**SOCIOLOGY OF MEDIA**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course (1) provides students with grounding in media sociology and (2) prepares students for doing their own media research. To facilitate the first objective, we survey the media literature that spans a number of disciplines, which includes (but is not limited to) sociology, communications, and history. In pursuing this survey, we touch upon the following themes: (a) We examine how various media industries (e.g., radio, TV, record, motion picture, print) are organized and how such organization is sometimes transformed by regulation, competition, and/or technology. (b) We focus on media content and investigate factors that promote stability, change, and diversity. (c) We address the consumers of mass media products and inspect how they utilize and are affected by media content. To facilitate the second objective (i.e., doing research), we give special attention to methods and designs employed in current research, and we heed how theoretical ideas are translated into empirical projects. Thus, by the end of the semester, each student will have a grasp of the field and an understanding of how to do media sociology.

**Grade breakup:**

Class participation and attendance 10%

Quizzes 20%

Mid-term exam 30%

Final Exam 40%

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

***SECTION ONE: MEDIA AND PRODUCTION***

***Week 1: Introductions***

***Week 2 : The Construction of Media Markets***

\*Timothy J. Dowd. 2003. “Structural Power and the Construction of Markets: The Case of Rhythm and Blues.” *Comparative Social Research* 21: 147-201.

Heather A. Haveman. 2004. “Antebellum Literary Culture and the Evolution of American Magazines.” *Poetics* 32: 5-28.

Candace Jones. 2001. “Coevolution of Entrepreneurial Careers, Institutional Rules and

Competitive Dynamics in American Film, 1895-1920.” *Organization Studies* 22: 911-944. Stephen Lippmann. 2007. “The Institutional Context of Industry Consolidation: Radio

***Week 3: Gatekeeping, Selection and Uncertainty***

Jarl A. Ahlkvist and Robert Faulkner. 2002. “‘Will This Record Work for Us?’: Managing Music Formats in Commercial Radio.” *Qualitative Sociology* 25:189-215.

\*William T. Bielby and Denise D. Bielby. 1994. “‘All Hits are Flukes’: Institutionalized

Decision-Making and the Rhetoric of Network Prime-Time Program Development.” *American*

Assessments of Newsworthiness.” *American Sociological Review* 63: 178-199.

Frédéric C. Godart and Ashley Mears. 2009. “How Do Cultural Producers Make Creative

***Week 4: Concentration and Its Impact in Media Markets***

William T. Bielby and Denise D. Bielby. 2003. “Controlling Primetime: Organizational

Concentration and Network Television Programming Strategies.” *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* 47: 573-596.

***Week 5: Media Careers (Examples from the Film Industry)***

\*Wayne Baker and Robert Faulkner. 1991. “Role as Resource in the Hollywood Film Industry.” *American Journal of Sociology* 97: 279-309.

Beth A. Bechky. 2006. “Gaffers, Gofers and Grips: Role-Based Coordination in Temporary Organizations.” *Organization Science* 17: 3-21.

***SECTION TWO: MEDIA AND CONTENT***

***Week 6: The Link between Content Production and Content Innovation***

\*Pablo J. Boczkowski. 2009. “Technology, Monitoring, and Imitation in Contemporary News Work.” *Communication, Culture & Critique* 2: 39-59.

\*Wendy Griswold. 1981. “American Character and the American Novel: An Expansion of Reflection Theory.” *American Journal of Sociology* 86: 740-765.

***Week 7: The Encroachment of Commercialization***

Gabriel Rossman. 2004. “Elites, Masses, and Media Blacklists: The Dixie Chicks Controversy.” *Social Forces* 83: 61-79.

***Week 8***

Progress Review; Mid-term Exam

***Week 9: The Consecration of Media Content***

\*Michael Patrick Allen and Anne E Lincoln. 2004. “Critical Discourse and the Cultural

Consecration of American Films.” *Social Forces* 82: 871-894.

Andrew Cheyne and Amy Binder. 2010. “Cosmopolitan Preferences: The Constitutive

Role of Place in American Elite Taste for Hip-Hop Music 1991-2005.” *Poetics* 38: 336-

***Week 10: Fields, Frames & Public Opinion (Examples from News Journalism)***

Kenneth T. Andrews and Neal Caren. 2010. “Making the News: Movement Organizations,

Media Attention, and the Public Agenda.” *American Sociological Review* 75: 841-866.

Rodney Benson. 2009. “What Makes News More Multiperspectival? A Field Analysis.” *Poetics*

***SECTION THREE: MEDIA AND AUDIENCES***

***Week 11: Broad Patterns of Media Consumption***

Kathleen Custers and Jan Van den Bulck. 2011. “Mediators of the Association between

Television Viewing and Fear of Crime: Perceived Personal Risk and Perceived Ability to Cope.”*Poetics* 39: 107-124.

***Week 12: Media Audiences in Action***

Michael Bull. 2005. “No Dead Air! The iPod and the Culture of Mobile Listening.” *Leisure Studies*24: 343-355.

***Week 13: Media Audiences and (Collective) Interpretation***

C. Clayton Childress and Noah E. Friedkin. 2012. “Cultural Reception and Production: The Social Construction of Meaning in Book Clubs.” *American Sociological Review* forthcoming.

***Week 14: Access, Information & Prosumption (Examples from Internet Usage)***

Paul DiMaggio and Bart Bonikowski. 2008. “Make Money Surfing the Web? The Impact of Internet Use on the Earnings of U.S. Workers.” *American Sociological Review* 73: 227-225.

***Week 15:***

Progress Review; Wrap-up session