

SOCIOLOGY OF MASS MEDIA  
SPRING 2015  
MWF 10:30-11:20  
ARCHITECTURE 127

Dr. Brandon Bosch

Oldfather 722

Office Hours: Monday 2:30-5:00, Wednesday 11:30-12:30, Thursday 2:00-4:00

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This class will focus on mass media representations of gender, race, class, and politics, as well as the cultural, legal, economic, and institutional factors influencing the production of media texts. We will also discuss the ways in which media audiences (not just media scholars) make sense of media texts.

Types of media to be discussed include advertisements, film (including romantic comedies, drama, horror, action, and war films) news media, comic books, video games, “reality” television, and sitcoms. Due to time constraints, popular music, novels, and “new” media will receive relatively less focus.

Much of the class will focus on classic theories and media texts. Many of the examples discussed in class will likely be things that you have not seen (e.g., *It Happened One Night*, *The Maltese Falcon*, *Halloween*, *Apocalypse Now*, *When Harry Met Sally*). This is done to expose you to media texts (and historical contexts) that you might be unaware of, and give you the opportunity to compare them with the media that you consume today.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Gail Dines and Jean Humez (2015). *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Critical Reader*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Readings from this book will be labeled *GRC* in the syllabus.

There will also be a number of readings posted on Blackboard. These online texts will be labeled *OT* in the syllabus.

*Million Dollar Baby* (2004). You must watch this film for your media analysis. You do not necessarily need to buy the film (brand new copies are available for only \$4.81 on Amazon), as you may choose to make use of Netflix or interlibrary loans.

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation	10%
Media Journal	10%
Media Analysis Paper	20%
Exam I	20%
Exam II	20%
Exam III (Essay)	20%

Participation refers to active contributions to class discussion. To receive a C or higher in your participation grade you must make substantive comments/questions in class (whether it be in

organized group discussions or to the class as a whole). Frequent absences and/or attending class late will result in an automatic “F” (0) in your participation grade.

The Media Journal can be done for any week, although it must be completed before the due date. The Journal must include four different media texts. After a brief description of the media text (2-3 sentences), you must explicitly link what you saw with something discussed in class (another 2-3 sentences). These entries must be on at least two different days and must not all be on the same topic (e.g., objectification), television show (e.g., *Orange is the New Black*), or genre (e.g., drama, horror movie, ect.).

The Media Analysis Paper will be a 4-6 page paper that critically analyses the ways in which gender and race are represented in the film *Million Dollar Baby* (2004). The paper must make explicit references to specific concepts discussed in class, and justify these claims by describing relevant scenes (and the approximate times in which they take place).

There will be three exams in the semester. Two will consist of multiple choice and some short answer. Be sure to bring an exam book to write in for these days. The third exam will be a take-home essay.

### Class Policies

No computers, electronics, or non-class materials can be used in class. Also, discussion must be with the entire class, not chatting with neighbors. The first violation of this policy results in a two letter grade deduction from your Participation grade. The second violation of this policy results in a Zero for your Participation grade. The third violation of this policy is automatic course failure.

Grade Appeals: Wait at least 24 hours. Provide a written statement explaining why you think you have been graded unfairly. Any grade complaint that references how hard you worked or studied will be rejected. I reserve the right to keep your grade the same or lower it. All appeals of grades must be made within 5 working days following the day the assignment was returned.

Plagiarism and Cheating (automatic course failure).

Assignments that are not handed in by the beginning of class will be docked a Full Letter Grade. If the assignment is not handed in by midnight (via email), the paper will be docked an additional Letter Grade. If the assignment is not handed in by the beginning of class time the next day (or its equivalent on a weekend/holiday), the assignment will receive a zero. Note: Late Exams (including the essay exam) will receive a zero.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

