J9055, Spring 2009, Mondays 2-4pm,
listed as 'Making Publics' in the CU director of classes
www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb/subj/JOUR/J9055-20091-001/

The Changing Dynamics of Public Controversies

Professor: Todd Gitlin   Teaching Assistant: Rasmus Kleis Nielsen

This course aims to help the participants make better sense of how public controversies play out in today's changing media environment. Recent years have seen an explosion in the number of platforms that allow publication (many commercial, some not), a decline in the relative importance of some of the traditional centers of publicity (network news and newspapers) and the professions formed around them (journalism). Simultaneously, the very material character of what is made public seems to be changing from the relative fixity of print and broadcast and the ephemeral character of face-to-face interaction in physical public spaces. Today, we face a profusion of eminently malleable and remixable but also oddly durable digital products that facilitate not only the transfer of information and its annotation, but also increasingly the development of communities and the pursuit of collective action both on- and off-line. Throughout the course, we will look at technological changes, novel organizational logics, and the emergence of new players and platforms, all tied together in various concrete examples of public controversy, whether political, financial, or cultural.

The starting proposition is that the dynamics of public controversies are undergoing a transformation partly propelled by the rise of the internet and what has been called the 'network society'. We will explore how these changes play out. One multi-faceted case that we will scrutinize together is the ongoing controversy surrounding media regulation and reform in the United States, including debates over copyright, network neutrality, and regulation of the telecommunications industry. This particular debate illustrates many of the new phenomena and players involved, underlines the continued importance of heritage institutions, and also serves to highlight how today may be an important formative moment in media history, as new infrastructures, institutions and organizational populations, and social settings are forged even as they and their alternatives are subject to intense debate. In addition to the case of media reform, students are encouraged to bring their own substantial interests and cases of controversy in.

We will read mainly contemporary works from communication studies, sociology, science and technology studies, political science, and law that explore these emerging phenomena, and shall steer largely clear off debates surrounding the notion of a 'public sphere' that has dominated most academic discussion of public controversy in the last decades.

In the first part of the course (3 weeks), we will discuss various alternative concepts for making sense of the dynamics of public controversies, drawn from pragmatist social theory, science and technology studies, and recent legal scholarship. Since the extent and precise character of the changing dynamics are unclear, we will continue with an open-ended exploration of, in the second part (5 weeks), different macroscopic theories grappling with the situation at hand, and, in the third part (6 weeks), various trends that have been identified at more intermediary levels. Throughout the course, students will be asked to present on actual cases of public controversy that interest them.

All participants will be invited to "The Changing Dynamics of Public Controversies", a conference on February 6-7. Bruno Latour and Paul Starr will be amongst the speakers.

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Course requirements: The course will be taught as a seminar, and will be capped at 15 students. Participants should be prepared to participate in the ongoing conversations throughout the semester, contribute a short presentation on a controversy of their choice, and write a final paper of 20 to 30 pages. The paper can build on the presentation. Our goal is to find a topic and means of presentation that best suits your needs.

Readings: Books are available at Book Culture, 112th street between Amsterdam and Broadway. They are also on reserve in the Journalism Library, room 204 on the entry level. All of the articles are available through the Columbia Libraries website.

We will read substantial parts of the following books.

Benkler, Yochai. 2006. *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Castells, Manuel. 2000. *The Rise of the Network Society*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell.

Dewey, John. 1991. *The Public and Its Problems*. Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press.

Lippmann, Walter. 1993. *The Phantom Public*. New Brunswick, N.J., U.S.A: Transaction Publishers.

Lessig, Lawrence. 2006. *Code: And Other Laws of Cyberspace, Version 2.0*. New York: Basic Books.

Turow, Joseph and Lokman Tsui, eds. 2008. *The Hyperlinked Society: Questioning Connections in the Digital Age*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

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Course Outline (* indicates required readings)

1. Introduction

Please skim the following brief readings for background.

* Project for Excellence in Journalism. *The State of the News Media 2008*. New York: Journalism.org. Available at: http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.org/2008/.

* Pew Internet and American Life Project. *The Internet and the 2008 Election*. Available at: http://pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_2008_election.pdf.

* Nordenson, Bree. 2008. "Overload!." *Columbia Journalism Review* November/December 2008:30-42.

Further readings:

Brookings Institution and the Norman Lear Center. 2008. *Democracy in the Age of New Media: A Report on the Media and the Immigration Debate*.

Kennedy School of Government Case Program. 2003. *"Big Media" Meets the "Bloggers": Coverage of Trent Lott's Remarks at Strom Thurmond's Birthday Party*.

- - - Concepts (part I) - - -

2. Conceptualizing Public Controversies (pragmatism)

* Dewey, John. 1991. *The Public and Its Problems*. Athens, Ohio: Swallow Press/Ohio University Press. Chapters 1, 4, and 5.

