

COMM 5110: The Rhetoric of Secrecy and Surveillance

Weekly Agendas

Online Meetings/Sessions:

Mondays/Wednesdays 2:30 pm - 3:45 pm CT

What is the purpose of this document? This document is where I will plan our synchronous meetings. The agenda is meant to keep us on task and offer a shared point of reference for the activities we will perform as a group. Please do not use this document as the course syllabus, which is the authoritative source for all readings, assignment due dates, and course plans. Please also note that I will only provide agendas for the Thursday synchronous sessions.

Pt.1 Key Terms and Definitions

(1/19) Course Introduction

Welcome to COMM 5110! How we will use the class time today:

- To review the basic structure of the class.
- To ask and respond to questions about the course
- Time permitting, we'll perform an activity.

What did we read for today's class? *If you haven't had an opportunity to complete the reading for this class, then please be sure to review these in addition to the readings due for our next class period. The readings below are (1) similar to the course content we will cover in this class and (2) shorter than the average weekly readings.*

- Primary Reading: [About the course](#)
- Secondary Reading: [What is Rhetorical Theory?](#)

Camera Policy. At no point will you be required to turn on your camera for this class. You may keep both microphone and camera off without explanation, but I would encourage you to follow up with me after class if your camera and microphone are off for the majority of our sessions regarding your questions or engagement with the course materials.

Public Health Disclaimer:

Even though we as a class do not carry the risk of contracting COVID-19 from us physically gathering together, we are still in an ongoing global pandemic. I recognize that you carry considerable uncertainty and anxiety. My goal is for this space to be a place where we can get good work and learning done alongside supporting one another through our continued public health crisis. Part of this week will be us setting our "remote community expectations."

In this course, you have the following work to complete outside of class... :

1. Complete the primary (UnTextbook) and secondary (article/chapter) reading. 2/w33k.
2. Watching the 6 film screenings for the class, viewable online for a rental fee.
3. Complete 3 short paper assignments with fixed due dates.
4. Complete 3 examinations with fixed due dates. Exams remain open for approximately 1 week at a time, offer 2 attempts to each examinee, and do not have time limits. There is no comprehensive final exam.

... and inside of class, during our online meeting sessions:

1. Attend every session as you are able, barring emergencies.
2. Participate by speaking up, writing in the chat, or following up with me after class.
3. Complete the activities with your fellow classmates as you are able.

This online class is designed with flexibility in mind, and you will get out of the class what you put into it. I strongly encourage everyone to attend every class they are able to, barring emergencies. Attendance is taken but not required, but at no point will you be required (or even asked) to turn on your camera or microphone. To get as much as possible from this class, you should

1. **Attend as many of the classes as you are able, and participate to the degree that you are able (and comfortable with).** Participation is assessed based on your (spoken/chat-based) contributions to the class discussions/activities. If you elect not to participate in our class periods, please follow up with me throughout the semester about your engagement with the material and consider attending office hours.
2. **Complete as much of the reading as you are able, starting with the primary readings** (entries from the UnTextbook) **and then moving on to the secondary readings** (selected academic articles and chapters). Everyone is asked to do all of the readings, and both primary and secondary readings are covered on the exams.
 - a. **For non-capstone undergraduate students**, it is especially important to complete the primary and secondary readings that are relevant to your short paper assignments.
 - b. **For capstone undergraduate students**, it is especially important to complete the primary and secondary readings that are relevant to your short paper assignments and your final projects.
 - c. **For the graduate students**, I very strongly encourage completing both the primary and secondary readings for each week that we meet, as this is commensurate with the expectations for a graduate-level seminar.
3. Go further with the material that interests you most. I have sought to include additional resources with each UnTextbook entry intended to deepen your engagement with the material discussed in this class and to provide a starting point in your search for additional research. These additional citations may be especially useful for the written work in this class.

4. Plan your schedule, noting the due dates for the exams and written assignments. I welcome extension requests, but I will not be able to respond to emails received within 24 hours of a deadline. In general, I have a 24-48 hour turnaround time with email.

How is this class organized?

- There are two meetings each week when we will talk about readings and do activities. I'd like everyone to attend as much as they are able, barring emergencies. I also encourage and provide a holistic score for participation, whether that is through speaking during class, contributions through the chat function on zoom, or follow-ups on your engagement with the content.
- There are **five units** of varying lengths. On the left hand side of this document, you will see the basic progression of the class with the dates we will discuss a given topic.
 - Part 1: Key Terms and Definitions
 - Part 2: Secrecy Situations
 - Part 3: Reading Strategies
 - Part 4: Authority Figures
 - Part 5: The "New" Secrecy
- Office hours are from 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm and have a "group" first come first serve format. I can create breakout rooms during those office hours sessions if folks need to meet with me one on one. If you can't make the group office hours, then email me to set up a time to meet via zoom.
- There are **four days dedicated to film screenings** listed in the left-hand index. These are "watch by" days. We will be discussing the movie on those dates, and not showing them in class via zoom.
 - *The Conversation* (1974)
 - *MLK/FBI* (2020)
 - *Contact (1997)/Arrival* (2016)
 - *The Matrix* (1999)/*Zero Days* (2016)
- There are several **course documents** that allow for the smooth coordination of this course. During the first class, I'll go explain them all individually. I strongly recommend everyone bookmark these links.
 - [The UnTextbook of Rhetorical Theory: Secrecy and Surveillance Edition](#)
 - [syllabus](#)
 - [assignments](#)
 - weekly agendas (this document)

- There are **three short writing assignments**. We will dedicate a day to introducing the assignment and another to talk through questions about it the week it is due.
 - A “keywords” entry
 - A post-viewing film response
 - An application of concepts in this class to real world situations.
- And **three Exams**. I will provide study guides in the assignment document when they become available. There is no comprehensive examination at the end of this class.

(1/24) Roots

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: [Roots](#) in the UnTextbook
- Secondary Reading: [Galison, "Removing Knowledge"](#)

Opening Question

What terms, concepts, and distinctions does Galison add to those that are offered in this entry? Why are they important or worthy of consideration? (How) are they related to the other concepts listed here?

Write your response to these questions before class begins. It will remain posted during the updates and agenda preview for the day. We will return to them during our discussion today.

Updates

- Please be sure to bookmark all of the major course documents.
 - UnTextbook: <https://the-un-textbook.ghost.io/rhetoric-secrecy-surveillance/>
 - Canvas: <https://canvas.umn.edu/courses/286369>
 - Assignments: <https://tinyurl.com/3tad9dhv>
 - Agendas: <https://tinyurl.com/y2hafjv2>
- [My \(group\) office hours are MW from 12:30-1:30 pm CT](#). Link is also on Canvas.

Our Agenda

- I'll answer any questions you have. (5-10m)
- We'll begin with a "get to know you" activity. (25-30m)
- I'll talk about the course content you read for today (5-10m)
- We'll discuss the opening question. (10-15m)
- We'll discuss an exam question.

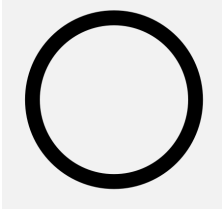
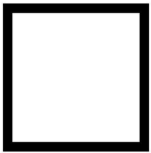
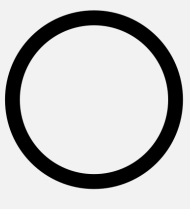
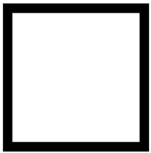
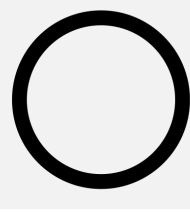
Question/Answer

The Activity (~25-30 minutes)

This is a game inspired by the famous “Prisoner’s Dilemma.” It may also be familiar to other games you have played like “Mafia” or “Among Us” because of the imposter premise. For more information:

- [Basic introduction to “The Prisoner’s Dilemma”](#)
- [Yale course on “The Prisoner’s Dilemma”](#)
- [“Lacan’s Prisoner’s Dilemma Done Linearly and Visually”](#)
- [Lecture on Lacan’s essay on “The Prisoner’s Dilemma”](#)

You will be placed in a discussion group with $\frac{1}{3}$ of your fellow classmates. There are two other groups in the class, and each group will be assigned a symbol to represent their group: a **circle** or a **square**. In this class, one or two of the groups will be assigned *circle* symbols, and one will be assigned a *square*. The square is an imposter. It’s the job of the square group to convince the other group that they are circles. It’s the job of the circle groups to correctly identify the square group. For instance, if there are 5 groups, there will be a majority of circles and one or more squares.

				
Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5

Do not communicate with the other groups before re-entering the big room. If you have already completed this activity, I advise you not to share the outcome of this earlier game with your group, and it will be no advantage to you. There IS at least one square among the circles.

When you break into groups, I will provide you with your group’s symbol by typing the following sentence into your breakout room group chat: Your group has been assigned the following symbol: **circle** (or **square**). While in your breakout room, ...

- Introduce yourselves among your group members. Your job is either to
 - Figure out the best way to convince others you are not a square.
 - Figure out the best way to ask questions that would reveal the square (imposter) group.
- Then (about 10 minutes) it is up to your group to strategize how to figure out who is who, or (for the squares) to misdirect the other groups.
- At the end of the exercise, we’ll take a survey where each participant can put in a vote.

Review of Course Content

- [Link to PowerPoint Slides on “Roots”](#)
- Why rhetoric? Why roots?
- Secrecy as a settler metaphor.
- The proliferation of terminology about secrecy and surveillance.

Discussion of Opening Question

1. What were the most interesting ideas, concepts, stories, or parts of the writing? What stood out to you and why?
2. What terms, concepts, and distinctions does Galison add to those that are offered in this entry? Why are they important or worthy of consideration? (How) are they related to the other concepts listed here?
3. Is it possible to make secrecy into an academic area of study? If it is (or were) possible, what sorts of things would it be necessary or important to pay attention to? Would this area of study have to change over time?

Review of Exam Questions

(1/26) Keywords

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: [Keywords](#) in the UnTextbook
- Secondary Reading: [Melley, "The Melodramatic Mode in American Politics and Other Modes of Narrative Suspicion"](#)

Opening Question

Melley would insist that we add the keyword "melodrama" to the collection of keywords from the primary reading. To which of the keywords from the UnTextbook (rhetoric, secrecy, surveillance) is melodrama most closely related? What is unique and important about melodrama that would make it a good keyword for the rhetoric of secrecy and surveillance?

