Kairos: Proactive Ministry in a Media Culture

8-12 July 2002

Stub Lounge

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The following information is provided for those of you who are not yet comfortable accessing the Web for a syllabus. Please note that the most comprehensive set of course resources, and the most current information will be found at: http://www.luthersem.edu/mhess/kmedia/

Rationale

By whatever measure you use, it is clear that we live in a society that is thoroughly pervaded by various kinds of mass media. More and more of these media are digitally mediated – whether at the point of creation, or throughout their life cycle of distribution.

At the same time, there is also strong evidence that we rapidly moving beyond a “Christendom” model for Christianity. We can no longer assume, for instance, that the wider cultural contexts in which various Christian communities are embedded in any way support or affirm Christian worldviews. In some ways this is problematic – primarily for our institutional structures – but in other ways this “new” situation poses enormous opportunities for us to share the Good News in innovative and fresh ways.

This course will explore the ways in which various kinds or “genres” of media shape our meaning-making, and propose strategies for Christian communities who would like to be proactive in their engagement with learning and proclamation.
Course Schedule:

**Monday, July 8**

What does it mean to be proactive in a media culture? What do we mean by "media" and how is faith expressed in and through various media?

1:00 – 2:30 pm
Introductions, orientation to week’s rhythms, mapping exercise

2:30 – 2:45 pm
Break

2:45 – 5:00 pm
Media and reality: an exercise in criteria awareness

Background resources (as you desire and find useful; items marked with an asterisk are on reserve in the library):


*The Matrix.*

**Tuesday, July 9**

What does and can it mean to live in a culture of consumer commodification? How do we -- as Christians -- speak authentically in the midst of advertising infused meaning-making?

8:30 – 9:50 am
*The Ad & The Ego* – a film documentary, viewing and discussion
10:00 – 10:30
Break for chapel and fellowship

10:40 – 12:30
The game of ‘3’s: an exercise in media production and message delivery

Background resources:

*The Spiritual Marketplace*
Wade Clark Roof


*The Ad and the Ego study guide/transcript.

**Wednesday, July 10**

**How is reality shaped and framed? What roles do news media play? and how do communities of faith engage this process constructively?**

8:30 – 9:50 am
*The Iraq Campaign*, and a comparison between the National Cathedral Service and *America: A Tribute to Heroes*

10:00 – 10:30 am
Break for chapel and fellowship

10:40 – 12:30 pm
A discussion with a journalist and a public relations professional (both of whom have theology background)
Background resources:

*Primetime Activism*
Charlotte Ryan


*FAIR /“How to read a newspaper: a reader’s guide”, Vol.4, No. 7, October 1991.*


*Ryan, Charlotte./“Getting framed, the media shape reality,” in *Primetime Activism*, South End Press,*

*Rocky Mountain Media Watch./“Not in the public interest: Local TV news in America, 3/11/98.”*

**Thursday, July 11**

**People of faith in our cyberhoods -- what is the impact of the WWW and the Internet more generally on communities of faith? And how might churches actively and constructively engage this emerging force?**

8:30 – 9:50 am
The shifting epistemologies of digital cultures...

10:00 – 10:30 am
Break for chapel and fellowship

10:40 – 12:30 pm
Hunting for treasures on the Net: constructing church websites and finding and using other resources

Background resources:

Dr. Dave’s Cyberhood
David Walsh
Fireside, 2001

Small Pieces, Loosely Joined
David Weinberger
Perseus Press, 2002

Please consult the course website for other websites you might find interesting and useful.

Friday, July 12

Putting it all together: proactive ministry in a media culture -- interweaving narrative and ritual.

8:30 – 9:50 am
Interweaving the human and divine, the role of ritual and narrative in postmodern culture; working with both the parabolic and the mythic...

10:00 – 10:30 am
Break for chapel and fellowship

10:40 – 12:30 pm
Putting it all together – sharing ideas, projects, and moving forward from here

Background resources:

Mighty Stories, Dangerous Rituals
Edward Foley and Herbert Anderson
Jossey- Bass, 1999