

The syllabus for

CMGT 584:

Communication and the Multicultural Marketplace

Annenberg School for Communication

University of Southern California

Prof. Chris Smith

Spring 2010

Office: ASC 321A

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Class meets: TH 6:30 – 9:20 pm, ASC G34

Academic Integrity Policy:

The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School for Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor, or from the graduate program.

ADA Compliance Statement

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Course Description

This course rigorously examines historical texts and contemporary case studies that track how an increasingly globalized and multicultural society impacts development of consumer products and their attendant market positioning across various platforms of communication. In aggregate, the texts under scrutiny conceptualize modernity as an historical and political condition that is structured to a significant degree by consumerism, the growing collective buying power of diverse social identities and cultural demographics, and the impact of these groups on commercial branding strategy. A subset of the reading list regards how the luxury market segment offers unique insights on the evolving nexus between class, local (sub-)cultures, and globalization (i.e., increasingly borderless flows of financial capital and the definitive role played by online and wireless social communities in the new public sphere).

Course Goals

1. To familiarize students with a representative range of social scientific research on “best practices” for negotiating social and cultural identity in the construction of brand messaging.
2. To formulate consumer brands as conceptually useful mechanisms through which students can meaningfully engage theories of social status, (post-) modernity, and power.
3. To offer students opportunities to reflect and write critically about the role of consumer brands in contemporary culture.
4. To offer students practical exposure to media and corporate industry professionals who work to create, manage, and extend consumer brands within diverse domestic and global markets.

Content

The reading for this course reflects an interdisciplinary approach to its subject. Over the next 15 weeks, we will engage scholars spanning a wide variety of fields and disciplines, including anthropology, communications, economics, history, linguistics, marketing science, and cultural/critical studies.

Course Readings

Required Textbooks (Available USC Bookstore):

1. *Why She Buys*, Bridget Brennan
2. *The Real Pepsi Challenge*, Stephanie Capparell

3. ***The Cult of the Luxury Brand*, Radha Chadha and Paul Husband**
4. ***Shopping for Identity*, Marilyn Halter**
5. ***Luxury Fashion Branding*, Uché Okonkwo**
6. ***The Culture Code*, Clotaire Rapaille**
7. ***Women Want More*, Michael J. Silverstein & Kate Sayre**
8. ***Ad Women*, Juliann Sivulka**
9. ***Deluxe*, Dana Thomas**
10. ***Buying In*, Rob Walker**

Course Reader (Available at Magic Machine Copies)

Textbooks and supplementary material are on reserve in Leavey Library.

Competencies and Evaluation

Reading Summaries	30%
Final Paper	30%
Discussion Leadership	30%
Participation	10%

Reading Summaries (30)

Thoughtful notes on each week's reading (as marked with an *) will be due 24 hours before each class (30% of final grade). Please submit these via e-mail. These notes, approximately 250 words per article or chapter, should include:

- The full bibliographic citation of the work
- The main points of the reading, including summaries of each chapter or section

CMGT 584 – Communication & the Multicultural Marketplace

- Definitions of major concepts and examples of their use in the text
- Significant quotations and commentary on items that you find interesting
- Your reactions/questions/critiques/connections with other authors and “big ideas” we’ve covered in class
- Page references throughout

The summaries will serve as your customized index of the course literature. They will be graded 3 points each if complete and turned in on time, 2 points if incomplete or one class late, and 1 point if more than one class late.

Final Paper (30)

This paper will aim to synthesize specific reading segments covered during the course of the semester. Details will be forthcoming at the appropriate time.

Discussion Leadership (30)

Each class member will take the role of facilitating class discussion for one of the course readings. The discussion leader will prepare a small number of thoughtful questions to begin the class discussion, and then the leader will actually lead the discussion for a period of between 12 and 16 minutes. **Guidelines for preparing for a discussion leader role will be posted on the course website under “assignments” by second week of the term.** Each student in the class is expected to read all the assigned readings each week and to come prepared to contribute to the discussion, regardless of who is discussion leader.

Participation (10)

Class discussion is a critical part of the effectiveness of this course. This is a seminar course, where we collectively grapple with issues and challenges to communication management today. Each individual is expected to be actively involved in class discussion during each class period. The primary assessment will be the quality of those contributions to the group effort.

Good contributions are:

- thoughtful
- analytical
- constructive to the group effort
- topically relevant
- linked to the readings assigned for that day*

Poor contributions:

- simply restate what someone else has already said

- take the discussion on a tangent
- refer to issues we have already left behind as the discussion moves forward
- do not respect the other participants
- show that the individual has not done the assigned readings*

This 10% will be based on **overall contributions throughout the semester based on my judgment of overall frequency and quality**. If you skip class, don't expect a high participation grade. If you want to know how you are doing on class participation, don't hesitate to ask me.

