

COMM 457: Youth and Media

Fall 2015 / MW 2:00-3:20 PM/ANN L101

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Office Hours: M/W 3:30-4:30 and by appointment

Course Description

What is a youth culture? How did this identity emerge and change as a distinct social group? How is youth portrayed in the media and understood in society? What role do the media have in shaping the identities, values, and experiences of youth and how do young people interact and bring changes to society and culture through media? Are youth media and culture exclusively preserved for young people? How do race, gender, class, and sexuality influence the way we think about young people and youth culture? In this class we will critically explore the category of youth and the myriad and complex interactions the youth have with the media and popular culture. We will address topics including media, consumption, technology, race, class, gender, and sexuality by exploring a variety of sources such as advertisements, films, television shows, videogames, YouTube, and social media.

We will read key research findings on these topics, engage in discussions about the accounts of youth and media, and critically analyze examples of media and popular culture that are associated with young people. By the end of the course, you will acquire a solid knowledge of the topics and concepts crucial to the ongoing research in this vital area of media studies.

Class Readings

All readings are posted on Blackboard. You are expected to complete readings by the start of lecture and be prepared to actively participate in class discussions.

Course Requirements

Attendance: Required

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken each class. This class will be discussion-oriented so your attendance and participation will play a vital role in enriching your learning experience. You will be given **three (3)** free unexcused absences. Four or more absences will result in an automatic half grade deduction from your overall grade for each unexcused absence. Missing more than seven classes without discussing the situation with the instructor **will** result in a failing grade for the course.

* Excused absences are granted *only* for the following reasons: serious illness (which must be documented with a doctor's certificate), a death in the family (again, documentation is required), or, in very rare cases, a school-related event that requires your presence and that you have arranged with the professor well in advance (e.g. an out-of-town university competitive event in which you are required to participate, a religious holiday, or a job interview). In order for an absence to be excused, documentation must be provided (a note from a coach, letter scheduling the interview, etc.).

The following types of situations are NOT considered excused absences: social events, meetings of Greek or service organizations, entertaining out-of-town visitors, holiday plans, going to weddings or to visit relatives, or any other circumstance that is extracurricular and at which your attendance is optional and secondary to your schoolwork.

Participation (10%)

I expect you to come to class on time and be prepared to discuss the assigned readings each week. This grade will reflect not only your participation, but also whether you have prepared the readings for thoughtful discussion in class. You should be able to respond to questions about the assigned readings and offer opinions and insight into the topics addressed. Poor attendance will adversely affect your participation grade. If you miss more than three classes, you **will not** receive the full participation grade.

Blog Posts (20%)

You will post a 250+ word blog entry that engages with the ideas in the readings, previous class discussions, and additional materials you find for 10 of the weeks. All of your blog posts are due by Sunday at 5 pm. Your posts to the class blog will be graded on a weekly basis.

2 Leading Class Discussions (10% each, 20%)

Early in the semester you will sign up to be a discussion leader for two topics of your interest. You will prepare at least three thought-provoking questions that we can use for class discussion. The quality of our class discussions will depend on your discussion points that nicely summarize and reflect the assigned readings (as well as previous readings, class lectures and class discussions). You will email me the discussion questions **24 hours** prior to your scheduled discussion leading day. If you fail to email me with the discussion questions before class, you will lose at least half the grade for this assignment.

Research Paper (Proposal+Annotated Bibliography: 5%/ Final Paper: 25%/ Total: 30%)

You will write a 10 page small-scale research paper incorporating topics and concepts you learned in class. This paper will be due at the end of the semester. Your research topic must be approved by the instructor in advance.

* Late Policy: No extensions will be given unless you have truly extenuating circumstances. In these cases, you must speak with me **before** the assignment is due to make an arrangement. Technology excuses are not acceptable. **Assignments turned in late without an approved extension will be marked down a letter grade for every day late. After five days late, the assignment will earn a 0!** Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss assignments.

Mid-term Exam (20%)

The mid-term exam will be consisted of short essay questions. The exam will evaluate both your understanding of the readings and topics covered in class and your ability to synthesize ideas across the course.

Course Grading Policy

You will receive details about each assignment/exam separately. **All assignments need to be completed and handed in on time to avoid a grade reduction. If you are unable to turn in an assignment due to illness or a personal emergency, you must provide written documentation that will allow you to be excused, or discuss your situation with me in a timely manner. Do no wait until the end of the semester to sort things out.**

In order to pass this class you will need to complete ALL of the assignments. Failure to complete one or more of them will result in an F in the class.

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A	outstanding, thoughtful and enthusiastic work
B+/B	above average work, demonstrating good insight into assignment
B-/C+	needs improvement on ideas, argument and follow through
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 won the assignments will be totaled and translated to a letter grade per the scale shown below:

A	= 100-94	C	= 76-74
A-	= 93-90	C-	= 73-70
B+	= 89-87	D+	= 69-67
B	= 86-84	D	= 66-64
B-	= 83-80	D-	= 63-60
C+	= 79-77	F	= 59-0

If you have concerns regarding a grade on a given assignment, you must appeal it in writing, stating the reasons why you feel the grade is inaccurate, within one week of receiving the graded assignment. No late appeals will be accepted for review.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources. [Annenberg School of Communication Academic Integrity Policy](#)

Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. Students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. You cannot turn in someone else’s work and you cannot turn in material you have used in other classes, whether at USC or elsewhere. You should also properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor.