- 1/12 M INTRODUCTION
- ANALYZING MEDIA TEXTS*
- 1/14 W *GRC:* Kellner. Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture (p. 7-19).
- MEDIA CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY*
- 1/16 F *GRC:* Moore. Resisting, Reiterating, and Dancing Through (210-219).
- 1/19 M MLK Day—NO CLASS
- 1/21 W *GRC:* Booth. Queering *Queer Eye* (409-418).
- 1/23 F *GRC:* Kessler. Showtime Thinks, Therefore I Am (600-609).
- 1/26 M *GRC:* Murray. Branding ‘Real’ Social Change in Dove’s Campaign for Real Beauty (285-296).
- 1/28 W *GRC:* Fairclough. Nothing Less Than Perfect: Female Celebrity, Ageing and Hyperscrutiny in the Gossip Industry (297-305).
- 1/30 F *GRC:* Lee and Moscovitz. The ‘Rich Bitch’ (143-156).
- 2/2 M *GRC:* Cuklanz and Moorti. Television’s ‘New’ Feminism: Prime-time Representations of Women and Victimization (175-186).
- 2/4 W *OT:* Re-Imagining” Hegemony and Misogyny in the Contemporary Slasher Remake
- 2/6 F *GRC:* Petersen. That Teenage Feeling: *Twilight*, Fantasy, and Feminist Readers (342-353).
- 2/9 M *OT:* Katz. Advertising and the construction of violent white masculinity (p. 261-269)
- 2/11W *GRC:* Katz. Big Talkers: Rush Limbaugh, Conservative Talk Radio and the Defiant Reassertion of White Male Authority (157-162).
- 2/13 F *OT:* Post-Princess Models of Gender: The New Man in Disney/Pixar
- 2/16 M EXAM # 1
- MEDIA CONSTRUCTION OF RACE AND ETHNICITY*
- 2/18 W *GRC:* Hall. The Whites of Their Eyes (104-107).

- 2/20 F *GRC*: McKay and Johnson. Pornographic Eroticism and Sexual Grotesquerie in Representations of African American Sportswomen (118-127).
- 2/23 M *OT*: Mcellwain & Caliendo. Mitt Romney's Racist Appeals.
- 2/25 W *GRC*: Smith. Critiquing Reality-Based Televisual Black Fatherhood (524-535).
- 2/27 F *GRC*: Drew. Pretending to be "Post-Racial" (167-174).
- 3/2 M *GRC*: A Shot at Half-Exposure: Asian Americans in Reality TV Shows (536-544)
- 3/4 W *GRC*: Fan activists and the politics of race in the Last Airbender.  
Lori Kido Lopez  
\*\*\*MEDIA JOURNAL DUE\*\*\*
- 3/6 F MOVIE DAY
- 3/9 M MOVIE DAY
- NEWS MEDIA*
- 3/11 W *OT*: Bennett. Four Biases (36-70)
- 3/13 F *OT*: Barbara Bowman. Why did it take 30 years for people to believe my story?
- 3/16 M *OT*: William Prochnau. The Military and the Media.  
MEDIA ESSAY DUE
- MEDIA REGULATION, NORMS & ROUTINES*
- 3/18 W *OT*: Croteau, D., & Hoynes. Political Influence on Media
- 3/20 F *OT*: Peter Suderman. "Save the Movie!"  
*OT*: Roger Ebert.
- SPRING VACATION
- 3/23 M NO CLASS
- 3/25 W NO CLASS
- 3/27 F NO CLASS
- 3/30 M EXAM # 2

*POLITICAL ECONOMY & CONSUMER CULTURE*

4/1 W *GRC*: Foster and McChesney. The Internet's Unholy Marriage to Capitalism (43-50)

4/3 F *GRC*: Hardy. Mapping Commercial Intertextuality (327-336).

4/6 M *GRC*: Rahman and Lockwood. How to 'use your Olympian': The Paradox of Athlete Authenticity and Commercialization in the Contemporary Olympic Games (318-326).

4/8 W *GRC*: 'Take Responsibility for Yourself': Judge Judy and the Neoliberal Citizen Laurie Ouellette (545-55)

4/10 F *GRC*: Extreme Makeover: Home Edition: An American Fairy Tale by Gareth Palmer (51-57).

#### *CULTURE & IDEOLOGY IN FILM*

4/13 M *OT*: Gianos. (1998). Movies and the Great Depression (p. 75-103).

4/15 W *OT*: Wright, B. (2001). Comic Book Nation 1968-1979.

4/17 F *OT*: Ernest Giglio Picturing Vietnam on Film

4/20 M *OT*: Ian Scott. Hollywood and Politics in the 1990s.

4/22 W *OT*: Dargis, M. Bang, Boom.

#### *MEDIA EFFECTS AND AUDIENCES*

4/23 F *GRC*: Radway. Women Read the Romance (58-68).

4/27 M *GRC*: Butsch. Reconsidering Resistance and Incorporation (87-98).

4/29 W WORK ON EXAM ESSAY

5/1 F EXAM # 3 (ESSAY) DUE