

English 6525: **Modernism, Media, and Mediation**

fall 2018  
Tuesday 10:10-12:05  
303 Olin Library

Jeremy Braddock  
braddock@cornell.edu  
office hours Tuesday 12:30-2:30  
Goldwin Smith 136

This seminar focuses on the relationship of literary writing to the emergence and dominance of new technologies in the first half of the twentieth century: the period one scholar has recently called "the first media age." Although it will survey a range of media and theories, two approaches to the problem will be dominant, and case studies will focus largely on the United States. A dominant theme of the class will be to explore the relation of print media to technologies for storing and broadcasting sound.

We will first study techniques of bibliography and book history in order to examine literary modernism's many print modalities, and to ask more far-reaching historical and theoretical questions about the technologies of writing and print. The controversial writing of Marshall McLuhan (itself deeply rooted in modernism) will be foregrounded, and paired with the more recent, influential work of Friedrich Kittler. These two broadly historical, determinist, thinkers will be preparation for a survey of contemporary essays defining the emergent subfield "media archaeology." This in turn will take the seminar to the rare and manuscript collections in the Carl A. Kroch Library, and its fall exhibition "Mixed Media: The Interplay of Sound and Text." We will work with this exhibition, in concert with the poet Bob Brown's notorious "readies": an exemplary case of "speculative media."

The second half of the class considers new media technologies in relation to the rise of fascism in 1930s Europe, as well as to fascism's influence and appeal in the United States at the same time. We will read important period essays that focus on the cinema, but the primary medium of consideration will be radio, a technology that postdates the gramophone and the cinema, but arguably became more politically influential than either. We will consider both propaganda broadcasts and the emergent forms of radio drama, as well as their dynamic interaction.

How did modernist writers respond to a social and political situation in which access to media and information was at once widely distributed, and consolidated by corporations and the state? What were the relationships between aural and print technologies, with respect to the dissemination of language? These are a few of the questions we will ask throughout the semester.

**Books on order at Buffalo Street Books**

Required books are marked with an asterisk

Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings* (Harvard UP 9780674024458)

Bob Brown, *The Readies* (Roving Eye) 0692217231

\* Kenneth Fearing, *Clark Gifford's Body* (NYRB 9781590171820)

Finkelstein and McCleery, eds. *The Book History Reader*, 2e (Routledge) 0415359481

Lisa Gitelman, *Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture* (MIT P 0262572478)

Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Stanford) 0804736332

Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications* (U California P) 0520262743

\* James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* (Norton) 0393972860

\* Elihu Katz, John Durham Peters, et al., *Canonic Texts in Media Research* (Polity) 0745629342

\* Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (MIT P) 9780262631594

\* Nathanael West, *Miss Lonelyhearts and Day of the Locust* (New Directions) 0811218228

Required and recommended books are available at **Buffalo Street Books** and can be ordered through their website (<https://www.buffalostreetbooks.com/cornell-1>), by telephone (**607-273-8246**), or by email ([offthehill@buffalostreetbooks.com](mailto:offthehill@buffalostreetbooks.com)). Books bought in this way will be delivered to my office. Books can also be bought at the store. Individual books can be placed on hold and purchased throughout the semester.

Buffalo Street Books is located in the DeWitt Mall on Buffalo Street between Cayuga and Tioga Streets in Downtown Ithaca.

Books listed as recommended (those without an asterisk, above) will also be on reserve at the circulation desk of Olin Library, along with other recommended works. A list of these and other reserve books appears at the end of this syllabus.

### **requirements**

Written work will include an archaeology of a medium of your choosing, written in the style of Raymond Williams's *Keywords* (500-1000 words, to be discussed in class), and a research paper (5000-6000 words). Students will also write short responses to the week's reading in advance of eleven of the fourteen course meetings. These are to be posted by 8:00 Monday evening.

### **policies**

**Attendance** is required. Students who miss more than one class will have their final grade lowered by 1/3 of one letter grade (e.g. A- to B+).

