

## History and Theory of Media Y20.6002.1 - Summer 2007

Adjunct Prof. Ina Adele Ray

Day & Time: Monday/Wednesday 6:00-8:50pm Location: 40 w. 4<sup>th</sup> St. UC56

### Description

A survey designed to introduce students to the general history of the mass media and to familiarize them with the major approaches used to study mass communication in contemporary society. Exposes students to different perspectives in the field of mass communication and provides them with the broad philosophical and historical background, and the basic theoretical tools, needed to analyze the institutions, forms, and content of the media.

### Texts:

1. Czitrom, Daniel, Media and the American Mind: From Morse to McLuhan, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1982
2. Dines, Gaile and Humez, Jean, eds. Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Text-reader (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), Sage Publications, 2003  
(The above books are available at the NYU Bookstore.)
3. Selected essays and book chapters will be available as downloadable PDF files in Blackboard.

### Attendance & Participation:

You will be expected to attend every class. If you have more than 2 unexcused absences, your final grade will drop 1/2 a letter for every additional unexcused absence. If you miss role within the first 10 minutes of class, you will be marked absent--NO EXCUSES! All students will be expected to ask questions and participate in every class discussion and the War & Media Class project. **War & Media Class Project** – This web-based presentation is a collaborative group project analyzing media forms that present specific aspects of the Iraq War. (See details in course schedule.) Your grade for your assignment will be incorporated in your participation grade.

**Assignments:** (Failure to turn assignments in on time will affect the final grade.)

**1. Leading Discussion** - In addition to the below assignments, each student will lead discussion (prepare summary and questions) for at least 2 assigned class reading.

**2. Logbooks** – You will be required to keep a weekly logbook that expresses your understanding, interpretation, questions, and mental notes regarding the week's assigned text. Relate these readings to your own day-to-day experiences/practices with media (whether that be blogging, listening to your ipod, watching the news, etc). **Logbooks Due 7/2 for mid-review and – 8/1 for final review.**

**3. Midterm Paper** – Write an 8-page (2000 word) critical essay in response to the readings/screenings covered thus far. You can assume either the reader knows nothing of media theory and history and needs to be informed OR that your reader is well informed (like your classmates or your teacher) and is interested in a deeper understanding of the thinkers studied. It can be written as a formal academic paper, take on a conversational tone of an email to a friend, or the style a magazine article, etc. Clarity of writing, comprehension of ideas, and creativity in approach all count in this assignment. **Due 6/27 – Regardless of your approach, you must identify all your sources and have a bibliography at the end.**

**4. Final Presentation** - Do a textual analysis of notable media text whether it be a news piece, an advertisement, a book, website, etc. What is the the message? How is it encoded? Who is the sender? Who is the receiver? How is it decoded? What is the feedback mechanism? Explain the political economy behind the media form, historical roots/comparisons, present the open meanings/symbolisms its' codes (images, colors, etc.), and race, class, and gender relationships within the text. What social impact does the piece have? What are the social influences? Refers to theories discussed in class or other media theory text researched out of class to support and guide your findings. **Due 8/1 - You must identify all your sources and have a bibliography and a printed outline of your presentation to hand in on due date.**

**Final Grade Evaluation:** 25% Midterm Paper | 25% Logbook – Leading Discussion | 25% Participation & Attendance | 25% Final Presentation

## Course Schedule

### WEEK 1 - Introductions

June 11 **Introduction** – Course Overview – Models of Communication - View Control Room  
June 13 **Approaching Media History** Reading: *Get on Blackboard: Narratives of Media History* (Grossberg) – How are Media Born? (Winston). Discussion

### WEEK 2 – Media Theory and History

June 18 **Media History** Reading: *Media and the American Mind* (Czitrom) Part 1 (pp. 3-88)  
Discussion & Screen: *The Image Makers* (1984, 60 min. VCA 228).  
June 20 **Media Theory**. Reading: *Media and the American Mind* (Czitrom) Part 2 (pp. 122-147);  
Get on Blackboard: *Technopoly* (Postman) Discussion & Screen: *Video McLuhan*

### WEEK 3 - Cultural Studies & The Political Economy of Media

June 25 **Cultural Studies and Media**. Reading: *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: "Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture"* (Kellner)  
June 27 **Political Economy of Media**. Reading: *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: "The New Media Giants"* (Croteau and Hoynes)

### WEEK 4 – Race, Power, & Media\*\*\*\*(Logbooks due)

July 2 **Logbook due – 4 entries** Reading: *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: "Hegemony"* (Lull); *"The Whites of Their Eyes: Race Ideologies and the Media"* (Hall)  
July 4 **No class** – Independence Day

### WEEK 5 – Reading Images & Advertising\*\*\*\*(Midterm due)

July 9 **Midterm Paper Due – Semiotics and Reading Images**  
July 11 **Advertising** Reading: *Get on Blackboard: "Advertising: the Magic System,"* (Williams).  
*"Image-Based Culture: Advertising and Popular Culture,"* (Jhally) **Bring samples of notable current advertisements.** Screen: *Consuming Images*

### WEEK 6 - War & Media Class Project

July 16 **War & Media Project** – Textual Analysis of Iraq War Media - Define specific categories for research for textual analysis on Iraq War – Possible assignments: Comparative analysis of media coverage of the Iraq War from different countries OR Research media history of WWII, Vietnam War, Desert Storm, and Afghanistan and compare one or more wars and their media coverage to the Iraq War. For homework, look at the NYU Bobcat for journals and books that we can check out at the library next class.  
Reading: TBA – Discussion View: "The Selling of the Pentagon"  
July 18 Reading: TBA - Library field trip. Begin Research. Do online research of media.

### WEEK 7 - War & Media Project (cont.)

July 23 Present research. Bring in media clips or web links of media samples. Reading: TBA  
July 25 Present findings of War & Media Project with a design of presentation of it for the web.  
View: Why We Fight

### WEEK 8 – LAST WEEK!!

July 30 **Logbook due – 7 entries** – Workshop final presentations.  
Aug 1 **Final Presentations**