

COMM 440.001: GLOBAL ICONIC EVENTS

JULIA SONNEVEND

FALL 2014

Meeting times

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:30-1:00 p.m.

Room: 1250 USB

Instructor:

Julia Sonnevend, Assistant Professor in Communication Studies, University of Michigan

E-mail: sonneven@umich.edu

Office hours: Thursday, 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Office location: North Quad #5429

Course Description

This course examines the media coverage of news events that have attracted large international audiences. These exceptional news events interrupt the flow of time, and provide us with uplifting or traumatic experiences and memories. The course's case studies include Nelson Mandela's memorial service, Steve Jobs' death; the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton, the Beijing Olympic Games, the September 11 attacks, Princess Diana's funeral, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and others. We will examine the events' journalistic coverage and their global social remembrance.

Reading Materials

Required reading materials will be provided on CTools.

Final paper:

Format: Final papers should be in 12-pt Times New Roman, double-spaced and 10 pages in length.

Deadline: Final paper is due on the last day of classes: **December 9, 2014.**

Topic: Please select a global event and analyze how the media named, narrated and visualized it in the first three days of coverage.

Assignments:

Every student is required to give two presentations. Your presentation has to be at least 10 minutes and you have to use Prezi or some other relatively new presentation software (not PowerPoint). Your presentation will be about a particular event we will discuss at that class. Each class will have multiple presenters and you must coordinate your presentations as a group.

Grading policy:

Following the standards of other professors in this department, your performance will be graded on the following scale:

A = Extraordinary. "A" work requires a full command of the material, a strong sense of purpose, clear and compelling thought, and skillful writing.

B = Good to very good. This is work that provides a very solid fulfillment of the assignment. Papers demonstrate clear argumentation and presentation.

C = Acceptable. This is work that fulfills the minimum required by the assignment. It might lack skillful argumentation, but show an understanding of the material. It might also suggest interesting approaches to the material, but falter in carrying them out.

D = A major deficiency in writing and argumentation.

F = Unacceptable.

Graded course activities:

Participation in class discussion: 20 %

Presentations: 30 %

Final paper: 50 %

Class attendance:

This seminar requires active participation. All students are expected to contribute to class discussions. Please contact me in person or by email if you have to miss a class. Extensive excused absences may result in extra assignments. Unexcused absences will affect your grade. After four unexcused absences, I will have to give you an F.

Academic honesty

Successful education is based on mutual trust. I trust that you follow the University Michigan's standards of academic integrity. For more information: <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity>

Accommodations for Students with Disability

Please feel free to discuss with me any special needs you may have. I will treat any information you provide as private and confidential. Information on services for students with disabilities: <http://ssd.umich.edu/>

Class 1 – Tuesday, September 2

INTRODUCTION: WHY TAKING A CLASS ON GLOBAL ICONIC EVENTS?

Class 2 – Thursday, September 4

A RITUAL VIEW OF COMMUNICATION

Carey, J. W. (1992). *Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society*. New York, London: Routledge. (Chapter 1, “A Cultural Approach to Communication,” pp. 13-36).

Cottle, S. (2006). Mediatized rituals: beyond manufacturing consent. *Media, Culture & Society*, 28, 411-432.

Class 3 - Tuesday, September 9

DEFINING EVENTS

Schudson, M. (2008). *Why democracies need an unlovable press* (Chapter 8, “The anarchy of events and the anxiety of storytelling,” pp. 88-94). Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Scannell, P. (1996). *Radio, television, and modern life: A phenomenological approach*. (Chapter 4, “Eventfulness,” pp. 75-92). Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Peters, J. D. (2009). Witnessing; An Afterword: Torchlight Red on Sweaty Faces. In P. Frosh & A. Pinchevski (Eds.), *Media Witnessing: Testimony in the Age of Mass Communication* (pp. 23-42 and 42-48). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Recommended:

Wagner-Pacifici, R. (2010). Theorizing the restlessness of events. *American Journal of Sociology* 115(5), 1351-1386.

