

CELEBRIMEDIA: THE BUSINESS OF FAME & CELEBRITY

CMGT 599 / Spring 2017 / ANN 406 (21838D)

University of Southern California

Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism

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Office Hours: 5:30-6:30PM Thursdays [by appointment or via Skype/Facetime]

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Celebrity is based in fame, but is not solely about being famous. Celebrity is created through the synergy and cultivation of opportunity between brand management, publicity, business and the social/emotional connection by fans. This course is intended to provide a fundamental understanding of the modern business of celebrity as a brand, as it relates to the interplay between reps, publicists, tabloids, journalists and the society which consumes celebrity content, in the creation and maintenance of the celebrity from a personality to a brand.

Through this course, you will analyze celebrity as a modern, vibrant business model through the prism of the components which foster celebrity and the analysis of current business activities. Aspiring publicists, agents, talent managers, reporters/bloggers, academics of communication and media, and even aspiring (or current) celebrities will gain a foundational outlook of the modern strategies and tactics being employed to grow and perpetuate celebrity in worldwide markets. This analysis will provide greater clarity in the operations of the modern entertainment and celebrity media industries and aid in understanding their effect on society.

COURSE GOALS

- ❖ To analyze how a celebrity uses media elements and practices as tools to craft brand strategies and to create specific, targeted messaging to convey a position or behavior;
- ❖ To provide an understanding of the structure and common practices of celebrity as a business and the synergies with media, agents/managers, publicists and corporations.
- ❖ To comprehend how celebrity can be transformed from a simple phenomenon to a worldwide brand and the economic effect on society;
- ❖ To grasp the transcendence of celebrity in society from life to death into “brand immortality.”

REQUIRED READING MATERIALS (TENTATIVE-SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

- ❖ *Starstruck: The Business of Celebrity* (2010); By Elizabeth Currid-Halkett
- ❖ *Celebrity, Inc.* (2011); By Jo Piazza

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- ❖ *Understanding Celebrity* (Second Edition, 2014); By Graeme Turner
- ❖ *Celebrimedia: The Business of Fame & Celebrity* (First Edition, 2017 [Delayed-MAY 2017]); By Aaron D. Settipane (not available for purchase yet)

CASE STUDIES & READING (IN READER)

- Craig, T., Sugai, P., & Aroean, L. (2014). *Hatsune Miku: Japanese virtual idol ignites global value cocreation*. Ontario, CAN: Ivey Publishing
- Cruz-Rodriguez, S. & Quinones, V. (2015). *Ricky Martin: The role of reputation in a celebrity's career*. Ontario, CAN: Ivey Publishing
- Elberse, A. & Christensen, M. (2011). *Lady Gaga*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School
- Elberse, A. & Golod, M. (2010). *Maria Sharapova: Marketing a champion*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Elberse, A. & McCall, J. (2010). *LeBron James*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Elberse, A. & McGee, H. (2015). *Shonda Rhimes' Shondaland*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School
- Elberse, A. & Smith, S. (2014). *Beyonce*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Elberse, A. & Stone, P. (2010). *Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) and Tom Cruise*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Ketchen, Jr., D., Adams, G., & Shook, C. (2008). Understanding and managing CEO celebrity. *Business Horizons* (51). p. 529-534.
- Koehn, N., Miller K., & Wilcox, R. (2012). *Bono and U2*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Maccoby, M. (2015, August 26). Why are people drawn to narcissists like Donald Trump. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Rose, C., Fisher, N. (2013). *Following Lance Armstrong: Excellence corrupted*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.
- Sharma, D. & Verma, V. *Lance Armstrong and Livestrong Foundation: Rising again after the fall*. Ontario, CAN: Ivey Publishing.
- Petriglieri, G. (2016, August 3). Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, and the danger of comparing leadership styles. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Plank, K. (2012). Under Armour's founder on learning to leverage celebrity endorsements. *Harvard Business Review*.

