

Publishing and Its Impacts on Society

TC599 M 6:15-10:00pm

<http://eserver.org/tc599>

office hours: by appt.

office phone: (206) 685-3409

Prof. Geoffrey Sauer

geoffs@u.washington.edu

14C Loew Hall

cell phone: (206) 354-8649

Objective and Description

This course will review the changes to publishing post-WWII, considering the implications for writers (particularly technical communicators), to companies that publish information, and to reading audiences at large. The course will learn about, then examine in some detail, the social impact of key innovations from that period:

- » the transition from letterpress to offset lithography (1940s-1960s)
- » the emergence of optical typesetting ('cold type') (1960s-1970s)
- » page layout systems and the emergence of desktop publishing (1980-1995)
- » modern paper processes, and increasingly-affordable specialty stocks (1970-1985)
- » the growth of non-print media (including audio, video, and software, 1940s-present)
- » resulting demand for changes in intellectual property laws (1962, 1976, 1988, 2000)
- » digital production presses (1988-present)
- » corporate publishers and modern social systems for disseminating published work
- » electronic/online publishing technologies (1990-present), including the Web and database-driven document systems

Students will (at first) read early theorists, such as Eisenstein, Goody, Watt and McLuhan, who assume that new technologies directly cause changes in culture and society. Over the course of the term, we will move on to study theorists who study innovations within more sophisticated cultural contexts (such as Postman and Lessig). Over the course of the term, students will develop skills in discussing recent (and continuing) changes in the material circumstances of publishing — particularly how it affects writers and audiences.

Participation

You are expected to participate in class sessions and conferences as scheduled. Consider this class as part of your professional life and keep in mind that you would not fail to report to work without giving appropriate notice.

Student Responsibility

Your contribution is central to the course. You will be expected to read critically the assigned readings, prepare brief written responses to particular assignments and to participate intelligently and articulately in class discussions. Your grade for the course will be based on the following areas: class participation, including in-class discussion, written responses, peer presentations and a final research paper (see the 'Grading' section below).

Schedule and Bibliography

The readings for this course will be provided as photocopies handed out in class. Also, there will be a few web-based readings online at the course website, as occasioned by class discussions.

Meeting Deadlines

Meeting deadlines is a professional responsibility. Therefore, all written assignments must be submitted on the due date. You can receive an extension only if you meet two conditions: 1) contact me before the date on which the assignment is due to explain why you need an extension, and receive written (or e-mail) approval from me. Then 2) submit the assignment within one week after the scheduled due date. Using these procedures, you may submit one late assignment during the term without harming your grade.

Grading

Participation will be graded not only on the quantity of contributions to in-class discussion but also to its quality: comments should attempt to build upon previous speakers' comments or topics whenever possible.

The papers and exam will be graded on a scale from 0-4. The three major assignments: the short paper, mid-term exam and final research paper, will be judged in one-tenth of a point increments, as follows:

4	Top-notch, excellent, extraordinary accomplishment. Really strong conception and execution. Minor tinkering at most needed to make this comparable to professional-quality work.
3	Very strong work. Everything in order, well conceived and well executed. Minor editing problems at most. NOTE: The differences between a 3 and a 4 have to do with a combination of originality, excellence, thoroughness, and attention to detail in execution. Although 4 grades may include comments on sentence level editing, doing this type of editing would not be sufficient to raise a 3 to a 4.
2	Average, but missing some components. No glaring conceptual or execution problems, but nothing particularly outstanding in either department. Topic or problem may be somewhat limited, or execution may be less than optimal.
1	Acceptable, but below average work. Either conception, execution or both definitely need to be improved.
0	Not of acceptable quality.

Any in-class quizzes, short response papers or supporting work for main assignments will be graded on a \checkmark , $\checkmark+$, and $\checkmark-$ basis, which will equate to a 3, 4 and 2 respectively. Your final grade for the course will be determined using the following breakdown:

Class Participation	20 %
Short Response Papers	10 %
First Presentation	15 %
Second Presentation	15 %
Final Research Paper	40 %
	100 %

Appointments, Conferences and Communication

I will be glad to meet you during office hours, before or after class, or by appointment to discuss your work in the course and any questions and concerns you may have in relation to it. I'm also available to answer questions via e-mail or phone. An e-mail message is often the easiest way to be sure you reach me or that I will be in the office when you drop by. You can get in touch with me in a number of ways:

- come to office hours: Loew 014C
- send me e-mail: geoffs@u.washington.edu
- call me at my office: (206) 685-3409
- leave a note in my mailbox in the TC Department
- call me on my cell phone: (206) 354-8649
- call me at home: (206) 525-9026

If you have an important question or problem during the evening, or on a weekend, particularly when an assignment is due, I don't mind your calling me at home as long as you call between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. and not during dinner (5:00 to 7:00 p.m.).

