**Syllabus**

**Seminar Module 3: Media and Crisis of Democracy**

**Lecturer:**

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**SEMINAR DESCRIPTION**

“The Media and Modernity: The Populist Moment”

The content of the seminar is outlined by its title, which quotes the titles of John B. Thompson’s classical social theory of the media and Jan Werner Müller’s recent article on populism in contemporary politics and culture. Added to this should be the content of Harry Frankfurt’s 2005 essay “On Bullshit”, which analyzed the implications of the rhetorical mode of “post-factual politics” even before the term was coined. Topics covered include discussions of the technological and cultural differences of “legacy media” and “social media”, the transformation of the public sphere in the era of “networked individualism”, and dissent in the age of “regressive modernity” (Nachtwey, 2016).

In the first week of the seminar, we will place the media developments into a wider context of social transformations taking place in what the sociologist Ulrich Beck has called a “risk society” and a “second” or “reflexive modernity”. To be able to understand these, we will also look back and discuss the transformations the media have undergone in the first and second half of the 20th century. In other words, we will study how consensus was manufactured in the age of the electronic mass media, and then move on to the role of the digital interactive media in the constitution of the current electoral politics.

In the second week, we will define and discuss populism in the “age of distrust”. In addition to the negative connotations of the terms like “mediocracy” and “digital populism”, ample space be devoted to the discussion of “digital activism” and other forms of civic and intellectual participation enabled by the digital media.

The lecturer’s plenary (morning lecture), entitled “Technology Meets Ideology: The Media Dimension of Populism” is to be understood as an integral part of the course.

**OUTCOMES**

Students will:

* Explore social theory of the media in modernity,
* Learn about the populist movement,
* Gain insight into rhetoric of political campaigns,
* Gain insight into populist rhetoric in other political and media systems,
* Understand the role of the media and their transformations in the 20th and 21st century,
* Be able to define the role of the media in the constitution of current populism,
* Grasp other concepts in connection to populism,
* Develop critical outlook on political campaigns.

**CLASS STRUCTURE AND EXPECTATIONS**

Class will meet for two weeks, in the first week from Monday to Friday, and in the second, from Monday to Thursday.

Time: **3pm - 6pm**

Room: **TBA**

This module is a seminar, meaning students are expected to attend classes and actively participate in discussions and other activities. Prior to the seminar meetings, students are expected to read selected texts and readings on their own. There will be no time for reading during the program of the summer school. Students are encouraged to ask questions, raise points, critically reflect on the readings and contribute in any other way.

**TOPICS AND SCHEDULE**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Topic** | **Reading** |
| 2 July 2018 | Social transformations in the “second modernity“ context | Martinez-Vela, Risk Society (summaries), Beck, Bonss, Lau (2003) |
| 3 July 2018 | The media and modernity | Thompson (overview), Thompson (2005), Sunstein (2001) |
| 4 July 2018 | Social media and surveillance capitalism | Lanchester (2017) |
| 5 July 2018 | A fourth age of political communication? | Blumler and Kavanagh (1999) |
| 6 July 2018 | Towards a populist media rhetoric: from Frankfurt’essay to “fake news” | Frankfurt (2005 [1986]) |
| 9 July 2018 | The populist moment | Müller (2014), Müller (2016) |
| 10 July 2018 | Populism in different contexts | Muis, J. and Immerzeel, T. (2017) |
| 11 July 2018 | Civil society 4.0? | Alexander (1998), Hauser (1999) (Overview), Morris (2007) |
| 12 July 2018 | From public intellectuals to citizen intellectuals? | Dunlop (2003), Aubin (2013) |

**ASSESSMENT/GRADING**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Percentage (%)** |
| Attendance and in-class participation | 10% |
| Critical reflection | 20% |
| Poster | 30% |
| Seminar paper | 40% |
| **Total** | **100%** |

* Attendance and participation – Seminars are designed for students to be present at all classes and to actively participate in them.
* Critical reflection – Each student picks one reading/topic and in seminar classes, they raise points and critically present a reading. Bear in mind, this is not meant as summarizing the readings. This also ensures the readings are covered and gives students an opportunity to explore the topics further.
* Poster – Students make a poster and present it. The poster can be about their thesis/work/research interest and it is not necessary connected to the seminar. Posters will be presented at science slam evening (12 July 2018).
* Seminar paper – This should be an independent work project for students, with the intention of synthesizing gained knowledge and critically reflect on their seminar module. Writing a paper is also an opportunity to explore additional areas outside the classroom. For more information about the seminar paper, see below.

**READINGS**

Alexander, J. (1998). “Introduction. Civil Society I, II,III: Constructing an Empirical Concept from Normative Controversies and Historical Transformations”, in: Alexander, J. C. (ed.), *Real Civil Societies: Dillemas of Institutionalization*, London, Thousand Oaks, CA, New Delhi: Sage, pp. 1-19.

Aubin, F. (2013). “Intellectuals, the Public Sphere and Dissemination Strategies.”, in: Thijssen, P. et. al. (ed.) New Public Spheres: Recontextualizing the Intellectual, Farnham: Ashgate, pp. 71-87.

Beck, U., Bonss, W, Lau, Ch. (2003). “The Theory of Reflexive Modernization: Problematic, Hypotheses and Research Programme”, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 20 (2): 1-33.

Blumler, J.G. and Kavanagh, D. (1999) “The Third Age of Political Communication: Influences and Features.” *Political Communication*, 16 (3): 209–230.

Frankfurt, H. (2005 [1986]). *On Bullshit*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. (a selection – the original 1986 *Raritan* essay)

Dunlop, T. (2003). “If you build it they will come”, *Evatt Journal*, 3 (4), June 2003., http://evatt.org.au/papers/if-you-build-it-they-will-come.html

Hauser, G. A. (1999). *Vernacular Voices: The Rhetoric of Publics and Public Spheres*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press. (Overview.)

Lanchester, J. (2017). “You are the Product!”, *London Review of Books*, 39 (16): 3-10.

Martinez-Vela, C. (2001). “World Systems Theory”, [http://web.mit.edu/esd.83/www/notebook/Wo rldSystem.pdf](http://web.mit.edu/esd.83/www/notebook/Wo%20rldSystem.pdf)

Morris, A. (2007). “Naked Power and the *Civil* Sphere”, The *Sociological Quarterly* 48: 615–628.

Muis, J. and Immerzeel, T. (2017). “Causes and consequences of the rise of populist radical

right parties and movements in Europe”, *Current Sociology*, 65 (6): 909-930.

Müller, J.W. (2014). “‘The people must be extracted from within the people’: Reflections on Populism”, *Constellations*, 21 (4): 483-493.

Müller, J.W. (2016). “Capitalism in One Family”, *London Review of Books*, 38 (23): 10-14.

Thompson, J. B. (1995). *The Media and Modernity. A Social Theory of the Media*. Cambridge: Polity Press. (Overview.)

Thompson, J. B. (2005). “The New Forms of Visibility”, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22 (62): 31-51.

Sunstein, C. (2001) “The Daily We: Is the Internet really a blessing for democracy?”, Bo<http://bostonreview.net/cass-sunsteininternet-democracy-daily-we>

**SEMINAR PAPER**

* All students will receive a **Certificate of Participation** for their attendance of the summer school. This is for you to keep, but cannot be used for credit transfer.
* Summer School. You can choose your topic in consultation with one of the lecturers of your seminar modules and they will be the one grading it.
* As not all students choose to write a seminar paper, there will be a **sign-up sheet** on the orange wall. We ask you to please inform us if you will write one by the end of the summer school (**July 14**). If you change your mind afterwards, please inform the organizers and your professor.
* **The paper has to meet the following standards**:
  + A minimum of 20 pages (excluding: titles, page numbers, index, bibliography, etc.),
  + font size: “12”
  + line spacing of “1,5”
* All works of other authors **must** be cited. If you fail to do so, this will be considered plagiarism. This may negatively affect the final grade of your paper.

The paper must meet one **chosen university standard referencing style** throughout (e.g. Chicago Manual of Style, MLA or a similar one).

You are **not** to mix and match referencing styles.

* The language must be **English** written in prose form.
* The format of the file has to be either a **Word Document** or a **PDF**. **NO** other data formats will be accepted!
* **Deadline** for sending the paper is **August 31st 2018!**
* You must submit the paper **via email** to **your professor.**

**Do not forget to put gusegg@uni-graz.at in the cc box**. The subject must be “*GUSEGG Seminar Paper 2018*”

* Within the email please state your **current home address** so we can send you the Transcript of Records via regular mail.
* All seminar papers will be graded by the **end of September 2018**. Please inform the organizers if you need your grade earlier, but do allow enough time for the professor to read them and mark them. For example, if you need it early, hand it in early.
* After your paper is graded, you will receivea **Transcript of Records** issued by the University of Graz, indicating the 6 ECTS credits earned.

For your **Lecturer:** Please use the **Austrian Grading System**:

**GRADING INFORMATION**

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| **ECTS SYSTEM** | | **AUSTRIAN SYSTEM** | | |
| **ECTS Scale** | **Definition** | **Austrian Scale** | **Definition** | **Definition in English** |
| A | Excellent – outstanding performance with only minor errors | 1 | Sehr gut | Very good |
| B | Very good – above the average standard but with some errors | 2 | Gut | Good |
| C | Good – generally sound work with a number of notable errors | 3 | Befriedigend | Satisfactory |
| D | Satisfactory – fair but with significant shortcomings | 4 | Genügend | Sufficient |
| E | Sufficient – performance meets the minimum criteria |
| FX | Fail – some more work required before the credit can be awarded | 5 | Nicht genügend | Fail |
| F | Fail – considerable further work is required |

**Publishing opportunity**

GUSEGG (Graz International Summer School Seggau) offers a unique opportunity for academic networking and discussing research ideas and future possibilities of collaborating. GUSEGG program encourages students to publish their work in “Off Campus. Seggau School of Thought” publication, which is a reputable book with various international contributions.

More information on the publication will be given on 2 July 2018, 1:30-3pm (see program).