Fall 2014
19:029  Reality TV: The Good, 
The Bad, and the Very, Very Ugly 
Class Meets- Wed 11:30-12:50pm 
Begins: 08/27/2014    Ends: 10/22/2014 
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COURSE OBJECTIVE:
Most of the programming on television is reality based, yet the influx of recent reality shows like: *The Real Housewives series, Bridezillas, Honey Boo Boo* and *Duck Dynasty* have given reality a bad name. This class will examine the broad reach of reality television from game shows and sports to shopping and the news. We will explore various issues like stereotypes, framing, authenticity, and representation in reality shows which influence consumers as they strive to navigate their own lives and understand the world they live in

Requirements: weekly class readings with a one-page response essay for each, participation in class discussions, a presentation exploring various issues like stereotypes, framing, authenticity, and representation in a favorite reality television show. Attendance is mandatory.

TEXTS:
The weekly readings can be found on the class ICON site. They are also 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, essay responses and presentations. Additional readings may also be assigned throughout the semester.

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. www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/index.shtml

DISABILITY - I would like to hear from anyone who has a disability which may need some modification of seating, testing or other class requirements so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Please see me after class or during my office hours.

EMAIL - Make sure your email account is active and connected to the University system so that you can get J-MC School, UI and class messages. You should check your email regularly. 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.)

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 can 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. Because this class meets only once a week you will be able to miss only one class without penalty.
RESOURCES – The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences offers a number of resources for student success. For example: The Writing Center, The Speaking Center and Tutor Iowa. The School of Journalism Resource Center (E350 Adler) also offers a broad range of help including computer access, writing assistance and relevant journalism materials.

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 professor when they are due. If you turn in an assignment in some other way (under office door or by email), at some other time (before or after due date), the professor is not responsible if it is lost or misplaced. It is always a good idea to keep a copy in case there is a problem.

UNIVERSITY EXAM POLICY - Final Examinations. An undergraduate student who has two final examinations scheduled for the same period or more than three examinations scheduled for the same day may file a request for a change of schedule before the published deadline at the Registrar’s Service Center, 17 Calvin Hall, 8-4:30 M-F, (384-4300). Missed exam policy. University policy requires that students be permitted to make up examinations missed because of illness, mandatory religious obligations, certain University activities, or unavoidable circumstances. Excused absence forms are required and are available at the Registrar web site: http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu/forms/absence.pdf

CHANGES - It may be necessary to make changes in the syllabus according to how readings, videos, 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 the professor. 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 are available on television, on videos and through YouTube.

SUGGESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS - Student complaints concerning the professor - first attempt to resolve the matter with the the professor, if you not able to settle it go to Journalism department executive officer, Dr. David Ryfe. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtm#5

SEVERE WEATHER OR OTHER CRISIS – If there is a weather or other crisis members of the class should seek appropriate shelter and stay until the crisis is over. In the case of really bad weather, like an ice storm, please check your email before coming to class. If the class is cancelled I will send an email notice as far ahead as possible. (Operations Manual, Part IV, 16. items e, h, and i.)

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT - Plagiarism and misconduct happens when students present work that is not their own. It is academic fraud. Cheating includes copying someone else's work or purposefully allowing someone else to copy your work. Disciplinary actions - the professor will inform you immediately of the allegation. If found guilty you will receive an F on the assignment, you may also receive an F in the entire course, probation, suspension or even expulsion. 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 consequences at the departmental level while CLAS may enforce additional consequences at the collegiate level. www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/academic_handbook/ix.shtml

INAPPROPRIATE USE OF COMPUTER OR CELL PHONE - Once class starts you may not use your computer/phone to check your email, go on Facebook or any other computer activity outside of class work. You will lose 5 points each time the professor determines an inappropriate use of the computer. It is also rude and unacceptable to work on the computer while the professor or fellow students are presenting to the class or a video is playing. Please be respectful at all times.
SEXUAL HARASSMENT - Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. Visit www.sexualharassment.uiowa.edu for definitions, assistance, and the full University policy.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES - Student rights and responsibilities means that you will respect the other members of the class, including the professor to 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 arguing with or distracting others; such behavior also is a violation of the Code of Student Life. When disruptive activity occurs, the 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 there are rigorous expectations. **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 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 if the total points are on the cut off. (Example: 100 points = A+/ 90 points = A-).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade Scale</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentation (7 minutes)</td>
<td>28pts.</td>
<td>100-90pts. = A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading essays (8) 3pts. each</td>
<td>24pts.</td>
<td>89-80pts. = B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>30pts.</td>
<td>79-70pts. = C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance (2pt.s each)</td>
<td>18pts.</td>
<td>69-60pts. = D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100pts.</td>
<td>below 60pts. = F</td>
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</tbody>
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 ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:
Presentation - Each student will prepare a 6-minute presentation for class that explores an assigned specific reality genre. You can focus on a variety of issues like stereotypes, authenticity, class and representation. You can examine one to three reality programs in the genre in your presentation. Another 2-minutes will be allotted for questions-answers-discussion. Audio, video, or print examples (2 min max) must also be included within the presentation. Evaluation criteria will include: substance, presentation style, organization and audio/visual example(s).