* Lippmann, Walter. 1993. *The Phantom Public*. New Brunswick, N.J., U.S.A: Transaction Publishers. Chapters 1-6, 9-10.

Further readings:

Lippmann, Walter. 1997. *Public Opinion*. New Brunswick, N.J., U.S.A: Transaction Publishers.

Schudson, Michael. 2008. "The "Lippmann-Dewey Debate" and the Invention of Walter Lippmann as an Anti-Democrat 1985-1996." *International Journal of Communication* 2.

Dewey, John. 1922. "Public Opinion." Review in *The New Republic* 30 (May 3):286-288.

Bentley, Arthur Fisher. 1935. *The Process of Government: A Study of Social Pressures*. Bloomington, Ind: Principia Press. Chapter VIII, "Public Opinion and Leadership".

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3. Conceptualizing Public Controversies (science and technology studies)

* Bruno Latour, "From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik or How to Make Things Public", in Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel, eds. 2005. *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

* Venturini, Tommaso. Forthcoming. "Diving in Magma: How to Explore Controversies with Actor-Network Theory." In *Public Understanding of Science*.

* Marres, Noortje. 2007. "The Issues Deserve More Credit: Pragmatist Contributions to the Study of Public Involvement in Controversy." *Social Studies of Science* 37(5):759-780.

* Star, Susan Leigh, and Geoffrey C. Bowker. "How to Infrastructure." In *Handbook of New Media*, eds. Sonia Livingstone and Leah A. Lievrouw. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

* Stark, David, and Monique Girard. 2007. "Socio-technologies of Assembly: Sense-making and Demonstration in Rebuilding Lower Manhattan." In *Governance and Information Technology: From Electronic Government to Information Government*, eds. Viktor Mayer-Schönberger and David Lazer. Boston: MIT Press, p. 145-176.

Further readings:

Latour, Bruno. 2005. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Callon, Michel. 1986. "Some Elements of a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and the Fishermen of St Brieuc Bay." In *Power, Action and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge*, ed. John Law. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, p. 196-233.

Hilgartner, Stephen, and Charles L. Bosk. 1988. "The Rise and Fall of Social Problems: A Public Arenas Model." *American Journal of Sociology* 94(1):53.

Marres, Noortje. 2005. "A crucial proposition of the Lippmann-Dewey debate" in her doctoral dissertation "No Issue, No Public." Available at: http://dare.uva.nl/document/17061.

- - - Macroscopes (part II) - - -

4. The Rise of the Network Society and its Public

* Castells, Manuel. 2000. *The Rise of the Network Society*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell. Prologue, chapters 1 and 5.

* Castells, Manuel. 2004. *The Power of Identity*. 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell. Chapters 5 and 6.

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* Castells, Manuel. 2008. "The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616(1):78-93.

Further readings:

Castells, Manuel et al. 2007. *Mobile Communication and Society: A Global Perspective*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

5. Denationalization and Rescaling of Public and Private Networks

* Sassen, Saskia. 2006. *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press. Chapter 7.

6. The Networked Information Economy and its Public

* Benkler, Yochai. 2006. *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 12.

Further readings:

Hindman, Matthew. 2008. "What is the Online Public Sphere Good For?" Joseph Turow and Lokman Tsui, eds. 2008. *The Hyperlinked Society: Questioning Connections in the Digital Age*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

7. Legal Debates over the New Infrastructures

* Lessig, Lawrence. 2006. *Code: And Other Laws of Cyberspace, Version 2.0*. New York: Basic Books. Chapters 1-5.

* Zittrain, Jonathan L. 2006. "The Generative Internet." *Harvard Law Review* 119. Available at: http://www.harvardlawreview.org/issues/119/may06/zittrain.pdf.

Further readings:

Anything related to the Supreme Court's Decision in *Eldred v. Ashcroft*, 537 U.S. 186.

Moglen, Eben. 2003. "The dotCommunist Manifesto." Available at: http://moglen.law.columbia.edu/publications/dcm.html.

Klinenberg, Eric. 2007. "Fighting for Air" in *Fighting for Air*. New York: Metropolitan Books.

8. Discussion session, catch-up, move on

No readings assigned this week.

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- - - Trends (part III) - - -

9. Attention Economy and Overload

* Gitlin, Todd. 2001. *Media Unlimited: How the Torrent of Images and Sounds Overwhelms Our Lives*. 1st ed. New York: Metropolitan Books. Chapter 1.

* James G. Webster, "Structuring a Marketplace of Attention", in Joseph Turow and Lokman Tsui, eds. 2008. *The Hyperlinked Society: Questioning Connections in the Digital Age*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

* Matthew Hindman, Kostas Tsioutsiouliklis, and Judy A. Johnson. 2003. "Googlearchy: How a Few Heavily Linked Sites Dominate Politics Online." Paper presented at MPSA. Available at http://www.matthewhindman.com/images/docs/mpsa03.pdf.