Updates

- Please be sure to bookmark all of the major course documents.
- New additional resources have been added to the "Keywords" entry, following up on our conversation from Wednesday.
- A new entry has been added at the end of the assignments document advising on a standard note-taking format. Not required, but it may be helpful. I am curious to know how experienced students are with reading academic writing, as well.
- My (group) office hours are MW from 12:30-1:30 pm CT. Link on Canvas.
- I will be hosting a capstone project information session during group office hours next W at 1-1:30pm, I'll try to record it but please try to attend if you can.

Our Agenda

- I'll answer any questions you have. (5-10m)
- I'll talk about the course content you read for today (5-10m)
- We'll discuss the opening question. (10-15m)
- We'll discuss one or more exam questions.

Question/Answer

Review of Course Content

- [Link to PowerPoint Slides on "Keywords"](#)
- Why keywords for Secrecy and Surveillance?
- *Secrecy* and *Surveillance* as keywords.
- *Paranoia*, as described by Jonathan Metzl, Max Horkheimer, and Richard Hofstadter
- *Metaphor*, as described by Roger Stahl's article, "[A Clockwork War](#)"

Discussion of Opening Question

1. What sticks with you the most from these readings? What concepts were more difficult to get into or understand?
2. Melley would insist that we add the keyword "melodrama" to the collection of keywords from the primary reading?
3. To which of the keywords from the UnTextbook (e.g. rhetoric, secrecy, surveillance) is melodrama most closely related?
4. What is unique and important about melodrama that would make it a good keyword for the rhetoric of secrecy and surveillance?

Review of Exam Questions

(1/31) Intro to Short Paper 1

Short Paper 1: Keyword Entry

- The short paper 1 assignment is required for all students (undergraduate, capstone, graduate) in COMM 5110. Capstone students may elect to expand this or any of the other short papers into a final project.
- At this time I do not have any completed examples of this assignment to circulate as previously successful models.

Generate Topics: Here is a list of all the topics from this class.

1. Privacy
2. Dark Web
3. Gossip: Gayle Collins, "Scorpion Tongues"
4. Espionage: Espionage and Sedition Acts
5. Trade Secret
6. VPN: Virtual Private Network
7. Scandal: Gayle Collins, "Scorpion Tongues"
8. **Covert:** *Femme Covert*
9. Crypto tumbling
10. Femme Fatale: Whistleblowing unit of the UnTextbook (Olmstead)
11. False Flag

(1) define the term and how it relates to "rhetoric" (persuasion/representation/power)

- **Persuasion:** a way that a speaker exercises influence over the audience by speaking with their anticipated addressee in mind.
- **Representation:** a way of creating meanings to foster shared identification through a shared understanding of the idea in question. **Antiepistemology.**
 - Gossip is how the public perceives secrets-as-representations when they are released for consumption.
- **Hierarchies of power:** The creation of social differences that divide constituencies into "haves" and "have nots" on the basis of unequal access to information.
- **Metaphor:** The translation of one idea into the terms of another. The use of a vehicle to modify the meaning of a tenor.
- **Melodrama:** The narrative form in which absolute good fights against absolute evil in service of a nostalgic past or a feminized entity deprived of their own agency. (Melley)

(2) explain its importance/significance to the core terms, secrecy and/or surveillance.

- What is the connection between gossip and secrecy/surveillance?
 - Gossip is one way that secrecy is manufactured.
 - gossip is typically rooted in secrecy, you trust who you share the info with and you trust that it will stay with them. Bellman, *Paradox of Secrecy*
 - Gossip relates to surveillance because it hints that our actions are being monitored by an external party without our knowledge or consent.

(3) provide a detailed description of its origination and prominent contexts of use, and

- God+Sib (OED) the evolution of this term from describing a “godfather” or “godmother” to its use as “idle chatter” or “tittle-tattle”.

(4) offer an example or examples of how this term is being used in practice.

- Insider stock trading
- Incorrect information about the foreign basis of the Jan 6 attack
- Tabloid journalism

The Final Project Proposal Assignment (Capstone and Graduate)

Purpose of the Proposal Assignment

The general purpose of the assignment is to describe the parameters of what the final project might be, what it wishes to argue, perform, or do (its thesis and/or contribution), to describe the context that makes a project like this one important, and to provide some basic guidelines for how you think a project like this one ought to be assessed.

For graduate students, I have encouraged folks to contour the project to their personal, professional, and pedagogical (teaching-related) goals. That means that your options for a final project might include (for example) writing specific sections of an (or a full) academic paper intended to be sent out for publication, an annotated bibliography that builds toward professional benchmarks like preliminary examinations, or syllabus materials for a future class that you know you would like to teach (writing a syllabus is part of the preliminary exam process in COMM as well, which is partly why I mention it). Of course, projects that are public-facing or related to community engagement are also welcome.

What can a final project be?

Final projects might be a final essay, a detailed annotated bibliography, or other public engagement or multimedia projects. Students have, for instance, talked to me about producing AV content on the need to be aware of the extent to which surveillance practices are a part of social media and digital platform use, and how we can guard against these at a practical level. If you are seeking to do non-academic work for this final project, I would only ask that you either seek out or have the required technical skills to complete it, as I may not be a good resource on how to create content or video edit (my video skills are limited to Zoom and PowerPoint this semester).

Capstone/Graduate Project Proposal Page Length and Bibliographic Requirements

- For capstone and graduate students, the final project proposal is a 1-3 page (capstone) or 3-5 page (graduate) document to be accompanied by a works-cited page or bibliography.
- The document should describe the final project you wish to complete for the class. The works cited/bibliography for undergraduate students is 3-5 (capstone) or 10+ (graduate) academic/peer-reviewed sources in addition to any popular (i.e. news, social media, film) resources you might want to include or draw upon.
- If you run into issues with the citation component of the assignment, I am always happy to send resources, and you may draw upon readings from the class. If the kind of project you are pursuing necessitates a different kind of source citation or resource than just described, please include that justification for the sources in the bibliography section of the document as well.
- The assignment should be turned in on Canvas, and there is a detailed description of it there and within the Assignments document. I have added all Capstone students and Graduate students to the appropriate assignment submission sub-modules on Canvas.

(2/2) Institutions

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: "[Institutions](#)" in the UnTextbook
- Secondary Reading: Jack Bratich, "[Public Secrecy/Immanent Security](#)"

Opening Question

Bratich returns us to some of the keywords we discussed last week, including "spectacle," and encourages readers "to revise our conceptions of publicity, secrecy, and activist strategy." What do we learn about institutions from this article? What revisions does Bratich propose? What understandings of institutional secrecy does he insist we depart from? What understandings of secrecy should we instead adopt or embrace?

Updates

- Today, I hosted an informational session about the capstone during office hours. Another similar session is scheduled for after class on Monday.

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- Provide updates
- To ask and respond to questions
- To talk about the assigned readings.

Question/Answer

Review of Course Content

- [Link to PowerPoint Slides on "Institutions"](#)
- [Secrecy](#) (2008). This documentary provides context for 20th-century secrecy institutions and the kinds of rhetoric that they use. This was assigned in a previous semester and we will watch a short clip from it at the beginning of class. Students may also elect to write about this documentary instead of the other films screened in this class. CW: Images of torture related to American wartime campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Discussion of Opening Question

Review of Exam Questions

(2/9) Conspiracy

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: "[Conspiracies](#)" in the UnTextbook
- Secondary Reading: Jodi Dean, "[Declarations of Independence](#)"

Opening Question

According to Jodi Dean, political conspiracy theories give believers an imagined sense of "independence" from institutions and government and grant them the power to "read between the lines" or to see what others cannot. Are conspiracy theories logical fallacies that allow believers to exercise mastery over the worlds they inhabit? What might it mean to define the psychological function of conspiracy theories without getting caught up in proving their truth or falsehood?

Updates

- Today's PowerPoint presentation will be longer than the typical lecture.
- There will not be a PowerPoint presentation in Wednesday's class to encourage wider student participation and discussion of the readings.
- There are several recordings for "Erasure" on the idea of erasure as both "negativity" and "production."

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- Provide updates
- To ask and respond to questions
- To talk about the assigned readings
- To go over exam questions about this entry

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Discussion of the Readings

- [Link to PowerPoint Slides on "Conspiracy"](#)
- *About "Declarations of Independence."* Jodi Dean's chapter makes the connection between secrecy, disclosure, and conspiracy explicit. Dean is also keen on the way that conspiracies produce the secret as an object of fascination and desire, as well as how this fascination is routine and predictable in its own right. The piece, finally, connects the motifs of conspiracy and secrecy to *suspicion*, to the paranoid style. Dean wants to draw attention to this suspicion as a speech act that declares the subject's "independence" from reason, the mainstream, and 'playing the rules of the game'.

The Activity

When is it the case that there ARE conspiracies (e.g. “just because you’re paranoid doesn’t mean...”) and when is it the case that they’re [just loosely connected fragments](#)?

[After you’ve watched the clip, return to class for group discussion. Then we’ll break up for a group discussion activity]

In addition to the many theoretical perspectives considered this week, we could also add *computer science* as another way of approaching or addressing conspiratorial logics. In the words of the Atlantic article: “We must redesign our information ecosystem in the 21st century” with interdisciplinary research “to reduce the spread of fake news and to address the underlying pathologies it has revealed.”

MIT Media lab concluded that false information spread significantly further than truth. They highlighted that significant aspects of disinformation included *people*, *linguistic content*, and certain social-media enabled *propagation features*. Ultimately, their goal was to predict the *veracity* of rumors, the outcome of this kind of analysis is to determine whether a given unit of information is *true* or *false*. What they found was that humans, not robots, are more likely to spread fake news. All of this research, including the interest in spreading and managing disinformation, must be held alongside the [troubling associations of MIT Media Lab](#) with Jeffrey Epstein, which constituted a real scandal for the institution and this unit.

Watch the video linked below and then we will break into discussion groups to think through the following prompt: [MIT Media Lab](#) (about 3m)

Does the “pathology” of conspiracy theory predates our exposure to the internet, and the internet exacerbates these pre-existing problems? Or does the internet-based function of these conspiracy theories add a new features to conspiracy theory as it has conventionally existed?

Next week we will talk about **Reference and Repetition** as we make the transition to the “how to read for secrets” section of the course New audio recordings and relevant internet content will be posted to Canvas by no later than next Tuesday. Readings for next week should already be posted on Canvas.

