

Communication 10, Journalism, Gender and Race

Spring Semester, 2008

Section 4106: Wednesdays, 6:45-9:50, LA236

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Textbooks: Period News stories and Readings for Communications 10, Journalism, Gender and Race, compiled and edited by Jacki Horwitz;
The Children are Watching: How the Media Teaches About Diversity by Carlos E. Cortes

Course Description

Communication 10 examines how popular culture and journalism from the 1920s to the present have helped perpetuate stereotypes of men, women and minority groups in the United States. Using examples from films, television shows, period newspapers and literature, students will follow the evolution of modern media and examine how news reporting and filmmaking have been filtered through the lens of the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture.

Through discussion and debate, students will be expected to develop critical thinking skills in order to analyze the profound influence of the media from mainstream, gender and ethnic-based points of view. Particular emphasis will be placed on the historical impact of gender bias and cultural ignorance on credibility and fairness in news reporting.

The goal of this course is to analyze and critique the influence of journalism and popular culture on how various Americans view themselves and the broader society they live in. The ultimate question this course will address is what constitutes news and entertainment as we progress through the early 21st century. particular emphasis will be placed on Southern California, and the myriad ethnic groups that live here.

Examination and Assignment Format

All exams and assignments will be in take-home, essay format. All work must be turned in the day it is due and must be typed, double-spaced and stapled to receive full credit. Late work will immediately lose one letter grade (i.e. "A" to "B") and will continue to lose one point for each additional day it is late. **Late assignments must be e-mailed.** Any e-mailed assignment will not be graded until the end of the semester.

Reading Assignments

The reader for Communications 10 contains the core materials you will need to understand the historical scope of this class, and assignments from the reader will be clearly marked in the syllabus. The reader is sold in the bookstore, available on reserve at the library, or can be downloaded (But Not Printed) from the instructor's homepage.

Carlos Cortes' book is a wonderful resource and interesting analysis. We will touch on it later on in the course and it will serve as the basis for an end-of-the-semester extra credit assignment.

Occasionally, you may also receive handouts, and be asked to read materials on reserve in the library or posted on my Web site. **Unless otherwise noted, readings must be completed by the date indicated in the syllabus.**

Pop Quizzes

Active participation will be a crucial component to this course. To ensure all students are caught up with readings and films and are able to intelligently discuss the core concepts, the instructor will conduct several pop quizzes during the semester, which will be worth 20 points, or 10 percent of your total grade. There will be no make-up opportunities.

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 5 percent or 10 points of your final course grade. Lively debate and discussion should be the norm for Communications 10 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.** It is only through these types of interactions that we learn to recognize our own prejudices and the experiences other members of the SMC community have lived through and may continue to experience on a daily basis.

Attendance and Absences

Attendance will be mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in a one-point (1) deduction from a students' class participation grade. Make-ups will not be offered. **Students must initiate all adds and drops, subject to the instructor's approval.** Cell phone ringers must be turned off. Offenders will forfeit participation points.

Diversity Media Blog

A semester-long, Diversity Media Blog will be a major component for the class and . This will serve as an opportunity to observe the media on a regular basis and comment on its representation of women, men and traditional minority groups. Students will be required to reference a range of sources including magazine and newspaper articles, broadcast news reports, internet-published articles, films, television shows or music recordings. There will be no "right" or "wrong" answers in this blog, but it will be graded for its level of critical thought, analysis and effort. The finished product will include at least 10 entries, and will contain no fewer than 1,500 words.

Plagiarism

Any clear instance of plagiarism will forfeit all points for that particular media blog, exam or assignment. Repeated instances will be forwarded to the proper campus authorities.

Final Grades

Final grades will be based on the media log, quizzes, participation, two exams/assignments, one midterm and one final. Points assigned as follows:

Diversity Media Blog, 25 %

Class Participation 5 %

Quizzes 10%

Exams and Assignments 20 %

Midterm 20%

Final Exam, 20 %

There will be 200 points possible for the semester. The following grade distribution will be used: **92-100%= A; 80-91%=B; 60-79%=C; 44-59%=D; 43%-below=F.**

Tentative Class Schedule

We may stray from this schedule to discuss relevant contemporary issues in media and diversity. Exam dates and deadlines will be adjusted accordingly, based on class input.

2/13

Introduction and Course Overview: What are the Mass Media? How are gender and race portrayed in contemporary media, particularly in journalistic endeavors? What about our own experiences?

