

J320:

Women, Minorities, and the Media

Spring 2001

Syllabus

Meets: Tues. & Thurs. 5-620 p.m. in 221
Allen Hall

Instructor

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Required Texts:

*** Cultural Diversity and the
U. S. Media (1998). Yahya R.**

Kamalipour & Theresa Carilli (Eds.)
Albany, NY: State University of New York
Press. (Noted as Text #1).

* **Mediated Women (1999).**

Marian Meyers (ed.). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton
Press. (Text #2). Both books available at:

* **Course Reader** available at the U
of O Bookstore.

Course Description

In J320 we will examine media inequities on the basis of race, gender, and ethnicity. This means not only representation in media content, but also representation in the media workforce. Considerable research, as well as casual observation, shows that women and minorities are marginalized in society and in the mass media. For example, minorities and women are more likely than white men to be absent from media content and media organizations. They are also more

likely to be represented as negative and limited cultural stereotypes, as objects of abuse, or as sex symbols (in the case of women). Given the global pervasiveness of the mass media, the nature and consequences of these representations constitute important political, ethical, and theoretical questions.

In this course we will draw on relevant theory and empirical research plus direct observation to critically examine representations in a variety of media. We will also consider the individual and societal consequences of media representations and possible solutions. Classes will include lectures, discussion, videos, and guest speakers. I encourage and appreciate your input at all times. Please feel free to speak up during class or to see me, Kumi, or Jane during our office hours. If these times aren't convenient, please contact me and we'll set up an appointment.

Assignments

All students must complete two short (2 page) reaction papers, a team paper/project and two exams. In addition, small assignments may be announced or quizzes given at the discretion of the instructor. All work is graded by Professor Merskin, Jane, and Kumi. The exams will be multiple choice, matching type tests.

Paper #1: Is due April 12 (Thursday)

The first paper will require the use of one reading from class to critically examine media content.

ASSIGNMENT:

Write a 2 page (typewritten, double spaced) paper that addresses the

following:

1. spend one day (of your choosing) imagining yourself to be a member

of another racial group from that which you identify yourself. This

means thinking about any interactions that you have with people

(classmates, instructors, store clerks, public safety etc.) as if you

were different in physical appearance than you are, relying on your

perceptive skills.

2. What was your experience like? Pausing to look through your eyes at

the world as if you were not in your usual self, would you have been

treated differently if you did belong to the group you selected? Were

there any situations that you encountered where you think your race made

a difference? What did you learn from this experience.

3. Write up a diary of your day, answering all the above questions and

filling in with your own observations.

4. be sure to proofread your paper carefully, checking for spelling and

grammatical errors. This is paper #1 for the class and is due at the

beginning of class on Thursday.

Paper #2: Is due May 03.

ASSIGNMENT:

Write a 2 page (typewritten, double spaced) paper that addresses the

following:

1. spend one day (of your choosing) imagining yourself to be a man (if you are a woman) or a woman (if you are a man). This

means thinking about how your day starts, how your sex affects any interactions that you have with people (classmates, instructors, store

clerks, public safety etc.) as if you are a different sex than you are, relying on your perceptive skills.

2. What was your experience like? Pausing to look through your eyes at the world as if you were not in your usual self, would you have been treated differently if you were a member of the opposite sex? Were there any situations that you encountered where you think your sex made a difference? What did you learn from this experience?

3. Write up a diary of your day, answering all the above questions and filling in with your own observations.

4. be sure to proofread your paper carefully, checking for spelling and grammatical errors. This is paper #2 for the class and is due at the beginning of class.

Test #1: May 15

Test #2: June 05

Paper/Project: Is due June 07. You will set up your project for others to see and provide a BRIEF (just a couple of sentences) that describe what you did.

This paper requires you to do a team project. The description is available [at this link:](#)

Grading

Grades are based on the two short reaction papers, two exams, a final project, and your participation.

