

Media Violence

CR 410/510-2000704

Instructor: Amanda Byron

E-mail: abyron@pdx.edu

Phone: 503/725-9170

Office: NH223 *Office hours by arrangement*

Website: <http://web.pdx.edu/~abyron>

Course Description

This course will explore the impact and influence that media has on cultural norms and ideals, with particular attention to the many ways that media promotes and reinforces patterns of violence and oppression. This course will introduce the concept of media literacy, inviting participants to discuss and deconstruct popular media message in film, video, television, radio, music, print and on the Internet. Course content will also present research on the correlation between media consumption and early brain development, and the connection to changes in expected and accepted social norms. Students will have the opportunity to creatively conceptualize non-oppressive media, and the class will explore means to advocate for social responsibility within the media industry. Students will become more educated consumers of their media diet, and more powerful activists for appropriate media education and direction.

Course Requirements

Students must attend entire duration of class, arriving on time and participating fully in discussion and activities. Assigned reading must be completed prior to class and assignments must be completed by the deadlines stated within the syllabus.

Grading

25% Attendance during on-ground portion of class

25% Daily Assignments

25% On-line participation

25% Final Paper

Daily Assignments

There will be discussion postings due on the WebCT course site every day, during the on-ground week and the on-line week. Instructions will be posted on the course-site. There will also be additional assignments given each day of the on-line week.

Final Paper

The final paper should be on a specific area of media violence discussed in this course, and explored in detail in one of the suggested readings (see attached list). CR students will also need to explicitly tie their topic into conflict resolution theory. In addition to citing a primary reading choice, draw in at least 4 additional resources (which can include required reading). Papers should use APA citation style consistently, and will be evaluated on the quality of writing as well as the content. Final papers are due by 5pm on Friday, September 14th.

First week will meet on campus (On-Ground) and will utilize the WebCT course site

Monday 8/27*Introduction to Media Violence*

Reading Assignment:

7 Sections on Media Violence at

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/violence/index.cfm>

and

8 sections of Beginner's Guide at

<http://www.freepress.net/guide/>

Writing Assignment:

Post an introduction to yourself on the WebCT course site, and describe your relationship with the media. Feel free to integrate new ideas from the readings as you describe your relationship.

Tuesday 8/28*Identity Construction*

Reading Assignment:

6 Sections (plus subsections) on Media Stereotyping at

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/stereotyping/index.cfm>

Writing Assignment:

Post a reflection about how you have noticed the media shaping identity, either in your own life or in the lives of those around you.

Wednesday 8/29*Enmification and Media*

Reading Assignment:

7 Sections on Online Hate at

http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/online_hate/index.cfm

and

<http://www.drzur.com/enmity.html>

Writing Assignment:

Post a reflection on the reading, and comment about how you have noticed media fuel hate in news reporting. Describe any strategies you have observed.

Thursday 8/30*Video Games and Killing*

Reading Assignment:

On Killing, Lt. Col. Dave Grossman or

http://www.killology.com/article_agress&viol.htm

Writing Assignment:

Post your opinions about whether video games contribute to real world violence (and why). Integrate your thoughts on the reading in your comments.

Friday 8/31*Censorship and the First Amendment*

Reading Assignment:

Propaganda: Introduction and Common Techniques at

<http://www.propagandacritic.com/articles/index.html>

and

7 Sections on Information Privacy at

<http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/issues/privacy/index.cfm>

Writing Assignment:

Post your thoughts on what the dividing line between censorship and free speech is, and your arguments for why.

Second Week will meet entirely On-Line

Tuesday 9/4

Children and Media

Reading Assignment:

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/childrenandmedia/>

Writing Assignments:

1. Post a reflection about how you were influenced by the media as a child, and how it affected your understanding of yourself and your relationship to the world.
2. Interview a friend or family with the above question and post your findings, and comment on similarities/differences.
3. Comment on at least one other person's post.

Wednesday 9/5

Consumerism

Reading Assignment: Watch Merchants of Cool

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/view/>

Writing Assignments:

1. Watch a Hollywood Blockbuster Film of your choosing. Take notes throughout the film to assess the following:
 - a. What consumer products were placed in the film?
 - b. Which people were presented as normative? What themes did you notice about the normative characters' appearance, beliefs, and actions?
 - c. What ideas/ideals were supported by the film?
 - d. What ideas/ideals were challenged by the film?
2. Post a summary of your findings.
3. Comment on at least one other person's post.

Thursday 9/6

Digital Democracy: How to support a democratic media

Reading Assignment:

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=1186>

and

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?ID=1185>

also check out the following websites:

<http://www.democraticmedia.org/>

<http://www.freepress.net/>

Writing Assignments:

1. Post a reflection on the reading, sharing your own thoughts about what the value/disadvantage of a democratic media might be.
2. Interview 3 friends/family members about whether they feel that media should be democratic, post your findings.
3. Comment on at least one other person's post.

Friday 9/7

New Media

Reading Assignment: Read entries about how media is changing culture and society
<http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/we-media-2007/>

Writing Assignments:

1. Post a reflection about the relationship between media and culture.
2. Comment on at least one other person's post.
3. Post a course evaluation in the evaluation section of the course site. Please be constructive and descriptive in your comments, defining what worked and making concrete suggestions for improvements.

Excellent Web Resources

Media Education Foundation Resources <http://www.mediaed.org/resources>

Media Literacy Online Project Resources

<http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/mlr/home/index.html>

Suggested Reading List

Children and the Media

Carlsson-Paige, N. and Levin, D. (1990). *Who's calling the shots? How to respond effectively to children's fascination with war play and war toys*. Santa Cruz, CA: New Society Publishers.

DeGaetano, Gloria and Bander, Kathleen (1996). *Screen smarts: A family guide to media literacy*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Healy, J.M. (1990). *Endangered minds: Why children don't think and what we can do about it*. New York: NY: Simon and Schuster.

Healy, J.M. (1998). *Failure to connect: How computers affect our children's minds – and what we can do about it*. NY: Touchstone.

Strasburger, V., and Wilson, B. (2002). *Children, adolescents, and the media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Consumerism

Fox, Roy (2000). *Harvesting minds: How tv commercials control kids*. Westport, CT:

Praeger Publishers.

Democratic Media and Censorship

Chomsky, N. (1994). *Manufacturing consent: Noam Chomsky and the media*. Cheektowaga, NY: Black Rose Books.

McChesney, R. W. (2004). *The problem of the media: U.S. communication politics in the 21st century*. NY: Monthly Review Press.

Enmification and Propaganda

Keen, S. (1986). *Faces of the enemy: Reflections of the hostile imagination*. San Francisco: Harper and Row.

Reiber, Robert W. (1991). *The psychology of war and peace: The image of the enemy*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Identity Construction and Oppression

Dines, G., and Humez, J. M. (Eds.) (2003). *Gender, race, and class in media: A text-reader* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

hooks, bell (1996). *Reel to real: Race, sex and class at the movies*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Katz, J. (2006). *The macho paradox: Why some men hurt women and how all men can help*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, Inc.

Kilbourne, Jean (1999). *Can't buy my love: How advertising changes the way we think and feel*. New York, NY: Touchstone.

McCall, Nathan (1997). *What's going on*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.

Video Game Violence

Grossman, Dave, Lt. Col. (1996). *On killing: The psychological cost of learning to kill in war and society*. Boston, MA: Back Bay books.

Grossman, Dave, Lt. Col., and DeGaetano, Gloria (1999). *Stop teaching our kids to kill: A call to action against tv, movie and video game violence*. New York, NY: Crown Publishers.