

SYLLABUS

A. Calendar Description of the Course

An interpretive and critical examination of the media's role in society that gives particular attention to media dimensions, processes, institutions, and texts – their content, production, circulation, and consumption. (Cross-credited with the Department of Professional Studies, Communications and Media.)

B. Purpose of the Course

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. identify the main public media in Canada, what they are mandated to do, and what they really do in and for Canadian society, and how;
2. compare the various theoretical perspectives and methods employed by sociologists and communications theorists to locate and explain media in their social context;
3. describe how public media are shaped by society, and how media in return, as processes of persuasion within the context of power and politics, shape society;
4. discuss the major issues of the content (media discourses) of contemporary media with reference to the perspectives and people represented in them;
5. demonstrate an appreciative and critical Christian understanding of the different types of public communication processes and technologies, and their role in Christian life;
6. interpret his or her own production and consumption of media, and thereby enhance self-understanding;
7. express encouragement toward her or his own potential for more enlightened and satisfactory human relationships through media;
8. display an appreciation of and commitment to the mediated well-being of both individuals and society.

Note re. Syllabus:

It is the student's responsibility to retain their course syllabi for use as support for possible future applications to other educational institutions for transfer of credit.

C. Textbooks

REQUIRED:

O'Shaughnessy, Michael, and Jane Stadler. 2009. *Media and Society: An Introduction*, 4th ed. Oxford University Press.

Media and Society Reader. Providence Bookstore, 2009.
- a bound compilation of photocopies of assigned readings

ONE OF:

Hipps, Shane. 2005. *The Hidden Power of Electronic Culture: How Media Shape Faith, the Gospel, and the Church*. Zondervan.

Haskell, David M. 2009. *Through a Lens Darkly: How the News Media Perceive and Portray Evangelicals*. Clements Academic.

Laytham, D. Brent. 2009. *iPod, YouTube, Wii Play: Theological Engagements with Entertainment*. Wipf & Stock.

Romanowski, William D. 2007. *Eyes Wide Open: Looking for God in Popular Culture*, rev. ed. Brazos Press.

RECOMMENDED:

The New Media Frontier

Bordwell, D., and K. Thompson. 2008. *Film Art: An Introduction*, 8th ed. McGraw-Hill.

Brabazon, T. 2007. *The University of Google: Education in a (post)Information Age*. Aldershot.

Chidester, D. 2005. *Authentic Fakes: Religion and American Popular Culture*. University of California Press.

Curran, James, and Michael Gurevitch, eds. 2005. *Mass Media and Society*, 4th ed. Hodder Arnold.

Danesi, Marcel. 2008. *Popular Culture: Introductory Perspectives*. Rowman & Littlefield.

Dawson, Lorne L., and Douglas E. Cowan, eds. 2004. *Religion Online*. Routledge.

Hartley, J. 2007. *Television Truths: Forms of Knowledge in Popular Culture*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Hendershot, Heather. 2004. *Shaking the World for Jesus: Media and Conservative Evangelical Culture*. University of Chicago Press.

- Jenkins, Henry. 2006. *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*. New York: New York University Press.
- Keane, S. 2007. *CineTech: Film, Convergence, and New Media*. Palgrave.
- Keen, A. 2007. *The Cult of the Amateur: How Today's Internet is Killing our Culture*. Doubleday.
- McCall, J. 2007. *Viewer Discretion Advised: Taking Control of Mass Media Influences*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Morgan, David. 2007. *The Lure of Images: A History of Religion and Visual Media in America*. Routledge.
- Nesbitt-Larking, P. 2007. *Politics, Society, and the Media*, 2nd ed. Broadview Press.
- Pomerance, Murray, and John Sakeris, eds. 2008. *Popping Culture*, 5th ed. Pearson Education Canada.
- Postman, N. 2005. *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. Vintage Books.
- Schultze, Quentin J. 2003. *Christianity and the Mass Media in America: Toward a Democratic Accommodation*. Michigan State University Press.
- Vivian, J., and P. Maurin. 2009. *The Media of Mass Communication: Fifth Canadian Edition*. Pearson Education Canada.

NOTE:

A **Selected Bibliography** for this course is posted under “Shared Documents” on your Providence Student Portal for this course. It is comprised of separate sections on 1) Books, 2) Journals, and 3) Websites.

