

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL for

**MASS COMMUNICATION THEORY:
Foundations, Ferment, and Future
Seventh Edition**

by

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INTRODUCTION

This instructor's manual is designed to assist faculty teaching a mass communication theory or media and society course. It offers many of the items typically found in such a manual (for example, test items and suggestions for using many of the text's special features). But it also ignores many of the things faculty have come to expect in an instructor's guide. We offer no glossary; no chapter outlines, objectives or summaries; no significant readings; and no important terms. This is because all of these are found inside the text itself. As the book's first chapter makes clear, we see mass communication theory as a living, changing, almost volatile thing. We argue that mass communication has been and is now a product of its time, shaped by technological advances, efforts at control, and the demands of diversity, pluralism, and democracy. This means that mass communication theory is a human construction, and as such, it is very often personal and subjective. Therefore, we felt compelled to include these features designed to generate thought, discussion, and argument in the body of each chapter to help students make the various theories relevant and, where they wish, their own. We do, however, offer several discussion questions for each chapter that go beyond those in the text itself. The discussion questions in the text lean toward the student-centered; that is, they are along the lines of "What would you do? Or "What was your experience?" Those included in this instructor's manual, labeled "Critical Thinking Questions," are designed to generate wide-reaching class discussion and debate.

This manual, then, should be seen as an instructor's problem-solver. For example, we'll provide examples and discussion of what exam questions have worked for others, how the "boxes" can be best utilized or augmented, and what audiovisual materials might be available to demonstrate and enliven the offered theories.

We recognize, though, that mass communication theory is taught under a variety of titles, in a number of different academic departments, with varying objectives, to graduate students and undergrads at the lower and upper divisions, by faculty trained in numerous methodologies and theoretical perspectives. This is our personal professional experience, and we know it to be true of the disciplines generally represented by the name "mass communication." So we readily and happily recognize that one successful course in mass communication theory can have a much different look from another.

There are, however, a few principles of pedagogy we believe are constant across these many approaches. First, it is more important to achieve comprehension than complete coverage of all the theories. This text is not only exhaustive in its survey of mass communication theory, but it is deep in evaluation, both positive and negative, of these ideas. And because this material is presented in such a way as to generate discussion and stir debate, it is the rare teacher who can achieve both student understanding and full completion of all 11 chapters. It may be helpful, then, to determine those sections of the book that you wish to emphasize and stress as important or necessary for student competency in mass communication theory.

If this textbook is used in a media and society course, you will want to place a different emphasis on its content than a course focusing on media theory. You may want to stress how the same questions about the role of media keep recurring despite ongoing changes in society and in media technology. You may want to devote more attention to the evolving structure of the media industries, professionalization, normative theories, and audience use and effects. Major issues from past eras (threat of propaganda, yellow journalism, violence in comic books and movies) can be linked to contemporary controversies. Challenges posed by new media can be contrasted with challenges posed by radio, movies, and television.

Second, students should know the facts of mass communication theory—the names, the schools of thought, the dates. But what is equally, if not more, important is that they develop a solid and, yes, personal understanding. The text is written to emphasize the analysis, comparison, and examination of ideas in a way that will allow students to apply what they've learned to their own experience with the media, society, and culture. Not every one of our students will assume careers in the media industries, but every one will live a lifetime of media consumption and interaction. Class discussion should enable students to learn from each other's experience with media. This should be especially useful in classes where students come from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Finally, time, resources, and class size may dictate straight lecture or other passive learning formats, but actively involving students in the examination and understanding of mass communication theory is demonstrably superior. We warn you, though, that the real problem may be keeping the course on schedule. Students are usually eager to discuss the media, their attitudes toward them, their feelings about their personal roles in the society, and their place in and comfort with contemporary culture. Generating student involvement may be as simple as directing their natural interest to the discussion of the theories under consideration. We'll suggest some ways to do this that are specific to individual issues and chapters, as well as some general strategies in the next section.

ASSIGNMENT IDEAS

Naturally, different student assignments are effective in different situations, but here are several general strategies that have been successfully employed in undergraduate and graduate mass communication theory courses.

Thought Pieces

These can be either written or oral, but in either case the objective is to confront the student with a conceptual problem, offer a solution, and defend it. The *Critical Thinking Questions* and *Thinking about Theory* boxes in each chapter can be used in this way, as can the *Critical Thinking Questions* accompanying each chapter in this manual, but it might be more effective to generate new problems that are less general and more current. For example, most students now spend large parts of their day using social networking websites and they make routine use of iPods. Many view these as entertaining activities that have no important consequences. They rarely consider the broader implications of what they are doing. Why, for example, do they choose to present themselves in problematic ways on the Internet? Do they risk social isolation when they walk around campus using an iPod or with their faces buried in a smartphone's glow? What makes use of the Internet and iPods so meaningful that they return to them day after day? Could there be consequences that they have not considered? Which mass communication theories could be used to gain insight into these uses and possible consequences?

