Syllabus

MMC 4704 (upper division; 3 credits; no prerequisites)

Media, Representation, and Diversity

Context Course for Film, Video and New Media, and Communication Studies

Elective for Certificate in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Christine Scodari, Professor, School of Communication and Multimedia Studies

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A theoretical and critical exploration of representation in or related to media institutions, texts, technologies, and users, exploring race/ethnicity, nationality, gender, class, age, sexuality, and ability.

COURSE OBJECTIVES. As a result of this class, students will:

1) Learn critical theories and approaches with which to evaluate media in terms of race/ethnicity, nationality, gender and gender identity, class, age, sexuality, and/or ability, through reading and understanding existing research and analysis.

2) Perform critical analyses of media related to the identities above using critical theories and methodologies introduced in the class.

3) Gain greater critical awareness and cultural sensitivity as they relate to professional media practices, and with which to build community, civic engagement, and character in everyday life.

4) Improve communication skills through analysis and oral presentation.

REQUIRED TEXT (make sure you get the correct edition):

Dines, G., & Humez, J. (Eds.). (2015). *Gender, race, and class in media* (4th edition).Thousand Oaks,

CA: Sage.

Required chapters:

Chap. 1: Kellner, D., “Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture.”

Chap. 6: Palmer, G., “*Extreme Makeover: Home Addition:* An American Fairy Tale.”

Chap. 9: Andrejevic, M., “Watching Television Without Pity: The Productivity of Online

Fans.”

Chap. 11: Hall, S., “The Whites of their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media.

Chap. 19: Cuklanz, L., & Moorti, S., “Television’s ‘New’ Feminism: Prime-Time

Representations of Women and Victimization.”

Chap. 22: Padva, G., “Educating *The Simpsons:* Teaching Queer Representations in

Contemporary Visual Media.”

Chap. 40: Rose, T., “There are Bitches and Hoes.”

Chap. 44: Lemish, D., “The Future of Childhood in the Global Television Market.”

Chap. 65: Nakamura, L. “‘Don’t Hate the Player, Hate the Game’: The Racialization of Labor

in *World of Warcraft.”*

Chap. 68: Cole, J. et. al.. “*GimpGirl* Grows Up: Women with Disabilities Rethinking,

Redefining, and Reclaiming Community.”

Chap. 69: Flores-Yeffal, N., Vidales, G., & Plemons, A. “The Latino Cyber-Moral Panic

Process in the United States.”

Additional reading selected from the following:

deWinter, J., & Kocurek, C. (2013). Rescuing Anita: Games, Gamers, and the Battle of the Sexes.

*Flow* 17.03. Online. Google or go to: <http://flowtv.org/2012/12/rescuing-anita/> .

Engstrom, E. (2008). Unraveling the knot: Political economy and cultural hegemony in

wedding media. *Journal of Communication Inquiry, 12* (1), 60-82.

Fahey, A. (2007). French and feminine: Hegemonic masculinity and the emasculation of John Kerry

in the 2004 presidential race. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 24* (2), 132-150.

Ho, H. (2016). *The model minority in the Zombie Apocalypse: Asian-American manhood*

*on AMC’s The Walking Dead. The Journal of Popular Culture, 49* (1): 57-76.

Liebler, C. M. (2010). Me(di)a culpa?: The “missing white woman syndrome” and media self-critique. *Communication, Culture, & Critique, 3* (4): 549-565.

Molina-Guzman, I. (2013). Zoë Saldana: The Complicated Politics of Casting a Black Latina. *Flow*

17.05. Online.Google or go to: <http://flowtv.org/2013/01/zoe-saldana-the-complicated-politics-of-casting-a-black-latina/>*.*

McFarlane, M. (2015). Anti-racist white hero, the sequel: Intersections of race(ism), gender, and social justice. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 32* (2): 81-95.

McRobbie, A. (2004). Post-feminism and popular culture. *Feminist Media Studies, 4* (3): 255-264.

Moore, E., & Coleman, C. (2015). Starving for diversity: Ideological implications of race

representations in *The Hunger Games. Journal of Popular Culture, 48* (5):948-969.

Oates, T.P. (2007). The erotic gaze in the NFL draft. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies,*

*4* (1), 74-90.

Scodari, C. (2016). “Recuperating Ethnic Identity through Critical Genealogy.” *Journal of*

*Multidisciplinary Research*, 8 (1): 47-62. Online. Google or go to:

<http://www.jmrpublication.org/portals/jmr/Issues/JMR8-1.pdf>

Scodari, C. (2012). “Nyota Uhura is not a white girl”: Gender, intersectionality, and *Star Trek* 2009’s alternate romantic universes. *Feminist Media Studies, 12* (3): 1-17.

Scodari, C. (2014). Breaking dusk: Fandom, gender/age intersectionality, and the “*Twilight*

Moms.” In *Age, Media, and Culture*, edited by C.L. Harrington, D. Bielby, and A. Bardo. Lexington Books (Division of Rowman & Littlefield): 143-54.

