PUBLIC TALK

The Media, or the Form of Symbolic Production under Capitalism

A Contribution to the Critique of the Political Economy of Communication

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Criticizing program content is not enough. Nor is it enough to go after the media "barons". For a critique of the media to have any purchase, it must begin by acknowledging that the media do not exist outside capitalism — of which they are at once a historical function and a site of investment. The task is therefore to understand why the media took the form we know them by over the history of capitalism, so as to grasp their recent transformations in light of the contemporary mutations of the capitalist mode of production. This is what the present talk sets out to do, drawing on a theoretical framework that brings together the political economy of communication and the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School. Working with the categories of Marxian critique, it will define the relations between capitalism, the media and other forms of symbolic production, in order to interrogate both the specific determinations that the media-form generates upon symbolic contents and the ideological function that those contents fulfill.

DATE
Monday November 2, 2026

TIME
2:30 – 4:00 pm

PLACE
Resource Centre RC 4400, Richcraft Hall