San José State University
Sociology Department
SOC 140, Sociology of Media, Fall 2014

Instructor: Mitra Rokni
Office Location: DMH 222
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Email: mitra.rokni@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: MW 1:30-3:00
Class Days/Time: MW 3:00-4:15
Classroom: DMH 231
Prerequisites: Prerequisite: SOCI 001

Faculty Web Page
Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on my faculty web page accessible through the Quick Links>Faculty Web Page links on the SJSU home page (http://www.sjsu.edu/people/mitra.rokni/).

Course Description
This course critically examines the historical development of media and its role in democratic democracy. It explores the relationship between culture, social behavior, technology, and various media forms. It analyzes how gender, race, class, sexuality, and disability have been depicted and represented in media images.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives
This course is a critical examination of the role of media in society and the consequences of corporate control of information and entertainment in perpetuation of social inequalities. We will examine the role of propaganda, representation of reality, and selective perception in shaping the dominant cultural values and beliefs. Furthermore we will examine the role of entertainment and cultural representation of minorities by including the dimensions of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. We will conclude by reflecting on the meaning of informed citizenship, democracy, and active participation in creating a free media through reform and social movement.

Course Content Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Critically evaluate media and its implication on everyday human relations.
- Critically understand the role of dominant media in relation to the established power structure.
Required Texts/Readings


Additional readings will be provided during the semester.

Classroom Protocol
We are all travelers on this learning journey called life. Classroom is our shared educational space for learning, understanding, discussing, and responding to one another as both students and teachers. To disregard the importance of an active engagement in this learning process could create an atmosphere of apathy that is disrespectful to the very spirit of education. It is crucial for students to take responsibility for their role in enhancing and creating the opportunities for a critical and civil dialogue on the most pressing issues of our time. Arriving on time, staying the whole period of a class time, turning off cell phones and other electronic devices, are part of the civility needed for a productive and engaged classroom. A smart sense of humor and/or intelligent critical debate is always welcome. But it is important to remember, at all times, that you are here to develop your critical mind, practical skills, study, learn, and participate in building a better world. It is critical to develop a sense of social responsibility towards others, and an individual responsibility for self-development.

NOTE: No recording devices are allowed in this class under ANY circumstances. Arrangements will be made by the DRC students and the educator, to have access to the class notes and lectures.

Assignments and Grading Policy
Midterm & Final Exams (each 25% of the final grade) Two Take-home Exams (3 to 4 essay questions) to reflect assigned readings, lectures, documentaries, and additional information provided.

Research Paper (20%) The 8-10-page paper, on a topic related to our course content, should demonstrate research skills, an understanding of the subject matter under study, critical thinking, analysis, as well as the implications of new knowledge. You must follow a recognized format for citations and references. The paper must be based on at least 4 books and 2 articles (you may use extra Internet educational websites). All sources must be scholarly, peer reviewed articles, and expert websites.

Check the following link for distinguishing scholarly from non-scholarly sources:
http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill20.html

Papers Prep (5%) The one page prep must include:
1. Topic: Select a question and/or problematic of interest to you.
2. Develop your Thesis Statement.
3. References: Four scholarly books (no need to include the articles for the prep).

Check the following website for how to write a research paper including all the above three requirements.
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Reviews/Summaries/Debates (25%) Random group discussions and/or written responses on assigned readings and documentaries (minimum two pages, double spaced typed, for each assignment).

Late assignments will lose 5 points for each week day.
University Policies:

Academic integrity

Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

Learning Assistance Resource Center

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/.
Peer Mentor Center

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop–in basis, no reservation required. Website of Peer Mentor Center is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html. Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course/Media and Society Lecture Notes</td>
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<td>Understanding Journalism &amp; Political Coverage Nichols/McChesney pp. 161-220</td>
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<td>Sept</td>
<td><strong>Labor Day - Campus Closed</strong> Media Corporate Monopolies Nichols/McChesney pp. 129-160</td>
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<td>Sept</td>
<td>The Architects of Dollarocracy Uncovered Nichols/McChesney pp. 11-96 Documentary</td>
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<td>Sept</td>
<td>The Propaganda Model/Noam Chomsky Myths of Liberal Media Lecture Notes</td>
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<td>Sept</td>
<td>Political Advertising/Persuaders Nichols/McChesney pp. 97-128/Documentary <strong>Papers Prep Due/See Instructions on my Webpage</strong></td>
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<td>Oct</td>
<td>Femininity and Media/Killing Us Softly/Jean Kilbourne Lecture Notes/Documentary</td>
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<td>Oct</td>
<td>Race and Ethnicity in Film/African Americans Reel Bad Arabs/Sut Jhally Benshoff pp. 45-102 Lecture Notes/Documentary</td>
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<td>Nov</td>
<td>Sexuality in Media Further Off the Straight &amp; Narrow/Sut Jhally Benshoff pp. 303-356 Lecture Notes/Documentary</td>
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<td>Nov</td>
<td>Class in Media Class Dismissed/Sut Jhally Social Inequality/Unequal Distribution of Wealth &amp; Power Benshoff pp. 165-210 Lecture Notes/Documentary Lecture Notes</td>
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<td>Nov</td>
<td>Disability in Films Internet Neutrality Benshoff pp. 363-384 Bill Moyers/PBS</td>
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<td>Nov</td>
<td>Not Just A Game (Sports &amp; Politics)/Dave Zirin Digital Politics Nichols/McChesney pp. 221-254 Documentary</td>
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<td>Dec</td>
<td>Culture of Video Games Lecture Notes</td>
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<td>Dec</td>
<td>Network of Outrage &amp; Hope: Digital Revolutions Manuel Castells/ Lecture Notes</td>
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<td>Dec</td>
<td>Reinventing Democracy in Information Age Public Media and Media Reform Movement Manuel Castells/ Lecture Notes Nichols/McChesney pp. 255-284 <strong>Research Papers Due/Review</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>Final Exam (Drop Take-home Papers 12:15-1:15PM)</td>
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