

Journalism 372

**DIVERSITY AND THE MEDIA**

**Spring 2002**

**Instructor:** Luis Martinez  
**Office:** MZ 337  
**Office Hours:** Wednesday 6-7 p.m.  
**Phone:** (818) 677-3145  
**E-Mail:** [ADLuisM@hotmail.com](mailto:ADLuisM@hotmail.com)

**Academic Integrity:** The Journalism Department at California State University, Northridge is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. Any student caught cheating will be reported to the University and will receive a failing grade in this class. For a further explanation of the behavior defined as cheating, and a more detailed explanation of disciplinary procedures, please consult pages 552-554 of the 2000-2002 CSUN Catalog.

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**Course Description:** Students in Journalism 372 will examine both historic and modern-day media portrayals of minority communities in the United States. We will further analyze the effects those portrayals of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, Arab Americans, women, the disabled and gays and lesbians have on shaping the general public's perceptions of those groups. We will explore to what extent media portrayals have evolved and continue to evolve. And we will finally discuss what effect efforts to diversify the media's ranks have on the media's portrayals of minority groups. Our focus will be primarily the news media, including newspapers, TV news, radio, magazines and the Internet, but discussions will also include media portrayals in entertainment media, such as film, music and television.

**Texts:** Wilson, Clint C. and Gutierrez, Felix. *Race, Multiculturalism and the Media 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1995 **(Required)**

Cortes, Carlos E. *How the Media Teach About Diversity: The Children are Watching*. New York, N.Y.: Teachers College Press, 2000 **(Optional)**

Supplemental Reading Packet Available on Reserve in the Oviatt Library

It is expected that students be as informed as possible about diversity issues being discussed in newspapers, TV, radio, magazines, the Internet and other relevant sources.

## **Final Grades:**

Final grades will be based on journal entries, class participation, four exams and assignments, one midterm exam and one final exam. Points are assigned as follows:

Journal Entries, 30%  
Class Participation 10 %  
Exams and Assignments 20 %  
Midterm Exam, 20 %  
Final Exam, 20 %

There will be a total of 400 points possible for the semester. The following grade distribution will be used: 92-100%= A; 76-92%=B; 60-76%=C; 44-60%=D; 44%-below=F.

## **Journals:**

A major component to the course will be an ongoing Journal students are expected to maintain. These journals are a free forum to discuss any thoughts students may have on the readings, films or discussions covered in the course. These also serve as an opportunity to observe the media on a regular basis and comment on their representations of diverse communities or other issues relating to diversity and the media. There are no right or wrong answers in the journals, but they will be graded for their level of critical thought, analysis and effort. Journals will be collected twice this semester, once prior to the midterm exam to gauge progress and then during the final class meeting. Though typed, double-spaced journals are appreciated very much, bound notebooks written in longhand are also acceptable. The final product should approximate 12-14 typed pages, or roughly one page for every class session.

## **Class Participation: Debate and Discussion Guidelines**

Class discussions on the readings, films and other materials studied in the course will be a requirement and will count toward 10 percent or 40 points of your final course grade. Lively debate and discussion will hopefully be the norm for this course rather than the exception. But, do keep in mind that these discussions will cover sensitive issues pertaining to race and gender. **Complete respect and tolerance for all points of view will be an expectation.**

**Exams and Assignments:** All exams and assignments will be in essay format, either in-class or take-home. Exams must be turned in the day they are due and take-home exams must be typed and double-spaced. Late exams and assignments will immediately lose 50 percent of their total value and one point for each additional late day. Exams are graded primarily on their level of critical thought and analysis and also on their overall presentation, including grammar, style, spelling, punctuation and syntax.

**Attendance and Absences:** Attendance will be mandatory in this course. Students with more than one unexcused absence or three total absences will lose all class participation points. Excused absences will require proper documentation or explanation. Students are expected to notify the instructor in writing (e-mail or note) of impending absence as soon as possible. There will be a sign-in sheet at each class session; please do not forget to sign it!

## **Tentative Class Schedule**

Occasionally, we may stray slightly from this schedule to accommodate guest speakers or to discuss relevant contemporary news issues. Exam and assignment dates and deadlines should not be affected though.

**Week 1**

**W 1/30**

**Introduction and Course Overview:** A 30 minute film made from old newsreels, films and TV shows will introduce you to the historical stereotypes of men, women, and minorities in period popular culture.

**Week 2**

**W 2/6**

**The Power of the Press and Yellow Journalism**

**Film:** Citizen Kane

**Readings:**

- \_ *Watching the World* by Raymond Clapper, selected columns about journalists and journalism (reserve)
- \_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Chs 1-2

**Week 3**

**W 2/13**

**Historic Portrayals and Key Course Concepts**

**Films:** Gentleman's Agreement; Visible Target

**Readings:**

- \_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Chs 1-2, 3-4

**Week 4**

**W 2/20**

**Historic Portrayals**

**Film:** Ethnic Notions

**Readings:**

- \_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Chs, 3-4

**Exam 1 Due**

**Week 5**

**W 2/27**

**Historic Portrayals**

**Film:** Zoot Suit

**Readings:**

- \_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Chs, 3-4

**Week 6**

**W 3/6**

**Women & Journalism: Pre-1970s**

**Film:** His Girl Friday

**Readings:**

- \_ *Journalism for Women:* E.A. Bennett (reserve)

**Exam 2 Due**

**Week 7**

**W 3/13**

**Covering Riots and Civil Disturbances**

**Film:** Heat Wave

**Readings:**

- \_ *Assorted Newspaper and Magazine Articles* (reserve)

**Week 8**  
**W 3/20**

**Midterm Exam**  
**Journals Due for Inspection**

**Week 9**  
**W 3/27**

**Spring Break! – No Class Meeting**

**Week 10**  
**W 4/3**

**Portrayals in Advertising and Public Relations**  
**Readings:**  
\_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Chs, 5-6  
**Assignment Due (Television News Critique)**

**Week 11**  
**W 4/10**

**Portrayals in the Press**  
**Film:** The Paper  
**Readings:**  
\_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Ch, 7

**Week 12**  
**W 4/17**

**TV News and Talk Radio**  
**Readings:**  
\_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Ch, 7  
\_ *Assorted Newspaper and Magazine Articles* (reserve)

**Week 13**  
**W 4/24**

**Ethnic Newspapers and Non-English Broadcast Outlets**  
**Readings:**  
\_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Ch, 8  
\_ *Assorted Newspaper and Magazine Articles* (reserve)  
**Assignment Due (Journalism Case Study)**

**Week 14**  
**W 5/1**

**Access and Advocacy: The Changing Face of America's Newsrooms**  
\_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Ch, 9-10

**Week 15**  
**W 5/8**

**What is Political Correctness?**  
**Film:** When Hate Goes Pop  
**Readings:**  
\_ Wilson and Gutierrez: Ch, 11  
\_ *Assorted Newspaper and Magazine Articles* (reserve)

**Week 16**  
**W 5/15**

**Roundtable Discussion**  
**Final Journals Due**  
**Review for Final**

**Week 17**  
**W 5/22**

**Final Exam – 8-10 p.m.**