

# Race, Gender & Media

JRMC 8240: Telecommunications Topics:

**Race, Gender & Media**

**Fall Semester 2001**

**Dr. Dwight E. Brooks**

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**Office Hours:**

Tuesday 1:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

Wednesday 10:00 A.M. - 12:00 noon

Also by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This graduate seminar examines media representations of the **social constructions of race and gender**. The course will also consider four related areas of studying media representations of race and gender: 1) **ways to study and analyze** race, gender and media, 2) **audience interpretations** of media images of race and gender, 3) **media institutions** and the production, distribution and exhibition of “racialized” imagery, and 4) what to do about media representations: **media literacy, activism and advocacy**.

This course is structured as an interactive seminar that emphasizes discussion. There also will be several video presentations. Although most of the course readings utilize critical media studies and cultural studies perspectives, no prior graduate course work in these areas is necessary.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To develop a greater appreciation of the media’s cultural influence.
2. To enhance understanding of, and sensitivity to the various ways race and gender impact both media content and audience interpretations of media content.
3. To acquire an understanding of the range of scholarship on media, race, and gender.
4. To introduce some of the critical theories and approaches used in the study of media, culture, gender.
5. To understand how race and gender representations are shaped by power—hierarchies in social structure and economic inequities.
6. To enhance analytical thinking, critical reading, writing and other communication skills.
7. To become more a more informed and critical media consumer.

**REQUIRED READING MATERIAL**

Readings Packet: Available from Bel-Jean Copy/Print. 163 E. Broad St. Athens.

All readings from the course packet are on reserve in the Drewry Resource Room of the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication (Room 238). Class articles are not to be removed from the reading room.

**COMPUTING AND ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Students are required to maintain an active computer account for electronic mail and other computing services. In addition, a class discussion list (listserv) will be used to disseminate and discuss course material. Students also are encouraged to use the class listserv for “electronic class discussions.” The address for the class listserv is: **RACEGENDER-L@LISTSERV.UGA.EDU**

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS, REQUIREMENTS, AND EVALUATION**

All students are expected to contribute regularly to the seminar by both participating in, and on occasions, leading class discussions. One purpose of the course is to introduce students to some of the issues that frame considerations of race, gender and the media (in the United States). Another purpose is to expose students to some of the literature that has emerged from the study of race, gender, and the media. As a result, this course covers a wide range of topics. Naturally, some topics will be more interesting than others. However, you should find most of the course material fascinating, and more important, crucial to your understanding of, and participation in both media culture in general and academic and professional cultures in particular.

Most of the course material (i.e., readings, videos) is fairly easy to read and comprehend. However, a few may prove a bit difficult--at least initially. Thus, while your task is not to master every detail of every reading and video, feel free to bring any questions to the class for discussion and possible clarification. Although we will not give every reading/video equal coverage in class, you are expected to keep up with assigned readings.

Final grades will be based on the quality of written essays and other assignments, class attendance, and participation in class discussions. Specifically, you are expected to:

1. **Attend class on a consistent basis.**
2. **Participate in class discussions.**
3. **Complete the assigned readings** for the day they are assigned (listed) on the syllabus. Do not get behind in the readings as the pace and structure of the course make it difficult to "catch up." Class discussions presume that you have read the material. Bring questions and comments from class readings to class. You also will be expected to incorporate ideas from readings in your essays.
4. **Complete essays** on various aspects of race, gender and the media:
  - A. **Complete two** essays that analyze any video (of your choice) shown in class.
  - B. **Critical essay**—a critical analysis, of a specific media "text" provided by the instructor. This essay is designed to enhance your appreciation of the complex relationships between race, gender and media.
5. **Book Report:** Each student will select and read a book on a course-related topic. After reading the book, the student will prepare an essay that summarizes and assesses the book's content and utility to media studies. Each student will also prepare and present an oral summary of the book to the class.

The instructor reserves the right to add to/alter the assignments, their respective due dates, and/or their percentage values.

Students are encouraged to discuss their performance and progress in this course with the instructor.

