

Comm 6740 Power and Control in Organizations
Stan Deetz, Instructor
Spring 2008

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TEXTS

Edward, R. (1979). *Contested terrain*. New York: Basic Books.

Fleming, P. & Spicer, A. (2008). *Contesting the organization: Struggle, power and resistance in organizations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Other readings will be distributed or available on line.

EXPECTATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

The course assumes a working familiarity with contemporary communication theory and basic theories of organizational behavior, but no specific prior course work is required. Needless to say, all class members are expected to attend regularly, read assigned as well as other relevant materials, and actively participate in class. The course grade will be based on class discussions and the research paper for the course.

The research paper for the course should identify an interesting organization problem and show how a particular theory of organizational communication or power helps us conceptualize, research and respond to it. Other projects based on the class member's ethnography or continuing research agenda are possible. The paper (5000-6000 words in length) is due the last day of class and should be in final form following the APA style sheet. I encourage everyone to turn in earlier drafts so that I may offer writing suggestions and be involved in the formative processes.

ROUGH SCHEDULE

Week 1: The Tradition of Power and Control Studies: Communication and the Right and Practice of Governance

Read: Fleming & Spicer, "Introduction: Prisons, playgrounds and parliaments."

Deetz, S. (1992). Chapter 8: The rise of the modern corporate form. In *Democracy in an Age of Corporate Colonization*. New York: SUNY Press.

Nace, T. (2003). "Chapters 5, 6 and 7," in *Gangs of America: The rise of corporate power and the disabling of democracy*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Week 2: A Critical Theory of Communication and Organization

Read: Deetz, S. (2005). Critical theory. In S. May and D. Mumby (eds.), *Engaging organizational communication theory: Multiple perspectives* (pp. 85-111). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Alvesson, M. & Deetz, S. (1996). Postmodernism and critical approaches to organizations. In S. Clegg, C. Hardy & W. Nord (eds.), *Handbook of organization studies* (pp. 191-217). London: Sage.

Deetz, S. (2003). Taking the "linguistic turn" seriously. *Organization: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Organization, Theory, and Society*, 10: 421-29.

Week 3: The Many Forms of Control: The Changing Nature of Work and the Changing Nature of Power

Read: Edwards

Fleming & Spicer, "Chapter 1: Faces of power in organizations."

Week 4: Cultural and Normative Control

Read: Alvesson, M. (1993). Cultural-ideological modes of management control.

In S. Deetz (ed.), *Communication Yearbook 16*, pp 3-42. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Barley, S. & Kunda, G. (1992). Design and devotion: Surges of rational and normative ideologies of control in managerial discourse. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 37, 363-99.

McCabe, D. (2007). Chapter 2: Do managers dream of electric staff or a design for drudgery? In *Power at work: How employees reproduce the corporate machine*. London: Routledge.

Week 5: Ideology, Discourse and Consent

Read: Mumby, D. (1987). The political function of narrative in organizations.

Communication Monographs, 54: 113-27.

Mumby, D. K. (1997). The problem of hegemony: Rereading Gramsci for organizational communication studies. *Western Journal of Communication*, 61, 343-375.

Mumby, D. (2005). Discourse, power, and ideology: Unpacking the critical approach. In D. Grant, C. Hardy, C. Oswork, N. Phillips, and L. Putnam (Eds.) *The handbook of organizational discourse*. London: Sage.

Dale, K. (2005). Building a social materiality: Spatial and embodied politics in organizational control. *Organization*, 12: 649-678.

Week 6: Identity, Identification and Control

Read: Tompkins, P. & Cheney, G. (1985). Communication and unobtrusive control in

contemporary organizations. In R. McPhee and P. Tompkins (eds.),

Organizational communication: Traditional themes and new directions. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tracy, S. J. (2000). Becoming a character for commerce: Emotion labor, self-subordination, and discursive construction of identity in a total institution. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 14, 90-128.

Collinson, D. (2003). Identities and insecurities: Selves at work. *Organization*, 10, 527-547.

Week 7: Subjectivity, Discursive Closure and Conflict Suppression

Read: McCabe, D. (2007). Chapter 3: Manufacturing the enterprise subject. In *Power at work: How employees reproduce the corporate machine*. London: Routledge.

Deetz, S. (1992). Chapter 9: The "subject" and discourse of managerialism. In *Democracy in an Age of Corporate Colonization*. New York: SUNY Press

Thackaberry, J. A. (2004). Discursive opening and closing in organizational self study: Culture as the culprit for safety problems in wildland firefighting. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 17: 319-359.

Clair, R. (1993). The use of framing devices to sequester organizational narratives: Hegemony and harassment. *Communication Monographs*, 60, 113-136.

Martin, J. (1990). Deconstructing organizational taboos: The suppression of gender conflict in organizations. *Organization Science*, 11, 339-59.

Week 8: Discipline and Self-Control

Read: Foucault, M. (1988). Technologies of the self. In L. Martin, H. Gutman, and P. Hutton (eds.), *Technologies of the self* (pp. 16-49). Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press

Holmer-Nadesan, M. (1996). Constructing paper dolls: The discourse of personality testing in organizational practice. *Communication Theory*, 7, 189-218.

McCabe, D. (2007). Chapter 7: Divided and conquered. In *Power at work: How employees reproduce the corporate machine*. London: Routledge.

Deetz, S. (1998). (Re)constructing the modern organization: Discursive formations, strategized subordination and self-surveillance. In A. McKinley & K. Starkey (eds.), *Foucault, management and organizational theory*. London: Sage.

Deetz, S. (2003). Disciplinary power, conflict suppression and human resource management. In M. Alvesson and H. Willmott (eds.), *Studying management critically* (pp. 23-45). London: Sage.

Wieland, S. & Bauer, J. & Deetz, S. (in press). Careerism and destructive life stresses: The role of consumption and entrepreneurialism in colonized work identities. In B. Sypher and P. Lutgen-Sandvik (eds.) *The destructive side of organizational communication*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Week 9: Power and Resistance

Read: Treatheway, A. (1997). Resistance, identity, and empowerment: A postmodern feminist analysis of clients in a human service organization. *Communication Monographs*, 64: 281-301.

Mumby, D. K. (2005). Theorizing resistance in organization studies: A dialectical approach. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 19, 1-26.

Murphy, A. G. (1998). Hidden transcripts of flight attendant resistance. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 11, 499-535.

Prasad, P., & Prasad, A. (2000). Stretching the iron cage: The constitution and implications of routine workplace resistance. *Organization Science*, 11, 387-403.

Thomas, R. & Davies, A. (2005). What have feminists done for us? Feminist theory and organizational resistance. *Organization*, 12: 711-740.

Week 10: Struggle in Organizations

Read: Fleming and Spicer, Chapter 3 to 9.

Taylor, P., & Bain, P. (2003). "Subterranean worksick blues": Humour as subversion in two call centres. *Organization Studies*, 24, 1487-1509.

Week 11: Distribution of Power and Control: Workplace Participation and Stakeholder Models

Read: Barge, J. K. & Little, M. (2002). Dialogical wisdom, communicative practice, and organizational life. *Communication Theory*, 12, 375-397.

Deetz, S. (2007). Corporate governance, corporate social responsibility, and communication. In S. May, G. Cheney, and J. Roper (eds.), *The debate over corporate social responsibility* (pp. 267-278). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lange, J. (2003) Environmental collaboration and constituency communication.
In L. Frey (ed.), *Group communication in context* (pp.209-234). Hillsdale,
NJ: Erlbaum.

Weeks 12-15: Class lead discussions