

Digital Media and Resistance: Lessons from Ukraine (course proposal)

The course brings together prominent theories of civic engagement and resistance in the digital age, and draws from case studies on Ukraine and other Eastern Partnership countries to illustrate them in action. From mediatization (Couldry & Hepp, 2017) to networked publics (boyd, 2010; Papacharissi, 2016) to connective action (Bennett & Segerberg, 2012), we will explore the role digital media play in the construction of identity (Korostelina, 2014; Milan, 2013), perceptions of citizenship (Jenkins, Itō, & boyd, 2016; Penney, 2017; Wells, 2015), elections (Stromer-Galley, 2014), news consumption (Chadwick, 2013), mobilization (Lokot, 2018; Onuch, 2015), protest (Tufekci, 2017), civil resistance (Schock, 2015), military conflict (Eskjær, Hjarvard, & Mortensen, 2015; Hoskins & O’Loughlin, 2010) and computational propaganda (Woolley & Howard, 2018). Subject to a wave of mass protests in 2013-2014 and an ongoing military conflict since 2014, contemporary Ukraine provides a rich social, cultural, and historical context to study these profound social transformations and activism in the digital age.

As this is a course on digital media, a part of the learning experiences in class will be mediated: whether through art (exploring the materiality of mediatized warfare through the Five Elements of War – a series of assemblages by Daria Marchenko and Daniel Green), craft (learning to make masking networks as a collaborative form of resistance), architecture (exploring urban murals and the post-protest imagery), Wikipedia (crafting strategic narratives of digital activism), data storytelling (exploring maps and visualizations on Maidan), and virtual reality (participating in an immersive documentary about the Maidan events of 2014).



Image source: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1057721017585410&set=pb.100000425651031.-2207520000.1549054069.&type=3&theater>

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