



Kursplan

Kursplanen är fastställd av fakultetsnämnden vid Fakulteten för humaniora och samhällsvetenskap 2020-03-11 och gäller från vt2020 vid Karlstads universitet.

Course name: Contemporary Debates in Media and Communications Theory (Samtida debatter inom medie- och kommunikationsteori)

Credit points: 7,5 ECTS credits

Degree Level: Doctor

Language of Instruction: English

Target groups and prerequisites: The course participants must be enrolled in a PhD programme in Media and Communication Studies, or similar subject area.

Aims:

After completing the course the doctoral student should be able to

- Describe the current landscape of theoretical debates within media and communications theory, and their connections to and implications for societal development;
- Explain the emergence of those debates in terms of overarching paradigmatic and ideological processes and conflicts;
- Identify the historical roots of the theoretical perspectives and debates that are covered during the course;
- Define the main ontological and epistemological issues that are at stake within the contemporary field of media and communications theory;
- Evaluate the usefulness of the theories discussed in relevant empirical contexts;
- Formulate and present, in the form of a paper as well as orally, an independent scholarly critique of a chosen area of theoretical debate.

Course content:

The main goal of the course is to make participants familiar with the theoretical forefronts of contemporary media and communications studies, and the ontological and epistemological debates through which these are articulated. The course also traces the historical roots of contemporary theoretical positions within the research areas covered. Because of the very nature of the course (teaching “Contemporary debates”), which research areas are covered is subject to change, but theories in/of core areas such as mediatization, materiality, surveillance, platforms and algorithmic culture, and media production and consumption are likely to be covered.

The course is given as two intense two-day seminars, involving a variety of teachers (specialists within their fields) from different universities. Participants will take part in introductory

lectures describing the central debates within a number of significant research areas, as well as literature seminars where the various approaches are discussed and evaluated in relation to both contemporary media society and the theoretical legacies of the discipline. The reading list is mainly comprised of recent journal articles. The course assessment is a written essay that will be distributed and discussed among participants at a third, concluding meeting.

Reading list:

See separate documents for an indicative reading list.

Examination:

The course is examined through two components: (1) Active participation at all course sessions/seminars; (2) Writing and discussion of an independent research paper.

INDICATIVE Reading List

The following reading list is INDICATIVE and covers what is currently seen as “contemporary” media and communication theories; additional texts may be added by the course leaders.

- Allmer, T. (2018). Precarious, always-on and flexible: A case study of academic working conditions. *European Journal of Communication*, 33(4), 381-395.
- Askanius, Tina (2018). '(Social) Media Time, Connective Memory and Activist Television Histories: The Case of TV Stop, In: Mette Mortensen, Christina Neumeyer and Thomas Poell (eds.) *Social Media Materialities and Protest: Critical reflections*. London: Routledge.
- Barker, M. (2019). How Shall We Measure Our Progress? On Paradigms, Metaphors, and Meetings in Audience Research. *Television & New Media*, 20(2), 130–141.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476418813441>
- Chakravartty, P., Kuo, R., Grubbs, V., McIlwain, C.; #CommunicationSoWhite, *Journal of Communication*, Volume 68, Issue 2, 1 April 2018, Pages 254–266,
<https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqy003>
- Das, R. (2019). A Field in Flux: The Intriguing Past and the Promising Future of Audience Analysis. *Television & New Media*, 20(2), 123–129. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476418814592>
- Duffy, B. E., & Pruchniewska, U. (2017). Gender and self-enterprise in the social media age: A digital double bind. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(6), 843-859.
- Fast, K. & Jansson (2019). Why transmedia work matters. In Fast, K. & Jansson, A. *Transmedia Work: Privilege and Precariousness in Digital Modernity*. London: Routledge.
- Fuchs, C., Qiu; J.L. Ferments in the Field: Introductory Reflections on the Past, Present and Future of Communication Studies, *Journal of Communication*, Volume 68, Issue 2, 1 April 2018, Pages 219–232, <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqy008>
- Gerlitz, C., & Helmond, A. (2013). The like economy: Social buttons and the data-intensive web. *New Media & Society*, 15(8), 1348-1365. doi:Article
- Gill, R. (2010). Life is a pitch: Managing the self in new media work. In Deuze, M. (ed.) *Managing Media Work*. London: Sage. 249-262
- Hallin, D & Mancini, P (2004) *Comparing Media Systems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapters 2-4
- Hepp, A., & Couldry, N. (2009). What should comparative media research be comparing? Towards a transcultural approach to “media cultures”, in D K Thussu, (Ed.), *Internationalizing Media Studies*, 32-48. Available online at
http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/52470/1/Couldry_Comparative_media_research_2009.pdf
- Klinger, U., & Svensson, J. (2018). The end of media logics? On algorithms and agency. *New Media & Society*, 20(12), 4653–4670. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818779750>
- Lekakis, Eleftheria (2017) Alternative media ecology and anti-austerity documentary: The #greekdocs archive, *Journal of alternative and community media*, 2 (2017). pp. 28-44.
- Lindström, K., & Ståhl, Å. (2015). Figurations of spatiality and temporality in participatory design and after-networks, meshworks and patchworking. *CoDesign*, 11(3-4), 222-235.
- Livingstone, S. (2003). On the challenges of cross-national comparative media research. *European journal of communication*, 18(4), 477-500.
- Livingstone, S. (2019). Audiences in an Age of Datafication: Critical Questions for Media Research. *Television & New Media*, 20(2), 170–183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476418811118>

