UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO-BICOCCA

COURSE SYLLABUS

Digital Media and Consumption

2425-3-E1601N095

Learning objectives

The course aims to provide as comprehensive an overview as possible of the social organization of production and consumption processes that characterize media organizations, with particular attention to those related to digital cultures. Through cultural analysis of the organizational, economic and communicative dynamics of these new forms of production and consumption, the course aims to train students for master's degrees or employment opportunities in this field.

Contents

The course is divided into three parts. The first part will provide the basic tools for analyzing *from a cultural perspective* the forms of production and consumption characteristic of old- and new-generation media organizations. The second part will focus on the emergence and organizational characteristics of the so-called *cultural industries* and their gradual transformation into *creative industries*, up to the entry of new digital media and new forms of content production. In the third part, a number of case studies will be investigated, both through a series of theoretical lectures to frame the theme, and through in-depth thematic seminars that will include *group project work* to be carried out in the classroom.

Detailed program

The course is divided into three parts.

The ***first part*** will provide the basic tools for analyzing *from a cultural perspective* the forms of production and consumption characteristic of old- and new-generation media organizations. Through a short series of introductory theoretical lectures, the basics of the *sociology of cultural production approach* to the analysis of media

organizations and the resulting processes of cultural production and consumption will be presented. Predominantly through the reconstruction of a basic glossary, the more general issues related to the cultural analysis of the worlds of communication and media cultures in general will be addressed.

The ***second part*** will focus on the emergence and organizational characteristics of the so-called *cultural industries* and their gradual transformation into *creative industries*, up to the entry of new digital media and new forms of content production. In this part, the main approaches to the *cultural study of media organizations* - from neo-institutionalism to the sociology of cultural production - with a focus on an in-depth examination of three areas of interest: an examination of the *production processes* internal to these types of media organizations; an examination of the *cultural products* that emerge from this particular type of content production; and an examination of the *consumption practices* that emerge in response to these new types of cultural offerings. Concluding this part, some aspects in particular of the new digital cultures will be explored, examining the effects of the processes of *platformization*, the emergence of new *subcultures* within the new digital environments, and, finally, the particular role of *cultural intermediaries* that moderators of digital platforms have gradually acquired.

In the ***third part***, a number of empirical case studies will be investigated through in-depth thematic seminar discussions that will include *group project work* to be carried out in the classroom. In this last part, it will be possible to agree with the lecturer on a group work dedicated to examining a particular case study related to moments in the production or consumption of media content, and specific contemporary cases will be discussed in each of the cases in the classroom through a seminar format to put the conceptual vocabulary and analytical approaches developed in the first two parts of the course to the test of empirical analysis.

Prerequisites

Basic knowledge of major theories and issues in general sociology.

Teaching methods

Class lecture; seminar activity; discussion of texts and audio-visual materials. The Course consists of 56 hours, of which approximately 60 percent is by didactic delivery (lectures with use of slides, audio and video) and 40 percent by interactive teaching (exercises, subgroup work, presentation of case studies from which to develop individual and subgroup work, prepared and discussed during the course).

Assessment methods

For those who will attend the lectures delivered in the classroom, the examination will consist of a written test with open questions (very short essays) at the end of the course relating to the materials listed in the bibliography, with the possibility (optional and at the choice of the students) of conducting a public presentation of a *group project work* to be carried out during the third part of the course, in the specific forms agreed with the lecturer. In the latter case, both assessments will contribute to the definition of the final grade.

For those who will not attend, the exam will consist of a written test with open questions (very short essays) from the texts indicated in the bibliography.

Textbooks and Reading Materials

Texts discussed during classrooms

1. Balbi, G., & Magaudda, P. (2021). *Media digitali: La storia, i contesti sociali, le narrazioni.* Laterza.
2. Stark, D., & Pais, I. (2021). *Management algoritmico nell'economia delle piattaforme.* Economia & lavoro, 56(3), 57-80.
3. Esposito, E. (2021). *Dall'Intelligenza artificiale alla comunicazione artificiale.* Aut aut, 392, 20-34.

Texts not discussed during classrooms

1. Hesmondhalgh, D. (2015). *Le industrie culturali*. Egea. **SECONDA EDIZIONE!! (non va bene la prima edizione)**
2. Poell, T.; Nieborg, D. B. & Duffy, B. E. (2022). *Piattaforme digitali e produzione culturale*. Minimum fax Edizioni.
3. Mazzini, F. (2023). Hackers. Storia e pratiche di una cultura. Laterza, Bari-Roma.

Sustainable Development Goals

QUALITY EDUCATION | DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH | INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE | RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION