Fall 2012
Dr. Venise Berry
Media and Consumers
335-3361/335-2765
Journalism 19:154
J-School Office - E340 Adler Bldg
Class – Thurs 3:30-6pm
Off Hrs: Th 2-3pm
AAS Office – 514 Jefferson Bldg
venise-berry@uiowa.edu
Off Hrs: Mon 2-3pm
*or by appointment
J-School Director: Dr. David Perlmutter
Office: W305 Adler Bldg 335-3486

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course is designed to help students become better critical consumers of mass media by enhancing media literacy. Course content focuses on consumer issues related to media in the United States and globally. Course requirements include readings, writing assignments, an ethics presentation and three quizzes. Students are expected to complete all readings and assignments and participate fully in discussion sections.

TEXTS:
The weekly readings can be found on the class ICON site. They are listed in the course outline below. Every student is required to complete all assigned readings. This material will be synthesized, debated, and critically evaluated through class discussions, critiques and presentations. Additional readings may also be assigned throughout the semester.

THE IOWA DOZEN is a pledge from the School of Journalism to help you:
Learn:
- to write correctly and clearly
- to conduct research and gather information responsibly
- to edit and evaluate carefully
- to use media technologies thoughtfully
- to apply statistical concepts appropriately

Value:
- First Amendment principles for all individuals and groups
- a diverse global community
- creativity and independence
- truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity

Explore:
- mass communication theories and concepts
- media institutions and practices
- the role of media in shaping cultures

NOTES:
ADMINISTRATIVE HOME - The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION - University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences. (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to k.11.)

ACCOMODATION FOR DISABILITIES - A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with the course instructor to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

ACADEMIC FRAUD - Plagiarism and any other activities when students present work that is not their own are academic fraud. Academic fraud is a serious matter and is reported to the departmental DEO and to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum. Instructors and DEOs decide on appropriate consequences at the departmental level while the Associate Dean enforces additional consequences at the collegiate level. See the CLAS Academic Fraud section of the Student Academic Handbook.

CLAS FINAL EXAM POLICY - Final exams may be offered only during finals week. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. Students should not ask their instructor to reschedule a final exam since the College does not permit rescheduling of a final exam once the semester has begun. Questions should be addressed to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum.
MAKING A SUGGESTION OR COMPLAINT - Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook.

UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT - Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

REACTING SAFELY TO SEVERE WEATHER - In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Public Safety web site.

DEADLINES - Deadlines in this class are firm. Late assignments must be pre-approved. NO assignment will be extended more than one week past the deadline – NO exceptions. It is your responsibility to turn in your assignments directly to the teaching assistant when they are due. If you turn in an assignment in some other way (under office door, in box or email), at some other time (before or after due date), we are not responsible if it is lost or misplaced. It is always a good idea to keep a copy in case there is a problem.

CHANGES - It may be necessary to make changes in the syllabus according to how readings, videos, speakers, and assignments flow throughout the semester. A number of new videos have been ordered. A currently listed video in the syllabus may be replaced by a new one depending on arrival date.

WARNING - If any of the videos shown in class are offensive to you talk to your TA. You are not required to stay and view them. However, each video has been selected because of its appropriateness to the particular section studied. And all videos are available on television or from video stores. Keep in mind that some of the videos will have response essays connected to them that cannot be made up.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES - Student Rights and Responsibilities means that you will respect the other members of the class, the professor/TA, and treat everyone with the same courtesy you want to receive in return. Students have the right to a classroom environment that encourages learning. The ability to learn is lessened when students engage in inappropriate classroom behavior, distracting others; such behavior also is a violation of the Code of Student Life. When disruptive activity occurs, a University professor has the authority to determine classroom seating patterns and to request that a student exit the classroom, laboratory, or other area used for instruction immediately for the remainder of the period. One-day suspensions are reported to appropriate departmental, collegiate, and Student Services personnel (Office of the Vice President for Student Services and Dean of Students).