**Undergraduates** enrolled in the course are responsible for the same assignments as graduate students, but may submit a shorter final paper (3500-4000 words)

**Disabilities:** In compliance with the Cornell University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for students with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except in unusual circumstances, so that arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with Student Disability Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

**Screen Policy:** In all my classes I discourage the use of phones, computers, tablets, ipads or laptops during class, and in most cases I forbid them. Because of the large number of online materials in 6525 I will not adopt this policy, but I will be grateful if use is kept to a minimum, and I request that phones not be used.

**Academic integrity:** All the work you submit in this course must have been written for this course and not another and must originate with you in form and content with all contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. Make yourself familiar with Cornell's Academic Integrity Code, which is distributed to students in the *Policy Notebook*. The code, together with a guide to *Acknowledging the Work of Others*, can be downloaded at <http://theuniversityfaculty.cornell.edu/academic-integrity/>. In this course, the normal penalty for a violation of the code is an "F" for the term.

## **schedule of assignments**

readings marked BB are posted to the course Blackboard site

readings marked R are on reserve at Olin Library

underlined titles are hyperlinks

**August 28** introduction: multiply mediated Joyce

James Joyce, "Aeolus," [Little Review](#) (October 1918) and Shakespeare & Co. (1922) (BB)  
versions

Joyce, [phonograph recording from 'Aeolus' \(1924\)](#)

further reading:

Harry Blamires, "Aeolus," in *The New Bloomsday Book*, 2e (BB)

Adrian Curtin, "[Hearing Joyce Speak: The Phonograph Recordings of 'Aeolus' and 'Anna Livia Plurabelle'](#)"

Damien Keane, "[Quotation Marks, the Gramophone Record, and the Language of the Outlaw](#)"

**September 4** book history

Robert Darnton, "What is the History of Books?," *Book History Reader* (R)

Walter Ong, "Orality and Literacy: Writing Restructures Consciousness," *Book History Reader* (R)

Roger Chartier, "The Practical Impact of Writing," *Book History Reader* (R)

Jerome McGann, introduction to *Black Riders*, "Modernism and the Renaissance of Printing" (BB)

further reading:

Pierre Bourdieu, "The Field of Cultural Production" (BHR)

John Guillory, "[Genesis of the Media Concept](#)"

Chartier, "Labourers and Voyagers: From the Text to the Reader" (BHR)

McGann, "The Socialization of Texts" (BHR)

D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*

John Timberman Newcomb, [How Did Poetry Survive?](#)

Bartholomew Brinkman, "[Making Modern Poetry: Format, Genre, and the Invention of Imagism\(e\)](#)"

**September 11** little magazines

Eric Bulson, introduction, [Little Magazine, World Form](#)

[BLAST #1 \(1914\) \[esp. 1-85\]](#)

[Poetry 1.4 \(Jan. 1913\) \[esp. 101-5, 118-34\]](#)

[Others 3.1 \(July 1916\) \[esp 1-7, 31-32\]](#)

[The Masses 9.10 \(Aug. 1917\) \[esp. 1-19\]](#)

[The Seven Arts 2.4 \(Aug. 1917\) \[esp. 395-408, 466-92, 528-end\]](#)

*In lieu of a conventional response paper this week, you might try adapting Darnton's "communications circuit" diagram to the world of little magazines.*

further reading

Richard Jean So and Hoyt Long, "[Network Analysis and the Sociology of Modernism](#)"

[Others 3.5 \(Jan. 1917\) Spectra Hoax issue](#)

Scholes and Wulfman, "How to Study a Modern Magazine" (BB)

McKibbler and Churchill, *Little Magazines and Modernism: New Approaches*  
Jerome McGann, [A New Republic of Letters](#)

