

TCU Honors College Colloquium 2015
How Media Revolutions Change Everything

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Description

Nicholas Carr, in his book *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains*, explores how merely using a new technology will produce fundamental changes in the way we think. Taking off from Carr's premise we will explore the full range of psychic and social consequences of media, and most especially how a new dominant medium actually changes the way everything works in society. We will look at the transition from print to television and from television to the internet, and then ask: How has family interaction changed each time? Do children behave differently? What about changes in politics and government? Has the institutional church changed? How about the ways we get and process the news... or don't? Has education, most notably higher education, changed for the better or worse? How has new media changed how leaders communicate? What about how countries around the world relate to each other? And how does unrest and violence develop. And with all this in mind, is there a need for "media literacy" education in our schools? The professor will share ideas and "lessons learned" from his work over the years; faculty and outside guests will join in with their expertise; and students will write about their thoughts and share them in interactive class panels and discussions.

Objectives

The course will be about "how to think about issues, most specifically media issues." It will be an adventure in ideas-- yours, mine and our guests'. Our focus will be: (1) How to establish frameworks for analysis, (2) How to determine the needed context for understanding, (3) How to clarify the "sides" in any debate, (4) But then how to differentiate "sides" from "truth."

Issues analysis should help us form "more informed opinions." It should help us establish parameters and mechanisms for "compromise." And it should help us assess the need and possibilities for media literacy education.

Colloquium Requirements

Class Agenda (except the first class)

1. Dialogue with guest expert... in class and/or via the Internet
2. Instructor's "lessons learned" ... on the topic of the day
3. Small group discussion... on the topic of the day
4. Report back... the most important lesson(s) of the day

Student requirements

1. Weekly issues analysis outline
 - a. One page, printed and brought to class
 - b. Outline to include:
 - (1) Sources you searched or consulted
 - (2) Your take on essential background facts
 - (3) The questions most important to answer
2. Blog-style colloquium report
 - a. Select any topic from the class schedule.
 - b. Develop it as a blog post, i.e. a complex issue analyzed with clarity and insight.

There is no length requirement. Emphasis should be on quality of insights, creatively conceived ideas, and writing style.
 - c. State a problem and present your solution. Or write about how to understand and address this particular issue its possible solutions.
 - d. You may submit it to the instructor electronically at any time during the semester.
 - e. The instructor may reference it in class discussions.
3. Attendance at every class meeting... learning objectives can only be met with full engagement. In the case of illness or unavoidable absence, bring your complete and signed explanation in writing.

Grading

1. Completing every weekly issues analysis will insure a B grade. Missing any one, can lower the grade.
2. The quality and creativity of the colloquium report will increase the B grade to A, or lower it.

Suggested background resources

Books:

1. The Shallow
2. Understanding Media

3. Alone Together
4. Little Bunch of Mad Men
5. The New Digital Age

Other:

1. Wired
2. The Economist
3. Internet and digital media monitored to give you a balanced view of the world

Mobile media in class:

1. Bring any and all mobile media to class
2. Your attendance is your pledge that you will not use it during class for personal communication
3. You should use it to search for additional information, to check facts, and to enrich our conversation.

Plagiarism

This is a growing problem in the new digital media world. Only personal integrity can solve it. Your status as an honors college student and your enrollment in this class is your honor commitment that every word presented by you that is *taken directly from someone else* will be credited to that source.

Colloquium Topic Schedule 2015 (Revised)

Jan 12 Introduction to Media Studies

Colloquium expectations. Understanding media dynamics. Why communication always breaks down. When communication can succeed. The case for media literacy.

Jan 19 Martin Luther King Holiday

Jan 26 Impact on Families, Children and Individuals.

The TV room and family interaction. Impact of TV sex and violence on behavior and values. Internet and social media produced changes. Impact on knowledge about the world.

Feb 2 The New Media Era of News

24/7 cable news. Aggregators. Bloggers. Websites. Citizen journalists. Impact on newspapers. Electronic newsletters.

Feb 9 International News

Network cutbacks. News services. Free-lancers. Citizen journalists. Herding. Foreign networks. Social media impact. Influence of literacy. Cell phones. The language of TV imagery.

Feb 16 The Future of Print

Print vs. electronic books. Newspapers. In marketing organizations. In third world nations.

Feb 23 Institutions

Nonprofits and NGOs. Brand identity. Relationships. Multiple platforms. Social media pros and cons. Changing news media relations. Crisis communication.

Mar 2 Communicating Cities

Nonpartisan problem-solving city by city. Mayor/city manager leadership. Intercity collaboration. Developing city brands. Neighborhood mobilization. Corporate and foundation funded special projects.

Mar 9 Spring Break

Mar 16 Politics and Campaign Communication

How campaign communication has changed. The role of media in polarization. The impact of negativity. The influence of money. Checks and balance changes. Media performance and leadership.

Mar 23 Foreign Policy and Diplomacy

Presidential communication at normal and crisis times. How diplomacy and state department communication has changed. The problem of message consistency. Adversaries hear what they want. Getting Through the clutter.

Mar 30 The Idea of America and Public Diplomacy

The need for credibility. National security vs. share values allies. Communicating the "idea of America. People to people communication vs. government to people communication. The USIA and credibility. NGOs. The feasibility of a quasi-government organization.

Apr 6 Global Higher Education

The purest form of public diplomacy. Changing government roles, digital technology and globalization happening simultaneously. Student and faculty migratory patterns. Study abroad, partnerships, and remote campuses. International leadership development. World problem-solving and nation rebuilding focused research and consulting.

Apr 13 Communicating complex Issues

The dynamics of issues management. Communication clarity and brevity. Revolution. Rebuilding. Strategies of deterrence. Crisis communication.

Apr 20 Religion, Denominations, Politics, and Extremism

How media has changed the church. Televangelism vs. mainstream religion. Separation of church and state. Religious values in governance. Religion and political extremism.

Apr 27 The Communication Dimensions of Leadership

Visibility and “walking the talk.” When to listen and when to act. Using group dynamics and meetings. Participatory problem-solving. Dealing with the news media. Understanding institutional politics.