Sifuentes, L. (2014). Being a woman, young and poor: Telenovelas and the cultural mediations of

gender identity. *Feminist Media Studies 14* (6): 976-992.

ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING:

1) Media Analysis (35%). Each student must perform an oral media analysis by applying concepts covered in class and/or in readings to a media excerpt or other example selected by the instructor and shown in class. These will begin on the third week of class and will be assigned on a weekly basis, allowing one week of advance notice to each student. The time frame for the oral presentation is 5-7 minutes, but this is a conversation, not a continuous presentation. More explanation of this assignment will be given in class.

2) Final Exam (45%). A cumulative, open book exam will be given on Blackboard. It will be objective in nature (true/false, multiple choice, etc.), covering readings, screenings, lectures, discussions, and student presentations in the class.

3) Participation (20%). The participation grade is based on attendance. Perfect attendance without any absences, whether excused or not, receives a grade of 105. No unexcused absences receives a grade of 100. Beyond this, deductions will be taken and compounded the higher the number of unexcused absences a student has, according to the following scale:

One unexcused absence: 96

Two unexcused absences: 90

Three unexcused absences: 82

Four unexcused absences: 72

Five unexcused absences: 57

Six unexcused absences: 37

Seven unexcused absences: 12

Eight or more unexcused absences: Zero for the participation grade, and one point will be deducted from a student’s final point total in the class for each absence beyond eight.

On most days, attendance will be taken twice a class period. For each part of a class period missed, a student will receive a deduction of half the point value of a full absence for that day.

Grading: Grading is done on a strict percentage basis. For instance, if you receive an 80% on an assignment worth 40% of the total grade, you will get 32 points for that assignment, since 32 is 80 % of 40.

**Extra credit:** One extra credit opportunity is provided. This involves a 200-word proposal for an episode of a television program to be screened and analyzed in class. The proposal can receive up to 3 points added to your final point total for the class. Proposals must be emailed to the instructor(s) by 11/22. On 11/29, five students with the best proposals will become finalists and present their proposal for a potential screening and analysis on 11/29. Each presenter will receive an additional 1 point of extra credit. Based on these presentations, the winning proposal will be selected by the instructor(s) with the help of class members. This person’s episode will be screened in class on 12/6 and analyzed/discussed by the class. This screening and analysis will be covered on the final exam. More information about this extra credit opportunity will be given in class and on blackboard. THIS WILL BE THE ONLY OPPORTUNITY FOR EXTRA CREDIT IN THE CLASS.

**Grading:**

Grading is done on a strict percentage basis. For instance, if you receive an 80% on an assignment worth 40% of the total grade, you will get 32 points for that assignment, since 32 is 80 % of 40.

ATTENDANCE: Students must keep their own records of their absences! If you have forgotten how many absences you have had, you must visit the instructor during office hours in her CU 228 office to go through the official attendance records. When it is accepted, documentation of an excused absence must reference a legitimate reason, an indication of the date(s) the student must be excused from class, and be in the form of such things as a doctor’s note, court summons, tow truck receipt, notice of covered student activity, funeral token or obituary, etc. Legitimate reasons include: illness of the student or an *immediate* family member; death or funeral of an immediate family member (no more than one excused absence will be given when these issues involve someone who is not an immediate family member, except in extenuating circumstances); valid religious observances; sudden transportation mishap *on the way to class that day* (car being repaired does not count; many students who don’t have a car manage to come to class); jury or court summons, covered student activity (such as travel for athletic participation). You MUST see me after class on the day you return from an absence to explain the absence and submit any documentation in print form. In some cases, the instructor will accept documentation later, but only if the student has spoken to the instructor about their absence upon his/her return. However, in no case will excuses/documentation be accepted after the final exam. If absent on the last day of class, students must email me their excuse and documentation no later than one day after the absence BUT BEFORE the final exam in order for the absence to be considered excused. If a situation arises involving more than one absence in a row, the student or someone else MUST email the instructor with the details and, if possible, the documentation, no later than the second absence, but BEFORE the final exam.

Students with chronic issues that involve absences throughout the term must see me before the third such absence to submit a doctor’s note or other evidence verifying the chronic issue and its effect on class attendance.

LATE or MISSED EXAMS/ASSIGNMENTS: Late assignments are subject to deduction without an excused, documented reason for lateness/absence, presented according to the attendance policy (see above). Makeup presentations (if absence was excused and documented) can only be allowed if time permits. Makeups will only be allowed in the most dire and/or sudden circumstances (see attendance policy). Notification of such circumstances must be provided before or, if sudden, by the end of the day on the due date, and they must be documented before a makeup can be given. Makeups may take a different form than the original assignment.

