

COMM 465: GENDER IN MEDIA INDUSTRIES AND PRODUCTS

FALL 2014

Professor: Alison Trope, Ph.D.

Office hours: TTH 3:30-4:30 and by appointment, trope@usc.edu

ANN 309

TTH 2-3:20

Course Description:

This course will examine the representation and inequity of gender and other facets of identity (race, sexuality, age) in a range of media industries and products. Our goal will be to understand how key media institutions construct and define identity and identity politics through a range of products as well as the marketing, distribution, exhibition and employment practices that play a role in shaping them. We will frame these issues historically in order to understand and assess whether change has occurred over time. We will further think about ways we can foster change and advocate for underrepresented groups and identities.

Course Readings:

All course readings and handouts will be available on Blackboard unless otherwise specified.

Course Requirements and Attendance:

Students are required to do all of the reading, attend all classes, complete all assignments, and participate in class discussion. Attendance is mandatory and will be taken each class meeting. Attendance grade may be affected by your promptness and level of attention during class lecture. You are allowed two absences without explanation, after which there is a deduction of half a grade off the final grade for each unexcused absence.

Personal computers and wireless Internet are a key part of today's technological culture, but they also can distract you from the class discussion and dampen participation. You may bring your laptops to class for note-taking, but please refrain from browsing the internet, updating your Facebook profile, playing games, instant messaging, shopping, etc. Although you may think you are being discreet, 90% of the time students engaging in such behavior give themselves away (through inappropriate facial expressions, lack of eye contact, out of sync typing, etc.). Use of computer in the classroom is a privilege. If you abuse this privilege, you will be marked absent for that class period and laptops may be banned from the classroom.

You will receive details about each assignment separately. **All assignments must be completed and handed in on time. Emailed assignments will not be accepted. Late assignments will be marked down three points per day (including weekends and holidays).** If you are unable to turn in an assignment due to illness or a personal emergency, you must provide documentation that will allow you to be excused, or discuss your situation with the professor in a timely manner, before the paper is due. Do not wait until the end of the semester to sort things out. Remember: this is YOUR responsibility.

Assignments and Grading:

You are responsible for the material covered in class and in the reading. You will be evaluated on the following:

- 1) the level of your engagement with the class materials (as demonstrated in your written work)
- 2) your capacity to explain your ideas and analysis in articulate and well-written forms
- 3) your ability to creatively explore those theories and methodologies

All of your work will be graded on two primary evaluative scales:

- 1) how well it demonstrates an understanding of the theories and methodologies of the class
- 2) how well it articulates and structures its argument

The final course grade will be based on the following distribution:

Class & online participation/attendance	15%
Take home midterm	20%
Social/Cause Marketing Research Summary	15%
Case Study Cause Marketing Firm (group assignment)	20%
Final Project/Presentation (group assignment)	30%

You must complete ALL of these assignments in order to pass the class. **Failure to complete one of them will result not only in an F for that assignment, but a failing grade in the course.**

Course Grading Policy:

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A	outstanding, thoughtful and insightful work and analysis, based in critical argument, and showing an ability to think beyond the basic course material
A-/B+	above average work, demonstrating effort and keen understanding of conceptual ideas
B/B-	average work, needs improvement on ideas and argument
C+/C	shows little effort, lacks clarity and/or argument
C- and below	fulfilling the bare minimum and showing little understanding of the material

Each assignment will be worth 100 points and will be converted to a percentage score depending upon the weight assigned to each. Your percentage scores on the assignments will be totaled and translated to a letter grade as per the scale shown below:

A+	= 97-100	C	= 76-74
A	= 96-94	C-	= 73-70
A-	= 93-90	D+	= 69-67
B+	= 89-87	D	= 66-64
B	= 86-84	D-	= 63-60
B-	= 83-80	F	= 59-00
C+	= 79-77		

If you have concerns regarding a grade on a given assignment, you must first wait 24 hours (cooling off period) before appealing it in writing, stating the reasons why you feel the grade is inaccurate. All concerns should be addressed within 10 days of receiving the graded assignment. After that, no appeals will be accepted for review and the grade will be considered final.