**Specific assignments** are listed below:

| <u>Assignment*</u>             | <u>Due Date</u>         | <u>Percent of Final Grade</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Video Analysis #1              | Tuesday September 27    | 15%                           |
| Video Analysis #2              | Tuesday November 20     | 20%                           |
| Essay                          | TBA                     | 10%                           |
| Book Report: Written           | Tuesday December 4      | 20%                           |
| Book Report Oral Summary       | Tues/Thurs December 4/6 | 10%                           |
| Attendance/Class Participation | Throughout the semester | 25%                           |

**Assignment Submission and Other Policies:**

1. All assignments must be typed and conform to a style manual for academic writing.
2. When submitting assignments, always make a photocopy and submit the original. The instructor is not responsible for "lost" papers.
3. Unless you are given permission, all assignments are to be submitted on or before the due date. Late submissions are penalized. Unexpected circumstances that contribute to late work must be discussed with the instructor prior to the due date in order to negotiate alternatives that are devoid of penalty.
4. In this seminar we seek to function as a **community of scholars** and it is expected that class meetings will provide a collegial and supportive atmosphere for the exchange of ideas.

In order to make the most of each class meeting, it is imperative that you are **prepared**: Complete **all** assigned readings, reflect on the ideas and themes in the readings, place course topics in the context of your own experiences, and be willing to discuss and interrogate ideas advanced in the readings, videos, and by seminar participants.

Throughout the semester, we will engage in a number of class discussions. Thus, it is imperative that **everyone's** opinions and views are to be respected at all times. **There is absolutely no place in this course for rudeness, discourtesy, and intolerance.** Everyone will not agree with everything that is said or written in this course—that's okay, as long as we create and maintain a learning environment that encourages open and honest exchanges of ideas and opinions.

**PLAGIARISM IS ABSOLUTELY UNACCEPTABLE AND IS GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY. ANY STUDENT INVOLVED IN PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, OR ANY UNETHICAL/ILLEGAL ACADEMIC BEHAVIOR WILL RECEIVE, AT THE VERY LEAST, A FAILING GRADE FOR THE SEMESTER!**

The next section contains a **tentative** schedule for the semester. The instructor will announce any schedule changes in class and/or on the listserv.

Reading assignments (>) are designated by **bold print**

Titles of full-length videotapes (<) are in *italics*

***Let's have a great semester!***

| <b><u>Date of Class:</u></b>         | <b><u>Class Topic, Reading Assignment, Video Tape</u></b>  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b><u>Thursday August 16:</u></b>    | Course Introduction  |
| <b><u>Tuesday August 21:</u></b>     | The Social Construction of Race<br><b>Read: Gandy, The Social Construction of Race<br/>Hall, The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies...</b><br><b>Video: Race, the Floating Signifier</b>  |
| <b><u>Thursday August 23:</u></b>    | Race as a Social Construction: Whiteness<br><b>Read: Dyer, The Matter of Whiteness<br/>Nakayama: Whiteness and Media<br/>Shome, Outing Whiteness<br/>Liera-Swichtenberg, Passing or Whiteness on the Edge</b>                                    |
| <b><u>Tuesday August 28:</u></b>     | Cultural Studies<br><b>Read: Dines, Class, Gender and Race in North America...<br/>Kellner, Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism and...</b><br><b>Video: Representation and the Media</b>  |
| <b><u>Thursday August 30:</u></b>    | Cultural Studies/Cultural Criticism<br><b>Read: hooks, Dialectically Down with the Critical Program<br/>Diawara, Black Studies, Cultural Studies...</b><br><b>Video: Cultural Criticism and Transformation: Pt. 1: On Cultural<br/>Criticism</b> |
| <b><u>Tuesday September 4:</u></b>   | Cultural Criticism and Analysis<br><b>Video: Cultural Criticism and Transformation: Pt. 2: Doing Cultural<br/>Criticism</b>  |
| <b><u>Thursday September 6:</u></b>  | Racial Stereotypes: Historical Perspectives<br><b>Read: Pieterse, White Negroes<br/>Miller, the Case of Early Black Cinema<br/>Rhodes, The Visibility of Race and Media History</b><br><b>Video: Ethnic Notions</b>                              |
| <b><u>Tuesday September 11:</u></b>  | Otherness and Orientalism<br><b>Read: Ferguson, Otherness, Eurocentrism and ...</b><br><b>Video: On Orientalism</b>  |
| <b><u>Thursday September 13:</u></b> | Television and African Americans<br><b>Read: Bodroghkozy, Is This What You Mean by Color TV...<br/>Ely, "This Continuing Harm"</b><br><b>Video: Color Adjustment Pt. 1: Color Blind TV? 1948-68</b>  |
| <b><u>Tuesday September 18:</u></b>  | Television and African Americans<br><b>Read: Gray, Television, Black Americans and...<br/>Gray, Black Cultural Politics and Commercial Culture</b><br><b>Video: Color Adjustment, Part 2: Coloring the Dream</b>                                 |
| <b><u>Thursday September 20:</u></b> | Watching Race<br><b>Read: Brooks &amp; Jacobs, Black Men in the Margins...<br/>Schulman, Laughing Across the Color Barrier...</b><br><b>Video: Space Traders</b>   |