Students should familiarize themselves with the following **websites**:

Media Education Foundation www.mediaed.org
 Center for Faith and Culture www.dickstaub.com
 ChristianMedia www.ChristianMedia.ca
 Adbusters Culturejammer Headquarters www.adbusters.org

D. Course Requirements

1. Media Fast (10%)

Due Date: January 30

Avoid all media you possibly can from when you wake up one morning until you wake up the next morning, and then write a 3-page report on your experience. You should at least be able to avoid all electronic media that you control, including ICTs (pull media), though it will be more difficult to avoid all print and visual media (push media). You are nevertheless still expected to attend classes

and maintain your normal course-related reading and writing. What behaviours did you engage in to avoid media? How successful were you in avoiding media? Which media were the most difficult to avoid? What did the experience make you do? How did it make you feel? What did you learn from the experience? Your grade will be based on your effort and attention to detail in media avoidance, and the depth of your reflection in your written report.

2. Book Review (15%)

Due Date: February 6

Write a 4-page formal book review (i.e. 3rd person, etc. – double-spaced, 12 point font) of **one of** Hipps’ *The Hidden Power of Electronic Culture*, **or** Laytham’s *iPod, YouTube, Wii Play*, **or** Romanowski’s *Eyes Wide Open*. Your review should **not** focus on outlining the contents of the book, but rather should demonstrate that you have interacted critically with the material, identifying its strengths and weaknesses while bringing fresh observations or applications to it. Help in all aspects of essay writing can be found in the *Providence College Academic Formation Guide* available in the Providence Bookstore. See also the separate class posting entitled “How to Write a Book Review.” Your paper will be graded on the quality of its content (15%) and composition (5%).

3. Project (20%)

Due Date: March 10

Do any **one** of the following options:

a) Research Paper

Write a short 6-7 page research paper (double-spaced, 12 point font) on any relevant topic of your choice, using a formal style of writing (i.e. 3rd person, etc.) and a social scientific style of documentation (see Section G of this syllabus, “The Bare Basics of ASA Documentation”). As a general guideline, research papers should have approximately the same number of references as there are pages to your paper, and no more than half of the references may be from internet sources other than on-line academic journals, government agencies, or credible public organizations. See also the *Providence College Academic Formation Guide* for general writing guidelines. Topics that are significantly different than those covered in the class sessions of this course should have prior approval from the instructor. Your paper should demonstrate that you have done independent research and reading beyond the assigned readings, that you have thought carefully and/or reorganized your topic in an original manner, and that you can express yourself in writing clearly and effectively. It will be graded on the quality of its content (15%) and composition (5%).

b) Case Study

Write a 5-page case study on any relevant topic of your choice, adhering to the same guidelines for a research paper stipulated above. See the list

of case studies on page *x* of the O’Shaughnessy & Stadler text for examples. Note that case studies typically have fewer references than research papers.

c) Culture Jamming Exercise

Read ahead of the class schedule in the O’Shaughnessy & Stadler text, carefully studying chapters 11-14. Then follow the instructions of the Culture Jamming Exercise on pages 225-6. Write a 5-page report of your jam.

4. Textual Analysis (15%)

Due Date: April 7

Select a particular text from a medium of popular culture, and write a 4 page analysis of its content, using the theoretical perspectives and/or interpretive skills developed in the classes and readings of this course. For examples, see the O’Shaughnessy & Stadler text Chapter 10: “Model Essay: Semiotic Analysis of an Advertisement,” or Chapter 16: “The Language of Film: *American Beauty*.” Attach a copy of the text you are analysing in photocopy (paper) or digital (CD, DVD, or URL link) form, together with your written report.

5. Exams (20% x 2 = 40%)

Write two exams, each consisting of approximately 30-40 multiple choice questions plus one question requiring a one-page written answer. Each exam will hold you responsible for only but all the material in the lectures and assigned readings covered since the previous exam; the final exam is not comprehensive. See the separate class posting entitled “How to Study for and Write (My!) Exams.” The dates of the exams are as follows:

Exam #1 February 20
Exam #2 April 17

E. Grading Summary

1. Grade Components

Media Fast	10%
Book Review	15%
Project	20%
Textual Analysis	15%
Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	20%

Note: The last date for **Voluntary Withdrawal** from this course is Friday, Nov. 13.

2. Grading Scale

Final course letter grades and their Grade Point equivalents will be calculated using the following scale:

<i>Percent</i>	<i>G.P.</i>	<i>Quality</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>G.P.</i>	<i>Quality</i>
91 – 99 = A+	4.0	Exceptional	67 – 69 = C+	2.5	Satisfactory
85 – 90 = A		Excellent	63 – 66 = C	2.0	Adequate
80 – 84 = A-			60 – 62 = C-		
77 – 79 = B+	3.5	Superior	57 – 59 = D+	1.0	Marginal
73 – 76 = B	3.0	Good	53 – 56 = D		Poor
70 – 72 = B-			50 – 52 = D-		
			< 50 = F	0.0	Failure

F. Course Policies

In addition to the policies outlined in the *Student Handbook*, the complete academic policies, procedures, and regulations of Providence College can be found online (http://prov.ca/college/ac_pol-proc-reg.aspx) or in the Library, Admissions Office, or Dean's Office.

