

COM/RTF 316M – Race, Ethnicity and the Media
Spring 2011
T/Th 9:30-11 CMA 2.320

Professor: Alexander Cho, M.A.

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Office Hours: W 10-12, and by appt.

Teaching Assistants:

Keara Goin

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CMA lobby

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CMA lobby

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UA9 2.108 (RTF grad space)

Discussion Sections:

08055 / 05380	T 5-6	CMA	A3.108	Keara Goin
08060 / 05385	T 6-7	CMA	A3.108	Keara Goin
08065 / 05390	T 6-7	CMA	A3.112	Caitlin McClune
08070 / 05395	T 6-7	CMA	A3.130	Adam Williams
08080 / 05405	T 6:30-7:30	CMA	A3.128	Al Martin
08085 / 05410	T 7-8	CMA	A3.108	Keara Goin
08090 / 05415	T 7-8	CMA	A3.130	Adam Williams
08095 / 05420	T 7-8	CMA	A5.136	Caitlin McClune
08105 / 05430	T 7:30-8:30	CMA	A3.128	Al Martin
08110 / 05435	T 8:30-9:30	CMA	A3.128	Al Martin
08075 / 05400	W 6-7	CMA	A3.130	Caitlin McClune
08100 / 05425	W 7-8	CMA	A3.130	Adam Williams

Course Overview

This course will introduce you to key theoretical tools to critically analyze representations of race in the mass media. You will also be trained in the historical background of the social construction of race and the history of racial representation in U.S. media. The course pays significant attention to the interplay of race with gender, sexuality, and national identity in media as well as how race influences industrial practices such as the creation of mass media and marketing.

Goals. You will be able to:

1. Critically analyze media texts in terms of their representation of race and ethnicity.
2. Explain the social construction of race from an historical perspective.
3. Articulate the relationship between mass media and racial ideology.
4. Explain the connections between race, gender, class, sexuality, and national identity in contemporary mass mediated representation.
5. Evaluate the role of structural and institutional practices of the media industry and their relationship to race.

University of Texas Cultural Diversity Flag

This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

Course Materials

All of the readings for this course will be on electronic reserve. To access the articles, go to the main Web page for the libraries, <<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>>, and click on "Access Electronic Reserves" under the "for Students" column. To find the readings, you may search by the course title, my last name, or the document itself. The course is listed under both COM316M and RTF316M. **The course reserves page password is "discourse" (no quotation marks).** You may want to bookmark the course reserves page.

Assignments

Examinations 3 @ 15%...45%

Papers 2 @ 15%...30%

Quizzes...15%

Class Participation...10%

Total...100%

Examinations. Exams are designed to test your recall of key concepts and all examples of those concepts from lecture and reading, your comprehension of how those concepts and examples relate to each other, and your ability to critically synthesize and evaluate class concepts against one another. Exams will consist of a combination of matching and/or multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions.

There are three exams over the course of the semester. They are not cumulative; you will only be responsible for detailed material and examples from the units since the previous exam. However, you are still expected to be able to retain the vocabulary of key theoretical concepts from previous units to aid in your explanations, especially in the short essay sections.

A bit of advice: Take robust notes on *everything* you see in lecture, including all examples such as images, stills, and video clips, including all caption, title, and attribution information. You will be asked to recall this information on the exams without visual reminders or prompts.

Do not make plans that will cause you to miss any exam, including the exam that is scheduled during finals week. If you must miss an exam for a documented reason (illness, family emergency or school-sanctioned event), I may allow you to take a make-up exam at a time convenient to your TA. The format of a make-up exam may differ substantially from the regular exam. Be aware that fabricating a reason for missing or delaying an examination is a form of academic misconduct and will be treated as such.

Papers. You will complete two papers during the course of the semester. See the course schedule below for due dates. The purpose of these papers is for you to demonstrate your ability to critically analyze and interpret media texts using the theoretical vocabulary you will be trained in with this class. They will both be four (maximum five) pages in length. The first paper is a critical analysis of a designated film regarding its representation of race; the second paper is a more open-ended assignment that will allow you to choose a media text. Late papers are accepted, but they will be marked off for each day they are late. Expect significantly more detail on these paper assignments about a month before they are due.