Of course, there is no right or wrong answer here. Research on social networking websites and iPod use is in its relative infancy. But students should be able to correctly and properly integrate and use material from the course, to extrapolate from the theoretical to the actual issue at hand, and to offer a cogent and intellectually defensible response. The value in this form of exercise is that it requires students to use theory in a way we hope they will use it throughout their lives. Ideally, they should learn to systematically question what they are doing with media and challenge simplistic assertions about entertainment.

Case Studies

Another useful way of getting students to apply theory is the case study. Again, these can be oral or written, and they can be individual or group exercises. Typically realistic and drawn from events of the day, students are asked to systematically observe their own use of media or that of others. Or students can be asked to stage problematic situations involving media. The purpose of either exercise is to generate observations that can be assessed using one or more of the media theories under consideration. Again there are no right or wrong answers, and the same evaluation criteria mentioned earlier can be applied. Here is an example of a group case study that has worked for the authors. When discussing normative theories, a three-student team is created. One assumes the role of local TV reporter, one the station's news director, and one, its general manager. The reporter takes a call from a man promising to set himself afire in protest against (fill in the blank with an issue from the headlines). He offers the reporter an exclusive if he or she agrees to videotape the immolation. What does the reporter do? How does the news director evaluate that decision? How does the GM judge both subordinates? Are the actual decisions made in this case consistent with prevailing normative theory? If not, why?

Another possibility would be to have some students role-play members of a group, agency, or organization that might seek (or avoid) news coverage. These could include (a) members of social movements such as ecofeminism, Earth First, or Green Peace; (b) members of ethnic, cultural, or religious groups such as the NAACP, Korean American Association, or Church Women United; (c) members of volunteer, public service groups such as a Parent Teachers Association or League of Women Voters; and (d) public relations staffers for a large company. Set up a hypothetical situation in which group members have to decide how to relate to journalists. They might be actively seeking news coverage that is useful to them or trying to avoid coverage that threatens them. They might plan an event designed to attract favorable coverage. Other students could role-play journalists who must decide how to cover the event. The journalists can be asked to write news stories. Then both groups can discuss the

stories. To what extent do the stories provide the coverage that was intended by event planners? Have journalists avoided being "manipulated"? Was the coverage "socially responsible"?

Literature Reviews

As thorough as the text is, at best it offers masterworks and illustrative examples of the literature underpinning the various theories. Even if the book's survey of the literature was exhaustive, new material is always being published. Students can be asked to do a literature review of a given theory for a given period. Most of the theories in this textbook are now listed on Wikipedia. Students can use the Wikipedia listing as a *starting point* for their reviews. They should be required to read, summarize and report on the materials they find. Undergraduate students might require some assistance, but all students should benefit from the bibliographic and information retrieval skills needed to complete this exercise. Lower-level students can be given a form to be completed by filling in essential information. It's possible to integrate instruction on plagiarism into this task. Students can be shown how to create reviews of theories that properly cite the literature. This assignment can be enhanced by a scheduled class visit to the library where a professional librarian offers a "short course" in accessing mass communication resources. Virtually all college and university libraries offer such a service, most often provided by a staff librarian with specific expertise in a given discipline, in this case of course, mass communication.

Field Research

Students can be assigned out-of-class research assignments. The sophistication of the project will of course vary with that of the students. Here the team approach may work best because students can combine skills and resources. Students should be asked to design the method of their observation based on the course content, collect the appropriate data, analyze them, and make a report, either written or oral. This assignment tends to demand some greater level of instructor involvement or supervision, but its benefits in terms of introducing students to how research actually supports theory are great. For example, when discussing mass society theory, limited effects, social cognition, cultural analysis, media literacy, or critical cultural theory, a research team may want to conduct interviews with grammar school and junior high students.

You can assign several teams of students to study the same theory using similar data collection strategies. Once the data have been collected and summarized, the teams can meet to discuss similarities and differences in their findings. If serious differences exist, you can discuss why they were found. Were they due, for example, to variations in questions asked, the people studied, or researcher bias? This can lead to the conclusion that for research findings to be comparable, methods of data collection and analysis should be standardized. Students can be sensitized to the subtle ways that bias can affect research.