**September 18**      determinism / media studies out of print culture

Marshall McLuhan, *Counterblast* (1954) (BB)  
McLuhan, *Understanding Media* (1964)  
Joshua Meyerowitz, "Canonic Anti-text: Marshall McLuhan's *Understanding Media*," in *Canonic Texts in Media Research* (R)  
Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, "[Drill and Distraction in the Yellow Submarine: On the Dominance of War in Friedrich Kittler's Media Theory](#)"

further reading:  
Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* (R)  
McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*  
Ong, *Orality and Literacy*  
Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era*  
—, *The Counterfeiters*

**September 25**      phonography

James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*  
Lisa Gitelman, "[New Media Users](#)," from *Always Already New*  
Katherine Biers, "[Syncope Fever: James Weldon Johnson and the Black Phonographic Voice](#)"  
Mark Goble, "The Autobiography of an Ex-Phonograph," from *Beautiful Circuits* (BB)

further reading:  
Langston Hughes, *Fine Clothes to the Jew*  
Zora Neale Hurston, "Characteristics of Negro Expression," *Mules and Men*  
Sterling Brown, *Southern Road*  
Alexander Weheliye, *Phonographies: Grooves in Afro-Sonic Modernity* (R)  
T.W. Adorno, "The Curves of the Needle" (1927); "[The Form of the Phonograph Record](#)" (1934)

**October 2**      media archaeology 1: speculative media

Bob Brown, *The Readies* [The Readies](#) [and [Readies simulator](#)]  
*Readies for Bob Brown's Machine* (BB)  
N. Katherine Hayles, "[Hyper and Deep Attention: The Generational Divide in Cognitive Modes](#)"  
Eric Kluitenberg, "On the Archaeology of Imaginary Media," in *Media Archaeology* (R)  
Jerome McGann, from *Black Riders*, "Composition as Explanation" (BB)

further reading:  
Craig Saper, *The Amazing Adventures of Bob Brown*  
Jessica Pressman, "[Machine Poetics and Reading Machines: William Poundstone's Electronic Literature and Bob Brown's Readies](#)"  
Jentery Sayers, "[Prototyping the Past](#)"

**October 9**      October break

**October 16** media archaeology 2: artifacts

*class meets at Kroch Library*

Lisa Gitelman, ["Media as Historical Subjects" from \*Always Already New\*](#)

Jonathan Sterne, ["Hello!" from \*The Audible Past\*](#)

Erkki Huhtamo, "Dismantling the Fairy Engine: Media Archaeology as Topos Study" in [Media Archaeology](#)

Wolfgang Ernst, "Media Archaeography: Method and Machine versus History and Narrative of Media" in [Media Archaeology](#)

Raymond Williams, "Media" and "Mediation" in *Keywords* (BB)

further reading:

Thomas Elsaesser, "The New Film History as Media Archaeology" (BB)

Sterne, ["Plastic Aurality: Technologies into Media," in \*The Audible Past\*](#)

Louis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*

Carolyn Marvin, ["When Old Technologies Were New"](#)

Raymond Williams, "From Medium to Social Practice" (BB), *Television*

**October 23** cinema / mass culture / Frankfurt School

Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility" (R)

Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, "The Culture Industry," in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (R)

Leo Lowenthal, "The Triumph of Mass Idols" (BB)

"The Frankfurt School" section from *Canonical Texts in Media Research* (58-102)

further reading:

Benjamin, "Theory of Distraction" (R)

Miriam Hansen, *Cinema and Experience: Kracauer, Benjamin, Adorno*

Aaron Jaffe, *Modernism and the Culture of Celebrity*

Judith Brown, *Glamour in Six Dimensions: Modernism and the Radiance of Form*

Brooke Duffy and Jefferson Pooley, "Idols of Promotion"

**October 30** Hollywood

Media archaeology assignment due

Nathanael West, *The Day of the Locust*

Walter Benjamin, "The Storyteller" (BB)

David Jenemann, ["Below the Surface: Frankfurt Goes to Hollywood," in \*Adorno in America\*](#)

further reading:

Adorno, *The Stars Down to Earth*

Adorno, "Culture Industry Reconsidered" (1963) (BB)

Casey Shoop, ["The California Occult: Nathanael West, Theodor Adorno and the Representation of Mass Cultural Desire"](#)

Miriam Hansen, *Cinema and Experience: Kracauer, Benjamin and Adorno*

Rita Barnard, *The Great Depression and the Culture of Abundance*

**November 6** soundscapes, fascist and capitalist

[Carolyn Birdsall, \*Nazi Soundscapes\*](#)

Emily Thompson, [The Soundscape of Modernity: introduction \("Sound, Modernity, and History"\) and epilogue \("Rockefeller Center and the End of an Era"\)](#)

further reading:

R. Murray Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*

**November 13** radio plays, democratic propaganda

listening: Archibald MacLeish, "The Fall of the City" (script on BB)  
Norman Corwin, *This is War!* (intro, "You're On Your Own") (scripts on BB)  
Orson Welles and Howard Koch, ["The War of the Worlds"](#) (script on BB)

reading: Neil Verma, *Theater of the Mind* (chapters 1, 3)  
Adorno, "Radio Physiognomics"  
Walter Lippmann, from *Public Opinion* (BB)  
Steven Connor, "The Modern Auditory 'I'" (BB)

further listening:

Archibald MacLeish, "Air Raid"

Norman Corwin, ["We Hold these Truths"](#) (1941), "Daybreak"

further reading:

Joseph Loviglio, [Radio's Intimate Public](#)

Susan Douglas, [Listening In, chapter 7](#), "World War 2 and the Invention of Broadcast Journalism"

Hadley Cantril and Gordon W. Allport, [The Psychology of Radio](#) (1935)

Rudolf Arnheim, *Radio* (1936)

Walter Benjamin, "Theater and Radio," "Two Types of Popularity: Fundamental Reflections on a Radio Play"

Verma, *Theater of the Mind* (chapter 2 and 4)

Crook, "Transatlantic or Anglo-American Corwin?"

Melissa Dinsman, "Clogged Communication," from *Modernism at the Microphone*

Evan Kindley, "Interrupting the Muse," from *Poet-Critics and the Administration of Culture*

Debra Rae Cohen, Michael Coyle, and Jane Lewty, eds., *Broadcasting Modernism*

**November 20** propaganda broadcasts / propaganda monitoring

listening:

Ezra Pound radio broadcasts

reading:

Pound, from *Jefferson and/or Mussolini* (BB)

Benjamin Friedlander, "Radio Broadcasts" (BB)

Damien Keane, "An Ear Toward Security: The Princeton Listening Center" (BB)

Mark Wollaeger, "Modernism and the Information-Propaganda Matrix" (BB)  
Adorno, "Thesis about the Idea and Form of Collaboration of the Princeton Radio Research Project," "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda" (BB)

further listening:  
Father Coughlin radio broadcasts

further reading:  
Pound, *Guide to Kulchur, Pisan Cantos*  
Daniel Tiffany, *Radio Corpse*  
Damien Keane, *Ireland and the Problem of Information*  
Timothy Campbell, *Wireless Writing in the Age of Marconi*  
Melissa Dinsman, "Clogged Communication," from *Modernism at the Microphone*

**November 27**                    media and counterfactuality

Kenneth Fearing, *Clark Gifford's Body*  
Fearing, "Jack Knuckles Falters" (1929), "Reading, Writing, and the Rackets" (1956) (BB)  
Bernard Stiegler, from *Technics and Time* (BB)

further reading:  
Catherine Gallagher, *Telling it Like it Wasn't: The Counterfactual Imagination in History and Literature*  
Rita Barnard, *The Great Depression and the Culture of Abundance*

**December 4**                    libraries, communication

MacLeish, "Libraries in the Contemporary Crisis" (1939) (BB)  
Office of Facts and Figures, "Divide and Conquer" booklet (1942) (BB)  
MacLeish, "The Library and the Nation" (1945) (BB)  
John Durham Peters, "The Problem of Communication," from *Speaking into the Air* (BB)

