and Social Movements*, London: Routledge

Waltz, Mitzi (2005) *Alternative and Activist Media*, Edinburgh University Press, ISBN-0-7486-1958-5

Postman, N. (1985) *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*, NY: Penguin.

Redmond, S. and Holmes, S. eds (2007) *Stardom and Celebrity : A Reader*, London: Sage.

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## WWW RESOURCES:

[www.theory.org.uk](http://www.theory.org.uk)

[www.uiowa.edu/journalism](http://www.uiowa.edu/journalism)

[www.uiowa.edu/~commstud/resources](http://www.uiowa.edu/~commstud/resources)

[www.sociologyarena.com](http://www.sociologyarena.com)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPuV1PvDlqE&fmt=22&feature=channel\\_page](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPuV1PvDlqE&fmt=22&feature=channel_page)

<http://www.mitpressjournals.org/toc/dmal/-/2>

<http://oreilly.com/catalog/9780596007331>

<http://hevron.haifa.ac.il/~soc/lecturers/talmud/files/547.htm>

Journals:

*Media, Culture and Society* <http://mcs.sagepub.com/>

*Global Media* <http://lass.calumet.purdue.edu/cca/gmj/>

*Television and New Media* <http://tvn.sagepub.com/>

## INDICATIVE CONTENT\*:

1. Mass Media in Contemporary society: from 19<sup>th</sup> century mass society to post-modern society and culture
2. Info-society – Network Society (Lyon-Castells)
3. Television analysis
  - a. representations and stereotyping : the case of sit-coms
  - b. “media events” :the live broadcasting of “ history”

- c. the social production of news (selection, production, )
  - d. professional culture: journalism and the critique of objectivity
4. Media criticisms :
- a. MacDonald, Boortsin, Ewen, Postman
  - b. The Frankfurt School's critique of culture industry-
5. Manufacturing (Un)realities
- a. The social construction of (un) reality
  - b. Reality TV
  - c. The culture of unreality (visual culture - hyperreality – virtual reality)
  - d. Consumer culture and advertising: from products to brands
  - e. Celebrity culture – constructing celebrities-
6. Media audiences
- a. Audience Research (effects, uses, audience reception and power)
  - a. High and popular culture and their “taste audiences”
  - b. Subcultures, fandom , cybercommunities
7. Media in the global age
- a. New Media ( websites, facebook, google, wikipedia, blogs)
  - c. The rise of a convergence culture
  - a. Media Power : from mainstream to alternative media
  - b. The rise of a new public sphere?
  - c. Alternative Media: Activism and new forms of cyberprotest