When undertaking this type of research it's important to check with your local human subjects committee to determine what rules will apply. On most campuses, it's possible for this type of research to be conducted as long as it's solely for instructional purposes and there is no intent to publish the findings. Even so, instructors should be careful to monitor the research that students plan to do especially if it involves research on children or controversial forms of media content such as pornography.

Abstracts of Books, Journal Articles, Material in Mass Media

Instructors sometimes find it useful for students to regularly search for, read, and then abstract books, book chapters, journal articles, and material in mass media (including movies, television programs, magazine or newspaper articles that deal with topics relevant to the course). Students should be provided with a form that can be filled in with relevant information.

Abstracts can be most useful when instructors believe that students need to develop library use skills or the ability to paraphrase and summarize what they read. On most campuses, students can now access most media research using electronic databases provided by the library. This assignment can serve to instruct them in how to make use of these databases. This should be less necessary for juniors and seniors. If outside reading is frequently assigned, abstracts can provide evidence that these

assignments have been completed. One strategy for assigning abstracts is to have every student locate at least one or two research articles on a particular theory or media effect. They can use the textbook references as a starting point for their search but aren't permitted to abstract them. Thus, the reference list tells them that Jay Blumler has done research on uses and gratifications. They could do a literature search in the library to find other research on this topic by Blumler. Abstracting can make younger students more aware of the structure of research articles and help them learn to quickly identify the most important parts of articles.

Debates and Discussions about Media Effects

Divide the class into groups that regularly (once a week) debate and discuss various media effects over the course of the quarter or semester. Effects could include the influence of (a) televised sports, violence, or sex; (b) various types of advertising, including image advertising and political advertising; (c) newspaper editorials; (d) news coverage of crises or celebrities; (e) pornography; (f) tabloid television, including "real-life" cop shows and so-called reality TV; (g) video games; (h) propaganda; (i) romance novels; (j) media coverage of the military in times of war or during political campaigns; (k) coverage of terrorism; or (l) soap operas. We've found that debates about the effects of ultrathin media representations of women have proved quite useful in illustrating a number of theories including framing theory, uses and gratifications, and social cognitive theory. Individual groups can be required to turn in summaries of their debates and discussions. At several points during the term, groups can be required to make class presentations that summarize conclusions.

Initially, these debates will be based on common sense, gossip, news coverage, and so on. As the term goes on, students should be encouraged to draw on various theories and research findings to argue for or against various effects. For example, early in the semester students might be asked to debate the CNN effect or the CSI Effect. Ample material for this debate can be found through simple Internet searches using the keywords "CNN effect" or "CSI effect." Instructors should take notes on these early debates and then refer to them later in the semester when these topics are debated again. On most topics, groups will contain some individuals who believe that certain effects exist and others who are skeptical. But it can be useful to encourage students to take and argue positions contrary to their own views. Groups should be encouraged to relate current concerns about effects to past controversies over similar effects (for example, current concerns about televised violence or video game violence can be related to concerns about gangster movies in the 1930s or violent comic books in the 1950s). Students should become increasingly aware that it is difficult to reach agreement about the existence and nature of effects. Assignment of responsibility for effects is also problematic. Students should become more aware that in our society considerable responsibility for limiting bad effects is placed on individual media consumers and parents rather than on the media industries. Debates and discussions should become increasingly substantive and data-based as the course goes on.

The following three assignments tend to work best toward the middle or end of the course.

Newspaper (or Online News) Combing

Students are asked to comb through the daily paper (or online news source) and cut out or otherwise identify news stories that can be explained or understood in terms of mass communication theory. You might want to lead up to this task by bringing in your own examples from recent papers. Some items will be obvious, for example, a report on congressional hearings on regulating Internet content. But it is those less obvious examples that can generate the most discussion, debate, and therefore, understanding. For example, a news report on an unsubstantiated rumor about a politician or celebrity might be discussed (social responsibility theory or media intrusion theory could be used in the discussion). Again, groups seem to be valuable here because students can discuss and argue among themselves before they present their "findings" to the class. A jury can be established to "judge" the winning team, but it, too, must defend its decision based on proper (possibly imaginative) application of the various theories.

Book Reviews

Books can be assigned and students asked to write a review based on their understanding of the prevailing or appropriate theory. We have successfully offered classes a long list of relatively current books on the media and asked students to choose the one that seems of greatest interest. Here are examples of a few we've used.

