THEORY AND HISTORY OF MEDIA (727) • Founded: 2009

This seminar brings together scholars from the humanities and social sciences to examine emerging concepts in media theory. Media, in this conception, refers to material technologies that (re)produce, store, and transmit information—a conception broad enough to move from the role of print technologies in early modern Europe, through spirit photography, to the emergence of contemporary digital media. The seminar is especially interested in how technologies shape and are shaped by cultural practices and social sensibilities, treats a historical dimension as central to this effort, and is committed to moving beyond the specifics of media in the U.S. to incorporate the different histories and trajectories of media in Europe and elsewhere. Each year is organized around a specific theme that sets the frame for questions and conversation.

CHAIR/S: **Stefan Andriopoulos**; **Debashree Mukherjee** • RAPPORTEUR/S: **Hannah Pivo**

2025–2026 MEETINGS

September 22 — *Tales of Militant Chemistry: The Film Factory in a Century of War*
Alice Lovejoy, University of Minnesota
Respondent: **Rachel Hutcheson**, Rochester Institute of Technology

October 20 — *Kew's Networks*
Zeynep Çelik Alexander, Columbia University
Respondent: **Kavita Sivaramakrishnan**, Columbia University

November 10 — *Processive Technics: Industrial Documentary, Audio-Visual Education, and New Cinemas in Postwar Japan*
Takukya Tsunoa
Respondent: **Dan Striebel**, New York University

February 9 — *Designing Wavelength: Production in a Vacuum, c. 1930*
Reinhold Martin, Columbia University
Respondent: **Richard R. John**, Columbia University

March 30 — *Resolving Nebulae: Aesthetic Arguments of Early Astrophotography*
Brooke Belisle, Stony Brook University

2026-2027 CHAIR/S: **Debashree Mukherjee**, dm3154@columbia.edu; **Reinhold Martin**, rm454@columbia.edu