Participation includes mandatory and on-time attendance (*which will be taken randomly*), discussion, and contribution of any small assignments (for example, you might be asked to bring in media content for discussion). Students with three unexcused absences will rarely receive a participation grade over 70%. Students with five or more unexcused absences will receive a failing grade for participation. Distracting behavior or blatant inattention will lower it. Quiet students will not be penalized for not speaking. The

"participation" component can help students who regularly attend and participate in class discussion. It can only penalize a student who is tardy, absent, or behaves in a distracting manner during class. **On-time attendance is required in this course. You are responsible for signing the attendance sheet. We need appropriate documentation for excused absences, e.g. illness or athletic obligations. I also need documentation if you must arrive late or leave early. Having a friend sign for you will result in a failing participation grade for both.**

NOTE: If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities sends a letter verifying your disability.

Papers must be turned in on time. No late papers are accepted under any circumstances. Regular class attendance will help as most of the material for exams comes from lectures and class discussions. Coming in late or leaving early to class (without prior approval) is considered to be a disturbance and you will lose points in the area of class participation.

Deadlines are not negotiable. A missed deadline is a missed opportunity for points. Work cannot be made up.

Plagiarism and academic honesty: Papers, exams, or reaction papers that contain plagiarism (someone else's words or sound bites presented as your own) or false information will result in failure of a project or the course. In some cases, this kind of academic misconduct can lead to more serious consequences. Assignments based on material gathered for assignments in other classes will receive a grade of zero unless prior written approval is obtained.

Written work: All written work must be typed, double-spaced using a 12-Font. Your work will be evaluated on adherence to the assignment, clarity of expression, and originality. Your work will be graded for correct spelling, grammar, and syntax. Remember: spellcheck doesn't catch everything! So proofread your work carefully.

What grades mean. There is a simple correlation with grading: grades reflect the quality of your work. University standards say that A is Excellent; B is Very Good; and C is Satisfactory. This means that A work is unqualified excellence, exceptional insight, and performance above and beyond a standard expectation for work. A B means you are highly motivated but your work needs some improvement; a "C" means the work needs significant improvement; and a "D" means the work meets minimal standards but is otherwise unsatisfactory.

Grades earned in this class depend on your ability to combine your academic skills (quality writing, thorough research) with clear integration of critical thinking skills. It is not enough to simply restate what you have read or heard, rather, the emphasis is on the integration of material with a deeper level of thinking---evidence that you clearly understand the issues at hand.

The points for the class are as follows:

1. Reaction Papers: 20% = 100 points each

2. Term paper: 40% = 200 points for paper/200 points for paper & presentation

3. Exams: 30% = 150 points each

4. Participation: 10% = 100 points.

Total: 1000 possible points

Course Outline & Topics

Week

1.

April 3: Introduction & Overview

The Mass Media & Society

Looking Back to Look Ahead

*** Class Notes**

April 5: Basic Issues: Race, class & gender

TEXT:

TEXT #1: #2: Minority Representation and Portrayal in Modern Newsprint Cartoons.

TEXT #2: Chapter 1 - - Fracturing Women. Marian Meyers.

READER:

Bjornstad, Randi (February 12, 1995). Stereotypes persist through time for black men. Eugene Register-Guard, 1C.

Bishoff, Don (Sept. 27, 1995). Fake ad fuels racial trouble. Eugene Register-Guard.

Video: Ethnic Notions

*** Class Notes**

2 Focus on Race

April 10: Stereotypes

Text:

#8: Media Stereotypes of Jews: From JAPs to MDs. Marsha Woodbury.

#13: The Representation of Arabs in U.S. Electronic Media. Rebecca Ann Lind.

READER:

Levine, Judith (March/April 1994). White like me: When privilege is written on your skin. Ms., 22-24.

Walsh, Jim (November 25, 2000). White Boys Who Wish They Weren't: The Ghetto Arrives in the Suburbs.

Bailey, Eric (March 18, 2000). 2 Brothers Indicted in Synagogue Fires. Los Angeles Times, A19.

*Class Notes

April 12: Tools for Analysis

Spencer, Gary (1989). An analysis of Jap-baiting humor on the college campus. *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research* 2: 329-348.

Green, Michael K. (1993). Images of Native Americans in Advertising: Some Moral Issues. *Journal of Business Ethics* 12: 323-330.