Alexander, J. and S. Seidman, *Culture and Society: Contemporary Debates*
Branscomb, A. *From Privacy to Public Access*
Brock, D. *The Republican Noise Machine*
Carey, J. *Communication as Culture Essays on Media and Society*
Chomsky, N. *Necessary Illusions Thought Control in Democratic Societies*
Dertouzos, A. *How the New World of Information Will Change Our Lives*
Douglas, S. *Where the Girls Are*
Entman, R. *Democracy Without Citizens*
Foerstel, H. *Free Expression and Censorship in America*
Galtung, J. and R. Vincent *Global Glasnost Toward a New World Information and Communication Order*
Gerbner, G., H. Mowlana, and K. Nordenstreng, *The Global Media Debate*
Glassner, B. *The Culture of Fear*
Goldberg, B. *Bias*
Gordon, W. *McLuhan for Beginners*
Greenberg, B., J. Brown, and N. Buerkel-Rothfuss, *Media, Sex, and the Adolescent*.
Healy, J. *Failure to Connect*
Jamieson, K. and K. Campbell, *The Interplay of Influence News, Advertising, Politics, and the Mass Media*
Kenski, K., Hardy, B. W. and K. H. Jamieson, *The Obama Victory: How Media, Money, and Message Shaped the 2008 Election*.
Klein, N. *No Logo*
Leeson, L. *Clicking In Hot Links to a Digital Culture*.
Linn, S. *Consuming Kids*
Mander, J. *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*
McChesney, R. *Rich Media, Poor Democracy*
McGilligan, P. and P. Buhle, *Tender Comrades*
McKibben, B. *The Age of Missing Information*
Minow N. and C. Lamay, *Abandoned in the Wasteland*
Mitroff, I. and W. Bennis, *Unreality Industry*
Mowlana, H. et al., *Triumph of the Image*
O'Barr, M. *Culture and the Ad Exploring Otherness in the World of Advertising*
Parenti, M. *Land of Idols*
Parenti, M. *Make Believe Media*
Pariser, E. *The Filter Bubble: What the Internet is Hiding From You*
Postman, N. *Amusing Ourselves to Death*
Postman, N. *Technopoly The Surrender of Culture to Technology*
Postman, N. *The Disappearance of Childhood*
Postman, N. *The End of Education*
Pratkanis, A. and E. Aronson, *Age of Propaganda*
Real, M. *Exploring Media Culture*
Rushkoff, D. *Coercion: Why We Listen to What "They" Say*
Sanders, B. *A is for Ox*
Shenk, D. *Data Smog Surviving the Information Glut*
Slouka, M. *War of the Worlds: Cyberspace and the High-Tech Assault on Reality*
Steinberg, S. R. *Kinderculture: The Corporate Construction of Childhood*
Steinberg, S. and J. Kincheloe, *Kinder-Culture*
Tannen, D. *The Argument Culture*
Tyner, K. *Literacy in a Digital World*
Van Evra, J. *Television and Child Development*
Wolf, M. *The Entertainment Economy*

Zaltman, G., *How Customers Think*

The assignment itself might read like this. Give an overview of the book you've chosen. Then craft an essay that answers any or all of these questions: What is the author's view of the power of the audience? Of media? Does your book's basic premise support or counter any of the theories or perspectives we've studied in class? Where do you agree or disagree with the arguments offered in your book?

Diaries

Students might be asked to maintain a diary of their media interaction for some specified period, for example, five days. They can then write an essay on the personal application of mass communication theory for them in the situations they find themselves in. This assignment has been successfully used in this way: "For one five-day period, you must maintain a diary of your media interaction. This means not only all of your consumption (intended and otherwise), but also the times you talk about what you've seen, read, or listened to, and the times you find yourself using (intentionally and otherwise) what you've received from the media; in other words, every time the media touch your life in that period. The diary can be handwritten, but it must be readable and detailed (for example, Tuesday, 1030 to 1115 am, read editorials in the *NY Times*. Brooks misses mark on immigration reform). Then, based on the information in your journal, you must discuss the nature of your interaction with media during that time. Focus on the applicability of various theories to your understanding of your involvement with media and their influence on you, your environment, and others in it. When students keep a diary, they often find that usage levels are greater than they expect -- especially when they begin to add up the time spent on media multitasking and all media related activities.

A variation of the media diary approach can be used to assess iPod use. Students can engage in various types of activities with or without their iPod. At time listening to the device, at others not, they can observe whether other people treat them differently when they do simple things like purchasing items in stores or sitting in locations where their friends are likely to be passing by.

Report on Disruption of Media Use

Most students have well-developed media use habits. For this assignment, they are told to stop using their preferred medium for a week or so. They maintain a diary in which they discuss how they cope without a preferred medium. What is their emotional reaction to the disruption? Do they substitute another medium? For example, if they regularly watch a particular television program, do they cope by reading a book or going to a movie? Morning newspaper readers might turn on a morning television news program and vice versa. If substitutions are made, students should report whether they are satisfied with them. The exercise should help students better understand how routine media use becomes a part of their daily lives. They should become more aware and critical of the purposes media serve for them.