The Annenberg School of Communication maintains a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found responsible for plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on examinations, or purchasing papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade for this course, will be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards and may be dismissed from the School of Communication.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

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 as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in 120 Grace Ford Salvatori Hall and is open 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Schedule of Classes, Topics & Readings

Week One: Construction of Youth

Monday, 24 August: Introduction and Overview

Wednesday, 26 August:

- Andy Bennett, Chapter 2. “As Young as You Feel: Youth as a Discursive Construct” in *Youth Cultures: Scenes, Subcultures and Tribes* (pp. 23-36).

Week Two: Moral Panic

Monday, 31 August:

- Sharon R. Mazzarella & Norma O. Pecora (2007). “Newspaper Coverage of Adolescent Girls” in *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 31(1), pp. 6-27.

Wednesday, 2 September:

- Ronald D. Cohen (1997), “The Delinquents: Censorship and Youth Culture in Recent U.S. History” in *History of Education Society* 37(3), pp. 251-270.

Week Three: Teen Market

Monday, September 7:

No class – Labor Day!

Wednesday, 9 September:

- Valerie Wee, Chapter 1. “Targeting Teens – The Return of a Vital Demographic Market” in *Teen Media* (pp. 23-40).
- Karen Brooks, Chapter 1. “Nothing Sells like Teen Spirit: The Commodification of Youth Culture” in *Youth Cultures: Texts, Images, and Identities* (pp. 1-16).

Week Four: Youth Branding

Monday, 14 September:

- Naomi Klein, Chapter 3. “Alt. Everything” in *No Logo* (pp. 62-85).
- Alissa Quart, Chapter 1. “Branded” (pp. 3-16) & Chapter 2. “From the Mall to the Fall: The Teen Consultants” (pp. 17-35) in *Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers*.

Screening: *Rhyme Pays: Hip-Hop and the Marketing of Cool*

Wednesday, 16 September:

- Bill Osgerby, Chapter 2. “The ‘Fab Phenomenon’” in *Youth Media* (pp. 12-29).

Week Five: Teen Films

Monday, 21 September:

- Catherine Driscoll, Chapter 3. “Inventing Teen Films” in *Teen Film: A Critical Introduction* (pp. 45-61).

Wednesday, 23 September:

- Catherine Driscoll, Chapter 5. “Teen Types and Stereotypes” in *Teen Film: A Critical Introduction* (pp. 83-100).
- Timothy Shary, Chapter 2. “Youth in School: Academics and Attitudes” in *Generation Multiplex: The Image of Youth in Contemporary American Cinema* (pp. 26-79).

Week Six: Youth Television

Monday, 28 September:

- Andrew Goodwin, Chapter 6. “A Televisual Context: MTV” in *Dancing in the Distraction Factory* (pp. 131-155).
- Valerie Wee, Chapter 4. “Beyond Music Television” in *Teen Media* (pp. 90-116).

Wednesday, 30 September:

- Ben Aslinger, Chapter 4. “Rocking Prime Time: Gender, the WB and Teen Culture” in *Teen Television* (pp. 78-91).
- Valerie Wee, Chapter 6. “From Teen Television Network to Teen Culture Nexus” in *Teen Media* (pp. 142-165).

Week Seven: Blurred Boundaries

Monday, 5 October:

- Sarah Banet-Weiser, Chapter 6. “Is Nick for Kids? Irony, Camp, and Animation in the Nickelodeon Brand” in *Kids Rule!* (pp. 178-210).

Wednesday, 7 October:

- Mary Celeste Kearney, Chapter 1. “The Changing Face of Teen Television, or Why We All Love *Buffy*” in *Undead TV* (pp. 17-41).
- (2012, 28 March). A Debate on “The Power of Young Adult Fiction” in *The New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/03/28/the-power-of-young-adult-fiction>).

Week Eight: Yout(h)ube

Monday, 12 October:

Mid-term Exam!

Wednesday, 14 October:

- Alex Hagwood (2011, 15 July), “No Stardom Until After Homework” in *The New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/17/fashion/how-teenagers-handle-the-webs-instant-fame.html>).
- Laura Jeffries, “The Revolution Will be Soooo Cute: YouTube “Hauls” and the Voice of Young Female Consumers” in *Studies in Popular Culture* 33(2), pp. 59-76.
- Ron Gregg (2008), “Queer Performance, Youth and YouTube” in *Jump Cut: A Review of Contemporary Media* 50 (<http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc50.2008/greg-kidsYouTube/text.html>).

Week Nine: Youth and Social Media

Monday, 19 October:

- danah boyd, Chapters 1-3 in *It's Complicated* (pp. 29-99).