Quizzes. You will have a short quiz (5-10 minutes) on the readings for the week *every Thursday*, unless announced otherwise or if there is an exam scheduled for that day. The quizzes will be on the readings for that day as well as for the preceding Tuesday of that week. Quizzes can be multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, or short answer. *You will drop the lowest four quiz grades* throughout the semester (absences will count as a grade of '0'). There are no opportunities to make up these quizzes.

Class Participation. This is a grade assigned primarily by your teaching assistant based on your participation and attendance in discussion section. We do not take attendance in lecture. Keep in mind that you will never lose points for speaking up in discussion sections (unless you are disrespectful or disruptive). So, it is in your best interests to contribute. See your TA for specifics on their participation and attendance policy.

Students who are repeatedly disruptive in discussion sections or lecture will receive a poor class participation grade. This includes but is not limited to: constant talking/whispering, reading the paper,

talking/text-messaging on a phone, sleeping, and noisily packing your books before class has ended, and in lecture, distracting use of a laptop computer.

Grades. Your TAs are bright and well-qualified instructors. They will be the record-keepers of your grades in this course, they will grade most of your tests and essays, and they will be primarily responsible for assigning your participation grade based on your attendance and participation in discussion section. I encourage you to get to know them, stop by their office hours with questions, and always speak up if you have a question or concern.

Grading Scale.

90-100 – A	70-79 – C	59 and below – F
80-89 – B	60-69 – D	

Helpful Hints

“Will This Be On The Test?” Your best bet is to assume that the answer is “yes.” Everything, including but not limited to: lectures, discussions, readings, informative handouts, clips, screenings and email/online material, is ‘fair game.’ Therefore, it is in your extreme best interest to not miss lectures.

Lectures. I do not put PowerPoints online or distribute them. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to ask a classmate for the notes.

In lecture, I will often show video clips of varying lengths as well as images. Occasionally, most of a class session will be taken up by a screening. Be sure to take notes, no matter the length of the clip. Clips and screenings will not be made available to you if you miss them. Your TAs and I will be more than happy to give you hints and tips about taking notes on lectures and readings as well as study strategies for the exams. Do not be afraid to ask!

Discussion sections. These are an opportunity for you to deepen your understanding of class concepts, and discussion material may appear on exams. Too many absences will hurt your grade. See your TA for their specific attendance policy. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to make sure you are marked present.

Reading assignments should be done prior to the class period for which they are listed. Students who fall behind in the readings will find it difficult to succeed in this course.

Academic misconduct: I simply don’t tolerate cheating. Expect us to pursue every instance of suspected academic misconduct in this course. Two kinds of academic misconduct are **cheating** on quizzes and exams, and **plagiarism** (such as turning in someone else’s work, downloading a paper from the Web in part or in whole, or paraphrasing or quoting sources without citation). Penalties range from a zero on the assignment to expulsion from school.

The work that you turn in should honestly and accurately demonstrate your own academic efforts. Your assignments should reflect work done for this course. Do not turn in assignments done for another course or attempt to pass off readings or screenings from another course as your own research or analysis.

I expect all of you to know the University's full definition of academic misconduct and its possible penalties.

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Scholastic Dishonesty. The University defines academic dishonesty as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to avoid participating honestly in the learning process. Scholastic dishonesty also includes, but is not limited to, providing false or misleading information to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment, and submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor. By accepting this syllabus, you have agreed to these guidelines and must adhere to them. Scholastic dishonesty damages both the student's learning experience and readiness for the future demands of a work-career. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. For more information on scholastic dishonesty, please visit the Student Judicial services Web site at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>

Undergraduate Writing Center. The Undergraduate Writing Center, located in the FAC 211, phone 471-6222, <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/uwc/> offers individualized assistance to students who want to improve their writing skills. There is no charge, and students may come in on a drop-in or appointment basis.

Services For Students With Disabilities. The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.

Religious Holidays. Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. If you miss a work assignment or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence. It is the policy of the University of Texas at Austin that you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day.

316M COURSE SCHEDULE

Part I: Thinking About Race

T Jan 18 Course introduction

Th Jan 20 What is race?