GRADING:
You must earn 60% of the available points in order to pass this class. This means that we have rigorous expectations and grade accordingly. **Assignments will be graded with these guidelines in mind: A = Exceptional work, B = Very good work, C = Average work, D = Poor work, F = Unacceptable work. Grades for each assignment will be determined within the range of that particular assignment. Grades are not based on percentages, but on points. The final grade will be based on the total points earned for all class assignments and activities (see grade scale below). Plus/minus grading will only be allocated for the final grade and only if the total points are on the cut off. (Example: 300 points = A+/ 275 points = A-).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media Diary/Essay</td>
<td>30pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparison Analysis</td>
<td>30pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance (2 pts. each)</td>
<td>26pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>25pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 response essays (3pts. each)</td>
<td>39pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Ethics presentation</td>
<td>20pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Theory Analysis</td>
<td>30pts.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total 200pts.

Final Grade Scale:
200-185 = A
184-164 = B
163-138 = C
137-125 = D
below 125 = F
CLASS PREPARATION:
You must complete the reading or assignment that is due before coming to class. As with any university class, much of the work will be done at home. The University’s guidelines say that the standard out-of-class preparation for a three-credit hour class is six hours, but you may find that more study time will be needed. You will each need to figure out how many hours will work for you. It is your responsibility to read all assigned material. If there is anything you don’t understand be sure contact the professor.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:
Class discussions are very important! They are an opportunity to broaden your understanding of the material. Points will be distributed based on your contribution to specific class discussions. Minimal contribution/rarely speak 8pts.
- Average contribution/speak sometimes 16pts. – Exceptional contribution/always speak 25pts.

CLASS ATTENDANCE:
Attendance is mandatory. Every class is important so please don’t ask my permission to miss a class. Missing 30 minutes of any one class will be considered an absence. If you must miss a class you will need to provide a written explanation and adequate documentation for me to consider suspending the penalty.

ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS:
Writing Assignments - All assignments must be typed in average size typeface such as Times 12/14 and double-spaced. Assignments will be graded on clarity/logic, depth of information/analysis, structure/organization, grammar/other mechanics, intelligent use of course concepts and resources. There may be other more distinctive criteria listed in each specific assignment handout. Assignments will not be accepted through email. You must hand in printed copies when due, unless approved by the professor. NO assignments will be accepted more than one week late - NO exceptions. Please note that Wikipedia and other unreliable Internet sources (like personal blogs) will not be accepted as legitimate citations for any of the writing assignments.

Media Literacy: Diary/Essay – (30 pts.) Part 1 - For one full day you will keep a media diary. You need to write down every interaction with the media (print, online, TV, film, music, etc). Jot down notes about what media products you read, watched or listened to that day - including where and how long - then take some time to think about and write a one-page overview on your media use patterns. Think about routines and other interesting connections. Part two - Identify a past or present situation where a media product impacted you significantly in some way (i.e. a song you related to, a movie you found empowering or an article that ticked you off) and write a two-page reflection essay. Total 4 pages.

Comparison Analysis – (30 pts.) Choose a current major news story and examine the coverage of that story in three different media outlets/genres. For example: local/national/international news or print/broadcast/cable news or newspaper/magazine/internet news. Discuss the differences and similarities in the content, visuals, headlines, etc. along with contrasting perspectives. Must include a minimum of four resources in the text that correspond with footnotes/bibliography section (MLA Style). You are required to include, at least, one chart or graph in your paper. All Internet sources must have a normal citation if possible. Total 5 pages, plus footnotes/bibliography.

Media Theory Analysis – (30pts.) Choose one media theory discussed in class and explore how it relates to a prominent issue like violence, sex, race, politics, etc. from a consumer’s perspective. For example: Social Learning Theory as it relates to children, violence and the Grand Theft Auto video game. Total 3 pages. Be informative and creative!

Group Ethics Presentation (20 pts.) Your group will develop a presentation on an assigned ethical media issue to be presented in class. Your grade will be assessed based on organization, information presented, examples included, presentation style and shared participation.

Response Essays (3 pts, each) You will write 13 response essays based on class readings. It should be no more than one page (1.5 or double spaced), normal typeface (Times 12/14). In order to receive points it must be evident that some thought has been put into the response. The essays will not be accepted after-the-fact. No Exceptions!!!!!