\*\*\*\*THE FINAL EXAM RULE\*\*\*\*: A common thread for all these policies is the Final Exam Rule. Submission of excuses/documentation and/or requests to discuss the grade received on a previous assignment or to do/revise extra credit are not welcome after the final exam. Your instructor is extremely busy at this time. Before the final exam she is *very* willing to talk with students about any issue or problem, and to discuss grades and/or how they might improve their standing by submitting approved extra credit or addressing deficiencies. **However, she will not do so after the final.** Students who wait until *after* they have seen their final exam or final grade to suddenly decide that they need to discuss their grade for an assignment, ask to do extra credit (only one opportunity for extra credit exists for the class – see extra credit above), or plead their case concerning unexcused absences, acceptance of documentation, late assignments, deduction of points, course policies etc., will simply be sent the relevant sentences/paragraphs from the syllabus in response.

ELECTRONICS in CLASS: Students are welcome to use tablets or laptops to take notes in class *when* *seated in the front three rows*. However, they are not allowed during screenings and student presentations. In these cases, notes should be taken the old-fashioned way with laptops closed and tablets turned face down. Cellphones should be silenced and put away while in class. You are welcome to check messages during the break.

Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

Grading Scale (please note that there is no rounding up):

94 and above A

90-93.99 A-

87-89.99 B+

84-86.99 B

80-83.99 B-

77-79.99 C+

74-76.99 C

70-73.99 C-

67-69.99 D+

64-66.99 D

60-63.99 D-

Below 60 F

SCHEDULE (schedule of additional specific readings and screenings will be provided):

8/23: Orientation. Review of syllabus. Explanation of assignments. Advertising and Representation. Key concepts. What do we mean by “media, representation, and diversity”? Media Analysis presentation signup.

Production, text, technology, audience/user elements of media culture. Key concepts, cont’d. Post-identity, postfeminism, postracism, etc. Reading: Dines & Humez (Chap. 1). Media Analysis guidelines.

8/30: Key concepts, cont’d. Class representation and television. Class privilege. Post-class media. Screening: *Class Dismissed.* Reading: Dines & Humez (Chap. 6).

Gender representation/stereotypes. The gaze. Postfeminism. Male privilege.

9/6: Feminism, cont’d. Hegemonic masculinity. Readings: Dines & Humez (Chap. 19);

Hegemonic masculinity, cont’d. Media watchdog groups. Screening: *Tough Guise II.* Media Analyses (*Tough Guise II*).

9/13: Race, ethnicity, and representation. Racial/Ethnic Stereotypes. Postracism. White privilege. Overt and inferential racism. Colorblind racism. Moral Panic. Reading: Dines & Humez (Chap. 11).

Race, ethnicity, and representation, cont’d. Screening: *Reel Bad Arabs.* Media Analyses (*Reel Bad Arabs*). Reading: Dines & Humez (Chap. 69).

9/20: Race, ethnicity, and representation, cont’d. Screening (to be announced). Media Analyses.

Sexuality and representation. Queer theory and heteronormativity. Screening (to be announced). Reading: Dines & Humez (Chap. 22).

9/27: Sexuality and representation/stereotypes. Screening: *Further Off the Straight and Narrow.* Media Analyses (*Further Off the Straight and Narrow*).

Representation and race/gender intersectionality. Reading: Scodari, “Nyota Uhura is not a White Girl.” Extra credit guidelines. Final exam preview.

10/4: Class/gender, race intersectionality. Screening (to be announced)*.* Readings (to be announced). Media Analyses.

Age, race, gender, and media. Research Exercise: “Casting a Movie.”

Fall Break

10/18: Gender/age double standard. Age/nation/gender/class/race intersections. Screening: *Something’s Gotta Give* (excerpt). Reading: Scodari, “Breaking Dusk.”

“Breaking Dusk,” cont’d. Age/nation/gender/class/race intersections. Kids and media. Gender/race/class intersection. Reading (to be announced).

10/25: Kids and media, cont’d. Screening: *Consuming Kids.* Reading: Dines & Humez (Chap. 44). Media Analyses *(Consuming Kids)*.

STEM, digital divides, video games, and diversity. Gender/race/sexuality/class intersections. Reading: Dines & Humez (Chap. 65).

11/1 Videogames and diversity, cont’d. Screening: *Joystick Warriors.* Reading (to be announced). Media Analyses (*Joystick Warriors*).

Racialization & Post Identity. Reading: Scodari, “Recuperating Ethnic Identity through Critical Genealogy.”

11/8: “Recuperating Ethnic Identity,” cont’d. Screening (to be announced)*.* Media Analyses*.*

Gender/race/sexuality/ability intersections. Sports media and gender. Readings: Dines & Humez (Chap. 68).

11/15: Gender/race/class/sexuality intersection. Screening: *Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes.* Reading: Dines & Humez (Chap. 40). Media Analyses *(Hip Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes*).

Gender/race intersection and fan controversy. Screening (to be announced). Reading: Dines & Humez (Chap. 9)*.* Media Analyses.

11/22:Multiple intersections, representation and reception controversies. Screenings and readings (to be announced).

Representation and reception controversies, cont’d. Gender/race/class/sexuality/ability intersections. Media Analyses.

11/29: Screening (to be announced). Media Analyses*.* Extra credit finalist proposal presentations and critique.

12/6: Extra credit screening and analysis by class members. Final exam review.

Blackboard Final Exam (between December 8 and 14; date and time frame to be determined).