VIDEO

Sellebrity (2011) – Directed by Kevin Mazur

Watch via Amazon Docs (fee) or Hulu at <http://www.hulu.com/watch/686424>

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ASSIGNMENTS

This course will evaluate your progress and learning via the following assignments:

❖ Two Short Answer Papers:

- 5-7 page maximum (not counting References or Cover Sheet), double-spaced, Times New Roman or Arial only, 12pt., 1" margins only.
- First Assignment: You will analyze one of the following celebrities in the same manner as the course case studies. Your analysis should include how they established their fame, how they transformed their business based on their fame, and how they have managed media/publicity to a business end. Celebrities to analyze will include Gene Simmons, Donald Trump, Ashton Kutcher, Jessica Alba, Kathy Ireland, Maria Sharapova, Mark Cuban, Paul Newman (more to be added upon assignment).
- Second Assignment: You will analyze one of the case studies not presented in class from the reader. You should present the issue of the study, analyze the supporting facts presented in the case study, and include any relevant, current information which may revise or add to the conclusion of the case study.
- All papers are to be submitted in proper APA format (e.g., references, citations, headers cover page, etc.) with a minimum of **10** academic or recognized news media sources used. APA format accuracy will not be graded, but bonus points may be awarded for minimal or no APA errors.
- Any citations or references must be from recognized academic resources and legitimate, valid news/analysis outlets or such similar outlets (e.g., not Wikipedia or a random person's [non-recognized expert's] blog). You should cross-authenticate your citations where able.
- Grading will be based on the content and writing quality, fact accuracy, and strength of your argument and analysis. No more than 8 grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors are permitted. More than 8 shall result in a reduced grade on the assignment.
- File format must be in Word or PDF (make sure your PDF conversion does not change your font). If you use Pages, Google Docs, OpenOffice or similar word processor, a .doc or PDF-compatible file is required to be sent for credit.
- The assignments will be more fully described in a summary on the Assignment day.

❖ The Networking Clinic (Short Individual/Group Presentation)

- Select one professional working in entertainment or media whose works as representing, influencing, reporting on talent and celebrity, or being a celebrity. Your group will interview and present a short showcase in class (outlined below). You will be required to reach out to this person (and you should not have a prior relationship with this person), set up and complete a short interview with them. Interviews can be conducted via Skype, Facetime, in-person, or can be chat sessions (per your arrangement).
- The level of celebrity must be A-D list celebrity. They must have some kind of quantifiable public notoriety (e.g., internet celebrities are OK, but must prove *why* they're celebrities); or, be the level of rep or reporter on a national or regional scale and (e.g., 1st or 2nd tier celebrity blogger, reporter, manager from a medium/large firm or rep from a small company who reps a known name, etc.)
- This project can be either an individual or a group project) and be no longer than 6 minutes in length (but no shorter than 3 minutes). If you exceed 6 minutes, your grade will be reduced by half a letter grade.
- The scope of your interview is to learn about the role this person has and how their role either creates or influences celebrity. If they are a celebrity of some level, discuss and discover what motivated them to undertake this work for their life and how their celebrity (or work with celebrity) has changed or influenced them (or how they use it to influence others).
- The subject of your interview can be a publicist, agent, manager, celebrity (of any level), or executive. All names must be pre-approved by the Professor by Week 3. If you have difficulties in connecting or are given terms and conditions and ultimately the interview does not occur, then your presentation will be on the experience of reaching out and the challenges you faced in connecting with the person.

❖ Final Project (Individual Presentation)

- Present a campaign which will pitch the value of a currently living celebrity (or a dead celebrity and its estate) as either becoming some form of a "lifestyle" brand for worldwide marketing or as an endorser of a product (one they don't already endorse) for a worldwide campaign. You are presenting an executive-level pitch, therefore your presentation needs to be first-class, top quality, with no spelling errors, pixelizations or other errors.
- You will outline the target demographic, the value of that celebrity in the market, recent achievements (or mistakes) which support your claim, and the projected

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value of the celebrity in terms of the impact on the endorsed product or as a stand-alone brand.

