

EMORY UNIVERSITY

Sociology 343

MASS MEDIA AND SOCIAL INFLUENCES

Spring 2009
M / W / F
11:45 – 12:35 & 2:00 – 2:50
218 Tarbutton Hall

Dr. Timothy J. Dowd
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Office Hours: 3:00-5:00 (W)

Graduate Assistant:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we examine the history and nature of mass media in four sections. (1) We begin by considering the social implications of new forms of mass media. (2) We then examine how various media industries (*e.g.*, radio, TV, recording, motion picture, print) are organized and how such organization is sometimes transformed by regulation, competition, and/ or technology. (3) We focus next on the content of media products and investigate factors that promote stability and change in media products. (4) Finally, we consider the audience for mass media products and inspect how they are affected by and actively use media content.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

You are strongly encouraged to attend class, especially because we use class time to integrate the assigned readings and to present additional information not found in the readings. Regular attendance, moreover, will raise your final grade. If you miss only two classes during the semester, I will add two points to your final grade. If you miss only three classes, I will add one point.

You are required to complete four written assignments: one major paper and three short memos. The paper involves a research project that you will complete over the course of the semester. You may choose your paper topic from a list that I will circulate on *February 20* or you may propose a topic of your own (subject to my approval) by *March 18*. In either case, an outline of your paper is due on *March 30* and the completed paper is due on *April 27* (although it may be submitted before that date). This 8- to 10-page paper is worth 25% of your final grade. The memos will help you prepare for the examinations. In these 3-page assignments, you will synthesize the readings and the issues that emerge as the class progresses. The due dates for the memos, as well as the dates for when I distribute memo questions, are listed below. The memos

will comprise 15% of your final grade (5% each). Note that I will distribute a total of four memo assignments, but you are required to complete only three.

You are also required to take two examinations – a midterm and a non-cumulative final. Both exams consist of multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions. Prior to each exam, I will distribute a handout that will help you prepare for the test. Each exam will be worth 30% of your final grade. The midterm examination occurs on *March 6* during class time. The final examination occurs (a) for the 11:45 section on *May 4* from 4:30 to 7:30 and (b) for the 2:00 section on *April 30* from 4:30 to 7:00 pm.

Students are expected to adhere to the Emory Honor Code when completing both assignments and examinations (see http://www.college.emory.edu/current/standards/honor_code.html).

COURSE RESOURCES

As the semester progresses, class materials (*e.g.*, syllabus, overheads) will be posted on the Blackboard site for SOC 343 (see <http://classes.emory.edu/>).

The assigned readings are drawn from many sources, so there is no textbook. Instead, the required readings will be available on our Blackboard site and at Woodruff Library's electronic reserves (see <http://www.library.emory.edu>; click on “Reserves Direct”).

If you have any special needs due to learning disabilities, please contact me at the beginning of the semester and we will discuss the necessary arrangements (see www.emory.edu/EEO/ODS/).

COURSE SCHEDULE

(subject to revision)

INTRODUCTION: CONCEPTUALIZING THE IMPACT OF MASS MEDIA

- January 14:* Logistical Matters
- January 16:* Robert Burnett and Patrik Wikstrom. 2006. “Music Production in Times of Monopoly: The Example of Sweden.” *Popular Music and Society* 29: 575-582.
- January 19:* **MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY (No Class Meeting)**

SECTION ONE: MASS MEDIA PRODUCERS

Construction of Early Media Industries: The Roles of Regulation, Competition, & Technology

- January 21:* Heather A. Haveman. 2004. "Antebellum Literary Culture and the Evolution of American Magazines." *Poetics* 32: 5-28.
- January 23:* Timothy J. Dowd. 2005. "From 78s to MP3s: The Embeddedness of Technology and the U.S. Market for Pre-recorded Music." Pages 205-224 in *The Business of Culture: Strategic Perspectives on Entertainment and Media*, edited by Joseph Lampel, Jamal Shamsie, and Theresa Lant. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- January 26:* Stephen J. Mezas and Elizabeth Boyle. 2005. "Blind Trust: Market Control, Legal Environments, and the Dynamics of Competitive Intensity in the Early Film Industry, 1893-1920." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 50: 1-34. [Read pages 1-12]
- January 28:* Stephen J. Mezas and Elizabeth Boyle. 2005. "Blind Trust: Market Control, Legal Environments, and the Dynamics of Competitive Intensity in the Early Film Industry, 1893-1920." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 50: 1-34. [Read pages 12-34]

MEMO QUESTION #1 DISTRIBUTED

- January 30:* Stephen Lippmann. 2007. "The Institutional Context of Industry Consolidation: Radio Broadcasting in the United States, 1920-1934." *Social Forces* 86: 467-495. [Read pages 467-479]
- February 2:* Stephen Lippmann. 2007. "The Institutional Context of Industry Consolidation: Radio Broadcasting in the United States, 1920-1934." *Social Forces* 86: 467-495. [Read pages 480-495]

Organization of Current Media Industries: Implications of Consolidation and Commercialism

- February 4:* Janet Wasko. 2001. *Understanding Disney: The Manufacture of Fantasy*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Chapter 3.

MEMO QUESTION #1 DUE

- February 6:* Daya Kishan Thussu. 2008. "The 'Murdochization' of News? The Case of Star TV in India." *Media, Culture & Society* 29: 593-611.

February 9: Amanda D. Lotz. 2007. "How to Spend \$9.3 Billion in Three Days: Examining the Upfront Buying Process in the Production of U.S. Television Culture." *Media, Culture & Society* 29: 549-567.

February 11: Laura J. Miller. 1999. "Shopping for Community: The Transformation of the Bookstore into a Vital Community Institution." *Media, Culture & Society* 21: 385-407.

