

COM 422: Women, Men, and Media
1:30-2:45 in NF 141

“One is not born a woman.” --Monique Wittig

*“Western Culture is committed to the notion that there are only two sexes.”
--Anne Fausto-Sterling*

Instructor: Dr. Jane Banks
Office: 230J Neff Hall
Phone: 481-6548 (office) Do not leave messages on this phone—I don’t use my voicemail; call me at home instead
456-5054 (home)
Email: banksj@ipfw.edu
Office Hours: TR 12:00-1:00; T 5:00-6:00 and by appointment

Text: Dines, G. and Humez, J., Eds. *Gender, Race, and Class in Media: A Text-Reader, 2nd Ed.*

Other readings as assigned: The instructor or student groups may substitute readings of their own choosing for readings from the text. These must be approved by me and will be put on Blackboard or on ResExpress at least one week in advance of when they are due. Substitute readings may appear on the final.

Course Objectives

1. In this class, students will develop competencies in **critical media literacy** in order to look at the issues of gender. In particular, students will be able to articulate and apply analytical frameworks from **feminist and queer theory and critical race theory** to examine masculine and feminine images in media texts.
2. Most students will bring beginning media analysis techniques to this class. Students will enhance this knowledge with a basic understanding of the three-part approach of **cultural studies**:
 - a. **textual analysis**: analysis of media production techniques
 - b. **audience ethnography**: analysis of the role of a text or genre in the everyday lives of audiences and of the way audiences interpret texts
 - c. **political economy**: the analysis of the culture industries as they control the constraints and capabilities of media artifacts and as they serve particular groups or interests more than others.
3. Students will learn to **apply** these concepts to their own media use and the role of media in the **social construction of race, gender, and social class**, both for themselves and for the culture at large.

Course Policies

1. You are expected to attend class regularly. We have exercises, focused discussions, and screenings in class that you cannot make up with any amount of outside work. A significant part of your grade is based on participation.
2. Class presentations are scheduled in advance. If you do not appear on a day for which your group is providing discussion questions and materials, for whatever reason, you will receive no more than half credit for the assignment. Failure to appear for your final group presentation will result in your receiving no credit for the assignment.
3. Due dates for assignments are on the syllabus. These are requirements, not suggestions.
4. Reading assignments are made for the next day of class. The assignment beside the first day of class will be discussed on the following day. I expect students to come prepared to discuss readings. This is part of the participation grade for the class.
5. I will make assignments both orally and in writing. I will explain the assignments and my criteria for grading as clearly as possible. If you still do not understand something about the assignment, it is up to you to ask questions. I am happy to talk about assignments both inside and out of class for as long you need, but it is up to you to tell me if something is unclear.
6. Finally, in most institutions, teaching a class like this would be like preaching to the choir (that is, everyone would agree with the basic principles that inform the course). Since this course fulfills a requirement for the major, only some of you will be in the choir—some will not. That's fine with me—all of you are welcome, and I expect that your differences will lead to some lively discussion. That said, two things need to be clear: first, this class is taught from a feminist perspective, which is an intellectual as well as a political position. You are not required to agree, but you are required to study, understand, and be able to articulate this position. Second, lively discussions are great and keep people from falling asleep; hostility is not conducive to learning and intimidates people into silence. The classroom should be a community where students and instructor work together to provide an environment where everyone feels protected from discrimination. This is not something I can do alone. It is the responsibility of all of us to create a safe space to discuss sensitive issues of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, and culture.

Campus Services

- In making the transition from novice to experienced college student, the Center for Academic Support and Advancement (CASA) can make the critical difference. CASA offers study-skills assistance, free tutoring, supplemental instruction, and free computer-technology courses (STEPS). The center is also the advising unit for students studying English as a Second Language.
- Services for Students With Disabilities (SSD) coordinates IPFW's programming for people with disabilities, as required by Section 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have or acquire a disability that affects your participation as a student at IPFW, you are eligible for specialized academic support services and other assistance from SSD.

- Academic Counseling and Career Services can answer questions about how the University experience will enhance your life and future career. They also offer resume assistance, assistance with interviewing and job application, and advice on networking, professional attire, and business etiquette.
- The Writing Center offers free one-on-one conferences. Writing consultants will talk with you about your writing for any class at any point in the writing process—understanding assignments, brainstorming and planning, revising and polishing final drafts. Consultants help you focus, organize, develop, and analyze your thoughts. They will help you learn how to edit and proofread your own papers.

