

J395 Audience Research in New Media

Fall 2015 (08130)

TTH 12:30 - 2 p.m., CMA 3.108

School of Journalism

The University of Texas at Austin

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Office hours: T 5 - 6 p.m., TH 2 - 3 and 5 - 6 p.m., or by appointment

Prerequisites

Graduate standing

Course Description

Audience as a concept has not received sufficient attention in journalism or media research because traditional news organizations tend to assume that the audience is always there, which, however, is no longer the case. Today's media landscape, characterized by factors such as information surplus, information overload, selective exposure, audience segmentation, information avoidance, etc., has fundamentally changed the taken-for-granted nature of the audience. This graduate seminar will explore new theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of audiences on digital media platforms (Web, smartphone, tablet, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.). Students are expected to apply what they learn to audience research and contribute a better understanding of today's multiplatform audiences to journalism and communication research.

Required Readings

Readings from different sources will be made available on the course's Canvas site at <http://canvas.utexas.edu/>.

Recommended Readings

Audience Analysis. By Dennis McQuail. (1997). Sage.

Audience Evolution: New Technologies and the Transformation of Media Audiences. By Philip M. Napoli. (2011). Columbia University Press.

The Marketplace of Attention. By James G. Webster. (2014). MIT Press.

Critical readings: Media and audiences. Edited by Virginia Nightingale and Karen Ross. (2003). Open University Press.

Digital marketing analytics: Making sense of consumer data in a digital world. By Chuck Hemann and Ken Burbary. (2013). QUE Publishing.

Course Requirements

Participation (25%): Students are expected to read and respond to assigned readings and actively participate in class discussion. Everyone is expected to think, argue, and respond to the ideas presented by others.

We will develop a blog for this course, which will serve as a platform for everyone to exchange ideas on readings and issues covered in class or to share information and examples with one another. Every student must contribute to our online discussion on a timely basis.

URL: _____ .blogspot.com/

Assignments and activities (25%): A series of assignments and activities are designed to help students achieve learning goals (e.g., problem identification, audience tracking, news sharing, brainstorming, etc.) You are expected to make presentations on assigned topics.

Research Paper (50%)

Students are expected to work on a research project (in academic or journalistic format), which should apply economic principles to address a research question. During the research process, the instructor would serve as your consultant and your classmates also would provide feedback. Grading Scheme

A = 94 or above A- = 90-93 B+ = 87-89 B = 84-86 B- = 80-83 C+ = 77-79 C = 74-76 C- = 70-73 D+ = 67-69 D = 64-66 D- = 60-63 F = below 60

Missed Classes/Deadlines and Late Assignments If an emergency prevents a student from taking a scheduled exam or meeting the deadline of a presentation, the student must notify the instructor prior to the exam or presentation. Otherwise, the student will not be eligible for a make-up. Make-up exams/presentations will be granted only for a limited time and only for valid, documented reasons, such as serious illness, family emergency, jury duty or military reserve obligation. Absence excuses are subject to verification. Presenting a false excuse will be considered a violation of the academic integrity rules.

If the deadline of an assignment is missed, all late work must be turned in within one week after it is due and will be downgraded for one letter grade no matter it is 1 or 7 days late. No late work beyond the oneweek period will be accepted. Missed assignments will receive a zero.

Disruptive Behavior Mutual respect is essential in this class. Therefore, please do not use your laptop computer or other electronic devices in class for purposes other than note-taking. In accordance with university policy, disruptive behavior will be documented and may lead to sanctions. Examples of disruptive behaviors in the classroom include arriving late to class, chatting, etc.

Academic Integrity

Be academically honest in every aspect of class work. All students are subject to the student code of conduct, including the University Code of Academic Integrity. For this course, academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) the following: fabrication (i.e., making up data, sources or information), plagiarism (using someone else's work in your work without giving proper credit), duplication (doing an assignment for this course and for any other course in this or any prior semester without the express consent of the instructor), and cheating (exchanging information with another individual during an exam). Violations of the academic integrity code will result in penalties in this course and all violations will be reported to the University. It is your responsibility to be aware of the rules of academic dishonesty -- ignorance is not a defense. When in doubt, consult the instructor before doing anything about which you are uncertain.

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

University Electronic Mail Notification

Policy All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

In this course, e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements. We will use your e-mail address in Blackboard. Use of Canvas This course uses Canvas, a Web-based course management system in which a password-protected site is created for each course. Canvas can be used to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to take online quizzes and surveys.

You will be responsible for checking the Canvas course site regularly for class work and announcements. As with all computer systems, there are occasional scheduled downtimes as well as unanticipated disruptions. Notification of these disruptions will be posted on the Canvas login page. Scheduled downtimes are not an excuse for late work. Canvas is available at <http://canvas.utexas.edu>. Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 Monday through Friday 8 am to 6 pm, so plan accordingly. Student Feedback Email or come see me during office hours if you have any questions/suggestions.

Documented Disability Statement

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone).

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>. Q Drop Policy The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231: "Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number."

Course Calendar & Readings 1.0 (Subject to Change) You are expected to complete the assigned readings before class.