(-/-) Erasure

How we will use the class time today:

- Provide updates
- To ask and respond to questions about
 - the course [syllabus](#), [assignments](#), [lecture outlines](#), and agenda
 - [Erasure as negativity](#)
 - [Erasure as production](#)
- To talk about the assigned readings.
 - [Todorov, The Semiotic Conquest of America](#)
- Then, we'll break out into discussion groups to perform an activity

Updates: *Due to an internet outage on 2/7/22, we returned to the entry on "Conspiracy" in Spring 2022.*

Question/Answer

Discussion of the Readings

- [Pharos](#) and [Eidolon](#) will direct you to critical-classical journals that deepen some of the criticisms of ancient Greek culture offered in the recordings.

(2/14) Transparency

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: "[Transparency](#)" in the UnTextbook
- Secondary Reading: John B. Thompson, "[The New Visibility](#)"

Opening Question

- According to John B. Thompson, "In this new world of mediated visibility, the making visible of actions and events is not just the outcome of leakage in systems of communication and information flow that are increasingly difficult to control: it is also an explicit strategy of individuals who know very well that mediated visibility can be a weapon in the struggles they wage in their day-to-day lives."
 - Is this an argument *for* or *against* transparency in principle?
 - Is it an argument to *nuance* our understandings of transparency?
 - How do we know *genuine* transparency when we see it?
 - How do we know if it is transparency *in name only*?

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- To ask and respond to questions
- To take a survey
- To address revisions to the participation element of the class.
- To talk about the assigned readings
- To go over exam questions (Roots, Institutions, Keywords, Conspiracies?)

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Updates

- New links in "additional readings" for both "Institutions" and "Erasure"
- At the beginning of class, I would like everyone to complete [this early-semester survey](#) to get a sense of how everyone in the class is doing and what we might do differently.
 - Depending on responses, we may break into groups so that you can discuss your responses with other members of the class.
 - We may return to some topics discussed in class last week and try to start a more organic discussion depending on collective engagement with this today's readings.

Open Discussion

- [Resolving the mystery of professor professorson](#)
- Amazon advertisement: [Scarlett Johansen and Colin Jost](#)
- Coinbase advertisement: [QR codes](#) and [third-party apps](#).

Discussion of the Readings

So what about transparency?

- The modernist-materialist idea of transparency: Mumford and McQuire
- Cinema and the view from nowhere
- The rhetoric of objectivist transparency.
- Monitory Democracy and Anti-Epistemology

Monitory Democracy	Anti-Epistemology
Refers to a version of democracy in which representation occurs through multiple means (watch-dog organizations, inspectors general, FOIA) and allows citizens to 'look back'. Michael Schudson, <i>The Rise of the Right to Know: Politics and the Culture of Transparency, 1945-1975</i>, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015)	Refers to the intensifying pace of classification efforts that make knowledge that is crucial for interpreting political life inaccessible with layers of secrecy and confidentiality. Peter Galison, "Removing Knowledge," <i>Critical Inquiry</i> 31(2004): 229-243.

(2/16) Short Paper 1/Exam 1

(Review Session)

What did we read for today's class?

- No reading assigned for today! Instead, we're talking about the assignment coming due at the end of this week and the exam opening next week.
 - [Exam 1 Study Guide](#)
 - [Keywords Assignment Description](#)

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- I'll review the survey from last class
- I'll go over the study guide for the exam and some important information
- We'll review some exam questions
- I'll answer your questions about exam 1 and short paper 1.

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Updates

(2/18) Intro to Short Paper 2

Updates:

- I'll open by answering questions about Exam 1
- I'll go over the short paper 2 assignment description and the first film screening of the semester.
- I'll cover the project proposal assignment

For [the short paper 2 assignment description](#), please navigate to the assignment document.

The Final Project Proposal Assignment (Capstone and Graduate)

- **The final project proposal/final project** are for capstone and graduate students only. If you are an undergraduate student not enrolled at the capstone level, you are not required to complete it.
- For capstone and graduate students, the final project proposal is coming due on **March 14**. *For capstone students*, this is a 1-3 page document to be accompanied by a works cited page or bibliography. The document should describe the final project you wish to complete for the class. The works cited/bibliography for undergraduate students is 3-5 academic/peer reviewed sources in addition to any popular (i.e. news, social media, film) resources you might want to include or draw upon. The works cited minimum is 10 sources for graduate students. If you run into issues with the citation component of the assignment, I am always happy to send resources, and you may draw upon readings from the class. If the kind of project you are pursuing necessitates a different kind of source citation or resource than just described, please include that justification for the sources in bibliography section of the document as well.
- The general purpose of the assignment is to describe the parameters of what the final project might be, what it wishes to argue, perform, or do (its thesis and/or contribution), to describe the context that makes a project like this one important, and to provide some basic guidelines for how you think a project like this one ought to be assessed.
- The assignment should be turned in on Canvas, and there is a detailed description of it there and within the Assignments document. I have added all Capstone students and Graduate students to the appropriate assignment submission sub-modules on Canvas.
- Finally, for graduate students specifically, I have included more detailed guidelines, and have encouraged folks to contour the project to their personal, professional, and pedagogical (teaching-related) goals. That means that your options for a final project might include (for example) writing specific sections of an (or a full) academic paper intended to be sent out for publication, an annotated bibliography that builds toward professional benchmarks like preliminary examinations, or syllabus materials for a future

class that you know you would like to teach (writing a syllabus is part of the preliminary exam process in COMM as well, which is partly why I mention it). Of course, projects that are public-facing or related to community engagement are also welcome.

(2/23) *The Conversation* (1974)

[The Conversation](#) (1974)

I would like students to be aware that this film contains (1) an instance of speech where the main character uses a hateful slur (2) brief nudity, and (3) a sequence involving abrupt, loud sounds which also depicts a murder. I did not recall any of these scenes when I first assigned the film. I wanted to make clear that students should not feel obligated to watch it and that there are a number of alternatives available for short paper 2.

The reason I chose *The Conversation* (1974) is that it is a story about a moral crisis over private surveillance made in the year of the Watergate controversy, in the months before Richard Nixon's resignation from the presidency. The film was made by Francis Ford Coppola, who is also famous for *The Godfather* (1972) and other films. It was nominated for three academy awards and won the grand prix du festival internationale du film at the Cannes film festival. For those who are familiar, it is allegedly a prequel to the film *Enemy of the State* (1998), which features the lead character of *The Conversation* in a very similar role.

- This film depicts a surveillance expert's moral dilemma over surveillance work that he has completed. What is the moral dilemma? How does it resolve? How does the film subvert the viewer's expectations about the dangers posed by surveillance?
- The main character is depicted as traumatized from having done work that resulted in a family's murder. Does the film's ending resolve or deepen this trauma? Does it offer the character an escape from the harm done by his work or does it repeat those harms?
- The main character in the film is both an expert in surveillance and grows increasingly paranoid that he is being surveilled. In what ways is he a surveillance expert? Why is he paranoid given his intimate knowledge of surveillance? Is his paranoia warranted? Does the film help us to understand how paranoia is related to surveillance?
- Consider a comparative analysis of [The Conversation](#) (1974) and [Enemy of the State](#) (1998). How are the dangers of surveillance 'updated' in the more recent film? What remains outdated about it? Is paranoia depicted in a similar way? Does the film resolve the moral dilemma of surveillance differently?

Brainstorming the Organization of Short Paper 2

- This film depicts a surveillance expert's moral dilemma over surveillance work that he has completed. What is the moral dilemma? How does it resolve? How does the film subvert the viewer's expectations about the dangers posed by surveillance?

Introduction

- **AGD** – attention getting device, an anecdote, fact, or example that is topical to the “moral dilemma” of surveillance.
- **Thesis:** In *The Conversation* (1974) the moral dilemma of surveillance concerns the fact that privatized surveillance seems to result in physical harm to the surveilled subjects and operators must make the decision whether or not to record their subjects' behaviors.
- **Purpose:** why is/was it important? The problems posed by the emerging profession of surveillance were significant at the time of the film's release due to how present the Watergate scandal would have been to viewers. There, the question of how, when, and why surveillance is an appropriate means of protecting peoples' lives or of uncovering a dramatic scandal was timely because of public events that were unfolding outside the scope of the film.
- **Preview:** how will the essay unfold?

Logically independent (separate examples)

Main Point 1: The first moral dilemma of the film ...

Main Point 2: The second ...

Main Point 3: The third ...

Logically dependent (chain link)

Main Point 1: What is the moral dilemma of surveillance as depicted in the film?

Main Point 2: How does the moral dilemma of surveillance resolve in the film?

Main Point 3: Why does this resolution break with viewers' expectations?

- The main character is depicted as traumatized from having done work that resulted in a family's murder. Does the film's ending resolve or deepen this trauma? Does it offer the character an escape from the harm done by his work or does it repeat those harms?

Introduction

- AGD
- Thesis: The role of trauma in determining surveillance behaviors
- Purpose: why is/was it important?
- Preview: how will the essay unfold?

Main Point 1: The trauma?

Main Point 2: Resolution/Deepening of trauma?

Main Point 3: Does surveillance help/harm more generally?

- The main character in the film is both an expert in surveillance and grows increasingly paranoid that he is being surveilled. In what ways is he a surveillance expert? Why is he paranoid given his intimate knowledge of surveillance? Is his paranoia warranted? Does the film help us to understand how paranoia is related to surveillance?

Introduction

- AGD
- Thesis
- Purpose
- Preview

Main Point 1: What is surveillance expertise? How does Harry Caul demonstrate/exemplify it?

Main Point 2: What is the role of paranoia among surveillance experts?

Main Point 3: How does the film gesture to a wider public context of paranoia?

Pt. 2 Secrecy Situations

(2/28) Quarantine

Updates

- The department of Political Science is hosting a webinar in which several Ukrainian experts and two POL UMN professors will discuss Ukraine's struggle for survival.
 - **Tuesday, March 1st, 2022 from 12:30-1:30pm**
 - Zoom webinar: <https://z.umn.edu/ukrainepanel>

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: "[The Secrecy Situation](#)" and "[Quarantine](#)" in the UnTextbook
- Secondary Reading: Michel Foucault, "[Panopticism](#)"

Opening Question

- What is the connection between the logic of quarantine and the contemporary logic of surveillance?
- What kind of governing authority does public health require? Is there a kind of surveillance that is necessary for public health?
- Surveillance is (1) often enacted in the name of greater "security" and (2) is described as a limitation upon a person or people's "freedom." When do such appeals go awry? When are they necessary?