Assignments

All assignments must be completed to pass the course.

Gender Media Diary: What is your gender world? Monitor your own media use for three days and write a short paper (3-5 pages) describing the representations of gender and sexuality in your personal media environment. Be honest! Keep an accurate log of your media use for three days and analyze what you saw (pick a time when your use is high—a weekend, for instance).

If an alien came from a planet where there was only one gender (science fiction readers may be familiar with the work of Ursula Le Guin), and had a DVD of what you saw, heard, and read in your three days, what would it learn about men and women? P.S. Don't tell me that you never watch TV. In a politics course, professors make their students read the newspapers. This is a media course, so you're going to have to grin and bear it. Surely your brain cells are sturdy enough to withstand three days of TV.

Discussion Questions: Group assignment. Twice during the semester your group will be responsible for developing discussion questions based on the reading for a particular day of class. Groups will choose two days (first come, first served), write questions based on the readings, and lead discussion.

In addition to that responsibility, groups must evaluate and update the material. The book was not written yesterday, many of its examples are outdated, and groups should identify where new material is needed and bring in films, videos, etc. that make the material relevant today. If no amount of new examples will make a reading relevant, a group may, in consultation with me, find an alternative reading to take its place on the same or a similar subject. If you do this, you must send me the file at least one week in advance so that I can upload it to Blackboard in time for the rest of us to read it. (We will).

Position Paper and Presentation: Group project. For this paper your group must to choose a question from a list that you will be given, answer it, and defend it in a paper of

3-5 pages. As support for your argument (the answer) you should use citations from class readings and may also use outside readings (other books and articles, Internet materials, etc.). In addition, you must illustrate your argument with visual evidence from a variety of sources organized into a Power Point presentation. In addition to TV shows and films, you will find valuable resources in the form of web archives of organizations such as the NAACP, the GLAAD media group and other social action groups.

Your presentation will be a 20 -30 minute oral version of your paper illustrated with video and film clips or other visual materials. Groups must turn in the paper and an outline of their PowerPoint. In addition, each member of the group must write a summary of her of his contribution to the project, both the paper and the presentation.

Take Home Exam: This is your final examination for the course, distributed during the last week of class and due during exam week during our final exam period. It will consist of approximately five essay questions which you are to answer at length. You are permitted to consult your textbook and other readings and your notes but *not* your classmates. Duplicate answers will be considered evidence of academic misconduct and will be treated as such as outlined in your student handbook.

Participation: This includes but is not limited to attendance; it means coming to class prepared, having done the readings, and attending in mind as well as body. Your grade will be based on the above as well as your thoughtful engagement in discussion and class activities. It should go without saying that you will refrain from all cell phone use during class, including texting and checking your email.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage of final grade</u>
Gender Media Diary	15
Discussion Questions 2 @ 15	30
Position paper and presentation	25
Take Home Exam	15
Participation	15

Tentative Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Reading assignments are for the following class
1	8/25	Introduction to the course	Part 1: A Cultural Studies Approach to Gender, Race, and Class in Media; 1. Cultural Studies, Multiculturalism, and Media Culture, Douglas Kellner
	8/27	Cultural studies: why society is so profoundly inhumane	5. Hegemony, James Lull ; 2. The New Media Giants: Changing Industry Structure, David Croteau and William Hoynes ;

2	9/1	Cultural studies: Hegemony versus context	. Women Read the Romance: The Interaction of Text and Context, Janice A. Radway ; 7. Black Sitcom Portrayals, Robin R. Means Coleman
	9/3	Political Economy, audience studies, and the study of gender and race	8. The Whites of Their Eyes: Racist Ideologies and the Media, Stuart Hall ; 11. White Negroes, Jan Nederveen Pieterse ; ; 14. Who(se) am I: Ownership, Identity and Multitextual Readings of Women in Hip Hop" Imani Perry