Further readings:

Goldhaber, Michael H. 1997. "The attention economy and the Net." *First Monday* 2(4-7).

10. Fragmentation

* Turow, Joseph. 2005. "Audience Construction and Culture Production: Marketing Surveillance in the Digital Age." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 597(1):103-121.

* Prior, Markus. 2005. "News vs. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout." *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3):577-592.

* Neumann, W. Russell. 2001. "The Impact of the New Media: fragmentation, stratification and political evolution", in W. Lance Bennett and Robert M Entman, eds. 2001. *Mediated Politics: Communication in the Future of Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Further readings:

Sunstein, Cass R. 2007. *Republic.com 2.0*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

11. New Connections?

* Henry Jenkins. 2006. "Eight Traits of the New Media Landscape", available online.

* Mimi Ito. 2008. "Introduction", http://networkedpublics.org/book/introduction.

* Lev Manovich. 2002. "What is New Media?" in his *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

* Sack, Warren. 2005. "Discourse Architecture and Very-Large Scale Conversation". In Robert

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Latham and Saskia Sassen, eds. 2005. *Digital Formations: IT and New Architectures in the Global Realm*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press.

Further readings:

Prior, Markus. 2008. ""Are Hyperlinks "Weak Ties"?". In Joseph Turow and Lokman Tsui, eds. 2008. *The Hyperlinked Society: Questioning Connections in the Digital Age*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Halavais, Alexander. 2008. "The Hyperlink as Organizing Principle". In Joseph Turow and Lokman Tsui, eds. 2008. *The Hyperlinked Society: Questioning Connections in the Digital Age*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Bolter, J. David and Richard A. Grusin. 1999. *Remediation: Understanding New Media*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Introna, Lucas D., and Helen Nissenbaum. 2000. "Shaping the Web: Why the Politics of Search Engines Matters." *The Information Society* 16(3):169.

Varnelis, Kazys, eds. 2008. *Networked Publics*. Boston: MIT Press.

12. Changing forms of Professional Content Production (convergence journalism)

* Klinenberg, Eric. 2005. "Convergence: News Production in a Digital Age." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 597(1):48-64.

* Deuze, Mark. 2003. "The Web and its Journalisms: Considering the Consequences of Different Types of Newsmedia Online." *New Media Society* 5(2):203-230.

* Boczkowski, Pablo J. 2004. *Digitizing the News: Innovation in Online Newspapers*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press. Chapters 2,3, and 7.

Further readings:

Boczkowski, Pablo J., and Martin de Santos. 2007. "When More Media Equals Less News: Patterns of Content Homogenization in Argentina's Leading Print and Online Newspapers." *Political Communication* 24(2):167.

Deuze, Mark. 2007. *Media Work*. Cambridge: Polity.

Hesmondhalgh, David. 2007. *The Cultural Industries*. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

13. Emerging forms of Production (user-generated content, remix, hybrid organization)

* Shirky, Clay. 2008. *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*. London: Allen Lane. Chapters 1 and 3.

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* Henry Jenkins. 2006. "Quentin Tarantino"s Star Wars? Grassroots Creativity Meets the Media Industry" in his *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*. New York: New York University Press.

* Deuze, Mark. 2006. "Participation, Remediation, Bricolage: Considering Principal Components of a Digital Culture." *The Information Society* 22(2): 63-75.

Further Readings:

Lessig, Lawrence. 2004. *Free Culture: How Big Media Uses Technology and the Law to Lock down Culture and Control Creativity*. New York: Penguin Press.

Lessig, Lawrence. 2008. *Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy*. New York: Penguin Press.

Benkler, Yochai. 2006. *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapters 3 and 4.

Stark, David, and Gina Neff. "Permanently Beta: Responsive Organization in the Internet Era." In *Society Online: The Internet In Context*, eds. Philip N. Howard and Steve Jones. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, p. 173-188.

14. Loser-Generated Content, or, the Pros and Cons of Free Labor

* Terranova, Tiziana. 2000. "Free labor: producing culture for the digital economy." *Social Text* 18(2):33-58.

* Lovink, Geert. 2005. "The Principles of Notworking: Concepts in Critical Internet Culture." Available at: http://www.hva.nl/lectoraten/documenten/ol09-050224-lovink.pdf.

Further readings:

Lanier, Jaron. "Digital Maoism." *Edge.org*. Available at: http://www.edge.org/3rd_culture/lanier06/lanier06_index.html.

First Monday, Special Issue, Critical Perspectives on Web 2.0, Volume 13, Number 3 - 3 March 2008.

- - - End of Semester - - -

15. Final Session (catch up and discussion)

No readings assigned this week.