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- To ask and respond to questions (including follow-up questions about the exam).
- To go over future exam questions
- To talk about the assigned readings

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Discussion of the Readings

- What is a "secrecy situation"?
- Why is "quarantine" a "secrecy situation"?

(3/2) Nuclear Secrets

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: "[Nuclear Secrets](#)" in the UnTextbook
- Secondary Reading: Galison, "[Secrecy in Three Acts](#)"

Opening Question

- How does the institutional management of nuclear secrets anticipate the way that secrets are part of public life in the United States today? What aspects of nuclear secrecy are familiar? What aspects of nuclear secrecy seem specific to the technical or scientific management of secrets?

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- Sample Short Paper 2 assignments posted in assignment document and on Canvs.
- Q/A
- [We'll administer a midterm evaluation of this course](#)
- Exam Questions on "Nuclear Secrets"
- To talk about the assigned readings

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Discussion of the Readings

- [Galison's "Secrecy" \(2008\) Documentary](#) (15:00-20:00)

(3/14) Whistleblowing

Updates

- All of the short paper 1 assignments have been returned via Canvas at this time.
- I was not able to write quiz questions for “whistleblowing”. I’ll share these at the beginning of Wednesday’s class instead.
- On Wednesday, we’ll be talking about our second film screening *MLK/FBI*. As a reminder, you should plan to watch the film before coming to class.
 - I’ll also use this as an opportunity to talk through Short Paper 2
- Today, project proposals come due for our class for capstone students and graduate students. If you require an extension, please let me know by e-mail by no later than end of day!

What did we read for today’s class?

- Primary Reading: “[Whistleblowers](#)” in the UnTextbook
- Secondary Reading: Fischer, “[Pathologizing and Prosecuting a \(Gender\) Traitor](#)”

Opening Question

- Why do you think it is important to attend to the overlap between whistleblowing and gender? What from the readings stood out to you that supports your claim?

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- To ask and respond to questions
- To respond to the mid-semester survey
- To talk about the assigned readings
 - The rhetoricity of whistleblowing
 - The cinematic spectacle of whistleblowing
 - The gendering of the whistleblower

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Open Discussion

Discussion of the Readings

- Some of the material in the “whistleblowing” entry is authored by UMN Graduate Scholar Jasmine Baxter, who specializes in media representation and gender.

(3/16) *MLK/FBI* (2020)

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: "*MLK/FBI*"

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- To administer a poll with exam questions about the "whistleblowing" unit
- To ask and respond to your questions
- To talk about the film screening assigned for today
- To talk about short paper 2

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Open Discussion (from Assignment Document)

- The themes of surveillance and secrecy come up repeatedly throughout this film. In what ways does institutional and police-based surveillance arise as a major theme? What forms did this surveillance take, and how did it intensify as time went on? What distinguishes the use of surveillance for observation from the FBI's use of surveillance against King?
- In what ways does King's private life take the form of a secret? How did public rhetoric about King reflect the FBI's desire to expose his secrets? Which audiences were most likely to believe the FBI's rhetoric about King? How did the FBI draw on a legacy of racist stereotypes when waging its propaganda campaign to delegitimize King?
- *MLK/FBI* juxtaposes two public figures: Martin Luther King and J. Edgar Hoover. Why was their relationship so important? In what ways did these public figures have reputations at odds with how they are remembered today? In what ways was each of the two *secretive*, and how did their attitudes about the openness of communication differ from one another?
- *MLK/FBI* discusses how the FBI's pursuit of King was strongly connected to the current of justifiable war and anti-communism in the United States. How was anti-communist sentiment related to the FBI's pursuit of Black protest movements in the American South? Why did King's resistance to the Vietnam War intensify the FBI's efforts to delegitimize him? Was King exposing the nation's dirty secrets, was the FBI exposing his, or both?

Structuring Short Paper 2

- Introduction
 - **AGD:** Open your essay with a topical example (e.g., a description of a scene from the film, parodies, etc.) or a noteworthy response (e.g., important/popular reviews of the film).
 - **Thesis:** What is your answer to the complex of questions posed here? Alternatively, what are you arguing about the film? What is the relationship between the film, secrecy, and/or surveillance?
 - **Purpose:** What do we learn about secrecy and surveillance from this film? What is the take-away for your reading audience? What is it that we, as readers, should gain from having watched the film as well as from your analysis?
 - **Preview:** This is the step-by-step unfolding of the remainder of this 2-3 page essay. Ideally, this would map the topic sentences in the order they are written.

MLK/FBI juxtaposes two public figures: Martin Luther King and J. Edgar Hoover. Why was their relationship so important? In what ways did these public figures have reputations that is at odds with how they are remembered today? In what ways were each of the two secretive, and how did their attitudes about the openness of communication differ from one another?

- Introduction (example)
 - **AGD:** The FBI's intensified pursuit of King following his receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize. Illustrates the important role MLK played in shaping public opinion.
 - **Thesis:** In this essay, I will argue that King and Hoover present two antithetical stances on the morality of secrecy and openness based on their public rhetoric and their statements about one another.
 - **Purpose:** This juxtaposition is important because these two individuals are pivotal historical figures in the civil rights movement and in the history of the FBI, and their conflict with one another has defined how each has been remembered in very different ways.
 - **Preview:** In the remainder of this essay, I will first discuss the antagonistic relationship between King and Hoover, how their reputations of each of these two has changed over time, and how their attitudes toward secrecy reflect distinct positions on the morality of concealment and revelation.
- Main Point 1: The antagonistic relationship between King and Hoover
- Main Point 2: Their changing reputations over time
- Main Point 3: The morality of secrecy, according to each. According to King is that open secrets about America's past must be revealed and discussed while elements of his private life should remain legitimately secret. According to Hoover, King presented a national security threat and his private life was a secret that should be leveraged in service of other, unstated national security goals.

Pt. 3 Reading Strategies

(3/21) Rhetorical Approaches to Secrecy

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: "[Rhetorical Approaches to Secrecy](#)"

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- To clarify how you should approach the readings for this class.
- To ask and respond to your questions
 - (e.g.) I can follow up on the film screening assigned for today or short paper 2
- Lecture on the readings from the textbook.
- To administer a poll with exam questions about the "rhetorical reading strategies" and "names and naming" entries

Update on How to Complete Readings

- At this point in the semester, I am actively prepping the pages of the un-textbook week to week. It would be unfair of me to expect students to complete readings that are not posted more than 24 hours before we meet as a class.
- I will plan to use the entries in the un-textbook (listed as the "primary readings" for the class) as the "PowerPoint" slides for our in-class discussions. That means that you should focus on the secondary readings if you are coming to class regularly, and I will cover the primary readings as part of our normal lectures.

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Lecture

- "[Rhetorical Approaches to Secrecy](#)"

Open Discussion

The notes below are from a previous version of the course offered in 2021. These notes are not part of the “Names and Naming” unit in 2022, but they have been preserved here for posterity.

Atilla's General Notes on “Reference and Repetition”: Foucault repeatedly makes use of several “moves” in his writing.

- The first is **division**, such as the division between “resemblance/representation” and “similitude/repetition.” Doing this allows Foucault to divide repetition into two, or to find *difference* in separate versions of the representation used to create symbols. The name can be split, divided, such that what we conventionally regard as a “repetition” (resemblance) is just one form of ‘pure’ repetition (similitude).
 - (In *Nietzsche Genealogy History*, this ‘move’ is called *descent*)
- The second is **particularism**, such that an architecture like the panopticon or a practice like confession is only made possible through the blending of otherwise separate discourses into a unique combination. The name clusters things together, brings them together to create something new. The panopticon brings together sequestration, the denial of light, and the invisibility of the prisoner and reverses two of the terms: it couples sequestration and visibility to enhance the effectiveness of policing and the punishment of the prisoner’s “soul.”
 - (In *Nietzsche Genealogy History*, this ‘move’ is called *emergence*)
- The combination of these ‘moves’ is like a pincer for the historical phenomenon being named.
 - On the one hand, the name can be subdivided into particular forms and subforms. What you take to be X is in fact the unique combination of Y and Z, both of which have their own unique paths of historical emergence, unique features, and purposes.
 - On the other hand, the name is a unique merger of different discourses into a unique whole. There was a moment at which X concept was rare, new, and not quite common-sense. (*Las Meninas* does this for the concept of “representation,” just as the plague and the *panopticon* does this for “surveillance”)
- The “X” being named can be an institution, practice, or a technique. Ultimately, this is where the secret ‘is’ -- it is a ritual that has a particular history in discourse and which creates subjects out of discourse. These practices create the impression of hiddenness by putting the idea out there that there is something out there to find.

The Activity/Discussion

Undergraduate Activity

- Watch the following clips, and then answer the following questions: *where* is the work of reference happening? If we were to read these videos like “*Las Meninas*,” as a tension between competing positions inside of -- and outside of -- the artwork, then how could we apply this framework to these examples? Start with “Lisa’s Brain” in your discussion, then move to “The Office.”
- [“The simpsons” lisa’s brain episode](#)
 - Physicist Stephen Hawking had the reputation of being a genius, which is creatively represented in the episode in a number of ways. How is Hawking represented in this clip as “more than human”? What characteristics give him more-than-human characteristics of intelligence or ability?
 - Pay attention to the screen Hawking uses to communicate. In theory, the screen should correspond to what Hawking says. Does it? When does it not? What does the fact that the text does not correspond with his speech reveal about this representation of Hawking?
- ["The office" email surveillance episode](#)
 - Foucault’s work is about relationships of power and how surveillance is a historical combination of different discourse. How is surveillance being exercised in this clip?
 - What are the tensions and power relations that are put into play or dramatised here?
 - How does the status of the “manager” enable and/or constrain their ability to engage in transparent or open communication with the rest of the office?
 - What specific practices generate secrecy in this situation?

Graduate Students

- **Discussion of the Readings:** Two items that were not discussed in the recordings: repetition as a function of techniques and practices; “biopower,” from the *History of Sexuality* readings and Browne’s *Dark Matters*.
 - *Your questions about the readings.*
 - *Is the connection to secrecy clear? How would you describe the way that Foucault foregrounds secrecy/surveillance in his work?*
 - *What other kinds of objects is this strategy of reading useful for?*
 - *Discussion of biopower/Dark Matters.*

Next week

We will talk about **retroaction and repetition, which foregrounds the reading strategies of psychoanalysis**. New audio recordings and relevant internet content will be posted to Canvas by next Tuesday. Readings for next week are already posted on Canvas.