Diversity Requirement

This course focuses on several key facets of diversity as they manifest themselves in the behind-the-scenes production of media (film, television, advertising, music, social media, etc.) as well as each industry's products. Given the industrial focus, we will spend time considering the way economic imperatives impact diversity (or the lack thereof) on several levels (writing, directing, producing, as well as casting and on-screen representation). We will also work to frame these issues historically in order to gauge the degree to which certain ideologies and practices tied to identity have become normalized and systemic in nature. The course focuses specifically on issues of gender; however, we cannot study gender or any single facet of identity in a vacuum. Therefore, throughout the term, readings, lectures and guest speakers will illuminate connections between gender and other categories of diversity (particularly race, sexuality and age) as they get reflected in certain industrial examples. The final project for the course asks students to identify a key problem tied to diversity in a specific media industry and address this problem in the context of an advocacy campaign. The course therefore not only pinpoints systemic problems of diversity but also works to solve them.

Classroom Conduct and Respect

All students are encouraged to use the classroom as a safe space in which to speak and voice their opinions. My expectation is that you respect not only the professor, but also your classmates when they participate in discussion.

Academic Integrity:

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *SCampus*, the Student Guidebook, (www.usc.edu/scampus or <http://scampus.usc.edu>) contains the University Student Conduct Code (see University Governance, Section 11.00), while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A. All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as Communication school administrators.

In addition, it is assumed that the work you submit for this course is work you have produced entirely by yourself, and has not been previously produced by you for submission in another course or Learning Lab, without approval of the instructor.

Disability

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 (or to TA) 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. Website and contact information for DSP: http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

ESL Students

Please inform me as soon as possible if you require special accommodations based on your understanding of the English language.

Campus Resources

Center for Women and Men (CWM): The Center for Women and Men provides a safe haven and support system by responding to and preventing acts of sexual violence.

Emergencies: (213) 740-4900
24-Hour Line: (213) 321-3982 (24-hour)
www.usc.edu/cwm

Student Support and Advocacy: Student Support and Advocacy assists students and families in resolving complex issues which adversely affect a student's collegiate experience. Whether personal, academic, or financial, we evaluate and present options to students and facilitate communication and connections with university departments.

STU 201
www.usc.edu/student-affairs/programs/ssa
(213) 740-2421

Trojans Care for Trojans: Trojans Care for Trojans, an initiative within the Division of Students Affairs, empowers students to take action and speak out when they are concerned about a Trojan. It

provides support resources and appropriate referrals for Trojans facing personal difficulties. Trojans Care for Trojans encourages students to care for each other and the entire campus community.

University Park Campus Counseling Services: USC Counseling Services is dedicated to providing and referring students with psychological services to assist them during their time at USC. Students may schedule an intake appointment at any time by calling or walking in to the center

Main Line: (213) 740-7711

http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/Health_Center/cs.index.shtml

TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

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Week 1

Introduction: Thinking About Media Industries in History

August 26

Course introduction and historical overview

August 28

Vicki Mayer, "To Communicate is Human; To Chat is Female: The Feminization of US Media Work"
Denise Bielby, "Gender Inequality in Culture Industries"

Week 2

Industrial Power and the Media Economy

September 2

Timothy Havens & Amanda Lotz, "Economic Conditions in Media Production"
Philip Napoli, "Media Economics and the Study of Media Industries"

September 4

Timothy Havens & Amanda Lotz, "Creative Practices and Roles Involved in Media Making"

Week 3

The Impact of Conglomeration and the Politics on Representation

September 9

Ben Aslinger, "Risk, Innovation and Gender in Media Conglomerates"

September 11

Elana Levine, "Fractured Fairy Tales and Fragmented Markets: Disney's *Weddings of a Lifetime* and the Cultural Politics of Media Conglomeration"

September 13

Last day to drop without receiving a "W"

Week 4

The Power of Marketing

September 16

Philip Drake, "Distribution and Marketing in Contemporary Hollywood"
"The Cobra: Inside a Movie Marketer's Playbook"

September 18

Peter Kramer, "Women First: 'Titanic' (1997), Action-Adventure Films"

and Hollywood's Female Audience"
Hilary Radner, "Hit Movies for Femmes"

Week 5**Understanding and Making Inequities Visible**

September 23

Judith Oakley, “Gender-based Barriers to Senior Management Positions: Understanding the Scarcity of Female CEOs”

