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Zero Textbook Cost Syllabus for COM 3060 (Media Analysis and Criticism)

Riann Subijanto

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COM 3060 MEDIA ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

Summer 2018

A Fully Online, Zero Cost, and Open Educational Resource (OER) Course

Instructor

Rianne Subijanto

Office:

Office Hours: through Skype by appointment

E-mail:

Course Description & Goals

In contemporary society, the media, including the Internet, television, smart phones, radio, magazines, movies, music, newspapers, and books, saturate our everyday lives to an extent unprecedented in human history. Their effects are wide-ranging and transformative, including affecting our perception of reality, influencing how and what we think about, and framing our understanding of the world around us. Yet, due to their pervasiveness, rarely do we seriously consider the media and the issues they raise.

This course will introduce you to the seminal theories in media studies. By considering these different approaches, we will situate the media in a broader historical, social, political, and economic context to better understand their nature and their roles in (re)producing the (global) societies we live in. We will examine the structures, forces, and environments that produce media; we will analyze mediated texts and images and their roles in shaping our ideas, cultures, and identities; and, we will explore the different ways people actively engage in using and interpreting the media.

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Elucidate seminal theories in media studies, their approaches to inquiry, and their methods of analysis and data gathering;
2. Compare and contrast the distinctions between the different theories and articulate their significance in the study of media;
3. Evaluate the explanatory power of these theories through a sustained, coherent explanation; and,
4. Using these theories, pose critical questions about media institutions, content, production, and consumption.

Course Platforms

This course is an intensive five-week summer course conducted **fully online** via the



following platforms: Blackboard, Blogs@Baruch, and Kanopy.

A week is divided into four parts. In Part I and II, you will

- a) Complete the assigned reading and take notes on the important concepts you find in it;
- b) Complete the quiz for the reading (Blackboard);
- c) Participate in the discussion on the reading by making at least three comments (Blackboard).

In Part III, you will watch a documentary film or read a set of newspaper/magazine articles to understand how the concepts you have learned that week are applied. For Part III, you only need to participate in a discussion or complete a homework (no quizzes).

Upon completing Part I-III, do Part IV. Part IV is a media analysis exercise that will help you build toward your final paper. For this exercise, every week, you will need to post 250-300 words entries on our course blog (follow my prompt available on our blog). You are also required to give peer input to two classmates' blog entries.

Reading Materials

All readings will be distributed via Blackboard.

Grading and assignments

I use the following grading scale for this course:

A	93.0-100.0	B-	80.0-82.9	D+	67.1-69.9
A-	90.0-92.9	C+	77.1-79.9	D	60.0-67.0
B+	87.1-89.9	C	73.0-77.0	F	Below 60.0
B	83.0-87.0	C-	70.0-72.9		

Your final grade is based on your performance on the following:

Participation & attitude	10%	Blog entries	10%
Discussion	25%	Peer input on blog entries	5%
Quizzes	15%	Media analysis paper	30%
Discussion leader	5%		

1) Participation & attitude (10%)

The success of this class depends on student participation. However, since this is an online course, all of our class activities can be done asynchronously. This means you can complete the assigned activities anytime **before** the deadline specified on our course schedule. **Absolutely no excuses on missing any deadlines.** Since this is an intensive course, if you know you will not be able to complete the requirements of the course, please consider dropping the course before the semester starts.

Class discussions are absolutely crucial so you are expected to participate in the discussions prepared to share your views, listen intently to others' opinions, and think critically about the material. I'm interested in what each of you think, so don't be afraid to ask tough questions or share a potentially unpopular opinion. You are not graded on the content of your discussion. In other words, it doesn't matter what your particular viewpoint is on a subject, what matters is that you have one.

However, since the success of this class depends on the learning environment we create together online, I encourage all of you to always be open minded and be respectful.

2) Quizzes (15%)

In most weeks, you will complete 2 quizzes. Your quizzes are ways for you to explore deeper the reading materials you have read before hand. You are allowed to take the same quiz twice to perfect your score. Make sure you read the answer key provided in the quiz carefully since this is where I clarify and communicate important highlights from the readings.

3) Discussion (25%)

You are required to make three (3) comments in each discussion session consisting of:

- 1) Your first initial response to my question;
- 2) Your comment on a classmate's response and/or on prompts/follow up questions from the discussion leader(s). You can respond to somebody's comment on your initial entry, or you can respond to others' comments as well. In other words, you are not obliged to comment on a friend's response to your initial entry. Anybody can make comments on anybody's responses they consider interesting;
- 3) Your second comment on a response. Rule is the same as point 2).

You are welcome to post more than 3 comments, but this won't be graded.

For further instruction on how to make comments and grading rubric, please check your course blog.

