MCC-UE.1016.1.001 Media Audiences
Professor Fisherkeller, Department of Media, Culture, and Communication
Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 3:30-4:30, &/or by appt., 239 Greene St. room 706
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Course Description
Communication and media scholars have long concerned themselves with the relationship between various media/technologies and ‘the audience.’ Different intentions and perspectives inform the discourse and research on how media and communication technologies and their audiences/users interact. This course will examine the history, theories, and methodologies of audience research, always questioning the construction of audiences and media users -- constructions that are shaped by commercial, academic, political and cultural interests. Students will examine different approaches to audience research that inform the concerns, questions, methods, findings, and implications of audience/user research.

Course Objectives
--To describe the general situation of communication and media in culture
--To describe how people as audiences and users experience and understand different media in different contexts
--To describe why and how academics and social critics have engaged in researching audiences/users
--To analyze the implications of the above
--To engage in critical reviews of the readings, verbally and in writing
--To gain experience in thoughtful discussions
--To develop a persuasive argument proposing a way to research an audience, teach people outside the classroom what was learned, or design and implement a creative project along with “director’s notes”

Note: This is NOT a course that will teach you specific marketing techniques—look into the Stern School of Business for that. This course takes a critical look at academic research on media audiences.

Required Reading
--Course Packet of articles/chapters at Advanced Copies (552 LaGuardia Place) between 3rd St. and Bleecker. The packet is unbound so that you can bring individual readings to class, which is required; additional readings may be added as the course proceeds.

Grading and Assignments (Specific guidelines will be provided)
Attendance and Thoughtful Participation 15%
Written Responses to Readings (1-2 pp each) 15%
3 Short Papers (approx 4-6 pp each) 45% (15% each)
Final Project (3 options, to be explained) 25%

Attendance and Participation:
Attendance will be taken. A drop in grade will occur for unexcused absences, meaning: absences that are not explained in writing either before class or after. In class, you must be prepared to discuss readings and participate in critical and reflective discussions; participation is not simply about showing up, but about being an active, thoughtful, respectful, and collaborative member of the class. Online discussions can prompt, complement, counter, and augment in-class participation. Office hours can also contribute to participation.
Format of Written Work
In the upper left corner, include your name, course name, date, assignment heading. All work must be typed and double spaced with numbered pages; multiple pages should be stapled; double sided-printing is welcomed, environmentally. Follow a formal writing style manual for guidelines on citations, quotations, etc., and specify which style manual you use in your reference list in papers. Make sure you edit/proof your paper before submitting it via paper copy in class. Your grade will be partly based on your ability to follow the norms and conventions of writing using Standard Written English styles and conventions.
NOTE: I comment on all written work. For the 3 short papers I allow for revisions based on my comments. For reading responses, if students submit a reply to my comments that counts as extra credit. Students can also locate supplemental resources on their own and share with the class and write a response to those resources for extra credit.

Late Assignments
Late assignments will be marked down qualitatively.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES WILL BE PROVIDED FOR ALL RESPONSES, PAPERS, AND FINAL PROJECT

Evaluation of Work
A= Excellent
Outstanding work in all respects. This work demonstrates comprehensive and solid understanding of course material, and presents thoughtful interpretations, well-focused and original insights, and well-reasoned commentary and analysis. Includes skillful use of source material, illuminating examples and illustrations, and fluent verbal/written expression. “A” work is coherent, fluent, and thorough and shows some creative flair.
B= Good
This work demonstrates a complete and accurate understanding of course material, presents a reasonable degree of insight and broad level of analysis. Work reflects competence, but stays at general or predictable level of understanding. Source material, along with examples and illustrations, are used appropriately and articulation/writing is clear. “B” work is reasonable, clear, appropriate and complete.
C= Adequate/Fair
This work demonstrates understanding that covers most or some of the basics but which remains superficial, incomplete, or expresses some important errors or weaknesses. Source material may be used inadequately or inappropriately. The work may lack concrete, specific example and illustrations, and articulation/writing may be vague or hard to follow.
D= Unsatisfactory
This work demonstrates a serious lack of understanding, and fails to express the most rudimentary aspects of the course. Sources may be used entirely inappropriately or not at all. The work may be inarticulate or extremely difficult to read.
F= Failed----Nothing submitted.
Plus (+) or minus (-) grades indicate your range with the aforementioned grades.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism
http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/policies/academic_integrity

The relationship between students and faculty is the keystone of the educational experience at New York University in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. This relationship takes an honor code for granted and mutual trust, respect, and responsibility as foundational requirements. Thus, how you learn is as important as what you learn. A university education aims not only to produce high-quality scholars, but to also cultivate honorable citizens.
Academic integrity is the guiding principle for all that you do, from taking exams to making oral presentations to writing term papers. It requires that you recognize and acknowledge information derived from others and take credit only for ideas and work that are yours.