- Prior to your presentation, you will present a “logline” pitch to the class – a one-line summary of what you intend to present. You should be able to field at least one question to qualify the presentation and celebrity choice.
 - No longer than 8 minutes. If you exceed 8 minutes, your presentation will be ended and your grade will be affected.
 - Allow for a window of up to 5 minutes immediately thereafter for any questions.
 - You may use Powerpoint, Keynote, Sway, Prezi, produced production or any combination of any media to convey your pitch and message.
 - Should be formatted and presented in a coherent, professional manner, fit for the market/product you’re presenting (i.e., if it’s for a surf or skate brand, you may not be wearing a suit and tie; but if for a luxury brand, you likely would). You should be a symbol – an embodiment of your pitch.
 - Presentations should have an accompanied print-out of each presentation slide (and any other presentation-related material), full page, in full color, presented in a professional manner (including any other related materials which may be required for your presentation, at your discretion). If you are not using a presentation using slides, an appropriate Press Kit should be prepared.
 - Grading will be based on project quality, fact accuracy, timing compliance and overall professional presentation quality.
- ❖ Current Issues Discussions
- Each person is expected to be knowledgeable in the current media/celebrity news relating to celebrity business issues including when a celebrity is suing (or threatening to sue), breaking celebrity deals, or the impact of salacious tabloid content.
 - Each class will begin with a short class-wide group discussion of recent issues. Class participants are expected to be reading all industry news websites daily and be ready to discuss such topics.
 - Grading is based on topic knowledge and participation in the discussion.

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CLASS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

❖ Grading

Short-Answer Papers:	25%
Networking Clinic	25%
Final Project:	30%
Current Issues Discussions	10%
Overall Participation:	10%

This course is designed to provide you an academic and functional background of the intricacies involved with the business of celebrity. Firm understanding of the class lectures, notes, text and presentations is crucial to ensure your future success as a working professional. You will demonstrate your understanding of these lessons and this class through your written papers and your final project.

❖ Participation

Class participation is essential and is 10% of your grade. Everyone is expected to contribute questions or comments to the class – even if it is to clarify a statement or concept because you simply did not understand it. This class is not just instructional, but collaborative. Participation is a lesson itself: if you are not an active participant in the entertainment industry and in the department and company in which you will work, your success will be stunted or stalled. If I do not know your name by the end of the semester, you did not participate sufficiently.

❖ Absence and Lateness

Class will begin promptly at 6:30PM; therefore, being late will result in you missing a vital portion of the day's lesson. Nevertheless, being absent or late to class will sometimes occur. The first unexcused absence is always forgiven. A sign-in sheet will be circulated during class twice to certify that you were present. More than one unexcused absence will result in a loss of that day's participation points (or fraction thereof). More than three unexcused absences during the term may result in you being dropped from the class. If you need to be absent for a period of time, please consult with me so that we can make arrangements to continue your participation in the class so that you may finish the class. Notifying me via email prior to your absence or lateness will result in no loss of points (except on presentation days or final exam day).

If you arrive late (e.g., up to thirty minutes late) without notifying me, your participation points will be affected, depending on the frequency of tardiness, as outlined above. You will lose all Current Issues Discussion points for that day. If you arrive very late (e.g., over one hour from the start of class) this is considered as absent, unless prior arrangements have been made with me. Please try to arrive on-time or no later than fifteen (15) minutes after class has begun. If there is some reason why you may have to arrive late on a consistent basis, please consult with me to make applicable arrangements.

Participation is important to the success of this course, and to realize success in the entertainment and media businesses. There is no dress code for this class, whether you're coming from work, from the gym, or from home, wear what you need to wear to be here and just show up!

❖ Assignment Due Dates

All assignments are due **one (1) hour prior to class time on the date due.** Assignments should be either posted to Blackboard or emailed to me directly. The timestamp from the server (via either Blackboard or my email server) shall act as your posting time.

❖ Late Assignments/Corrupted Files/Emergencies

No late assignments will be accepted.