1. Class Attendance

Full attendance at all classes is expected, because active listening, thinking, and discussing are primary learning experiences in this course. Questions on exams will be designed to reward class attendance and alertness. While the instructor is committed to making the classes as interesting and informative as possible, it is neither his role nor his gift to be an entertainer. Students who find themselves struggling with course material are welcome to seek additional individual assistance from the instructor outside the classes, but only if they have demonstrated the self-discipline to attend all the classes they possibly can.

2. ICTs in Class

Student use of information and communication technologies for purposes other than class note-taking is not allowed in the classroom, as students are expected to give their total attention to class activities. Use of cell-phones or ipods is never appropriate in the classroom, and use of laptop computers to play games, write blogs, chat with others, browse the internet, or engage material not related to the class is always distracting to classmates and disrespectful to the instructor. Unlike some other post-secondary institutions, Providence has not yet found it necessary to ban laptops from the classroom, or prevent wireless internet access in classrooms. Only judicious use of them will keep it that way.

3. Academic Integrity

Students are expected to demonstrate academic integrity in all its various forms, and will be held accountable for doing so by the policy on Academic Conduct in the Student Handbook (<http://prov.ca/studentLife/handbook.aspx>). One particularly problematic breach of academic integrity is plagiarism, which is stealing from the ideas and writings of another person and passing them off as one's own. For an elaboration of the nature, types, and prevention of plagiarism, see the Providence College document entitled "Academic Dishonesty: The Problem of Plagiarism in Academic Writing," in the Providence College Academic Formation Guide available in the Providence Bookstore, or in the Providence College "Academic Policies, Procedures, and Regulations" (http://prov.ca/college/ac_pol-proc-reg.aspx).

4. Late Assignments

Late assignments will be accepted up to one week after their due date, but their grades will be reduced by 10%, which equals one letter grade. Late papers will **not** be accepted more than one week after their due date, and students who do not submit a paper by at most one week after the due date will receive a grade of zero for that component of the course. The instructor will not receive requests for extensions. If you feel an extension is warranted, attach a cover letter to your assignment when you hand it in, explaining why it is late, and a decision will be made by the instructor when your paper is graded. A waiving of the 10% late reduction, or the one week deadline, will be granted only in the cases of personal or medical emergencies as detailed in the cover letter. Computer problems, conflicts with co-curricular activities, competition for library resources, and/or long weekends before or after due dates do not constitute such emergencies. Failure to plan ahead, or to maintain a margin of time for unforeseen events prior to the due date, does not warrant an extension either.

5. Missed Exams

Students who miss an exam are responsible to contact the instructor within one week of the exam date if they still wish to write the exam. Permission to do so will be given to only those students who present evidence, acceptable to the instructor, of medical reasons for having missed the exam. The format of the exam will be at the discretion of the instructor, with essay questions likely. Students who do not write an exam by at most 2 weeks after the exam date will receive a grade of zero for that component of the course.

G. The Bare Basics of American Sociological Association (ASA) Documentation

For the complete ASA Quick Style Guide for students writing sociology papers, see <http://www.asanet.org/page.wv?name=Quick+Style+Guide§ion=Sociology+Depts>

1. In-text Citations

- a) For ideas or information contained in a sentence:

Basic Format:

This is what you should do at the end of the sentence (Author Year-of-Publication).

Example:

This is what you should do at the end of the sentence (Smith 2008).

Basic Format:

According to Author (Year-of-Publication), this is what you should do in the middle of a sentence.

Example:

According to Smith (2008), this is what you should do in the middle of a sentence.

- b) For direct quotations contained in a sentence:

Basic Format:

This is what you should do for a quotation “at the end of the sentence” (Author Year:page#).

Example:

This is what you should do for a quotation “at the end of the sentence” (Smith 2008:35).

Basic Format:

For a quotation “in the middle of a sentence” (Author Year:page#), this is what you should do.

Example:

For a quotation “in the middle of a sentence” (Smith 2008:35), this is what you should do.

2. Notes

ASA format does **not** use footnotes at the bottom of the page where a reference occurs. Endnotes numbered consecutively at the end of the whole document are permissible for material that explains or amplifies the main text.

3. References

Full bibliographic information for all citations in the text must appear at the end of the essay in alphabetical order under the centered title of “References” as follows:

a) Books:

Basic Format:

Last Name, First Name and Second Initial. Year. *Title Italicized and in Title Case*. City: Publisher.

Example:

Smith, John Q. 2008. *How to Document a Paper: The ASA Style*. Toronto: Academic Publishers.

b) Edited books, and editions other than the first:

Basic Format:

Last Name, First Name and Second Initial., Editor. Year. *Title Italicized and in Title Case*. Edition. City: Publisher.