(3/23) Naming and Belatedness

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: "[Names and Naming](#)" and "[Belatedness](#)"
- Secondary Reading: "[The Rhetorical Aesthetics of More](#)"
 - Among other topics, this essay addresses how "nothing" may serve as evidence of "something," and how conspiracies prey on the affective habitus of those that they pull into their orbit. Why is the appeal to "more" an insufficient substitute for actual transparency? What is the difference?

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- To clarify how you should approach the readings for this class.
- To ask and respond to your questions
 - (e.g.) I can follow up on the film screening assigned for today or short paper 2
- Lecture on the readings from the textbook.
 - Start with "The Rhetorical Aesthetics of More" (on this document)
 - Move to "Names and Naming" (UnTextbook)
 - End with "Belatedness" (UnTextbook)
- I will have to wait until next week to administer the poll on "names/naming" and "belatedness," I simply ran out of time this week to write these questions up.

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Lecture

- "[The Rhetorical Aesthetics of More](#)"
- "[Names and Naming](#)"
- "[Belatedness](#)"

Open Discussion

Recall from last time: Public Address/Persuasion; Hermeneutics of Suspicion/Ideological Representation; Apparatus or Assemblage/Networks of Power

“The Rhetorical Aesthetics of More”

- Megethos (the Aristotelian concept of magnitude)
 - Fine-grained enormity of conspiracy discourse
 - Large scale big data
- The “self-sealing” quality of Conspiracy Theories (Sunstein and Vermeule)
 - “Increase available information sources to people” who encounter conspiracies.
 - Conspiracy and (S&V): “More information, more sources, more research”
- Why is archival magnitude relevant?
 - Many U.S. universities, for example, have begun to invest significant resources into big data analytics in order to raise student retention numbers, decrease time to graduation, and streamline the advising process. While privacy experts are wary of these large-scale personal data-mining operations, universities justify them on the grounds that claims about what classes an individual student should take, for example, are better supported with more information (Stirton 2012). More is not only more; more is better. (28)
 - Consider Kenneth Burke’s analysis in “The Rhetoric of Hitler’s Battle,” which offers a look at the magnitude of Hitler’s perverse archive: “If you point out the enormous amount of evidence to show that the Jewish worker is at odds with the ‘international Jew stock exchange capitalist,’ Hitler replies with one hundred per cent regularity: That is one more indication of the cunning with which the ‘Jewish plot’ is being engineered” (1974, 194–95). Any counterevidence is simply absorbed into an ever-growing archive of anti-Semitism. (28)
- The central claim:
 - **Archival magnitude is not only a function of (or a catalyst for) the persuasive moment but is also a discrete act in itself. That is, the act of constructing and maintaining archives may also be read separately from any particular claims those archives are used to support.**
 - FORM: HOW ARE ARCHIVES BUILT AND MAINTAINED.
 - CONTENT: WHAT DO THEY CONTAIN/WHAT ARE THEY USED FOR,
- Back to MEGETHOS: [When does magnitude make an argument?](#)
 - According to Farrell: “Magnitude—in its myriad of manifestations—seems essential to the most important concerns of traditional rhetoric: namely, whether an audience may care about any topic sufficiently to attend to it, to engage it, and to act upon it; what consequences will weigh most heavily upon their prospective deliberation; what priorities will finally tip the balance in their judgment; and what appetitive attachments will need to be overcome for rational reflection to be feasible” (2008, 471).
 - I was reminded of magnitude’s weight and weightlessness when I received an

overstuffed envelope in my campus mailbox from a conspiracist who said that he wanted to send me some important information about secret government plots. He copied and stapled each item, because (as he told me in his letter) the documents were deeply significant. When I read through the mountain of documents, however, I had a hard time understanding the significance of anything. There were declassified memos, newspaper clippings, and other information acquired through the Freedom of Information Act. To me, it was nothing more than random pages of bureaucratic ephemera. The weight was very light to me, and yet there was so much of it. To him, however, the large amount of this material was damning and deeply important. It had weight. Heaviness.

- Conspiracy Theories

- Such fine-grained attention to detail was seen, for example, in the truther community that sprung up (literally overnight) after the Boston Marathon bombing. As soon as gory images began to appear online of badly injured victims—some missing limbs and covered in blood—the conspiracy community began citing them as evidence of a “false flag” at work. Many of the postings in online sites like Reddit and Facebook reflected intensive archival work, the mining of old websites and images in order to connect some fairly dark dots. Consider this posting from a conspiracy website, written only a few hours after the events in Boston: “Family Guy episode (Turban Cowboy) which was aired on March 17, 2013 on Fox, You will see a Boston marathon with people being killed, a library, terrorists and you will hear two explosions, bombs detonated via cell phone and see one explosion of a bridge from a bomb detonated via cell phone. Look into it.”
 - It may be that explaining ideological complexities of any given conspiracy discourse is not the only—or even the best—means of critique or counterresponse. This is not to say that the contents of any given text or archive play no role in persuasion. The mass of evidence alone does not persuade regardless of what that evidence contains. At the same time, we must recognize that the quantity of material amassed has rhetorical impacts that are not coterminous with those contents. (36)

- Big Data

- In one of the boldest statements of big data’s perfect scalability, former Wired editor-in-chief Chris Anderson declares in an article titled “The End of Theory” that “this is a world where massive amounts of data and applied mathematics replace every other tool that might be brought to bear. Out with every theory of human behavior, from linguistics to sociology. Forget taxonomy, ontology, and psychology. Who knows why people do what they do? The point is they do it, and we can track and measure it with unprecedented fidelity. With enough data, the numbers speak for themselves” (2008). Anderson’s faith in big data rests on the assumption that enough data will eventually lay bare the truth of everything. The numbers speak for themselves. And the more numbers we have, the louder they speak. (37)

(2/28) Autoimmunity & Deconstruction

Opening Questions:

- What is one question you have about the recordings/deconstruction? What would help you to get a better understanding of the concepts involved? Please write your answers into the chat.

What did we read for today's class?

- Primary Reading: "[Autoimmunity and Deconstruction](#)"
- Secondary Reading: "[Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides](#)"

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- I'll go over how the class has been re-organized for the end of the semester.
- To ask and respond to your questions
- Lecture on the readings from the textbook.
- I'll release a poll on naming, belatedness, and autoimmunity at the very beginning of our next class. My apologies, this and last week have been very difficult in terms of time management.

Question/Answer

- *Feel free to ask about the readings, the material presented in the recordings/outlines, the short paper assignment (or any assignment), or something else!*

Lecture

- PowerPoint Slides on "[Autoimmunity and Deconstruction](#)."
- UnTextbook Entry on "[Autoimmunity and Deconstruction](#)."

For Next Time

- How do *Contact* and "Story of Your Life" stage the secret? What is the secret in each case? Is it the same secret? Why or why not?
- What is a stand-out moment from the readings/screening that sticks out to you? Make a note of it and why you felt like it was so impactful.

(3/30) *Contact* (1997) / *Arrival* (2016)

Reminders

- If you are seeking an extension, please do so at least 24 hours before the deadline this Friday.
- Exam 2 opens this Friday. It will remain open until the following Friday (4/8). There is a chance that I will have to delay this exam opening. If so, I will reach out to the class with an e-mail; the exam will be open for a full 8 days regardless of this change.

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- I'll respond to your questions.
- I'll release a poll on naming, belatedness, and autoimmunity.
- I'll show a brief 5m lecture on the films and how they are related to the "Autoimmunity and Deconstruction" unit we discussed on Monday.
- We'll answer the discussion questions together.

What did we read for today's class?

- (3/30) Discussion of Double Feature: [Contact](#) (1997) and [Arrival](#) (2016) [Links to Trailers]. *Contact* is available in full for a \$3.99 rental on [YouTube](#), [Google Play](#), [AppleTV](#), and [Amazon Prime](#). *Arrival* is available in full for a \$2.99 rental on [YouTube](#), [Google Play](#), and [Amazon Prime](#). Also available with a subscription to [Hulu](#) or [Paramount+](#).
- The short fiction that *Arrival* is based upon, "[Story of Your Life](#)," can also be accessed [here](#).

Discussion Questions

- How do *Contact* and *Arrival*/"Story of Your Life" stage the secret? What is the secret in each case? Is it the same secret? Why or why not?
- What is a stand-out moment from the readings/screening that sticks out to you? Make a note of it and why you felt like it was so impactful.
- How does *Contact* and/or *Arrival* illustrate strategies of reading secrecy (e.g., "difference," "autoimmunity" or "retroaction")? What scene or scenes would allow the film/short story offer good demonstrations of this concept? What do we learn about these concepts from the film?
One of the protagonists in this film is a religious leader, the other is a scientist. What kinds of knowledge do these figures represent? How are they differently oriented to the secret of extraterrestrial communication?
- What real-world of circumstances does *Contact* reflect? What urgent problems of secrecy does it help us to understand? In what ways is the film an *allegory*?

- What do we gain from reading *Contact* in relationship to *Arrival*? How is the secret of extraterrestrial communication different in each case? What point does each seek to make (about secrecy, national security, demagoguery) and what are the differences between them?

Short Paper 2 Demo

How does *Arrival* illustrate strategies of reading secrecy as “retroaction/belatedness”?

- Define retroaction or belatedness. Belatedness a coming to awareness or realization after-the fact, where a series of past events that seem incoherent or unintelligible crystallize in a new constellation of meaning.
 - For example, the realization of how heptopod language is structured comes about after the scientists have seen it a number of times. By putting together these different moments of ‘reading,’ they look backward upon their interactions in the heptopods and come to the realization that the extraterrestrials have a different sense of ‘time’. This is, for instance, how the main character is able to re-interpret the word ‘weapon’ after the fact.
 - Another example is the way that the main character becomes aware of what she must do at the moment where international war is about to break out. It is at that moment that she not only realizes that heptopod allows her to think from a position in the future, but also what to say to the Chinese general who she speaks to on the phone.
 - A final example is how the heptopods ‘look back’ from a position 3000 years in the future and see that their intervention is necessary in the past to ensure their own survival.
- In each case, retroaction or belatedness occurs as a realization at a point in time well after events have originally or first occurred. It is only by looking backwards that scientists and heptopods can ‘put the pieces together’ and see a full constellation of meanings.

What scene or scenes would allow the film/short story offer good demonstrations of this concept?