If you have a legitimate and verifiable emergency that makes it impossible to turn in your assignment on time you must: (1) email me before the beginning of class the day the assignment is due to notify me of your emergency, (2) provide official proof (doctor's note or other evidence) and (3) arrange to email the assignment at a time to be determined. As a future professional, you are expected to have verified that the file to which you are submitting to me is in readable, executable condition, and not corrupted (unopenable) or have font issues or other alterations to the document. If a corrupted file is received by me it is treated as if the file never arrived. You will be notified that the file is corrupted only if there is time for you to re-submit the file (e.g., more than 1 hour prior to the deadline time), and only if I detect the file is corrupted in time, both at my sole election. I have no obligation to notify you of any file corruption issues (or of any other file errors or issues).

❖ Recording Policy

No recording of any lecture, guest speaker or any person presenting or attending the class via any media, now known or hereafter devised, (including but not limited to via iOS/Android

devices, through Word for Mac or any other recording method) is permitted. Lecture materials will be provided online, but this will not replace the discussion value in the class. Attendance is strongly encouraged. I reserve all rights in connection with my personal name, personality & likeness rights and no license of any kind is expressly granted for any media, now known or hereafter devised.

❖ Laptop/Device Use Policy

Laptops are not to be used for note taking during lecture. The presentations and other documentation will be provided online prior to class. Notes taken by hand are always permitted. Due to the nature of devices and the Internet, no use of any devices or laptops during lecture or during a guest appearance are permitted. If you need to respond to an email or other such situation, please step out of the class room. Excessive device use will result in you being asked to leave and your participation points forfeited.

Effective fall 2014, all undergraduate and graduate Annenberg majors and minors will be required to have a PC or Apple laptop that can be used in Annenberg classes (subject to the forgoing restriction). Please refer to the Annenberg Virtual Commons for more information. To connect to USC's Secure Wireless network, please visit USC's Information Technology Services [website](#).

OFFICE HOURS & QUESTIONS

Office hours are 5:30-6:30PM, by appointment, just before class. Arrangements can be made in the event you have questions or need to discuss a concept further prior to class or at a mutually convenient time on-campus or at my office at Sony Pictures. Meetings can also be arranged via Facetime, Skype, etc., or for a different day, around the same time general times. Please feel free to email me with any questions or issues pertinent to the class and the lessons. I always make myself available to support your academic success.

USC ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

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, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any

suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at:
<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

All work you submit must be your own and you may not inappropriately assist other students in their work beyond the confines of a particular assignment. There is a no-tolerance policy for academic misconduct in this course! The minimum penalty for academic misconduct will be a failing grade (F) for the course – further academic and disciplinary penalties may be assessed.

USC SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The following is the USC Annenberg School of Journalism's policy on academic integrity and repeated in the syllabus for every course in the school:

"Since its founding, the USC School of Journalism has maintained a commitment to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found plagiarizing, fabricating, cheating on examinations, and/or purchasing papers or other assignments faces sanctions ranging from an 'F' on the assignment to dismissal from the School of Journalism." All academic integrity violations will be reported to the office of Student Judicial Affairs & Community Standards (SJACS), as per university policy, as well as journalism 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.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Students are under a lot of pressure. If you start to feel overwhelmed, it is important that you reach out for help. A good place to start is the USC Student Counseling Services office at 213-740-7711. The service is confidential, and there is no charge.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS/COURSE CONTINUITY IN A CRISIS

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

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COURSE OUTLINE – (SUBJECT TO CHANGE: ALL SPEAKERS ARE TENTATIVE)