- Löwgren, J., & Reimer, B. (2013). The computer is a medium, not a tool: Collaborative media challenging interaction design. *Challenges*, 4(1), 86-102. <https://www.mdpi.com/2078-1547/4/1/86/htm>
- Mattoni, A. (2013) 'Media Activism', *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, Edited by David A. Snow, Donatella della Porta, Bert Klandermans, and Doug McAdam. Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Mattoni, Alice (2017) A situated understanding of digital technologies in social movements. Media ecology and media practice approaches, *Social Movement Studies*, 16:4, 494-505
- Murdock, G. (2018) Media Materialities: For A Moral Economy of Machines, *Journal of Communication*, Volume 68, Issue 2, 1, 359–368, <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqx023>
- Neumayer, Christina; Mortensen, Mette and Poell, Thomas (2018) 'Introduction: Social Media materialities and protest' in (eds.) *Social Media Materialities and protest: critical reflections*. London: Routledge.
- Picard, R. G. (2006). Historical trends and patterns in media economics. In *Handbook of media management and economics* (pp. 35-48). London: Routledge. Available online: <http://www.citi.columbia.edu/B8210/read1/Ch.2-Picard.pdf>
- Perez, C. (2010) Technological revolutions and techno-economic paradigms, *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 34(1), 185–202. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cje/bep051>
- Pfetsch, B & Esser F (2012) Comparing Political Communication. In F Esser & T Hanitzsch (Eds.) *Handbook of Comparative Communication Research*. London: Routledge, 25-47. Available online at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281728186_Pfetsch_B_Esser_F_2012_Comparing_Political_Communication_In_F_Esser_T_Hanitzsch_Eds_Handbook_of_Comparative_Communication_Research_London_Routledge_25-47
- Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, Pille; Runnel, Pille; Aljas, Agnes (2014). A Multi-Method and Multi-Site Interventionist Approach to Studying Audience Participation in Museums. In: Runnel, P.; Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, P. *Democratising the Museum: Reflections on Participatory Technologies* (55–74). Peter Lang Verlag.
- Rochet, J. C., & Tirole, J. (2003). Platform competition in two sided markets. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 1(4), 990-1029. doi:10.1162/154247603322493212/abstract
- Sparks, C.; Changing Concepts for a Changing World, *Journal of Communication*, Volume 68, Issue 2, 1 April 2018, Pages 390–398, <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqx026>
- Splichal, S., Mance, B. Paradigm(s) Lost? Islands of Critical Media Research in Communication Journals, *Journal of Communication*, Volume 68, Issue 2, 1 April 2018, Pages 399–414, <https://doi.org/10.1093/joc/jqx018>
- Tufekci, Zeynep, (2017) *Twitter and Tear Gas: The Power and Fragility of Networked Protest*, Yale University Press. Chapters 4, 8.
- Turow, J. (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.
- Van Couvering, E. (2017). "The Political Economy of New Media Revisited: Platformisation, Mediatisation, and the Politics of Algorithms" *Proceedings of the 50th Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS)*, January 4-8, pp. 1812-1819. URI:<http://hdl.handle.net/10125/41374>.
- Wood, A. J., Graham, M., Lehdonvirta, V., & Hjorth, I. (2018). Good gig, bad gig: autonomy and algorithmic control in the global gig economy. *Work, Employment and Society*, doi: 0950017018785616.
- Örnebring, H. (2012) Comparative Journalism Research – An Overview. *Sociology Compass* 10 (6) 769-780.