Mastro, Dana E. and Greenberg, Bradley S. (2000). The Portrayal of Racial Minorities on Prime Time Television. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 44 (4): 690-703.

3

April 17: African Americans and the media

Context and Representations

TEXT:

TEXT #1: #6: Black Situation Comedies and the Politics of Television Art. Angela M. S. Nelson.

TEXT #2: Chpt. 5: *Mammy Goes to Las Vegas: Showgirls* and the Constancy of African-American Female Stereotypes. Carmen R. Gillespie.

VIDEO: Color Adjustment, Passing, Ethnic Notions

April 19: African Americans as recipients of messages

TEXT:

#15: O. J. Live: Raced Ways of Seeing Innocence and Guilt. Darnell Montez Hunt.

READER:

Dixon, Travis and Linz, Daniel (2000). Overrepresentation and Underrepresentation of African Americans and Latinos as Lawbreakers on Television News. *Journal of Communication* (Spring): 131-154.

Video: **Passing**

LINK: Rwandan Survivors Urge Burial of Genocide Victims:

http://www.britannica.com:80/news/reuters/article?article_id=148480

Serb's Face Ugly Truths:

http://www.britannica.com/news/reuters/article?article_id=151737

Images of Slavery on Confederate Currency:

http://www.britannica.com/frm_redir.jsp?query=slavery&redir=http://www.cwc.lsu.edu/cwc/beyondfacevalue

Holocaust: Info and imagery at:

<http://www.britannica.com>

Fact Sheet on Armenian Genocide:

<http://www.umd.umich.edu/dept/armenian/facts/genocide.html>

April 24

Latinos and the media:

Context and Representations

TEXT: :

#14: Moving Beyond the Screen: Hollywood and Mexican American Stereotypes.

READER:

Taylor, Charles R. & Bang, Hae-Kyong
(1997). Portrayals of Latinos in Magazine Advertising. Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly 74 (2): 285-303.

April 26

Latino use of media

TEXT:

TEXT #2: Chapt. 7: Who is the Puerto Rican Woman and How is She? Shall Hollywood Respond? Jocelyn A. Geliga Vargas.

READER:

Santiago, Esmeralda (1995). Speaking Latina. Si, pp. 13-14.

HotLink! Growing up Latina In Southern California by: Elizabeth Sanchez Jackson

5

May 01: Native American Representations in the Media

TEXT:

#11: Destroying the Past to Save the Present: Pastoral Voice and Native Identity. Richard Morris and Mary E. Stuckey.

READER:

Merskin, Debra (1996). What does one look like? In *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Popular Culture*, pp. 281-284.

Sand, Paul O. (1991). Cowboys & Indians. In *American Indian and the Media*, T. Giago (ed.). Minneapolis, MN: National Conference of Christians and Jews, pp. 17-19.

Mander, Jerry (November/December 1991). What you don't know about Indians. *Utne Reader*, 67-7?

Video: Smoke Signals

May 03: Native American reception of media content

TEXT:

#2: Chapter 6: Tales of Difference:
Representations of American Indian Women in
Popular Film and Television. S. Elizabeth
Bird.

READER:

Giago, Tim (1991). Pigskin mascots: A
seasonal insult. In American Indian and the
Media, T. Giago (ed.). Minneapolis, MN:
National Conference of Christians and Jews,
21-22.

HOT LINK! [__Native American Music Awards__](#)

Native Radio

Video: In Whose Honor?

6

May 08: Asian-American representations in media

TEXT:

#17: Who's the Victim? Intercultural Perceptions Between African American and Korean American Business People in Dallas. Meta G. Carsarphen and Tae Guk Kim.

READER:

Taylor, Charles R. & Stern, Barbara B. (1997). Asian-Americans: Television advertising and the 'model minority' stereotype. *The Journal of Advertising* 26 (2): 47-61.

Hot Link!

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~commstud/resources/GenderMedia/asi an. html>

Resources:

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~commstud/resources/GenderMedia/tvfilm.html>

Paper #2 Due!!!!