Schedule of Reading & Evaluation

(Course Reader= CR); (Blackboard=BB); (Handout=HO)

Week 1 (Jan 14): Introduction, Course Overview

Lecture:

Introductions, syllabus review, overview of expectations.

Week 2 (Jan 21): Multicultural America, Pt. 1*

Reading:

(HO) L. Friedman, *The Horizontal Society*, Introduction, Ch. 5

(HO) L. Wynter, *American Skin*, "Introduction"

(HO) M. Halter, *Shopping for Identity*, Ch. 1 "Longings and Belongings"; Ch. 4 "The Romance of Ethnicity"

(BB) C. Cho, et. al., "Multicultural Marketing in Contemporary U.S. Markets" *

(HO) H. Hsu, "The End of White America?"

Week 3 (Jan 28): Multicultural America, Pt. 2*

Reading:

M. Halter, *Shopping for Identity*, Chs. 2-3

S. Capparell, *The Real Pepsi Challenge*, Introduction, Chs. 1-5

(CR) L. Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic*, Ch. 7

(CR) S.S.L. Jain, "Come Up to the Kool Taste..."*

Week 4 (Feb 4): Multicultural America, Pt. 3*

Reading:

M. Halter, *Shopping for Identity*, Chs. 5-6

(CR) G. Garcia, *The New Mainstream*, Ch. 3

(CR) L. Wynter, *American Skin*, Chs. 5, 9

(CR) L. Savan, "What's Black, Then White, and Said All Over?"

(CR) A. Davila, "Images: Producing Culture for the Market" *

(CR) B. Steinberg, "P&G brushes Up Iconic Image of 'Crest Kid'..."

Leavey Reserve DVD: *Brown is the New Green* *

Week 5 (Feb 11): Multicultural America, Pt. 4*

Reading:

M. Halter, *Shopping for Identity*, Ch. 7

(CR) Navarro, "Going Beyond Black and White"

(CR) R. Rodriguez, "The Third Man"

(CR) R. La Ferla, "Generation E.A."

(CR) J. Pressler, "Truly Indie Fans"

Leavey Reserve: R. Dyer, *White*, Ch. 3: "The Light of the World"*

Week 6 (Feb 18): "Murketing" & Multiculturalism

Reading:

R. Walker, *Buying In*, Introduction, Chs. 1-8, 10-11

Leavey Reserve DVDs: *Dogtown & Z-Boys; Merchants of Cool*

Week 7 (Feb 25): Identity Signaling, Consumption, and Race*

Reading:

(CR) J. Berger & C. Heath, "Where Consumers Diverge From Others..."*

(CR) M. Lamont & V. Molnar, "How Blacks Use Consumption to Shape Their Collective Identity"

(CR) K.K. Charles, et. al., "Conspicuous Consumption and Race"

(CR) V. Postrel, "Inconspicuous Consumption"

(CR) S. A. Kwon, "Autoexoticizing"*

Week 8 (Mar 4): Identity Signaling, Consumption, & the GLBT Market*

Reading:

(CR) L. P. Gross, "The Mediated Society"

(CR) R. Becker, "Prime-Time Television in the Gay Nineties"*

(CR) H. Shugart, "Reinventing Privilege"*

(CR) K. Sender, *Business, Not Politics*, Chs. 1, 8

Week 9 (Mar 11): The Women's Market, Pt. 1

Reading:

J. Sivulka, *Ad Women*, Chs. 3, 6-10

Leavey Reserve DVD: *Mad Men – Season One, episodes 1, 6, 8, 11, 13*

SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (Mar 25): The Women's Market, Pt. 2

Reading:

B. Brennan, *Why She Buys*, Introduction, Chs. 1-5

Week 11 (Apr 1): The Women's Market, Pt. 3

Reading:

M. Silverstein, *Women Want More*, Preface, Introduction, Chs. 1, 3, 9-11, Conclusion

Week 12 (Apr 8): Transcultural Marketing*

Reading:

C. Rapaille, *The Culture Code*, (All chapters except Ch. 11)

(CR) I. Matthiesen, et. al., "The 'Hugo Boss' Connection..."

(CR) N.Y. Wong, "Personal Taste and Family Face..."*

(CR) C. Kripalani, "Trendsetting and Product Placement in Bollywood Film..."*

Week 13 (Apr 15): The Luxury Market, Pt. 1

Reading:

U. Okonkwo, *Luxury Fashion Branding*

Week 14 (April 22): The Luxury Market, Pt. 2

Reading:

R. Chadha & P. Husband, *The Cult of the Luxury Brand*

Week 15 (April 29): The Luxury Market, Pt. 3

Reading:

D. Thomas, *Deluxe*

FINAL PAPER DUE, TH May 6th