- This is my summary or synopsis of the scene (or scenes) in question. I would want to show
 - What is “time 1” where things appear jumbled, messy, or incoherent.
 - What is “time 2” where things crystallize, become clear, or coherent.
 - What is ‘realized’ in that moment, what crystallizes and how does the character’s perspective change.

What do we learn about these concepts from the film?

- Language is the vehicle for belatedness, it allows us to come to grips with a secret 'after the fact' because language is always spoken from a specific and limited point of view.
- Belatedness is not an individual phenomenon that happens 'in therapy' but something that can happen at the level of a mass public or by a film's viewers as they experience the same realization as the characters in the film.
- Secrets when read "belatedly" always are in plain sight. In other words, they exist out in the open and it's only when we assume a 'proper' perspective on them that they reveal themselves.

(3/30) Short Paper 2 & Exam 2 (Review Session)

(4/4) Intro to Short Paper 3

Reminders

- Exam 2 is open and will remain open until Friday (4/8).
- Today is the first of several writing-discussion days. I will rely on the class to keep the discussion moving with questions and contributions.
- I am working on the proposals, with the hope to get them all back to you by the end of this week (at the latest).
- There was no assigned reading for today.

Revised Course Schedule

- Today: Short Paper 3 and general writing advice
- Wednesday: Who/What is the o/Other & The Police and the Detective
- Next Monday: Writing Day
- Next Wednesday: Dark Sousveillance
- 2 weeks out Monday: Writing Day
- 2 weeks out Wednesday: Matrix/Zero Days Screening Discussion
- 3 weeks out Monday: Algorithm
- 3 weeks out Wednesday: Workshop for Short Paper 3 and Exam 3
- 4 weeks out Monday: Course Wrap-Up

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- I'll respond to your questions (including those about Exam 2)
- I'll discuss Short Paper 3, which is described in [the assignments document](#).
- I'll answer your questions about writing more generally.

Discussion Questions/Drafting Demo

- Logical dependency as a writing strategy
- Outlining and Reverse outlining as a writing strategy

Requests for Writing Lessons

- General prompts for longer paper assignments
- [Structure/Flow of longer papers](#)
- How to present scholarship/theories in a way that flows
- Succinctness, reducing repetition
- Transitions from sources to arguments
- How to deepen an argument
- Use of quotations to support a core argument
- The pipeline approach: research, topic sentences/sections, drafting.

Pt. 4 Authority Figures

(4/6) The o/Other and The Police & The Detective

A lot of public discussion concerning the police is very public now, and the argument can be made that the police is *very* visible in our shared discourse. That begs the question of “why secrecy?” in a time of publicity. In what ways do you think that “secrecy” or “transparency” with respect to “the secret police” remains an important topic for our consideration? You may choose to draw on the readings (or not) in writing up your pre-class response.

(4/11) Writing Day

Updates

- **Grading.** All proposal documents and short paper 2 assignments have been graded and I have left at least one research recommendation for folks in the Canvas portal. Please take a look if you have not already.
- **Exam 2** has closed and to the best of my knowledge, everyone has taken it.
- **The Student Rating of Teaching (SRT)** is now available and I will be offering regular reminders (and extra credit) to ensure that everyone in the class completes it. Below you will find links to both the SRT and the extra credit survey. You **MUST** complete the SRT before completing the secondary survey, and there are several questions on the secondary survey related to the UnTextbook and the possibility of recommending the class for a college-wide teaching award.
 - [Student Rating of Teaching \(SRT\) for COMM 5110](#)
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- **Grading Calculator.** I'm also releasing two versions of a grading calculator for the class to use through the end of the semester. Keep in mind that the Google Sheets version of the calculator is publicly visible and so you will either want to save a copy of the calculator for yourself or ensure that your grading values have been deleted from the calculator once you are done using it.
 - [Google Sheets Grade Calculator for COMM 5110](#)

Course Schedule

- Wednesday: Dark Sousveillance
- Next Monday: Writing Day
- Next Wednesday: Matrix/Zero Days Screening Discussion
- 2 weeks out Monday: Algorithm
- 2 weeks out Wednesday: Workshop for Short Paper 3 and Exam 3
- 3 weeks out Monday: Course Wrap-Up

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- I'll respond to your questions.
- I'll release quiz questions on "the o/Other" and "The Police and the Detective"
- I'll offer a brief lecture on "[The Police and the Detective](#)" to follow up on our last session.
- We'll run through some examples of reverse outlining as a way to talk about the overall "flow" of the essay, using three examples:
 - [David Zarefsky's "Making the Case for War": \(Zarefsky handout/cheat-sheet\)](#)
 - [Cal U'Ren Short Paper 3 Draft; TS OUTLINE](#)
 - [Cal U'Ren Final Paper Draft; TS OUTLINE](#)

Writing Day Discussion: Reverse Outlining Instructions

1. Read the **Text of the Essay** and create a *topic sentence outline* in a separate document. A *topic sentence outline* is an outline version of the essay that selects the topic sentence of each paragraph and lists them in the sequence they appear. You should be able to read the topic sentence outline as a single continuous paragraph that follows the same progression and has the same main ideas as the longform essay.
2. Using the *topic sentence outline*, determine whether each paragraph is *logically dependent* or *logically independent* relative to the paragraph that comes before it.
 - a. *Logically dependent* sequences will “stick together” by continuing a single same thought or idea. For example:
 - i. *Many of the tropes used in Powell’s speech were borrowed from speeches that were popular during Cold War*
 1. *The most widely received speeches delivered about the possibility of armed conflict during the Cold War were often delivered by the U.S. President, rather than the Secretary of State*
 2. *It was therefore a marked departure from the norm that the Secretary of State would deliver an important speech regarding the United States’ decision to declare war.*
 - b. *Logically independent* sequences provide several non-overlapping sentences in a parallel structure. For example:
 - i. *Many of the tropes used in Powell’s speech were borrowed from speeches that were popular during Cold War/*
 1. *One of the tropes was the amorphous threat of terror from an unknown source*
 2. *Another of the tropes was about the terrifying enormity of the weapons that war would unleash.*

Selections below drawn from David Zarefsky. 2007. “Making the Case for War: Colin Powell at the United Nations,” *Rhetoric & Public Affairs* 10(2): 275-302.

Introduction

In the months leading up to March 2003, those who favored U.S. military action in Iraq did so for one or more of three basic rationales. For some, the principal concern was the tyrannical character of the regime of Saddam Hussein. He was a dictator and violated the rights of his people, the argument went; therefore he should be overthrown. Among advocates of this position were many who believed that the first President Bush had erred in bringing the Persian Gulf War of 1991 to a close with Saddam Hussein still in power. This was the opportunity to finish the job. What made this a kairotic moment, creating the opportunity to mobilize public opinion in support of the goal, was the same factor that gave urgency to the other two rationales: the psychological effect of September 11, 2001.

Others found this first rationale insufficient—not because they disagreed with the assessment of Saddam Hussein or with deep-seated antipathy for dictatorships, but because they believed that these deplorable circumstances did not justify intervention by an outside power. They may have upheld this belief as a general principle, or have thought that waging aggressive war was not in keeping with the American tradition, or have recognized that acting consistently on the principle would threaten other totalitarian rulers of nations that were U.S. allies. For any or all of these reasons, they were not committed a priori to the goal of regime change in Iraq. Their goal was instead to eliminate the danger articulated in either of the other two justifications for war.

The second rationale was the possibility that Saddam Hussein was actively colluding with al Qaeda, which President George W. Bush had described to Congress in 2001 as “a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations.” There were rumors that Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, alleged to be the leader of a terrorist network in Iraq, was doing the bidding of Osama bin Laden and was in contact with Saddam Hussein. Those who accepted the rumors found in them evidence of a clear and present danger of Iraqi sponsorship of terrorist attacks against the West. Perhaps because the evidence of this nexus was far from conclusive, depending mostly on the assertions of Iraqi defectors and refugees, it seldom carried the full burden of making the case for war. Without asserting directly what could not be proved, President Bush and—even more so—Vice President Cheney implied that there was a link between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. Polls suggested that significant numbers of Americans believed that there was a link, with substantial numbers believing that Saddam Hussein actually had orchestrated the attacks of September 11, a claim for which there was no evidence at all.

The most substantial of the justifications for war was not the direct connection to al Qaeda but the claim that Iraq either was rapidly developing or already had weapons of mass destruction, in violation of sanctions imposed after the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The danger lay not just in the destructiveness of the weapons but in the widely shared assumption that a rogue state such as Iraq would freely make them available to terrorist organizations who would not hesitate to use them against Western powers. This was the sense in which Bush administration officials argued that September 11 had brought to the threat a new sense of urgency.

Whichever of these rationales for war one adopted, an additional question was who ought to be the agent to contain the Iraqi danger. Some believed that the United States, having identified the threat, should act alone, preempting the possibility of further terrorism against the West. The *National Security Strategy of the United States*, published in 2002, justified preemptive action as a strategy made necessary by the lethal potential of future terrorist attacks. A variation of this argument was that the United States should not act alone but should lead a coalition of other like-minded nations—a “coalition of the willing.” This approach would share the human and financial burdens of the war and reap the additional benefits of multilateralism without subjecting American judgments or control to the approval of others. When criticized later for the seeming unilateralism of the war, President Bush denied the premise, identifying a list of other nations that had contributed money or troops.

On the other hand, there were strong reasons to insist upon, or at least to seek, the support and perhaps the leadership of the United Nations. This was especially the case for those whose goal was to contain the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. The resolutions that Saddam Hussein was accused of violating were imposed by the United Nations; the weapons inspectors who had been expelled from Iraq worked under the authority of the United Nations; and the UN Security Council had the authority under the UN Charter to authorize member states to use force in order to repel threats to the peace. Reportedly, there were intense discussions within the Bush administration about whether to seek the legitimization of the UN, with Secretary of State Colin Powell emerging as the principal advocate for such a course. He prevailed, at least in part. He persuaded President Bush to make an appeal to the United Nations, but not to make U.S. actions contingent on approval by the international body.

Context

Not long after Vice President Cheney raised consciousness of the Iraqi threat in a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars on August 26, 2002, in which he essentially said that weapons inspection would be futile so war would be necessary, President Bush addressed the United Nations General Assembly at the opening of its fall session. He challenged the UN to take action against the threat lest the world body confess its irrelevance. The speech was alternately solicitous and defiant, but on the whole it seemed to indicate that Powell's position had won out within the administration over that of Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. The United States would go the route of multilateralism.