May 10: Asian Americans
reception of media content

READER:

(Sept/Oct. 1993). When 'sleepy eyes' won't
due. Psychology Today, 11.

Video: Slaying the Dragon

7

May 15: Test #1!!

May 17: Growing Up Girls

READER:

Reilly, Rick (2001). Boy Meets Girls. Sports Illustrated, 214.

McGowan, Karen (February 2001). Eugene Register-Guard.

Yim, Su-Jin (February 2, 2001). What a girl wants? The Oregonian, pp. C1.

Merskin, Debra (1999). Adolescence, advertising, and the ideology of menstruation. Sex Roles: 40 (11/12): 941-957.

Piatote, Beth Hege (June 12, 1997). Teens fight supermodel thin image. The Eugene Register-Guard, B1.

Video: Tough Guise & Slim Hopes

8

May 22: Living in the female body

TEXT:

Text #2: Chpt. 14- The Portrayal of Women in Television Advertising. Carolyn Lin.

READER:

Quinlan, Anna (1994). Barbie doll makes poor role model. Eugene Register-Guard.

Romando, Tony (Nov/Dec 1997). It's hard to be a woman. Jane, 141-143.

Avenoso, Karen (November 23, 1992). Trapped by self-actualizing ads. *Advertising Age*, 16.

Tisdale, Sallie (1993). A weight that women carry. *Harper's*, 49-55.

Hall, Christine C. Iijima & Crum, Matthew J. (1994). Women and 'body-isms' in television beer commercials. *Sex Roles* 31: 329-337.

Hot Link! Hollywood & Sexism

Video: Slim Hopes

May 24: Surviving in the Female Body

TEXT:

Text #2: Chapter #4: The Pornography of Everyday Life. Jane Caputi.

READER:

Meyers, Marian (1994). News of battering. *Journal of Communication* 44(2): 47-63.

(April 21, 1995). Legislator: Victims don't get pregnant. *Eugene Register-Guard*, 3A.

Brinson, Susan L. (1992). The use and opposition of rape myths in prime-time television dramas. *Sex Roles* 27 (7/8): 359-375.

Benedict, Helen (1992). Sex crimes in the press: A recent history. In *Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes*. NY: Oxford University Press, pp. 25-42.

Video:

The distraction of a woman journalist having to worry about her hair, her weight, her clothes--

as a male, I never have to be concerned about that, about the salt and pepper in my hair.

How many gray-haired newswomen do you see on television? The double standard in this business is disgusting.

--Bernard Shaw, chief anchorman, CNN.

May 29: She works hard for the money

TEXT:

Text #2: Chapter 22- News, Feminism, and the Dialectics of Gender Relations. Carolyn M. Byerly.

READER:

Zahn, Susan Brown & Gubanc, Susanne R. (1997). The under representation of women as on-air radio personalities. *Feedback*, pp. 4-7.

Engstrom, Erika and Ferri, Anthony J. (2000). Looking Through A Gendered Lens: Local U. S. Television News Anchors' Perceived Career Barriers. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 44 (4): 614-634.

Flint, Joe (01/06/00). NBC to hire more minorities on TV shows. *Wall Street Journal*, B13.

Quindlen, Anna (1995). Why I quit. *Working Woman*, 30-33.

Video:

HOT LINK! Gendered Practices in the Contemporary Workplace.

HOT LINK! ASNE Diversity Report

May 31: Gays & Lesbians in the Media

TEXT

TEXT #2: Chapter 10-We are your neighbors: *Serving in Silence* and the Simulated Lesbian. Amy Villarejo.

READER

Dowell, Pat (March 4, 1996). A gay old time. In *These Times*, 32-33.

Bhat, Subodh, Leigh, Thomas W., and Wardlow, Daniel L. (1998). The effect of consumer prejudices on ad processing: Heterosexual Consumers' Responses to Homosexual Imagery in Ads. *Journal of Advertising* 27(4): 9-28.

Video: Celluloid Closet

HOT LINK!! GLAAD

10

June 05: Test #2!!

June 07: Final Paper Due & Team Presentations