



CMAP 8001 | Fall 2020

Media and the Senses

This seminar provides a rigorous introduction to modern media theory. Special attention is given to the way in which contemporary media address and reshape the human sensorium. Students will engage with different theories of vision, hearing, touch, smell, taste, and locomotion and with how media technologies such phonography, photography, cinema, and digital imaging have captured and reworked human sensory perception. Additional attention will be paid to the question of how the human body and brain have been theorized and mapped as media, as the primary medium of sensation. Readings will include the work of canonical media theorists such as Arnheim, Benjamin, Crary, Heidegger, Manovich, McLuhan, as well as more recent writing from fields and disciplines as diverse as the neurosciences, gaming theory, cultural anthropology, and musicology.

This course is required for graduate students enrolled in the Joint-Ph.D. Program in Comparative Media Analysis and Practice (CMAP). This seminar is open to all interested students whether they seek to pursue a CMAP degree or not.

Instructor: Lutz Koepnick

Class Time: W 6:15-9:00 pm

For questions please email: lutz.koepnick@vanderbilt.edu



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Media and the Senses



COURSE INFORMATION

Class Time	Wednesday 6:15-9:00 pm (actual meeting time within this time window might vary each week)
Room	ONLINE
Instructor	Lutz Koepnick Sahar Sajadieh
Email	lutz.koepnick@vanderbilt.edu sahar.sajadieh@vanderbilt.edu
Telephone	615.875.9065
Office Hours	Koepnick: W 1-3, Th 2-3 (Zoom Meeting ID: 956 3939 8564 Passcode: 086110) & by appointment Sajadieh: TBD

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Participation	10%
Presentation 1	10%
Presentation 2	20%
Presentation 3	5%
Final Project	25%
Weekly E-journal	20%
Group Work	10%

REQUIRED TEXTS

Materials marked “ONLINE” in the course schedule will be made available electronically. All other books are available for purchase at the Vanderbilt University Bookstore or can be found via electronic access at Vanderbilt University Library.

- James Baldwin. *Devil Finds Work*. ISBN: 9780307275950
- John Berger. *Ways of Seeing*. ISBN: 9780140135152
- Jonathan Crary. *Techniques of the Observer*. ISBN: 9780262531078 [also online]
- Lynette Jones. *Haptics*. ISBN: 9780262535809 [also online]
- Damon Krukowski. *Ways of Hearing*. ISBN: 9780262039642.
- Lev Manovich. *The Language of New Media*. ISBN: 9780262632553 [also online]
- Marshall McLuhan. *Understanding Media*. ISBN: 9781584230731 [also online]
- Peter Mendelsund. *What we See when we Read*. ISBN: 9780804171632

ACTIVITES AND ASSIGNMENTS

A NOTE ON DEADLINES AND WORKFLOW: Since this class will be taught online, I have developed all kinds of work modules on Brightspace to help you prepare, complement, and reflect on what we do during our weekly zoom class meetings. In many cases zoom meetings on Wednesdays might be shorter than posted on YES simply because some work, whether in groups or individual, will take place asynchronously and on your own terms. Please be aware of the sequencing of work modules each week. You will be asked to carry out various activities before our zoom meetings and some after them. I will remind you of deadlines for different module components each week, but it is important that you stick to these deadlines and the workflow they set up in order to learn effectively. All activities associated with a weekly class module will typically need to be completed by Thursday 4 pm of a week in question.

GROUPWORK: I will divide the class into a certain subgroups early in the semester to enable a number of groupwork assignments throughout the semester. While the whole class of course will still meet every week to discuss texts etc., subgroups may at times convene outside class time to carry out certain tasks, inquiries, and assignments. Groups may use zoom to connect with each other at agreed times to work on these special tasks. In certain weeks such meetings may take place during official class time, at others either before or after, following my instructions and your availability. We may switch group membership a few times in the course of the semester.

PRESENTATIONS:

- **Presentation 1: Weekly Summary.** Each student will be asked to present, in electronic form, one brief summary of a preceding week’s meeting as if presenting the gist of our class meeting to audiences not familiar with our texts and discussions . This presentation could take various forms, draw on different media platforms, and can include images, graphs,

illustrations, etc. as you see fit. It should be time-based, however, and last no more and no less than 5 minutes. Summaries are due by 2 pm on Wednesdays. Post them both to "Assignment" and to <https://flipgrid.com/cmap8001> and will be posted to all course members before class. Other students in class will watch your summary before class.

- **Presentation 2: Class Presentation.** Each student will be responsible to present a selection of our assigned texts for ten minutes in class and guide our day's discussion of that text for another twenty minutes.
- **Presentation 3: Final Project Presentation.** Each student will present their final project on December 2 to the rest of the group. Each presentation should take no longer than 5 minutes and, if used, involve no more than 10 projected slides. Post your presentation by December 1 to flipgrid so that others can view it before our meeting.

FINAL PROJECT: Each student will be asked to develop a final project in which class readings are applied to material from a student's home discipline. Collaborative work is encouraged. The format is relatively open and should be discussed with the instructor as we go along. If you produce a written paper, it should be 12-15 pages in length. Joint projects and interdisciplinary collaborations are encouraged. Brief abstracts for the final project are due by November 11, 2020.