Read: Shreeve, "Terms of Estrangement"; Ewen & Ewen, "Hierarchies of Humanity"

T Jan 25 Seeing race, talking about race

Read: Williams, "The Emperor's New Clothes"; Nance & Foeman, "Statue or Statement?"

Part II: Fundamentals of Representation

Th Jan 27 Race and representation

Read: Hall, "Spectacle of the Other," pp. 239-253

T Feb 1 Mechanics of stereotyping

Read: Hall, "Spectacle of the Other," pp. 257-261

Th Feb 3 Historical stereotypes in mass media

Read: Shim, "From Yellow Peril Through Model Minority to Renewed Yellow Peril"; Ramirez-Berg, selection from "Stereotyping in Films in General and of the Hispanic in Particular"

T Feb 8 Representation and resistance

Read: Hall, "Spectacle of the Other," pp. 269-276; Pearson, "White Network/Red Power"

Th Feb 10 Beyond "positive" and "negative"

Read: Jhally & Lewis, excerpts from *Enlightened Racism*

T Feb 15 Laughing matters

Read: Howells, "'Is it Because I Is Black?' Race, Humour and the Polysemiology Of Ali G"

Th Feb 17 Examination 1

Part III: Identity and Intersectionality

T Feb 22 Intersectionality

Read: Delgado & Stefancic, "Intersectionality"; Perry, "Who(se) Am I? The Identity and Image of Women in Hip Hop"

Th Feb 24 Gender, fetish, psychoanalysis

Read: Hall, "Spectacle of the Other," pp. 262-269; Ewen & Ewen, "Tablier Rasa"

T Mar 1 Gender and sexuality

Read: Delgado, "Golden But Not Brown: Oscar De La Hoya and the Complications of Culture, Manhood, and Boxing"; Century, "Singing in the Buff: The Pure Beefcake Video"

Th Mar 3 National identity

Read: Spickard, excerpts from *Almost All Aliens: Immigration, Race, and Colonialism in American History and Identity*

T Mar 8 National identity

Read: Torres, “In a Crisis We Must Have a Sense of Drama”

Part IV: Power in the Everyday

Th Mar 10 Whiteness**(Paper 1 Due)**

Read: Dyer, selection from *White*; Garner, “How the Irish became White (again)”

Spring Break Mar 14-19**T Mar 22 Whiteness**

Read: Lipsitz, “How Whiteness Works”; Harkins, selection from “Race, Class, Popular Culture, and the ‘Hillbilly’”

Th Mar 24 Appropriation & hybridity

Review: Hall, pp. 262-269 “Power and fantasy”

Read: Yousman, “Blackophilia and Blackophobia”

T Mar 29 Appropriation & hybridity

Read: Rivera, “Hip Hop and New York Puerto Ricans”; Chin et. al., “Chinese Tattoos” (group of essays)

Th Mar 31 Transcending bodies?

Read: Nakamura, “Head-Hunting on the Internet”

Recommended: Gibson, selection from *Neuromancer*

T Apr 5 Examination 2

Part V: Inside the Industry

Th Apr 7 Just business?

Read: Westin, “The Color of Ratings”; Noriega, “Missing in Action” pp. 35-51

T Apr 12 Case study: *Chico and the Man*

Read: Beltrán, “The Burden of Playing Chico”

Th Apr 14 Case study: *All-American Girl*

Read: Cho, selection from “I’m the One that I Want”

T Apr 19 Post-network television

Read: Zook, “Introduction”, “Conclusion” of *Color by Fox*

Th Apr 21 Case study: *The Corner*

Read: Scott, “Who Gets to Tell a Black Story?”

T Apr 26 Marketing multiculturalism – film

Read: Beltrán, “The New Hollywood Racelessness”

Th Apr 28 Marketing multiculturalism – advertising

Read: Dávila, “Selling Marginality”

T May 3 Social media, digital gates

Read: Watkins, "Digital Gates"

**Th May 5 Seeing and talking about race, revisited
(Paper 2 Due)**

Review: Williams, "The Emperor's New Clothes"

Sat May 14, 7 p.m. Examination 3. See Registrar for exam location.