A simplified version of this exercise would ask students to stop using television for a week. The class can be divided into various groups based on their attitudes toward television. These might include (a) the television dependent (frequent viewers of all types of programming who find many programs to be quite satisfying; often "zone out" in front of the set); (b) abstainers (avoid television except for occasional news viewing); (c) selective viewers (view several times a week but only specific programs; never "zone out"); (d) fans of specific programs (very knowledgeable about specific programs and rarely miss them, such as cable news or *The Simpsons*). After the week is over, the groups can meet to compare their reactions and then report them to the class. Students should be encouraged to critically assess the role that television plays in their lives. They should become aware that others experience and use television differently.

Another possibility is to encourage students to stop using various forms of new media and then observe the consequences. What happens when they stop checking their social networking websites or sending text messages? How quickly do other people react? To what extent is student media use supported or even compelled by the people around them?

Finally, if students are reluctant to actually give up media, they can be asked to conduct a thought experiment – or perhaps recall an actual experience when access to media was cut off. For example, they might have lost a cell phone or broken a tablet computer. How did they react and what did they do? Was the loss of access important? Why?

Culture Representation

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to critically assess the way culture is portrayed on television. Students are made more aware of how television programs constantly portray human relationships in stylized and limited ways. It should be most appropriate after students have been introduced to the various cultural theories (Chapters 5 and 10). Choose a popular television program, such as *Gossip Girl*, *Teen Mom*, *16 and Pregnant*, or *Pretty Little Liars*, that features actors who are about the same age as many of your students and require all students to view it. The program or parts of it can be shown during the class. Students can be given a coding sheet on which they record observations that you want them to make. Do they find certain interactions unusual or problematic? What do people on the program spend most of their time talking about? How are male-female relationships portrayed? After viewing the program, students should discuss their observation of it. You may want to have small groups discuss observations and then compare the conclusions reached by different groups. Encourage students to consider what is not being presented as well as what is presented. Emphasize that television program producers must package culture as a commodity in order to market it to large audiences. The packaging process necessarily glamorizes and highlights certain aspects of culture and ignores or marginalizes other aspects. You might choose to focus this assignment by having students center their attention on sex role portrayals, the way problems are presented and solved, techniques used to encourage greater viewer involvement in the program (what makes us care enough about the characters to keep viewing), or use of sound or body movements and facial gestures to provide us with cues for how to anticipate or interpret action. You might contrast a reality TV program with a scripted TV program. How is reality TV different in the way it packages culture?

SYLLABUS PREPARATION

Course Objectives

As discussed, this textbook can be used in a broad range of classes. Different types of classes will necessarily have different objectives. Here we list some of the specific objectives that courses based on this textbook could have

1. Develop awareness and basic understanding of a broad range of theories that deal with mass communication.
2. Enable students to trace the historical development of media theories and link this development to historically important societal, political, and technological events or issues such as the Great Depression, rise of totalitarianism, World War II, the cold war, Civil Rights Movement, and development of various media technologies.
3. Encourage students to develop a personally meaningful and well-developed perspective on mass media—a perspective that will enable them to make better use of media to achieve valued goals (such as becoming critical consumers of media). This should include a critical understanding of new media so that students can make effective use of new technology and media as they become available.
4. Develop understanding of the strengths and limitations of various types of media theories, including normative, critical, and scientific theories. Ideally, they should form preferences for various theories and be able to offer cogent reasons for these preferences.
5. Increase student awareness of recurring criticisms made of media and the limitations of these criticisms. For example, the recurring debate over the effects of media portrayals of sex or violence.
6. Increase student awareness of how media professionalization developed, its grounding in normative theory, its use in defending media industries from criticism and censorship, and its limitations.
7. Prepare some students for advanced coursework in communication theory and research that will prepare them for careers as communication scholars. Prepare other students for advanced coursework in ethics, law, and cultural diversity that will train them to become responsible media practitioners.
8. Increase student understanding of how conceptualizations of the role of media have changed over the years and assess the advantages and limitations of these ideas. Consider how these conceptualizations will change as new media evolve over the next decade.
9. Improve students' media literacy skills.

Scheduling of Course Content

The textbook contains 11 chapters and is easily adapted to a 15- or 16-week semester schedule. It is designed so that early chapters prepare students for the content in later chapters. Instructors should be able to devote a week to each chapter even if there are one or two midterm examinations. Chapters 6 through 10 are somewhat longer than earlier chapters and cover more recent theories. Instructors who prefer to focus on current theory may want to move more rapidly through the early chapters and schedule more time to consider contemporary theories. In that case, the first five chapters might be covered in five weeks or so with an exam scheduled during the sixth week. This would leave nine or ten weeks to cover the six remaining chapters and schedule a second midterm exam.