4) Discussion leader (5%)

For every discussion, 1-2 students will be assigned to be the discussion leaders. In addition to making 3 comments in the discussion, discussion leaders will need to pose follow up questions after my first initial question(s). It is the responsibility of the

discussion leaders to get the discussion going and interesting and to make sure that the discussion digs deeper into the materials in the readings/quizzes.

5) Blog entry (10%)

The blog entries are scaffolding exercises for you to work toward your final media analysis paper. Each entry will respond to the prompt and is 250-300 words long. The entries will cover:

Week 1: explore a media-related problem you find interesting. Why is it interesting for you? Why is it interesting for others? What is the problem you are trying to solve? Why the problem needs solving?

Week 2: Identify sources of evidence that can help you explore and understand the problem. List three journal articles or books that have previously discussed a similar aspect of the topic. Write in two-three sentences what they books/articles say about the topic.

Week 3: Write one or more concept(s) from class that you find useful to help you analyze the problem. What do scholars say about the concepts? Provide at least 3 quotes you find helpful from the readings.

Week 4: Write preliminary findings/analysis. What does the concept illuminate as you are reading the corpus of evidence you have previously gathered?

Your entry will be graded according to these criteria:

Blog entries are graded 0-3

- (a) 0 = Not or inadequately completed
- (b) 1 = Fair, mostly completed, respond to the prompt partially
- (c) 2 = Good, fully completed, respond to the prompt completely
- (d) 3 = Excellent, fully completed and posed challenging questions and issues

6) Peer input on blog entries (10%)

You are required to write input and/or comments on two classmates' blog entries every week. This will be assigned at the beginning of the class. Your comments have to go beyond "I agree with you" or "I like your idea." In your input, think about helping your classmates in their media analysis project, instead of just saying you agree/disagree with them.

Your input will be graded according to these criteria:

Comments are graded 0-2

- (a) 0 = Not or inadequately completed
- (b) 1 = Only make 1 substantial comment; or, one of the comments does not make a substantial point.
- (c) 2 = Both comments make substantial points.

7) Media analysis (30%)

You will conduct original research exploring a case study on the mass media resulting in a paper of 6-7 typed, double-spaced pages excluding bibliography. You will work on this paper throughout the semester through your blog entries. Check the grading rubric

in our course blog.

Course policies

Deadline: This is a fully online course. All required assignments, discussions, and quizzes can be done asynchronously anytime **before** the stated deadline. **Absolutely no excuses on missing any deadlines.** All deadlines are on the indicated date by midnight.

Reading: This is a reading intensive course that is designed to be a discussion-driven interactive experience. To that end, you are expected to have read all assigned reading before the group discussions and quizzes.

Electronic devices: You are responsible to have computer devices and the Internet connection to be able to participate in the course. If you know you won't be able to have access to these necessary means for our online class, please consider dropping the class as soon as possible. This class is a fully online class.

Academic integrity and plagiarism: I fully support Baruch College's policy on Academic Honesty, which states, in part: "Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Cheating, forgery, plagiarism and collusion in dishonest acts undermine the college's educational mission and the students' personal and intellectual growth. Baruch students are expected to bear individual responsibility for their work, to learn the rules and definitions that underlie the practice of academic integrity, and to uphold its ideals. Ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable excuse for disobeying them. Any student who attempts to compromise or devalue the academic process will be sanctioned." Academic sanctions in this class will range from an F on the assignment to an F in this course. A report of suspected academic dishonesty will be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students. Additional information and definitions can be found at http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/academic/academic_honesty.html.

Religious observances: Every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance will be made. In this class, the instructor needs to be identified prior to any conflict resulting in the non-attendance of class so alternative arrangements can be made.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Students with disabilities may be eligible for a reasonable accommodation to enable them to participate fully in courses at Baruch. If you feel you may be in need of an accommodation, please contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at (646) 312-4590. For additional information: <https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/facultyhandbook/DisabilitiesInformation.htm>.