3	9/8	Alternative assignment: Gender Diary	13. Living Single and the 'Fight for Mr. Right': Latifah Don't Play, Kristal Brent Zook ;
	9/10	Television in Color: Screening: Ethnic Notions	55. The Fox Network and the Revolution in Black Television, Kristal Brent Zook
4	9/15	Will the revolution be televised? Whose revolution? Gender Media Diaries Due!	10. Popular Culture and Queer Representation: A Critical Perspective, Diane Raymond ; 56. Representing Gay Men on American Television, Kylo-Patrick R. Hart
	9/17	Liberace is so good to his mother: the domestication of queerness	61. This Is For Fighting, This Is For Fun: Camerawork and Gunplay in Reality-Based Crime Shows, Fred Turner ; 62. Here Comes the Judge: The Dancing Itos and the Televisual Construction of the Enemy Asian Male, Brian Locke
5	9/22	How real is reality television? Whose reality is the real deal?	20. Nike, Social Responsibility, and the Hidden Abode of Production, Carol A. Stable ; 21. " You've Never Had a Friend Like Me": Target Marketing Disney to a Gay Community, Sean Griffin
	9/24	Calling Michael Jordan? Do you know where your Nikes come from?	22. Advertising and the Political Economy of Lesbian/Gay Identity, Fred Fejes ; 29. Advertising and People of Color, Clint C. Wilson II and Felix Gutierrez
6	9/29	Selling sand in the Sahara and Ice boxes at the North Pole:	25. Image-Based Culture: Advertising and Popular Culture, Sut Jhally
	10/1	How much weight do I need to lose to fit into that little screen?	26. "The More You Subtract, the More You Add": Cutting Girls Down to Size, Jean Kilbourne ; 23. Sex, Lies and Advertising, Gloria Steinem ;
7	10/6	Advertising in living color	30. Current Perspectives on Advertising Images of Disability, Beth A. Haller and Sue Ralph ; 31. Selling Sexual Subjectivities: Audiences Respond to Gay Window Advertising, Katherine Sender
	10/8		Group Planning Day

8	10/13	Fall Break: No Class	
	10/15	Keeping a lid on he little screen	46. Women Watching Together: An Ethnographic Study of Korean Soap Opera Fans in the United States, Minu Lee and Chong Heup Cho;
9	10/20	You're not real unless you're on the tube	34. Advertising and the Construction of Violent White Masculinity: From Eminem to Clinique for Men, Jackson Katz; 37. Lessons from Littleton: What Congress Doesn't Want to Hear About Youth and Media, Henry Jenkins
	10/22	Does television cause violence or does violence cause television?	38. Hidden Politics: Discursive and Institutional Policing of Rap Music, Tricia Rose; 44. Gendered Television: Femininity, John Fiske;
10	10/27	How active is the active audience?	48. " No Politics Here": Age and Gender in Soap Opera "Cyberfandom" Christine Scodari; 49. Consuming Pleasures: Active Audiences and Soap Opera, Jennifer Hayward
	10/29	Are they really just eating bonbons?	45. Daze of Our Lives: The Soap Opera as Feminine Text, Deborah D. Rogers
11	11/3	Textual analysis and ethnography	50. Cathartic Confessions of Emancipatory Texts? Rape Narratives on the Oprah Winfrey Show, Sujata Moorti; 51. The Mediated Talking Cure: Therapeutic Framing of Autobiography in TV Talk Shows, Janice Peck; 53. Sitting Ducks and Forbidden Fruit, Joshua Gamson
	11/5	Confession is good for the soul—is it also good for the goal?	19. The New Politics of Consumption: Why Americans Want So Much More Than They Need, Juliet Schor; 58. Once in a Lifetime: Constructing "The Working Woman" Through Cable Narrowcasting, Jackie Byars and Eileen R. Meehan;
12	11/10	Watching the girls go buy: What women's liberation really meant.	65. The Titanic Sails On: Why the Internet Won't Sink the Media Giants, Robert McChesney; 67. Television and the Internet, Ellen Seiter;
	11/12	What kind of place is cyberspace?	57. What's Wrong with this Picture? The Politics of Ellen's Coming Out Party, Susan J. Hubert
13	11/17	Screening: Off the Straight and Narrow	63. Ling Woo in Historical Context: The New Face of Asian American Stereotypes on Television, Chyng Feng Sun; 64. Jewish Women on Television: Too Jewish or Not Enough? Joyce Antler
	11/19	NCA convention: work in groups	
14	11/24	What are <u>those</u> people doing on my TV?	
	11/26	Thanksgiving: No Class	
15	12/1	Presentations;	Take Home Exam distributed

	12/3	Presentations	
16	12/8	Presentations.	
	12/10	Presentations	

Final exam period: Thursday, 12/17, 1:00-3:00 **Take Home Exam Due**