Screening: *Digital Nation*

Wednesday, 21 October:

- Sherry Turkle, Chapters 9, 10, 13 in *Alone Together*.
- Bill Osgerby, Chapter 9. "Totally Wired" in *Youth Media* (pp. 154-172).

Week Ten: Gendered Technology

Monday, 26 October:

- Mary Celeste Kearney (2010), "Pink Technology: Mediamaking Gear for Girls" in *Camera Obscura* 25(2), pp. 1-39.

Wednesday, 28 October:

- Jacqueline Ryan Vickery (2014), "Talk Whenever, Wherever: How the US Mobile Phone Industry Commodifies Talk, Genders Youth Mobile Practices, and Domesticates Surveillance" in *Journal of Children and Media* 8(4), pp. 387-403.
- Mary Celeste Kearney (2005), "Birds on the Wire: Troping Teenage Girlhood Through Telephony in Mid-Twentieth Century U.S. Media Culture" in *Cultural Studies* 19, pp. 568-601.

Week Eleven: Videogames

Monday, 2 November:

- Stephen Kline, Nick Dyer-Witheford, & Greig de Peuter, Chapter 10. "Pocket Monsters: Marketing in the Perpetual Upgrade Marketplace" (p. 218-245) & Chapter 11. "Designing Militarized Masculinity: Violence, Gender, and the Bias of Game Experience" (p. 246-268) in *Digital Play*.

Wednesday, 4 November:

- Henry Jenkins & Justine Cassell, Chapter 1. "From *Quake Grrls* to *Desperate Housewives*: A Decade of Gender and Computer Games" in *Beyond Barbie and Mortal Kombat: New Perspectives on Gender and Gaming* (pp. 4-19).
- Jan Jagodzinski, Chapter 9. "Girl/Gurl/Grrrl Video Games and Cyberspace" in *Youth Fantasies* (pp. 153-167).

Final Paper Proposal Due!

Week Twelve: Girl Crisis

Monday, 9 November:

- Anita Harris, Chapter 1. "The "Can-Do" Girl Versus the "At-Risk" Girl" in *Future Girl: Young Women in the Twenty-First Century* (pp. 13-35).
- Sarah Banet-Weiser (2015), "Confidence You can Carry!?: Girls in Crisis and the Market for Girls' Empowerment Organizations" in *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 29(2), pp. 182-193.

Wednesday, 11 November:

- Shayla Thiel-Stern, Chapter 5. “Policing Teen Girls Online, 2004-2010” in *From the Dance Hall to Facebook: Teen Girls, Mass Media, and Moral Panic in the United States, 1905-2010* (pp. 145-172).
- Amy Adele Hasinoff (2014), “Blaming Sexualization for Sexting” in *Girlhood Studies* 7(1), pp. 102-120.

Week Thirteen: Masculinity

Monday, 16 November:

- Mia Consalvo (2003), “The Monsters Next Door: Media Constructions of Boy and Masculinity” in *Feminist Media Studies* 3(1), pp. 27-45.
- Jackson Katz (2011), “Advertising and the Construction of Violent White Masculinity: From BMWs to Bud Light” in *Gender, Race, and Class in Media* (pp. 261-269).

Screening: *Tough Guise 2* or *Guyland* (depending on availability)

Wednesday, 18 November:

- Max Morris & Eric Anderson (2015), “‘Charlie is So Cool Like’: Authenticity, Popularity and Inclusive Masculinity on YouTube” in *Sociology*, pp. 1-18.
- Sue Turnbull, Chapter 9. “‘They Stole Me’: *The O.C.*, Masculinity, and the Strategies of Teen TV” in *Teen TV* (pp. 170-183).

Week Fourteen: Youth Subculture

Monday, 23 November:

- Marion Leonard, Chapter 5. “The Riot Grrrl Network: Grrrl Power in Indie Rock” in *Gender in the Music Industry: Rock, Discourse, and Girl Power* (pp. 115-136).
- Kyra D. Gaunt, Chapter 16. “Dancin’ in the Street to a Black Girl’s Beat: Music, Gender, and the Ins and Outs of Double-Dutch” in *Generations of Youth: Youth Cultures and History in Twentieth-Century America* (pp. 272-292).

Wednesday, 25 November:

No Class – Thanksgiving Break (November 25 – 29)!

Week Fifteen: Youth Doing Media

Monday, 30 November:

- Marion Leonard, Chapter 6. “The Development of Riot Grrrl: Through Zines, the Internet and Across Time” in *Gender in the Music Industry: Rock, Discourse, and Girl Power* (pp. 137-162).
- Kristin Schilt, “‘I’ll Resist with Every Inch and Every Breath’: Girls and Zine Making as a Form of Resistance,” in *Youth Society* 35(71), pp. 71-97.

Wednesday, 2 December:

- Patricia G. Lange & Mizuko Ito, Chapter 6. “Creative Production” in *Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out* (pp. 243-293).

Wednesday, 9 December:

Final Paper Duel!