*final paper due 4:00PM December 15*

## Books on reserve, Olin Library circulation desk

### ***anthologies***

David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, [\*The Book History Reader\*](#)  
Z4 .B647x 2002

Wendy Chun and Tom Keenan, [\*New Media/Old Media: A History and Theory Reader\*](#)  
P90 .N52 2015

Katz, Peters, Liebes, and Orlogg, [\*Canonic Texts in Media Research\*](#)  
P91.3 .C36x 2003

Paul Marris and Sue Thornham, eds., [\*Media Studies: A Reader, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.\*](#)  
P91 .M3794x 2000

### [\*The SAGE Handbook of Media Studies\*](#)

Online: <https://newcatalog.library.cornell.edu/catalog/9241725>

### ***monographs***

T.W. Adorno, [\*The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture\*](#)  
CB427 .A33x 1991

Walter Benjamin, [\*The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings\*](#)  
N72.S6 B413 2008

Peter Brooker and Andrew Thacker, eds., [\*The Oxford Critical and Cultural History of Modernist Magazines, vol. 2.\*](#)  
PN5124.L62 O94 2009 vol. 2

Eric Bulson, [\*Little Magazine, World Form\*](#)  
PN4832 .B85 2017

Debra Rae Cohen and Michael Coyle, eds., [\*Broadcasting Modernism\*](#)  
PN1991.8.L5 B76 2009

Lisa Gitelman, [\*Always Already New: Media, History, and the Data of Culture\*](#)  
P90 .G4776 2006

Mark Goble, [\*Beautiful Circuits: Modernism and the Mediated Life\*](#)  
P96.L5 G63 2010

Miriam Hansen, [\*Cinema and Experience: Siegfried Kracauer, Walter Benjamin and Theodor W. Adorno\*](#)  
PN1994 .H265 2012

Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, [\*Dialectic of Enlightenment\*](#)  
B3279.H8473 P513 2002

Erkki Huhtamo and Jussi Parikka, [\*Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications\*](#)  
<https://newcatalog.library.cornell.edu/catalog/7310338>



- Damien Keane, *Ireland and the Problem of Information*  
PR8755 .K427 2014
- Hugh Kenner, *The Counterfeiters*  
PS3561.E57 C8 1973
- Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*  
P96.T42 K5713x 1999
- . [The Truth of the Technological World](#)  
P96.T42 K584 2014
- Bruno Latour, *Aramis, or the Love of Technology*  
HE4769.P3 L3813x 1996
- Marshall McLuhan, *Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*  
Z116 .M16
- Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Civilization*  
T15 .M92
- Walter J. Ong, [Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word](#)  
P35 .O5 2012
- Jussi Parikka, [What is Media Archaeology?](#)  
P90 .P336 2012
- John Durham Peters, *The Marvelous Clouds: Toward a Philosophy of Elemental Media*  
P91 .P48 2015
- . *Speaking into the Air: A History of the Idea of Communication*  
P90 .P388x 1999
- Craig Saper, *The Amazing Adventures of Bob Brown*
- Robert Scholes and Clifford Wulfman, *Modernism in the Magazines: An Introduction*  
PN4878.3 .S36 2010
- Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*  
TK7881.4 .S733x 2003
- Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time*  
T14 .S85 1998
- Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933*  
NA2800 .T48 2004
- David Trotter, *Literature in the First Media Age: Britain Between the Wars*  
PR478.M37 T76 2013
- Neil Verma, *Theatre of the Mind: Imagination, Aesthetics and American Radio Drama*  
PN1991.3.U6 V47 2012
- Alexander Weheliye, *Phonographies: Grooves in Afro-Sonic Modernity*  
ML3916 .W46 2005

Raymond Williams, [Keywords](#)  
PE1580 .W58x 1985

———, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form*  
HE8700.4 .W54