As you develop your syllabus, you may want to give an indication of the topics, theories and theorists, or concepts to be covered during each week. You can use the table of contents in the textbook

or the important terms in the margins of each chapter as a source of these topics. List the terms in the syllabus on which you prefer to focus.

Term Papers or Group Projects

We have offered a number of suggestions for group projects. Students should be informed of these in the syllabus and told how much of their grade will be determined by them. Even though students work in groups, they can be graded individually on their group participation, class presentations, and reports on group activities.

Several brief or one long term paper can be assigned. The textbook provides students with many possible term paper topics. The *Thinking about Theory* and *Critical Thinking Questions* sections of the chapters are good sources. Reports can be done on individual theories or theorists, specific sets of research findings, controversies over various effects, historical eras in which important ideas about media developed, media professionalization and normative theories, and critical assessment of personal media use.

Sample Syllabus

The next four pages present a sample syllabus that has proved successful in our theory classes, given how we teach them. It may offer you an idea or two in preparing your own syllabi.

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Introduction

The purpose of this course is to provide a comprehensive grounding in mass communication theory. We will review the historical development of media theory, consider the many issues and problems created by the introduction of media, and then focus on contemporary conceptualizations of media, ending with a discussion of media literacy. We live at a time when media technologies are undergoing rapid change. New media industries are being created, and old ones are being restructured. Movie studios are being bought by cable entrepreneurs, and cable companies are being absorbed into telephone companies. These changes will undoubtedly have many consequences for our lives and the society at large. Today's media challenge us in many of the same ways that earlier media challenged our grandparents and great-grandparents. We can learn from their experience and from the decisions that they made about media. As individuals and as societies, we can use media wisely or foolishly. To guide our use of media and our study of media, we need theories—theories that explain the role of media for us as individuals and guide the development of media industries for our society at large. This course should help you develop your understanding of theory so that you can make better use of media and play a role in the development of new media industries.

Examinations and Grading

There will be three examinations -- two midterms and a final. All exams will consist of 70% multiple-choice questions and 30% short-answer essay questions. Two brief term papers will be required. The due dates for these are listed on the class schedule. Finally, there will be a grade for class participation. The following weights will be used to calculate the final grade: 2 midterms = 40%, final exam = 35%, class participation = 5%, two term papers = 20%. Class attendance is expected, and your participation grade will be lowered for numerous, unexcused absences, late assignments, or late completion of examinations.

Textbook

Baran, S.J. and Davis, D.K., *Mass Communication Theories: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*, 7th edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2015.

Class Schedule

Dates	Topic	Reading
Week 1	Introduction. Understanding and Evaluating Mass Communication Theory. Enduring questions about the role of media. Post-positivist, Interpretive, Critical, and Normative theory. Evaluating Theory. Four Trends in Media Theory. Mass Society & Mass Culture Limited Effects. Critical Cultural. Cultural. Meaning-Making.	Chapter 1
Week 2	The Debate Over Media. The First Trend in Media theory – Mass Society and Propaganda Theories. Mass Society Theory Today. Propaganda and Propaganda Theory. Behaviorism. Lasswell and Lippmann. Modern Propaganda Propaganda Theory. Libertarianism Reborn.	Chapter 2

Week 3	Normative Theories of Mass Communication. Origin of Normative Theories. Libertarian theory To Social Responsibility theory. Professionalization. Recent theories. Public interest and the Internet. Nonprofit journalism.	Chapter 3
Week 4	The Media-Effects Trend. Rise of Postpositivism and Effects Research. Rejection of Mass Society theory. Importance of Lazarsfeld and Hovland research. Klapper's Reinforcement theory. Systems Theories. Functionalism.	Chapter 4
Week 5	The Critical Cultural Theory Trend. Macroscopic versus Microscopic Theories Marxism and neo-Marxism. Textual and literary analysis. The Frankfurt School. Political Economy theory. Critical Feminist Scholarship. McLuhan and Innis.	Chapter 5
Week 6	First Midterm Week. Review for Exam. Exam.	
Week 7	Theories of Media and Human Development. Children and Media Violence. Social Learning. Active Theory of TV Viewing. Developmental Perspective. General Aggression Model. Growing Up Connected.	Chapter 6
Week 8	Audience Theories: Uses and Reception. Active Audience. Uses and Gratifications. Entertainment Theory. Reception Studies. Feminist Reception Studies.	Chapter 7
Week 9	Theories of Media Cognition and Information Processing. Schema Theory. Hostile Media Effect. Elaboration Likelihood Model. Narrative Persuasion Theory. Neuroscience Perspective	Chapter 8
Week 10	Theories of the Effect of Media on Society. Agenda-setting, Spiral of Silence. News Production, Media Intrusion. Media Dependency, Knowledge Gap. Cultivation. Media Literacy.	Chapter 9
Week 11	Second Midterm Week. Review for Exam. Exam.	