E-JOURNAL: The purpose of the weekly e-journal is to reflect ahead of class time about assigned readings. Individual posts range between 250 and 500 words or use Brightspace's video feature (2-3 minutes). They may register your general response to the week's reading assignment, note special observations or insights you would like to share, raise questions you might want the class to discuss, whether in class or online, or highlight certain insights or challenges of your final project. In certain weeks and cases, e-journal entries will be asked to respond to particular prompts about the reading. Late submission is not possible. Posts are due each Wednesday at 2 pm.

COURSE POLICIES

ZOOM PROTOCOLS: Please mute your mic when not speaking. Please keep your camera on during class time even if you do not actively contribute to class discussion. Use a virtual background if your physical setting calls for this.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Students are bound by the University rules on academic integrity in all aspects of this course. All references to ideas and texts other than the students' own must be so indicated through appropriate footnotes, whether the source is a book, an online site, the professor, etc. All students are responsible for following the rules outlined at: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/studentaccountability/>

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: CMAP is committed to making educational opportunities available to all students. In order for its faculty members to properly address the needs of students who have disabilities, it is necessary that those students approach their instructors as soon as the semester starts, preferably on the first day of class. They should bring an official letter from the Opportunity Development Center (2-4705) explaining their specific needs so that their instructors are aware of them early on and can make the appropriate arrangements.

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COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One | Introduction (8/26/20)

- Mitchell and Hansen, *Critical Terms for Media Studies* (vii-xxii; 19-34; 88-100, 186-198) [ONLINE]: <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044020462255>
- Mark M. Smith, *Sensing the Past: Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching in History* (1-18, 117-132) [ONLINE]

Week Two | Understanding Media I (9/2/20)

- Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility” [ONLINE]

Week Three | Understanding Media II (9/9/20)

- Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media* (part I, selections of part II: chapters 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31)

Week Four | Media as Ecology (9/16/20)

- Lance Strate, “A Media Ecology Review” [ONLINE]
- Matthew Fuller, *Media Ecologies: Materialist Energies in Art and Technoculture* (sel) [ONLINE]
- Lance Strate, “Taking Issue (Review of *Media Ecologies: Materialist Energies in Art and Technoculture* by Matthew Fuller)” [ONLINE]
- Jussi Parikka, “Media Ecologies and Imaginary Media: Transversal Expansions, Contractions, and Foldings” [ONLINE]
- Ursula Heise, “Unnatural Ecologies: The Metaphor of the Environment in Media Theory” [ONLINE]
- John Durham Peters, *The Marvelous Clouds* (sel) [ONLINE]

Week Five | Seeing I (9/23/20)

- Siegfried Kracauer, “Photography” (from *Theory of Film*) [ONLINE]
- John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*
- Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer* (chapters 1, 2, and 3)

Week Six | Seeing II (9/30/20)

- Rudolf Arnheim, “A New Laocoon” [ONLINE]
- Malte Hagener and Thomas Elsaesser, *Film Theory: An Introduction through the Senses* (Introduction; chapters 1-5) [ONLINE: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/vand/detail.action?docID=1987329>]
-  Alfred Hitchcock, *Rear Window*

Week Seven | Seeing III (10/7/20)

- Franz Fanon, “The Lived Experience of the Black Man” [ONLINE]
- David Macey, “Fanon, Phenomenology, Race” [ONLINE]
- Lewis Gordon, “Phenomenology and Race” [ONLINE]
- James Baldwin, *Devil Finds Work*
-  *I am Not Your Negro* (2016, dir. Raoul Peck)

Week Eight | Hearing I (10/14/20)

- Christoph Cox, *Sonic Flux: Sound, Art, and Metaphysics* (chapter 1: “Toward a Sonic Materialism”) [ONLINE]
- Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (sel) [ONLINE]
- Steve Goodman, *Sonic Warfare* (sel) [ONLINE]

Week Nine | Hearing II (10/21/20)

- Holger Schulze, “Corpus in Flux” [ONLINE]
- Nina Sun Eidsheim, *Sensing Sound: Singing and Listening as Vibrational Practice* (“Introduction”) [ONLINE]
- Damon Krukowski, *Ways of Hearing* (read chapter 1, 3, 4, 6; listen to chapter/episode 2: <https://www.radiotopia.fm/showcase/ways-of-hearing>)

Week Ten | Smell & Taste (10/28/20)

- Constance Classen et al., *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell* (1-12, 180-205) [ONLINE]
-  *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* (dir. Tom Tykwer, 2006)
- Jessica Zhang, “Food as a Medium” [ONLINE]
- Paul Freedman, *Food: The History of Taste* (7-35) [ONLINE]

Week Eleven | The Touch of Books (11/4/20)

- Andrew Piper, *Book There Was* (chapter 1: “Take it and Read it”; chapter 3: “Turning the Page”) [ONLINE]
- Peter Mendelsund, *What we See When we Read*

Week Twelve | Haptics and the Total Work of Art (11/11/20)

- Lynette Jones, *Haptics* (chapters 1, 2, and 3) [ONLINE: 1]
- Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin* [ONLINE]
- Matthew Wilson Smith, *The Total Work of Art* (1-47) [ONLINE]

Week Thirteen | Synesthesia: From Modernism to New Media (11/18/20)

- Philippe Junod, *Counterpoints: Dialogues between Music and the Visual Arts* (37-97) [ONLINE]
- Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (chapter 1, 2, 4, 5, 6)

Week Fifteen | Final Discussion (12/2/20)

- Final Discussion
- Presentation of Projects