

MEDIA THEORY

MST 301: examination of media texts, contexts, influence, and effects from a variety of theoretical perspectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to: (1) explain, (2) evaluate, (3) differentiate, and (4) apply contemporary theories of and frameworks for understanding media and their influences

Most material will be covered through lectures and in-class activities. READINGS are on Canvas (under "Files"). Students may also wish to consult [Media & Society](#) (O'Shaughnessy) or [Media Society](#) (Croteau & Hoynes).

TOPICAL OUTLINE & CALENDAR

Week of Aug 18-20

Approaches to studying media and The Media
Third Person Effect, Inoculation theory

READINGS (look under "Files")

C: 235-41

301-OPTIONAL effects

Week of Aug 25-27

Theories of Influence
"Direct Effects," minimal effects
Agenda Setting, Priming
Framing, Schema, Heuristic Processing
Socialization/ Observational Learning, Social Learning Theory

301_intro framing +agenda

C: 16-20

Week of Sep 1-3

Cultivation
Content Analysis
Correlation vs. Causation
Qualitative vs. Quantitative Methods of Analysis; Objective vs. Subjective

Chapter 4_TV effects (covers weeks 2-4)

Week of Sep 8-10

applications, test-prep
*** TEST: Sep 10**

Sep 15, 17, 22

Narrative/ Textual Analysis
Coding ... *** coding exercises in class**
***GRADED CONTENT ANALYSIS will be 9/17 or 22**

Narrative Analysis page 266-76, page 278-86,
page 290-93 (doc is in 3 sections)

**bring w/you "Narrative + Textual OUTLINE"*

Sep 24 : NO CLASS

Week of Sep 29-Oct 1

Audiences and Meaning
Polysemy, Negotiated Readings
Message Characteristics
Humor

C: 260-68

Moyer (j'l article)

Chappelle's Show, ep 1

Week of Oct 6-8

...Humor cont'd
Cognitive Factors in Message Processing
ELM, emotions, Fear Appeals
Persuasion

Oct 13: BREAK

Oct 15: NO CLASS (I'll be out of the country)

Weeks of Oct 20-22, 27-29

Audiences and Meanings (cont'd)

Representation: of whom, by whom

Gender Schema Theory, feminism/ post-feminism

Male Gaze, gaze aversion

Bechdel test

Race/ ethnicity

gender identity, sexualities

Ideology, Hegemony

Ideology (feminist + binary)

301-finalgirl

Alison Bechdel Reflects

C: 152-67

Week of Nov 3-5

Semiotics

Translating and Decoding Media

Creeber semiotics + textual

*** WRITTEN QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS will be distributed sometime between 11/5-12 and will be due the next class**

Week of Nov 10-12

Motivations for Media Use

Uses and Gratifications, alternatives

Segmentation, Selective Exposure

News and Political Discourse

Week of Nov 17-19

finish content, reveal meaning of life

Th Nov 19 = last day of class, test prep

Nov 24: NO CLASS . . . b/c I know you're not coming anyways

FINAL EXAM: Tu 12/8, 12-1:30 pm in 402 Graham (our classroom)

EVALUATION AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADING

1/3 **Exam 1**(multiple choice)

1/3 **Written Analyses:** This has 2 components: (1) Content Analysis (in Sep) and (2) Qualitative Analysis (in Nov). Due to their nature, each of the Analyses is graded as straight: A, B, C, D, F with no plus/minus (the grading rubric will be provided with the assignment); The overall (combined) Written Analyses Grade is: A, A/B, B, B/C, C, C/D, D, F.

This is how it is calculated: You receive a separate grade for the Content Analysis and the Qualitative Analysis. The higher grade is then weighted 2/3. So, if you get an 'A' (4.0) on Content Analysis and a 'B' (3.0) on the Qualitative, it is calculated as: $(4.0 \times 2/3) + (3.0 \times 1/3) = A/B$ (3.5).

1/3 **Final Exam** (multiple choice): 12/8, 12-1:30, 402 Graham

Attendance

I do not enforce the Departmental Policy (of 3 absences = -1/3 of final grade); **INSTEAD**, to encourage you to attend, I make many materials (including the Written Analyses assignments, exam answers, and significant content) available *only* in class – it will not be available on Canvas or “retaught” during office hours. Therefore, if you choose not attend class, you knowingly choose to miss material. (If you have a personal issue and notify me in advance, or, if not possible, within 2 business days of a missed class, we can attempt to implement an accommodation. If you have a prolonged illness or personal issue, *you should contact the Dean of Students/ Office of Student Affairs as soon as possible and ask them to intercede on your behalf*).

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students must familiarize themselves with UNCG's Policy on Academic Integrity, available at: <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity>. On written work, students must affirm that: "My words and actions will reflect Academic Integrity. I will not cheat or lie or steal in academic matters. I will promote integrity in the UNCG community." In THIS class it is deemed academically dishonest to allow a colleague to read your written work/ tests as well as to copy from a colleague's work. It is also academically dishonest to forge or fake documents (e.g., University documents, doctor's notes, police reports, obituaries) in order to obtain a benefit, an excuse from, or extension on written work/ tests.

Students violating academic integrity standards receive a 0 for the assignment (with no opportunity to rewrite it OR opt for the original grade, *and* where that grade is part of a variable percentage, the 0 will count as the greatest proportion possible) and lose any and all extra credit, rewrites, and/ or grade-related benefits available in the class.