DREXEL UNIVERSITY
Department of
Communication
College of Arts and Sciences

CCM Colloquia Series

Friday, March 10

3 PM

PISB 103
33rd & Chestnut Sts

Dr. Timothy D. Taylor Presents

TRENDSPOTTERS: AGENTS AND INSPECTORS OF CONSUMER CAPITALISM

This presentation examines some of capitalism's agents by exploring the practices of trendspotting, carried out by people in advertising agencies and all sorts of consumer research companies that employ different methods, including ethnography, to learn more about consumers and potential consumers. These workers act as agents of capitalism in several ways: by making their clients' quantitative data more qualitative through ethnographic studies, educating clients about their market(s), ethnographizing consumers in order to improve their clients' products, identifying markets, and helping to make a product appeal to that market. Trendspotters take the preferences of consumers segmented into particular groups and regularize, officialize them as "values," which are then employed to market products.

Timothy D. Taylor is a professor in the Departments of Ethnomusicology, Anthropology, and Musicology at UCLA. He is the author of many books and articles, most recently, *Working Musicians: Labor and Creativity in Film and Television Production*, to be published early in 2023 by Duke University Press, and *Making Value: Music and the Social*, also to be published by Duke University Press. He is currently working on a book about background music in early television programs.