Reading Essays – Response essays will be turned in each week based on the assigned weekly readings. Essays should be ½ to 1 page maximum for the article. Do not write an overview of what is in the article. You should respond to something you relate to, something you don’t agree with or something that is interesting to you. Your response must be submitted in normal typeface (12/14 Times), and double-spaced. Essays will not be graded. However, the response must be well thought out and submitted during the class where the readings are discussed to receive points - **NO exceptions!!!!!** Essays should not be sent through email unless approved.

Attendance – Attendance is mandatory. Every class is important so please don’t ask my permission to miss a class. Missing 20 minutes of any one class can 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. You will receive two points for your attendance in each class session. An attendance sheet will be passed around it is your responsibility to sign it. You can miss two classes without penalty.

Participation – the class discussion is very important! Points will be distributed based on your contribution to class discussions. Minimal contribution/rarely speak = 10pts. Average contribution/sometimes speak = 20 pts. Exceptional contribution/always speak = 30pts. Please make sure that you contribute appropriately.
COURSE OUTLINE:

August 27th - Overview Syllabus
Powerpoint: Understanding Reality TV
Discussion – Media Effects worksheet

September 3rd – News/Alternative News Shows
Video Clips: Local news/CNN/Fox/MSNBC/ The Daily Show/PBS/Bloomberg/
Readings: News as Reality TV: Election Coverage and the Democratization of Truth by W. Lance Bennett
*Reading Essay Due!

Presentations
1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________

September 10th – Dating/Doctor./Game Shows
Video Clips: The Millionaire Matchmaker/The Bachelor/Dr. Oz/Dr. Phil/Wipe Out/Fear Factor
Readings: Stereotypes: Reality TV as Both Creator and Comforter by Kristie Bunton
*Reading Essay Due!

Presentations
1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________

September 17th – Judge/Talk/Performance Shows
Video Clips: Judge Judy/Divorce Court/The View/Jimmy Fallen/The Voice/The X Factor
Readings: Ruling Class: Disciplining Class, Race and Ethnicity in Television Reality Court Shows by Helene Shugart
*Reading Essay Due!

Presentations
1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________

September 24th – Teen/Family/Event Shows
Video Clips: The Real Housewives series/16 & Pregnant/Honey Boo Boo/Bridezillas/Duck Dynasty
Readings: Exploitation: When Reality TV becomes Degradation TV by Wendy Wyatt
*Reading Essay Due!

Presentations
1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________

October 1st – Food/Animal/Weather Shows
Video Clips: Kitchen Nightmares/Shark Week/It’s Me or the Dog/Freaks of Nature/Extreme Weather
Readings: Spectacles of Labor: Viewing Food Through the TV Screen by Jean Retzinger
*Reading Essay Due!

Presentations
1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________

October 8th – Cop/Legal/Prison Shows
Video Clips: Cops/Lawman/Dog the Bounty Hunter/Locked Up/Prison Diaries/The Hunt
Readings: Fear and Loathing on Reality Television: An Analysis of "America's Most Wanted" and "Unsolved Mysteries" by Gray Cavendar and Lisa Bond-Maupin
*Reading Essay Due!

Presentations
1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
October 15th – Shopping/Real Estate/Home Improvement shows

Video Clips: Say Yes to the Dress/HSN/Love It or List It/Million Dollar Listings (NY & LA)


*Reading Essay Due!

Presentations
1. ___________________________________________________________
2. ___________________________________________________________

October 22nd - Religion/Sports/Globalizing Reality Shows

Video Clips: Joyce Meyers/Preachers of LA/SportsCenter/ Hawkeye & NFL/NBA games/BBC Tumble

Readings: Factual Entertainment and Reality TV by Daniel Beck, Lea Hellmueller and Nina Aeschbacher

*Reading Essay Due!

Presentations
1. ___________________________________________________________
2. ___________________________________________________________

*Wrap up/Evaluations
*Extra Credit Experience Essay DUE!

Bibliography


