

**Women, Minorities and the Media  
Comm/WNST 205-1 Spring, 2001**

**Professor: Dr. Fleming-Rife**

**Office: Carnegie 223      Office hours: MW: 11-12**

**Phone: 865-8135      Email: [axf23@psu.edu](mailto:axf23@psu.edu)**

**Class: MWF: 2:30-3:20**

**Class Meets: 108 Henderson**

**Teaching Assistant: Ming Cao**

**Office: 223 Carnegie      Office hours: T-R: 11-12**

**Phone: 863-4896 or 865-2176      Email: [mxc475@psu.edu](mailto:mxc475@psu.edu)**

**Required Texts: Dines, G. & Humez, J.M. (Eds.). Gender, Race and Class in Media. (1995), Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.**

**Harlequin Romance**

**Philosophy:**

As a journalism educator, I believe that my role is to encourage you to think critically and effectively – that includes questioning the role of media and of journalists. To that end, you will learn intellectual skills such as observing, gathering, classifying and synthesizing information. My intention is to help you acquire confidence in your ability to make contributions to the field of mass communicators. I believe also that learning is both an active and an interactive process – for this reason, you will be responsible for participating in this class. I believe that just as I can share with you, you can share with your classmates and me – it's give and take.

**Description of course:** This course explores the historical, economic, legal, political and social implications of the relationship between women, minorities, class and the mass media. In this class we will explore how the media help in constructing notions of social reality. The primary focus of this class is on media representations of marginalized groups in the United States.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To understand historical, political, economic and cultural influences that shape the media representations of women, minorities and other marginalized groups.
2. Understand culture – what it is and the interplay between media and culture.
3. From a cultural perspective, learn tools to help you understand and criticize media as related to representation of gender, race and class.
4. To acquaint you with relevant media theory, as well as theories of representation.
5. To encourage you to think about ways that media depictions of marginalized and disempowered groups might be improved.

**Activities:** To make this an interactive class and to strongly encourage participation, there will be less emphasis on lecture and more emphasis in discussion and experiential learning. Research has found that students who are active learners (students who participate in their learning) actually learn more than students who are passive learners (students who are lectured to). Because of this, you will be required to read the assigned materials before class and come to class prepared to discuss. In addition, you will have group work that will require you to be prepared to apply the readings to some outside assignment.

Working collaboratively also improves learning; therefore, you will be assigned to a group. You will work with your group on assigned projects throughout the semester. Group assignments will be organized at the beginning of the semester. In week three, if you find you are just not compatible in your assigned group, you may ask to be reassigned. After week three, you will be required to remain in your group until the end of the semester. Attached to your syllabus is a peer evaluation form, you should immediately make 10 copies for use throughout the semester. After each group project, you must complete one and turn it in with your name on it. You will receive a negative grade from me if you don't have the proper evaluation form completed at the end of the class period in which a project has been completed. **You must know that the information you provide is Confidential.**

Participation and attendance are crucial to your learning. I take both seriously, so you will receive points for quality of participation and for attendance. It's a given that if you're not in class, you can't participate. Participation will be evaluated based on in-class participation. That means offering substantive input to class discussion. By substantive I mean input that shows clearly that you have read the text and/or other outside assigned readings and assignments.

You are responsible for all material assigned and covered in class, whether you are present or not. Unless you have an excused absence – doctor's excuse, or health clinic excuse, make-up texts will not be allowed.

There will be **two tests: mid-term and final**. Also, there be a **debate**. You will be assigned a position to take on a media issue and you will debate that pro or con position in class. You will need to pull together supporting materials from your texts, outside scholarly readings, discussions and lecture materials. This is a major project – for that reason – you will be expected to demonstrate that you have conducted adequate research in preparation for this debate. The group that you are assigned to will be your debate team. You will be required to turn in an annotated bibliography that supports that position that you take.