Film Clips: Samples of Period Film, TV and Newsreel Clips

2/20

The Power of the “Press Lords” and “Yellow Journalism”

Film Assignment: “Citizen Kane” (To be viewed before tonight’s class session)

Assigned Reading:

Reader Week 1,

- *Watching the World* by Raymond Clapper, selected columns about journalists and journalism
- *Letters to my Children* by Robert Maynard and Dori Maynard, “The Right Kind of Father,” “A Recollection 17 Novembers Old,” Reconciliation Struggle.”

2/27

The Power of the “Press Lords” cont.

Women Journalists of the 20s, 30s, 40s,

In-Class Film: “His Girl Friday”

Assigned Reading:

Reader Week 2,

- News Clips from the Depression Era
- *Watching the World* by Raymond Clapper, selected Depression Era columns.

Reader Week 3,

- *The Columnists* by Charles Fisher, introduction
- *Watching the World* by Raymond Clapper, selected columns.
- *It Seems to Me*, by Heywood Hale Broun, selected columns.

Reader Week 5,

- Profiles of Women Journalist Pioneers (Web Site)
- *Journalism for Women*, by E.A. Bennet

Take-Home Exam 1 Distributed

3/5

World War II Coverage of Japanese Americans

In-Class Film: “Visible Target”

Assigned Reading:

Reader Week 6,

- *And Justice for All, and Oral History of the Japanese American Detention Camps*, by John Tateishi, “Haruko Niwa”
- Period news clips about Japanese American detention camps

Take-Home Exam 1 Due

3/12

Coverage of African Americans before 1960

Film: "Ethnic Notions"

Assigned Reading:

Reader Week 7,

- Period news clips about integration of Central High School
- *Letters to my Children*, by Robert Maynard and Dori Maynard, "Is America a racist society?" and "Prophets and Protesters"

3/19

Early Coverage of Latinos

Film: "Zoot Suit Riots"

Assigned Reading:

Reader Week 9,

- Period news clips about the Zoot Suit Riots

3/26

The Sixties: A Watershed Time in U.S. History

Assigned Reading:

Reader Week 8,

- *Soul on Ice*, by Eldridge Cleaver, "On Becoming," "On Watts," "A Day in Folsom Prison."
- *The Feminine Mystique*, by Betty Friedan, "The Problem that has No Name"
- *The Sixties, Years of Hope, Days of Rage*, by Todd Gitlin, "Leftward kicking and screaming," "All-Purpose Apocalypse"

Midterm Review

Midterm Exam Distributed

4/2

Journalism, Gender and Race Today

Film: "The Paper"

Midterm Exam Due

4/9

No Class Meeting: Spring Break

4/16

Coverage by and about women post World War II

Film Clips: "Up Close and Personal" and "The Paper"

In-Class: Exercise and Discussion

Assigned Reading:

Reader Week 11,

- *Personal History*, Katharine Graham
- "Sex, Lies and Advertising," by Gloria Steinem, Ms. Magazine (*Web site*)

Students Must Bring a Copy of a Magazine to Class

Take-Home Exam 2 Distributed

- 4/23** **The Nightly News ... A Discussion**
- Take-Home Exam 2 Due**
- 4/30** **Coverage of Contemporary Civil Disturbances:
Watts Riots –1965 and L.A. 'Rebellion' -- 1992**
- Film: "Heat Wave"**
- Assigned Reading:**
Reader Week 12,
■ News clips on the Watts Riots
■ News clips on the 1992 Los Angeles Riots
- 5/7** **Wrestling with objectivity and personal prejudices**
- The Role of the Ethnic Press and non-English broadcast outlets;
The Role of the Reporter:**
- In-Class:** Exercise and Discussion
- Assigned Reading:**
Reader Week 10,
■ *Journalism's Colorful Firsts* by Clint C. Wilson & Felix Gutierrez
■ Diversity figures from the *American Society of Newspaper Editors* and the
Radio-Television News Directors Association (Web Site)
- 5/14** **Native Americans: Indian Gaming to Offensive Mascots**
- Film:** Smoke Signals
- Assigned Reading:**
Instructor's Web Site,
■ Selected Articles on Native American Issues
- 5/21** **Impact of Political Correctness: Good or Bad?**
- Film:** "When Hate Goes Pop"
- Diversity Media Blog Due**
- 5/28** **Roundtable Discussion and Final Exam Review**
- Final Exam Distributed**
- 6/4** **Final Exam and Extra Credit Due**
Instructor Available for final Grade Checks