Week 12/13	Media and Culture Theories: Meaning-Making In the Social World. Symbolic Interactionism, Pragmatism. Social Constructionism, Framing Theory and Frame Analysis. Effects of Frames, Commodification of Culture.	Chapter 10
Week 14	The Future of Media Theory and Research New Media Theory and Research: Challenges and Findings. Internet Addiction. Health Communication. Journalism in Transition. Reforming Journalism. New Media Literacy.	Chapter 11
Week 15	Summary and Final Examination.	

List of Recommended Readings

If a list of recommended readings is considered desirable, it can be easily constructed by referring to the books and articles referenced in the individual chapters.

TWO SHORT TERM PAPERS

Description Each term paper should be from five to seven double-spaced, typewritten pages in length. I expect that most papers will use the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)* as a guide to citing sources, footnoting, and references. Copies should be available in the bookstore. If you prefer to use the *Modern Language Association* guidelines, you are free to do so. Papers should have from three to seven citations to either books or research articles.

Topics We will discuss possible paper topics in class. However, it is possible for you to base your papers on any of the theories being covered in the textbook or lecture. Most papers will review the literature in some area of media theory or effects. However, other topics are possible. Please discuss your ideas for papers with me early in the semester. Television violence has again become a focus of attention. This would be an appropriate topic for your second paper since we will cover the theories that deal with TV violence after the midterm. Another possibility would be to focus on new media technologies or new media industries. Consider the challenges posed by these technologies or industries. Choose a theory that could be useful in investigating or understanding these challenges.

Due Date The first term paper is due just before the second midterm examination. The second term paper is due on the last day of class.

Structure Give careful thought to the overall structure of your paper. Write the paper as though it were intended to communicate to some informed peers who are interested in your topic. Include an introduction that explains the significance of the topic and introduces the theme or issues that the paper will explore and discuss. The body of the paper should systematically develop your points. The conclusion should summarize key points and offer your perspective on them. Keep your readers in mind as you write. Express yourself clearly.

**CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER TEST QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR
AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS AND OTHER DISCUSSION AIDS**

**CHAPTER 1
UNDERSTANDING AND EVALUATING MASS COMMUNICATION THEORY**

Multiple Choice

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| a, recall | 1. Humans think about their behavior, values, beliefs, and attitudes. In other words, they are
a) reflexive
b) causal
c) deduced
d) impossible to study scientifically |
| b, recall | 2. The type of mass communication theory that might be involved when studying how well the mainstream American press serve democratic principles is
a) post-positive
b) normative
c) critical
d) interpretive |
| c, recall | 3. There are several reasons why social science has difficulty providing definitive answers to questions of human behavior. Which of the following is among those listed in the text?
a) humans are very often motivated by money
b) humans often respond to cultural forces rather than direct stimuli
c) if causality does exist in human behavior, its roots may simply be too complex for identification through social science
d) causality simply does not exist in human beings |
| b, recall | 4. The idea that others are affected by media but not ourselves is called the _____.
a) laboratory effect
b) third person effect
c) not-in-my-backyard-effect
d) denial effect |
| d, interpretation | 5. _____ theories are based on empirical research and adherence to the scientific method.
a) Normative
b) Interpretive
c) Critical
d) Post-positive |
| a, recall | 6. Questions of the place of values in theory and research are issues of _____.
a) axiology
b) ontology
c) epistemology
d) metatheory |

