

**BTMM 540 – Communication Content and Behavior
Spring 2006**

Mondays 4:40-8:00, TUCC 305

Professor: Dr. Zizi Papacharissi

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Office hours: MonWed 2-4 and by appt.

Course website: <http://astro.temple.edu/~zpapacha/btmm540/btmm540.html>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers theory and research on mass media artifacts and their socialization functions, focusing on the uses and the consequences of mass media content. The course begins with an introduction to relevant theory and research methods, addresses myths and theories of media influence and media use, examines relevant research methods, provides an overview of the social and psychological function of media artifacts, and centers on media violence, popular culture and entertainment, celebrity, publicity and advertising, and gender, class and race.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To become well-versed in theories and perspectives employed routinely within the examination and impact of media content.
- To learn to synthesize relevant communication theories and research.
- To help students become critical readers of communication perspectives and research.
- To produce a research paper for submission to a conference/publication.

REQUIRED TEXT

All required readings have been placed on electronic reserve and can be accessed at diamond.temple.edu, or will be available outside my office.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reaction papers. These papers serve the purpose of helping you gather your thoughts for the week's discussion. They should be typed and written in essay format (not to exceed 1 page, single spaced). The paper should be a synthesis/reaction to the readings, so you should focus on what the authors say collectively and refer back to the text for examples, to reveal your understanding of the readings. Do not summarize the readings in the paper, but provide your own critique, evaluation, and analysis of the readings. These papers will serve as the basis for your contribution to class discussion and are worth a total of 300 points or 30% of your grade (30 each, worst grade is excluded). Your grade will be based on clarity and thoughtfulness. No late weekly papers will be accepted.

Weekly Presentations and Class Participation. Each week, a selected student will be responsible for initiating the class discussion on that week's readings. The presentation should be no longer than 15 minutes, and will count as part of the class participation grade. Students are expected to introduce the major themes of that week's readings and pose a few questions for further discussion by the entire class. Students presenting are responsible for making copies of their questions for all students and forwarding them to me a couple of days before class, to ensure that you are on the right track.

Your attendance and participation to class discussions is essential and expected. This is a graduate seminar, meant to inform you on this topic but to also teach you to articulate your own opinions with confidence. All readings should be completed before the assigned date, and you should come to class prepared to talk. 200 points total or 20% of your grade.

Final Paper/Essay. This is your final paper for the course, for which you can produce either a paper summarizing research you conducted over the semester, or a research prospectus, or a critical analysis. The **research proposal** for this is due March 3. This needs to be written formally, following the research paper guidelines of the discipline. Use APA or MLA, depending on the conference/publication this is directed to. This paper should be at least 20 double-spaced pages, including tables, charts, endnotes, reference list. The paper should in some significant way relate, in depth, to one or several of the theories that we discuss in the seminar. The final paper is worth 40% of your final grade, accompanying presentation 10%. Due on the last day of class.

SPECIAL NEEDS

It is our desire that all students participate fully in the curriculum of our department. If you have a disability or special condition that compromises your ability to successfully participate in this class, please notify me as soon as possible and make sure you register with the appropriate University office. All efforts will be made to accommodate your needs.

HONOR CODE

All students are expected to read and observe Temple University's Honor Code Policy concerning academic integrity.

PLAGIARIZING

When facts or other material are obtained from an outside source, that source should be cited properly in the text and the bibliography/references section of your work. Plagiarism is defined as taking the words or ideas of another person and presenting them as one's own without proper credit. Plagiarizing is considered cheating, and a student who plagiarizes will receive a zero for that assignment and/or a failing grade for the course. If you are not certain that you are citing materials properly, feel free to double check your citations with me.

Grading scale:

A = 100-93	A- = 92-90		
B+ = 89-87	B = 86-83	B- = 82-80	
C+ = 79-77	C = 76-73	C- = 72-70	
D+ = 69-67	D = 66-63	D- = 62-60	59 and below = F

What these grades mean: An **A** means your work is outstanding. **A** work goes above and beyond expectations and shows an astute intellect. **B** work is better than average and demonstrates excellent effort and satisfactory understanding of coursework. **B-** work meets expectations and demonstrates a general understanding of material and an average effort. Graduate school standards indicate that a **C** represents seriously flawed work. This might mean a misunderstanding of fundamental concepts, presenting them unacceptably in writing, and/or a lack of constructive participation in class discussion. A **D** cannot be assigned in graduate course. An **F** illustrates a failure to adhere to policies of academic honesty.