1. Week of Aug. 27:

Overview of the course; class survey

2. Week of Sept. 1: Why audience research; assumptions about new vs. old media; the state of the news audience in the new media landscape; identify important issues Read: 5 key takeaways from State of the News Media 2015: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/04/29/5-keytakeaways-from-state-of-the-news-media-2015/> (The full report: <http://www.journalism.org/files/2015/04/FINALSTATE-OF-THE-NEWS-MEDIA1.pdf>)

Exercise: Identify some "audience problems" from the State of News Media or other industry reports (Sept. 3)

3. Week of Sept. 8:

Defining audience; history of audience research; death of the mass audience Read: Ch1, 8, 9 of Audience Analysis by McQuail

Theoretical approaches to audience research Read: Ch2 of The Marketplace of Attention by Webster Lee, A. M. (2013). News audiences revisited: Theorizing the link between audience motivations and news consumption. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 57(3), 300-317. Consumer demand and price: http://www.economicsonline.co.uk/Competitive_markets/Consumer_demand.html (also see Demand curves: http://www.economicsonline.co.uk/Competitive_markets/Demand_curves.html Shifts in demand: http://www.economicsonline.co.uk/Competitive_markets/Shifts_in_demand.html) 4. Week of Sept. 15: Audience measurement overview Read: Ch4 of Audience Analysis by McQuail Ch4 of The Marketplace of Attention by Webster

5. Week of Sept. 22: Audience measurement for the Web; Google Analytics Read: Zheng, N., Chyi, H. I., & Kaufhold, W. (2012). Capturing “human bandwidth”: A multi-dimensional model for measuring attention on Web sites. *International Journal on Media Management*, 14(2), 157-179. Digital News — Audience: Fact Sheet (2015): <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/digital-news-audience-factsheet/>

6. Week of Sept. 29:

Audience measurement for online advertising; Google AdWords and Facebook

Read: Ch5 of Advanced Social Media Marketing (2013) by Tom Funk. The Advertising Engagement Spectrum: Defining and Measuring Digital Ad Engagement in a Cross-Platform World. (2014). By Interactive Advertising Bureau: http://www.iab.net/media/file/Ad_Engagement_Spectrum2014_FI_NAL2-5-2014-EB.PDF Digital News — Revenue: Fact Sheet (2015): <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/digital-news-revenue-factsheet/>

7. Week of Oct. 6:

Audience measurement with big data; Google Trends Read: Anderson, C. (2008). The end of theory: The data deluge makes the scientific method obsolete, *Wired*: http://archive.wired.com/science/discoveries/magazine/1607/pb_theory Gonzalez-Bailon, S. (2013). Social science in the era of big data. *Policy & Internet*, Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2238198>

8. Week of Oct. 13:

Audience measurement on mobile and social media

Read: Mobile Messaging and Social Media 2015: <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/08/19/mobile-messaging-and-social-media-2015/> How do Americans use Twitter for news? <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/08/19/how-do-americans-use-twitter-for-news/> Bruns, A., & Stieglitz, S. (2012). Quantitative approaches to comparing communication patterns on Twitter. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 30(3-4), 160–185. Winter, S., Brückner, C, & Krämer, N. C. (2015). They came, they liked, they commented: Social influence on Facebook news channels. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 18(8): 431-436.

Exercise: Proposing research questions based on digital audience metrics

9. Week of Oct. 20: Multiplatform audience measurement; displacement effects; the repertoire approach Read: Lee S.N. P. & Leung, L. (2008). Assessing the displacement effects of the Internet. *Telematics and Informatics*, 25(3), 145-155. Yuan, E. (2011). News consumption across multiple media platforms: A repertoire approach. *Information, Communication & Society*, 14(7), 998-1016. Chyi, H. I. (2015). Ch4 of *Trial & error: U.S. newspapers' digital struggles toward inferiority*. University of Navarra.

The psychology of digital media audiences—the lack of engagement; the perceived inferiority of digital content Read: Chyi, H. I. (2015). Ch5 of *Trial & error: U.S. newspapers' digital struggles toward inferiority*. University of Navarra. *Newspapers: Fact Sheet* (2015): <http://www.journalism.org/2015/04/29/newspapers-fact-sheet/>

10. Week of Oct. 27: The psychology of digital media audiences—willingness to pay Read: *Newspapers: Top 5 U.S. Daily Newspapers with Paywalls* (2014): <http://www.journalism.org/media-indicators/top-5-u-s-newspapers-with-paywalls/> *Top 5 U.S. Daily Newspapers with Paid Smartphone/Mobile Editions* (2014): <http://www.journalism.org/media-indicators/top-5-u-s-newspapers-with-paid-smartphonemobile-editions/> *Top 5 U.S. Daily Newspapers with Paid Tablet Editions* (2014): <http://www.journalism.org/media-indicators/top-5-u-s-newspapers-with-paid-tablet-editions/> Ch4 of *Free by Chris Anderson*. (2009).

Research topic and research questions for final project due

11. Week of Nov. 3:

Development and consultation on final project

The ethics of audience research Read: *Everything We Know About Facebook's Secret Mood Manipulation Experiment*, *The Atlantic* (2014): <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/06/everything-we-know-about-facebooks-secret-mood-manipulationexperiment/373648/> *Facebook Conducted Another Secret Experiment on Users* (2014): http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/11/03/facebook-voterexperiment_n_6094690.html Tandoc,

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(2015).

The ethics of Web analytics: Implications of using audience metrics in news construction. *Digital Journalism*, 3(2), 243-258.

12. Week of Nov. 10:

Implications for journalism Read: Anderson, C.W. (2011). Deliberative, Agonistic, and Algorithmic Audiences: Journalism's Vision of its Public in an Age of Audience Transparency. *International Journal of Communication*, 5, 529-547.

Development and consultation on final project

13. Week of Nov. 17:

Predicting the future

Development and consultation on final project

14. Week of Nov. 24:

Development and consultation on final project

Thanksgiving

15. Week of Dec. 1:

Presentations of Final Projects Final Project due (Dec. 3)