

Masking the Crisis

*Social Movements, Street Politics
and the Political Process*



UNION FOR DEMOCRATIC COMMUNICATIONS

2021 Conference
Held Virtually

WELCOME to the 2021 Union for Democratic Communications (UDC) conference: *Social Movements, Street Politics, and the Political Process*.

The UDC, since its founding conference in Philadelphia in 1981, has been a place for scholars in the political economy of communications to level theoretically sharp inquiry into the relationship between media, quality of life, democracy, and equality. Scholars at past and present meetings have approached studies of media through the lenses of race, class, gender, sexuality, age and ability expanding our understanding of the forms of power, inequality, oppression, and domination that often escape the orbit of normative approaches to democracy and plurality promoted in other disciplines. The UDC continues to promote critically and radically emancipatory approaches to the analysis and use of media and it also continues to expand into and further complicate areas of inquiry including gaming studies, cultural studies, queer, indigenous studies, and critical race approaches (to name a few). Perhaps, most significantly, since its founding the UDC has and continues to work to bridge the divide between academics, activists, cultural workers, and social movements. The UDC sesquiennial meeting remains a place where UDC participants join with media activists and community groups to build connections that can advance broader local and national projects. We have been lucky to partner with excellent organizations like Project Censored (PC) and we hope to continue our relationship with PC and to include other organizations interested in advancing inquiry into media studies.

BUSINESS MEETING: Thursday, June 24, 3-4pm

UDC is a volunteer-run organization. That means if you'd like to see these conferences continue, if you want to have a meeting space for the kind of activism and scholarship that UDC has supported for 40 years, **we need your help**. It's that simple. Please consider attending the business meeting and joining the steering committee to help put on our next conference!

Presenters at this year's meeting are strongly encouraged to submit their papers to the UDC's journal, [*Democratic Communiqué*](#). We will discuss our association's journal at this year's business meeting which we hope you will all attend. As noted above, the business meeting is also an opportunity for first and longtime participants to become involved with the UDC more directly. This meeting, past ones, and the organization as a whole depend upon voluntary labor. **The business meeting serves as a way for people who truly appreciate this unique organization and conference to ensure that it continues into the future.**

DALLAS SMYTHE AWARD

At every conference we honor a scholar and activist with The Dallas Smythe Award. This award is given in loving memory of one of the great pioneers of the study of the political economy of communications and one of the great leaders in the struggle for democratic communications. At each conference, the Union for Democratic Communications honors a critical media scholar/activist whose work exhibits the spirit of engagement, democracy, teaching, and feistiness to which the UDC is committed.

Past recipients of the Dallas Smythe Award include George Ciccariello-Maher, Sut Jhally, Deepa Kumar, Santiago Alvarez, John Downing, Tom Guback, DeeDee Halleck, Ed Herman, Robert McChesney, Eileen Meehan, Vincent Mosco, Manju Pendakur, Peter Phillips, Herb Schiller, and Janet Wasko.

This year's Dallas Smythe Award goes to Chenjerai Kumanyika

Chenjerai Kumanyika is a researcher, journalist, an artist who works as an assistant professor in Rutgers University's Department of Journalism and Media Studies. His research and teaching focus on the intersections of social justice and emerging media in the cultural and creative industries. He has written about these issues in journals such as *Popular Music & Society*, *Popular Communication*, *The Routledge Companion to Advertising and Promotional Culture* and *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*.

Currently, Kumanyika is the Co-Executive Producer and Co-Host of Gimlet Media's new podcast on the Civil War. He has also been a contributor to Transom, NPR Codeswitch, All Things Considered, Invisibilia, VICE, and he is a news analyst for Rising Up Radio with Sonali Kolhatkar.

Please join us on Thursday at 6pm (Eastern Standard Time) to congratulate Dr. Kumanyika, see him receive his award, and give the Dallas Smythe lecture.

PLENARIES

In addition to the Dallas Smythe Award and our regular panels we have three special plenaries, an opening and closing plenary and a book launch plenary.

The Opening Plenary, *Un/Masking Media Power: Journalism and Propaganda in the Age of COVID* is on Wednesday at 3pm.

The Book Launch Plenary, *The Gig Economy: Workers and Media in the Age of Convergence* is on Thursday at 11am

The Closing Plenary, *A Return to Sut Jhally's 2018 Dallas Smythe Keynote Address: Stuart Hall's Legacy for Media Studies: Conjunctures, Critique, and Political Projects* is the last panel of the conference to be held on Friday at 3pm.

We hope to see all of you at these plenaries!

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

A few important notes about the program schedule and other things to consider:

- All times listed are Eastern Standard Time (EST)
- The Zoom link for the meeting follows the moderator's name
- We welcome you sharing the link with anyone who you'd like to have attend the presentation

- We encourage you to attend other presentations (as you would at an in-person conference)
- We really hope that you'll attend the business meeting: we welcome all of you playing a role in the organization and absolutely need your help planning the next meeting

SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS OVERVIEW

Wednesday

11am-12:45pm	Concurrent Sessions
1pm-2:45pm	Concurrent Sessions
3pm-4:45pm	Opening Plenary
5pm-6:45pm	Concurrent Sessions
7pm-9pm	Happy/Social Hour

Thursday

11am-12:45pm	Book Launch Plenary
1pm-2:45pm	Concurrent Sessions
3pm-4pm	Business Meeting
6pm-8:30pm	DALLAS SMYTHE AWARD, PRESENTATION and TALK

Friday

11am-12:45pm	Concurrent Sessions
1pm-2:45pm	Concurrent Sessions
3pm-4:45pm	Closing Plenary

The Union for Democratic Communications Steering and Conference Committee

Robert F. Carley (Coordinator)

Brian Dolber (Coordinator)

Christina Ceisel

Aaron Heresco

Nolan Higdon

Andrew Kennis

Ryan Lizardi

Steve Macek (*Ex Officio*)

Russell Newman (Treasurer)

Ricardo Valencia

Jeffrey Blevins (Editor, [*Democratic Communiqué*](#))