Class 4 - Thursday, September 11

DEFINING MEDIA EVENTS AND GLOBAL ICONIC EVENTS

Dayan, D., & Katz, E. (1992). *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Chapter 1, “Defining Media Events: High Holidays of Mass Communication,” pp. 1-24 and Chapter 2, “Scripting Media Events: Contest, Conquest, Coronation,” pp. 25-53).

Sonnevend, J. (2014). *Stories Without Borders: The Making of a Global Iconic Event*. (Chapter 2 “Global Iconic Events: The Five Dimensions of Transnational Storytelling”) *manuscript*

Class 5 - Tuesday, September 16

MACARTHUR DAY IN CHICAGO

For the historical context please watch:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X3aCIfVhW7w>

Lang, K., & Lang, G. E. (1953). The unique perspective of television. *American Sociological Review*, 18(1), 3-12.

Katz, E., & Dayan, D. (2003). The audience is a crowd, the crowd is a public: Latter-day thoughts on Lang and Lang's "MacArthur Day in Chicago". In E. Katz, J. D. Peters, T. Liebes & A. Orloff (Eds.), *Canonic texts in media research* (pp. 121-136). Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Class 6 - Thursday, September 18

CONTEST: THE BEIJING OLYMPIC GAMES

Cui, X. (2013). Media events are still alive: The opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics as a media ritual. *International Journal of Communication* 7, 1220-1235.

Marvin, C. (2008). “All Under Heaven” – Megaspaces in Beijing. In M. Price & D. Dayan (Eds.), *Owning the Olympics: Narratives of the New China* (pp. 229-259). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press. Available at: <http://bit.ly/15ePlro>

Recommended:

DeLisle, J. (2008). “One World, Different Dreams”: The contest to define the Beijing Olympics. In M. Price & D. Dayan (Eds.), *Owning the Olympics: Narratives of the New China* (pp. 17-66). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

Rothenbuhler, E. W. (1988). Living room celebrations of the Olympic games. *Journal of Communication*, 38(4), 61-81.

Class 7 - Tuesday, September 23

CONQUEST I: LANDING ON THE MOON

Perlmutter, D. D., & Smith Dahmen, N. (2008). (In)visible evidence: pictorially enhanced disbelief in the Apollo moon landings. *Visual Communication* 7, 229-252.

Class 8 – Thursday, September 25

CONQUEST II: THE INAUGURATION OF THE FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN PRESIDENT

Bemmel, K. van. (2013). Obama made in Kenya: Appropriating the American dream in Kogelo. *Africa Today* 59, 4, 69-90

World media on the Obama inauguration:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/obama_inauguration/7842752.stm

President Barack Obama's Inaugural Address:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/President_Barack_Obamas_Inaugural_Address

Class 9 - Tuesday, September 30

CORONATION I: DIANA'S FUNERAL

Marriott, S. (2007). The BBC, ITN and the Funeral of Princess Diana. *Media History* 13(1), 93-110.

Taylor, D. (1998). Dancing with Diana: A study in hauntology, *TDR* 43(1), 59-78.

Schudson, M., & Sonnevend, J. (December 8, 2009). Mourning becomes electric: The rituals of grief can still bring a fragmented audience together. *Columbia Journalism Review*, available at:

http://www.cjr.org/the_research_report/mourning_becomes_electric.php

Recommended:

Pantti, M., & Sumiala, J. (2009). Till death do us join: Media, mourning rituals and the sacred centre of the society. *Media, Culture & Society*, 31(1), 119-135.

Kuhn, A., Brunt, R., Geraghty, C., Kitzinger, J., Edginton, R., & Silverstone, R. (1998). Flowers and tears: The death of Diana, Princess of Wales. *Screen*, 39(1), 67- 84.

Class 10 - Thursday, October 2

CORONATION II: THE ROYAL WEDDING

Dekavalla, M. (2012). Constructing the public at the royal wedding. *Media, Culture & Society*, 34, 296-311.

Kellner, D. (2012). Media spectacle and insurrection, 2011: From the Arab uprisings to Occupy Everywhere (Introduction). New York: Bloomsbury. Available at: <http://bit.ly/17i6eiJ>

Class 11 - Tuesday, October 7

RETHINKING MEDIA EVENTS

Scannell, P. (1995). Media events [Review of Dayan and Katz, *Media Events*]. *Media, Culture and Society*, 17, 151-157.