But the adoption of a Security Council resolution authorizing force against Iraq hardly was a foregone conclusion. Several members, including U.S. allies, were skeptical about the imminence of the threat or about the appropriateness of military action rather than an expanded program of sanctions. In the event, it would take eight weeks for the Security Council to agree on the language of Resolution 1441, which passed unanimously on November 8. In an attempt to convince the Security Council of the seriousness of the U.S. commitment, the administration sought and received congressional passage of a resolution authorizing the president to use force in Iraq. In the midst of a heated midterm election campaign, the resolution received significant bipartisan support, whether out of genuine conviction or fear of political repercussions. Touted at the time as a way to send a signal to the United Nations, this resolution would be used later as independent authorization for the United States to employ force in Iraq regardless of the action of the UN. Disaffected Democrats who maintained that they were only giving authority to the president, not agreeing that the authority ought to be used, found themselves drawing a very tenuous distinction.

Resolution 1441, like most Security Council resolutions, was ambiguous. As passed, it called for a new round of stringent weapons inspections, required an Iraqi declaration of its weapons of mass destruction and its efforts to eliminate them, and warned Iraq that a material breach of the resolution (consisting of a false declaration and a general failure to cooperate)⁴ would subject Iraq to "serious consequences." The phrase "serious consequences" was used

instead of an authorization for member states to use “all necessary means” (understood as war) to force compliance. Left unstated, then, was whether a violation of Resolution 1441 would automatically authorize war, or whether a second resolution would be required to confirm the finding of material breach and authorize the use of military force. Pressing for clarity on this matter would shatter the unanimity with which the Security Council approved Resolution 1441. The United States insisted that 1441 gave all the authorization that was needed; France and other Security Council members thought not.

Actions in the ensuing months bolstered no one’s confidence that Saddam Hussein was prepared to comply with the resolution. The Iraq government submitted an 11,000-page declaration in early December, right before the 30-day deadline. Its length seemed more to obfuscate than to clarify; the data were incomplete and often obsolete. In late January, the leaders of the UN inspection team, Hans Blix and Mohamed El-Baradei, reported cases of Iraqi noncooperation and concluded that Iraq had not yet moved toward compliance. To some, this evidence meant that the weapons inspections should be given more time and power to achieve success; to others, that the time for patience had expired and the United States should now move to war.

Although the United States did not think that a second resolution was necessary, it certainly would welcome one, as that would finesse the issue. Secretary of State Powell did not explicitly call for a second resolution, but it was in this context that he was scheduled to speak to the Security Council. President Bush announced in his State of the Union speech on January 28 that on February 5 Powell “will present information and intelligence about . . . Iraq’s illegal weapons programs, its attempts to hide those weapons from inspectors, and its links to terrorist groups.” But the president made clear that American action would not depend on what action the Security Council might take. “We will consult,” he said, and then added, “But let there be no misunderstanding. If Saddam Hussein does not fully disarm, for the safety of our people and for the peace of the world, we will lead a coalition to disarm him.”

Selecting the United Nations as the venue and Powell as the advocate were both rhetorical choices. The Security Council is the appropriate place to follow up on Blix’s report of Iraqi noncompliance with Security Council resolutions and to call attention to Saddam Hussein’s contempt for the international organization. And, of course, if one interpreted Resolution 1441 as calling for a second debate and vote in the face of Iraqi noncompliance, then a presentation to the Security Council would set that process in motion.⁷ Finally, of course, the Security Council is what one writer termed an unrivaled “backdrop for political theater.”⁸ It permits the U.S. representative to stage “dramatic diplomatic confrontations” with American adversaries for the benefit of a worldwide audience while at the same time being overheard by a domestic audience and using the opportunity to solidify American opinion. Sending an American envoy to present the case at the UN signaled the desirability of gaining as much international support as possible for whatever action the president might take.

The choice of Powell rather than the UN ambassador or another diplomatic official symbolically highlighted the importance of the issue. In response, 13 of the 15 Security Council

members sent their foreign ministers to the meeting as well.¹⁰ Powell commanded the respect of the nation and the world; he was known to examine evidence carefully and to develop a persuasive presentation. More than that, his reputation as a skeptic on Iraq, if not an outright “dove” within the administration, enhanced his credibility. This would be no hack presenting the party line; his remarks would be akin to reluctant testimony. He had his doubts about the war in the first place and had been the leading advocate of a diplomatic rather than a military solution. If he now acknowledged that Resolution 1441 had failed to bring about compliance, his words would carry extra weight.¹¹ There also was speculation that his presence at the UN would “keep Washington hard-liners at bay”¹² by conveying their message that the United States was prepared to act with or without a second Security Council resolution. This message, in turn, might convince the members of the Security Council to take the whole matter of Iraq more seriously. The speech then could also serve as a test of the likelihood of gaining a second resolution. Of course, despite all these symbolic benefits, the decision to send Powell as the U.S. advocate carried risks. He was such a visible symbol that if he were to fail to change attitudes in the administration’s direction, the results could be embarrassing for the United States and for Powell personally.

The symbolism of the speaker and venue was further enhanced by an oft mentioned historical analogue: the presentation almost exactly 40 years earlier in which UN Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson confronted the Soviet delegate and presented to the world evidence of the construction of offensive missile sites in Cuba. Asking Valerian Zorin whether he denied that such construction was under way, Stevenson received an evasive response: he should continue with his statement and would receive an answer in due course. Stevenson, angry, replied that he would wait for his answer “until hell freezes over” and that he was prepared to present the evidence. With that, he referred to easels on which were placed poster-sized blowups of photos taken by reconnaissance flights. Stevenson interpreted the photos, pointing to evidence of continuing construction at the missile sites. It was a key moment in fixing responsibility for the Cuban missile crisis and convincing delegates that a military response was called for.

In the days leading up to Powell’s speech, allusions to Stevenson’s presentation were frequent. On January 28, Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle had challenged the president: “If we have proof of nuclear and biological weapons, why don’t we show that proof to the world, as President Kennedy did 40 years ago when he sent Adlai Stevenson to the United Nations to show the world U.S. photographs of offensive missiles in Cuba?”¹³ In a sense, Daschle was calling the administration’s bluff, but he also was identifying a way for the Bush administration to win over skeptics and swing support to its position. Daschle’s evocation of the 1962 experience resonated in media commentary leading up to Powell’s speech, with repeated statements anticipating an “Adlai Stevenson moment.” Inevitably, noted the *Seattle Times*, “Powell’s appearance will invite comparison with one of the most dramatic televised moments of the Cold War.”¹⁴ Janine Zacharia of the *Jerusalem Post* portrayed the decision to send Powell to the UN as a choice by the Bush administration “to repeat the Adlai Stevenson performance of the Cuban missile crisis.”¹⁵ And Bruce Berkowitz forecast that “with enough effort, we will have what people are calling an ‘Adlai Stevenson moment.’”¹⁶ This was a common theme in the commentary before the speech.

Of course, the circumstances were not altogether analogous to those of 1962. Unlike Stevenson, Powell was not trying to prove the presence of some activity; he was trying to prove the absence of efforts by Iraq to disarm. Necessarily, then, his visual evidence would be circumstantial rather than direct. Accordingly, he and others tried to deflate expectations aroused by the comparison to the “Adlai Stevenson moment.” As he was developing the speech, Powell reportedly “has conceded that whatever he comes up with is unlikely to have the stunning impact of the photos of Soviet missiles in Cuba.”¹⁷ Another administration official, reflecting the belief that “new, convincing evidence is hard to come by . . . warned against expecting the kind of vivid pictures” that Stevenson presented in 1962.¹⁸ Even so, those involved in the preparations of the speech were convinced that Powell’s evidence be clear, sufficient, and convincing.

Powell himself was actively engaged in preparation for the speech. Senior administration officials said that he wanted “a few select, vivid items of solid evidence,” not ambiguous material that could be discounted by critics.¹⁹ The weekend before the speech, he spent time at the Central Intelligence Agency reviewing intercepts and other evidence and rejecting anything that did not seem credible.²⁰ Vice President Cheney reportedly urged Powell to consider evidence in a report that had been prepared by his chief of staff, Lewis Libby, but Powell was skeptical. He thought that the report presented as certainties statements that were dubious.²¹ CIA officials looked through information to determine what might safely be included. Meanwhile, Powell engaged in extensive rehearsal for the speech, rearranging the furniture in one room so that it would more closely resemble the Security Council chamber. He insisted on continued fact-checking and refused to insert details requested by hard-liners but which did not have the necessary support.²² He took CIA Director George Tenet with him to the Security Council in order to convey the message that intelligence officials backed up his judgments. On the whole, the preparation for the speech was commensurate with its importance.

That it would be an important occasion, there was little doubt. Asking, “How important will Powell’s presentation on Wednesday be to the United Nations about the Bush administration’s evidence about Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction?” a USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll found that 60 percent replied “very important” and another 27 percent replied “somewhat important.” Only 12 percent said “not too important” or “not important at all.” In the same poll, majorities of 75 percent or more responded that the United States would be justified in taking military action against Iraq if the evidence demonstrated that Iraq had ties to al Qaeda, or if Iraq had biological or chemical weapons, or if Iraq had nuclear weapons, or if Iraq was obstructing the weapons inspectors. The only circumstance in which a smaller majority would support military action was if Iraq were shown to have facilities to create weapons of mass destruction but did not actually have such weapons. Even then, 60 percent of the poll respondents would find military action justified if Secretary Powell’s speech provided convincing evidence.

(4/13) Dark Sousveillance

Updates

- **Grading.** All proposal documents and short paper 2 assignments have been graded and I have left at least one research recommendation for folks in the Canvas portal. Please take a look if you have not already.
- **The Student Rating of Teaching (SRT)** is now available and I will be offering regular reminders (and extra credit) to ensure that everyone in the class completes it. Below you will find links to both the SRT and the extra credit survey. You **MUST** complete the SRT before completing the secondary survey, and there are several questions on the secondary survey related to the UnTextbook and the possibility of recommending the class for a college-wide teaching award.
 - [Student Rating of Teaching \(SRT\) for COMM 5110](#)
 - [Confirmation \(+3/+6 points Extra Credit\) Survey for COMM 5110](#)
- **Grading Calculator.** I'm also releasing two versions of a grading calculator for the class to use through the end of the semester. Keep in mind that the Google Sheets version of the calculator is publicly visible and so you will either want to save a copy of the calculator for yourself or ensure that your grading values have been deleted from the calculator once you are done using it.
 - [Google Sheets Grade Calculator for COMM 5110](#)

Course Schedule

- Next Monday: Writing Day
- Next Wednesday: Matrix/Zero Days Screening Discussion
- 2 weeks out Monday: Algorithm
- 2 weeks out Wednesday: Workshop for Short Paper 3 and Exam 3
- 3 weeks out Monday: Course Wrap-Up

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- I'll respond to your questions.
- We'll return to some examples of reverse outlining as a way to talk about the overall "flow" of the essay, using three examples:
 - [David Zarefsky's "Making the Case for War": \(Zarefsky handout/cheat-sheet\)](#)
 - [Cal U'Ren Short Paper 3 Draft; TS OUTLINE](#)
 - [Cal U'Ren Final Paper Draft; TS OUTLINE](#)
- I'll release quiz questions on "[Dark Sousveillance](#)"
- I'll offer a brief lecture on "[Dark Sousveillance](#)."