MEMO QUESTION #2 DISTRIBUTED

February 13: Gabriel Rossman. 2004. "Elites, Masses, and Media Blacklists: The Dixie Chicks Controversy." *Social Forces* 83: 61-79.

February 16: Video Viewing: *Dixie Chicks: Shut Up and Sing*.

February 18: Video Viewing: *Dixie Chicks: Shut Up and Sing*. [Conclusion]

MEMO QUESTION #2 DUE

SECTION TWO: MASS MEDIA PRODUCTS

Creativity and Innovation: Media Workers and Their Endeavors

February 20: Laura Grindstaff. 2002. *The Money Shot: Trash, Class, and the Making of TV Talk Shows*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. Pages ix-xii and Chapter 3.

RESEARCH TOPICS DISTRIBUTED

February 23: Matt Stahl. 2006. "Nonproprietary Authorship and the Uses of Autonomy: Artistic Labor in American Film Animation, 1900-2004." *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 2: 87-105.

February 25: Beth A. Bechky. 2006. "Gaffers, Gofers and Grips: Role-Based Coordination in Temporary Organizations." *Organization Science* 17: 3-21.

TEST PREPARATION SHEET DISTRIBUTED

February 27: Steven E. Clayman, John Heritage, Marc N. Elliot, and Laurie L. McDonald. 2007. "When Does the Watchdog Bark? Conditions of Aggressive Questioning in Presidential News Conferences." *American Sociological Review* 72: 23-41. [Read Pages 23-32]

March 2: Steven E. Clayman, John Heritage, Marc N. Elliot, and Laurie L. McDonald. 2007. "When Does the Watchdog Bark? Conditions of Aggressive Questioning in Presidential News Conferences." *American Sociological Review* 72: 23-41. [Read Pages 32-41]

March 4: **MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

March 6-13: **SPRING BREAK (NO CLASS MEETINGS)**

Supply and Diversity: Media Industries and The Range of Their Offerings

March 16: Timothy J. Dowd. 2007. "Innovation and Diversity in Cultural Sociology: Notes on Peterson and Berger's Classic Article." *Sociologica* 1: 1-47 [Selections].

March 18: Bethany Klein. 2008. "'The New Radio': Music Licensing as a Response to Industry Woe." *Media, Culture & Society* 30: 463-478.

ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH TOPIC DUE

March 20: F. Ted Tschang. 2007. "Balancing the Tensions between Rationalization and Creativity in the Video Games Industry." *Organization Science* 18: 989-1005.

March 23: Bernice Pescosolido, Elizabeth Grauerholz, and Melissa A. Milkie. 1997. "Culture and Conflict: The Portrayal of Blacks in US Children's Picture Books through the Mid- and Late-Twentieth Century." *American Sociological Review* 62: 443-464.

March 25: Huaiting Wu and Joseph Man Chan. 2007. "Globalizing Chinese Martial Arts Cinema: The Global-Local Alliance and the Production of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*." *Media, Culture & Society* 29: 195-217.

March 27: Video Viewing: *The Story of Pixar*.

March 30: Video Viewing: *The Story of Pixar*. [Conclusion]

RESEARCH OUTLINE DUE

MEMO QUESTION #3 DISTRIBUTED

SECTION THREE MEDIA AUDIENCES

The Active Audience: The Formation of Opinions and Tastes

April 1: Aeron Davis. 2006. "Media Effects and the Question of the Rational Audience: Lessons from the Financial Markets." *Media, Culture & Society* 28: 603-625.

April 3: Franklin D. Gilliam, Jr. and Shanto Iyengar. 2000. "Prime Suspects: The Influence of Local Television News on the Viewing Public." *American Journal of Political Science* 44: 560-573.

April 6: Melissa A. Milkie. 1999. "Social Comparisons, Reflected Appraisals, and Mass Media: The Impact of Pervasive Beauty Images on Black and White Girls' Self-Concepts." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 62: 190-210.

MEMO QUESTION #3 DUE

April 8: David Hesmondhalgh. 2007. "Aesthetics and Audiences: Talking about Good and Bad Music." *Cultural Studies* 10: 507-527.

April 10: Jane Zavisca. 2005. "The Status of Cultural Omnivorism: A Case Study of Reading in Russia." *Social Forces* 84: 1233-1255.

MEMO QUESTION #4 DISTRIBUTED

The Active Audience: The Formation of Communities and Resources

April 13: Elizabeth Long. 2003. *Book Clubs: Women and the Uses of Reading in Everyday Life*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1.

April 15: Elizabeth Long. 2003. *Book Clubs: Women and the Uses of Reading in Everyday Life*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 5.

April 17: Lakshmi Srinivas. 2002. "The Active Audience: Spectatorship, Social Relations and the Experience of Cinema in India." *Media, Culture & Society* 24: 155-173.

MEMO QUESTION #4 DUE

April 20: Sameer Hinduja and Justin W. Patchin. 2008. "Personal Information of Adolescents on the Internet: A Quantitative Content Analysis of MySpace." *Journal of Adolescence* 31: 125-146.

April 22: Paul DiMaggio and Bart Bonikowski. 2008. "Make Money Surfing the Web? The Impact of Internet Use on the Earnings of U.S. Workers." *American Sociological Review* 73: 227-225.

TEST PREPARATION SHEET DISTRIBUTED

April 24: Video Viewing: *Trekkies II*.

April 27: Video Viewing: *Trekkies II*. [Conclusion]

RESEARCH PAPER DUE (In Class)

April 30: ***FINAL EXAMINATION – 2:00 Section (4:30 to 7:00 pm)***

May 4: ***FINAL EXAMINATION – 11:45 Section (4:30 to 7:00 pm)***