Katz, E., & Liebes, T. (2007). "No more peace!" How disaster, terror and war have upstaged media events. *International Journal of Communication*, 1, 157-166.

Dayan, D. (2008). Beyond Media Events: Disenchantment, derailment, disruption. In M. Price & D. Dayan (Eds.), *Owning the Olympics: Narratives of the New China* (pp. 391-403). Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press. Available at: <http://bit.ly/19KH0Kc>

Recommended:

Couldry, N. (2003). Media Rituals: A Critical Approach. (Chapter 4, "Rethinking Media Events," pp. 55-71). New York: Routledge.

Class 12 - Thursday, October 9

DISASTER – KATRINA AND THE TSUNAMI

Eyerman, R. (2013). "Is This America?" Katrina as Cultural Trauma." University of Texas, Katrina Series (chapter 6 from forthcoming book on Katrina).

Wilke, J. (2009). Historical Perspectives on Media Events: A Comparison of the Lisbon earthquake in 1755 and the Tsunami catastrophe in 2004. In Couldry, N., Hepp, A., & Krotz, F.: *Media Events in a Global Age* (pp. 45-61). New York: Routledge.

Recommended:

Liebes, T. (1998). Television's disaster marathons: A danger for the democratic process? In T. Liebes & J. Curran (Eds.), *Media, ritual and identity* (pp. 71-84). New York: Routledge.

Class 13 - Tuesday, October 14 – BREAK

Class 14 - Thursday, October 16

TERROR: 9/11

Schudson, M. (2002). What's unusual about covering politics as usual. In B. Zelizer & S. Allan (Eds.), *Journalism after September 11* (pp. 36-48). London: Routledge.

Blondheim, M., & Liebes, T. (2003). From disaster marathon to media event: Live television's performance on September 11, 2001 and September 11, 2002. In A. M. Noll (Ed.), *Crisis communications: Lessons from September 11* (pp. 185-197). Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield.

Scannell, P. (2014). *Television and the meaning of live: An enquiry into the human situation* (Chapter 12, "Catastrophe – on television, pp. 191-209). Cambridge: Polity.

Recommended:

Anker, E. (2005). Villains, victims and heroes: Melodrama, media, and September 11. *Journal of Communication*, 55(1), 22-37.

Class 15 - Tuesday, October 21

WAR: IRAQ

Maass, P. (January 10, 2011). "The toppling: How the media inflated a minor moment in a long war," *The New Yorker*, available at http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/01/10/110110fa_fact_maass

Andén-Papadopoulos, K. (2009). Body horror on the internet: US soldiers recording the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. *Media, Culture & Society* 31, 921-938.

Class 16 - Thursday, October 23

ASSASSINATION: JFK

Zelizer, B. (1992). Covering the Body: The Kennedy assassination, the media, and the shaping of collective memory (Chapter 4, "'Covering the Body' by telling the assassination," pp. 49-66). Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Zelizer, B. (1992). The Kennedy assassination through a popular eye: Toward a politics of remembering. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 16(2), 21-36.

Class 17 Tuesday, October 28

TRIAL: EICHMANN

Pinchevski, A., & Liebes, T. (2010). Severed voices: Radio and the mediation of trauma in the Eichmann trial. *Public Culture* 22(2), 265-291.

Recommended:

Alexander, J. C. (2002). On the social construction of moral universals: The 'Holocaust' from war crime to trauma drama, *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(5), 5-85.

Class 18 - Thursday, October 30

REGRET: WILLY BRANDT'S KNEEFALL AT THE WARSAW MEMORIAL

Rauer, V. (2006). Symbols in Action: Willy Brandt's Kneefall at the Warsaw Memorial. In J. C. Alexander, B. Giesen, & J. L. Mast (Eds.), *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual* (pp 257-282). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Class 19 - Tuesday November 4

GENOCIDE: RWANDA

Zelizer, B. (1998). *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera's Eye* (Chapter 7, "Remembering to Forget: Contemporary Scrapbooks of Atrocity," pp. 202-239). Chicago, London: Chicago University Press.