(4/18) Writing Day

Updates

- **The Student Rating of Teaching (SRT)** is now available and I will be offering regular reminders (and extra credit) to ensure that everyone in the class completes it. Below you will find links to both the SRT and the extra credit survey. You **MUST** complete the SRT before completing the secondary survey, and there are several questions on the secondary survey related to the UnTextbook and the possibility of recommending the class for a college-wide teaching award.
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 - [Google Sheets Grade Calculator for COMM 5110](#)

Course Schedule

- Today: Writing Day
- Wednesday: Matrix/Zero Days Screening Discussion
- Next Monday: Algorithm
- Next Wednesday: Workshop for Short Paper 3 and Exam 3
- 2 weeks out Monday: Course Wrap-Up

Our Agenda

How we will use the class time today:

- I'll respond to your questions about writing.
- In the absence of questions about writing, I'll conduct a lecture and/or activity

Requests for Writing Lessons

- [Writing Advice Document: Conferences, Abstracts, Paragraph Structure](#)
- Prompts for longer paper assignments ((3) [Sample Thesis Brief](#)/(2) [Assignment Document](#))
- (1) [Structure/Flow of longer papers](#)
- [Reverse Outlining](#)
- How to present scholarship/theories in a way that flows (I)
- Succinctness, reducing repetition (I)
- **Transitions from sources to arguments (III)**
- How to deepen an argument
- Use of quotations to support a core argument (I)
- The pipeline approach: research, topic sentences/sections, drafting.

Example of Sources/Arguments

Any quotation you use needs to be subordinated to *your* argument.

X1 says Y about secrecy. X2 says Z about secrecy. Finally X3 says B about secrecy.

Rather than just a painting technique, anamorphosis describes a psychological experience.

- Part 1: set up the quotation: Martin Jay talks about anamorphosis as a painting technique.
 - Part 2: “Y” the quotation, what is that this person says.
 - Part 3: In other words, [restate the quotation in terms of its significance to the main argument.]
- Jacques Lacan talks about anamorphosis as a psychoanalytic principle. “Z”
- Shoshana Felman nuances Lacan’s version of anamorphosis: “B”

NAME IT: The main idea of the paragraph.

Erasure can also be understood to produce positive forms of knowledge as patterns, practices, significations, and myths.

EXPLAIN IT:

To say that erasure ‘affirms’ a myth (or that it is a ‘positive’ phenomenon) does not mean that it is ethically or morally sound. Rather, it means that erasure brings something forth, in the sense of a ‘positivity’ or (logical) ‘positivism’. In other words, this erasure describes a historical cover-up, the introduction of narratives that violently “over-write” the past. For that reason, the productive aspect of erasure is iconophilic: by proliferating image, representation, and myth, it creates secrets through a gesture of displacing affirmation.

PROVE IT:

For instance, Cortés engaged in iconophilic erasure by re-writing Indigenous myths as part of his conquest of the Americas. Prior to the conquistadors, Quetzalcoatl was “a figure at once historical (a leader) and legendary (a divinity),” whose return was relatively uncertain. **However, following 16th-century Spanish colonization, Cortés was figured as the unambiguous ‘return’ of Quetzalcoatl, adding a new messianic element to the existing myth:**

The notion of an identity between Quetzalcoatl and Cortés certainly existed in the years immediately following the conquest, as is also attested by the sudden recrudescence of cult objects linked to Quetzalcoatl. But there is an obvious hiatus between these two states of the myth: the old version, in which Quetzalcoatl's role is secondary and his return uncertain; and the new one, in which Quetzalcoatl is dominant and his return absolutely certain. Some force must have intervened to hasten this transformation of the myth. This force has a name: Cortés, who effects a synthesis of varying data. The radical difference between Spaniards and Indians, and the relative ignorance of other civilizations on the part of the Aztecs led, as we have seen, to the notion that the Spaniards were gods. But which gods? Here Cortés must have provided the missing link, converting the rather marginal myth into the myth of Quetzalcoatl's return – perfectly adapted to the language of the Other.

After learning of the Quetzalcoatl myth, Cortés positioned himself as its architect.

CONCLUDE IT:

His appropriative revivification of the myth is explicitly iconophilic, bringing with it a resurgence in “cult objects.” Todorov is also complicit with this mythic rewriting because he argues that without the Spaniards' establishing “Nahuatl as the national native language in Mexico,” it would never have spread so widely across the Americas. Iconophilic erasure spins the colonizer's atrocities as essential to Indigenous historical progress. As Patrick Wolfe argues, “the logic of elimination marks a return whereby the native repressed continues to structure settler-colonial society.” This mode of erasure is not just a single event, but a continuous series of secret-creating cover-ups designed to maintain the colonizer's innocence.

Brainstorming for Short Paper 3

(4/20) *The Matrix* (1999) / *Zero Days* (2016)

Updates

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 - [Google Sheets Grade Calculator for COMM 5110](#)
- **"Thank a Teacher"** If you feel like this class spoke to you this semester or offered you the flexibility you needed, please consider filling out a "Thank a Teacher" for this (and your other) classes. The "Thank a Teacher" system would help me to justify continuing to teach this class as it has been taught this semester and offer some evidence to administrators that the model of online teaching I am using is working!

Course Schedule

- Today: Matrix/Zero Days Screening Discussion
- Next Monday: Algorithm (see today's poll on this session)
- Next Wednesday: Workshop for Short Paper 3 and Exam 3
- 2 weeks out Monday: Course Wrap-Up



The Matrix

- The origin of the 'red pill' metaphor
- The digital as the new terrain of ideological mystification
- The "mirror" as a metaphor for (imaginary) subjectivation (the creation of an ideologically-aware subject)
- "Agents" as the template ("blank subject") of figural authority and as a rejection of symbolic identifications.



Zero Days (2016)

- Extensions of 9/11 policing strategy ("fusion centers" from Brayne reading)
- One of the reasons that I selected Gibney's *Zero Days* for this week is that he effectively translates the genre of *detective fiction* into a mystery about cybersecurity in the United States and abroad. Is it a successful translation? Is it still too steeped in a western and colonial perspective?
- How does *Zero Days* fall within our received understandings of surveillance? Does *Zero*

Days contribute to *surveillance* or is it *anti-surveillance*?

- How can/should we read Gibney's choice in *Zero Days* to represent NSA whistleblowers as a digital shadow?
- Given the lengths Gibney and the subjects of his documentary go to in order to expose the inventors of Stuxnet, what understanding of "transparency" does the film leave us with?

We could add other elements to [the use of statistics as knowledge of the state], such as the problem of the secret, for example. Actually, the knowledge that the state must develop of itself, and on the basis of itself, would be in danger of losing some of its effects and not having its expected consequences if everyone were to know what was going on. In particular, the state's enemies and rivals must not know the real resources available in terms of men, resources, and so on, hence the need for secrecy. Consequently, inquiries are needed that are in a way coextensive with the exercise of administration, but a precise codification of what can be and what must not be published is also necessary. At the time this was an explicit part of *raison d'Etat* called the *arcana imperii*, the secrets of power, and for a long time statistics in particular were considered as secrets of power not to be divulged.[1]

[1] Michel Foucault, *Security Territory Population*, 275.

(4/25) Algorithm

Updates

- **The Student Rating of Teaching (SRT)** is now available and I will be offering regular reminders (and extra credit) to ensure that everyone in the class completes it. Below you will find links to both the SRT and the extra credit survey. You **MUST** complete the SRT before completing the secondary survey, and there are several questions on the secondary survey related to the UnTextbook and the possibility of recommending the class for a college-wide teaching award.
 - [Student Rating of Teaching \(SRT\) for COMM 5110](#)
 - [Confirmation \(+3/+6 points Extra Credit\) Survey for COMM 5110](#)
- **Grading Calculator.** I'm also releasing two versions of a grading calculator for the class to use through the end of the semester. Keep in mind that the Google Sheets version of the calculator is publicly visible and so you will either want to save a copy of the calculator for yourself or ensure that your grading values have been deleted from the calculator once you are done using it.
 - [Google Sheets Grade Calculator for COMM 5110](#)
- **"Thank a Teacher"** If you feel like this class spoke to you this semester or offered you the flexibility you needed, please consider filling out a "Thank a Teacher" for this (and your other) classes. The "Thank a Teacher" system would help me to justify continuing to teach this class as it has been taught this semester and offer some evidence to administrators that the model of online teaching I am using is working!

Course Schedule

- Today: Algorithm
- Wednesday: Workshop for Short Paper 3 and Exam 3 Review
- Next Week Monday: Course Wrap-Up

Lecture/Discussion of "Algorithm" Unit

- Opening Audio Clip: [Chris Gilliard \(@hypervisible\) talks about technology and relationships.](#)
- [Algorithm Mini-Lecture](#)
- [Monihan's "Built to Lie"](#)
- (quiz questions)

(4/27) Short Paper 3 and Exam 3 Review

Updates

- **Exam 3 Review:** The study guide is available in [the assignments document](#). I'm happy to re-open the questions distributed in previous classes as well throughout this session, by request. The chapters covered by this exam include: (1) the o/Other, (2) the police, (3) the digital situation, (4) dark sousveillance, and (5) algorithm. As with previous exams, Exam 3 is open-book, there is no time limit, and you have two attempts to complete it. It opens on Friday 4/29/22 and closes on Friday 5/6/22.
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Course Schedule

- Today: Workshop for Short Paper 3 and Exam 3 Review
- Next Monday: Exam 3 Review continues, Course Wrap-Up

(5/2) Course Wrap-Up