September 25

Stacy Smith, Katherine Pieper, Marc Choueiti, “Gender Inequality in Popular Films: Examining On-Screen Portrayals and Behind-the-Scenes Employment Patterns in Motion Pictures Released between 2007-2013”

Read one ADDITIONAL study from Blackboard folder “Studies”

Week 6**Modes of Resistance, Change and Advocacy**

September 30

Christina Dunbar-Hester, “Beyond ‘Dudecore’? Challenging Gendered and ‘Raced’ Technologies Through Media Activism”

October 2

Cynthia Carter, “Online Popular Antisexism Political Action in the UK and USA: The Importance of Collaborative Anger for Social Change”

Making Waves: A Guide to Cultural Strategy (report)

ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE

Week 7**The Audience as Construct**

October 7

Eileen Meehan, “Gendering the Commodity Audience: Critical Media Research, Feminism and Political Economy”

Jane Shattuc, “Talk is Cheap: How the Industrial Production Process Constructs Femininity”

October 9

Amanda Lotz, “Women’s Brands and Brands of Women: Segmenting Audiences and Network Identities”

Week 8**Race as Niche Identity**

October 14

Jennifer Fuller, “Branding Blackness on US Cable Television”

Aymar Jean Christian, “[The Black TV Crisis and the Next Generation](#)”

Madhavi Mallapragada, “[The Market of the Future...and Now: Media Industries in the US and the Race to Capitalize on ‘Multicultural’ Consumers](#)”

GUEST: [Dayna Chatman](#)

October 16

Scott Wible, "Media advocates, Latino citizens and niche cable: The Limits of 'no limits' TV"

Angharad Valdivia, "Latinas on Television and Film: Exploring the Limits and Possibilities of Inclusion"

Week 9**Narrowcasting and LGBT Audiences**

October 21

Katherine Sender, "Dualcasting: Bravo's Gay Programming and the Quest for Women Audiences"
David Craig, "How TV Movies Saved My Life"

GUEST: [David Craig](#)

October 23

Ben Aslinger, "Creating a Network for Queer Audiences at Logo TV"
Julia Himberg, "Multicasting: Lesbian Programming and the Changing Nature of Cable TV"

TAKE HOME MIDTERM DUE

Week 10**Changing Mediascapes: Sharing and Social Media**

October 28

Tamara Shepherd, "Gendering the Commodity Audience in Social Media"

October 30

Tajnja Carstensen, "Gender and Social Media: Sexism, Empowerment, or the Irrelevance of Gender"
Dara Persis Murray, "Investigating Users' Responses to Dove's Real Beauty Strategy: Feminism, Freedom and Facebook"

Week 11**Labor Politics and Power Plays in Media Industries**

November 4

Miranda Banks, "Gender Below the Line: Defining Feminist Production Studies"
Linda Steiner, "Glassy Architectures in Journalism"

November 6

Russell K. Robinson, "Casting and Caste-ing: Reconciling Artistic Freedom and Antidiscrimination Norms"

ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE

Week 12**Who Tells Stories and Whose Stories Are We Telling?**

November 11

Denise Bielby, William Bielby "Women and Men in Film: Gender Inequality Among Writers in a Culture Industry"

November 13

Darnell Hunt/WGA West, "Turning Missed Opportunities Into Realized Ones"

Week 13**Working With and Against Type**

November 18

Richard Dyer, "Stars as Types" and "Stars as Specific Images"
P. David Marshall, "The Cinematic Apparatus and the Construction of
Celebrity" (Tom Cruise, pp. 94-118)

November 20

Julie D'Acci, "Defining Women: The Case of Cagney and Lacey"

Week 14**Male Consumers and Lifestyle Branding**

November 25

Kenon Brazeale, "In Spite of Women: *Esquire* Magazine and the Construction
of the Male Consumer"
Annabelle Mooney, "Holy Grail or Poisoned Chalice? Three Generations of
Men's Magazines"

November 27

Thanksgiving

Week 15**Rethinking the Old Adage: Sex Sells**

December 2

Elana Levine, "Sex as a Weapon: Programming Sexuality in the 1970s"
Linda Majewski, excerpt from *Pretty Funny* (Sarah Silverman)

December 4

Karen Boyle, "Buying and Selling Sex: Sexualization, Commerce and
Gender"

December 11

FINAL PROJECTS & Presentations (in lieu of final exam)