7. _____ occurs when a given factor influences another, even by way of an intervening variable.
- a) Connection
 - b) Theory
 - c) Science
 - d) Causality
- d, recall
8. A hypothesis is best described as
- a) speculation about how some process works
 - b) a proven theory about how some process works
 - c) a method for conducting an experiment
 - d) a tool used by scientists to make observations
- a, recall
9. The type of mass communication theory that seeks prediction and control is
- a) critical theory
 - b) interpretive
 - c) normative theory
 - d) post-positivism
- d, recall
10. The type of mass communication theory that seeks emancipation from and change in a dominant social order is
- a) critical theory
 - b) interpretive
 - c) normative theory
 - d) post-positivism
- a, recall
11. People who apply logic and observation to the understanding of the social world are
- a) social scientists
 - b) futurists
 - c) philosophers
 - d) scientists
- a, recall
12. _____ is the consideration of how knowledge is created and expanded.
- a) Ontology
 - b) Axiology
 - c) Epistemology
 - d) Science
- c, recall
13. Your friend tells you that she is immune from television violence's effects, but you are not. This is an example of
- a) causality
 - b) the third person effect
 - c) gloating
 - d) a hypothesis
- b, interpretation
14. Interpretive theorists who set aside their values when investigating a text are said to be _____.
- a) scientific
 - b) ethical
 - c) bracketing
 - d) dialectic
- c, recall

15. Post-positivist and hermeneutic theory are _____, that is, they are articulations of existing realities. Critical theory is _____. This means its goal is to change reality.
- a, recall
- a) representational/nonrepresentational
 - b) nonrepresentational/representational
 - c) passive/active
 - d) active/passive
16. Which was the first dominant perspective on mass media?
- d, interpretation
- a) Media primacy theory
 - b) Limited effects theory
 - c) Yellow journalism theory
 - d) Mass society theory
17. The man who did the most to challenge mass society theory and encourage development of scientific theories of mass communication was
- c, recall
- a) Harold Lasswell
 - b) John Dewey
 - c) Paul Lazarsfeld
 - d) Walter Lippmann
18. British cultural studies, which focuses on media and their role in promoting the interests of dominant elites at the expense of less powerful groups, is based on _____ notions of mass communication.
- d, interpretation, recall
- a) limited effects
 - b) mass society
 - c) conspiracy theory
 - d) neo-Marxist
19. The meaning-making theory trend is focused on
- a, recall
- a) an active audience that uses media to create experiences
 - b) a passive audience that is strongly affected by media
 - c) average people using media for entertainment
 - d) average people using media for information
20. Since the development of meaning-making theories, media effects research has
- c, recall, interpretation
- a) gone into decline due to the rise of new media
 - b) developed less complicated, easy to understand theories of persuasion
 - c) been revitalized by new research methods and theories
 - d) been challenging key assumptions of meaning-making

Essay

1. What difficulties exist in applying social science to the demonstration of causality? Why is the task even more difficult when the media are the focus of study?
2. Which of the various definitions of the scientific method introduced in the text do you find most useful for your own understanding of mass communication? Why?

3. Compare the axiologies of post-positivist, interpretive, and critical theory. Which one do you favor?
4. Which of the various definitions of theory introduced in the text do you find most useful for your own understanding of mass communication? Why?
5. Why does our society seem to have so much difficulty accepting the theories and findings of social scientists? Do you share the culture's distrust of their work? Why or why not?
6. What are the four general trends in mass communication theory described in the text? What is the prevailing view of mass media's role in the society and their influence on individuals that characterizes each of these trends?
7. Trace the overall development of mass communication theory from 1900 to today. List important eras, theories, and theorists.
8. What does it mean to say that mass communication theory is a human construction? Can scientific theory be anything other than a human construction?

Critical Thinking Questions

1. Can you think of any examples of social science evidence from any field that you accept? Any that you reject? Can you think of any evidence of media influence that you have either accepted or rejected? If you are skeptical, can you explain why you are?
2. Can you develop your own definitions of the scientific method and theory that are more useful to you than what we've suggested? In other words, what kinds of ideas and evidence supporting them satisfy you?
3. Have you ever read or heard of any social scientific findings regarding media and aggressive behavior? If you have, do you believe what social science has told you about this controversial issue? Why or why not?
4. Where do you stand on the fundamental issue of media impact? In other words, do you believe that media influence individuals, society, and the culture, and if you do, to what extent do they do so?
5. We make some strong claims about the power of the new communication technologies to reshape not only the media industries but also the world that relies on them. It is impossible to pick up a contemporary newspaper or magazine without seeing the same theme echoed. Are people making too much of the Internet and the World Wide Web? Are these technologies destined to become just "more TV" or another way to see ads and do your shopping?
6. The United States is a country that permits, even celebrates, its various differences. At the same time, it is a country with its own distinct culture—we know what it means when someone says he or she is "typically American." Do you see the fragmentation of the audience, as people search out and consume ever more narrow forms of media content, enriching our diverse culture, or do you see it further dividing us and insulating us from one another?

Discussion Aids

A good way to get students thinking about research is to ask them how they "research" a movie choice, a music selection, or some similar activity. You can then identify such things as the method employed (quantitative, qualitative, etc.) and elements such as respondents, independent variable, and the like depending on student responses.