**Date of Class:                      Class Topic, Reading Assignment, Video Tape**

- Tuesday September 25:**      Intersections of Race and Gender: Asian Women/Men  
**Read: Hagedorn, Asian Women in Film: No Joy, No Luck  
 Locke, Here Comes the Judge...**  
**Video: *Slaying the Dragon***
- Thursday September 27:**      Communication, Media, Culture and Gender  
**MacDonald, Disciplined Approaches: Redefining...**  
**Last Day to Submit Video Analysis I**
- Tuesday October 2:**              Gendered Advertising  
**Read: Lazier & Kendrick, Women in Advertisements...  
 Kilbourne, A Girl of Many Parts: The Making...**  
**Video: *Killing Us Softly III***
- Thursday October 4:**              Advertising: Beauty and Thinness  
**Read: Yang & Ragaza, The Beauty Machine  
 Kilbourne, The More You Subtract the More You Add**  
**Video: *Slim Hopes: Advertising and the Obsession with Thinness***
- Tuesday October 9:**              Masculinity and the Media  
**Read: La France, What is Masculinity?  
 Katz, Advertising and the Construction of ...**  
**Video: *Tough Guise: Media . . . and the Crisis in Masculinity* (Pt. 1)**
- Thursday October 11:**              Masculinity  
**Read: McIntosh, White Privilege and Male Privilege...**  
**Video: *Tough Guise...* (Pt. 2)**
- Tuesday October 16:**              Sexual Identity and Media  
**Read: Fejes & Petrich, Invisibility, Homophobia and...  
 Gross, Out of the Mainstream: Sexual Minorities...**  
**Video: *Off the Straight and Narrow: Lesbians, Gays & Bisexuals & TV***
- Thursday October 18:**              Racial/Gender Identity, Performance and Essentialism  
**Read: hooks, Postmodern Blackness  
 Lubiano, But Compared to White? Reading...**  
**Video: *Black Is...Black Ain't***
- Tuesday October 23:**              Black Is, Black Ain't  
**Read: Julian, Black Is, Black Ain't**  
**Video: *Black Is...Black Ain't***
- \*Special Meeting: Wed. 10/24 or Monday 10/29**
- Tuesday October 30:**              *Bamboozled* (Guest) Presentations
- Thursday November 1:**              **NO CLASS\***

**Date of Class:                      Class Topic, Reading Assignment, Video Tape**

- Tuesday November 6:**              Feminist Perspectives and the Media: Rape  
**Read: Rakow, Feminist Perspectives...  
 Van Zonen, 'New' Themes**

**Video:** *The Date Rape Backlash: Media and the Denial of Rape*

**Thursday November 8:** Pornography  
**Read:** **Dworkin, Pornography and Male Supremacy**  
**Collins, The Sexual Politics of Black Womanhood**  
**Video:** *And Still I Rise*

**Tuesday November 13:** Music Videos and Female Sexuality  
**Read:** **Jhally, Intersections of Discourse...**  
**Video:** *Dreamworlds 2*

**Thursday November 15:** Rap and Hip-Hop Culture  
**Read:** **Rose, Voices From the Margins...**  
**Dyson, The Culture of Hip-Hop**  
**Video:** *Material Witness*

**Tuesday November 20:** To Be Announced  
**Last Day to Submit Video Analysis II**

**Tuesday December 4:** Book Report Presentations

**Thursday December 6:** Book Report Presentations

**Thursday December 13:** **Final Exam Period**  
**3:30-6:30 P. M.**  
Course Wrap-Up and Evaluations