Religious Observance

In accordance with university policy, I have worked to avoid having graded assignments due on major religious holidays, but given the variety of such observances, it is often impossible to avoid all conflicts. If you have a conflict between a religious holiday and an assignment, please contact me in advance so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Accountability and Plagiarism

In your academic and professional career, you will often draw on work done by others. You are expected to do so, but you are always required to give due credit to the person(s) whose words, thoughts, ideas or phrases you are using. Presenting someone else's work as your own is never acceptable. Any assignment including non-documented material from another source will receive a failing grade. A second instance will mean failure in the course and may result in further disciplinary action.

Week I: March 31**Introduction: Publishing and Society: Determinism and Culture**

Monday: Introduction to the course—themes and topics.

Week II: April 7**Materialism and Determinism Applied**

Monday: Discussion of how the material circumstances of publishing might be argued to determine the social interactions among and between writers, publishers and audiences.

Assigned Readings: Selections from Pipes, Alan. *Production for Graphic Designers*.

Week III: April 14**Early Determinisms**

Monday: Discussion of how some scholarly writers have argued that the material circumstances of publishing have determined culture.

Assigned Readings: Selections from Eisenstein, Elizabeth. *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, 1979. pp. 3-42.

Selections from McLuhan, Marshall. *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*, 1962.

Goody, Jack and Ian Watt. 'The Consequences of Literacy.' From *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, 1968.

Week IV: April 21**Publishing as Commodity**

Monday: Popular publishing as an example of cultural issues problematic from the determinism perspective.

Assigned Readings: Radway, Janice. 'Mail-Order Culture and Its Critics: The Book-of-the-Month Club, Commodification and Consumption, and the Problem of Cultural Authority.'

Benjamin, Walter. 'Unpacking My Library: A Talk About Book Collecting.' From *Illuminations*.

Further Readings: Smith, Erin A. 'How the Other Half Read: Advertising, Working-Class Readers, and Pulp Magazines.' In *Book History*.

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/book_history/v003/3.1smith.html

Haugland, Ann. 'Book Propaganda: Edward L. Bernays's 1930 Campaign Against Dollar Books.' In *Book History*.

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/book_history/v003/3.1haugland.html

Week V: April 28
Intellectual Property

Monday: Visual Media: Student Presentations

Assigned Readings: Levin, Thomas Y. 'For the Record: Adorno on Music in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility.'
 Lessig, Lawrence. Selections from *The Future of Ideas*.
 Eldred v. Ashcroft. Selections from the Arguments for Appeal.
 Postman, Neil. 'Informing Ourselves to Death.'

Further Readings: Brouillette, Sarah. 'Corporate Publishing and Canonization: Neuromancer and Science-Fiction Publishing in the 1970s and Early 1980s.' In *Book History*,
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/book_history/v005/5.1brouillette.html

Week VI: May 5
Desktop Publishing: The 1980s

Monday: Publication Design, continued.

Assigned Readings: Romano, Carlin. 'The Grisly Truth About Bare Facts.'
 Williams, Robin. Selections from *The Mac Is Not A Typewriter*.
 Chagnon, Bevi. 'Desktop Publishing Software.' In *The Journal of Electronic Publishing*.
<http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/08-01/chagnon.html>

Further Readings: Jensen, Michael. 'Cost Recovery and Destiny: Developing the Appropriateness Matrix.' In *The Journal of Electronic Publishing*.
<http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/04-01/jensen.html>

Week VII: May 12
Online Publishing: The Early 1990s

Monday: Discussion of early Internet publishing protocols and standards.

Assigned Readings: Negroponte, Nicholas. Selections from *Being Digital*.
 Ferris, Sharmila Pixy. 'The Effects of Computers on Traditional Writing.' In *The Journal of Electronic Publishing*.
<http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/08-01/ferris.html>

Week VIII: May 19
Online Publishing: The Late 1990s

Monday: Content Management Systems and collaborative workflow.

Assigned Readings: Linda Beebe and Barbara Meyers. 'Digital Workflow: Managing the Process Electronically.' in *JEP*
<http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/05-04/sheridan.html>
 Kartchner, Chris. 'Content Management Systems: Getting from Concept to Reality.' In *JEP*
<http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/03-04/kartchner.html>

Week IX: May 26

Memorial Day: No Class

Week X: June 2

Presentations and Critiques

Monday: Final Project Presentations/Critiques.
Turn in final papers.