

Mass Media and Diversity

JOUR 7320-001, M50

Spring 2018

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

Research and analysis of the relationship among mass media, women and minorities

PREREQUISITE:

Graduate status

TEXTBOOK:

Gender, Race and Class in Media edited by Gail Dines & Jean M. Humez, (4th edition)
Sage Publications, 2011.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course is designed to increase your sensitivity to the biases and stereotypes that are among the fundamental tools we use to comprehend the complexities of our social interactions and norms.

In particular, we will examine and explore the overt messages that we receive from the popular media about the characteristics and status of various minority groups, and the ways we incorporate those generalizations into our understandings of the world. When used in its statistical sense, the term 'minorities' refers to groups that are smaller in number, less than the majority. It has often been applied to persons of color in the United States because as individual groups, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans do not constitute a major percentage of the national population. The term minority has become a convenient semantic umbrella under which to place any group that is not white. In addition, the term minority has as readily been applied to persons of underrepresented religious groups and sexual orientation, as well as to women.

Like most labels, the term is misleading. It misleads us to believe that those whom we call minorities are not only few in number, but somehow less important or valuable. It can suggest that the issues and problems of the minority are not as pressing or worthy of solution as those of the majority. And in a democratic society dependent upon majority rule, the term minority inheres a fundamental lack of authority, control and rights. In addition, the term minority as it is used to describe ethnic and racial minorities, is, in many cases, no longer a statistically accurate term. In many parts of the United States, the very peoples commonly referred to as minorities in fact constitute the majority of the population when they are considered as a single group.

We are, by tradition and culture, the world's melting pot. Many people who—because of differences in race, ethnicity, legal status, sexual orientation, cultural or religious tradition—have yet to blend into the mainstream, or to contribute their uniquely valuable traditions and voices to the society as a whole. It is the focus of this course to examine the history and current status of these groups and to explore the ways that the media create and support social biases toward them.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- To research and analyze the relationship between gender, race, class and sexual orientation and the mass media.
- To encourage students to a greater awareness of the functions and effects of the mass media on society in the 21st century with particular emphasis on the print and electronic media as they relate to gender, race, class and sexual orientation issues.
- To trace the history and evolution of minorities' coverage by and participation in the mass media.
- To observe and analyze the portrayal and image of minorities in the mass media.
- To sensitize students to the impact of the spoken and written word.
- To collect and compare research data on how the spoken and written word are being used and their effect on the image of minorities.

CLASSROOM FORMAT:

This is a graduate seminar with lecture and class discussion. Each week, we will discuss a new topic and designated classmates will be responsible for presenting the class with ideas for debate from the readings or examples from the field, and critically analyze the week's concepts. Please note that failure to attend class or to actively participate, even if all your assignments are turned in on time and done acceptably, will significantly affect your final grade.

Participation

This is a seminar course, which means the richness of this experience depends on your participation. Your participation is essential and required, with class participation comprising a significant portion of your final grade.

Weekly Essays

Each week students will write an essay of between 450-500 words that answers the question or questions, which will be due no later than 1PM on Wednesday via the Dropbox on eCourseware. You should provide insights and comments that demonstrate knowledge of the concepts found in the week's readings. The response is designed to allow you to engage and synthesize the readings. You should have a printed or electronic copy of your response to help in your weekly discussion.

Leading Class Discussion

Students will be responsible for leading the class discussion at least twice during the semester. Students will be leading with a partner. When it is your turn to lead, your responsibilities include: leading class discussion of the readings and offering a critique of the arguments made in the readings. The development of visual aids such as PowerPoint to help guide the discussion is required. Your presentation will be due by 5PM on the day of the presentation.

Additional Assignment:

Students must attend and write a two-page reflection paper about at least one Research Colloquium sponsored by the Department. Attendance and papers will count for 2%. Dates for the colloquia are to be announced. All are Noon in 212 MJ. Students are also encouraged to live tweet during the colloquium using #MeemanTalks. Participation and paper are due one week after the final colloquium. Those who cannot attend will receive instructions about remote viewing. Students enrolled in more than one graduate course in the Department may write multiple reflections of one research presentation as long as the topic is customized to the individual class.

RESEARCH PAPER:

Your research paper of between 4,000 to 4,500 words (count only text, not cover sheet, references or endnotes) is to be based upon individual research conducted by each student on some aspect of the course. Research must be original, but the interpretation of the findings must reflect an appropriate review of the literature. Paper topic ideas must be approved by the instructor. Because IRB (Institutional Review Board) usually requires several weeks, I would strongly suggest that your research not include interviewing human subjects. A content analysis or a case study, for example, would not require IRB approval.