You violate the principle of academic integrity when you
• cheat on an exam,
• submit the same work for two different courses without prior permission from your professors,
• receive help on a take home examination that calls for independent work, or
• plagiarize.

Plagiarism, one of the gravest forms of academic dishonesty in university life, whether intended or not, is academic fraud. In a community of scholars, whose members are teaching, learning, and discovering knowledge, plagiarism cannot be tolerated.

Plagiarism is failure to properly assign authorship to a paper, a document, an oral presentation, a musical score, and/or other materials that are not your original work. You plagiarize when, without proper attribution, you do any of the following:
• copy verbatim from a book, an article, or other media;
• download documents from the Internet;
• purchase documents;
• report from other’s oral work;
• paraphrase or restate someone else’s facts, analysis, and/or conclusions; or
• copy directly from a classmate or allow a classmate to copy from you.

Your professors are responsible for helping you to understand other people's ideas, to use resources and conscientiously acknowledge them, and to develop and clarify your own thinking. You should know what constitutes good and honest scholarship, style guide preferences, and formats for assignments for each of your courses. Consult your professors for help with problems related to fulfilling course assignments, including questions related to attribution of sources.

Through reading, writing, and discussion, you will undoubtedly acquire ideas from others, and exchange ideas and opinions with others, including your classmates and professors. You will be expected, and often required, to build your own work on that of other people. In so doing, you are expected to credit those sources that have contributed to the development of your ideas.

Student Resources
• Students with physical or learning disabilities are required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities, 719 Broadway, 2nd Floor, (212-998-4980) and are required to present a letter from the Center to the instructor at the start of the semester in order to be considered for appropriate accommodation.

• Writing Center: 269 Mercer Street, Room 233. Schedule an appointment online at www.rich15.com/nyu or just walk-in.

Schedule Topic/Assignments Due
Classes 1 & 2 &3 Overview, Definitions, and Issues. Student expectations.

Early Perspectives, Methods, and Findings

Class 5 • Siefert, M. (1994) “The audience at home: the early recording industry and the marketing of

Class 6  • Short Research Paper #1: Historical Analysis of the construction of different cellphone audiences

Class 7  • Blumer, H. (1933). “Adolescents and Imitation” & “Methods” In *Movies and Conduct*. New York: The MacMillan Company, pp. 141-213, (Chapter 3 and Appendix); in class students write reflective notes on the influence of movies on their own behavior and attitudes


Class 9  • Agenda Setting research-- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agenda-setting_theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agenda-setting_theory)

In class, watch Documentary—*The Brainwashing of My Dad*—review these sites, watch trailer [www.thebrainwashingofmydad.com](http://www.thebrainwashingofmydad.com) [http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/07/31/how-fox-news-made-my-dad-crazy.html]

Class 10  • Discussion of Effects and Uses and Gratifications Research Approaches and Methods in preparation for paper #2

Class 11  • Short Research Paper #2: find Effects research on the influence of contemporary TV on different people’s political views and activities

**Cultural studies: contexts, identities, genres, and lived experience**


Class 16  • Ito, Mizuko, et.al. “Introduction,” “Project Overview,” and “Project Descriptions” in *Hanging Out, Messing Around, and Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010. (Other chapters recommended)


Class 17  • Short Research Paper #3 Prep: find Contemporary scholarly/journalistic articles, on
different groups of people’s use of internet/social media around the world and analyze in relation to Cultural Studies assigned readings

Class 18  
Short Research Paper #3 due; students present in class (5 minutes each student)

Class 19  

Class 20  

Class 21  

Class 22  

Class 23  
• Students work in small groups in class to find more contemporary Cultural Studies on different groups of people’s uses of cellphones and/or internet/social media, locally and globally

Class 24  
Overview and Discussion of Final Project Assignment Options:  
1) research proposal to study a specific audience; 2) teaching a specific group of people outside the classroom what you have learned; 3) creative project with “director’s notes” aimed at a specific group of people outside the classroom

Class 25  
Develop Outline for Final Project Assignment/Submit

Class 26  
Feedback on Final Project Outline

Individually:  
More Final Project Outline Feedback/ Development

Final Project Due (exact date TBA but it will be finals week; deposited at my office, or sent via e-mail)  
If papers are submitted for final project NO BINDERS OR HEAVY FOLDERS, don’t waste precious earthly resources; so NO PLASTIC—use biodegradable/recyclable materials. Printing both sides of paper is GREAT if you can manage it. Multimodal projects are submitted electronically to my e-mail; please put your name on the file. Check with me about what application you will use so that I can make sure I am able to open it.