Course Week	In-Class	Reading Assignment for Current Lecture
Week 1: 1/12/17	Lecture: Introduction to Celebrity <u>Assign Networking Clinic</u>	Watch: "Sellebrity" Currid-Halkett (Ch. 1-2)
Week 2: 1/19/17	Lecture: The Players in the Biz <u>Assign Paper 1</u>	Turner (Ch. 1-2); Currid-Halkett (Ch. 4-6); Piazza (Ch. 2-3)
Week 3: 1/26/17	Lecture: <i>Tatiana Simonian, Head of Media and Entertainment Partnerships, Tumblr</i> Foundation of Celebrity and branding & endorsements. <u>NC-Interviewees Due</u>	Turner (Ch. 4) Additional Reading articles: "What's A Celebrity Worth" "Koby Bryant Libel Rights of Publicity Issue" "Pitfalls in Celebrity Endorsements" "A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Celebrity Endorsements In Advertising" "Effects of Celebrity Endorsements"
Week 4: 2/2/17	Speaker: <i>Phil Guerini</i> <i>VP, Music Strategy Disney Channels Worldwide & GM, Radio Disney Networks</i> Case Study: Sharapova Lecture: The Digital Celebrity: Celebrity or Influencer?	Case Study: Under Armor & Sharipova Additional Reading articles: "Economics of Authenticity"

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Week 5: 2/9/17	<p>Speaker: <i>Thomas Williamson (Actor) on being an up-and-coming celebrity</i></p> <p>Continued from 2/2: Case Study: Sharapova & Under Armour</p>	<p>Currid-Halkett (Ch. 3,7)</p> <p>Case Study Articles: Celebrity as a CEO & Under Armour & Leveraging Celebrity Endorsements</p>
Week 6: 2/16/17	<p>Speaker: <i>A conversation with celebrity photographer Scott Nathan.</i></p> <p>Case Study: Lebron James</p> <p><u>Paper 1 Due</u></p>	<p>Ferris & Harris (Ch. 5-6); Piazza (Ch.1, 9)</p> <p>Case Study: Lebron James and MGM/Tom Cruise</p>
Week 7: 2/23/17	<p>Lecture: Using Journalists & Publicity</p> <p>Case Study: Donald Trump & Hillary Clinton</p> <p><u>Assign Paper 2</u> <u>Notify NC Presentation Type</u></p>	<p>Turner (Ch. 4)</p> <p>Case Study Articles: "Why are people drawn to narcissists like Donald Trump" & "Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, and the danger of comparing leadership styles"</p>
Week 8: 3/2/17	<p>Presentations: <u>Present Networking Clinics</u></p> <p><u>Paper Advising</u></p>	<p>Piazza (Ch. 4); Turner (Ch. 5,6)</p>
Week 9: 3/9/17	<p>Speaker: <i>Media & Celebrity Publicity with Christina Radish/ Collider</i></p> <p>Lecture: The role of paparazzi and,</p>	

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	tabloids in media and famebuilding <u>Assign Final Projects</u>	
Week 10: 3/16/17	Spring Break HAVE FUN!	No assignment... but you should review other case studies and think about your final topics!
Week 11: 3/23/17	Lecture: Celebrity & The Value of Death Case Study: Hatsune Miku	Piazza (Ch. 10); Turner (Ch. 7) Case Study: Hatsune Miku
Week 12: 3/30/17	Lecture: <i>Celebrity & MP Financing with David Ducar, Esq. VP, Sony Pictures Worldwide Acquisitions</i> <u>Paper 2 Due</u>	Piazza (Ch. 6-7, 11) Case Study: Motion Picture Finance
Week 13: 4/6/17	Lecture: Case Study Analysis: Dwayne Wade <u>Logline Pitches Due</u>	Piazza (Ch. 5,8); Turner (Ch.3) Case Study: Dwayne Wade
Week 14: 4/13/17	Lecture: Case Study Analysis: Beyonce <u>Final Projects: Advising</u>	Case Study: Beyonce & Lady Gaga

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Week 15: 4/20/17	Celebrity and the National Brand Case Study Analysis: Rachel Ray	Case Study: Rachel Ray, Jimmy Choo
Week 16: 4/27/17	<u>Group 1 Final Projects</u>	10 to 12 will go each day. Positions will be chosen by random lottery (i.e., out of a hat). ALL students must attend both days to get full credit. Pot luck for each day is encouraged.
Week 17: 5/4/17	<u>Group 2 Final Projects</u>	