Course Schedule

1/23 Introduction

1/30 Theory Review and Methods Introduction

Blumer, "Symbolic Interactionism;" Katz, "Two Step Flow;" and "Utilization..;" Fiske, "Active Audiences;" Lazarsfeld, "Administrative...;" Lasswell, "Structure and Function;" McCombs and Shaw, "Agenda Setting;" Rosengren and Windahl, "Mass Media Consumption...;" White, "Gatekeeper"

2/6 Myths of Media Impact and the Rhetoric of Media Use

Hall, "Encoding/Decoding;" Merton, "Manifest and Latent Functions;" Gramsci, "Ideological Hegemony;" Jameson, "Reification;" Carey, "Cultural Approach;" Walker, "Art in the age...;" Gans, "Critique of Mass Culture"

2/13 Research Methods I

Berelson, "Content Analysis in Comm Research;" Holsti, "Content Analysis: An Introduction"

2/20 Research Methods II

Westley, "Controlled Exp;" Stempel, "Content Analysis;" Thomas, "Artifactual Study"

2/27 Social Function of Artifacts through History

Adorno, "Dialectic...;" Benjamin, "Work of Art...;" Breed, "Mass Comm and Sociocultural...;" Shils, "Mass Society...;" Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses"

Project proposals DUE FRIDAY BEFORE BREAK, MARCH 3

3/6 Spring Break

3/13 Media Genres, News, and the Construction of Objectivity (Social Theory)

Gans, "Values in the News;" Grossberg, "Media and Politics;" Stam, "Television News and its Spectator;" Morgan, "TV and Democracy"

3/20 Information and Entertainment (Psychology)

Horton and Wohl, "Parasocial...;" Meyrowitz, "Television and Interpersonal...;"

3/27 Content and Effects – TV Violence

Freedman, "Effect of TV Violence;" Gerbner, "Living with TV;" Klapper, "Effects of Crime...;" Talese; Zillman, "Pornography..."

4/3 Race, Class, Gender

Russo, "Female Grotesques;" Lipsitz, "Meaning of Memory;" Omi, "In Living Color;" Bobo, "Color Purple;" Hall, "Ethnicity...;" Bourdieu, "Sport and social class"

4/10 Publicity, Celebrity, Advertising

Jhally, "Class and Myth;" Chaney, "Department Store as Cultural Form;" Jhally, "Origins of Consumer Culture;" Steinem, "Sex, Lies & Advertising;" Dyer, "What do advertisements mean?"

4/17 Popular Culture and Entertainment – Wrap up

Modleski, "Rhythms of Reception;" Ang, "Watching Dallas;" Radway, "Women and Romance;" Jenkins, "Star Trek"

4/24 RESEARCH/STUDY DAY

5/1 Project Reports and Final Projects DUE

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Adapted from the Temple University policy statement on academic integrity, passed by the Academic Senate on April 19, 1989.

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's labor: another person's ideas, words, or assistance.

There are many forms of plagiarism: repeating another person's sentence as your own, adopting a particularly apt phrase as your own, paraphrasing someone else's argument as your own, or even presenting someone else's line of thinking in the development of an idea as though it were your own. Academic writing is built upon the use of other people's ideas and words - this is how ideas are developed - but appropriate credit must always be given to the originator.

In general, all sources must be identified as clearly, accurately, and thoroughly as possible. When in doubt about whether to identify a source, either cite the source or consult your instructor. Here are some specific guidelines to follow:

- a. Quotations. Whenever you use a phrase, sentence, or longer passage written (or spoken) by someone else, you must enclose the words in quotation marks and indicate the exact source of the material, including the page number of written sources.
- b. Paraphrasing. Avoid closely paraphrasing another's words. Substituting an occasional synonym, leaving out or adding an occasional modifier, rearranging the grammar slightly, or changing the tenses of verbs simply looks like sloppy copying. Good paraphrasing indicates that you have absorbed the material and are restating it in a way that contributes to your overall argument. It is best to either quote material directly, using quotation marks, or put ideas completely in your own words. In either case, acknowledgment is necessary. Remember: expressing someone else's ideas in your own way does not make them yours.
- c. Facts. In a paper, you will often use facts that you have gotten from a lecture, a written work, or some other source. If the facts are well known, it is usually not necessary to provide a source. (In a paper on American history, for example, it would not ordinarily be necessary to give a source for the statement that the Civil War began in 1861 after the inauguration of Abraham Lincoln.) But if the facts are not widely known or if the facts were developed or presented by a specific source, then you should identify that source.
- d. Ideas. If you use an idea or ideas that you learned from a lecture, written work, or some other source, then you should identify the source. You should identify the source for an idea whether or not you agree with the idea. It does not become your original idea just because you agree with it. Penalties for violation of Temple University's academic honesty policies can range from a failing grade for the assignment or the entire course to referral to the university disciplinary committee.