For your citations style, you must use the Chicago Manual of Style or APA. Your papers will be graded on content, including writing quality, comprehensiveness of research, adherence to complete and proper citation style, grammar, punctuation and spelling. All of these will be analyzed to determine a final paper grade. When writing your paper, you must attribute all direct quotes. Don't just drop them into the middle of the text with only a citation. Give direct quotes their own paragraph. Avoid overusing long or block quotes. Within your paper, you will have an introduction, a review of pertinent literature, research questions or hypotheses, method, findings and discussion.

YOU MAY NOT CITE YOUR TEXTBOOK OR ANY OTHER TEXTBOOK, AND WIKIPEDIA IS NEVER AN ACCEPTABLE SOURCE.

You must use a minimum of 15 acceptable sources—traditional, scholarly sources, such as journal articles and scholarly books (OTHER THAN TEXTBOOKS), and a significant number of your sources (85%) must scholarly. A limited number of popular magazines, newspapers and professional publications may be used.

For a complete list of journalism and mass communication scholarly journals see <http://www.aejmc.com/home/publications/> and [w.aejmc.com/home/publications/division-journals/](http://www.aejmc.com/home/publications/division-journals/)

You are required to prepare a paper proposal (draft introduction, literature review, RQs/Hs, and suggested method), which is due Feb. 21.

Paper Presentation

Students will be responsible for preparing a 12 to 15-minute presentation of your paper. All PowerPoint presentations are due April 11 via the Dropbox.

GRADING:

- Written essays 30% (8 weekly essays)
- Leading discussion 10%
- Participation 5%
- Research colloquium 5%
- Paper 50%, including presentation

A=90% of total possible

B=80% of total possible

C=70% of total possible

D=60% of total possible

Plus and minus scores will be given.

OTHER ISSUES:

- Students in this department are preparing for careers in which adherence to professional standards is a prerequisite to success; therefore, students will be expected to conform to practices which will in large part govern their professional success. Those standards include, but are not limited to:
- Keeping with job requirements;
- Punctuality in attendance and completion of assignments;
- Acting responsibly in keeping with all obligations.
- Students' literacy is assumed. Mistakes in spelling, structure, language and punctuation will produce grade reductions.
- All assignments are due on the day assigned.

TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

DATE	READING/INFORMATION
Jan. 17	Introduction
Jan. 24	Part I / A Cultural Studies Approach to Media
Jan. 31	Part II / Representations of Gender, Race and
Class	
Feb. 7	Part III / Reading Media Texts Critically
Feb. 14	Part IV / Advertising and Consumer Culture
Feb. 21	Paper discussion/essay due by Dropbox at 4PM
Feb. 28	Part V / Representing Sexualities
March 7	Spring Break/No class
March 14	Part VI / Growing Up with Contemporary Media
March 21	Part VII / Is TV for Real?
March 28	Part VIII / Interactivity, Virtual Community and Fandom
April 4	Paper due
April 11	Paper Presentations (all presentations due)
April 18	Paper Presentations
April 25	Paper Presentations (if needed)

HYBRID CLASSROOM FORMAT

- Blue Jeans is a web-based video conferencing platform. Students in the M50 section will receive an invitation to join Blue Jeans from your instructor.
- This hybrid class, with students on campus and also online synchronously, operates in a seminar format.
- Online students must have a stable Internet connection, speakers and a microphone (or a headset with a built-in mic). Headsets can be purchased for approximately \$20. Students will need to be able to have video turned on for the entire class. Online students will not be permitted to attend class using a cellphone.
- Class time will primarily be spent in discussion of theories, issues, and applications. To that end, on campus and online students must complete the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss the night's topic. Please note that failure to attend class or to actively take part — even if all your assignments are turned in on time and done acceptably — will significantly affect your final grade.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT:

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and contribute to it from every course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from his/her courses and/or professional experience and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in the capstone course for their majors.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. The department requires students to use WordPress to build their portfolio sites. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail or Yahoo.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files, and Storify pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

EMAIL:

You must have your UM email account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UM email. You are required to check your email daily. You are responsible for complying with any email sent to you by your professor or the University.

MOBILE PHONES AND LAPTOPS:

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Your instructor will set the policy for her/her specific class.

ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

CHEATING:

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. That may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the university.

Further, as this is a journalism/mass communication class, students are expected to comply with copyright law, and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

“Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com’s restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all.” (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

ONLINE SETEs:

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray “Student” tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the “Submit” button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

DEADLINES:

Remember there’s a reason “DEAD” makes up half the word “deadline.” All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. If you get into trouble, talk to your instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

AP STYLE AND GRAMMAR:

All written work in this class should follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. If you don’t know the style for a particular phrase, look it up or ask your classmates or the instructor.

DISABILITY:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact your instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

DIVERSITY:

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Mass communications reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

WEATHER POLICY:

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the university is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.