**In-class, homework assignments:** You will work in assigned groups (these groups will be organized no later than the beginning of the second week in the semester) and will be responsible for reading and learning materials as required and outlined in the course outline. You will be provided with discussion sheets. These sheets must be completed and turned in at the end of the class period. Some ds's require that you do the work at home, or outside class – in these cases, they are due as assigned. You may be called on to discuss your answers/positions at the end of the class, or the next class period. You will have four of these discussion sessions during the semester. It is important to know how to work with others. Pull your own weight, be responsible and considerate are some tips to an effective group experience. Try to problem solve and work out problems without involving the professor if at all possible.

**Readings should be done before the scheduled class in which they are to be discussed.**

Because of the nature of this class, it will be structured more loosely. It will be less formal than most classes. The success of this class depends on your contributions to it.

**Assignments: With the exception of in-class work, all assignments must be typed and double-spaced.**

**The tests will be given only on the date scheduled – no opportunity for taking the test late or early.**

**Schedule may change – student is responsible for being aware of any changes in dates, assignment due dates, content test dates and DS dates.**

**In addition to the readings in your course outline, there will be other reading assignments.**

### **Outline Course Content**

Week 1 J8,10,12	Course Introductions Photo Shoot Group Assignment Read Hutchins Commission Reports (Commission on Freedom of the Press) <a href="http://reserve.libraries.psu.edu/comm/205F/syllabus.htm">http://reserve.libraries.psu.edu/comm/205F/syllabus.htm</a>
Week 2 J15,17,19	<b>VP</b> “Bill Cosby on Prejudice” Representations and why they should change Read (D&H 1,2,3) and Kerner Commission Report: <a href="http://reserve.libraries.psu.edu/comm/205F/syllabus.htm">http://reserve.libraries.psu.edu/comm/205F/syllabus.htm</a>
Week 3 J22,24,26	Africa Americans in media content Film and news Slide presentation Bogle: <a href="http://reserve.libraries.psu.edu/comm/205F/syllabus.htm">http://reserve.libraries.psu.edu/comm/205F/syllabus.htm</a> Social construction of reality Adoni&Mane: <a href="http://reserve.libraries.psu.edu/comm/205F/syllabus.htm">http://reserve.libraries.psu.edu/comm/205F/syllabus.htm</a>
Week4 J29 J31,F2	Television D&H 47,48,49,50 <b>VP</b> “Color Adjustment” parts 1&2
Week5 F5,7,9	Group work research day (DS#1) No class Group presentations
Week6 F12 F14 F16	Women in media content D&H 24,25,26 Group work (research day) Harlequin Romance reports (DS#2)
Week 7 F19,21 <b>F23</b>	Harlequin Romance cont’d Reports cont’d <b>Test Review</b>
<b>Week8</b> <b>F26</b> F28 M2	<b>Midterm</b> <b>Test</b> Hispanics in the media (return test) Video Hispanics in media and Stone Study

<http://www.missouri.edu/~jourvs?>

**Week9**      **Spring Break – Have a good one!!!**  
**M5-9**

Week 10      Women in advertising  
M12,14,16      (D&H 10,11, 15, 16,17)  
                    **VP “Still Killing Us Softly”**  
M16              Magazine ads group research day (**No class**)

Week11      Mag ad presentations (DS#3)  
M19,21,23

Week 12      Women in music videos  
M26,28,30      (D&H 4, 55, 56,57)  
                    **VP “Dream WorldII”**

Week 13      Women in music videos  
A2              (DS#4) No class/research day  
A4,6              Presentations of group work

Week 14      American Indian representations  
A9,11          **VP “In Whose Honor?”**  
                    American Indians in media content  
                    Campbell: <http://reserve.libraries.psu.edu/comm/205F/syllabus.htm>

Week 15      Debates  
A16              Debate group 1&2  
A18              Debate group 3&4  
A20              Debate group 5&6

Week 16      Debate cont'd  
A23              Debate group 7&8  
A25              Debate group 9&10  
A27              Debate group 11&12

**Finals week Final Exam**  
**A30-M4**