Example:

Smith, John Q., ed. 2008. *How to Document a Paper: The ASA Style*. 5th ed. Toronto: Academic Publishers.

c) Journal articles:

Basic Format:

Last Name, First Name and Second Initial. Year. "Title of the Article in Title Case and Quotations." *Title of the Journal in Title Case and Italicized* Volume Number:Pages.

Example:

Smith, John Q. 2008. "How to Document in ASA Format." *Journal of Documentation Styles* 27:44-51.

d) Articles from edited collected works:

Basic Format:

Last Name, First Name and Second Initial. Year. "Title of the Article in Title Case and Quotations." Pages xx-yy in *Title of the Book in Title Case and Italicized* edition, edited by First and Last Name. City: Publisher.

Example:

Smith, John Q. 2008. "How to Document in ASA Format." Pp. 65-76 in *A Comparison of Documentation Styles* 3rd ed., edited by Jane X. Doe. New York: Scholar's Press.

e) Internet sites:

Basic Format:

Last Name, First Name and Second Initial. Publication or update date. "Title in Title Case and Quotations," Access date. Internet address.

Example:

Smith, John Q. 2008. "A Quick Style Guide for Students Writing Sociology Papers." Washington, DC: American Sociological Association, Retrieved July 1, 2008.

<http://www.asanet.org/page.wv?name=Quick+Style+Guide§ion=Sociology+Depts>

H. Class Schedule

The readings appearing beside each class topic are to be read in conjunction with that class, not necessarily prior to it. All assigned readings are either from the O'Shaughnessy & Stadler text (O & S) or the *Course Reader*. The instructor reserves the right to assign additional readings during the course of the term or to alter the schedule of topics as he sees fit.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Required Readings</u>
Jan. 6	Orientation to the Course	
UNIT I: Media Dimensions		
Jan. 9	Introduction to Media Studies	O & S ch. 1-2
Jan. 13	Media Outputs: Effects and Impacts	O & S ch. 3 Fitzpatrick, "Wired Bunch"
Jan. 16	Media Effects: The Case of Violence Guest Lecturer: Val Hiebert	O & S ch. 4
Jan. 20	Media Ownership and Regulation	Nesbitt-Larking "Masses and Masseys"
Jan. 23	Media Technology: The Digital Age Video: <i>The End of Print/Radio/TV</i>	O & S ch. 7 Vos "Digital Embrace"
Jan. 27	Day of Prayer (classes cancelled)	
UNIT II: Media Processes		
Jan. 30	Newscasting: Framing Reality	O & S ch. 5 Media Fast Due
Feb. 3	Videos: <i>Rich Media, Poor Democracy</i> ; <i>Unsettling Accounts</i> ; <i>Sticks and Stones</i>	O & S ch. 6
Feb. 6	Advertising: Manufacturing Discontent	Book Review Due
Feb. 10	Video: <i>Deadly Persuasion: The Advertising of Alcohol and Tobacco</i> Williams "Magic System"	
Feb. 13	Public Relations: Managing Corporate Impressions Postman articles	
Feb. 17	Video: <i>Toxic Sludge is Good for You: Public Relations Unspun</i> Hiebert "Suspension of Disbelief"	
Feb. 20	Exam #1	
Feb. 24	The Internet and ICTs	Livingstone "Critical Debates" Quittner, "Who Will Rule...?"

UNIT III: Textual Analysis

Feb. 27	Reading Popular Culture	O & S chs. 11-14
Mar. 2-6	Reading Week (classes cancelled)	
Mar. 10	Semiotic Analysis: Reading Images	O & S chs. 8-10
	Guest Lecturer: Cameron McKenzie	Project Due
Mar. 13	Narrative Analysis: Reading Films	O & S chs. 15-17
	Guest Lecturer: Michael Boyce	
Mar. 17	Lyric Analysis: Reading Music	O & S chs. 18-19
	Guest Lecturer: Michael Gilmour	

UNIT IV: Media and Identity

Mar. 20	Gender in Media	O & S chs. 20-21
Mar. 24	Minorities in Media	O & S chs. 22-23
Mar. 27	Video: <i>Class Dismissed: How TV Frames the Working Class</i>	
Mar. 31	Christians in Media	Tatarnic “Mass Media and Faith”
	Guest Lecturers: David Balzer, “God Talk Radio”	
		Aiden Enns, <i>Geez Magazine</i>
Apr. 3	Postmodernity and Globalization	O & S chs. 24-25
Apr. 7	Video: <i>An Anthropological Introduction to YouTube</i>	
		Textual Analysis Due
Apr. 17	Exam #2	