CLASS SCHEDULE		
<p>* This course schedule is tentative and subject to change according to the needs and interests of the class. *All readings are available on Blackboard. Follow the link for the readings with blue highlight. *All specified deadline is by midnight of the indicated date.</p>		
Week I (July 16-22) Media, Society, and the Perils of Democracy		
Part I	*Read “Welcome” entry in our course blog. *D. Croteau and W. Hoynes, “Media and the Social World”	By Monday, July 16: *Introduce yourself on our blog. *Complete Week I/Part I quiz on Blackboard. By Tuesday, July 17: *Write 3 entries in Week I/Part I discussion on Blackboard.
Part II	*Raymond Williams, “Communications and Community” (1961)	By Thursday, July 19: *Write 3 entries in Week I/Part II discussion on blackboard. *Complete Week I/Part II quiz on Blackboard.
Part III	*Watch: Requiem for the American Dream *Watch: Noam Chomsky, The 5 filters of the Mass Media Machine	By Friday, July 20: *Write 3 entries in Week I/Part III discussion on blackboard.
Part IV	Complete blog entry 1 (see prompt) by Saturday, July 21	
Week II (July 23-29) Political Economy of Media		
Part I	* Understanding Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication, Chapter 13: Economics of Mass Media	By Monday, July 23: *Complete Week II/Part I quiz on Blackboard. *Write 3 entries in Week II/Part I discussion on blackboard.
Part II	*Brice Nixon, “The old media business in the new: ‘the Googlization of everything’ as the capitalization of digital consumption”	By Wednesday, July 25: *Complete Week II/Part II quiz on Blackboard. *Write 3 entries in Week II/Part II discussion on blackboard.
Part III	*Watch: YouTube, YouTubers, and You *Christian Fuchs, “The Snapchat-Bubble: Why it is not Twitter and Kylie Jenner, but Capitalism that Creates Stock Market	By Friday, July 27: *Write 3 entries in Week II/Part III discussion on blackboard.

	Volatilities ”, <i>Medium</i> .	
Part IV	By Friday, July 27 : *Complete_blog entry 2 (see prompt) *Give input to your peer’s blog entry	
Week III (July 30-August 5) Gender, Text, and Representation		
Part I	*Gaye Tuchman, “The Symbolic annihilation of women by the mass media” in <i>Culture and Politics</i> edited by Lane Crothers and Charles Lockhart, 2000, pp. 150-174.	By Monday, July 30 : *Complete Week III/Part I quiz on Blackboard. *Write 3 entries in Week III/Part I discussion on blackboard.
Part II	*Sarah Banet-Weiser, “Free Self-Esteem Tools?”: Brand Culture, Gender, and the Dove Real Beauty Campaign” in <i>Commodity Activism: Cultural Resistance in Neoliberal Times</i> edited by Roopali Mukherjee and Sarah Banet-Weiser, NYU Press, pp. 39-56	By Wednesday, August 1 : *Complete Week III/Part II quiz on Blackboard. *Write 3 entries in Week III/Part II discussion on blackboard.
Part III	Watch: <i>Killing us Softly 4-Advertising’s Image of Women</i> on Kanopy	By Friday, August 3 : *Write 3 entries in Week III/Part III discussion on blackboard.
Part IV	By Friday, August 3 : *Complete_blog entry 3 (see prompt) *Give input to your peer’s blog entry	
Week IV (August 6-12) Technology and Digital Media		
Part I	*Raymond Williams, “Communications Technologies and Social Institutions”	By Monday, August 6 : *Complete Week IV/Part I quiz on Blackboard. *Write 3 entries in Week IV/Part I discussion on blackboard.
Part II	*S. Vaidhyanathan, “The Googlization of Us: Universal Surveillance and Infrastructural Imperialism”	By Wednesday, August 8 : *Complete Week IV/Part II quiz on Blackboard. *Write 3 entries in Week IV/Part II discussion on blackboard.
Part III	How to detect fake news: *Carl Sagan, “The Fine Art of Baloney Detection” from <i>The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark</i> (1996) *Eric Weiskott, “Before ‘Fake News’ Came False Prophecy” in <i>The Atlantic</i> , Dec 27, 2016 *Andrew Higgins, Mike McIntire, and Gabriel J. X. Dance, “Inside a Fake News Sausage	By Friday, August 10 : *In lieu of discussion, this week you are asked to submit a homework called “Fake news report”: Find 1 article online that contains fake news. Using Sagan’s art of baloney detection, identify

	<p>Factory” in <i>The New York Times</i>, Nov 25, 2016</p> <p>*CUNY J-School’s Fake News Detection Checklist</p>	<p>and explain what sentences, paragraphs, and pictures that contain fallacies in the article. Submit your report on our course blog and provide a link to the article.</p>
Part IV	<p>By Friday, August 10:</p> <p>*Complete blog entry 4 (see prompt)</p> <p>*Give input to your peer’s blog entry</p>	
Week V (August 13-16) Audiences in Global Media		
Part I	<p>*Sonia Livingstone, “Media Audiences, Interpreters and Users”</p> <p>*Watch: Beyond Good and Evil</p>	<p>By Monday, August 13:</p> <p>*Complete Week V/Part I quiz on Blackboard.</p> <p>*Write 3 entries in Week V/Part I discussion on blackboard.</p>
Part II	<p>By Thursday, August 16: submit your final paper and your plagiarism report (see blog).</p>	