Extra Credit/Letter to Editor – Read the letter to the editor pages in several newspapers for a few days to gain familiarity with the style and format. Choose a topic of interest, one that you are passionate about and write your own letter to the editor. Submit it for extra credit points. Extra credit is not automatic - the letter must be well thought out with a substantial message in order to issue the extra credit points. If you send the letter to a newspaper or magazine and it is accepted, turn in a published copy to receive additional points.
COURSE OUTLINE:

August 23 - Lecture: Syllabus Overview
**Video/Speaker Growing Up Online**
**Discussion** – Explain media diary assignment/Media Effects exercise

August 30 – Media Diary/Essay Assignment

September 6 - Lecture: Media Literacy
**READING: Media Literacy: Keys to Interpreting Media Messages** by Art Silverblatt
**Video/Speaker Consuming Kids: the Commercialization of Childhood**
**Discussion** – Assessing Internet websites handout & examples

**Media Diary Due!**

September 13 – Lecture: Media Framing
**READING: Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm** by Robert Entman
**Video/Speaker Class Dismissed: Framing the Working Class**
**Discussion** – Redefining News exercise

September 20 – Lecture: Redefining News
**READING: The Commercialization of News** by John McManus
**Video/Speaker Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch’s War on Journalism**
**Discussion** – Redefining News exercise

September 27 – Lecture: Media Ethics
**READING: The Chains of Materialism** by Tim Kasser
**Video/Speaker: Finish - Outfoxed: Rupert Murdoch’s War on Journalism & If You Can’t Beat ’em Blog ’em**
**Discussion** – Organize ethics groups

October 4 – Lecture: Consumer Behavior
**READING: Totalizing Society** by Benjamin Barber
**Video/Speaker - Remote Control: Children, Media & the American Family**
**Discussion** - Explain Comparison assignment/Group ethics committees meet

October 11 – Group Ethics Presentations!

October 18 – Lecture: First Amendment and Free Speech
**READING: Our Privatized World: Selling off the Public Square, Culture, Our Democracy and Everything Else** by Kembrew McLeod
**Video/Speaker You Can’t Say That - Politically Correct Free Speech**
**Discussion** – Hate Speech Exercise

October 25 - Lecture: Media Programming
**READING: Buying Into American Idol: How We are Sold Reality TV** by Henry Jenkins
**Video/Speaker Not Just a Game: Power, Politics and American Sports**
**Discussion** – Social Media Exercise

November 1 - Lecture: Media Impact: Sex & Violence
**READING: Media Violence and the American Public** by Brad Bushman and Craig Anderson
**Video/Speaker Tough Guise: Violence and the Crisis in Masculinity**
**Discussion** – Critical Thinking Exercise

November 8 – Lecture: Media Control: Deregulation & War
**READING: Evaluating Mass Media Performance in a Deregulatory Era** by Carl Ramey
**Video/Speaker Reporters at War**
**Discussion** – Media Control Exercise

**Comparison Analysis Due!**
COURSE OUTLINE (CONT.)

November 15 – Lecture: Media Stereotypes, Race & Gender
READING: *Cats and Dogs on Venus and Mars: Gender and Advertising* by Kim Sheehan
Video/Speaker *Generation M: Misogyny in Media & Culture*
Discussion – Stereotypes exercise

November 22 – Thanksgiving Break

November 29 – Lecture: Media Activism
READING: *We the Media: The Empire Strikes Back* by Dan Gillmor
Video/Speaker *No Logo: Brands, Globalization & Resistance*
Discussion – Discussion and examples from students about their own media connections - blogs/websites, Facebook pages, twitter accounts and others.

December 6 – Lecture: The Pros and Cons of Consumerism
READING: *Everything Bad is Good For You* by Steven Johnson
Video/speaker *Shop 'Til You Drop*
Discussion – Wrap Up/Class Evaluations

**Extra Credit Letter to the Editor Due!**

December 10th - Media Theory Analysis Due!/Final Graduate Student Paper Due!

Bibliography