Class 20 - Thursday November 6

DEATH: MICHAEL JACKSON AND STEVE JOBS

Fast, S. (2010). Difference that exceeded understanding: Remembering Michael Jackson (1958-2009). *Popular Music and Society* 33, 259-266.

Myrick, J. G et al. (2013). Reactions of young adults to the death of Apple CEO Steve Jobs: Implications for cancer communication. *Communication Research Reports* 30(2), 115-126.

Remembering Steve (Apple's commemorative site):

<https://www.apple.com/stevejobs/>

Commencement speech by Steve Jobs at Stanford:

<http://news.stanford.edu/news/2005/june15/jobs-061505.html>

Class 21 - Tuesday November 11

MEMORIAL SERVICE: NELSON MANDELA

Evans, M. (2010). Mandela and the televised birth of the rainbow nation. *National Identities* 12(3), 309-326.

Nelson Mandela in pictures: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/nelson-mandela/10507354/Nelson-Mandela-in-pictures-Memorial-service-for-former-South-African-leader.html>

Class 22 - Thursday, November 13

MEDIA SCANDAL

Lull, J., & Hinerman, S. (1997). *Media scandals: Morality and desire in the popular culture marketplace*. (Chapter 1, "The search for scandal," pp. 1-33).

Thompson, J. B. (2000). *Political scandal: Power and visibility in the media age*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press. (Chapter 3, "Scandal as a Mediated Event," pp. 60-89).

Class 23 - Tuesday November 18

ACCIDENT

Molotch, H. & Lester, M. (1974). News as purposive behavior: On the strategic use of routine events, accidents and scandals. *American Sociological Review*, 39(1), 101- 112.

Katchanovski, I. (2012). Fukushima vs. Chernobyl coverage of the nuclear disasters by American and Canadian media. *Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*. Available at: http://www.academia.edu/1890136/Fukushima_vs._Chernobyl_Coverage_of_the_Nuclear_Disasters_by_American_and_Canadian_Media

Class 24 Thursday, November 20

REVOLUTION: THE FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL

Bartmanski, D. (2012). "Inconspicuous revolutions of 1989: Culture and contingency in the making of political icons. In J. C. Alexander, D. Bartmanski, & B. Giesen, *Iconic Power: Materiality and Meaning in Social Life* (39-67). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Loshitzky, Y. (1995). Inverting images of the 40s: The Berlin Wall and collective amnesia. *Journal of Communication*, 45(2), 93-107.

Class 25 Tuesday, November 25

UPRISING: THE EGYPTIAN UPRISING

Russell, A. (2011). Extra-national information flows, social media, and the 2011 Egyptian uprising. *International Journal of Communication* 5, 1238–1247.

Alexander, J. C. (2011) *Performative revolution in Egypt: An essay in cultural power* (pp. 1-36). New York: Bloomsbury.

Class 26 Thursday, November 27 – BREAK

Class 27 Tuesday, December 2

BIRTH: PRINCE GEORGE

Swanson, E. (July 27, 2013). Royal baby poll: Most say media covered the story too much. *Huffington Post*, available at:
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/27/kate-middleton-baby-poll_n_3660563.html

Lule, J. (2001). *Daily news, eternal stories: The mythological role of journalism*. New York: The Guilford Press, pp. 1-41.

Class 28 Thursday, December 4

NON-EVENTS AND PSEUDO-EVENTS: CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON PUBLIC DRAMA

Boorstin, D. (2012). *The image: A guide to pseudo-events in America*. 50th anniversary edition. (Chapter 1, From news gathering to news making: The flood of pseudo-events, pp. 7-17). New York: Random House.

Bell, D. (1963). A Moralizer's Tale. (Review of *The image: Or what happened to the American dream* by Daniel Boorstin). *The Kenyon Review* 25(1), 156-161.

Gabler, N. (April 15, 2012). Daniel Boorstin got it right in "The Image." *Los Angeles Times*.

Available at: <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/apr/15/entertainment/la-ca-neal-gabler-20120415>

Class 29 Tuesday, December 9

Closing discussion, paper due